

F1 IS GO

CAN FERRARI WIN IN AUSTRALIA?



AUTOSPORT

CRISIS

*What's gone wrong
at McLaren-Honda*

...and can it be saved?



**BRAWN ON
F1's FUTURE**

"We do not want a
Mexican standoff"

CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations to Sennan Fielding, on a superb win at the VdeV season opener

Sennan completed an incredible comeback drive against all odds to win the opening round of the 2017 VdeV Championship with its #52 Ginetta G57-P2 at Circuit de Catalunya.

Catch Sennan at The second round of the 2017 VdeV Series season is set to take place at the Algarve International Circuit in Portugal on the 28-30 April

Visit www.sennanfielding.com to get in contact with Sennan and be part of Britain's brightest racing talent



DRAGON ENGINES

GINETTA



Is it now crunch time for McLaren-Honda?

WE TAKE NO PLEASURE IN OUR COVER STORY THIS week, but the ongoing struggle at McLaren-Honda is likely to be one of the key talking points in the Formula 1 season opener in Australia this weekend. And will probably continue to be throughout the year.

McLaren is a great F1 name and is one of the few teams to boast the sort of resources and expertise that *should* be able to challenge Mercedes at the front. But as Ben Anderson shows on page 14, that seems as far away as ever at the moment.

Just how long the McLaren-Honda relationship can be maintained with all this pressure is open to question, as is Fernando Alonso's desire to stay. The 35-year-old is beginning to run out of time to win a third world title. It is nearly four years since the Spaniard – still regarded by some as the best driver in the world – won a race.

Alonso's old team, Ferrari, seems set to be the closest challenger to Mercedes in Melbourne. F1 needs the Silver Arrows to be put under pressure – we've got faster cars, now we need a close battle at the front.

- The Goodwood Members' Meeting kicked off the European historic racing season in fine style last weekend. There were many highlights, including tributes to the great John Surtees, but perhaps the most memorable sight was that of a 106-year-old, 28-litre land speed record car making its way around the 2.4-mile circuit (see p65). Adrian Newey would doubtless be appalled by the high centre of gravity and terrible aero, but the flame-spitting monster could never be described as dull.



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COVER IMAGE

Charniaux/XPB Images

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NIGEL ROEBUCK

Zak Brown's orange order

AT THE LAUNCH OF THE McLAREN

MCL32 on February 24 there was optimism in the air, a hope that Honda's new engine would transform the team's fortunes in 2017, but when I went back to Woking two weeks later, to talk to Zak Brown, the barometer had fallen: in the intervening period there had been the test sessions at Barcelona.

"I think," said Brown, "the longest run we did was eight laps, and the most we did in a day was 70-something. Certainly we did fewer than any other team, and through the trap we were 26km/h [16mph] down on the best. Hard to make that up – I'd say impossible!

"It's not where Honda thought they would be, but we know they're giving it all they've got, so giving them grief through the media serves no purpose."

That said, it's evident from recent remarks by Eric Boullier and Fernando Alonso that patience is running thin.

"I've just started at McLaren, so I don't feel a responsibility for where we are – but I do feel a great responsibility for what we're going to do about it," added Brown. "Technical problems don't fix themselves overnight – we know Melbourne isn't going to be fun.

"It's not like I've come into a championship-winning team, and all I have to do is not screw it up: I've got to step up – everyone's got to

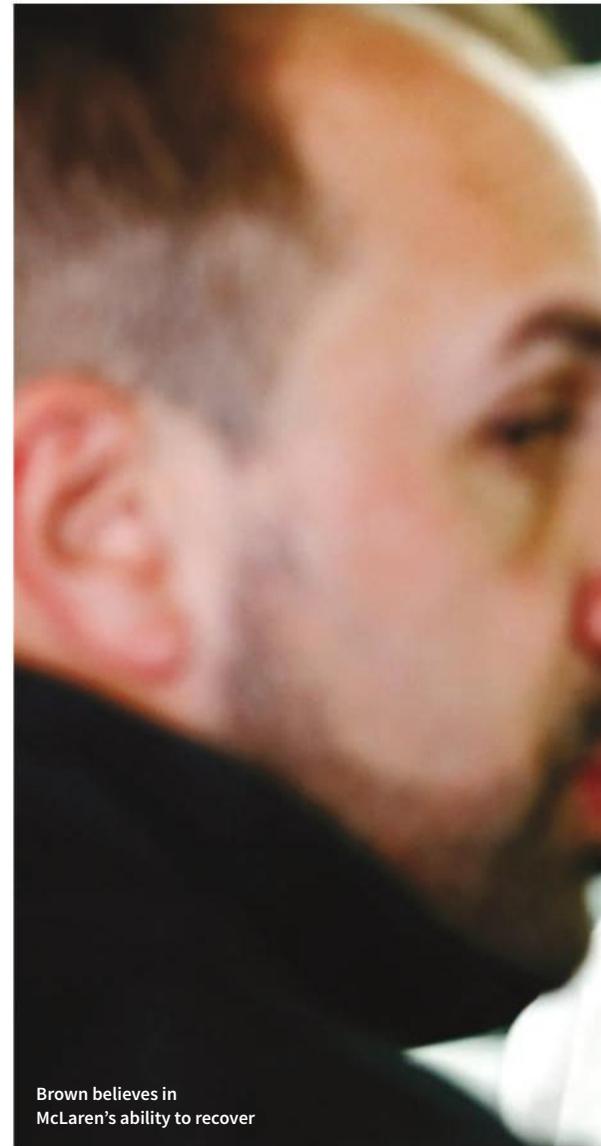
step up – and *do* something. You've got to show what you're made of, although I wish we weren't as far off the pace as we are..."

Thinking back to conversations I've had with people involved with Honda a common thread was always, 'How do you break through the mentality?' The lamented John Surtees told me that 50 years ago it took *forever* to get anything done, and that seems never materially to have changed.

"Yeah, I think Eric said it best: 'Honda needs to adapt to Formula 1 culture'. They got it really right in the '80s and '90s, then really wrong in the 2000s, and there's not been much success in the past two years. Over time manufacturers who did it 'the Formula 1 way', like Mercedes, always had more success than those who did it their way, like Toyota."

Frustration with the Honda situation is all the greater against a McLaren backdrop more upbeat than for years. Under the stewardship of Ron Dennis, the team was going nowhere, and many rejoiced when the Crown Prince of Bahrain and Mansour Ojeh – Dennis's fellow shareholders – declined to renew his contract. Brown, installed as executive director, hasn't been there long, but McLaren folk tell me that already he has galvanised the company.

Given Brown's friendship with Dennis, this could have made for a difficult situation. "Ron



Brown believes in McLaren's ability to recover

himself had been approaching me for years, with a 'You're welcome at McLaren whenever you want' kind of offer," said Brown.

Having sold JMI, his immensely successful marketing company, Brown was contracted to remain with it for three years, so it was too early to have serious conversations. "I knew,



Pre-season optimism took a dive during the first test

XRB IMAGES



though, I wasn't going to keep doing the CEO role – I'm a racing guy, and I missed it. Then all the Formula 1 stuff heated up..."

For 'all the Formula 1 stuff', read the arrival of Liberty Media. "They wanted me to be 'head of commercial', which was extremely tempting, and I also had the offer from McLaren," confirmed Brown. "I looked at what success would mean with both opportunities, and concluded that winning the world championship with McLaren would be the coolest thing. Mind you, right about now I'm wondering if I made the right decision! Just kidding..."

"I was in negotiation with Ron, and then, when he left, with the other shareholders. That transition was uncomfortable for me, but I said I wanted to do the best for McLaren, and all three shareholders agreed on that – even if they don't agree on lots of other things!"

Getting back to the vexed topic of Honda, Brown is in a difficult situation, for McLaren gets not only free engines, but also very substantial backing at a time when it lacks a major sponsor – and has done for some time. The conundrum is that, for all Zak's consummate ability at finding sponsors, unless or until Honda gets its act together, McLaren will struggle to attract one.

“For all Zak’s ability at finding sponsors, until Honda can get its act together McLaren will struggle”

"It's not that easy," he allowed, "but I did the Martini deal on the back of Williams having a terrible year, so it can be done. I like where Formula 1's going with Liberty – if you said a year ago, 'Where's the sport headed?', no-one could have answered that, but now it's positive, and I think the same about McLaren."

Another problem Brown faces is keeping hold of Alonso, whose contract expires this year. "Something that's really impressed me about the team is that usually when things are bad everyone starts taking it out on each other, but I haven't seen any of that.

"No-one is more desperate to win than Fernando, and I think, given how things have been, he's handled himself impeccably – and for a couple of years now. What he's said is what he feels: it's hard to say we have horsepower and reliability, because the facts are the facts.

"Fernando's the best driver in the world – he's unbelievably motivated and fit, and he's got five years ahead of him, if he wants that. He loves the team, and I'm desperate for him to stay, which I think he will – if we give him a car..."

Brown says he has two heroes: "Mario Andretti, a great driver, and the coolest dude in the world – and Roger Penske. I've been fortunate enough to be around all the big boys in motor racing, and, while they're mega-impressive, they all have some sort of blind spot – but I can't find one with Roger. There's no-one like him.

"When I was making my decision, I called him, and said, 'Here's my situation – what do you think?' He said, 'Does McLaren have the resources and the people to get back to winning championships?' I said yes, and he said, 'That's what you do, then...'" ✨



FORMULA 1

The big questions as

Will Ferrari genuinely fight Mercedes for the 2017 world championship?

After testing ended, Autosport asked: 'Is the threat to Mercedes real?' And the answer was 'yes' – with a caveat. Ferrari claimed the 'winter world championship' with the fastest time and the second-highest mileage count of any team during eight days of testing at the Circuit de Catalunya, while Kimi Raikkonen's 1m18.634s Barcelona benchmark was seven tenths of a second faster than Lewis Hamilton's best (1m19.352s).

This has turned hope to expectation, aided by speculation that Mercedes was concerned about a potential problem with its crankshaft. But this has been refuted and Mercedes has confirmed that its teams will use the latest version of its engine this weekend in Australia.

Mercedes has made a big change to its power unit for this season and there have been rumours that it has been producing up to 70bhp more on the dyno. It appears that the team may have been running with its engines in a more conservative mode in Spain, which could explain why Ferrari, which ran a single power unit for the entire two weeks, appeared to hold the edge and why things could be different in Melbourne.

Equally, Mercedes may feel that it is not yet comfortable enough to unleash the full power of its engine, so its full potential may not be seen for several races.

Can Red Bull battle Merc and Ferrari?

Hamilton reckons that Mercedes will face a two-pronged attack, one from Maranello and one from Milton Keynes. But Red Bull driver Max Verstappen has conceded "we are not good enough yet to win".

The RB13 was the fourth-quickest car in Barcelona testing, behind the pacesetter Ferrari team, reigning champion Mercedes and Williams, and Verstappen reckons Mercedes "probably sandbagged a bit" in testing too.

Verstappen's and team-mate Daniel Ricciardo's chances likely rest on engine supplier Renault. The French manufacturer's managing director Cyril Abiteboul confidently declared that the customer team will "clearly be in a position to fight for the championship".

Where will McLaren-Honda be?

As this week's cover feature examines (see p14), one of F1's all-time great alliances is on the rocks. Where McLaren-Honda will line up this week was already one of the great points of intrigue once testing had concluded – and then came the news that McLaren had started evaluating a break-up of the (re)union.

McLaren has sounded out Mercedes about a supply of customer engines if it concludes that it is best to split with current partner Honda. While Honda is adamant that it can resolve the reliability dramas that will then unlock steps in



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IN THE HEADLINES

AZERBAIJAN AT ODDS WITH LIBERTY

The promoter of the Azerbaijan Grand Prix has hit back at F1 commercial rights holder Liberty Media's criticism of the Baku race. Liberty boss Greg Maffei said that races such as Baku do "nothing to build the long-term brand and health of the business" of F1. Arif Rahimov responded: "Mr Maffei has been involved in F1 for less than half a year. We've been working on this project for three years now so we have more experience with F1 than them. I think saying something like this is ignorant, but we'll see."

ROSBERG WANTS MOTORSPORT ROLE

Reigning world champion Nico Rosberg says he wants a new role within the sport, three months after he hung up his helmet. "At the moment I'm primarily working on social projects to help children and the less privileged," he said. "I want to give something back. This means a lot to me. I'm looking for a project I can put my whole heart into. There are plenty of possibilities. One could be, for example, to help other drivers to be successful, maybe as counsellor or in a management capacity."

MANOR 2017 SCALE MODEL FOR SALE

The windtunnel model for Manor's stillborn 2017 F1 racer will be among the items auctioned off to pay the team's creditors. Four 'rolling-chassis show cars' will also be going under the hammer at Gordon Brothers, which has yet to announce a date for the auction.

ADELAIDE EYES AUSTRALIAN GP RETURN

Adelaide City Council is to make a formal request to the South Australian State Government concerning a possible return of the Australian GP to the city, which hosted the race from 1985-95. A shortened version of the F1 circuit is used to host the opening round of the country's prestigious Supercars touring car series.

IAN STEWART 1929-2017

A leading driver in sportscars and one-time grand prix starter for Ecurie Ecosse in the early 1950s, Scot Ian Stewart (no relation to Jackie) has died, aged 87. Stewart was fourth in the '53 Le Mans 24 Hours, sharing a Jaguar C-type with Peter Whitehead, and second with Roy Salvadori in that year's Nurburgring 1000Km at the wheel of a similar car. He also contested that year's British GP in Ecosse's Connaught. A crash in a D-type in the '54 Buenos Aires 1000Km, which caused minor injuries, preceded his retirement.

HAKKINEN REJOINS McLAREN

McLaren folk hero Mika Hakkinen has rejoined the team with which he won two Formula 1 titles as a 'partner ambassador'. The Finn will work alongside McLaren executive director Zak Brown and the team's marketing staff, as well as with McLaren Automotive CEO Mike Flewitt. "We've [Hakkinen and Brown] spoken about how we can work together, and I can see that he's putting in place the building blocks needed to help McLaren get back to the front," said Hakkinen (below).



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F1 2017 kicks off

power, McLaren knows that it cannot afford for the situation to stay as it is.

Honda has reiterated its "100% commitment" to the project and also says it has already implemented fixes for the reliability problems that surfaced during pre-season testing, and is pressing on with plans to improve the driveability and extract more power from the engine ahead of the first race. Whether this can lift McLaren away from a battle with Sauber to avoid the wooden spoon in the opening grand prix remains to be seen. But if McLaren's at the back, then the next big questions will be 'How long will it continue?' – and 'How long can it continue?'

Will lap records tumble?

The purpose of F1's rules overhaul was to create more impressive machinery, with talk of lap times being up to six seconds faster and possibly the quickest era of grand prix racing ever. This didn't quite bear out in pre-season testing, with Raikkonen's best 0.3s slower than Felipe Massa's all-time Barcelona lap record. It was 3.4s faster than the pole position time from the 2016 Spanish Grand Prix, which is towards the low end of the 3-5-second gain targeted.

That said, this is the very beginning for this breed of F1 car. Once they get turned up to 11 on grand prix weekends, the

improvements should increase. In Australia, we should see the first lap record fall – last year the pole time was only 0.3s slower than the all-time quickest lap, a 1m23.529s set by Sebastian Vettel in qualifying in 2013. That should be smashed, and other records will also surely be broken this season.

Will the racing be better, or worse?

How this new, bigger, better, faster, harder era of F1 translates to an audience that seems to have a fading interest needs to be top of the priority list.

On the positive side, McLaren driver Fernando Alonso says the new cars and lower-degradation tyres will mean drivers no longer have to race like 'small children'. Tyre management during grands prix should be less of an issue and pushing harder for longer should, in theory, make races more interesting – if only through drivers having quicker deltas (target times) to hit over a stint. On the negative side, though, is that more aero performance and bigger tyres mean higher corner speeds and shorter braking zones – not exactly conducive to good racing.

F1 can only hope that happier, braver drivers who are more inclined to attack than in the previous era can offset it significantly enough for races not to become a procession.

SCOTT MITCHELL AND JONATHAN NOBLE

Q&A

PADDY LOWE
WILLIAMS CHIEF
TECHNICAL OFFICER



After leaving the Mercedes steamroller, Lowe started work at Williams last Thursday. Then he spoke to Autosport on Friday...

Do you see this as coming full circle?

Yes, it's an amazing story actually. It was an emotional moment to come back. I didn't actually work at this site [in Grove]; it was in Didcot. But yeah, it's almost 30 years since I started with Williams and very special to come back and in effect take on a position of my original boss, Patrick [Head].

What is your gameplan for Williams?

It's too early to say, really. The first stage is to get to know the team and see how I can bring value. I'm very respectful of the team that's already in place and what they've achieved, and I've come here to help build upon that. The standard of engineering in Formula 1 generally is very, very high these days, so it would be extremely misplaced for anybody to think they can come into any team and expect to suddenly find some sort of miracle or silver bullet.

Without the same facilities as at Mercedes, do you see that as a challenge to overcome, to still try to take them on?

Yeah, I think the challenge that has come into all engineering is how to make the best with what you have. There's always an element of compromise in any direction you take and it's about making the right compromises, making the best with what you have available to get the best value from it. There are undoubtedly things here at Williams that are much better than they have in Mercedes already. So I have to see what are the strengths and what are the gaps, and then build on those.

DIETER RENCKEN

FORMULA 2

Rejuvenated Arden tops first F2 test

JUST DAYS AFTER THE GP2 SERIES' name was changed to the FIA Formula 2 Championship, a new order emerged in the first official pre-season test at Barcelona – on the proviso that this is only testing.

Arden International had a shocking 2016 GP2 season, with expected lead driver Jimmy Eriksson suffering a lack of funding and team-mate Nabil Jeffri struggling for pace. But with Arden's '15 driver Norman Nato (below) back on board – after a race-winning campaign with Racing Engineering – the team found itself at the top of the times.

The Frenchman headed the 'dummy' qualifying session on the final morning, beating DAMS driver Oliver Rowland by 0.054 seconds, and was in the top five in three other sessions. He focused on race runs in the remaining two sessions.

"It was a really good start to the season," Arden general manager Julian Rouse told Autosport. "Norman's come back into the team and that's given us the opportunity to kick on where we were the year before with him – he was a bit inconsistent as a rookie, but he was bloody quick at times."

Rouse also highlighted the progress of Campos Racing refugee Sean Gelael, the lanky Indonesian going eighth overall in the sister Arden car. "Sean impressed a lot of people," he said. "He and Norman have been able to provide us with a lot of direction and they know what they want. Sean's worked really hard over the winter – he's put a lot of effort into it."

On the engineering side, technical director Cyril Blais stays on at Arden for a seventh season and will engineer Nato. Meanwhile, Gaetan Jago has been recruited from ART Grand Prix to work on Gelael's car. He was part of ART's

all-conquering GP2 squad from 2005-12, and over the past two seasons worked as technical director of the French squad's DTM operation. "The strength has always been there under Cyril's watch," said Rouse. "It's just all come together this year with the experience and drivers we've got."

Apart from Nato's overall test-topper, the other sessions were headed by ART duo Alexander Albon and Nobuharu Matsushita, Rapax pair Nyck de Vries and Johnny Cecotto Jr, and Russian Time's Luca Ghiotto, with reigning champion Prema Racing keeping its powder dry, as is that team's tradition.

Arden also had a good test over at Magny-Cours with two days of running for the Formula Renault Eurocup. The team is new to the category, yet its Red Bull junior Dan Ticktum topped two of the four sessions, although an electrical problem effectively ruled him out of running in the other two periods.

The new squad has been put together with ex-Fortec man Ben Salter as team manager and former Carlin/DAMS technician Matt Callaghan – who ran Alex Lynn to the 2014 GP3 title – as chief engineer, working on Ticktum's car.

Tech 1 Racing's Gabriel Aubry set the overall fastest time from his team-mate, Renault junior Max Fewtrell. The other session topper was MP Motorsport's Renault protege Jarno Opmeer.

World Series Formula V8 3.5 also began its tests, at Motorland Aragon. Egor Orudzhev (AVF) was fastest, after Pietro Fittipaldi had headed the first day for the Charouz-run Lotus team. Arden, which won last year's teams' title with Orudzhev and Aurelien Panis, has pulled out of the series; 12 cars ran at the test.

MARCUS SIMMONS





BTCC Speedworks Motorsport driver Tom Ingram topped the times last week in the British Touring Car Championship's official pre-season test at Donington Park. Ingram now has a facelifted Toyota Avensis (above) to attack the 2017 season. Speedworks boss Christian Dick said the team was in positive frame of mind, because the lap time had been set with an amount of success ballast on the car – Autosport understands Ingram had an extra 45kg of lead bolted on. Second was the Handy Motorsport Avensis of Rob Austin. Returning team BTC Norlin Racing was third with Chris Smiley in its Chevrolet Cruze, while the new factory-backed Power Maxed Vauxhall Astra of Tom Chilton clocked the eighth best time. Reigning champion Gordon Shedden was just outside the top 10 in his Team Dynamics Honda Civic Type R. **Photograph by Ebrey/LAT**

WORLD TOURING CAR CHAMPIONSHIP

WTCC is 'most open world title' of 2017

WORLD TOURING CAR SUPREMO Francois Ribeiro says his series will offer the most open title fight of any world championship this year.

Citroen and Lada both pulled out at the end of 2016, leading to fears about grid numbers and a rushed decision to implement a WTCC-2 class for TCR-spec cars, which has now been canned.

But four Citroens and two Ladas will remain on the grid, including Rob Huff taking up a seat in a Munnich Motorsport Citroen C-Elysee.

With dominant force Citroen ending its works involvement, and developments for Volvo's – which has recruited four-time champion Yvan Muller to assist – and Honda's TC1 challengers over the winter, Ribeiro is optimistic.

"Genuinely, eight drivers can challenge for the drivers' title," said Ribeiro at last week's season launch. "I doubt one brand will dominate, [and] there will be a good balance of forces. Eight drivers, reasonably on the same

footing for the title – how many world championships can have that? Not F1, WRC, WEC, or Formula E."

● Last week's two-day Monza test was topped by Huff, the Brit fastest (below) in all four sessions. Honda's Tuesday was disrupted when Tiago Monteiro's exhaust insulation caught fire. Volvo's Wednesday times were unrepresentative, with the team running without transponders for much of the day.

JACK COZENS



FORMULINO E



NOW JUNIORS ARE GOING ELECTRIC

WHAT'S THIS? IF IT LOOKS LIKE A JUNIOR SINGLE-SEATER, that's because it is – but it's one with a difference.

The chassis is the familiar Dallara Formulinio, as used until 2014 in Germany's Formel Masters series and still the basis of the Indian-based MRF Challenge. But this derivative features electric power to become Formulinio E, a collaboration between Dallara and Belgian constructor Punch Powertrain.

The shakedown was at Zolder last week, before its launch at an electric-vehicle congress in Geneva. Formulinio E chairman Thierry Deflandre eyes it as a feeder category to Formula E or the new Lucas di Grassi-backed Electric GT series. Top speeds should exceed 120mph, with a target price of €80,000.

Di Grassi said: "As Formula E evolves and progresses it's natural the drivers will be prepared somewhere else. It's very positive to hear it's coming so early. It's a good preparation, like F2 to F1."



FORMULAE

FIA GIVES BMW A PLACE IN FORMULA E

BMW IS AMONG THE nine manufacturers to have been accepted by the FIA to become powertrain providers in Formula E from 2018.

The Munich marque joins DS, Abt, Mahindra, Renault, Jaguar Land Rover, NextEV, Penske Autosport and Venturi on the list of makes that have won a place for the first three seasons of Formula E's new era, where mid-race car swaps will be eliminated. Their powertrains will be mated to the new chassis from Spark Technologies and battery from McLaren Applied Technologies.

BMW has been working with the Andretti Formula E team since early 2016, but only officially confirmed its evaluation of a future full works effort last September. Audi is understood to have essentially entered its powertrain under the Abt Formel E name as it continues to build up to a full-works outfit.

Two additional teams are set to be granted a space on the 2018-19 grid due to the lack of mid-race car swaps opening up paddock space. Among these could be Mercedes customer specialist HWA and McLaren.

McLaren boss Zak Brown told Autosport: "We are looking at ways to get more involved in Formula E. We can go beyond the battery technology. Everything is on the table from starting a team, to buying a team, to working with a team. Formula E is going places."

SAM SMITH AND
SCOTT MITCHELL



WORLD RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP

Toyota tests Yaris to resolve Mexico gravel-pace woes

TOYOTA WILL RUN ITS YARIS WRC THROUGH AN exhaustive series of test sessions ahead of the next three rallies in an effort to rediscover the pace that stunned the World Rally Championship on the first two rounds.

Jari-Matti Latvala was an unexpected series leader after finishing second on the Monte Carlo Rally and winning in Sweden, but prolonged overheating problems for the Yaris in Mexico meant neither Latvala nor team-mate Juho Hanninen managed a top-three stage time on the car's first gravel rally.

Latvala said that damage to the engine caused the overheating worries in Mexico, and that a longer-term problem is from the brake pads running too hot. The brake issue is likely to be masked on next month's all-asphalt Corsica round, where the cars will run bigger discs.

"We have four days of running before Corsica," said Latvala, "then we have five days for Argentina and six days for Portugal. This level of testing is the very good thing with the programme. The brakes in Corsica will be asphalt-spec, so they should be much better and I'm confident we will have everything else sorted in time for Argentina [in April]. Don't forget, Mexico is probably the worst for overheating because of the temperatures and the altitude."

Team principal Tommi Makinen said: "Mexico was much more the type of situation we were expecting from this year, but it still gave us a lot of satisfaction as we scored points with both drivers for the first time and also had to overcome a lot of difficulties to achieve that."

DAVID EVANS



TCR INTERNATIONAL

Tarquini gets Hyundai role

TIN-TOP WARHORSE GABRIELE TARQUINI (above) has been recruited by Hyundai to lead development on its new project for the TCR International series.

The 55-year-old World Touring Car Championship veteran – who is out of a race drive this season – will test the car based on the i30 model before the South Korean manufacturer starts deliveries. Tarquini links up again with Hyundai

customer racing boss Andrea Adamo, who worked with him at the Honda WTCC team.

The 2017 TCR season is taking shape just one week before kickoff at Rustavi in Georgia. James Nash, who was pipped to the 2016 title, stays at the Craft-Bamboo SEAT team alongside Pepe Oriola and Lada WTCC refugee Hugo Valente.

Honda WTCC star Norbert Michelisz has launched a new team, MIRA, to run Civics

for Italian veteran Roberto Colciago and Hungarian teenager Attila Tassi.

WestCoast Racing has left the Honda camp and acquired Volkswagen Golfs to run for ex-F1 racer Gianni Morbidelli and 16-year-old Italian Giacomo Altoc.

Meanwhile, double champion Stefano Comini has announced his departure from the Leopard Racing Golf team.

VAL KHOROUNZHIVY AND MARCUS SIMMONS

IN THE HEADLINES

VERGNE JOINS MANOR IN WEC...

Ex-Toro Rosso Formula 1 driver Jean-Eric Vergne has joined Manor to contest the LMP2 class of the World Endurance Championship. The Frenchman will dovetail his programme in one of Manor's two ORECA with his Formula E commitments with Techeetah, but will have to miss the Nurburgring 6 Hours as it clashes with the New York FE double-header. Vergne joins Simon Trummer, Tor Graves, Jonathan Hirschi and Roberto Gonzalez at Manor, with one other driver yet to be confirmed.

...AS LYNN GETS G-DRIVE SEAT

Sebring 12 Hours winner Alex Lynn is another to join the almost-full-time WEC LMP2 ranks. As anticipated, the Brit joins the TDS/G-Drive Racing ORECA line-up alongside Roman Rusinov and Pierre Thiriet. Like Vergne, he will likely miss the Nurburgring round to be in New York, where he is expected to sub for Jose Maria Lopez – committed to the Toyota LMP1 team – at DS Racing.

MORTARA LINKED TO GT MERCEDES

DTM star Edoardo Mortara looks set to join the ASP Mercedes line-up for the Blancpain Endurance Cup. The Italian replaced Mathias Lauda – who will now concentrate on his WEC programme – at the French team in last week's Blancpain test at Paul Ricard.

OGIER'S GEARBOX PASSED OK

Sebastien Ogier has kept his World Rally Championship lead after the FIA declared the gearbox of his M-Sport Ford Fiesta legal following his second place on the recent Rally Mexico. He is eight points in front of Jari-Matti Latvala.

CLIO TEENAGER GETS BMR SUBARU

Renault UK Clio Cup race winner Josh Price has received a surprise last-minute call up to join Team BMR in the British Touring Car Championship. The 18-year-old, who was scheduled to contest the French Clio Cup, tied up a deal last week to replace team boss Warren Scott in the four-car Subaru attack. He will race under Team BMR Academy colours and is due to begin testing this week.

BERGER TAKES THE HELM OF THE DTM

Gerhard Berger was announced as the new chairman of DTM promoter the ITR as Autosport went to press. Berger's appointment, hinted in Autosport in January, comes after Hans Werner Aufrecht, Hans-Jurgen Abt and Walter Mertes left the board. Mertes retains his role as MD of the ITR's Euro F3-organising subsidiary.

ALESI REMAINS IN GP3 RANKS

Ferrari junior Giuliano Alesi will remain with Trident for his second season in the GP3 Series this year. The son of Jean Alesi (below, Alesi Jr right) joins Kevin Jorg as one of Trident's confirmed drivers, while Formula Renault ace Dorian Boccocacci and ex-F3 racer Ryan Tveter are part of the squad for this week's Estoril test. Another GP3 signing is Alessio Lorandi, who stays at Jenzer Motorsport for '17.



F1 PREVIEW

Australian Grand Prix

March 24-26



ALBERT PARK

LENGTH 3.295 miles **NUMBER OF LAPS** 58

2016 POLE POSITION Lewis Hamilton 1m23.837s

POLE LAP RECORD Sebastian Vettel 1m23.529s (2011)

RACE LAP RECORD Michael Schumacher 1m24.125s (2004)



TYRE ALLOCATION



UK START TIMES

LIVE ON SKY SPORTS F1

FRIDAY

FP1 0100 FP2 0500

SATURDAY

FP3 0300 QUALIFYING 0600

SUNDAY

RACE 0600

HIGHLIGHTS ON CHANNEL 4

QUALIFYING SATURDAY 1300 RACE SUNDAY 1400

PREVIOUS WINNERS

Year	Driver	Team
2016	Nico Rosberg	Mercedes
2015	Lewis Hamilton	Mercedes
2014	Nico Rosberg	Mercedes
2013	Kimi Raikkonen	Lotus
2012	Jenson Button	McLaren
2011	Sebastian Vettel	Red Bull
2010	Jenson Button	McLaren
2009	Jenson Button	Brawn
2008	Lewis Hamilton	McLaren
2007	Kimi Raikkonen	Ferrari

THEMES TO WATCH

IS FERRARI THAT FAST?

Mercedes is favourite, but testing suggested Ferrari has the pace to be a contender. Only qualifying and the race at Albert Park can validate that speed.

BOTTAS'S BIG BREAK

After four seasons at Williams, Valtteri Bottas finally has his big break. But taking on Lewis Hamilton at Mercedes will be his toughest test so far.

RED BULL WILD CARD

Testing suggested Red Bull is on its own in third, several tenths off the top two. But upgrades are expected that could change the balance of power.



Brains and Brawn

Bernie Ecclestone had been quiet since his ousting by Liberty. But now he's back, and he's trying to rattle Ross Brawn's cage

By Dieter Rencken, Special Contributor

[@RacingLines](#)

TWO MONTHS AGO, AFTER NEWS BROKE THAT Bernie Ecclestone had been unceremoniously booted upstairs – albeit with the fancy title of ‘chairman emeritus’ – by Formula 1’s incoming commercial rights owner Liberty Media, speculation abounded that he had been put out to grass and it was the last F1 would see of the 86-year-old.

Such suggestions were fuelled a week later by news that Ecclestone (and various co-directors of the holding company) had cashed in tranches of shares. This pointed to him becoming disillusioned with the direction taken by the company (and the sport) he’d built over a period of 40 years, and was phasing out.

Autosport, though, saw it differently, stating that a possible showdown between Ecclestone and the new management team was looming, concluding with: “[Bernie] knows the business inside out (and outside in, to boot), has a head start over his (possible) adversaries should push come to shove-back. And, this time, he has nothing to lose...”

On cue, a variety of reports conservatively described as ‘scathing’ about the takeover of Formula One Management by Liberty appeared in media outlets known to have indirect links to Ecclestone. Despite the gravity of some claims, paddock folk generally treated these with ‘from whence they come’ disdain, adding that the primary source seemed fairly obvious.

For a month or so little was heard from Bernie, with the word being that he’d headed to his coffee farm (and in-laws) in Brazil to recharge his batteries. Yet, during F1’s test fortnight, various folk admitted to having heard from him, suggesting he was in London, with one or two confessing to having attended his ‘farewell’ dinner hosted by Flavio Briatore. Then, out of the blue, an email requesting a chat hit my desk late last week. It was from Bernie’s office, but for various reasons a face-to-face wasn’t possible, so we spoke briefly on the phone. After opening banter he moved straight in: “A lot has been written about me, and I have not reacted. But I think it’s time to tell the truth about what we’ve done, and what we’re doing.” When, then?

“I’m off to Brazil this weekend, returning on the Sunday of the Chinese GP.” Coffee farm and family? “Yes, but I’ll visit the president [of Brazil, Michel Temer] to see if we can save the race,” adding he had invested 45 years in the event, and did not wish to see it disappear due to the country’s financial situation. Unsaid was that Interlagos is named after one of Bernie’s (if not the) favourite Brabham drivers, the late Carlos Pace.

We agreed to meet in Bahrain. All fairly vanilla thus far. So what was the real reason behind his call? “People should ask exactly what it was Ross Brawn [Liberty’s newly appointed managing director of F1] did at Ferrari. I asked Michael [Schumacher] who ran the team, and he said, ‘I do’. Michael and Mr Todt [pronounced by Bernie to rhyme with ‘road’] ran Ferrari, not Ross Brawn. He helped them.”

Clearly, stung by media coverage about how the new management team, directed by the only man within Liberty with F1 experience – namely Brawn – plans to change F1, Bernie’s fightback has begun. He could not have chosen better timing to start his offensive: exactly a week before proceedings in Melbourne were due to get under way.

Those familiar with *Total Competition*, the book on lessons in executive strategy co-authored by Brawn and former Williams team principal Adam Parr, will have gleaned that both had bruising run-ins with Ecclestone. Indeed, both men make clear their individual beliefs that Ecclestone played parts in their downfalls at Williams and Mercedes respectively.

A particularly telling paragraph, attributed to Brawn and (obviously) written before Liberty confirmed Brawn’s appointment as MD and Bernie’s emeritus role, reads: “[Ecclestone] will meet his maker one day,

but no-one has managed to depose him; you can’t go to [former rights holder] CVC Capital Partners and have an argument and think they will override him. There is no higher authority.”

Yet Brawn’s appointment achieved exactly that. During testing at Barcelona various FOM employees outlined how Brawn is restructuring FOM’s operations, with one or two key Ecclestone loyalists being placed on gardening leave. That alone would not have sat well with Bernie, who built his empire the old East London way.

During our chat he made clear he did not blame Liberty for easing him out of the mainstream, nor did he seem to hold it against Chase Carey, Liberty’s appointed chairman/CEO of F1. Indeed, it was Carey who spoke to him face to face about the emeritus role. Yet it’s Brawn who seems to have got to Bernie. At Monza last September, when F1’s takeover by Liberty was all but confirmed, Ecclestone spoke about staying in F1’s CEO role for three years (or as long as he was still up to it), yet just three months later he was hastily stripped of all executive duties. Did Brawn accept his MD role on condition that Bernie was neutered? ❄

“Bernie does not blame Liberty. It’s Brawn who seems to have got to him”

FEEDBACK

Remembering 'John the Great'

Paul Fearnley has certainly given us a worthy obituary for the late John Surtees (March 16), though I would have liked to have seen more emphasis on the "modified Indy Lola" that was used to win the 1967 grand prix at Monza.

We are regularly told that only three drivers (Jack Brabham, Dan Gurney and Bruce McLaren) ever won world championship grands prix in their own cars, but I have always believed that this unfairly ignores the one-off Honda RA300 that Surtees drove that day.

This car was really a collaborative effort between Honda, Lola and Team Surtees. It was also known to Lola as the T130 but never carried the Surtees name or a TS-type number despite the car being completed in his workshop. It never seems to be credited with the same status as the other three but, as the Brabham cars would never have happened without Jack, the Eagles without Dan or the McLarens without Bruce, the 'Hondola' would never have existed without *Il Grande John*...

He did not receive the knighthood that he so richly deserved, so I for one will always remember him by his more unofficial Italian title, often loosely translated as Big John by us Brits

back in the day, though John the Great was so much more accurate.

David Cole
Oakham, Rutland

See our top 10 Surtees F1 drives, p38 – ed

Stirring Thruxton memories

Reading the recollections of Marcus Simmons and the impact made on him by the Easter Monday Formula 2 meetings at Thruxton (March 16) evoked my own memories of similar visits.

As with Marcus, the noise, smells and colours provided the initial wow factor, but then of course there was first-class racing and star drivers of the day such as Jackie Stewart, Jochen Rindt and Ronnie Peterson providing the slipstreaming entertainment.

Marcus Pye has also revisited his younger days spectating at the challenging Hampshire circuit, which I believe endorses the fact that the 1970s at the BARC track yielded first-class racing, and that is without considering the closely fought one-litre Formula 3 races that always brought the fans in the Club grandstand to their feet.

Geoffrey Pickett
Byemail



Surtees deserves more credit for the car in which he won the 1967 Italian GP, reckons reader Cole

Turn up pressure in qualifying

With regards to making F1 more exciting, I have a suggestion for the qualifying format. After the change was made to the system last year, which proved unsuccessful, I may have the answer.

Qualifying should be run in two parts. Part one is a 30-minute shootout to decide the running order for the bottom half of the grid. Part two is a one-lap shootout to determine pole position. Running order determined by qualifying part one. One lap. One chance. Maximum pressure and the chance to mix things up if mistakes are made.

One-lap qualifying always led to slightly mixed-up grids. I have been present at Silverstone when it was one-lap qualifying, and it was awesome to hear 80,000 people sigh or moan all at once when the cars hit sector points.

Give the fans some excitement.

Robert Atkinson
Byemail

Put F1's long-term welfare first

Autosport should name and shame those teams and/or persons whose myopic short-term self-interest trumped the greater long-term welfare of Formula 1 by refusing to drop the ludicrous and ugly shark fins for this season.

The mind boggles and I trust that Ross Brawn and Liberty will put an end to this nonsense by having a clause in the future rules: 'In the interest of F1's public image and support...' as well as 'In the interest of safety/costs/whatever...'

Guy Dormehl
South Africa

HAVE YOUR SAY, GET IN TOUCH

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COVER STORY/McLAREN IN TROUBLE

Can McLaren



McLaren-Honda be saved?

By Ben Anderson, Grand Prix Editor [@BenAndersonAuto](https://twitter.com/BenAndersonAuto)



Unless its fortunes dramatically and suddenly improve, there is a very real danger that McLaren-Honda will be fighting Sauber to avoid being at the very back of the grid when Formula 1 2017 kicks off in Melbourne this weekend.

Its new car is slow and unreliable, and probably won't finish. There is every chance that this could be the worst grand prix McLaren-Honda has endured since the 2015 Australian GP, the first race for this reformed alliance.

The build-up to that event was remarkably similar to what we've witnessed this time around: pre-season testing dogged by persistent engine unreliability, leading to a car that didn't work properly at the first race and had to run in a detuned state just to survive. McLaren-Hondas filled the back row of the grid in qualifying (the Manors never made it out of the garage), Kevin Magnussen's car failed on its way to the grid, and Jenson Button finished last of the classified runners – a scoreless 11th and two laps down on Lewis Hamilton's winning Mercedes.

Two years down the line the cars have changed, the rules have changed, and Honda has gained experience and exploited the abolition of the token system to develop a brand-new engine. And yet the more things change, the more they seem to stay the same.

McLaren-Honda came into 2017 with high hopes. By last year it had a package that was capable of fighting Williams and Force India to be the fourth best at many circuits, despite carrying a power deficit. Honda promised more power from the combustion engine over the winter, and developed a new architecture for the power unit that would benefit the chassis. McLaren used the lessons of recent seasons to build a car it

felt would be capable of leaving the midfield behind.

There was a new car, new engine, new driver line-up, new livery, new management – a real feeling that McLaren could draw a firm line under the acrimonious end to the largely successful era of Ron Dennis, and remake itself anew. McLaren-Honda headed to Spain for pre-season testing buoyant with optimism. Time to get serious.

But testing was nothing short of disastrous. All within the alliance went to Barcelona with genuine expectations of a real leap forward – probably not yet on par with any of the big three F1 teams, but certainly in a position right behind them, with scope to challenge properly in the very near future. Instead, the team returned from Spain demoralised, nursing broken promises, broken engines and broken spirits. Potentially, broken dreams as well. The McLaren-Honda awning was a study in frustration and disappointment.

Reliability was so bad that the MCL32 failed during its pre-test filming day, and completed not much more than a third of the laps Mercedes managed across eight days of testing – a deficit of nearly 2000 miles. Fernando Alonso completed fewer laps in total than Sauber's Pascal Wehrlein, who missed the entire first test through injury.

The new Honda engine lacks power to such a degree that it is currently weaker than the 2016 power unit. Estimates suggest Honda's deficit to Mercedes has increased from 80bhp at the end of last year to something approaching 120bhp, which is not far short of running without use of the MGU-K.

Honda made great strides developing its energy-recovery systems in 2016, but its new 'Melbourne-spec' combustion engine was so unstable during the second Barcelona test that it literally shook itself to death. When the severe vibrations weren't causing electrical failures, the ignition

Hopes were high pre-testing, but all the headlines so far this year for McLaren-Honda have been negative



systems were detonating the engine at low revs.

McLaren-Honda struggled to string more than 10 laps together consecutively in testing, let alone attempt long runs or full-race simulations, and the car was close to three seconds off the ultimate pace when you consider that Ferrari's Kimi Raikkonen topped the timesheet without using ultra-soft tyres.

All this means McLaren-Honda starts 2017 seriously on the back foot. If Melbourne is as bad or worse than '15, in relative terms that would represent zero progress in the space of two seasons. That is surely the definition of a crisis point. Racing director Eric Boullier admits relations between McLaren and Honda are now strained to the "maximum", and that McLaren is experiencing "real pain" while it endures this ongoing and unprecedented competitive slump.

The decision to ditch Mercedes customer engines for a works deal with Honda now looks like a terrible mistake. Reports that McLaren has begun sounding out Mercedes about the possibility of a reunion suggest the team has finally come around to that way of thinking. But McLaren and Honda are tied to a long-term contract, understood to be a 10-year agreement, with Honda also committing significant resources to the project. Unless that arrangement is somehow dissolved or modified, McLaren-Honda simply must find a way to make this work.

The best place to start is rapidly and significantly improving the performance and reliability of the power unit. Despite the severe difficulties experienced in Spain, Honda says it has already implemented what it calls "counter measures" for its reliability problems.

"Obviously the problems we had in Barcelona limited our track time and put added pressure on our pre-season preparations," says Honda F1 chief Yusuke Hasegawa. "However, we were still able to generate a huge amount of useful data –

as was McLaren.

"We were not dealing with lots of different problems, despite how it looked from the outside, and already we were able to introduce some counter measures – and we proved the effectiveness of these during test two.

"In terms of performance, there is room for improvement with mapping before Melbourne, in order to have better driveability, and at the same time we will continue to work on our development to generate more power from the power unit."

But even if Honda does a better job in Australia, there are still wider problems to address. The Japanese manufacturer has made steady progress since its return to Formula 1, but not quickly or consistently enough. After such a poor start to 2017, it looks as though it will spend at least part of this year trying to repair the damage, rather than building on the solid foundations needed to challenge Mercedes, Ferrari and Renault.

McLaren is frustrated by Honda's apparent unwillingness to adapt its practices, or work to the rapid deadlines demanded by an F1 team. Honda recently parted ways with consultant Gilles Simon and, although other F1 engine experts with recent experience of the three rival manufacturer programmes are still working at Sakura, they are struggling to make themselves heard.

"They [Honda] only need one thing, which is to understand and integrate the F1 racing culture," says Boullier. "What I mean is, the way we behave in racing and Formula 1 is all driven by this culture – by a calendar, by fixed targets, fixed dates, >>



Above: Boullier stresses the need for Honda to adopt a 'racing mentality'. Above, right: McLaren faces the prospect of fighting with Sauber to avoid the wooden spoon

lap-time gains; we always try to find the best solution as fast as possible. When a car manufacturer is running a project, you can have a few weeks' delay and it's not going to change the product, it's not going to change the business model. In racing if you don't bring your upgrade for race one, in race one you will be nowhere.

"That's the racing mentality. It's as far as going to suppliers and making sure that if they do something in one month, the next time they do it in three weeks, and from three weeks to two. The corporate influence is not helping us to be efficient. The more you behave like a corporate company, the more process is inherited from a corporate company, the slower you are, the less agile you are, which doesn't fit the racing culture.

"To deliver the first time is [everything] in our world. That's the racing culture, which maybe having the base in Sakura [means] they lack a little bit. This is why Mercedes is based in England, and I guess they benefit from the supply chain, from people with experience of F1. Our suppliers maybe cost twice as much [as Honda's] but are three, four, five times faster. We value more the time gained than the money spent. This is a different approach from the rest of the world."

There is mounting frustration within McLaren at what it perceives as Honda's inability or unwillingness to be flexible, and assimilate some of that racing culture Boullier mentions. Honda's job-for-life approach to its employees also isn't helping, because it reduces positive pressure on them to perform. This ties in with an apparent mismatch of urgency between the two organisations, in terms of an acceptable timescale for achieving results on track.

McLaren urgently needs to end the success drought that has afflicted the team since the end of the 2012 season. The longer it fails to deliver proper results on track, the greater commercial damage it takes from lack of sponsorship and prize money. For Honda, V6-hybrid-turbo F1 is an R&D project that it wants to be successful at some point along the planned 10-year journey, but not necessarily immediately.

This is creating obvious tension between the two organisations, which already looks in danger of mimicking the recrimination that almost ended Red Bull's alliance with Renault at the end of 2015.

"Frankly, I feel extremely sympathetic to what Honda is going through, including in their relationship with McLaren, which reminds me of something I have experienced myself," says Renault F1 boss Cyril Abiteboul. "I think McLaren needs to stay steady, Honda needs to remain focused. They have to go through this, and I am sure they will have the financial resources and the talent to do that.

"I'm not feeling safe at all, even if I watch Honda. Anything could happen in Melbourne. We are doing everything we can to make sure that only good things happen [for Renault], we believe we have a situation that is roughly under control, but these power units are so complex to control that we are really on a critical path, and it's really important to stay focused and not take anything for granted.

"In that respect, having three teams is only helping. I think it would have been better for Honda – it would accelerate Honda's resolution of the current issues – if they had other customers. [But] that's up to McLaren and Honda to sort out."

Red Bull would argue that the public slugging match that almost left it without an engine partner for 2016 was ultimately worthwhile, because Renault got its act together, hired Ilmor

Gary Anderson on the Honda mentality

McLAREN PROBABLY EXPECTED MORE THAN it's got from the might of Honda, but I would like to add that, from day one of pre-season testing in 2015, the McLaren-Honda relationship appeared to lack anyone taking control of the situation.

I can feel for what McLaren is going through. It happened to me when I was at Jordan and we switched from Peugeot to Mugen Honda for 1998. The engine geometry was very similar, so there was no big problem with packaging, but power-wise we were at a deficit

of something in the region of 60bhp.

The chassis itself was, as every team will tell you when they produce a new car, stiffer, had more downforce and was more efficient than the previous car. But it had a basic handling problem and the drivers, Ralf Schumacher and Damon Hill, just didn't feel comfortable with it

So I set about trying to fix both. We knew that what we had done aerodynamically was better than before, but there was something we'd missed. So instead of doing the same old thing and just looking for more downforce, we went back to thinking about how a car works and looked deeper at the transient aerodynamics. Something popped up that I didn't feel was right so we addressed it.

In those days we weren't privy to engine-performance data. We only had what we could generate from the chassis-acceleration data. We felt this in no way matched our chassis-acceleration data

from the previous season. I travelled to and from Japan five times for meetings with Honda. It just would not accept that the engine was not the class of the field. As far as they were concerned, what we had was the best in the pitlane – have you heard this before somewhere?

Finally, after the San Marino GP in April, I went to Honda in Japan. At that meeting, something seemed to click. After a bit of desk-bashing they produced a dyno report sheet, which only had percentages on it. I converted the numbers to bhp and sat back, and the first words were, 'We have a problem.'

From that day of acceptance they worked tirelessly. By the morning they had a plan for a major engine upgrade for the British GP and by Silverstone had found half the deficit. That, together with our aerodynamic upgrade, brought the car to life. More importantly, the drivers started to enjoy driving it because it gave them the confidence to push.



co-founder Mario Illien as a consultant, and put its F1 engine programme back on track last season, allowing Red Bull to win two races and beat Ferrari to second in the constructors' championship.

For his part, Boullier says McLaren does not intend to follow the Red Bull model of trying to 'publicly persuade' its engine partner. "The Renault partnership was different for Red Bull, and obviously our partner is Japanese, so it's [also] different," Boullier says. "I don't think there is value in being vocal and publicly criticising. We are strong believers in working hard behind the scenes, rather than publicly slamming."

But he does agree that Honda would benefit from a strong outside influence, such as that which Illien apparently brought to bear during his stint working with Renault.

"Definitely," is Boullier's reply when asked about this directly. "If you are good at what you're doing, and have always been doing it this way, and suddenly we ask you to do it completely differently, you always need some help, or support, let's say."

But in that case the other side has to be willing, even >>

“We believe in working behind the scenes, rather than publicly slamming”





Reliability has been so poor that McLaren-Honda now has a huge test-mileage deficit

reluctantly, to accept the support. Honda has said before that it is happy to allow outsiders to work on its F1 project, but there is a difference between allowing something and accepting it.

What McLaren desperately needs is for Honda to get its act together, and quickly. Alonso has certainly demanded an “immediate” reaction, and there is a worry that McLaren’s star driver could walk away when his contract expires at the end of this season if the situation does not improve.

Alonso and McLaren can perhaps take heart from the way Honda transformed its terrible 2015 energy-recovery systems into a potent weapon last season, but – as Renault knows all too well – finding real gains in efficiency with the combustion engine is the true challenge of this formula, and that is not an easy challenge to meet.

The real danger in the short term is that Honda retreats into itself in the face of this latest setback, and that strides made in working practices and cultural understanding between the two organisations are undone as pressure on Honda to fix its mistakes ramps up.

“As Eric said during a recent press conference, we are in Formula 1 and we are racing, we have to perform, so the pressure is obviously huge on both sides,” says Hasegawa. “McLaren puts maximum pressure on us to perform, and vice versa.

“We believe in this partnership, as does McLaren, and in order to move forward it is important for us to work as one team and overcome the situation together. The priority is to maintain honest and open communication, and to continue strengthening all relationships between Honda and McLaren, despite the difficulties we are facing.

“Of course the situation we find ourselves in is not what we hoped for when we returned to Formula 1, but we are still 100% committed to our future in the sport,

and our relationship with McLaren.

“Formula 1 is in Honda’s blood. Indeed, it was our founder Soichiro Honda who said, ‘Without racing there is no Honda,’ and this racing spirit continues to thrive throughout the company today. This is not a short-term project for us.”

That’s a pretty emphatic statement, and totally at odds with the idea that McLaren’s renewed flirtation with Mercedes somehow has Honda’s blessing. It’s indicative of how far apart the two organisations are becoming in their world view. But it’s also clear things that need to change quickly, or else any remaining unity could rapidly disintegrate.

Perhaps, ultimately, it needs to disintegrate from McLaren’s point of view. Certainly, it could benefit in one regard if Honda pulled out of F1, with FIA regulations – modified in the wake of Red Bull-Renault’s near-split two years ago – now compelling manufacturers to supply teams left without an engine supplier, regardless of whether Mercedes is open to a new deal with McLaren.

That would solve one problem, but would also leave an estimated \$100 million hole in McLaren’s budget (plus the cost of a customer engine deal), as well as sending a bad message to other manufacturers in an era when F1 is generally lacking their presence.

It’s difficult to see Honda agreeing to some kind of stay of execution, whereby McLaren uses Mercedes engines on a temporary basis while Honda sorts out its problems away from the limelight, but in any case it shows how bad the situation has become that McLaren is now entertaining the idea of looking elsewhere.



McLaren knows it will be slowly and systematically destroyed if its fortunes do not soon improve on track – with or without Honda. It will take obvious hits commercially, could potentially lose key staff to rivals, and eventually end up becoming another Williams – a former champion squad that has spent so long in the doldrums that it can no longer legitimately call itself a top team.

Williams knows all too well that if you fall too hard for too long, it becomes incredibly difficult to claw your way back to the top.

McLaren feels it has built a decent car to this season's new regulations, but that will mean nothing if Honda cannot provide the necessary power, driveability and reliability to allow that performance to be extracted.

McLaren-Honda's prospects for Melbourne look bleak unless Honda makes a rapid breakthrough, despite the fact that McLaren plans to bring upgrades to the chassis that are anticipated to be worth a second per lap.

"The real car will be tested only in Australia – it's going to be a big step," says Boullier. "Then we will see where we are, and will benefit from the GPS traces, so we can quantify what is [lacking]: engine, high-speed, low-speed, medium-speed, braking, traction – you can find everything like this.

"Hopefully we have an OK package for Australia." McLaren-Honda desperately needs that package to be 'OK' at the very least. The alliance stands at a critical juncture, and the Australian Grand Prix should give the first real indication of whether this crisis can be averted, or whether there simply is no hope for McLaren-Honda in 2017. ❄

Will Alonso's patience run out?

AFTER A DISASTROUS FIRST day in the new MCL32 at the first pre-season test, Fernando Alonso dismissed early questions over Honda's reliability problems as an "easy headline". But after eight days of persistent failures on the car, McLaren-Honda's issues cannot now be dismissed so easily.

The double world champion completed only 190 laps across four days in the car during pre-season testing, as Honda's engine suffered repeated failures. To put that figure in perspective, Felipe Massa and Sebastian Vettel both did 168 on a single day at the second test.

The massive engine vibrations rattled Alonso's brain, and no doubt shook his faith in the McLaren-Honda project. When the car did run, Alonso lapped 2.755 seconds adrift of Ferrari's outright pace, set by his former teammate Kimi Raikkonen.

"We have only one problem: that is the power unit," Alonso declared. "The situation is far from ideal. We are a big team. We need a reaction from everyone. We need to stay united, working close to each other. But definitely I expect a big reaction from the team immediately."

Alonso signed for McLaren-Honda expecting the project to deliver him the third world championship he so desperately craves. Instead, he is facing the

very real danger of having wasted another three years of his career in uncompetitive machinery.

But what else can Alonso do in F1 if he decides to walk away from McLaren-Honda?

Although seats at Mercedes and Ferrari become theoretically available at the end of this year, Alonso's options appear limited. Mercedes and Red Bull aren't interested, and a return to Ferrari seems unlikely too – though you would have said that about a second stint at McLaren before 2015.

He could potentially return to Renault, which is building up for a title push in 2018 and could make a seat available alongside Nico Hulkenberg at the end of this season.

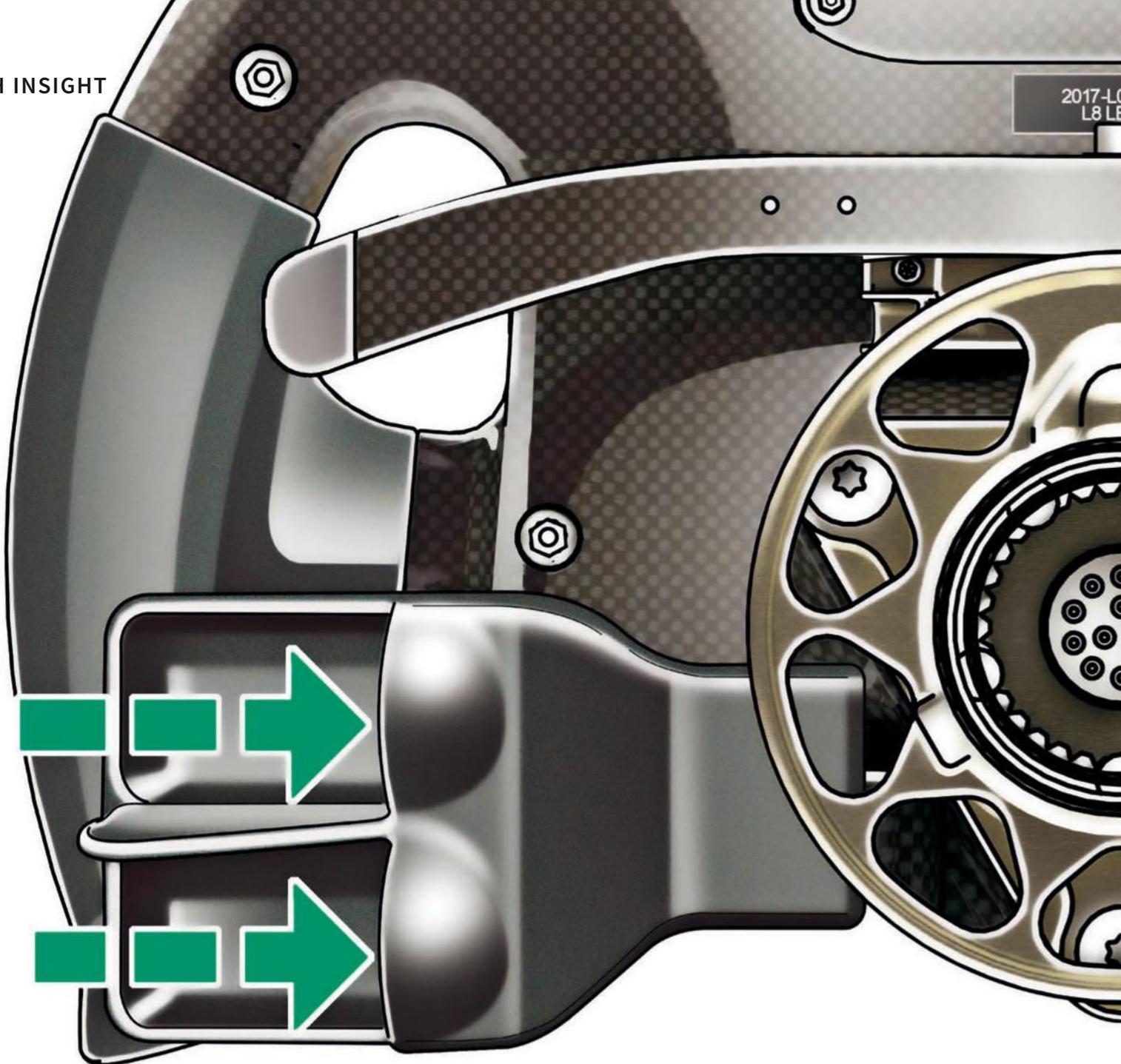
But that's for the future. For now he has to work with what he has, and hope that Honda can produce a turnaround similar to the one Renault managed in 2014, when it struggled woefully in pre-season but still powered Red Bull to three grand prix wins.

"I'm always going anti-clockwise," Alonso says. "When people go pessimistic, I go optimistic. When people are overexcited, I get worried. I feel confident that this year we will be competitive – I don't know at which point in the year, but we will be competitive."

Hope is a wonderful thing.



Alonso is upbeat about being competitive – sometime in 2017

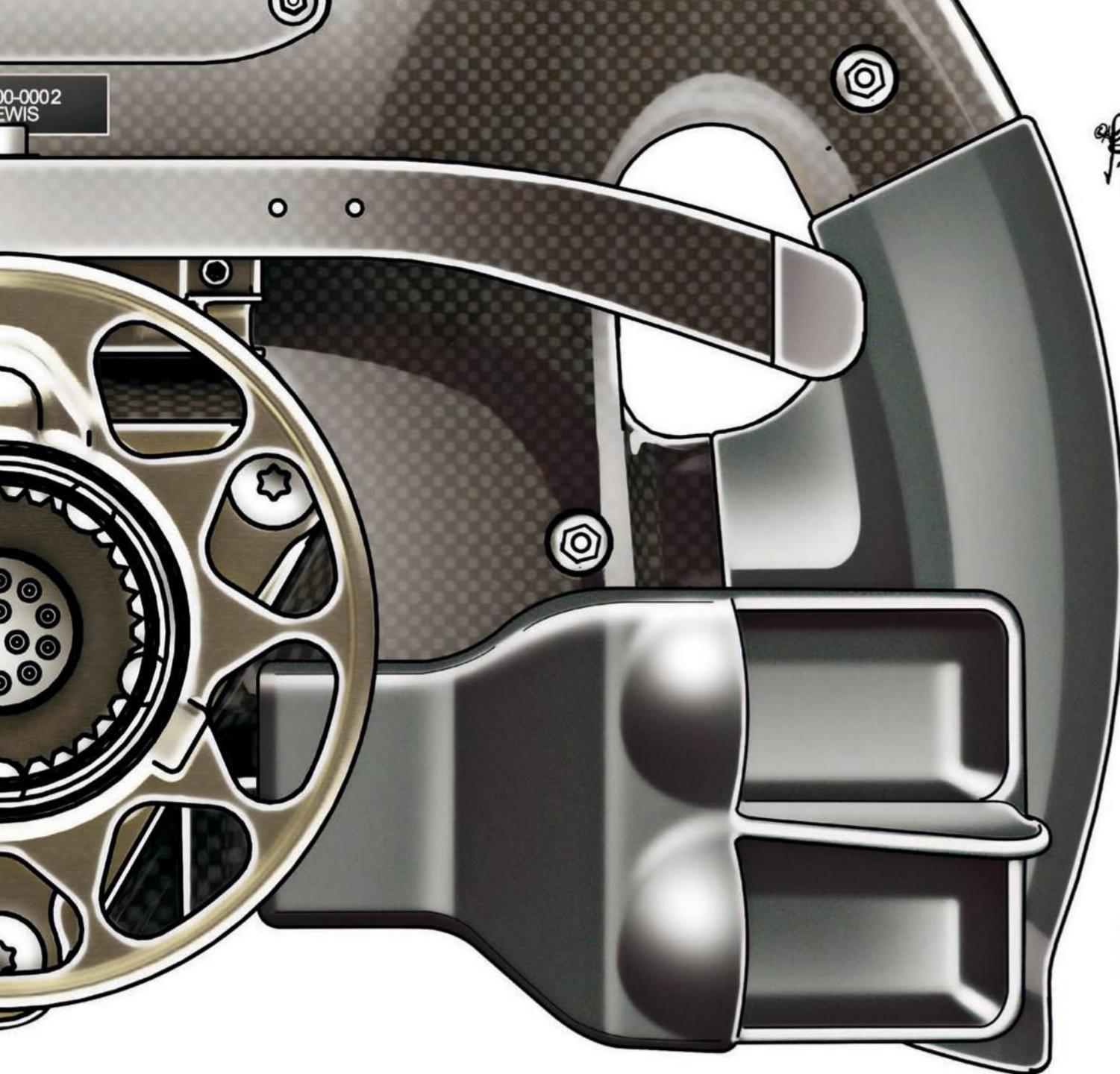


How Mercedes aims to improve its starts

In the wake of rule changes designed to put more control into the hands of the driver at the start, Mercedes has come up with a unique way to make it harder to fluff a getaway

By Jonathan Noble and Giorgio Piola

[@autosport](#)



NEW

Mercedes has opted for a bold new approach to clutch-paddle design on its 2017 Formula 1 car. Its purpose is to help Lewis Hamilton and Valtteri Bottas make better starts than the team managed last year.

The team targeted the start procedure as a key area of improvement after some problems in 2016, and this new design is also a response to a change in start rules imposed by the FIA. The new restrictions have been designed to make life harder for drivers this year, with new linear torque restrictions meaning more precision is now needed while releasing the clutch lever.

Previously, teams were able to map the clutch settings cleverly to ensure that the sweet spot for the getaway could be found within a wide range of lever movement.

As Haas's Kevin Magnussen explained: "You just had to release it between 10% and 80%. Somewhere in there was a flat map that would be set to the grip, the tyres and fuel loads. So the start was 100% up to the engineers before. But now it's completely down to us."

Added to the linear clutch maps, the FIA has put limits on the location of the clutch and gearchange paddles behind the steering wheel to stop drivers being able to use their fingers to find reference points.

As well as a maximum 80mm movement allowed in the clutch paddle, there now has to be at least

a 50mm gap between the clutch paddle and any other control on or behind the wheel.

The only exception to the 50mm gap is if teams put in place a stop mechanism that restricts a driver's hand from being able to feel elsewhere for a reference point.

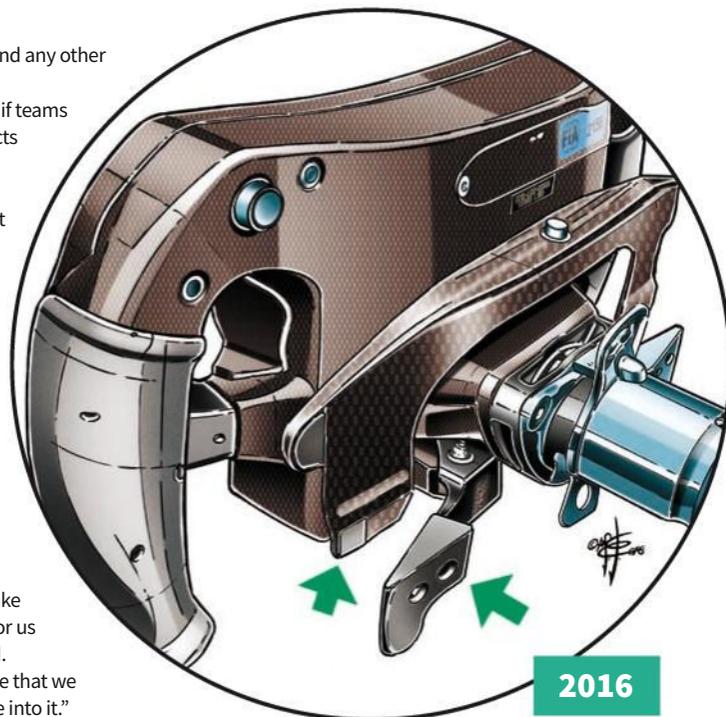
While teams including Ferrari have kept similar solutions to last year – with a long single-clutch paddle – Mercedes has opted for a stop mechanism.

The Mercedes concept consists of two long holes that the drivers will slot their fingers into for the starts.

This solution opens the way for a much larger clutch paddle, which should in theory allow for a better feel of the clutch bite point. The hope is that this will manifest itself in better getaways for the drivers.

Lewis Hamilton said after pre-season testing that he welcomed the move to make things difficult. "They've made it harder for us again and that's a good direction," he said.

"We've been working hard to make sure that we are on top of it, and we've put a lot of time into it."

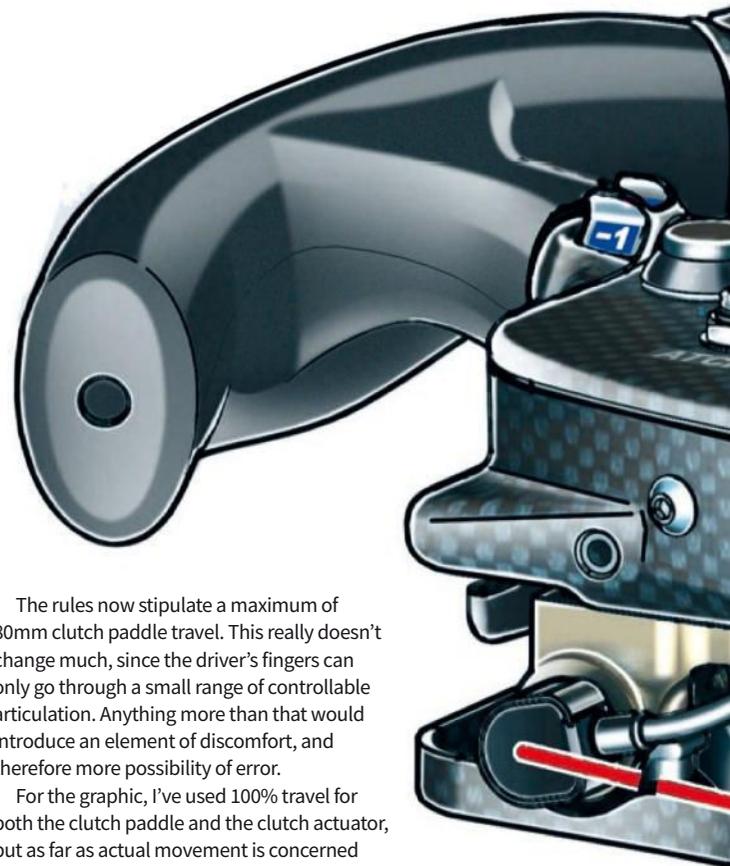


2016

Clutch rules explained

By Gary Anderson and Giorgio Piola

[@autosport](#)



Electronically controlled, hydraulically operated clutches have been around in Formula 1 since the early 1990s. Since then, there have been many steering-wheel paddle designs attempting to simulate the feel of a normal clutch pedal. But in my time of creating all sorts of weird and wonderful systems to vary the stiffness, none of them were very successful.

Teams have tried many different paddle solutions over the years. As you can see from the comparison of Mika Hakkinen and Martin Brundle at McLaren in 1994 (see opposite page), some drivers just didn't like it – Brundle stuck with the pedal-operated clutch.

The clutch bite point is where the clutch starts to engage, takes up the drive and moves the car forward. On a road car, this is relatively easy to feel and you can engage or disengage as required to keep the revs fairly stable.

On an F1 car, the clutch is a carbon/carbon device very similar to brake discs. But it's a lot smaller, and because of this it's very sensitive to temperature. Unlike the brakes, there is very little material mass in the clutch to absorb

the changing temperature. If the clutch slips a little, the friction level increases dramatically, putting more torque through the clutch. This leads either to a stalled engine, or too much wheelspin, both of which are undesirable.

Different clutch maps (which dictate the relationship between the steering-wheel paddle and the clutch actuator) can compensate for some of this. But there is no simple answer.

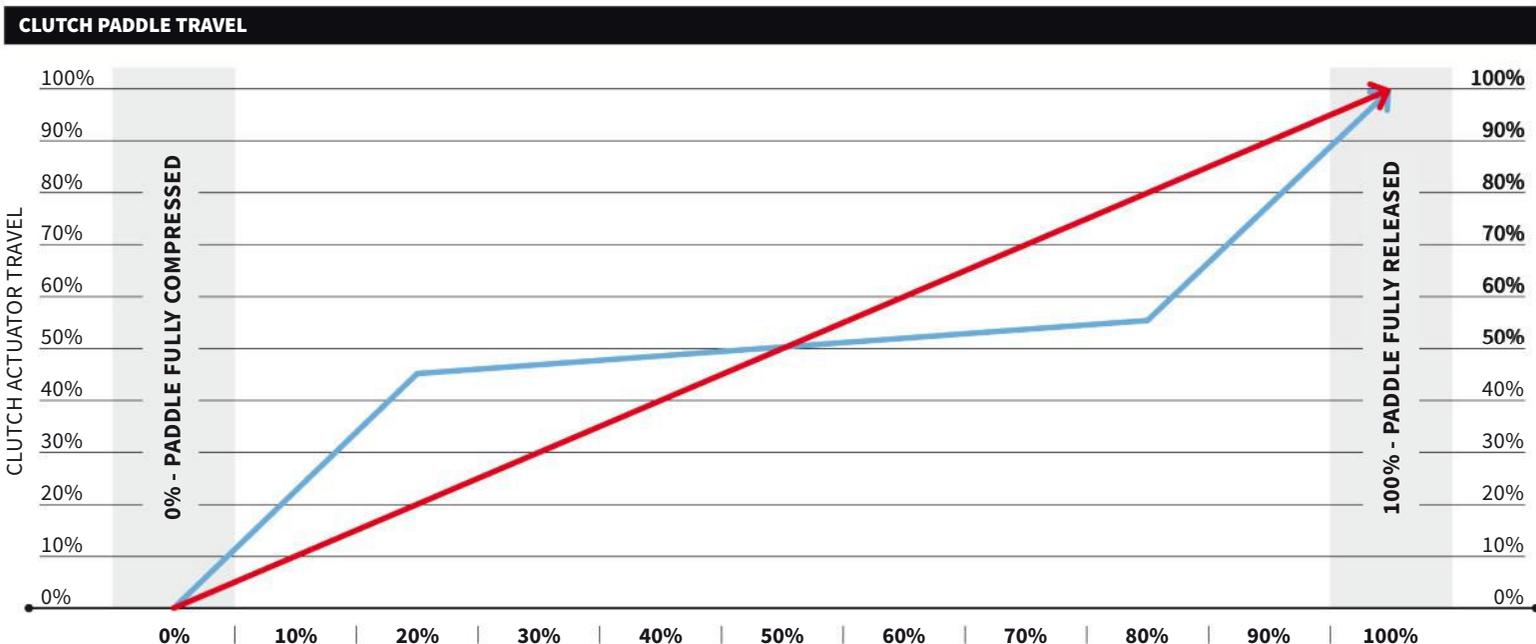
During 2016, the teams could use a non-linear clutch map, seen here in blue in the graph below. This meant the driver had a much bigger window to find the bite point. When he did, and the clutch slipped that little bit, its friction level would increase and the clutch would effectively be self-engaging from that point. This meant the driver would have a fairly progressive launch.

For 2017, that has all changed. Now, the clutch maps have to be linear, as seen by the red line. This makes the start more about the driver, as they have to find that critical clutch-engagement point. Too much engagement and you will get a stall or wheelspin, too little and you get left behind on the grid.

The rules now stipulate a maximum of 80mm clutch paddle travel. This really doesn't change much, since the driver's fingers can only go through a small range of controllable articulation. Anything more than that would introduce an element of discomfort, and therefore more possibility of error.

For the graphic, I've used 100% travel for both the clutch paddle and the clutch actuator, but as far as actual movement is concerned let's say that 100% paddle movement equates to the new regulation of a maximum of 80mm. The actual clutch actuator's 100% movement equates to only about 5mm and this is why it is so difficult to control. Just 0.5mm more or less engagement at the clutch actuator makes a massive difference to the amount of torque the clutch can transmit.

This will be a tough one to get on top of, but at least it has brought some of the car control back into the drivers' hands. Or, in this case, fingers.

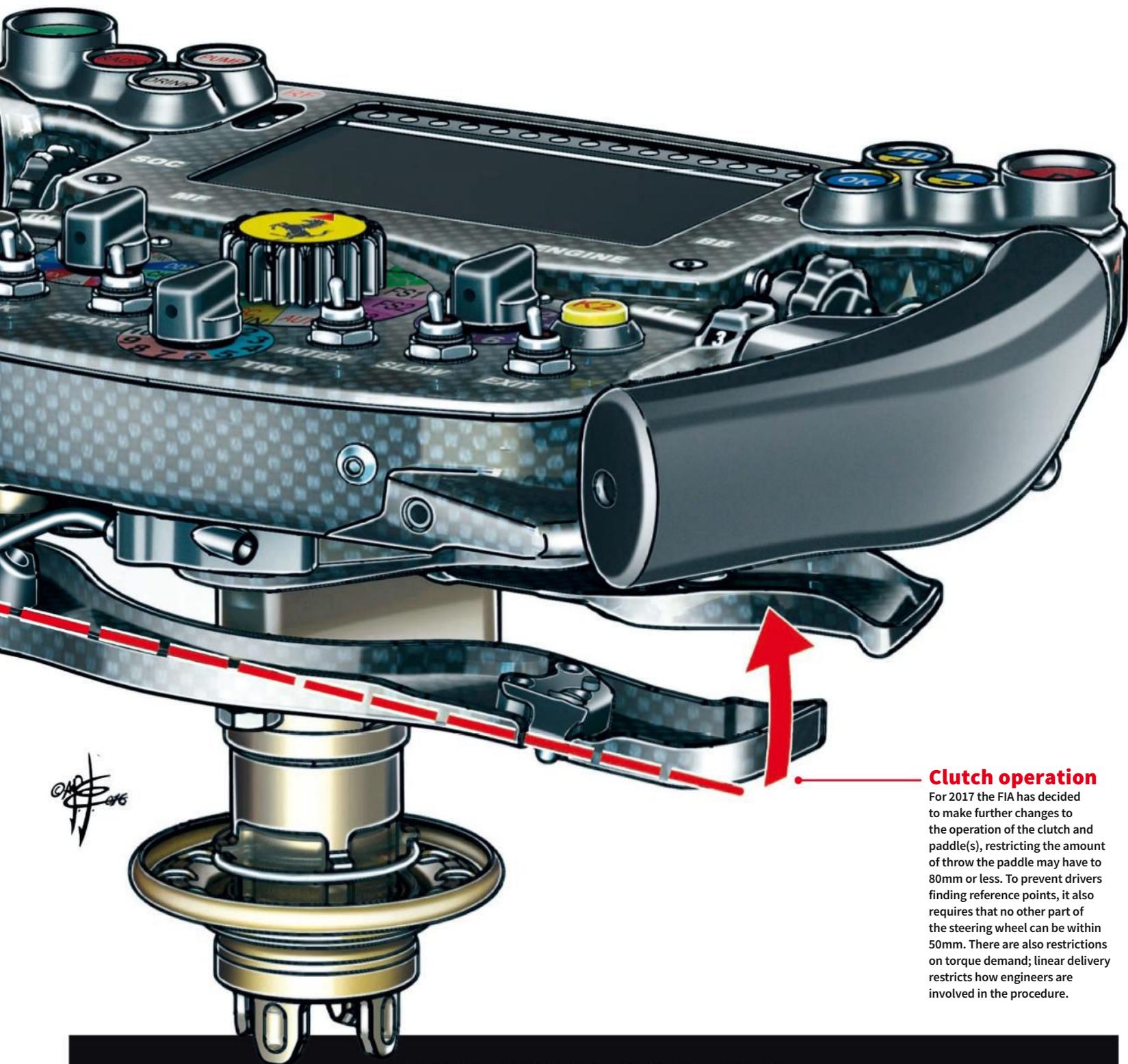


2016 (Blue trace)

In 2016, the engineers would set the clutch paddle so that the clutch bite point was at around 50% of the clutch paddle's travel. On the startline, the driver would release the clutch paddle to what he estimated was 50% paddle travel. If he got this wrong by up to +/-30%, which is a lot, the clutch actuator would still be only up to +/-5% from its required position. This would mean the driver would still make a reasonable start.

2017 (Red trace)

This year, the engineers can still set the clutch-bite-point-to-paddle relationship as before. But with a linear clutch-paddle-to-clutch-actuator relationship, the driver now has more difficulty finding that position. So an error of the same +/-30% on the clutch paddle means an error on the clutch actuator of +/-30% – in effect, a stalled engine, lots of wheelspin or just a stuttering start.



Clutch operation

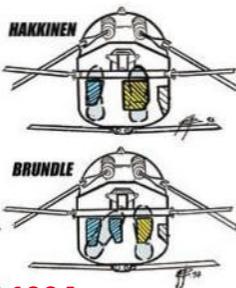
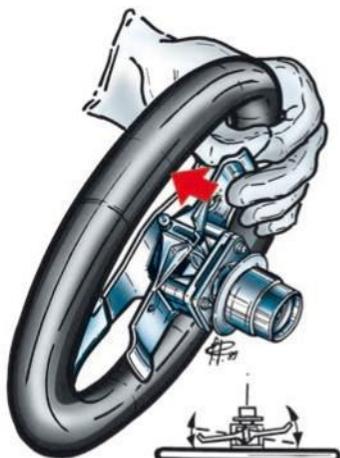
For 2017 the FIA has decided to make further changes to the operation of the clutch and paddle(s), restricting the amount of throw the paddle may have to 80mm or less. To prevent drivers finding reference points, it also requires that no other part of the steering wheel can be within 50mm. There are also restrictions on torque demand; linear delivery restricts how engineers are involved in the procedure.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF CLUTCH PADDLES

1989

THE FIRST PADDLESHIFT

The use of the steering wheel for the placement of controls can be traced back to the early 1980s when teams used simple buttons on the wheel, rather than the dashboard, to give the driver ease of access to things like the boost button or control over their drinks bottle. But in 1989 John Barnard's first Ferrari design, the 640, featured two paddles on the rear of the steering wheel to enable their drivers to shift up and down the gearbox.



1994

TWO PEDALS OR THREE?

In 1994, McLaren developed a hand-operated clutch paddle. Mika Hakkinen used it but teammate Martin Brundle preferred to carry on using his foot.



2015

START RULES TIGHTENED

Rules were introduced during 2015 to put the driver back in control and minimise the procedural starts that had become standard. These were further revised in 2016, when the FIA stated that only one paddle may be used by the driver when operating the clutch. Ferrari responded to this by changing its two-paddle layout for a single wishbone-style paddle that gave a much longer throw.

MATTHEW SOMERFIELD



Ross Brawn

By Jonathan Noble, Special Correspondent

[@NobleF1](#)

JONATHAN NOBLE How are you judging what's right and what's wrong? Often fans want contradictory things. They want a close grid with everyone within half a second, but they want cars that have enough of a performance differential to overtake. They want cars with lots of downforce, but they want cars that can follow each other closely. So what the fans want isn't clear...

ROSS BRAUN Yeah, you're right about the contradictions. We appear to have tyres, at least from testing, that are fairly consistent. And that's something we moved away from because of one-stop races, so what's needed is a very complex question. That's why I don't think we should rush into it. We need some time to evolve. I think you create the right fundamentals and then let it take care of itself. We have a strong differential at the moment between the front and the back. A team like Mercedes, when they've got probably the best resource in F1, with a great team, great drivers – why should they lose? What are the things that you can try to evolve in a different direction?

The dependency on resource is one that you can certainly look at. Can you do that with a budget cap or a set of technical constraints? Maybe a combination of both. So it's flattening off that slope of 'the more money you put in, the faster you go', because F1 is still very strongly orientated towards that.

We want to try to level the playing field without artificial solutions.

That's the trick. And if we can – and this would be an interesting experiment – conclude that cars with a high level of

aerodynamic performance ultimately mean that it's very difficult to race, then we've had a pretty successful experiment and we should get that in our heads: that we've got to find a solution to that. But it's a complex problem: we don't want the cars to be slow, so we want the levels of grip that we have, but we want it in a way that doesn't cause disruption to the car following. Is there a solution to that? If we put the right sort of people on that task and gave them a year, 18 months, to find a solution, can we design F1 cars in a way that a car behind could follow?

I know we had a go at it before with the Overtaking Working Group, but I don't think we had the knowledge and capability that teams have now. CFD has made a huge difference. We were trying to carry out physical experiments in the windtunnel that was never designed to have two cars in it, so it was compromised. But the CFD now gives new opportunities to look at all of that.

Maybe you could create a car that had decent levels of aerodynamic grip but left a wake that was benign. There are lots of people who will tell you that you can't do that, but I don't think we've really put our minds to it. Because otherwise, there's not a solution – you just get rid of all the aerodynamic downforce. You can get some back with tyres and chassis grip, but you can't have cars as quick as this.

And if you want cars as quick as this, you've got to find another solution. That's the sort of stuff that we'll be involved in initiating and supporting.

JN If we look at the big picture, how do you balance F1 crediting innovative technology and making the sport a show?

RB What I want to try to do is understand: what are the innovations and technologies that make F1 special? To give you an example, does the complexity and speed of a gearchange enhance F1? Do people say 'wow'? I'm not sure they do, but for the performance of the car the teams are trying to achieve the ultimate and are spending millions on it.

The suspension systems are mechanical computers and they are having millions spent on them and nobody knows [about it]. What are the technologies that capture the public's imagination, and capture the manufacturers' imagination? Those suspension systems are no good to the manufacturers because they find the most cost-effective and reliable way, and that's not building a mechanical computer costing millions – so the technology is not even relevant for road cars. It's a dead-end that, with more knowledgeable input from our side, we'd like to avoid and eliminate.

JN Would you set up a working group or something outside of the teams?

RB There is a Technical Working Group now.

It has become informal, and we would certainly get involved with that. I wouldn't pretend to know the mechanism beyond the strategy group and how we'll progress this, but the key is we will have the capacity ourselves. We'll have some experts, working within Formula One Management, that I think people will be able to respect. It won't be a big team – five or six people – but enough capacity with my experience and knowledge to be able to create and get a proper reasoned argument for what we want to do and have an input into the process.

I want to make sure there is always a consideration for the quality of the show, the quality of the racing, and the cost of the racing. There are some boxes that need ticking every time we make a decision. There may be a very strong sporting consideration where, for the integrity of the sport, it's a decision that has to be made and I understand that. But there will be other decisions when someone's holding up a flag saying, 'Have you thought about what the fans are going to think about that? Have you thought about how much this is going to cost? Have you thought about the impact on racing?'

Part of the sales pitch for these new rules was nicer-looking cars. We've only half-achieved that, because we've got all these oddities – shark fins and T-wings, and more bits surrounding the turning vanes than I've seen for a long >>

“We want a level playing field without artificial solutions. That's the trick”

time. The frustrating thing is that [FIA president] Jean Todt has had this bee in his bonnet, which is valid in a way, to put the number on the side of the car so that the fan in the grandstand can see what car he's looking at. We came up with the shark fin, because it was easy to put a big number on. And half of the teams said, 'We're not going to have that on our cars, that's terrible.' It was tested, we had photographs and everything, because I did it at Mercedes, and everyone said they didn't want it.

JN This is the classic mentality that F1's had for a long time, that everyone is obsessed with their own performance. Christian Horner mentioned in the strategy group last year that we should get rid of the shark fins for aesthetic reasons. The others think this is being done for Red Bull's aero benefit. The same with Bernie Ecclestone – it was always, 'Why is he doing this?' How do you break this cycle?

RB There's no switch you can turn, it's just people hopefully understanding that we have that interest in the sport at heart. Liberty Media wants to make money out of F1 – they're not in it for charitable reasons – but they believe that the sport can be much better and much bigger with investment and time. So the philosophy is different – they are into building businesses. And if you look at their history, a lot of their businesses they've had for a decent amount of time.

I hope people will recognise our motives are just to improve F1 – we have got no other motives. And as long as we don't fall into the trap of trying to distort the competition because somebody is winning, which I would never want to do, then people shouldn't have a need to question our motives. They might disagree with what we want to do, but they shouldn't question our motives, which is purely to make F1 more successful, more entertaining, more appealing and more commercially successful, because that goes hand in hand.

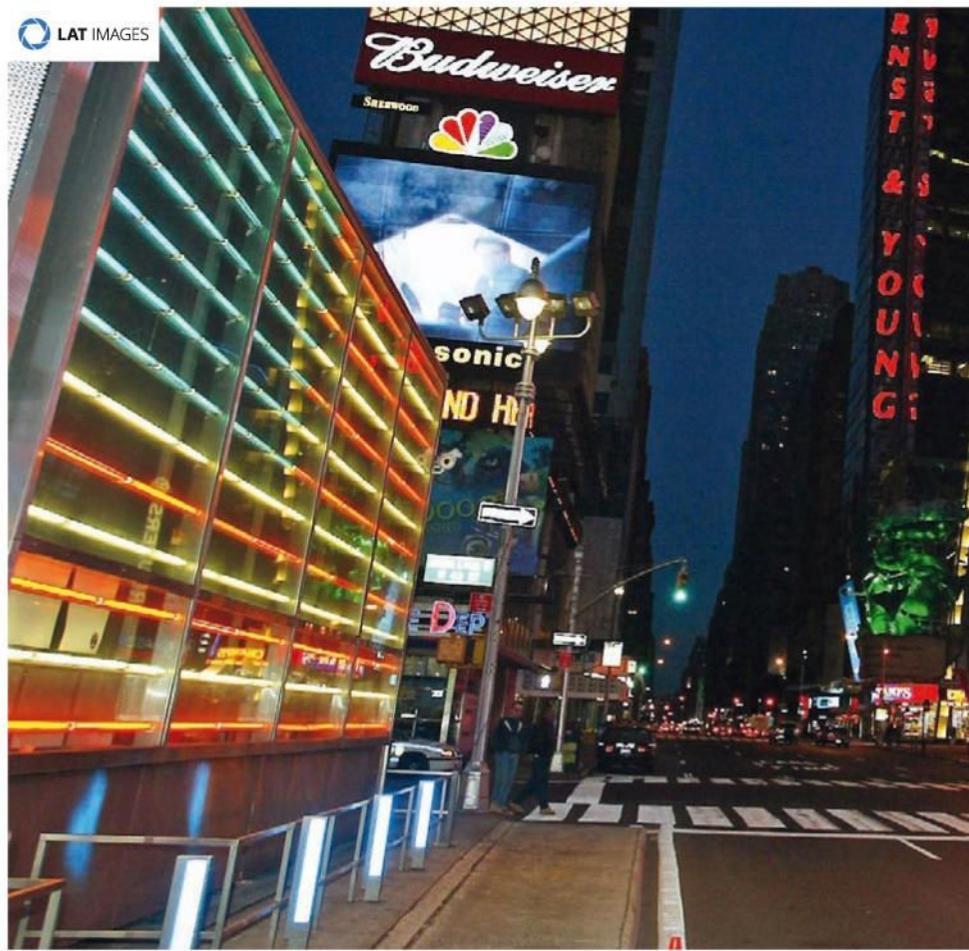
JN The drop in TV audience, is it the result of strategic mistakes or is it deeper than that?

RB The world is changing and we know that, so we have to react – how we present, market and allow people to watch F1. I don't have the answer. What I want to see is us being very proactive in trying to improve the show, put a big effort into improving the experience for the fans, the experience for the viewers. And then we can see what response we have and see whether we can reverse that trend. I hear all sorts of explanations about people watching the sport differently now, so the number of eyeballs on a TV is different, and the move to pay-per-view is naturally going to reduce the volume of audience, but the quality is higher. This is all the marketing stuff I hear. Having said that, a full grandstand is an ambition. On a Sunday, we want to have the place roaring.

JN To succeed in this you have to put the driver back in the middle of everything...

RB Yes, absolutely. The drivers are our stars and, in a small way, giving them the social-media capacity is recognising that. The teams have got to be a bit less exclusive with their access to the stars. We will encourage the teams to be a bit more liberal with their drivers and really make the stars stand out. Lewis Hamilton, from a money perspective, is a great example of crossing those barriers. His interest doesn't only come from people who want to watch F1, it's people who are interested in his lifestyle and his approach. And he's not been able to explain that as thoroughly as he wanted to because his living and his sport is F1 and he couldn't put F1 on Twitter.

JN Bernie was often very good at reacting to events as they happened, but there was no long-term vision. You are coming at this with a long-term vision, but are there any short-term gains that you're looking at? And how do we avoid the scenario where, four races into this season, there has been no overtaking, one team is 30 seconds in



front and fans and media say it's all a disaster?

RB What typically happens in those situations is that you have crisis meetings. And I think we just need to make sure anything that comes out of those is balanced and thought through. There may be solutions, but until you see what the scenario is, it's a little difficult to come up with a solution to a problem. If we go to the first race and Mercedes disappears, what are we going to do about it? I don't know if I have an answer, or if there is an answer. What I do know is that if we try to create some artificial solution, that will be even worse.

It needs very careful thought before we start jumping into reactions. That would have been the approach in the past: we've got to do something. If you remember, the qualifying thing [at the start of the 2016 season] came about because Bernie wanted to reverse the grid and there was so much horror and despair at doing that, they compromised and came up with a qualifying system that hadn't been thought through very well and became ridiculed. So we need to avoid that.

JN Are there any short-term fixes already on the radar?

RB Get rid of the fins! No, no there's not. I think the short-term stuff will be media, fans, fan-engagement events. Because they are more sensible things to do and they are things you can tune quite easily. Sean [Bratches, commercial operations MD] has got some support events he wants to do at the races, and they'll be a success or a failure but they won't make it worse. If you do a support event that doesn't work very well, you're not going to detract from the main event. Hopefully, you add to it. But if you make changes to the racing you can detract just as easily as you can improve, so I think we have to be careful.

JN One of the messages coming from you is that things like DRS were responses to a problem – get rid of that problem and you don't need the gimmicks. Are costs, and levelling the costs, fundamental?

RB The costs are very important. My fellow directors have

New York: a promised land for F1; flirted with by Champ Car back in the day. Far right: we want the fans (top), but not the fins (bottom)



been brought up in a culture where sports teams are profitable ventures, and they look at F1 and you have to pay someone to take a team off your hands. We have to change that. We have to try to make moves towards changing the business model for a non-manufacturer team. We want the manufacturers in, we want their support, but we want to make the business model for a non-manufacturer team viable.

Look at some of the NFL teams and what they call their equity value. I think the Dallas Cowboys is getting close to the whole value of F1, and that doesn't make sense, does it? There was a time in American football where there was quite a heavily distorted reward system and the top two teams got the majority of the money and the rest struggled. And the top two teams sacrificed their position in order to have an equitable solution. The consequence of that was they then surpassed what they were getting, but everyone was getting it. The income of those top two teams surpassed what they were getting before because the sport became so much more successful. Is there a lesson for us there? The sponsorship is on top of that, so the more successful ones do have more profit because they are controlled on what they spend, so all the extra sponsorship they get is more profit, which is why the Dallas Cowboys are worth so much. The new owners and my fellow directors come from that culture. It's not about razzmatazz and all the rest of it, it's about lifting the whole business. Can we do that? It's going to be a big challenge, but we can try.

JN Do you think there will be less conflict in the paddock after years of FOM versus the FIA?

RB I hope so. There's always going to be differences of

opinion, there are going to be different views on things, and things sometimes get a bit heated. But at the core of it, there's lots of willingness to cooperate. I think the elephant in the room is distribution of funds and the discussions need to start on that so everyone knows where everyone stands and we can begin to find solutions. We don't want to have a Mexican standoff in 2020 to see who's chicken – that's what happened last time.

JN There's an argument to give the teams less money because it would force the budgets to come down...

RB Yeah, that would be good! I don't know what the solutions are yet. I think we've got to have the debate. If we can

demonstrate that, OK, the commercial-rights holder is putting money into the sport, we're returning that investment from our 30%-odd, can we not all find solutions that lift the whole sport up?

We want a race in New York, which I think would be a fabulous race to have. I doubt if we're going to find a promoter that's going to stand the costs of doing that, because the site I've seen is sensational, but it's a massive task to do it. It's across the river. You stand there and you look at Manhattan and if you could do that as a twilight race or even a night race, it would be absolutely sensational. But you look at the infrastructure that's needed to do that, you've got to have those grandstands on pontoons and all the rest of it, so it's a big investment. And I think Liberty is prepared to join up on that. But it needs everyone. If it's what we feel is good for the sport in the long term, then there's got to be investment from all sides. And if we can reduce the cost of participating, why wouldn't the manufacturers then be amenable to investing money in the sport? ❄

“Liberty Media believes the sport can be much better and much bigger”



Is this the start of MotoGP's new era?

The good news for reigning champion Marc Marquez is that he's looking better than this time last year. The bad news? Maverick Vinales is showing awesome form for his new team Yamaha

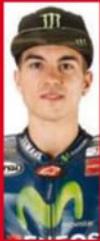
By Mitchell Adam, International Editor

[@DrMitchellAdam](#)



TEAM BY TEAM

YAMAHA



**MAVERICK
VINALES** (E)
AGE 22
STARTS 36
WINS 1
DEBUT 2015
BEST SEASON
4th (2016)



**VALENTINO
ROSSI** (I)
AGE 38
STARTS 288
WINS 88
DEBUT 2000
BEST SEASON
Champion (2001, '02,
'03, '04, '05, '08, '09)

HONDA



DANI PEDROSA (E)
AGE 31
STARTS 181
WINS 29
DEBUT 2006
BEST SEASON
2nd (2007, '10, '12)



**MARC
MARQUEZ** (E)
AGE 24
STARTS 72
WINS 29
DEBUT 2013
BEST SEASON
Champion (2013,
'14, '16)

DUCATI



**ANDREA
DOVIZIOSO** (I)
AGE 31
STARTS 160
WINS 2
DEBUT 2008
BEST SEASON
3rd (2011)



**JORGE
LORENZO** (E)
AGE 29
STARTS 156
WINS 44
DEBUT 2008
BEST SEASON
Champion (2010,
'12, '15)



It won't rank highly among the sporting miracles of 2016, but to predict this time last year that Marc Marquez would waltz his way to a third MotoGP championship would have been bold.

After winning the title as a rookie in 2013 and doubling up the following year, Marquez was given a particularly tough Honda to master in '15. And while he extracted plenty of speed out of it, he crashed the troubled RC213V on plenty of occasions too.

His fortunes improved after reverting to a 2014 chassis mid-season, but there was bad news for Honda: last year's move from factory-developed electronics to a control, toned-down ECU. If Honda was having trouble getting its engine under control with its own electronics, how would it go with a simplified unit that was designed to reduce the influence of the software? Honda had been a staunch opponent

of the change, threatening to quit several times in the years before it was introduced, but eventually it had no choice but to adapt.

Testing at the end of 2015 and early '16 was telling, as riders also got up to speed with Michelin's return as tyre supplier. Honda was struggling and frustrated. You would have never written Marquez off, but winning the championship looked a tall order, especially against Yamaha's Jorge Lorenzo and Valentino Rossi, who had fought for the '15 title and then seemed to adapt with ease.

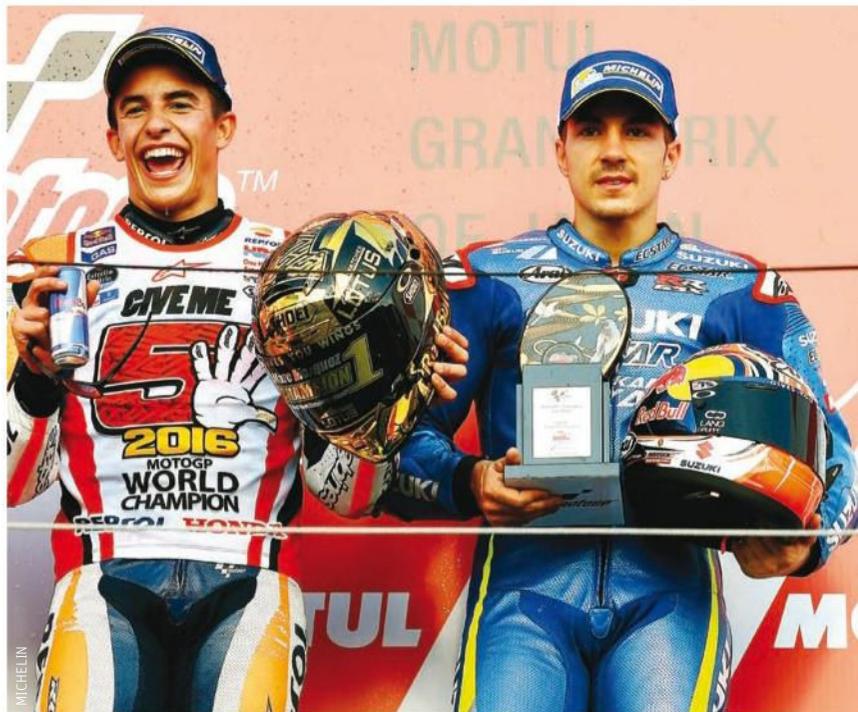
But here we are talking about Marquez as a three-time MotoGP champion. The Spaniard, who's just turned 24, was mesmerising last year. As expected, and evident pre-season, the Honda lacked acceleration, but the Japanese manufacturer made a breakthrough late in the final pre-season test in Qatar and gave him just about enough to work with.

Marquez, for his part, toned back a riding style that could have been described at times as



HONDA

Who would bet against another Marquez title? But it's Vinales (above, right) who's most likely to rain on his parade



MICHELIN



MICHELIN

overzealous, reeling back the risks and learning to accept points when they were on offer, rather than throwing away results in the impossible or improbable pursuit of a win. Witness settling for second behind Jack Miller at Assen. He did all of this as rivals threw away points, but Marquez would have won the championship anyway – their wobbles simply meant that he wrapped it up with three races to spare rather than two, one or perhaps at the finale. Some feat in a chaotic year that had nine different winners.

Given the progress it has made in the past 12 months, and only a relatively minor regulation change with the winglet ban, things should look rosier for Honda on the eve of the 2017 season. And they do, even if some of the same frustrations and limitations linger. Focusing on its engine rather than the chassis, Honda has opted to revamp its powerplant's configuration, headlined by a change in firing order from 'screamer' to 'big bang' to refine how the power is delivered through the rear tyre.

The engine it started testing late last year did not wow Marquez, nor other Honda riders, including Dani Pedrosa and Cal Crutchlow, who tried it. Honda had another go over the winter, and tested a newer version pre-season. This looked to offer more potential, even if engineers did not have it successfully mated to the ECU initially. That led to Honda taking the unusual step of scheduling a private session at Jerez between the official Phillip Island and Qatar runouts.

Sure, Marquez dislocated his shoulder – his right one, the good one – on that February Saturday at Jerez, but otherwise it has been a much better start to the year for Honda and its world champion than in 2016. The Qatar test was more of a struggle than the first two, and he crashed five times over the three days, but part of Marquez's 2016 success was that he didn't crash when it mattered. On the whole, he has been quick in testing, both on single laps and over longer runs. >>

SUZUKI



ANDREA IANNONE (I)
 AGE 27
 STARTS 65
 WINS 1
 DEBUT 2013
 BEST SEASON
 5th (2015)



ALEX RINS (E)
 AGE 21
 STARTS 0
 WINS N/A
 DEBUT N/A
 BEST SEASON
 N/A

TEAM BY TEAM

TECH3 YAMAHA

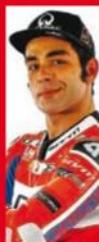


JOHANN ZARCO (F)
AGE 26
STARTS 0
WINS N/A
DEBUT N/A
BEST SEASON N/A

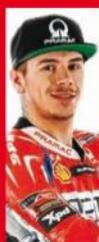


JONAS FOLGER (D)
AGE 23
STARTS 0
WINS N/A
DEBUT N/A
BEST SEASON N/A

PRAMAC DUCATI



DANILO PETRUCCI (I)
AGE 26
STARTS 82
BEST FINISH 2nd
DEBUT 2012
BEST SEASON 10th (2015)



SCOTT REDDING (GB)
AGE: 24
STARTS: 54
BEST FINISH: 3rd
DEBUT: 2014
BEST SEASON: 12th (2014)

APRILIA



SAM LOWES (GB)
AGE 26
STARTS 0
WINS N/A
DEBUT N/A
BEST SEASON N/A



ALEX ESPARGARO (E)
AGE 27
STARTS 111
BEST FINISH 2nd
DEBUT 2009
BEST SEASON 7th (2014)



Team-mate Pedrosa and LCR satellite rider Crutchlow, both race winners last year, have also looked stronger than they did 12 months earlier. The pre-season picture is never clear, but does at least look clearer for Honda than it did heading to the Qatar opener last year. “The pressure to fight for the title is there,” Marquez concedes. “This is something that we need to accept and we need to fight for the championship again.”

“I always say it depends on the tools you have. If you have a good tool, you can attack from the beginning. If you don’t feel comfortable you need to wait a little bit.”

This year, you would be bold to bet against Marquez winning another championship. But in true Honda style it probably won’t be all smooth sailing.

In the blue corner

If you’re watching MotoGP this year, you’re likely to be watching a title fight between Marquez and Maverick Vinales.

Two years younger than Marquez, Vinales has impressed with every step. But in 2016 he emerged as a bona fide star of MotoGP. In his second season with Suzuki, which gave him a shot as a rookie for its return in ’15, Vinales flew, other than when limited in warmer conditions or the wet by the GSX-RR’s frustrating habit of losing rear grip.

Even before Yamaha locked him in to replace the Ducati-bound Lorenzo, Vinales was firmly in the spotlight. He was rapid in pre-season testing,

qualified on the front row for the Qatar opener and kept his cool while weighing up between staying with Suzuki and joining Yamaha.

He claimed his maiden MotoGP podium at Le Mans, but a level of frustration kicked in from there, even though he was a regular top-six finisher in the dry. Now-former Suzuki boss Davide Brivio says he “has a champion mind. He just wants to win the championship. It’s very clear to him – he works for his target.”

Then came a September day made for Vinales and Suzuki, the British Grand Prix at Silverstone, where he broke through to win in style. He grabbed two more podiums before the season was out and wound up fourth in the points. Impressively, he only fell in a race once all year, as other riders struggled to feel the limit of the Michelin front.

Since throwing his leg over Yamaha’s M1 for the first time at Valencia last November, in the official post-season test, Vinales has looked at home. He topped those two days, a private session for himself, Rossi and Tech3 Yamaha rookies Jonas Folger and Johann Zarco at Sepang a week later, and then swept the three official pre-season tests of 2017 at Sepang, Phillip Island and Losail.

He has looked at home, with a sort of mishmash aggressive-yet-smooth style, which allows him to extract plenty of corner speed, enjoying the Yamaha’s compliant nature and better rear grip and acceleration compared to the Suzuki. Lorenzo and Rossi did, though, find Yamaha was outdeveloped

Vinales' test pace will have left Rossi unsettled



with the new ECU last year, and the front end of the M1 was not entirely compatible with the Michelin front in cooler conditions.

Still, Vinales on the bike looks about as good a match as you could have, and even Yamaha team director Massimo Meregalli concedes “we couldn’t expect he would be so fast so quick”.

“Last year when I was following the Yamaha I knew the bike was really fast,” Vinales says. “When I got on the Yamaha I just tried to ride like I know how to do, and the bike was really good. I was really fast; I was quite surprised that I could go so fast, just in a few days.”

Vinales’ arrival is basically Rossi’s worst nightmare. The pair have a good relationship, despite being split by 16 years, have never clashed on-track and seem to enjoy each other’s company. Their boss Lin Jarvis says Vinales’ work ethic and curiosity actually even play to Rossi’s nature of wanting to share, like he does with the young riders in the VR46 Academy coming through the ranks in Moto3 and Moto2.

But Rossi’s smiles will have faded whenever he has looked at the timesheets this winter and seen Vinales at the top – seemingly doing it easily – while he has been slogging away further down the order. Rossi hasn’t been far down, but there has been a noticeable gap as he chases corner-entry confidence.

And that’s where it will hurt. If, even for a split second, Rossi thought life and his quest for an eighth premier-class title and perfect 10th across the three divisions was going to get easier when Lorenzo left, the arrival of Vinales is just

about the worst-case scenario. Other than having to work with arch-rival Marquez...

Now 38, Rossi’s quest for self-improvement and successful efforts to rekindle some of his very best days have been superhuman. In 2016 he won a pair of early-season races, and took three pole positions, his most in a season since the year of his last title, ’09. A championship bid looked on, before some unforced errors mid-season and an unfortunate engine failure at Mugello.

Whether you consider that a missed opportunity or not, Rossi re-elevated his game in 2016. His reward? A genuine freak arriving to share the garage with him. That Vinales will win a MotoGP championship seems a given, that it could be in his very first year with Yamaha is by no means out of the question. Rossi will be more than in the mix, but Marquez versus Vinales is both a likely and massively tantalising prospect. Some mind games have already started – this could be the dawn of the next rivalry that defines an era of MotoGP.

In the red corner

Every step or misstep Lorenzo makes this year will be scrutinised. That comes with the territory of making a big-dollar move from a team with which he has won three championships to a manufacturer that has only ever won one.

Lorenzo has, in fact, won more MotoGP races since entering the premier class in 2008 (44) than Ducati has (33) since doing the same five >>

LCR HONDA



CAL CRUTCHLOW
(GB)
AGE 31
STARTS 105
WINS 2
DEBUT 2011
BEST SEASON
5th (2013)

AVINTIA DUCATI



HECTOR BARBERA (E)
AGE 30
STARTS 121
BEST FINISH 4th
DEBUT 2010
BEST SEASON
10th (2016)



LORIS BAZ (F)
AGE 24
STARTS 31
BEST FINISH 4th
DEBUT 2015
BEST SEASON
17th (2015)

TEAM BY TEAM

ASPAR DUCATI



KAREL ABRAHAM (CZ)
AGE 27
STARTS 67
BEST FINISH 7th
DEBUT 2011
BEST SEASON 14th (2011, '12)



ALVARO BAUTISTA (E)
AGE 32
STARTS 121
BEST FINISH 3rd
DEBUT 2010
BEST SEASON 5th (2012)

MARC VDS HONDA



JACK MILLER (AUS)
AGE 22
STARTS 31
WINS 1
DEBUT 2015
BEST SEASON 18th (2016)



TITO RABAT (E)
AGE 27
STARTS 17
BEST FINISH 9th
DEBUT 2016
BEST SEASON 21st (2016)

KTM



BRADLEY SMITH (GB)
AGE 26
STARTS 69
BEST FINISH 2nd
DEBUT 2013
BEST SEASON 6th (2015)



POL ESPARGARO (E)
AGE 25
STARTS 53
BEST FINISH 4th
DEBUT 2014
BEST SEASON 6th (2014)

years earlier. Ducati has been in the relative wilderness since Casey Stoner, who won its only title in '07, returned to Honda in '11. Rossi came and went, unsuccessfully, and it took until last year's Austrian Grand Prix for it to win a race for the first time since Stoner's final victory in red in October '10.

Ducati signed Lorenzo before breaking that nearly-six-year drought, having decided that it needed a gun rider to come in and take it to the next level. As good as Andrea Iannone and Andrea Dovizioso are — both grand prix winners — few would stick them in the absolute top bracket of MotoGP riders.

In Lorenzo, Ducati has taken away one of its last-remaining unknowns. The fast-but-erratic Iannone has made way, landing at Suzuki to replace Vinales, and in comes a proven quantity. It's time to see just how much progress Ducati has made since technical maestro Gigi Dall'Igna, who worked with a much younger Lorenzo in 125cc and 250cc, arrived to lead the programme in late 2013.

The early signs, though, are that Ducati is perhaps a little bit further from its goal than any one rider can fix. The bike stops very well, its engine leads the way, and Ducati made the best of the now-banned winglets and last year's new control electronics to deliver that potent power. But as Iannone succinctly put it late last year, the Desmosedici still lacks something "inside the corners".

Lorenzo worked his way into things nicely at Valencia last November, his only two days of 2016 Ducati running, less than 48 hours after leaving Yamaha with one last victory. He spoke glowingly of the Ducati at the team's '17 launch in January, essentially his first chance to talk about it given that his Yamaha contract ran to December 31, calling the bike an "incredible surprise".

highlighting its stability and raw power.

Ten days later, pre-season testing started at Sepang. Lorenzo laboured to the 17th-fastest time on day one, the best part of two seconds off the pace set by Stoner, the Australian having rejoined Ducati as a star test rider last year. It was almost as though the Valencia test was a gimme, and his learning curve was really only now starting. "At Valencia everything was easier, because I rode more or less the way that I've ridden for the past nine years and the times were there," Lorenzo said in Malaysia. "Here, however, riding the same way it was much harder to go quick. This bike is basically ridden the opposite way, so until I learn how to extract the best from the bike it will be hard to be among the quickest."

Extracting the best from the Ducati is still a work in progress. Lorenzo finished those three days at Sepang in 10th place, recovering from the initial "shock". He was eighth at Phillip Island, conceding during that test that "something is still not right", before showing more promise to be fourth in Qatar.

Team-mate Dovizioso, second in Qatar, is perhaps a better barometer for Ducati, having been in red since 2013. The Italian said last month that it is in a "much better position" than last year, but "still we didn't improve enough the negative points. We did a great job, but it's not enough."

Ducati's fortunes will unfold long after this weekend's race in Qatar. The Losail circuit has always been a happy hunting ground for Ducati and Lorenzo, separately. So they may start well together, and even look good in Argentina and at Austin. The big test will come in May, when the championship visits Jerez, a traditionally unhappy venue for Ducati.

Whether they fly or flail, we're going to be talking about Lorenzo and Ducati a lot over the next eight months. ✍



Lorenzo was hired to up Ducati's game, but it'll be a long road

MICHELIN



KTM's arrival: is the future (more) orange?

THAT POL ESPARGARO likened arriving at MotoGP's first 2017 test at Sepang and seeing the raft of development parts he had to try to a Christmas morning says a lot about the ferocity with which KTM is entering MotoGP.

The famous Austrian manufacturer becomes the sixth on the grid this year, after an extensive 2016 testing programme led by Mika Kallio, who also raced at the Valencia season finale as a wildcard. Espargaro and Bradley

Smith both join KTM's new programme from the Tech3 satellite Yamaha squad, and have had plenty to test in recent months. Both have spoken about the scale of KTM's investment and the professionalism of the team, strengths that will help develop its RC16.

KTM's race debut – overlooking its short-lived role supplying engines to Kenny Roberts' team in 2005 – highlighted a lack of rear grip, but it's sticking to its own path. MotoGP manufacturers favour

aluminium frames, but KTM is using its traditional steel trellis, and working with regular partner WP on suspension.

That has proven successful in other arenas, including winning three of the past five Moto3 titles, but KTM knows it's playing catch-up in MotoGP against Honda and Yamaha – and even Ducati, Suzuki and Aprilia. It's also entering Moto2 for the first time this year, biting plenty off and committing to a big chew. Espargaro and Smith

(above) have said that the bike requires a more-physical riding style than the Yamahas they have been on in recent years, as they have worked to develop the package. Gains on the timesheets have been slow and steady – finishing the Qatar test at the foot of the order, more than two seconds adrift – and Smith concedes it will be difficult to score points regularly this year. Smith in particular needs a big season, having struggled to come to grips with Michelin's front tyre

during the 2016 campaign and being comprehensively outperformed by Espargaro, even before he injured his knee in an Endurance World Championship event.

The Briton finished sixth in the championship in 2015, and was only 15th before he missed his first race last year, while Espargaro wound up eighth. However big the potential of the KTM, and serious the resources thrown at the programme, both riders are starting a campaign more about hard work than glory.

10 John Surtees's **GREATEST F1 DRIVES**

Earlier this month one of the sport's legends passed away. Here are our picks for Big John's best drives at the pinnacle of the sport

By Kevin Turner, Editor

[@KRT917](#)



Surtees leads Oliver on his way to Gold Cup victory in his TS7

10

**1970
Gold Cup**
Oulton Park

Surtees TS7 (1st)

The International Gold Cup entry was not on a par with a world championship event, with stock-block Formula 5000 machines providing the bulk of the grid, but there were Lotus 72s for F1 points leader Jochen Rindt and double title winner Graham Hill, while reigning world champion Jackie Stewart appeared in the new Tyrrell 001.

Changeable weather made qualifying unpredictable and Surtees managed to find a nearly-dry moment to put the TS7 on pole, three seconds clear of Jackie Oliver's BRM in second, with Rindt 10th.

The aggregate times of two heats decided the results and Surtees led the first encounter from the start. Stewart, who started from the back, and Hill both suffered problems. Although Rindt charged into third, he could not catch the duo ahead, Surtees beating Oliver by 6.6s.

Oliver led heat two initially, but Rindt was soon into his stride and took the advantage. Surtees got the better of Oliver in a fine duel, then set off to make sure he finished within 12.8s of the rapid Lotus to secure aggregate victory.

Despite setting fastest lap of the heat, Rindt could not build the gap he required and Surtees secured his first F1 victory in three years, and in a car bearing his own name.



Surtees impressed until sliding off in works Lotus 18

9

1960 Portuguese GP

Porto

Lotus 18 (retired)

In just his third world championship event, Surtees put his Team Lotus 18 on pole for the Portuguese Grand Prix.

He lost out in the early skirmishes as Dan Gurney (BRM) grabbed the lead, but he soon overcame Stirling Moss to run second.

The Lotus then closed on Gurney and was poised to challenge for the lead when the BRM hit engine trouble. Moss now moved forward and started applying pressure to Surtees, only to have to pit for a plug change on his Lotus 18.

That left Surtees comfortably clear of reigning world champion Jack Brabham. Alas, Surtees had been battling with a fuel leak and his petrol-soaked feet slipped off the pedals. The resulting incident burst the radiator and forced Surtees out, but he'd not looked out of place at the front.

Surtees dominated in Mexico for a rare Cooper victory



8

1966 Mexican GP

Mexico City

Cooper T81 (1st)

After walking out of Ferrari during 1966, Surtees joined Cooper. He starred several times in the T81 and trounced his rising-star team-mate Jochen Rindt in qualifying.

Perhaps his most impressive outing came in the Mexico City finale. Despite a water leak and fuel-pressure problems limiting his track time in practice, Surtees took Cooper's first pole for five years, ahead of Jim Clark's Lotus.

He made a slow start, falling as low as fifth, before working his way forward. "Surtees really had his Cooper-Maserati motoring and was second by the fifth lap, right up Brabham's exhausts," wrote Michael Kettlewell in Autosport's report.

"On the following tour Big John was in the lead, driving magnificently."

Brabham, already crowned world champion for the third time, kept Surtees under pressure, but he never regained the lead. Surtees took the flag nearly eight seconds clear to secure runner-up spot in the standings.

7

1968 French GP

Rouen

Honda RA301 (2nd)

This is arguably one of Surtees's least-famous great drives, partly because it was overshadowed by the winner and partly due to the tragic circumstances surrounding his team-mate.

Surtees had yet to finish a world championship race in Honda's water-cooled, aluminium RA301 when the teams arrived in Rouen. The Japanese firm had also produced an experimental magnesium RA302, which was air-cooled. Surtees had declared it not ready, so was unimpressed when Honda elected to run it for Jo Schlesser.

Neither car was competitive in qualifying – Surtees lining up seventh and Schlesser 16th – but rain on race day allowed Big John to show his old class.

Jacky Ickx's Ferrari grabbed the lead from Jackie Stewart's Matra on the opening lap, which Surtees completed in fourth. Two tours later and he was up to second behind Ickx, but it was on lap three that Schlesser crashed.

The Frenchman lost control and spun into a bank, the Honda immediately bursting into flames. Schlesser was trapped and had no chance of survival as the magnesium chassis burned while the other cars picked their way through.

That brought the top three together, Ickx, Surtees and Pedro Rodriguez (up from 10th) – the experienced 'old' hand taking on two of the best wet-weather drivers of the next generation.

Ickx made the race his own in the middle third, building a big lead. Surtees stayed with Rodriguez until deciding he needed to stop to change broken goggles. He retained third, but dropped three quarters of a minute behind the BRM.

Surtees now started taking great chunks out of Rodriguez's advantage, and moved into second when the BRM developed gear-selection issues. Come the finish, Surtees was the only man on the same lap as Ickx.



A fine reminder of Surtees's skills in the wet came in France

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6

1961 Glover Trophy

Goodwood

Cooper T53 (1st)

The clashing Pau GP – won by Jim Clark – contributed to a small field, but there was still plenty of quality in the non-championship Glover Trophy at Goodwood. Stirling Moss qualified on pole, and he was joined on the front row of the grid by the Yeoman Credit Coopers of Surtees and the experienced Roy Salvadori, and Graham Hill's BRM.

Surtees snatched the lead from the start, with Moss's Lotus 18 in pursuit. "Moss could do nothing about Surtees, who was in tremendous form in a superbly prepared

machine," said Gregor Grant in Autosport.

Surtees set a new lap record and, when Moss started suffering from a misfire, he looked even more comfortable. The Cooper eventually crossed the line 26.6s clear of runner-up Hill.

Moss was still at the height of his powers – his famous underdog victories against Ferrari at Monaco and the Nurburgring were yet to come – so for Surtees to defeat him in what was an inferior car marked him out as a potential world champion.

Maestro Moss struggled to stay with Surtees



Surtees edged away from Clark in the wet

LAT IMAGES



5

1964 Solitude GP

Solitude

Ferrari 158 (2nd)

A Jim Clark-John Surtees dice came in another non-championship event, Clark now a world champion and Surtees armed with Ferrari's new V8. The quality of the entry was high and Clark pipped Surtees to pole by just 0.2s, with each seven-mile lap taking almost four minutes.

Appalling weather greeted the drivers on race day, in theory playing into the hands of Clark, one of the greatest rainmasters in motorsport history. But Surtees grabbed the lead on the first lap – which claimed seven starters thanks to the slippery surface – and started pulling away.

Only when the track started to dry did Clark close back in. Eventually he passed the Ferrari and edged away, winning by 10.4s, but Surtees had made his point in the wet.

Everyone else was lapped.

4

1964 Italian GP

Monza

Ferrari 158 (1st)

Surtees had to battle his friend, Brabham driver Dan Gurney, to score success on Ferrari's home ground and reignite his title hopes.

As soon as they had overcome Bruce McLaren, Gurney and poleman Surtees started battling for the lead. Jim Clark also joined the trio to form an early four-car breakaway.

Around the pre-chicane Monza, places changed constantly. Just taking positions across the line, Surtees and Gurney swapped the lead 27 times.

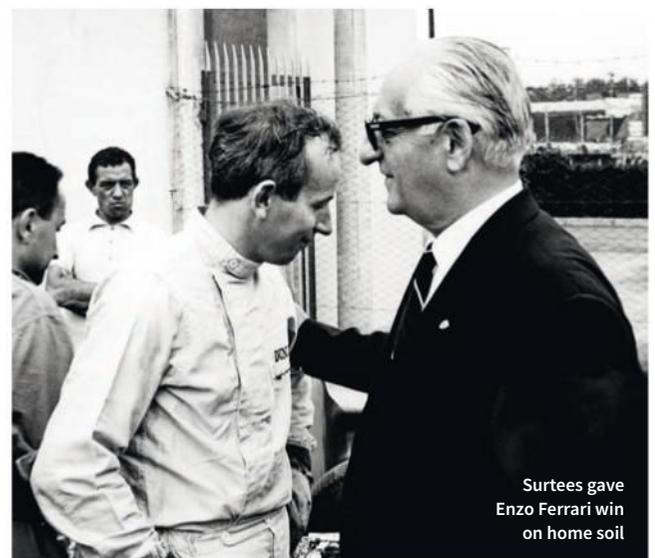
"It was the GP of the slipstreamers, with positions changing rapidly on every

part of the circuit," said Autosport's report.

When Clark's Lotus hit engine trouble, thus causing McLaren to lose his towing partner, Surtees and Gurney were left out on their own.

On lap 56 of 78 Surtees once again moved to the front and this time the Ferrari stayed there. The Brabham started suffering with a misfire and fell back, leaving Surtees to pound on to victory with a new lap record.

More importantly, problems for Clark and Graham Hill (clutch failure on his BRM) meant Surtees had closed to within four points of the championship lead with two rounds to go.



Surtees gave Enzo Ferrari win on home soil



LAT IMAGES

3

1967 Italian GP

Monza

Honda RA300 (1st)

“The struggle between John Surtees, Bruce McLaren, Chris Amon and Jochen Rindt provided the fiercest contest seen on the track for many years,” said Autosport.

“However, it was the last-lap drama that set the seal on the finest GP of 1967.”

That year’s Italian GP is now largely remembered as one of Jim Clark’s great drives, fighting back from a lap down to snatch the lead. But it was also one of Surtees’s finest.

Surtees had Honda’s new V12-engined RA300 at his disposal for Monza. After suspension problems, he qualified only ninth and made gradual progress in the opening laps. While the Brabhams and Lotuses battled at the front, Surtees joined the fight for fifth that so enthused Autosport.

Then Clark pitted with a puncture and Denny Hulme retired with a blown head gasket. With

Graham Hill well out in front, Surtees managed to break away from his group and started to close on second man Jack Brabham.

With 10 laps to go of the 68-lapper, Hill’s DFV blew up, leaving Brabham in the lead with Surtees closing and Clark catching them both.

Clark swept by and into the lead on lap 61, with the Honda passing Brabham shortly afterwards. Surtees then edged back towards Clark, taking Brabham with him.

On the final lap, Clark slowed with a fuel-pump problem. Surtees shot past, with Brabham diving down the inside of him into the final corner. With cement dust down on the inside line, Surtees elected not to defend. Brabham thus took the lead, but ran wide, allowing the Honda to slip back by. Brabham then tucked into Surtees’s slipstream but lost the drag race to the line by a car’s length.

2

1964 Mexican GP

Mexico City

Ferrari 158 (2nd)

Hill, 39 points; Surtees, 34; Clark, 30. Three drivers could take the crown at the 1964 F1 finale in Mexico. In one of the most dramatic title deciders ever, Surtees came out on top, but only after an incredible late turn of events.

Jim Clark comfortably took pole, with Surtees struggling into fourth with engine issues, and the Lotus cleared off from the start. Surtees’s engine was still playing up as he left the line and he fell into the midfield.

But Surtees held his nerve and, once hot, the eight-cylinder engine started to work and he charged through the field. He caught the fight for third between his team-mate Lorenzo

Bandini and Graham Hill shortly before they controversially clashed, leaving Hill well down.

But Clark was still well out in front, chased by Dan Gurney, with Bandini and Surtees next. That would have been enough to allow Clark to retain his crown.

Then an oil line broke on the Lotus. Gurney swept into the lead on the penultimate lap as Clark slumped to fifth. Bandini moved aside for his team leader, allowing Surtees to finish second – and take the title by one point. His determination in the face of problems, both in the race and earlier in the season, had been rewarded.



1

1963 German GP

Nurburgring

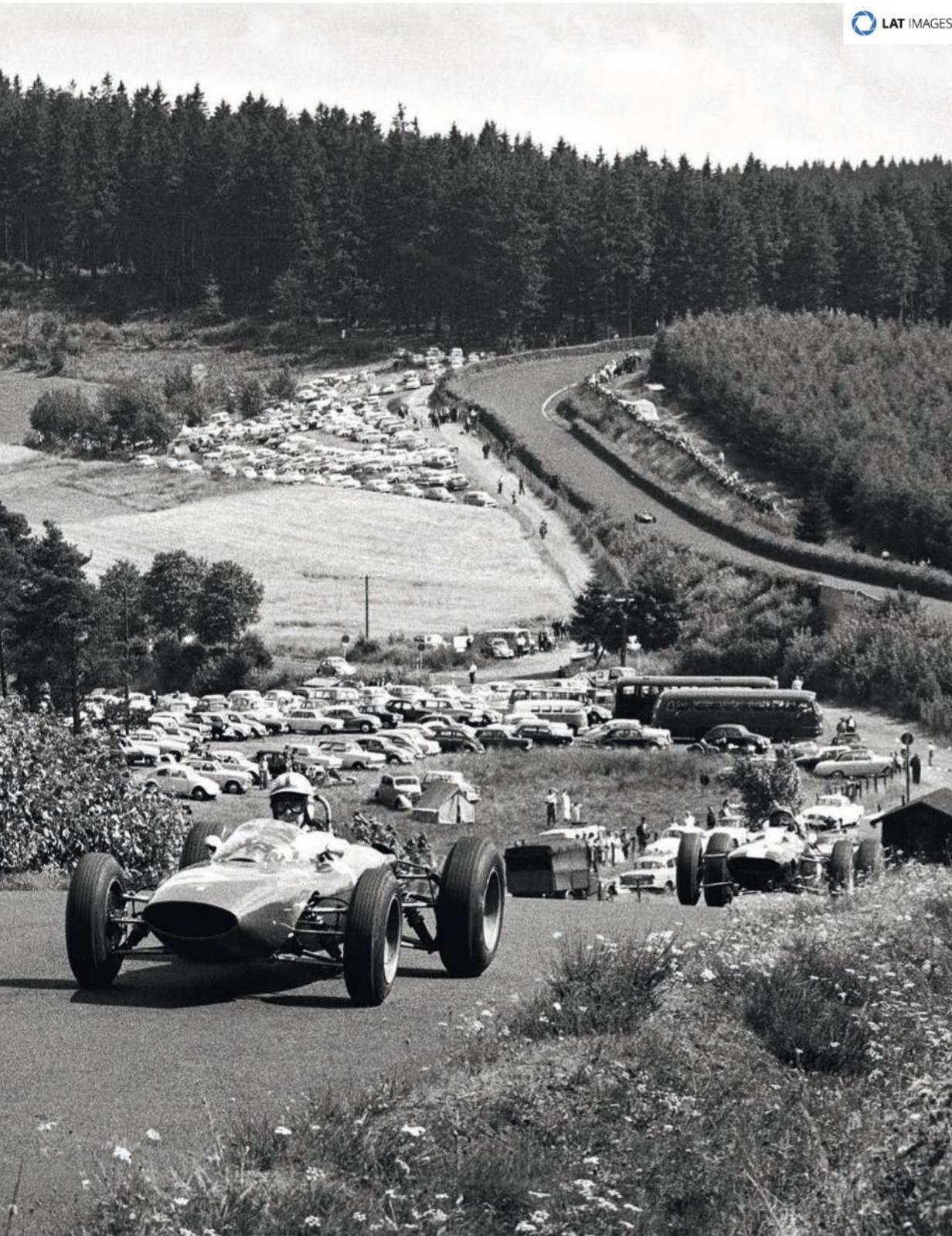
Ferrari 156 (1st)

The Ferrari-Surtees combination proved ever-stronger during 1963, and at the Nurburgring the Briton finally scored his first world championship F1 victory. To do so he defeated the Lotus 25 of runaway championship leader Jim Clark in a straight fight.

Richie Ginther’s BRM and the Cooper of Bruce McLaren jumped poleman Clark at the start, but they didn’t stay in front for long. Surtees, who also got ahead of Clark on the opening lap, soon took the lead, followed by the Lotus.



LAT IMAGES



AND NOT FORGETTING...

TWO OTHER WORLD championship grands prix almost made the list.

Clutch problems dropped Surtees to 14th on the opening lap of the 1965 Italian GP (above), but he soon powered the new Ferrari 1512 through the field. Shifting gear without the clutch, Surtees reached the front on lap 11. He remained engaged in the lead slipstreaming battle until clutch failure put him out.

Another new Ferrari – this time the 312 – helped Surtees take pole for the 1966 Belgian GP on the old Spa by 3.2 seconds. He chased Jochen Rindt's Cooper-Maserati for much of the race following a rain shower that caused many drivers to crash. After biding his time, Surtees moved to the front when Rindt started struggling with gearbox problems, and won by 42.1s.

Outside of F1, Surtees was a leading sportscar exponent. He won first time out in the 1963 Sebring 12 Hours, sharing a Ferrari 250P with Ludovico Scarfiotti. Despite his frustration at the team's focus on Le Mans instead of F1 early in each season, Surtees became one of Ferrari's key assets in endurance events.

He underlined his mastery of the fearsome Nurburgring with two 1000Km wins (1963 and '65, below), set pole at Le Mans in '64, and took three victories on his way to the inaugural Can-Am title in his team's Lola T70.

Surtees and Clark now put on a superb duel, with Clark briefly getting in front on lap four before the Ferrari reasserted itself. Everyone else was left far behind.

"Surtees, driving an inspired race, began to increase his lead slightly," wrote Gregor Grant in Autosport's report. The Ferrari was five seconds ahead at half distance.

As Surtees broke the lap record, the Climax engine in Clark's Lotus started lapsing onto seven cylinders. The Ferrari was

thus left to complete a dominant win – more than a minute clear of Clark and nearly three minutes ahead of Ginther.

"Surtees fully vindicated those who felt that, given the machine, the former champion motorcyclist would be a most difficult man to beat," reckoned Autosport.

Beating one of the classic F1 cars driven by an all-time great around the finest circuit in the world would surely be a worthy top entry on anyone's list of greatest drives.



LAT IMAGES



TVR topples Cobras in Good

Mike Jordan's breathtaking heart-in-mouth pass round the outside of Andy Wolfe at Woodcote corner four laps from home, putting his faith in what little remained of the tattered Dunlops on Mike Whitaker's TVR Griffith, stemmed two years of AC Cobra domination in the Graham Hill Trophy GT race, which topped the landmark 75th Members' Meeting.

"That was everything I had," grinned Jordan. "The left-rear tyre was finished. It was scary but fantastic. I nearly binned it twice at Fordwater [getting] on the grass [in a savage crosswind]."

Car owner Whitaker, 2014 HSCC Guards Trophy champion in his other

Nigel Reuben-prepared 'Griff', had done a magnificent job chasing the Cobras of Michael Gans – who relayed Wolfe in Jason Wright's – and quintuple Le Mans winner Emanuele Pirro in Shaun Lynn's Le Mans original, matching the Italian's lap time before installing Jordan.

"I didn't leave Mike a lot of car," admitted Whitaker, "but he was sensational." That the Chris Lawrence-developed BFR 400B had period Goodwood history with Tommy Entwistle (in the 1965 Whitsun Trophy race) made the victory extra special. But the icing on the cake for Whitaker was the presence of TVR factory engineer David Hives, who built the chassis (001) in Blackpool 52 years ago.

The race was anything but straightforward for the pacemakers, for Pirro had hounded polesitter

Jordan put in a superb charge to snatch GT victory in the Graham Hill Trophy from Wolfe's Cobra

Gans relentlessly before jinking ahead on lap 10 of 31. Whitaker was first to stop, installing Jordan on lap 12, two before Wolfe (who set the pole time) supplanted Gans. Pirro ran 18 laps, but still Lynn exited the pits with Wolfe bearing down on him. The TVR stop had dropped Jordan nearly six seconds behind Wolfe, but the ex-British GT ace immediately started a determined charge.

Lynn repelled them for a couple of laps "but bottled it under pressure". Jordan redoubled his efforts to reel in Wolfe before making his bold move. Wolfe then slowed over the final three laps with a deflating left-front tyre, but kept Lynn behind.

Nicky Pastorelli and 2016 winner James Cottingham howled their Ferrari 250 GTO/64 from 15th on the grid to fourth, despite its gear knob detaching



Woodward thriller

itself in the Brit's hand, ahead of Rob Huff, who finished Richard Meins's ex-Dick Protheroe Jaguar E-type CUT 7 superbly, and the well-driven Cobra of Andrew Haddon/Ben Shuckburgh.

Other stars in the priceless 29-car field included second qualifier Sam Hancock, who hauled Alexander Rittweger's E-type back from mid-pack to seventh, Richard Meaden and Nick Padmore for flinging Grant Tromans's 26R-spec Lotus Elan to eighth, and the sublime Ferrari 250LM that the Pearson brothers brought home 10th, first time out.

Rupert Clevely/Simon Garrad won an entertaining Shelby Mustang battle, pipping Nick and Dom Sleep by five seconds after they'd shaken off Dutchmen Hans Hugenholtz/Karsten le Blanc.

The crowd-pleasing Gerry Marshall

Trophy touring car showpiece continues to grow and a new format – a one-hour Saturday evening enduro and a full-blooded Sunday reversed-grid sprint race – ensured greater fun for 'owners'. Twenty-five years on from his Le Mans victory with Peugeot, Mark Blundell set the scene, revelling in damp conditions to grab pole in Kerry Michael's flat-fronted Ford Escort RS2000.

Chris Ward (Rover SD1) led Blundell and Nick Swift (Mini 1275GT) initially, but two and four-wheeled TT winner Stuart Graham – his age unbelievably matching the event's number – blasted Nigel Garrett's Faberge Chevrolet Camaro ahead on lap eight of 35, from row five, and stayed there until he relayed the owner. By then Gordon Shedden was in the Rover, Michael in the Escort and Andrew Jordan in the Mini, while Andy

**Top: Ward/Shedden
Rover topped both
Group 1 bouts**

**Above: Hibberd (#79)
won the F1 race despite
a poor start from pole**

Priaulx climbed to second in Patrick Watts's newly finished Frank & Jean Capri by maximising his stint.

Shedden was let off the hook, for Garrett's stop was painfully slow, and front-row starter Grahame Bryant had stalled his re-clutched Simoniz Camaro twice at the start. Everybody missed him, but he and son Oliver were left with too much to do. Bryant Jr did claw his way back to second, ahead of Garrett, Michael and Jordan. A full-course caution, called after Mike Wilds smote the bank approaching St Mary's in Ian Conway's Mazda RX-7, cut Bryant's deficit, but with darkness descending and lights ablaze nobody would catch Shedden, whose BTCC team-mate Matt Neal was a lapped sixth in David Clark's Bastos Camaro, their 2015 winner.

Sideline by a blown fuse before >>



LAT IMAGES

SURTEES TRIBUTES AND ICONIC DEMOS

A 'MINUTE OF NOISE' SEEMED AN APPROPRIATE way to remember the achievements of John Surtees. The 1964 F1 world champion was a supporter and star of many Goodwood events, and his passing just a week before the Members' Meeting was never far from people's minds.

As Lord March led the Surtees Trophy field for Group 7 cars to the grid in a Team Surtees Lola T70, the cars in the paddock were fired up in a loud and powerful salute to one of the sport's legends.

A lower key – but no less poignant – moment came when 1970 Le Mans winner Richard Attwood completed a slow lap (above) on Sunday in the Formula Junior Cooper in which Surtees took pole (and finished second) in his first race on four wheels. Remarkably, it was 57 years to the day since debutant Surtees had been narrowly beaten by fellow rising star Jim Clark.

Also outside of the racing action, the high-speed demonstrations have already been established as key elements of the Members' Meeting. This time around, three-litre sports-prototypes of the 1970s, Group A touring cars, and the '90s GT1 era got the star treatment.

Matra MS670, Porsche 908/3 and Alfa Romeo T33/3 starred in the first group, while Simon Hadfield put in sub-lap-record times with Leo Voyazides' DfV-engined Lola T282.

Support for the Group A tin-tops of the 1980s was impressive, with the cars split into earlier and later groups. Gerhard Berger, Spa 24 Hours winner in 1985 while he was a rising single-seater star, was reunited with his BMW 635CSi in the earlier pack. He got the six-cylinder coupe nicely wound up, so much so that he managed a minor off on Saturday...

Fellow BMW legend Roberto Ravaglia, on his first visit to Goodwood, led the later group in one of the iconic E30 M3s, but the phalanx of Ford RS500s (below) stole the show. Period racers Steve Soper, Robb Gravett and Karl Jones were among those driving the spectacular flame-spitting turbocars.

Jaguar XJS, Rover SD1, MG Metro Turbo, Volvo 240 Turbo and Ford Mustang GT racers – in many colourful and varied period liveries – emphasised the eclectic mix of the era.

The GT1 demo contained Porsche 911 GT1, McLaren F1 GTR (both short and long-tailed varieties), Ferrari F40 and Lotus Elise machinery. They were led by the 1998 Le Mans-winning Porsche 911 GT1-98, driven by Indycar legend Dario Franchitti. "The engine is so sweet, it's a wonderful thing," he said. "It was one of those periods when sportscars were really beautiful."

Sadly, Sunday's run was curtailed when Nick Mason crashed his F1 GTR at St Mary's.

KEVIN TURNER



HAWKINS



HAWKINS

Saturday's start, Jim Morris was on pole for the sequel in father John's Morris Vulcan/Lifeline VW Golf GTI. The gallant combo proved a surprise package too, staying ahead for six glorious laps as the pack jockeyed for position, with 'displaced' Rovers, Camaros and Capris attempting to get back to the sharp end in company with Nick Padmore's rorty UFO Jeans BMW 530i and the astonishing Swift's apparently brakeless Mini camera car.

Ward eventually hit the front to complete a weekend double, but front-row man Mike Whitaker – still buzzing from his TVR success – found new pace in his Capri to keep second ahead of the writhing peloton led by Watts, the mirrors of whose energetically conducted Capri were filled by Morris, fast-starter Padmore, the extrovert Swift, Grahame Bryant's Camaro and Stuart Hall's Rover after a scintillating battle.

In an extraordinary turnaround of fortunes, the UDT Laystall team/Cliff Allison Lotus 18 '915' in which owner Stephen Bond was fired into the empty (now roofed) pedestrian tunnel at last year's MM won the Brabham Trophy 2.5-litre grand prix car race in the hands



of co-preparer Andrew Hibberd. “This means a lot. We’ve only just finished rebuilding the car and are delighted that it’s back on top form,” he said.

Hibberd made a poor start from a clear pole, dropping to fifth on the opening lap, while Andy Middlehurst in Charles McCabe’s ex-Jim Hall/Lloyd Ruby Lotus 18 – from sixth on the grid following magneto issues in qualifying – shot through to oust Roger Wills (Cooper T51) from the lead. Alas, a misfire sent Middlehurst (five-time Glover Trophy victor at the Revival in a 1500cc Lotus 25) pitward, leaving Sam Wilson ahead in Sir John Chisholm’s ex-Jim Clark/Innes Ireland Team Lotus 18.

Once into his stride Hibberd was in imperious mood, shooting round John Young (Cooper T45/51) at St Mary’s, then usurping Wills for a sight of the leader. Not even previous Goodwood 500cc and Fjunior victor Wilson could keep the on-form Hibberd at bay, Andrew steaming past on lap four, then inspiring his pal to go quicker.

“I really wanted to stretch his legs for a good race,” said Hibberd. “Sam put up a great fight. The sidewinds made it very difficult through Fordwater and we



were also getting hit by gusts [across the airfield] at the end of the pit garages.”

Kiwi Wills just held Young at bay for third, while Malcolm Cook bagged a good fifth, his two-litre Cooper T43 in the sunsights of Mathias Sielecki (T45/51). Gareth Burnett qualified Chris Lunn’s T45 – Maurice Trintignant’s 1958 Monaco GP winner – third in damp practice, but posted an early retirement.

Defending champion Hibberd and Wilson also finished one-two in Saturday’s Derek Bell Trophy F3 opener, albeit a long way apart, Hibberd having

fled in Chris Irwin’s 1966 Goodwood-winning Chequered Flag Brabham BT18 as his pursuers squabbled. Wilson, piloting the injured Marcus Mussa’s ex-Lionel Noghes Tecno, just held off Peter Thompson’s Brabham and Jonathon Hughes’s Merlyn – which collided at St Mary’s – plus Steve Smith’s Chevron and Paul Waine’s De Sanctis.

With Tony Wood away on business, sub Martin Stretton snared pole for the new Scott Brown Trophy Lister race by 0.097s in Barry Wood’s Knobbly, with ‘Jon Minshaw’, Chris Ward, Sam Hancock and Gary Pearson within 0.879s. Minshaw’s Knobbly powered ahead as the Union Jack fell on Sunday and stayed there, with Ward’s bulbous Costin-bodied streamliner in spectacular oversteery pursuit until its rear tyres wilted. Hancock (ex-Walt Hansgen prototype BHL101) and Pearson passed Stretton towards mid-distance, deciding the minor placings. Only after the finish did the world – including the commentators – discover that Phil Keen had saddled Demon Tweeks Direct boss Minshaw’s machine!

“The car was brilliant,” said Keen. “It’s my favourite of Jon’s collection.” >>>

Top: Blundell led the Gerry Marshall endure from pole, but was handed a penalty for jumping the start

Above: Keen was too quick for Ward in the high-quality Scott Brown encounter



Sunday's Weslake Cup opener for BMC A-series-engined GTs evoked the ethos of period Members' Meetings with a sensational battle between youngsters James Colburn (Lenham GT) and Richard Woolmer (Austin-Healey Sprite). They traded places repeatedly, until a safety-car interlude after which Woolmer spun at Madgwick. As he was recovering, his yellow car was clobbered by Jim Dean's Sprite, forcing a stoppage. Colburn aced the restart, chased by Woodcote spinner Tom Grindall and Mike Haigh, who qualified 17th after his throttle cable snapped.

With heroic 2016 victor Duncan Pittaway trading up to his 28.4-litre Fiat S76 (see page 65), Patrick Blakeney-Edwards took over the GN Curtiss and topped the SF Edge Trophy

Edwardian practice timesheets by 8.7s. When the spindly hybrid lost a couple of cylinders from the race start, PBE pitted then chased down 74th MM runner-up Mathias Sielecki's V12 Delage, coming up half a second short in the catchweight bout after a tussle with Mark Walker's two-cylinder GN Thunderbug.

The Franco-Italian Varzi Trophy, for pre-Second World War GP cars and voiturettes, was always the domain of Christian Glasel's wonderful Alfa Romeo Tipo B, but the enduring struggle between Michael Gans (Maserati V8RI), Julian Majzub (Bugatti T35B) and Sean Danaher (Maserati 6CM) saw each protagonist hold positions two to four. As they wrestled, Gans half-spun at Lavant and rotated at Woodcote,

Woolmer and Colburn had a fine duel in the Weslake Cup before things went wrong

leaving preparation guru Danaher to pip Majzub for silver.

Honouring 1965 British saloon car champion Roy Pierpoint – the Alan Mann Racing Ford Mustang tamer who debuted with seventh in race one of Goodwood's inaugural BARC Members' Meeting, driving an 1100cc Fiat special – the V8 showcase brought a thunderous field of Americana under orders. A clash between the red-and-gold Mustangs of Steve Soper and Craig Davies (who had barged past Rob Hall's Falcon Sprint at Woodcote, then caught and passed his hero) at St Mary's fired both onto the grass. They rejoined clear of impressive 17-year-old Oliver Hart (Mustang) and Hall, whose order was reversed on countback when red flags flew after Leo Voyazides' Falcon thumped the tyre wall before St Mary's.

Named for the 1966 Can-Am champion, the Surtees Trophy finale was also interrupted by an incident. Australian Laurie Bennett, running fourth in his McLaren M1B, spun wildly onto the infield at Fordwater trying to repass James Cottingham's Ford GT40. As Bennett returned to the track Mads Gjerdrun (M1B) lifted to miss him and Diogo Ferrao (GT40) spun in avoidance, clonking Steve Farthing (in Chris Jolly's Cooper T61) as he gyrated.

A safety car reunited the field behind the T70s of poleman Simon Hadfield and Tony Sinclair, who had beaten him to Madgwick, only to be pushed back to second immediately. Descending darkness triggered an early chequer, with Sam Hancock third and top GT40 in Chris Wilson's example.

MARCUS PYE



Glasel's Alfa won the new Varzi Trophy



HAWKINS

Hadfield controlled the dramatic Surtees Trophy

RESULTS

GRAHAM HILL TROPHY: GT CARS 1960-66 (31 LAPS)

1 Mike Whitaker/Mike Jordan (TVR Griffith 400);
2 Michael Gans/Andy Wolfe (AC Cobra) +15.953s;
3 Emanuele Pirro/Shawn Lynn (AC Cobra Le Mans);
4 Nicky Pastorelli/James Cottingham (Ferrari 250GT0/64);
5 Richard Meins/Rob Huff (Jaguar E-type); 6 Andrew Haddon/Ben Shuckburgh (AC Cobra). **Fastest lap** Jordan 1m25.500s (101.05mph). **Pole** Wolfe. **Starters** 29.

GERRY MARSHALL TROPHY: PRODUCTION SALOONS

1970-82 (35 LAPS) 1 Chris Ward/Gordon Shedden (Rover 3500 SD1); 2 Grahame and Oliver Bryant (Chevrolet Camaro Z28) +12.660s; 3 Stuart Graham/Nigel Garrett (Chevrolet Camaro Z28); 4 Mark Blundell/Kerry Michael (Ford Escort RS2000); 5 Nick Swift/Andrew Jordan (Mini 1275GT); 6 David Clark/Matt Neal (Chevrolet Camaro Z28); 7 Ric Wood/Adam Morgan (Ford Capri III 3.0S); 8 Andrew Bruce/Tim Harvey (Rover 3500 SD1); 9 Andy Priaulx/Patrick Watts (Ford Capri III 3.0S); 10 Raphael de Borman/Gerhard Berger (Ford Capri III 3.0S). **FL** Graham 1m27.433s (98.81mph). **P** Blundell. **S** 30.

SPRINT RACE (10 LAPS) 1 Ward; 2 Mike Whitaker

(Ford Capri III 3.0S) +2.650s; 3 Watts; 4 Jim Morris (VW Golf GTI); 5 Nick Padmore (BMW 530i); 6 Swift. **FL** Ward 1m29.287s (96.76mph). **P** Morris. **S** 25.

BRABHAM TROPHY: REAR-ENGINED GP CARS 1954-60

(14 LAPS) 1 Andrew Hibberd (Lotus-Climax 18); 2 Sam Wilson (Lotus-Climax 18) +1.061s; 3 Roger Wills (Cooper-Climax T51); 4 John Young (Cooper-Climax T45/51); 5 Malcolm Cook (Cooper-Climax T43); 6 Mathias Sielecki (Cooper-Climax T45/51). **FL** Wilson 1m24.421s (102.34mph). **P** Hibberd. **S** 22.

DEREK BELL CUP: 1000cc F3 1964-70 (15 LAPS)

1 Andrew Hibberd (Brabham BT18); 2 Sam Wilson (Tecno 69) +38.335s; 3 Peter Thompson (Brabham BT21A); 4 Jonathon Hughes (Merlyn Mk14); 5 Stephen Smith (Chevron B15); 6 Paul Waine (De Sanctis). **FL** Hibberd 1m24.021s (102.83mph). **P** Hibberd. **S** 24.

SCOTT BROWN TROPHY: LISTER SPORTS RACING CARS (15 LAPS) 1 Phil Keen (Lister-Jaguar Knobbly);

2 Chris Ward (Jaguar Costin) +9.606s; 3 Sam Hancock (Jaguar Knobbly); 4 Gary Pearson (Jaguar Knobbly); 5 Martin Stretton (Jaguar Knobbly); 6 David Hart (Jaguar Costin). **FL** Keen 1m24.555s (102.18mph). **P** Stretton. **S** 25.

WESLAKE CUP: BMC A-SERIES-ENGINED GT CARS

1958-66 (5 LAPS) 1 James Colburn (Lenham Sprite GT); 2 Tom Grindall (Williams & Pritchard MG Midget GT) +8.625s; 3 Mike Haigh (Lenham GT); 4 Shaun Rainford (Lenham GT); 5 Darryl Davis (Austin-Healey Sebring Sprite); 6 Ian Hulett (WSM Sprite). **Class winner** David Wylie (Austin-Healey Speedwell Sprite). **FL** Colburn 1m37.026s (89.04mph). **P** Richard Woolmer (Austin-Healey Sebring Sprite). **S** 29.

SF EDGE TROPHY: EDWARDIAN CARS TO 1923

(11 LAPS) 1 Mathias Sielecki (Delage DH V12); 2 Patrick Blakeney-Edwards (GN Curtis) +0.592s; 3 Mark Walker (GN Thunderbug); 4 Richard Scaldwell (Lorraine De Dietrich); 5 Ben Collings (Mercedes 60hp); 6 Niall Dyer (Mors). **FL** Blakeney-Edwards 1m47.438s (80.41mph). **P** Blakeney-Edwards. **S** 22.

VARZI TROPHY: FRENCH & ITALIAN GP CARS & VOITURETTES TO 1939 (13 LAPS) 1 Christian Glasel

(Alfa Romeo Tipo B); 2 Sean Danaher (Maserati 6CM) +4.293s; 3 Julian Majzub (Bugatti T35B); 4 Michael Gans (Maserati V8 R1); 5 Charles Knill-Jones (Bugatti T35B); 6 Stephen Shoosmith (Bugatti T51). **FL** Glasel 1m36.829s (89.22mph). **P** Glasel. **S** 26.

PIERPOINT CUP: AMERICAN V8 SALOONS TO 1966

(10 LAPS) 1 Craig Davies (Ford Mustang); 2 Steve Soper (Ford Mustang) +0.494s; 3 Rob Hall (Ford Falcon Sprint); 4 Oliver Hart (Ford Mustang); 5 Michael Squire (Ford Mustang); 6 Bill Shepherd (Ford Galaxie 500).

FL Davies 1m29.877s (96.13mph). **P** Soper. **S** 29.

SURTEES TROPHY: PRE-1966 CAN-AM & GROUP 7

PROTOTYPES TO 1966 (10 LAPS) 1 Simon Hadfield (Lola-Chevrolet T70 Spyder); 2 Tony Sinclair (Lola-Chevrolet T70 Spyder) +3.260s; 3 Sam Hancock (Ford GT40); 4 James Cottingham (Ford GT40); 5 Chris Ward (Ford GT40); 6 Christian Glasel (Ford GT40). **FL** Hadfield 1m19.966s (108.04mph). **P** Hadfield. **S** 24.

HAILWOOD TROPHY: 250 & 350cc GP MOTORCYCLES

1972-84 (14 LAPS) 1 Mike Edwards (Yamaha TZ350E); 2 Nigel Palmer (Harris Yamaha TZ350G) +31.099s; 3 Michael Russell (Harris Yamaha TZ350); 4 Glen English (Yamaha TZ350G); 5 Duncan Fitchett (Harris Rotax); 6 Mike Farrall (Maxton Yamaha TZ350E). **FL** Edwards 1m25.155s (101.45mph). **P** Edwards. **S** 27.

STAR CARS



Tecno-Ford F3

Bologna art manufacturers the Pederzani brothers enjoyed much success with star drivers Ronnie Peterson and Reine Wisell in their 1000cc Ford-powered F3 cars of the late 1960s. Engine guru Geoff Richardson's newly restored example was raced by Dane Ole Veijlund in period. Debuted by engine builder James Claridge, it ran as high as third in the Derek Bell Trophy race before retiring.



Cheetah-Chevrolet

Californian Bill Thomas produced a few Cheetahs in the 1960s, with under-the-radar support from General Motors. Seen fleetingly in Graham Hill Trophy GT race practice on Saturday, Ian Burford's recently acquired 1964 car was a talking point in the paddock. The cocktail of 327 cubic-inch (5.4-litre) Chevrolet V8 engine and ultra-short wheelbase proved a handful in the damp. It was withdrawn.



Lotus 18 '907'

Renowned for his ground-breaking Chaparrals, Texan Jim Hall competed in Formula 1 from 1959-63 in Lotus cars. Hall made his world championship debut in the '60 seasonal finale at Riverside, California – the last of the 2½-litre formula – and finished seventh in his Lotus 18, sporting the American racing colours. Owned by Charles McCabe, the car was driven by Andy Middlehurst at Goodwood.

LAT IMAGES



Short-fuel tactic moved
Wayne Taylor Racing
Caddy in front at sunset

Taylors stitch it up

IMSA SPORTSCAR
SEBRING 12 HOURS (USA)
MARCH 18
ROUND 2/12

LAST SATURDAY'S 65TH 12 HOURS OF Sebring was a thriller. True, reliability among the latest IMSA-spec Prototype contenders wasn't great, and the Dallara-chassised Cadillacs once again proved to be comfortably the class of the field, despite efforts to bring them more into line with the performance of the new 'global' P2 cars. But as at Daytona, the race boiled down to a no-holds-barred contest between two of the top teams. Ultimately, once again, the talented Taylor brothers, Ricky and Jordan, capably supported by English open-wheel convert Alex Lynn, emerged on top for their father Wayne's team following a race-long battle with the similar Action Express Cadillac DPi-V.R of Christian Fittipaldi, Joao Barbosa and Filipe Albuquerque.

After a cameo performance by reigning World Endurance champion Neel Jani, who qualified Rebellion Racing's ORECA-Gibson 07 on pole and led until the opening round of pitstops, there was no stopping the trio of Cadillacs, which ran almost flawlessly. Jani recovered from a slow first stop, followed by a drivethrough penalty, to move briefly back into contention,

only for the car to be afflicted by an alternator problem when Sebastien Buemi took over shortly before the two-hour mark.

Reigning IMSA champions Dane Cameron and Eric Curran, joined by Mike Conway, looked especially menacing in the second Action Express Cadillac until their challenge effectively ended in the third hour when Curran was involved in an incident with one of the ESM Nissans and lost three laps while trying to restart the car.

The two unhindered Cadillacs picked up the slack, and both enjoyed lengthy periods in the lead before Jordan Taylor made the decisive move on Albuquerque in traffic. Brother Ricky took over for the final 90 minutes and repelled Barbosa's charge before taking the flag 13.6 seconds clear.

Briton Conway set the fastest lap of the race as he, Cameron and Curran overcame some late niggles to clinch a podium sweep for Cadillac.

Young Mexican Jose Gutierrez showed some good early pace before the PR1-Mathiasen Motorsports Ligier-Gibson encountered a series of mechanical woes. Indeed the only other Prototype to enjoy a trouble-free run was the JDC-Miller Motorsports ORECA-Gibson of Stephen Simpson, Chris Miller and Misha Goikhberg, which finished a strong fourth.

Equally meritorious was the fifth-place overall result for Performance Tech Motorsports.



with Lynn

Youngsters James French, Pato O'Ward and Kyle Masson barely put a wheel wrong as they added a PC-class win to their Daytona 24 Hours triumph.

The two GT classes provided some typically spectacular action. Ford/Chip Ganassi Racing began as firm favourite in GTLM after monopolising the front row of the grid and actually held the top three positions midway through the 10th hour, but the Ford GTs were never able to shake off their competition.

The Corvette of reigning champions Oliver Gavin and Tommy Milner (plus Marcel Fassler) retired early due to overheating, but the sister C7.R of Jan Magnussen, Mike Rockenfeller and a particularly inspired Antonio Garcia was always in contention. Garcia tracked Dirk Muller's Ford during the early stages and starred at the denouement too, as he held off a determined challenge from Joey Hand to win by a little over four seconds. Both men turned their cars' fastest laps of the race within the final 30 minutes.

The Porsche of Dirk Werner/Patrick Pilet/Frederic Makowiecki and the Risi Ferrari of Giancarlo Fisichella/Toni Vilander/James Calado were also in the thick of the mix for virtually the entire distance. The Porsche came on particularly strongly as the temperature cooled after sunset. Pilet overtook Hand and was challenging Garcia for the lead when he picked up a left-front



The sole surviving Corvette defeated Ford hordes in GTLM



Riley Mercedes won GTD, but there was a titanic scrap behind

puncture with just over an hour remaining. The Ferrari didn't have quite as much speed but a particularly feisty Calado was rewarded with third place when Richard Westbrook made an uncharacteristic error on the very last lap in the #67 Ford, which Ryan Briscoe had qualified on pole (but was obliged to start from the pitlane after the car failed to fire up on the grid).

The GTD category was as close-fought as ever, although Tristan Vautier showed the capability of the Mercedes-AMG GT3 by posting a lap 0.7s clear of the field in qualifying. The SunEnergy1 car was obliged to start from the pitlane after encountering a fuel leak in final warm-up but eventually worked its way into contention.

The similar Riley Motorsports Merc of Jeroen Bleekemolen/Ben Keating/Mario Farnbacher ended up with a convincing victory, although most of the field was involved in a titanic scrap behind. Reigning series champions Alessandro Balzan and Christina Nielsen, joined in the Scuderia Corsa Ferrari by Matteo Cressoni, held on for second, while Vautier passed Christopher Mies (Land Motorsport Audi) on the final lap to complete his climb from seventh to third in the final 20 minutes. He was assisted when the Change Racing Lamborghini of Corey Lewis ran out of fuel just two laps from the end.

JEREMY SHAW

RESULTS

1 Ricky Taylor/Jordan Taylor/Alex Lynn (Cadillac DPi-V.R) 348 laps in 12h01m09.681s; 2 Christian Fittipaldi/Joao Barbosa/Filipe Albuquerque (Cadillac) +13.614s; 3 Dane Cameron/Eric Curran/Mike Conway (Cadillac); 4 Stephen Simpson/Chris Miller/Misha Goikhberg (ORECA-Gibson 07); 5 James French/Pato O'Ward/Kyle Masson (ORECA-Chevrolet FLM09); 6 Garrett Grist/Max Hanratty/Sean Rayhall (ORECA-Chevrolet). **PC 1 French/O'Ward/Masson**; 2 Grist/Hanratty/Rayhall; 3 Gustavo Yacamán/Chapman Ducote/Marc Drumwright/Colin Thompson. **GTLM 1 Antonio Garcia/Jan Magnussen/Mike Rockenfeller (Chevrolet Corvette C7.R)**; 2 Dirk Muller/Joey Hand/Sebastien Bourdais (Ford GT); 3 Giancarlo Fisichella/Toni Vilander/James Calado (Ferrari 488 GTE); 4 Ryan Briscoe/Richard Westbrook/Scott Dixon (Ford); 5 Stefan Mücke/Olivier Pla/Billy Johnson (Ford); 6 Alexander Sims/Bill Auberlen/Kuno Wittmer (BMW M6 GTLM). **GTD 1 Ben Keating/Jeroen Bleekemolen/Mario Farnbacher (Mercedes-AMG GT3)**; 2 Christina Nielsen/Alessandro Balzan/Matteo Cressoni (Ferrari 488 GT3); 3 Tristan Vautier/Kenny Habul/Boris Said (Mercedes). **Points 1 Taylor/Taylor 70**; 2 Fittipaldi/Barbosa/Albuquerque 65; 3 Cameron/Curran/Conway 56; 4 Marc Goossens/Renger van der Zande/Rene Rast 55; 5 Simpson/Miller/Goikhberg 54; 6 Scott Sharp/Pipo Derani/Ryan Dalziel 48. **PC 1 French/O'Ward/Masson 72**; 2= Rayhall & Ducote/Yacamán 60. **GTLM 1 Hand/Muller/Bourdais 67**; 2 Garcia/Magnussen/Rockenfeller 63; 3 Fisichella/Vilander/Calado 60; 4 Patrick Pilet/Dirk Werner/Frederic Makowiecki 57; 5= Briscoe/Westbrook/Dixon & Mücke/Pla/Johnson 50. **GTD 1 Keating/Bleekemolen/Farnbacher 66**; 2 Connor de Phillippi/Christopher Mies/Jules Gounon 60; 3 Daniel Morad/Michael de Quesada/Michael Christensen 56.

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Newman claimed first win since 2013 Brickyard 400

Newman ends his winless drought

NASCAR CUP
PHOENIX (USA)
MARCH 19
ROUND 4/36

RYAN NEWMAN CAME AWAY with an upset victory, bringing an end to two very long NASCAR winless streaks.

A late-race caution with five of 312 laps remaining sent most of the lead-lap cars, including then-leader Kyle Busch, to pit road for new tyres. But Newman, Ricky Stenhouse Jr and Martin Truex Jr remained on track.

Kyle Larson, in fifth place, was the first to line up for the restart with new tyres. But it was Newman, who had been running seventh before the final caution was displayed, who got a jump on the rest of the field and held off Larson to earn his 18th career Cup victory. The win snapped a 127-race winless streak for Newman and gave the Chevrolet-equipped Richard Childress Racing its first Cup win since November 2013 (112 races).

Larson took over the series points lead, becoming the first Chip

Ganassi Racing driver to head the series standings this far into the season since Sterling Marlin in 2002. He holds a six-point advantage over Brad Keselowski, who took fifth.

Busch finished third in his Joe Gibbs Racing Toyota, while Stenhouse claimed fourth.

Joey Logano dominated much of the early part of the race and led 82 laps. He was saddled by a late-race pitroad speeding penalty and he blew a tyre to bring out the final caution. He ended up 31st.

JIM UTTER

RESULTS

1 Ryan Newman (Chevrolet SS) 314 laps in 3h00m41s; 2 Kyle Larson (Chevy) +0.312s; 3 Kyle Busch (Toyota Camry); 4 Ricky Stenhouse Jr (Ford Fusion); 5 Brad Keselowski (Ford); 6 Kevin Harvick (Ford); 7 Daniel Suarez (Toyota); 8 Erik Jones (Toyota); 9 Jimmie Johnson (Chevy); 10 Denny Hamlin (Toyota). **Playoff qualifying**
1 Keselowski 178/1 win; 2 Martin Truex Jr 153/1; 3 Kurt Busch 105/1; 4 Newman 101/1; 5 Larson 184; 6 Chase Elliott 171; 7 Joey Logano 135; 8 Ryan Blaney 127; 9 Harvick 123; 10 Jamie McMurray 119; 11 Kasey Kahne 105; 12 Trevor Bayne 100; 13 Kyle Busch 97; 14 Hamlin 97; 15 Clint Bowyer 97; 16 Johnson 93.

Ferrari on top in Italy

24 HOUR SERIES
MUGELLO 12 HOURS (I)
MARCH 17-18
ROUND 2/7

CZECH TEAM SCUDERIA Praha claimed honours in Italy with its Ferrari crewed by marque specialist Matteo Malucelli, ex-Formula Master ace Josef Kral and Jiri Pisarik.

The 488 GT3 was leading at the end of the first four-hour segment on Friday, and stayed in front most of the way through Saturday's remaining eight hours.

The usually-tough-to-beat Herberth Motorsport Porsche was already out of action by the end of Friday, thanks to engine failure. The Forch Racing 911 of Robert Kubica's mate Robert Lukas upheld Porsche honour, and was second on Friday, but then lost

time with bodywork repairs before retiring with a puncture.

The Dimitri Enjalbert-led IDEC Sport Mercedes claimed second, while the Grasser Racing Lamborghini was third after Ram Racing's Mercedes – in which Tom Onslow-Cole led the driving strength – lost the position with a spin half an hour from home.

Italian team Nova Race claimed SP3-GT4 honours with its Ginetta G55, which featured ex-Italian F3 champion Luca Rangoni in the line-up.

RESULTS

1 Matteo Malucelli/Josef Kral/Jiri Pisarik (Ferrari 488 GT3) 326 laps; 2 Dimitri Enjalbert/Patrice Lafargue/Paul Lafargue (Mercedes-AMG GT3) -4 laps; 3 Marco Mapelli/Giorgio Maggi/Franz Konrad/Christopher Zochling (Lamborghini Huracan GT3); 4 Tom Onslow-Cole/Remon Leonard Vos/Kevin Veltman (Mercedes); 5 Kenneth Heyer/Christiaan Frankenhout/Michael Kroll/Chantal Kroll/Roland Eggimann (Mercedes); 6 Toni Forne/Horst Felbermayr Jr/Max Edelhoff/Peter Schmidt (Audi R8 LMS).

Ahlin escapes Cave attack

BRITISH RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP
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ROUND 1/7

SWEDE FREDRIK AHLIN WAS pushed hard to win the Jedburgh-based opening BRC round.

Ahlin, who swapped a Ford Fiesta for a Skoda Fabia R5 for 2017, was a fixture in a changeable lead battle that boasted three leaders and six stage winners from eight tests.

Tom Cave (Fiesta), who finished second in the championship last year, led overnight after two stages in the dark, but ceded the lead early on Saturday morning before retaking it a stage later.

Ahlin turned up the thermostat on SS5 to take 12s out of Cave, and took another nine seconds on the next test. Cave attempted to play strategy, checking into the penultimate stage late to force Ahlin to go first and clean the road. But it wasn't enough.

Reigning Drive DMACK Fiesta Trophy champion Osian Pryce (Fiesta) took third after a Friday puncture slowed him, while three-time BRC champion and new works M-Sport recruit Keith Cronin (Fiesta) had two punctures and took fourth.

Oscar Solberg, son of Henning, won the Junior class in his Fiesta on his debut in the BRC.

JACK BENYON

RESULTS

1 Fredrik Ahlin/Torstein Eriksen (Skoda Fabia R5) 53m01.6s; 2 Tom Cave/James Morgan (Ford Fiesta R5) +38.6s; 3 Osian Pryce/Dale Furniss (Ford); 4 Keith Cronin/Mikie Galvin (Ford); 5 Rhys Yates/Carl Williamson (Ford); 6 Matt Edwards/Darren Garrod (Ford). **Points 1 Ahlin 25**; 2 Cave 22; 3 Pryce 15; 4 Cronin 12; 5 Yates 10; 6 Edwards 8.



Ahlin started in perfect style

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The event will be held at the Epsom clubhouse of the Royal Automobile Club and will include a stage interview hosted by Henry Hope-Frost, covering Nigel's F1 and IndyCART career.

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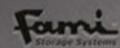
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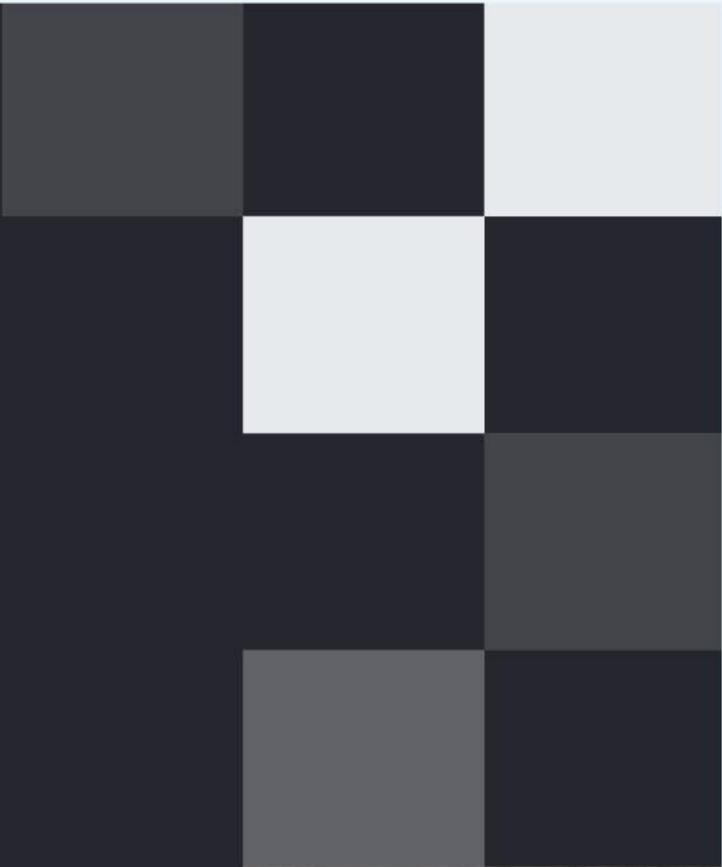
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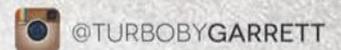
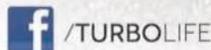
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Pittaway manhandles the Fiat

HAWKINS

Land speed record Fiat in Goodwood race debut

THE 'BEAST OF TURIN' FIAT S76 LAND SPEED record car from 1911 made its race debut at the Goodwood Members' Meeting last weekend.

Since being restored by Duncan Pittaway, the 28-litre aero-engined monster has been demonstrated at a range of events, but had never contested a race until Pittaway tackled the SF Edge Trophy for Edwardian cars at the 75th Members' Meeting.

"This is the first time racing it and I'd never used more than quarter throttle before," said Pittaway after qualifying 12th fastest in the 25-car field.

"I had no idea what to expect and it is not an ideal racing car. I pumped the tyres up to 100psi.

"The straight bits are fine – it's the corners that are the tricky bits. Once it's going, it builds speed very nicely and goes like the clappers. It's really high-g geared and will do 70mph in first

gear at 1000rpm. I feel very humbled that so many people want to see the car. I love it. I just wanted to try it on a track."

Pittaway, who won the SF Edge Trophy in 2016 driving his GN Curtiss, elected to start the race from the pitlane but climbed as high as 11th in the fire-spitting Fiat. After slowing late on with a misfire, Pittaway finished 13th in the car that reached 116mph in 1911.

It took Pittaway 15 years to complete the project after he found one of the two original chassis in Australia. It was later fitted with the engine from its sister car as Pittaway brought the machine back to life more than 100 years after it was first created, with assistance from Fiat.

Pittaway's GN Curtiss, driven by Patrick Blakeney-Edwards, qualified on pole and finished second after a pitstop and its own technical issues.

GOODWOOD IN BRIEF

WATTS GIVES CAPRI FIRST RUN

Patrick Watts had a first race in his Group 1 Ford Capri in the Gerry Marshall Trophy. World Touring Car champion Andy Priaulx starred in the two-driver race, helping the duo to ninth, before touring car veteran Watts took third in Sunday's sprint race.

TURKINGTON IN A LISTER

British Touring Car ace Colin Turkington replaced Sam Thomas in Michael Tuke's Lister-Jaguar Knobbly in the Scott Brown Trophy. The two-time BTCC champion qualified 11th and climbed to eighth in the race.

WILDS IN, THEN OUT

Ex-Formula 1 driver Mike Wilds – who has competed for 52 of his 71 years – finally made his maiden Goodwood race starts last weekend, driving a Mazda RX7 and a Ford Falcon. He finished 16th in the Pierpoint Trophy with the Falcon, but crashed out of the Gerry Marshall Trophy in the Mazda he shared with Ian Cowley.

MIRAGE ON SHOW

A rare Mirage M6 Le Mans (below) was on static display at Goodwood, having been shipped back from the United States to be part of the ROFGO collection. The long-tail three-litre V12 Weslake-engined car was built in 1972 for the '73 race, but was withdrawn after it struggled to show suitable pace in testing.



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GT4 car would be first produced in-house since the E-type

GT

Jaguar begins work on GT4 racer

JAGUAR IS DEVELOPING A GT RACER in-house for the first time in more than 50 years.

The project is believed to be under way at the British manufacturer's Special Vehicle Operations unit in Warwickshire, and will turn the F-type sports car into a contender for the GT4 category.

It will be the first GT racing car developed in-house by Jaguar since the E-type lightweights of the early 1960s were built in the same Browns Lane facility in Coventry that had been responsible for the Le Mans 24 Hours-winning C-types and D-types of the 1950s.

Jaguar, which made a return to international motorsport last year in Formula E, is refusing to comment on the project. A spokesman told Autosport: "We have a lot of requests for special

projects at SVO, but details of them remain confidential between the customer and Jaguar."

Autosport understands that Jaguar has recruited Graham Humphrys, designer of the 1999 Le Mans-winning BMW V12 LMR, to lead the GT4 project. Humphrys is moving over from Aston Martin, and previously worked for Bentley on the Continental GT3 racer with which it made its racing return at the end of 2013.

Funding is believed to be coming from James Holder, one of the founders of the Superdry clothing brand. He started racing last year and contested selected rounds of the British GT4 Championship and the GT4 European Series at the wheel of an Aston Martin Vantage. He raced under the Generation AMR SuperRacing banner

in a team run by David Appleby Engineering, which has denied any knowledge of the Jaguar project. It has already announced a European GT4 campaign with Holder and an Aston for 2017.

Holder is believed to have commissioned three cars from Jaguar, with a view to introducing them in the later rounds of the GT4 European Series run by the Stephane Ratel Organisation.

The F-type GT4 will be the first official Jaguar GT racing car since Paul Gentilozzi's RSR team developed the XKR to GT2 regulations with funding from the factory.

The car, unveiled at the end of 2009, raced in the GT class of the American Le Mans Series in 2010-11 with little success, and made a disastrous one-off Le Mans assault in 2010.

RENAULT UK CLIO CUP

Bushell back to fight for Clio Cup title



FORMER RENAULT UK Clio Cup champion Mike Bushell will remain in the series this season with the frontrunning Team Pyro squad.

Bushell returned to Clios last year after a season in the British Touring Car Championship in 2015, and narrowly missed out on the title to Ant Whorton-Eales.

"I'm starting 2017 physically fitter and hungrier than ever for success," said Bushell.

"I make no secret about how much I love driving these cars and I'm just looking forward now to it all beginning again."

Meanwhile, Ginetta Junior team-mates Kyle Hornby and Cameron Roberts will graduate to the Clio Cup under the 20Ten Racing with Pyro banner.

The pair finished 13th and 14th in the Ginetta standings last year with the JHR Developments team.

GINETTA GT4 SUPERCUP

Gamble brothers to race with JHR

FORMER GINETTA GT5 CHALLENGE champion George Gamble will return to racing this season in the Ginetta GT4 Supercup with JHR Developments.

Gamble hasn't had a full-time drive since his 2014 GT5 title season, but the 20-year-old impressed team boss Steve Hunter in testing at Brands Hatch last week. "I think we can be quite confident to say he will be on the pace at the first race," said Hunter. "He's very good to work with – his input is exceptional."

Gamble's younger brother Tom will contest the full Ginetta Junior schedule after a part-season with HHC Motorsport last season.

"I'm really, really happy to get them both on board," said Hunter. "Tom's only done half a year in Juniors, so he will do a full season and then graduate in either G55s or Formula 4."



BRSCCALFAROME0

Ex-Tarquini 156 back in Alfa series

AN EX-GABRIELE TARQUINI 156 S2000 will return to the BRSCC Alfa Romeo field at Oulton Park this weekend with double champion Neil Smith driving.

The N.Technology built-car, chassis 10, won six races in the 2004 European Touring Car Championship with Tarquini behind the wheel, before Gary Ayles's A-Tech squad ran it in the 2007 British Touring Car Championship.

Smith, Alfa champion in 2004 and '08, has spent the past few years racing his Super

Touring 156 in the HSCC Super Touring Series. He returns to BRSCC Alfas for the first time since 2013.

"It's a series I've been competitive in and most of my lap records still stand from the last time I was in BRSCC, so it will be nice to see some old faces again," he said.

"I haven't personally raced the S2000 car for three or four years, so I may be a little bit rusty, but it will be nice to get back in it and hopefully we'll be on the pace straight away."

IN BRIEF



ZAMPARELLI TO TRY OUT BRITCAR

Porsche Carrera Cup GB frontrunner Dino Zamparelli will dovetail another Porsche campaign with selected Britcar Endurance Championship outings. He will share an FF Corse Ferrari 458 Challenge with Mike Wilds (above) in the opening two rounds of the season.

WEBSTER GRADUATES TO SUPERCUP

Josh Webster will graduate to the Porsche Supercup this season. The 2014 Carrera Cup GB champion has signed a deal with Fach Auto Tech, pitching him against Carrera Cup rival Dan Cammish at Lechner Racing. He had sporadic outings last year after a Blancpain deal fell through.

HARPER TO REMAIN WITH DOUGLAS

Ginetta Junior rookie class champion Daniel Harper will remain with the Douglas Motorsport squad in the series this year. The 16-year old finished fifth in the standings in 2016, with wins at Donington and Snetterton.

BELL IN JCW SWITCH

Scottish Mini Cooper Cup champion Paul Bell will graduate to the Mini Challenge JCW Championship this season with Aaron Reeve Motorsport. The 42-year old bought the car following a prize test with Team Dynamics.

COWLEY'S EVENTFUL DONINGTON MEET

750 Formula frontrunner Bill Cowley had to rush home to his native Doncaster to retrieve parts for his gearbox after a problem in his first race at Donington Park last weekend. Cowley finished a close second in race one despite stalling on the grid, then finished second with his repaired car in race two.

HARMER MAKES SUCCESSFUL COMEBACK

Ex-Formula First driver Jon Harmer celebrated his first competitive outing in 25 years by recording a stunning double victory in the Caterham Sigma category at Oulton Park last weekend (below). The 52-year old said a full season is likely, although damage or a retirement could put his participation in the championship at risk.



FF1600

Scots bolster FF1600 National field

FORMER BRITISH F4 DRIVER Ross Martin will return to racing this season with a dual campaign in Scottish and National Formula Ford.

The Allan McNish protege contested the first three Formula 4 rounds of 2016 with Fortec Motorsport (below) as a prize for winning the Formula Kart Stars title the previous season, but could not raise the

budget to continue when the kart category folded.

Martin will be entered by FF1600 stalwart Graham Brunton Racing.

"My goal is to win the Scottish Championship," he said. "I'm not going to do all the National races, but I would like to make a name for myself."

Meanwhile, reigning Scottish Formula Ford 1600

champion Neil Maclennan will step up to the BRSCC National championship for 2017 with Cliff Dempsey Racing.

Maclennan, who impressed at the Mazda Road to Indy Shootout in the US after earning a ticket through his Scottish title success, will drive a Ray GR08 for the first two rounds and a Ray GR15 for the remainder of the season.



MSA

Closed-road events get UK boost

MOTORSPORT ORGANISERS WISHING to use public roads in England and Wales have been given a boost thanks to a putative amendment to the Road Traffic Act, provided it receives no objections in Parliament.

Previously, organisers had to secure an Act of Parliament to stage events on closed roads, and they rarely obtained one.

But subject to approval from the Commons and the Lords, from April 2017 onwards the right to issue a permit for closed roads will

lie with the Motor Sports Association, the governing body for motorsport in the UK.

If the amendment receives no objections in Parliament, it will be passed into law.

An MSA spokesperson said: "The MSA welcomes this latest development in its long-running campaign to bring closed-road motorsport to mainland Britain.

"We anticipate and look forward to making a much fuller statement when the legislative process is fully complete."



BRITISH GT

MORRIS/ PARFITT BACK TO BRITISH GT

SEB MORRIS IS PLANNING to add a sportscar programme in Germany to his assault on this year's British GT Championship alongside Rick Parfitt Jr.

Morris and Parfitt will return to British GT for a second season aboard a Team Parker Racing Bentley Continental GT, after finishing third in the standings last year.

They complete TPR's two-car, factory-assisted Bentley GT3 effort alongside Callum MacLeod and Ian Loggie.

Morris, who also starred in January's Daytona 24 Hours by leading the race outright on his Sunoco prize drive, said he was excited to fight for the British title but also wanted to add a European programme.

"British GT will be very tight this year but we're going in looking at winning the championship – anything else would fall short for us really," said Morris.

"In addition I'm working on a VLN programme, and we're in talks about that. It's a popular series and puts you on a stage in front of manufacturers. If you can go over there and perform it opens doors to works teams for events like the Nurburgring 24 Hours."

BLYTON PARK

Ginetta takes over Blyton

BLYTON PARK COULD BE IN LINE FOR AN overhaul after British manufacturer Ginetta Cars bought the lease to operate the venue.

Ginetta has been in negotiations with Blyton Park founder Richard Usher since last November, and last week concluded a deal to buy the 30-year lease of the popular Lincolnshire track.

Blyton – a former RAF base – was built by Usher in 2003 and formally opened as a business in '11. The grounds incorporate a 1.5-mile Tarmac track able to run up to 10 configurations, as well as an MSA-approved rallycross circuit.

While Blyton is not licensed to hold circuit racing, it does host rounds of the British Sprint Championship, as well as BTRDA Rallycross events.

Ginetta has used the venue for its own corporate testing and development in recent years, but does not plan to close the venue to the public or make it an 'exclusive' test track.

Ginetta commercial director Nick Portlock said: "Ginetta is one of the circuit's best customers, so it made complete sense to take that relationship a step further and complete the purchase of the track.

"Blyton has a very successful business model

and a great core of customers, so we don't want to mess around with that.

"What we'll do now is take stock and start to assess ways where we can invest to make the customer experience better. We'll look at things such as if the facilities need upgrading or if the track or paddocks need tidying up, then act on those.

"Yes, it does give us access to a very useful race circuit for testing and development, and that is a benefit of the deal, but we'll only conduct our own activities when we can fit them in around the circuit's business."

Usher said it would be unlikely that the venue would play host to race meetings after the deal.

He added: "Blyton is not an MSA-licensed race venue, and I don't think it will become one under Ginetta's ownership.

"There are plenty of race tracks and racing events in the UK, and not many make money, whereas there's a shortage of places like Blyton where you can come and practise and learn in a non-pressured environment. We also cater for a lot of junior drivers, who need to test without age restrictions. Making Blyton into a licensed race venue would be to the detriment of that."

VDEV

F4 runner-up Fielding plots more V de V after Barcelona victory

BRITISH F4 RUNNER-UP Sennan Fielding took a victory in his first V de V Championship race after securing a last-minute deal to drive a Simpson Motorsport Ginetta G57 at Barcelona last weekend.

Fielding shared the car with factory driver Charlie Robertson and GT4 Supercup Am champion Colin White. The trio recovered from an

off-track moment for White in the early stages to take the win.

"I just went out there to show what I can do, and at this point in my career I've got to show I can jump in whatever opportunity I get and get a result," said Fielding.

"Unfortunately when Colin was in the gravel in his stint and we were four or five laps down, we knew it was going to

be extremely hard to get a good result. But hopefully everyone is happy with my performance."

Fielding now hopes to complete the full season.

"All in all it was a great weekend," he said. "This all came about very last minute and the car lived up to expectations. I would love to do the full season since the car was awesome."



Fielding won V de V opener in a G57

EBREY



Surtees remembered in style at Goodwood

By Marcus Pye, the voice of club racing

[@Autosport](#)

SEVEN WEEKS AFTER THE GLORIOUS CACOPHONY OF Formula 5000 V8 engines at New Zealand's Bruce McLaren Motorsport Park, my racing season kicked off in earnest at Goodwood, where the Members' Meeting counter clicked to 75 with the fourth of the modern epoch. It's the first of two successive landmark years for host Lord March, with the 25th Festival of Speed and 20th Revival upcoming this summer. In 2018, the 70th anniversary of the motor course's opening, the 76th MM will be the 50th event of its second heyday.

Fifty-seven years to the day after the 39th and most celebrated of the 71 period MMs, during which Jim Clark scored his first single-seater race victory in one of Colin Chapman's Formula Junior Type 18s, narrowly defeating four-wheeled debutant John Surtees, *Il Grande John* was fondly remembered. Richard Attwood, who raced a sister car at Goodwood at the end of 1960, did a lap of honour in the Surtees car and was the first to honour the late driver.

Lord March's lap in a broad-arrowed Team Surtees Lola T70 Spyder before the sports-prototype curtain closer that carried John's name remembered the 1964 world champion, who won the inaugural Can-Am title two years later. Meanwhile, the sister T70 SL70/2 that David Hobbs debuted at Goodwood in '65 – finishing third in the Lavant Cup race with a 4.7-litre Ford engine – went under the hammer at the Bonhams sale there.

Other winners on March 19 1960 were Paul Fletcher (AC Ace-Bristol), RD Paine (Frazer Nash Mille Miglia), CJ Parkinson (Austin A40), Michael Salmon (Jaguar D-type XKD 504), James van Sickle (Lotus 11) and John Venner-Pack (Austin-Healey Sprite). JV-P's success and the event's humble roots were recalled by the Weslake Cup race for little GT cars

powered by BMC A-series engines, with cylinder heads designed by Harry Weslake. It provided arguably the meeting's finest racing, as young hotshoes James Colburn and Richard Woolmer – who we'd watched, spellbound, wrestling the unique HWM-Cadillac to victory at last September's Revival – explored every inch of the track.

The 68th MM of 1966 was the other first-heyday meeting that fell on March 19. Nick Brittan (Hillman Imp), John Bromilow (DRW), Tony Flory (Elva Courier), Chris Lawrence (Morgan SLR), Doc Merfield (Ford Cortina V8), future Lotus F1 racer John Miles (Lotus Elan), Tommy Weber (Lotus-BMW 23) and Chris Williams (Brabham BT18) were hailed as winners that day, when Derek Bell, Holman 'Les' Blackburn, Roger Heavens, John Markey, Max Mosley and Ted Whitbourn (later an FF1600 stalwart) also competed. Intriguingly, Williams's F3 lap record of 1m27.2s was three seconds slower than Andrew Hibberd's on Saturday, although tyres are different, suspension and engines optimised, testing more regular and track surface immeasurably better today.

Mikes Whitaker's and Jordan's Graham Hill Trophy GT victory in the former's Nigel Reuben-fettled TVR Griffith – Grantura Engineering's prototype 400 model – was a turn-up for the books. Wire-wheeled BFR 400B has quite a history: 14th in the 1965 Whitsun Trophy with Tommy Entwistle, raced by Ted Worswick and Keith Aitchison elsewhere, hillclimbed at St Ursanne les Rangiers in Switzerland, road tested (in 200 spec) by John Bolster for Autosport, it was subsequently autocrossed by John Akers and Gillian Fortescue-Thomas (now Goldsmith), a factory Ford Escort racer alongside Gerry Marshall in the early '70s and now a renowned driver coach. 🏆



RETENMAIER MASERATI AT MEMBERS' MEETING

The ex-Luigi Villorosi/Giuseppe Farina Maserati 8CL was a magnet for marque fanatics at Goodwood, although German Josef-Otto Rettenmaier withdrew it after Varzi Trophy practice. Completed in 1940, Scuderia Milan's chassis 3035 finished seventh in the 1946 Indianapolis 500 (Villorosi) and won at Mar de Plata in '48 (Farina).



BERGER BACK IN A BIMMER

Former McLaren and Ferrari Formula 1 driver Gerhard Berger was reunited with one of the iconic Group A Schnitzer BMW 635CSi machines at Goodwood. Berger, the winner of the 1985 Spa 24 Hours alongside Roberto Ravaglia and Marc Surer in the super-coupe, led the earlier split of the high-speed demonstration for the 1980s touring cars.



DONINGTON PARK
750MC MARCH 18-19

Burgess scores double in Bikesports

STEVEN BURGESS STARRED WITH A double Bikesports win as the 750 Motor Club season began in wet conditions.

Chris Preen had an awful getaway from pole in the first Radical-dominated Bikesports race, allowing Burgess to escape to victory. But this woe was relatively mild compared with that suffered by reigning champion Philip Knibb. An ECU issue with his SR3 forced him into the pitlane on the formation lap, and he rejoined a lap down. Then, while attempting to fight back through the field, he hit Joe Stables at the Old Hairpin, taking both cars out.

Knibb managed to take a podium in the second race behind double winner Burgess and Stables, who made a spectacular recovery from 22nd to second.

More trouble followed for Knibb in the Roadsports contest. He won the race with Neil Primrose, but was later excluded for the use of illegal tyres, as was the third-placed Lotus Exige S2 of Andrew Rath and Andrew Higginbottom.

This allowed BMW E46 M3 pairing Andy Marston/Brett Evans to take the win ahead of Jamie Sturges's SEAT Leon, while Class B winner Steve Hewson was promoted to third in his Peugeot 106.

Classic Stock Hatch champion Matt

Rozier battled with his two closest rivals from last season in both races. Andrew Thorpe's Citroen AX finished ahead of Rozier's AX in the first, interrupted by a red flag when Jason Watkinson rolled his Fiesta XR2i at McLeans.

Rozier was also second in race two, this time behind Lee Scott's Fiesta, as Matthew Stubington (Peugeot) took advantage of a battle between Edward Cooper and Martin Cayzer to take third.

Eliot Dunmore took a win from pole in the Super Cooper Cup. David Drinkwater took honours in the concurrent BMW 330 Challenge, putting in a last-lap pass

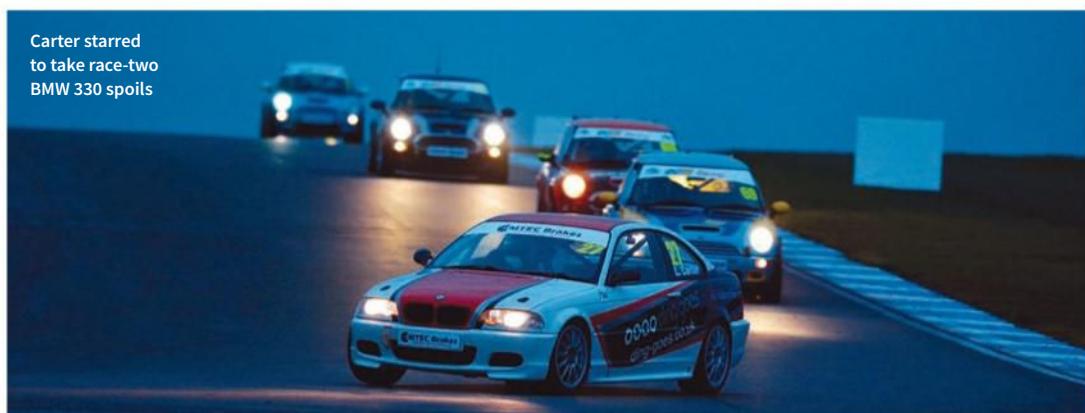
Steven Burgess won both Bikesports races in awful conditions

on Will Sharpe's Mini at the Melbourne hairpin for second overall, with Lewis Carter (BMW) following him past.

In the second race, held in darkness after earlier delays, Carter swept around the outside of Redgate to take the lead from the second row of the grid, and he stayed in front until the chequered flag, with Sharpe top of the Minis.

Paul Smith and his Crossle 9S cruised to victory in the Bernie's V8s/SRGT Challenge after Mike Johns made a poor start from second on the grid. Johns dropped down the field before spinning his Royale out of the race at McLeans.

Carter started to take race-two BMW 330 spoils



ALL PICS: JONES

Berris was out of sight in Armed Forces



Thompson (left) and Rogers clash in Club Enduro



But Smith did not have an easy time of it, as he lost fifth gear after only two laps.

Russell McCarthy missed a chance of a podium in the second race when his MGB GTV8's gearstick snapped off and he had to limp home. Smith made it two out of two, with Gwyn Pollard (Crossle) and Neil Fowler (MGB) following him home.

Polesitters for the two-hour Club Enduro race Rory Hinde/Owen Fitzgerald were excluded from qualifying after their BMW E36 M3 was found to be underweight. But by the end of the race they were battling for second with Chris and Mika Brown's Aston Martin GT4.

While in second, Fitzgerald was given a stop/go penalty for overtaking under yellows. Shortly after he served it, Mika Brown suffered a front-left puncture, which allowed Fitzgerald to retake the position. The setback had enabled the BMW 135d of Neil Primrose and Luke Schlewitz to run clear to victory.

Clive Hudson won the first Sport Specials race from pole. Fellow Eclipse SM1 runner Paul Boyd and Charles Hall (Locost 7) enjoyed a tasty scrap for second, from which Boyd emerged on top. Boyd then jockeyed for the lead with Hudson for the majority of the second race, and came away with the victory.

Kristian White led from the start of the first MR2 race and made it a double victory in race two, undercutting Paul Cook at McLeans before slipping up the inside at Coppice.

Darren Berris (Westfield V8) converted pole position into victory in the Armed Forces Race Challenge, while Andy Ebdon (Caterham) took second after Richard Evans crashed his BMW M3 into the tyre barrier through the Craner Curves.

Robin Gearing was untroubled in the 750 Formula race when his nearest rival Bill Cowley made a bad start. But Cowley's choice of wet-weather tyres proved wise since the track was still drying, and the Cowley MkIV flew back through the field to take second behind the Darvi.

Another poor start by Cowley in race two enabled Gearing to take a second win. Cowley still managed to recover to second, despite a red flag for oil on track putting him in fourth for the restart.

In the newly renamed Historic 750 Formula, Christian Pedersen took victory in his Austin 7. Behind him, Martin Depper and Michael Harvey fought over second for the duration. Depper sealed it at the Old Hairpin on the last lap.

CHRIS STEVENS

RESULTS

BIKESPORTS (BOTH 11 LAPS)

1 Steven Burgess (Radical SR3 RSX);

2 Dominik Jackson (Radical SR3) +11.59s; 3 Stefano Leaney (Radical PR6); 4 Chris Preen (Radical SR3 RS); 5 John Macleod (Radical SR3 RSX); 6 Barry Liversidge (Radical SR3 RSX).

Class winners Brian Caldwell (Radical SR3); Max Windheuser (Spire GT3). **Fastest lap** Burgess 1m43.97s (86.22mph). **Pole Position** Preen.

Starters 23. **RACE 2 1 Burgess;** 2 Joe Stables (Radical PR6) +28.94s; 3 Philip Knibb (Radical SR3 RSX); 4 Macleod; 5 Elliot Goodman (Radical SR3 RSX); 6 Jackson. **CW** Stables; Windheuser. **FL** Burgess 1m32.48s (96.93mph). **P** Preen. **S** 22.

ROADSPORTS (19 LAPS) 1 Andy

Marston/Brett Evans (BMW E46 M3);

2 Jamie Sturges (SEAT Leon Eurocup) +25.05s; 3 Steve Hewson (Peugeot 106 GTi); 4 Neal Martin (Honda Civic); 5 Petteri Jokinen (Mini Cooper S); 6 Matt Faizey (Porsche 968). **CW** Hewson; Jokinen; Sam McKee (BMW E36 328i). **FL** Faizey 1m57.89s (76.04mph). **P** Marston/Evans. **S** 39.

CLASSIC STOCK HATCH (3 LAPS)

1 Andrew Thorpe (Citroen AX GTi);

2 Matt Rozier (Peugeot 205 GTi) +0.52s; 3 Lee Scott (Ford Fiesta XR2i); 4 Marcus Ward (Fiesta XR2i); 5 Edward Cooper (Vauxhall Nova GSi); 6 Andrew Fellows (Ford Fiesta XR2).

FL Rozier 2m13.83s (66.98mph). **P** Scott. **S** 23. **RACE 2 (8 LAPS)**

1 Scott; 2 Rozier +0.70s; 3 Matthew Stubington (205 GTi); 4 Cooper; 5 Martin Cayzer (Fiesta XR2i); 6 Daniel Fillingham (205 GTi). **FL** Rozier 1m59.10s (75.26mph). **P** Scott. **S** 23.

SUPER COOPER CUP/BMW 330

CHALLENGE (7 LAPS) 1 Eliot

Dunmore (Mini Cooper S); 2 David Drinkwater (BMW 330) +1.78s; 3 Lewis Carter (330); 4 Will Sharpe (Cooper S); 5 Andy Knowlton (Cooper S); 6 Stephen Rose (Cooper S). **CW** Drinkwater. **FL** Carter 2m05.78s (71.27mph). **P** Dunmore. **S** 17. **RACE 2 (7 LAPS) 1 Carter;** 2 Drinkwater +12.98s; 3 Sharpe; 4 Knowlton; 5 Rose; 6 Martyn Hathaway (Cooper S). **CW** Sharpe. **FL** Carter 1m52.68s (79.55mph). **P** Dunmore. **S** 15.

BERNIE'S V8S/SRGT CHALLENGE

(11 LAPS) 1 Paul Smith (Crossle 9S);

2 Neil Fowler (MGB GT) +19.88s; 3 Gwyn Pollard (Crossle 9S); 4 Tim Davis (TVR Tuscan); 5 Andy Todd (Crossle 9S); 6 Stuart Daburn (Tuscan). **CW** Fowler; Matthew Smith (TVR Chimaera); Robert Frost (Dax Tojeiro); Austen Belford (Taydec Mk2). **FL** P Smith 1m44.70s (85.62mph).

P P Smith. **S** 22. **RACE 2 (12 LAPS)**

1 P Smith; 2 Pollard +24.30s; 3 Fowler; 4 Daburn; 5 Russell McCarthy (MGB GTV8); 6 Christopher Ridge (Tuscan). **CW** Fowler; M Smith; Peter

Samuels (MGB GTV8); Belford. **FL** P Smith 1m41.59s (88.24mph). **P** Mike Johns (Royale S2000M). **S** 20.

CLUB ENDURO (57 LAPS) 1 Neil

Primrose/Luke Schlewitz (BMW 135d); 2 Rory Hinde/Owen Fitzgerald (BMW E36 M3) -1 Lap; 3 Chris Brown/Mika Brown (Aston Martin GT4); 4 Thomas Halliwell/Daniel Ludlow (Honda Civic); 5 Carl Readshaw/Daniel Taylor (BMW E46 M3); 6 Jonny MacGregor/Liam Crilly (Mazda RX8). **CW** Halliwell/Ludlow; MacGregor/Crilly. **FL** Fitzgerald 1m44.72s (85.60mph). **P** Andy Marston/Brett Evans (E46 M3). **S** 36.

SPORT SPECIALS (8 LAPS) 1 Clive

Hudson (Eclipse SM1); 2 Paul Boyd (Eclipse SM1) +2.81s; 3 Stephen Ward (Westfield Aerorace); 4 Stuart Adam (ARD SR2); 5 Charles Hall (Locost 7); 6 Anton Landon (Cyana Mk2). **CW** Hall; Micky Scott (MEV MX150R). **FL** Boyd 1m44.21s (86.02mph). **P** Hudson. **S** 26. **RACE 2 (9 LAPS) 1 Boyd;** 2 Hudson +0.99s; 3 Landon; 4 Ward; 5 Hall; 6 Nigel Brown (Sylva Phaser). **CW** Hall; Scott. **FL** Boyd 1m43.11s (86.94mph). **P** Hudson. **S** 24.

MR2 CHAMPIONSHIP (8 LAPS)

1 Kristian White; 2 Ben Rowe +1.42s; 3 Lewis Ward; 4 Wayne Lewis; 5 Darren Aldworth; 6 William Gallacher (Roadster). **CW** Gallacher; Paul Callaway (Mk1). **FL** White 1m55.41s (77.67mph). **P** Shaun Traynor. **S** 37. **RACE 2 (8 LAPS)**

1 White; 2 Rowe +0.76s; 3 Paul Cook; 4 Ward; 5 Aldworth; 6 Gallacher. **CW** Gallacher; Callaway. **FL** Traynor 1m54.24s (78.47mph). **P** White. **S** 35. **ARMED FORCES RACE CHALLENGE (23 LAPS) 1 Darren Berris (Westfield V8);** 2 Andy Ebdon (Caterham Seven 310R) +1m03.13s; 3 Andrew Stacey (Mini Cooper S); 4 Darren Smeed (Honda Integra DC2); 5 Matty Taylor (BMW Compact); 6 Mark Inman (Vauxhall VX220). **CW** Ebdon; Stacey; Inman. **FL** Berris 1m50.27s (81.29mph). **P** Berris. **S** 35.

750 FORMULA (7 LAPS) 1 Robin

Gearing (Darvi P88); 2 Bill Cowley (Cowley MkIV) +1.73s; 3 Mark Glover (Racekits Falcon); 4 Bob Simpson (SS/F 750F); 5 Ian Barley (Racekits Falcon); 6 Peter Bove (Darvi Mk4/5). **CW** Richard Rothery (PRS 1b). **FL** Cowley 1m55.29s (77.75mph). **P** Gearing. **S** 17. **RACE 2 (5 LAPS) 1 Gearing;** 2 Cowley +2.28s; 3 Bove; 4 Glover; 5 Barley; 6 Simpson. **CW** Rothery. **FL** Gearing 1m47.16s (83.65mph). **P** Cowley. **S** 17.

HISTORIC 750 FORMULA (8 LAPS)

1 Christian Pedersen (Austin 7); 2 Martin Depper (Centaur Mk14) +10.24s; 3 Michael Harvey (JB Special); 4 Gregan Thruston (Rawson Special); 5 Ben Myall (Gerrel Mk1); 6 Lyndon Thruston (Historic 750 DNC). **CW** Ian Grant (Austin 7 Pigsty Special). **FL** Pedersen 2m05.27s (71.56mph). **P** Pedersen. **S** 14.

Davies claimed win after
Proietti was penalised



OULTON PARK
BARC MARCH 18

Davies finally breaks 2CV duck

LIEN DAVIES BEGAN HIS 2CV RACING Championship title defence in the best way possible by recording his maiden win in the series at a gloomy Oulton Park. The Gadget Racing man trailed on-the-road winner Sandro Proietti in the first race, but benefited from Proietti's 10-second jumped-start penalty to secure maximum points.

Having lost ground early on following a tardy start from pole, Davies forced himself back into contention – despite dropping to one cylinder on the approach to Cascades – with a daring overtake on eventual runner-up Nick Crispin into Lodge. Unbeknown to Davies, this became the de-facto lead with Proietti's penalty and one he kept till the end.

Proietti was relegated to fifth at the finish, one spot behind Julie Walford, who agonisingly lost a podium at Lodge on the final lap to Chris Yates.

Remarkably, it was Davies's first-ever win in 2CV racing and the Ossett-based driver was elated, if a little bemused. "It's a little bit tainted [the first win] because I won it but not on the track," he said.

Crispin couldn't match the pace of Davies and Proietti but contented himself with an on-the-road third, which became second after the race.

Race two was a more subdued affair, with Matthew Hollis taking an easy lights-to-flag victory amid a fresh rain shower ahead of Davies's team-mate –



in the same car – Ainslie Bousfield, with Steven Walford surviving Luca Proietti's fightback to claim a deserved third.

Ex-Formula First ace Jon Harmer celebrated his first race in 25 years by winning both Caterham Graduates Sigma/Classic races. A perfect start launched Harmer from fourth to the lead into Old Hall, and he fended off a spirited fightback from polesitter Rui Ferreira to claim victory by just under two seconds.

The pair were hardly separated in an enthralling race two as Ferreira desperately tried in vain to find a way by. Harmer pipped his rival to the flag by just 0.1s.

Graeme Smith narrowly missed out on a clean sweep in the Classic class, with Robin Webb taking the second race win.

Rose collected CNC
Heads honours in
his glorious Saker

Glenn Burtenshaw lost a dominant on-track victory in the first of the Super/Mega races due to a jumped start. John Benfield inherited the win despite suffering a late spin at Knickerbrook, with Burtenshaw and Declan Dolan completing the podium.

Burtenshaw made amends in a largely professional second race, beating Dolan and Benfield to the win. Toby Briant took a brace of Super class victories.

Oliver Gibson pulled off a daring late-braking move on Harry Cramer on the inside of Old Hall to win a thrilling first Sigmax race, with Nick Whitehead third.

Whitehead was denied the race two win after receiving a 10-second penalty for blocking Gibson as he elbowed his way into the lead at Druids. This gave James Russell the win from Jamie Ellwood and Cramer.

CNC Heads Sports/Saloon champion Paul Rose recovered from a slow getaway to cruise to overall victory in his Saker, while second-placed Joe Spencer (Stuart Taylor Locosaki) took Class B. Roddie Paterson won Class C in his Caterham.

In the D/E/F classes, Garry Wardle profited from a perfect start in his Porsche 997 to ease to a 3.46s win ahead of the four-wheel-drive Subaru Impreza of Oliver Thomas. Steven Hibbert (Lotus Elise) and Simon Sheridan (Honda Civic) were the other class winners.

STEPHEN BRUNSDON

RESULTS

2CV CLASSIC (7 LAPS) 1 Lien

Davies; 2 Nick Crispin +2.486s; 3 Chris Yates; 4 Julie Walford; 5 Sandro Proietti; 6 Martin Riman.

Fastest lap Brian Heerey 2m50.398s (56.87mph). **Pole** Davies. **Starters** 18. **RACE 2 (6**

LAPS) 1 Matthew Hollis; 2 Ainslie Bousfield +1.765s; 3 Steven Walford; 4 Luca Proietti; 5 Crispin; 6 Richard Hollis. **FL** Heerey 2m50.000s (57.00mph). **P** Hollis. **S** 19.

CATERHAM GRADUATES SIGMA/CLASSIC (10 LAPS) 1 Jon

Harmer; 2 Rui Ferreira +1.864s; 3 Ben Winrow; 4 Gary Smith; 5 Julian Viggars; 6 Jonathan Miller. **Class winner** Graeme Smith (Classic).

FL Ferreira 2m13.776s (72.44 mph). **P** Ferreira. **S** 20. **RACE 2 (7 LAPS)**

1 Harmer; 2 Ferreira +0.134s; 3 Viggars; 4 Miller; 5 Gary Smith; 6 Julian Willis. **CW** Robin Webb (Classic). **FL** Ferreira 2m12.232s (73.28mph). **P** Ferreira. **S** 18.

GRADUATES SUPER/MEGA (10 LAPS) 1 John Benfield (Mega);

2 Glenn Burtenshaw (Mega) +6.872s; 3 Declan Dolan (Mega); 4 Roger Ford (Mega); 5 Toby Briant (Super); 6 Andy Molsom (Super). **CW** Briant.

FL Burtenshaw 2m11.832s (73.51mph). **P** Dolan. **S** 18. **RACE 2 (8 LAPS) 1 Burtenshaw;** 2 Dolan +0.364s; 3 Benfield; 4 Briant; 5 Ford; 6 Ian Noble (Mega).

CW Briant. **FL** Dolan 2m09.436s (74.87mph). **P** Dolan. **S** 18.

CATERHAM GRADUATES SIGMA (10 LAPS) 1 Oliver Gibson;

2 Harry Cramer +2.247s; 3 Nick Whitehead; 4 Jamie Ellwood; 5 Jamie Winrow; 6 Martin Collier. **FL** Whitehead 2m08.365s (75.49mph). **P** Winrow.

S 18. **RACE 2 (8 LAPS) 1 James Russell;** 2 Ellwood +1.808s; 3 Cramer; 4 Gibson; 5 Whitehead; 6 Nicholas Haryett. **FL** Russell 2m10.031s (74.52mph). **P** Winrow. **S** 17.

CNC HEADS SPORTS/SALOONS

A/B/C (11 LAPS) 1 Paul Rose

(Saker RAPX S1-400); 2 Joe Spencer (Stuart Taylor Locosaki) +16.162s; 3 Roddie Paterson (Caterham R400); 4 David Harvey (Locosaki 1400); 5 Paul Woolfitt (Lotus Exige); 6 Matt Spark (Caterham C400). **CW** Spencer; Paterson. **FL** Rose 1m53.763s (85.18 mph). **P** Rose. **S** 18.

CNC HEADS D/E/F (10 LAPS)

1 Garry Wardle (Porsche 997); 2 Oliver Thomas (Subaru Impreza) +3.467s; 3 Alistair Stenhouse (BMW E36 M3); 4 Ian Burrows (Toyota Celica); 5 Steven Hibbert (Lotus Sport Elise); 6 Steve Rowles (Honda Integra Type R). **CW** Hibbert; Simon Sheridan (Honda Civic). **FL** Wardle 1m57.842s (82.23mph). **P** Wardle. **S** 24.



Denning and McFadden share the spoils

JOHN DENNING AND SHANE McFADDEN (pictured) shared the honours in the Fiesta STs on the opening weekend for the Mondello Park Sports Club.

Denning cruised to an easy win in the first race from Murray Motorsport team-mates Dave Maguire and Hugh Grennan, while 16-year-old William Kellett impressed with seventh on his class debut.

In a drier race two, ex-karter McFadden dominated, taking advantage of a reversed-top-six grid that put him on the front row. A mid-race safety-car intervention didn't cause the Blackchurch-run driver any drama, easing away to win as he pleased.

Team-mate Kevin Doran followed McFadden home, with 2016 champion Maguire completing the podium in third and Stephen Kirwan charging to fourth from ninth on the grid.

In difficult conditions, Joe Power took the Formula Vee qualifier from Dublin DJ Luke O'Faolain, after a mid-race stoppage. Conor Molloy was third, from Jack Byrne and Gavin Buckley.

Colm Blackburn drove superbly in the final, grabbing the lead off the line and easing away to take an impressive win. Perennial rivals Ray Moore and Dan Polley ended their race in the gravel at Turn 1, leaving Kevin Grogan with the task of tracking down Blackburn. At the flag he was right on Blackburn's gearbox, with Justin Costello in third making it an all-Leastone podium.

Reigning champion Paul O'Brien led the Irish Legends grid away for race one, but Niki Meredith snatched the lead before half distance and eased away for the win. Ian Conroy completed the podium, while tin-top expert Kevin Doran ran fifth on his

debut before a last-lap spin dropped him to seventh.

In race two, Meredith was again untouchable, with Conroy getting the better of O'Brien for second. O'Brien redeemed himself with victory in race three, Meredith keeping him honest throughout with Conroy well adrift in third.

Darren Lawler led the Zetec Fiesta pack away from pole and hung on for an impressive win, despite the best efforts of Mark O'Donoghue, the pair crossing the line side by side. Class returnee Barry Barrable completed the podium in a car he took as a trade-in during the week.

In race two, O'Donoghue made the break out front, while Lawler held the pack back. Reigning champion Phil Lawless charged through to second and slashed the gap to the leader before time ran out. Owen Purcell was next, from Adam Johnston and multiple Stryker champion Alan Watkins.

Tommy Byrne's Toyota Celica was first across the line in Future Classics, with Richie Kearney's beautiful Martini-liveried Alfa Romeo 155 running him close. Time after time Kearney got alongside, but had no answer to the straight-line speed of the Toyota. Ken Byrne was a distant third from 2016 champion Timmy Duggan, with Dan Byrne debuting his FWD Corolla in fifth.

Alan Auerbach made a winning return to the resurgent Stryker class, comfortably heading home polesitter Des Bruton and Andy D'Alton.

Race two was no different, with Auerbach almost eight seconds to the good at the flag. Dave Griffin finished third at the line.

LEO NULTY

RESULTS

FIESTA ST (11 LAPS) 1 John Denning;

2 Dave Maguire +0.856s; 3 Hugh Grennan; 4 Rod McGovern; 5 Shane McFadden; 6 Kevin Doran. **Fastest lap** McGovern 1m11.334s (58.01mph). **Pole** Denning. **Starters** 23.

RACE 2 (13 LAPS) 1 McFadden; 2 Doran +4.765s; 3 Maguire; 4 Stephen Kirwan; 5 McGovern; 6 Darragh McMullen. **FL** McFadden 1m06.729s (62.02mph). **P** Doran. **S** 23.

FORMULA VEE QUALIFYING RACE (3 LAPS)

1 Joe Power (Leystone); 2 Luke O'Faolain (Sheane) +0.931s; 3 Conor Molloy (Leystone); 4 Jack Byrne (Sheane); 5 Gavin Buckley (Sheane); 6 Brandon Polley (Sheane). **FL** Byrne 1m16.623s (54.01mph). **P** Power. **S** 13.

RACE 2 (7 LAPS) 1 Colm Blackburn (Leystone); 2 Kevin Grogan (Leystone)

+0.646s; 3 Justin Costello (Leystone); 4 Anthony Cross (Sheane); 5 Stephen Morrin (Leystone); 6 Power. **FL** Blackburn 1m02.763s (65.94mph). **P** Dan Polley (Sheane). **S** 18.

LEGENDS (7 LAPS) 1 Niki Meredith;

2 Paul O'Brien +3.944s; 3 Ian Conroy; 4 Gordon Brown; 5 Jonathan Taylor; 6 Gary Humphries. **FL** Meredith 1m18.188s (52.93mph). **P** O'Brien. **S** 8.

RACE 2 (7 LAPS) 1 Meredith; 2 Conroy +2.657s; 3 O'Brien; 4 Taylor; 5 Humphries; 6 Brown. **FL** Conroy 1m16.244s (54.28mph).

P Meredith. **S** 8. **RACE 3 (5 LAPS) 1 O'Brien;** 2 Meredith +0.546s; 3 Conroy; 4 Brown; no other finishers. **FL** Meredith 1m04.281s (64.38mph). **P** Meredith. **S** 5.

FIESTA ZETEC (10 LAPS) 1 Darren Lawler;

2 Mark O'Donoghue +0.030s; 3 Barry Barrable; 4 Philip Lawless; 5 Roy Tobin; 6 Alan Watkins. **FL** Lawler 1m17.435s

(53.44mph). **P** Lawler. **S** 21.

RACE 2 (13 LAPS) 1 O'Donoghue; 2 Lawless +4.271s; 3 Owen Purcell; 4 Adam Johnston; 5 Watkins; 6 Barrable. **FL** Thomas Mulready 1m12.236s (57.29mph). **P** O'Donoghue. **S** 21.

FUTURE CLASSICS (13 LAPS) 1 Tommy Byrne (Toyota Celica); 2 Richard Kearney (Alfa Romeo 155) +0.464s; 3 Ken Byrne (Toyota Celica); 4 Timothy Duggan (SEAT Ibiza Cooper); 5 Daniel Byrne (Toyota Corolla); 6 David Walsh (Mitsubishi FTO). **FL** T Byrne 1m11.181s (58.14mph). **P** T Byrne. **S** 19.

STRYKERS (3 LAPS) 1 Alan Auerbach; 2 Des Bruton +7.662s; 3 Andrew D'Alton; 4 Des Meehan; 5 Roger Welaratne; 6 Paul Yeomans. **FL** Auerbach 1m12.796s (56.85mph). **P** Bruton. **S** 15. **RACE 2 (15 LAPS) 1 Auerbach;** 2 Bruton +7.747s; 3 Dave Griffin; 4 Greg Kelly; 5 D'Alton; 6 Yeomans. **FL** Auerbach 1m02.348s (66.38mph). **P** Griffin. **S** 15.

The saviour of the Silverstone 24 Hours

Britain's longest race has had a shaky history. But it's been on the up since it became part of the Creventic organisation's calendar

By Robert Ladbrook, Special Correspondent

[@LaddersMN](#)



READ

The past few years haven't been kind to Britain's longest endurance race, but the Silverstone 24 Hours is now on an upward curve and is starting to show the potential to again be one of the biggest events on the UK's racing calendar.

Under the ownership of the ultra-successful Creventic organisation, and run to a new format, the twice-around-the-clock race now appears to be on a stable footing for the first time in almost a decade. Teams and drivers are coming back, and next week's event is expected to feature a grid of more than 40 cars.

It's a very different situation from a few seasons ago when the event – then running under its original title of the Britcar 24 Hours – fought a constant battle against noise regulations and local residents. The rows were nothing new, having been going on for years, but the situation reached a head in 2014 when the race was cancelled after Whittlebury Parish Council withdrew its permission on noise grounds. It was unquestionably the lowest point in the 24 Hours' 13-year history.

Britcar founder James Tucker had a vision to bring 24-hour GT racing to Britain, and delivered in 2005 when he founded the event. Tucker's persistence got the race through the darkest days of the global financial crisis relatively unscathed – barring a reduction to a six-hour bout for '09 – but since '12 it had been on a worrying downward slope.

Rising circuit-hire costs pushed entry fees up, the then-favourable exchange rates made it more cost-effective to race abroad, and entries began to drop off. In 2013 the race was shortened to a 1000km event, and then came the cancellation the following year. Tucker knew he'd had enough.

He restored the full 24 hours in 2015, but issues were raised when just six cars entered the top classes for GT3, GT2 and sports-prototypes. Changes were needed, and Tucker saw the chance to sell up ahead of the '16 event, with Creventic taking over organisation of the race.

With that change in management came a rebranding of the Silverstone 24 Hours, as Creventic saw the chance to make it a showpiece for its new 24H Touring Car Endurance Series. The Silverstone 24 Hours is no longer a standalone event – it is now part of something much bigger.

“Amateurs are a huge part of sportscar and endurance racing. We are the only outlet”

But first off, who and what is Creventic? The Dutch operation was founded in 2005 by racing drivers Ivo Breukers and Gerrie Willems, who dreamed of hosting a major event at the Dubai Autodrome. Through them the Dubai 24 Hours was born in '06 and has become a regular – and major – fixture in the annual sportscar calendar. They formed Creventic (standing for CReative-EVENT-IC) and it has since blossomed into a global endurance-racing organiser and promoter. Its events are built around, and targeted at, amateurs, with the USP of offering gentleman drivers the chance to race at world-class venues in either 12 or 24-hour formats, something that was previously the preserve of professional and world championships.

“The key thing for us is that we were founded by racers, for racers,” says Creventic's Natasha Mark. “Our racing is built around the amateur drivers. This is because there are so many opportunities out there for professional drivers to do big-name races at big venues, but there aren't for the amateurs, and they are a huge part of sportscar and endurance racing. We are the only outlet for something like this.

“The motto of the company has always been ‘never let an opportunity slip away’, so every time there's been a chance to run a new race somewhere different, we've taken it. Our first >>



Rollcentre Racing's M3 won in 2016

READ



“One of the great things about endurance racing is the atmosphere”

ever race was a full 24-hour event in Dubai, which was a pretty brave thing to try to do. It took a lot of planning and logistical work, but also a lot of trust and support from teams who were having to sign cars over to us for over a month for transporting and such. They saw the potential in what we could do.”

A decade later, Creventic is now running three championships: the full 24H Endurance Series (see sidebar), the Touring Endurance Series and the new-for-2017 LMP3-based Prototype Endurance Series. Races are run all over Europe and in the Middle East, as well as the United States with a calendar expansion to Austin’s Circuit of the Americas.

“It’s grown faster than any of us could predict,” adds Mark. “I think it helps that our founders and many of our officials race themselves, so they have seen both sides of the events, and we also try to run multiple classes as bigger grids keep the entry fees down for everybody.”

So why did Creventic take over the Britcar 24 Hours? The short answer is that it saw the potential of the event. “We had a number of chances to run races at different circuits, but you can only make a single championship so long,” explains Mark. “We wanted to do something different to the GT-led 24H Series. When we looked at our class structure, the base of Creventic was always the touring car classes. They are the cheapest to run and the most accessible. When we first started running events, we had very few GT3 cars, but since they’ve come in they’ve taken the spotlight from the touring classes.

“When the conversations started about running the Silverstone race, we had an idea to do something different, and everything just fitted.”

With Silverstone’s noise limits already making it difficult to run the higher-powered classes for 24 hours, the move to make the event touring car-only was a natural one. And it gave Creventic the chance to kickstart the touring car-focused series. Silverstone last year acted as a showpiece event, followed by two further rounds at the Slovakia Ring and Brno.

With Creventic already having a strong following, a 41-car grid lined up for the 2016 event. This year the Silverstone race again kicks off the Touring Car Series, which now has a five-round calendar. The race runs across seven classes, ranging from production saloons to diesel-powered cars, and TCR-spec machines up to GT4 cars.

Dubai 24 Hours
kicked off the 2017
Endurance Series



GT racing gives amateurs a fair crack of the whip

WHILE CREVENTIC'S TOURING Car Series is just finding its feet, the 24H Endurance Series is thriving.

Already two rounds in – the Dubai 24 Hours and the Mugello 12 Hours (above) – and grids are 50-plus across an even mix of GT3, GT4 and touring classes. At a time when GT and sportscar racing is becoming ever-more professional as younger drivers make the switch out of single-seaters in an effort to forge a career, Creventic offers a fresh option.

At the top, the series does have factory-affiliated teams, but the bulk of entries are Pro-Am and customer squads.

One driver who used Creventic as a springboard to full factory GT racing is Briton Tom Onslow-Cole, who will do the entire 24H series this year with the Ram Racing Mercedes team, but also has factory drives lined up with BMW in Germany.

“Creventic was one of the first series I did when I wanted to move from touring cars into GTs, and it was mainly due to the fact

that the teams gave me the opportunity to have a go,” he says. “It’s wonderfully open in that respect. You can be up against full pro factory drivers, right down to near-total amateurs.

“The racing taught me a lot – because of the performance differential up and down the grid, you’re always overtaking somebody when you’re in a GT3 car. They balance the field out through fuelling and delta lap times, like in the Touring Series, but in a GT3 car the delta time is actually pretty difficult to hit

as there’s always traffic, so it doesn’t stifle the racing at all.

“There’s also a clever system in place that means amateurs always have a chance. If you’re a Pro-Am or Am-Am driver team, you can run at a lighter weight and be allocated more fuel. As a Pro it’s actually very difficult to win because you get less fuel and burn it faster, as you have to be right on it every lap, whereas the Ams can run for longer at a more comfortable pace and they’re always in the hunt at the finish, and that’s how it should be.”

Last year’s race was won by long-time Britcar 24 Hours supporter Rollcentre Racing’s BMW M3 V8. Team head and driver Martin Short says the change in the race operation has been evident. “What Creventic does very well is organise things and make the race as accessible as possible,” he explains. “They run multiple classes, but manage to keep everything very even and straightforward.

“For example, they don’t run a physical balance-of-performance system, which can force you to fit engine restrictors or change a car’s rideheight or aero, and can add cost and be a pain. Instead they equalise everybody through delta lap times and pitstops.

“Creventic races use standard fuel pumps and you’ll have half a dozen in the pitlane, and your team will have a card allowing a different amount of fuel per stop, ranging from 70 to 120 litres. The idea is if your car is two to three seconds per lap faster, you get allocated less fuel per stop, meaning you have to stop more and the slower cars can run for longer, so it equalises things at the end.

“You’ll also have a strict delta lap time that you cannot break, which keeps all cars within a performance bracket. Last year our BMW had a four-litre engine, which was actually too big for the touring-class rules [which has a limit of up to 3.5 litres]. But instead of turning us away they equalised us in with the GT4 cars, and we stuck to the delta times and ended up winning the race after the leading TCR car dropped out late on with engine failure.

Things like that mean owners don’t have to keep modifying cars, and it allows all sorts of different cars to take part.

“Creventic are also free to innovate as they aren’t governed by a major organisation like the FIA, ACO or SRO. As a result they can try out rules to see what works. They were the first to trial Code 60 [where the field is restricted to 60km/h during an incident, rather than a safety car being deployed], which has now spread around the world.”

Short adds that the amateur focus is also a bonus of the series. “One of the great things about endurance racing is the atmosphere,” he says. “We all get into racing for the sheer enjoyment of it, but often in the top-level series it’s not fun as there’s too much pressure. With this type of racing you get groups of mates doing it and just enjoying taking part. The result for them is the cherry on top, not the be-all and end-all. It’s a refreshing way of going racing.”

What of the future for the Silverstone 24 Hours? Under the Britcar banner it had a troubled time, but Creventic has brought a dose of stability and a fresh approach. “So far the response to the Silverstone race has been great,” says Mark. “It’s a world-famous circuit that teams and drivers want to race on. Plus we have a large proportion of competitors and teams from the UK, so it’s good for them to have a home race.

“Silverstone will definitely be on the calendar for 2018. We do try to rotate races to keep the calendars fresh each season, but I can’t see many not wanting to keep Silverstone as part of the series for the foreseeable future.” ❄

WHAT'S ON

The other battle in F1 this season



WHILE MOST EYES AT ALBERT PARK this weekend are likely to be on the battle for supremacy on track, there will also be a fight for plaudits in the studio.

For Channel 4, the 2017 season is its second covering Formula 1, and on the eve of the Australian Grand Prix pundits Eddie Jordan and David Coulthard have taken the gloves off for round two, as they begin the challenge of following up from a strong debut year.

Jordan brings levity and colour to any table, but his brow furrows when asked how he's going to deal with the rivals, particularly Sky Sports, in a new political climate – particularly in the wake of Liberty's F1 takeover. "I don't want to be critical of the opposition," he says. "I like the personality of Sky but personally I'm totally biased. I just happen to believe our programme is a better programme."

The former team boss says that pay-per-view has made F1 coverage "slightly more elitist". And since Sky will have exclusive rights to show all live

races from 2019 onwards, F1 coverage will not become any less so.

"Stop it, revert, go back to where the fans are because how can you tell a sponsor that they're going to be on a network with about 400,000 or 500,000 people, whereas in the past it was five or six million people?" says Jordan. "It doesn't make sense and that's not going to happen.

"Free-to-air for me is vital and the people at Liberty – despite the fact they've got some equity participation in some of these pay-per-view companies – I would strongly advise against going too far down the same path as Bernie."

While he laments the migration of F1 towards paying platforms under Bernie Ecclestone, Jordan's feeling of unease remains since Liberty owns Virgin Media and has stakes in TimeWarner and Viacom. The company has a vested interest in squeezing money out of F1 coverage across the board by tying up deals with pay channels.

Jordan, Webber and Coulthard will enter second season with C4

Coulthard seems more optimistic about the future, though he avoids the topic of Whisper Films's (the production company owned by the Scot and Jake Humphrey) broadcasting deal reaching its conclusion in 2019.

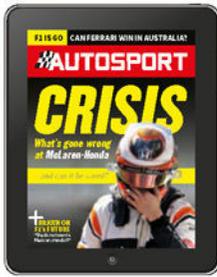
Instead, he praises "a willingness to allow more social interaction" by the new owners, a policy that became clear when teams uploaded testing footage to their respective accounts, as a step in the right direction.

"Watching a driver in his road car heading to the track will quickly become not particularly interesting," says Coulthard. "It needs to be interesting, behind-the-scenes insights into what makes that individual tick or the challenges he faces with people he works with. And that should open opportunities for us as well."

Channel 4 enjoys a younger audience and far more viewers than Sky, whose coverage peaks at the higher end of six figures while C4 easily adds another

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zero to the end of that, so there's a weight on C4 to hold its own in this turbulent climate and make the most of its expiring agreement.

Coulthard is stoic in his approach; expect more of the same sharp, intelligent analysis that C4 offered last year. "Sky has got a fantastic offering of course, and they have a lot of time to fill. We tend to be a lot more, well, time-restricted, so there's a lot more getting to the point," he explains.

Channel 4 has 10 live races to broadcast this year, with highlights of the Australian Grand Prix from 1400 on Sunday. Whether you think the season will be a one-horse race or not, Jordan and Coulthard certainly don't.

"If I didn't feel that, then I would have lost my competitive urge and I don't think I have," says Jordan, who wants C4 to nail its proverbial difficult second album. "I might have lost some years but I haven't lost the competition."

SAMARTH KANAL



HOT ON THE WEB THIS WEEK

YouTube LOOKING BACK, LOOKING FORWARD

Search for: F1 2016: The Most Dramatic Moments

Formula 1's YouTube channel does its best to crank up fans' anticipation in the immediate run-up to this weekend's Australian Grand Prix with this punchy four-minute highlights package from last season. And it does an excellent job, thanks to some pin-sharp editing.



AUSTRALIAN GRAND PRIX

SKY SPORTS F1
Sunday 0600

It's finally time. After all the build-up, all the hype and all the talking, it's now time for the action to take centre stage as the new Formula 1 season begins. Set your alarm clocks for early Sunday morning to find out who *really* has the pace in Melbourne this year and who was just sandbagging in testing.

INTERNATIONAL MOTORSPORT

AUSTRALIAN GP

Formula 1 World
Championship
Rd 1/20
Albert Park,
Victoria, Australia
March 26

Live Sky Sports F1
Sunday 0600 **Highlights**
Channel 4 Sunday 1400

AUSTRALIAN SUPERCARS

Non-championship
Albert Park, Victoria,
Australia
March 24-26

NASCAR CUP

Rd 5/36
Fontana, California, USA
March 26
Live Premier Sports,
Sunday 2000

SUPER TC2000

Rd 1/12
Buenos Aires, Argentina
March 26

MOTOGP

Rd 1/18
Losail, Qatar
March 26
Live BT Sport Sunday 1845



UK MOTORSPORT

SNETTERTON MSVR

March 25
Lotus Elise, Lotus Cup,
Allcomers, Asia Challenge,
Toyota MR2 Classic,
Lotus Sprint

OULTON PARK BRSCC

March 25
FF1600, Porsches,
Ford XRs, Alfa Romeos

KIRKISTOWN 500MRCI

March 25
FF1600 Super Series,
Road Sports, Fiesta

Zetecs, FF1600, Formula
Sheane, Ginetta Juniors

SILVERSTONE BARC

March 25-26
Classic FF1600, Clio Cup,
Hyundai Coupes, Mighty
Minis, MaX5, MGOC,
Junior Saloons, Karts

BRANDS HATCH BARC

March 25-26
Trucks, Pickups, Legends,
Kumho BMWs, Modified
Saloons, Tin Top Saloons,
Intermarque



UNILOCK

UNILOCK

e.cheever

GOODYEAR

gilles villeneuve



FROM THE ARCHIVE

Gilles Villeneuve makes way for co-driver Eddie Cheever during the 1977 Mosport 6 Hours, round six of the World Championship of Makes. Their BMW 320i finished second, from 11th on the grid, behind the Porsche 934/5 of Paul Miller and Ludwig Heimrath.



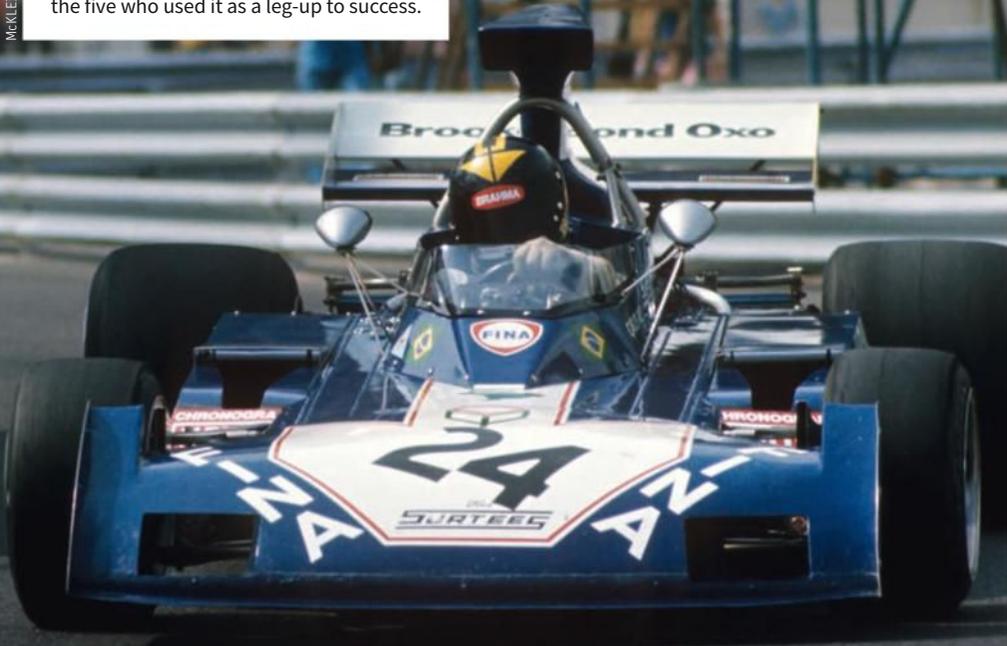
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TOP FIVE

TEAM SURTEES F1 GRADUATES TO WIN A GP

The late John Surtees's team never won a world championship race. But it was a breeding ground for talent who would go on to glory with other squads. Here are the five who used it as a leg-up to success.

MCKLEIN



1 CARLOS PACE

The Brazilian gets our number-one spot owing to his two successive fastest laps – at the Nurburgring Nordschleife and the Osterreichring – in the TS14 during the 1973 season. After a debut F1 campaign in '72 with a Frank Williams-run March, Pace joined Surtees to form a talented line-up with Mike Hailwood. The Brit moved to McLaren for '74, while Pace got poached by Bernie Ecclestone's Brabham midway through that season, and would win the '75 Brazilian GP.



3 JOHN WATSON

'Wattie' had made a strong impression at the wheel of his privateer Brabham in 1974, so there were high hopes for his first full F1 season as a 'works' driver. Second position in the '75 Race of Champions raised hopes, but the combination failed to score a point and Surtees skipped the end-of-season races. Watson landed at Penske, where he would take the first of his five grand prix wins.



2 ALAN JONES

After breaking into F1 in 1975 with Hesketh and then Hill, the future world champion ended up at Surtees in '76. A terrific second place first time out in the Race of Champions proved a false dawn – his best world championship result would be fourth in the famous Japanese GP. Sponsor Durex caused a TV-broadcasting row, with the BBC refusing to televise the Race of Champions! Fags were OK though.



4 JOCHEN MASS

Ford protege Mass, as the reigning European Touring Car champion, joined Surtees to race in Formula 2 for 1973. He got a handful of F1 starts later in the season, and was promoted full-time in '74 alongside Pace. Despite the driver line-up, the TS16 was not a success. Pace left mid-year, while Mass replaced the injured Hailwood late in the campaign at McLaren, for which he would win in Spain in '75.



5 RENE ARNOUX

He'd won the F2 title with Martini in 1977, but their graduation together to F1 was a flop in '78. With Rupert Keegan quitting Surtees and Vittorio Brambilla seriously injured, Arnoux slotted into the TS20 for the final two grands prix. He impressed many, reviving his F1 career, and the rest – multiple wins with Renault and Ferrari, and backmarker notoriety with Ligier – is history.



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