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AUTOSPORT

RAIKKONEN INTERVIEW

THE KIMI ENIGMA

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Under the skin of the enigmatic Raikkonen

KIMI RAIKKONEN IS ONE OF THOSE BLOKES WHO polarises opinion, that people seem to either love or hate. Ironical really, considering he is the epitome of getting on with doing his own thing, not manipulating anything, staying clear of boring politics and not worrying about things he has no control over.

As a private man who can be difficult to read – not to mention one who a proportion of Formula 1 followers think has passed his best – he is, as our cover suggests, F1's enigma. Which is why Ben Anderson's in-depth 14-page feature, beginning on page 14, is probably the best and most-balanced thing you'll ever read about him. Based on interviews with Raikkonen himself and those around him, it properly assesses his role on the F1 grid, and in the paddock.

Ferrari announced a one-year contract extension for Raikkonen on Tuesday – after the last page of our feature had gone to press – but one thing for sure is that he is closer to the end of his F1 career than the beginning, and this week's Autosport also provides a study of a talent at the opposite end of the spectrum. There hasn't been a buzz this big about a young British prospect since Lewis Hamilton was rising the ranks, and Kevin Turner's chat with Lando Norris (p28) tells us all about his cracking recent F1 test with McLaren. It was good timing that the interview coincides with two more wins in the Formula 3 European Championship at Zandvoort (p40).

Funny to think that Norris hadn't even been born when Raikkonen made his Formula Renault UK debut in 1999, and was only a toddler when Kimi first raced a Formula 1 car...



MS

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COVER IMAGE
Sam Bloxham/
LAT Images

COVER STORY

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FREE INSIDE

PERFORMANCE SUPPLEMENT



Our latest guide to doing better on the track... and who can argue with Petter Solberg, Tom Kristensen or coaching maestro Rob Wilson?

NIGEL ROEBUCK

The brave and not so beautiful

THIS BEING SOPORIFIC AUGUST – with deals being done, but the engines stilled – it seemed like a good idea the other day to listen again to Peter Ustinov’s sublime *Grand Prix of Gibraltar*: I may have known it word for word since childhood, but, as with *Fawlty Towers* or *Frasier*, unfailingly it makes me laugh anew.

Recorded off the cuff – Ustinov had no script, preferring to ‘wing it’ – in a single afternoon in New York, it is an affectionately satirical take on grand prix racing, and if it were created 60 years ago, trust me, there remain echoes of it in the Formula 1 of today.

Ustinov, who loved racing all his life, had a genius for mimicry, and here he gives it full rein, gently mocking the team personnel in the paddock, amplifying the perceived characteristics of each nationality. Thus the British are self-effacing, the French laidback, the Italians chaotic, the Germans meticulous, and like that.

At one point the Schnorcedes team manager, Herr Altbauer, summons his driver: “Von Grips! It’s time to blow your nose now!” He then explains to the American commentator that laboratory research has shown that the best time to blow the nose – to have it completely clear for the race – is seven and

a half minutes before the start. “As we have no central pocket on our overalls, a handkerchief would have to be carried either in the left or right pocket – which would completely destroy the balance of our revolutionary car...”

This snippet came into my mind last week as, thanks to a link sent by a friend, I watched a recording of the 1972 French Grand Prix. The race is remembered as one of Chris Amon’s greatest drives, and watching it again – 45 years after witnessing it – had me wandering off down memory lane.

Clay Regazzoni having hurt himself playing football, Ferrari unfathomably chose to put an Italian journeyman, Nanni Galli, in with Jacky Ickx at Clermont Ferrand. Embarrassingly slow and untidy, Galli repeatedly showered the track with stones – one of them, perhaps, causing the puncture that cost Amon the race.

Two rows in front of Galli on the grid, alongside Tyrrell debutant Patrick Depailler, was the Eifelland of Rolf Stommelen. This German company, a manufacturer of caravans, was founded by Gunther Hennerici, a racing fan keen to use the sport to publicise his company. Thus he bought a March from Max Mosley, and hired Stommelen to drive it. So far, so good – but unfortunately he didn’t leave it there. Aiming to make the car



Stommelen
in Eifelland at
1972 French GP



Stommelen at
'69 Le Mans in
fearsome 917

distinctive, and to enable him to call it an ‘Eifelland’, Hennerici employed one Luigi Colani to pen some bodywork for it.

Bad move. Although Colani had worked for car companies in the past, his focus by now was on furniture design. Patently an odd man, and one very pleased with himself, he glibly expressed contempt for the Formula 1 designers of the time, suggesting that they lacked his vision.

Perhaps that was just as well. It took just 100 hours for him to come up with revised bodywork for Hennerici’s car, which merely showed, he said, that the other teams were uselessly wasting time. In Colani’s world, everything had to be round. Why? Well, because the Earth was round.

So, too, therefore, was the bodywork of the Eifelland, and in no time at all, having caused acute overheating problems, it was discarded, so that the car reverted to being a March – save in one detail. Having an obsession with symmetry, Colani – who would presumably



LAT IMAGES

have empathised with the Schnorcedes designers' handkerchief problem – was not prepared to countenance the mundane notion of mirrors to the left and right of the cockpit, instead siting a single one on a long stalk smack in front of the driver.

Even after all the other Colani design features had been shed, this mirror remained, despite the entreaties of the driver. A couple of years later, Graham Hill, for whom I was working at the time, hired Stommelen to lead his Formula 1 team, and I got to know him well.

Rolf, who was killed in a Porsche 935 at Riverside in 1983, is remembered by one and all for being abnormally brave, and never more so than in the early stages of Le Mans in 1969: at the wheel of the 'early' Porsche 917, when he left everyone behind.

This was the car given its debut, at the Nurburgring, by Frank Gardner and David Piper, after the factory drivers – even the fearless Jo Siffert – declined to race it. “They gave me a big bundle of deutschmarks,”

“I never wanted to be the bravest racing driver, just the oldest... the 917 was going to interfere with that plan”

Gardner told me, “and offered even more for Le Mans, but I never wanted to be the bravest racing driver – I just wanted to be the oldest, and the 917 was going to interfere with that plan. It was simply indescribable, the motor car, but at Le Mans, where he had the whole of the Fatherland on his back, Stommelen really got it going...”

A thoroughly good guy, with a dry sense of humour, Rolf described to me how the 917 had been down Mulsanne, in those days uncluttered by chicanes. “It would steer left, and I would correct, and then it would steer right... it was like that all the way down the

straight, and you just hoped it would be on the left when you got to the right-hand kink...”

Stommelen bridled when one day I mentioned the Eifelland – and, particularly, that mirror. “I never liked the car,” he said, “but most of all I *hated* that mirror! One day, I actually broke it off, and told them I wanted normal mirrors – but when I got back in, for the next session, they’d put the f***** thing back again! It’s completely unnatural for a driver to have something right in front of his eyes, and I never got used to it...”

I somewhat doubt he’d have gone for the halo. 🌀



FORMULA 1

Honda in limbo as Toro Rosso

WHERE DOES HONDA LOOK NOW FOR teams to supply Formula 1 engines to? Its 2018 agreement with Sauber was cancelled recently, talks with Toro Rosso collapsed last week, and it's not a given that it will even have McLaren...

Honda wanted a second F1 team because it felt that the extra data gathered would help its development with McLaren. With the Sauber option falling over, it opened talks with Toro Rosso, with Honda chief Masashi Yamamoto and Red Bull motorsport advisor Helmut Marko holding several meetings to discuss the deal. But time was running short for both parties to be sufficiently prepared for next year, and a failure to agree on the financial terms of the deal meant that the talks were ended. Toro Rosso will continue to run Renault engines next year.

It also remains unclear whether Honda will continue with McLaren next season after a challenging campaign so far. McLaren is evaluating its options, even though Ferrari and Mercedes have made it clear that they will not supply engines to the team. Should McLaren split with Honda, that would force the Japanese manufacturer out of the championship and leave Renault as McLaren's only option for a supply.

Time to agree a deal with Renault is running short, with McLaren engineers already advanced in working on next year's car configuration. It is believed that a Renault tie-up – while not impossible – is unlikely, as the French marque is thought to be reluctant to expand its supply to a fourth team due to concerns that this could impact on reliability.

Neither Renault nor Honda is a particularly attractive option for McLaren given that both are way off the Mercedes and Ferrari power units. But while Renault is not planning to bring any major updates for the remainder of the season, Honda is targeting a more aggressive approach, with more than one package planned before the year is out. Honda, which believes it can leapfrog Renault in the pecking order before the end of 2017, hopes to have one update ready for this weekend's Belgian Grand Prix or the following Italian GP, but it will only be introduced once it has been proved on the dyno.

Given the rate at which Fernando Alonso and Stoffel Vandoorne have gone through engine parts so far this year, further changes to any of the six components in the final nine races will trigger penalties. These are likely to be taken tactically to

What's the next step for Honda and Yamamoto?

CHANDON
HONDA
HYBRID

talks fail

ensure the team is penalty-free at races such as the Singapore GP, where the circuit characteristics give it the best chance of a strong result.

Meanwhile, how is Mercedes vs Ferrari brewing up for Spa and beyond?

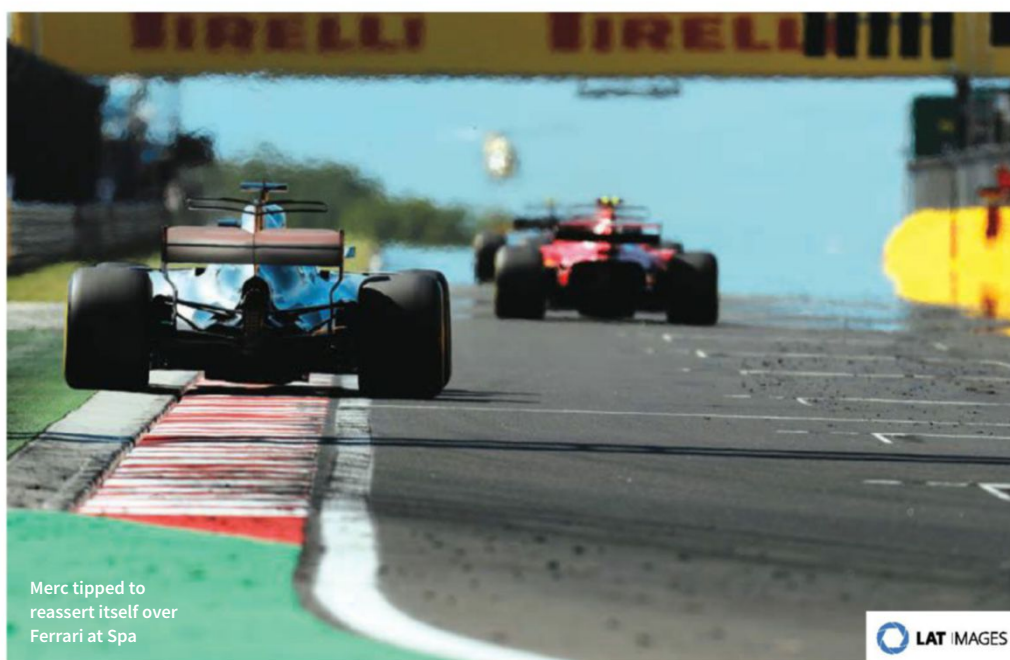
At the sharp end of the grid, it's engines that could have the biggest impact on the title battle as F1 resumes this weekend at Spa after the summer break. Ferrari ended the first half of the season on a high at the Hungaroring by scoring its second one-two of the season. The SF70H excelled on the tight and twisty turns, with Sebastian Vettel nursing an ill-handling car home ahead of Kimi Raikkonen for his fourth victory of the campaign.

Ferrari narrowed the gap to rival Mercedes in the constructors' championship to just 39 points, with Vettel pulling 14 clear of Lewis Hamilton in the drivers' standings. But it faces a challenge to further erode that deficit when F1 reconvenes in Belgium this weekend as the long and power-hungry Spa-Francorchamps circuit will likely expose Ferrari's engine weakness, relative to Mercedes.

In Hungary, Vettel spoke about his confidence



Toro Rosso will stick with Renault power after all



Merc tipped to reassert itself over Ferrari at Spa

LAT IMAGES

that his team could maintain its title charge into the second half of the season. "We know how to build a strong car and we have improved the engine this year massively, so everything is going in the right direction," he said.

The engine remains the second best of four, ahead of Renault and Honda, but Ferrari has been unable to catch and match Mercedes' class-leading unit this term. That has hurt Ferrari particularly in qualifying, where Mercedes has exploited its superior qualifying modes. That deficit has meant that Ferrari has been unable to make the most of its stronger race performance because of inferior starting positions.

The Mercedes energy-recovery system — particularly the MGU-H, which recovers energy at full throttle — was a key part of its massive advantage on the huge straights of Baku. At Spa, where drivers are on full throttle for 60% of the time, Mercedes is likely to have a similar advantage over Ferrari — unless it can make progress with an update.

With Ferrari in sight of a first constructors' championship since 2008 and first drivers' title since '07, president Sergio Marchionne is placing huge pressure on the team to seize its chance

and find a step forward over the summer. The team is hoping to introduce a new spec at one of the next two races, with the current state of play suggesting it will be the Italian GP at Monza.

But in waiting for a new spec, Ferrari is also bracing itself for grid penalties. Unreliability early in the season, particularly surrounding the turbocharger, means Vettel and Raikkonen have accelerated through their respective permitted allocations of engine components. The duo took fresh internal-combustion engines at the British Grand Prix, which allows for just one more change apiece in the final nine races without penalty.

They each have one more free change of the MGU-H, MGU-K, energy store and control electronics. But should either take a new turbocharger, they will be handed a 10-place grid penalty as they have already maxed out their respective allocations.

In contrast, Mercedes duo Hamilton and Valtteri Bottas are on schedule, having used three internal-combustion engines, turbochargers, MGU-Hs and MGU-Ks and just two energy stores and control electronics.

LAWRENCE BARRETTO

INDYCAR SERIES

HARVEY GETS INDY SEAT FOR FINAL TWO ROUNDS

EX-BRITISH FORMULA 3 champion Jack Harvey will contest the final two rounds of this year's IndyCar Series at Watkins Glen and Sonoma with a Schmidt Peterson Motorsports Dallara-Honda.

Following Mikhail Aleshin's departure from the team earlier this month, Colombian Sebastian Saavedra took over the Russian's car for last weekend's Pocono race and will drive again this weekend at the Gateway oval.

Mercedes DTM ace Robert Wickens publicly declared his interest in the seat for the road-course season enders, but SPM has settled on Harvey, who finished runner-up with the squad in Indy Lights in 2014 and '15, to join James Hinchcliffe.

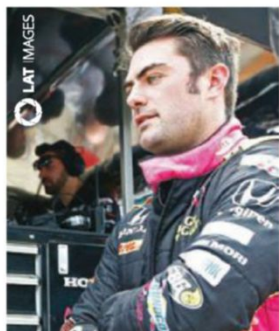
"It's obviously a really exciting time for me," said 24-year-old Harvey, who has one IndyCar start to his name, in this year's Indy 500 with Andretti Autosport.

"We had a lot of success together in Indy Lights, and I'm excited to be back with so many familiar faces.

"I'm really looking forward to getting on track at Watkins Glen. It's definitely been a bucket-list track and one that I've been looking forward to driving on even before I came to America."

SPM general manager Piers Phillips added: "Jack's done a great job for the team throughout his Indy Lights career, and we've been looking at ways of incorporating him into our IndyCar programme, so it's been wonderful to see it come to fruition."

JAMIE KLEIN



IMSA SPORTSCAR

Montoya's new Penske Acura weapon unveiled

HERE'S THE ACURA ARX-05 THAT JUAN PABLO Montoya will race for US motorsport powerhouse Team Penske in next season's IMSA SportsCar Championship.

The wraps were taken off the Acura — representing the American brand of Honda — last Friday. Based on the successful ORECA 07 LMP2 car, it will compete against works-blessed efforts from Cadillac, Nissan and Mazda.

The unveiling came three days after Montoya and reigning IMSA champion Dane Cameron were confirmed by Penske as the first two of the four full-time drivers that will represent the squad in 2018.

Montoya, who won the Indy 500 with Penske in '15 but was dropped from the team's full-season IndyCar programme this year, said: "I've really enjoyed working with Roger [Penske] and Team Penske over the last four

years. When Roger asked if I'd like to be part of starting this new sportscar operation with Acura, it was an easy decision. I've always loved racing sportscars. It's definitely a challenge and it's going to be a lot of fun to develop a new car with Acura. I'm excited to start the testing of the ARX-05 next week. Team Penske started its winning tradition in sportscars and it's going to be cool to be a part of a new chapter with the team."

"Getting a chance to race for Team Penske is like a dream come true for a driver," added Cameron, who switches over from Cadillac team Action Express Racing.

Meanwhile, Pipo Derani has been firmed up for a full season with the Extreme Speed Motorsports Nissan team, having taken the car's first win this month at Road America.

DAVID MALSHER AND JAMIE KLEIN



DTM

Berger wants rid of DTM balancing

NOW THAT THE SHOCK OF Mercedes' announcement of its withdrawal — effective from the end of 2018 — has subsided, the DTM has gone back to sparring about its ever-more-complicated performance-balancing-weight system.

However complex the equations the rulemakers come up with, the engineers and strategists are outsmarting them, and DTM chairman Gerhard Berger just wants

to get rid of it once and for all.

"It's no secret: I hate the ballast," said Berger last weekend at Zandvoort, "and I'm still pushing [to have it scrapped]. It's not really the ballast that is the problem; it's the consequences [of tactical racing]."

"You mix strategies to not get the ballast, you don't go as fast as you can, you get the best position, but you're not the quickest. I would like to change that, but to change

anything in the regulations you need everyone to agree on it."

Are there any other alternatives to even things up? No, says Berger: "You cannot put the show ahead of the sport, even if the show is worse. I would prefer to have the sport right."

Audi chief Dieter Gass said of performance balancing: "Its unconditional abolishment is the only solution for this absurd condition."

MARCUS SIMMONS

IN THE HEADLINES

POLAND OUT, TURKEY IN FOR WRC

Rally Poland's departure from the World Rally Championship will be confirmed at next month's World Motor Sport Council meeting. This year's event was hit by numerous spectator-control problems and it's those issues that have cost Poland its place on the calendar. Turkey will return to the WRC for the first time since 2010, with a round in September. Croatia was offered three dates in July to join the WRC, but running at the height of the tourist season was unsuitable and prevented it becoming the 14th round.

PREMA CLOSING ON GP3 PROGRAMME

Italian single-seater powerhouse Prema looks on course to add a GP3 Series programme in 2018. Team boss Rene Rosin told Autosport that a decision is likely within a month, but that it would not impact on its commitment to the rival Formula 3 European Championship. GP3 would be a fourth category for Prema, which also has top teams in Formula 2 and German/Italian Formula 4.

MAKINO RETURNS FROM WRIST INJURY

Japanese Honda protege Tadasuke Makino returned to Euro F3 action at Zandvoort last weekend after breaking his wrist seven weeks earlier in a Norisring shunt. Makino, who had the wrist plated, said he was not at 100%. Ironically, the Hitech GP driver had to serve a three-place grid penalty at Zandvoort for the Norisring accident, in which he took out Harrison Newey.

HANLEY GRABBED BY MANOR FOR MEXICO

In-demand LMP2 racer Ben Hanley will race for his fourth different team in four races in the next World Endurance Championship round at Mexico City. Hanley joins Manor, where he will partner Jean-Eric Vergne and Matt Rao in the #24 ORECA after Jonathan Hirschi and Tor Graves stepped down. Rao switches from Signatech, which has slimmed down to one car and shifts Andre Negrão across to share with Nicolas Lapierre and Gustavo Menezes.

STEVENS BACK IN BLANCPAIN FRAY

Will Stevens rejoins the WRT Audi squad for the final two Blancpain GT Sprint Cup rounds at the Hungaroring and Nurburgring after skipping the Spa 24 Hours. Stevens will retake his place alongside fellow ex-F1 racer Markus Winkelhock in the R8 LMS. "I've been back in the car at the Hungaroring and had a really strong test," said Stevens, who has also competed recently in the Absolute Racing Bentley in a Pirelli World Challenge round in Utah, and a Walkenhorst BMW in a VLN event on the Nurburgring Nordschleife. "Winkie' and me are a good partnership and I have a good feeling about the rest of the season."

VAXIVIERE STAYS ON BOARD AT DAMS

Matthieu Vaxiviere will stay on with the DAMS GP3 squad for the Spa round this weekend. Vaxiviere stood in last time out at the Hungaroring (below) for Santino Ferrucci, who has left the team to graduate to F2 with Trident.



F1 PREVIEW

Belgian Grand Prix

August 25-27



SPA

LENGTH 4.352 miles NUMBER OF LAPS 44

2016 POLE POSITION Nico Rosberg 1m46.744s

POLE LAP RECORD Mark Webber 1m45.778s (2010)

RACE LAP RECORD Sebastian Vettel 1m47.263s (2009)



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SATURDAY

FP3 1000 QUALIFYING 1300

SUNDAY

RACE 1300

BBC RADIO 5 LIVE 1300

PREVIOUS WINNERS

2016	Nico Rosberg	Mercedes
2015	Lewis Hamilton	Mercedes
2014	Daniel Ricciardo	Red Bull
2013	Sebastian Vettel	Red Bull
2012	Jenson Button	McLaren
2011	Sebastian Vettel	Red Bull
2010	Lewis Hamilton	McLaren
2009	Kimi Raikkonen	Ferrari
2008	Felipe Massa	Ferrari
2007	Kimi Raikkonen	Ferrari

THEMES TO WATCH

RED BULL RIVALRY

Max Verstappen hit team-mate Daniel Ricciardo last time out in Hungary. Verstappen apologised but what's in store when they next go wheel to wheel?

MERCEDES VS FERRARI

Ferrari was top in Hungary, but the high-speed Spa will likely favour Mercedes, which could help Lewis Hamilton get his title challenge back on track.

McLAREN STRUGGLES?

The team had its best finish of the season in Hungary with both cars in the points, but unless Honda delivers an upgrade it's likely to struggle at Spa.



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Peace of ART

There's little in it between four team-mates at the top of the GP3 points standings. Will harmony hold out as the title pressure grows?

By Alex Kalinauckas, Assistant Editor

[@nauckas](#)

MERCEDES, RENAULT AND HONDA DRIVERS FIGHTING for the championship, with a Ferrari racer racking up the wins to stay in the title hunt: it's a combination that would make for an epic Formula 1 season.

And that's exactly what is happening two steps down the ladder on the F1 support bill in GP3.

The third-tier series is halfway through its season and the top six drivers are separated by just 29 points. With 25 for a race-one win and four for pole, that gap can vanish quickly.

Just 20 points separate the ART Grand Prix drivers in the scrap for the top four. Having a quartet of team-mates fighting for the title is not an unfamiliar scenario for the French squad, which has won six of GP3's seven teams' titles.

"It's a good problem," says ART team boss Sebastien Philippe. "I've never given any orders to my drivers and I will not start now. I just need to be sure that they respect each other and don't do stupid things. It's better to have four drivers fighting than no one, so I will not complain."

McLaren Autosport BRDC Award 2014 winner George

Russell – the Mercedes-backed championship leader – made a low-key start to the '17 season, hampered by poor starts at Barcelona, where he struggled with GP3's hand-operated clutch. GP3 had a hefty eight-

week gap between its opening rounds and Russell used an in-season test at the Hungaroring to sort out his getaways, which worked a treat. The 19-year-old claimed back-to-back pole and race-one wins in Austria and Britain, which propelled him into the standings lead.

But disaster struck in Hungary when a sensor problem stopped him starting race one, and a collision with Renault academy driver Jack Aitken – second in the standings – ended his hopes of points while on a charge in race two.

Aitken, racing in his second GP3 season, is back in the title hunt after a difficult start to the year. He claimed pole at Barcelona, but a sensor glitch – similar to what Russell would suffer in Hungary – halted his fight with Honda junior Nirei Fukuzumi for victory. In a season with only eight rounds, it looked as if that DNF would be costly.

But the 21-year-old chased Russell hard for the win at the Red Bull Ring and came away from Silverstone with 24 points. Hungary reignited his title charge as he scored 31 points in race one, which catapulted him back into contention. Thanks to that result, Aitken, who finished fifth in GP3 last year, headed

into the summer break with restored optimism.

Third-placed Anthoine Hubert is the only driver to have scored a point in every race so far. The Frenchman took a while to make it onto the podium, and his second place in race one at Silverstone remains his best result of 2017, which he followed up with third in the first event in Hungary.

While Russell and Aitken have both suffered with reliability problems, arguably the unluckiest of the ART quartet has been Fukuzumi, who led the championship after Spain, where he won the opening race. The Honda junior was still the points leader leaving Austria, but his own sensor problem derailed his chances in race one in Britain and he failed to score in the second race after being given a time penalty. A race-two collision in Hungary means the popular Japanese driver is now 20 points from the head of the standings.

Behind the dominant ART squad sit Trident's Ferrari junior Giuliano Alesi and Jenzer Motorsport driver Alessio Lorandi, and this pair cannot be counted out of the title hunt just yet.

One of the key features of Alesi's recent pair of reversed-grid wins and Lorandi's charges to two thirds in Spain was the way they mastered the two sides of GP3's limited DRS, which is new for this year.

The lead driver, naturally, must be careful to stay as far out of

reach as possible, but it has been rare for them to escape the one-second zone entirely, and keeping in front while prolonging the life of the fragile Pirelli tyres has become something of an art.

In the pack behind, DRS has created a high-speed tactical game that has led to a series of intense races – in Spain in particular, where Lorandi and Russell gained places at a track where overtaking is traditionally tough. While Barcelona felt like something of a new dawn in terms of overtaking, the race-one duels for victory have so far remained tense and fast-paced but without much wheel-to-wheel action.

This weekend in Belgium, the ART drivers will resume battle in their ultra-tight title fight – one that has been markedly good natured so far. The mature approach from all four has been noticeable and there's nothing to suggest they will fall out, either on-track or off.

But the second half of the season brings extra motivations in a title battle – especially in the context of the pressure that comes from F1 manufacturer backing. Will harmony hold firm in the ART camp as a thrilling season comes to the boil? 🍷

“I need to be sure they respect each other and don't do stupid things”



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FEEDBACK

Fuel efficiency does not fire fans' interest

I read with interest Nigel Roebuck's column 'Power for the people' (August 17) and in particular Toto Wolff's views, as he represents the manufacturers' voice.

Dare I suggest that neither the seasoned F1 follower nor the casual race viewer has any interest in how much fuel is being used or whether or not we are watching hybrid power in action? Current F1 fuel efficiency is incredible, yet when did we last read or hear anything of it? Truckloads of two-metre-high screens now prevent us seeing anything of a current F1 motor, other than a 'hybrid' sticker on an engine cover – so what is actually going on under that engine cover doesn't really matter.

The manufacturers, as stated by Wolff, want that 'hybrid' sticker on the bodywork to highlight that they increasingly use such technology in their road cars. That's fine – so let's have a simple, large-capacity, loud F1 engine that has a very simple, cheap hybrid system.

We want to see fast, close racing in loud, exciting racing cars. If the engine makers must use hybrid systems to justify the marketing sticker, then keep it simple – we never get to see what goes on under that sticker anyway.

Ian Roberts
Byemail

Break this 'window' habit

Can writers, commentators and drivers please take a vow to forgo using the

ridiculous cliché 'window' at every opportunity? Enough is enough.

From last week's edition, "give top drivers a bigger window to make a difference". Recently I've heard drivers talk all sorts of gibberish, like getting their tyre temperatures in the window, of looking for the right window for the front wing, and commentators wondering breathlessly about which strategy is in the window and whose pitstop window is better.

It's gone past farce and it's surely time for a new cliché to do to death.

Brian Colton
Piccadilly, South Australia

WRC on the up, F1 going down

It's seven years now since I last visited Rally GB, but I'll be going this year! Why? The cars look great, sound great, are fast, and there are quality drivers again.

If things keep going the way they are in Formula 1, then I think my interest will start to wane. What I remember about my trip to Barcelona this year, apart from Lewis overtaking Vettel, was the sound of the twin-seat V10 Minardi. What I remember about Silverstone was the same, on Thursday lunch time!

Formula E is of no interest to me, even though I realise electric cars are coming (not hybrids). Two friends of



So the 'hybrid' sticker matters to the manufacturers, but do fans really give a fig?

mine have electric cars, one a Tesla and the other a Nissan Leaf, and both think they are wonderful, providing they plan their journeys for recharging.

I have loved F1 for years, but the hybrids seem too complicated and too quiet. I remember the years of the wailing Matra, and feeling the organs inside me vibrating as 20 V10s went off the starting grid at Silverstone.

I realise that electric is the right way to go for road cars, but not racing cars.

I regard myself at 68 years of age to be very fortunate to have lived in a time of great cars and bikes and great drivers and riders. Will it be as good for the up-and-coming generation? I think not!

Stuart Warsop
Bromsgrove, Worcestershire

P.S. Will someone please give Felix Rosenqvist a try at F1?

Get back to work, F1!

Formula 1 should ditch this silly summer break. It is unfair to fans and the sport's media partners (I doubt Sky F1 gains many subscribers in August).

The sport is in the entertainment business. Hopefully Liberty, being a US company, will look seriously at getting F1 back to work!

Nicholas Binns
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COVER STORY

**“IF YOU
STRUGGLE, PEOPLE
SLAG YOU OFF,
BUT IT DOESN'T
BOTHER ME”**

KIMI RAIKKONEN

By Ben Anderson, Grand Prix Editor

 @BenAndersonAuto



KIMI STATS

AGE
37STARTS
262WINS
20PODIUMS
88POLES
17FASTEST
LAPS
45

It is very rare that a driver comes along who challenges preconceived notions of what it takes to be a Formula 1 driver. But when a true prodigy breaks through into grand prix racing through sheer force of talent, they often create a sort of butterfly effect. The world we thought we knew before is suddenly changed, and will never be the same again.

Kimi Raikkonen should go down in F1 history as one such driver. It has taken Max Verstappen's remarkable recent ascension to motorsport's pinnacle to further redefine the boundaries of possibility – so successful in one season of junior single-seater racing that he simply must be in F1 immediately. Since 2015, Verstappen has been thrilling fans, threatening reputations, and rewriting rules with his fearless and superlative brand of racing.

Fourteen years earlier, Raikkonen laid the template – arriving with Peter Sauber's eponymous team after a brief but highly successful stint in Formula Renault. Raikkonen had competed in fewer than 25 car races; surely he couldn't be ready for such a monumental leap.

Yet there he was – 13th on the grid for his debut in Australia, within four tenths of a second of sophomore team-mate Nick Heidfeld, scoring a point in his first GP, finishing not much more than 12 seconds behind his team-mate. Raikkonen looked immediately like he belonged – a driver so naturally gifted he could bypass F3 and F3000 completely, turn convention on its head, yet be immediately and properly competitive in F1. Truly astounding.

The question with all prodigies, in any sport, is what next? Will they fully harness that ability, show the necessary will and dedication to ally proper craft to their genius, and transform themselves into a truly unstoppable force? It is this unique blend that tends to define the ultimate greatness of an athlete – whether they burn out early and fade away in the Wayne Rooney style, or evolve into an era-defining machine in the mould of Cristiano Ronaldo.

Raikkonen's stats suggest he's something of an

underachiever. This weekend's Belgian Grand Prix will mark his 263rd grand prix start; only four drivers – Rubens Barrichello, Michael Schumacher, Jenson Button and Fernando Alonso – have started more. For a driver of Raikkonen's ability and longevity to have scored 'only' 20 wins and 17 pole positions, plus a single world championship achieved in fortuitous circumstances in 2007, seems out of kilter.

Damon Hill would not consider himself to be the most naturally gifted driver ever to grace F1. Raikkonen could make that claim, yet Hill achieved more wins and poles than Raikkonen has, in much less than half the number of starts.

And yet Raikkonen is still good enough that he is still racing for Ferrari – F1's grandest team – at the ripe old age of 37, and Tuesday's announcement that he will remain for 2018 means he will continue doing so for another season at least. That shows Raikkonen still has something serious to offer in the eyes of those who make the biggest decisions in Maranello.

Sport is always about much more than pure numbers. Personality and style also count for as much sometimes. Raikkonen commands a strong and loyal fanbase, energised by his 'Iceman' reputation, one he says he's done nothing conscious to cultivate. Publicly, Raikkonen comes off as a cool, aloof, anti-hero character – a no-nonsense antidote to the clean-cut corporate image of modern racing.

His 'wild-child' early years curry him huge favour with those followers of F1 who pine for the era of James Hunt, when drivers partied away the nights and drove by the seat of their pants in the day. But even lovable rogues like Hunt and Raikkonen are driven by a fierce competitive instinct that belies their devil-may-care reputations.

We are left with a confusing picture. How to reconcile the incredible natural ability that once redrew boundaries at Sauber and McLaren, and claimed a historic post-Schumacher world championship for Ferrari, with the later seasons of struggle: bettered by Felipe Massa, outpaced by Romain Grosjean, destroyed by Alonso, now playing second fiddle to Sebastian Vettel? Herein lies the enigma of Kimi Raikkonen.

BLAZING A TRAIL AT SAUBER

Raikkonen's first season in F1 was very strong by conventional standards for a rookie, but when you consider his fundamental lack of experience in car racing it was truly exceptional.

His results were very good – four points finishes in total, twice finishing fourth (in Austria and Canada) and placing inside the top 10 in the world championship. Raikkonen made a vital contribution to what then constituted Sauber's best F1 season, but it was his raw speed that caught the eye.

Third time out, Raikkonen qualified only a tenth behind Heidfeld in Brazil, and thereafter matched his more experienced team-mate 7-7 on Saturdays. Not only that, Raikkonen performed with a calm assuredness that belied his lack of experience.

"Kimi was very young [21] and not experienced at all – it was very risky," says Sauber driver trainer Josef Leiberer, who worked with Ayrton Senna at McLaren and recalls his season alongside Raikkonen with fondness. "A lot of people said, 'I don't understand why Sauber were doing this'. But it worked.

"He's not the kind of guy who sits days and hours on the computer. Such an intuitive driver, his instinct is incredible. This way I would say he's one of the best. It comes naturally. No bullshit. Just wanna be fast, no excuses.

"He was not spoiled, so you could talk with him and be straightforward, and he was an incredible, cool guy. Doing the massage in the morning we had to wake him up and he said, 'Let me get an extra five minutes of sleep before the race'. I'd never seen this – the second race in Malaysia and he wanted to sleep an extra few minutes! Can you imagine being like this in your second race?

"He made such an impact. We had a feeling and he was fast immediately. You could see he had the requirements to be a top driver."

Raikkonen's extraordinary ability to drive an F1 car quickly without the educational foundation enjoyed by his peers left a lasting impression on the paddock. Renowned motor racing journalist and author David Tremayne was Sauber's press release writer during Raikkonen's rookie campaign. He recalls a driver aloof and reserved in public, but completely different when hidden from the glare of a camera lens.

"He was very quiet, like he is now," explains Tremayne. "You thought, 'What is this kid like, is he going to be another Mika [Hakkinen]?' But he clearly wasn't in terms of the way he conducted himself – he wasn't forthcoming. Kimi didn't want to do any of the other bollocks. He wanted to get in the car and get on with it.

"[But] at Monza I heard all this raucous laughter on top of the media bus at Sauber. I went downstairs and it was Kimi, Peter Collins, and a guy who turned out to be Kimi's kart mechanic – and it was Kimi doing all the laughing.

"It was the only time I ever saw what you might call 'the real Kimi' – with mates, completely relaxed, no need to be protective of anything.



I think he has the ability to compartmentalise. There was a lot of fire in him but you didn't get to see it. He's very self-reliant. I don't think he needs an entourage.

"As a driver, he was wonderful to watch. Felipe came in the following year and he was quick but always on a different line. Kimi was just cool and calm with it – not pushing the car or wrestling with it."

So many drivers dream of being world champion, work hard to achieve that dream, but never even make it onto the grid. Others carve out opportunity but become overwhelmed by expectation or consumed by pressure.

It seems Raikkonen benefited not only from exceptional natural ability behind the wheel – after all there are many drivers who share that sort of skill – but also a mental resilience and confidence that helped strip away the extra burdens that might have destroyed someone of a different character.

Raikkonen never dreamed big or got carried away by the prospect of fame and fortune. It seems it was this aloof attitude, bordering on indifference, that made him so perfectly suited to thrive in F1.

"It was a good team to be in; nice people – I still have lunch there," Raikkonen tells Autosport, relaxing into his seat as we discuss the first stage of his long career in F1. "For me, it was very easy in some ways because I didn't really expect anything.

"I didn't know anything about F1. I never went to see a race. The first time I saw it live was when I was in a test myself. So for me it was like if you just go to Formula Renault [for the first time]. I had nothing to worry about – what's the point? It either goes well or it goes bad. What can you do?"

Ultimately, it went very well indeed for Raikkonen, who made such an impression that he was poached by Ron Dennis to replace retiring double world champion Hakkinen at McLaren for 2002. Even a *wunderkind* like Verstappen had to wait four races into his second season before earning promotion to one of F1's biggest teams... »

After one year racing cars, Raikkonen finished sixth on his GP debut in Australia



Raikkonen took seven wins and five poles in 2005, but problems denied him the title



McLAREN: WHAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN

Some paddock insiders consider Raikkonen's five-year stint at McLaren to be his absolute peak. His first grand prix victory at Malaysia in 2003 briefly made him F1's youngest winner since team founder Bruce McLaren.

Raikkonen won eight more times for McLaren in those five seasons, as well as taking 11 pole positions and 36 podiums from 87 starts. He quickly established himself as one of grand prix racing's most exciting stars, but a world championship title eluded him. He was second to Alonso in 2005, but came closest to breaking through two years earlier, when Raikkonen lost out to Schumacher by just two points.

"Back in those days he was massively quick," recalls Pat Fry, McLaren's chief engineer during Raikkonen's stint with the team. "It's a shame car reliability and engine reliability didn't work for him really. If you look at him through the early 2000s, he was right up there with the best, wasn't he? He was absolutely outstanding driving the McLaren through 2003, 2005. He should've won the championship in 2005."

Raikkonen was unfortunate in that his time at McLaren coincided with Schumacher's most dominant seasons at Ferrari and latterly the brief but potent rise of Alonso at Renault. Only once during that period, in '05, could McLaren be considered to have produced the absolute quickest car on the grid, and senior personnel admit it was too unreliable to ultimately get the job done.

In this context, Raikkonen achieved much of his success against the odds. Apart from his first year with the team in 2002 – when he was paired alongside stalwart David Coulthard – Raikkonen was never beaten by his McLaren team-mate across a season. He won many admirers inside the squad for his fearless style of racing.

"He was blindingly quick – sometimes the circuit wasn't big enough to contain him in those early days, but he was pushing to the max and everyone liked it," remembers McLaren's chief operating officer Jonathan Neale. "He used to scare me. He scared me because he was so completely fearless. You just knew there was no way he was going to give anything less than 110%, and I don't mean that lightly. He was just a force of nature."

Out of the car, McLaren found a "completely uncompromising" driver, whose "maverick" style didn't always sit well with the team's clean-cut corporate image.

"We struggled to find out who he was as he didn't say very much," adds Neale. "[But] everybody underestimates him at their peril. He did have a fantastic sense of humour. If there were two drivers going on stage, to do a presentation or a question-and-answer session, he'd be sitting in the back and he'd do an amazing mimic. He had the voices and the phrases, all of that, so he was a sharp observer.

"There was never a dull moment, but he was a great racer – somebody who is still spoken of highly in the team for what did with us, for us, and the style in which he did it, which was uncompromising. It was uncompromising in the car, it was uncompromising in the set-up, he was uncompromising on whether he wanted to be with a sponsor. It's not always easy, but isn't it refreshing when you find somebody who is brave enough to be candid and frank and not prepared to cower to conformity?

Ron Dennis signed Kimi, who became an F1 star at McLaren, for 2002



"He wouldn't suffer fools. Everyone was taken at face value, no airs, no graces, nobody standing on ceremony, what you see is what get, very grounded, but enormous following with the mechanics and engineers – real loyalty.

"Because that fire burns very intensely, it was kind of polarising – either you got it or you didn't. It is quite difficult getting engineers close to him – to be able to have that rapport and reach him without being too much, too little, not a fool.

"Any whiff of bullshit and you were toast! But [race engineer] Mark Slade was very good with Kimi and they had an understanding. Mark knew when to leave him alone, and when to push him and there were occasions when Mark was quite assertive with him, but because he built up that trust he could be. It is easy to be intimidated by somebody of that temperament."

Slade has worked with Raikkonen twice through the Finn's F1 career – first at McLaren and later at Lotus. Slade responded well to Raikkonen's no-nonsense attitude and fussiness for precision. He says the Raikkonen that drove for McLaren arrived at Woking "well-rounded" and was "massively impressive".

"He knew how to manage tyres, he knew how to set up the car – it was like working with someone who'd done it for five years," Slade

recalls. "He knew exactly what he wanted. It was not like working with a new driver.

"The only aspect that was a little bit ragged early on was in qualifying, when we had to put the fuel in the car for the race, so 2003. He had a little bit of a tendency to want to be on pole regardless of the amount of fuel in the car. And there were a couple of races

where he went off trying to achieve too much.

"We basically banned him from watching the other drivers' qualifying laps. We just told him, 'Go out and drive the car as quickly as it will go'. We did that for the rest of this season and he didn't do any more mistakes."

Raikkonen is often portrayed as a lazy driver – someone who simply relies on his natural feel for the car but isn't particularly interested in doing anything other than driving. Slade argues that's a misunderstanding of Raikkonen's approach. It's not that he is uninterested, rather that he sees clear delineation in responsibilities within teams, and wants to trust those around him to do their jobs properly without interference. Slade admits this approach can compromise Raikkonen when internal politics arise. >>

Q&A



MARK SLADE

RAIKKONEN'S ENGINEER
AT MCLAREN AND LOTUS

Does Kimi have particular traits in his driving?

He's very, very smooth, very gentle, very precise – minimal inputs into the car.

He wants the car to do the work. Most

drivers tend to be a bit more aggressive with inputs, which can have benefits when the tyres are hard and difficult to get into the working window. The other thing is power steering. He came to us and complained about power steering. We spent a lot of time fixing it. Then he went to Ferrari and apparently complained about power steering there. Then he came back to Lotus and complained about power steering. So the feel of the steering is very, very important. He doesn't want any friction in it. He doesn't want any play on the brake pedal. Also, Mark [Arnall] always carried a special cloth to clean the windscreen, because if there was a slightest finger print or scratch, we had to change it.

He says he hates understeer and you often hear him complain about the front...

Even at McLaren there were occasions where we did have issues. Canada was a good one in 2005. We were slower on new tyres than on used tyres because he couldn't get the new tyre temperature to work. The start of the lap can be a real problem if he just hasn't got the front grip that he needs to get the car into corners. I would say that's probably the only real weakness. There were times also that was an advantage, because he was a lot more gentle on tyres. When we won the race with Lotus in 2013 in Melbourne, he just walked away with it because he could do one stop. Those tyres were absolutely perfect for him, then Pirelli changed the tyres and that disadvantaged him unfortunately.

Why does he often seem to make mistakes in qualifying?

He takes a high-risk approach to qualifying. It's all about corner entry speed. And if you get the corner wrong you tend to drop a lot of time. Other drivers probably prioritise the exit a little bit more. He's trying to carry speed through; that is high risk.



"There were times at McLaren when things didn't go the way they should have for Kimi and if he had been just a little bit more involved, that could have swapped things around a bit," Slade says. "In the middle of 2005 there were certain things happening with the design direction of the car that didn't suit Kimi and there was a lot of tension and pressure. I was having to fight Kimi's corner, because he wasn't really doing much himself. That was quite stressful.

"He didn't like hanging around in the office for very long. His debriefs were very short, but he gave us the important points and that was almost perfect for me, because it meant we didn't spend lots of time talking about what was not relevant. He won't rant about it. It's just, 'That's what we need to fix'. Simple as that.

"If people try to push him in a different direction, it's not going to work because you need him on board. You need to be on board with him and he needs to be on board with you. For me, it was enjoyable to work with him, because it was logical and straightforward.

"One of the biggest difficulties with drivers who are less consistent with their approach is trying to filter out this inconsistency. It becomes very difficult very quickly. If he came in saying there's something wrong with the car, the chances are there's something wrong with the car – even if you can't see that on data. Ninety-nine percent of the time he's right.

"When we were doing Michelin tyre testing, they desperately wanted him to do the testing. They told us at one point that he was the best test driver that they worked with. They used to give a little array of tick boxes for different characteristics of the tyre – what the tyres were doing, what the characteristics of the different compounds were. They said there were some drivers who got most of the points correct, but he always got them all correct.

"And his consistency of lap time when we tested eight different compounds – his baselines would be within one tenth, and that meant that they could properly analyse the lap time data as well as the driver's comments."

Slade says he's never seen anything else like Räikkönen's "extraordinary level of sensitivity" to the car, to the point where Räikkönen could detect problems with McLaren's traction control software the engineers couldn't see in their trackside data. The chase for a 'perfect car' can be a real curse when too many things aren't working correctly, but this degree of feel made Räikkönen a formidable

weapon during F1's tyre war between Bridgestone and Michelin.

"That played a big part of how it went," says Räikkönen. "I was very happy to do the tyre tests. We could test 20 different sets of tyres and choose exactly what you wanted, whatever you feel is best for you. It was one extra thing that you could use."

Räikkönen does not agree with those, such as Williams technical chief Paddy Lowe, who would say his McLaren years represent Räikkönen at his peak. But he was certainly unfortunate not to win at least one world title with McLaren, and Slade recalls some truly stunning drives by Räikkönen during that period.

"No doubt Michael, Fernando and Kimi were the three guys," argues Slade, who feels Räikkönen could have won "15 straight races" in 2005 with better reliability. "Then, just slightly behind, DC, [Juan Pablo] Montoya and a few others. When it came to the driving and his racecraft, Kimi was right up there.

"In the middle part of the [2005] season the car was phenomenal and he was driving phenomenally well. At Monza, he qualified fastest with the full tank of fuel [before a grid penalty]; at Silverstone, he was half a second per lap quicker than Montoya, who won the race; in France he started 13th and finished second. Japan was awesome because he came from the back and won.

"One of the best races he ever did was Indianapolis in 2003, when we were on the Michelin wets and the Michelin wets were rubbish. He finished second. It was fantastic. He just drove his heart out. He didn't win the race, but it was an absolutely phenomenal drive.

"Nurburgring 2006 – the engine was terrible that year and he finished fourth. I remember him coming to the bus afterwards, sweat pouring off him, and he said, 'I just drove 60 qualifying laps', and you could see he had. We knew he had to drive phenomenally well to achieve that with the car we had then."

By now Räikkönen had grown increasingly frustrated with life at McLaren and reputedly made an agreement with Ferrari as early as late-2005 to join the Scuderia for 2007. "He signed with Ferrari two years before he moved to Ferrari," confirms his then-Ferrari teammate Massa. "I remember when I signed for Ferrari, Kimi already has his contract; the only way I stay in Ferrari is if Michael stops."

Schumacher announced his first retirement from F1 after winning the 2006 Italian GP at Monza. Thus, the way was clear for Räikkönen and Massa to usher in a new era at Maranello.

WORLD CHAMPION THEN DITCHED BY FERRARI

Raikkonen's Ferrari career got off to a dream start – pole position and victory in his first race in Melbourne, and of course he went on to claim the championship as Ferrari backed his bid to overhaul the McLarens of Alonso and rookie sensation Lewis Hamilton. Raikkonen succeeded in this mission by a solitary point when team-mate Massa moved aside for him to win the season finale in Brazil.

“For me it counts much more than any others – if I had won with McLaren or with somebody else,” Raikkonen says. “Ferrari is Ferrari. I got close a few times in the McLaren. I mean yes in some people's eyes I [could] have won three championships. I didn't deserve it. In the end, whoever gets the most points deserves it.

“Would I be happier with three championships? It makes no difference. I am happy with what I have achieved.”

It felt as though F1 almost owed Raikkonen that championship – regardless of the peculiar circumstances – as payback for the disappointment and near-misses at McLaren. But although he finally conquered the world in his first season as a Ferrari driver, Raikkonen never fully established himself as the team's number one.

Raikkonen says his biggest concern before coming to Ferrari was having to adjust to Bridgestone tyres after years spent honing his car on Michelin rubber, but according to Rob Smedley – Massa's race engineer throughout Raikkonen's first stint at Ferrari – the tyres were “never the limiting factor” for Raikkonen during this period.

“In terms of raw talent he definitely was one of the best drivers on the grid when he came to us,” Smedley says. “[But] he very much needs a particular set-up. He needs the front to work for him very positively. He turns the car in very early, a little bit like Michael, like Fernando, like Valtteri [Bottas]. They turn very early in the corner, and due to that he's very demanding on the front-end in that phase of the corner.

“He needs to start sending the car into the apex almost immediately when he starts thinking about the corner, especially

in medium-speed corners. When he first came to us, it took us a long time to understand what he wanted.

“He's the driver who, probably the most I've ever seen of anyone, is absolutely and entirely unfazed by rear locking at the start of heavy braking. To be able to deal with that and not to be fazed by that is something quite incredible.

“We spent a lot of our time in that winter of 2007 attempting to understand how on earth he was putting the brake balance so far rearward. He was running probably 8% more rearward than Felipe and the other drivers – that's another planet.

“We were quite surprised by that, but actually what he was trying to do, in his own way, was to make the car turn as soon as he asked for it. As soon as he asked for response out of the steering, he wanted the car to turn. He had a particular way of driving the car and I think it took us a little bit of time to understand that. Once we did, we got performance from him.”

But not consistently. Raikkonen was closely matched with Massa through most of 2007, but would likely have been asked to support his team-mate's own bid for the championship had Massa not suffered a damper failure while running ahead of Raikkonen in that year's Italian GP – and narrowly leading Raikkonen in the standings.

Massa, who describes Raikkonen as “for sure one of the strangest people I've met”, was a fan of the Finn's honesty as a team-mate, but rates Schumacher and Alonso higher: “Definitely Michael and Fernando were stronger – not quicker, but more complete.”

The following year Raikkonen was cast into the supporting role, as his title defence fell apart amid a run of four consecutive non-scoring races in the second half of the season. Massa was unlucky not to become world champion in '08 and was Ferrari's leading driver through the first part of a difficult 2009 campaign too, before he suffered a terrible head injury during qualifying for the Hungarian GP.

“We never were really comfortable – like if you drive and you have to try and do things that are not normal,” says Raikkonen of his first stint at Ferrari. “We never really found it and put things together. We changed the cars a little bit, but we just struggled compared to what we did in the first bit.”

Raikkonen showed flashes of form in a very difficult 2009 Ferrari, which was not a strong answer to the regulatory upheaval of the previous winter. He qualified on the front row and finished third at Monaco, but he wasn't proving so relentlessly impressive as he had done in his McLaren years – against a team-mate not rated as one of the absolute best on the grid. »

“WE WERE NEVER COMFORTABLE. WE CHANGED THE CARS A LITTLE BIT, BUT WE JUST STRUGGLED”

Raikkonen overcame Michelin deficiencies in the wet to finish second at Indy in '03

Things started well at Ferrari with a win in Australia, then last-gasp title success





Raikkonen found himself behind Massa too often during their time together at Ferrari

"In '08 Felipe was still in the stage of rapid improvement and overall Felipe was pretty much quicker than him, definitely in qualifying," adds Smedley, who reckons Raikkonen's "pure natural talent" made him better than Massa at looking after the rear tyres in races.

"That was one of the things that really surprised me, because I expected him to come in and be blisteringly quick but not really manage things in such a mechanically sympathetic way, and in fact the opposite was true. One of the strengths he's always got is that he can take the tyres further than anybody else and, wherever he goes, the team tries to exploit that.

"It's never a matter of application with Kimi – you just plug him in and he just does it. You often wonder [what would happen] if he had the level of application of others with his level of natural skill and tenacity, [but] one thing you can say about him is that he doesn't bring any politics. The guy is absolutely apolitical.

"I think that comes a little bit from not being interested in this world. The thing that is really important to him is going racing on a Sunday afternoon, qualifying, trying to be better than anybody else. And all the other periphery bits do not interest him.

"And that's kind of where he probably differs to 99.9% of the rest of us in F1. You wake up thinking about it, you go to sleep thinking about it – much to the annoyance of my wife! But that's how we are – constantly striving to do better and be the best. I don't think Kimi has that. I mean, he likes it here, he comes and drives his car, then he goes home, and doesn't think about it a great deal after that."

The feeling inside Ferrari was that Massa was establishing himself as the quicker driver, and that messed with Raikkonen's head. Raikkonen's form certainly picked up following Massa's accident. Kimi was on the podium at Budapest, Valencia and Monza, and beat Giancarlo Fisichella's Force India to victory at Spa. His performances were made to look all the more remarkable by how badly Massa's stand-ins Luca Badoer (who qualified slowest of all at Valencia and Spa) and Fisichella (who took over after Spa) struggled.

But it wasn't enough for Ferrari, which elected to pay Raikkonen out of the final two years of his contract to bring Alonso on board for 2010. Raikkonen is still guarded about the events that unfolded behind closed doors at Maranello, but says he was keen to get out of F1 in any case.

"I have nothing to hide really," says Raikkonen, who originally never planned for a long career in F1. "That's how it played out and I was happy at that point to say, 'OK, that's fine and I'll go'. Honestly, some things happen in life and I didn't feel bad about it. Obviously, I had a contract, but that got dealt with. They obviously wanted something else at that point, and for me that's how it goes sometimes. I wanted to do something else anyhow."

RETURN FROM THE WILDERNESS

Raikkonen was temporarily done with F1, but F1 wasn't done with him. Throughout his two-year stint experimenting in the World Rally Championship, proposals were made for his return.

Eventually, Raikkonen realised he missed the joy of wheel-to-wheel competition so began thinking seriously about a comeback. He held talks with Williams – "I had a meeting with Toto [Wolff]; he came to my home" – and Lotus, before opting to make his comeback with the Enstone outfit.

"The year before I got people asking me if I wanted to come back – there was a lot of talk but I felt if I want to come back I needed to have a current team that people will at least try to put the money into," Raikkonen explains. "I didn't need the money, but I wanted a car and a team that actually had some chances to do something good, rather than just being there."

Raikkonen enjoyed a superb first season with Lotus. He finished every one of the 20 races held in 2012, was on the podium seven times, and claimed a victory in Abu Dhabi – the infamous GP where he told the team to "leave me alone I know what I'm doing" over the radio while preparing for a safety car restart.

Then-Lotus team principal Eric Boullier recalls a driver who was "a bit rusty over one lap" at first, but "brilliant" in the races, despite spending two seasons out of the game.

"His capability and racecraft was amazing," recalls Boullier. "The good thing for him [was] he had Grosjean near to him, and he [Grosjean] was very fast on one lap but not as good [overall]. The most amazing thing about Kimi is he has a great understanding. He has a GPS in his head. He's doing his own strategy, it's amazing."

Boullier recalls the 2012 Hungarian GP as the perfect example of Raikkonen's craft, where the Finn came from the third row of the grid to beat Grosjean (who qualified on the front row) to second by saving his tyres and running longer in each stint.

"You just have to guess sometimes what he wants, because he's not the best communicator in the world," Boullier adds. "Kimi gets quite stressed sometimes; he needs people who understand him and can handle him.

"He is charismatic – actually, his charisma is strong enough to make people fans of him. What would be better would be to have more motivation to push people around him. He's not as complete as maybe a Vettel, but he is a great driver. Some drivers need support. He's one of the guys who can do it on his own. He's incredibly talented.

"He's quite easy [to work with] to be honest – as long as you give him space to breathe and you're not on his back all the time.





That was key – to let him live his life.”

Reuniting Raikkonen with Slade (who came across from Mercedes to work with Kimi again) also proved crucial in helping Raikkonen get the most from his comeback, and Lotus get the best out of Raikkonen.

“When he first came back, he was really enthusiastic,” remembers Slade. “Unfortunately, he got messed around a bit on the salary side of things. That was an annoyance, but in terms of the driving, I felt he was still exactly the same. I don’t think it’s any secret that he’s not a big fan of the F1 paddock scene and the stuff that goes with it.”

It seemed those two seasons of F1, racing on the most extremely fragile rubber of the Pirelli control tyre era, also suited Raikkonen’s particular skillset. Often he would score a big result by making fewer pitstops than his rivals, but Raikkonen himself reckons the design of that generation of Lotus – conceived by James Allison’s team around the Renault V8 engine and exhaust-blown downforce – made more of a difference, giving him the “pure front-end” grip he needs to drive well.

Whatever, the combination gelled superbly. Raikkonen added eight more podiums to his tally in 2013, winning the first race of the season in Melbourne and finishing second six times. An unfortunate retirement at Spa that year (thanks to a visor tear-off blocking a brake duct) broke an incredible run of 27 consecutive points finishes stretching back to the Bahrain GP of 2012.

“He’s relentless,” says Slade. “I’d say Fernando is the closest in terms of achieving consistent results.”

But into the latter part of 2013, Grosjean began to establish himself as the stronger and generally faster of the two Lotus drivers, even though he was twice defeated by Raikkonen overall in the championship. Grosjean describes Raikkonen as “the perfect



benchmark” and says he learned a lot from racing alongside the Finn.

“As team-mates we didn’t talk much – maybe three times in two years!” Grosjean says. “Everybody thinks he doesn’t give a shit; he actually does. He works. Same as Fernando – the only thing he thinks on Sunday is 2pm, how to get the car to where he wants it to go.

“Once I had a rear soft spring for a race and Kimi tried it and liked it. He was pushing to get the springs. He was trying even though you think he doesn’t [care]. It was interesting that everybody thinks he [just] comes and drives the car and goes. He actually works.”

Their head-to-head record as team-mates is also skewed slightly by the fact Raikkonen skipped the final two races of 2013 – quitting the team over a financial dispute and electing to have surgery on a long-standing back injury, legacy of a testing accident during his first season in F1 at Sauber.

“Unfortunately the whole thing [was] destroyed by people that, in my mind, were just stupid to be honest,” Raikkonen says. “They had a great thing on their hands.

“It’s not my business, but I left there purely because I didn’t get paid. Without it, who knows? But then obviously I got the offer from Ferrari. I never had a bad feeling with them when I left, despite people thinking that. You know how people always think it will end in a mess, but they offered me a new deal and I went back.” >>

Above left: Grosjean and Raikkonen rarely spoke at Lotus
Above: Oz GP win was secured with superb tyre management

“THE WHOLE THING WAS DESTROYED BY PEOPLE THAT WERE JUST STUPID”

WHY RAIKKONEN OWES HIS SECOND F1 CAREER TO RALLYING AND NASCAR

Kimi Raikkonen’s two-year sabbatical from F1 in 2010-2011 led him to try his hand at other forms of motorsport he’d long wished to dabble in but never had the time to do so while fully absorbed into grand prix racing’s goldfish bowl.

Having sampled Rally Finland in the summer of 2009, Raikkonen contested most of the 2010 World Rally Championship as part of the Citroen Junior Team, and nine rounds of the 2011 championship

with a DS 3 run under his own ‘Ice 1 Racing’ banner. There were many incidents, but also many top 10s.

“I always wanted to try the rally stuff, because it looks so difficult,” says Raikkonen. “I wanted to see how it would go and I was happy to have the help from Red Bull to do it. I still think it’s a great sport, it’s so difficult. The problem is that it needs time – experience counts a lot more in rallying than in circuit racing.

“In rallying you have to put the same effort in driving, but you [also] have to listen to your co-driver. The most difficult thing is that you have to think about what he says and then react. That takes too much time. When that starts to happen automatically then you can go faster, then it gets easier. I was close to getting to that point, then things happened and I ended up back in F1.”

Raikkonen also travelled

Stateside in 2011, to try his hand at NASCAR. He contested the lower-tier Nationwide and Truck series races at Charlotte, qualifying mid-pack for his Nationwide outing. It was this experience that rekindled Raikkonen’s enthusiasm for circuit racing and accelerated his F1 return.

“Without that happening then I would definitely not be here today,” he says. “I would never have lasted this long if I hadn’t had a few years doing something else, trying things.”

MARANELLO COMEBACK

It was during Raikkonen's financial dispute with Lotus that he agreed a two-year deal to return to Maranello. Initially, it looked as though signing Raikkonen was the perfect insurance policy for Ferrari, which seemed in danger of losing Alonso after failing to carry the fight to Vettel and Red Bull in 2013.

But despite publicly criticising the team and being admonished by company president Luca di Montezemolo, Alonso stayed put (for the moment) and he and Raikkonen became team-mates for 2014, as Massa departed for a fresh start at Williams.

Raikkonen's first season back at the Scuderia was a real struggle. The first year of F1's current V6 hybrid turbo era was Ferrari's least competitive since 1993. The car was bad, Raikkonen couldn't adapt it to his driving style, and was demolished in the championship by Alonso, 161 points to 55.

Jonathan Neale recalls how McLaren found its suspension development pulled "in two different directions" owing to Raikkonen's demand for instant steering response from its cars, and Pat Fry, who was Ferrari's chief engineer when Raikkonen returned in 2014, found his team coming up against an age-old problem – one exacerbated by stiff and hard Pirelli tyres that Raikkonen often struggled to get working for a single flying lap in qualifying.

"He has a very smooth driving style – you've got to get rid of the understeer in the car," says Fry. "You can obviously play around with suspension geometries and stuff like that to try and give him the feel, and sort out power-steering and all that stuff."

The process was made trickier by Alonso's long-standing presence as Ferrari's number one driver, which inevitably led the team in a development direction that suited Alonso, before he departed for the ill-fated McLaren-Honda project.

"In all the years I've worked with Kimi, the year I saw him struggle the most was that first year back at Ferrari," says his long-time trainer Mark Arnall. "Coming from Lotus, where he had a good front-end on the car and had podium after podium after podium, it's not like he suddenly forgot how to drive – he just couldn't get a balance with that 2014 car."

But Raikkonen commanded the faith of technical director James Allison, with whom he worked at Lotus previously, and knew that he would have to play the long game at Ferrari to get back to where he needed to be.

"I knew what I was getting into," Raikkonen says. "With the engineers, I wouldn't say they were bad – maybe the fit wasn't what I wanted. It just didn't work, I suppose, and our car was not very good.



Life back at Ferrari proved very tough in 2014...

...but things have improved alongside Vettel

"The front end has to be right there. If it's not right, it's not right, unfortunately. When it's right things are very easy. Even when you have a good year, it's a little percentage that's perfect. There's always something. There's so many things that you have no control over.

"Some days everything goes perfectly fine, and some days whatever you do it seems to be against you, but I've been long enough in the sport to know it. People look at you in one race and if you struggle they slag you off, but I'm used to it so it doesn't bother me too much.

"I want myself to do well and I know what I can do. That's more important for me. Obviously, it's not nice when you are in a team like Ferrari and the results are not coming, [but] I had no issues with them and I knew that things would turn out to be just fine with time. It just took some patience."

Raikkonen's form has gradually improved since that annus horribilis, during which time the Ferrari senior management has changed, the technical structure has changed, the identity of his team-mate has changed, and so has his engineering group. Drafting in Dave Greenwood as his race engineer at the end of 2014 has made a massive difference for Raikkonen.

"The car has been getting better and better every year, and a big part for me has been the people," Raikkonen explains. "Dave is for sure one of the greatest guys that I have ever worked with. I would compare him with Slade – I very highly rate them.

"For me it's important that when we do something, everything has to be exactly like it should be. A very easy example: the rideheight, if it's [supposed] to be 20mm, it has to be 20mm; it can't be 21mm or 19mm.

"When everything is 'close enough', and you have five or six things like that, we all know in F1 how much difference small things make, then suddenly the lap time is not so perfect anymore."

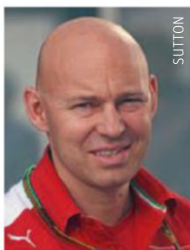
Vettel has generally outperformed Raikkonen since arriving at Maranello in 2015, but their similar set-up demands and harmonious working relationship is helping drive Ferrari's development in a single direction, and the Scuderia is now finally carrying the fight >>





LAT IMAGES

Q&A



SUTTON

MARK ARNALL

RAIKKONEN'S LONG-TIME
PERSONAL TRAINER**How does the Kimi of now compare to the Kimi you first knew back in 2001?**

He didn't really care too much about the PR stuff, he wasn't interested in that glamour side of it, being famous, I think

he would much rather be anonymous! Every time he got in the car all he wanted to do was drive the crap out of it. When I started working with him, I could never imagine him being a father. Now seeing him with two kids is a phenomenal transformation. He is fantastic dad. I think all drivers, everyone learns, go through life and grow; experience teaches a lot. If you look at Kimi, the PR stuff he does now and what the sponsors say, everyone is super happy with him, and he's got a global following of fans.

He doesn't give much away in public; is he a shy character?

I think that mysterious side to him is intriguing for people. I don't think he is particularly shy – the whole fan side of things, he obviously understands Formula 1, knows he is a popular driver, but it is not something he deliberately tries to play to, he just tries to get on with the job and what comes with it comes with it. One area he is very good is with kids. There was a guy who come up to me in Spa once, with this charity, to say this girl has cancer and she'd just love a picture with him or to say 'hi', and he spent 25 minutes sitting down and talking to her.

Is he quite a difficult character to work with? He polarises opinion – some people get him and say he is brilliant, others say he is completely closed off, difficult to work with...

The nicest thing I'd say about Kimi is what you see is what you get. Zero bullshit, zero politics. Kimi's always been his own character and will always make his own decisions. He's got a very strong head on those shoulders, so if he doesn't want to do something, it is really difficult to get him to do it.

It sounds like he is not too demanding, quite independent and knows his own mind.

That is quite an accurate description of what he is like. I think he is probably the opposite to what most people think. If I was to describe Kimi, it would be 'Mr 110%'. Goes into the gym and goes 110%. If he is lying on his sofa, he'll go 110% horizontal! When he drives anything, it would be 110%, if he goes out it is 110%. I think that is just the way he lives his life.

The public persona is the 'Iceman': cool, disinterested, closed-off. Is he really like that?

In most situations, he is like that, but Kimi is actually a very warm, big-hearted character, and he has got a phenomenal sense of humour, but that is not really something people see. He needs to like people as well. If he doesn't particularly like being with someone, he doesn't do anything other than just ignore them. There is no bullshit, if he doesn't like someone, he is quite straight about it. I think I've seen all the different versions of him, but I wouldn't carry on working with him if I thought he was an arse. I actually really like him. I think he is super genuine, super kind. That is something people don't really see so much.



Raikkonen won't be walking away from Formula 1 just yet

to Mercedes in the world championship – though it is Vettel leading the charge rather than Raikkonen.

“Of all F1 drivers, he is probably closer to him [Vettel] than any of the others,” says Arnall, who arranged for Vettel to travel with Raikkonen on a private jet when Vettel was first in F1, and recalls Vettel’s rapid progression playing badminton against Raikkonen. “Kimi always liked Seb and I think Seb always liked Kimi. They are good friends – as much as you can be in this sort of environment.

“The thing about Kimi is that he is not political at all, so I think to be a team-mate of, he is actually very easy as he doesn’t stir up any shit in the background – he is very transparent. Harmony in the team is something that is massively underrated. It makes a huge difference.”

Paired alongside Vettel, Raikkonen’s own performances have steadily improved too, to the point where he has earned three contract extensions, which will keep him in F1 until after his 39th birthday.

Questions about his ultimate speed and consistency remain, though, stoked further by occasional criticism from Ferrari president Sergio Marchionne, who has described Raikkonen as an occasional “laggard” in races.

But Raikkonen’s pole position in Monaco proves he can still be faster than anyone when things are right, and his pernickety

obsession with car set-up and tyre behaviour, plus the deep levels of valuable experience from F1’s tyre war era he can bring to bear in an age of severely limited testing, make him a valuable commodity, even if the price is the odd lacklustre performance.

“I think Kimi is one of those guys that if he thought, ‘I just can’t drive one of these cars as quick as I used to’, he would stop,” reckons Arnall. “Kimi brings a shit load of experience, he’s very good with the development of the car, very non-political, an easy team-mate for people to have, so I think as an overall package, he is [still] very good.

“I think his belief is that he can still compete near the top. He is very honest with himself – if he didn’t think that was the case, he’d stop.”

Many would argue that he should have stopped a while ago, that his continuing presence on the grid, in such a coveted seat, is baffling when you consider he hasn’t been definitively quicker than any of his last four team-mates in F1. But what does Raikkonen himself think

**“AS LONG AS
I AM HAPPY WITH
WHAT I AM DOING,
THAT IS MY
ONLY INTEREST”**



Highs and lows: Kimi crashed out at Monaco amid difficult start to 2016 (top); first podium of '17 came in Russia (middle); Monaco pole (bottom) was Raikkonen's first since '08 French GP

– does he believe he is as good a driver now as he ever was?

“That’s so hard to say,” he replies. “I feel that I can drive as well as 2007 and 2001, or whatever people think has been my best ever [year]. For me, if I didn’t feel that I can drive well, or couldn’t win races or championships, I wouldn’t be here, because I don’t have interest to waste my own time and everyone else’s time.

“I value my own time too much to use it on something that I wouldn’t be happy with, or that I wouldn’t think that I can actually do well. Plus, all the other people who would waste their time and money or on something that I just want to be part of. It’s not the most friendly place to be if you don’t really want to be...”

That Ferrari continues to place its faith in Raikkonen suggests it feels, beyond the headline results and numbers, that he is still fundamentally among the very best drivers in the world, and that it recognises those deeper layers of style, character, substance and ability that make Raikkonen something more than the sum of his parts. He is enigmatic and mercurial, hasn’t been world champion for a decade, but clearly possesses extra qualities that F1’s biggest team finds are still worth investing in.

He may lack the single-minded dedication of some of his peers, he may not be the out-and-out fastest driver on the grid anymore, he may well be too Button-esque in his over-reliance on particular car characteristics to drive quickly. He may not be as adaptable as

some of his rivals, and F1 may only be a job to him, rather than an all-consuming obsession – but what’s wrong with being naturally gifted enough at your job that you don’t feel the need to take your work home with you every day?

His critics will argue that’s not good enough, that Raikkonen has long overstayed his welcome. If Ferrari hands him another contract extension, they will no doubt be outraged if this enigma is given yet another lease of life. But one thing is for sure, Raikkonen will not care what they think.

“I can live my life very happy,” Raikkonen says. “Obviously, my aim is to win races and I’m not happy when I’m not doing well. My biggest issue when I’m getting older is that I care too much. In the past, I didn’t care much. Now, when I have a bad weekend it’s more painful because I care more. Before it was still painful, but I got over it very quickly.

“I never tried to be anything else than myself. If people like it, that’s good; if people don’t like it, that’s fine. As long as I’m happy what I’m doing, that’s my only interest. I’m not trying to please people because then I don’t live my life as I should. I live my life for myself.

“I always said I have a life and that F1 is just a part of that. It’s not like F1 is all your life and then you have nothing. In my mind, I have the opposite. I mean F1, yes I love it and I enjoy doing it, but it’s not my life. My life is outside of it, and that’s how it should be.” ❦



 LAT IMAGES

FOUND

Britain's next F1 star

There are a lot of promising British talents around at the moment, but a recent F1 test has put Lando Norris at the front of the queue

By Kevin Turner, Editor

[@KRT917](#)

People are always looking for the next Formula 1 star. Followers of junior racing take pride in spotting talent before anyone else, Red Bull has reaped the benefits of its rigorous driver programme, and national interest in motorsport increases when there is a homegrown hero to cheer for.

Britain has a good record when it comes to drivers, but there is always the concern about where the next potential world champion is going to come from. That's particularly true for Silverstone owner, the British Racing Drivers' Club, which knows that having a frontrunning local hero can make a big difference to the number of fans who come through the gates for the British Grand Prix.

Since 1989 the McLaren Autosport BRDC Award has been a part of that search to find and help British talents. One of the prizes is an F1 test, which usually takes place at Silverstone at the end of the following year, and recently has been conducted in

1998 Award victor and 2009 F1 World Champion Jenson Button's 2011 Canadian GP-winning MP4-26.

But this year things have been rather different. Lando Norris took three titles in 2016 – the Toyota Racing Series, Formula Renault Eurocup and FR NEC – and then won the McLaren Autosport BRDC Award in arguably the most impressive style since Button 18 years earlier.

By the end of June this year, McLaren had given Norris a run in the MP4-26 in Portugal and decided to extend his prize drive to an official F1 test in a current car at the Hungaroring. On August 2, the 17-year-old did 91 laps in the McLaren-Honda MCL32 – and he was stunning.

Norris spent the first half of the day on set-up and development work, before McLaren let him have a crack at some qualifying runs and, in his own words, “have some fun”.

Using the ultra-soft Pirelli, Norris lapped in 1m17.385s, almost half a second faster than McLaren regular Stoffel Vandoorne had done in similar conditions the day before. It also put him »

second overall in the test, behind only Ferrari's Hungarian GP winner Sebastian Vettel, who went slower than he had done during qualifying.

Perhaps even more impressively, Norris's time was quicker than the 1m17.549s lap double world champion Fernando Alonso managed in qualifying for the previous weekend's GP in the same equipment. Even factoring in the advantage of the ultra-soft tyre over the super-soft rubber that Alonso used – reckoned to be around half a second – that puts Norris within about three tenths of a driver regarded by many as the best in the world, on his first run in a contemporary F1 car.

"It was a very good day," says Norris, who nevertheless tries to play down the times. "I felt comfortable pretty quickly and I got the chance to do some qualifying-style runs, but you can't just look at the times.

"There was some time left in me – not loads, but there were a few tenths. It was slightly better than I expected it would go."

McLaren racing director Eric Boullier describes Norris as a "potential star of the future" and points to more than the Brit's pace: "Lando showed positive progress throughout the day and impressed us with his maturity, professionalism and speed. He was able to adjust his driving style as we moved through our run plan, adapting his input and technique to the requirements we needed for our evaluation programme. That proved very useful and he's certainly an asset to our test-driver line-up.

"He's at the beginning of a steep learning curve, but he's

definitely shown that he deserves to be on this path."

None of this has been a surprise to BRDC president and chairman of the Award judges Derek Warwick, who has helped a number of rising British aces in recent years. "When we saw him in the tests we all saw something very special," says the ex-F1 racer. "He considers things before he answers questions and has a natural gift for driving a racing car.

"I've never met a more unassuming yet confident guy – he is so understated. In F3 he made a mistake at Pau and admitted to it, and said it would never happen again. With him you believe it.

"The most impressive thing for me was Spa [in F3]. He'd just had his McLaren test in Portimao and found out he was going to drive at the Hungaroring, and he took three poles and two wins. To deliver under that sort of pressure at that age is very unusual."

The impressive Hungary

test was a continuation of exceeding expectations that Norris has managed in 2017. As well as that stellar European F3 campaign (see panel, page 32), he has also become part of McLaren's simulator team. That was one of the new Award prizes introduced last year, but Norris has made more of it than anyone could have hoped.

After passing McLaren's tests, he is now part of its race support team, trying changes in the simulator during a GP weekend based on feedback from Alonso, Vandoorne and the rest of the race operation.

"It involves trying things the team at the track wants to try, »

"I've never met a more unassuming yet confident guy. He is so understated"

Just 17 and about to leave the pits in a McLaren. It's been an amazing rise for Norris



LAT IMAGES





Norris impressed on his run in a 2017 McLaren MCL32 at the Hungaroring test

CURRENT STATUS OF RECENT AWARD WINNERS

Lando Norris

2016 winner
1st in European F3 with Carlin

Will Palmer

2015 winner
3rd in Formula Renault Eurocup with R-ace GP

George Russell

2014 winner
1st in GP3 with ART

Matt Parry

2013 winner
Blancpain GT racer

Jake Dennis

2012 winner
Blancpain GT and Euro F3 racer

Oliver Rowland

2011 winner
2nd in F2 with DAMS

Too good to be a rookie?

BY ALL ACCOUNTS LANDO Norris has had an eye-opening debut season in the Formula 3 European Championship – going into the final three rounds, he's in contention for the overall title, let alone the rookie crown – but perhaps key to this has been to not even consider himself a newcomer.

"None of us like to tell ourselves that he's a rookie and that he can't win the championship," says his Carlin engineer, Matt Ogle.

"After all, we all got beaten

by [Esteban] Ocon in 2014!

"He's very well-prepared," adds Ogle. "He's done a lot of driving last year in Formula Renault and BRDC F3, and in MSA the year before. The good thing is he's always been jumping onto different tyres and different tracks, and that makes him adaptable, whether it's cold conditions at home or stinking hot in Europe."

Norris has also felt comfortable at Carlin. Stefan de Groot, who has taken over as chief engineer on the FIA F3

squad this season, was his race engineer in MSA Formula and BRDC F3, while Ogle – who has previously run F3 luminaries such as 2012 British champion Jack Harvey and '15 European runner-up Antonio Giovinazzi – doubled up on BRDC duties last year with Ricky Collard. Both were therefore familiar to Norris, and he has flourished.

"The thing about the best drivers – Jack, Antonio, Lando – is that they don't have one particular standout strength," says Ogle. "They're just good

everywhere all the time. Lando can improve in lots of areas, but it's encouraging that he's always there or thereabouts.

"As for his adaptability – rain, damp, dry – he's incredible, like all the great drivers. And with Ferdinand [Habsburg] and Jehan [Daruvala] as teammates, they always give us something we know we can improve. It's valuable having them around."

One negative point has been Norris's starts, which have cost him a bucketload

which is pretty cool,” says Norris, before explaining the details of the assessment he had to do first.

“They didn’t tell me what they were doing to the car and I had to say how it had been affected. That gave them an idea of what my feedback was like. They have to trust me, otherwise it’s not worth me doing any more tests. I did reasonably well fairly quickly and they were giving me things to test and develop.”

The result was that, about a month after starting, Norris began helping with the race effort back at the Woking base. He regularly visits McLaren’s factory, even if it is just to do some fitness training and “see everyone”. Despite his youth, Norris’s perspective on the wider requirements needed to be successful is often apparent.

“I’ve done a fair bit of sim work – it’s not easy because I’ve been busy with F3,” he adds. “It’s been mainly working on the car and it’s definitely helped me improve and get ready for the test. If I hadn’t done the sim I would have done a lot worse in Hungary.”

“Sometimes you have late nights doing the race support if the time zones are different to the races, but I enjoy it.”

So does he think the simulator work was why he got the chance to drive the real MCL32 in Hungary? “It’s not just that – it’s a lot of things,” replies Norris after his characteristic thoughtful pause. “It’s the sim work, the results I’ve had in my career so far, how I’ve been doing in my rookie F3 year, and the effort I put in.”

At each step of the way Norris has performed to such a high level that McLaren has been compelled to raise the stakes. “You can’t risk everything in one go,” he says with trademark maturity. “The MP4-26 run was useful because until then the fastest car I’d driven was the [Williams-built JPH1B] F2 at the Award tests. It gave me experience of the downforce, braking performance and things like all the buttons and adjustments – knowing what the car does.”

One of the big challenges of jumping into an F1 machine for the first time is the strength and fitness required. That’s particularly true for the new generation of high-downforce cars.

Norris is not the largest driver in the world and he admits his physical attributes were a concern before he climbed aboard on a blisteringly hot day in Hungary.

“Going into it I was a bit nervous as to whether I’d be able to do 100 laps or what the other guys were doing, but it actually went really well,” he says. “By the end of the day I was tired, but in terms of neck strength it went very well. Though I can see why they’d complain after a couple of race runs!”

“I want to say thanks to McLaren – they’ve given me a big opportunity. Not everyone gets to drive for McLaren. Hopefully it’ll lead on to more things.”

That seems certain. Norris’s pace was never really in question, but he still managed to surprise in Hungary. Throw in his work ethic, abilities on the simulator, impressive feedback, fitness and desire to improve, and it’s hard to see a chink in the armour. He also has a strong support network and clearly has more than

just a foot in the door at McLaren.

A Max Verstappen-style graduation from F3 to F1 is probably not going to happen next year; McLaren isn’t currently struggling in the driver-talent department and empty seats are few

and far between. But a season in F2 or Super Formula in Japan, along with some more sim work, could be a great final stepping stone to the sport’s pinnacle.

“McLaren is nurturing him and making sure he’s not rushed,” adds Warwick. “I think he is ready for F1, but if I was his management team I would put him at Prema in F2 for 2018 because another year of top-line racing would do no harm, and there are no gaps in the market.”

“There were questions asked in the F1 paddock about whether he was doing too much and not being allowed to develop as a young man, but he loves it. If he could do, he’d go karting between all the racing!”

“It’s nice Britain has got someone who is going to be a real character, is super-quick and intelligent, and can carry on that wave after Lewis Hamilton.”

For now, the search for a star is over. ✨

“Not everyone gets to drive for McLaren. I hope it will lead on to more”

of points, although he seemed to have finally cracked this in last month’s Spa round.

“Weaknesses become strengths if you work on them,” points out Ogle. “Lando is a brilliant driver but like any human being he has his weaknesses.”

“Hopefully we’ve made a big step forward. I think it was an overall lack of understanding of the system and not having the procedure nailed in place, but I’m confident he now understands the process.”

MARCUS SIMMONS

The teenager heads the F3 European points standings with three rounds to go



The sky's the limit: Ott Tanak was on spectacular form for his second WRC win



ALL PICS: MCKLEIN

Tanak the tank on Panzerplatte

A spot of homework and a dose of faith inspired a flying victory for M-Sport's Ott Tanak on lethal German roads

By David Evans, Rallies Editor

[@davidevansrally](https://twitter.com/davidevansrally)

Deep inside the M-Sport World Rally Team command centre, there's a drivers' room. It was in there, at around three o'clock last Friday afternoon in Germany, that Ott Tanak sealed his first World Rally Championship win on asphalt.

Going into that room, the Estonian was 4.1 seconds behind leader Andreas Mikkelsen and 1.5s ahead of fellow Ford Fiesta WRC driver Sebastien Ogier. Three stages later Tanak was out front, 5.7s up on Mikkelsen. Ogier was almost half a minute down, having spent 20 seconds off the road.

Two days later and celebrating his second win in four rallies, following his



maiden victory in Sardinia, Tanak referred to that room on Friday afternoon. “That,” he said, “that was where we did this.”

So, let’s rewind and unlock the door to M-Sport’s inner sanctum. Outside, clouds that had been gathering and darkening for hours were starting to deliver. The rain was coming. And it didn’t stop. It got heavier and heavier.

The room has no windows, but there was no escaping the intensity of the weather as the rain bounced off the roof. As well as the drivers, there was an elephant in the room. And that elephant was called the Michelin Pilot Sport FW3.

‘FW’ means ‘full wet’ and, while there was no denying that it was fully wet outside, this tyre was a complete unknown quantity. “The problem was that we simply didn’t have enough data on the tyre,” said M-Sport head of rally

engineering Chris Williams. “Obviously, to find out how good the tyre is, you need the perfect conditions to test it in and we hadn’t had a week of heavy rain to get the right picture. How durable would it be? We didn’t know.”

But surely Michelin could offer some insight into what might be possible from the softer-compound, much more heavily treaded tyre? No. And the French company was really not sure about the mass movement towards its FW3.

The key question centred on the weather. From the time the cars started to arrive in Bostalsee to the point where they were all in service, the weather had changed. How much more would it change? M-Sport’s weather coordinator Stuart Loudon was in the room being downloaded of every piece of meteorological news he had gathered.

“The atmosphere was definitely a bit tense in there,” Loudon said. “The good thing is that there are no windows, so you can’t see what the weather’s doing – it can be quite disorientating if you can see the pouring rain out there; it’s hard to imagine that over the hill in the stages 30 or 40 kilometres away it’s bone dry with no rain. For a while, it was like that and that’s a bit of a nightmare.”

“I was on the phone to the weather crews pretty much non-stop during that hour or so the cars were in. It was raining at the start [of SS6], then it would stop, rain in middle, then it would stop and rain at the finish, then it would stop – it was going in a pattern like this. Then the heavy rain came. I got some pictures of the rain running down the road and, once Ott saw that, he was sure he wanted the rain tyre.”

Tanak took three of them and three of the soft-compound racer, but this, it turned out, was more to placate the team. Ogier wasn’t so sure. In the thick of a championship fight, he feared he had more to lose by running the untried and largely untested option. That policy was extended to all aspects of the event once Ogier saw Thierry Neuville’s stricken Hyundai i20 Coupe WRC at the side of the road on Saturday morning.

How much had Tanak done on the tyre? “About 10 kilometres,” he said nonchalantly as he stepped from beneath the umbrella and back aboard the Fiesta.

That was all he needed, as it turned out. The weather had dried through the afternoon, but the rain tyres were still bolted on beneath him. “I should have taken four of them,” he said. Spotting Michelin’s Herve Jothy at the side of the car, he added with a grin, “but he wouldn’t let me! They really need to have more faith in their product – maybe I should do some marketing for them... I really had to fight the team a little bit on this one, but it was the right choice. I had a small moment in the last stage where we went off the road a little bit, but I just couldn’t see the road in the hairpin. It was no problem.” ➤

MEEKE CAN STILL INHERIT THE EARTH

THERE ARE FEW PEOPLE KRIS MEEKE WOULD TAKE advice from right now. But I’ve found one. Everybody would listen to Ireland’s talismanic former rugby captain Paul O’Connell. At times of trouble, the heroic and stoic second-row would say: “You’re either going to get back to being able to be strong and fast and powerful again. Or you’re not.”

Bingo.

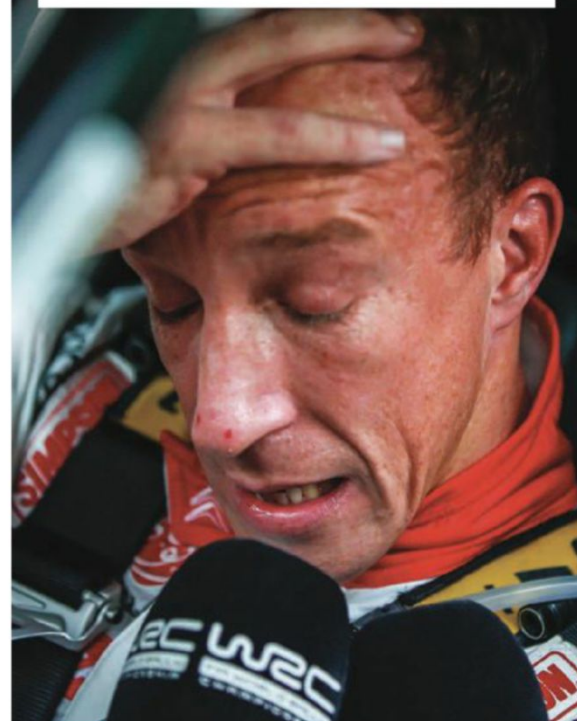
There’s lots of opinion about when things started to go wrong for Kris. Could it be Portugal, third shunt in two rallies? Or Italy, when he rolled out of the fight for the lead? I’d go back a bit further. Try Corsica, when that first whiff of oil came from beneath the bonnet and spoiled what would have been back-to-back wins.

Nail that one and he’s third in the championship, right in the mix and firmly on the front foot. That’s where he’s best. Put him on the back foot and he has a tendency to try to win every rally on every corner.

So, how does team boss Yves Matton move forward from here? Firstly, keep Meeke. He’s quick; there are few quicker. Secondly, stop all this Sebastien Loeb business. Loeb was and always will be the greatest rally driver in the history of the world. We get that. But he had his go and, much as I love the bloke, having him back at Citroen is a distraction and, worryingly, it appears to be one sanctioned at corporate level.

The team has made it clear that the rest of this season is aimed at 2018, so the best thing to do is leave Meeke where he is and let him drive his rallies. This will come good. I’ll admit jingoism has blinded me slightly, but my faith’s not entirely without sight. Meeke has towering speed and massive natural ability. The question is whether there’s still time for those stars to align.

The only negative to O’Connell’s comments was that he said them when he realised his hamstring injury in the last Rugby World Cup was career-ending. Forget the context; focus on the positive sentiment.



For the next two days, nothing was a problem. The first run through the 26-mile Panzerplatte stage was a bit nerve-wracking given that it was still damp under the trees, but ultimately it was drier than expected. Tanak remained unflustered and managed his mixed hard and soft tyres brilliantly.

Fourteen years ago, another Estonian had been in a similarly dominant position in a relatively new M-Sport World Rally Car. It still rankles with Markko Martin that he didn't win Germany in 2003. He should have done. He was the fastest by far, he won 10 of the 22 stages, but only led for one before hydraulic problems slowed his Focus.

Williams was in charge of Martin's car on that event. Predictably, he remembers it well. "The Focus used the handbrake as a secondary gearshift if we lost the paddle-shift," he said. "I remember when the car was being designed, we said, 'The only place this would be a problem is Germany...'. And it happened. We should have had that one."

Not just the one, for it should have been a one-two with Francois Delecour. The demise of both cars with hydraulic problems put an end to team boss Malcolm Wilson's days as a spectator. "Christian [Loriaux, M-Sport's technical director] and I had gone out in the stages to watch," said Wilson. "When we went in, we were one-two, but on the stage where we were watching it all went wrong. The only place I watched on a stage after that was in the superspecial in Poland in 2009, when Jari-Matti [Latvala] crashed and cost us a one-two. I don't go spectating anymore."

Such was the self-assured nature of Tanak's drive, you get the feeling Wilson could have watched on every stage and had no impact on the result. But he was happy to count them down from service.

And, with the 21st and final stage completed (16 of them with Tanak in the lead), Wilson's cheer was the loudest and longest: a double podium, with Ogier third; back to the front for the Frenchman in the drivers' championship

and a leap to 64 points ahead in the manufacturers' race. "This one's really satisfying," said Wilson. "It's perfect."

Standing champagne-soaked alongside, Tanak wasn't about to argue — not now that his talk of being in the title race looked a lot more coherent; he's 33 down with 90 to play for.

And how sweet was Tanak's revenge, to edge the Citroen of Mikkelsen, the man who had robbed him of a Polish win in that most emotional of finishes to a WRC round last season?

Talking of Poland, how Hyundai's story has changed since its last win there... Having fluffed his lines at the start of the year, Neuville looked to be word perfect as he zeroed in on Ogier's championship lead. Admittedly, the previous event was a blip as he struggled to dial the i20 into Finn air, but a wet-dry-damp-dry Germany had the Belgian's name all over it. Raised on rallies like Ypres, complete with their ever-changing grip levels and widely differing definitions of asphalt, the series leader was odds-on to build that advantage, especially with Ogier returning after slamming two trees in a week in Finland and his co-driver on forced concussion-induced recuperation.

Neuville and Hyundai blinked. Cutting a corner he knew well early in the spectator-pleasing Arena Panzerplatte stage first thing Saturday morning, the inside of the left-rear wheel slapped the kerb as the car rejoined the road. Neuville was mystified as to how it had happened and was shocked when he opened his door, peered behind him and saw the wheel at a 45-degree angle, and disconnected from the hub and rear differential.

He would, he promised, give it all in the powerstage. Five points or a trailer home was the plan. In the end, Neuville was sixth. In powerstage terms, he was nowhere. A pointless rally complete.

The mood within Hyundai contrasted starkly with that at M-Sport. If Neuville slipped up, at least it would have its banker Dani Sordo ready to spoil the



Flower power: Andreas Mikkelsen kept Citroen in bloom following Meeke's latest troubles

Cumbrian party. Four years ago, the affable Spaniard sealed his one and only WRC win here in Germany and a repeat of that result was more than possible.

After the first stage proper, Sordo was delivering. Two stages later, he wasn't. Two stages later, he was on his arse. He'd dropped the Hyundai under braking and slipped down a bank. Having walked back up to the road to put the warning triangle out, he then suffered the ignominy of a second loss of traction — he fell over as he descended the bank on foot.

Little wonder that despondency overtook expectancy within the blue-and-orange walls of the team from just down the road in Frankfurt. A return to form next time out in Spain is a must if the South Korean-German alliance is going to retrieve anything from a season that promised so much.

Low as Hyundai may go, it's hard to imagine it rivalling Citroen in terms of unfulfilled 2017 promise. But Germany would provide at least a partial reprieve for the Parisians. The shockwaves of Kris Meeke's first-stage crash could still be felt in the future, but Mikkelsen's second place was a demonstration of just how good the C3 WRC is on sealed surfaces. What's so frustrating about the Norwegian's pace is that you just know that, if Meeke had been in a purple patch rather than a black hole, that rally would have been his for the taking. Not that he could have taken it — a cooling problem on Saturday night sidelined him for good. In the other Citroen, Craig Breen offered final-day cheer as he stormed past Elfyn Evans's DMACK-shod Fiesta on the final stage to land fifth. The Welshman had struggled to find a firm footing across the three days in Germany, while his Irish rival had found confidence and speed (enough to go quickest on the penultimate test) as conditions dried.

Ahead of the event, post-recce, there were plenty of concerns about some of

Sebastien Ogier made sure of an M-Sport one-three and took back his points lead on the way





the new roads being used on a more southerly-based Rally Germany. With Saarland footing the bill, Trier had been ousted in favour of Saarbrücken. Unfortunately for the host city and regional capital, Meeke's steering-wrecking, walking-pace argument with a concrete block will be the lasting memory of one of the best supported (if worst planned in terms of stage layout) superspecials in recent years.

There were faults with last weekend's event, of that there can be little doubt. A grass service park on a rally regularly hit by heavy rain is a recipe for potential disaster and the ensuing mudbath that greeted some of the support crews on Friday night and Saturday morning was a product of this. But on the whole, it was positive. The boring stages turned out to be moderately interesting and the event actually provided another thrilling chapter in this season of seasons.

Five changes of leader on the opening day and the sort of unpredictability team principals loathe is always going to be a winner as far as the WRC's concerned. And so it turned out.

As we left Saarland for the final time, questions had been asked and answered – particularly by the dominant M-Sport squad. But there remained one outstanding conundrum relating to the Cumbrians: just a couple of hours up Bundesautobahn 1 is Cologne, Ford of Europe's home city; what a crying shame nobody from the Blue Oval turned up to cheer the sort of result rival manufacturers are spending millions chasing, while it rides for free.

Not that it impacted on Sunday night celebrations. Another job had been well done and, with an Eric Camilli WRC2 victory in there as well, Germany couldn't have been a happier hunting ground for the British-based squad. The only downer is the five-week wait for Spain and another piece of the jigsaw. 🍷

RESULTS ROUND 10/13, RALLY GERMANY, AUGUST 17-20

POS	DRIVER	CO-DRIVER	TEAM	TIME
1	Ott Tanak (EST)	Martin Jarveoja (EST)	M-Sport WRT · Ford Fiesta WRC	2h57m31.7s
2	Andreas Mikkelsen (N)	Anders Jäger (N)	Citroen Total · Citroen C3 WRC	+16.4s
3	Sebastien Ogier (F)	Julien Ingrassia (F)	M-Sport WRT · Ford Fiesta WRC	+30.4s
4	Juho Hanninen (FIN)	Kaj Lindstrom (FIN)	Toyota Gazoo Racing WRC · Toyota Yaris WRC	+1m49.2s
5	Craig Breen (IRL)	Scott Martin (GB)	Citroen Total · Citroen C3 WRC	+2m01.5s
6	Elfyn Evans (GB)	Daniel Barritt (GB)	M-Sport WRT · Ford Fiesta WRC	+2m03.4s
7	Jari-Matti Latvala (FIN)	Miikka Anttila (FIN)	Toyota Gazoo Racing WRC · Toyota Yaris WRC	+3m58.2s
8	Hayden Paddon (NZ)	Sebastian Marshall (GB)	Hyundai Motorsport · Hyundai i20 Coupe WRC	+4m32.4s
9	Armin Kremer (D)	Pirmin Winklhofer (D)	Ford Fiesta WRC	+10m19.4s
10	Eric Camilli (F)	Benjamin Veillas (F)	M-Sport WRT · Ford Fiesta R5	+10m44.3s
OTHERS				
21	Esapekka Lappi (FIN)	Janne Ferm (FIN)	Toyota Gazoo Racing WRC · Toyota Yaris WRC	+18m05.2s
33	Dani Sordo (E)	Marc Martí (E)	Hyundai Motorsport · Hyundai i20 Coupe WRC	+35m19.0s
43	Thierry Neuville (B)	Nicolas Gilsoul (B)	Hyundai Motorsport · Hyundai i20 Coupe WRC	+56m25.6s
R	Kris Meeke (GB)	Paul Nagle (IRL)	Citroen Total · Citroen C3 WRC	SS15-cooling

DRIVERS' CHAMPIONSHIP

1 Ogier 177; 2 Neuville 160; 3 Tanak 144; 4 Latvala 123; 5 Sordo 89; 6 Evans 87; 7 Breen 261; 8 Hanninen 58; 9 Paddon 55; 10 Lappi 49

MANUFACTURERS' CHAMPIONSHIP

1 M-Sport WRT 325; 2 Hyundai Motorsport 261; 3 Toyota Gazoo Racing WRC 213; 4 Citroen Total 163



STAGE TIMES

STAGE	FASTEST	LEADER	SECOND
SS1 Saarbrücken 1.27miles	Kopecky 2m05.9s	Kopecky	Tanak +0.3s
SS2 Wadern-Weiskirchen 1 5.76miles	Sordo 5m12.2s	Sordo	Tanak +1.5s
SS3 Mittelmosel 1 13.67miles	Tanak 13m00.3s	Tanak	Mikkelsen +4.2s
SS4 Graftschaff 1 11.40miles	Mikkelsen 10m50.3s	Mikkelsen	Tanak +4.8s
SS5 Wadern-Weiskirchen 2 5.76miles	Neuville 5m15.9s	Mikkelsen	Tanak +4.1s
SS6 Mittelmosel 2 13.67miles	Tanak 13m31.5s	Mikkelsen	Tanak +0.9s
SS7 Graftschaff 2 11.40miles	Tanak 11m15.4s	Tanak	Mikkelsen +4.5s
SS8 Wadern-Weiskirchen 3 5.76miles	Latvala 5m54.9s	Tanak	Mikkelsen +5.7s
SS9 Arena Panzerplatte 1 1.78miles	Tanak 1m45.5s	Tanak	Mikkelsen +6.3s
SS10 Panzerplatte 1 26.08miles	Hanninen 24m39.7s	Tanak	Mikkelsen +15.3s
SS11 Freisen 1 9.18miles	Tanak 8m59.9s	Tanak	Mikkelsen +25.7s
SS12 Romerstrasse 1 7.63miles	Mikkelsen 6m13.9s	Tanak	Mikkelsen +23.0s
SS13 Arena Panzerplatte 2 1.78miles	Sordo 1m43.3s	Tanak	Mikkelsen +23.5s
SS14 Arena Panzerplatte 3 1.78miles	Sordo 1m43.4s	Tanak	Mikkelsen +26.7s
SS15 Panzerplatte 2 26.08miles	Sordo 23m52.0s	Tanak	Mikkelsen +25.2s
SS16 Freisen 2 9.18miles	Ogier 8m44.8s	Tanak	Mikkelsen +24.8s
SS17 Romerstrasse 2 7.63miles	Latvala 6m12.0s	Tanak	Mikkelsen +21.4s
SS18 Losheim am See 1 8.09miles	Hanninen 6m32.0s	Tanak	Mikkelsen +18.5s
SS19 St Wendeler Land 1 8.05miles	Lappi 6m22.5s	Tanak	Mikkelsen +18.0s
SS20 Losheim am See 2 8.09miles	Breen 6m29.4s	Tanak	Mikkelsen +17.1s
SS21 St Wendeler Land 2 (Power Stage) 8.05miles	Sordo 6m17.3s	Tanak	Mikkelsen +16.4s

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Fuel fail halts BMW's perfection

DTM
ZANDVOORT (NL)
AUGUST 19-20
ROUND 6/9

MARCO WITTMANN FOR A THIRD DTM title, and second on the bounce? That looked like a very distinct possibility as the pack-up began after the racing at Zandvoort. Second place on a BMW-dominated podium on Saturday, and then first past the flag on Sunday, he seemed to have closed to just seven points off Audi veteran Mattias Ekstrom. Then came the bombshell: Wittmann's RMG-run M4 had failed to yield the required 1kg of fuel for a sample at scrutineering, and he was excluded.

So, in the end, Zandvoort proved just as inconclusive in the title battle as almost every other event this season. Wittmann's loss of his 'victory' buries him back in eighth in the points, while Ekstrom – who hasn't even won a DTM race this season – left the North Sea coast with 14 points in hand over Audi stablemate Rene Rast.

BMW had the edge on one-lap pace last weekend, but it was Audi that appeared to get the better over long runs. Even so, with Zandvoort being such a difficult place to overtake at, that wasn't going to be much help to the flotilla of RS5s in rising to the front. Timo Glock claimed pole for Saturday's race, and the RMR-run yellow machine led home

Wittmann and Maxime Martin.

This was quite a spectacular race, with Audi pair Mike Rockenfeller and Jamie Green showing great long-run pace once everyone had got their early pitstops out of the way. Rockenfeller allowed Green through to have a crack at the Bimmers; when Green failed, he let Rockenfeller back ahead just before the finish.

Meanwhile, an uncharacteristic blunder by Ekstrom cost him the points lead to Rast. Ekstrom dived into the Tarzanbocht gravel trap straight after his pitstop, and finally retired with a puncture. Rast was badly delayed early on by BMW's Augusto Farfus, who held up the pack and allowed his team-mates to escape. A late stop didn't help either, but ninth place elevated him over Ekstrom in the standings.

Ironically, that Audi race pace gave it a net penalty of 10kg of performance weight against BMW for Sunday, prompting a grumpy Rast to proclaim about BMW: "If they don't fuck it up tomorrow, they should be P1 to P6."

But it actually transpired to be a similar kind of race. Farfus took pole

Glock beat Wittmann and Martin in BMW podium wipeout in Saturday race

from Wittmann and Martin, but the Brazilian lost the lead to Wittmann at the start, while Martin stalled and badly delayed Rast (at least this time Rast couldn't blame it on BMW tactics...)

Once the pitstops had shaken out, Wittmann was leading Rockenfeller, but the Team Phoenix Audi was making inroads. Rockenfeller – back to left-foot braking this weekend as he recovers from his Norisring injury – was almost up with Wittmann when they caught the late-stopping Audi of Loic Duval. Such was the advantage this trio had built up that Duval was able to take his stop and slot into a comfortable third place, which was converted to second by Wittmann's penalty, allowing the Frenchman to end a miserable rookie-season run that had hitherto failed to yield a point.

A long way behind, Ekstrom had a front-left puncture but was brilliantly protected by Nico Muller, with some eye-widening last-lap brake-testing and tactical driving preventing a fuming Gary Paffett – who nevertheless netted the best result of a tough weekend for Mercedes – from getting through. With Rast out of the race with broken suspension after a clash with Maro Engel's Merc, that handed the points lead back to Ekstrom. Worse still for Rast, his prediction of a BMW whitewash was not only massively off-target – it was an Audi 1-2-3-4 – but he wasn't even part of it...

MARCUS SIMMONS

Ekstrom (left) tops points, but Rockenfeller (right) inherited Sunday spoils



Superb Norris goes to top of the table

FORMULA 3 EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIP
ZANDVOORT (NL)
AUGUST 19-20
ROUND 7/10

NOW THAT HE SEEMS TO HAVE cracked his starts, there hasn't been much to stop Lando Norris in the Formula 3 European Championship's two Benelux trips. As at Spa three weeks earlier, the McLaren junior initially earned three pole positions for the series' visit to the Dutch seaside track of Zandvoort. As at Spa, he lost one of those to a grid penalty for a driving transgression. And as at Spa, he took two wins, this time leapfrogging Maximilian Gunther for the championship lead.

Both of these mid-season venues are hugely popular with the competitors as driving challenges, but while Spa was, as usual, all-action and high-cholesterol racing, Zandvoort was typically processional. Norris could do nothing from his penalised third on the grid for the middle race, and it was Callum Ilott who ensured an all-UK sweep of the three encounters as he headed home what was, remarkably, a British 1-2-3-4.

But don't let yourself think that Norris and the Carlin team are dominating this championship. Prema Powerteam men Gunther and Ilott were right up there on pace at Zandvoort, but, apart from Ilott's win, the Italian team couldn't convert its form to quite the same effect as its British rival. And it wasn't just Norris at the front for Carlin – Ferdinand Habsburg, his confidence high following his maiden win last time out, was also mixed in there, his pace and commitment highly impressive right from the off through the daunting Scheivlak and Mastersbocht right-handers. Through here, he set a standard that even someone as good as Norris had to build up to.

Norris's first pole, indeed, came by just 0.012 seconds from Habsburg in a qualifying session where the much-vaunted new track surface (happily, the Zandvoort organisers seemed to have left in the bumps) was surprisingly slippery. It could have been that, in high winds, sand was blowing onto it from the surrounding dunes; in any case, no one matched the standard Gunther had set in free practice. Norris even had such a big moment at Mastersbocht that the steering wheel was jolted briefly out of his hand, but he recovered and set the time he needed.

Ilott never got a proper run – “How did I manage to get one clear lap in 2015 when there were 35 cars, but I can't in 2017 when there are 19?” he grumbled – and was fifth behind Gunther. “We struggled with balance,” explained the Austro-Bavarian. “And as soon as that happens... You know how the championship is this year: you're not going to be fighting for pole.”

Joel Eriksson made a welcome return to qualifying form by grabbing third in his Motopark machine, and it was the Swede who benefited from Habsburg's fluffed start to take second.

Habsburg's launch wasn't great, and that in turn meant he'd moved onto a damp part of the circuit (following overnight rain) when the power came in, and he wheelspun down to fifth.

Norris's biggest worry was an early safety car, triggered when Guan Yu Zhou locked up into Tarzanbocht just after the start. The Chinese Ferrari protege thought he'd got it back, but needed cooperation from Ralf Aron to his outside to make the corner. But Aron in turn was squeezed in by David Beckmann to his left, and, with no room to breathe, he pitched Beckmann off the circuit and into the gravel, which, being damp, caused the car to dig in and roll over. When this was cleared, Norris



Norris leads Eriksson, Gunther and Habsburg after first-race restart

– thinking there wasn't much of a gap to the safety car – went too late to prevent Eriksson tucking into his slipstream, and locked up and flat-spotted his front-right tyre into Tarzan as he defended. But with two new Hankooks on the left side (Eriksson was on all-used tyres), he sailed away to win by nine seconds, followed by Eriksson and Gunther, while Habsburg nabbed fourth from Ilott at the restart.

Beckmann also played a crucial role in the outcome of the other two races. The qualifying session for these had already been red-flagged when Jehan Daruvala crashed at Mastersbocht, leaving just a two-lap run at the end. But when Beckmann spun at the Turn 10 left-hander on the final lap, the resulting yellow flag caught out 10 drivers. Nine – including Norris, Habsburg, Gunther and Eriksson – received grid penalties for race two for not slowing down sufficiently, while Eriksson lost his best lap and Ilott his second fastest.

The upshot was that Ilott, whose quickest lap was 0.123s adrift of Norris's, was elevated to race-two pole from Hitech GP's Jake Hughes. Brummie Hughes had struggled with a suspected trapped nerve, particularly in Friday qualifying. He sits low in the car so needs ultra-tight belts to prevent himself sliding down into the cockpit, and on this high-g-force track it was causing problems on grippy new tyres. “The car's been mega all weekend,” he said. “I just couldn't drive it on Friday.”

While Ilott sprinted away to win, Hughes likewise had no challenge from

Ilott moved onto race-two pole and was a serene winner





Norris for second, and the British quartet at the front was completed by Harrison Newey. Two days after learning that he'd passed his A-levels, Newey had another bonus when the grid penalties lifted him from ninth to fifth, and he chased his compatriots home after passing Beckmann at the start.

With Gunther trailing Habsburg in seventh, that cost him the series lead to Norris, and he fell further behind in the finale. Norris once again got a strong getaway. "That's been the good thing this weekend," he smiled. "My starts have been good all the way through, and the car has been brilliant." He led all the way from Habsburg, Gunther and Zhou, while Ilott was forced to the pits to replace a loose front wing after early contact with team-mate Zhou.

Ilott also had a knock with Hughes, which damaged the front wing on Hughes's car, killed his tyres, and led to him defending a massive train of cars throughout the race. Mired in this group was Eriksson, watching the title beginning to drift away. The BMW junior was on a new-tyre run when Daruvala crashed in qualifying, and felt the lost rhythm "cost me a minimum four tenths". That would have put him at least third, and then the irony was that the spin of his own team-mate Beckmann – and the Swede's subsequent penalties – converted sixth and 10th on the grid to two 13ths and a Sunday spent outside the points. Zandvoort may well prove to have been a pivotal moment for the 2017 title.

MARCUS SIMMONS

RESULTS ROUND 7/10, ZANDVOORT (NL), AUGUST 19-20 RACE 1 (21 LAPS – 56.201 MILES)

POS	DRIVER	TEAM/CAR	TIME
1	Lando Norris (GB)	Carlin · Dallara-Volkswagen F317	34m40.756s
2	Joel Eriksson (S)	Motopark · Dallara-Volkswagen F315	+8.974s
3	Maximilian Gunther (D)	Prema Powerteam · Dallara-Mercedes F316	+11.653s
4	Ferdinand Habsburg (A)	Carlin · Dallara-Volkswagen F315	+12.493s
5	Callum Ilott (GB)	Prema Powerteam · Dallara-Mercedes F314	+13.002s
6	Mick Schumacher (D)	Prema Powerteam · Dallara-Mercedes F317	+20.000s
7	Pedro Piquet (BR)	Van Amersfoort Racing · Dallara-Mercedes F317	+21.066s
8	Jake Hughes (GB)	Hitech GP · Dallara-Mercedes F315	+21.761s
9	Jehan Daruvala (IND)	Carlin · Dallara-Volkswagen F315	+22.989s
10	Harrison Newey (GB)	Van Amersfoort Racing · Dallara-Mercedes F316	+24.258s
11	Nikita Mazepin (RUS)	Hitech GP · Dallara-Mercedes F316	+24.635s
12	Keyvan Andres Soori (D)	Motopark · Dallara-Volkswagen F317	+33.606s
13	Ameya Vaidyanathan (IND)	Carlin · Dallara-Volkswagen F312	+39.197s
14	Joey Mawson (AUS)	Van Amersfoort Racing · Dallara-Mercedes F316	+43.819s
15	Marino Sato (J)	Motopark · Dallara-Volkswagen F314	-1 lap
16	Guan Yu Zhou (PRC)	Prema Powerteam · Dallara-Mercedes F315	-1 lap
R	Tadasuke Makino (J)	Hitech GP · Dallara-Mercedes F317	8 laps-wristache
R	Ralf Aron (EST)	Hitech GP · Dallara-Mercedes F316	0 laps-accident
R	David Beckmann (D)	Motopark · Dallara-Volkswagen F316	0 laps-accident

Winner's average speed 97.235mph. **Fastest lap** Norris 1m28.204s, 109.229mph.

QUALIFYING 1

1 Norris 1m28.362s; **2 Habsburg** 1m28.374s; **3 Eriksson** 1m28.442s; **4 Gunther** 1m28.520s; **5 Ilott** 1m28.521s; **6 Aron** 1m28.644s; **7 Beckmann** 1m28.735s; **8 Zhou** 1m28.762s; **9 Schumacher** 1m28.766s; **10 Hughes** 1m28.824s; **11 Piquet** 1m28.908s; **12 Newey** 1m28.935s; **13 Daruvala** 1m28.940s; **14 Mazepin** 1m29.069s; **15 Andres Soori** 1m29.304s; **16 Sato** 1m29.891s; **17 Vaidyanathan** 1m31.045s; **18 Makino** 1m30.038s; **19 Mawson** 1m29.159s*.

RACE 2 (22 LAPS – 58.877 MILES)

1 Ilott 34m52.414s; **2 Hughes** +7.371s; **3 Norris** +8.742s; **4 Newey** +14.993s; **5 Beckmann** +15.650s; **6 Habsburg** +20.059s; **7 Gunther** +20.756s; **8 Zhou** +21.837s; **9 Schumacher** +22.405s; **10 Aron** +23.367s; **11 Mazepin** +24.239s; **12 Eriksson** +24.671s; **13 Andres Soori** +34.803s; **14 Mawson** +35.537s; **15 Makino** +36.898s; **16 Daruvala** +37.078s; **17 Vaidyanathan** +39.948s; **18 Sato** +42.598s; **R Piquet** 0 laps-accident.

Winner's average speed 101.298mph.

Fastest lap Ilott 1m28.234s, 109.192mph.

QUALIFYING 2

1 Ilott 1m28.161s; **2 Hughes** 1m28.220s; **3 Norris** 1m28.038s*; **4 Beckmann** 1m28.505s; **5 Newey** 1m28.585s; **6 Habsburg** 1m28.343s*; **7 Gunther** 1m28.370s*; **8 Mazepin** 1m28.381s*; **9 Zhou** 1m28.427s*; **10 Daruvala** 1m28.771s; **11 Schumacher** 1m28.930s; **12 Aron** 1m28.662s*;

13 Eriksson 1m28.673s*; **14 Makino** 1m28.983s; **15 Piquet** 1m28.996s; **16 Mawson** 1m29.026s; **17 Andres Soori** 1m29.514s; **18 Sato** 1m29.238s*; **19 Vaidyanathan** 1m30.050s*.

RACE 3 (24 LAPS – 64.230 MILES)

1 Norris 35m44.299s; **2 Habsburg** +6.646s; **3 Gunther** +11.530s; **4 Zhou** +15.058s; **5 Hughes** +31.078s; **6 Piquet** +31.541s; **7 Newey** +31.936s; **8 Aron** +32.461s; **9 Mawson** +32.817s; **10 Mazepin** +32.976s; **11 Schumacher** +33.607s; **12 Eriksson** +34.109s; **13 Beckmann** +34.606s; **14 Daruvala** +35.174s; **15 Andres Soori** +38.441s; **16 Makino** +39.655s; **17 Sato** +40.533s; **18 Vaidyanathan** +58.724s; **R Ilott** 19 laps-stopped in pits.

Winner's average speed 107.833mph.

Fastest lap Ilott 1m28.688s, 108.633mph.

GRID FOR RACE 3

1 Norris; **2 Habsburg**; **3 Gunther**; **4 Zhou**; **5 Hughes**; **6 Beckmann**; **7 Ilott**; **8 Piquet**; **9 Aron**; **10 Newey**; **11 Mazepin**; **12 Mawson**; **13 Eriksson**; **14 Daruvala**; **15 Schumacher**; **16 Makino**; **17 Andres Soori**; **18 Sato**; **19 Vaidyanathan**. * grid penalty.

CHAMPIONSHIP

1 Norris 313; **2 Gunther** 302; **3 Eriksson** 258; **4 Ilott** 221; **5 Daruvala** 140; **6 Hughes** 132; **7 Habsburg** 131; **8 Zhou** 115; **9 Newey** 94; **10 Aron** 85.



Power scored his second successive Pocono triumph

AT A GLANCE

- 1 Power Penske
- 2 Newgarden Penske
- 3 Rossi Andretti

 P45 RESULTS



ALL PICS: INDYCAR/CHIPS JONES

Power pushes past principles of winning

INDYCAR
POCONO (USA)
AUGUST 20
ROUND 14/17

IN THE MOVIE *HITCH*, WILL SMITH'S titular character starts out as a cynical matchmaker with a list of 'basic principles' that he advises his clients to follow in order to successfully woo their dream dates. At the end, after his theories have been proven wrong, Hitch turns to the camera and admits, "Basic principles? [shrug] There are none."

Last Sunday, another Will, Mr Power of Team Penske, tore up the basic principles of how to go about winning a motor race with his third victory of the season at Pocono.

Just stay out of trouble? Nah. After two separate incidents, Power had acquired a new nose/front-wing assembly and a new rear wing. Minimise time spent in the pits? No. Power stopped 10 times over the course of the 200 laps around the 2.5-mile tri-oval; his team-mate Josef Newgarden, who would finish second made seven stops, while the other leading runners made do with just six. And finally, don't go a lap down or you're screwed. Well, in a 500-mile race, that's not quite the case, as a handy caution period and swift decisions by strategist Jon Bauslog and race engineer Dave Faustino got Power's car back on the lead lap, albeit on an

unconventional strategy. It was one that ultimately led to his second straight victory at the Pocono Raceway circuit and the 32nd of his Indy car career.

Pocono's twee nickname – The Tricky Triangle – had proven to be rather apt on the Saturday. Ed Carpenter crashed exiting Turn 3 in morning practice, while Helio Castroneves shunted his Penske at Turn 1 at the start of his qualifying run, and Ryan Hunter-Reay took a 138g hit against the Turn 3 wall just before his first flying lap. The Andretti Autosport driver was hospitalised, but ultimately passed fit, and, nursing a very sore knee and hip, made a brave return to the cockpit on Sunday.

Polesitter Takuma Sato's Andretti machine plummeted down the order after the start, and the lead quickly became a battle between the Chip Ganassi Racing-run cars of Tony Kanaan and Scott Dixon, plus Alexander Rossi's Andretti machine, with reigning champion Simon Pagenaud's Penske on the fringes. But Power was in the mix, too, and had just passed Kanaan for fourth on lap 63 when the wing adjuster on his nosecone failed, which dropped his front wings flat and left him precious little front-end downforce. He sank down the order before pitting, and, although his crew made swift repairs, he lost a lap.

Then James Hinchcliffe, who'd shoved his Schmidt Peterson Motorsport-run machine

into the Rossi v Ganassi battle, had a vicious sideways moment approaching half-distance, which he miraculously kept out of the wall, but the incident lost him so much momentum that he fell out of the top dozen. Power, trying to avoid the dirt-tracking SPM car, slowed himself and slewed around in avoidance. But the unsighted Charlie Kimball clattered his car into Power's, tearing into the Australian's rear wing.

Just 16 laps later, the other SPM car, driven by Sebastian Saavedra rather than the deposed Mikhail Aleshin, hit the rear of Carlos Munoz's AJ Foyt Racing machine and then two walls, which brought out the caution flag while a pitstop cycle was underway. Power was just the right side of the closed-pit scenario to get back on the lead lap despite an elongated stop to replace that damaged rear wing. During the six-lap period of yellow, and the seven-lap caution that swiftly followed – because Hinchcliffe and Ed Carpenter Racing's JR Hildebrand had collided – Power pitted again for fuel top-ups. As he was at the tail of the lead lap, he had nothing to lose.

The restart on lap 132 triggered a 15-lap back-'n'-forth exchange for the lead between Kanaan and Graham Rahal in his Rahal Letterman Lanigan Racing-run car. Then Dixon, still trying to get back on strategy after using too much fuel while leading 51 of the race's first 100 laps, headed to the pits for the penultimate time.

Unconventional strategy paid off for Power



Newgarden (right) extended his points lead

Gasly grabs first victory in Japan

SUPERFORMULA
TWIN RING MOTEGI (J)
AUGUST 20
ROUND 4/7

REIGNING GP2 CHAMPION PIERRE Gasly scored his maiden win in Japan's top single-seater series.

The Team Mugen driver had a bad start to the weekend as he grappled with a brake problem in Friday's free practice and could not run to complete his setup work. But the Red Bull junior recovered to start the race in fourth.

The field was able to use two tyre compounds at Motegi and Gasly started on medium rubber before changing to the softs on lap 28. He moved up to second at this point by getting ahead of Kenta Yamashita and Tomoki Nojiri.

The Frenchman then moved into the lead when former Formula 1-racer Kamui Kobayashi lost a large chunk of time in the pits due to a problem with his left-rear wheel nut. The Toyota LMP1 driver eventually finished second behind Gasly, who enjoyed an 18-second gap at the flag.

Felix Rosenqvist finished ahead of championship leader Hiroaki Ishiura to complete the podium. Andre Lotterer, second in the standings, finished seventh after a drive-through penalty.

Yamashita started from his first pole position but finished sixth behind his team-mate Nick Cassidy. Jann Mardenborough spun off on the warm-up lap but recovered to finish 14th.

JIRO TAKAHASHI

RESULTS

1 Pierre Gasly (Dallara-Honda) 52 laps in 1h24m26.817s; **2 Kamui Kobayashi (D-Toyota)** +18.583s; **3 Felix Rosenqvist (D-T)**; **4 Hiroaki Ishiura (D-T)**; **5 Nick Cassidy (D-T)**; **6 Kenta Yamashita (D-T)**
Points 1 Ishiura 25.5; **2 Lotterer 20**; **3 Rosenqvist 16.5**; **4 Yuki Sekiguchi 15**; **5 Gasly 15**; **6 Kazuki Nakajima 13**.



Gasly scored first win in his fifth Super Formula start

“Power stopped 10 times over the course of the 200 laps”

Rahal, Kanaan, and the heroic Hunter-Reay — who'd managed to lead 12 laps despite his trauma — soon followed.

That left the charging Power in the lead and he set a scorching pace — with several 216mph laps and a couple that hit 217mph — as the others emerged from the pits and continued their in-fighting down at 212–213mph. Such was his speed that Power ducked into the pits on lap 161 with a 13-second advantage over the other off-strategy cars, but more than twice that much over his principal rivals. His advantage was so great that he emerged from his stop still in the lead by 4.2s, and was now back on a conventional strategy. Everyone had one more visit to the pits to make.

In that final round of stops, Power's was long as Fausto ordered some of the draggy downforce — necessary while carving through traffic — to be wound out to help enable faster running in clean air. That allowed Rossi and Kanaan to slice his lead down to 1.7s, but they were soon elbowed aside by another Penske driver, Newgarden, who'd made a similar 'extra' stop to Power at two-thirds distance. He hadn't quite had the downforce to make such swift progress through the field, but that was paying

off now. When the off-strategy Marco Andretti pitted from the lead of the race on lap 191, Power regained P1, but with Newgarden just 0.6s adrift and with less drag.

Power, aware of his vulnerability to attack from behind, swung hard left to cover the inside line into Turn 3 three times over the closing seven laps. This approach left Newgarden only the outside lane from which to consider a move — which was tricky given the rubber 'marbles' and his lighter downforce level. The American, knowing he'd be extending his championship lead over Dixon, who finished down in sixth, didn't push the issue and they took the chequered flag half-a-second apart. Rossi was less than 0.2s further behind the second

Penske-run machine after another superb drive, as he had been hobbled by a broken fuel-adjustment knob that wouldn't allow him to run a full rich mixture.

Pagenaud lost contact with the leading trio at the start of the final stint while embroiled with the fading Dixon and Kanaan, who had a damaged front wing and came home fifth. But once into fourth, the Frenchman charged hard to cross the line to finish barely 0.1s behind Rossi.

DAVID MALSHER

to take Pocono top spot

IN BRIEF

BRITISH RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP

Keith Cronin reignited his British Rally Championship title hopes by winning the Ulster Rally aboard his M-Sport-run Ford Fiesta R5. Cronin came under pressure from Osian Pryce, but Pryce retired with a fuel-related issue on Saturday morning. Cronin led every stage to finish ahead of series leader Fredrik Ahlin, who now heads Cronin by 24 points on dropped scores, with 55 on offer for the Irishman at the Rally Isle of Man finale in September.

NASCAR XFINITY SERIES

Kyle Busch took the second leg of his NASCAR Truck, Xfinity and Cup sweep at Bristol Motor Speedway with a victory in the second-tier event on Friday night. He cleared Daniel Suarez on a restart with eight of the 300 laps remaining and held on for his fifth win in nine Xfinity starts this season, which was also the 91st of his career in the category. Elliott Sadler finished third, with Ty Dillon fourth.

NASCAR TRUCK SERIES

In a taste of what was to come for Kyle Busch at the Bristol Motor Speedway, he dominated last Wednesday night's race at the 0.533-mile oval to claim his 49th career Truck Series victory. The Toyota man overcame a pitlane speeding penalty after Stage 2, but advanced from 17th to the lead in less than 50 laps. Matt Crafton finished second, with John Hunter Nemechek third and Grant Enfinger fourth.

AUDI TT CUP

Philip Ellis and Mikel Azcona shared the wins at Zandvoort, with the Spaniard preserving his 33-point lead in the standings. Ellis won race one from pole – his fourth victory of the season – while Azcona reversed their finishing positions with the race-two win. Former Formula 1 driver Giedo van der Garde recorded finishes of 12th and seventh from his guest weekend appearance.

SMP NEZ FORMULA 4

Renault Sport Academy driver Christian Lundgaard secured the SMP NEZ Formula 4 title with two wins at Moscow Raceway. The 16-year-old had been on course to take a third but accidentally served a drive-through after misreading his pitboard. He placed 11th in race three – won by Tuomas Haapalainen – but Alexander Smolyar only finished fifth, handing Lundgaard the title.

AUSTRALIAN FORMULA 4

Nick Rowe scored a pair of wins at Sydney Motorsport Park, with championship rival Cameron Shields picking up the other victory. In race one, Shields converted pole into the race win ahead of Rowe, before the positions were reversed in the second encounter. In the finale, Rowe leapt clear as Shields struggled with wheelspin and came home 1.3 seconds adrift.



Master and apprentice:
Busch leads Jones on
Bristol's half-mile oval

LAT IMAGES

Busch bags Bristol clean-sweep

NASCAR CUP
BRISTOL (USA)
AUGUST 19
ROUND 24/36

KYLE BUSCH COMPLETED THE BRISTOL Motor Speedway sweep on Saturday night.

After he was victorious in the Truck Series race the previous Wednesday and picked up the Xfinity Series win on Friday, Busch earned his 40th Cup career win, to make it three out of three at Thunder Valley.

Busch led 156 laps and beat Erik Jones, who "put up a whale of a fight" according to the victor, to the line by 1.422 seconds. This was the second time (after 2010) he has swept all three NASCAR categories during a Bristol weekend.

Denny Hamlin finished third and Matt Kenseth fourth as Toyota cars claimed the top-four spots, with Kurt Busch coming home fifth.

JIM UTTER

RESULTS

1 Kyle Busch (Toyota Camry) 500 laps in 2h46m37s; 2 Erik Jones (Toyota) +1.422s; 3 Denny Hamlin (Toyota); 4 Matt Kenseth (Toyota); 5 Kurt Busch (Ford Fusion); 6 Ryan Newman (Chevrolet SS); 7 Trevor Bayne (Ford); 8 Kevin Harvick (Ford); 9 Kyle Larson (Chevy); 10 Ryan Blaney (Ford).

Playoff qualifying 1 Martin Truex Jr 951/4 wins; 2 Larson 845/3; 3 Jimmie Johnson 628/3; 4 Kyle Busch 850/2; 5 Brad Keselowski 728/2; 6 Ricky Stenhouse Jr 528/2; 7 Harvick 824/1; 8 Hamlin 753/1; 9 Blaney 623/1; 10 Kurt Busch 586/1; 11 Newman 574/1; 12 Kasey Kahne 451/1; 13 Austin Dillon 437/1; 14 Chase Elliott 711; 15 Kenseth 703; 16 Jamie McMurray 700.

Whincup closes on McLaughlin

AUSTRALIAN SUPERCARS
SYDNEY MOTORSPORT PARK (AUS)
AUGUST 19-20
ROUND 9/14

JAMIE WHINCUP IS NOW THE STANDALONE record-holder in terms of Supercars race wins after racking up his 106th career victory at Sydney Motorsport Park last Sunday.

With the win and a third place in race one, the Triple Eight Holden driver also moved to within 12 points of championship leader Scott McLaughlin – a crucial swing in momentum heading into the long-distance races.

Most of the points damage McLaughlin suffered was inflicted in race one, largely down to him botching the restart. The DJR Team Penske Ford

ace and Shane van Gisbergen had been battling for the lead, but clashed at Turn 2 with 10 laps to go.

McLaughlin went on to finish second on the road behind team-mate Fabian Coulthard, but was subsequently hit with a 15-second time penalty – giving the position to Prodrive Ford racer Chaz Mostert – and was handed another 18 seconds after a post-race review.

Van Gisbergen – 15th on the road after spinning – got a 33-second penalty of his own for overlapping with McLaughlin on the restart.

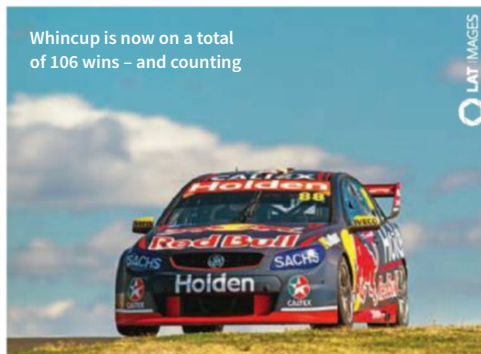
That was all good news for Whincup who, despite sustaining significant front-end damage as a byproduct of that clash, came home third.

On Sunday, Whincup took his second win of the season, helped in the closing stages by some aggressive defensive work from team-mate van Gisbergen. Even better for him was that McLaughlin finished fourth, helping bring Whincup right back into serious title contention.

ANDREW VAN LEEUWEN

RESULTS

Race 1 1 Fabian Coulthard (Ford Falcon) 31 laps in 49m29.1701s; 2 Chaz Mostert (Ford) +3.9836s; 3 Jamie Whincup (Holden Commodore); 4 Mark Winterbottom (Ford); 5 Scott Pye (Holden); 6 Michael Caruso (Nissan Altima). **Race 2 1 Whincup** 52 laps in 1h24m01.8616s; 2 Coulthard +9.8630s; 3 Shane van Gisbergen (Holden); 4 Scott McLaughlin (Ford); 5 Mostert; 6 Nick Percat (Holden). **Points 1 McLaughlin 2058;** 2 Whincup 2046; 3 Coulthard 1951; 4 van Gisbergen 1800; 5 Mostert 1794; 6 Winterbottom 1503.



Whincup is now on a total
of 106 wins – and counting

LAT IMAGES

RESULTS ROUND-UP

DTM

ROUND 6/9, ZANDVOORT (NL), AUGUST 19-20

RACE 1 (37 LAPS – 99.021 MILES)

1	Timo Glock (D) <i>RMR</i> • BMW M4	57m18.491s
2	Marco Wittmann (D) <i>RMG</i> • BMW M4	+0.178s
3	Maxime Martin (B) <i>RBM</i> • BMW M4	+0.840s
4	Mike Rockenfeller (D) <i>Team Phoenix</i> • Audi RS5	+2.530s
5	Jamie Green (GB) <i>Team Rosberg</i> • Audi RS5	+3.164s
6	Augusto Farfus (BR) <i>RMG</i> • BMW M4	+4.173s
7	Paul di Resta (GB) <i>HWA</i> • Mercedes C63	+4.771s
8	Gary Paffett (GB) <i>HWA</i> • Mercedes C63	+5.382s
9	Rene Rast (D) <i>Team Rosberg</i> • Audi RS5	+5.911s
10	Nico Muller (CH) <i>Team Abt</i> • Audi RS5	+6.278s
11	Robert Wickens (CDN) <i>HWA</i> • Mercedes C63	+6.734s
12	Edoardo Mortara (I) <i>HWA</i> • Mercedes C63	+7.929s
13	Loic Duval (F) <i>Team Phoenix</i> • Audi RS5	+13.880s
14	Bruno Spengler (CDN) <i>RBM</i> • BMW M4	+21.214s
15	Lucas Auer (A) <i>HWA</i> • Mercedes C63	+27.053s
16	Maro Engel (D) <i>HWA</i> • Mercedes C63	+52.140s
17	Mattias Ekstrom (S) <i>Team Abt</i> • Audi RS5	34 laps-puncture
R	Tom Blomqvist (GB) <i>RMR</i> • BMW M4	17 laps-handling

Winner's average speed 103.672mph. **Fastest lap** Rast 1m30.160s, 106.859mph.

QUALIFYING 1

1 Glock 1m27.823s; 2 Farfus 1m27.907s; 3 Wittmann 1m28.065s; 4 Martin 1m28.155s; 5 Rast 1m28.287s; 6 Duval 1m28.331s; 7 Blomqvist 1m28.351s; 8 Paffett 1m28.375s; 9 Rockenfeller 1m28.468s; 10 Ekstrom 1m28.547s; 11 di Resta 1m28.567s; 12 Wickens 1m28.652s; 13 Engel 1m28.656s; 14 Muller 1m28.751s; 15 Green 1m28.819s; 16 Auer 1m28.861s; 17 Spengler 1m28.875s; 18 Mortara 1m28.983s.

RACE 2 (37 LAPS – 99.021 MILES)

1 Rockenfeller 56m33.404s; 2 Duval +16.581s; 3 Ekstrom +58.073s; 4 Muller +58.620s; 5 Paffett +58.848s; 6 Martin +59.390s; 7 Glock +59.928s; 8 Farfus +1m00.069s; 9 Green +1m02.405s; 10 Spengler +1m12.009s; 11 Engel +1m30.127s; 12 Mortara +1m30.761s; 13 Blomqvist +1m31.278s; 14 Auer -1 lap; 15 Wickens 33 laps-puncture damage; EX Wittmann +0.807s; R di Resta 12 laps-electronics; R Rast 10 laps-suspension.

Winner's average speed 105.049mph. **Fastest lap** Duval 1m29.168s, 108.048mph.

QUALIFYING 2

1 Farfus 1m27.475s; 2 Wittmann 1m27.616s; 3 Martin 1m27.642s; 4 Green 1m27.673s; 5 Rast 1m27.832s; 6 Rockenfeller 1m27.892s; 7 Spengler 1m27.991s; 8 Engel 1m28.004s; 9 Wickens 1m28.037s; 10 Ekstrom 1m28.089s; 11 Auer 1m28.260s; 12 Blomqvist 1m28.292s; 13 Duval 1m28.302s; 14 Muller 1m28.439s; 15 Mortara 1m28.775s; 16 di Resta no time; EX Glock 1m27.690s; EX Paffett 1m27.926s.

CHAMPIONSHIP

1 Ekstrom 128; 2 Rast 114; 3 Rockenfeller 110; 4 Glock 104; 5 Martin 102; 6 Auer 99; 7 Green 99; 8 Wittmann 93; 9 Paffett 75; 10 Spengler 62.



Wittmann lost race-two win due to lack of fuel sample

INDYCAR SERIES

ROUND 13/16, POCONO (USA), AUGUST 20 (200 LAPS – 500.000 MILES)

1	Will Power (AUS) <i>Team Penske</i> • Dallara-Chevrolet	2h43m16.6005s
2	Josef Newgarden (USA) <i>Team Penske</i> • Dallara-Chevrolet	+0.5268s
3	Alexander Rossi (USA) <i>Andretti Herta Autosport</i> • Dallara-Honda	+0.7112s
4	Simon Pagenaud (F) <i>Team Penske</i> • Dallara-Chevrolet	+0.8770s
5	Tony Kanaan (BR) <i>Chip Ganassi Racing</i> • Dallara-Honda	+2.9056s
6	Scott Dixon (NZ) <i>Chip Ganassi Racing</i> • Dallara-Honda	+3.3544s
7	Helio Castroneves (BR) <i>Team Penske</i> • Dallara-Chevrolet	+3.7273s
8	Ryan Hunter-Reay (USA) <i>Andretti Autosport</i> • Dallara-Honda	+4.0833s
9	Graham Rahal (USA) <i>Rahal Letterman Lanigan Racing</i> • Dallara-Honda	+4.6884s
10	Carlos Munoz (CO) <i>AJ Foyt Enterprises</i> • Dallara-Chevrolet	+6.9330s
11	Marco Andretti (USA) <i>Andretti Autosport</i> • Dallara-Honda	+9.4607s
12	Ed Carpenter (USA) <i>Ed Carpenter Racing</i> • Dallara-Chevrolet	+10.4503s
13	Takuma Sato (J) <i>Andretti Autosport</i> • Dallara-Honda	+11.2388s
14	Conor Daly (USA) <i>AJ Foyt Enterprises</i> • Dallara-Chevrolet	+19.8050s
15	Gabby Chaves (CO) <i>Harding Racing</i> • Dallara-Chevrolet	+20.6790s
16	Charlie Kimball (USA) <i>Chip Ganassi Racing</i> • Dallara-Honda	+24.4523s
17	Ed Jones (UAE) <i>Dale Coyne Racing</i> • Dallara-Honda	+25.0689s
18	Max Chilton (GB) <i>Chip Ganassi Racing</i> • Dallara-Honda	129 laps-turbo wastegate
19	JR Hildebrand (USA) <i>Ed Carpenter Racing</i> • Dallara-Chevrolet	124 laps-accident
20	James Hinchcliff (CDN) <i>Schmidt Peterson Motorsports</i> • Dallara-Honda	124 laps-accident
21	Sebastian Saavedra (CO) <i>Schmidt Peterson Motorsports</i> • Dallara-Honda	114 laps-accident
22	Esteban Gutierrez (MEX) <i>Dale Coyne Racing</i> • Dallara-Honda	23 laps-accident

Winner's average speed 183.737mph. **Fastest lap** Kanaan 41.2230s, 218.325mph.

QUALIFYING

1 Sato 219.639mph; 2 Pagenaud 219.395mph; 3 Kimball 219.369mph; 4 Kanaan 219.012mph; 5 Power 218.688mph; 6 Rossi 218.622mph; 7 Rahal 218.099mph; 8 Chaves 218.020mph; 9 Dixon 217.819mph; 10 Chilton 217.748mph; 11 Jones 217.565mph; 12 Hinchcliff 217.556mph; 13 Gutierrez 217.292mph; 14 Newgarden 217.235mph; 15 Saavedra 216.943mph; 16 Andretti 216.801mph; 17 Daly 215.964mph; 18 Munoz 215.115mph; 19 Hildebrand 214.988mph; 20 Castroneves no speed; 21 Hunter-Reay no speed; 22 Carpenter no speed.

CHAMPIONSHIP

1 Newgarden 494; 2 Dixon 476; 3 Castroneves 472; 4 Pagenaud 468; 5 Power 452; 6 Rahal 418; 7 Sato 399; 8 Rossi 394; 9 Kanaan 351; 10 Hinchcliff 327.



Power claimed third win of the 2017 season

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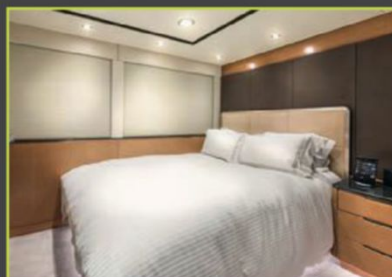
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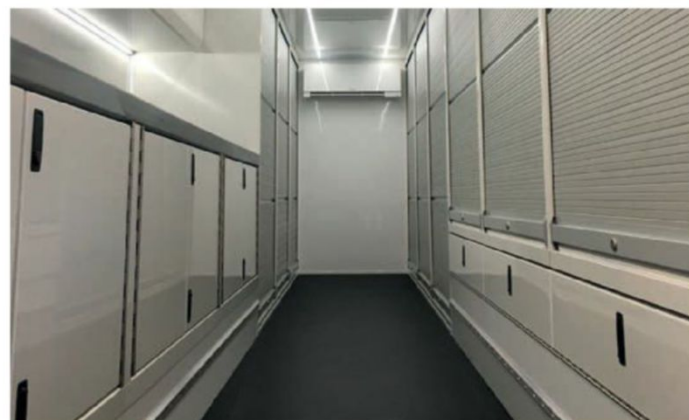
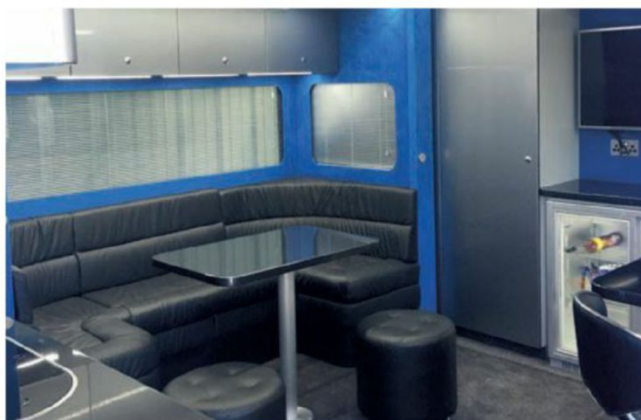
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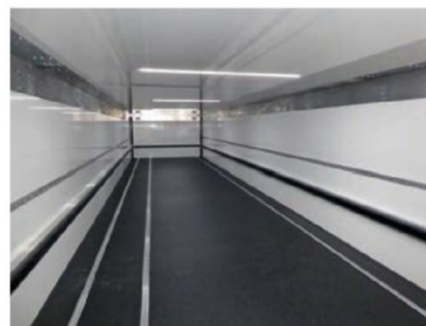
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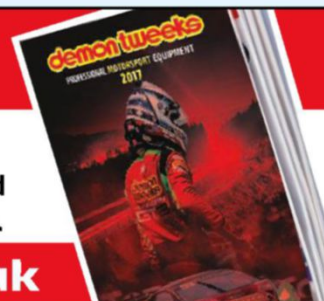
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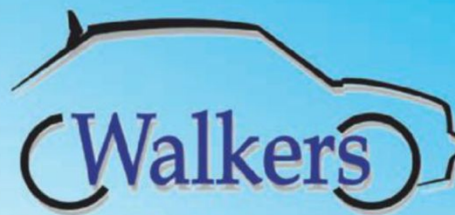
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GINETTA JUNIOR

JHR racers find new berths after team's Ginetta exclusion

GINETTA JUNIOR POINTS LEADER SEB PRIAULX has moved to top team HHC Motorsport for the rest of the season after JHR Developments was suspended.

The 16-year old was one of eight drivers affected by Ginetta's decision to suspend JHR from both Juniors and the GT4 Supercup for the rest of the season while the manufacturer investigates its conduct.

Three of JHR's Junior drivers, including Priaulx, were excluded at Thruxton in May when stewards declared their engines illegal, before the team successfully appealed this at the National Court. But Ginetta was dissatisfied with that investigation and opted to suspend JHR.

"It's been weird but I'd like to thank Ginetta for helping," Priaulx told Autosport. "HHC are a really great team – I can't wait to get started. It's been quite difficult but I need to try and move on. Steve Hunter [JHR boss] has been really good too and let me have my car."

Scholarship driver Adam Smalley will also join Priaulx

at HHC, which has run multiple Junior champions, while Tom Gamble – who is currently second in the standings – will join Elite Motorsport. Priaulx says it is beneficial that the pair are no longer driving for the same team. "It's not a bad thing we are in different teams as there might have been a little bit of friction if we were both going for the title," he said. "I can now focus on my job."

Two more ex-JHR drivers, Matt Luff and Finley Green, will decide which team to join at this week's Rockingham test ahead of this weekend's next round.

JHR's two GT4 Supercup racers, George Gamble and Seb Perez, have both joined Rob Boston Racing.

The team has also been competing in British Formula 4 this season but the series is happy with JHR's presence.

Championship promoter Sam Roach said: "They have been with us for two and a half years now and are welcome in our paddock. We have never had any cause for concern."

JHR boss Hunter has been unavailable for comment.



STEPHEN LICKORISH
SPECIAL
CORRESPONDENT

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IT'S A VERY BOLD STATEMENT for Ginetta to make.

Suspending a driver is one thing, but suspending the team that runs more cars than any other squad in your categories is quite another.

Ginetta's news last week that JHR Developments would be suspended while its conduct is investigated was a bit of a bombshell. And it has raised several questions.

First there's the issue of timing. JHR was suspended some four weeks after the team's successful National Court appeal against its Thruxton illegal-engine exclusions. That's a long time to wait and, with just over a month left in the season, it would have caused a lot less disruption to wait until the end of the year.

As well as questions over Ginetta's right to suspend a team mid-year when wrongdoing is yet to be proved, there is also the issue of the champion. If JHR is found guilty and one of its ex-racers wins a title, surely it would be a tainted victory. And it's not just JHR's reputation that would be damaged if that was the case.

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TCR UK

Files: TCR UK could tip BTCC off perch

REIGNING TCR GERMANY AND MIDDLE East champion Josh Files believes that the newly announced TCR UK will usurp the British Touring Car Championship as the UK's biggest national tin-top series in three to four years.

Masterminded by former WTCC boss Marcello Lotti, TCR is a cost-capped formula that has rapidly gathered momentum since its 2014 launch. The UK series has already caught the attention of BTCC teams including Motorbase Performance and Team Hard.

BTCC director Alan Gow said the BRSCC-run UK championship was "not even on my radar", but Files is confident it will be a success.

"It only needs a few teams to get behind it and a few drivers to get behind it that don't have the budget to do BTCC and you'll soon get big grids," said Files.

"Drivers will start coming away from BTCC into TCR UK and ultimately it won't be long. I think in three or four years maximum it will become the BTCC."

"The nice thing is you can take the same car from the UK to Germany and the next weekend do TCR International – the cars are all the same, so from that perspective it's greater value for money."

"The cars now are already faster, cheaper to maintain and cheaper to buy, so I don't really understand what the value is of BTCC apart from TV."

Files anticipates that grid sizes will increase as the year goes on, mirroring the growth of TCR Germany, which has swelled to 40-car grids after a modest start last year. "People have to be open-minded to it," he said. "The inaugural year is always difficult, and I imagine they will probably get 14 cars for the first year, but that would be no different to TCR Germany."



Files (leading) has experience of TCR concept

BRDC BRITISH F3

Pull pushing to stop Ahmed title cruise

ENAAM AHMED STANDS on the cusp of being crowned as the BRDC British Formula 3 champion in this weekend's penultimate round at Snetterton, but closest rival James Pull has vowed to push him.

Ahmed, who has taken 10 wins from 18 races with Carlin this season, only needs to retain his current advantage to be crowned before the finale, which takes place at Donington Park.

Ahmed is 106 points clear of team-mate Pull,

with 95 on offer at each round. "I'm going to go for the win," said Ahmed. "The only way to win the championship is by winning races. I'm going to push like hell."

But Pull, who has taken 12 podiums but has yet to win, is not giving up without a fight.

"It does look out of reach," said Pull, who liked Ahmed is 17. "But he [Ahmed] could have a disastrous weekend – I don't wish that upon him, but you never know what can happen."



RENAULT UK CLIO CUP

Bushell close to early Clio crown

RENAULT UK CLIO CUP POINTS LEADER Mike Bushell is this weekend aiming to become the first driver since Dave Newsham in 2010 to secure the title with four races still to go.

The Team Pyro racer, who won the title in 2014, heads into Rockingham with a 98-point lead. If he can extend that to 136 by the end of the weekend, he will leave Corby as champion.

Bushell says he will not change his approach with the title now in sight and is just happy to be in this position.

"More than anything it's a reassuring thought that the hard work I've been putting into this year has really been paying off," he said. "Just to have the possibility of winning it with two weekends left – I've done well to get to that point! I'm still going to go there and attack."



Fiestas went downhill through Clark's

MOIR

SMRC

Reverse-direction Knockhill lauded

THE KNOCKHILL RACING CIRCUIT WAS used in reverse for the first time in 20 years by the Scottish Motor Racing Club last weekend.

The circuit had safety alterations completed in 2012 to gain acceptance for using its track in an anti-clockwise direction, but had previously only held bike meetings and some car events organised through its Knockhill Motor Sports Club on the layout.

Drivers competing at last weekend's SMRC meeting were positive about the track.

Former Mini Challenge champion and Porsche GT3 Cup Challenge winner Oliver Mortimer said: "I've been racing here since 2002 but it was the first time I'd run it in reverse.

"I picked the track up quite quickly but I would say it's more technical and quite challenging in reverse. I think it's great."

Former Scottish Legends champion Ben Mason added: "It feels faster than normal and going down through Clark's and uphill to McIntyres and Duffus is awesome."

IN BRIEF



EASTWOOD DOCKED POINTS FOR CLASH

Carrera Cup GB points leader Charlie Eastwood (above) has been docked three points for forcing Redline team-mate Dan Cammish off the road in the second race at Knockhill earlier this month. The incident resulted in Cammish retiring from the race after colliding with the barriers out of Clark's. Eastwood's lead has been cut to 10 points over Dino Zamparelli after the additional penalty – that had yet to be confirmed as Autosport closed for press last week – to the 10-place grid drop he has for the next race.

SOWERY RACES LAMBO TO FUJI PODIUMS

BRDC British Formula 3 race winner Toby Sowery made his debut in the Lamborghini Super Trofeo Asia at Fuji last weekend. The 21-year-old McLaren Autosport BRDC Award finalist was racing in sportscars for the first time and took two podiums sharing a Lazarus-run Huracan with Polish ex-GP3 racer Artur Janosz. The pair were third in the opener and second in race two.

ROSS TO MAKE CLIO CUP DEBUT

JJ Ross is set to make his Renault UK Clio Cup debut at Rockingham this weekend. The 2015 Fiesta champion will make what is currently a one-off appearance in a car entered by his father, Bob, that JJ has raced in a variety of categories over the past year.

MINI MIGLIA CHAMPION OWENS RETURNS

Mini driver Endaf Owens made his first start in a Miglia for six years at Oulton Park last weekend. The 2011 Miglia champion was ruled out of race one after a collision, but finished second in race two. "First time out for six years and I was absolutely bricking it beforehand," said Owens, who now races in Honda Civics. "I've missed the Miglias, but it was just a bit of fun as a one-off."

MUSSI MAKES WINNING COMEBACK

British GT4 race winner Fulvio Mussi made his first outing of 2017, deputising for Simon Walton in the Mini Challenge Cooper Class at Oulton Park last weekend (below). While Walton was at Brands racing his Audi TT, Mussi won both Cooper races. "I've only done about six races in the last four years and ended up winning all of them!" he said.



WALKER

EUROPEAN GT4

Glew wins on one-off racing return

ONE-TIME BRITISH TOURING Car racer and 2009 Renault UK Clio Cup champion Phil Glew made a return to the cockpit last weekend at Zandvoort – and won a GT4 European Series Northern Cup double with his protegee, Charlie Fagg.

Fagg, who celebrated his 18th birthday on Friday, started the series with a Sean

Walkinshaw Racing Nissan 370Z before quitting the team.

He raced the Ebor GT Maserati GranTurismo MC GT4 to two class wins in last month's British GT round at Spa, before Glew joined him at Zandvoort.

The first Dutch win came despite a drivethrough for Glew when he knocked the leading BMW of Ricardo van der Ende

into a spin. Fagg had charged back onto the tail of the lead battle when the top duo collided, putting him in front. The second race was more clear-cut, Fagg starting before Glew completed the job.

"I've looked after Charlie since he started in Ginetta Juniors, and to see his progress has been fantastic," said Glew.

Fagg is now eyeing the European Southern Cup finale at Barcelona in the Maserati. "It would be great to have British, Northern and Southern wins in the same season!" he said.

Fagg will make his British GT3 debut at Donington Park next month in a JRM-run Nissan GT-R shared with Ben Green.



Glew and protegee Fagg won

BRITCAR

Milner to race Porsche in Britcar

GINETTA GT5 CHALLENGE RACER AND reigning Junior Saloon Car champion Katie Milner will compete in the Britcar Endurance Championship for the first time at Donington Park next month.

The 17-year-old will make the step up to a Porsche 997 GT3 alongside former team-mate Ollie Willmott, who has raced the car this season.

Milner, who is eighth in the Ginetta GT5 Challenge, briefly tested the Porsche

earlier in the year at Silverstone.

"I was quite surprised when I tested the car," she said. "There's quite a few higher demands – big braking zones and more power out of the corner – but in a way I found it easier to drive."

"It's going to be the first time experiencing a GT car [in a race], and that's my ambition [ultimately]. It will be good to get experience around circuits in a GT car and I think we will definitely look at doing some more races."



DEUTSCHE FEST A number of single-seaters performed demonstration runs at Brands Hatch during Deutsche Fest at the weekend. They included the ex-Takuma Sato Jordan EJ12 (chassis 01), now owned and driven by Barry Walker, and which took Sato to fifth at Suzuka in 2002. Also on view was a Formula Renault 3.5 car in Lotus F1 livery, driven by Jon Reakes, as well as an ex-Erik Comas F3000 car.

Photograph by Gary Hawkins

NATIONAL FORMULA FORD

Woe for MacLennan's title bid

NATIONAL FORMULA FORD CHAMPIONSHIP contender Neil MacLennan has endured a difficult week after losing an appeal to have a win reinstated, and then having a race that he was due to start from pole cancelled.

MacLennan took victory during the second race at Knockhill earlier in the year but was excluded after passing a lapped car under yellow flags.

The reigning Scottish Formula Ford title holder's appeal failed, but if successful would have put him in the lead of the championship heading to last weekend's meeting at Silverstone. "We did everything we could but it came out of our hands. At the end of the day if you pass under a yellow flag then that's that," said MacLennan, who failed to score a podium during the weekend.

To make matters worse, the Cliff Dempsey Racing

Ray driver had been due to start on pole for a postponed race from Castle Combe, which was to be held at Silverstone. But as 100% of the competitors did not agree to the race being rescheduled, it was cancelled and the time used for a 25-minute practice session.

Team owner Cliff Dempsey said: "Obviously it was handy to have a practice session as it gave us a chance to prepare for qualifying.

"But I'm very annoyed that we didn't have the Combe race, because we're lying second in the championship and Neil was on pole."

While MacLennan endured a difficult weekend, his main championship rival Luke Williams took two wins from three races in his Firman to extend his lead at the top of the standings to 65 points.

FORMULA JUNIOR

BRITS STAR IN FORMULA JUNIOR AT LAGUNA SECA

BRITISH FORMULA

Junior racers ended Laguna Seca's two Rolex Monterey Historics Reunion events in California with resounding victories.

Chris Drake (Elva 300) triumphed in all three drum-braked sets, with Ray Mallock's front-engined U2 taking a pair of second places. US-based Joe Colasacco's Stanguellini was second in the opening race.

Fresh from his Silverstone Classic debut last month, young American Tim de Silva made history in the disc-braked races, scoring the futuristic Gemini MkIV's first win since 1963 – watched by period Gemini driver and FJ 60th Anniversary World Tour patron Howden Ganley – in the first Pre-Reunion race.

Local racer Scott Drnek triumphed in his Brabham BT6 in the second contest before extraordinarily close racing in Sunday's finale had locals Danny Baker (Lotus 27) and Art Hebert (Lola Mk5A) dive for the chequer after a faulty wheel bearing sidelined de Silva.

Scot Mark Shaw (Brabham BT6) passed Andrew Hibberd (BT27) on the last corner for third, with James Claridge (Lola) also in contention.

The tour continues with visits to three more great circuits: Lime Rock, Watkins Glen and Road America.

OULTON PARK GOLD CUP

Touring car greats head to Gold Cup

THREE TOURING CAR RACE series, spanning 1960 to 2000, will feature at this weekend's Oulton Park Gold Cup as the Super Touring Trophy, Historic Touring Car Challenge and the HSCC Historic Touring Car Championship share the bill.

Four of the weekend's five touring car races will be run on Monday, including the Oulton Park debut for the HTCC from

Motor Racing Legends. The 50-minute pitstop race features cars from the 1970s and '80s and is topped by the Rover Vitesse of Steve Soper and Chris Ward.

Former European Touring Car champion Gianfranco Brancatelli (Ford Sierra RS500) heads the Super Touring grid, while the Pre-1966 pack includes

Minis for Sam Tordoff and Jonathan Lewis.

The lives and racing careers of John Surtees and Eric Broadley will also be jointly honoured at the meeting.

Mike Whitaker will run rapid demonstration laps in his Lola T70 Spyder, a car created by Broadley and raced when new by Surtees.



Soper/Ward Rover Vitesse is leading tin-top attraction

LAWRENCE



Balancing the books at 750MC Silverstone

By Marcus Pye, the voice of club racing

[@autosport](#)

THE SIGHT OF AN ASTON MARTIN GT4, PORSCHE Cayman GT4 and a fleet of bewinged BMW E46 M3s being disgorged from trucks to contest a two-hour Club Endurance race will doubtless rankle with 750 Motor Club traditionalists weaned on dragging a self-built Austin 7 'special' to Debden in the early 1960s. Low-cost motorsport it is not, yet it's the sort of modern fare that conscientiously run organisations are seeking to promote to cover the cost of circuit hire and, dare I say it, stay afloat in today's increasingly commercially driven and time-sensitive customer marketplace, favouring fewer and better events.

Sunday's race action was superb – riveting if you were embroiled in it, or following it closely from outside – but the maths are crucial. Putting on the Silverstone International Circuit meeting, as the 750MC has done for the past few Augusts, now costs circa £100,000. Even with an entry of around 280 across seven championship double-headers, attracting 17-34 runners, a singleton Historic 750 Formula race and two longer-distance contests (Saturday's over 45 minutes), it's a delicate balance between achieving an operating surplus and sustaining a loss. Particularly when metaphorical 'rainy days' have to be factored in across the season.

The lead battle between poleman Carl Swift's screaming Area Motorsport Honda Civic and the BMWs of Andy Marston (Autobahn) and Tim Gray (TGM) made the first hour flash past. The trio was separated by just a few lengths – chased by Andy Henderson's beautifully built and very well-driven Lotus Exige – as they threaded their way through relentless traffic on the 1.85-mile circuit. With the BRSCC's

race meeting staged concurrently on the National layout, and the School track holding popular single-seater experiences for punters, it was a productive day for Silverstone.

As so often in long races, the real heroics were hidden in the pack. Gearbox karters James Tucker and Louis Wall (winner of his debut 750MC Locost race at Oulton Park in April) did a brilliant job, lapping swiftly and consistently to bring their basic Lotus Elise home a class-winning 13th overall, a lap ahead of the pair of Mazda MX-5 Mk3s that had pipped them in qualifying. Even they were flabbergasted at the result.

The battle of the race, for second in class, was sensational. In the closing stages the MX-5s of the redoubtable Nigel Greensall (relayed by Mark Holme) and series debutants Richard Breland/Simon Baldwin were inseparable, slipstreaming, running doorhandle to doorhandle and trading places constantly. Greensall – who deserves to be a BRDC member, racing and mentoring drivers in diverse machinery world-over – crossed the line four tenths of a second ahead, five laps behind the overall winning Honda of Swift/Rob Baker.

The final, fifth Cartek Club Endurance race gives competitors the chance to race at Spa on October 1, while the 750MC finals unfold at Donington HQ. This weekend the club returns to Thruxton – where it ran Birkett Six Hour Relays in the dim-and-distant past – with a programme of six double-headers. While the RGB entry has dwindled this season, I'm fascinated to see what lap times Billy Albone and John Cutmore (Spires) and Scott Mittell and Paul Smith (Mittells) can wring from the 1000cc sports-prototypes. Cars to which club stalwarts can surely relate? 🏁



AUSTIN 7 ACE PLANS RILEY DEBUT

Following two wins from five starts at Mallory Park and Silverstone over the past two weekends in his faithful supercharged Austin 7 single-seater (above), Christian Pedersen is turning his attention to completing a blown Riley TT Sprite replica for a planned debut at VSCC Snetterton next month. "I've had the car a while but have yet to race it," said the UK-based Dane, who acquired the Riley from Aston Martin graduate Robert Blakemore.



ASCAR BROTHERS AT SILVERSTONE

Scottish brothers Andrew and Antony Knight enjoyed a tussle in 5.7-litre ASCAR stock cars during Sunday's Bernie's V8s opener at the 750MC Silverstone International event. Andrew (#97) stalked Antony (#96) for much of the race, growling ahead on the penultimate lap, but just lost out in the fight for 10th. Sibling Alex recovered from a race-one retirement the previous day to land 12th in the second M3 Cup race.

ALL PICS: JONES



SILVERSTONE
750MC AUGUST 19-20

Happy Ballantyne's day in Civics

ON A WEEKEND OF FIRSTS ON Silverstone's International Circuit, both Tegiwa one-make double-headers had maiden winners, Jason Ballantyne the eighth in 12 Civic Cup races.

The Cumbrian looked to have secured race one when he missed fifth gear on the Hangar Straight and Mark Grice pounced, grateful that title rival Lee Deegan was third as National Autograss graduates filled the podium. Focus sharpened, Ballantyne charged from ninth on race two's reversed-top-10 grid to lead Deegan twice, the second time as they passed the chequered flag.

Second four times in the M3 Cup, ex-Formula BMW racer Simon Walker-Hansell battled to victory in race one, ousting Carl Shield, only to be T-boned out of the sequel by Sam Carrington-Yates, who arrived at Stowe too quickly. Adam Shepherd, dominant in the first six rounds, made it seven from 10, having rediscovered his car's sweet spot.

Graham Gant drove his WEV superbly to their first Formula Vee victory since 2013 on Saturday, shading polesitter Ben Miloudi and 50th Anniversary Festival champion James Harridge, whose Maverick's nose was removed by Adam Macaulay's Sheane at Stowe. Table topper Miloudi won Sunday's race, his third of the season, keeping Gant and title rival Macaulay behind when it mattered.

Double Classic Stock Hatch champion Matt Rozier (Peugeot 205 GTi) could have lost his hat-trick chance here to

Ford XR2i man Lee Scott, another multiple title winner. Second to Scott and Coventry's Martin Cayzer — who drove a peach of a race on Sunday in his 205 — in both frenetic counters, by a combined 0.45s, they will slug it out at the finale. Taken out by contact on Saturday, Marcus Ward finished third in race two, leaving his card with two fastest laps. Scott salvaged sixth after an early scrape with Matt Stubington's Pug.

Stephen Sawley (Honda Civic) scorched to his first Hot Hatch win, but lost the second for exceeding track limits. Halted by an electrical glitch on Saturday, Alistair Camp (Fiesta RS) was third from the back inside three laps on Sunday, then accorded victory over the resurgent Ben Rushworth, whose oversteery Honda Integra was partially tamed overnight, having looked highly likely to fire him off at Abbey previously. Ironically, Rushworth's result was the same, as was unbeaten Class C winner

Jason Ballantyne (left)
surged from ninth to
victory in race two

Paul Jarvis's, although faster starter Adam Read (BMW Compact) made the Citroen Saxophonist sweat.

Off-road motorcycle enduro racer James Plant qualified out of session, but won both Bernie's V8s thrashes from the back in granddad John's splendidly savage 6.4-litre Chevrolet-powered Allard J2 clone, evolved from a Kougar. Plant particularly enjoyed the wet finale in which many rivals — including initial leader Gwyn Pollard (Crossle 9S) — spun or had hairy moments. Unfazed by a gyration at Club, where MGB GTV8 sparring partner Russell McCarthy was stranded, Lee Barnard claimed the scalp of Stuart Daburn (TVR Tuscan) to land third behind Steve Ough's Crossle.

Jon-Paul Ivey romped Sunday's Bikesports opener, then started race two from the back "to spice things up". Despite overshooting the first corner and an excursion to avoid contact, he again took gold from points leader Stefano Leaney, whose similar Radical PR6 was sidelined from race one by driveshaft failure. Third on the road, Adrian Reynard (SR3), who had led the morning race away from row two, was penalised for sideswiping Julian Caldwell's SR3 at the lights in his endeavour to repeat the feat.

Wolverhampton-domiciled Dane Christian Pedersen won an entertaining Historic 750 Formula bout in his supercharged Austin 7 Monoposto 'Miss Green', but was not expecting Gegan Thruston to thread his Rawson Special



Plant swept
Bernie's V8s
from the back



Camp leads on way to Hot Hatch win



Cayzer took a narrow win in Classic Stock Hatch



Swift (#1) held off the M3s for Club Enduro honours



Ivey ruled Bikesports, winning both races

from the back of the grid onto its shapely tail. Ben Myall was third in Stuart Gerrell's first brainchild.

SEAT Leon Eurocup pilot Jamie Sturges beat the BMW E46 M3 hordes over the Roadsports Endurance line after a hard 45 minutes, but overtaking under waved yellow flags spelled exclusion. Andy Marston/Brett Evans thus came out on top again, narrowly, over Paul Cook/Wayne Lewis and Mark Betts in Tim Gray's M3.

A stirring lead battle between poleman Carl Swift (Honda Civic) and the M3s of Marston and Gray raged until past halfway in Sunday's two hour Club Enduro (see Humble Pye, p61), with Andy Henderson's Lotus Exige in pursuit. Despite serving a drive-through and a stop-and-go in his 70-lap stint, Swift relayed Rob Baker to gold. Marston retired with suspension damage, having collected Guy Colclough's spinning SEAT Leon Supercopa, while Betts pitted Gray's 'Beemer' with a shot gearbox, leaving Endaf Owens to chase Baker. Owens had a fright when his Civic's long-damaged bonnet flew open, smashing the screen on what appeared to be the last lap, promoting the Brown brothers' Aston Martin GT4 to second. Their order was reversed, however, because the chequer was flown two laps late and the result rolled back one – the clock having started, confusingly, at the second rolling-start lap behind the safety car!

MARCUS PYE

RESULTS

CIVIC CUP (BOTH 15 LAPS) 1 Mark Grice;

2 Jason Ballantyne +0.26s; 3 Lee Deegan; 4 Daniel Reason; 5 David Vincent; 6 Mark Higginson. **Fastest lap** Vincent 1m17.41s (86.04mph). **Pole** Reason. **Starters** 22. **RACE 2** 1 Ballantyne; 2 Deegan +1.34s; 3 Vincent; 4 Grice; 5 Adam Jones; 6 James Griffith. **FL** Ballantyne 1m17.40s (86.05mph). **P** Lewis Rose. **S** 22.

M3 CUP (15 LAPS) 1 Simon Walker-Hansell;

2 Carl Shield +0.99s; 3 Adam Shepherd; 4 Paul Cook; 5 Sam Carrington-Yates; 6 Nick Williamson. **Class winners** Martin Wallbank (BMW 330); Eliot Dunmore (Mini Cooper S). **FL** Shield 1m15.00s (88.80mph). **P** Shield. **S** 27. **RACE 2 (16 LAPS) 1 Shepherd;** 2 Shield +16.12s; 3 Tom Collier; 4 Wayne Lewis; 5 Williamson; 6 Walker-Hansell. **CW** Wallbank; David Hale (Mini Cooper S). **FL** Shepherd 1m14.90s (88.92mph). **P** Shield. **S** 28.

FORMULA VEE (BOTH 11 LAPS) 1 Graham

Gant (WEV FV01); 2 Ben Miloudi (Storm GKB 2015) +0.70s; 3 James Harridge (Maverick); 4 Ian Buxton (GAC Daghorn); 5 Adam Macaulay (Sheane); 6 Jimmy Furlong (Sheane). **CW** Harridge. **FL** Gant 1m16.49s (87.07mph). **P** Miloudi. **S** 32. **RACE 2** 1 Miloudi; 2 Gant +0.73s; 3 Macaulay; 4 Harridge; 5 Furlong; 6 Buxton. **CW** Harridge. **FL** Harridge 1m16.06s (87.56mph). **P** Miloudi. **S** 31.

CLASSIC STOCK HATCH (11 LAPS) 1 Lee

Scott (Ford Fiesta XR2i); 2 Matt Rozier (Peugeot 205 GTi) +0.25s; 3 Ben Leach (XR2);

4 Matthew Stubington (205 GTi); 5 Andy Philpotts (XR2i); 6 Martin Cayzer (XR2).

FL Marcus Ward (XR2i) 1m23.73s (79.54mph). **P** Scott. **S** 22. **RACE 2 (10 LAPS)**

1 Cayzer; 2 Rozier +0.22s; 3 Ward; 4 Daniel Fillingham (205 GTi); 5 Andrew Thorpe (Citroen AX GTi); 6 Scott. **FL** Ward 1m23.81s (79.47mph). **P** Scott. **S** 22.

HOT HATCH (BOTH 11 LAPS) 1 Stephen

Sawley (Honda Civic); 2 Ben Rushworth (Honda Integra DC2) +9.85s; 3 Chris Coomer (Honda Civic); 4 Philip Wright (Renault Clio Cup); 5 Will Hunt (Citroen Saxo VTR); 6 Daniel Williams (Ford Fiesta ST). **CW** Hunt; Paul Jarvis (Citroen Saxo VTR). **FL** Sawley 1m16.56s (86.99mph). **P** Sawley. **S** 23.

RACE 2 1 Alistair Camp (Ford Fiesta ST);

2 Rushworth +0.23s; 3 Sawley; 4 Coomer; 5 Wright; 6 Hunt. **CW** Hunt; Jarvis. **FL** Sawley 1m16.59s (86.96mph). **P** Sawley. **S** 22.

BERNIE'S V8S/SRG/CRDC (16 LAPS)

1 James Plant ('Allard J2'); 2 Gwyn Pollard (Crossle 9S) +5.14s; 3 Steve Ough (Crossle 9S); 4 Stuart Daburn (TVR Tuscan); 5 Russell McCarthy (MGB GTV8); 6 Lee Barnard (MGB GTV8). **CW** Pollard; Alex Taylor (Mazda RX-7); Robert Frost (Dax Tojeiro). **FL** Plant 1m13.25s (90.92mph). **P** Pollard. **S** 21.

RACE 2 (15 LAPS) 1 Plant; 2 Ough

+17.32s; 3 Barnard; 4 Daburn; 5 Bernard Foley (MGB GTV8); 6 Michael Blake (TVR Griffith). **CW** Ough; Blake; Peter Samuels (MGB GTV8). **FL** Pollard 1m13.12s (91.08mph). **P** Pollard. **S** 19.

BIKESPORTS (BOTH 18 LAPS) 1 Jon-Paul

Ivey (Radical PR6); 2 Richard Stables (PR6) +8.73s; 3 Doug Carter (PR6); 4 Neil Primrose

(Radical SR3 RSX); 5 Ian Charles (PR6); 6 Charles Graham (SR3 RS). **CW** Graham.

FL Chris Preen (SR3 RS) 1m05.31s (101.98mph). **P** Ivey. **S** 17. **RACE 2 1 Ivey;**

2 Stefano Leaney (PR6) +6.91s; 3 Preen; 4 Stables; 5 Julian Griffiths (PR6); 6 Adrian Reynard (SR3). **FL** Ivey 1m04.13s (103.85mph). **CW** Leaney. **P** Leaney. **S** 17.

HISTORIC 750 FORMULA (10 LAPS)

1 Christian Pedersen (Austin 7 Monoposto);

2 Grgen Thruston (Rawson Special) +1.15s; 3 Ben Myall (Gerrell Mk1); 4 John Davies (Rapide Mk1); 5 Greg Swan (Centaur Mk22); 6 Martin Depper (Centaur Mk14). **CW** Ian Grant (Austin 7 Pigsty Spl). **FL** Thruston 1m28.24s (75.48mph). **P** Pedersen. **S** 17.

ROADSPORTS ENDURANCE SERIES

(34 LAPS) 1 Andy Marston/Brett Evans

(BMW E46 M3); 2 Paul Cook/Wayne Lewis (E46 M3) +5.48s; 3 Tim Gray/Mark Betts (E46 M3); 4 Carl Readshaw/Daniel Taylor (E46 M3); 5 Julian McBride (E46 M3); 6 Guy Colclough (SEAT Leon Supercopa). **CW** Imran Khan (BMW E30 528i); Rodren Vella (Honda Civic); Aaron Bowman-Smith (Toyota MR2 Mk2). **FL** Marston 1m15.25s (88.50mph). **P** Marston. **S** 42.

CLUB ENDURO (89 LAPS) 1 Carl Swift/

Rob Baker (Honda Civic); 2 Mark Harris/Endaf Owens (Honda Civic) +34.30s; 3 Chris & Mika Brown (Aston Martin GT4); 4 Alan Henderson/Daniel Jude (Lotus Exige S1); 5 Rob Meredith/Bill Forbes (BMW E46 M3); 6 Daniel Taylor/Carl Readshaw (BMW E46 M3). **CW** Henderson/Jude; James Tucker/Louis Wall (Lotus Elise). **FL** Andy Marston (BMW E46 M3) 1m15.29s (88.46mph). **P** Swift. **S** 40.

ALL PICS: JONES



BRANDS HATCH
MSVR AUGUST 19-20

Voyce doubles up at Deutsche Fest

TWO PACKED RACING SALOONS encounters provided matching victories for Stuart Voyce in his BMW M3 at the first Brands Hatch Deutsche Fest. There was plenty happening on and off the track, but overall the weekend lacked the spark that ignited the success of the previous Sunday's Italian-themed event. A Porsche category was notable for its absence and would have provided a welcome addition to the bill.

Voyce's tyres were going off by the end of race one, giving Stephen Pearson's M3 the chance to close in. Third was Barnaby Davies (Toyota Starlet), who nipped ahead of Roger Kneebone's M3 close to the finish. Pearson crashed in another event so he missed race two, but Davies took the fight to Voyce, losing out only when they encountered traffic. Kneebone was third, but the drive of the race came from Cliff Pellin, who steered his Ford Fiesta from 31st to sixth.

Paul Taylor (Golf) extended his points lead in the VAG Trophy with a win and a second place. In race one Taylor narrowly beat Kenan Dole's Golf with Ben Wallace close behind in another Golf. The top six were reversed for race two, and this played into the hands of Simon Walton, who recorded his second win of the year in his Audi TT.

The first of two non-championship BMW races fell to Rick Kerry's 1 Series when Lee Frost's M3 lost power having led nearly all the way. Front-row qualifier Mike Hibbert damaged his car at the start, which should have made life easier

for poleman Lucky Khera, but he spun out of the lead early on. Race two was arguably the best of the weekend, as Frost fought off Khera and Hibbert, who charged from the back of the grid. There were big changes at the end when Hibbert made a mistake at Paddock Hill and was lucky to escape a big tank-slapper up the hill. Fourth-placed Kerry then shunted at the other end of the circuit, so red flags ended the action.

William Davison and Matt Swaffer continued their table-topping series duel for the Production BMW title, and Davison extended his advantage after a double victory. Swaffer had been poised to close the points gap in race one, but he was held up by a backmarker under yellow flags at the last corner and Davison outdragged him to the finish line by half a bonnet's length. A restarted

Taylor (on pole) and Walton (Audi on right) shared the wins in the VAG Trophy

second race was cut to five minutes following a crash on Cooper Straight and, although Swaffer briefly led, Davison fought back to claim his seventh win.

Collisions started before the first corner in the VW Cup, and after a pause to remove two stranded cars another pair failed to survive half a lap of the rerun. Poleman Bobby Thompson (Golf) won easily after passing Darelle Wilson's diesel Scirocco. Thompson took race two impressively from sixth on a part-reversed grid, overhauling Jamie Bond, who led until two laps from home. Bond and Tom Witts were fourth and fifth in race one, and second and third the next time out, closing the points gap between them in the championship.

James Card and Cemal Osman each won a BMW E30 M3 celebration race. A pair of third places went to Jody Halse in



A red flag halted Production BMW race

HAWKINS



a 635 that had been raced in the 1980s by Hans Stuck and Jonathan Palmer.

Rod Birley was the weekend's most successful driver, adding four wins to his mammoth career total including two in his Escort among the Modified Saloons. Malcolm Wise (Ford Escort) stayed in touch in race one, but a first-lap clash with Tony Skelton's Clio in race two gifted a big lead to Birley and left Wise playing catch-up. Birley finished ahead of Andy Banham's roadgoing Subaru. Third in both races, Paul Adams (Ford Focus) won his class.

Birley had to work much harder when he switched to a Honda Integra for the Tin Tops championship. Daniel Fisher (Honda Civic) took pole and led a shortened first race until Birley took the lead on the final lap. Birley scored a lights-to-flag victory in race two from Fisher, with James Ross (Vauxhall Astra) third in both races.

The Champion of Brands FF1600 series produced a new winner in Matt Rivett, who bounced back from retirements in the two previous races of the series to win in his Ray by less than half a second from Adam Quartermaine. The thin field of eight cars split into two battling pairs as Rivett fended off Quartermaine's Van Diemen, and Kevin Bottomley beat Jason Down. Second qualifier Keith Wood missed out when his engine wouldn't start in the paddock.

BRIAN PHILLIPS

➔ **P68** FULL RESULTS

OULTON PARK MSVR AUGUST 19

BTCC stars' boys claim race win – and the title

NEXT-GENERATION BRITISH TOURING Car Championship drivers made the headlines in the Mini Festival at Oulton Park, as Brett Smith clinched the JCW Mini Challenge title in the first race of the day, while Henry Neal took the win.

Matt Neal and Jeff Smith embraced their youngsters on the podium, Neal Sr celebrating a first win for his son after what had been a dramatic contest, tainted by a race-ending shunt that left Mark Wakefield requiring a precautionary visit to hospital. A late downpour on the shorter Fosters circuit caught out Wakefield at Knickerbrook, and after heavy impact with the tyre barriers Rob Smith and Ray McDowell collected him.

The stoppage ensured leader Neal could finally throw the monkey from his back, winning thanks to a rapid start from the front row despite leaving the road himself in the subsequent deluge. "A relief" was father Matt's response after Team Dynamics' wish for a damp race came true, while Henry: added "I had the pace to do it, but lucky is a good word for it!" Smiles were equally large at Eurotech Racing, Brett Smith wrapping up the title with a hard-fought second place following Charlie Butler-Henderson's retirement. "I'm delighted," said Smith. "I was going at about 90% in the wet – I couldn't afford to throw it away."

Possibly distracted by jubilation, the new champion then failed to spot the moment the lights went out to get the second race under way. While he fought back on slick tyres from 11th to fourth, rookie George Sutton grabbed a maiden JCW win of his own ahead of Reece Barr, who earned his second podium of the day.

Mother Nature persistently intervened on a day where just one of 10 races avoided a



safety car or stoppage – that being one of the Mini Miglia brace. In only his second wet race, 16-year-old Alfie Brown got the better of the experienced Rupert Deeth in a "gentlemanly" thriller, as he later described it. Deeth got his revenge in the second, battling off Endaf Owens who surged from 11th to second – and even led briefly.

Darren Thomas won a two-lap dash against Charlie Budd after a lengthy safety-car period in the first Mini Se7en race, but a collision ended his second outing prematurely at Old Hall. Points leader Budd said "the relief was incredible" when he finally took his first win of the season ahead of the rapid Spencer Wanstall in race two, Shaun Tarlton and Nick Croydon Fowler taking S Class spoils.

Fulvio Mussi returned to Mini racing with a double victory in the Cooper Class. Mussi survived contact with title contender Matt Hammond, who later surrendered his series lead to a consistent Jessica Hawkins after a race-two retirement. Just 0.355s separated the top three in that second race, Mussi pipping Hawkins, while Stuart McLaren claimed an emphatic Am Class double.

Ben Dimmack's Open Class domination looked set to continue after a lights-to-flag race-one triumph, but he retired jostling for second in race two in an incident that sent Aaron Reeve rolling down Cascades. Both emerged unscathed. Rob Austin claimed race-two honours having passed Chloe Hewitt, who celebrated her maiden podium.

DAN MASON

RESULTS

MINI CHALLENGE JCW (BOTH 10 LAPS) 1 Henry Neal; 2 Brett Smith +0.368s; 3 Reece Barr; 4 George Sutton; 5 David Grady; 6 Paul Bell. **Fastest lap** Smith 1m04.717s (92.00mph). **Pole** Charlie Butler-Henderson. **Starters** 23. **RACE 2 1 Sutton;** 2 Barr +0.268s; 3 Max Bladon; 4 Smith; 5 Will Neal; 6 Scott Jeffs. **FL** Butler-Henderson 1m07.044s (88.81mph). **P** Sutton. **S 19.** **MINI MIGLIA (9 LAPS) 1 Alfie Brown;** 2 Rupert Deeth +1.159s; 3 Kane Astin; 4 Sam Summerhayes; 5 Aaron Smith; 6 Colin Peacock. **Class winner** Peter Crewes. **FL** Summerhayes 1m17.211s (77.11mph). **P** Deeth. **S 18.**

RACE 2 (18 LAPS) 1 Deeth; 2 Endaf Owens +4.641s; 3 Summerhayes; 4 Dave Drew; 5 Astin; 6 Paul Thompson. **CW** Thompson. **FL** Deeth 1m09.042s (86.24mph). **P** Summerhayes. **S 17.** **MINI SE7EN (6 LAPS) 1 Darren Thomas;** 2 Charlie Budd +0.300s; 3 Spencer Wanstall; 4 Ashley Davies; 5 Lewis Selby; 6 Paul Spark. **CW** Shaun Tarlton. **FL** Spark 1m17.889s (76.44mph). **P** Budd. **S 25.** **RACE 2 (12 LAPS) 1 Budd;** 2 Wanstall +0.359s; 3 Davies; 4 Spark; 5 Selby; 6 Gareth Hunt. **CW** Nick Croydon Fowler. **FL** Wanstall 1m16.776s (77.55mph). **P** Spark. **S 22.** **MINI CHALLENGE COOPER (9 LAPS) 1 Fulvio Mussi;** 2 Richard Newman +0.288s; 3 Jessica Hawkins; 4 Matt

Hammond; 5 Darren Chatt; 6 James Goodall. **CW** Stuart McLaren. **FL** Hammond 1m19.313s (75.07mph). **P** Hammond. **S 19.** **RACE 2 (4 LAPS) 1 Mussi;** 2 Hawkins +0.182s; 3 Sam Weller; 4 Owen Walton; 5 Michael Bamber; 6 Bryony King. **CW** McLaren. **FL** Walton 1m14.770s (79.63mph). **P** Chatt. **S 19.** **MINI CHALLENGE OPEN (4 LAPS) 1 Ben Dimmack;** 2 Rob Austin +3.445s; 3 Andy Montgomery; 4 Chloe Hewitt; 5 Neil Ginley; 6 Aaron Reeve. **FL** Dimmack 1m14.211s (80.23mph). **P** Dimmack. **S 7.** **RACE 2 (9 LAPS) 1 Austin;** 2 Montgomery +3.996s; 3 Hewitt; 4 Tim Bill; 5 Ginley; no other finishers. **FL** Austin 1m11.032s (83.82mph). **P** Ginley. **S 7.**

SILVERSTONE
BRSCC AUGUST 19-20

Williams schools rivals with a brace

THE NATIONAL FORMULA FORD 1600 title is within Luke Williams's grasp thanks to a Silverstone masterclass. He deployed a combination of dogged defence, swift passing and outright pace to win twice in his Firman.

Williams and Luke Cooper broke free from the five-strong battle for third in race one. A scary collision that sent Michael Eastwell's Spectrum clattering over the engine cover of James Roe Jr's Van Diemen reshuffled the podium hunt, with Roger Orgee in his Ray eventually completing the top three.

On the final lap of race two Cooper and his Swift got the better of Williams with the help of a slipstream into Brooklands, and the drag race from Luffield to the flag was decided in his favour by 0.1 seconds. Van Diemen man Jordan Dempsey was next after a "very robust battle for third".

In the reversed-grid race three, Cooper retired after being launched over the back of Josh Smith's momentarily slow Firman on the Wellington Straight. Williams overcame his low starting position only to tangle with Jamie Thorburn for the race lead. As Thorburn's damaged Ray dropped, Williams prevailed for another victory. Eastwell redeemed his eventful weekend in a fine second place.

Neil MacLennan, Williams's nearest championship rival, entered the weekend having effectively lost two rounds from his title challenge. Being excluded from a race-two win at Knockhill and the abandoning of the final race at Castle Combe, where he was due to start on pole, left the Ray driver with a lot to do. A trying weekend returned a fourth and a brace of fifth places.

A quality display of defensive driving was required by Danny Harrison to



Luke Williams has the FF1600 title all but won after his Silverstone double

keep Josh Gollin behind in the Fiesta Class C opener. They traded paint and compromised each other's lines but nevertheless trounced Simon Horrobin. Meanwhile, leading title contender Lewis Kent was sixth. The second race was messy. On the opening lap Jamie Going's mistake caused a chain reaction that sent Kent battering into Gollin and Gollin into leader Harrison. Horrobin capitalised briefly to head the pack before entering Luffield far too fast on cold tyres and spinning. Nathaniel Gollin didn't share the same fate as his brother as he was gifted the lead and held off ex-British Touring Car driver David Nye to win. Nye went one better in race three, capitalising on Nathaniel Gollin's half-spin at Brooklands on the first lap to take a lead he wouldn't relinquish. Josh

Gollin battled from 16th to claim second ahead of Harrison, who'd started 12th.

Pushing race leader John Cooper into a spin through Luffield meant Jamie White was excluded from an opening Fiesta A, B and D class win. Jack Youhill inherited the victory while Stuart Robbins recorded third, despite being punted off at Brooklands by fourth-finishing Shaun Andrews. Youhill held off White for a win in race two, while Tom Hutchins secured third when Cooper wiped out Andrews in an overzealous Luffield lunge. Race three was a clean affair and completed Youhill's treble.

Lee Connell won his "best race ever" in the MG Metro Cup. He lost out to Mike Williams at the start but quickly regained the position, with 72-year-old Dick Trevett also coming through. It was



Nathaniel Gollin (#25) battled David Nye to win



Connell led the way in the MG Metro Cup



Trevett who provided Connell with the biggest challenge, the pair running side by side and occasionally touching, but Trevett's car expired on the penultimate lap, allowing points leader Williams back through to second. Williams's main title rivals, brothers Andrew and Jack Ashton, were third and fourth.

Steven Dailly held off an aggressive James Gornall to win the first BMW Compact Cup race, twice surviving contact at Luffield, the second instance happening on the last lap as reigning champion Gornall launched to the inside. In race two Gornall was handed a comfortable win after Dailly went off on the opening lap and had to recover from 14th, eventually finishing second.

Jack Davidson now has a firm grip on the Fiesta Junior title following race-one start-to-finish domination that was made sweeter when rival Nicholas Reeve's progress was halted by gear-selection issues. The second race was stopped following Oliver Turner's and Gustav Burton's heavy shunt into the Copse barriers; Davidson won again.

Championship leader Michael Watton was a three-time winner in the F1000s, marked by processional and sparsely populated outings.

Arron Pullan and Adam Lockwood split top Toyota honours in the two MR2 races that were won by invitational entry Eliot Dunmore in his Mini Cooper S.

MATT KEW

➔ P68 FULL RESULTS



Reversed Knockhill provides thrills

THE SCOTTISH MINI COOPER CUP provided some of the closest action on Knockhill's reversed-direction layout, used by the Scottish Motor Racing Club for the first time in 20 years. The anti-clockwise direction offered plenty of challenges, and there were standout drives in many series on what was, effectively, a new track.

Polesitter Hannah Chapman won the first race of the weekend after seeing off the challenge of Dominic Wheatley, who was left to rue an off-track moment on the exit of Clark's, which opened the door for Chapman's team-mate Michael Weddell to sneak past. The newcomer almost got alongside Chapman on the run out of the hairpin on the last lap, but yellow flags at Clark's took away any chance of the win.

Ian Munro took up the chase in race two and was within a car's length of Chapman for the whole race, but he couldn't stop her taking her second win of the weekend. "I was under so much pressure from Ian," explained Chapman. "I think one more lap and he would have got me."

Michael Courts was promoted to pole position for the final race after the top five were reversed, and he immediately broke the tow to the trailing pack of nine cars, headed by Mark Geraghty. Courts held on to take his first win in the series, while Chapman finished fourth to move within sight of the title protagonists who all had disappointing weekends — none more so

than standings leader Morgan Murray, who could not better an eighth-place finish.

Similarly, David McNaughton moved to fourth in the Scottish BMW Championship after two dominant wins. Newcomer Liam McGill also starred with second place in race one, but suffered a transmission failure in race two, which brought out the safety car. Points leader Lee Elrick won a race-long battle with Greig Sutherland for second in race two.

Scottish Legends champion John Paterson had a difficult weekend after being caught up in a startline shunt in the first heat, which launched him into a frightening roll. After a huge effort from his team to repair the car, Paterson retired with an electrical problem in heat two and struggled with poor handling in the final race. David Hunter won the first heat and has closed the gap to Paterson in the championship. Former champion Ben Mason won heat two, while Ivor Greenwood made a break to seal the win in race three.

Rookie Ross Martin continued his dominant form in the Scottish Formula Ford Championship to pull further ahead of Sebastian Melrose in the standings. Martin's Ray was dominant on the revived layout, with his pole-position time more than 0.7 seconds clear of his nearest rival. Melrose got involved in a fierce battle for fourth place with Clay Mitchell in race two, but spun at the hairpin and could only finish sixth.

Tommy Gilmartin won the first Classics race but his Morgan did not start race two, which set up a battle between the Porsche 911 of Raymond Boyd and Rover 3500 of John Kinmond. Despite struggling under braking in the latter stages, Kinmond survived to take the win. Finlay Crocker took both Saloons and Sportscar races in his Honda Civic TCR, while Wayne Macaulay did the same in the Scottish Fiesta Championship.

JONATHAN CRAWFORD

➔ P69 FULL RESULTS





2CVs spar in 24 Hour finale

LIEN DAVIES WAS CROWNED Classic 2CV champion for the second successive year after coming through the season-closing 24 Hour race at Snetterton.

Overall honours went the way of the BMW-powered BNLL 1 (Dyane Hybride) partnership of Thierry de Bonhome, Laurent Jossiaux and Rudy Coppieters, but the focus was on Davies once more.

In contrast to his 2016 title win, Davies was already assured of the championship after Friday night's qualifying session, as chief points rival Nick Crispin failed to secure the necessary five points for pole position to keep his hopes alive.

This was a relief to Davies and his Gadget Racing team who, with Ainslie Bousfield, Tom Perry, Wayne Cowling and Simon Clarke, endured an up-and-down race. They ran a strong second two hours in before a broken rocker forced an engine change approaching the third hour. A superb recovery, aided by the rapid times of Bousfield, enabled them to finish fifth of the UK 602 runners and 11th overall.

The Team LION 1 car of Pete Sparrow, Alec Graham and David O'Keeffe, which claimed the class win, was not without its issues either in the gruelling endurance race. A detached throttle cable lost them five laps early on to UK leaders Christopher Bassett, Phil Jose, Tom Burgess and Oli Poyser (Team Rebellion), but four-time series champion Sparrow showed incredible outright pace to turn this

deficit into a six-lap advantage as the sun rose in the 13th hour.

The remaining hours were more sedate and, despite several safety-car interventions to recover stranded cars, LION 1 took victory by seven laps from Team ECAS, while the best of the Mini Grands came home fourth overall.

The race was marred by a huge crash six hours in when Glenn Oswin (Tete Rouge) careered into the back of the ailing Blueberry Muffins entry of James Dartiaill – leading at the time – at full speed on the Bentley Straight. Both cars were severely damaged but neither driver was seriously hurt.

After missing the previous round at Cadwell Park, the BSA Division 1 category rejoined the regular 250 British Superkarts at Snetterton. Division 1 points leader Dave Harvey was given a significant let-off as main rival and race-one winner Carl Hulme ground to a halt in the second race. Swede Ingvar Bjerger took the victory while Dave Clark took National 250 Class honours with a brace of third-place overall finishes.

Sam Moss came close in two F125 Open Championship races after twice failing to capitalise on quick starts from the second row. He was overtaken by Kirk Cattermole in race one with a bold move into Riches, and eventually lost out by 0.22 seconds.

A tamer second encounter was won at a relative canter by Liam Morley. The polesitter raced to a 5.6s victory, again from Moss, with Alan Crossen third.

David Mellor made it six consecutive MG Owners Club Championship victories in his ZR by cruising to a win in race one and edging Michael Weidner in race two, leading from lights to flag.

STEPHEN BRUNSDON



➔ P69 FULL RESULTS

RESULTS

BRANDS HATCH

MSVR

RACING SALOONS (21 LAPS)

1 Stuart Joyce (BMW E36 M3); 2 Stephen Pearson (E36 M3) +0.229s; 3 Barnaby Davies (Toyota Starlet); 4 Roger Kneebone (E36 M3); 5 Robert Sadler (VW Golf Mk5); 6 Peter Osborne (Opel OPC). **Class winners** Osborne; John Willcocks (BMW E30 M3); Jamie Jeffrey (BMW Z4); Martin Gadd (Honda Civic); Robert Taylor (Citroen Saxo); Justin Turner (BMW E30 320i); Karl Graves (BMW 120d).

Fastest lap Pearson 54.445s (79.87mph). **Pole** Joyce. **Starters** 33.

RACE 2 (22 LAPS) 1 Joyce; 2 Davies +6.041s; 3 Kneebone; 4 Sadler; 5 Osborne; 6 Cliff Pellin (Ford Fiesta ST150). **CW** Osborne; Pellin; Jeffrey; Lewis Turner (Citroen Saxo); Graves; Taylor; J Turner. **FL** Joyce 54.314s (80.06mph). **P** Joyce. **S** 33.

VAG TROPHY (15 LAPS) 1 Paul

Taylor (Golf); 2 Kenan Dole (Golf) +0.618s; 3 Ben Wallace (Golf); 4 Simon Walton (Audi TT); 5 Brayden Fletcher (Golf); 6 Paul Dehadray (Scirocco). **CW** Martyn Culley (SEAT Leon). **FL** Wallace 52.575s (82.71mph). **P** Taylor. **S** 17.

RACE 2 (17 LAPS) 1 Walton;

2 Taylor +3.162s; 3 Dole; 4 Dehadray; 5 Fletcher; 6 Kyle Owen-Bradshaw (Golf). **CW** Culley. **FL** Walton 52.302s (83.14mph). **P** Dehadray. **S** 17.

KUMHO BMW (20 LAPS) 1 Rick

Kerry (1-series); 2 Lee Frost (E36 M3) +3.917s; 3 Ian Crisp (1-series); 4 Lucky Khera (E46 M3); 5 Robert Davidson (E36 M3); 6 Paul Travers (E46 M3). **FL** Kerry 52.178s (83.34mph).

P Khera. **S** 18. **RACE 2 (18 LAPS)**

1 Frost; 2 Khera +0.293s; 3 Crisp; 4 Tom Hibbert (E36 M3); 5 Peter Smith (1-series); 6 Kenny Coleman (E46 M3). **FL** Khera 52.006s (83.61mph). **P** Kerry. **S** 17.

PRODUCTION BMW

CHAMPIONSHIP (21 LAPS)

1 William Davison; 2 Matt Swaffer +0.036s; 3 David Graves; 4 Owen Darch; 5 Justin Turner; 6 Andy Strong. **FL** Davison 57.970s (75.01mph). **P** Swaffer. **S** 29.

RACE 2 (5 LAPS) 1 Davison;

2 Swaffer +0.477s; 3 Graves; 4 Darch; 5 Turner; 6 Strong. **FL** Graves 58.309s (74.57mph). **P** Swaffer. **S** 25.

VW RACING CUP (16 LAPS) 1 Bobby

Thompson (Golf); 2 Darelle Wilson (Scirocco) +6.059s; 3 Simon Walton (Audi TT); 4 Jamie Bond (Golf); 5 Tom Witts (Scirocco); 6 Tim Docker (Scirocco). **FL** Thompson 52.344s (83.07mph). **P** Thompson. **S** 15.

RACE 2 (23 LAPS) 1 Thompson;

2 Bond +4.339s; 3 Witts; 4 Walton; 5 Tom Walker (Golf); 6 Owen Walton (Audi TT). **FL** Thompson 52.158s (83.37mph). **P** Docker. **S** 14.

E30 M3 CELEBRATION (BOTH 17

LAPS) 1 James Card; 2 Giovanni di Gennaro +1.942s; 3 Jody Halse (635); 4 Rob Payne; 5 John Willcocks; 6 Cemal Osman. **FL** Osman 54.142s (80.31mph). **P** Card. **S** 8.

RACE 2 1 Osman; 2 Card +3.970s; 3 Halse; 4 di Gennaro; 5 Willcocks; 6 Mark Astall. **FL** Osman 52.989s (82.06mph). **P** Card. **S** 8.

MODIFIED SALOONS

(BOTH 17 LAPS) 1 Rod Birley

(Ford Escort WRC); 2 Malcolm Wise (Ford Escort Cosworth) +1.091s; 3 Paul Adams (Ford Focus RS); 4 Tony Skelton (Renault Clio); 5 Andy Banham (Subaru Impreza); 6 Matt Turner (BMW E36 M3). **CW** Adams; Turner; Riku Garner (Renault Clio); Bill Richards (Mini Clubman). **FL** Wise 52.031s (83.57mph). **P** Birley. **S** 16.

RACE 2 1 Birley; 2 Banham +9.358s; 3 Adams; 4 Wise; 5 Michael Eustace (BMW E46 M3); 6 Turner. **CW** Adams; Eustace; Garner; Richards; Paul Restall (Ford Sapphire Cosworth). **FL** Birley 52.481s (82.86mph).

P Birley. **S** 16.

TIN TOPS (12 LAPS) 1 Rod Birley

(Honda Integra); 2 Daniel Fisher (Honda Civic Type R) +0.877s; 3 James Ross (Vauxhall Astra VXR); 4 Graham Richardson (Honda Civic Type R); 5 Trevor Collar (Honda Civic Type R); 6 Terry Searles (MG ZR 190). **CW** Ross; Steve Everson (Citroen Saxo); Vince Wheeler (Renault Clio). **FL** Birley 54.738s (79.44mph).

P Fisher. **S** 17. **RACE 2 (17 LAPS)**

1 Birley; 2 Fisher +2.026s; 3 Ross; 4 Robert Hosier (SEAT Leon); 5 Richardson; 6 Collar. **CW** Ross; Mikey Day (Citroen Saxo); Wheeler. **FL** Birley 54.483s (79.81mph). **P** Birley. **S** 16.

CHAMPION OF BRANDS FF1600

(16 LAPS) 1 Matt Rivett (Ray GR10); 2 Adam Quartermaine (Van Diemen) +0.259s; 3 Kevin Bottomley (Reynard 88FF); 4 Jason Down (Getem Mygale GD515); 5 Innes Hickman (Van Diemen RF89); 6 Simon Puce (Ray GR97). **FL** Quartermaine 51.472s (84.48mph). **P** Rivett. **S** 8.

SILVERSTONE

BRSCC

NATIONAL FORMULA FORD 1600

(ALL 15 LAPS) 1 Luke Williams

(Firman RFR16); 2 Luke Cooper (Swift SC16) +0.360s; 3 Roger Orgee (Ray GR17); 4 Neil MacLennan (Ray GR09); 5 Jordan Dempsey (Van Diemen LA10); 6 Jamie Thorburn (Ray GR15). **CW** Felix Fisher (Van Diemen RF02); David Cobbold (Van Diemen RF89). **FL** Cooper 1m02.406s (94.63mph). **P** Williams. **S** 33. **RACE 2 1 Cooper;** 2 Williams +0.127s; 3 Dempsey; 4 Orgee; 5 MacLennan; 6 Thorburn. **CW** John Ferguson (Spectrum 012); Jack Clayton (Van Diemen RF89). **FL** Cooper 1m02.353s (94.71mph).

ROUND-UP

P Williams. S 32. RACE 3 1 Williams; 2 Michael Eastwell (Spectrum 011) +0.529s; 3 Orgee; 4 Dempsey; 5 MacLennan; 6 Matt Round-Garrido (Medina Sport JL17). **CW** Ferguson; Clayton. **FL** Dempsey 1m02.557s (94.40mph). **P** Joshua Smith (Firman RFR16). **S 32.**

FIESTA CLASS C (ST) (ALL 17 LAPS)

1 Danny Harrison; 2 Josh Gollin +0.283s; 3 Simon Horrobin; 4 Jamie Going; 5 Nathaniel Gollin; 6 Lewis Kent. **FL** J Gollin 1m09.883s (84.49mph). **P** Harrison. **S 17.**

RACE 2 1 N Gollin; 2 David Nye +3.088s; 3 Richard Ashmole; 4 Ryan Faulconbridge; 5 Going; 6 Samuel Watkins. **FL** Watkins 1m09.840s (84.55mph). **P** Harrison. **S 17.**

RACE 3 1 Nye; 2 J Gollin +3.088s;

3 Harrison; 4 Kent; 5 Going; 6 Watkins. **FL** Kent 1m09.946s (84.43mph). **P** N Gollin. **S 17.**

FIESTA CLASSES A, B & D (17 LAPS)

1 Jack Youhill (Zetec S); 2 Stuart Robbins (Zetec S) +10.628s; 3 Shaun Andrews (Zetec S); 4 Tom Hutchins (Zetec S); 5 Luke Bannister (Zetec S); 6 Tim Bennett (Si). **CW** Bennett; Derek Robinson (Zetec). **FL** Youhill 1m11.996s (82.02mph). **P** John Cooper (Zetec S). **S 14. RACE 2 (17 LAPS) 1 Youhill;** 2 Jamie White (Zetec S) +1.184s; 3 Hutchins; 4 Cooper; 5 Andrews; 6 Robbins. **CW** Tim Bennett (Si); Sean Banks (Zetec). **FL** White 1m11.598s (82.48mph). **P** Youhill. **S 14. RACE 3 (15 LAPS) 1 Youhill;** 2 White +2.778s;

3 Andrews; 4 Robbins; 5 Hutchins; 6 Bennett. **CW** Bennett; Robinson. **FL** Youhill 1m11.742s (82.31mph). **P** Youhill. **S 13.**

MG METRO CUP (17 LAPS)

1 Lee Connell; 2 Mike Williams +1.179s; 3 Andrew Ashton; 4 Jack Ashton; 5 Mark Eales; 6 Przemyslaw Glodek. **FL** Dick Trevett 1m11.993s (82.03mph). **P** Connell. **S 19.**

BMW COMPACT CUP (BOTH 13 LAPS)

1 Steven Dailly; 2 James Gornall +0.760s; 3 Samuel Carrington Yates; 4 Ben Huntley; 5 Ian Jones; 6 Mark Skeats. **FL** Gornall 1m11.996s (82.02mph). **P** Dailly. **S 33.**

RACE 2 1 Gornall; 2 Dailly +4.904s;

3 Carrington Yates; 4 Jones; 5 Skeats; 6 Tom Griffiths. **FL** Dailly 1m11.784s (82.26mph). **P** Dailly. **S 32.**

FIESTA JUNIOR (17 LAPS) 1 Jack

Davidson; 2 Scott Cansdale +7.205s; 3 James Waite; 4 Gustav Burton; 5 Oliver Turner; 6 James Hillery. **FL** Davidson 1m10.452s

(83.82mph). **P** Davidson. **S 13.**

RACE 2 (8 LAPS) 1 Davidson;

2 Cansdale +3.511s; 3 Waite; 4 Hillery; 5 Josh Steed; 6 Matthew Greenwood. **FL** Davidson 1m10.271s (84.04mph). **P** Davidson. **S 12.**

F1000 (ALL 16 LAPS) 1 Michael

Watton; 2 Paul Butcher +4.684s;

3 Dan Clowes; 4 Robert Sayell;

5 Stuart Abbott; 6 Dax Ward. **FL** Butcher 55.882s (105.68mph).

P Watton. **S 10. RACE 2 1 Watton;**

2 Butcher +1.020s; 3 Abbott; 4 Alok

Iyengar; 5 Ward; 6 Laura Chapple. **FL** Butcher 55.993s (105.47mph).

P Elliott Mitchell. **S 10.**

RACE 3 1 Watton; 2 Butcher

+3.363s; 3 Sayell; 4 Clowes; 5 Ward;

6 Mitchell. **FL** Watton 55.681s

(106.06mph). **P** Butcher. **S 10.**

MR2 CLASSIC RACING SERIES

(13 LAPS) **1 Eliot Dunmore (Mini**

Cooper S); 2 Jonathan Weedon

(Peugeot 106 GTi) +23.701s; 3 Alan

Lee (Mini Cooper S); 4 Arron Pullan

(Toyota MR2 Mk1); 5 Adam Lockwood

(MR2 Mk1); 6 Neale Hurren (MR2

Mk1). **CW** Pullan. **FL** Dunmore

1m10.355s (83.94mph). **P** Dunmore.

S 22. RACE 2 (12 LAPS) 1 Dunmore;

2 Lockwood +27.128s; 3 David

Hemingway (MR2 Mk1); 4 Pullan;

5 Peter Highton (MR2 Mk1); 6 Neil

Stratton (MR2 Mk1). **CW** Lockwood.

FL Dunmore 1m14.527s

(79.24mph). **P** Dunmore. **S 22.**

KNOCKHILL

SMRC

SCOTTISH MINI COOPER CUP

(9 LAPS) **1 Hannah Chapman;**

2 Michael Weddell +0.317s;

3 Dominic Wheatley; 4 Ian Munro;

5 Chris Reid; 6 Robbie Dalgleish.

FL Weddell 1m03.879s (71.398mph).

P Chapman. **S 21. RACE 2 (12 LAPS)**

1 Chapman; 2 Munro +0.306s;

3 Weddell; 4 Mark Geraghty;

5 Michael Courts; 6 Reid. **FL** Wheatley 1m03.962s (71.305mph). **P** Chapman.

S 21. RACE 3 (9 LAPS) 1 Courts;

2 Geraghty +0.582s; 3 Weddell;

4 Chapman; 5 Wheatley; 6 Reid.

FL Reid 1m03.839s (71.443mph).

P Courts. **S 21.**

SCOTTISH BMW CHAMPIONSHIP

(BOTH 12 LAPS) **1 David**

McNaughton; 2 Liam McGill +1.161s;

3 Greig Sutherland; 4 Lee Elrick;

5 Gary Clark; 6 Cliff Harper.

FL McNaughton 1m02.852s

(72.565mph). **P** McNaughton.

S 12. RACE 2 1 McNaughton;

2 Elrick +3.349s; 3 Sutherland;

4 Clark; 5 Harper; 6 Jake Hutchinson.

FL McNaughton 1m03.316s

(72.033mph). **P** McNaughton. **S 11.**

SCOTTISH LEGENDS (8 LAPS)

1 David Hunter; 2 Ben Mason

+6.674s; 3 Steven McGill; 4 Ivor

Greenwood; 5 Michael Paxton;

6 John Bushby. **FL** Greenwood

1m00.631s (75.223mph).

P Ross McCulloch. **S 15.**

HEAT 2 (8 LAPS) 1 Mason;

2 McCulloch +1.155s; 3 Ryan

McLeish; 4 McGill; 5 Scott Hynds;

6 Greenwood. **FL** Hunter 59.827s

(76.234mph). **P** Hynds. **S 13.**

FINAL (10 LAPS) 1 Greenwood;

2 Hunter +4.914s; 3 McCulloch;

4 McGill; 5 Jordan Hodgson; 6 McLeish.

FL Hunter 59.971s (76.051mph).

P John Paterson. **S 14.**

SCOTTISH FORMULA FORD (BOTH

12 LAPS) 1 Ross Martin (Ray GR17);

2 Kenneth Cowie (Ray GR09) +4.447s;

3 Michael MacPherson (Ray GR14);

4 Sebastian Melrose (Ray GR14);

5 Clay Mitchell (Ray GR13) 6 Steven

Barlow (Ray GR09). **FL** Martin

54.924s (83.039mph). **P** Martin. **S 8.**

RACE 2 1 Martin; 2 Cowie +6.040s;

3 MacPherson; 4 Mitchell; 5 Barlow;

6 Melrose. **FL** Martin 55.049s

(82.851mph). **P** Martin. **S 8.**

SCOTTISH CLASSIC SPORTS

AND SALOONS (BOTH 12 LAPS)

1 Tommy Gilmartin (Morgan +8);

2 Raymond Boyd (Porsche 911)

+10.171s; 3 Charlie Cope (VW Golf

GTi); 4 John Kinmond (Rover 3500);

5 Alastair Baptie (Fiat X1/9); 6 Ian

Blacklin (Ford Capri). **CW** Boyd; Cope;



Card leads E30 M3
Brands celebration race

HAWKINS

Baptie; Alex Montgomery (MGB GT).

FL Gilmartin 59.838s (76.220mph).

P Gilmartin. **S 13. RACE 2 1 Kinmond;**

2 Boyd +0.249s; 3 Baptie; 4 Bruce

Mitchell (Lotus Europa); 5 Blacklin;

6 Mario Ferrari (Alfa Sprint Trofeo).

CW Boyd; Baptie; Mitchell.

FL Kinmond 59.776s (76.299mph).

P Gilmartin. **S 11.**

SCOTTISH SALOON AND

SPORTSCARS (BOTH 12 LAPS)

1 Finlay Crocker (Honda Civic TCR);

2 Kenneth McKell (Mitsubishi Evo 8)

+0.397s; 3 Andrew Morrison (SEAT

Leon Eurocup); 4 William Robson

(Ford Focus RS); 5 Alan Doncaster

(Mitsubishi Evo 6 RS); 6 Thomson

McIntyre (Subaru Impreza). **CW**

McKell; Robson; Oliver Mortimer

(Mini Cooper R53); Andrew Paterson

(BMW E36 318i). **FL** McKell 53.680s

(84.963mph). **P** Crocker. **S 12.**

RACE 2 1 Crocker; 2 Morrison

+19.933s; 3 Robson; 4 Doncaster;

5 McIntyre; 6 Mortimer. **CW** Robson;

Mortimer; Paterson. **FL** Crocker

53.802s (84.771mph). **P** Crocker. **S 11.**

SCOTTISH FIESTA CHAMPIONSHIP

(BOTH 12 LAPS) **1 Wayne Macaulay**

(ST); 2 Barry Farquharson (ST)

+3.261s; 3 Paul Curtis (ST); 4 Nicholas

Forsyth (ST); 5 Aiden Ward (ST);

6 Stephen Ward (ST). **CW** Kristian

Leith (XR2). **FL** Macaulay 1m02.657s

(72.791mph). **P** Macaulay. **S 11.**

RACE 2 1 Macaulay; 2 Farquharson

+3.463s; 3 Curtis; 4 S Ward; 5 Forsyth;

6 A Ward. **CW** Leith. **FL** Macaulay

1m02.624s (72.829mph).

P Macaulay. **S 11.**

SNETTERTON

BARC

CLASSIC 2CV CHAMPIONSHIP

24 HOURS (788 LAPS) 1 Thierry de

Bonhome/Laurent Jossiaux/Rudy

Coppieters (Dyane/Hybride); 2 Eric

Bonnan/Jeremie Deroissart/Gerard

de Barbeyrac/Christian Tiggeleer

(Dyane/Hybride) -16 laps; 3 Andre

Blaise/Bernard Crespin/Jean-Luc

Louys (Dyane/Hybride); 4 Ade

Tuckley/Simon Tuckley/Alan

Eason/Ashey Shelswell (Mini Grand);

5 Andy Slade/Chris Slade/Danielle

Furzeland/Steve Furzeland (Mini

Grand); 6 Alec Graham/Pete Sparrow/

David O'Keefe (Citroen 2CV 602).

CW Tuckley/Tuckley/Eason/Shelswell;

Graham/Sparrow/O'Keefe; Rob

der Voort/Frank der Voort/Erik

Nerderpel/Martijn van der Goes/Erik

van der Voort (Dyane/Classique);

Jean-Eric Brethenoux/William

Bernett/Marc de Well/Bernard

Rousse (2CV Ameliore). **FL** Blaise

1m36.788s (73.79mph).

P Coppieters. **S 34.**

MSA BRITISH SUPERKART

CHAMPIONSHIP (BOTH 13 LAPS)

1 Carl Hulme (Anderson/VM);

2 Dave Harvey (MS Kart/VM) +12.818s;

3 Dan Clark (Anderson/Gas Gas);

4 Jack Layton (Anderson/DEA);

5 Ross Allen (Jade/DEA); 6 Gavin

Bennett (Anderson/DEA). **CW** Clark.

FL Hulme 1m10.316s (101.57mph).

P Hulme. **S 30. RACE 2 1 Ingvar**

Bjerger (Anderson/VM); 2 Harvey

+6.680s; 3 Clark; 4 Tom Rushforth

(Spyda/VM); 5 Bennett; 6 Gareth

James (Anderson/DEA). **CW** Clark.

FL Bjerger 1m10.454s (101.37mph).

P Bjerger. **S 27.**

F125 OPEN SUPERKART

CHAMPIONSHIP (BOTH 12 LAPS)

1 Kirk Cattermole (Raider/CAT

SGM); 2 Sam Moss (Anderson/DEA)

+0.222s; 3 Liam Morley (Anderson/

DEA); 4 Lee Harpham (Anderson/TM);

5 Ian Larder (Anderson/TM); 6 Alan

Crossen (Anderson/Vortex).

FL Morley 1m15.825s (94.19mph).

P Morley. **S 21. RACE 2 1 Morley;**

2 Cattermole +5.319s; 3 Crossen;

4 Harpham; 5 Danny Edwards

(Anderson/TM); 6 Andrew Connor

(Anderson/TM). **FL** Morley 1m16.053s

WHAT'S ON

Artificial intelligence fights back, hard

ACCESS TO CLASSIC FORMULA 1 CARS and a more in-depth career mode are the highlights in Codemasters' latest iteration of its official F1 video game.

Autosport was given a pre-launch test drive of the title, and based on this experience these features are highly accomplished add-ons to what was already an impressive product. Other elements of the software have also been tuned up.

The game's creative director, Lee Mather, says there have been "multiple prongs of attack" on the artificial intelligence that won praise last year, and which has provided what is arguably motorsport console gaming's most intelligent computer-controlled driver.

It's good timing, considering the way the rules of engagement within 'real' F1 have changed with the end of the 'Max Verstappen rule' and the reduction in on-track penalties, opening the door to willing risk takers. But having to replicate the intuitive art of battle within the confines of a video game is complicated.

The solution, therefore, is a highly detailed AI, which can be imagined as a sliding scale of attributes where the game can decide how a driver will make the overtake happen, including braking late and using traction out of a corner.

"On top of all those parameters they have to be aware of and constantly assessing what's going on around them so they have to understand when to break the tow," says game director Paul Jeal. "It's that awareness of what's going on in front and behind them which is hard to balance. It's like real life."

Mather put it more simply, and his words rung true in the preview game: "You will find that they'll hang with you corner after corner if they can't make a move stick, and they will if you make a pass."



That leads to some exciting virtual racing. A highlight of Autosport's sample session was a seemingly never-ending battle with Marcus Ericsson's Sauber and Fernando Alonso's McLaren.

A lightning start counts for nothing when the AI is robust enough to close the door and push you off-line, while it wasn't to be deterred if we blitzed past on a following corner, remaining wheel-to-wheel in pursuit as others closed in.

All of that made for an authentic experience, as hard to quantify as that phrase is – but it doesn't necessarily mean immense difficulty, as Mather is quick to point out.

During the team's early days creating the series' instalments it had the aid of former F1 driver Anthony Davidson, who used to

The AI in F1 2017 isn't afraid to continue fighting through multiple corners

Approaches from agents to drive classic cars in the career mode add authentic touches



lament that the game was more difficult than the sport was in reality. What F1 2017 does is convincingly put you behind the wheel, experiencing the speed and the fine margins that lead to success, and the AI is key to that. But it's also a part of a wider window into the world of F1.

The heightened career mode covers performance and reliability concerns during the off-track development race, and you earn upgrades through completing free practice programmes. Mather described the game as "RPG-esque" in some elements, and being approached by your manager and a wealthy businessman to drive his expensive classic F1 cars does feel plausible, and opens the door to a break from the intensity of the career mode.

Codemasters clearly hasn't slacked off in other areas of the game, either, including the returning classic car feature. The same care and detail has been applied to making the McLaren MP4/4 feel like an analogue handful through the corners, while the Red Bull RB6 stuns with how planted it is thanks to its blown aero.

Pleasingly this philosophy has also been applied to the more-enjoyable 'pursuit' and 'overtake' challenges that feel like a late-1990s arcade racer, and a refreshing change of pace that keeps the game varied.

TOM ERRINGTON

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HOT ON THE WEB THIS WEEK

YouTube RAHAL HAULS ASS IN PENNSYLVANIA

Search for: VISOR CAM: Rahal Pocono

Buckle up for a driver's-eye view – thanks to IndyCar's benchmark visor cam – of Graham Rahal during his qualifying run at the 'Tricky Triangle'. Rahal lined up in seventh with an average speed of 218.099mph



INTERNATIONAL MOTORSPORT

BELGIAN GRAND PRIX

Formula 1 World Championship

Rd 12/20

Spa, Belgium

August 27

WATCH ON TV

Live Sky Sports F1, Sunday 1230.

Channel 4, Sunday 1235. Radio

BBC Radio 5 Live, Sunday 1300.

Highlights, Sky Sports F1,

Sunday 1800

WATCH ON TV

Live Sky Sports F1, Saturday

1630, Sunday 0815

PORSCHE SUPERCUP

Rd 6/8

Spa, Belgium

August 26-27

WATCH ON TV

Live Eurosport 2, Saturday 1730,

Sunday 1015

FORMULA 2

Rd 8/11

Spa, Belgium

August 26-27

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1455, Sunday 0915

INDYCAR SERIES

Rd 14/16

Gateway, Illinois, USA

August 26

WATCH ON TV

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Sunday 0200

GP3 SERIES

Rd 5/8

Spa, Belgium

August 26-27

INDY LIGHTS

Rd 9/10

Gateway, Illinois, USA

August 26

INDYCAR GATEWAY



NEXT WEEK

ON SALE THURSDAY



EUROPEAN LE MANS SERIES

Rd 4/6

Paul Ricard, France

August 27

WATCH ON TV

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Sunday 1045

FORMULA RENAULT EUROCUP

Rd 8/10

Paul Ricard, France

August 26-27

WATCH ON TV

Live BT Sport 1, Saturday 1100.

BT Sport ESPN, Sunday 1100

BLANCPAIN SPRINT CUP

Rd 4/5

Hungaroring, Hungary

August 26-27

WATCH ON TV

Live Motorsport.tv, Sunday 1230

IMSA SPORTSCAR

Rd 10/12

Virginia International Raceway,

USA

August 27

SUPER GT

Rd 6/8

Suzuka, Japan

August 27

24 HOUR SERIES

Rd 6/8

Portimao 24 Hours

Algarve Circuit, Portugal

August 26-27

EUROPEAN RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP

Rd 6/8

Rally Zlin, Czech Republic

August 25-27

UK MOTORSPORT

SILVERSTONE MOTOGP

August 25-27

MotoGP, Moto2, Moto3

WATCH ON TV

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KIRKISTOWN 500MRCI

August 26

Supercars, Road Sports, Fiesta

Zetecs, FF1600, Formula Sheane,

Formula Vee, Formula Libre, SEATs

THRUXTON 750MC

August 26

Clio 182s, Toyota MR2s, RGB, 750

Formula, Sport Specials, MX-5s

OULTON PARK GOLD CUP

August 26-28

Historic F2, Historic Touring Car

Challenge, Super Touring, Derek

Bell Trophy, Historic FF1600,

Historic Touring Cars, Guards

Trophy, Classic Clubmans, Historic

Road Sports, '70s Road Sports,

Jaguar Classic, Classic Racing Cars

ROCKINGHAM TOCA

August 26-27

BTCC, Formula 4, Renault Clios,

Ginetta GT4, Ginetta Juniors

WATCH ON TV

Live ITV4, Sunday 1045

SNETTERTON MSVR

August 26-27

British F3, Monoposto, Radical

Challenge, Radical SR1, Sports

2000, Trackday Championship,

7 Race Series

MONDELLO PARK HISTORIC RACING FESTIVAL

August 27

Historic Racing Cars, Pre-'55,

Future Classics

CASTLE COMBE CCRC

August 28

FF1600, GT, Saloons, Hot Hatch,

Mighty Minis, Midgets/Sprites

FROM THE ARCHIVE

Nigel Mansell leads the field away at the start in Adelaide, the last grand prix of his 1992 title-winning season, while Jean Alesi takes to the kerb to stay out of trouble. Mansell and Ayrton Senna would collide on the 19th lap, putting both out.

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DALE EARNHARDT JR

NASCAR STAR REMEMBERS A HOLIDAY WITH A SUPERCARS TWIST

Dale Earnhardt Jr's budding friendship with double Supercars champ-turned-NASCAR-driver Marcos Ambrose turned a two-week off-season holiday to Australia in December 2007 into a chance to test Paul Morris's 2006 Holden Commodore VZ V8.

The NASCAR superstar, who by this time had won 17 Cup races, attended the Supercars' grand finale at Phillip Island before he sampled the series' machinery for himself at Queensland Raceway.

"We hung with Paul for about a week on the Gold Coast," recalls Earnhardt. "We went to driving school and drove his cars; we went to his winery; he took us around in his helicopter — he was a super-nice guy and he's still a good friend.

"At the time, they were testing their new car and he had the old car from the past season there and he asked me if I'd like to drive it. I borrowed a driver's suit and helmet from [Supercars driver] Owen Kelly and I just ran that car all day long."

Earnhardt says Morris was serious about trying to convince him to return to Australia at a later date to compete in Supercars' 'Development Series' finale but the details were never worked out.

Earnhardt, who is retiring from NASCAR at the end of this year, says he doesn't foresee a move to Supercars in his future, but he still looks upon the experience very favourably, and hopes he and his wife, Amy, can return to Australia for another visit.

"I think it's a good blend of what we do but with better braking and a little more driveability on a road course," he says. "But grip-wise, it felt very familiar. They had a lot of power and a very reasonable tyre.

"It wasn't really foreign to me except for sitting on the other side of the car and using the shifter with your left hand. They didn't use the paddle[shifters] yet and still had an H-pattern. I might have messed a few gears up every once in a while.

"I was a little concerned about sitting on the other side of the car but once I got out there, the driveability of the car was really nice. It was immediately a lot of fun to drive and easy to understand exactly where the grip level was. You could really get it out of shape if you wanted."

JIM UTTER



VERACITY MEDIA/HOLDEN MOTORSPORT

Earnhardt found the Supercar similar to his NASCAR in a number of ways

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44

PAGES



WORK-LIFE

BALANCE

**WHY MOTORSPORT
ISN'T ALL GLITZ
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**MASTERCLASS
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**TRACK GUIDE
TOM KRISTENSEN**

**DRIVER'S EYE
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“RACING IS LIFE. EVERYTHING ELSE

is just waiting.” Steve McQueen’s famous line from the 1971 movie *Le Mans* has been immortalised among motorsport fans, and for many it rings true. Motorsport is commonly regarded as one of the last true escapist pursuits, a chance to live out childhood dreams of watching fast cars in exotic locations, but that romanticised notion rarely holds up for those who live and breathe it daily.

For drivers, team personnel and media alike, motorsport is a way of life, an all-consuming passion that demands total dedication and focus, often to the detriment of a life outside. While it may be a dream job to many in the industry, motorsport is not without its stresses and for drivers, the strain caused by relentless travel, PR commitments and fitness requirements has an impact on performance as the season goes on.

In this issue, we explore how this pressure manifests itself and examine whether it is indeed possible to achieve a work-life balance in motorsport. We also find out why Petter Solberg is still as motivated as ever after almost two decades at the top of the WRC and World RX, then count down the best drivers aged over 40 who have lost none of their competitive spirit and outright speed over the years. At 44 pages, this is the biggest-ever issue of PERFORMANCE, so I hope you enjoy it.

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MASTERCLASS

WITH ROB WILSON

THE WORLD-RENOWNED DRIVER COACH EXPLAINS WHY THERE'S NO CLEARLY DEFINED PATHWAY TO REACH THE TOP



Verstappen and Raikkonen bucked the trend of how to reach Formula 1

LAT IMAGES

There's a case to be made for saying there should be a minimum number of years you've raced in cars before you get into Formula 1, but Max Verstappen has clearly proved you don't need a lot of time to reach the top. Going back a few years further, Kimi Raikkonen did the same. They each had a career history of one year prior to F1.

Previously, there was a value in following a driver through the smaller national formulas, or maybe racing in America, then emerging with a real history. Look at the case of Peter Revson, who re-emerged in F1 seven years after he made his debut in 1964 and went back to race in Indycar, Can-Am and Trans-Am. He was an interesting character with a very loyal fanbase that covered a great many categories. By comparison, drivers today often rise without trace and arrive in F1 with a wafer-thin history, which means that they're often not regarded as very interesting.

Raikkonen has been there for long enough that he's now one of the most interesting people, but when he came along everything changed massively overnight. The following year, the type of people who said, 'I want to be a racing driver' were completely different. Drivers suddenly had to be telegenic and have managers saying, 'This is the next Kimi'. It's happening all over again now with Verstappen.

Raikkonen raced for a year in F1 after a season in Formula Renault and suddenly he was being paid

£3million a year to drive for McLaren – one of the very top teams. After that, people started to come with a business plan and the sales pitch of 'back my son, invest this amount and within three years you'll have millions back'. The failure rate was phenomenal. Lots of deals were done that only had the effect of hothousing people who promptly burned out within a couple of years. It's sponsor-driven, it's television-driven. Everyone must be 100% professional by the time they're 16 in a series that's televised, and pretty much everything is televised now.

The first obvious example of being instantly successful was Sir Jackie Stewart, who came out of a one-litre F3 series and after one season went straight

into F1. He finished third in the world championship in 1965 and was third in his second race, but, generally speaking, it's impossible to get all that wisdom in there in that short space of time. It just so happened that Raikkonen and Verstappen were freaks of nature – twice-per-generation drivers – and most of those that followed were not. They were able people who could have had long and successful careers, but were trying to do it in the same timescale.

That much is as true now as it ever was. Remember Mike Thackwell? For many years he was the youngest driver to start an F1 race. He was a brilliant talent and went on to win the 1984 European F2 title, but he got pushed in too quickly and didn't quite get it to work



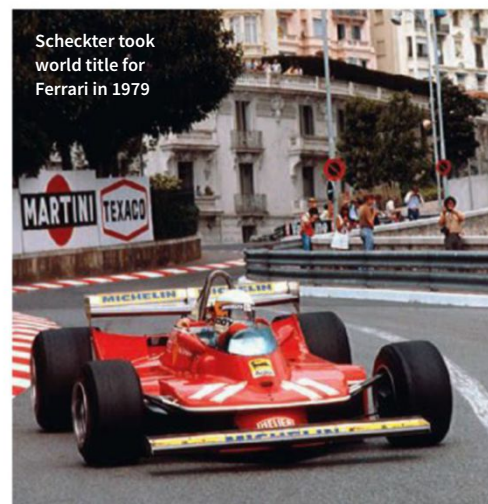
Stroll and Palmer have had contrasting levels of preparation



Hill only reached F1 in his early thirties



Jaime Alguersuari and Sebastian Buemi were both ditched by Toro Rosso in 2011



Scheckter took world title for Ferrari in 1979

“Raikkonen and Verstappen were freaks of nature – twice-per-generation drivers. Most of those that followed were not”

out in F1. Some of the recent Toro Rosso drivers possibly felt they could've got better with more time to develop too, but it's part of the Red Bull policy that they get a very limited amount of time and the team can point to many success stories to support that.

There's a huge amount of expectation on young drivers now. They're made to feel that if they haven't achieved a certain amount within two years they are failures at the age of 19 or 20, instead of thinking, 'That's just the beginning of my development years'. People will be looking for the next Verstappen, but even a non-Verstappen, who has been four or five years in development, will still only be 23 or 24. People think, 'I'm too old for Formula 1 or will be too old by the time I get there', and because of that we're losing a lot of talent that then heads to America or to sportscars.

Drivers who feel they may miss the boat should be told, 'Don't give up, don't be a fashion victim' because if you are around long enough and you are lucky enough to get a sponsor, then teams will listen and an opening may appear. You've got to hope that

Formula 1 will wait for you, if you are good enough.

There were times in the early-1970s when Frank Williams had no choice but to take on younger, more inexperienced drivers who might be able to bring in some sponsors, but as soon as he got a sensible car and a few sensible sponsors for '79, they were for 'adults only', such as Alan Jones and Clay Regazzoni or, later on, for Carlos Reutemann, Nelson Piquet and Nigel Mansell. These people are greats of the sport and were not in Formula 3 in their mid-teens, but when they were a decade older or, in the case of Damon Hill, in his late twenties.

If you do a 'slow-roast', the benefit is that you will continue to improve. Verstappen should end up winning a world title when he's in the right car. The question with him is will he be any faster than he is right now? His policy is to do the fastest lap he can within five laps. Jody Scheckter was like that. He was right on the pace in his first or second grand prix and after a few mistakes, he matured into an excellent driver. But I'm not sure he was any faster when he

became world champion in 1979 than he was in the McLaren in '73. Sometimes, too much too soon can stunt your growth.

Ultimately, it comes down to the personality of the individual. There are some we have seen who, like Stewart, Raikkonen and Verstappen, have rewritten the rulebook. There are others who initially appeared to have been parachuted in too early, but then found their footing. Lance Stroll was promoted very, very quickly and he perhaps would have been well-served by a season in Formula 2 to gain more experience, but he appears to have matured extremely well over the first part of this F1 season and is beginning to catch up with himself.

Others have followed the rules, but it hasn't worked out for them, as Jolyon Palmer is finding out. He's had a long development process and followed the Damon Hill route of being a test driver for a year before moving to a race seat, but it hasn't been his saviour – as yet. There were always drivers who failed, who had been there for a while and then just fell out of it. Just having a long development period is not always a guarantee of success. You've got to build up a fanbase, a level of driving that is a marker of something special. Equally, not everyone who comes in very suddenly is doomed to failure.

The process of preparing for Formula 1 isn't written in stone, but I still believe it is a good thing to have more experience before you get into an F1 car.

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INSIDE LINE

PETTER SOLBERG

THE WRC AND TWO-TIME WORLD RX CHAMPION IS STILL AS MOTIVATED AS EVER AFTER ALMOST TWO DECADES AT THE TOP



CAREER Highlights

- 2017** FIA World RX (PSRX Volkswagen Sweden)
- 2016** 4th in World RX (PSRX Citroen DS 3), 1 win, 4 podiums
- 2015** Champion World RX 3 wins, 9 podiums
- 2014** Champion World RX 5 wins, 9 podiums
- 2013** 8th in FIA European RX 2 podiums
- 2012** 5th in WRC (Ford WRT), 5 podiums
- 2009-11** WRC (Petter Solberg WRT), 12 podiums
- 2006-08** WRC (Subaru WRT), 7 podiums
- 2005** 2nd in WRC (Subaru), 3 wins, 8 podiums
- 2004** 2nd in WRC (Subaru), 5 wins, 7 podiums
- 2003** Champion WRC (Subaru), 4 wins, 7 podiums
- 2002** 2nd in WRC (Subaru), 1 win, 5 podiums
- 2001** 10th in WRC (Subaru), 1 podium
- 1999-00** 16 WRC events (Ford WRT and Subaru WRT)

Cars have and always will be a huge part of my life. I won my first championship aged 13, but that was with a radio-controlled car. After that, I needed a proper engine and trust me, I have had some proper engines since then!

I was born to this game and I married into this game; my parents competed and my wife Pernilla was a fantastic rally driver just like her parents. Now our boy Oliver is racing and rallying. The next generation is here already, but this generation is not quite ready to say goodnight yet. I don't think I ever will!

Subaru made me the happiest man around when I won the World Rally Championship with them in 2003. It was incredible. Unbelievable. My championship was finished so many times in that season. Remember Corsica? I crashed in shakedown. I hit the telegraph pole so hard I knocked it down – the car was completely finished. I was sure it was the end of the rally and the end of the championship. But Prodrive made a miracle in Ajaccio in one night and brought the car back to life.

in Monaco, thinking about the '09 car and what we could do and the next I got a call and I was told it was over.

I felt numb. Everything stopped. How could this happen? It was a joke, surely... It wasn't. It was real. Once I knew it wasn't going to change and the decision was made, I sat down with Pernilla and some other people close to me and decided: "OK, we fight on. We make our own team and we come back in 2009."

I spent the next month on the telephone, bought a car, a Citroen Xsara WRC, made a team and did some deals. I couldn't make everything ready in time for the first round and it hurt me so bad sitting at home for that event, but I was ready for round two: Rally Norway, where I went fastest on the first ever stage for the Petter Solberg World Rally Team. Fantastic!

Subaru leaving was really bad, but the good that came from it was the start of my team. It's something I always wanted to do, the second part of my dream.

Rallying will always be my first love and driving for Ford in 2012 took me back to where I started – driving for Malcolm Wilson, who gave me my break in 1999.

“The next generation is here already, but this generation is not quite ready to say goodnight yet”

That night, that rally and that incredible, amazing win confirmed to me one of the things I always say: you can never give up.

That win in Corsica was one of the biggest achievements in my life and when we came to Rally GB for the last round, it wasn't nearly as exciting. The championship was between me and Sebastian Loeb. We were both fighting like hell for our first title and I won it. I'd won Rally GB for the first time the year before and, because my co-driver, Phil Mills, is from Wales, it was like a second home rally for me. I'm proud of winning that title, the first for Norway and the only time Loeb lost in a complete season is to me.

When Subaru pulled out of rallying at the end of 2008, it came as a shock to everybody – me included. One minute I was in the flat

But at the end of that season, the time had come for a change. Rallycross is where my parents came from and, of course, Martin Schanche made this sport massive in my country. I talked to IMG and I was really interested in their plans for a world championship. And the cars come with 600 horsepower. I like that! I was in.

The first year was difficult, finding the right way with the Citroen DS 3, but I have some incredible people with me at the PSRX team in Torsby. In the winter before 2014, everything came together – we engineered the perfect RX car and took back-to-back titles. A manufacturer deal was the next big thing, and working with the support of Volkswagen Motorsport this year has raised PSRX to another level.

Life is about challenging yourself and, sitting around a table six months ago, we had no car, nothing to talk about. We worked like hell and now we're first and second with Johan Kristoffersson and me, and leading the teams' championship as well.

I love this sport more than ever. As my friend Colin McRae used to say: "You're here for a good time, not a long time."



WORK LIFE

IS IT POSSIBLE TO FIND A BALANCE IN MOTORSPORT?

When Nico Rosberg announced his retirement at December's FIA Prize Giving gala last year, days after prevailing in an epic season-long duel with Lewis Hamilton, it sent shockwaves throughout the motorsport establishment. 'How could a competitive sportsman at the peak of his powers suddenly go cold turkey?' they cried. 'Clearly he was never all that interested in the first place,' others complained.

But perhaps Rosberg's decision shouldn't have been all that surprising – even if it meant turning down the chance to defend his title in a car most of the Formula 1 grid would have given their great aunts to drive. To beat a driver who will go down as one of F1's true greats in the same car, over the longest season in the sport's history, Rosberg put himself under enormous pressure and took a step back from family life to give the world championship his full focus. However, he recognised that this was not sustainable and, having emulated father Keke's 1982 title, was satisfied that his dreams had been accomplished.

It may be that Rosberg returns to racing someday, but his example shows that nobody is immune to the pressures of competing at the highest level of

motorsport and that finding a work-life balance is vitally important if success is to be sustained.

The problem is that's easier said than done in an industry that by definition moves at a relentless pace.

After returning to 20 races this year, the F1 calendar will swell back to a record-equalling 21 races in 2018, including the sport's first triple-header across the French, Austrian and British Grand Prix weekends. No sooner had the calendar been announced than teams began working on provisions to facilitate the rotation of staff.

Although the traditional summer break after Hungary comes as a welcome reprieve, Force India deputy team principal Bob Fernley believes that it does not do enough.

"It's very difficult to keep people fresh on more than 20 races," he says. "We start with testing in March in Barcelona and we don't finish until the last week of November. It has a massive impact on families and, especially if people have children or get married, it puts quite a strain on their relationships."

"Occasionally we can do 21, as we have done, and then in other years it drops back to 19, so overall we can take the odd extra race. Once you go above that, whether it is 21, 24 or 25 races on an annual basis, ►



F1 will expand to 21 races in 2018, putting strain on teams

you need to look at supplementing the crew and maybe running two teams. That is where the issues come.”

Limitations placed on travelling staff means Force India are no more impacted than any other team, but even FOM Motorsport managing director Ross Brawn acknowledges that the situation is not something he is in favour of in the long term.

“The triple-header was not ideal, and we’re not trying to set a precedent for doing triple-headers,” he said. “There will be a point at which teams have to restructure to manage an increased quantity of races.

“When I was at Mercedes, we had more mechanics than we needed to service the cars so that we could rotate them, even without the number of races we have now, and give them a few races off. Those are the sort of initiatives the teams are going to have to take.

“There are certain personnel for whom rotation is more difficult, such as race engineers, but for certain levels it’s possible and we’ll need to have a think with the teams, about how we achieve it at other levels.”

Of course, F1 isn’t the only series affected by a demanding schedule. In IndyCar, the entire season takes place between March and September – in 2014 and 2015 it finished in August – while the top-level NASCAR Cup series takes in 36 weekends per year from



February to November, all without a summer break.

Bobby Labonte, the NASCAR Cup champion in 2000, was on the tour for two decades and his unbroken streak of 704 races between 1993 and 2013 is third only to Ricky Rudd and Jeff Gordon in Cup series history. Now 53, Labonte admits that it became tough to sustain peak performance as the schedule intensified and he’s not the only one – in recent years, top drivers including Gordon, Tony Stewart and Carl Edwards have all opted to step out of the cockpit, with Dale Earnhardt Jr the latest set to follow suit at the end of the year.

“Looking back, the more it went up with more races and more commitments, it became a lot more

“Nobody does it right, it’s just about trying to do it the best you can”

challenging to get motivated every year,” says Labonte.

“By the time you get to race 30, you’re getting tired, but you know you have to do it because you’re an athlete and you’re committed to it. I consider it today and go, ‘I don’t know how I got all this stuff done’.

“There’s no doubt that the drivers today are going to get tired of the travel and all of it faster than they used to. For the most part, I’m glad I did it, it was a ton of work travelling all the time, but you don’t stop doing things and it was a great time. If they could make it less it would be better, but you just have to balance it out.

“Nobody does it right, it’s just about trying to do it the best you can.”

Labonte’s point is a good one – namely, it’s difficult to say what a proper balance looks like. A degree of disciplined preparation is important to make sure drivers fulfil their potential – Jan Magnussen is often cited as a driver who didn’t live up to expectations in F1, having broken Ayrton Senna’s British F3 wins record in 1994 – but it can just as equally go too far the other way. For drivers seeking what Mark Donohue coined *The Unfair Advantage*, it can be difficult to escape the bubble and set their mind on other things.

58

The number of races Kyle Busch started across NASCAR’s three tiers last year, winning 16

18



Labonte (18) entered
704 consecutive
NASCAR Cup races

LAT IMAGES

Aston Martin factory driver Jonny Adam is one such example. This year, the Scot has three full-time programmes totalling 20 weekends across the FIA World Endurance Championship, Blancpain GT Series Endurance Cup and British GT, in which he is the reigning double champion. Having worked hard to rebuild his career in sportscars after a short-lived spell in the British Touring Car Championship, Adam isn't about to ease off any time soon and acutely feels the weight of responsibility that comes with representing Aston Martin both with the works team and in customer racing.

"My mind is always on motorsport, I don't really switch off," he says. "I'm probably at a race circuit two or three days on average all the way through the year. It does lighten up slightly after British GT finishes in September and Blancpain as well, but then we've got the flyaways for WEC, so the racing season for me doesn't really stop – the only chance to chill out is over Christmas and New Year.

"You're always there to do your job, but you always want to be the best you can be. As Aston keep saying, the devil is in the detail and that's the key to finding that last little bit, because I'm a paid professional and I'm representing Aston Martin across the world."

Tim Harvey is best known for winning the BTCC in 1992, but for the past 10 years has also served as the director of the BRDC SuperStars programme, which works to equip elite British talents with the tools they need to reach the top in their chosen fields. Having seen more than 60 drivers pass through the scheme since its inception in 2008, Harvey knows what it takes to succeed and sympathises with Adam's all-encompassing desire to be the best, even if this stance can impact on other areas of life. ►

BRDC SUPERSTARS GETTING INTO GOOD HABITS

There are many pitfalls on the path to becoming a professional racing driver, so it's as well that young drivers have no shortage of resources and advice they can draw upon to avoid them. One such scheme is the BRDC SuperStars, now in its 10th year, which is geared towards helping the best young British talents to become professionals.

Twelve drivers on the programme competing in single-seaters, touring cars and sportscars receive tailored mentoring from programme director Tim Harvey, SuperStars ambassador Alexander Sims and other senior members of the club, including president Derek Warwick, to help them establish good habits they can carry through their careers.

"We try to get them not to fall through the hurdles on their rise up the ladder and make the most of their opportunities," says Harvey.

"A lot of talented drivers don't get there because they make the wrong decisions, whether they take the wrong advice or they don't give it 100%. The habits you learn early on are what carries you through.

"The advice we give is always unbiased – we're not financially involved with them so we don't have that to cloud our judgement. We look at the bigger picture in terms of what

is best for their careers and that also applies to work-life balance, as they're getting advice from sometimes quite a large support group that may or may not be the right advice."

This pool of experience is a huge asset to a young driver, as SuperStars graduate and Formula E polesitter Alex Lynn explains.

"When you're coming up you're always aspiring to be like them, so it gives you an incentive to be more professional and work harder to achieve what they've done," he says.

"Having guys like Derek and Tim, and now Alexander, that have been there and done it gives you a good barometer of where you are as a racing driver and there are a few little gems I got specifically from Tim that I've passed on as well."



Lynn benefited from
SuperStars advice

Rydell suffered from "racing hangovers"

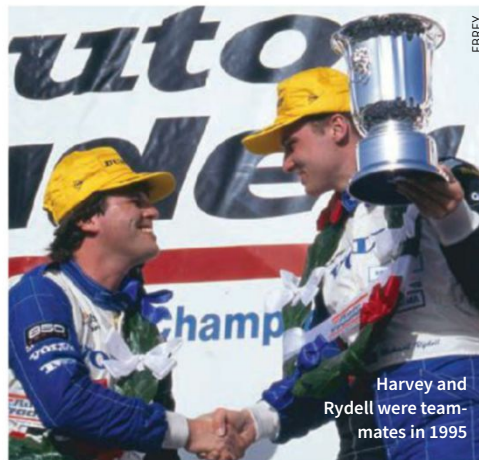


"It is innate that there is some imbalance because in order to reach the very top, you have to make some sacrifices," says Harvey.

"Since I retired, I realised just how much time and effort I was putting into my career – it will be the last thing you think about when you put your head on the pillow and the first thing you think about when you wake up in the morning. You'll be thinking about it while you're having Sunday lunch with your family, you're thinking about it 24/7.

"There are times when you have to become quite self-absorbed and concentrate on your racing. If you don't, you're very unlikely to get to the top."

But does this mean a work-life balance is incompatible with motorsport? Rosberg's case would lend weight to that theory, but there are plenty of



Harvey and Rydell were team-mates in 1995

drivers who have gone on to sustain success well into their forties that suggest otherwise.

"One person's idea of normal life is very different to another person, so what might be acceptable for one person may not be acceptable to another," Harvey offers. "It totally depends on the individual – unfortunately, there is no manna from heaven guide to perfect preparation."

Since retiring from competition last year, Harvey's former team-mate Rickard Rydell has maintained an active role in the sport, mentoring F2 racer Gustav Malja. The Swede believes the pressure on drivers in today's social media-governed age is greater than ever before and has applied the lessons from his own career to his handling of Malja, with a well-planned schedule key to keeping the youngster on the right track.

CASE STUDY

GOING BACK TO THE GRASS-ROOTS

No matter what the job title, Formula 1 is a highly pressured environment to work in and finding some form of release is encouraged.

C4F1 commentator Ben Edwards achieves this in a different way than most by getting behind the wheel in Formula Ford as often his schedule allows. Having raced in Formula First and Formula Vauxhall Lotus then

Caterhams in his early 20s, Edwards put his dreams on hold when his commentary career took off in the mid-'90s, but never lost the urge to compete and bought a '92 Van Diemen, with which he won a recent SuperSeries round at Snetterton.

"It's been great going out and doing some racing again – club racing is what gave me my initial

enthusiasm for the sport and I find it really does re-enthusiase me," says Edwards from the back of a minivan in the paddock.

"It reminds me how fun it is just being out there and how tough it is. There are certain things I can't do, but I like doing a bit of work on the car myself. If you've got a passion for something away from the Formula 1 side, then it's good to make time for that and enjoy it."

Edwards would relish the prospect to do more racing, but the increasingly congested F1 calendar means that isn't possible.

"With so many races in Formula 1, you get that one weekend off and you've got to catch up with stuff at



Edwards won at Snetterton in '92 Van Diemen



home, so you don't get a chance to do those other things that you're passionate about," he says.

"From when I did it in the 1990s for Eurosport and we had 16-17 races, you can really notice the difference. As the calendar expands in the future, it will be even harder."



Malja's schedule is carefully managed

LAT IMAGES

“There is no manna from heaven guide to perfect preparation”

“I always took it quite seriously when I was racing, maybe sometimes too seriously – I think you have to relax a little bit between the races depending on how many travel and PR days you have,” says Rydell, who won the BTCC at its Super Touring zenith in 1998.

“I remember in the BTCC when Volvo had the best budget during 1997-99, I had between 170 and 180 travelling days. In those days, I found it quite tough and I had help from a mental trainer to relax me.

“On the Monday after a race, you feel like the worst hangover you can have, but not from alcohol. It's like a racing hangover, you have so much on your mind over the weekend that you're just exhausted, but then the next day you have to think about the next race and start again.

“Now with Gustav, we look at his calendar and we fit in a full week of training at home and relaxing, because if you fit too many media days in then your physical training is going to suffer as well. It's all a balance and it's always going to be quite difficult because whatever you do, if you are reaching to be the best in the stock market or if you are a Formula 1 driver or whatever, anything that you try to be the best at will take up all of your time.”

In that sense, professional motorsport is no different to any other industry you can choose to work in. It can be hugely rewarding, but also highly stressful. Success has to be earned and invariably comes at a price.

All things considered, Rydell believes he got the balance right during his career, but admits that this owed much to circumstance.

“I lived in England one year and Japan one-and-a-half years, but I'm quite happy that I decided to base myself in Sweden and have my family at home – they came to one race per year maybe, or two,” he says.

“But in the BTCC days we only had 13 or so weekends, it's quite a lot more to do 20 races, travelling all over the world with all the PR days as well.

“It's like Nico Rosberg – you give up a lot and I can understand his decision to say, ‘It's not worth it, I want to be there when my children are growing up’. I hope they don't go to 25 races because then there might be more drivers doing the same thing...” ■

JAMES NEWBOLD



DRIVER COACHING

THE UNGLAMOROUS SIDE OF MOTORSPORT

Before he was a Le Mans winner and an Aston Martin factory ace, Jonny Adam's bread and butter came from coaching. Although the Scot had personal sponsors that subsidised his budget, everything he earned during the week was reinvested to keep his racing career alive.

It's a familiar story up and down the country to drivers putting in the hard hours, patiently waiting to earn their big break and that constant immersion can begin to grind when the hoped-for doors don't open.

But Adam, who calls on his coaching skills in customer racing with Aston Martin, says his many years of hard graft make him all the more determined to make the most of his opportunities and could even be an advantage next to others who had a more direct route to the top.

“I know how hard it was to get to this

point, so in the future I know that the work I've put in to get here doesn't stop, it actually becomes more important,” says Adam, who won the Renault Clio Cup and SEAT Cupra Cup on his way up the ladder.

“I used to always try and coach from Monday to Thursday or Friday and then go racing the following day. I had to travel the length and breadth of the country because I lived in Scotland at that point and I had no money. Sometimes I couldn't afford even a hotel room which meant leaving at three in the morning to get down to Silverstone – that was just part and parcel of it.

“We all have to go through our low points in any sport or in any point in life to appreciate the high points – Le Mans was a nice personal goal for me, but it was also an achievement for the people that have been with me all the way since I was 14.”



Adam had a lengthy journey to the top

LAT IMAGES

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CASE STUDY

Josh Files

AGE 26 FROM NORWICH 2017 ADAC TCR GERMANY

Josh Files is making quite a name for himself beating 40-car grids in ADAC TCR Germany, but only ended up racing in mainland Europe by chance.

Hailing from just outside Norwich, Files had no karting background before he landed in the British Touring Car-supporting Renault Clio Cup via a few historic outings in 2011. He proved instantly quick, but his lack of race experience held him back from achieving his potential.

However, that all changed when Team Pyro boss Mark Hunt offered him a dual campaign in the UK and Eurocup, which introduced the new-spec Clio one year before the UK. Files duly won both the British and European championships, attracting the attention of Italian Clio Cup team Rangoni Corse. Faced with the prospect of racing for free on the

continent or trying his luck back in the UK, he didn't have to be asked twice.

"They have a very different philosophy in the European teams, where they have a lead driver that they completely pay for, or contribute to highly so the driver has to bring such little money that they can actually earn money from it," Files says.

"The lead driver is responsible for all the data and the driver coaching, then they have three or four other cars paying top whack to have this lead driver working with them. That was the turning point for me to get recognised."

Despite not speaking the language – "The team I run with speak such a strange dialect that if I learned German I still wouldn't understand them" – Files has flourished in Germany and is on course to successfully defend his TCR title with the Target Competition Honda outfit, taking four wins from 10 races. He says he's not concerned if he's not on the radar of UK teams and is instead hoping to earn recognition from the 'big three' manufacturers: VW, Mercedes and BMW.

"Germany is the biggest country in the world for motorsport and it has the most manufacturers, which tend not to look out of their own country, they look at what's

"Germany is the biggest country in the world for motorsport"



Files leads the 40-strong TCR pack at the Red Bull Ring



CV

2016

Champion ADAC TCR Germany, 6 wins; Clio Italia, 1 win; TCR International Series, 2 races

2015

3rd in Clio Italia; TCR International Series, 2 races

2014

Clio Eurocup, 4 races; Porsche Carrera Cup GB, 2 races

2013

Champion Clio Cup UK, 2 wins; Champion Clio Eurocup, 4 wins

2012

6th in Clio Cup UK

2011

7th in Clio Cup UK

2010

Historic racing

happening in Germany," Files explains.

"Porsche, Audi, Mercedes, BMW and even Opel, all of them are big manufacturers and all have their drivers that have stemmed from Germany, so for that reason I'm not really interested in what the English teams see. I don't think there are opportunities in the UK anymore, it's a very stagnant market.

"I don't know any BTCC driver that doesn't take some form of money to their team to race those cars. You can earn money out of it by getting 'over-sponsored', but you're still having to find money year on year to go there, so for that reason I don't see it as a career. I get offers frequently from BTCC teams asking me to drive their cars, but I'm not prepared to bring 300 grand to do that."

Having been bitten by the European bug, Files is hoping to step up to the TCR International Series full-time next year, but sees his long-term future in sportscars, much like mentor Andy Priaulx. So what has he learned from racing abroad?

"It's a fairer game, the teams are more professional and the track limits are much better, because in the UK you go one wheel off and there's this whole debacle, whereas in Germany and Europe they don't have these problems at all," says Files.

"If you can prove that you're consistently fast, winning or on the podium, then teams are going to ask you to be their lead driver and you can end up taking no money to them at all. That's the step that you're going to need to become a professional."



GOODWOOD

TOM KRISTENSEN

'MR LE MANS' IS A REVIVAL REGULAR AND KNOWS WHERE TIME CAN BE FOUND – AND LOST – AT THE SWEEPING SUSSEX TRACK



KEY CORNER

01 MADGWICK
Turn 1

When you are approaching the start/finish line in top gear you blend out from the pit entry over to the left for the racing line into the first corner. I treat it as a triple-apex corner. We line ourselves up by turning from the outside to the inside very early, before getting on the brakes. There's not a lot of grip and it's easy to lock up with zero aerodynamic load on these cars, so you have to treat the braking and the downchanges pretty smoothly. Good old-fashioned heel-and-toe technique is important.

If fourth gear is top, you go down to third and brake at the same time. The rear is light and you start to slide already

coming into the corner, but you have to be careful because there's a crest at the second apex. If you are still on the brakes at that point it's too late – you have to be on the throttle by then. The car slides the most at this point as you feed the throttle in, and normally from there you're flat, depending on the car. The third apex takes you out towards the grass – and there is no kerbing on the exit. You can't lift at this point because that is going to cost you time.

The key to the corner is the entry speed and to get the car to sit over the crest, then feed the throttle progressively until you are flat.



Madgwick is tricky on the limit

LAT IMAGES

GRASS LANDSTRIP FOR AIRFIELD

GRAVEL TRAP

KERBS

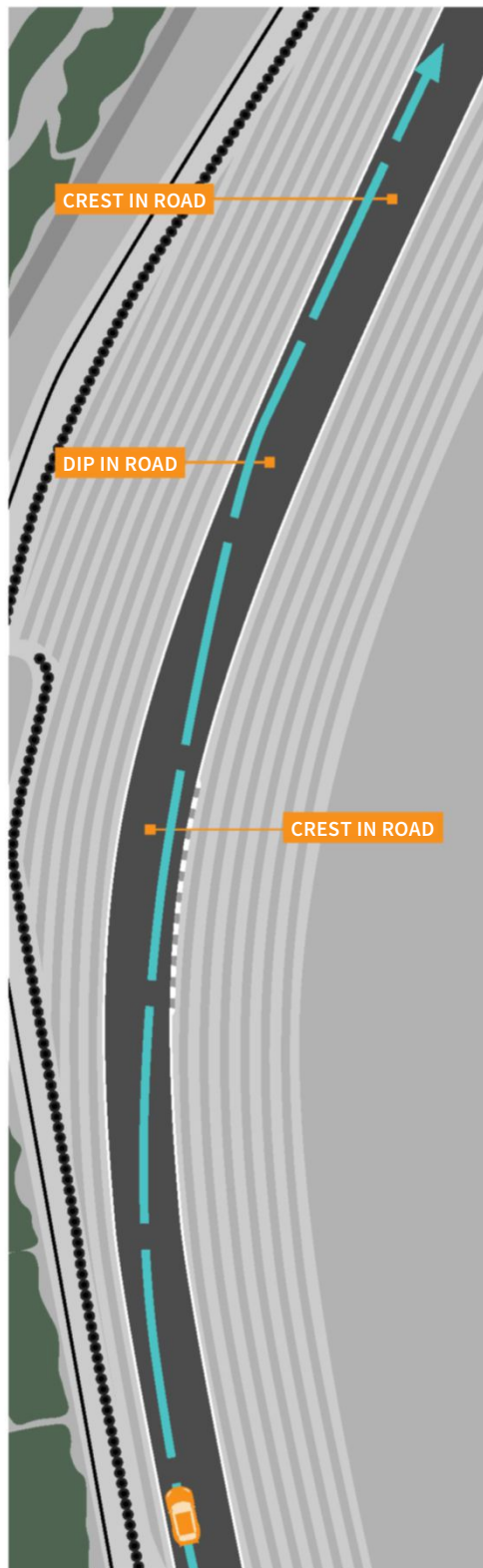
MARSHAL POST

SAFETY BARRIERS

SERVICE ROAD

02 FORDWATER Turn 2

You change up to top gear and then you get to the kink at Fordwater. This is a big challenge in any car. It's supposed to be flat – but it's definitely not in every car. What makes it difficult is the huge dip right after the apex. The road falls away and that pushes the car towards the outside. If you need to lift, do it before the dip, not once you get there – otherwise you'll lose the car. We try to keep it flat through the dip. In the wet it's the most demanding corner on the track.



03 ST MARY'S Turn 3

This one can bite. At the right-hander often known unofficially as No Name, the road falls away to the outside and it's very tricky in the wet, but even in the dry you still tend to turn in a little early. That's the corner where you slide the least on the circuit because it's very fast. Sometimes it's top gear, but most often you come down one. You can carry a lot of momentum through the corner, but you have to compromise for the second part of St Mary's. You need to get back

to the right and be straight for the left-hander – and you can't do that if you are at the maximum through No Name.

Next is the first left-hander on the track. You come over a crest and it drops down. You really want to be sideways and flat early to be able to use the grip here, because half-way through the road falls away and you very easily get carried away close to the grass on the outside. It's also blind over the crest, which makes it a really challenging corner.



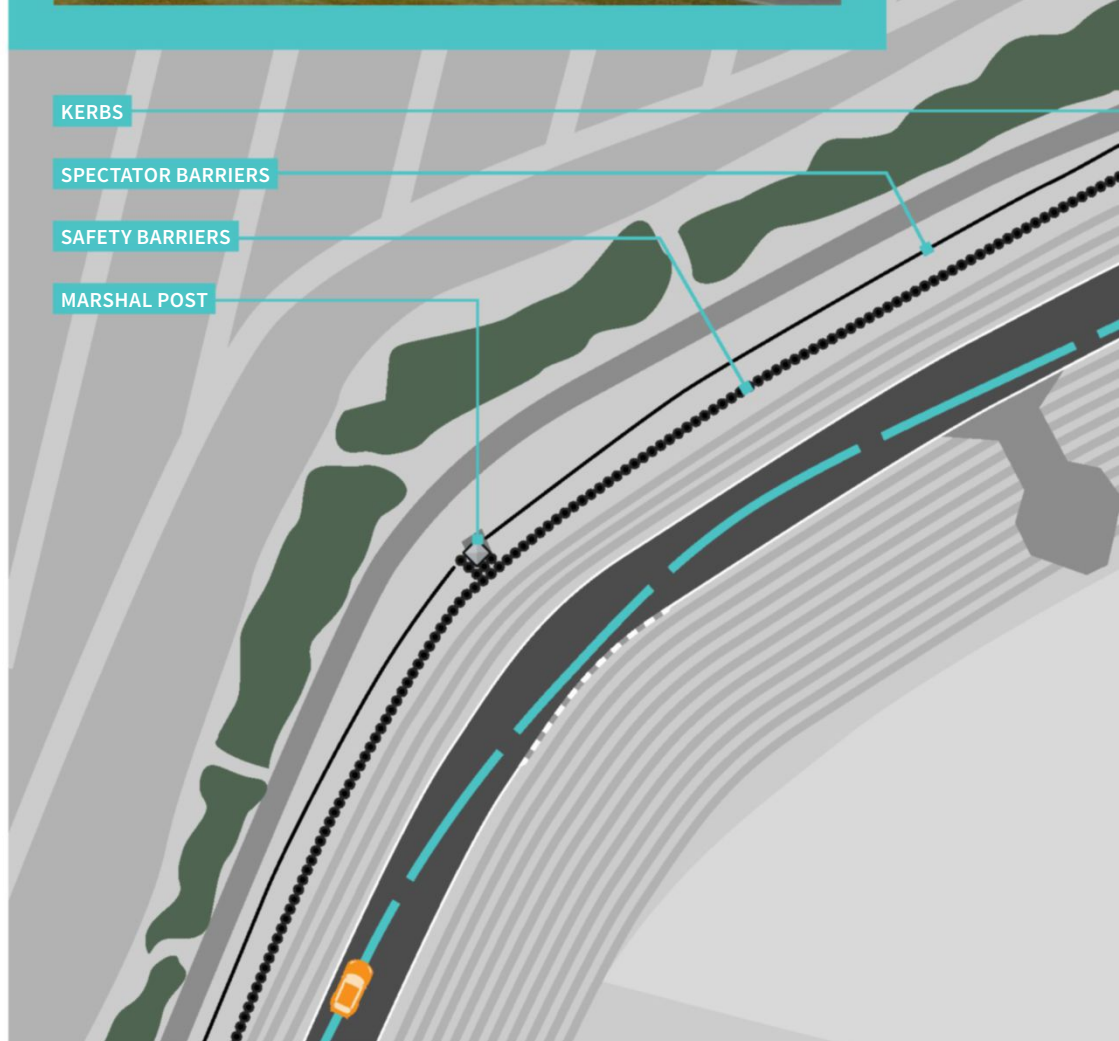
Not running too wide through the right part of St Mary's is crucial

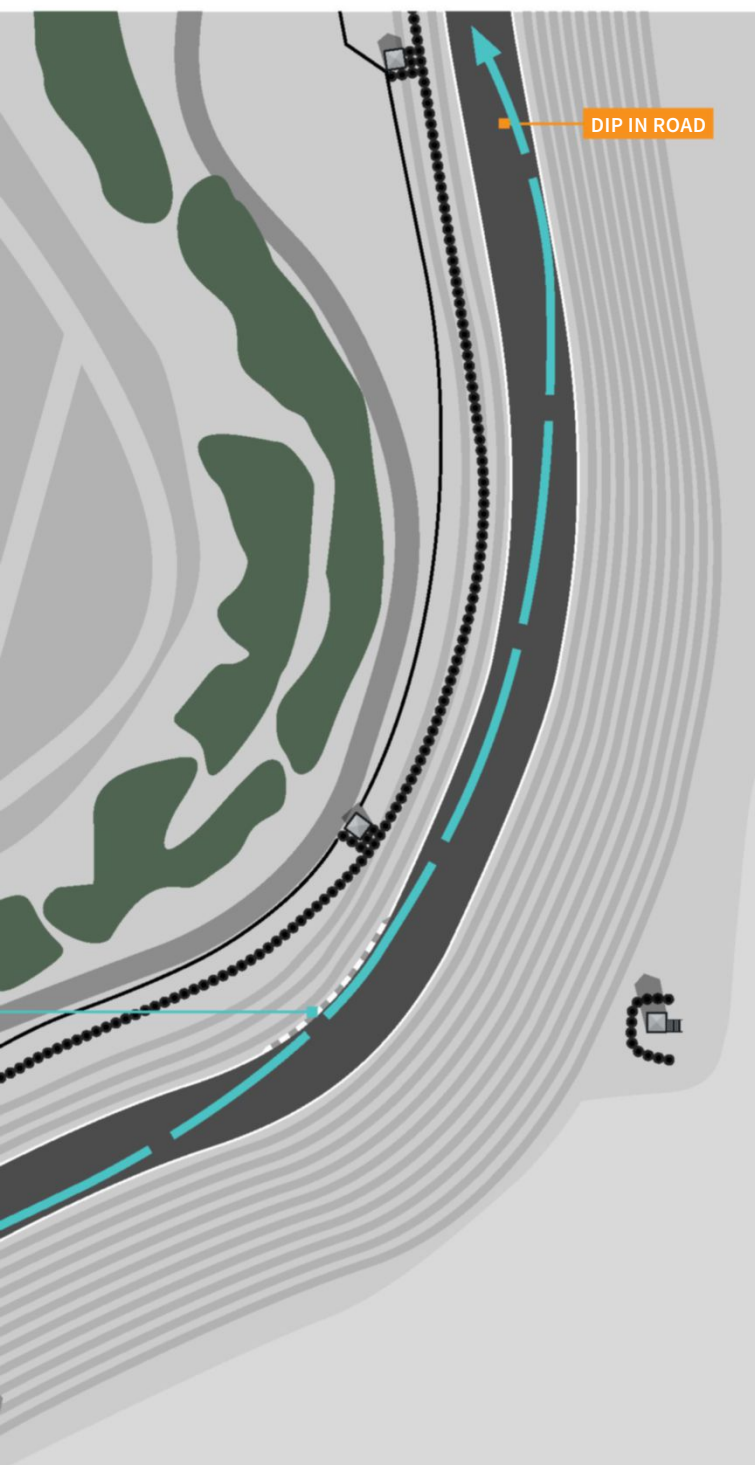
KERBS

SPECTATOR BARRIERS

SAFETY BARRIERS

MARSHAL POST





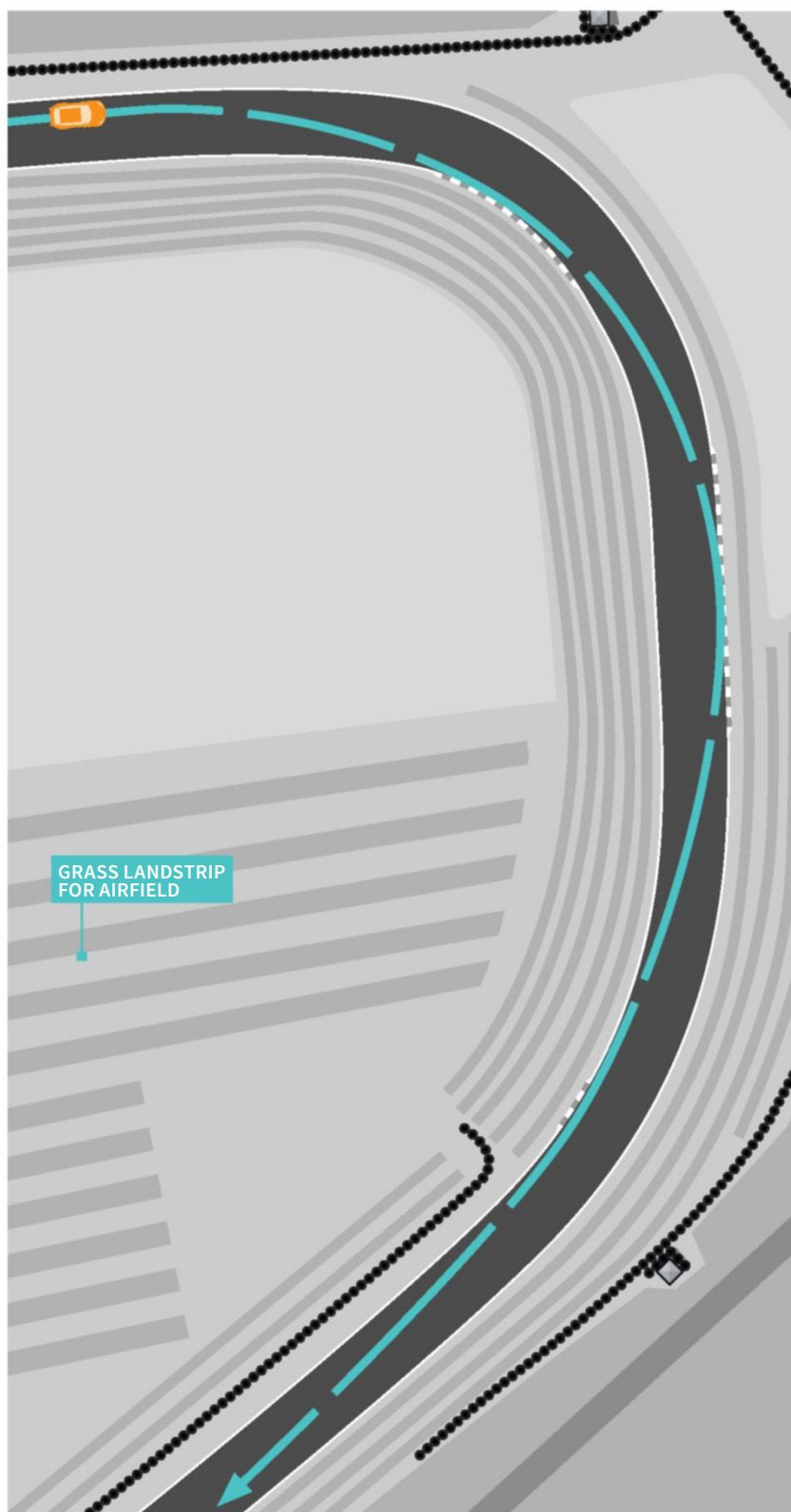
AUTOSPORT SAYS

The outside of the right-hander of the St Mary's sequence is one of the best places to watch racing cars in the country.

Because most of the cars that compete at Goodwood have more power than grip, the quickest drivers always get their machines moving around. The very best can get the cars

turned in and drifting long before they reach the apex kerb. This means they can stay to the right on the exit without compromising too much corner speed.

There are several sublime and spectacular variations, including hooking a wheel over the kerb. All are a joy to watch.



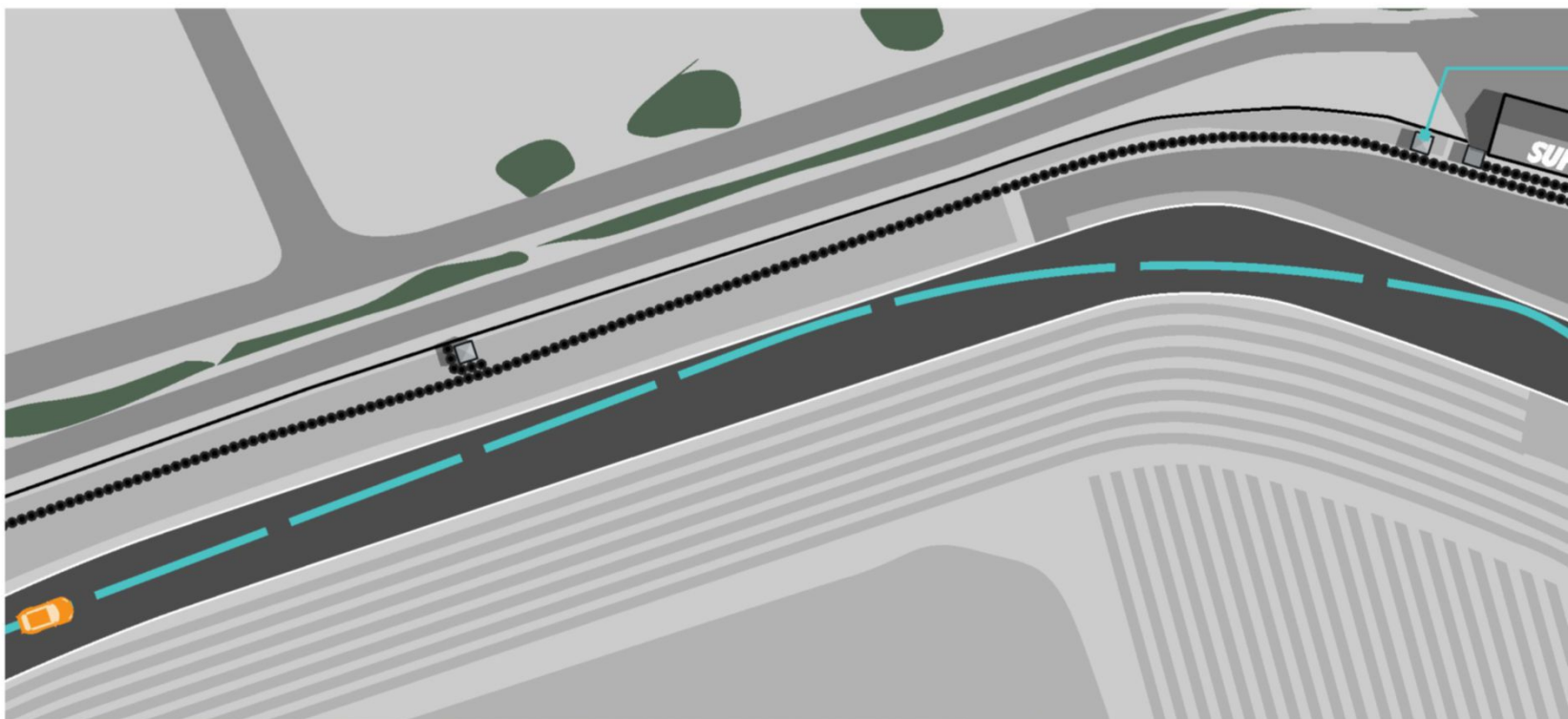
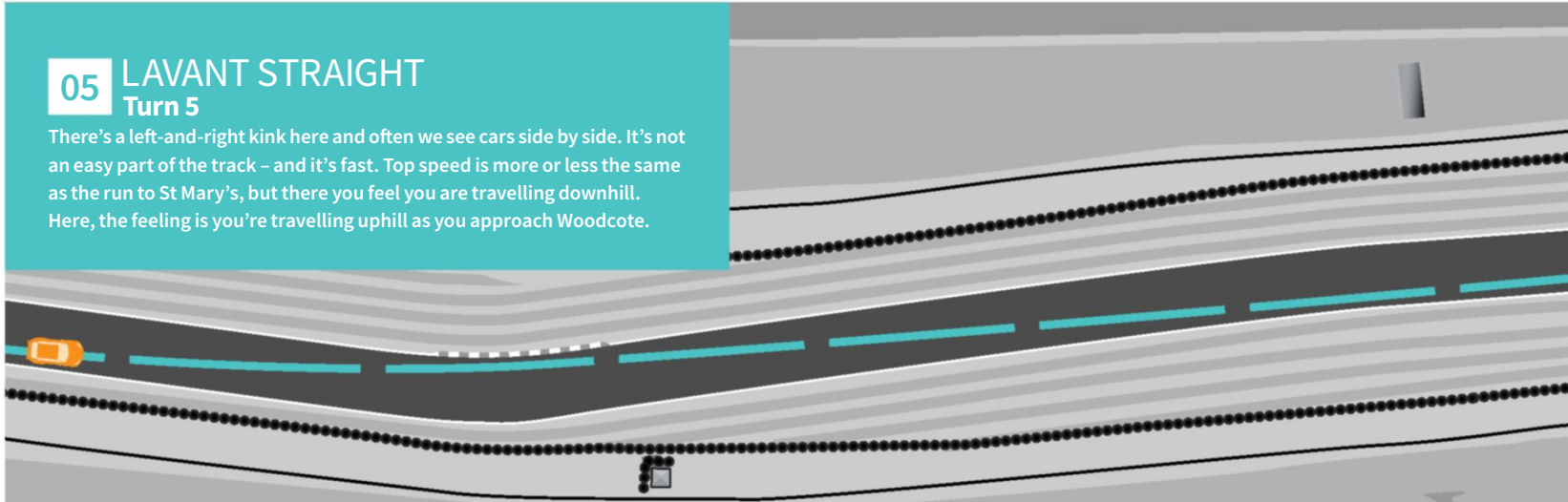
04 LAVANT CORNER Turn 4

After St Mary's you must get back to the left for the next right-hander. After the chicane, Lavant is the second slowest part of the track. You can take the corner in third, but it feels better in second. Again, the old-style heel-and-toe downchanges are important here. It feels like you are braking downhill because there is not a lot of grip, particularly in the wet – plus these old cars drop a bit of

oil. A very tricky corner, but it's nice because it's a proper 90-degree bend. When you go through it you are sliding, and if you are in second gear you have to change up to third while you slide into the second part that leads you on to the back straight. You are sitting and waiting, feeding in the steering and throttle and travelling sideways, often with someone breathing down your neck.

05 LAVANT STRAIGHT Turn 5

There's a left-and-right kink here and often we see cars side by side. It's not an easy part of the track – and it's fast. Top speed is more or less the same as the run to St Mary's, but there you feel you are travelling downhill. Here, the feeling is you're travelling uphill as you approach Woodcote.

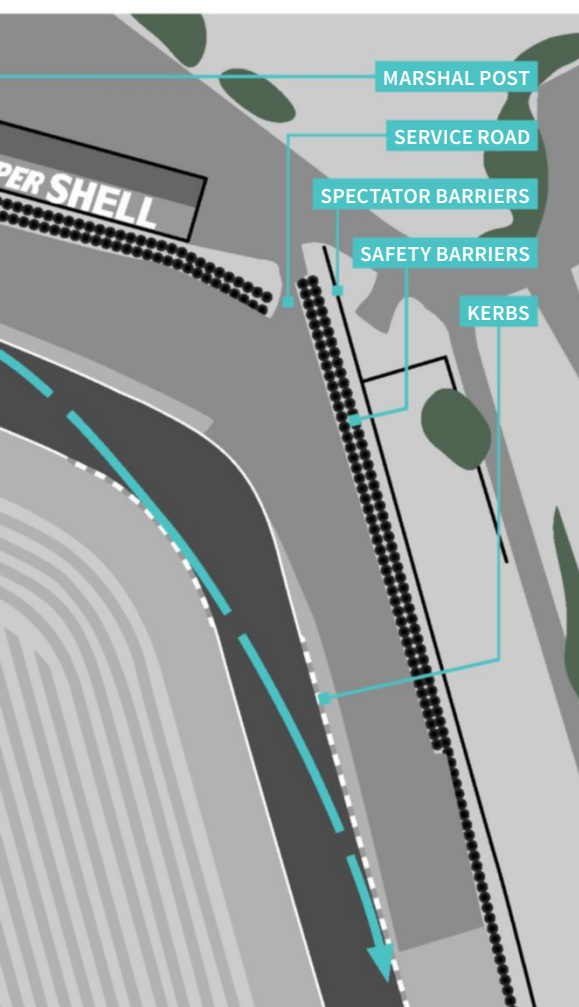
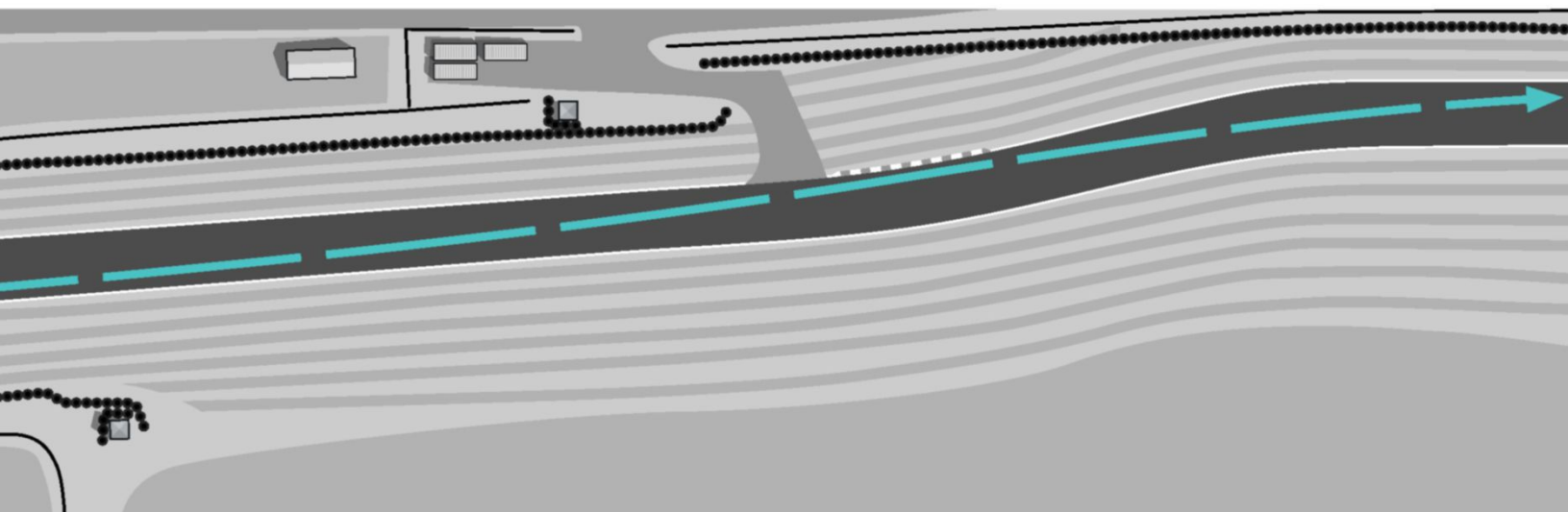


GRASS LANDSTRIP
FOR AIRFIELD

06 WOODCOTE Turn 6

You want to brake straight – but during the braking you have to turn in. There are two phases of braking. First, you brake quite hard, then you release a little and apply a constant brake. As you turn in, you come down a gear and get the car sideways. Then, once you feel it move, you release the brakes and get on the throttle for the second part of the corner. It's a double-apex corner, so the key is to kiss the kerb on the inside, stabilise the car and get it to stick on the outside.

TK uses all
of the road
on the exit



WATCH THE WALL

The slowest part of the circuit is occasionally an overtaking spot, but only for the boldest – or most optimistic – racers, because the circuit is so narrow.

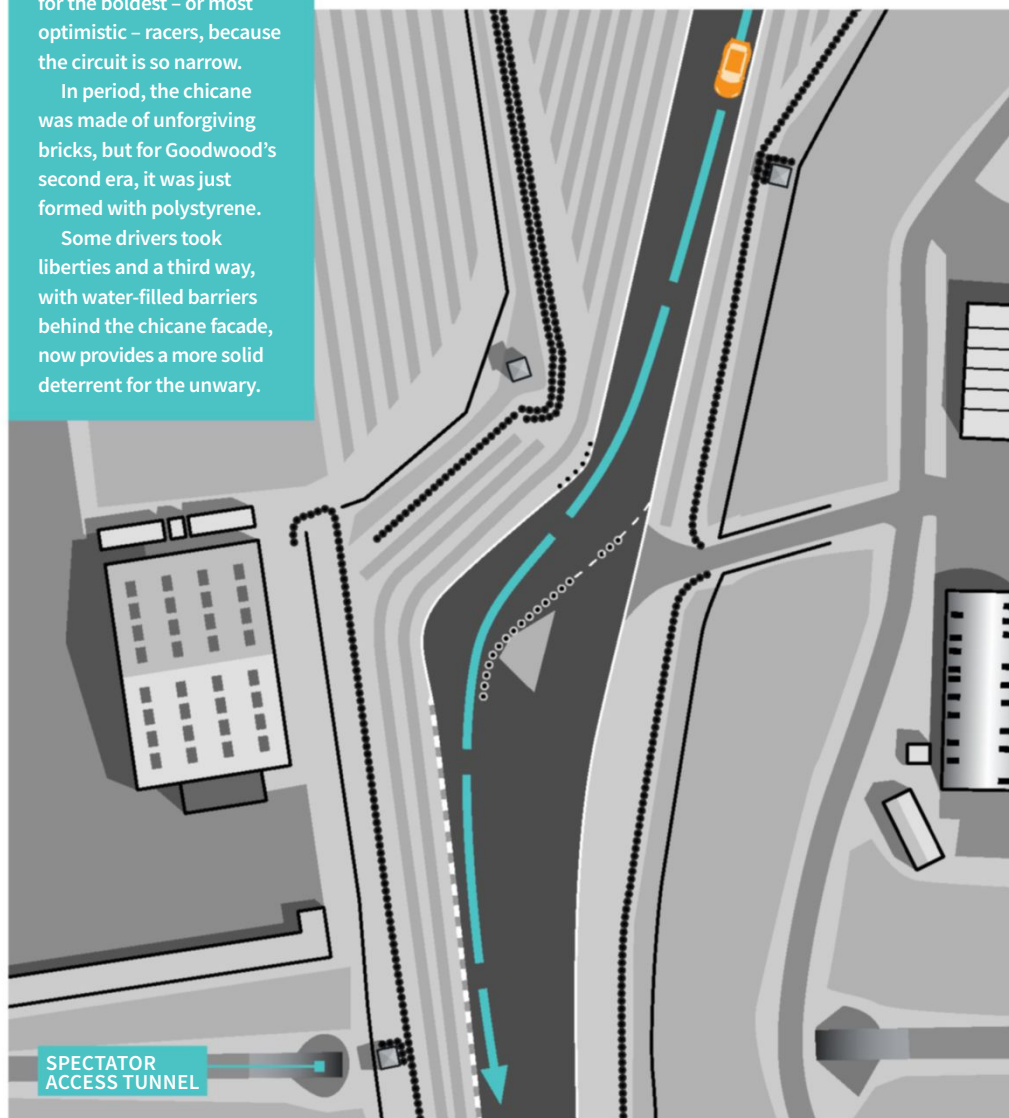
In period, the chicane was made of unforgiving bricks, but for Goodwood's second era, it was just formed with polystyrene.

Some drivers took liberties and a third way, with water-filled barriers behind the chicane facade, now provides a more solid deterrent for the unwary.

07 CHICANE

Turn 7

You stay in third gear as you approach the chicane. You have to drop it into second on the way in, again using heel-and-toe, go in early and brake straight before turning right and left. Try to keep it off the kerb on the way out. In the wet there is zero grip and you'll lose a lot of momentum. Then it's up to third and fourth, and over the line to start another lap.



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TOYO R888R

PRODUCT TRACK TEST

TYRES

The rubber on your race car is perhaps the most critical part of it, seeing as it's the only thing keeping your machine in contact with the track at any one time.

For club motorsport drivers and trackday enthusiasts, there's a plethora of different options on the market. These range from full-blown race tyres that aren't road legal, to trackday specials that you can simply bolt on, drive to the circuit, hammer round all day before heading back safe in the knowledge your covers comply with all road laws.

With tyres being such a big part of success and enjoyment, we took three different sets to the Snetterton 300 circuit to see how each performed.

We used a standard Ford Puma Cup car, run by Rob Sims Racing – a team with over 20 years' race

experience – and recruited British GT regular Joe Osborne to do the driving.

The Puma is the ideal template for this test. It's a 1.7-litre, 130bhp production racer running at 1000kg with single-way adjustable suspension, spec wheels, and no camber or castor modifications.

All tyres were tested in identical conditions and to each manufacturer's recommended specifications, with Osborne and Sims providing their verdict on the merits of each set from both a driver's and an engineer's view. All ratings were taken after each tyre had undergone a 30-minute stint and a separate qualifying simulation. Each session was run with 25 litres of fuel and the pressure/temp of each individual tyre recorded in the pits.

For more on MSV track and test days, visit MSV.com.

ROB LADBROOK

Anybody who knows tyres will know Toyo and its ultra-successful Proxes range. The R888R is its new cut-slick model, and has been developed to offer better steering feel and response, while also being road legal. It is available in sizes from 13-20 inches with a 5mm tread depth.

DRIVER'S VIEW JOE OSBORNE

"Of the two road-legal sets we tested, the Toyo feels the most like a full race tyre. It's also the softest compound of the three, and was very easy to drive when cold.

"Saying that, it's quite an aggressive tyre and has a bit more compression in the sidewall, so it tends to roll into grip that bit more. As a driver you have to work it to bring it in properly.

"You could feel it had more grip at an overall peak, but it definitely dropped off once you surpassed that peak. I think you can over-drive the Toyos as they tend to move into oversteer when you're too aggressive with them.

"The key with it is getting the tyre into its performance window and keeping it there, which teaches you to drive consistently and not overstep the mark. When you do get close to the edge they tended to get a little lazy on turn-in, but you get plenty of warning to back it off and they never fell off a cliff in terms of grip. The Toyos were the most fun straight out of the box, gave good response and a decent feel on the brakes too."

ENGINEER'S VIEW ROB SIMS

"The Toyo is a visibly softer compound, as after the first run you could see the aggression on the outside shoulders. It's a tyre that you will need to work more. Ideally it needs more camber to get the best out of it and protect the outside edge. Rolling it over you could have a bigger footprint and get better grip.

"The tyre also works more in a window as you get to peak performance and then drop off. It's more of a race tyre – still a very good test tyre, but likely one you'll do set periods on to control the temperature and pressure. You could also dial oversteer in or out by adjusting the rear pressures accordingly."



Our Ford Puma Cup car, affectionately nicknamed 'Penny', underwent a full refresh using a range of ValetPRO products.

After four Classic Sports Car Club meetings this season – winning once and scoring two more podium finishes in

the hands of Hamish Brandon and Robert Ladbrook – the car was bound to be mucky.

At tracks such as Thruxton and Croft, the Puma was a 100mph fly swat, which picked up grime, glue and tyre marks from debris.

ValetPRO's Advanced Neutral Snow Foam and Blaster loosened the dirt, while a Concentrated Car Wash left a glistening shine,

coated with Beading Marvellous wax.

We used the Citrus Tar and Glue remover to erase any rubber marks on both the vinyl graphics and paintwork, before using a spot of Dragon's Breath to shine up the Team Dynamics alloy wheels nicely. Finally, a spot of Black to the Future brought the dashboard back to a nice deep black. Sorted.



NANKANG AR-1

Taiwanese tyre supplier Nankang may be a relatively new name to UK motorsport compared to some of its rivals, but the company has been around since 1940. The AR-1 is its flagship track tyre, and is available in sizes between 13-18 inches. It comes only in one compound, with a 5.5mm tread depth.

DRIVER'S VIEW JOE OSBORNE

"Of all the tyres in this test, the Nankangs were a bit of an unknown to me. I've raced on Avons and tested on Toyos, but the AR-1 really impressed me.

"The balance of the tyre was very good from the outset, and stayed very consistent even after a full heat cycle. The sidewall definitely felt stiffer than the others, so, when you turn in, the car was more flat and gave great feedback. You always knew what was going on with the chassis and that feeling never dulled. It's a perfect tyre for an amateur as the car tells you exactly what it's doing and the tyre allows you to drive to the limit. It never tries to bite you if you overstep it.

"It's hard to over-drive the Nankangs. They loved the punishment and just kept giving. The car would move into understeer when you did push too hard. With a stiffer sidewall you can also safely take that bit more kerb.

"They felt great straight away, gave the best feedback of the three and felt stable under braking. You can really have a lot of fun on these."

ENGINEER'S VIEW ROB SIMS

"The Nankang had a hotter shoulder temperature and a cooler centre, indicating that you're getting deflection in the tyre and the sidewalls are taking a lot of the load – that's why this tyre has a good usable footprint. It also has the fewest cuts of the three we tested, meaning it's about as close to a slick as you can get on the road. It did show a higher wear rate than the other two, though.

"It's a consistent tyre, and very good for the everyday driver. It's likely that you could drive the Nankang all day from A, to B, to C, and it wouldn't change its characteristics much. With the Nankang you could top the tank up and drive until it's empty."



AVON ZZR

Avon (or Cooper Tire) has a storied history in UK motorsport, most notably for supplying Formula Ford 1600, Caterham and historic fields, as well as the British GT Championship for over a decade. The ZZR has been designed with pure track performance in mind and comes in sizes from 13-18 inches with a 5.5mm tread depth.

DRIVER'S VIEW JOE OSBORNE

"I've known Avon for a long time, having raced on them in British GT, so I have a good foundation knowledge of how to get the best from them.

"The ZZR is the most race-orientated tyre, and has the potential to be strongest in terms of performance. However, on the non-adjustable Puma, we couldn't get the best from them.

"In BGT we always used to run the most camber with the Avons because they've always been constructed with more flex in the sidewall. You'd run a lot of camber to keep the tyre's contact patch as big as possible when it flexes.

"With no camber adjustment, our test tyre wasn't running on its full contact patch. As such, it was the hardest of the three to drive cold and was also a little snappy on the rear until they came in.

"However, the fact the Avons proved second-fastest running in compromised conditions shows how good they are, they just need a car with more sophisticated suspension.

"They were also by far the best on the brakes, perhaps because the softer sidewall allowed the car to sit down on the anchors. I could brake later and harder with less ABS intrusion with the ZZR. I also had no drop-off at any point."

ENGINEER'S VIEW ROB SIMS

"On this particular car, with this tread pattern, you're getting a wave across the tyre when it deforms. It's like the inside third isn't getting used where you get an S-wave from the shoulder across, and the shoulder gets worked very hard. However, the wear rate was very good.

"With camber you can settle the tyre down and minimise that wave. These tyres are probably a bit too advanced for this car and would better suit something with adjustability. However, the times don't lie and it's clearly a very good race tyre."



TYRE SPECS

TOYO R888R

Size 195/50R15
Category MSA
List 1B
Road legal Yes
RRP £82 + VAT
per tyre

NANKANG AR-1

Size 195/50R15
Category MSA
List 1B
Road legal Yes
RRP £74 + VAT
per tyre

AVON ZZR

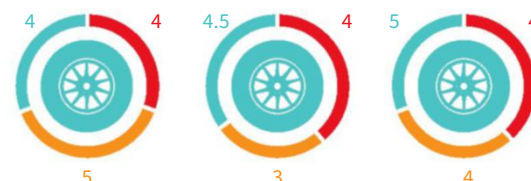
Size 195/50R15
Category MSA
List 1C
Road legal No
RRP £110 + VAT
per tyre

TEST DATA

TRACK TEMP		
28.5C	28.6C	28.6C
COLD PRESSURES		
Front 23-24psi Rear 26psi	Front 23-24psi Rear 26psi	Front 23-24psi Rear 26psi
HOT PRESSURES		
Front 32psi Rear 31-33psi	Front 34-35psi Rear 32-33psi	Front 34psi Rear 33psi
TEMP RANGE (ALL TYRES)		
Min 43C Max 55C	Min 45C Max 76C	Min 46C Max 68C
BEST LAP TIME		
2m25.26s	2m24.28s	2m24.80s

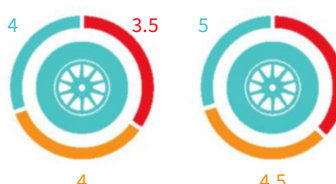
SCORES

GRIP/HANDLING DURABILITY/WEAR PERFORMANCE



DRIVING FEEL

PRICE/VALUE



HOW TO

MAKE A SIM SESSION RELEVANT TO REAL LIFE

USING THE SIMULATOR WITH THE CORRECT MINDSET IS VITAL FOR ENSURING A PRODUCTIVE SESSION

Racing drivers are by their nature fundamentally competitive. Whether those instincts are manifested in their number of Instagram followers, who has the best training regime or even something as trivial as being first in the queue for a rental car at the arrivals desk, drivers take delight in any perceived edge they can find.

However, those pale in comparison to any activity that involves driving, even in a simulation environment where the chief objective is not to set the fastest times but to learn as much that can be transferred to the race track as possible.

When chasing lap times, it is easy to fall into the habit of driving erratically and taking more risks than on a real circuit, where flirting with the walls carries a greater risk of damaging the car and the bank balance. Pushing the boundaries and setting a blistering time on the simulator may win a driver short-term bragging rights, but it will be of little use in the long-term when they arrive at the actual circuit, without the same equivalency between risk and reward.

As the founder and head driver coach of simulation experts Pro-Sim, GP2 race winner Adrian Quaife-Hobbs is familiar with the common pitfalls that affect drivers in the sim and how to avoid them. It sounds obvious, but sessions are most relevant when there is a specific issue to work on beyond simply 'going faster', which involves a degree of self-analysis from the driver concerned.

"We'll speak before the session to get a rough idea of what we're trying to achieve, so we need to know how their last race or their last test went, if there's something in particular they're struggling with, or maybe a scenario that is causing them an issue in real life they want to replicate," says Quaife-Hobbs.

"You don't want to draw too many conclusions from what you see first of all – the key thing is to understand if it's just something they have on the sim that's an issue. You don't want to focus on something that isn't

on the basics of the car," explains Quaife-Hobbs.

"You can get into the technicalities of the track once you're looking for the last few tenths, but, to start with, it's more about what they're actually driving and how they're affecting the balance, rather than really working on lines and braking points."

Setting ego to one side and stressing that simulators are purely a tool to become a better racing driver, rather than as a validation of skill, is another way Quaife-Hobbs keeps sessions focused.

"We're trying to get everything in line so when drivers go for a performance run, it's fast and they know why it's fast"

actually a problem in real life but they can't seem to hook up in the sim, which can happen."

Pro-Sim will typically tailor a session around a track that is coming up, but with the specific aim of learning the nuances of the car and developing techniques that can be applied to any circuit. Acing a lap of Brands Hatch is of little use if the driver picks up bad habits that prove detrimental elsewhere.

"It's always in a car and a track that they're going to be testing on, then we'll pound around and work

"You don't always have to focus on lap times – if you want to do that then it can come in the last performance run," he adds.

"It's the same as real life in testing – often you're not that quick in the middle when you're trying a lot of things and then you put it all together at the end of the day. What we're doing here is trying to get everything in line so when drivers go for a performance run, it's fast and they know why it's fast."

With this in mind, Quaife-Hobbs encourages drivers



Ahmed is on course for BRDC F3 title



Quaife-Hobbs conducts data analysis

to approach the session as though they were driving on the actual circuit, with all the seriousness that entails.

Pro-Sim regular Enaam Ahmed has taken that advice to heart and is reaping the rewards, with 10 BRDC British F3 wins to his name this season. The 17-year-old acknowledges the temptation to push the limits on the simulator is always present, but he has benefited greatly from devoting recent sim sessions to braking technique, allowing him to prioritise set-up work in testing.

“You can gain a lot of time on sims by cutting corners and doing things that you can’t do in real life, but I don’t really look at lap time on the sim,” he says.

“The biggest reason why I use the simulator is to develop driving techniques that I want to get better at, then we’ll structure the session around that.

“Adrian’s sim feels like the real deal, so I always feel like I have to build the speed up. A lot of people think crashing on the simulator doesn’t matter, but that ruins the whole point because you want to keep it as real as possible.

“Before jumping in I will close my eyes, visualise the track and get a feeling of how it would be to drive in real life to get that fear-factor back, so if I do crash

in the simulator then I have the same feeling that I’m going to hurt myself.”

Pro-Sim runs software designed by Quaife-Hobbs himself, which features low-grip grass and AstroTurf to discourage abuse of track limits. Discipline is perhaps the ultimate trait of a good sim driver, but also helpful for all drivers to learn on their way up the ladder.

“With some drivers you have to turn the lap times off, but it’s better to let them do that themselves and develop a bit of self-discipline,” he says.

“You always start off slow and then build it up, but it’s natural that you have to go beyond the limit on the sim because you don’t get the same feelings as real life.

“Obviously, there are certain corners where you can take a lot of kerb or too much exit kerb, the same as in real life – at the Red Bull Ring you could probably gain seven tenths by taking all the runoff up to the wall at turn one – but it’s pointless. It’s better to stay within the limits because you’re not going to hop over that big sausage kerb in real life.

“Ultimately, it’s about what you want to achieve. If you want to cheat the system then you can, but you’re only kidding yourself.”

JAMES NEWBOLD



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AHMED'S UPWARD TRAJECTORY

Pro-Sim’s formula has proven to be a winning one for Enaam Ahmed. A former Junior World Karting champion in the KF category, Ahmed had plenty of pedigree when he arrived in MSA Formula in 2015, but it took a few simulator sessions before he started to fulfil his potential.

“Before my first single-seater race, I’d only done around six or seven days in the car and I wasn’t really using simulators much, so I was on the back foot,” he says.

“When I had my first race and I struggled, I realised I needed to do something about it so I went to Adrian. It took me another two races to start getting up to speed with everything, then I started getting top-three finishes and won my first race at the end of the year.”

Ahmed’s key gains have resulted from a better understanding of weight transfer, a key skill for all karting graduates to learn.

“In cars you can’t do a lot of track time anyway, so the simulator is the closest thing you can get, and Adrian’s sim does a really good job of making you feel how the car moves around in the braking area,” adds Ahmed.

“He taught me how to use weight transfer to my advantage, because when you’re fresh out of karting you don’t really know what it is. You just throw the kart in and hope it sticks, but you can load the weight of the car to alter the balance and make it feel different or do different things in certain corners.”





Professional drivers can earn money from racing karts

WHY KARTING IS MORE THAN MOTORSPORT'S TRAINING GROUND

KARTING IS TRADITIONALLY VIEWED AS THE TRAINING GROUND FOR FUTURE STARS, WHO THEN LEAVE WITHOUT LOOKING BACK – BUT MANY TOP DRIVERS RETURN TO REFINE THEIR SKILLS. JAMES NEWBOLD EXPLAINS

Wind the clock back to September 2013 and the CIK KZ1 World Championship final in Varennes sur Allier, France. A highly rated 15-year-old called Max Verstappen, the son of ex-F1 racer Jos and 1995 Andrea Margutti Trophy winner Sophie Kumpen, sits on pole. After a sluggish start, the driver of the factory CRG kart drops to third before fighting back to win, with ART's Monegasque prodigy Charles Leclerc heading a close battle for second.

Now the Formula 2 championship leader and with his feet securely under the table at Ferrari, Leclerc is widely tipped to be a Formula 1 star before too long, while Verstappen's meteoric rise to the status of grand prix winner aged 18 and 228 days with Red Bull is as well versed as it is unlikely ever to be repeated.

However, that's not to say that everyone in the 2013 world championships was a starry-eyed youngster. Indeed, several were established racing drivers with a proper pedigree in cars.

Former Renault World Series runner-up Ben Hanley stormed from 16th on the grid to fourth and took fastest lap, ex-Toro Rosso F1 and Virgin Formula E racer Jaime Alguersuari was ninth, and Le Mans stalwart Pierre Ragues, who won that year's European Le Mans Series title, was an off-colour 22nd.

It points to a common trend that drivers are not too proud to return to their roots in karting and pit their skills against the next generation of talent to stay sharp. Indeed, even Fernando Alonso is not opposed to spending his precious spare time pounding around his privately owned karting track in northern Spain. So what can a professional gain from returning to school?



Alonso is a regular at his own kart track



Hanley (in pack) faced Leclerc (#6) and Verstappen (behind #2) in KZ1 world finals

“Good feedback and feel for set-up changes don't just translate to karting, they can also be found in cars too”

For Hanley, karting offered a means to keep himself racing and an unlikely route to the Le Mans 24 Hours. A contemporary of Lewis Hamilton, Paul di Resta, Jamie Green and Mike Conway in junior karting, the now 32-year old climbed the single-seater ladder as high as GP2 before Renault pulled the plug on his funding in 2008, prompting him to return to karting as a factory driver for Maranello, ART and Croc Promotion.

In 2015, he beat Formula Renault 2.0 Eurocup frontrunners Richard Verschoor and Marcus Armstrong to win the European KF title, attracting the attention of DragonSpeed owner Elton Julian, who initiated his return to car racing in the ELMS the following season.

But despite spending five years out of cars, Hanley found it didn't take him long to adapt on his return, having preoccupied himself with fine-tuning the tiny details that make all the difference between success and failure in karting. In his experience, karting was not a step down but an opportunity to further his development at an international level while also earning a living.

“You get from it what you want to,” Hanley agrees. “I love the detail of it and how you can change frames, axles, everything, it's such small differences between winning and not being on the podium. Good feedback and feel for set-up changes don't just translate to karting, they can also be found in cars too.”

Ben Barnicoat won the European KF title in 2012 before moving on to race in Formula Renault 2.0, Formula 3 and the Blancpain GT Series. He too was loath to give up karting and credits his stellar form in the second half of his 2015 Eurocup campaign to a summer spent pounding around the PFI circuit in Lincolnshire, which he helps his father Paul maintain.

“I did a year or maybe a bit longer when I didn't do any karting when I first moved into cars, but when I moved into Eurocup and the testing ban kicked in, I found that I had a lot of downtime, so I thought I would do a bit to keep me sharp and I've never really stopped since,” says Barnicoat.

“In cars you don't get too much time to practice, you can have quite long periods when you're out of the ▶

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Hanley raced at Le Mans with DragonSpeed



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car, and it's expensive to do a day testing, whereas in a kart the costs are much lower.

"I'm a strong believer that any laps in any sort of racing environment, trying to push yourself as fast as you can, are beneficial, and that year it really did me good. We had a long summer break of around seven weeks and I did a lot of karting, then came back and won at every weekend from there to the end of the season, which I think speaks for itself."

Without any suspension or a moulded seat in karting, or any of the creature comforts that are standard issue in his McLaren 650S GT3, Barnicoat – who recently added a sixth Kartmasters GP title to his CV – relishes the physical challenge too.

"You haven't got that much support from the seat so you do get thrown around in it," he continues. "You've got to have a very good upper-body strength as well as core and it's also quite demanding on your neck."

"When you go over a bump you know about it immediately, but from that side of things it's good because when you get in a car, even a slight thing you can still feel from what you learned in go-karts."

Speeds are relatively low in comparison with cars, but being low to the ground means the sensation of speed is unrivalled – particularly when the braking zones and runoff areas are so much smaller.

"With it being a sprint race format and so much happening in the short space of a lap, it's good mental training," says Hanley.

"Where in karting you've got to battle your way to the front and be pushing 110% every lap. In endurance competition there's a lot of traffic and different categories in the same race, but you can't think that you've got time to overtake people because

Barnicoat keeps his hand in racing karts



it's a longer race – you've still got to attack the competitors you're racing against."

Gary Catt won back-to-back Andrea Margutti Trophies as a factory Tony Kart driver in 2007 and '08 and believes there is no more stimulating form of motorsport on the market.

"In terms of a driver thinking and keeping fit and sharp, there's nothing better than driving a gearbox kart because you're sitting so low to the ground and everything happens so fast," he says.

"You do four or five heats, you have two finals and a lot of testing, so it throws many different aspects at you of what can happen over a race weekend."

"For some people, once they've gone out of karting, they've gone – it's just a part of the path you have to go on, but I think it would be good if all car drivers came back and did a race in karting now and again. It would be good for them, good for the sport,

and everyone would be a winner."

Catt, who now runs the Infinity Sports Management stable, is a staunch advocate of karting and is among many who view it as a serious category in its own right, rather than merely a finishing school to leave behind as soon as drivers are old enough to race in Formula 4. As Hanley showed by taking five years to win his European crown, a car racing background is no guarantee that a driver can jump in and immediately sweep the opposition aside, much the same as with any other racing category.

"I think some people do see it as just the start of going up the ladder," says Hanley. "But you do still get a lot of the older drivers – and even F1 drivers – still doing karting every now and then because they enjoy it, but also it's still a good form of racing and you can always learn something."

"I'm pretty old compared with the people that I was racing against, especially in the KF category, and the younger people have got more of a point to prove – the older people can't just go back into it thinking they've got the experience to be able to beat them. You can never expect to be at the front, you always have to work for it."

True enough, as he has proved, karting can still have a relevance wherever you are on the scale. Hanley's determination to fit as many European championship events around his sportscar commitments in the ELMS and World Endurance outings underlines that his aspirations are not over yet.

"I'm in a good position where I have the opportunity to be able to do it, so why wouldn't I?" he says.

"Winning a world title would be nice, it took me long enough to win the European, so never say never..." ■



THE CLUB RACER WHO LAUNCHED A RACEWEAR REVOLUTION

RACEWEAR BRAND WALERO HAS UNCONVENTIONAL ROOTS, BUT FOUNDER FIONA JAMES IS ON TO A GOOD THING, AS **MATT KEW** FOUND OUT

Sat in a Silverstone pit garage taking feedback from a British Touring Car driver and a British GT champion, from a drifter and a Dakar Rally driver, Fiona James is continually looking to improve her racewear company, Walero.

So much of motorsport is about pushing new technology, taking a concept that performs well in research and then testing it in competition. This principle extends to clothing, too.

Launched at the AUTOSPORT International Show in 2015, Walero's temperature-regulating, flame-retardant underwear uses Outlast® technology developed with NASA research and military testing to combat the hot, uncomfortable and dehydrating conditions of a racing car cockpit.

However, its potential for use in motorsport lay untapped until James, an equestrian-turned-club racer, brought the technology to the track.

Her passion spurred by a trackday experience in a Porsche 996 Turbo, James campaigned varied machinery including a Ginetta G50, Radical SR4 and

development and launched a company sourcing, selling and training competition dressage horses. Her horse Walero was integral to Team GB winning Bronze at the 2003 European Championships, the team's first dressage medal in 17 years, so it was fitting that the name should be carried over from saddle to bucket seat.

"During that time, I was very privileged to spend time with some of the world's top trainers, riders and vets and I learned a lot from that," James reflects.

"I have carried over the ethos of 'what can go wrong will go wrong', and you need to learn to work around that and try and prevent it.

"When watching Formula 1 we used to look at Michael Schumacher's pitstops and say 'that's how we need to run the competitions with the horses.' Everyone needs to know their job, everything needs to be practised, organised and equipped to the best of our ability and knowledge."

It was once again when her two passions in life collided that Walero the brand came to be. Now well versed in a hot cockpit, James spotted a gap in the market.

"I was looking at the technology for a different product and when I found out what it could do, I phoned up the manufacturer straight away. They confirmed the technology could be used in flame-retardant fabric, and the idea just brewed from there.

"It was mainly for my own comfort, knowing that I was too hot in the car. I wanted a product that offered something I couldn't find in the marketplace."

The technology itself was developed for astronauts working in the extremes of temperature, to keep them comfortable at both ends of the spectrum. Walero applies that research and uses phase-changing micro-capsules, similar to paraffin wax, in the yarn of its clothing.

"Your primary method of cooling your body is evaporation and it's very difficult to actually do that in the car because of the limited air flow – you're wrapped in a race suit, underwear, helmet and then

"Even small rises in temperature can really affect your mental processes"

Lamborghini Gallardo LP520 GT3 through the intervening years up to Walero's launch, before settling on long-distance endurance racing as her chosen field.

From one horsepower to another, James has taken a lot from both paddocks.

James previously trained in performance



Praga is James's weapon of choice in Dutch Supercars



F4 racer Harry Webb is a brand ambassador



The original Walero, a medal-winning dressage horse



James cut her teeth racing Ginetta in GT Cup

you've got a seat which is also enclosing 50-60% of your body," James explains.

"What Walero does is absorb the heat energy, soak up the water and keep your skin dry. That allows you to regulate at human body temperature, which means you sweat less and this stops your temperature from rising so quickly.

"Dehydration can significantly raise your heart rate and therefore stress and fatigue levels, so Walero helps reduce the likelihood of that happening as the lower your core temperature, the less you sweat, meaning your brain and body can function better."

While keeping cool in the car has its safety benefits, it's also a low-hanging fruit to be picked when it comes to improving performance. With Walero underwear carrying FIA and SFI approval, it provides a feasible alternative to heavy and power-sapping air-conditioning, while James testifies that it takes less time to recover from a stint in the unsanitized Praga R1 in Supercar Challenge while wearing her product.

"Moving from the Ginetta to the Lamborghini, I had to step up my gym work for upper body strength, but the Praga is another level – it's physically hard work because there's no power steering and higher g-forces, so I had to go back to the gym again!" she says.

"That said, my clothing definitely helps prevent fatigue, because you're not getting as stressed. When we were developing it we only had a top to start with, so I would get out after an hour or so and think 'my legs are really hot.' It's really noticeable if you wear part of the kit and something else on the other part of your body – the difference is huge.

"Even small rises in temperature can really affect your mental processes and reaction speeds, and it's not that unusual to see drivers suffering with mild heat stress or even heat stroke. I think it happens more than people will admit, and we've probably all heard horror stories due to heat stress. In this day and age, when there's more endurance racing in hot countries like Bahrain and Dubai, it's even more important to manage that.

"People spend fortunes improving the car and they forget that improving themselves is actually quite an easy and relatively cheap thing to do."

The clothing was designed to suit both ends of the temperature spectrum, but Walero is also satisfying both ends of the racing spectrum – being used in 20-minute Ginetta Junior races, for stints of two hours or more at Le Mans and for punishing nine-hour days in the Dakar Rally.

Staying at the top of the marketplace is often as difficult as getting there, so James is constantly open to feedback, sitting down with Walero users as frequently as she can.

"That's the beauty of having the team of ambassadors that we've got, because they're all quite varied and they're constantly giving us feedback of how it works for them," James says.

"We've got touring cars, rallying, rally raids, RX, sportscars and drifting, so we've got a really good, wide range of user types which helps us keep on top of any changes we might need to make, and we've made a couple of tweaks to the core range already, taking that feedback into account."

The company is still very much in its infancy, but a continual cycle of development underpins new products in the pipeline. In the ultra-competitive world of motorsport, where tiny margins can make the difference between success and failure, every little performance gain is invaluable.

Through her own experience of what drivers need and the discovery that this was not being met, James developed an idea, networked and brought it to market. The result is a revolution in racewear technology and a brand fitting of the Walero name.

FINDING THE BEST DRIVERS OVER 40

AS ATHLETES GET OLDER, IT BECOMES HARDER TO MAINTAIN THE MOTIVATION TO PERFORM AT A TOP LEVEL. AUTOSPORT PERFORMANCE RANKS THE DRIVERS WHO CAN STILL SHOW THE YOUNGSTERS A TRICK OR TWO

10

DARREN TURNER

DOB: 13/04/74

A veteran of 13 years at Aston Martin Racing – and even longer within factory team Prodrive (where he teamed up with Colin McRae and Rickard Rydell to take a Le Mans class podium in a Ferrari in 2004) – Turner's recent victory at the 24 Hours and GTE-Pro lap record in qualifying showed that the 1996 McLaren Autosport BRDC Award winner has still got it at the age of 43.

With Turner partnering Jonny Adam and Daniel Serra, the tense victory over Corvette in June was the British marque's first in the Pro class and came 10 years after Turner, Rydell and David Brabham defeated Corvette for GT1 honours in 2007.

Now a three-time winner at Le Mans, having doubled up alongside Brabham and Antonio Garcia in 2008, Turner has more than earned his stay at AMR and played a key supporting role in Nicki Thiim's and Marco Sorensen's World Endurance Championship title triumph last year before moving across from #95 to the #97 car after Le Mans.

Alongside his commitments with Beechdean AMR in the European Le Mans Series, in which he is the reigning GTE champion, Turner sits 15 points off the GTE-Pro lead heading into the North American double-header in September. Few would begrudge him if he were to add 'World Champion' to his glittering CV at season's end.



9

JASON PLATO

DOB: 14/10/67

Twenty years on from his debut in the British Touring Car Championship, Plato is still a potent force and recently ended a one-year drought to take his 96th career victory at Knockhill.

The 49-year-old has won at least one race in every season he's raced in the championship and a key part of this longevity has been his ability to adapt to different cars. Since his 2010 title in a Chevrolet Cruze, Plato has helped to develop and won in the MG6 and Volkswagen CC, then adapted to rear-wheel drive for the first time in his tin-top career in the Subaru Levorg.

With the mystery handling problems that wrecked the first half of his season now behind him, Plato will be a huge boost to Subaru team-mate Ash Sutton's title chances at the business end of the season, even if being cast in the supporting role is not one the two-time champion is used to or relishes.



HONOURABLE MENTIONS

2014 NASCAR Cup Series champion **Kevin Harvick** (41) is a man for the big occasion and more versatile than he's credited for, having won at Sonoma in June. Harvick only missed out on the 2015 title in a head-to-head showdown with Kyle Busch and continued his form into last season, winning four times and leading the most laps on a further six occasions to make the Chase for a seventh year in a row.

The only British driver ever to win the Porsche Supercup, **Richard Westbrook** (42) gave the Ford GT programme its first victory at Laguna Seca last year with an astonishing 52-lap fuel run and, along with Ryan Briscoe, ran Oliver Gavin and Tommy Milner close for the title. The ex-Porsche and Corvette ace also finished second at the Nurburgring 24 Hours in the Rowe Racing BMW. Plato's old sparring partner and

three-time BTCC champ **Matt Neal** (50) has struggled to match Team Dynamics Honda team-mate Gordon Shedden this season, but won from pole at Thruxton and scored more points than anyone at Oulton Park.

Yuji Tachikawa (42) may not be a household name over here, but the three-time Super GT champion has won races in 14 of his 18 full-season campaigns. Already a winner at Fuji this year, the Lexus man sits just

three points off the series lead.

No list of over-forties would be complete without nine-time World Rally champion **Sebastien Loeb** (43). The Frenchman has had a varied career since departing the WRC, finishing third of the three factory Citroens in WTCC in 2014 and '15 before switching to rallycross last year, winning in Latvia for the Peugeot-Hansen team. He also finished second on the Dakar Rally.

8

PETTER SOLBERG**DOB: 18/11/74**

Ever the showman, the 2003 World Rally champion has been a box-office smash since switching to rallycross, taking back-to-back world titles in 2014 and '15 and raising the sport's profile in the process. Solberg was renowned for wearing his heart on his sleeve in the WRC and has applied the same philosophy with great success in World RX, in which he also holds the record for the greatest number of wins.

After a difficult title defence last season, missing the final on four occasions and managing only one victory, in the Portugal season opener, the 42-year-old took the bold leap of switching from Citroen to VW over the winter and it has already begun to bear fruit.

He has largely kept PSRX team-mate Johan Kristofferson honest in his first season running a Polo and ended his winless drought in an

emotionally charged weekend at Lydden Hill, putting himself in the running for a third title.

Consecutive seventh places at home in Norway and Sweden haven't helped his cause, but Solberg has fared consistently better than nine-time WRC champ Sebastien Loeb since switching codes, a fact for which he deserves a great deal of credit. That he has done so with his own family-run team is perhaps all the more impressive.



6

ANDY PRIAULX**DOB: 08/08/74**

Ten years on from his last WTCC title, Priaulx is in the hunt for a fourth World Championship in the WEC with Ford and has formed a formidable double-act with Harry Tincknell, who explains what makes the Guernseyman tick.

"One of the biggest things I've learned from Andy is how to set the car up," says Tincknell. "When you listen to him talking to the engineer, his feedback is so precise and so accurate."

"I would say 95% of the time we agree on which direction to go on the set-up, but he's very good at talking about the finer details and explaining why he's suggesting to change a certain part of the car rather than something else. We're driving the same car so I'm getting the same feelings as him, but I'm

learning more and more about the reasons behind that set-up change and also how to be more articulate with the engineers.

"We've got a really strong relationship and it's competitively healthy as well. He knows he has to be absolutely on the limit to match me and vice versa – if I'm on an off-day then he's going to have three or four tenths on me. Generally on a lap there will always be a couple of corners where one of us is quicker than the other and the great thing is he is super-open to helping me, as I am with him. He's a very good team leader, without having any sort of arrogance."

"We always move the car forward on a race weekend; we've never gone backwards on set-up or got lost. We will regularly go back to the hotel at night with the data to extract the last couple of tenths, which just shows that, no matter how experienced you are or how many world titles you've won, you can still learn and improve just the same as if you were starting out in Formula 4."

"He's still super-quick and absolutely at the top of his game in terms of driving. When you've achieved everything that he has, to keep coming back year after year and still be just as hungry takes a special attitude. I think we've got the ideal blend of youth and experience."



7

NICK HEIDFELD**DOB: 10/05/77**

At 40, 'Quick Nick' remains one of the most effective drivers in Formula E and has played a key role in building Mahindra into a frontrunning entity.

Having been denied the honour of winning Formula E's inaugural race in 2014 by a Nico Prost swipe, F1's perennial bridesmaid has still to chalk up a race victory and had to watch as team-mate Felix Rosenqvist received the applause in Berlin.

But a run of three straight podiums across Monaco, Paris and Berlin showed that Heidfeld is making good use of his equipment and operating with the same degree of consistency that defined his F1 career.



THE ASSET THAT MONEY CAN'T BUY

Only 10 years ago, Audi veterans Frank Biela, Emanuele Pirro and Marco Werner won Le Mans with a combined age of 128, but such success stories are becoming rarer in a sport that puts a premium on finding the next big thing.

The phenomenon has even reached NASCAR, where a host of veteran drivers including Daytona 500 winner Kurt Busch (39), 2003 Cup series champion Matt Kenseth (45) and Kasey Kahne (37) are all looking for new rides next year.

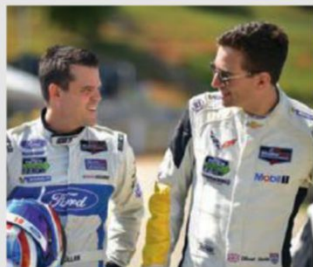
Despite this, experience is still a prized asset that teams cannot put a price on. With it comes an invaluable knowledge of how to set up a car properly, a cool head in high-pressure situations and being a reliable focal point for teams to build on moving forward.

Perhaps it shouldn't come as a surprise that four drivers on this list come from GT and endurance racing, where it can be all too easy to throw the race away by making an ill-judged move with several hours to go. As Corvette ace Oliver Gavin explains, the mark of a good endurance driver is patience.

"You realise that there are certain points where you need to be driving qualifying laps and other points where you just need to look after the car and bring it back for your team-mate," he says.

"It's about knowing when you're treading water and can't affect the outcome of the race – you can't win it at this point, you can only lose it.

"I'm not saying that experience makes you foolproof, but it gives you the tools to read races and understand that those sorts of risks are pointless."



5 TAKUMA SATO DOB: 28/01/77

Sato has always had an affinity for Indianapolis – the scene of his only Formula 1 podium in 2004 – but few had the Japanese down as a victory contender in the 'Alonso 500', right up until he became the first over-40 to win the great race since Eddie Cheever in 1998. Race engineer Garrett Mothersead worked with Sato at KV Racing and has noticed a big improvement since he switched from Foyt to Andretti Autosport.

"When we first started working, he'd just come over from Formula 1, so there was a lot of adaptation in terms of getting to know specific venues, the cars, the style of racing, and so on," says Mothersead. "With him coming back now, it's old hat. He's coming forward with 'I need the car to do this here, because I've done this five other times and I know exactly where it's going.'

"There is quite a bit of maturity that's gone on, especially this year. When you reach the pinnacle and win a 500, a championship, or something of that calibre, there's a big internal sigh of relief, like getting a monkey off your back and it can really change the personality of a racer. He's much more relaxed – he knows when it's his day and when it's not.

"With Andretti, he knows that we're giving him the tools he needs and he doesn't have to overextend himself. If you go back to his Formula 1 career or even to his KV days, he didn't necessarily have the



equipment, he was rising well above the level of the equipment that he had and, by overextending his talents, that's what got him in trouble.

"You couldn't find a nicer, more genuine human being. He's very humble, very intelligent. He's a quiet, thoughtful kind of racer – he can think through problems probably better than anyone else I've ever seen. The language barrier at times becomes something, but it really doesn't hold him back that much."



4 DIRK MULLER DOB: 18/11/75

Having spent many years in the shadow of non-related namesake Jorg at BMW, Muller has emerged as one of the finest GT drivers around and, like Andy Priaulx, is enjoying a renaissance at Ford after two spells at the Bavarian marque, sandwiching a short stint at Ferrari.

While his form in IMSA last season wasn't on a par with title-chasing team-mates Richard Westbrook and Ryan Briscoe, the German's star turns at Le Mans and Daytona helped earn the Blue Oval two high-profile victories that might otherwise have gone the way of Risi Competizione. At Daytona, it was Muller's opportunistic pass on James Calado and staunch defence under pressure from Patrick Pilet that proved the difference, but his performance at Le Mans was on another level altogether.

The 2007 FIA GT2 champion's return to Le Mans

for the first time since 2011 coincided with the 50th anniversary of the Ford GT's first win at the Circuit de la Sarthe in 1966, and the 41-year-old truly stepped up to the plate for the occasion.

After pipping Briscoe to pole with a last-gasp effort in qualifying, Muller drove like a man possessed in the race and always looked the most likely to bring home the bacon for Ford, even after serving a penalty for refuelling with the engine running.

He was the fastest of all the GTE-Pro drivers based on an average of their best 30 laps, and, after closing the gap to Risi in his penultimate stint, took over from Joey Hand in the lead for the final stretch to the flag.

Ford was never really in the fight this year, but only Harry Tincknell could boast a better average – understandable considering the 16-year age gap...

3

OLIVER
GAVIN

DOB: 29/09/72

After 49 victories – including five Le Mans class wins over 16 years at Corvette Racing – Oliver Gavin could be forgiven for winding back, but the reigning IMSA GTLM champion won't hear of it. Now 44, the Brit is as hungry as ever and already eyeing LM win number six next year.

What has been the key to your longevity at Corvette?

It's difficult to put a finger on one thing, but certainly the team have been very supportive, very loyal, and they have given me a car that has enabled me to have lots of success. I've been driving with some very good team-mates, my partnership with Tommy Milner is very good and we get on very well both as team-mates and as friends. A key part of being successful in sportscar racing is developing a good relationship with your team-mate – there's got to be give and take. Tommy has been fantastic with that and he's also been a motivation for me, which has kept me fresh. You can never stop learning, you never can sit there and think that you know it all, which is something that I've always tried to keep in my head.

How have you managed to stay motivated?

I have a great desire to compete in the big events. I still enjoy the racing – it's a bit of a drug. I love the buzz of competing, of being part of a team, and this journey that you go on of working with the car set-up and thinking about how you're going to get the most from the car, the tyre, from everything that you've got. It's part of your job, but it's also part of this great challenge you face every weekend and I love that. I've done it now for many years and I still get a great buzz from it.

Are you satisfied with everything you've achieved in your career?

I feel if I can go to Le Mans again and I can get win number six, I think I would feel content with what I've achieved there. I'd love to get another championship in the US – I'd love to win another Sebring, that would be seven, and if I could win at Petit again that would be six there. There's always a milestone that I would really like to aim for, but I realise at some point that I will stop. Will that be in the next two years, three years? I don't know, but I feel that I've got a lot to offer to the team still.



LAT IMAGES

2

HELIO
CASTRONEVES

DOB: 10/05/75

It would be easy to knock Castroneves for not managing to win an IndyCar title after almost 20 years of trying, 18 of those at Team Penske, and for living off the success of his three Indianapolis 500 wins for too long. But even if that were true, the very fact that Roger Penske has kept the Brazilian around for so long – choosing to bench Juan Pablo Montoya, the man who won the '500' in 2015 and came within a whisker of the title the same year, and keep Castroneves when Josef Newgarden became available – speaks volumes. The Captain is loyal, but doesn't suffer fools gladly.

Unlike fellow over-40 club member and compatriot Tony Kanaan, who has drifted through the past few years at Chip Ganassi Racing without ever looking likely to add to his 2004 championship, Castroneves has been ever-present in the top-five since the introduction of the DW12 chassis in 2012, twice finishing second and edging Newgarden to third last year.

Now 42, Castroneves is bang on form and as close as he ever has been to winning his elusive first

championship after ending a three-year victory drought at Iowa. That statistic disguises the fact that since Detroit 2014, Castroneves notched up 12 pole positions, eight second places and lost several races through forces out of his control – he was set to score a second win on the trot in Toronto before an untimely caution, caused by Kanaan, knocked him out of contention.

And as an added bonus, the Iowa breakthrough took him past Penske legend Rick Mears's tally of 30 career wins and into the midst of a three-way title fight with Newgarden and Scott Dixon, whose flying car hobbled Castroneves's rear wing at Indy, arguably costing him a shot at win number four. That he was even in the fight for victory at all says a lot about the Brazilian's knack for reading a race and being in the right place at the right time, a trait that has served him well throughout his career.

On current evidence, 'Spiderman' has many years of fence-climbing in him yet. But if he does end up joining Montoya in Penske's Acura DPi programme next year, IndyCar will be worse off for it.

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1

JIMMIE JOHNSON

DOB: 17/09/75

The man they used to call 'five-time' now has seven NASCAR Cup titles to his name and is showing no signs of slowing down at 41. Johnson is a force of nature whom the record books are struggling to keep up with – currently level with Richard Petty and Dale Earnhardt as the joint most successful driver in history, it's by no means inconceivable that Johnson could soon have that honour all to himself.

Heralding from California, Johnson has had to do more to win over NASCAR's traditional Southern heartland than many of his less successful contemporaries, while having Jeff Gordon as a mentor and the backing of Rick Hendrick caused many to enviously dismiss his prowess out of hand.

Popular or not, Johnson has achieved near-universal respect for his achievements, which are unparalleled in the modern era. The struggles of team-mates Dale Earnhardt Jr and Kasey Kahne – whose first victory in 102 starts at the Brickyard 400 was not enough to save his ride for 2018 – underlines that Hendrick machinery is only as potent as the driver behind the wheel, and Johnson's record of 83 wins at all bar three circuits on the calendar is a reflection of a driver constantly pushing the boundaries in search of improvement.

Much of this can be attributed to his long-standing relationship with crew chief Chad Knaus. The NASCAR landscape has changed considerably since their first full season together in 2002, but the Johnson/Knaus axis has stood the test of time and yielded five consecutive titles between '06 and '10.

Even after title number six in 2013, Johnson has retained his meticulous attention to detail and came through a rough spell last summer – which gave Hendrick cause to contemplate breaking up the band – to secure his record-equalling seventh title in style, with victory from the rear of the field at Homestead.

True, 2017 has not been a vintage year for Johnson so far, but he has still managed to bag three wins – only one was required to guarantee a place in the Playoffs. Some in his position might allow complacency to creep in, but that's not a criticism that could ever be levied at Johnson. Ever the stickler for perfection, he is working hard to ensure all the preparations for a record eighth title are in place and it's this unquenchable thirst for more success that made his contract extension until 2020 a formality.

Johnson will be 45 then – at that age, Earnhardt Sr was still 12 months from his first Daytona 500 win...



LAT IMAGES

PARTNERS' NOTICEBOARD

VALET-PRO

💡 TOP TIP PREPARE, PROTECT, MAINTAIN

With the many stresses that a race weekend can throw up, spending time cleaning your car can seem like an unwelcome distraction. To help with this, Valet-Pro has devised a range of easy cleaning tools to make life easier at the track.



1 The key to ensuring a glossy finish is the preparation, and Valet-Pro's Purple Passion does just that. Perfect for enhancement detailing by removing light marring to the paintwork, it comes in two different sizes, with prices retailing from £12.99.

TOP TIP If using a machine, squeeze onto pad in a small cross, then apply pressure in small rectangular motions. If by hand, apply using a Polish Applicator and work into paint surface one panel at a time.



2 To protect the paint surface from scratches, Valet-Pro recommend using Beading Marvellous wax, which will keep the surface clear for over three months. Retail prices start at £9.99.

TOP TIP Initially comes out thick, but continue to spread thinly across the paint surface to cure faster and make buffing easier.



3 Valet-Pro's most versatile cleanser is Citrus Bling, a quick detailer which combines Carnauba wax and silicone emulsion to maintain the gloss on wheels and surfaces, while also protecting against marring. It's ideal for quickly removing bug splats and rubber marks between races. Retail prices start from £9.99.

TOP TIP Use on alloy wheels to counteract the effect of water-marking. Make sure you've got a selection of clean microfibre cloths to hand.

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WALERO

ANNOUNCE FIBRE 15 AS AUSTRALIAN SUPPLIERS

Walero is pleased to confirm an official agreement with Australian retailer Fibre 15 to supply the most technologically advanced range of competition base layers to the Australian motorsport community.

The new association means that Walero's flame-retardant underwear

will be available to purchase in Australia.

Walero underwear garments are FIA and SFI-approved and are tailored for a superior fit with flat-lock seams and supersoft fabric for maximum comfort under race conditions. Developed by NASA for off-world applications, Outlast® fabric technology actively regulates your body temperature despite changes in your environment, reducing perspiration by 30%. Combining that with an eco-friendly anti-microbial application means

that everyone will keep coming out of the car smelling of roses.

Paul and Cath Loiacono, Fibre 15 Pty Ltd, commented: "We see enormous potential for the Walero brand in Australia. The Walero product is a game changer with its innovative design and temperature-regulating fabric. Fibre 15 is all about supplying the best brands, latest styles and newest materials, so Walero is the perfect fit for our Motorsport customers".

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SCHROTH

FIA STANDARD 8853-2016

Back in 1998, the Prime Minister was a fresh-faced Tony Blair, the Spice Girls were in their pomp and Jacques Villeneuve was the reigning Formula 1 World Champion. It was also the year that the last generation of harness standards, expiring this year, was put into place, with the stated requirement of withstanding a 28g impact.

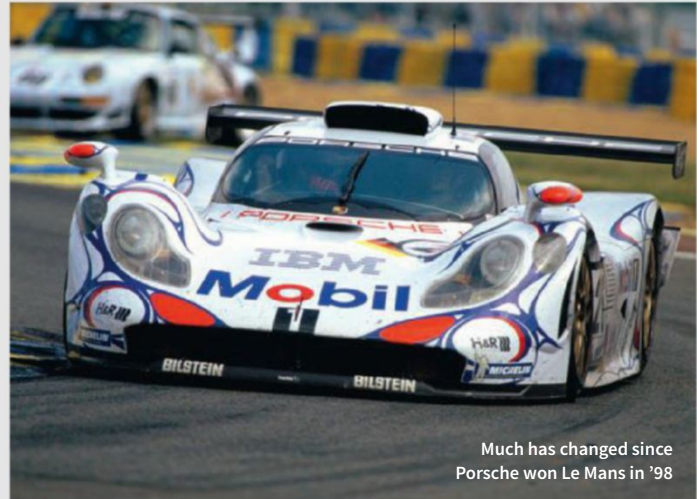
At four times the force generated during the re-entry of Apollo 16, this is certainly not an insignificant feat, but it pales next to the latest standard of safety harnesses, which came into effect in December last year.

Extensive analysis of accidents across many championships has shown that impacts in excess of 70g can now be survivable if good vehicle crashworthiness and safe cockpit environments are combined with cutting-edge safety

equipment, leaving plenty of room for improvement on standard 8853/98.

This research prompted the FIA, in collaboration with the Global Institute for Motor Sport Safety (GIMSS) and manufacturers of FIA-approved safety harnesses, to develop standard 8853-2016 to “ensure improved strength during frontal and angled frontal impacts.” It was rolled out with immediate effect in Formula 1, the World Endurance Championship and World Rally Championship, and will be compulsory in all international and national series by 2023.

The chief gains from the 8853/98 to 8853-2016 standard have been made in five key areas, the most significant being the dynamic impact speeds. These were increased from 50 km/h (28g) to 67 km/h (around 60g), with the



Much has changed since Porsche won Le Mans in '98

test dummy fixed to the seat in a reclined position at 30° to simulate an angled impact.

Further improvements have been made to the sub-straps, more than doubling the breaking load from 11.3kN to 25kN – equivalent to an increase of almost 1,400 kg – while the testing loads and requirements on other components such as the buckle (diagonal pull and oblique load), adjusters and sub-strap attachments have also been redefined, making for a vastly more durable product that drivers can rely upon.

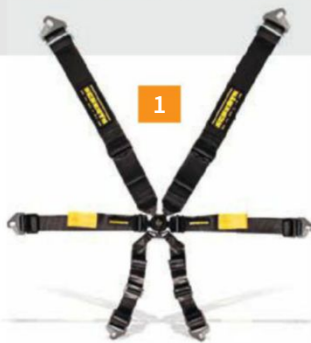
Additional modifications to the new standard include the allowance of >44mm webbing for all straps (lap and sub) and shoulder belts when used in conjunction with a frontal head-restraint device (FHR). This replaces the current 2-inch/

3-inch shoulder belts under the 8853/98 standard. The possibility of homologating a “Z” seventh-point sub-strap has also been added to the new standard, and is intended to aid in controlling occupant positioning in roll-over accidents.

SCHROTH is an industry leader in the safety harness market and has introduced five new safety harness models conforming to the latest standard, with a further 16 models in the pipeline for 2018. With “V-Strap” and five-point harness systems no longer eligible for homologation under 8853-2016, the Profi XLT (initially for WRC), PROFi, Flexi, Enduro and FORMULA models are each available in six-point configurations, and are among the first models that fulfil the more stringent requirements of the 8853-2016 standard.

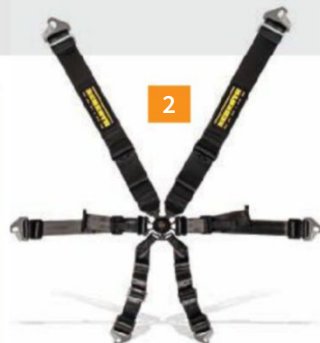


Busch's leg-breaking shunt at Daytona in 2015 registered 90g



SCHROTH 6-point Enduro harness

Super-fast, super-easy pull-down adjustment is ideal for driver changes or tight cockpit arrangements. The original “Enduro” belt.



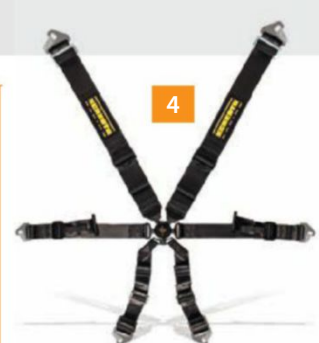
SCHROTH 6-point Flexi harness

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HOW TO

TRAIN A RALLY DRIVER

THE EUROPEAN RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP HAS LAUNCHED A JUNIOR EXPERIENCE, WITH THE AIM OF PREPARING DRIVERS FOR WORLD RALLYING DOMINATION

How do you train a rally driver? It's a question many have asked and attempted to answer, but the variables involved with rallying make training drivers difficult.

Where circuit racers can pound around a track for hours on end, rally drivers deal with differing surfaces, and a much greater chance of the unexpected taking place on the stages.

Since 2014, when it introduced a new junior competition, the European Rally Championship has been constantly evolving as it positions itself as the training ground for drivers leaving national rallying and heading to the next level of European and international competition.

The latest step on that ladder is the ERC Junior Experience, which is aimed at drivers competing in national rally championships, where they can get a flavour of ERC competition.

The programmes they are enrolled in include car-control training (where the costs of the test including fuel and tyres are covered by their entry fee); improving pacenotes with high-profile co-drivers; social media, TV and stage end interviewing; first aid and extraction, plus fitness and sponsorship advice – all key things to drivers looking to make their next career steps. The organisers are always looking for new items to add to the programme to make the Experience as valuable as possible.



ALL PICS: FIA/ERC



Munnings competes in a Peugeot 208 R2 while learning from the ERC Junior Experience

Left: national governing bodies have supported young drivers contesting the programme

ERC's YOUNG DRIVER FOCUS

The ERC is well on its way to becoming a championship for young drivers, starting with the Junior Experience and culminating in the winner of the Under 28 championship earning a fully paid-for drive in a 2016 World Rally Car on a European round of the World Rally Championship.

For 2017, the ERC has split its hugely successful Junior Championship in two. Previously, in 2014-'16, it had been for drivers under 28 years of age in R2-specification machinery, with the prize of one event in an R5 car.

Now the ERC and promoter Eurosport Events have ramped up the prizes. That same junior championship has been renamed Under 27, the changes being to the age group and with the prize of €100,000 to spend on an R5 programme in the ERC for the following year.

The second change is the addition of the Under 28 championship for R5 drivers of that age group, with the aforementioned prize of an event in a WRC car.

"The strategy is now really clear in the ERC," says Jean-Baptiste Ley. "We give priority to the young drivers to develop their skills and become world champions."

"Part of this is the new championship for the Under 28s and the support of the Under 27s. The change has increased the entry and we are happy that we want this to continue into the following years."

There's not another championship in rallying that can offer the size of the prizes on offer in the ERC, and recent comments from the FIA's Jarmo Mahonen about wanting the ERC to be where national rally talents collect before heading into the WRC can only be good for the championship.

Thanks to the ERC Experience and its Junior championships, that pathway from national rallying has already begun.

Under 28s compete in R5 cars for WRC drive



Munnings is only Brit on the scheme



ERC Junior Experience co-ordinator Evelien Deschuytter formerly ran a similar programme on a smaller scale in Belgium, before the ERC and its promoter Eurosport Events decided to adopt it to attract young drivers.

"There's one very important thing [World Rally title contender] Thierry Neuville told me while we were in the Future Stars Academy," recalls Deschuytter. "He said, 'What you do with these guys in one year took me five years'. There's a lot more to rallying than just getting in the car."

ERC co-ordinator Jean-Baptiste Ley has been at the heart of the series' transition to targeting the "youngsters", as he amiably refers to them.

"Our target is to make sure these young drivers are ready to be competitive as soon as they come into the championship," explains Ley.

"It is for drivers who want to enter the Under 27 class maybe the year after, and they undergo a huge training programme to develop the skills."

As part of the programme on the four rallies this year and the three last year, the drivers have worked with ex-World Rally driver Urmo Aava in his native Estonia on car control and set-up before the event, with Craig Breen and Kevin Abbring in the Canaries and Ypres respectively for Q&A sessions relating to general and event-specific advice, and with a number of relevant competing co-drivers to improve their notes.

Despite the Experience's infancy, a number of governing bodies, including Spain, France, Latvia and the Czech Republic, have paid for drivers to attend,

Breen is among the star guests to share advice



"The whole package is perfect for making that leap into international rallies from the UK"

and as of the Barum Rally there will be 16 drivers and co-drivers participating.

The Experience is always four days with two days recce included, and drivers are encouraged to stay for the weekend to work with teams and learn as much as they can from those competing.

If the drivers are competing in the ERC Junior Under 27 championship, they have to pay €650 to be on the programme and that also alleviates them of the €1600 they would have to pay to enter the championship alone.

The drivers not participating pay €2550, but have their entry fees included for the following season in Junior Under 27 – the prize for winning that is €100,000 towards a season in an R5 – plus all the costs of things like closed tests with Aava in an R2 car. For a truly unique development experience, it's unrivalled.

Catie Munnings is the only British driver on the Experience and is competing in Under 27 Junior Championship in a Sainteloc Peugeot 208 R2. As a driver the ERC is aiming at, coming from national rallying with only five events under her belt, she's the perfect yardstick for the programme.

"The Experience hands a lot of things to you on a plate, some of which would take you years to learn outside it," says Munnings. "The whole package is perfect for making that leap into international rallies from the UK – it's a different world to club events."

There's no doubt that €2550 is a hefty amount to pay. But you get what you pay for and the ERC Experience is doing plenty to help young drivers step up the ladder into the ERC.

JACK BENYON

RSRSPA

LEARN SPA WITH THE EXPERTS

SPA-FRANCORCHAMPS IS ONE OF THE MOST POPULAR TRACKDAY LOCATIONS IN EUROPE. DRIVER TRAINING EXPERTS RSRSPA SHOWED JASON HARDY THE ROPES

Based a stone's throw from the Nurburgring, RSRNurburg is a one-stop shop for car rental and tuition on the Nordschleife. RSR also offers a premium trackday and

Driving Academy experience at Spa-Francorchamps, where there are fewer corners to learn and the instructors can focus more on improving technique, without having to worry about *Touristenfahrten* traffic.

Suffice to say, RSR is very thorough with its approach, starting with the basics of car-handling and how to hold the steering wheel before moving on to the theory of how to actually go faster on the track.

The first thing I was asked to do was adjust the seating position to where I thought it should be – and it



was completely wrong. My instructor, Luis Ramirez, explained that I sat too far away from the controls to maximise braking force – and, sure enough, moving further forwards made a massive difference.

My weapon of choice was a BMW 235i, which was a bit like bringing a knife to a gunfight in terms of the other cars at the trackday, but it was quite soft in its settings and a reassuring car to learn the track with.

I was desperate to prove that I was already a good driver, but to my dismay Luis dragged me in after three laps and said: "That was really quite bad."

"Brutal!" I thought, but then we set about improving by breaking the lap down into sectors – La Source to Les Combes for four laps, then Les Combes to Fagnes and Fagnes to the Bus Stop – before working on stringing a complete lap together.

Sitting down with Luis after each session and talking about why I should be braking earlier here or taking a later apex there was very helpful. When you're in the car in the heat of the moment it's hard to process it all, but we were carrying data loggers so we could follow

where I was improving throughout the day.

The hardest thing to get my head around was the fast left-hander at Blanchimont. My sense of self-preservation kept kicking in and I would lift off before turning in and getting back on the power, but Luis insisted that I could take it flat. It was a big learning curve, moving out of my comfort zone and building up the belief that I could do what he was telling me the car could do. In that one morning, I found nine seconds.

With Luis's instructions still whirring in my head, I was challenged to go out on my own and knock a further second off my lap time. This time I went out with the lap timer turned off to help me focus on spotting apexes without thinking about the time. When I came back in, I'd found another three seconds.

I've been doing trackdays for some time now but had never timed myself before, so it was great to quantify my progression. Had I been there on my own I would have been left scratching my head, but I definitely came away from the RSR Academy a better and more confident driver. ■

RSR DRIVING TIP

APPLYING THROTTLE AND THE 'STRING THEORY'

One of the most common mistakes drivers make on track is over-slowing the car at the entry and then trying to win back the lost time by applying the throttle too early, thinking they can still 'fix it'.

This actually has the opposite result, plus the driver will then complain about mid-corner

understeer or oversteer.

I tell people to imagine they have a piece of string tied to the bottom of the steering wheel, which is also attached to the accelerator pedal. While you are still cornering, the string is tight and does not allow you to fully press the accelerator.

As you start opening your line

and removing steering lock, the imaginary string allows you to gradually apply more throttle, without unbalancing the car. With less cornering load, there is more traction available. It's not uncommon to find that your ill-handling car is now 'fixed' by applying this technique.

LUIS RAMIREZ



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