

**F1 Hamilton:**  
'I can't always  
create miracles'



**MotoGP Silverstone**  
defends wet race  
cancellation

**BTCC Exclusions**  
hand Turkington  
title advantage

# AUTOSPORT

BRITAIN'S BEST MOTORSPORT WEEKLY

AUGUST 30 2018

## 'TRICK' FERRARI TRUMPS MERCEDES

'We are deflated, we weren't  
good enough' **Toto Wolff**



## ...AS HALO SAVES LECLERC





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# CAN FERRARI MAKE AMENDS AT MONZA?

Ferrari fans must have groaned when rain arrived in Belgian Grand Prix qualifying at Spa last weekend. Once again the Italian team seemed to have the edge over Mercedes in the dry and, for the third event in a row, wet weather gave Lewis Hamilton an opportunity.

Unsurprisingly, Hamilton delivered, but this time it didn't result in a win against the odds. In the dry race, Sebastian Vettel grabbed the lead early on and Hamilton was powerless to do anything about it. Ferrari never looked like losing.

Last year, Vettel seemed a little faster in the Belgian GP, but Hamilton was able to drive a clever race from pole and take a narrow victory. This time, Ferrari's pace advantage was such that track position was not enough for Mercedes to hold on.

Perhaps more worrying for the Silver Arrows is that Ferrari has an edge on power and looks strong on every type of track. High-speed Monza was a disaster for Ferrari last year, but there's every reason to think Vettel will have a speed advantage over Mercedes in this weekend's Italian Grand Prix. The 24-point gap Hamilton took into the break now looks very vulnerable.

● The new-for-2018 halo was one of the most controversial Formula 1 rule changes in recent years and it has certainly altered the look of the cars. But Charles Leclerc was grateful that his Sauber had one after the first-corner crash at Spa. It's hard to know at this stage exactly what would have happened without the halo, but it seems fair to say that, at very least, it saved Leclerc from injury. And for that we should all be thankful.



*Kevin Turner*

**KEVIN TURNER**  
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Mark Sutton, Manuel Gorja/Sutton Images; Steve Etherington/LAT; Motorsport Images

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## HALO PROVES ITS WORTH

### FORMULA 1

Formula 1's halo device has been widely credited for stopping Charles Leclerc's head being struck by Fernando Alonso's flying McLaren during the dramatic first-corner crash in the Belgian GP.

Nico Hulkenberg's Renault hit Alonso from behind, and the McLaren cannoned into the back of Leclerc's Sauber before riding over the top of it. Amidst the wreckage, the right-hand side of the halo showed clear signs of the impact.

The halo has divided opinion since its introduction this season. Its detractors have questioned whether it is necessary or even effective, since it represents a halfway house between an open cockpit and complete driver protection.

However, leading F1 figures praised the halo even before slow-motion videos emerged in which it appeared to deflect Alonso's right-front tyre from a trajectory seemingly bound for Leclerc's crash helmet. FIA race director Charlie Whiting said the "huge extent" of tyre marks showed the McLaren "probably would have made contact with his head", though he conceded that was a speculative view.

"It doesn't take much imagination to think that the tyre marks could have actually been on Charles's head," he said.

"It would be a bit of a miracle if they weren't, had the halo not been there."

F1 sporting boss Ross Brawn backed up Whiting's statement that a full analysis was needed before reaching a firm conclusion. However, he believes that it "in all likelihood prevented Leclerc's helmet from being hit by Alonso's car" and said "the marks speak volumes in this regard".

Much of the debate after the initial replays were shown focused on whether it was the underneath of the car or the right-front wheel that struck the halo. Those who continue to criticise the device, or those who believe it made no difference in this incident, suggested that a glancing hit to the edge of the halo was not really a danger, and that it was only marked because it protrudes the imaginary 'line' from the top of the rollhoop to just in front of the cockpit opening, above the driver's head.

However, since crashes unfold in three dimensions, it is impossible to say with

**WHITING: "THE TYRE MARKS COULD HAVE ACTUALLY BEEN ON LECLERC'S HEAD"**





# N ALONSO-LECLERC CRASH

certainty that a trailing part, such as a wheel or a wing, would have missed Leclerc's helmet — particularly in this incident, in which the McLaren was moving quickly while spinning. The line from rollhoop to cockpit is intended to ensure a gap to the driver's head that is big enough to protect them if a car lands on another, or to give them room to get out if a car lands upside down.

It is wrong to use that imaginary line here because it is a completely different kind of accident. Michael Schumacher's crash with Vitantonio Liuzzi in the 2010 Abu Dhabi Grand Prix, or Fernando Alonso escaping his crumpled McLaren in Australia in 2016, are examples of incidents in which that line is most effective.

F1 is trying to eliminate as many freak accidents as possible, and two airborne first-corner crashes in seven years at Spa barely merits that description. In 2012, Alonso was lucky not to be struck in the head but in '18, luck played no real part in Leclerc walking away unharmed.

This is why the halo was also praised by former drivers, such as 2016 F1 champion Nico Rosberg and 2008 runner-up Felipe Massa, who was nearly killed by a rogue spring during 2009 Hungarian Grand Prix qualifying and understands the need for

cockpit protection better than most. Massa, referencing those that criticised the halo for making F1 cars look less attractive, tweeted a photo showing the damage to the device on Leclerc's Sauber and said: "After seeing this, we can say, 'the halo is beautiful'"

Rosberg added: "We can end the halo discussion now. It will save lives."

The FIA has worked extensively on the halo and after this crash, plus Tadasuke Makino's Formula 2 accident in Spain in May, it now has two major case studies from which it can extract crucial data.

It can look at how the halo and its fixings held up, how much force it took, and take that on board as it develops the next-generation concept. Whiting said that will be extremely valuable because the FIA is "in the process of beginning development on 'halo 4', so the more information we can get, the better."

Though enduring critics of the halo may bridle at the news there is a next-generation halo in the works, Alonso said "we don't need to prove that it's a good thing to have."

"I flew over his car and the halo was a very good thing to have today," he said. "For him it helped, looking at the replay. I was happier that I had the halo."

SCOTT MITCHELL

## IN THE HEADLINES

### NO MCLAREN PROGRESS

McLaren driver Stoffel Vandoorne believes the team has not made any progress this season after admitting it is "difficult to get a worse weekend" than the Belgian Grand Prix. He was the last of the 15 finishers in his home race at Spa, having qualified slowest. He said: "We've seen the performance we have is very far away from being good. The reality is we haven't progressed since the start of the year, we haven't progressed at all compared to the others." After multiple problems on Friday, Vandoorne also urged McLaren to sort its reliability before trying to compare him with reserve Lando Norris, who is being assessed for a 2019 seat.

### BOTTAS'S BACKUP ROLE

Mercedes says it will sit down after the Italian Grand Prix to discuss whether it should shift Valtteri Bottas into a support role for team-mate Lewis Hamilton. Both drivers share equal status, but in the face of increasing pressure from Sebastian Vettel and Ferrari, Toto Wolff has said the team may be forced to change its stance. "Let's see how Monza pans out and how it goes, and then we will address the question whether we need to put all our force behind one driver," he explained.

### DRS ZONES EXTENDED

The FIA has outlined changes to DRS zones for the remainder of the season, as part of its push to improve overtaking. It revealed that not only will it extend the second DRS area in Italy for this weekend's grand prix, it will also enlarge DRS zones in Russia, the United States, Brazil and Abu Dhabi.

### RICCIARDO GRID DROP

Red Bull's Daniel Ricciardo will take Italian Grand Prix grid penalties when he becomes the first driver to use Renault's new 'spec C' engine. After failures earlier this season, he is out-of-sequence on engine usage. Team principal Christian Horner said Red Bull has chosen to take the hit at Monza to coincide with the availability of the upgrade. The Renault works team has opted not to use it; managing director Cyril Abiteboul said the "couple of additional reliability risks" it brings were too much of a gamble.







# Force India faces backlash after rescue

## FORMULA 1

The 'debut' of the Racing Point Force India team in Belgium last weekend did not spell the end of a saga that continues to rumble in and out of the Formula 1 paddock.

In the days leading up to the grand prix, a new entry was approved following intense scrutiny of the legal situation surrounding the takeover of Force India by a consortium led by Lawrence Stroll.

The former Force India entry has been officially annulled and excluded from the world championship with immediate effect. This forfeited its constructors' championship points, but rival teams agreed to let the new entry take the Column 2 prize money that would have been due to Force India for its previous results.

It will lose its place on the Strategy Group as part of the deal that saved its future, though. The Strategy Group consists of representatives from the FIA and FOM, plus the Ferrari, Red Bull, McLaren, Mercedes and Williams teams — as well as the next highest-finishing team in the previous year's constructors' championship. That has been Force India since 2015.

It is unclear yet whether or not it will be replaced for the rest of 2018. Renault was the next best team after Force India last year, but it is understood that no decision has been taken yet on whether the French manufacturer will be granted

a slot for the rest of this year, or if a sixth team will only be added in 2019.

New Racing Point Force India team principal Otmar Szafnauer suggested he was unhappy despite the compromises reached: "We still have to use the engine allocation that we got at the beginning of the year. We still have the same gearbox allocation that we started at the beginning of the year. So how can you say we are a true new entrant? We are not."

However, the Haas team believes its rival has received unprecedented treatment from the powers-that-be. Haas boss Gunther Steiner and his team's owner Gene Haas are seeking a better understanding of why the new Force India outfit has been allowed to earn Column 1 prize money itself immediately, while Haas had to wait two years before it could qualify.

F1's commercial rights deals normally require new outfits to finish in the top 10 of the constructors' championship for two seasons before they can qualify for such income, but sources indicate that Force India has agreed a deal with F1 chiefs that will allow it to earn payments straight away. This still requires approval from all of Force India's rivals, which had not happened by the end of the Belgian GP weekend.

Despite talks at Spa with F1 chairman Chase Carey and managing director Ross Brawn, plus a follow-up meeting with Stroll, Steiner said he still had some unease about the situation.

The fluctuating Force India situation has also extended to its drivers. Stroll's investment means his son Lance will move across from Williams at the earliest opportunity, which could be this year. Stroll would likely replace Esteban Ocon, with Sergio Perez expected to re-sign for the team next year, but it is unclear where Ocon could be moved to.

He has been linked to McLaren and had a seat fitting with the team earlier this year, however McLaren has indicated Stoffel Vandoorne will complete the season. A straight swap is not immediately possible at Williams, because reserve driver Robert Kubica is understood to have a guarantee to drive if a regular driver is not available.

Off-track, a losing bidder to buy Force India has threatened legal action over a separate issue. Chemical company Uralkali, which is closely associated with Dmitry Mazepin, father of GP3 series race winner Nikita, says it made a viable bid to bring the team out of administration and questioned the way Stroll's consortium was able to buy the assets.

Last week, Uralkali wrote to the administrator, FRP Advisory, asking for answers, and says that, if it does not get them by September 10, it will take court action over its "serious concerns".

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# Wickens breathes unassisted, Massa blasts IndyCar safety

## INDYCAR

Robert Wickens is now breathing unassisted for the first time since his huge crash at Pocono, while IndyCar has been criticised over safety concerns.

“For the first time following his August 19 incident at Pocono Raceway, Schmidt Peterson Motorsports driver Robert Wickens is breathing without medical assistance and speaking with his family,” read a statement from SPM.

It’s a positive step in his recovery after the IndyCar rookie underwent an operation on his injured spine, following a crash that also broke his right arm and both legs.

Former Formula 1 driver Felipe Massa took to social media to blast IndyCar over what he perceived as

the series lagging behind F1’s safety standards.

“When you see all the accidents that happen in F1 and IndyCar in the last years, we can say that F1 is always trying to improve with halo, track changes, virtual safety car, etc. to improve safety, and IndyCar is not doing much,” he tweeted.

“It’s unbelievable to see a circuit like Pocono with an average speed of around 360km/h [224mph] and you see the walls lower like that, with the fences, it’s so, so dangerous for the safety.

“Sorry to say that, but they need to look [at it] for the safety of the drivers.”

IndyCar chose not to comment on Massa’s view while Wickens remains hospitalised. That’s been taken by some as too conservative because IndyCar could point to a series of recent developments that prove Massa to be ill-informed.

Rahal Letterman Lanigan Racing’s Graham Rahal decided to take Massa on. He replied on Twitter saying: “It’s a little easier to do things [to improve safety] when your budget is hundreds of millions a year, [with a] new chassis every year built in-house etc.”

Rahal also pointed to the windscreen concept that, to his eye, will be more elegant than the halo, and just as effective.

One thing is certain – it’s systematic of IndyCar’s approach. The windscreen has been kept under wraps as it undergoes ballistic testing and IndyCar is keen not to set a deadline for it before the concept is proved sound. That’s in addition to the new aerokit for 2018, which removed aero appendages that could become dangerous debris, and featured a revised side-impact structure to help end a run of pelvic injuries.

**TOM ERRINGTON**

MOTORSPORT IMAGES/ (GORIA/ SUTTON



Massa missed eight races in 2009 after Hungarian Grand Prix head injury

# DTM needs at least 16 cars next year – Audi

## DTM

A 16-car grid is the minimum size viable for the DTM next season, following the imminent departure of Mercedes, says Audi’s motorsport boss Dieter Gass.

The Silver Arrows’ exit is set to leave only BMW and Audi on the grid for 2019 in a two-marque transition season before the potential arrival of a third brand – possibly Aston Martin.

The grid has been 18 cars, six from each marque, since the three firms agreed to scale back from their previous eight-car line-ups

in the interests of cost-saving after 2016.

Gass indicated that both Audi and BMW will have to accept returning to eight cars in 2019 at least.

“It’s early days still, but I think we need to try at least to have two [extra] cars from each manufacturer on the grid. For me that’s very much the limit.”

Gass also suggested that the extra cars could be run by customer teams, rather than Audi directly – albeit with access to latest-specification factory equipment.

“Currently I’m planning to get proper customer cars, which is as well the target

of Gerhard [Berger, ITR chairman], to get more independent teams involved,” he said.

“That’s the big difference to what customer cars were in the past, [they were] previous years’ cars. [Next year] there will be no previous years’ cars, the material will be factory material, basically.”

Next season marks the first year of the DTM’s new regulations, in which the series will adopt a common rulebook with the Japanese Super GT series.

That includes a move away from V8 normally aspirated engines in favour of a new turbocharged four-cylinder motor, which had been due to be introduced in 2017 before it was vetoed by Mercedes.

“We are on schedule,” said Gass when asked how preparations for the series’ new era were going.

“Obviously, work started for us a long time ago, because we planned to introduce [the new engine] in 2017 before our friends from Mercedes said, ‘Ah, no, we can’t, it’s too expensive and we’ll stop if we do.’”

**JAMIE KLEIN**



MOTORSPORT IMAGES/ GASPERRI/LAT

# Thirteen F3 drivers receive penalty

## FORMULA 3

Thirteen drivers were given grid penalties for the second race of last weekend's Misano Formula 3 European Championship round after a bizarre second qualifying session.

No fewer than 15 of the 22 drivers were found to have exceeded track limits after all teams were instructed to present their drivers' onboard footage at 1100 on Sunday, more than 15 hours after the evening session had finished.

Numerous reports from onlookers alerted the officials to drivers who were abusing track limits at corners that are not normally an issue at Misano — but wet conditions made a difference, mostly at the Turn 13 kink, which is flat-out in the dry but not when it is slippery. The double right-hander at Turns 4 and 5 also came under scrutiny.

Officials imposed a bizarre system of a 0.5-place grid penalty for each infraction, with each driver's total rounded down to the nearest whole number. Usually the relevant lap time is deleted, but this was not possible because the final results had been published overnight, and once that happens they cannot be changed.

With Marcus Armstrong and Ferdinand Habsburg each taking seven-place grid penalties, this means that they clocked up 14 or 15 infringements each. On the other hand, Enaam Ahmed and Sacha Fenestraz were unpenalised, as their single offences were rounded down from 0.5 to count for nothing. But with second qualifying deciding the grid for races two and three, this meant that the erring drivers went totally unpenalised for the weekend's finale. Armstrong therefore started from pole, despite barely completing a lap without a track-limits offence, although in the end he was taken out in a collision with team-mate Guan Yu Zhou.

Notably, fastest qualifier Juri Vips was the only one of the top 11 drivers not to clock up a single offence — he was 1.615 seconds faster than the next-quickest competitor not to be found guilty of breaching track limits.

When asked about his regularly running wide at Turn 13, Armstrong said: "It was logic. They said they would look at Turns 6, 8 and the inside of 2. It was, 'OK, I might as well just go there'. It was a case of send it."

MARCUS SIMMONS



## Zanardi thought fifth was a joke

### DTM

Racing legend Alex Zanardi thought his BMW team was joking when it told him he finished fifth in the second DTM race of the weekend at Misano.

The 51-year-old two-time CART champion, ex-Formula 1 racer and multiple handcycling champion made a one-off appearance in the series on home soil in Italy last weekend, driving an additional BMW entry.

Zanardi, using a special M4 DTM with adapted hand controls, qualified last for both races, and after coming home 13th in race one, he came through a topsy-turvy mixed-weather race on Sunday to take fifth.

Several drivers were forced into making two pitstops to switch between wets and slicks, but Zanardi was one of the few drivers not to react too quickly when the circuit briefly dried early in the race, meaning he only needed to make one mandatory stop.

In-race radio communication is banned in the DTM unless the car is in the pitlane, so when Zanardi was told of his result after the chequered flag he could not believe it.

"This is the best joke of the weekend," he said. "Come on, you're kidding me!"

"I am an old man, you cannot tease me this way."

Speaking after getting out of the car, having performed the donuts he made famous during his championship-winning CART years, Zanardi added: "Fifth place is the payoff for the whole weekend."

"I am very happy with this result and, at my age, I won't get too many more opportunities to celebrate racing successes like this."

"I had a very good racing speed and wasn't sure what to do when slower drivers kept appearing in front of me!"

"I will always have a place in my heart for this weekend. It has taken me 51 years to experience it — but at least I got that chance."

GLENN FREEMAN



# Indy Lights struggles to attract new faces

## INDY LIGHTS

“We’ve been lucky this year that seven cars have so often put on a decent show,” murmured one close observer of junior US open-wheel racing.

He was referring to the Indy Lights Championship which has suffered badly since the four-car Schmidt Peterson Motorsports outfit ended its involvement in the series before the 2017 season, and the same-size Carlin squad followed it out of the door 12 months later.

This season, there have only been seven cars — four from Andretti Autosport, two from Belardi Auto Racing and a solitary entry from Juncos Racing — attend all the races, and a couple of those have been on a wing and a prayer.

And yet, like the observer said, there has been good racing. Last weekend’s race at Gateway Motorsports Park was one of the very best, with the edgy wheel-to-wheel battle over fourth place between the Belardi cars of Aaron Telitz and Santi Urrutia (resolved in the latter’s favor) then being overshadowed by the fight for the lead. That included Ryan Norman stalking team-mate Colton Herta into the closing 10 laps and



then mounting an ultimately successful charge in which neither driver showed any sign of backing down, but resolved itself in Norman’s favour. It was his first win in the series, while Herta’s second place — one spot ahead of points leader and another team-mate Pato O’Ward — leaves him 25 points out of the lead with two rounds, both at Portland this weekend, to go.

Now Mazda — which, since 2011, has been the prime supporter of Indy Lights, Pro Mazda and USF2000 through the Road to Indy scholarship scheme — has announced it’s pulling out at season’s end,

although it will honour its prize money promise. That means the Lights champion will receive \$1million and a guaranteed three-race deal with an IndyCar team.

It’s unquestionably a big help for any rising star, but which company will replace Mazda?

“No-one can tell us anything right now,” said one disgruntled team owner. “That’s not helping us find our next drivers, especially when the costs — the *real* costs — are much higher than what it says on the PR sheet.”

DAVID MALSHER

## Muller and Doran return

### WORLD RALLYCROSS

DTM driver Nico Muller will reunite with the title winner EKS for his third World Rallycross appearance, as Liam Doran will also make his series return.

Muller (below) entered an EKS Audi S1 in both French and Latvian rounds in 2017, reaching the final of the latter. He has since run as part of an official in-season test at the Riga venue in July ahead of his return.

“I have done some testing since my last race outing and the new car is for



sure faster and I can feel the improvements have been done in all areas,” he said. “Despite the competitive field at the top of World RX nowadays, I would hope to repeat or even improve the result from last year’s Latvia RX, where I finished P6 in the final. This is a track I like and know well, so the chance is there.”

Meanwhile, GC Kompetition Prodrive Renault team has signed Liam Doran (right) to race in the French round of the championship at Loheac this weekend.

The 31-year-old will drive one of the squad’s Prodrive-built Megane RS RX Supercars alongside team owner and driver Guerlain Chicherit, replacing Frenchman Jerome Grosset-Janin after he parted company with the team.

Doran last competed in World RX with the JRM Racing team in 2016 — the same squad with which Chicherit also made his first series start in the same year — driving a Mini Countryman RX, but split with the squad mid-season.

He then had his race licence suspended for the 2017 season after an altercation at the Gatebil festival in Norway.



# Rabat suffers multiple leg fractures

## MOTOGP

Tito Rabat was airlifted to hospital for “emergency surgery” after he suffered multiple leg breaks in an impact with Franco Morbidelli’s bike during fourth practice at Silverstone.

The Avintia Ducati rider was hit by Morbidelli’s Marc VDS Honda in the gravel at Stowe corner, shortly after heavy rain fell and caused multiple riders to crash.

He was immediately airlifted to University Hospital Coventry with what was later confirmed as a broken femur, fibula and tibia.

Suzuki rider Alex Rins witnessed the incident, having crashed at Stowe moments before Rabat, and was seen gesticulating at his compatriot prior to the impact.

“What happened today was incredible, I have no words to describe it,” recalled the Suzuki rider. “When I came out of the [pit] box I saw there was a lot of water on the [Hangar] straight, almost a hand [deep], and I thought there would be a red flag.

“I saw Tito, but he was on his back. I screamed at him and I made gestures, but he could not move.

“I saw that Morbidelli was also losing control. I could not prevent his bike from hitting Rabat’s leg and throwing him two or three metres away. It was a brutal impact.”

It was the second heavy crash for 2014 Moto2 champion Rabat this year after an incident during a Michelin tyre test at Barcelona in May – back then he escaped with a small muscle rupture on his left arm, and did not need to miss a race as a result.

JAMIE KLEIN AND LEWIS DUNCAN



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## Silverstone defends surface

### MOTOGP

Silverstone has launched an independent track investigation and has defended its new surface following the cancellation of the MotoGP races last weekend.

After several delays and timetable changes caused by heavy rain, the MotoGP race was cancelled at 1600 on Sunday with several key figures blaming the new track surface for the problems.

The circuit’s managing director Stuart Pringle (above) said an investigation is already underway. “We will be conducting an investigation and Silverstone has already engaged an independent track consultant, who we became aware had been there all weekend,” he said.

“He is a seasoned expert and he started work at 8am on Monday.

“He will not be the only independent consultant we will be using. We want a thorough investigation to find out what happened.

“We’ve moved quickly and Aggregate Industries [the resurfacing contractor] has too.”

Pringle also defended Silverstone, and pointed out that circuit staff expected the MotoGP, Moto2 and Moto3 races to take place on Sunday afternoon.

“I do not accept the criticism of the circuit and resurfacing because none of us have the data to substantiate those claims,” he added.

“It’s conjecture and completely overlooks the significant rainfall that fell on the day and caused many other events across the country to cancel.

“I don’t think the cancellation was a reflection of the track, it was just the sheer volume of water.

“In wet warm-up the riders were

only 8.5% slower than dry times and the norm is 10-15% – so that indicates a very grippy surface.

“It wasn’t our decision [to cancel the races] – it was the riders. The race director was expecting the track inspection at 1600 to indicate that the circuit was ready, but the decision was made before the agreed inspection time.

“We thought there was a weather window. We watched the weather and thought there was going to be an opportunity to put on the whole three-race programme.

“We had an agreement from [MotoGP commercial rights holder] Dorna that the teams would race up to dusk. But we think a couple of riders called the meeting before the scheduled track inspection and, contrary to what we had been told and the weather forecast indicating an improvement in conditions, they were not willing to race.”

Pringle does not believe the cancellation will jeopardise future MotoGP events at Silverstone, which has hosted the pinnacle of motorbike racing since 2010.

“Both Dorna and Silverstone have worked really hard in the aftermath of the [failure of the] Circuit of Wales and the fact we did the resurfacing for MotoGP is evidence of our commitment,” he said. “We want to host MotoGP.

“I want to apologise to all our MotoGP fans, who were subjected to the most extraordinarily long wait in the foulest of British weather conditions, which ultimately resulted in no race at all.

“I will be contacting all customers who bought tickets this week to explain what we are going to do.”

KEVIN TURNER



## F1 ITALIAN GRAND PRIX PREVIEW



## UK START TIMES

## FRIDAY

FP1 1000 FP2 1400

## SATURDAY

FP3 1100 QUALIFYING 1400

## SUNDAY

RACE 1410

LIVE ON SKY SPORTS F1

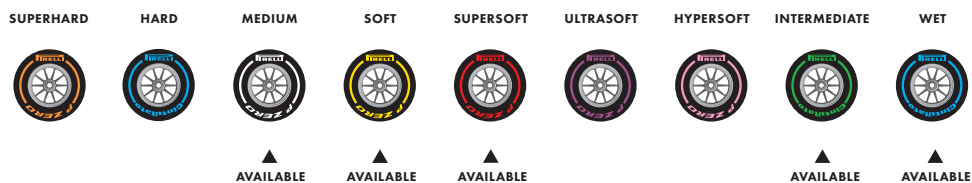
BBC RADIO 5 LIVE 1400

HIGHLIGHTS ON CHANNEL 4 1845

## DRIVERS' CHAMPIONSHIP AND CONSTRUCTORS' CHAMPIONSHIP SO FAR

1	Hamilton	231	1	Mercedes	375
2	Vettel	214	2	Ferrari	360
3	Raikkonen	146	3	Red Bull	238
4	Bottas	144	4	Renault	82
5	Verstappen	120	5	Haas	76

## TYRE ALLOCATION



## TRACK STATS

LENGTH 3.600 miles

NUMBER OF LAPS 53

2017 POLE POSITION

Lewis Hamilton 1m35.554s

POLE LAP RECORD

Rubens Barrichello 1m20.089s (2004)

RACE LAP RECORD

Rubens Barrichello 1m21.046s (2004)

## PREVIOUS WINNERS

2017	Lewis Hamilton	Mercedes
2016	Nico Rosberg	Mercedes
2015	Lewis Hamilton	Mercedes
2014	Lewis Hamilton	Mercedes
2013	Sebastian Vettel	Red Bull
2012	Lewis Hamilton	McLaren
2011	Sebastian Vettel	Red Bull
2010	Fernando Alonso	Ferrari
2009	Rubens Barrichello	Brawn
2008	Sebastian Vettel	Toro Rosso



## THEMES TO WATCH

## HOME CROWD PRESSURE

Ferrari will be desperate to win in front of its home crowd, assured it has the fastest car on the grid. Last season, Mercedes dominated the Italian Grand Prix, Lewis Hamilton heading Valtteri Bottas for a one-two. Twelve months on, Mercedes boss Toto Wolff has acknowledged the team has "many deficits" to an in-form Ferrari. Will the ardent tifosi fans get what they want?

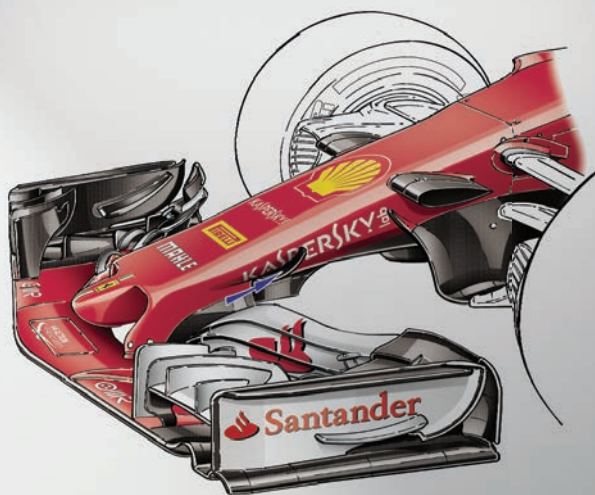
## RICCIARDO'S CHARGE

Red Bull's Daniel Ricciardo heads to Monza knowing he's on a recovery mission. The decision to run Renault's latest engine specification has rewarded him with a grid penalty. But if Ricciardo's audacious pass on Valtteri Bottas into Turn 1 at the 2016 Italian Grand Prix is anything to go by, his progress through the field should make for an entertaining spectacle.

## McLAREN EVALUATION

Formula 2 title challenger Lando Norris will again take part in opening practice as McLaren continues to evaluate him for the seat alongside Carlos Sainz Jr for 2019.

# THE ART OF RACING



  
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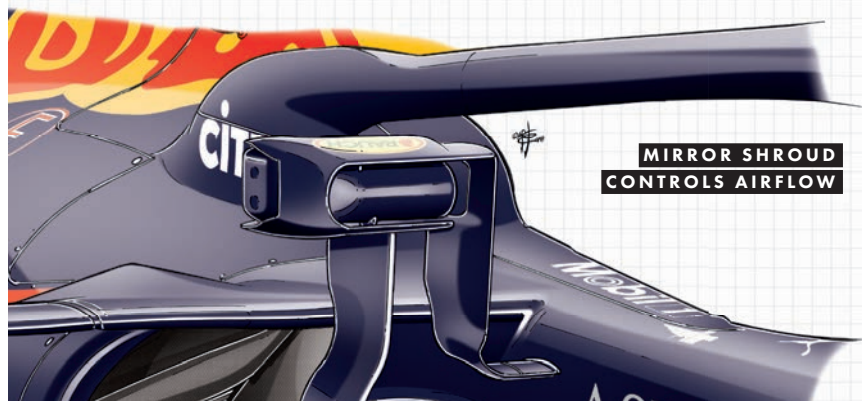
GIORGIO PIOLA

## RED BULL'S MIRRORS

Red Bull has taken a leaf out of Ferrari's design manual in that it has added a shroud around the mirror pod.

When it is just a pod with the mirror lens in the back of it, the airflow trying to fill that void becomes fairly turbulent. But with the shroud around the outside of it leaving a small airflow gap to the mirror pod, and with the top and bottom trailing edges curving inwards, the airflow filling that void is managed in a better way. That reduces the turbulence.

GARY ANDERSON



MIRROR SHROUD  
CONTROLS AIRFLOW

## FERRARI AND RED BULL REAR WINGS

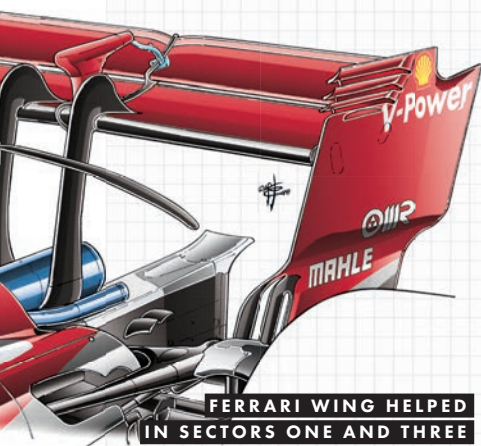
Red Bull ran without doubt the shallowest-section rear wing in the pitlane. It suffered in qualifying because of this but took the gamble knowing that the top speed in sectors one and three during the race were going to be critical. Thanks to lots of underbody downforce, it's probably the only team that could get away with this.

Ferrari ran a fairly shallow-section rear wing, which, together with its improved

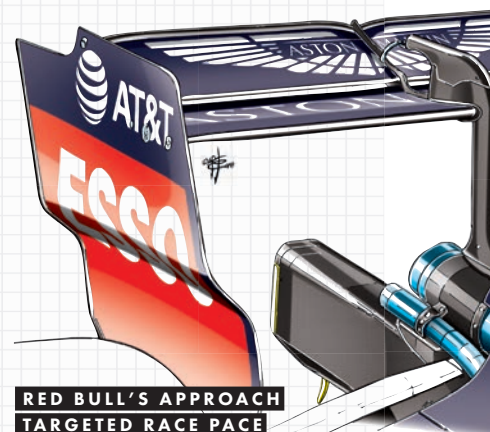
engine performance meant it was one of the fastest in sectors one and three but a little slower than Mercedes in sector two. But passing another car with a similar performance in sector two is impossible, while overtaking in sector one with the DRS is simply a mirror-signal-manoeuve event.

Provided you can avoid overdoing it on the tyres, this approach makes sense.

GARY ANDERSON



FERRARI WING HELPED  
IN SECTORS ONE AND THREE



RED BULL'S APPROACH  
TARGETED RACE PACE

## HAAS REAR WING

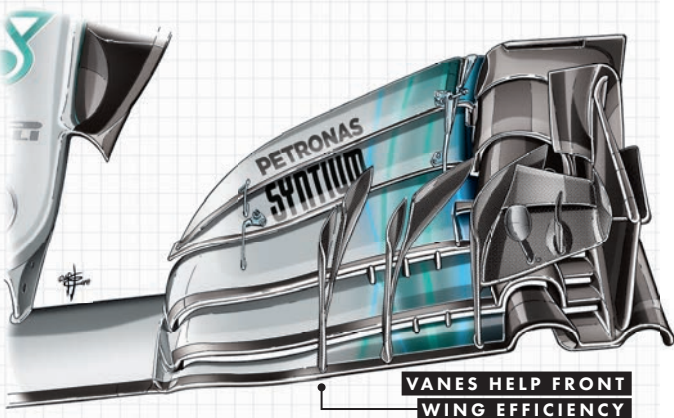
Haas had a new rear at Spa, but only Kevin Magnussen used it in qualifying and the race as Romain Grosjean stuck with the old one.

Rear wing developments have become more complicated since the introduction of the DRS. The wing has to be efficient in two conditions – closed and open – and the transient airflow reattachment has to be understood in detail to ensure

a rear wing design that allows it to be closed as late as possible.

If the car is travelling at about 325km/h (200mph), or 90m/s at the end of the Kemmel Straight, and the driver brakes, the car still travels two car lengths in 0.1s. So, if the airflow reattachment is a little lazy on initial braking, you have insufficient rear grip, which can very easily lead to a spin.

GARY ANDERSON



VANES HELP FRONT  
WING EFFICIENCY

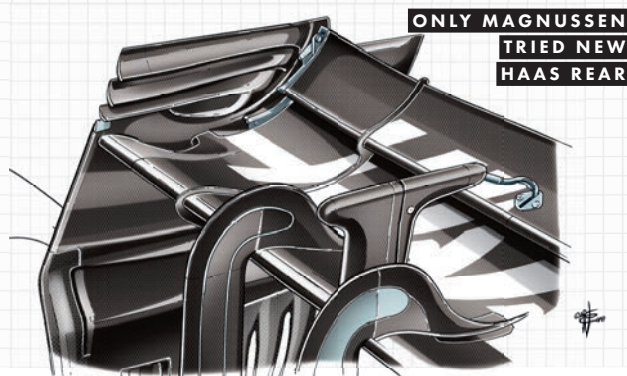
## MERCEDES FRONT WING

Mercedes has adopted the philosophy that if one is good two must be better, and added another curved vertical turning vane to the front wing assembly. Two vanes work in conjunction with the front-wing endplate and together they set up an airflow turning moment to move more mass

airflow around the outside of the front tyre.

This means that less turbulent airflow goes between the inside of the front tyre and the chassis, allowing the front wing and the leading edge of the sidepods to work more efficiently.

GARY ANDERSON



ONLY MAGNUSSEN  
TRIED NEW  
HAAS REAR

# FIFTH COLUMN

## GOODBYE TO ALL THAT

*An urgent desire for change has motivated both of this summer's big driver moves, those of Fernando Alonso and Daniel Ricciardo*

NIGEL ROEBUCK

It was close to freezing when they went out to qualify for the Canadian Grand Prix in the autumn of 1980, so the problem everyone faced was getting temperature into the tyres. A goodly amount of downforce helped, of course, but if – like the Ferrari drivers – you didn't have any, the afternoon was a nightmare. Gilles Villeneuve, ever mercurial, slithered round to 22nd place, three and a half seconds from the Brabham of poleman Nelson Piquet, and his team-mate Jody Scheckter did not so much as qualify at all.

The following day Villeneuve somehow finished fifth, and afterwards was as exhilarated as ever I saw him, sure in his mind he could have done nothing more. That drive, and a similar one in the rains of Monaco earlier in the year, were among the greatest of his life, and if not many noticed that didn't matter to Gilles: he knew what he'd done.

"Little victories," I said to Fernando Alonso at Daytona in January. "That's what Gilles used to call them – he'd say that even in a hopeless car if he left a track at the end of the weekend, knowing he'd done the best possible job, he was happy. That probably resonates with you..."

"Completely," said Alonso. "I'm just the same. I never knew Villeneuve, but when I was at Ferrari everyone still talked about him, and I understood why – he was a racer, a fighter, and for me that is more important than anything.

"When you have a slow car, you have to find small challenges and targets – OK, you're not fighting for the big trophy, but you find motivations here and there, and you need that fuel to keep the fire burning. Without that passion – those little victories – it goes down, down, down, and then you lose the hunger.

"Here at Daytona is a good example. We know our car's not competitive, but yesterday I said to Lando [Norris] and all the guys, 'Let's try to win our race – no stalling in the pitlane, doing the driver changes perfectly, avoiding contact with the GTs... It would be sad to finish fifth or sixth, after mistakes from us, because then we will have a bad taste about the race. So let's try to do a perfect race, and not care about the result – and that will be our own victory.'

At the time Alonso, after three dispiriting years in a McLaren-Honda neither competitive nor reliable, was looking to the coming Formula 1 season with some optimism. Throughout 2017 he had enthused about the McLaren chassis, and logically believed that the team's switch to Renault engines would improve its prospects.

Most observers were of the same opinion, but alas, how wrong we were: the poor performance of the McLaren-Renault has provided painful evidence that by no means all the team's recent troubles could be laid at Honda's door. A while ago, indeed, it was acknowledged that this year's car unfathomably has less downforce than its predecessor.



Gilles Villeneuve drove the wheels off his Ferrari in 1980





For all that, Fernando has continued to drive the wheels off it every time out, fighting for ninth as if for first, because that's him: like Villeneuve, he can do no other, and it is this aspect of his racing persona that I most admire. "Fernando's the best I've ever seen," said former team-mate Felipe Massa. "He never has an off day, never gives up..."

As he announced during the summer break, though, Alonso – at least for now – has called time on Formula 1, and it came as no great surprise. Watching a driver of his greatness fighting to get into the midfield has put me in mind of Villeneuve's struggles long ago with the wretched Ferrari T5. "I need to be near the front," Gilles would say, and Fernando is of the same cloth.

Last year at Indianapolis he was thrilled for once to be in a competitive car, and admitted to me that sometimes it wasn't easy to keep his motivation high. "I carried on training hard, and competing in different things – like

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## "FERNANDO TALKED WISTFULLY ABOUT A RACE FOR FORMULA 1 DRIVERS IN FORMULA 2 CARS"

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a 24-hour kart race in Dubai – that were not public or important, but at least I felt I was competitive in something, and I really need that."

As much as anything else, it is the predictability of contemporary Formula 1 that has sapped Alonso's enthusiasm. Week in, week out, the Formula 2 cars – with their relatively simple aerodynamics – put on a far better show than their exalted big brothers, and that day at Indy Fernando talked wistfully about a race for F1 drivers in F2 cars: "Wouldn't that be great? The spectators would love that kind of racing – and it would be so cheap, compared with what we have now. But of course Ferrari would not be there, Mercedes would not be there, so..."

Alonso, as we know, is frozen out of Mercedes and Ferrari, and team principals endlessly trot out the mantra that he is 'political'. Undeniably he's an immensely strong-willed

individual who likes his own way, but, as Frank Williams long ago remarked, the really great ones have always been like that – not least the sainted Ayrton Senna.

Think back to 1993, when – holding out for \$1million a race, huge money in those days – for a long time Senna declined to commit to the entire season with McLaren, and to keep Ron Dennis on the hop showed up at Imola only minutes before the start of Friday morning practice, having flown overnight from Sao Paulo. Had Alonso ever pulled a stunt like that, those who delight in vilifying him would have rubbed their hands.

A while ago, in a chat with Bernie Ecclestone, the sport's former godfather suggested that Ferrari needed to get Alonso back. "I'm not sure," I murmured, "that Vettel would go for that..."

"So don't ask him," Bernie responded. "It's not his team.

"The thing is, these people will never face facts: Ron Dennis thought he ran McLaren, but he didn't – Senna ran it, and Alain Prost before him, just like Piquet ran Brabham when I owned it, and these days Sebastian Vettel runs Ferrari and Alonso runs McLaren. With drivers of that level, it's always been like that, and it'll never change."

Alonso has yet to reveal what, beyond his Toyota commitments, he will be doing in 2019, but the assumption is that he will again drive in the Indianapolis 500, and most anticipate that he will run the whole season in IndyCar, where a competitive car is virtually guaranteed.

"I'm not surprised by Fernando's decision," said Martin Brundle in a conversation last week. "I interviewed him for Sky at Monaco, and afterwards said to my guys, 'I don't think he'll be in Formula 1 next year – I reckon he's finally come to the end of his tether...'"

"In a way, it'll be a sort of blessed relief, not only for him but also for us – there's no pleasure in seeing a driver as great as that wasting his time. He's 37 now, so to go away and come back again would be really hard, even for him – but he's still on top of his game, isn't he? He's outqualified Stoffel Vandoorne in every race, and his racecraft has been as good as ever. The thing about Fernando is that he just loves racing: he's not precious about it, which is why you find him at a kart track – I don't think he's a guy who demands luxury!

"At his first Le Mans, too, he was superb – everyone said it was going to be a hollow victory for Toyota, but in >>

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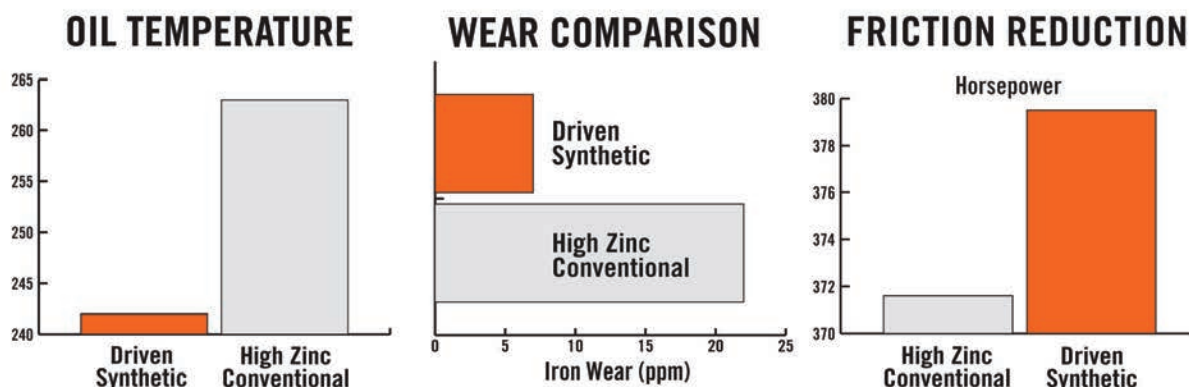
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Formula 2 encounters routinely provide more racing spectacle

fact it was a brutally tough race, and I came away thoroughly impressed – it was absolutely a bona fide victory, after a fierce battle between the Toyotas, and Alonso’s quadruple stint in the night, when he made up two minutes on the other car, was outstanding.

“Throughout his career Fernando’s always had this relentless, never-say-die quality, and he’s still the same now. What must really hurt is that Ferrari and Mercedes and Red Bull all needed another driver – and he’s never going to get into any of them, so he’s had to accept that his best bet is McLaren, and for now I don’t think he can suffer that any longer.

“The big problem we’ve got is that there are only 20 cars, and while there isn’t a good seat for Fernando Alonso, there are good seats for paying drivers – that’s a great indictment of Formula 1, isn’t it? I see he thanked Liberty for trying to talk him out of leaving – but they didn’t succeed, did they?”

Commenting on Alonso’s decision, Sean Bratches said, “He’s been such a hero, a legend”, and he admitted that Fernando’s leaving was a blow. “I was,” he said, “disappointed from a business standpoint.”

Those who love Formula 1 will be disappointed for sporting, rather than financial, reasons. On the day of his announcement, Paddy Lowe, with whom he worked at McLaren in 2007, was asked by the BBC for his reaction, and he didn’t hold back: “It’s an absolute disgrace that Formula 1 cannot give an ace such as Fernando a competitive car. He is

one of the all-time greats. And because he can’t get into one of only six cars that can ever win a race in the current business model, then he must leave. This is a sign if ever we needed one that Formula 1 is completely broken.”

If it is Alonso’s personal tragedy that he has not been in the mix these past four years, it has been a greater one for Formula 1.

While the Alonso announcement was not unexpected, that from Daniel Ricciardo came out of nowhere. Invariably in these circumstances there are those who claim to have seen it coming, but on this occasion everyone was caught off guard.

In this era the business of signing drivers has fundamentally changed, not least because so many are ‘owned’ by this company or that, a phenomenon unknown not so long ago. I have come to think in terms of drivers being awarded passes: gold for Mercedes and Ferrari gives you access to guaranteed victory, silver for Red Bull the occasional possibility of it, while bronze for everyone else allows admission to the battle for seventh. Commercial reality dictates that many of the latter are available for sale.

For all that he is a ‘Mercedes’ driver, Esteban Ocon had been due to move to Renault, but Ricciardo’s unexpected decision put an end to that. Nor for that matter can Ocon stay at Force India, where well-financed Sergio Perez is to be joined by Lance Stroll, whose father’s consortium recently bought the team.

“I think,” said Brundle, “that we’ve completely lost our way on what Formula 1 is supposed to be. It should be the 20 best drivers in the world, but it’s not, is it?”

Where next, then, for the highly rated Ocon? “It’s not down to one party deciding a movement,” said Mercedes’ Toto Wolff. “We need to put in place several chess figures” – he might have said ‘pawns’ – “and that isn’t clear yet.”

For the first time in 10 years, Ricciardo found himself a free agent, and to general amazement chose to trade in his silver pass for a bronze one. Few were more >>



Ricciardo's decision to move to Renault came as a great surprise

taken aback than Helmut Marko and Christian Horner, but — as with McLaren people, when Prost left for Ferrari — perhaps a touch of introspection might be appropriate in their bemusement.

The decision to go with Honda in 2019 will have been a factor in Danny's thinking, but beyond that was something more fundamental, the fact that the tide at Red Bull was not running his way. Once that seeps into a driver's mind, it is as good as impossible to remove it, as Prost once told me.

Prior to Senna's arrival in 1988, McLaren was very much Alain's team. "Once Ayrton arrived, it wasn't long before the ambience began to change, and as soon as you start to feel the other guy — super-quick, younger, the future — is the favoured one, you cannot shake it off."

In 2017, to forestall advances from Mercedes, Helmut Marko swooped in with an eye-watering contract extension for Verstappen, and that made absolute sense, but when it came time to renegotiate Ricciardo's contract this year, the process was more protracted: yes, Red Bull folk insisted,

## "THE DECISION TO GO WITH HONDA WILL HAVE BEEN A FACTOR IN DANNY'S THINKING"

they really wanted Daniel to stay, and I'm told that eventually all his requirements were met, but yet...

At the beginning of the summer break, an announcement about Ricciardo's future duly materialised — and it was from Renault. Danny came forth with all the usual stuff about 'needing a new challenge', and doubtless he meant it, but beyond that I could not but think of Prost and McLaren: "At Monaco in '88 Senna crashed out of the lead, and I won — but that evening, at the Gala Prizегiving, all Ron could talk about was how sorry he was for Ayrton."

When denying, following Ricciardo's move, that Red Bull had made an offer to Alonso, Marko said: "If you look at his history, in McLaren and Ferrari, it was always a one-man show, and that doesn't fit with us." I know



a Mr Webber, of Queanbeyan, New South Wales, who will have spluttered at that.

"Marko and Vettel held all the cards, mate," Mark told me. "Fundamentally, if Sebastian was happy, Helmut was happy. I'd been at Red Bull for two years when it was announced that Seb was coming to the team for '09 — Helmut's quotes to the press were that he was 'going to finish Webber's career', and this was before we'd even done a race together!

"In 2010 I won at Barcelona, and then at Monaco a week later — after which we went to Istanbul, where I was leading when we had the incident." This coming-together between the Red Bulls was clearly Vettel's fault, yet Marko instantly blamed Webber, and it wasn't greatly different at Baku this year, when Verstappen caused an accident that took out Ricciardo as well as himself.

At the time Daniel was very much the Red Bull driver in form, having recently won in Shanghai, while Max was having a terrible time of it. Marko — doubtless mindful of the team's wish to keep Ricciardo — did not try to blame him for the shunt, but neither did he ascribe it to Verstappen. It was, he said, 50:50, which most saw as tantamount to saying, 'It was Max's fault, but I can't bring myself to say it...' Whatever, I doubt that Danny was much impressed: if he weren't in favour just then, when was he ever going to be?

"Yes," said Brundle, "I get all that — in the end he just wanted out, didn't he? Clearly, he was unhappy at Red Bull — otherwise he wouldn't have been looking around in the first place. Verstappen's not going to get any slower in the next 10 years — and he claims the high ground in the team, doesn't he?"

"Therefore you either leg it, or you say, 'Let me just show the golden boy how this is done', as he did in Monaco and





Helmut Marko blamed Mark Webber for shunt at Istanbul in 2010

China. And to be honest, I wish that was the decision he'd taken – just get his head down, forget the apparent favouritism towards Verstappen, and go and hit it head on.

"The only reason to leave Red Bull was to go to either Ferrari or Mercedes – I couldn't see any other logical reason to change. Given that that couldn't happen – and he'd decided he wanted to leave Red Bull, anyway – he's done the only thing he could have done, and joined the only other 'works' team."

That, of course, was Nico Hulkenberg's reasoning in leaving Force India for Renault – it was a factory team, and the only one he had ever been offered.

"Yes, go and be a bigger fish in a still relatively big pond – but in Ricciardo's case, he's going to a car he would normally expect to lap in any race free of a safety car. I'm sure the Renault will be good, but occasionally a Red Bull can beat anything, and he's not going to have that. Still, he was unhappy where he was – he felt he was driving in Verstappen's team – and he wanted to make a team of his own, so good luck to him. I hope it works."

For a long time it was tacitly assumed that as and when Red Bull needed a new driver, it would be Carlos Sainz, but another in the company's stable, Pierre Gasly, has got the nod, leap-frogging Sainz, much as Vandoorne did Kevin Magnussen in McLaren affections.

"These things happen, don't they?" said Brundle. "Gasly is a good choice for Red Bull, no doubt about it, but personally I think it would have been a no-brainer to go with Sainz – perhaps they thought there would be friction between him and Verstappen, like when they were at Toro Rosso together."

"Now Sainz is going to McLaren, but who will be with him? Will Mercedes 'place' Ocon there, or might they go

with Lando Norris? At one point, when it looked as though Raikkonen was going to lose his drive to Charles Leclerc, they were thinking about him, but that would have been revisiting old ground – and anyway Kimi now looks sure to stay at Ferrari.

"Anything's possible at McLaren, but it's looking unlikely that Vandoorne will keep his place, and that's a shame. All the way through, in GP2 and so on, he looked sensational – and he did a terrific job in his first F1 race, standing in for Alonso at Bahrain two years ago. Stoffel's a really nice lad, but, observing him, I don't know if he's got a strong enough personality."

It has been Vandoorne's misfortune, of course, to come into Formula 1 with a woeful car, and ironically the man he usurped at McLaren – Magnussen – is having a much better time of it. It pleases me, I said to Brundle, to see this proper old-fashioned racer thrive with Haas.

"I agree – what impresses me is that through all the trials and tribulations he's kept his self-belief intact. The Haas is obviously good this year, and he's making the most of it – he's brought himself back into contention, and in Formula 1 that's really hard to do. You don't get many second chances, and you're written off in a heartbeat."

"Kevin's having an incredibly good year – in fact, amid all our concerns about the state of Formula 1, the thing that really excites me is the new talent, like Ocon and Gasly and Leclerc – some that's already arrived, and some that's knocking on the door. There are some great young drivers out there – they just need to get into the right cars..."

Absolutely they do. After 10 laps at Spa Vettel's Ferrari led Hamilton's Mercedes by three seconds and Verstappen's Red Bull by 13. The rest were somewhere in Belgium. 🍀



# MARRIAGE OF CONVENIENCE

*Stoffel Vandoorne is failing to live up to expectations at McLaren.  
But here's why Toro Rosso, short of drivers for 2019, should sign him anyway*

EDD STRAW

**S**toffel Vandoorne is the only driver who has failed to outqualify his team-mate in 2018. He hasn't scored a point for nine races. The McLaren team that has had him on its books since 2013 is on the brink of giving up on him. He seems all washed up.

You might believe Vandoorne has been 'found out'. But he's still the driver that tore up the junior categories on his way to grand prix racing and that is what makes him the ideal solution to Red Bull's Toro Rosso driver shortage in 2019. While this might be considered a marriage of convenience for a 'failed' driver and a junior scheme that is lacking drivers with a superlicence, it's one that could pay off for both.

Vandoorne has not forgotten how to drive, and he's clearly not out of his depth in Formula 1. Remember, this was a driver who scored a point on his one-off debut in a McLaren-Honda in Bahrain 2016 – outqualifying Jenson Button in a car he'd not driven before Friday practice. And he has a stellar junior formula CV. Yet if he is to stay on the grid next year, unless something changes dramatically, it's only Toro Rosso and Sauber – on top of an unexpected reprieve from McLaren – who could conceivably give Vandoorne that second chance.

## "VANDOORNE HAS NOT FORGOTTEN HOW TO DRIVE AND IS NOT OUT OF HIS DEPTH"

But why does he deserve it? Usually, you'd demand a driver in the second half of his second full season to have made more progress and start to achieve a more consistently high standard of performance. Particularly if they are a driver coming into F1 with the reputation that Vandoorne has carried. But he is not in a usual situation. Vandoorne's increasing plight has been a sideshow in the McLaren/Honda/Renault/Alonso circus for the past 18 months and his reputation has been shattered.

It seemed Vandoorne was on the brink of a breakthrough earlier this year. After an up and down first part of 2018, where he struggled with the car's rear-end instability, Vandoorne was as quick as, perhaps even quicker than, team-mate Fernando Alonso at Monaco before a rear suspension problem manifested itself in qualifying that also caused significant garning in the race.

In Canada, one of his worst circuits of 2017, he was just 0.009 seconds off Alonso in qualifying. This confirmed Vandoorne had

made significant progress in balancing up his natural driving style – turning in aggressively and carrying good speed into the corner – with ensuring he didn't ask too much of the car and compromise the exit. But car problems soon intervened. At the British and German GPs Vandoorne was battling chassis issues that meant he simply didn't have the same level of downforce as Alonso.

Vandoorne would have finished ninth in Hungary, a few seconds behind Alonso, without a gearbox failure and that again seemed like a reset. But at Spa, he again had all sorts of difficulties during Friday practice – in the first part of FP2 describing the car as "undriveable", before having the misfortune to be shoved off the track by the unsighted Valtteri Bottas in FP3. In the race, a justified gamble on an early pitstop under the safety car ensured he spent the race at the back.

The Spa weekend, which Vandoorne went into presumably hoping to continue his Hungary form, seems to have been the tipping point for him. After Friday practice, during which possible replacement Lando Norris also ran, Vandoorne said: "First of all the team should give a car that is able to run on track before we can really compare." After the race, he questioned McLaren's development rate. After a season of toeing the party line, saying the right things while his career got away from him, it seems Vandoorne has decided to bear his teeth.

Has Vandoorne extracted the maximum from his situation with McLaren? Probably not, as even amid the problems he's had in an unstable team he's had a disappointing season. This is elite sport and drivers must make the best of whatever their situation is, and Vandoorne hasn't. But you also have to consider just how difficult the situation has been. What he needs is a reset, which is what a move to Toro Rosso could provide.

It's not clear what Red Bull's mindset is when it comes to selecting a driver or whether Vandoorne is of any interest to the team. But he should be, especially given Toro Rosso's options are limited for replacing Pierre Gasly and, should it not retain him after attempting to replace him earlier this season, Brendon Hartley. While Red Bull likes to grow its own, perhaps this time it should consider 'recycling' a driver who has shown prodigious ability in the past?

There's every chance Vandoorne won't get a second chance in F1. Often drivers don't, and for all the problems surrounding him at McLaren he will have had two full seasons to convince the team, or another one, that he's worth persevering with. But if anyone does take the gamble, Vandoorne could repay them in spades. This is what makes him worthy of another F1 shot.

After all, he potentially offers the most valuable commodity there is in F1 – performance. Even if he hasn't shown that anywhere near enough over the past 18 months. ❧



# YOUR SAY

*I'll continue to watch Fernando Alonso in whatever category he races, just as I'd continue to watch Lionel Messi even if he played in the Championship*

PAUL MILLWARD

## Alonso has chased his American dream too soon

Surely the best drivers in the world should be in Formula 1, not IndyCar, NASCAR, Formula E or whatever. The likes of Mario Andretti, Emerson Fittipaldi and Nelson Piquet made the move to Indycar but only after their talents had peaked.

This is not the case with Fernando Alonso, who is surely at his absolute best. A seat was going begging at Red Bull and yet it wasn't available to him. Christian Horner claims that Alonso would bring chaos. Chaos, wins, or perhaps both?

Either way it would have been great to see him battling it out with Max Verstappen. This is a major loss for F1.

I, for one, will continue to watch Fernando in whatever category he races, just as I'd continue to watch Lionel Messi if he played in the Championship!

**Paul Millward**  
Nottingham

## Don't forget the 1955 Dutch Grand Prix

One good thing about F1's summer break is that it gives Autosport a chance to publish interesting historical features (August 9 issue). A couple of points, though, if I may...

On Zandvoort — one race that I would have included for its significance in the history of the sport would have been the 1955 Dutch Grand Prix. This was the first international motor race to be held after Pierre Levegh's death, and some 83 spectators had been killed at Le Mans just a week before.

The Dutch authorities and the race organisers had only a few days to decide whether the safety arrangements at their purpose-built circuit were adequate in the face of widespread hysteria in what we now call the media — so much of it based on ignorance, as hysteria often is.

**David Cole**  
Barrowden, Oakham

## You don't know what you've got until it's gone

Why oh why did fans shun Rockingham? The facilities are great, parking is easy and not in a field, you can see the whole circuit from every seat and it's a doddle to get to.



Having been a regular visitor since it opened, it saddens me to hear of its demise. The management tried their best with Indycar racing and the ASCAR series, both of which I enjoyed immensely. The Pickups were incredibly exciting too. It makes you wonder what fans and drivers really want at a track.

I am sure as I queue to get into Silverstone, negotiate the narrow lanes to Brands Hatch, or watch the 100 metres of track you can see from the Bomb Hole at Snetterton that I will be lamenting its closure.

**Paul Drinkwater**  
Downham Market, Norfolk

## Force India's points shouldn't be wiped

I understand that Racing Point Force India has had to enter as a new team, but they are still running Force India cars as you can't change the chassis mid-season.


So if it is a Constructors' Championship, why are they unable to keep Force India's points?

**Bruce Carlin**  
By email

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# RACE CENTRE

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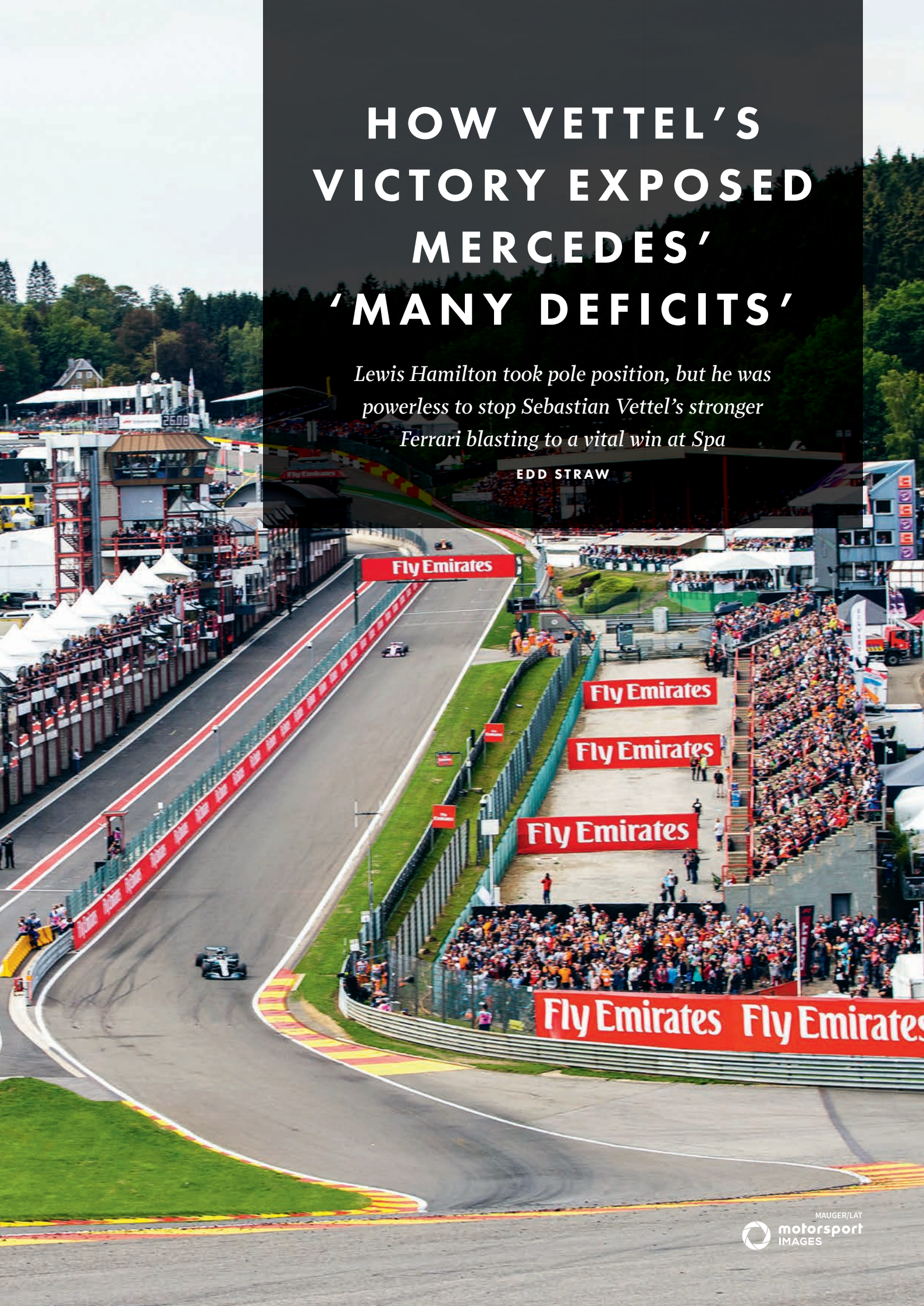




# HOW VETTEL'S VICTORY EXPOSED MERCEDES' 'MANY DEFICITS'

*Lewis Hamilton took pole position, but he was powerless to stop Sebastian Vettel's stronger Ferrari blasting to a vital win at Spa*

EDD STRAW







FAILURE WAS NOT AN OPTION FOR SEBASTIAN VETTEL AND FERRARI IN THE BELGIAN Grand Prix last weekend, not after having a pace advantage in the previous two races in Germany and Hungary but watching Lewis Hamilton rack up back-to-back wins thanks to his wet-weather brilliance. Vettel must have feared he faced a hat-trick of reverses when Hamilton grabbed pole position in the Spa-Francorchamps rain on Saturday. But on Sunday the Ferrari man took a dominant victory after passing Hamilton on the first lap to get his 2018 title bid back on track.

All the talk was of Ferrari's power unit advantage, particularly after Hamilton referred to "a few trick things going on in their car" straight after the race, but that wasn't the only difference. As Toto Wolff put it, this weekend exposed his Mercedes team's "many deficits".

The main weaknesses for Mercedes were punch off the final chicane and out of La Source. While Ferrari was consistently slower in the twisty middle sector of the Spa lap, which runs from Les Combes to Stavelot, everywhere else it seemed to have an advantage in dry conditions, including on the long run to the final chicane.

Given both Ferrari and Mercedes were powered by the third 2018 evolution of their V6 engines for Spa (Ferrari's customer teams

ran this first in Hungary, while all Mercedes teams got the upgrade in Belgium), this pattern could hold for the rest of the season. But Mercedes also reckons strong corner-exit traction played a part in Ferrari's supremacy, on top of the advantages on the straights detected on GPS data.

Add to the mix Mercedes battling tyre temperature management problems, with Hamilton suffering very obvious blistering on his rear rubber, and you had a team that was up against it.

"The last two corners and Turn 1 [La Source] are where we were losing a lot of time – I think most of our time to be honest – but also today [Vettel] didn't have to do any management," said Hamilton.





Alonso's McLaren  
clatters Leclerc's  
Sauber during flight

"He was just flat chat and looked after the tyres better than I did."

Despite all that, Hamilton should never be discounted when starting from pole. The last thing he wanted was to face a headwind on the Kemmel Straight, but that's exactly what was waiting for him on the first lap. Having made a good enough start to stay ahead into La Source, albeit only after moving to his left and pinning Vettel to the outside of the track to delay the Ferrari's entry, Hamilton was in front as they climbed the hill.

Having held off second-row starter Esteban Ocon, Vettel inevitably started to close on Hamilton on the long Kemmel Straight. Hamilton kept to the right-hand side of the track out of the kink, meaning Vettel had to blast past him on the outside.

Vettel knew Hamilton would pick up a tow and be able to counter-attack, so moved to the inside as the Mercedes came back at him. The two Racing Point Force Indias, Sergio Perez to the outside and Ocon tight on the inside, then made it four-wide for the lead.

Ocon had a decent overlap on Vettel, but despite the fact he could have tried for the lead (he reckoned he was only a metre away from doing so), he opted to go conservative and had to file back into fourth place. Given he risked taking out himself, his team-mate, and two title rivals — one of which was driving for the team of his overall employer

— this was an understandable moment of discretion.

What mattered was Vettel had done exactly what he needed to do and seized the lead. Moments later, the safety car was deployed for the first-corner accident caused by Nico Hulkenberg, starting 18th thanks to engine penalties, locking up and launching Fernando Alonso's McLaren over Charles Leclerc's Sauber.

This eliminated all three, while some precision pruning of Daniel Ricciardo's Red Bull rear wing by Alonso's flying McLaren effectively ruined his race and also played a part in the Red Bull hitting Kimi Raikkonen at the exit of the La Source hairpin, giving the Ferrari a right-rear puncture.

Having lost the first battle, Hamilton had a chance to strike back when the race restarted at the end of lap four. Perhaps this was his only chance. Vettel gunned it out of Turn 16, the first part of Blanchimont, but Hamilton stuck right with him.

Hamilton feinted to the inside into the chicane in an attempt to distract Vettel (the line for the green-flag restart, where you are permitted to overtake from, is at the second apex of the corner), before returning to the orthodox line. A slight lock-up cost him, and he crossed the start/finish line six-tenths of a second behind and too far back to launch an attack into La Source. >>



## QUALIFYING



MOTORSPORTIMAGES/SUTTON/SUTTON

LEWIS HAMILTON DESCRIBED IT AS “ONE OF THE TOUGHEST qualifying sessions that I can remember”, but given it was his supremacy in wet conditions that allowed him to turn the tables on Ferrari in the previous two races at Hockenheim and the Hungaroring, he can’t have been too disappointed when he saw it spotting with rain as he rolled back to the pits on his Q2 slowdown lap.

With Valtteri Bottas always destined to start at or near the back thanks to a complete engine package change, the Finn headed into Q3 with the sole aim of giving Hamilton a tow. It seemed that strategy might work too, as Hamilton quickly passed Sebastian Vettel’s Ferrari to sit behind Bottas on track at the start of the top 10 shoot-out. Then the rain returned and Bottas lost it coming out of Blanchimont, though he kept his Mercedes out of the wall.

Eight of the 10 cars dived into the pits for intermediates, while only the Racing Point Force India drivers stayed out. An alarming moment for Sergio Perez in Eau Rouge that he brilliantly gathered up showed why that gamble was never going to work.

With Kimi Raikkonen, who looked a pole threat in dry conditions, being sent back out after a quick tyre change without refuelling – something that led to him being denied a final fast lap on his second set of intermediates – it boiled down to Hamilton versus Vettel. Both set their fastest times on their penultimate laps, with Hamilton 0.726 seconds faster.

Vettel said it was a chaotic session, complicated by traffic and the fact he had run out of battery power for the start of his key lap. He still matched Hamilton to the thousandth in the first sector, but lost four-tenths in the twisty middle sector and a further 0.332s in the final sector blast to line up second – by which time he had recovered some battery power. Ferrari could have managed it better, but it was Hamilton and Mercedes that nailed it. And Vettel lost significant time in Pouhon and under braking for the chicane independent of any electrical power mismanagement.

The Force Indias claimed third and fourth, Perez frustrated he didn’t have time to squeeze in a final lap for a tilt at pole. The Haas of Romain Grosjean and Raikkonen were next, with Max Verstappen suffering from the same problem as Kimi but beating Red Bull team-mate Daniel Ricciardo to seventh.

**“IT WAS  
HAMILTON  
AND HIS  
MERCEDES  
TEAM THAT  
NAILED IT”**

Four-wide on lap one as  
Ocon, Vettel, Hamilton  
and Perez duke it out



Vettel was critical of his own initial handling of the restart. “It was one of my worst, [attempting] initially to surprise Lewis,” said Vettel. “He was sharp and obviously I knew I had nothing to fear because the safety car line is not braking for Turn 18 [the chicane].

“When I realised the initial bit was not great – I caught some wheelspin – I didn’t want to slow down again to then surprise him or get a second chance because I don’t think that’s fair. Then I focused on the last corner and that worked really well, plus Turn 1 where we had a tailwind the whole race, so I made sure I knew where the wind was going. I got it really right and had a great exit.

“Once I was told the gap, which was around 0.9s at the exit of Turn 1, I knew that I should be safe. But you never know with a bit of headwind up that long straight [Kemmel]. I looked in the mirror and when I saw he wasn’t a threat I was happy.”

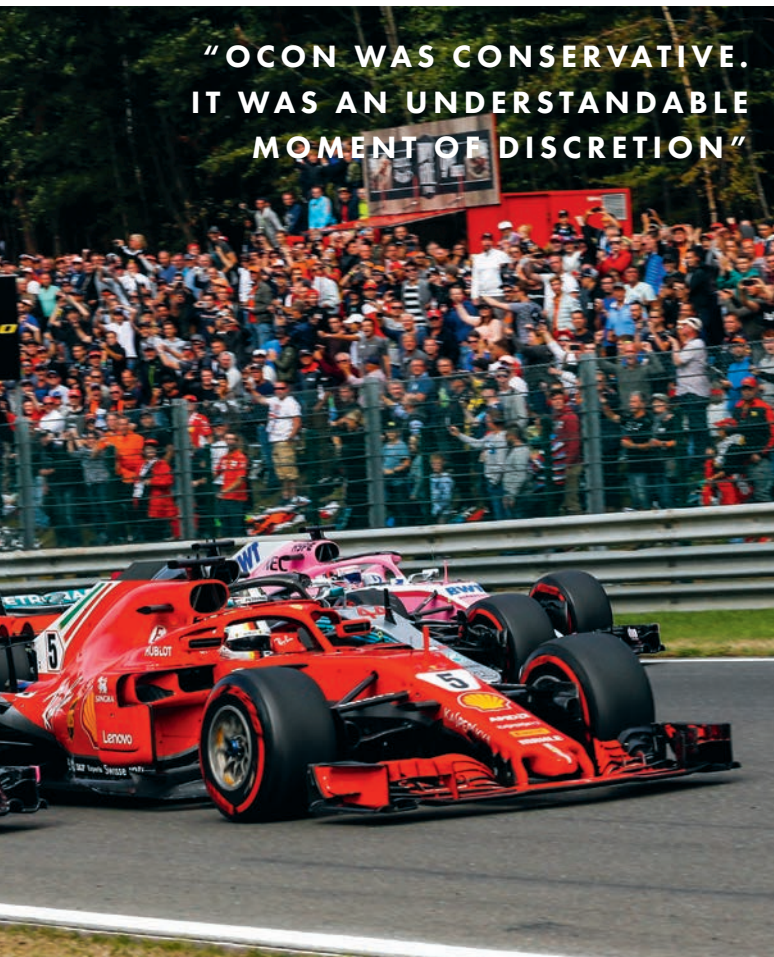
That 0.9s gap was the moment all hope was lost for Hamilton and Mercedes, although he suggested that even if he had got back ahead, it would have been to no avail because Vettel “would have sailed past me on the straight”.

“I probably could have gone up the inside into the last corner, maybe just about, but they would just overtake us on the straight, so I just tried to stay close,” said Hamilton. “But he just pulled away out of the last corner and then through Turn 1 they’ve been quicker than us all weekend, so by the time I came out of Turn 1 he was quite far ahead.”

What followed was a typical first stint of a grand prix. Vettel ended the first full racing lap 1.7s to the good, and he extended that to a first-stint peak of four seconds at the end of lap 14 of the 44. It was now all about when Mercedes would attempt the undercut, which it opted for at the end of lap 21 when Vettel’s lead was just over three seconds.

Hamilton emerged behind the temporarily second Red Bull of Max Verstappen, who had dispatched Ocon and then Perez to climb to third by lap 10 with passes at Les Combes. Ferrari, inevitably, called Vettel in immediately and any threat was diffused by a combination of a strong in-lap – just over half-a-second quicker than Hamilton’s – and a 2.2s





stop that ensured there was no time lost in the pitlane.

When it had all settled down, Vettel was 1.9s clear. Hamilton gave it all he had, but over the next two laps he lost a combined total of 0.371s to Vettel. Hamilton's pace dropped back by 1.1s on lap 26, putting him 3.2s behind. The Vettel/Ferrari combination was simply faster than the Hamilton/Mercedes combination. Vettel drove immaculately and his advantage gradually grew to 11.061s by the chequered flag.

"Ultimately, Ferrari were just faster all weekend," said Hamilton. "If you look at last year, they were faster here also and we just managed to hold them behind. As for today, their power is obviously much better than it was and they sailed past us at the start and their pace was just stronger [through the race]."

The bottom line is that Ferrari was faster. What's more, Vettel again showed how effectively he can progress through a grand prix weekend to get the most from himself and the car. For the first half of the weekend, until topping Q2, he looked slower than team-mate Raikkonen. Given that progression, had Q3 been dry Vettel would likely have been ahead of both Hamilton and Raikkonen.

What's clear is that Ferrari does, right now, have the upper hand and it was only rain that struck in the German GP, in which Vettel crashed, Hungarian GP qualifying and then on Saturday in Belgium that has allowed Hamilton to turn the tables.

"Imagine if it hadn't rained in Hockenheim, we wouldn't have won, he would have won," said Hamilton. "If it hadn't rained in Hungary, we wouldn't have won, he would have won. And if it hadn't rained yesterday we probably wouldn't have started first and I don't know if I could have towed past him down that back straight. So it might have been similar to last year, but reversed.

"The rain creates opportunity and we can't just rely on that. We've got to improve performance."

Vettel gave Hamilton no such opportunity to turn the tables during the race this time. His qualifying performance is questionable, for despite complaints about the battery de-rating Vettel also lost

time to a mistake in the long Pouhon left-hander and with conservative braking into the chicane, but on Sunday he was bang on it. And even when he didn't get the best of the restart, Vettel made the right decisions to consolidate his position.

"I hope we have more power, that's what we're working for," said Vettel when the suggestion Ferrari had an engine advantage – triggered by Hamilton's reference to his rival team's "tricks" – was put to him. "If that's the case, then well done to our engine guys.

"I think this feels pretty straightforward. We ran a little bit less wing, were faster in sector one, sector three and in sector two a little bit slower. But I wouldn't disagree that this year in terms of power we are a lot closer than we were last year. I think last year we didn't have a chance here. It's good to see that we are making progress."

As has often – but not always – proved to be the case this year, while box-office A-list stars Vettel and Hamilton duked it out their respective team-mates were cast into supporting roles. >>







## TRACKSIDE VIEW

LES COMBES IS A SPOT TALKED about more for overtaking and incidents than it is for driver challenge. But with the right/left Turn 5/6 combination followed immediately by the Malmédy right-hander taking up around 7% of the lap time, it's a medium-speed section that can have a big impact.

The high-speed approach, with drivers at 190mph or more, makes picking the braking point hugely challenging. There are also the camber and slight elevation changes in the corner, which make it easy to overload the rear-left mid-corner. That can, in turn, make the mid-sequence transition more violent and lead to the rear stepping out in the middle.

The entry, too, is a challenge. Early on, Kimi Räikkönen takes his usual approach and initially seems to get the car set with minimal provocation on turn in. But after a few laps, he begins to struggle as the grip starts to improve. Bottas appears to have trouble, just as he did last year, to get the rotation on entry, and has a couple of slightly wide moments.

One sub-plot from the session is Lando Norris's first appearance on a grand prix weekend for McLaren. The 18-year-old Formula 2 ace



immediately looks comfortable, which perhaps should be no surprise for a driver who already has 336 F1 test laps under his belt.

The most interesting phase is early on after the 40-minute cut-off when Norris and team-mate Stoffel Vandoorne are running on the same medium Pirellis. They are on the same pattern of push and recharge laps and, despite Vandoorne's earlier – and later – problems in the session, appear to be on similar

programmes. But the way they are driving is very different.

Norris appears to carry in either a little more speed, or achieve less rotation of the rear, meaning he's climbing over the kerb in the left-hander and controlling the wheelspin. It's aggressive but under control and he keeps the minimum speed up. It works for him, although later on older rubber he does have a big moment and goes extremely deep on entry, kicking up the dirt

on the edge of the track where nobody else has previously been.

Vandoorne squares off the first part of the corner a little more. That means he's able to get more decisively onto the power for the left-hander but the exit speed isn't noticeably different.

There are differences in set-up, which play a part in the variation in style, but Norris hasn't done his chances of a race seat any harm.

**EDD STRAW**

Lando Norris showed his commitment at Les Combes on his FP1 McLaren debut







Vettel celebrates.  
Are Hamilton's title  
hopes starting to flag?

RUBIO/SUTTON  
IMAGES

Valtteri Bottas came into the weekend knowing he would start at or near the back thanks to a complete power unit change strategically deployed at Spa. From 17th on the grid, he then clattered the rear of Sergey Sirotkin's Williams on the approach to the first corner.

The deployment of the safety car allowed him to pit for a replacement front wing and to change from soft to supersoft tyres. He restarted down in 16th, ahead only of the twice-lapped Red Bull of Brendon Hartley, and started making his way up the order.

Nobody put up much of a fight against the Mercedes, although the highlight of Bottas's rise to an eventual fourth place was a ballsy move on Brendon Hartley's Toro Rosso for 13th on lap seven. Bottas had the inside line into the left-hand entry to Eau Rouge, then closed the move through the fast right.

After making his second stop for another set of softs with 15 laps to go, he emerged in sixth behind the two Force Indias. But like Verstappen before him, he made two effortless passes on the run to Les Combes to salvage fourth place — over half-a-minute behind the Red Bull driver and 7.4s ahead of Perez. That latter figure proved important as it rendered harmless the five-second penalty he would incur for the Sirotkin clash at the start of the race.

**"AS HAMILTON ADMITTED,  
THE UPCOMING ITALIAN GP  
WEEKEND LOOKS 'VERY TOUGH' "**

As for Raikkonen, he rejoined after that first-lap puncture but damage to the back of the car meant he was facing an impossible fight, and he quietly retired after completing eight laps.

Realistically, both Finns are relegated to a supporting role in the championship fight between Hamilton and Vettel, although it would have been interesting to see if Raikkonen could have threatened for pole position either in dry qualifying or had he been refuelled in qualifying and able to set a lap time when the track was at its fastest.

But 2018 is all about Hamilton versus Vettel, and this season is looking like a role-reversal from last year. While Hamilton has the championship lead, cut from 24 to 17 points, just as Vettel had in the middle of last season, it now seems that the Ferrari is the package to have while the Mercedes faces fewer victory opportunities.

Last year, a combination of unreliability and Vettel's misjudgement at the start of the Singapore GP ensured Hamilton and Mercedes vanished into the distance. It won't take long for the points situation to be turned on its head if the current competitive pattern continues and gives Vettel the chance to do the same. And as Hamilton admitted, the upcoming Italian GP weekend looks "very tough".

In a world championship battle that has ebbed and flowed, it was always going to be essential for Vettel to win at Spa and Monza to mitigate his losses from the previous two races. He's halfway there, and if he finishes the job in Italy, Vettel will surely leave Ferrari's home race as clear title favourite, even if he leaves without the points lead.

But the competitive pendulum could swing again before we're through. That's what makes this battle between two great drivers, and two great teams locked in a ferocious development war, so gripping. ❧





MOTORSPORT IMAGES/ANDRE/SUTTON

## ‘New’ Force India team bags strong Spa result

The Racing Point Force India team is technically a new one, owing to the complexities in the way the team was rescued from administration by a consortium headed by Lawrence Stroll by acquiring its assets but not its entry, and bagged fifth and sixth places on its ‘debut’.

Esteban Ocon and Sergio Perez qualified third and fourth respectively in wet conditions, holding those positions out of La Source on the first lap. Perez moved to the outside of Lewis Hamilton and Sebastian Vettel on the run to Les Combes, with Ocon challenging for the lead on the inside and momentarily holding second place before backing off into fourth behind his team-mate.

“I lost the place to Sergio trying to take the lead,” said Ocon. “Maybe I was a bit overconfident there, [trying to] take the lead – I don’t know and we’ll never know. I had a good run, a good slipstream. I was lacking a metre, probably.

“We were not all going to fit there. I braked early just to be safe and Sergio had the perfect spot.”

They held third and fourth early on, before Max Verstappen’s Red Bull worked its way past both slower cars.

Both Force Indias were later passed by the recovering Valtteri Bottas, but the team’s haul

of 18 points has already elevated it to ninth in the constructors’ championship.

**STAT**  
**59**  
Points lost by  
Force India due to  
name change

## Hulkenberg blamed for La Source pile-up

Nico Hulkenberg faces a 10-place grid penalty at this weekend’s Italian Grand Prix for causing the dramatic first-corner crash that sent Fernando Alonso airborne and over Charles Leclerc at Spa.

The German locked up both front wheels under braking for La Source after the start and ran into the back of Alonso, pitching the McLaren over the top of Leclerc’s Sauber. Leclerc’s halo was damaged by the flying MCL33, which also hit Daniel Ricciardo on its way through the air and broke the Red Bull’s rear wing.

Hulkenberg, Alonso and Leclerc were eliminated from the race immediately, but fortunately escaped unharmed.

As well as the Monza grid penalty, Hulkenberg has been handed three penalty points on his superlicence for the crash. The FIA said the German “completely misjudged the situation and freely admitted it was his mistake”.

Hulkenberg later said he was probably “a bit too keen” under braking, although suggested he was not helped by “how sensitive these cars are with aerodynamics”. Alonso, speaking immediately after the accident, was unimpressed by Hulkenberg’s mistake, and drew parallels with the 2012 shunt at Spa in which he was also involved that earned Romain Grosjean a one-race ban.

“It’s hard to understand how you can miss a braking point that much,” said Alonso. “You arrive at a speed where it’s impossible to negotiate the corner.”

Such a punishment was not considered by the stewards on this occasion. In their explanation, they pointed out that the penalty points system had been introduced as a means of ensuring repeat offenders were sanctioned more heavily. This is not something that was in place six years ago, which is why Grosjean was banned for Monza.

SUTTON/SUTTON  
motorsport  
IMAGES

## Bottas blamed for Vandoorne FP3 shunt

Valtteri Bottas was reprimanded for an incident in FP3 that resulted in Stoffel Vandoorne’s McLaren crashing on the Kemmel Straight.

Vandoorne was on a flying lap and closed on Bottas through Eau Rouge and onto the Kemmel Straight. He pulled left to pass Bottas through the gentle right-hand kink, only for Bottas to drift left and force the McLaren onto the grass. Vandoorne spun across the track and glanced the barrier, bringing out the red flag.

Bottas accepted the incident was his fault and the stewards, including former Ferrari F1 driver Mika Salo, accepted it was “not intentional or reckless”.



This was on the basis that, even though he had heard a warning message, Bottas thought Vandoorne was further behind than he was.

“Valtteri didn’t see me and I had to pick a side to avoid him,” said Vandoorne. “Then he pushed me onto the grass. It was a strange incident, but fortunately without big consequences.”





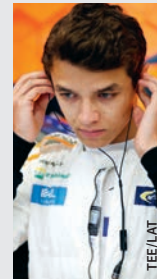
After watching a replay, Leclerc said he did not believe Hulkenberg deserved a ban. "Nico is not a driver that has a past and you can see it's not deliberate what he did," said Leclerc. "I don't think [a ban is right] for this type of mistake. If something is deliberate and dangerous then a ban should occur but not in this situation."

The halo was introduced this season to improve driver safety. Leclerc was completely unhurt in the crash, and said: "Looking at the images it's quite spectacular but it was not that big in the car. "I don't know how it would have ended up without [the halo], but looking at it, I'm happy it was there."

## Q & A LANDO NORRIS

McLaren reserve driver

Lando Norris made his grand prix weekend debut for McLaren, taking over Fernando Alonso's car for FP1. Norris set a best time of 1m47.364s from his 26 laps, 0.088s faster than Stoffel Vandoorne, who had problems in the other McLaren. Norris will drive again at Monza tomorrow (Friday).



track, I'm going as fast as I can and [trying to show] I'm worthy of a seat. It's not all about pure speed, it's about being consistent, giving good feedback. It's important in the development of

the car. I know I'm normally critical of myself, but I think it went smoothly and I didn't make any mistakes, I think if I really had to I could find more time. I chose the safer option of being more consistent, not going off. I put some good laps on the board, decent laps, so I'm happy with what I did.

### How important are your free practice outings for next year's seat?

I don't know if it's the definite decider, but I know it's a very good opportunity for me to show what I can do. With such a short amount of time being on track, we did three proper runs – four push laps, three push laps, three push laps. So, you can't have loads of laps to build up to it, you have to be on it straight away. It's a track I haven't driven in an F1 car, in a car I haven't driven a lot, against drivers who have done it for a couple of seasons.

### Did you get any hints on how McLaren rated you?

I was out at the same time as Stoffel but we were testing quite a few things: high downforce, low downforce, different tyres, different bits on the car. It's always very difficult to compare. In terms of myself, how quickly I got up to speed, in terms of what they said, consistency and my feedback, everything was really good. I was happy with the job I did. It's hard to have any comparison with Stoffel or Fernando, so I was happy.

### Is this a key time to prove yourself given McLaren has a seat available next year?

Yeah, definitely. Obviously, I'm doing everything I can on

# Haas closes on Renault in 'B-class' battle



The Haas team squandered too many points in the first half of the season, which looked to have cost it any hope of finishing fourth in the constructors' championship. But its second consecutive double-points finish, with Romain Grosjean finishing seventh and Kevin Magnussen eighth, means it is now just six points behind Renault.

Grosjean qualified fifth in wet conditions and fell behind Max Verstappen's Red Bull into Les Combes on the first lap. Grosjean was passed by the recovering Mercedes of Valtteri Bottas when he made his sole pitstop on lap 23, but was not under threat from anyone else and finished 6.4s behind Sergio Perez.

Magnussen had a similar race, falling in behind Grosjean on the first lap after starting ninth. This was after missing the best of the conditions in Q3 thanks to a brief off. He finished just 1.6s behind Grosjean after a strong final stint on softs, well clear of ninth-placed Pierre Gasly.

With Renault failing to score, and enduring its worst weekend of the season in terms of outright pace – and the continuation Force India team having to start from zero thanks to it being a new entry – Haas is now in a strong position to fight for best-of-the-rest behind the big three teams over the final eight races of the season.

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# Mercedes introduces innovative wheel rim

Mercedes ran an aggressive update to its rear wheel rim design at Spa, giving both an aerodynamic benefit and, crucially, a tyre temperature management advantage.

Autosport technical expert Gary Anderson said: "Mercedes has had two tyre-related problems – it sometimes struggles to get the front tyres up to temperature in qualifying, and it overheats the rears.

"All the teams to some degree allow the heated front brake cooling airflow to heat up the front rims. That then transfers into the air volume inside the tyre increasing and maintaining the front tyre temperature – you see various front brake duct

openings to either increase or decrease this effect.

"On the rear it is a little different, and the key is keeping the tyres cool.

"The rims play a big part in this as they are the heat soak that has to dissipate this hot airflow. Mercedes has created some small raised sections between the wheel spokes where they meet with the rim diameter.

"These will act like a paddle, increasing the turbulence in this area, meaning that the airflow in contact with the rim will change more often.

"This airflow change will take more heat out of the rim, helping to reduce the heat transfer into the tyre."



SUTTON/SUTTON  
motorsport  
IMAGES

## Time called on Ricciardo once points hope faded

Daniel Ricciardo retired from 16th place after completing 28 laps of the Belgian Grand Prix, after rear wing damage sustained in the first-lap accident cost him two laps.

The rear wing of Ricciardo's Red Bull was destroyed by Fernando Alonso's flying McLaren at the start, and after rejoining following repairs under the safety car the team kept him in the race until it was clear he had no chance of a point.

"He got caught in someone else's accident," said Red Bull team principal Christian Horner. "The mechanics did a wonderful job to get the car turned around within two laps of

the lead car. We ran as long as we thought we might gain time back in the race, but in the end we had to make the decision to retire the car.

"There was some damage to the floor, so he was losing quite a bit of load. But it wasn't too bad, and he was running at the same pace as [Valtteri] Bottas. We were looking at the predictions; I said, 'Let's make a decision on lap 30'. We had no chance of scoring any points, the best place finish was going to be 16th, so it didn't make sense to continue."

Team-mate Max Verstappen's largely lonely run to third place elevated him above Ricciardo in the drivers' championship.



ANDRE/SUTTON



GORIA/SUTTON  
motorsport  
IMAGES

## Gasly scores again after Red Bull deal

Pierre Gasly spent a little time on the Thursday before the race acquainting himself with the cockpit of the Red Bull Formula 1 car, following confirmation he will race for the team next season. And he celebrated the deal with a strong run to ninth place at a circuit where Toro Rosso struggled.

Gasly was 11th fastest in qualifying, crediting a big aerodynamic tow on his first Q2 lap for his pace. He was promoted to 10th thanks to Valtteri Bottas's penalty, and ran eighth

early on. Although Bottas's pace in recovery inevitably led to Gasly losing the position on lap 18 on the run to Les Combes, he was never under serious threat from Sauber driver Marcus Ericsson – who picked up the final point for 10th.

"It was a really positive race and weekend overall for us," said Gasly. "On such a track, with all the long straights, we knew we would struggle compared to the others, and to be just out of the top 10 in quali and finish ninth in the race was over our expectations."



## FREE PRACTICE 1

POS	DRIVER	TIME
1	Vettel	1m44.358s
2	Verstappen	1m44.509s
3	Hamilton	1m44.676s
4	Raikkonen	1m44.718s
5	Bottas	1m44.724s
6	Ricciardo	1m45.558s
7	Ocon	1m45.786s
8	Hulkenberg	1m45.951s
9	Perez	1m46.169s
10	Sainz	1m46.210s
11	Gasly	1m46.300s
12	Grosjean	1m46.387s
13	Leclerc	1m46.554s
14	Ericsson	1m46.557s
15	Hartley	1m46.932s
16	Stroll	1m46.965s
17	Magnussen	1m47.012s
18	Norris	1m47.364s
19	Sirotkin	1m47.367s
20	Vandoorne	1m47.452s

WEATHER 15C, cloudy

## FREE PRACTICE 2

POS	DRIVER	TIME
1	Raikkonen	1m43.355s
2	Hamilton	1m43.523s
3	Bottas	1m43.803s
4	Verstappen	1m44.046s
5	Vettel	1m44.129s
6	Ricciardo	1m44.250s
7	Perez	1m44.662s
8	Sainz	1m45.481s
9	Ericsson	1m45.537s
10	Leclerc	1m45.622s
11	Hulkenberg	1m45.753s
12	Grosjean	1m45.817s
13	Ocon	1m45.935s
14	Magnussen	1m46.078s
15	Gasly	1m46.080s
16	Alonso	1m46.153s
17	Hartley	1m46.337s
18	Sirotkin	1m46.451s
19	Stroll	1m46.470s
20	Vandoorne	1m46.496s

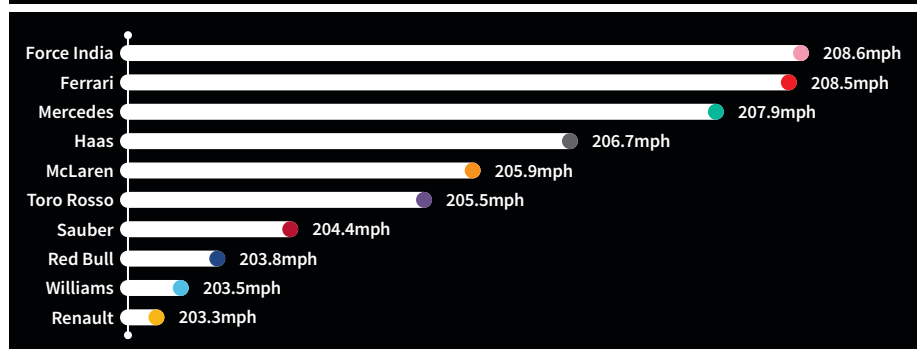
WEATHER 17C, cloudy

## FREE PRACTICE 3

POS	DRIVER	TIME
1	Vettel	1m42.661s
2	Raikkonen	1m42.724s
3	Hamilton	1m42.798s
4	Bottas	1m43.464s
5	Verstappen	1m44.048s
6	Ricciardo	1m44.479s
7	Leclerc	1m44.963s
8	Perez	1m45.341s
9	Hulkenberg	1m45.464s
10	Ocon	1m45.485s
11	Ericsson	1m45.536s
12	Grosjean	1m45.814s
13	Sainz	1m45.925s
14	Magnussen	1m46.087s
15	Gasly	1m46.182s
16	Hartley	1m46.259s
17	Stroll	1m46.502s
18	Sirotkin	1m46.630s
19	Alonso	1m46.942s
20	Vandoorne	1m47.061s

WEATHER 19C, cloudy

## SPEED TRAP



## QUALIFYING 1

POS	DRIVER	TIME
1	Raikkonen	1m42.585s
2	Bottas	1m42.805s
3	Hamilton	1m42.977s
4	Vettel	1m43.035s
5	Verstappen	1m43.199s
6	Grosjean	1m43.597s
7	Ricciardo	1m43.604s
8	Leclerc	1m43.654s
9	Magnussen	1m43.834s
10	Ericsson	1m43.846s
11	Ocon	1m44.003s
12	Perez	1m44.004s
13	Hulkenberg	1m44.145s
14	Hartley	1m44.153s
15	Gasly	1m44.221s
16	Sainz	1m44.489s
17	Alonso	1m44.917s
18	Sirotkin	1m44.998s
19	Stroll	1m45.134s
20	Vandoorne	1m45.307s

## QUALIFYING 2

POS	DRIVER	TIME
1	Vettel	1m41.501s
2	Raikkonen	1m41.533s
3	Hamilton	1m41.553s
4	Bottas	1m42.191s
5	Verstappen	1m42.554s
6	Perez	1m43.014s
7	Grosjean	1m43.042s
8	Ricciardo	1m43.126s
9	Ocon	1m43.302s
10	Magnussen	1m43.320s
11	Gasly	1m43.844s
12	Hartley	1m43.865s
13	Leclerc	1m44.062s
14	Ericsson	1m44.301s
15	Hulkenberg	no time

## QUALIFYING 3

POS	DRIVER	TIME
1	Hamilton	1m58.179s
2	Vettel	1m58.905s
3	Ocon	2m01.851s
4	Perez	2m01.894s
5	Grosjean	2m02.122s
6	Raikkonen	2m02.671s
7	Verstappen	2m02.769s
8	Ricciardo	2m02.939s
9	Magnussen	2m04.933s
10	Bottas	no time

WEATHER 13C, cloudy/rain

## SEASON STATS

## DRIVERS' CHAMPIONSHIP

1	Hamilton	231
2	Vettel	214
3	Raikkonen	146
4	Bottas	144
5	Verstappen	120
6	Ricciardo	118
7	Hulkenberg	52
8	Magnussen	49
9	Alonso	44
10	Perez	40
11	Ocon	37
12	Sainz	30
13	Gasly	28
14	Grosjean	27
15	Leclerc	13
16	Vandoorne	8
17	Ericsson	6
18	Stroll	4
19	Hartley	2
20	Sirotkin	0

## CONSTRUCTORS' CHAMPIONSHIP

1	Mercedes	375
2	Ferrari	360
3	Red Bull	238
4	Renault	82
5	Haas	76
6	McLaren	52
7	Toro Rosso	30
8	Sauber	19
9	Racing Point Force India	18*
10	Williams	4

\* Team lost its 59 points scored in rounds 1-12 as Force India due to its name change.

## QUALIFYING BATTLE

Hamilton	8	5	Bottas
Vettel	11	2	Raikkonen
Ricciardo	2	10	Verstappen
Perez	3	9	Ocon
Stroll	5	8	Sirotkin
Hulkenberg	8	5	Sainz
Gasly	8	3	Hartley
Grosjean	4	8	Magnussen
Vandoorne	0	13	Alonso
Ericsson	3	10	Leclerc

## WINS

Hamilton	5
Vettel	5
Ricciardo	2
Verstappen	1
Bottas	1
Ricciardo	1

## FASTEST LAPS

Bottas	4
Ricciardo	4
Verstappen	2
Hamilton	1
Raikkonen	1
Vettel	1

## POLE POSITIONS

Hamilton	6
Vettel	5
Bottas	1
Ricciardo	1



## STARTING GRID

<b>10 Gasly</b> #10 1m43.844s	<b>8 Ricciardo</b> #3 2m02.939s	<b>6 Raikkonen</b> #7 2m02.671s	<b>4 Perez</b> #11 2m01.894s	<b>2 Vettel</b> #5 1m58.905s
<b>9 Magnussen</b> #20 2m04.933s	<b>7 Verstappen</b> #33 2m02.769s	<b>5 Grosjean</b> #8 2m02.122s	<b>3 Ocon</b> #31 2m01.851s	<b>1 Hamilton</b> #44 1m58.179s

## RACE RESULTS ROUND 13/21 44 LAPS - 191.42 MILES

POS	DRIVER	TEAM	FINISH TIME	LED	TYRES
1	<b>Sebastian Vettel</b> (D)	Ferrari	1h23m34.476s	44	SSu, Sn
2	<b>Lewis Hamilton</b> (GB)	Mercedes	+11.061s		SSu, Sn
3	<b>Max Verstappen</b> (NL)	Red Bull-Renault	+31.372s		SSu, Sn
4	<b>Valtteri Bottas</b> (FIN)	Mercedes	+1m08.605s		Su, SSn, Su
5	<b>Sergio Perez</b> (MEX)	Force India-Mercedes	+1m11.023s		SSu, Sn
6	<b>Esteban Ocon</b> (F)	Force India-Mercedes	+1m19.520s		SSu, Sn
7	<b>Romain Grosjean</b> (F)	Haas-Ferrari	+1m25.953s		SSu, Sn
8	<b>Kevin Magnussen</b> (DK)	Haas-Ferrari	+1m27.639s		SSu, Sn
9	<b>Pierre Gasly</b> (F)	Toro Rosso-Honda	+1m45.892s		SSn, Sn
10	<b>Marcus Ericsson</b> (S)	Sauber-Ferrari	-1 lap		Sn, SSn
11	<b>Carlos Sainz</b> (E)	Renault	-1 lap		Mn, SSn
12	<b>Sergey Sirotkin</b> (RUS)	Williams-Mercedes	-1 lap		Sn, SSn
13	<b>Lance Stroll</b> (CDN)	Williams-Mercedes	-1 lap		Sn, SSn
14	<b>Brendon Hartley</b> (NZ)	Toro Rosso-Honda	-1 lap		Sn, SSn
15	<b>Stoffel Vandoorne</b> (B)	McLaren-Renault	-1 lap		Sn, Mn, SSn
R	<b>Daniel Ricciardo</b> (AUS)	Red Bull-Renault	28 laps-accident damage		SSu, Sn
R	<b>Kimi Raikkonen</b> (FIN)	Ferrari	8 laps-accident damage		SSu, Mn
R	<b>Charles Leclerc</b> (MC)	Sauber-Ferrari	0 laps-collision		Sn
R	<b>Fernando Alonso</b> (E)	McLaren-Renault	0 laps-collision		Sn
R	<b>Nico Hulkenberg</b> (D)	Renault	0 laps-collision		Sn

## FASTEST LAPS

POS	DRIVER	TIME	GAP	LAP
1	<b>Bottas</b>	1m46.286s	-	32
2	<b>Vettel</b>	1m46.644s	+0.358s	25
3	<b>Hamilton</b>	1m46.721s	+0.435s	23
4	<b>Verstappen</b>	1m46.946s	+0.660s	36
5	<b>Magnussen</b>	1m47.937s	+1.651s	36
6	<b>Ocon</b>	1m48.078s	+1.792s	35
7	<b>Perez</b>	1m48.080s	+1.794s	38
8	<b>Grosjean</b>	1m48.283s	+1.997s	35
9	<b>Gasly</b>	1m48.588s	+2.302s	36
10	<b>Sainz</b>	1m48.670s	+2.384s	32
11	<b>Ericsson</b>	1m48.694s	+2.408s	35
12	<b>Hartley</b>	1m48.756s	+2.470s	33
13	<b>Vandoorne</b>	1m48.956s	+2.670s	38
14	<b>Sirotkin</b>	1m49.113s	+2.827s	42
15	<b>Ricciardo</b>	1m49.242s	+2.956s	27
16	<b>Stroll</b>	1m49.287s	+3.001s	39
17	<b>Raikkonen</b>	1m54.320s	+8.034s	6
-	<b>Hulkenberg</b>	no time	-	-
-	<b>Alonso</b>	no time	-	-
-	<b>Leclerc</b>	no time	-	-

WEATHER 16C, cloudy

TYRES n - New set u - Used set Available | SH - Superhard H - Hard M - Medium S - Soft SS - Supersoft US - Ultrasoft HS - Hypersoft I - Intermediate W - Wet

WINNER'S AVERAGE SPEED 137.43mph. FASTEST LAP AVERAGE SPEED 147.42mph.

## RACE BRIEFING

### FP1 DRIVERS

**LANDO NORRIS** replaced Alonso at McLaren

### GRID PENALTIES

**HULKENBERG** required to start from the back for

additional power units used  
**BOTTAS** required to start from the back for additional power units used

**SAINZ** required to start from the back for additional power units used

**VANDOORNE** required to start from the back for additional power units used

### RACE PENALTIES

**HULKENBERG** 10-place grid penalty for next race

and three penalty points for colliding with Alonso  
**BOTTAS** Five seconds added to race time and two penalty points for colliding with Sirotkin

## STAT

# 111

Hamilton has now started 111 F1 races for Mercedes, one more than he started for McLaren

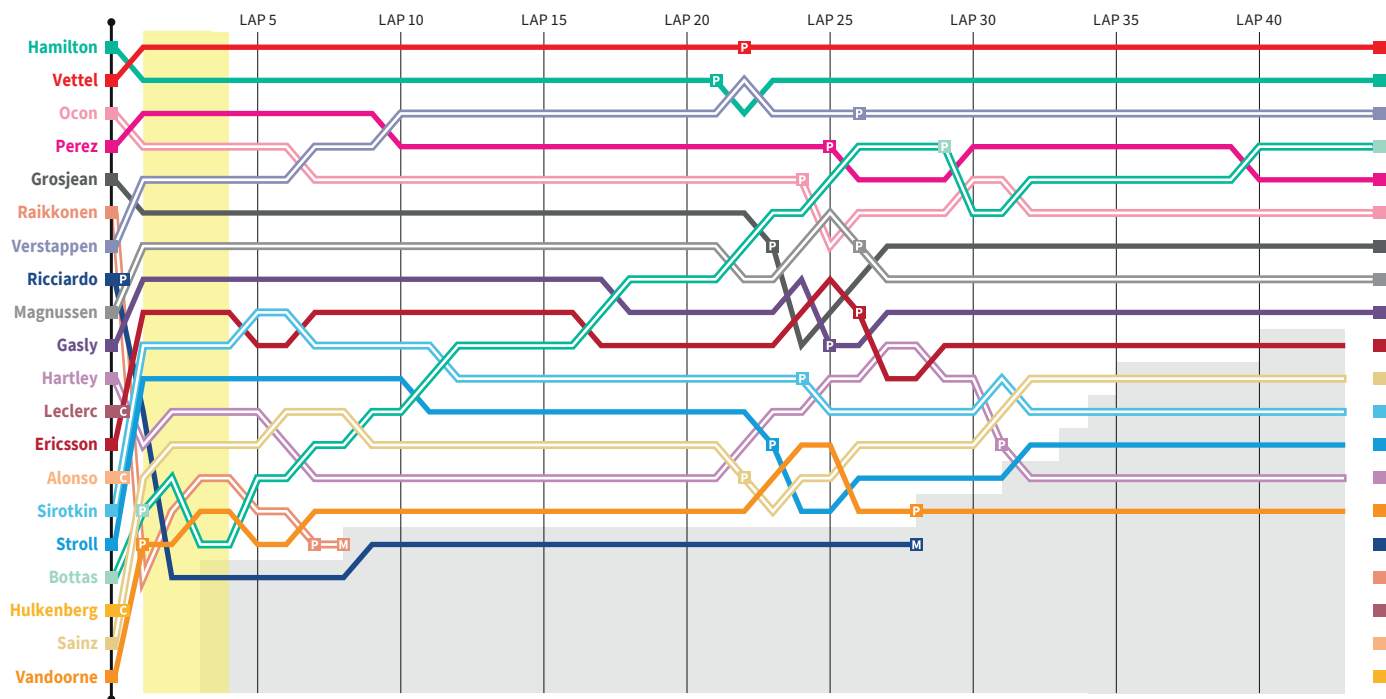
## NEXT RACE

# SEPTEMBER 2 ITALIAN GP

Monza



## LAP CHART What happened, when



P Pitstop C Crash M Mechanical failure S Spin Pen Penalty L Car lapped SC Safety car

# 'A NEEDLESS MISTAKE FOR A DRIVER OF HIS CALIBRE'

*Seven drivers just fell short of their best, but perhaps small blemishes at the most celebrated F1 circuit of them all can be forgiven. One error wasn't so small though...*

EDD STRAW

## MERCEDES



LEWIS HAMILTON

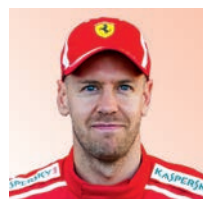
**9** Hamilton rose to the occasion in wet qualifying, but was always going to struggle to hold that advantage in the race. The lock-up at the chicane meant he was further behind Vettel than he should have been and cost him a shot at retaking the lead – probably temporarily – after a strong initial restart.



VALTTERI BOTTAS

**7** Fourth from 17th thanks to taking a new engine package was about as good as he could have hoped for. Bottas's move on Hartley at Eau Rouge was particularly bold, but he is marked down for smashing into Sirotkin at the start. Only the safety car ensured he didn't pay a higher price.

## FERRARI



SEBASTIAN VETTEL

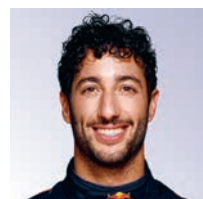
**9** On Sunday, save for a dab of wheelspin at the restart, Vettel did everything right. This included a rare on-track pass for the lead against his world title rival. Vettel could have done better in wet qualifying – particularly on the brakes at the chicane – meaning his work wasn't quite perfect.



KIMI RAIKKONEN

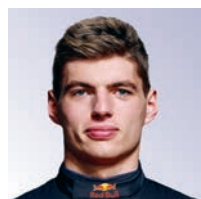
**8** The phrase 'looked a credible pole threat before things unravelled in Q3' is all too familiar, but this time it wasn't his fault. Raikkonen didn't have enough fuel for a key final lap and ended up sixth on the grid. His race was ruined at Turn 1, but given his pace he gets a strong rating.

## RED BULL



DANIEL RICCIARDO

**7** He didn't have Verstappen's pace and was at a loss to explain his qualifying deficit. Race day is his trump card, but he lost the chance to make amends thanks to Alonso's airborne McLaren clattering his rear wing. His pace was decent enough in the circumstances prior to retirement.



MAX VERSTAPPEN

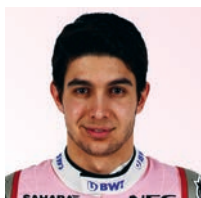
**9** The Red Bull was third quickest at Spa, so a podium is another good return. Qualifying wasn't perfect, but like Raikkonen he didn't have enough fuel to post a lap in the best conditions. Cleared the Force Indias effectively and ensured he was well out of reach of the recovering Bottas.

## FORCE INDIA



SERGIO PEREZ

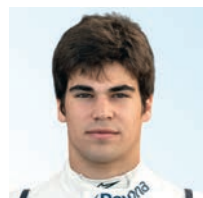
**9** Perez set eye-catching times on Friday, and he was disappointed to miss a shot at pole position. Marginally slower than Ocon in qualifying, he got ahead of his team-mate on the opening lap and stayed there. Did what he needed to for his best result since the podium in Baku.



ESTEBAN OCON

**9** Ocon had two hero moments – qualifying third and then briefly threatening to pass Hamilton and Vettel in one move. He might have pulled it off had he not, very wisely, thought better of it. It meant he lost out to Perez, then followed his team-mate, never hinting at an edge on pace, to bank sixth.

## WILLIAMS



LANCE STROLL

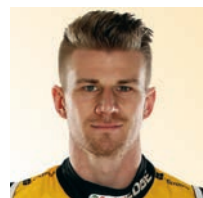
**7** Stroll was 0.136s slower than Sirotkin in qualifying thanks to a wide moment. He ran behind Sirotkin at a similar pace all race. Missed a shot at an undercut when he was brought in to cover a Carlos Sainz stop, completing an in-lap 0.4s slower than Sirotkin. He was 2.2s behind him at the flag.



SERGEY SIROTKIN

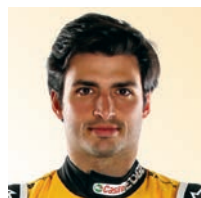
**8** Had the edge over Stroll both in qualifying and the race, and ran in the points in the early stages. He kept himself close enough to the top 10, and was fast enough when it mattered to ensure Stroll stayed behind. In the hunt to nab a point but needed a little more help from his rivals to score.

## RENAULT



NICO HULKENBERG

**4** Took a relaxed approach to qualifying thanks to a power unit change that ensured he would start at the back, but was still faster than Sainz by 0.344s in Q1. Then made a big error on below-temperature brakes at the start and clattered into Alonso. A needless mistake for a driver of his calibre.



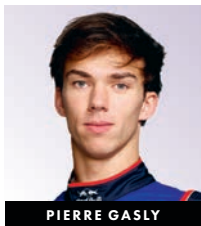
CARLOS SAINZ

**6** Complained about a strange lack of rear grip that led to a Q1 elimination, and was outpaced by his team-mate – who wasn't even mounting a serious qualifying bid. Finished 12.4s away from the top 10 in the race. The car wasn't great, but Sainz didn't appear to get the best out of it.





## TORO ROSSO



PIERRE GASLY

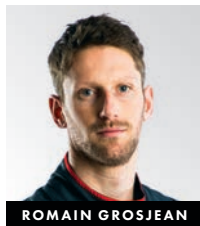
**9** Not the strongest of events for Toro Rosso, but Gasly picked up a tow in Q2 to earn 11th, which became 10th thanks to Bottas's penalty. In the race, ninth was the best he could have done given the car's pace. Another accomplished drive, including an extended stint on supersofts, for his fourth points finish.



BRENDON HARTLEY

**7** Again, it looks worse for Hartley on paper despite performing well. Not far off Gasly on pace, he earned the benefit of the doubt for his Q2 spin after locking the rears into La Source because of a suspected problem. Running long after starting on softs wasn't ideal, and left him a distant 14th.

## HAAS



ROMAIN GROSJEAN

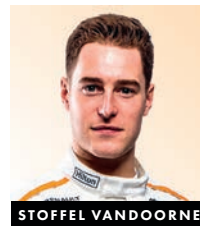
**9** Grosjean started the second half of the season as he'd finished the first, by qualifying and racing well to bag decent points. He didn't have to work too hard in the race for seventh place, but that was as good as Haas was going to get – and largely thanks to his strong performance in wet qualifying.



KEVIN MAGNUSSEN

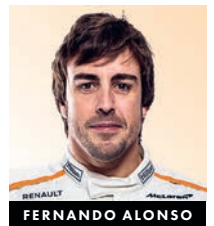
**8** Magnussen stuck with Haas's upgraded rear wing, while Grosjean used the old. It might have been a disadvantage. What made the difference between them was an off on what should have been his best qualifying lap. He followed Grosjean in the race, putting in a good drive to eighth.

## McLAREN



STOFFEL VANDOORNE

**5** His McLaren nightmare continued with problems in practice, culminating in Bottas inadvertently pushing him off in FP3. Vandoorne was four tenths slower than Alonso in qualifying and made no impact in the race. How much is down to him or to McLaren's problems remains to be seen.



FERNANDO ALONSO

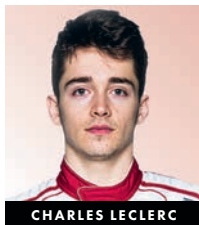
**7** After sitting out FP1 to allow Norris some track time, Alonso was way off even reaching Q2 in qualifying. He was helpless to avoid being punted into a spin and being launched over Leclerc's Sauber at the start, but even without that the McLaren wouldn't have been a points threat.

## SAUBER



MARCUS ERICSSON

**8** An engine problem in Q2 restricted him and meant he couldn't match his Q1 pace. But Ericsson claimed his third points finish in five races. Without Leclerc, it's hard to judge if the Sauber was good for Gasly's ninth place, but Ericsson did lose time battling with Sirotkin early on.

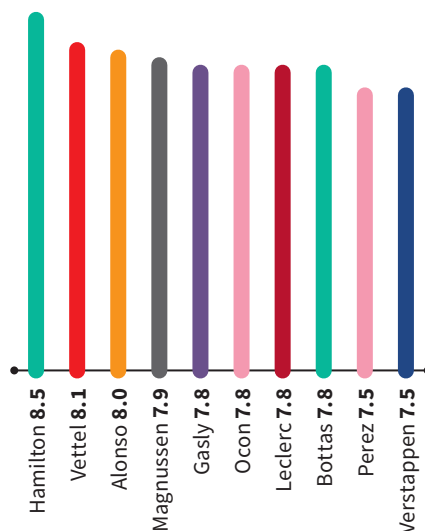


CHARLES LECLERC

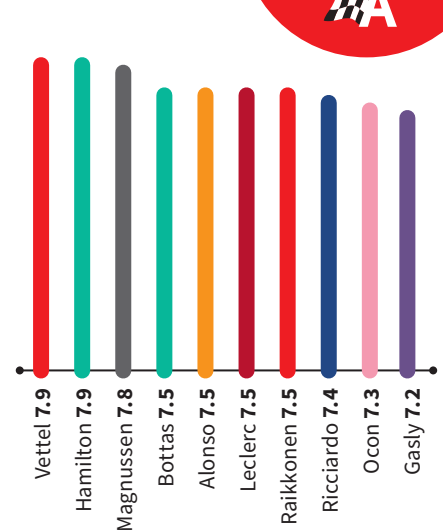
**7** Could have been in Q3, but for the car pulling to the right under braking and making it impossible to match his stellar Q1 time. The race went even worse as Alonso's McLaren bounced over the top of his car and ended his day immediately. A miserable weekend on paper, but Leclerc's pace was good.

## TOP 10 AVERAGE RATINGS

AUTOSPORTS' RATING  
AFTER ROUND 13



READERS' RATING  
AFTER ROUND 13



GIVE  
YOUR DRIVER  
RATINGS

VISIT  
AUTOSPORT.COM





# Exclusions give Turkington crucial boost

*With two key rivals falling foul of post-race scrutineering, Colin Turkington's grip tightened on the BTCC title during a wet weekend at Knockhill*

MATT JAMES





1958

**BTCC**

2018

**60**  
YEARS





**I**t looks like a paint roller on a long handle. But it is a piece of equipment that is a vital tool for the British Touring Car Championship officials.

After a race, the roller must be able to pass under the car unimpeded to prove that a machine has completed the race with its minimum rideheight intact. After Ash Sutton had taken his second win of the meeting at Knockhill last weekend following a stunning opener, he pulled up in the parc ferme area. The technical official got out his roller and it failed to go underneath the Team BMR Levorg. Several attempts were made, but it simply didn't happen.

The podium celebrations took place as normal while the officials checked and rechecked the car. It ultimately failed.

But there was further drama. Tom Ingram, who had backed up sixth place in the opening race with second behind Sutton in race two, was also wearing a frown. The roller could not squeeze underneath the front of his Speedworks Motorsport Toyota Avensis either.

While that handed a maiden victory of the season to WSR BMW 125i M Sport man Andrew Jordan, who had been near the front all weekend, it also gave Jordan's team-mate Colin Turkington a massive boost in his title hopes.

Turkington had finished second in race one behind Sutton, and was then promoted to fourth in race two after Sutton and Ingram were pinged. The two censured drivers are the others in the heart of the fight for the crown alongside the Northern Irishman.

What it meant was that Turkington started the finale from third with only 33kg of success ballast, while his two foes were banished to the back of the race-three grid with 75kg and 66kg of extra weight.

This is very much likely to be the tipping point of the title chase. Turkington raced to second spot in the finale behind Tom Chilton's Motorbase Performance Ford Focus. Even though Sutton scorched through the field to land eighth at the flag (while Ingram was 16th), Turkington left Fife with a handy 43-point buffer in his pocket. With only two meetings left, he will be the hot favourite – not that he is admitting it.



"You can never take anything for granted in this championship – just look at the ups and downs there have been today," said Turkington. "But I would always rather have the points in my pocket than be out there chasing them. Yes, this weekend has gone very well for us given what has happened to the others."

Turkington had a lucky escape of his own earlier in the meeting. While he was battling for second place in race one with the Team Parker Racing BMW 125i M Sport of Stephen Jelley, the two-time champion

uncharacteristically nudged into the back of his rival and pushed him into the gravel.

Turkington said: "I feel sorry for Stephen, and we had been having a great scrap. He made a small slip coming out of the chicane and we both went to the inside of the track going into Clark's. He hit the brakes and I had nowhere to go and we touched. I will go and apologise to him straight away – there was certainly no malice in it."

Jelley accepted the apology, and Turkington was given two penalty points on his race licence but, crucially, was allowed to keep his result. The Northern Irishman said that the handling of his car was slightly awry as he slipped to sixth in race two, but that became fourth when the under-the-car roller had done its deeds.

WSR was pleased with its weekend's work. Jordan had been right in the hunt for pole position but was ultimately thwarted by yellow flags. He started third before dropping to fourth in race one, but a set-up tweak on the spring rates for race two worked. He finished third on the road, but was promoted to the win. "I will take them any way they come," said the Pirtek-backed man.

In the final race, Jordan battled throughout and eventually wriggled free for another







Sutton's and  
BMR's Knockhill joy  
was short-lived

ALL PICS: JEP/LAT  
motorsport  
IMAGES

podium with third spot to push himself up to fourth in the points.

Sutton's race one win was achieved from eighth on the grid after a barnstorming drive. He would have been the only driver who was pleased when he saw the persistent rain on Sunday morning. In a car that he still feels is giving away something in terms of straightline speed, a wet track was his only chance.

He is a master in tricky conditions, too. He grabbed the lead at the halfway stage of the opener when he jumped the ailing Team Dynamics Honda Civic Type R of early leader Dan Cammish and zoomed clear, despite a late-race safety car wiping out his seven-second lead. "It was tricky, because they've laid new Tarmac here," said Sutton. "No-one knew how much grip there was, and as I was the leader, I was the one finding out first."

Then there was the hammer blow of the second race. Sutton was pragmatic, but it was obvious that losing what would have been 22 points was painful. "The car was fine on the left-hand side, and at the front and the back. However, it failed on the right-hand side. I had slipped off the track earlier on at Duffus Dip when I was pushing and maybe that caused a bit of damage. I can't change it now, so we have to look forward." >>



## IS WINNING NOW TOO EASY?

Tom Chilton was pretty impressed when he stepped from his Motorbase Ford Focus after winning race three to be told that he was part of modern-day BTCC history.

"It's pretty cool," said the 33-year-old when he was told that he had become the 14th different race winner of the season.

It is an old argument. While it is great that so many cars stand a chance of taking victory, the flip side of that coin could mean that it is now too easy to win a race. Former champion and now ITV4 BTCC commentator Tim Harvey agreed: "I think it is possible, with so many factors involved like weight, tyres and reversed grids, that it is now easier to claim an individual race win. But that also



**"IT IS POSSIBLE THAT IT IS NOW EASIER TO CLAIM AN INDIVIDUAL WIN"**

**TIM HARVEY**

means that it is so much harder to win a championship now, with attacks coming on any given weekend from any angle."

That is true – but the championship fight always boils down to the best drivers on the grid. Look at the top three in the points this season: Colin Turkington (BMW), Tom Ingram (Toyota) and Ash Sutton (Subaru). It would be hard to argue against these three being the best of the crop this term, even though Turkington has only won one of the 24 races so far.

The technical infringement that both Sutton and Ingram had in race two at

Knockhill could well have ripped the heart out of the title battle for this year, though. Losing all those points (and the subsequent struggles it prompted in race three) means that both have seen Turkington zoom to a healthy buffer with just six races left.

Given the way the championship is now, there is no guarantee that any of those three will be at the front and grabbing the big points in any of those events. That is just the landscape of the modern British Touring Car Championship.

**MATT JAMES**

STAT

14<sup>TH</sup>

Chilton became the 14th different race winner this season, a new BTCC record







The reigning champion is known for his charging drives, and he needed one. A disjointed race three with safety cars gave him the opportunity he needed, and he skilfully guided his way through the midfield to land eighth and at least rescue eight marks.

Ingram was less fortunate. He had hauled 66kg from the third row to sixth in race one, but once he was shorn of serious weight, he flew through the pack in race two to climb to second with some seriously good overtaking.

He was also pragmatic about the penalty that could well have derailed his title hopes. "The rules are black and white – they are written in a book!" he observed. "There was contact in the queue for the hairpin on the opening lap and that might have caused some damage. I am not sure that would have represented a performance advantage, but we will have to take it on the chin."

Ingram then had to avoid a midfield shunt in the early stages of race three, which restricted him to a pointless 16th.

Cammish was also pointless in race three when his Civic Type R overheated. That was a shame, because he had driven well all weekend. A maiden pole position was helped

by the fact he was carrying no ballast into the event, but he fought tooth-and-nail for top spot with Jordan and the rejuvenated Jelley and eventually prevailed by 0.023s.

"I think I took a knife to a gunfight," he mused after finishing third in the opener. The rear-wheel-drive cars all around him made his performance even more impressive.

That meant he was saddled with 57kg for race two and was forced to fight a rear-guard action, but fifth was a solid return, even before that became his second podium of the meeting when the top two were booted out.

The car was overheating in race three and he was losing power. Cammish slipped down the order to an eventual 17th place.

Fellow Team Dynamics Honda Civic man Matt Neal came to the meeting equal fourth in the points table. Because he was tied with Jack Goff (Eurotech Honda Civic) he would only carry 39kg into the event but that still tipped the car over the edge.

"It is interesting, because our car is fantastic over the kerbs, which there are lots of here, but we are also strong on the faster corners, and there aren't any," he explained. A busy track in qualifying left him with 21st

spot, but the real nadir came on lap 11 of the opening race. Matt Simpson's Simpson Racing Honda Civic Type R cannoned into the side of the factory version at the hairpin, which demolished the rear suspension of the three-time champion's car.

Once that happens, a driver has to start at the back for race two and, in the compact midfield, that spells trouble. In the end, Neal only scored one point for 15th in race three.

Josh Cook dragged himself up to fifth in the points with a strong weekend. The softly sprung Power Maxed Racing Vauxhall Astra, which always showed lots of pitch and yaw, performs well in the soggy conditions.

He was stripped of a qualifying lap and therefore started 10th and, if he had been closer to the front, it is possible he could have won the opening race. He climbed to fifth and that translated into second spot in the second event after the dramas for others. Lugging 39kg to sixth in the finale rounded out a weekend where he was on form.

The final victory was reserved for Chilton, and that was a long way from where he had started the weekend. Traffic spoiled his qualifying run on a grid where the top 26 were covered by one second.

He finished 12th in race one after starting 15th, and improved that to sixth in race two. There was a slice of luck with reversed-grid pole, but he didn't squander it despite the wet-but-drying track.

"The team has worked so hard and we have been so hungry for this," said the ex-World Touring Car racer, who won his first race since his 'first' British touring car career ended in 2011. "I looked after my tyres, and I had enough in hand to fend off Turkington when he appeared behind me."

His puppy-dog enthusiasm for his victory contrasted with Turkington's knowing smile.

Turkington might not have won a race in Scotland, but it could well be the venue where he nailed down a third career crown. ❧





**RESULTS RACE 1 (27 LAPS – 34.206 MILES)**

POS	DRIVER	TEAM / CAR	TIME
1	<b>Ash Sutton</b> (GB)	Team BMR / Subaru Levorg (57kg)	27m34.050s
2	<b>Colin Turkington</b> (GB)	WSR / BMW 125i M Sport (75kg)	+1.287s
3	<b>Dan Cammish</b> (GB)	Team Dynamics / Honda Civic Type R	+2.779s
4	<b>Andrew Jordan</b> (GB)	WSR / BMW 125i M Sport (15kg)	+2.999s
5	<b>Josh Cook</b> (GB)	Power Maxed Racing / Vauxhall Astra (21kg)	+3.433s
6	<b>Tom Ingram</b> (GB)	Speedworks / Toyota Avensis (66kg)	+4.370s
7	<b>Tom Oliphant</b> (GB)	Ciceley Motorsport / Mercedes-Benz A-Class	+6.606s
8	<b>Chris Smiley</b> (GB)	BTC Norlin / Honda Civic Type R	+7.015s
9	<b>Adam Morgan</b> (GB)	Ciceley Motorsport / Mercedes-Benz A-Class (27kg)	+7.778s
10	<b>Rory Butcher</b> (GB)	Amd Tuning / MG6	+8.108s
11	<b>Ricky Collard</b> (GB)	WSR / BMW 125i M Sport	+8.412s
12	<b>Tom Chilton</b> (GB)	Motorbase Performance / Ford Focus RS (27kg)	+8.804s
13	<b>Brett Smith</b> (GB)	Eurotech Racing / Honda Civic Type R	+10.166s
14	<b>Rob Austin</b> (GB)	HMS Racing / Alfa Romeo Giulietta	+10.452s
15	<b>Jack Goff</b> (GB)	Eurotech Racing / Honda Civic Type R (39kg)	+11.192s
16	<b>Ollie Jackson</b> (GB)	Amd Tuning / Audi S3 Saloon	+11.847s
17	<b>Sam Tordoff</b> (GB)	Motorbase Performance / Ford Focus RS	+12.096s
18	<b>Aiden Moffat</b> (GB)	Laser Tools Racing / Mercedes-Benz A-Class	+15.787s
19	<b>Senna Proctor</b> (GB)	Power Maxed Racing / Vauxhall Astra (9kg)	+16.130s
20	<b>Glynn Geddie</b> (GB)	Amd Tuning / MG6	+16.371s
21	<b>Matt Simpson</b> (GB)	Simpson Racing / Honda Civic Type R	+16.634s
22	<b>Sam Smelt</b> (GB)	Amd Tuning / Audi S3 Saloon	+17.346s
23	<b>Mike Bushell</b> (GB)	Team Hard / Volkswagen CC	+18.388s
24	<b>James Cole</b> (GB)	Motorbase Performance / Ford Focus RS	+19.101s
25	<b>Daniel Lloyd</b> (GB)	BTC Norlin / Honda Civic Type R	+19.287s
26	<b>Jason Plato</b> (GB)	Team BMR / Subaru Levorg	+19.660s
27	<b>Ollie Pidgley</b> (GB)	Team Hard / Volkswagen CC	+21.098s
28	<b>Carl Boardley</b> (GB)	Team Hard / Volkswagen CC (45kg)	+21.452s
R	<b>Stephen Jelley</b> (GB)	Team Parker Racing / BMW 125i M Sport	18 laps-accident
R	<b>Matt Neal</b> (GB)	Team Dynamics / Honda Civic Type R (39kg)	11 laps-accident damage
R	<b>Bobby Thompson</b> (GB)	Team Hard / Volkswagen CC	0 laps-suspected oil leak

**Winner's average speed** 74.44mph. **Fastest lap** Sutton 56.410s, 80.85mph.

**QUALIFYING**

**1 Cammish 50.929s; 2 Jelley 50.952s; 3 Jordan 50.980s; 4 Turkington 51.172s; 5 Smiley 51.234s; 6 Ingram 51.236s; 7 Oliphant 51.274s; 8 Sutton 51.313s; 9 Morgan 51.343s; 10 Cook 51.351s; 11 Smith 51.377s; 12 Collard 51.381s; 13 Austin 51.385s; 14 Lloyd 51.389s; 15 Chilton 51.390s; 16 Tordoff 51.394s; 17 Goff 51.433s; 18 Plato 51.502s; 19 Jackson 51.511s; 20 Moffat 51.525s; 21 Neal 51.575s; 22 Cole 51.608s; 23 Butcher 51.664s; 24 Proctor 51.675s; 25 Bushell 51.693s; 26 Simpson 51.828s; 27 Geddie 52.142s; 28 Boardley 52.163s; 29 Smelt 52.273s; 30 Pidgley 52.854s; 31 Thompson no time.**



**GRID RACE 2** Decided by result of Race 1.

**RACE 2** (20 LAPS – 25.338 MILES)

**1 Jordan (48kg) 24m12.823s; 2 Cook (39kg) +1.222s; 3 Cammish (57kg) +1.835s; 4 Turkington (66kg) +2.577s; 5 Morgan (15kg) +3.077s; 6 Chilton +3.659s; 7 Butcher (9kg) +4.305s; 8 Goff +6.981s; 9 Austin +7.653s; 10 Smiley (21kg) +8.239s; 11 Tordoff +8.586s; 12 Collard +8.913s; 13 Moffat +9.413s; 14 Lloyd +10.083s; 15 Geddie +10.522s; 16 Proctor +11.107s; 17 Neal +11.755s; 18 Cole +12.219s; 19 Smith +12.585s; 20 Simpson +14.839s; 21 Pidgley +16.001s; EX Sutton (75kg) rideheight; EX Ingram (33kg) rideheight; R Smelt 20 laps-accident; R Plato 20 laps-accident damage; R Thompson 17 laps-accident damage; R Bushell 17 laps-accident damage; R Oliphant (27kg) 10 laps-accident; R Jelley 10 laps-technical; R Boardley 6 laps-accident; R Jackson 0 laps-accident.**

**Winner's average speed** 62.78mph. **Fastest lap** Cook 57.756s, 78.96mph.

**GRID RACE 3** Decided by result of Race 2, with top six reversed.

**RACE 3** (27 LAPS – 34.206 MILES)

**1 Chilton (21kg) 27m39.687s; 2 Turkington (33kg) +0.948s; 3 Jordan (57kg) +6.332s; 4 Morgan (27kg) +10.899s; 5 Tordoff +11.112s; 6 Cook (48kg) +11.590s; 7 Butcher (15kg) +12.075s; 8 Sutton (75kg) +15.266s; 9 Goff (9kg) +16.153s; 10 Lloyd +16.446s; 11 Smiley +17.016s; 12 Moffat +17.533s; 13 Austin +18.607s; 14 Jelley +19.057s; 15 Neal +21.412s; 16 Ingram (66kg) +25.592s; 17 Cammish (39kg) +26.595s; 18 Geddie +27.150s; 19 Plato +27.210s; 20 Thompson +27.600s; 21 Oliphant +28.149s; 22 Cole +31.206s; 23 Boardley +34.540s; 24 Collard -1 lap; 25 Bushell -2 laps; R Smith 21 laps-accident; R Proctor 20 laps-accident; R Pidgley 19 laps-technical; R Jackson 7 laps-accident; R Smelt 2 laps-accident damage; R Simpson 2 laps-accident.**

**Winner's average speed** 74.19mph.

**Fastest lap** Turkington 56.098s, 81.30mph.

**CHAMPIONSHIP**

**1 Turkington 269; 2 Ingram 226; 3 Sutton 218; 4 Jordan 210; 5 Cook 205; 6 Chilton 204; 7 Morgan 200; 8 Goff 192; 9 Neal 177; 10 Cammish 161.**

Will Power leads Penske team-mate Pagnaud and Hunter-Reay

## Power pushes open the Gateway to title charge



**INDYCAR**  
**GATEWAY (USA)**  
**AUGUST 25**  
**ROUND 13/16**

Victory at Gateway Motorsports Park left Team Penske's Will Power convinced that he can, with the help of the double points on offer at the Sonoma finale, still win the 2018 IndyCar Championship.

"We can absolutely do it," said Power — currently 68 points adrift of Chip Ganassi Racing's Scott Dixon.

"When we turned up at Indy, it was a single points race [Indianapolis Grand Prix] and a double points race [Indy 500] and I was about the same amount of points behind [77], and I came out two points ahead with those two wins."

His logic is undeniable. Yet the superlative display from him last Saturday night seemed unattainable by any Penske driver 24 hours earlier. Rain hit the 1.25-mile oval on Friday and kept first

practice to 22 minutes, so IndyCar canned qualifying and instead ran a 90-minute second practice in the evening. The grid would be set by championship points and Chevrolet-powered Penske could be grateful for that because Power, Josef Newgarden and Simon Pagnaud were only midfield in that second and final session — around 3mph off Dixon and Andretti Autosport's Alexander Rossi. Given their positions in the points, Dixon and Rossi would start on the front row, ahead of Newgarden and Power, with Ryan Hunter-Reay and — in the absence of Robert Wickens, injured at Pocono — Pagnaud on row three.

But Power and race engineer Dave Faustino then "changed everything" on the car in preparation for a steaming hot race evening. Their efforts paid off.

Rossi was slow to start, leaving Power and Newgarden to tuck into second behind Dixon. Rossi clung on to third but, when Sebastien Bourdais wrecked his Dale Coyne Racing, Newgarden slipped his Penske past

at the restart — a situation Rossi couldn't resolve until lap 49 of 248. Then the Andretti driver chipped away at his disadvantage to Dixon and Power until the trio ran nose to tail. But their pace was reduced as they followed backmarkers, albeit still comfortably ahead of Newgarden. Following the first pitstops, these four resumed in the same order, while Pagnaud moved ahead of Hunter-Reay for fifth.

Through most of the second stint, the top three again elected to save fuel rather than risk getting up into the marbles by passing each other or backmarkers. Power tried to break that trend when he got a run on Dixon out of Turn 4 on lap 118. Dixon moved down to the pitwall along the straight to force Power to go to the outside, but then moved right to take a more conventional line through Turn 1. That ran Power into the grey and he only just kept it off the wall. That loss of momentum meant the closely following Rossi immediately zapped past. Newgarden tripped over his team-mate and lost pace himself and, when everyone stopped a lap later, Power found himself in fourth behind Pagnaud.

But on lap 143, the 2016 champion got it wrong through Turns 3 and 4 and slowed enough to allow Power to pass him along the pit straight, and his reduced pace for a whole circuit dropped him to ninth. Meanwhile, Power reeled in Rossi and dived down the inside into Turn 1 three laps later, causing Rossi to slide and make a brilliant save — although he lost another place to Hunter-Reay. Four laps on, Power pulled a very similar pass on Dixon, and then stretched out a four-second lead.

That was reduced when yellow flags flew on lap 173 for the luckless Hunter-Reay

Power joined rivals for a final stop after Roger Penske made the call



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Sebastien Bourdais  
crashed out early on

MOTORSPIRIT IMAGES / LEVITT/LAT

— who needed to be towed to his pitbox after his engine cut out. The leaders made their stops as soon as the pitlane opened, while IndyCar elongated the caution in order to clean the track.

At the restart, Power didn't pull rapidly away from Dixon because Roger Penske was debating whether to try and make it to the flag without another stop. Power reduced his speed to 168mph, Dixon and Rossi did likewise, but others had different instructions. Andretti's rookie Zach Veach and the second Ganassi car of Ed Jones charged from the lower reaches of the top 10 into the top five, Jones climbing to third behind team-mate Dixon while Veach passed Rossi for fourth.

Soon after, Penske decided to commit Power to running hard and making another stop. He swiftly pulled a seven-second lead over Dixon, who would also pit again. Only Rossi committed to the no-more-stops plan, and it worked. He dropped to eighth at his heavily reduced pace, then rose up the leader board as the others peeled in for a splash 'n dash. While he couldn't resist the charging Power, Rossi retained second ahead of Dixon to reduce his points deficit to 26.

Pagenaud found his mojo in the final stints to take fourth, while Veach's brave effort earned fifth ahead of hard-charging Spencer Pigot of Ed Carpenter Racing.

DAVID MALSHER

## RESULTS ROUND 14/16, GATEWAY, AUGUST 25 (248 LAPS – 310 MILES)

POS	DRIVER	TEAM/CAR	TIME
1	<b>Will Power</b> (AUS)	Team Penske / Dallara-Chevrolet	1h59m30.1972s
2	<b>Alexander Rossi</b> (USA)	Andretti Autosport / Dallara-Honda	+1.3117s
3	<b>Scott Dixon</b> (NZ)	Chip Ganassi Racing / Dallara-Honda	+2.8092s
4	<b>Simon Pagenaud</b> (F)	Team Penske / Dallara-Chevrolet	+3.1336s
5	<b>Zach Veach</b> (USA)	Andretti Autosport / Dallara-Honda	+7.2693s
6	<b>Spencer Pigot</b> (USA)	Ed Carpenter Racing / Dallara-Chevrolet	+10.5509s
7	<b>Josef Newgarden</b> (USA)	Team Penske / Dallara-Chevrolet	+10.6003s
8	<b>Ed Jones</b> (GB)	Chip Ganassi Racing / Dallara-Honda	+22.1362s
9	<b>Takuma Sato</b> (J)	Rahal Letterman Lanigan Racing / Dallara-Honda	-1 lap
10	<b>Graham Rahal</b> (USA)	Rahal Letterman Lanigan Racing / Dallara-Honda	-1 lap
11	<b>Pietro Fittipaldi</b> (BR)	Dale Coyne Racing / Dallara-Honda	-1 lap
12	<b>Ed Carpenter</b> (USA)	Ed Carpenter Racing / Dallara-Chevrolet	-1 lap
13	<b>Tony Kanaan</b> (BR)	AJ Foyt Enterprises / Dallara-Chevrolet	-2 laps
14	<b>Marco Andretti</b> (USA)	Andretti Herta Autosport / Dallara-Honda	-2 laps
15	<b>James Hinchcliffe</b> (CDN)	Schmidt Peterson Motorsports / Dallara-Honda	-2 laps
16	<b>Matheus Leist</b> (BR)	AJ Foyt Enterprises / Dallara-Chevrolet	-2 laps
17	<b>Max Chilton</b> (GB)	Carlin / Dallara-Chevrolet	-4 laps
18	<b>Gabby Chaves</b> (CO)	Harding Racing / Dallara-Chevrolet	-6 laps
19	<b>Charlie Kimball</b> (USA)	Carlin / Dallara-Chevrolet	-13 laps
20	<b>Ryan Hunter-Reay</b> (USA)	Andretti Autosport / Dallara-Honda	172 laps-fuel pressure
21	<b>Sebastien Bourdais</b> (F)	Dale Coyne Racing with Vasser-Sullivan / Dallara-Honda	0 laps-accident

**Winner's average speed** 155.644mph.

**Fastest lap** Power 25.1165s, 179.165mph.

### CHAMPIONSHIP

**1 Dixon 568; 2 Rossi 542; 3 Power 500; 4 Newgarden 490; 5 Hunter-Reay 421; 6 Pagenaud 400; 7 Robert Wickens**

**Q3 / Q2 / Q1 - GROUP 1 / Q1 - GROUP 2** Cancelled, see report

**391; 8 Rahal 371; 9 Hinchcliffe 353; 10 Bourdais 334.**



Power believes he  
can still take the title  
after Gateway win

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Just five points now separate Russell (8) and Norris in title race

# Norris and Russell battle through pack to set

## FORMULA 2

SPA (B)

AUGUST 25-26

ROUND 9/12

The shorter and reversed-grid Formula 2 sprint race is rarely the focal point of the weekend. But at Spa, it proved so as McLaren junior Lando Norris more than halved the points gap to leader George Russell.

It may be a repeated theme, but rarely have two drivers more ready for Formula 1 met in a support category – meaning the motorsport world is being treated to a once-in-a-generation battle between the pair.

After making his FP1 debut in Fernando Alonso's McLaren (and before Alonso vaulted it over Charles Leclerc in Sunday's F1 race), Norris reported difficulty switching back to the F2 car. But, by Sunday, he hadn't looked as comfortable since his dominant – and only – F2 win in the opening race of the season at Bahrain. And it's because he's still hell-bent on winning F2, regardless of F1 appearances.

"I think F2, at the moment, is just as important," he said. "McLaren still wants me to do well in F2. It's still a nice thing to have on your CV, to say you won Formula 2. I don't want to finish second, so I still do the best I can."

Trouble in qualifying followed by rapid race pace has been the story of the year for Norris. In Sunday's sprint, he started fifth, one spot ahead of Mercedes junior Russell and was determined to take back some points after finishing a place behind him the day before.

A strong early charge was key, Norris jumping into fourth at Turn 1 while spectacular feature race winner Nyck de Vries leapt into third from eighth.

As polesitter Nicholas Latifi drove off into the distance, Norris set about his work. Artem Markelov proved troublesome, repassing Norris at Les Combes after being jumped at La Source at the start. The two were side-by-side on lap four but to no avail, Norris needed another lap to pass with DRS on the Kemmel Straight.

He then made short work of Luca Ghiotto and closed down de Vries' two-second gap to nothing on the last lap, diving past his fellow McLaren junior – who was clearly struggling with tyres – at Les Combes.

But it wasn't straightforward. Alexander Albon followed Norris through, motivated by the need to beat Norris and Russell regularly to rise from third in the standings

(and prove to Helmut Marko he is worthy of a Toro Rosso seat). Albon did everything he could, but Norris – also struggling compared to Albon on his Pirellis – held him off for second. It was Latifi's first win of a nightmare season, while the gap between Norris and Russell stands at just five points with six races to go.

Russell suffered a nightmare in the sprint race. He initially fell to eighth and, although he got back by Roy Nissany, seventh was as high as he could get.

"This whole weekend was the toughest of the year for us," said Russell. "I think Spa is a very different circuit to anywhere else we've been to. It's not been resurfaced like 90% of the tracks we've had. I don't think it really suited our car or my driving style."

"I can see a similar story in Monza if we don't make improvements."

Luckily, a bad weekend looks like third



De Vries departed Spa with back-to-back feature race wins





# up sprint finish

and seventh to Russell. His performance in the feature race was strong, dropping one spot from his second on the grid, while the star of the show was undoubtedly de Vries.

He lost the lead momentarily in the pitstop phase, but turned his pole into a dominant victory that, as a neutral, makes you as much angry as it does relieved. The Prema-run car has been class all season and de Vries should be a lot closer to this title battle than he is. However, two feature race wins in a row must be applauded.

Sergio Sette Camara used Russell's wheelspin-heavy start to steal second, which he held to the end, in contrast with arguably his most disappointing result of the season with ninth in the sprint race.

Norris had a crack at Russell after a late restart in the feature, trying to go around the outside of Les Combes, but Russell was having none of it and then pulled away. The key part of Norris's race was holding off Albon and Ghiotto on lap one, three wide at Les Combes, and he came out on top.

With that, the exciting title battle overshadowed more fantastic racing through the field. Predicting a winner is tough, as the pendulum of momentum swings almost round-by-round. Norris has to cope with another McLaren FP1 outing distracting him in Monza, while Russell has the uncertainty of the musical chairs that is the F1 driver market to see if he'll have a seat. With all that pressure outside of F2, a title battle seems the least of the two drivers' worries. But both want to get one over the other and are fully motivated.

JACK BENYON

## RESULTS SPA (B), AUGUST 25-26 RACE 1 (25 LAPS – 108.725 MILES)

POS	DRIVER	TEAM	TIME
1	<b>Nyck de Vries</b> (NL)	Prema Racing	56m02.281s
2	<b>Sergio Sette Camara</b> (BR)	Carlin	+3.153s
3	<b>George Russell</b> (GB)	ART Grand Prix	+7.572s
4	<b>Lando Norris</b> (GB)	Carlin	+8.906s
5	<b>Alexander Albon</b> (T)	DAMS	+9.408s
6	<b>Artem Markelov</b> (RUS)	Russian Time	+13.181s
7	<b>Luca Ghiotto</b> (I)	Campos Vexatec Racing	+13.211s
8	<b>Nicholas Latifi</b> (CDN)	DAMS	+14.674s
9	<b>Maximilian Gunther</b> (D)	Arden International	+15.915s
10	<b>Roy Nissany</b> (IL)	Campos Vexatec Racing	+22.354s
11	<b>Jack Aitken</b> (GB)	ART Grand Prix	+23.917s
12	<b>Tadasuke Makino</b> (J)	Russian Time	+24.477s
13	<b>Alessio Lorandi</b> (I)	Trident	+26.417s
14	<b>Arjun Maini</b> (IND)	Trident	+28.920s
15	<b>Dorian Boccolacci</b> (F)	MP Motorsport	+29.612s
16	<b>Sean Gelael</b> (RI)	Prema Racing	+32.482s
17	<b>Antonio Fuoco</b> (I)	Charouz Racing System	+32.706s
18	<b>Louis Deletraz</b> (CH)	Charouz Racing System	+34.112s
R	<b>Ralph Boschung</b> (CH)	MP Motorsport	18 laps-accident
R	<b>Nirei Fukuzumi</b> (J)	Arden International	13 laps-engine

**Winner's average speed** 116.412mph. **Fastest lap** de Vries 2m00.632s, 129.878mph.

**QUALIFYING** 1 de Vries 1m56.054s; 2 Russell 1m56.457s; 3 Camara 1m56.594s; 4 Ghiotto 1m56.611s; 5 Norris 1m56.723s; 6 Albon 1m56.878s; 7 Fuoco 1m56.930s; 8 Fukuzumi 1m57.169s; 9 Deletraz 1m57.183s; 10 Markelov 1m57.266s; 11 Makino 1m57.394s; 12 Latifi 1m57.515s; 13 Boschung 1m57.596s; 14 Gunther 1m57.635s; 15 Maini 1m57.718s; 16 Aitken 1m57.754s; 17 Nissany 1m57.773s; 18 Gelael 1m57.878s; 19 Lorandi 1m58.174s; 20 Boccolacci 1m58.338s.

**GRID RACE 2** Decided by result of Race 1, with top eight finishers reversed.

**RACE 2** (18 LAPS – 78.260 MILES)

1 Latifi 37m13.659s; 2 Norris +10.402s; 3 Albon +10.766s; 4 de Vries +13.210s; 5 Markelov +13.448s; 6 Ghiotto +22.179s; 7 Russell +23.357s; 8 Maini +31.864s; 9 Camara +33.578s; 10 Aitken +34.567s; 11 Makino +40.032s; 12 Boschung +40.100s; 13 Deletraz +42.899s; 14 Nissany +44.631s; 15 Lorandi +52.568s; 16 Gunther +55.305s; 17 Fukuzumi +59.007s; 18 Boccolacci +1m00.115s; 19 Fuoco +1m06.936s; R Gelael 2 laps-oil pipe.

**Winner's average speed** 126.132mph. **Fastest lap** Latifi 2m01.484s, 128.967mph.

**CHAMPIONSHIP** 1 Russell 188; 2 Norris 183; 3 Albon 161; 4 de Vries 153; 5 Markelov 128; 6 Camara 124; 7 Fuoco 112; 8 Ghiotto 89; 9 Deletraz 62; 10 Aitken 61.



Norris admitted it took time to readjust back to his Carlin F2 car

STAT

213.248

The number of miles covered by Norris on Friday across F1 and F2





# Reshuffles allow new GP3 stars to shine

## GP3 SERIES

SPA (B)

AUGUST 25-26

ROUND 6/9

Could the GP3 Series have a pair of new stars on its hands? The Spa weekend certainly proved fruitful for feature race winner David Beckmann (above) and sprint race charger Richard Verschoor.

Beckmann has been in GP3 since the start of the season. But a series of driver moves triggered an open spot at the Trident squad that he filled quickly, replacing Alessio Lorandi – Santino Ferrucci's Formula 2 replacement – moving from Jenzer Motorsport.

He topped practice on his first outing with the team in Budapest and followed that with a fourth and seventh, before placing his car on pole for the Spa feature race. No Trident car has graced the pole spot for a feature contest this season, let alone won the race.



Would his pole mean that the other drivers took him seriously as a challenger?

"I've known all these drivers for many years so I think everyone respects each other," he said. "I think it's just very nice to break through and have a very good result. For sure, it's nice and a mega feeling to finally be in front."

He was soon challenged at the front of the order. While team-mate Pedro Piquet held up the four ART Grand Prix cars, Ryan Tveter went from sixth to second at La Source, and the American was on Beckmann's tail until he outbraked himself at Les Combes on lap nine of the 17. That allowed Beckmann to escape.

Championship leader Anthoine Hubert got a second bad start in a row but only dropped one place and held on to third. As the track dried he came back to Tveter, but was still 0.7s behind at the flag.

It was a first one-two in GP3 for Trident, and Tveter – who would have been forgiven for being angry after missing out on a first win – not only played up his team-mate, but dedicated the result to team manager Giacomo Ricci's ill father. For that, Tveter must be considered a class act.

The sprint race wasn't so kind to Trident, though, and it was an ART attack that Neil Buchanan would be proud of.

Before the race started, Beckmann was out on the formation lap with gearbox trouble. Reversed-grid polesitter Joey Mawson needs a car befitting his ability as he defended mightily but fell back almost

immediately. Ferrari Academy driver Callum Iltott's shot at victory was ruined with an ill-timed attack around the outside of Les Combes, which was rebuffed by Mawson and allowed Iltott's team-mates Jake Hughes and Nikita Mazepin through.

Mazepin overtook Hughes on lap four and, although his tyres went away late on, he managed to hold on from a charging Hubert, after the Frenchman had pulled off a vital overtake on Iltott to take second in the closing stages.

It may have been another weekend where he wasn't the quickest, but Hubert beat his title rival twice to maximise his points at the front of the order. He leads the way by 26 points and looks every bit the championship favourite.

Trident and MP Motorsport on any given weekend are closer to ART than in previous years, and while they are snatching points from the pacesetters, Hubert is making sure he's Mr Consistent.

Speaking of MP, it has replaced Roberto Merhi's Formula 2 successor, Dorian Boccolacci, with Formula Renault Eurocup driver Richard Verschoor for the remainder of the season. Traffic ended a top 10 qualifying lap and missing the weighing scales truly was a rookie error. But in the sprint race, he feistily raced from 17th to seventh and into the points in a breathtaking drive. Verschoor was definitely the class of the MP Motorsport stable this weekend on a brilliant debut.

**JACK BENYON**





## GP3 SERIES

## SPA

**Race 1 David Beckmann**  
Trident

**Race 2 Nikita Mazepin**  
ART Grand Prix

## PORSCH SUPERCUP

## SPA

**Thomas Preining**  
Lechner Racing

INTERCONTINENTAL GT  
CHALLENGE

## SUZUKA

**Tristan Vautier/Maro Engel/  
Raffaele Marciello**  
Team GruppeM Racing Mercedes-AMG GT3

## INDY LIGHTS

## GATEWAY MOTORSPORTS PARK

**Race 1 Ryan Norman**  
Andretti Autosport

## NASCAR XFINITY SERIES

## ROAD AMERICA

**Justin Allgaier (above)**  
JR Motorsports Chevrolet Camaro

## NASCAR TRUCK SERIES

## MOSPORT

**Justin Haley**  
GMS Racing Chevrolet Silverado

For full results visit:  
[motorsportstats.com](http://motorsportstats.com)

# Young bloods lead rookie Rosenqvist's 'toughest' race

## PORSCH SUPERCUP

## SPA (B)

AUGUST 26

ROUND 7/9

Whether Rene Rast or Richard Westbrook, Nick Tandy or Nicki Thiim, the Porsche Supercup has enjoyed a rich 'recent' history as a conveyor belt of top-class talent.

Although the experienced Michael Ammermuller is leading the race for the 2018 title, which would be his second in a row, the emergence of a crop of young talent indicates a changing of the guard. And if you want proof that these new contenders can live up to the series' high standards, take a look at the masterclass dished out to the guy who finished ninth at Spa.

Felix Rosenqvist is one of the best drivers outside Formula 1, having won Macau twice, taken victory in Formula E and scored podiums in Super Formula and Super GT. Last weekend, he described the Supercup as "by far the toughest thing I've ever got myself into". Rosenqvist managed to qualify 10th in the 33-car field, but made

no progress. He dropped a place on lap one, regained it, then got promoted thanks to a post-race penalty for one of his rivals.

Leading the "specialists", as Rosenqvist calls them, in Belgium was 20-year-old Thomas Preining. He dominated the race from pole position and claimed a comfortable win by 3.6 seconds over the 21-year-old Larry ten Voorde. But a false-start penalty demoted ten Voorde to 10th, with Zaid Ashkanani inheriting second. Six of the top 10 were younger than Rosenqvist (26) as the Supercup's new youthful horde took control, led by Preining showing maturity beyond his years.

Ten Voorde had taken advantage of a scruffy race from 19-year-old Frenchman Julien Andlauer, who spent too much time sliding across kerbs and runoff as he fell from second to fourth. Mattia Drudi completed a fine rise from ninth to third by demoting Andlauer on the final lap.

Ammermuller's championship lead was reduced to one point after he finished sixth, a place behind nearest rival Nick Yelloly.

SCOTT MITCHELL



Preining (1) showed  
skill beyond his years

## GruppeM untouchable in Suzuka enduro

INTERCONTINENTAL GT  
CHALLENGE

## SUZUKA (J)

AUGUST 26

ROUND 3/4

As the GruppeM Mercedes-AMG GT3 led 222 of the Suzuka 10 Hours' 276 laps en route to victory, it's little wonder that one third of its driver line-up, Tristan Vautier, described the race as "flawless".

Not only did Vautier and team-mates Raffaele Marciello and Maro Engel sit pretty by 31.6 seconds at the flag, but second for Strakka Racing's sister car underlined Mercedes' strength.

The Ferrari 488 GT3 of polesitter Nick Foster maintained its position during the

opening stint. But a grid infringement earned the car a penalty before the first hour was out. From there, GruppeM inherited the lead and never looked backed. The only fly in a jar of otherwise pleasant ointment was a brief and costless fire during the final stop, courtesy of a hot exhaust.

Vautier wasn't surprised by the incident, however, anticipating that victory wouldn't be offered up on a plate. "It was flawless and actually felt like it was going too well at one point — something had to happen," he said. "It was perfect execution from the team."

Strakka's Lewis Williamson, Maxi Gotz and Alvaro Parente joined GruppeM on the podium. They remained less than 10s adrift of GruppeM up until the penultimate set of stops. But Marciello found an extra burst

of speed to pull clear. Christopher Haase, Markus Winkelhock and Kelvin van der Linde's Absolute Racing Audi R8 was quick, but had to settle for third.

Team WRT's similar car was fourth, ahead of an entertaining final-hour scrap for fifth between the Good Smile Mercedes and the lead Bentley Continental GT GT3 of M-Sport. Williams Formula 1 young driver Oliver Rowland was seventh in the Strakka AMG he shared with Adrien Tambay and Maxi Buhk.

The sole McLaren of Ben Barnicoat, Andrew Watson and Come Ledogar failed to make it past the three-hour mark after a crash at Suzuka's infamous and high-speed 130R left-hander.

# The Rolling Estonians fight for number one

## EUROPEAN FORMULA 3

MISANO (I)

AUGUST 25-26

ROUND 7/10

Juri Vips could well be the most exciting car-control maestro to hit the Formula 3 European Championship since Max Verstappen. Another superb weekend for the Estonian at Misano, during which he took the third win of his rookie F3 season, means he sits just 12 points behind Motopark team-mate Dan Ticktum. As at Silverstone just seven days earlier, Vips left a venue after scoring more points than anyone else over the three races.

The other victors were Prema Powerteam pair Mick Schumacher and Ralf Aron, this duo keeping themselves on the coat-tails of the title chase, while their team-mate Marcus Armstrong lost ground but remains third. Aron's win over compatriot Vips on a torrentially wet track in the finale was also superb as they took a one-two for a tiny Baltic nation that clearly produces racing drivers as good as their rallying counterparts.

Vips's victory was brilliant, but it was the corresponding qualifying session that was absolutely staggering. The sweltering mid-thirties temperatures of Friday and Saturday morning had given way to thunderstorms by the time Q2 began. The kerbs at Misano are such that track limits



are always an issue, and the conditions meant that this became the case at the sweepers that are normally flat in the dry. No fewer than 13 of the 22 drivers were hit with grid penalties after examinations of onboard footage. Vips was one of seven who stayed totally clean (two were let off the hook, due to only one offence), his minimum speed at the fast Turn 15 a startling 16mph up on many other leading drivers. He had pole for race two, only denied a double pole for the finale by catching Keyvan Andres – himself striving to improve – on his penultimate lap, just as he had done at Silverstone.

The second race began with the track damp due to earlier rain, but most of the field were slick-shod. Vips hung on around the outside of a fast-starting Enaam Ahmed to reclaim his lead at Turn 1, and

it was Ahmed's Hitech GP team-mate Alex Palou who emerged to challenge. Showers in the second half of the race put Vips in that invidious position of being the race leader and having to judge the conditions. Palou, still searching for his first Euro F3 win, put pressure on all the way, but acknowledged: "It's just a shame because he's one of the best I saw out of Turn 10 [the right-hander leading onto the back straight], and I could not overtake him."

"It seemed honestly one of the hardest races I've ever been in," sighed Vips. "I didn't have any references, and the guys behind could see what I was doing. It was a miracle that I won the race. There were two, three, four moments every lap."

Vips, who blamed a malfunctioning radio and inadequate tyre preparation for qualifying seventh for the opener, before driving to fifth in the race, was also on form in the finale. Polesitter Armstrong splashed into the lead, but once Aron got going he reeled in the Kiwi, and passed him neatly at Turn 8. A safety car, called after two drivers had spun into the gravel, presaged disaster for Armstrong, who was passed by Vips and Ferdinand Habsburg at the restart. Guan Yu Zhou, defending fourth, then locked up and took himself and Prema team-mate Armstrong out at Turn 4. Zhou was tearful, Armstrong understanding, but a lot of damage was done to his title hopes.

Vips then wriggled free of a titanic scrap with Carlin's Habsburg, in which they were side by side for half a lap, before closing on Aron and securing second. "Juri had special lines – he was putting dirt on my face every lap!" laughed Habsburg after



Mick Schumacher has now tasted success in each of the last three rounds

ALL PICS: FIA F3/SUER





his first podium of the season. “I enjoyed fighting him – it’s fun when you know he’s not going to try anything stupid.”

For Aron, it was a relief after a miserable Silverstone – where he’d suffered a recurrence of his Hungaroring problem of a lack of pace in the car. This was a solid weekend, during which he added a fifth and a seventh to his win. “I’m really happy after a stressful and hard weekend at Silverstone,” he said. “The car was amazing in the rain.”

Schumacher’s win over Armstrong from pole in the opener was impressive, with Robert Shwartzman completing the podium on a weekend where Prema seemed to have a tiny advantage – until it turned wet. Ticktum was best of the rest in dry qualifying, but struggled in the wet Q2 with a “set-up-related” issue. His drives to fourth in races two and three were described as “damage-limitation”. As far as Ticktum was concerned, so was Armstrong’s removal from race three and his poor start in race two that left him outside the points. But now they both have the outstanding Vips to worry about.

**MARCUS SIMMONS**



## RESULTS MISANO (I), AUGUST 25-26 RACE 1 (24 LAPS – 63.022 MILES)

POS	DRIVER	TEAM/CAR	TIME
1	<b>Mick Schumacher</b> (D)	Prema Powerteam / Dallara-Mercedes F318	35m51.668s
2	<b>Marcus Armstrong</b> (NZ)	Prema Powerteam / Dallara-Mercedes F317	+2.224s
3	<b>Robert Shwartzman</b> (RUS)	Prema Powerteam / Dallara-Mercedes F314	+5.281s
4	<b>Guan Yu Zhou</b> (PRC)	Prema Powerteam / Dallara-Mercedes F315	+5.948s
5	<b>Juri Vips</b> (EST)	Motopark / Dallara-Volkswagen F315	+7.401s
6	<b>Dan Ticktum</b> (GB)	Motopark / Dallara-Volkswagen F318	+11.348s
7	<b>Ralf Aron</b> (EST)	Prema Powerteam / Dallara-Mercedes F317	+11.584s
8	<b>Alex Palou</b> (E)	Hitech GP / Dallara-Mercedes F316	+12.375s
9	<b>Jehan Daruvala</b> (IND)	Carlin / Dallara-Volkswagen F315	+17.189s
10	<b>Jonathan Aberdein</b> (ZA)	Motopark / Dallara-Volkswagen F315	+21.861s
11	<b>Sacha Fenestraz</b> (F)	Carlin / Dallara-Volkswagen F317	+22.238s
12	<b>Ferdinand Habsburg</b> (A)	Carlin / Dallara-Volkswagen F317	+22.684s
13	<b>Artem Petrov</b> (RUS)	Van Amersfoort Racing / Dallara-Mercedes F316	+24.424s
14	<b>Fabio Scherer</b> (CH)	Motopark / Dallara-Volkswagen F316	+26.750s
15	<b>Marino Sato</b> (J)	Motopark / Dallara-Volkswagen F314	+31.607s
16	<b>Sophia Florsch</b> (D)	Van Amersfoort Racing / Dallara-Mercedes F316	+34.061s
17	<b>Sebastian Fernandez</b> (YV)	Motopark / Dallara-Volkswagen F318	+34.416s
18	<b>Nikita Troitskiy</b> (RUS)	Carlin / Dallara-Volkswagen F315	+35.760s
19	<b>Keyvan Andres</b> (D)	Van Amersfoort Racing / Dallara-Mercedes F317	+36.437s
20	<b>Ameya Vaidyanathan</b> (IND)	Carlin / Dallara-Volkswagen F312	+44.070s
21	<b>Enaam Ahmed</b> (GB)	Hitech GP / Dallara-Mercedes F315	+45.178s
22	<b>Ben Hingeley</b> (GB)	Hitech GP / Dallara-Mercedes F316	+52.000s

**Winner's average speed** 105.443mph.

**Fastest lap** Vips 1m29.142s, 106.047mph.

**QUALIFYING 1** 1 Schumacher 1m27.934s;  
2 Armstrong 1m27.953s; 3 Zhou 1m27.992s;  
4 Shwartzman 1m28.015s; 5 Ticktum 1m28.020s;  
6 Daruvala 1m28.067s; 7 Vips 1m28.172s; 8 Aberdein  
1m28.177s; 9 Aron 1m28.224s; 10 Fenestraz 1m28.254s;  
11 Ahmed 1m28.257s; 12 Palou 1m28.283s; 13 Hingeley  
1m28.288s; 14 Sato 1m28.294s; 15 Habsburg  
1m28.513s; 16 Scherer 1m28.597s; 17 Petrov  
1m28.620s; 18 Fernandez 1m28.351s\*; 19 Troitskiy  
1m28.682s; 20 Florsch 1m28.987s; 21 Vaidyanathan  
1m29.423s; 22 Andres 1m29.519s.

**RACE 2** (23 LAPS – 60.396 MILES)

1 Vips 34m38.779s; 2 Palou +0.521s; 3 Schumacher  
+1.544s; 4 Ticktum +5.902s; 5 Aron +7.340s; 6 Ahmed  
+7.431s; 7 Habsburg +10.570s; 8 Fenestraz +12.899s;  
9 Shwartzman +12.923s; 10 Scherer +13.354s; 11 Zhou  
+18.025s; 12 Sato +18.696s; 13 Armstrong +19.367s;  
14 Aberdein +39.965s; 15 Fernandez +40.155s;  
16 Hingeley +1m21.790s; 17 Petrov -1lap; 18 Andres  
-1lap; 19 Florsch -1lap; 20 Vaidyanathan -1lap;  
21 Troitskiy -1lap; R Daruvala 8laps-pushrod.

**Winner's average speed** 104.593mph.

**Fastest lap** Ahmed 1m28.279s, 107.084mph.

**QUALIFYING 2** 1 Vips 1m46.004s; 2 Ahmed 1m47.440s;

3 Daruvala 1m47.106s\*; 4 Palou 1m47.095s\*;

5 Fernandez 1m47.619s; 6 Schumacher 1m46.170s\*;

7 Hingeley 1m47.401s\*; 8 Aron 1m46.520s\*;

9 Armstrong 1m46.069s\*; 10 Aberdein 1m48.254s;

11 Ticktum 1m47.354s\*; 12 Habsburg 1m47.007s\*;

13 Zhou 1m47.187s\*; 14 Fenestraz 1m48.256s;

15 Shwartzman 1m48.458s; 16 Sato 1m48.864s;

17 Florsch 1m49.686s; 18 Scherer 1m49.094s\*;

19 Vaidyanathan 1m51.580s; 20 Troitskiy 1m49.874s\*;

21 Petrov 1m49.303s\*; 22 Andres 1m49.956s\*.

\* = grid penalty.

**RACE 3** (17 LAPS – 44.641 MILES)

1 Aron 58m57.472s; 2 Vips +1.686s; 3 Habsburg +4.607s;

4 Ticktum +5.460s; 5 Schumacher +7.698s; 6 Palou

+9.072s; 7 Shwartzman +11.323s; 8 Scherer +13.988s;

9 Daruvala +14.842s; 10 Ahmed +15.448s; 11 Aberdein

+16.228s; 12 Fenestraz +17.394s; 13 Hingeley +19.463s;

14 Troitskiy +21.043s; 15 Petrov +22.793s;

16 Vaidyanathan +29.827s; 17 Andres +30.457s;

18 Florsch +34.571s; R Armstrong 13laps-accident;

R Zhou 13laps-accident; R Fernandez 9laps-spun off;

R Sato 9laps-spun off.

**Winner's average speed** 45.429mph.

**Fastest lap** Vips 1m47.046s, 88.310mph.

**GRID FOR RACE 3** 1 Armstrong; 2 Aron; 3 Vips; 4 Zhou;

5 Habsburg; 6 Ahmed; 7 Ticktum; 8 Schumacher;

9 Daruvala; 10 Palou; 11 Fernandez; 12 Fenestraz;

13 Aberdein; 14 Hingeley; 15 Sato; 16 Shwartzman;

17 Petrov; 18 Scherer; 19 Florsch; 20 Andres;

21 Troitskiy; 22 Vaidyanathan.

**CHAMPIONSHIP** 1 Ticktum 222; 2 Vips 210;

3 Armstrong 190; 4 Schumacher 186; 5 Aron 183.5;

6 Ahmed 154; 7 Zhou 154; 8 Palou 134; 9 Shwartzman

129; 10 Daruvala 117.5.



# Di Resta dream transforms title fight

DTM

**MISANO (1)**  
**AUGUST 25-26**  
**ROUND 7/10**

The DTM was back to its brilliant and unpredictable best at Misano last weekend, and that was mainly thanks to the sweltering Adriatic climate taking a turn for the worse just as the competition began in earnest. So did Gary Paffett's title fortunes. The Mercedes veteran was comfortably ahead in the championship as he arrived in Italy, yet failed to score a single point under the floodlights in what literally became a nightmare. Team-mate Paul di Resta clung on to win a thrilling opening race, then did all he could on the wrong strategy on Sunday night to claim sixth place – and the Scot now leads the standings.

Di Resta claimed pole position for race one, which started on a damp track with the majority of the field on rain tyres. Paffett burst through from fourth on the grid to second, with Edoardo Mortara completing a Mercedes 1-2-3 as the track dried out.

Three cars had started the race on slick rubber and, as the remainder made early stops to get onto dry-weather tyres, so Daniel Juncadella's Mercedes and the BMWs of Augusto Farfus and Bruno Spengler moved to the front. All was looking good for Juncadella, who was 42 seconds in front of di Resta – almost

enough to emerge from his mandatory stop still in the lead, and with the possibility that with his tyres up to temperature he could extend that gap and retain the advantage. Then disaster struck Paffett.

On his second lap on slicks, the championship leader ran wide at Turn 8 and, as he rejoined he clattered into the right side of Mortara, breaking his steering and putting him out of the race. Mortara in turn had the BMW of Philipp Eng, who had been among the first to stop for slicks and had made up a host of places, to his left. "My intention was not to make contact," said Mortara. "He came back on track pretty aggressively because I guess he didn't see me on his left, and I had Eng on my left and got squeezed. I had damage to both sides."

The resulting safety car scuppered the strategies of Juncadella, Farfus and Spengler – not that it mattered for Juncadella, who retired later with mechanical problems anyway. It also indirectly led to Spengler triggering a second safety car, when he hit Jamie Green, with Rene Rast collected in a three-car mix-up. Lucas Auer was also stranded after a collision with Joel Eriksson, meaning a further neutralisation of the race.

With Farfus yet to pit, di Resta was effectively the leader, but Eng was flying. The Austrian passed di Resta and pulled away, but then the BMW began to lose speed. "My car did take a few hits [including the Mortara collision]," he explained.

"The damage from those clashes made itself known around 12 minutes before the end. I couldn't do anything else then."

Eng eventually faded to eighth, while di Resta and Mortara marched back in front, but the Audi of Robin Frijns was showing outstanding pace. Once he'd cleared the struggling Eng with six laps to go, Frijns started slashing the gap to the leading Merces, which were running line astern. A superb defensive job by Mortara saved di Resta's win. Frijns finally got ahead of Mortara out of Turn 14 on the last lap, surviving a panel-rub at Turn 15. He crossed the line 1.973 seconds behind di Resta, on whom he'd been making up 2s per lap before he caught Mortara.

Di Resta had driven a brilliant race in the tricky conditions. "The difficult point is reading it," he said. "Where is the grip you can't see?"

DTM rookies Frijns and Eng might have been denied their maiden wins on Saturday, but the other new boy Eriksson came up trumps on Sunday thanks to an inspired strategy – and a bit of luck.

BMW baby Eriksson was the only driver to start this race on slicks, and to be fair it looked a bit of a long shot as he slithered around at the tail of the field. Soon the majority of the rest of the field pitted – only for the rain to return. So they all had to pit for a second time, dropping off the lead lap, while Eriksson took this chance to make



DTM

MISANO

Race 1 Paul di Resta

HWA Mercedes C63

Race 2 Joel Eriksson

RBM BMW M4

AUSTRALIAN SUPERCARS

THE BEND MOTORSPORT PARK

Race 1 Shane van Gisbergen

Triple Eight Holden Commodore

Race 2 Jamie Whincup

Triple Eight Holden Commodore

For full results visit:  
motorsportstats.comDi Resta starred as the  
DTM offered great drama  
during Misano night races

his single mandatory stop. Up front, Mortara, Rast, Frijns and BMW guest star Alex Zanardi had all stayed on wets, and then a safety car — caused by Auer spinning into the barriers — allowed Eriksson to latch on to their tails.

Mortara put in a storming drive to attempt to build enough of an advantage to make his stop and rejoin in front of Eriksson, but the Swede kept the pace he needed on his ageing wet tyres. It was a perfectly judged tortoise-and-hare race, with Eriksson crossing the line 1.817s clear of the charging Mortara. “Joel did great to keep the car on the track and claim the victory,” acknowledged Bart Mampaey, head of Eriksson’s team RBM.

“The safety car pretty much screwed our race,” said Mortara. “Those were probably the worst conditions I ever had in the DTM. I’m happy I finished both of them!”

Rast survived an assault from Timo Glock at the start to take third from Frijns, while Zanardi — on the right strategy — took a headline-making fifth from di Resta. Meanwhile, there was more gloom for Paffett, who was trying to pass Spengler when he was bumped out of the points by team-mate Juncadella, who had already messed up by spinning in the pit-entry road. “I cannot remember a race as bad as this at any point in my career,” said the sheepish Juncadella.

Maybe so, but few of the onlookers could remember many DTM races anywhere near as unpredictable as these.

MARCUS SIMMONS

# First-time venue hosts Aussie team history

AUSTRALIAN SUPERCARS

THE BEND (AUS)

AUGUST 25-26

ROUND 11/16

Shane van Gisbergen is the new Supercars points leader, after he and Jamie Whincup split the wins at the all-new The Bend Motorsport Park. The Triple Eight Holden pair couldn’t be stopped across the two races, only a poorly timed safety car on Saturday preventing a clean-sweep.

And, with Scott McLaughlin struggling to break into the top five in either race, a win and a second was enough for van Gisbergen to overhaul his fellow Kiwi in the standings.

To make the weekend even sweeter for the team, the two wins have moved its total victory tally to 181 — making it the most successful Australian Touring Car Championship/Supercars team of all-time.

It all started with a dominant performance from van Gisbergen, who cruised to a 6.3-second win in the single-stopper on Saturday.

The pivotal moment was a fifth-lap pass on polesitter and early leader Whincup. So when the safety car was called two laps later to retrieve Garth Tander’s broken-down Commodore, van Gisbergen had priority in pitlane.

With Whincup dropping back to eighth after being forced to stack, and Rick Kelly — who inherited second — lacking the speed to mount a serious challenge, van Gisbergen was able to cruise to the first ever Supercars win at The Bend circuit.

Kelly finished second, Michael

Caruso third, with Whincup fourth after an impressive recovery during the second stint.

The icing on van Gisbergen’s victory cake was that McLaughlin couldn’t do any better than sixth behind Mark Winterbottom, which slashed his points lead to just 41 on Saturday night.

On the Sunday, the opening laps were once again crucial, although this time it was Whincup that benefited. While he skipped away from pole position, van Gisbergen found himself stuck behind a fast-starting Tim Slade.

It only took him two laps to get by, but by that point Whincup was 3s down the road in what would ultimately become a comfortable 11s win.

While unable to take the fight to Whincup, second place was good enough for van Gisbergen. With McLaughlin managing just 10th, van Gisbergen ended the weekend with a 19-point advantage.

“I saw the purple board [signifying the championship leader in parc ferme] and got a bit excited,” said the 2016 series champion.

“There’s a long way to go, we need to keep our heads down, but the team gave us some rockets this weekend. A one-two is really special.”

David Reynolds was the big mover in the second race, coming from 12th on the grid to finish third after Slade made a mistake with a handful of laps to go and gifted his podium spot to the Erebus Holden driver.

The series now heads into endurance mode, with the Sandown 500 kicking off the long-distance races.

ANDREW VAN LEEUWEN



The two Triple Eight Holdens stormed to both wins, taking its Aussie tally to a record 181

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## ROCKINGHAM TARGETS INDYCARS FOR FAREWELL MEETING

### ROCKINGHAM

Rockingham Motor Speedway is planning a 'send-off' race meeting in November, where it hopes to attract Indycars and NASCARs to demo at the circuit at its final racing event before motorsport activity ceases for 2019.

The circuit announced its sale two

weeks ago, to a group expected to turn the venue into a car storage and auction site. The businesses stationed at the circuit are understood to be safe.

The already-arranged motorsport events taking place for the remainder of the season at the venue near Corby, Northamptonshire, will still go ahead.

However, no motorsport will take place

## Fewer events for clubs?

### ROCKINGHAM

The British Racing and Sports Car Club may reduce the number of meetings it runs next year following the demise of Rockingham.

The BRSCC is one of four organising clubs to have race meetings at the Northamptonshire venue this year.

The British Automobile and Racing Club is the other club to have multiple meetings at Rockingham, but has the benefit of operating its own circuits, such as Thruxton and Croft, where it controls the calendars.

The BRSCC doesn't operate any tracks and so relies on the availability of circuits owned by other organisations. BRSCC competitions secretary Dominic Ostrowski admits losing Rockingham is a blow for clubs.

"It's a problem, really," he said. "If we can run a couple less meetings and still offer all

of our championships what they need, then we would do that and not run some of the less profitable meetings.

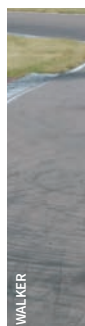
"But it [the loss of Rockingham] might help the likes of Mallory Park, Croft and Pembrey. We haven't run a meeting at Pembrey for many years and that is something we might look at now."

The BARC has the most Rockingham club dates in 2018 with six, and the club's general manager Ian Watson says it will be a challenge to try and rehouse them.

"It's very sad to see it go," he said. "We were fortunate enough to be involved from the very first day as we helped to organise the first meeting.

"We have quite a few meetings there and will hopefully try and pick up a few extra dates at other venues."

STEPHEN LICKORISH







at the track next year and the outgoing operators plan to give the oval venue — completed in 2001 — a big send off.

The circuit hosted the CART Champ Car series in 2001 and '02, with races won by Gil de Ferran and Dario Franchitti respectively, and is looking to drum up some nostalgia to end the circuit's motorsport life on a high.

"The team at Rockingham is working really hard at the moment," said Michael Galjaardt of Rockingham. "The idea is to hopefully get some Indycars back at the circuit. That's the primary aim. We're also on the lookout for a few NASCARs that would do some laps with us, too. The idea is to make it a nostalgia trip for everybody, in terms of the brilliant history of the track. More news on that



NASCAR experiences have been run at the track and could demo

DUNCAN PHOTOGRAPHY

in the coming weeks, but that's the plan."

In the past two weeks, circuit staff have canvassed clubs, championships and manufacturers for the event, with a variety of all three showing interest to come on board for the new club meeting, scheduled for November 24/25.

Friday testing will be on offer, and Rockingham is working to confirm a finalised schedule and race entries in the coming weeks. Interested parties wishing to take part can contact the organisers via the circuit's website.

At a minimum, Rockingham is offering multiple allcomers races, but will add further grids depending on the amount of interest received.

"It's going to be Rockingham staged and managed, with the support of major

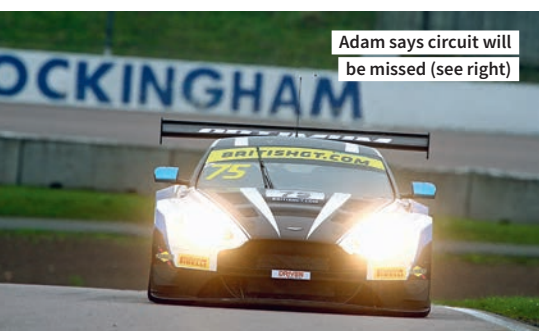
clubs," added Galjaardt. "The BARC, BRSCC and MSVR have said they will support the event as best as they can.

"It looks like we'll have involvement from three manufacturers. Ginetta appear keen to put together a grid, as are Caterham. Radical have said they're keen to support with some entrants, too.

"We'll have allcomers in different categories, and then if there's sufficient demand from individual championships or makes then we'll have specific grids for those as well.

"We'll go out to the C1 guys [C1 Challenge] and try to get them involved with a grid, either as part of the allcomers or on their own. It's probably the biggest series in terms of grid size."

**JACK BENYON**



Adam says circuit will be missed (see right)



BRSCC could run fewer meetings (left)

## UK has lost 'unique' venue

### ROCKINGHAM

Two-time British GT champion Jonny Adam believes the closure of Rockingham means UK motorsport has lost a degree of variety.

The Scot, twice a winner on the roval in 2011 and '16, found that its abrasive surface — estimated to take eight tenths per lap out of the tyre from its peak — meant significant extra preparation was required to make the car work over a race stint.

"It's a shame what's happened with the circuit, it's nice to have different circuits within the calendar," Adam told Autosport.

"That means more input, we

need to test or we need to go and do more simulator time because Rockingham is very different to, say, Silverstone GP, which is wider in places.

"The surface at Rockingham is a bit like Thruxton in a way, it's so abrasive on the tyre that you needed to perfect the set-up for a full stint. It was one of those circuits that was a unique set-up point and a unique engineering challenge to get the car to work well over a stint.

"It's good to have different variety in the championship, in terms of it was the shortest lap of the year in British GT, so if you made a mistake or got traffic on that lap, it really screwed up your qualifying."

**JAMES NEWBOLD**



Rob Bell and Joe Osborne  
have tested new McLaren

## McLaren's new GT3 car on course for 2019 debut

### BRITISH GT

McLaren Automotive's new 720S GT3 is "exactly on target" ahead of its competition debut in 2019, according to motorsport director Dan Walmsley.

The first GT3 machine to be developed in-house at McLaren Automotive's new GT facility in Woking – taking over from Andrew Kirkaldy's CRS organisation that operated under the McLaren GT banner

– the 720S GT3 is based on the marque's 720S supercar and powered by a four-litre twin-turbo V8 engine.

Walmsley estimates that 95% of the parts are completely new to the 720S GT3, but told Autosport that he was "very encouraged" by the early potential displayed in testing with works drivers Rob Bell and Joe Osborne.

"We're very impressed with the progress we're making, we're exactly

on target from a performance point of view, a reliability point of view and a homologation point of view," he said.

"We've had a big job on our hands this year assembling the in-house motorsport division, we've brought some fantastic expertise to the team and I'm delighted with the product that they've come together with. The potential in the car, we are already seeing, we're excited about that."

Retailing at £440,000 for customers, development work on the 720S GT3 has been focused on making the car more accessible for gentleman drivers and simpler for teams to operate than the outgoing 650S GT3, which won the Blancpain GT Series Endurance Cup with Garage 59 in 2016.

"We wanted to make the car both a pleasure to drive for the amateur racer and also easier and more practical for the race teams to run, and from a performance perspective we've really changed the philosophy of the car," said Walmsley. "There's a significant rework on the aerodynamics, the suspension geometry and the powertrain pickup."

McLaren is still to confirm when the car will make its competitive debut, although it is understood that an appearance in the VLN Endurance Championship prior to the car's homologation is unlikely. The car will be sold in limited numbers in 2019.

**JAMES NEWBOLD**

## Ginetta ace Jones in GT5 Knockhill debut

### GT5 CHALLENGE

Former Ginetta GT4 Supercup racer Declan Jones made a one-off outing in the GT5 Challenge for W2R Motorsport, in place of regular driver Brett Ward.

Called up to assist the team, guest entrant Jones qualified third and had been disputing championship leader James Kellett for the lead before

the pair made contact at Duffus. He finished fourth and sixth in the weekend's two races.

"I'd never driven a GT5 car before," said Jones. "I got a bit of a test day, but qualifying was about the third time I'd sat in the car. It's totally different to what I'm used to."

"I'm happy to be in the top five as it's so competitive. It's a second that separates most of the field so yeah, it's good to

be at the sharp end."

The weekend went more smoothly for Jones than his last experience of Knockhill, which was being part of a multi-car startline crash in 2012.

Ward, a world and European champion in karting, has decided to leave the series.

"Unfortunately he's with us no longer," said team boss Ben Hyland. "It's not been working out for him."

**STEPHEN BRUNSDON**



Jones scored a fourth  
and a sixth at Knockhill

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Saxo-based Saloons could have endurance bouts

HAWKINS

## Juniors go long distance

### JUNIOR SALOONS

Junior drivers are set to get the chance to compete in endurance races for the first time next year as part of a new initiative from the Junior Saloon Car Championship.

The series, which is open to drivers aged between 14 and 17, plans to hold three standalone one-hour endurance events in 2019. It intends that drivers will be able to either compete individually or share a car between two. The category uses Citroën Saxos and its regular races last 15 minutes plus one lap.

"It gives our existing kids more track time and it gives drivers who don't have the budget for a full year, but can do three races, a chance," explained series coordinator Dave Beecroft. "It's cost-effective for a driver wanting to put a

toe in the water and the emphasis is on fun and fair racing.

"There's nobody who's been doing anything similar – I don't think they've thought of it! If it is popular we will do more of these races in the future."

Beecroft said that with more and more drivers going down the endurance racing route, it would be good for them to have experience of longer car races from an earlier age.

"I think with endurance racing being so popular, and single-seaters being so expensive to break into, this will help young drivers," he said. "We've already got JSCC drivers like Ed Moore, Marmaduke Hall and Lucas Nannetti who have gone into Britcar so we can help drivers on their way."

STEPHEN LICKORISH

## Low grid for British F4

### BRITISH F4

British Formula 4 suffered its smallest entry since the series became an FIA F4 championship at Knockhill last weekend, when just 12 cars took part.

Fortec Motorsport pairing Hampus Ericsson and Lucca Allen decided not to take part in the Knockhill rounds. It was the lowest entry since the series switched to its current guise in 2015.

Ericsson won the category's Challenge Cup last term but has had a miserable second half of the season,

with a mixture of collisions and car woes restricting to him to just a seventh place from the six races at Snetterton and Rockingham.

Fortec team owner Richard Dutton hopes that both drivers will return later in the year, with two rounds remaining in the championship.

"Hampus has had three crashes through no fault of his own recently, and I think he got a bit fed up," said Dutton. "Lucca decided to take a break but I'm hoping he will be back."

STEPHEN LICKORISH

### IN THE HEADLINES

#### HUNTER BEATS OP TO RACE

Former Mini Se7en champion Max Hunter finished on the podium last Sunday at Brands Hatch, only hours after being discharged from hospital following a kidney operation. After his enforced absence from Saturday's action, he had to start the second event from the back of the grid but charged through to third by the start of lap three. He held the position to the flag but was later promoted to second when Andrew Deviny was excluded post-race.

#### DYSON IN JUNIOR RETURN

Former Ginetta Junior racer Harry Dyson made a return to the series at Knockhill last weekend with the Premiership Academy Racing squad. Dyson contested the first seven rounds of the series last year before switching to British F4 with the JHR Developments team. It was a difficult return for Dyson, though, as a time penalty for gaining an unfair advantage limited him to 11th in race one and he finished the second contest in the gravel.

#### FOX ATTACK IN C1 24

Ginetta squad Fox Motorsport will take part in the second Citroën C1 24 Hour race at Rockingham this weekend. Team boss Paul McNeilly will compete for the first time in two years and will be joined by GT regular Jamie Stanley and Fox Ginetta GT5 Challenge racers Nick Halstead and James Townsend.

#### RAVEN RETURNS TO UK

Former Formula Ford Festival winner James Raven (below) endured mixed fortunes last weekend in the Champion of Brands races, which were his first back in the UK this year. Raven, who last raced in the UK at the Walter Hayes Trophy meeting at Silverstone last November, took time out of competing in the Formula 4 United States Championship to steer his Ray GR14/15 to second in the first race, before clipping a trackside bollard in the second at Graham Hill Bend and recovering to sixth.



HAWKINS

# Chevron B4 takes to the track again

## GOLD CUP

Chevron founder Derek Bennett's unique B4 BMW-engined GT prototype of 1966, which began the iconic line, was among the stars of last weekend's B8 50th anniversary celebrations at Oulton Park.

Put together by Historic Sports Car Club's executive director Grahame White – sales director at Chevron in the mid-1970s – it was a reunion for former Chevron personnel including Bennett's right-hand men, Paul Owens and Bob Faulkner who styled the GT.

Period drivers Digby Martland, John Lepp, Brian Classick, John Cardwell, John Burton, Alan Rollinson and Tony Goodwin were among Bennett's disciples who joined the fun, which centred around Monday's



Gold Cup race for the Bolton-built GT cars, a run of 50 of which achieved FIA Group 4 homologation.

Bennett's prototype, eventually known as the B4, was built between the pair of Lotus twin-cam engined cars [B3s] bought by Martland and Lepp. The first with BMW's M10 unit – which would power the majority of B6s and B8s – it debuted at Crystal Palace and took Chevron to the Daytona 24 Hours in '67 with Peter Gethin and Roy Pike.

Subsequently owned by Roy Johnson, it competed internationally until '71, after which it briefly went to Ireland.

Preserved by the Knights brothers for 40 years, it was acquired by Swedish Chevron nut Kent Abrahamsson and partially restored last winter. "It wasn't race-ready, but it was my target to have it here," said Abrahamsson, who withdrew after a short practice run.

MARCUS PYE

# Cooper clinches Castle Combe title

## FF1600

Luke Cooper wrapped up the Castle Combe FF1600 Championship on Monday in spite of failing to finish either race, with the engine of his Swift SC16 failing while challenging Josh Fisher just over a lap from the end of the opening encounter.

The 25-year-old had started the race from pole but dropped to sixth position on the opening lap, before fighting back up the order, partly as a result of other incidents.

"I was exactly where I wanted to be going into the final lap when the engine let go at Camp," he said. "I wanted to challenge Josh and finish the championship with a win."

The team briefly considered cannibalising a sister car to get Cooper back out for race two, but



with the only other contender, David Vivian, finishing back in fifth, Cooper already had an unassailable points total and hence elected to sit it out.

The opening race was won by reigning champion Josh Fisher in a Van Diemen JL14, the first driver other than Cooper to win a Combe FF1600 race this season.

IAN SOWMAN

## EASTWELL TARGETS AMERICA

## USF2000

Formula Ford frontrunner Michael Eastwell will make his American car racing debut next month in the F2000 Championship Series season finale.

Eastwell, who won the 2016 F-Series Karting title in the USA, lies second to Niall Murray in the British Racing and Sports Car Club's National FF1600 standings.

He recently won both Northern FF1600 races at Silverstone, his first in the category, as well as both Champion of Brands races last weekend (below).

Last month he tested an F2000 car – the previous generation of USF2000 machinery prior to the series' introduction of carbonfibre tubs – at Palmer Motorsport Park in Massachusetts.

"Given that it was a really good test, I'll actually be back in the US next month to run the final round at New Jersey Motorsports Park [September 14-16] in the F2000 series," he said.

"My ultimate goal for next year would be to do a full season of USF2000. But, in truth, it really depends on what funds are available."

MATT KEW





# Doran to run at Watergate

## WATERGATE BAY HILLCLIMB

FIA World Rallycross racer Liam Doran is topping the entry list for the Watergate Bay event, the first modern-era closed-road hillclimb to take place in England, on September 15/16.

The 31-year-old will drive his 1000bhp Ford RS200 up the hill on the B3276 road between Padstow and Newquay in North Cornwall. He is one of 90 entries for the event, which was oversubscribed in terms of interest just hours after entries opened. He will be joined by Ginetta GT5 Challenge racer Charlie Martin, who will drive a BMW Mini Cooper.

Martin said: "It may be the shortest race on my 2018 calendar, but that has no bearing on how excited I am to be competing at Watergate Bay Hillclimb.

"It is the first hillclimb being held on the beach front and it's also the first event of its kind being held in the UK since legislation was passed last year. It's a great feeling to be one of the first competitors to tackle this course."

Jointly organised by Truro and District Motor Club, Newquay Auto Club and Plymouth Motor Club, the hillclimb will start from 0900 each day and entry to the event costs £10 per adult.

**MATT JAMES**



# Rain stops Gurston event

## BRITISH HILLCLIMB

The latest round of the British Hillclimb Championship at Gurston Down was cancelled last weekend due to heavy rain.

With conditions worsening and the rain showing no signs of stopping, the decision to cancel the meeting came shortly after midday on Sunday.

"The forecast is not going to improve and I wasn't happy with the state of the course," said Sarah Howard, South West British Automobile Racing Club chairman and clerk of the course.

Only half the competitors had

completed their first timed run before the cancellation. It was confirmed the meeting would not be rescheduled.

"The competitive half of you wants to be out there driving so you can show your skills, but the other half is thinking you could have a nasty crash," said Trevor Willis, who leads the standings.

"I've been talking to the drivers who have been up there and they say after the finish line there's standing water."

Driver Wallace Menzies added: "Absolutely it was the right decision [to cancel the meeting]."

**STEFAN MACKLEY**

## IN THE HEADLINES

### FORMULA 2 GOES DUTCH

A 27-strong field of Historic Formula 2 cars will travel to Zandvoort this weekend for a double-header at the Dutch track's Historic Grand Prix. Frenchman Robert Simac (March 712M) could move closer to a sixth straight title ahead of the deciding double-header at Dijon in October. Matthew Watts (March 772P) rejoins the series and will be among the overall pacesetters.

### COLMANS RETURN

More than a year after their Chevron B8 was heavily damaged at Brands Hatch, father and son Hugh and Mark Colman returned to action at the Oulton Park Gold Cup. In July 2017, Mark was at the wheel when the Chevron crashed heavily at Paddock Hill Bend and suffered a leg injury in the accident. Despite a detached oil pipe in testing, they finished ninth overall from 31st place on the grid in Sunday's Guards Trophy race.

### NEWBORN OVER RACING

James Dodd missed the Oulton Park Gold Cup due to the imminent arrival of his third child. Dodd elected not to be away contesting the Super Touring and Jaguar Classic Challenge races as his wife Amy was poised to go into labour. His father Grahame raced solo to fifth place in their E-type.

### SYKES' RACING RETURN

Formula Junior racer Adam Sykes had only his second race in nine years at the Oulton Park Gold Cup when he borrowed the front-engined Merlyn Mk2 of his father John. Sykes junior has his own Merlyn being prepared but borrowed the Mk2 to claim a podium finish while his father was away watching the Manx Grand Prix.

### LOCKIE'S CAN-AM DREAM

Experienced all-rounder and former British GT champion Calum Lockie realised a long-held ambition when he raced a Can-Am car for the first time during the Oulton Park Gold Cup (below). Lockie climbed aboard the eight-litre March 717 of Richard Dodkins for the pair of Pre-80 Endurance races and mastered treacherous conditions to dominate Sunday's race, giving the car a rare victory.



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# SILVER LININGS

*With Rockingham closing to motorsport events from next year, the effects are already being felt, but the circuit's loss could have big benefits for club racing*

STEPHEN LICKORISH

**T**he phrase 'it's a shame to lose any motorsport venue' has been used quite a lot in the couple of weeks since Rockingham's demise. And there's definitely a strong element of truth in it, especially with a circuit that was as unique as the Northamptonshire speedway.

Although British Touring Car Championship bosses apparently saw this coming and planned its 2019 calendar without Rockingham, the track ceasing motorsport activities will have much more of an impact on the world of club racing.

Discounting the BTCC and British GT meetings – and the planned November farewell event (detailed on page 64) – there are 10 club racing events on the 2018 Rockingham calendar. Six of those are British Automobile Racing Club events (including the two Citroen C1 24-hour races that will now need to find a new home), two are British Racing and Sports Car Club-organised and there are solitary meetings for the 750 Motor Club and MotorSport Vision Racing. Rockingham's closure will therefore create a logistical headache for all these clubs and BRSCC competitions manager Dominic Ostrowski admits he is surprised that the circuit will shut down so soon.

## "ROCKINGHAM CEASING ITS MOTORSPORT ACTIVITIES WILL AFFECT CLUB RACING"

"Rockingham has never been everyone's cup of tea but it's one less circuit for us to go to now," he adds. "It's a problem, really, we normally have two or three meetings there. We need to think about where we go – we are just starting the long and arduous process of booking dates."

And Rockingham's demise has another knock-on effect on this complicated process. To compensate for the loss of Rockingham, the BTCC has added a second Thruxton date to its 2019 schedule. But the Hampshire circuit is restricted to just 12 days of racing a year. With four of those now taken up by the BTCC, two likely for British Superbikes and two for a planned historic event following this year's successful anniversary celebration, that leaves space for just four days of club meetings.

Given the circuit is operated by the BARC, you would expect two days to be dedicated to the club's own championships, meaning one of the 2018 visitors (the BRSCC and Classic

Sports Car Club) will probably be left out.

Therefore it's no wonder the BRSCC is looking at other venues and, for example, could make a first visit to Pembrey since 2011. And that is one of the positives that can emerge from Rockingham's closure: other small circuits could receive a boost. Ostrowski has named Mallory Park, Croft and Pembrey as three examples of this and the BARC's Ian Watson says the club is also looking at alternative venues.

Another beneficiary could be Mondello Park. The circuit's general manager Roddy Greene says there is a renewed focus on club racing at the track and is working to tempt UK championships and clubs to make the trip to Ireland. The Rockingham news can only help that process. It could also be a boost to the proposed Lake Torrent circuit in Northern Ireland, which – all being well – is due to open at some point next year.

But, more significantly, Ostrowski says the BRSCC could run fewer meetings next season, condensing its series into a slightly smaller number of more profitable events. If replicated across the major clubs, that could be a very good outcome indeed.

Autosport has long since argued that there are far too many club meetings. Competitors, marshals, officials and spectators are spread too thinly and a smaller number of meetings should lead to improvements across the board. By running fewer meetings, the quality and entries should rise with competitors offered slightly less choice.

If the number of events is indeed reduced, this will put track time at more of a premium and will turn the attention to which series run.

And that's another gripe with the club racing world – there are too many championships, some of which attract small entries. There are several series known to be on the brink of being axed and joining the already-ousted Renault UK Clio Cup Junior series on the scrapheap this year. This could be an ideal opportunity for clubs to take action as they can't afford to have poorly supported categories clogging up a reduced number of meetings.

That is not an impossible challenge as grids for some series could be amalgamated, and there could be a reduction in the number of allcomers races, which often have small entries. It also means that any new series launched for next year will have to justify their place on the packed schedules.

So, while it really is a shame to lose Rockingham, with Ostrowski among those paying tribute its "very dedicated staff", there are some possible positives to the loss of the first UK circuit since Inghelton shut in 1994. Now it is down to the clubs to look at their schedules and make the tweaks that can help club racing to thrive. 🏁

## TOCA SUPPORTS KNOCKHILL AUGUST 25-26



Foster continued his fine recent form with two Knockhill wins

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## Foster takes care of business with two wins

GINETTA JUNIOR

Louis Foster says he has only a “mathematical chance” of winning the Ginetta Junior title. But, regardless of where the Elite Motorsport racer finishes in the final standings, he is certainly the form teenager in the series.

The rookie claimed another two victories at Knockhill – taking his run to four from the last five races – to keep the

pressure on points leader Adam Smalley.

The first few corners proved the key to his opening win. Although his getaway was no better than poleman James Hedley’s, his approach to Duffus certainly was. Foster was able to brave it out around the outside of his team-mate and made the move stick.

From there he wasn’t to be stopped and headed Smalley and James Taylor home.

While Foster’s drive was impressive, he wasn’t star of the race. That honour fell

instead to Luke Browning.

His race got off to a miserable start as he was tagged into a spin at Clark’s by Fin Green, who also spun and got stranded, bringing out the safety car.

The clash led Browning to pit at the end of lap one so his crew could check his car. But crucially he never went a lap down and, as soon as the race restarted, he quickly began to pick off other drivers. By the flag he was fourth and right on the rear bumper of Taylor.

“I couldn’t believe it!” said a delighted Browning, who entered the meeting second in the points. “I’m trying to get my title back [he was disqualified from a race win earlier in the year]. This is helping my championship and I want it to rain every round now!”

Sure enough it was wet again in a truncated race two. And Browning was again in the thick of the action. Starting fourth he was ahead of Hedley by Duffus and then produced a stunning move down the inside of the hairpin to pass Smalley. But he could do nothing about Foster up front, who was able to manage the race despite two safety cars caused by Green and series returnee Harry Dyson.

“The safety cars made it a bit more interesting,” said Foster, son of former BTCC racer Nick. “It was a perfect weekend. I still have a mathematical chance of winning the overall title and anything can happen.”

He now sits 32 points behind Smalley, with Browning a further 15 back, and the title fight is interestingly poised ahead of the final six races of the season.

STEPHEN LICKORISH

## Zamparelli edges clear as Harper stars

PORSCHE CARRERA CUP GB

Dino Zamparelli extended his Porsche Carrera Cup GB points lead over Tio Ellinas by a point as JTR’s Dan Harper stole the show at Knockhill.

Northern Irishman Harper converted pole position into a win and second place. “It’s been a fantastic weekend and it was good to put on a bit of a show for everyone,” he said. “Hopefully this can kick-start the last two rounds going into next year.”

He worked hard for his race one win, losing his lead to team-mate Lewis Plato after being baulked by lapped Steve Gales.

After a brief safety car intervention to recover the beached cars of Jamie Orton and Fraser Robertson, Harper retook the lead with a forceful late lunge on Plato under braking into Clark’s. Plato then spun at the hairpin, allowing Zamparelli and Ellinas



Second win of the year for Harper



Harper took a win and a second place

through to claim the final podium positions.

As torrential rain hit, organisers elected to start race two behind the safety car. With that, polesitter George Gamble led from start to finish for Team Parker, with Ellinas this time beating Zamparelli for third.

Harper made swift work from fourth on the partially reversed grid and profited from a slide by Zamparelli at the chicane’s exit to

take third. Rookie Harper followed Ellinas for several laps before grabbing second as the pair turned into Duffus. Harper took to the sausage kerb while the Cypriot trundled across the runoff on the outside.

Redline Racing’s Zamparelli now has a five-point table lead heading into the penultimate round at Silverstone.

STEPHEN BRUNSDON



# Simmons trims Jewiss's lead

## BRITISH F4

Johnathan Hoggard had gone 13 races without victory but has now won three of the last five F4 contests, having taken a brace at Knockhill. But again the focus was on title rivals Kiern Jewiss and Ayrton Simmons.

Hoggard strolled to a comfortable win in a dull opener, while Jewiss and Simmons were fourth and sixth respectively.

The other two races were run in the wet and Simmons was the star in the second race, taking his first win since June.

"It's been a long time but it's great to win, especially in these tricky conditions," said Simmons. "We're working extremely

hard and I'm delighted it's paid off."

Further back, Jewiss was having an error-strewn day starting, with him running wide at Clark and losing third to Pasma. He was then hit by Jack Doohan at the hairpin before eventually finishing fourth.

The two title rivals then made contact for the second meeting in succession in the finale while squabbling for third. Simmons had a better run out of the hairpin but Jewiss appeared to move across on the pit straight. Shortly afterwards, Jewiss ran wide at the chicane to let Simmons through, with Dennis Hauger also profiting to leave Jewiss fifth, and his points advantage cut to 31.

STEPHEN LICKORISH



Simmons scored first win since Oulton Park in June



Browning's race one recovery was brilliant

## GINETTA JUNIOR

**Race 1 (both 17 laps) 1 Louis Foster;** 2 Adam Smalley +5.240s; 3 James Taylor; 4 Luke Browning; 5 Jonny Wilkinson; 6 Greg Johnson. **Fastest Lap** Browning 1m04.790s (70.39mph). **Pole** James Hedley. **Starters** 17. **Race 2 1 Foster;** 2 Browning +0.476s; 3 Smalley; 4 Hedley; 5 Taylor; 6 Johnson. **FL** Browning 1m04.724s (70.47mph). **P** Foster. **S** 17. **Points** 1 Smalley 541; 2 Foster 509; 3 Browning 494; 4 Patrick Kibble 359; 5 Taylor 338; 6 Ruben Del Sarte 327.

## PORSCHE CARRERA CUP GB

**Race 1 (30 laps) 1 Daniel Harper;** 2 Dino Zamparelli +4.395s; 3 Tio Ellinas; 4 George Gamble; 5 Tom Wrigley; 6 Lewis Plato. **FL** Ellinas 53.562s (85.15mph). **P** Harper. **S** 19. **Race 2 (32 laps) 1 Gamble;** 2 Harper +8.251s; 3 Ellinas; 4 Zamparelli; 5 Plato; 6 Wrigley. **FL** Harper 52.938s (86.15mph). **P** Gamble. **S** 19. **Points** 1 Zamparelli 91; 2 Ellinas 86; 3 Wrigley 72; 4 Plato 67; 5 Harper 62; 6 Gamble 58.

## BRITISH F4

**Race 1 (25 laps) 1 Johnathan Hoggard;** 2 Patrik Pasma +1.175s; 3 Jack Doohan; 4 Kiern Jewiss; 5 Seb Priaux; 6 Ayrton Simmons. **FL** Hoggard 49.266s (92.58mph). **P** Hoggard. **S** 12. **Race 2 (18 laps) 1 Simmons;** 2 Priaux +5.126s; 3 Pasma; 4 Jewiss; 5 Dennis Hauger; 6 Manuel Sulaiman. **FL** Simmons 56.288s (81.03mph). **P** Simmons. **S** 12. **Race 3 (20 laps) 1 Hoggard;** 2 Pasma +0.954s; 3 Simmons; 4 Hauger; 5 Jewiss; 6 Doohan. **FL** Doohan 56.190s (81.17mph). **P** Hoggard. **S** 12. **Points** 1 Jewiss 353; 2 Simmons 322; 3 Hauger 283; 4 Doohan 259; 5 Pasma 239; 6 Hoggard 223.

## GINETTA GT5 CHALLENGE

**Race 1 (22 laps) 1 Shane Stoney;** 2 Max Bird +0.461s; 3 James Kellett; 4 Declan Jones; 5 Geri Nicosia; 6 Alex Toth-Jones. **FL** Kellett 56.391s (80.88mph). **P** Kellett. **S** 30. **Race 2 (15 laps) 1 Stoney;** 2 Kellett +0.243s; 3 Bird; 4 Nicosia; 5 James Robinson; 6 Jones. **FL** Stoney 1m01.735s (73.88mph). **P** Stoney. **S** 30.



Zamparelli extended his points lead by one

# Stoney takes maximum

## GINETTA GT5 CHALLENGE

Shane Stoney ensured the Ginetta GT5 Challenge title will go down to the wire after securing maximum points in two vastly contrasting races at Knockhill.

The ex-Scottish Mini racer used his knowledge of the Fife circuit to climb up from sixth on the grid to claim victory in Saturday's dry opener before edging title rival James Kellett in a rain-soaked second race.

Kellett lost a probable win in the first race following a high-speed incident with guest entry Declan Jones approaching Duffus with six laps remaining. The pair pirouetted a full 360 degrees down

Duffus, but continued to finish third and fourth respectively.

Race two was stopped almost as soon as it began following a multi-car pile-up at McIntyre's, eliminating five drivers on the spot.

Once the race got going, Stoney led for the duration, but nearly threw it away after a hair-raising trip through the gravel exiting the chicane. The Quattro Motorsport driver just did enough to keep Kellett at bay to claim victory by a quarter of a second.

Stoney now lies only 25 points adrift of Kellett in the championship, ahead of the final round at Donington Park.

STEPHEN BRUNSDON



Stoney kept his title chances alive by taking two victories



Kirkaldy beat Wolfe and Pittard at Oulton Gold Cup

# Chevron anniversary glory goes to Kirkaldy

**OULTON PARK  
GOLD CUP  
AUGUST 25-27**

Former British GT champion Andrew Kirkaldy beat Andy Wolfe and David Pittard to win Monday's evocative Chevron B8 50th anniversary race, centrepiece of the Historic Sports Car Club's Oulton Park Gold Cup.

Period factory personnel, star drivers past and present, as well as cars and enthusiasts, made the pilgrimage to celebrate Derek Bennett's most iconic brainchild, styled so memorably by Bob Faulkner.

They were treated to masterclasses in parallel Avon and Dunlop-tyred competitions as the photogenic field played on the glorious undulating circuit where Digby Martland scored the first Chevron GT success on his B3 twin-cam's debut in 1966.

A late safety car allowed Pittard and Wolfe to close up to Kirkaldy – driving Sandy Watson's ex-Johnny Blades 1600cc Cosworth FVA-engined CH-DBE-54.

The chasers' order changed on the final lap when a missed gear apiece brought contact and Wolfe darted past Pittard for second. The Dunlop [slower than the Avon

equivalent] battle between Dan Eagling – in Mark Halstead's 1790cc FVC-engined example – and Simon Hadfield in Andy Yool's, ended when the latter's rear hub collapsed. Martin O'Connell finished 6.3s behind Eagling, with the pair fifth and sixth.

Ross Hyett started Watson's B8-BMW in Sunday's superbly supported Guards Trophy race, but in Kirkaldy's hands the ex-Tony Beeson CH-DBE-57 – originally with a 2.7-litre Climax engine – came alive in the rain, slithering to victory as B8s finished 1-2-3-4.

At points Kirkaldy was lapping more than 10 seconds quicker than the rest, led by Charles Allison's ex-Trevor Twaites 1970 RAC title-winning CH-DBE-32. A 30-second penalty for stopping too soon dropped Allison to fourth behind reserve Hadfield – who started Yool's car from the back, without a windscreen wiper and held its door closed – and his own team-mate Philip Nelson.

The concurrent GT race's form book was ripped up when Eagling, debuting Halstead's 1965 Sebring 12 Hours Ginetta G4R twin-cam, beat champion John Davison's Lotus Elan 26R and Martin Stretton/Stefan Ziegler's Jaguar E-type. The Nick Fennell/John Milicevic Lotus 23B was the first early sportscar in seventh.

Calum Lockie's long-held ambition to race the Dodkins brothers' "ballistic" 8.8-litre March-Chevrolet 717 – based on Helmut Kelleners' 1970 Croft Inter-series-winning 707 – came to fruition. It resulted in a memorable Pre-80 Endurance double over period Chevron star John Burton's B26 in a predominantly two-litre field. Spectacular through Druids in Sunday's

rain, Lockie lit the blue touch paper on Monday, cutting a stunning 1m36.728s (100.18mph) best lap, after Kent Abrahamsson touched the grass and biffed his B19 on Clay Hill.

Following a shower, fast-starter John Williams (Porsche 911SC) passed poleman Will Leverett's Yokohama-shod Lotus Europa as it slewed sideways at Hislops for 70s Road Sports victory. "My first win in it for 20 years," beamed Williams. Russell Paterson was third, his Avon-tyred Morgan +8 being caught by returnee Adam Bagnall's E-type from 18th.

John Davison (Lotus Elan) was harassed in Historic Road Sports by Paul Tooms, who from row three fired his Turner-Ford Mk3 – an ex-Tony Broom car he'd worked on as a lad – onto his tail. Davison finished a second clear of Tooms, pursued by Kevin Kivlochan and Peter Garland in Morgan +8s.

Debuting a newly built Valley Motorsport E-type, British GT Lamborghini pairing Jon Minshaw and Phil Keen outran Jaguar Classic Challenge rivals. Ben Short and Dave Coyne made the initial running, pursued by Minshaw, but their car owners could not match Keen. Ziegler pounced on Nick Riley for third in the E started by Stretton.

John Cleland aced both Super Touring races. A switch from qualifying's experimental Dunlop slicks – a trial for 2019 – to control Hoosiers for Sunday's wet race rendered his Vauxhall Vectra eligible again. Neil Smith (Alfa Romeo 156) led the chase both days, after winning Monday's entertaining bout with Mark Jones (Renault Laguna) and Jasons Minshaw (Volvo V40) and Hughes (Vectra).

BTCC veteran Rick Belcher completed





## WEEKEND WINNERS

### CHEVRON B6/B8 50th ANNIVERSARY

Andrew Kirkaldy (Chevron-FVA B8)

### GUARDS TROPHY

Ross Hyett/Andrew Kirkaldy (Chevron-BMW B8)

### PRE-80 ENDURANCE

Races 1 & 2 Calum Lockie  
(March-Chevrolet 717)

### 70s ROAD SPORTS

John Williams (Porsche 911SC)

### HISTORIC ROAD SPORTS

John Davison (Lotus Elan S1)

### JAGUAR CLASSIC CHALLENGE

Jon Minshaw/Phil Keen (E-type)

### SUPER TOURING

Race 1 & 2 John Cleland (Vauxhall Vectra)

### HISTORIC TOURING CARS

Race 1 Richard Belcher (Ford Cortina Lotus)

Race 2 Barry Sime (Morris Mini Cooper S)

### HISTORIC TOURING CAR CHALLENGE/TDT

Paul Hogarth/Chris Boardman (BMW E30 M3)

### HISTORIC FORMULA FORD

Ben Mitchell (Merlyn Mk20)

### HISTORIC FORMULA FORD 2000

Races 1 & 2 Andrew Park (Reynard SF81)

### HISTORIC FORMULA JUNIOR, FRONT-ENGINE

Mark Woodhouse (Elva-BMC 100)

### HISTORIC FORMULA JUNIOR, REAR-ENGINE

Jack Woodhouse (Lotus-Ford 20/22)

### HISTORIC FORMULA 3

Races 1 & 2 Jon Milicevic (Brabham BT21B)

For full results visit:  
[mstworld.com/results/hssc](http://mstworld.com/results/hssc)

a Lotus Cortina Historic Touring Car hat-trick on Monday. In a fine 25-car field, poleman Barry Sime (Mini Cooper S), Steve Platts (Singer Chamois), Adrian Oliver (Hillman Imp) and Rob Wainwright (Austin A40) chased valiantly. The sequel was derailed when Mark Watts' Ford Mustang vaulted the inside kerb at Hislops and took leader Belcher out, leaving Sime an overjoyed victor over Platts and Oliver in a one-lap sprint following a caution.

Two safety car periods and a drivethrough penalty for Ric Wood – for pitting his Ford Capri pre-window – made the MRL Historic Touring Car Challenge confusing to follow. Paul Hogarth/Chris Boardman triumphed in the ex-Tim Harvey BMW M3 over Mark Smith/Arran Moulton-Smith's ex-works version. Behind Wood, giant-slayer Tom Burgess drove his Ford Fiesta brilliantly to finish fifth overall, beating 'Skid' Scarborough/Peter Ratcliff (Capri) and balls-out Jason Minshaw (Escort RS2000) for Tony Dron Trophy Group 1 victory.

MARCUS PYE

## NATIONAL REPORTS CLUB AUTOSPORT

### LOW TO HIGH FOR MITCHELL



Mitchell took sixth win of year

Historic Formula Ford points leader Ben Mitchell emerged from a torrid weekend at Oulton Park with flying colours, and his sixth win of the season.

Having bent a rear corner of his Merlyn Mk20 in wet testing on Saturday, Mitchell returned to the Cotswolds to rob father Westie's car of spares. They rebuilt it again following stub axle failure in Monday's qualifying, as Mitchell survived everything Callum Grant and Ben Tusting (Mk20As) threw at him.

The only single-race round of the season halved 2018's 42-car entry, with Mitchell's title rival Cameron Jackson – tending to his newborn son – the most notable absentee.

Grant led initially, but once Mitchell deposed the double champion, Boltonian Grant could not breach his defences. "That was tough. I was quicker through Cascades, Island and Lodge, but lost out to Callum at Druids," said Mitchell, who held on by 0.064s as the trio fanned out to take the chequer. Tusting, who crossed the line 0.117s after Grant, set fastest lap.

Lashing rain and poor visibility did not faze lifeboatman Andy Park. With erstwhile table-topper Nelson Rowe absent and Davy Walton retiring, Park put his Historic FF2000 triple crown aspirations back on track with a last-ditch Sunday win, then extended it with a second victory in the dry on Monday.

Ian Pearson (Royale RP30) boldly ambushed Park and had just passed leader Benn Simms (Reynard) when he arrived backwards at Hislops on day one.



Park (r) twice beat Simms in FF2000

Park timed his attack perfectly though, robbing Simms, with misted visor, on the last lap. Croft winner Callum Grant found his Delta "aquaplaning everywhere", but nabbed second, despite opining that the race should not have been run.

On URS cut slicks, Drew Cameron (in Tom Smith's Royale RP27) won the section, but lost a front wheel at Knickerbrook on Monday, promoting Chris Lord (Van Diemen RF82). Park shrugged off Simms and Grant to extend a useful points advantage. Paul Allen grabbed fourth after a duel with Jason Redding – from the back in a similar Reynard – Walton and Pearson. Devonian Lord took URS honours.

The Woodhouse family mastered Sunday's treacherous conditions in a resounding Formula Junior double for the Catshill Garage equipe. Driving his faithful Elva-BMC 100, father Mark overcame Alex Morton's Condor-Ford S2 on the final lap of the front-engined split, pursued by Adam Sykes, who landed his first podium place in dad John's Merlyn Mk2. Having run-in a fresh engine, son Jack Woodhouse dug deep to beat Andrew Hibberd in the rear-engined field. Adrian Russell hounded down Katsu Kubota for third in a Lotus clean-sweep.

After another stirring Brabham duel, Jon Milicevic (BT21B) earned the 1000cc Historic F3 victory over Andrew Hibberd (ex-Chris Irwin BT18) on Sunday. Italian Enrico Spaggiari was third in the Gold Leaf Team Lotus 41X in which John Miles placed second to Tim Schenken's Chevron B9 here in '68.

Monday's stanza was red-flagged after Gregan Thruston (BT21B) and Peter Hamilton (Tecno) went off at Deer Leap. At the restart Cascades spinner Hibberd bounded back to second, ahead of Mike Scott (ex-Erkki Salminen BT28), but Milicevic's 11th win from 12 starts put the crown beyond his rivals' reach.

MARCUS PYE

# Historic F1 ace Padmore claims Mini Miglia brace

BRANDS HATCH  
MSVR  
AUGUST 25-26

In a car very different to his classic Williams FW07C, Historic F1 ace Nick Padmore claimed two Mini Miglia wins in contrasting weather at Brands Hatch.

In Saturday's dry opener, moments after the fast-starting Aaron Smith and Kane Astin tripped over each other leaving the line, five drivers were eliminated in a pile-up climbing Hailwood Hill, leading to an immediate race stoppage.

Reigning champion Rupert Deeth briefly blasted into the lead at the restart, chased by Lee Deegan, Astin and poleman Padmore. By the start of lap four Padmore had worked his way to the front as Astin – sporting heavy front-end damage from his earlier clash – and Deeth dropped down.

While Padmore pulled clear, Deegan came under pressure from Smith in a thrilling tussle for second. Smith took the position approaching Paddock Hill five laps from the end but Deegan and the recovering Deeth never allowed him time to relax. The trio

were separated by just 0.166 seconds at the flag, with Smith beating Deegan and Deeth.

Deegan shadowed Padmore relentlessly in a sodden race two on Sunday but was unable to get by, and Smith finished a distant third.

There were two first-time winners in the Mini Seven contests. Spencer Wanstall powered around the outside of triple series champion Andrew Deviny at Paddock en route to sealing victory in a damp first encounter. Reigning Super Mighty Mini champion Scott Kendall claimed an impressive third in his S Class machine. In an even wetter second event, Daniel Budd

rewarded his team for all its hard work in rebuilding his car following his huge Thruxton shunt in June by scoring an emotional triumph. Initial race runner-up Deviny was excluded from the results post-race due to 'driving in a manner incompatible with general safety'.

Max Hunter was promoted to second after a drive from the back as he missed Saturday due to a kidney operation.

Three further wins for Ant Whorton-Eales strengthened his Mini Challenge JCW title claim. Jordan Collard led from lights to flag in race one but was penalised post-race for an out-of-position start. Collard



HAWKINS

# David McCullough takes double FF1600 triumph

KIRKISTOWN  
500MRCI  
AUGUST 25

Matt Round-Garrido has led the Northern Irish Formula Ford 1600 Championship since the first round. But while his pace in the Bernard Dolan-run Medina has never been in doubt, the Midlander has encountered several bumps along a road that he hopes will eventually lead to a place in the Mazda Road to Indy Shootout.

One of those bumps appeared just yards after the start of the first of two races last weekend in the shape of Ivor McCullough's rear wheel, which he climbed over on the way to retirement.

Meanwhile an on-form David McCullough, unhindered by the fracas,

romped off into a lead he was never to lose. Behind him Alan Davidson, who started back in the pack after losing a front wheel during qualifying, engaged the recovering Ivor in wheel-to-wheel combat, eventually pulling clear to claim second spot and Pre-90 honours and, just for an hour or so, moving to within 10 points of Round-Garrido in the championship standings.

Ivor McCullough had to settle for third in his first race for almost a year, just ahead of the battling Van Diemens of Will Herron and Scott Finlay. Further back, Swiss visitor Gislain Genecand monstered Paul McMorrans' 47-year-old Crossle 20F into the top 10 in the early stages and, although eventually passed by some much younger machinery, took Pre-82 honours.

The McCullough brothers staged a repeat performance in race two, but this time it



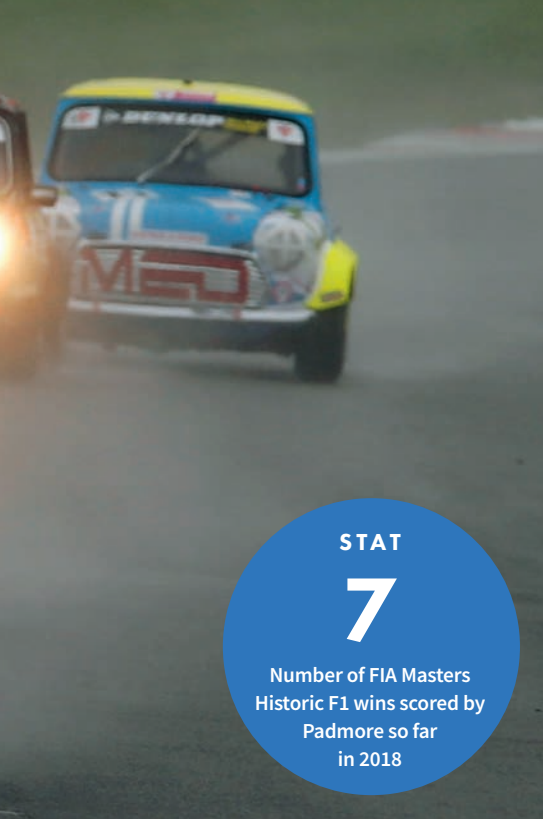
DEMPSTER

was Round-Garrido keeping them apart on the results table. Davidson eventually placed fifth behind Herron, but remains Round-Garrido's closest rival for the title with two rounds still to run.

Elsewhere in a very busy day, there was a win for Eamon Matheson's MM Honda turbo in BOSS Ireland from the mighty McLaren M10B of Swiss visitor Alain Girardet. David Parks won the concurrent Formula Sheane encounter by two seconds from Richard Kearney, clinching the title in the process.

Matheson led race two as well, but was despatched by an errant backmarker at the Hairpin, bringing out the red flags.





STAT

7

Number of FIA Masters Historic F1 wins scored by Padmore so far in 2018

attempted to fight back in race two, but had two trips through the Paddock gravel, enabling Henry Neal and series debutant Dan Zelos to seal the final two podium spots behind Whorton-Eales. A soaking and red flag-interrupted third race was won by Whorton-Eales from Nathan Harrison.

Kyle Reid was another driver to claim a hat-trick in the Cooper Pro/Am class on his first visit to Brands. After fending off Richard Newman in a dry opener, Reid narrowly held off the challenge of the rapidly closing Mark Cornell in race two after Cornell had gambled on a late switch to wet tyres. Reid comfortably won a



Wanstall was a first-time Mini Se7en winner



Kyle Reid continued his Cooper Pro/Am domination

soaking race three ahead of the battling Robbie Dagleish and Newman.

Connor O'Brien put in a dominant performance to record his first Super Mighty Minis win of the year in race one. Neven Kirkpatrick battled his way through to second before series leader Jo Polley produced a superb pass around the outside of Surtees to snatch third from David Kirkpatrick in the closing stages.

The Kirkpatrick brothers scored a one-two in the wet second encounter ahead of O'Brien, with Neven leading home David despite the latter sliding wide at Clearways.

MARK LIBBETER



Barry Rabbitt in familiar colours took a BOSS Ireland win

The restarted race fell to Barry Rabbitt's Tatuus Formula Renault from Sam Mansfield's Radical SR8. Parks also took the second Formula Sheane race.

Saloon excitement was provided by the battling SEAT Leons of Eoin Murray, Shane Murphy and Barry English, and it was Murray who took the spoils. He might well have won the second, too, but hit the Hairpin tyre barrier and caused red flags to fly again. There were no Leons in the restarted race, which had an all-Honda top three of Stephen Potter, Stephen Traub and Ciaran Denvir.

Further tin-top fun came from the solitary Ford Fiesta race, in which Ricky Hull

emerged victorious from Malcolm McKeown and Paul Stewart, while the Mondello-based Legends entertained as always, two victories going to Paul O'Brien and the third to veteran Ivor Greenwood.

Mike Johnston and Jim Larkham renewed their rivalry in two Roadsports encounters, taking one win and one second place apiece. Like the Fiestas, the Formula Vee contingent had just one race this time, which was won by Anthony Cross by the considerable (for Irish Vees) margin of 8s. Lee Newsome and Ken Brown were the placemen.

RICHARD YOUNG

## WEEKEND WINNERS

### BRANDS HATCH

#### MINI MIGLIA

Race 1 Nick Padmore

Race 2 Nick Padmore

#### MINI SE7EN

Race 1 Spencer Wanstall

Race 2 Daniel Budd

#### MINI CHALLENGE JCW

Race 1 Ant Whorton-Eales

Race 2 Ant Whorton-Eales

Race 3 Ant Whorton-Eales

#### MINI CHALLENGE COOPER PRO/AM

Race 1 Kyle Reid

Race 2 Kyle Reid

Race 3 Kyle Reid

#### SUPER MIGHTY MINIS

Race 1 Connor O'Brien

Race 2 Neven Kirkpatrick

#### CHAMPION OF BRANDS

Race 1 Michael Eastwell (Spectrum 011C)

Race 2 Michael Eastwell (Spectrum 011C)

#### MINI CHALLENGE COOPER S

Race 1 Will Fairclough

Race 2 Will Fairclough

Race 3 Jono Davis

#### MSVR ALL-COMERS

Race 1 Chris Enderby (Radical SR4)

Race 2 Colin Watson (Caterham 400)

For full results visit: [tsl-timing.com](http://tsl-timing.com)

### KIRKISTOWN

#### NORTHERN IRELAND FF1600

Race 1 David McCullough (Van Diemen RF01)

Race 2 David McCullough (Van Diemen RF01)

#### BOSS IRELAND

Race 1 Eamon Matheson (MM Honda)

Race 2 Barry Rabbitt (Tatuus FRenault)

#### LIBRE SALOON

Race 1 Eoin Murray (SEAT Cupra)

Race 2 Stephen Potter (Honda Integra)

#### FORD FIESTA ZETEC

Ricky Hull

#### LEGENDS

Race 1 Paul O'Brien (below)

Race 2 Paul O'Brien

Race 3 Ivor Greenwood

#### ROADSPORTS

Race 1 Mike Johnston (Opel Tigra)

Race 2 Jim Larkham (Radical PR06)

#### FORMULA VEE

Anthony Cross (Sheane FV94)

#### GINETTA JUNIOR

Race 1 Se Og Martin

Race 2 Se Og Martin

For full results visit: [speedhive.mylaps.com](http://speedhive.mylaps.com)



DEMPSTER

# FINISHING STRAIGHT

IN THE MEDIA • ARCHIVE • QUIZ

## ALWAYS LEAVE THEM WANTING MORE



GUY MARTIN AND JENSON BUTTON are no strangers to this section of Autosport. Martin is something of a household name since making the leap from quirky motorcycle road racer to bona fide TV presenter. And now Button's stepped aside from Formula 1, he's made a strong start to a career as a pundit – having joined Sky Sports F1 for the British Grand Prix (July 12 issue). The prospect of the two together on our screens, therefore, had all the makings for a stellar combination.

The pair joining forces was a big selling point to the latest episode of *Speed with Guy Martin*. But it was a race between them in early 1980s Williams machinery that was the headline act of the *Classic F1 Special*.

But on both counts, there's a case to be made that Monday night's 90-minute Channel 4 broadcast was underwhelming. No doubt down to the 2009 F1 champion's busy schedule, including both LMP1 and Super GT programmes, Button was only present for the duo's head to head filmed at the British GP. The footage he recorded is interwoven throughout, from the first ads break onwards in an effort to expand

his presence, but with choppy cuts back to Martin's preparation with the 1983 FWo8C – the same chassis with which Ayrton Senna unofficially broke the Donington Park lap record during his first F1 test.

Likewise, billing Martin and Button – who piloted the banned six-wheel, ground-effect FWo8B – as heading out on track for a genuine race made liberal use of poetic license. They were pitched together around Silverstone for five laps. Button made a mandatory pitstop from a 10-second lead after two circuits before catching and passing Martin under braking into Stowe. He then promptly disappeared into the distance. For the lack of time they spent side by side on track, calling it a run of exhibition laps might have been a more honest sell. Granted, that hardly makes for a strong pitch to draw in a diverse and potentially motorsport apathetic audience.

That said, if you could make the easy jump to look beyond either of those niggles, then the *Classic F1 Special* made for compelling viewing even for ardent racing fans. From a historic perspective, it ticked all the right boxes. The production



Button (l) and Martin have got two, four and now six wheels sorted



Lorry mechanic Martin  
was hands-on during  
the FW08C's (r) build



RYAN MCNAMARA

didn't even skimp on the use of evocative archive footage, as Martin enthused about Senna's stout late-race defence against Nigel Mansell at Monaco in 1992.

Having built a relationship with Williams when Martin tried his hand as part of the team's pit crew at Spa last year for a previous instalment of *Speed*, he now integrated himself into Williams Heritage. Giving proper screen presence to the division's boss Jonathan Williams, former chief mechanic and team manager Dickie Stanford, plus heritage driver Karun Chandhok, was a masterstroke.

Williams and Stanford oversaw lorry mechanic Martin's hands-on role in restoring the FW08C. Chandhok, meanwhile, was a mentor during Martin's time in the team's simulator, as he sought the limits in a Formula 3 car around a sodden Pembrey, and was even willing to be thrown around the backseat of a Vauxhall Astra during a lesson with renowned driver coach Rob Wilson. In fact, the latter's healthy section of the show dedicated to explaining Wilson's in-demand tutelage of how to maintain a flat car while keeping corners as short as possible.

Although the final showdown between Button and Martin is oversold, that doesn't stop it from still being a thoroughly engaging climax. Viewers have waited 80 minutes for these two to face off and while Martin understandably doesn't offer Button much of an on-track threat, that doesn't stop it from being a proper thrill.

Watching two thoroughly likeable personalities pressing on to a Cosworth DFV soundtrack hits a lot of right notes. So much so that it's all over too quickly. But then the art of great entertainment is to always leave people wanting more.

MATT KEW



**motorsport.tv**

HIGHLIGHT OF THE WEEK



## RACING DOCUMENTARIES

### Formula E - Off The Grid Jean-Eric Vergne

#### FORMULA E: OFF THE GRID - JEAN-ERIC VERGNE

This week we're off to America's Big Apple as we spend 48 hours with newly crowned Formula E champion Jean-Eric Vergne. Handily condensed into a 14-minute run-time, catch a behind-the-scenes glimpse into Vergne's life as he enters the brace of New York City ePrix for the season finale. Go to <https://bit.ly/2w4spMq>

### THIS WEEKEND'S EVENTS

#### INTERNATIONAL MOTORSPORT

##### Italian Grand Prix Formula 1 World Championship

Rd 14/21

Monza, Italy

September 2

TV Live

Sky Sports F1,  
Sunday 1330.

TV Highlights

Channel 4,  
Sunday 1845

##### Formula 2

Rd 10/12

Monza, Italy

September 1-2

TV Live Sky Sports

F1, Saturday 1540,  
Sunday 0950

##### GP3 Series

Rd 7/9

Monza, Italy

September 1-2

TV Live Sky Sports

F1, Saturday 0925,  
Sunday 0835

##### Porsche Supercup

Rd 8/9

Monza, Italy

September 2

TV Live Sky Sports

F1, Sunday 1130.  
Eurosport 2,  
Sunday 1100

##### IndyCar Series

Rd 15/16

Portland, Oregon, USA

September 2

TV Live BT Sport 1,

Sunday 1930

##### Indy Lights

Rd 10/10

Portland, Oregon, USA

September 1-2

##### Blancpain GT Sprint Cup

Rd 4/5

Hungaroring,  
Hungary

September 1-2

TV Live BT Sport

ESPN, Saturday 1315,  
Sunday 1345

##### Formula Renault Eurocup

Rd 7/10

Hungaroring, Hungary

September 1-2

TV Live BT Sport

ESPN Saturday 1500.  
BT Sport 1,  
Sunday 1230

##### World Rallycross

Rd 8/12

Loheac, France

September 1-2

##### NASCAR Cup

Rd 25/36

Darlington, South  
Carolina, USA

September 2

TV Live Premier  
Sports, Sunday 2230

##### Super TC2000

Rd 8/12

Santa Fe, Argentina

September 2

#### UK MOTORSPORT

##### Rockingham BARC

Aug 31-Sept 2

Citroen C1 24 Hours,  
C1 Challenge, Tin  
Tops, Quaife Saloons

##### Oulton Park MGCC

September 1

MG Cup, MG Metro  
Cup, BCV8, MG  
Trophy, Cockshoot  
Cup, Northwest 100

##### Snetterton MSVR

September 1

Pre '63, Intermarque,  
Equipe GTS, Jaguar  
XKs, GT Challenge,  
Pre-War Sports

##### Silverstone MSVR

September 1-2

International GT  
Open, Euroformula  
Open, Alpine Cup,  
Lotus Cup Europe,  
Radical European  
Masters

TV Live

BT Sport 3,  
Saturday 1400, 1500,  
Sunday 1230

##### Donington Park 750MC

September 1-2

Clio 182s, BMW  
330s, BMW Car Club,  
Formula Vee, Locost,  
Toyota MR2s, 750  
Formula, Historic  
750 Formula, Sport  
Specials, MX-5 Cup,  
M3 Cup, Armed  
Forces Race

##### Anglesey BARC

September 1-2

NW Sports/Saloons,  
Clubmans, karts,  
Caterham Graduates,  
Junior Saloons

##### Thruxton BRSCC

September 1-2

Caterham Academy,  
270Rs, 310Rs, 420Rs,  
Roadsports, Ford  
Fiestas, Fiesta Juniors,  
BMW Compacts

##### Brands Hatch MSVR

September 2

Festival of Porsche:  
Porsche Club, Porsche  
Speed Championship

##### Mallory Park BRSCC

September 2

FF1600, HRDC  
Allstars, HRDC  
A-Series/Academy,  
karts, Track Attack



**FROM THE ARCHIVE**

It all looked so good for Michael Schumacher to end Ferrari's near 20 years of driver-title hurt in 1998. At the penultimate round, the Luxembourg

Grand Prix (at Germany's Nurburgring!), Schumacher was equal on points with McLaren rival Mika Hakkinen, and pole position kept the wind in his sails. But, as this wheel-locking moment suggests,

the race did not go to plan. Hakkinen took a brilliant win, as he would at the Suzuka finale, and Schumacher would have to wait two more years to end Ferrari's longest-ever drought.





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## TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

### QUIZ

#### WHO, WHAT, WHERE, WHEN?



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#### WHO IS THIS?

This amiable racer from the land of ice and snow was a diamond in his junior career but didn't quite make the most when presented with an opportunity at the top table.

Like his countryman before him he was forced to foreign climes for his first forays into single-seaters, which was where he caught the eye of a talent programme that backed him all the way.

He starred as he was halfway to the top and was then the initial shining light of a new series before getting lost in Shakespeare country.

After spending a year on the sidelines, he was promoted into the big time and after a sluggish start he rose well to the challenge. These efforts earned him a call to partner a superstar in waiting.

There was one amazing high, before he was off to a resurrected ersatz legend that struggled at the back.

#### ON THIS DAY

**1** Which team claimed its only Formula 1 pole on this day in 2009?

**2** Emanuele Naspetti made his F1 debut on this day in 1992. Who was he driving for?

**3** Bruce McLaren was born on this day in 1937. Between them, how many of the 11 rounds of the 1969 Can-Am championship did he and team-mate Denny Hulme win?

**4** Today is Francois Delecour's birthday. How many WRC rounds did he win?

**5** Who claimed his only MotoGP podium on this day in 2009 at Indianapolis?

#### NAME THE HELMET



#### LAST WEEK'S ANSWERS

**Who, what, where, when** Stephane Sarrazin, only F1 start, driving for Minardi, Sao Paulo, 1999 Brazilian GP.

**Who is this?** Tazio Nuvolari. **On this day** 1) 1980 Belgium GP. 2) 10. 3) Dale Earnhardt Inc. 4) Raffaele Marciello.

5) 1967 German GP. **Name the helmet** Alain Menu.

## IN NEXT WEEK'S ISSUE



IT'S TIFOSI TIME: FULL  
ITALIAN GP COVERAGE

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