



F1 Why Hamilton was one lap away from failure

Indy 500 Alonso's latest quest with McLaren

Formula E Under the skin of the new Gen2 racer

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COULD VERSTAPPEN HAVE AVOIDED THE OCON CLASH?

Max Verstappen's charge in the early stages of last weekend's Brazilian Grand Prix was remarkable, albeit aided by tyre issues for Mercedes. Just after half distance, the Dutchman looked like he had done enough to take one of the best victories of 2018.

Then his old Formula 3 sparring partner Esteban Ocon decided he wanted to unlap himself in his fresh-tyre-shod Force India. As the backmarker in the situation, Ocon was undoubtedly in the wrong in the ensuing clash with the race leader. But was Verstappen blameless? Or did Lewis Hamilton have a point when he said that Max was the one with more to lose?

Those questions sparked some debate in the Autosport office, particularly given Edd Straw's driver ratings (see page 28). It's hard not to think that Verstappen, knowing the personal history with Ocon and the fact that the Red Bull had everyone covered around Interlagos, could have let the Force India go once its overly aggressive intentions had become clear (surely in the braking zone for Turn 1). It's hard to imagine Hamilton having that crash.

On the other hand, the chasing Mercedes was still only 2.8s behind at that point and there's a chance that following Ocon would have hurt Verstappen's tyres.

Either way, it continued Hamilton's recent history of wins when things seem against him, and was the sort of encounter Verstappen will need to avoid if he is to challenge for a world title.

Beyond the rights and wrongs of last weekend, the performance of the Red Bulls – for the second GP in a row – could be good news for the future. If Honda can provide an engine as strong as Red Bull has hinted, it may not just be Ferrari that Mercedes and Hamilton have to worry about in the world championship fight.



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ALONSO ANNOUNCES 20

INDY 500

Fernando Alonso will return to the Indianapolis 500 with McLaren in 2019 as he bids to complete motorsport's unofficial Triple Crown.

The two-time F1 world champion will step away from McLaren's grand prix team at the end of this season. Beyond completing the 2018/19 World Endurance Championship superseason with Toyota, he had nothing else firmed up for next year.

However, McLaren announced last weekend that it will once again make a one-off entry at Indianapolis with Alonso, as it did in 2017.

"I've made clear for some time my desire to achieve the Triple Crown," said Alonso – Indy 500 success is all he needs to emulate Graham Hill's triumph, having won the Monaco Grand Prix twice and Le Mans on his debut this year.

"I had an incredible experience at Indianapolis in 2017 and I knew in my heart of hearts I had to go back if the opportunity was there.

"I'm especially glad to be returning with McLaren. This was always my first choice if the team decided to do it, so I'm delighted they've decided to go ahead.

"It's a tough race and we'll be up against

the best, so it will be a huge challenge."

Alonso skipped the Monaco GP to make his Indy 500 debut in 2017, running under the McLaren-Honda-Andretti banner. He qualified fifth and took the lead on lap 37, enjoying four stints in first place.

Having led 27 laps, he was running seventh and was on the attack in the closing stages of the race when his Honda engine let go as he completed his 179th tour. His performance and impact at Indy earned him the Rookie of the Year award despite being classified only 24th.

The 2017 Indy attempt was run in conjunction with IndyCar team Andretti Autosport under the McLaren banner and with the presence of F1 team veteran Neil Oatley in an observer capacity.

McLaren's 2019 effort will be a "separate team", according to McLaren CEO Zak Brown, with direct McLaren involvement and an expected Chevrolet engine deal – although it is expected to again use some

**"I KNEW IN MY
HEART OF HEARTS
I HAD TO GO BACK IF
I HAD THE CHANCE"**



Button: GT title as big as F1 crown

SUPER GT

Jenson Button says winning the Super GT crown as a rookie is “just as big” an achievement as his Formula 1 title success in 2009.

He and Kunimitsu Honda team-mate Naoki Yamamoto clinched the title by finishing third in the Motegi finale, beating Lexus duo Nick Cassidy and Ryo Hirakawa by three points.

Button became the first rookie driver to win the class since 2005, while he and Yamamoto ended Honda’s seven-year series drought.

Button likened his latest success to his shock 2009 F1 championship, which he won with Brawn GP.

“That was a tough race,” Button said. “They are never easy and that’s what makes it extra-special.

“This championship is one of the toughest in the world.

“The last championship I won was nine years ago. That was quite a big one, and this for me at the moment feels just as big. This is so important.”

Team boss Kunimitsu Takahashi praised Button’s “dedication and devotion” after his squad lifted the drivers’ title for the first time in its 25-year stint in Super GT. Takahashi thanked both drivers – describing Yamamoto as “world class” and Button as a “superstar”.

“As a Formula 1 champion here in Super GT, I wondered if you were going to make fun of us, saying, ‘This will be a piece of cake,’ [that] kind of thing,” Takahashi said to Button.

“I was wondering if you would enjoy it or not. But I’ve been so impressed with your devotion and trust you put in our team, and your fabulous driving abilities. We have several ex-F1 drivers here but your dedication and devotion have been fabulous. You did really well and you’re definitely a superstar.”

JAMIE KLEIN AND RACHIT THUKRAL

P31 RACEREPORT



19 INDY 500 COMEBACK

Andretti support. Brown denied that the programme could impact the F1 team.

“Definitely not, it’s a whole separate racing team that will be created,” he said.

“We’re a large racing team with lots of resources and I’m extremely confident, or we would not have entered, that we will give maximum effort to F1 and this Indy 500 effort without one compromising the other.

“It’s going to be people that aren’t currently on our F1 team. It will be built up from relationships that we have. But yes, it will be a new McLaren entry.

“We always had a desire to go as McLaren Racing. Last time we did it at such short notice I think it would have been impossible – I think it was six weeks between announcing and racing, and you can’t build a race team up that quickly.”

Asked if it could be a two-car effort, he said, “I don’t think I’m going to comment on that at this moment”, but did concede it would be a useful precursor to a full-time IndyCar programme in the future.

“Certainly we’ll be in a position where we’re there with the equipment, people, resources, so it certainly gives you a head start if ultimately we decide to do a full-time entry.

“IndyCar as a series is attractive

to McLaren Racing.

“We have big ambitions, first and foremost to get back to winning world championships, and winning F1 races, but we think the IndyCar series, the market which it races in, how they go motor racing, is of interest to McLaren.

“It’s something that from a longer-term point of view continues to be under review, and which certainly I’d like to see us a full-time entry in the future.”

As for Alonso, he says his return to the Indy 500 is just the first announcement regarding his plans for 2019.

He stressed that, with IndyCar testing and qualifying added, his diary is already busy for the first half of the year but after June he currently has a clear schedule.

“I will do many more, you will know step-by-step,” he said. “Today is the first one. Apart from the three races of WEC, I think there are [also] four tests. If you add the three weekends of racing, it’s already seven, until June, plus the tests of IndyCar and the two weeks of the Indy 500.

“If you see the calendar until June, there are only two or three weekends off. Even if it seems there are not too many races, there are a lot of preparations. I’m looking forward to it.”

SCOTT MITCHELL

Revoked exclusion gifts Black Falcon title

BLANCPAIN GT SERIES

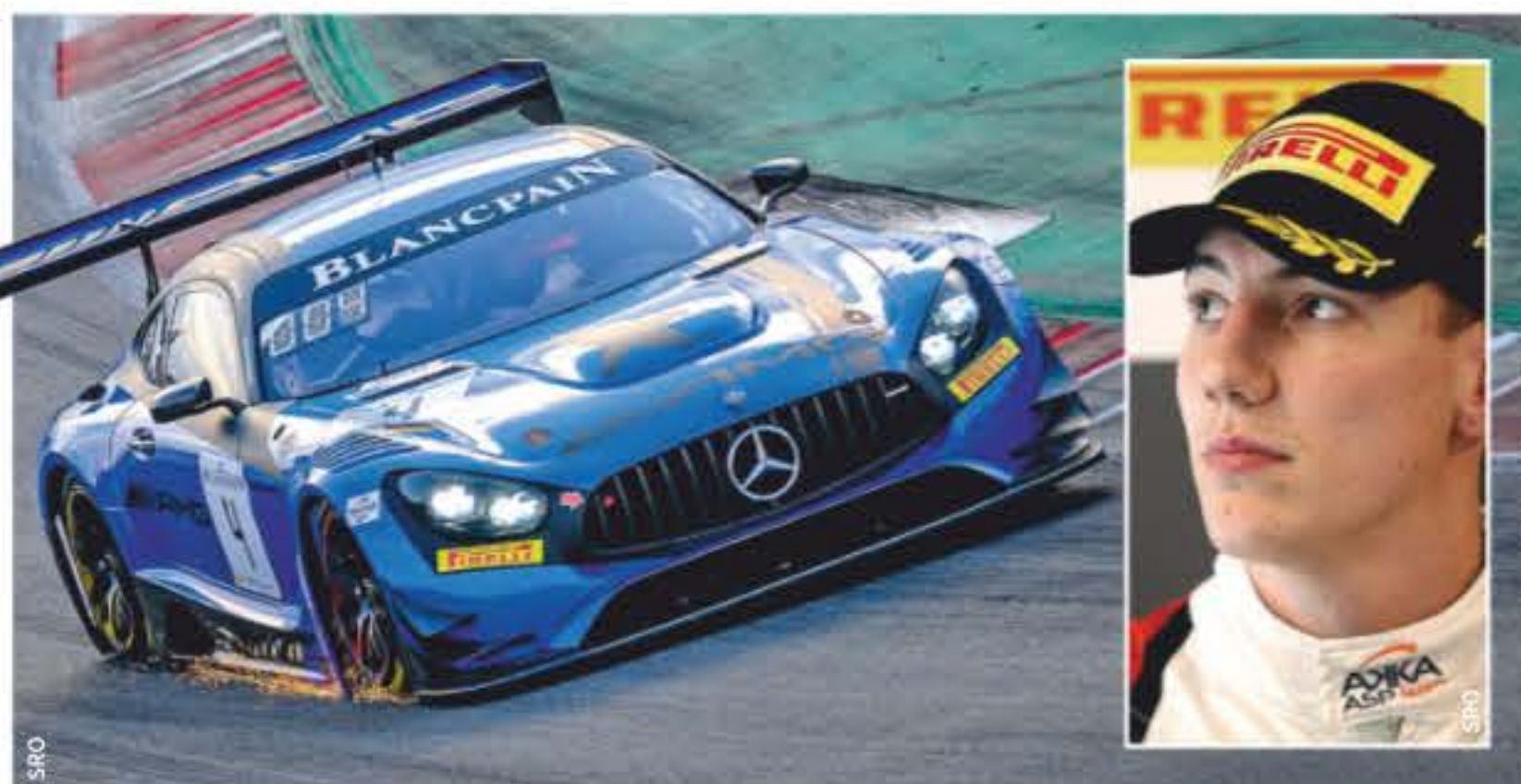
Black Falcon Mercedes-AMG GT3 drivers Maro Engel, Yelmer Buurman and Luca Stolz have been crowned Blancpain GT Series Endurance Cup champions after their exclusion from Barcelona's season finale in September was overturned.

The national court of appeal of the Royal Automobile Club of Belgium, under whose auspices the series is run, upheld the decision of the series technical delegate and the stewards of the meeting that the application of self-adhesive tape to the car's air intake system contravened its homologation.

However, it ruled that disqualifying the car from victory was disproportionate with the infringement because the modification did not "provide any advantage of performance".

The punishment has been transmuted to a €5000 fine. That means that Engel, Buurman and Stolz are reinstated in the results as the race winners, which gives them enough points to take the drivers' title, and Black Falcon the teams' title.

The ruling has deprived Auto Sport



Promotion Mercedes driver Raffaele Marciello (top right) of a clean sweep of BGTS crowns. Had the disqualification of the Black Falcon car been upheld then the Italian would have added the Endurance Cup title to the overall title and the BGTS Sprint Cup championship that he won alongside Michael Meadows.

The disqualification of the winning

Black Falcon Mercedes at Barcelona was the latest instalment of what might be termed as 'gaffer tape-gate' in the BGTS this year. At the Spa 24 Hours blue riband round in July, WRT Audi driver Dries Vanthoor lost pole position for the same offence of sealing the intake system, as well as the removal of connector lugs.

GARY WATKINS



SUPERCARS The Ford Mustang, which will replace the outgoing Falcon FG/X for the 2019 Supercars season, completed its first running last week. DJR Team Penske driver and current championship leader Scott McLaughlin drove a prototype at Queensland Raceway, prior to a run at Phillip Island. The Mustang still requires its official aerodynamic homologation, to be conducted in back-to-back testing alongside the Nissan Altima and the Holden Commodore ZB. The example McLaughlin tested had begun life as a Falcon, and has been Penske's spare chassis for almost two seasons. When it makes its competitive debut, the Mustang will become the first two-door car to race in Australian tin-tops for nearly 20 years. **Photograph by Tickford Racing**



Plans for Robocar changed

ROBORACE

The driverless Roborace initiative will commence its inaugural season with an upgraded version of its autonomous development car and not the bespoke Robocar revealed last year.

Roborace's 'Season Alpha' is due to launch in spring next year, supporting some Formula E events, and the series will use an evolution of the development car that can also be driven by a human.

'DevBot 2.0' (above) retains the LMP-inspired design of the original mule but will be rear-wheel drive instead of all-wheel drive and has updated styling and hardware.

Autosport has learned that the initial season will likely comprise fewer than 10 cars, which will be piloted by a human for one part of the race.

Roborace CEO and 2016/17 Formula E champion Lucas di Grassi told Autosport that this is to make the driverless technology clearer to people watching: "We changed our mind. The impression of a driver driving and then jumping out much better exemplifies the difference between human and autonomous driving.

"Most importantly, I think motorsport has to have a human component. It's always been about human and machine."

SCOTT MITCHELL



BTCC revises ballast rules

BTCC

The success ballast system in the British Touring Car Championship will be tweaked next season, meaning leading cars will carry less weight.

Since 2015, the top 10 in the points have been required to carry 75kg – down a sliding scale to 9kg for the 10th-placed car. Then, the ballast is applied for finishing positions in race one and race two.

For 2019, the weight will be reduced to 54kg for the most successful, dropping by increments of 6kg down to ninth –

10th place will also carry 6kg.

Series director Alan Gow said: "It is a good thing that we can reduce the level of ballast: it's a reflection of how competitive the grid is right now. The field is so tight that 75kg can have a huge effect."

The rules regarding penalties for contact have also changed. Any driver who receives three reprimands will earn a strike. Three strikes will result in the driver being demoted to the back of the grid, and a fourth will result in a one-race ban. A reprimand remains on a licence for 12 months.

MATT JAMES

IN THE HEADLINES

F1 SIGNS NEW FITTIPALDI

Pietro Fittipaldi, the grandson of two-time world champion Emerson, will test a Formula 1 car for the first time in Abu Dhabi this month after the 22-year-old landed a deal to become Haas's test driver for 2019. Also, Formula 2 racer Sergio Sette Camara will take on a test and development role at McLaren after joining its junior programme.

BBC TO SHOW FORMULA E

The BBC will screen every race of the 2018/19 Formula E season via its website and TV red button for viewers in the UK. It will also show at least one race live on one of its network TV channels – BBC One or BBC Two. The deal means live motorsport returns to the BBC for the first time since it stopped broadcasting Formula 1 at the end of 2015.

FORMULA E GRID FILLED

Formula 2 race winner Maximilian Gunther has joined Jose Maria Lopez at Dragon Racing to seal the final space on the 2018/19 Formula E grid. Gunther was Dragon's reserve driver last season, and shared its second car with Antonio Fuoco during testing at Valencia last month. The 21-year-old replaces Jerome d'Ambrosio, who has joined Mahindra alongside fellow ex-Formula 1 driver Pascal Wehrlein.

DAVID MORGAN 1944-2019

David Morgan, best-known for his one-off grand prix start with Surtees and being punched by James Hunt after a Crystal Palace Formula 3 shunt, has died aged 74 after a stroke. He was one of the leading lights of British single-seater talent during the early 1970s. After success in Formula 2, he turned team boss in the '80s.

ROAD TO INDY CLARIFIED

The 2019 Indy Lights champion will receive an additional \$100,000, despite Mazda withdrawing its annual \$5million backing from the Road to Indy scheme. Its decision follows a period of uncertainty, with Indy Lights grids usually featuring just eight cars. But next year the Road to Indy scheme will be presented by Cooper Tires, with Andersen Promotions – the organisers of the ladder – confirming an increased prize pot.

GIBERNAU TO RETURN

MotoGP race winner and sometime title contender Sete Gibernau will come out of retirement in 2019 to race in the new MotoE series. The 45-year-old is the latest rider to sign up to participate in the five-round all-electric support series. He last competed in grand prix racing in 2009 and recently worked as a rider coach for Dani Pedrosa.

Tarquini and Muller in fight to make history

WTCR

In the battle to win the inaugural World Touring Car Cup title, two of the main stalwarts from the past two decades of touring car racing will go head to head for honours in Macau this weekend.

Although seven drivers mathematically remain in contention for the WTCR crown, realistically 2009 world champion Gabriele Tarquini and four-time title winner Yvan Muller are the two whose moves will be

under most scrutiny. It's nine years since Tarquini defeated Muller by four points to claim his only World Touring Car Championship to date, and the Italian again faces stiff competition from the French driver to add to his title tally in the first year of the new TCR era.

The gap is a far more comfortable 39 points this time around, courtesy of Tarquini's fifth victory of the season in the third race of the Suzuka weekend while Muller failed to score. But the

now-56-year-old said he would be taking nothing for granted against his fellow Hyundai i30 N TCR driver in Macau despite a healthy standings advantage.

"I have not raced there for four years, but I remember well the corners," said Tarquini. "Macau is a special race for everybody. Apart from Rob [Huff, nine-time winner at the circuit], who is the king of Macau, it is very tough."

"It's the best position to approach the final race for me and I will be concentrating on the title. But it's a lottery and everything can happen in Macau. You can have trouble, an accident, you must survive the start – especially the first corner [Lisboa]."

"It's probably not the best place for me when you have an advantage, probably it's the best race for Yvan when he must recover. But that's it. I will be with a smile as in Suzuka and thinking about my title dream."

While Muller is Tarquini's only serious rival, last year's WTCC champion Thed Bjork retains a shot at claiming successive titles at world level. Bjork has more wins (four versus three) than YMR team-mate Muller, but is 53 points behind Tarquini with 87 on offer in Macau. Pepe Oriola, Jean-Karl Vernay, Esteban Guerrieri and Norbert Michelisz are the four other drivers still in the title picture.

JACK COZENS



WTCR

TOP 3

2018 MACAU GT DRIVERS

Ahead of the Macau GT World Cup, Autosport previews the drivers who are expected to fight it out at the sharp end



DRIES VANTHOOR

The WRT Audi team's talisman driver this season is only making his Macau debut, but Vanthoor consistently proved in the Blancpain GT Sprint Cup that he's a bit special – witness a qualifying lap at Spa that was six tenths clear of the rest, even if it was scrubbed out by the scrutineers. Rene Rast's second place on his debut in 2015 showed what a rookie can do.



AUGUSTO FARFUS

Farfus finished second last year on his return to what has been a happy hunting ground for the Brazilian – he has two wins in the World Touring Car Championship on the Guia circuit. He again drives a BMW M6 GT3 for Schnitzer, which will be bidding for a 14th victory at Macau, in what will be veteran team manager Charly Lamm's last race at the helm.



EDOARDO MORTARA

Never count the king of Macau out. Mortara now has seven victories – two in F3, four in the GT event and one in a one-make Audi R8 race – on the street track. The DTM driver, who again turns out in a car entered under the Mercedes-AMG Team Driving Academy banner, returned to the winners' circle last year in sublime fashion to notch up his latest victory.



WRC's three-way championship decider

WRC

Ready? The final act in the most astonishing World Rally Championship season is upon us as three drivers start this week's Rally Australia with a shot at the title.

Who's favourite? Who knows? Well, actually, we can probably call Ott Tanak an outsider. Despite the Estonian's fearsome pace – pace that has helped him to win four of the last six rounds (and he had Wales Rally GB and Spain in the bag as well before a heavy landing and a puncture ended his tenure at the top of the timesheets) – he's 23 points behind series leader Sebastien Ogier.

But what of Thierry Neuville? What of the pretender to Ogier's crown, on track to end 14 years of French rule?

After leading for much of the campaign – and building an advantage of 27 points – a hugely mediocre second half of the year has allowed the defending champion back into the race. Three points separate them as they head down under.

With 30 points on offer (25 for the win plus five bonus points for fastest time on the powerstage), the permutations for Ogier and Neuville are pretty much endless. While

we're on the maths, let's despatch Tanak. He needs to win the rally and the final stage with Ogier and Neuville failing to score on the powerstage and finishing seventh or lower and fifth or lower respectively.

For Ogier, victory would mean everything. It would take his points total to 229, and second place and a powerstage win for Neuville would still leave him five shy. In short, both drivers need to win to be safe.

The one thing you would have thought we could rely on this week is the weather. The WRC arrives at the start of a Southern

Hemisphere summer that usually has the Coffs Coast toasting nicely in the mid-30s with not a cloud to be seen. Not this week. It's low 20s with rain forecast.

Rain on Friday would play into Ogier's hands beautifully. Usually one of the toughest rallies to run first on the road, Australia's gravel-strewn surface gets faster and faster with each passing car when it's dry. It's slippery when wet and so always better to be at the front.

The rally, the season and the spectacle couldn't be more finely balanced or perfectly poised. It's 15 years since we've had three drivers in with a shot at the title on the final round and, for the first time in 14 of those, the season might not be soundtracked with *La Marseillaise*.

As if that's not enough, the manufacturers' championship is a similar three-way fight – Toyota leading Hyundai and M-Sport into the final round.

Everything's set, but let's give Neuville the final word. He Tweeted earlier this week: "The fight will be hard and beautiful in Australia and I feel thankful about the season so far. Time for the Final. May the best win!" Game on.

DAVID EVANS

DRIVERS' STANDINGS

POS	DRIVER (TEAM)	POINTS
1	Sebastien Ogier (M-Sport)	204
2	Thierry Neuville (Hyundai)	201
3	Ott Tanak (Toyota)	181

MANUFACTURERS' STANDINGS

POS	TEAM	POINTS
1	Toyota	331
2	Hyundai	319
3	M-Sport	306
3	Citroen	216



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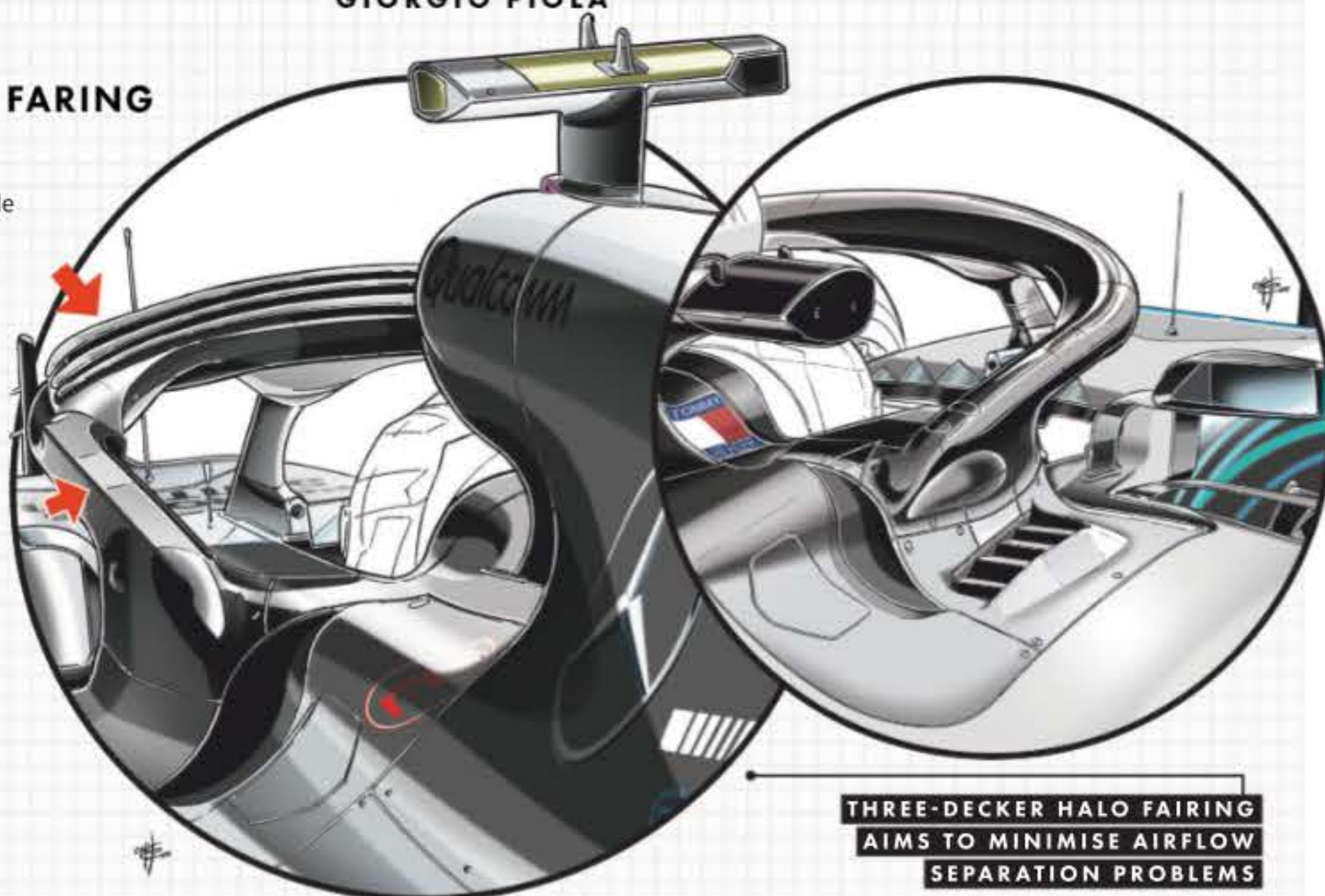
GIORGIO PIOLA

MERCEDES HALO FARING

Mercedes has added a three-element halo fairing, which made its race debut in last month's Mexican Grand Prix – and it was retained at Interlagos.

Adding more elements means that, just like a wing, you can work it harder and turn the airflow that bit more. It is mounted over the top of the halo front section to reduce the airflow separation problems over that part of the surface that are caused by what is effectively a tube passing through the air. If this separation is not minimised then the turbulence created will affect the airbox inlet area, which in turn will affect the rear wing performance.

GARY ANDERSON



TORO ROSSO BARGEBOARDS

Along with the front wing endplates, the bargeboard area of an F1 car has been allowed to get out of hand. If anyone wants to reduce the costs and improve the show, these two areas should be addressed very quickly.

This drawing shows you the number of turning vanes that work together to improve the underfloor performance. It is a fantastic feat of aerodynamic flow-structures optimisation, but as soon as you get close to another car and the airflow to these components gets any level of turbulence, this aero flow structure falls over and

reduces the performance of the other aerodynamic components it was influencing.

The other, and probably more important, issue with this area of the car for the teams themselves is that there are no sponsors because there is no surface that can be seen from different angles. People sometimes forget that it is the sponsors that keep this thing afloat.

So eliminating bargeboards would improve racing, save money and bring in more money. The decision should be very simple.

GARY ANDERSON

MERCEDES WHEEL RIMS

Mercedes is still working to optimise its rear-wheel hub airflow system, but since the question of legality was brought up by Ferrari, it seems to have only been tested. Mercedes appears reluctant to race it again.

The FIA stewards ruled on the initial design and deemed it acceptable, but with the caveat that any changes to the original design could be re-examined. So perhaps Mercedes is just putting as many different designs out there as possible to get the best results for next year.

It is always difficult to quantify what is a moveable or moving aerodynamic device. The basic principle of cooling a brake disc by passing air through the holes in the disc means that, like the wheel, which at the very least has spokes, they are a moving aerodynamic device. But they are not moveable and the geometry is consistent when the car is stationary or in action. Adding a few holes like this in the wheels is just exaggerating the wheel spoke design.

GARY ANDERSON





HOW GREAT IS MERCEDES?

Mercedes has just claimed its seventh drivers' title, and fifth constructors', but, with its complicated history, where exactly does it stand in the table of F1's great teams?

EDD STRAW

Who won the 2018 Formula 1 world championship? Lewis Hamilton, most would reply. Not Mercedes. Perhaps Lewis Hamilton for Mercedes, but few would simply say Mercedes.

F1 is, in the public perception, the drivers' championship, with the constructors' championship a secondary prize. That was certainly how many felt when Mercedes wrapped up that title in Brazil last weekend. It was a postscript to Hamilton's title victory in Mexico two weeks earlier.

Yet the constructors' championship is crucial to teams, not only because it affects how much 'Column 2' cash they get paid out of F1's revenues, and there are bonuses available for winning it, but also because it proves that over a full season, with two cars, the winning team was the best. It means a lot to those working for each team.

Just look at the reaction to Hamilton's victory, which secured the constructors' crown. The swell of team members congratulating him led to the parc ferme fence being knocked over under sheer weight of enthusiasm. And rightly so – this is an incredible achievement, and the vast number of people who have contributed, most of them names you will never hear, deserve to revel in what they have done. Congratulations to every single one of them.

"MERCEDES HAS NOW CLIMBED TO FOURTH PLACE IN THE LIST OF WINS BY CONSTRUCTORS"

So where does this leave Mercedes in the bigger F1 picture? The logical place to start is with the numbers. Mercedes has now climbed to fourth place in the list of victories by constructors, ahead of Lotus, with 86. In terms of constructors' championships, Mercedes is now fifth overall, having moved clear of Red Bull this year and would likely be equal with Lotus on seven had the constructors' championship existed in the mid-1950s. On top of that, it has carried Juan Manuel Fangio, Hamilton and Nico Rosberg to a total of seven drivers' crowns, putting it behind only Ferrari and McLaren, and level with Williams.

A prerequisite of being one of the true great teams is to have multiple periods of success, which is where the history of Mercedes in F1 comes into play. Mercedes is arguably one of eight teams who have had multiple spells of success in F1, along with Ferrari, McLaren, Team Lotus, Williams, Brabham, 'Enstone' (including success under the Renault, Benetton and Lotus banners) and Tyrrell.

The idea of 'Mercedes' as a grand prix team is more complicated than it might first seem. The victories credited to it in the above list were secured in two stints, the first in 1954-55 when Fangio won a couple of drivers' titles. The constructors' championship didn't appear for the first time until '58.

The first nine of the victories credited to Mercedes were taken during this period, in a span of just 12 races. The subsequent 77 wins have been taken by the current incarnation of the team, which came into being at the start of 2010. So, immediately, we have two distinct teams contributing to this success.

Now things start to get more complicated. What we should call 'Team Brackley', in deference to the town in the UK where it is based, has previously existed under three different names – Brawn, in 2009, Honda from '05-08 and BAR from 1999-2004.

Add to that the fact that it's the same company (registered number 00787446) as Tyrrell, thanks to its original incarnation as Tyrrell Racing Organisation Limited from 1964-98, and it becomes ever-more difficult to tie down exactly what we mean by 'team'.

Mercedes could technically lay claim to all of that history (an additional 42 victories, along with four drivers' and three constructors' titles) given it is the same legal entity. That, of course, would allow it to claim wins with Matra, March, Tyrrell and Honda machinery and move ahead of Williams to third in the victories list.

But it would be absurd to let Mercedes sweep up so much success it had nothing to do with. And when BAR arrived in 1999 it was, to all intents and purposes, a start-up that did draw from the old Tyrrell team but basically rebuilt it, having demolished all that once existed in order to get a place on the grid.

It is perfectly legitimate to take the Brackley era, from 1999 as BAR to today, and consider it a single, successful, entity. But that would mean you'd have to discount the earlier Mercedes success as that applies to a manufacturer entry and not the team entity. Tricky.

So which version of the team are we going to focus on? It's most logical to consider the version that runs from the start of BAR in 1999 through to the present day, in four separate identities.

While 'Brackley' hasn't got the history for innovation of a Team Lotus, a McLaren or a Williams, that's more down to the era it has operated in. Gone are the days when you could make conspicuous innovations obvious to all. But what it has done, in recent years, is set new standards for what a grand prix team can be and how well a massive organisation can be integrated.

That elevates it above Enstone, Brabham and Tyrrell into the top five. The history of Ferrari and the impact on F1 over longer periods means Ferrari, McLaren, Williams and Lotus have to stand above it.

That leaves Mercedes fifth for now. There is still time for it to break into the top four teams, but, even if it doesn't, Mercedes is now unquestionably one of the very greatest F1 operations. 🏆

YOUR SAY

Verstappen was robbed of victory in a grand prix where he had worked so hard to get to the lead through a combination of fantastic overtaking and excellent Red Bull strategy

JOSHUA KERR

Verstappen was robbed of race win

How can a driver who is unlapping himself think it is OK to take out the leader, as was the case with Esteban Ocon on Max Verstappen in the Brazilian Grand Prix? Verstappen (right) was robbed of victory in a grand prix where he had worked so hard to get to the lead through a combination of fantastic overtaking and excellent Red Bull strategy.

Let's take the positives, though, as he did finish second in a grand prix where he started fifth and recovered well after the incident. However, that still doesn't stop the wrath of Kerr, who was screaming at his television at around six o'clock on Sunday night...

Joshua Kerr

Kidderminster, Worcestershire

Max's ego was to blame

Verstappen's ego was the prime reason why he did not win the Brazilian Grand Prix. He should have just let Ocon past if he had been properly advised by his race engineer of the situation, but his ego is such that he cannot stand the idea of being overtaken by a 'lesser' driver, so he kept his foot down when a slight lift would have avoided the collision.

I wonder if he will realise that it is the right foot connected to a working brain that wins races and that he was the author of his own misfortune.

Graham Butler

Beckenham

When push comes to shove...

If Max Verstappen does ever win a championship, he certainly won't be getting a WBC belt for it.

Graeme Innes-Johnstone

Elland, West Yorks

Unique identity is what makes a track special

With the newly planned circuit for Vietnam being revealed, it was interesting to note that 'cues from other F1 tracks' will be incorporated into its design. Sadly, it seems there's



a lack of imagination on the F1 designers' part in making unique identities of tracks from around the world. With some notable exceptions, a lot of tracks pretty much look and feel the same now.

There was a time, when I first got interested in F1 back in the mid 1980s, that individual circuits had different characteristics about them, which made them unique. Some fast, some slow, some smooth, some bumpy, some power circuits, some twisty, which was all part of the challenge. Different chassis and engine combinations struggled at different venues, so as the season progressed teams would see-saw with success at these places as they 'handled' whichever track suited them, adding extra spice, intrigue and excitement on race weekends.

Now it seems 'one track fits all' pretty much for the new permanent circuits, so one element of the unpredictability that race weekends provided has gone.

With the general lack of close racing commonplace these days, the unique originality of layouts really could help circuits and countries 'stand out from the crowd', be easily recognised and lauded and hopefully challenge teams again like in the past.

MA Smith

By email

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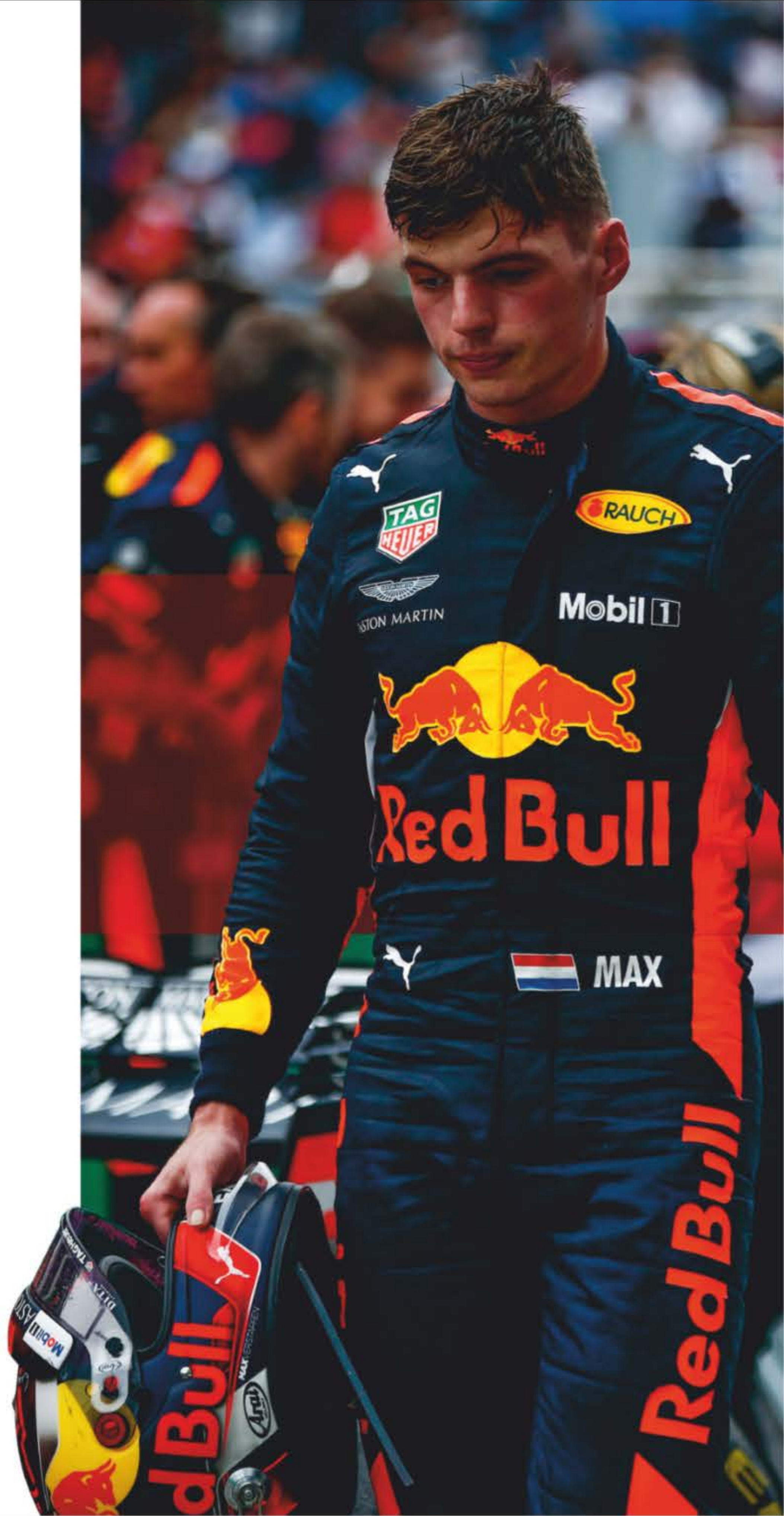

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HOW HAMILTON STOLE VERSTAPPEN'S VICTORY

While the world champion struggled, Red Bull's charger looked to have the Brazilian GP sewn up. Then Esteban Ocon tried to unlap himself...

EDD STRAW

“RIGHT, LET’S GET A GAP TO HIM THEN STROKE it to the end,” Max Verstappen was told over the radio after he’d passed Lewis Hamilton to take command of the Brazilian Grand Prix. He’d done the hard work to climb from fifth on the grid, there were no more pitstops to make, and Hamilton’s Mercedes team was focused more on getting him to the end amid engine problems than fighting back. The race was won.

Verstappen’s lead over Hamilton crept up to 2.8 seconds by the start of lap 44, four laps after the pass, but having been told “we don’t need any pace” there was no need to pull away any more dramatically than that. Hamilton was no threat, but there was another Mercedes driver who posed a problem – Esteban Ocon. The Racing Point Force India attempted to go around the outside of Verstappen into Turn 1, hung onto what became the inside line for Turn 2 and clattered into the Red Bull when it took the apex.

Hamilton saw this unfold and charged between the two stricken cars to take a lead he would never lose. While Verstappen rejoined second and closed back up on Hamilton in a car with significant damage to the right side of the floor, he never got close enough to attack. Ocon had swung the race decisively in favour of his employer.

Any suggestion that this was a deliberate act, to buy into the conspiracy theory that Ocon made himself into a missile to help Mercedes, is categorically nonsense. Ocon was certainly guilty of bad judgement, but it was not a malicious or calculated move, and certainly wasn’t orchestrated by his employer or done unilaterally in search of a works team job as some wild theories posit. It was simply a confluence of circumstances that set the pair on a collision course.

With Verstappen on a set of softs that would run to the end of the race and Hamilton no threat, there was no need for the Red Bull driver to attack. The problem was that Ocon had made his pitstop on lap 40 and was eager to make progress on his fresh supersofts. On both lap 41 and 42, he was the fastest driver on track, on average 0.240s quicker than Verstappen. A lap down, the Racing Point Force India pitwall advised Ocon that he could unlap himself should he want to. With Carlos Sainz Jr’s Renault 25s up the road, Ocon decided he needed to crack on.

“The first lap I was a lot faster and the second lap I was a lot faster,” said Ocon. “I had fresh tyres basically and the rules say you are allowed to unlap yourself if you are faster, and that is what I did on the second lap because I had massive pace. I went around the outside of him, the same move I did on Fernando [Alonso], the same move I did on many other drivers, coming from last on the first lap. But it didn’t happen the same way in the corner after that.”

Verstappen was furious. The subsequent shoving match with Ocon at the post-race driver weigh-in was proof of that. “You do everything well, you go through the field, we had a great car, and then by such an idiot you get taken out while he is being lapped,” was Verstappen’s »







LEWIS HAMILTON DIDN'T PUT THIS DOWN AS ONE OF HIS greatest pole position laps, but on a short circuit like Interlagos the Mercedes driver did enough right to be almost a tenth clear of nearest challenger Sebastian Vettel. What's more, his first-run time was already enough to give him pole and, along with seventh-fastest Marcus Ericsson, he was one of only two drivers to improve their time on the second run.

"That was a tough qualifying session," said Hamilton. "The last lap wasn't that great, I had a bit of understeer in a few places. I was so grateful when I heard I got pole."

Hamilton's second lap shaved two hundredths off his original mark, but Vettel's hopes of challenging for Ferrari's first pole position since Monza six races earlier faded when he had a lock-up into the slow Turn 8 right-hander that feeds into the twisty sequence in the middle of the track.

"I had a tiny lock-up in Turn 8," said Vettel. "I got a good start to the second attempt in Q3 and I thought I'd go for it, but it was just a little bit too much so I lost some time and didn't improve."

Valtteri Bottas fancied his chances of repeating his 2017 pole position, and was set to improve on his second lap before things went wrong late on.

"I was more than two tenths up on my best lap but somehow in Turn 12 I just lost a little bit and then I was the first car out in the last run so had no tow on the back straight and kept losing time on the uphill."

That said, he was 0.126s slower than Hamilton at the end of the second sector, shortly before the Juncao left-hander that leads onto the blast to the line. He described the middle sector pace as "average", but without the time lost in the last sector could conceivably have made it a Mercedes lockout.

Fortunately for Bottas, Kimi Raikkonen also did not improve on his second run, ending up 15 thousandths slower but ahead of the two Red Bulls. Of the top six, only the Ferraris set their Q2 times using soft Pirellis after diving into the pits after the out-lap in a rain-threatened session, giving them a potential advantage for the race.

For the first time this year, Sauber driver Ericsson was at the front of 'Class B', beating team-mate Charles Leclerc by almost two tenths. Leclerc had performed heroics late in Q2 to get into the top 10 in the first place and both were surprised to be ahead of the lead Haas of Romain Grosjean.

EDD STRAW

"THAT WAS TOUGH. I WAS SO GRATEFUL WHEN I HEARD I GOT POLE"



summary. Ocon was hit with a 10s stop/go penalty, and was certainly at fault for the collision. While he's absolutely right that it is acceptable to unlap yourself and it's entirely understandable that he wanted to get on with his race having endured the pain of a long first stint on softs, it has to be a clear-cut move.

Given that he could have slotted in right behind Verstappen once it was clear it wasn't going to work, then picked up the DRS again on the run to Turn 4, it wasn't the percentage play. True, Verstappen could have given Ocon a wider berth and let him go, but that would have been ultra-conservative. With Hamilton only a few seconds behind, and Red Bull only partially aware of the extent of his engine problem, why should Verstappen yield?

Now just under six seconds behind, with a car that had lost downforce but that was at least still relatively well-balanced, Verstappen still had a chance to trouble Hamilton.

"You know all the cutouts that you have on the side of the floor, that whole area [was damaged]," said Verstappen, indicating an area 15-20cm wide. "That was completely gone so it was pretty



"AS IS OFTEN THE CASE, MERCEDES ROSE TO THE CHALLENGE AND GOT THE SITUATION UNDER CONTROL"



bad. I lost a lot of downforce and I had to lock a lot of tools on the steering wheel, but that was not enough. Still the car was quick, but we could have been much faster."

Verstappen attempted to regroup and inched towards Hamilton, saving his best for the closing laps. With five laps remaining, he got the gap below two seconds, then down to around 1.5s – but there it stayed. When Hamilton nailed a strong middle sector on the penultimate lap, Verstappen knew it was game over.

His fury was entirely understandable, for until the clash with Ocon this was a superbly executed race. From fifth on the grid, Verstappen briefly jumped Kimi Raikkonen before making a move stick by going around the outside of the Ferrari into the Senna S on lap three. Next time round, he ambushed Sebastian Vettel with a late move up the inside into the same corner. Taking a load of inside kerb, Verstappen forced Vettel wide – but not too wide – to move into third. With both Ferraris on the softs, Verstappen was enjoying the advantage of more grip at this stage.

His next victim was Valtteri Bottas, who started third in the second Mercedes and went around the outside of a locked-up Vettel into the first corner at the start. But Bottas was struggling more to keep the rear tyres under control than Hamilton and was vulnerable. On lap eight, he was warned that he was running out of battery energy and needed to be careful how much he used in battle, and sure enough Verstappen challenged him at the start of lap 10.

Bottas was told to defend to the inside, which he did initially before inching back to the right and leaving the door open for Verstappen. While the Red Bull driver was going to get past anyway, it was not the first moment of softness in battle from the Finn.

With Hamilton less than two seconds up the road at this point, Verstappen clearly had the speed to lap faster but he could not make a move. Hamilton was doing a good job of keeping the rear-overheating under control, something that became a little easier once more of the compound had worn away and therefore the tyres lost heat quicker, so Verstappen had to bide his time. This is where one of the key traits of the Red Bull came to the fore – tyre management.



Close contest: Bottas, Raikkonen, Vettel and Ricciardo line astern



Hamilton swaps supersofts for mediums

The RB14 has probably been the best of the three big teams on its tyres this year thanks to a combination of its inherent good balance and Red Bull's excellence in mastering the black art of getting the best out of the Pirellis. Verstappen was able to extend his stint far beyond the moment Hamilton pitted at the end of lap 19.

Hamilton emerged 18s down, with Mercedes wanting him to keep Verstappen within 20.5s to be certain of regaining track position when the Red Bull stopped. During this phase of the race, Hamilton was singularly unimpressed by the grip offered by the mediums he had taken on and was battling to manage the rear temperatures. Having been asked to match Verstappen's pace, Hamilton expressed frustration that he hadn't been warned how close Verstappen was to busting his pit window.

When he was told his pit-window margin was down to just 0.8s at the end of lap 27, he asked, "When were you going to tell me this?", then was given a more aggressive engine mode to respond with. He did so, and while Verstappen at one stage got within a few tenths of pulling a big enough gap, his right-rear Pirelli gave out. So when Verstappen finally dived into the pits at the end of lap 35, he emerged with a deficit of around three seconds. Towards the end of lap 38, Verstappen was allowed an attacking engine mode and breezed past Hamilton on the run to Turn 1 with the help of the DRS. The race was won. With Hamilton being told "we've had to turn the engine down to protect it" amid earlier chatter about not wanting to lose a power unit, and with tyre troubles, there was no chance of a response. Just stroke it home, Max.

Ocon's intervention a few laps later turned the race on its head and Hamilton gratefully claimed his 10th victory of the season. It wasn't one of his most emphatic wins, but Hamilton was able to manage the tyres better than team-mate Bottas and kept Verstappen at bay once back ahead. It was a fitting way for Mercedes to clinch a remarkable fifth consecutive constructors' championship, especially after high temperatures manifested themselves and threatened a failure while in battle with Verstappen. As is often the case, the team rose to the challenge and managed to get the situation under control.

"We have the engine guys here in the back and at base," said >>



TRACKSIDE VIEW

INTERLAGOS ISN'T QUITE THE circuit it once was. It's still a great track that television images fail to do justice to, but in its old incarnation it was faster, longer and even more beloved by drivers. There was a corner on that circuit named 'Laranja', which translates as orange. This was in deference to the fact that it was considered the easiest turn, with 'orange' an old slang term for a bad driver.

On today's circuit, that corner name has morphed into 'Laranjinha' – literally 'little orange', for reasons that aren't entirely clear. It's applied to what are rather coldly called Turns 6 and 7. The only 'orange' on display in this long, fast, uphill double right-hander is Dutchman Max Verstappen. This is far from the easiest corner on the circuit, and one that doesn't get talked about as much as it should.

The topography of Interlagos, with 43 metres of elevation change, means there are plenty of unusual vantage points. Adjacent to the entry to Laranjinha, standing on the top of a grass bank during FP3 allows you to look down to the corner and across the track, catching glimpses of the slow turns that follow and even the Juncao left-hander that feeds the cars onto the long blast to the start/finish line.



It's that compact.

Laranjinha is long and demands a good car balance. Some cars respond more violently to the bumps, some suffer from understeer on the way in, some visibly look pendulous mid-corner – notably the Mercedes. But one of the trickier to drive is the Renault, with Nico Hulkenberg and Carlos Sainz both battling mid-corner instability as the sparks shower from the back of the car.

"That corner, on the second apex, goes a bit to a crest so on

entry you always get a bit of understeer if you push," says Sainz. "But on exit you always get the snap oversteer at the crest, especially on my car, so it's about how you balance out how much you want to straighten the car for Turn 8 over the crest, or how much you want to gain on entry pushing the front. You're always trying to find the right compromise there. If you push the entry too much, you're going to have understeer. If you push the exit too much, you're

going to have oversteer."

Ferrari drivers Sebastian Vettel and Kimi Raikkonen exhibit the two approaches. Raikkonen holds the car a little tighter with a more conservative entry and keeps the car more stable in the second phase of the corner, while Vettel attacks it and has to work hard to manage the rear end later in the corner. There's always a trade to be made in Laranjinha, it's just a question of exactly where you make it.

EDD STRAW

Laranjinha demands good car balance – and the driver finding the right entry/exit compromise





Three-pointed star cast: the Mercedes ensemble celebrates title double

"I HEARD, 'LEWIS HAMILTON, ENGINE FAILURE IMMINENT, WITHIN THE NEXT LAP'. I JUST SAID, 'EXCUSE ME, WHAT?'"

ETHERINGTON/LAT
motorsport
IMAGES

Mercedes team boss Toto Wolff. "We have about 10 channels open [on the radio]. On one channel what I could hear is, 'Lewis Hamilton, engine failure imminent. It's going to fail within the next lap'. I just said, 'Excuse me, what?' They said, 'Yes. We have a massive problem on the power unit, it's going to fail on the next lap'. But it didn't fail the next lap."

"I said, 'I'll let you work, but when you have a minute, tell me what's happening'. They said, 'Our exhaust is about to fail. We're overshooting all the temperature limits'. I said, 'What's the fix?' They started to fix it by turning the whole thing down. The temperatures went down to below 1000 to 980 degrees. It's still too high! He recovered another lap. That was truly horrible."

But what of the Ferrari challenge? After qualifying, Wolff declared the red team favourite. This was thanks to Ferrari's inspired gamble of calling its drivers in amid the threat of rain after one lap in Q2 to switch from supersofts to softs. While this resulted in Vettel damaging the weighbridge and being reprimanded in his frustration at being called to an FIA check, it meant Vettel and Raikkonen started second and fourth respectively on what should have been a favourable tyre.

Vettel's race never really got going. After losing a place to Bottas, he then ran wide at the Turn 4 left-hander during the first stint and lost third to Raikkonen. Having jumped back ahead of Raikkonen thanks to undercutting him, he was then ordered to let the Finn past. Vettel, on mediums, then came under pressure from Daniel Ricciardo, who had charged from 11th on the grid after a five-place drop for a turbocharger change, and was passed for sixth in the second stint.

A sensor problem meant Vettel was having to run the car in unusual

engine modes, which also made life difficult under braking. Combined with nobody struggling as much as Ferrari hoped on supersofts, this condemned him to finishing at the back of the six-car battle at the front after making a second stop for supersofts.

With Raikkonen never quite able to threaten the top two despite getting close in the closing stages, Ricciardo came through to fourth having ambushed Bottas into Turn 1 on lap 59. The Mercedes driver was struggling badly with his medium Pirellis and had no chance of keeping Ricciardo behind, so immediately headed to the pits for fresh softs knowing he was able to emerge still ahead of Vettel.

Had Ricciardo not had the grid penalty, he undoubtedly would have been on the podium and might have been well placed to come through to victory after the Verstappen/Ocon clash. It's indicative of the way his season has gone since a stellar start that he wasn't.

Verstappen, meanwhile, was left to rue a victory lost. After the race, Hamilton pointed out the risks associated with getting tangled up with a backmarker who has little at stake while you have everything to lose. Perhaps it was the wisdom of a driver who probably would have found a way to evade such a fate.

But given that Ocon was the driver who caused the clash, it's hard not to regard Hamilton's comments as a little psychological warfare against a young driver who becomes more formidable by the day. Unlike mistakes earlier in the season that cost potential victories in China and Monaco, this was not a race lost by Verstappen, rather to misfortune. But the 2018 Brazilian Grand Prix is another signpost to a challenge for the title that Hamilton must surely one day face from Verstappen. 🏆

Verstappen punished for Ocon confrontation

Max Verstappen has been ordered to complete two days of public service as punishment for his post-race altercation with Esteban Ocon in Brazil.

The Red Bull Formula 1 driver confronted Ocon while the drivers were being weighed after the race, shoving the Frenchman in reaction to their collision during the race that cost Verstappen victory. Both were summoned to the stewards, and it was decided Verstappen was guilty of making "deliberate physical contact" with Ocon.

The stewards' verdict said Verstappen "is

required to perform two days of public service at the discretion of the FIA within six months of the incident". In a statement, the stewards said they understood Verstappen's feelings on the situation, and they noted that during the hearing both drivers "acted appropriately and cooperated".

They added: "Max Verstappen entered the FIA Weigh Bridge Garage, proceeded directly to Esteban Ocon and following a few words, started an altercation, pushing or hitting Ocon forcefully several times in the chest. The stewards understood from Verstappen that he was extremely upset by the incident on track during

the race and accepted his explanation that it was not his original intent to strike Ocon, but that he was 'triggered' and caused him to lose his temper.

"While sympathetic to Verstappen's passion, the stewards determined that it is the obligation of sportsmen at this level to act appropriately and as role models to other drivers at all levels and found that Verstappen failed in this respect."

No further action was taken against Ocon, who was given a 10-second stop/go penalty during the race for the on-track collision. He and Verstappen shared a brief handshake in the paddock after returning from the stewards room before parting.

MOTORSPORT IMAGES/MAUGER/LAT



FIA explains unlapping crash penalty

FIA Formula 1 race director Charlie Whiting says Esteban Ocon was not wrong to try to unlap himself in the Brazilian Grand Prix, but fighting Max Verstappen was "wholly unacceptable".

Verstappen was taken out of the lead of the race after Ocon, recently out of the pits on fresh supersoft tyres, attacked him around the outside into Turn 1 and then tried

to pass him on the inside of Turn 2.

Ocon was handed a 10-second stop/go penalty for causing a collision. Whiting explained it was the manner in which he tried to pass Verstappen – who would have been vulnerable to a pass with DRS into Turn 4 had Ocon waited a little longer – that was the problem.

"It's happened many times in the past," said Whiting (left) of

whether lapped drivers can pass frontrunners. "But you expect it to be done safely. More to the point, it should be done cleanly and absolutely without fighting.

"If he's got the pace, one would expect Red Bull to say, 'Ocon has the pace, let him through'. But he just went for it. It was unfortunate he decided to fight for it, which was wholly unacceptable."

MOTORSPORT IMAGES/SUTTON



BIG NUMBER

100

F1 POLE POSITIONS FOR MERCEDES

Lewis Hamilton claimed the 100th pole position in Formula 1 for Mercedes as a constructor. It is only the fifth constructor after Ferrari, McLaren, Williams and Lotus to achieve this.



FIRST MERC POLE: 1954 FRENCH GP



MOTORSPORT IMAGES/SUTTON



Q&A CHRISTIAN HORNER Red Bull team principal

The Red Bull team principal defends Max Verstappen's post-race altercation with Ocon, as well as ruing a certain victory lost.

How frustrating is what happened to Max in the race?

It's hugely frustrating to lose a victory like that. Max was able to make his way past the Ferraris and Bottas early on, then close on Lewis Hamilton and put him under pressure. They pitted very early for the medium tyre and Max's pace on the supersoft was fantastic, so we went as far as we could to give him a tyre advantage for the second half of the race. He was able to cruise up and pass Lewis easily, then he was just managing the race from there when a backmarker has decided to start racing him and taken him out. Through the irresponsible actions of a backmarker we've lost the grand prix.

How much performance did he lose from the damage?

Close to a second.

Lewis Hamilton suggested he would have given Ocon a wider berth in that situation – should Max have done?

I don't think so. Max is the race leader and Ocon's been lapped. He's got a car that's much quicker on the straight. It just wasn't well handled by



Ocon. It was totally irresponsible even to dream of racing him.

What do you make of the incident between Verstappen and Ocon at the weigh-in?

We don't condone violence in any way, but you have to understand that emotions are running very high. There's a lot of history between those two drivers that goes right back to karting. What we don't know is what words were said between them and how he was antagonised. You've just had a backmarker take a grand prix victory away from you and inevitably emotions are running high.

F1 does want to see rivalries and character...

Absolutely. Drivers aren't robots and nor should they be. We see in other sports that there is interaction between players and it's down to the referee to step in and manage that. I don't think it got out of hand.

Leclerc wins 'Class B', Hulkenberg champion

Charles Leclerc claimed seventh place in the Brazilian Grand Prix, his second 'Class B' victory of the season – while Renault driver Nico Hulkenberg clinched the unofficial title despite retiring.

Based on Autosport's unofficial scoring system, which removes Mercedes, Ferrari and Red Bull from the tally then reallocates the points, Hulkenberg now has

an unassailable lead over Racing Point Force India's Sergio Perez even though he retired to protect his engine at Interlagos.

Leclerc's midfield victory was built on a stunning performance in Q2, in which he was set to be eliminated thanks to rain that hit with five minutes remaining. The Sauber driver argued with his team to allow him to stay

out, and he was able to nail a lap at the end of the session that got him into the top 10 at the expense of Kevin Magnussen.

Starting seventh, Leclerc moved up to sixth ahead of Sauber team-mate Marcus Ericsson, who suffered damage in a clash in the Senna S while battling with Romain Grosjean. Leclerc executed a one-stop

strategy to take a comfortable 'victory', although nearest challenger Grosjean was carrying floor damage that meant he didn't have the speed to threaten the Sauber.

Leclerc called his Q2 lap "number one" in his career, and without that pace it's unlikely he would have been able to claim such a strong result.

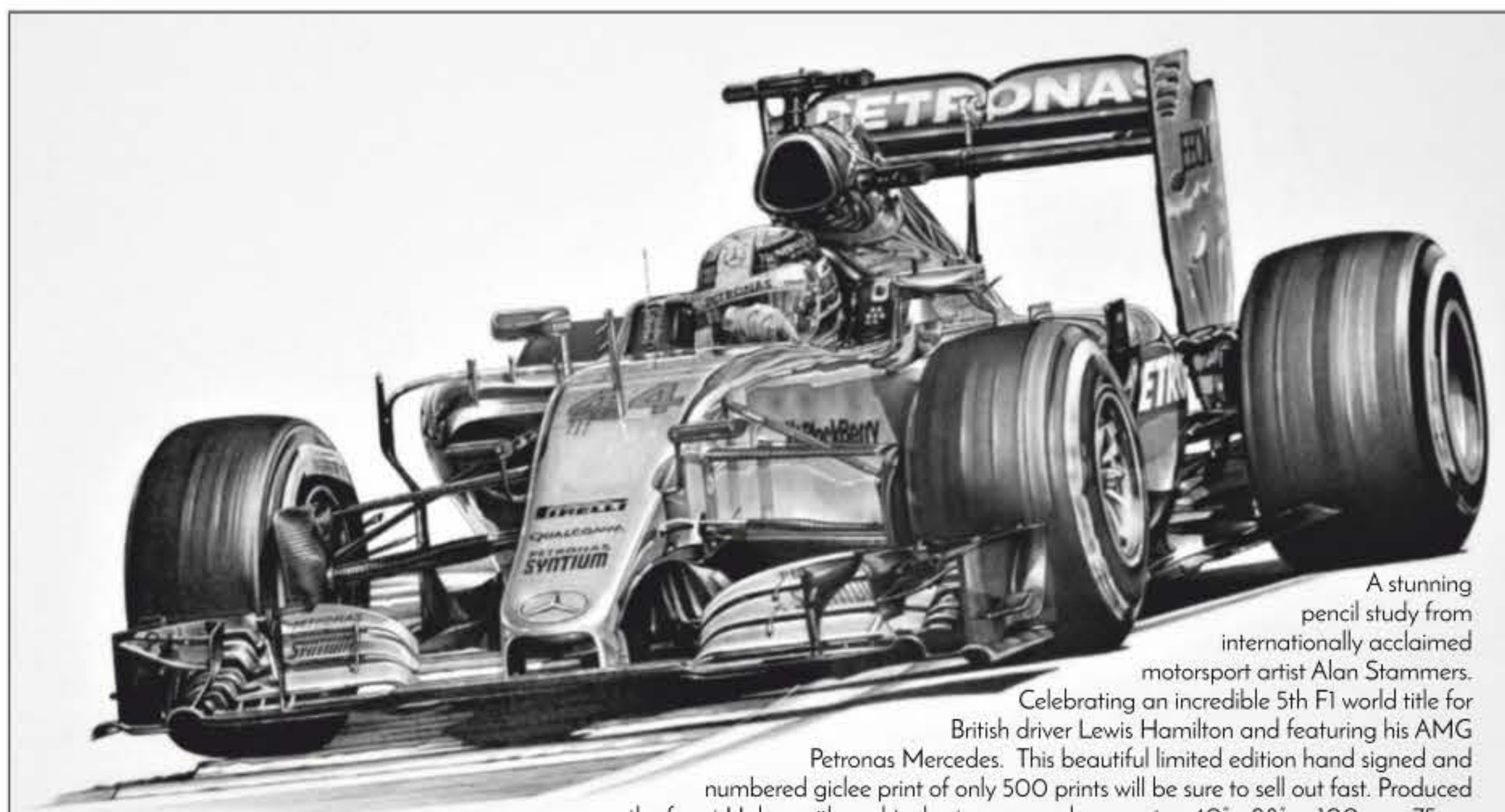
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Vettel fined after 'destroying' scales

Sebastian Vettel was reprimanded and fined €25,000 after a stewards' investigation into his behaviour at the weighbridge during Brazilian Grand Prix qualifying.

Vettel, who was called up to the weighbridge when he came into the pits without setting a lap time early on in the second segment of qualifying, was anxious to get through the process. He hit a cone and hurried FIA staff through the motions.

He subsequently incurred the wrath of technical delegate Jo Bauer, who reported that the four-time world champion had ignored instructions, didn't switch off the engine as required and "destroyed the scales" by speeding off under his own power after the procedure.

After deliberations, FIA stewards gave Vettel his first reprimand of the season, as well as the fine, for "failing to follow the instructions of the relevant officials for

the safe and orderly conduct of the event".

It was explained in the verdict that Vettel had "eventually stopped the engine, although not at the time usually expected in the established procedure". This cleared him of one of the relevant charges.

He was held responsible for driving the car off the scales under his own power, damaging them and also risking flicking the cornerweight pads dangerously into the air.



McLaren drivers hit with penalties

Both Fernando Alonso and Stoffel Vandoorne were hit with penalties for ignoring blue flags during the Brazilian Grand Prix.

Alonso was given his penalty during the race, meaning five seconds were added to his race time when he took the chequered flag. This dropped him to 17th, behind Williams driver Sergey Sirotkin.

Vandoorne's offence was handed down after the race, meaning he lost a place to Esteban Ocon in the final results and was classified

15th after a strong drive from last place. He passed Lance Stroll, Alonso, Sirotkin and Ocon to take 14th on the road.

Alonso had a more difficult race after stopping earlier, at one stage declaring "no more radio" to the team and expressing frustration at having to target a lowly position ahead. He has now gone five races without scoring a point, although McLaren is on the verge of securing sixth place in the constructors' championship.

Toro Rosso racers row on radio

Toro Rosso drivers Brendon Hartley and Pierre Gasly became embroiled in a heated exchange over the team radio on their way to finishing 11th and 13th at Interlagos after Gasly (right) defied an order to give way.

Hartley and Gasly were running different strategies after Hartley was eliminated in Q1 and started 16th, while Gasly was ninth on the grid after making it to Q3. Hartley was the only driver to start on medium-compound tyres and, after a long first stint, he swapped to new supersofts on lap 49 of 71, enabling him to close rapidly on 11th-placed Gasly, who had stopped for mediums on lap 29.

Since Carlos Sainz's Renault was threatening both of them, Hartley asked the team if they would consider swapping places, telling race engineer Pierre Hamelin: "If I don't get by I'll get



passed by Sainz." But Gasly refused to obey several clear instructions to move over, insisting that they were racing for position.

Hamelin then suggested that Hartley use a different engine mode to get closer to Gasly and overtake, to which Hartley responded: "Mate, I'm right up his arse."

Hartley claimed the position two laps from the chequered flag while Gasly, running low on fuel, then lost 12th place to Sainz.



FREE PRACTICE 1

POS	DRIVER	TIME
1	Verstappen	1m09.011s
2	Vettel	1m09.060s
3	Hamilton	1m09.107s
4	Ricciardo	1m09.395s
5	Raikkonen	1m09.573s
6	Bottas	1m09.679s
7	Grosjean	1m09.922s
8	Magnussen	1m10.236s
9	Leclerc	1m10.346s
10	Ocon	1m10.361s
11	Sainz	1m10.662s
12	Hulkenberg	1m10.679s
13	Giovinazzi	1m10.685s
14	Stroll	1m10.799s
15	Gasly	1m10.934s
16	Norris	1m11.013s
17	Sirotkin	1m11.037s
18	Hartley	1m11.176s
19	Vandoorne	1m11.452s
20	Latifi	1m11.493s

WEATHER 21C, cloudy

FREE PRACTICE 2

POS	DRIVER	TIME
1	Bottas	1m08.846s
2	Hamilton	1m08.849s
3	Vettel	1m08.919s
4	Ricciardo	1m09.164s
5	Verstappen	1m09.339s
6	Raikkonen	1m09.412s
7	Grosjean	1m09.769s
8	Leclerc	1m09.943s
9	Magnussen	1m10.007s
10	Ocon	1m10.159s
11	Perez	1m10.320s
12	Gasly	1m10.330s
13	Alonso	1m10.332s
14	Sainz	1m10.458s
15	Ericsson	1m10.532s
16	Sirotkin	1m10.569s
17	Vandoorne	1m10.596s
18	Stroll	1m10.662s
19	Hartley	1m10.734s
20	Hulkenberg	1m11.674s

WEATHER 20C, cloudy

FREE PRACTICE 3

POS	DRIVER	TIME
1	Vettel	1m07.948s
2	Hamilton	1m08.165s
3	Bottas	1m08.465s
4	Raikkonen	1m08.490s
5	Verstappen	1m08.733s
6	Ricciardo	1m08.788s
7	Magnussen	1m09.146s
8	Grosjean	1m09.257s
9	Gasly	1m09.402s
10	Leclerc	1m09.448s
11	Hulkenberg	1m09.461s
12	Ocon	1m09.588s
13	Ericsson	1m09.808s
14	Sainz	1m09.864s
15	Sirotkin	1m09.885s
16	Hartley	1m09.985s
17	Stroll	1m10.001s
18	Alonso	1m10.020s
19	Perez	1m10.116s
20	Vandoorne	1m10.289s

WEATHER 24C, sunny

SPEED TRAP



QUALIFYING 1

POS	DRIVER	TIME
1	Verstappen	1m08.205s
2	Raikkonen	1m08.452s
3	Vettel	1m08.452s
4	Hamilton	1m08.464s
5	Magnussen	1m08.474s
6	Bottas	1m08.492s
7	Ricciardo	1m08.544s
8	Leclerc	1m08.667s
9	Grosjean	1m08.735s
10	Ericsson	1m08.754s
11	Hulkenberg	1m09.009s
12	Gasly	1m09.046s
13	Perez	1m09.217s
14	Sirotkin	1m09.259s
15	Ocon	1m09.264s
16	Sainz	1m09.269s
17	Hartley	1m09.280s
18	Alonso	1m09.402s
19	Stroll	1m09.441s
20	Vandoorne	1m09.601s

QUALIFYING 2

POS	DRIVER	TIME
1	Bottas	1m07.727s
2	Vettel	1m07.776s
3	Hamilton	1m07.795s
4	Verstappen	1m08.017s
5	Raikkonen	1m08.028s
6	Ricciardo	1m08.055s
7	Grosjean	1m08.239s
8	Leclerc	1m08.335s
9	Ericsson	1m08.579s
10	Gasly	1m08.616s
11	Magnussen	1m08.659s
12	Perez	1m08.741s
13	Ocon	1m08.770s
14	Hulkenberg	1m08.834s
15	Sirotkin	1m10.381s

QUALIFYING 3

POS	DRIVER	TIME
1	Hamilton	1m07.281s
2	Vettel	1m07.374s
3	Bottas	1m07.441s
4	Raikkonen	1m07.456s
5	Verstappen	1m07.778s
6	Ricciardo	1m07.780s
7	Ericsson	1m08.296s
8	Leclerc	1m08.492s
9	Grosjean	1m08.517s
10	Gasly	1m09.029s

WEATHER 23C, overcast/occasional rain

SEASON STATS

DRIVERS' CHAMPIONSHIP

1	Hamilton	383
2	Vettel	302
3	Raikkonen	251
4	Bottas	237
5	Verstappen	234
6	Ricciardo	158
7	Hulkenberg	69
8	Perez	58
9	Magnussen	55
10	Alonso	50
11	Ocon	49
12	Sainz	45
13	Grosjean	35
14	Leclerc	33
15	Gasly	29
16	Vandoorne	12
17	Ericsson	9
18	Stroll	6
19	Hartley	4
20	Sirotkin	1

CONSTRUCTORS' CHAMPIONSHIP

1	Mercedes	620
2	Ferrari	553
3	Red Bull	392
4	Renault	114
5	Haas	90
6	McLaren	62
7	Racing Point Force India	48*
8	Sauber	42
9	Toro Rosso	33
10	Williams	7

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

QUALIFYING BATTLE

Hamilton	14	6	Bottas
Vettel	16	4	Raikkonen
Ricciardo	4	15	Verstappen
Perez	5	15	Ocon
Stroll	8	12	Sirotkin
Hulkenberg	12	8	Sainz
Gasly	13	5	Hartley
Grosjean	10	9	Magnussen
Vandoorne	0	20	Alonso
Ericsson	4	16	Leclerc

Scores ignore sessions if a driver did not participate in qualifying, as happened with Hartley in Spain and GB, Verstappen in Monaco, and Grosjean in Canada.

WINS

Hamilton	10
Vettel	5
Ricciardo	2
Verstappen	2
Raikkonen	1

FASTEST LAPS

Bottas	7
Ricciardo	4
Hamilton	3
Verstappen	2
Vettel	2
Magnussen	1
Raikkonen	1

POLE POSITIONS

Hamilton	10
Vettel	5
Bottas	2
Ricciardo	2
Raikkonen	1

STARTING GRID

	9 Gasly #10 1m09.029s		7 Leclerc #16 1m08.492s		3 Bottas #77 1m07.441s		2 Vettel #5 1m07.374s		6 Ericsson #9 1m08.296s		1 Hamilton #44 1m07.281s
---	---------------------------------	---	-----------------------------------	--	----------------------------------	---	---------------------------------	---	-----------------------------------	---	------------------------------------

RACE RESULTS ROUND 20/21, 71 LAPS - 190.07 MILES

POS	DRIVER	TEAM	FINISHTIME	LED	TYRES
1	Lewis Hamilton (GB)	Mercedes	1h27m09.066s	46	SSu, Mn
2	Max Verstappen (NL)	Red Bull-Renault	+1.469s	21	SSu, Sn
3	Kimi Raikkonen (FIN)	Ferrari	+4.764s		Su, Mn
4	Daniel Ricciardo (AUS)	Red Bull-Renault	+5.193s	4	SSu, Sn
5	Valtteri Bottas (FIN)	Mercedes	+22.943s		SSu, Mn, Sn
6	Sebastian Vettel (D)	Ferrari	+26.997s		Su, Mn, SSu
7	Charles Leclerc (MC)	Sauber-Ferrari	+44.199s		SSu, Mn
8	Romain Grosjean (F)	Haas-Ferrari	+51.230s		SSu, Mn
9	Kevin Magnussen (DK)	Haas-Ferrari	+52.857s		Sn, SSn
10	Sergio Perez (MEX)	Force India-Mercedes	-1 lap		SSn, Sn
11	Brendon Hartley (NZ)	Toro Rosso-Honda	-1 lap		Mn, SSn
12	Carlos Sainz (E)	Renault	-1 lap		Sn, Mn, SSn
13	Pierre Gasly (F)	Toro Rosso-Honda	-1 lap		SSu, Mn
14	Esteban Ocon (F)	Force India-Mercedes	-1 lap		Sn, SSn
15	Stoffel Vandoorne (B)	McLaren-Renault	-1 lap		Sn, Mn
16	Sergey Sirotkin (RUS)	Williams-Mercedes	-2 laps		Sn, Mn
17	Fernando Alonso (E)	McLaren-Renault	-2 laps		Sn, Mn, SSn
18	Lance Stroll (CDN)	Williams-Mercedes	-2 laps		Sn, Mn, SSn
R	Nico Hulkenberg (D)	Renault	32 laps-overheating		Sn
R	Marcus Ericsson (S)	Sauber-Ferrari	20 laps-damage		SSu, Mn

FASTEST LAPS

POS	DRIVER	TIME	GAP	LAP
1	Bottas	1m10.540s	-	65
2	Vettel	1m10.831s	+0.291s	71
3	Ricciardo	1m11.343s	+0.803s	62
4	Verstappen	1m11.578s	+1.038s	61
5	Stroll	1m11.751s	+1.211s	68
6	Raikkonen	1m11.769s	+1.229s	64
7	Hamilton	1m11.795s	+1.255s	70
8	Leclerc	1m12.082s	+1.542s	70
9	Sainz	1m12.169s	+1.629s	50
10	Magnussen	1m12.206s	+1.666s	67
11	Ocon	1m12.352s	+1.812s	70
12	Grosjean	1m12.362s	+1.822s	71
13	Perez	1m12.472s	+1.932s	58
14	Alonso	1m12.643s	+2.103s	57
15	Hartley	1m12.949s	+2.409s	53
16	Vandoorne	1m12.968s	+2.428s	68
17	Gasly	1m13.822s	+3.282s	55
18	Hulkenberg	1m14.029s	+3.489s	30
19	Sirotkin	1m14.262s	+3.722s	52
20	Ericsson	1m15.281s	+4.741s	3

WEATHER 27C, sunny

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 130.86mph FASTEST LAP AVERAGE SPEED 136.65mph

RACE BRIEFING

FP1

ANTONIO GIOVINAZZI replaced Ericsson at Sauber
LANDO NORRIS replaced Alonso at McLaren
NICHOLAS LATIFI replaced Perez at Force India

GRID PENALTIES

RICCIARDO Five-place penalty for additional power unit elements used
OCON Five-place penalty for replacement gearbox

RACE PENALTIES

OCON 10-second stop/go penalty for causing a collision with Verstappen
ALONSO Five-second penalty for ignoring blue flags

VANDOORNE Five-second penalty and two licence points for ignoring blue flags

STAT

10

Bottas now has the same number of fastest laps as world champions Graham Hill, John Surtees and Mario Andretti

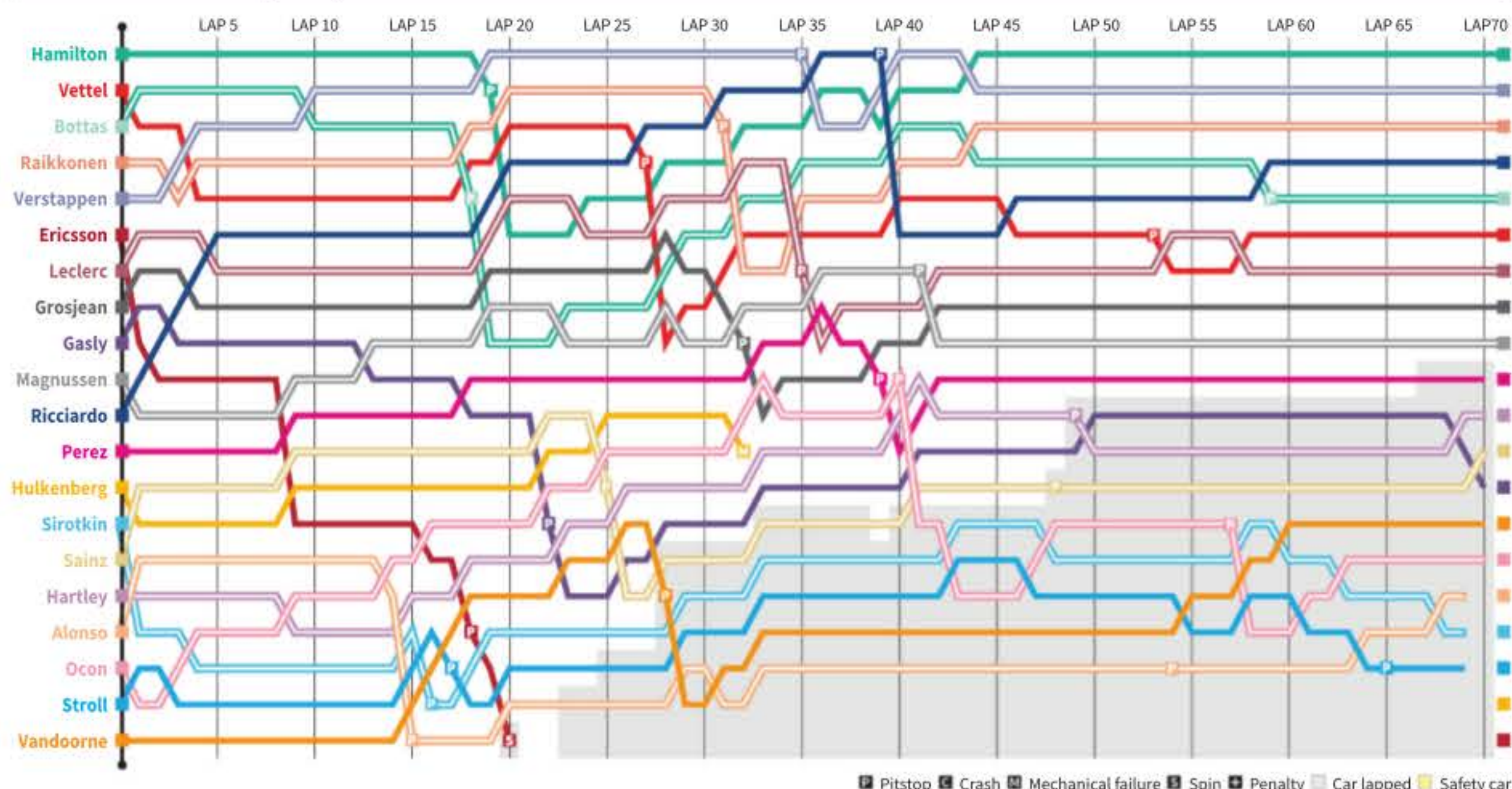
NEXT RACE

NOVEMBER 25
ABU DHABI GP

YAS, MARINA



LAP CHART What happened, when



PERFECT 10 FOR THE MAN WHO SHOULD HAVE WON

Verstappen's full marks won't compensate for a victory denied, while team-mate Ricciardo, lucky winner Hamilton and 'Class B' star Leclerc also figure highly

EDD STRAW

MERCEDES



LEWIS HAMILTON

9 Could not have won without Verstappen's misfortune, but Bottas's struggles in comparison show the Mercedes wasn't the car of choice on race day. In a race of tyre concerns and engine worries, second was already a very good result. Many wouldn't have won facing these circumstances.



VALTTERI BOTTAS

6 Declared his race a bad one that sums up the season, and you can understand why. Couldn't manage the rear tyres as well as Hamilton, sliding from second on the first lap to fifth after having to make a second stop. At times he was a little soft in battle, and he perhaps should have been on the front row.

FERRARI



SEBASTIAN VETTEL

7 Race was made to look worse than it was by a sensor problem that manifested itself before the start and gave him a car that was tricky under braking. The consequence was finishing at the back of the group of top-team drivers and a scrappy race. But overall he still wasn't performing as he can.



KIMI RAIKKONEN

7 Another of those Raikkonen performances where you can't help but wonder if there was a little left on the table. He certainly could have qualified better than fourth, and he was close enough to the top two to have potentially got into the lead battle but he never quite did so.

RED BULL



DANIEL RICCIARDO

9 Thanks to some over-enthusiastic fire extinguishing after his Mexico retirement, he was doomed to start 11th but deserves credit for matching Verstappen in qualifying. Made short work of the leading midfielders, and was able to pick off both Vettel and Bottas on his way to a strong fourth place.



MAX VERSTAPPEN

10 The Red Bull didn't have the qualifying speed to be higher than fifth, which he delivered, and he made short work of climbing to first. Should have won, and only didn't thanks to Ocon. Could he have left more space? Maybe, but he had no reason to expect a lapped car to still be on his inside.

FORCE INDIA



SERGIO PEREZ

7 Had the edge on Ocon in qualifying, although the pace wasn't stellar on a difficult weekend for Force India. Race was straightforward, with a one-stop strategy allowing him to climb from 12th on the grid to take a point for 10th, jumping the ailing Ericsson and passing Gasly on the way.



ESTEBAN OCON

4 Gearbox-change penalty meant he started 18th and it was always going to be a long way back from there. Race was defined by his bid to unlap himself. There is no problem trying to get a lap back in theory, but setting aside what it meant for Verstappen, the way it was attempted also ruined Ocon's own race.

WILLIAMS



LANCE STROLL

6 Admitted that he made a mistake on his second Q1 lap that ensured he couldn't join Sirotkin in Q2. In the race, he couldn't do much about the cars around him and a nothing-to-lose second stop stretched the gap to his team-mate when they could have finished together.



SERGEY SIROTKIN

7 An excellent qualifying lap meant he made it to Q2 in tricky conditions. While he finished two places and 18s clear of Stroll, a late pitstop for the latter distorted the gap. Effectively their performance level was the same in race conditions. Not much more to be done in a poor car.

RENAULT



NICO HULKENBERG

6 Qualifying was decent enough in a car lacking the speed it showed in the USA and Mexico. Then came out worse in a dramatic first-lap battle with team-mate Sainz, culminating in the latter's needless chop into him on the approach to Juncao. Even without his retirement, points weren't on the cards.

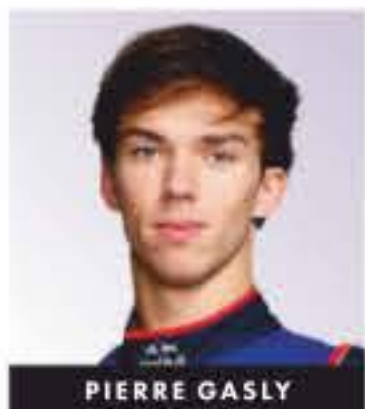


CARLOS SAINZ

6 Didn't nail a good lap when he needed to in Q1, but made amends with an aggressive first lap – albeit one that got a little too aggressive as he tried to get ahead of Hulkenberg. Then did what he could with a not-especially-competitive Renault to take 12th after passing Gasly near the finish.



TORO ROSSO



7 Did a great job to haul his car into the top 10 in qualifying. Didn't have the pace to stay there in the race, but executed his one-stop strategy pretty well, only to lose places to Hartley and Sainz late on. Disregarding team orders to let Hartley past was understandable, but unnecessary.



7 Another one of those qualifying sessions where a mistake, this time a lock-up that caused a flatspot, cost him. Ran long on mediums, then was able to show his pace in the second half of the race, although he took too long to pass Gasly despite the confusion caused by the Frenchman not heeding team orders.

HAAS



8 Perhaps should have done better than qualifying ninth, although the Saubers' turn of speed was a surprise. Was confident he could have won the midfield war, but picked up damage on the first lap squeezed between Ericsson and Leclerc. Given that, did a fine job to take second in 'Class B'.



7 Was second best of the Haas drivers, but only narrowly, and was unfortunate to be knocked out in Q2 by Leclerc's miracle late lap. After running 11th early on, he passed the ailing Ericsson – forcefully – and Gasly, and executed a decent race from there to bag ninth, just behind Grosjean.

McLAREN



8 Was, as has always been the case this year, slower than Alonso in qualifying. But while he was low profile early on, nursing his softs, he was able to pass Alonso, Stroll and Sirotkin on his way to 14th. Unfortunately, that became 15th when he was given a time penalty for ignoring blue flags.



5 Had the air of somebody who really doesn't want to be in an F1 McLaren and, after a qualifying performance that looked fine, his race went nowhere. Pointless belligerence contributed to him getting a penalty for ignoring blue flags, and there was little sign of the old Alonso magic in his race performance.

SAUBER



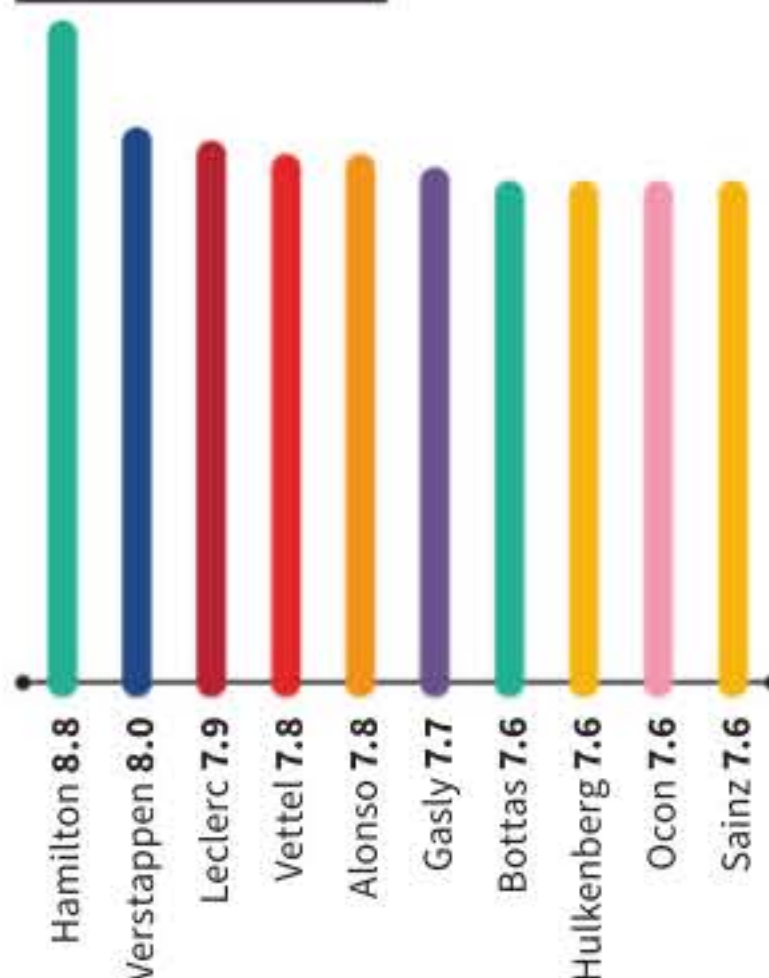
7 Qualifying has been his big weakness, but for the first time he earned a chance to start at the front of the midfield. But even before the start the team looked to be patching up some floor damage, and he picked up more on lap one. Was fighting a hopeless cause and soon retired after a high-speed spin.



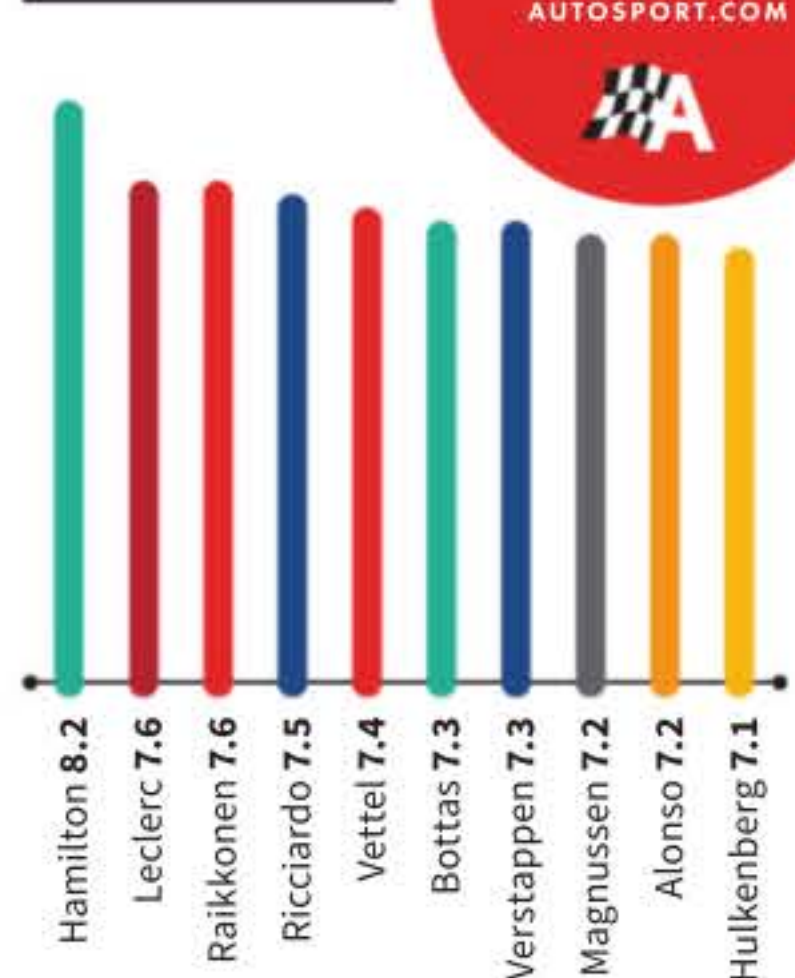
9 Midfield win was well-executed, but what really elevates his score was his inspired performance in Q2 by demanding he be left on track amid rain that briefly made the circuit slower, then nailing a lap good enough to get into the top 10. It's just a shame an error on his fresh-tyre run in Q3 cost him midfield 'pole'.

TOP 10 AVERAGE RATINGS

AUTOSPORT'S RATING
AFTER ROUND 20



READERS' RATING
AFTER ROUND 20



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Button seals historic GT title win

SUPER GT
MOTEGI (J)
NOVEMBER 11
ROUND 8/8

Top of the points: Jenson Button, Kunimitsu Takahashi and Naoki Yamamoto



Jenson Button, the 2009 Formula 1 world champion, returned to title-winning ways at Motegi last weekend. Third place earned him and team-mate Naoki Yamamoto the Super GT spoils, and in the process the Kunimitsu Racing duo wrapped up a flurry of historic achievements.

The NSX-GT drivers' title win returned Honda to the top of the Super GT tree for the first time since 2010, and ended drift king Kunimitsu Takahashi's 25-year wait for the GT500 teams' title.

Button became only the second rookie to win Super GT, equalling Toranosuke Takagi's 2005 efforts. Perhaps most impressive of all, Yamamoto, who won the Super Formula title last month at Suzuka, became the first driver

to complete a clean sweep of crowns in Japan's two most prestigious series since Richard Lyons in '04.

Button and Yamamoto arrived at the season finale level on points with the Lexus LC 500 pairing of Nick Cassidy and Ryo Hirakawa, but it was the Honda of Takuya Izawa and Tomoki Nojiri that took pole – which they converted to a 1.8-second win.

Yamamoto retained second at the start, while Cassidy made up one place on the opening lap to move into fifth. They remained in that order until Izawa pitted from the lead on lap 19 of 53, at which point Yamamoto assumed control.

At the end of their stints, Cassidy and Yamamoto pitted together. Button climbed

in on lap 29 and filtered back into fourth, also quickly picking off Kosuke Matsuura's NSX. But Button was unable to find a way by Hiroaki Ishiura, who did Lexus stablemates Cassidy/Hirakawa a favour by holding off the Briton.

In that time, Hirakawa was able to climb from eighth to fourth. Within three laps, he had cut the deficit from 7s to less than two, and with five laps to go he was right on Button's tail. The gap ebbed and flowed as the pair tried to negotiate slower GT300 traffic, but Button was able to score a decisive break on the penultimate lap and begin the final tour with 1.5s in hand, which he held for the title spoils.

JIRO TAKAHASHI

Pile-up guarantees Busch's finale place

NASCAR CUP
PHOENIX (USA)
NOVEMBER 11
ROUND 35/36

Victory in Phoenix secured Kyle Busch his place in the NASCAR Cup championship finale, where he will join fellow 'championship four' drivers Joey Logano, Kevin Harvick and Martin Truex Jr

in the Homestead showdown this week.

A win for any of the remaining playoff drivers would have automatically advanced them to the final four. But when Erik Jones had a moment at Turn 2, that moved contender Kurt Busch up the track. Busch was in turn collected by Denny Hamlin,

and the pair collided with Chase Elliott.

The incident eliminated both Kurt Busch and Elliott from the race and, as a result, title contention. That ensured 2015 Cup champion Kyle Busch would advance on points, regardless of his finishing position.

He won the second stage of the race, and dominated the final segment, resisting Brad Keselowski by half a second to take his 51st Cup win.

Harvick, who was stripped of his victory last time out in Texas due to a rear spoiler irregularity, was unstoppable in the first part of the race. That was until a puncture left

him fighting back from a lap down. He eventually finished fifth, while Truex slipped back to 14th at the chequered flag – both benefiting from Kurt Busch and Elliott's demise to advance on points.

Clint Bowyer was another playoff driver to crash out, leaving Stewart-Haas Racing team-mate Aric Almirola as the only driver who could stop Harvick or Truex.

Almirola had to win, though he couldn't match the pace of Busch or Keselowski. A late charge from Kyle Larson pushed Almirola down to fourth at the finish, ending his already faint hopes of a first title.

DOMINIK WILDE

WEEKEND WINNERS

SUPER GT
MOTEGI
Tomoki Nojiri/
Takuya Izawa
Autobacs Racing Team
Aguri Honda NSX-GT

NASCAR CUP
PHOENIX
Kyle Busch
Joe Gibbs Racing
Toyota Camry

NASCAR XFINITY
PHOENIX
Christopher Bell
Joe Gibbs Racing
Toyota Camry

NASCAR TRUCKS
PHOENIX
Brett Moffitt
Hattori Racing
Toyota Tundra

For full results visit:
motorsportstats.com



Busch scored his 51st Cup win to advance

MOTORSPORT IMAGES/NKP/LAT

INSIGHT

ILOTT'S MACAU RETURN • FORMULA E'S GEN2 RACER • PAFFETT'S DTM FIGHTBACK



HE'S GOT ILOTT OF LOVE FOR MACAU

Ferrari junior Callum Iloft has had heartbreak in the Macau GP before, but he's addicted to the challenge it poses. That's why he's back from GP3 to bid for victory

MARCUS SIMMONS

His own charmingly down-to-earth, self-deprecating manner has previously led Callum Iloft to describe his crash-strewn first experience of the Macau Grand Prix in 2015 as "getting to know all the recovery-truck drivers". In 2016, he led the qualification race but got done over in the slipstream away from the start of the final and finished fifth. Last year, he won the Saturday quali race, but collided with Joel Eriksson as they tussled for the lead of Sunday's big race in the early stages.

This weekend he's back. No longer an F3 regular – Iloft has been racing instead in the parallel GP3 Series this season – he just can't resist returning to the category in which he made his name for one last shot at Macau in what looks set to be the race's final year for what most would describe as 'proper' F3 cars. And he's back with Carlin, the team with which, as a 16-year-old Red Bull Junior, he was placed for his maiden year of car racing in 2015 in the F3 European Championship – remember, this was hard on the heels of Max Verstappen's sensational season straight out of karts. Iloft didn't measure up in the same way as Verstappen, and the writing was on the wall that he was out of Red Bull even before his four separate accidents in Macau.

It was in Macau last year that Iloft had his first race weekend in his present guise as a Ferrari Driver Academy prospect, and it looked like the race was between him and Eriksson until their clash as the race restarted following a full-course yellow. Ominously, Eriksson is also back (with Motopark) in Macau this year after his rookie DTM campaign with BMW...

Here lies the intrigue for Macau 2018. "I think we've both got the natural speed," observes Iloft, as if *that* were ever in doubt... "It will be interesting to see how we compare with the guys racing this year. I've done tests already to get prepared for Macau and the speed was pretty good. That's a positive and I think he [Eriksson] won't be slow either. With the experience we have of Macau we should definitely be up there..." He asserts this, and then adds with typical Iloft unbullishness (calfishness?) "...I hope".

The testing was carried out at Silverstone, where Iloft reunited – as he will in Macau – with some of the crew from his 2015 campaign: veteran, calm-as-a-sleeping-tortoise Carlin engineer Mark Owen and mechanic Calum Wooldridge. "I was expecting two or three sessions just to get into the rhythm and get a feel for it," he says of his first time in an F3 car since Macau '17. "But actually it came straight away. Two laps in and you remember exactly how to drive it and what the style is to be quick. It's a car I'd always driven because I went from karting to F3. You get the seat, it's perfect, the position's nice – easy for me to get used to." »

"IT WAS SUCH A SHAME ME AND JOEL CAME TOGETHER. IT WOULD HAVE BEEN A DIFFERENT RACE"

But why return to Macau? As you might expect, Iloft – and the same goes for Eriksson – is doing it because he's a good old-fashioned racer. He draws comparisons with recent two-time winners Antonio Felix da Costa and Felix Rosenqvist, who both went back to Macau – and won – after they had moved into the ranks of professional drivers. "Felix, Antonio... when they came back, they did a good job. They've known Macau, raced there at least a couple of times before. It's a race that, if you ask any driver who's done it, they really enjoy it."

"I really enjoyed it too and I've also had a lot of heartbreak there. I've never sort of finished a job I started. Last year I was very quick; the year before I was quite quick as well and it didn't end the way I wanted. And then obviously this year the opportunity came up to do it. An F3 car is always amazing to drive, and as it will be the last proper Macau in that car I thought I may as well do it."

Initially the talks were with Prema. Iloft's 2017 team is inextricably linked with the Ferrari Driver Academy and already had three of the Prancing Horse's proteges – Robert Shwartzman, Marcus Armstrong and Guan Yu Zhou – in its full-season Euro F3 team alongside champion Mick Schumacher and Ralf Aron. Some of the teams tried to increase their line-ups for Macau (sources suggest that Prema tried for seven cars) but, when the notifications came through, the Italian squad had 'only' gained five places. Carlin too had put in for multiple entries, had five accepted, but had just three drivers firmed up.

"Considering all the drivers that were doing the championship this year with Prema were going, there was no space," says Iloft. "We'd been in contact with Trevor [Carlin] before, so I just called him up, asked if there was any space available and there was. I'm so grateful to him and the team, and I know the guys really well there. It seems like they've had a tough year this year. It would be nice if we can get a good result."

That call to Carlin came only after the penultimate round of the GP3 season at Sochi, where a nightmare weekend in Russia put the title mathematically beyond the reach of Iloft and into



Iloft leads Eriksson and Habsburg before collision in 2017

a two-way Abu Dhabi showdown between his ART Grand Prix team-mates, Anthoine Hubert and Nikita Mazepin. "That was the point where we just said, 'Let's do it,'" admits Iloft. "I was thinking about it before, but Sochi wasn't a great weekend. Every result in your career helps and last year it was such a shame for me and Joel that we came together, because otherwise it would have been a completely different race. Look at Dan Ticktum [2017 winner] – Macau can really boost your career. After the year I've had, it's something that I think would help me."

Iloft now knows how to approach Macau – and, of course, how not to. After his calamitous 2015, his '16 attack with Van Amersfoort Racing was strong, only losing out on a restart to da Costa in the qualification race, and then fading in the final – some quarters suggested it was a duff set of tyres, but no-one could say that on the record as teams had been made to sign a document not to criticise Pirelli, which had won the contract for that year only. Back on Yokohamas last year, Iloft blitzed the quali race with Prema after passing Eriksson, only for the tiniest of misjudgements when moving across to defend from the Swede into Lisboa to result in the two cars colliding.



2015 was a nightmare. Iloft (left) climbs out after shunt in qualification race

THE CONTENDERS

MOTOPARK

Intriguing line-up. Dan Ticktum is going for a second successive Macau win; Joel Eriksson (right) and Ferdinand Habsburg both think they should have won it last year; Macau debutant Juri Vips is stunning on street circuits; and Marino Sato will hope not to cause an FCY by shunting on lap one as he did last year.



DTM

PREMA POWERTEAM

Oooh – don't rule any of them out. European champion Mick Schumacher set fastest lap in last year's GP after a gearbox repair; Ralf Aron was on the podium; Guan Yu Zhou is due a good Macau; and rookies Marcus Armstrong and Robert Shwartzman are both capable of a podium.

CARLIN

F3 returnee Callum Ilott has to be the spearhead. Jehan Daruvala and Sacha Fenestraz have both won on street tracks in Euro F3, but they're long shots. Yoshiaki Katayama joins from the Japanese F3 ranks.

HITECH GP

Like Ilott, Jake Hughes returns to F3 from a season in GP3 – he was top Macau rookie in 2016. His experience should benefit rapid Macau newcomer Enaam Ahmed. Seventeen-year-old local Charles Leong, who has raced in Asian F3 this season, completes the team.

VAN AMERSFOORT RACING

This team usually runs well in Macau but, of its line-up, only Keyvan Andres has been before. Sophia Florschütz could put a decent run together, while Frederik Vesti – who was born in 2002! – made a promising end-of-season F3 debut after graduating from German F4.

B-MAX RACING

Ran quite strongly in 2017 with Yuhi Sekiguchi, who returns for his sixth Macau, while Alex Palou joins a solid line-up. 'Dragon' – born in 1967! – will make progress if he lasts more than a day without breaking any bones.

TOM'S

Sho Tsuboi (below) won 17 of the 19 races on his way to the Japanese F3 title this year, and Ritomo Miyata claimed the other two. But both struggled here last year.



MOTORSPORT IMAGES/ISHIHARA/LAT

THREEBOND

Ukyo Sasahara is a highly promising Honda protégé who was third to the dominant TOM'S duo in Japan this year. But team had a set-up nightmare in Macau last year.

TODA RACING

Two more Honda youngsters who've never been to Macau – Sena Sakaguchi and Toshiki Oyu – represent Toda on its first trip to the race since 2016.

ILOTT'S MACAU RETURN INSIGHT

Strong 2016 Macau for Ilott with VAR, before he dropped back to take fifth in the final



MAUGER/LAT
motorsport
IMAGES

"Obviously, as a very, very long street circuit the track improves so much during the weekend," points out Ilott. "The track is five, six seconds off in the first session compared to second qualifying. If you weren't running with high fuel and pretty worn tyres, you'd go quite a bit quicker in the races than in qualifying – people are doing fastest laps of the weekend in the GP and they're not pushing 100%."

"So the first free practice you build up – there are no prizes won – and just get into a little bit of a rhythm, build some new references. Then in quali one, normally you just get one or two quick laps in, just to get a feel for it. Don't overdo it, just build up. Then you're really set for free practice two. Obviously you try to gain some consistency, but never pushing ridiculously. Then in quali two you just get the new tyres in, do a couple of laps building yourself up, get a feel for how the track is, and then you've just got to lay it. Last year was a pain for me: I only had one lap really in the whole of quali without traffic or red flags. It's a long session so there's no need to rush it at the beginning – you've just got to get the laps in when you need to from the middle to the end."

Even with Yokohama returning in 2017, there remain question marks over the tyres. The extra weight of the aero and safety updates to the Dallara chassis last year resulted in a fair amount of degradation for some teams, particularly Ilott and Prema team-mate Maxi Gunther. Ilott had continued following his Eriksson clash, and pitted under the safety car that emerged due to Eriksson parking on the circuit. He clambered back up to 11th spot before retiring with severe tyre problems, albeit this was exacerbated by a balance issue caused by bending the wishbone when he was reversing in the escape road!

Were the Yokos he tested at Silverstone the same as last year's? "I don't know exactly," he says. "Normally it's sort of, you get what you're given. They seemed good."

One team that certainly didn't struggle with the tyres last year was Carlin, as exhibited by Ferdinand Habsburg almost winning and Lando Norris finishing a close runner-up to Ticktum. Can Ilott repeat the team's wins with Takuma Sato in 2001 and da Costa in '12 and '16? "The thing with Macau is showing the progress that's been made [as a driver] and that I'll still be there, even if this year in GP3 hasn't been like that," says Ilott, who's aiming for a step up to Formula 2 next year. "A lot of people judge Macau quite highly, so we'll take that into the next few years."

But first there's the small matter of winning it. Don't rule Ilott out – after all, none of his rivals will. *W*

INSIDE

FORMULA E'S NEW GEN2-ERATION

The all-electric formula's dramatic-looking, halo-sporting racer ushers in a faster, noisier era that's set to spice up the spectacle with a new 'attack mode'

ALEX KALINAUCKAS





Look underneath any Autosport social-media post relating to a Formula E story and there's always the same tiresome, and factually incorrect, comments: "It's not a sport", "FE should race on the same tracks as Formula 1, even though I moan about those too", "The cars don't make any noise so I can't possibly like this". All irritating, all wrong.

That third gripe, which many FE detractors seem to have, is even more out of date with the introduction of the Gen2 cars that will make their debut in the upcoming 2018-19 season. Standing in the pitlane during pre-season testing at Valencia last month, it was possible to not only hear that the cars are noticeably louder than during FE's first generation – largely thanks to their aggressively styled spec body kits pushing more air out of the way – but there are now distinct differences in the sounds their powertrains produce. Variety is a good thing.

So, with one part of the FE-problems-that-never-really-existed dealt with (nameless Twitter types are always vanquished by a sound argument, right?), let's move onto the rest of the Gen2 car.

According to official figures, the new machine will have a maximum speed of almost 175mph. It is relatively low-drag, despite the massive bodykit, but that also means it doesn't have huge amounts of downforce, just like its predecessor, which was a major part of the close-racing spectacle that FE enjoyed during its first era. The car has a minimum weight of 900kg, which includes the driver and the 385kg battery, up from the 880kg total weight allowance for the old Spark-Renault SRT_01E. The Gen2 car measures in at 5160mm in length and 1770mm width, and comes with a halo.

The main difference from the old car is the power output and battery range – simply put, the Gen2 machines go faster for longer. The car's standard power setting is 200kW, which was previously only used in qualifying on the Gen1 machine, and it is now mandatory to use a second, higher mode at 225kW. This will be accessed via FE's new attack-mode race-format system (see page 39). The battery has a significantly greater range, which means FE has dropped its mid-event car swaps. The races will now run to 45 minutes plus one lap.

The halo differs from any version you may have seen before: »



Purple LEDs fitted to the halo will show when fanboost is being used



Massive rear diffuser produces bulk of the Gen2 car's downforce



Gen1 car was prone to shedding its bodywork

the FE halo is fitted with LEDs that flash blue when a driver activates the higher-power mode and purple if they use fanboost, which – for better or worse – is still a part of FE racing.

Because the car is slippery thanks to the standard aerodynamic approach that FE's rules require, its main downforce-producing device is an enormous rear diffuser, which juts out considerably from the base of the car.

"The chassis itself is no big evolution," says Nissan e.dams driver and 2015-16 FE champion Sebastien Buemi. "The car is 20kg heavier than the previous car, so you can't expect it to be much quicker. You're quicker because of the evolution of tyres and the powertrain itself.

"In the corner, the car is not really quicker than the one before, but the FIA and Formula E wanted that, because if they wanted the car to be quicker, they would have gone with slick tyres. You go wings, and you go much quicker. But that was not really the objective."

There are several important new features on the Gen2 car that could well turn into factors that impact on individual races and overall championship challenges.

For a start, the Gen2 cars are shod with Michelin's new 'Pilot Sport' tyre, which has been built to be lighter and have less rolling resistance than the old rubber, but will also have to last an entire race distance. What this means is that tyre degradation is likely to become a key strategic consideration for the teams and drivers.

"The tyre has more peak grip and it also has a bit more degradation," says Jaguar team boss James Barclay. "It's designed on purpose that way, so I think tyre degradation will be a factor definitely in the championship, in the racing. That's designed to create some of that excitement.

"The previous tyre didn't really degrade that much – it was a very consistent tyre. What you'll see now is the car starting to lose performance as the tyre life increases, and that now becomes a strategic element that you need to think about."

"To be honest the level of downforce of these cars is so low that I don't know that actually damaging the diffuser would make a massive change," reckons Buemi, who is pleased that the new car has done away with the wheelpods that sat at the rear on the Gen1 machine.

"What I didn't like in the Gen1 was that you would lose a small kind of protection behind the wheel and then the race control would stop you. First of all, the guy that would clip it off your car would get nothing and you would have to stop and repair the car, and your race would be over, so I much prefer that we don't have these kind of parts anymore on the car."

Another factor that's likely to influence the competitive spread in FE's new era – and one to please every irksome internet sage who insists on comparing FE to F1 on all things – is unseen technology that can have a big impact on performance.

Software updates in FE have become the championship's equivalent of F1's aero-upgrade war, with the teams working to make small improvements to their systems where they can, usually on a race-to-race basis. This will become more imperative to unlocking the performance secrets of the Gen2 cars, as the new powertrain technology has now been homologated by the FIA.

Teams can introduce powertrain hardware changes after homologation, but only "for the purpose of improving reliability or safety" and they have to be "approved by the FIA and/or after full consultation with all other manufacturers", according to FE's 2018-19 technical regulations. They must also wait for a 30-day period to expire before event scrutineering if the request is related to safety, reliability or driver comfort and 60 days if the change is "regarding a technical modification to a car".

"Now the wheelrims are again a common part," explains Audi team

"SOFTWARE UPDATES WILL BECOME IMPERATIVE TO UNLOCKING THE PERFORMANCE SECRETS"

With most of the Gen2 car's downforce coming from the rear diffuser, it's worth considering what could happen if FE's new era proves to be just as nose-to-tail and contact-heavy as the one that has just ended. With all the indications from testing pointing to a close upcoming campaign, and FE returning to the narrow and bumpy streets that make its action appear all the more spectacular, it is highly likely we'll see one or two diffuser-damage issues being discussed after races. But for now, it's unclear how much any damage to the device would impact the drivers.



principal Allan McNish, “where before they were open for development and so we brought in aero-rims that were a bit better for being aero efficient and energy efficient. It does bring everything predominantly back to basically the software. It is the one thing that you can work on and understand.”

The new car is also fitted with brake-by-wire technology, which “is a component that makes it easier to drive”, says Audi driver and 2016-17 champion Lucas di Grassi. Several drivers reported throughout the private manufacturer testing of the new cars over the summer that, if the systems encounter a physical variation in the carbon brake hardware they are operating, then issues can arise – although the teams are expected to quickly get on top of any problems.

The battery-temperature problems drivers had to cope with on the Gen1 cars are now understood to have been solved, so there will no longer be a need to shift the brake balance to combat climbing temperatures. The technology on the new cars has also converged to a certain extent, with all squads thought to be running single-speed transmissions and only two teams rumoured to still be using a twin-motor approach.

Pre-season testing produced the expected reliability niggles and technical headaches for the teams to solve but, now that they have hit the track in public for the first time, excitement is building for the start of the new season next month with the Ad Diriyah race in Saudi Arabian capital Riyadh. At the same time, with the Gen2 car only set for a three-year lifespan, the opening shots in negotiations for its replacement are already under way – further internet judgement awaits... ✎

FORMULA E ON THE ATTACK

THE MAIN HEADLINE CHANGE FOR THE RACING spectacle is the Mario Kart-inspired attack-mode system. Known as hyperboost during its planning phase, the attack mode will be activated after a driver passes through an activation zone that will be visible both at the circuit and on TV. This will allow the drivers to use an additional 25kW and take their maximum power level to 225kW, with fanboost – only available to the three winning drivers during their attack-mode stints – taking this to 250kW.

It is understood that the wording of the sporting regulation regarding attack mode has been left deliberately vague as the FIA and FE work on fully implementing the system ahead of the season opener next month. How long each attack-mode activation lasts and how many each driver must use is therefore still to be determined. Draft proposals suggested that the system would be available twice during FE races and would last four minutes, but the rules currently state that “the number of activations and the duration of the use of the attack mode will be determined at each race by the FIA, according to the special features of the circuits”.

The change of race length to 45 minutes plus one lap could also have a significant impact on outcomes. This is because the leader is likely to effectively decide each race distance.

“THE LEADER WILL LIKELY DECIDE THE DISTANCE OF EACH RACE”

“The race format is a big change,” says Sebastien Buemi. “It is a very difficult one, because you need to constantly calculate where the leader will be according to the timing. If you calculate to finish and be at zero energy, and let’s say the leader is crossing the line at 44 minutes and 58 seconds, you need to do an extra lap. And if you have no more energy, you are going to be stopped on the side.

“So, you constantly need to estimate where the leader will be around that time, which makes it really difficult. You can also take a gamble and use a lot more energy, thinking maybe a safety car will come or whatever and you’re going to be fine – or you may not be.”



REDEMPTION OF A CHAMPION

Gary Paffett looked washed up a few years ago. Now, as DTM champion for the second time, he tells us about his long road back to the top

MARCUS SIMMONS

It's a classic hero-to-zero-to-hero story. Thirteen years ago, Gary Paffett was crowned DTM champion with Mercedes at the age of 24, before leaving the series for one year to become McLaren test driver as he pursued his Formula 1 ambitions. In 2014, after several seasons of coming close but not close enough to his second title, he finished 22nd in the DTM – ahead only of Vitaly Petrov. Surely he was coasting towards a GT career twilight... Yet four years after that, now aged 37, he's been celebrating that elusive crown number two in a series whose standard of drivers is second only to F1.

"It's gone in waves, as motorsport does," says Paffett as he reflects on those dark days before his redemption. "Mercedes were very competitive and we were fighting for championships all the way up until 2011, and then we had a new generation of cars come in [the C-Coupe for Mercedes] for 2012 – at the same time, BMW came in. We started 2012 in incredible form, but then BMW outdeveloped us and that was the story of the next few years really. Then 2013 and 2014 were tough years for the whole team – in 2014 I scored very few points and really struggled."

Paffett experienced the ignominy of being downgraded from Mercedes' flagship HWA team to DTM newcomer ART Grand Prix for 2015-16, something that in hindsight he is glad about. "At that point, I wasn't really happy with the decision," he recalls. "But as a very experienced DTM driver the main reason was I could help ART get up to speed as quickly as possible. Which was great for ART and probably Mercedes – I just didn't see it as a positive at the time."

"On reflection it was a great thing because I added a lot more to my game. I had to suddenly really be the one leading the team – I had three young junior guys: Felix Rosenqvist, Esteban Ocon and Lucas Auer as team-mates, learning off me every weekend. The team, engineers and mechanics were learning the series as they went. Actually I enjoyed the whole experience – it helped my character and generally my personality a lot to do that for two years."

With the DTM manufacturers downscaling from eight cars apiece to six for 2017, Mercedes brought its entire team within HWA. Paffett finished 10th that season, so it's understandable that he wasn't tipped as a title contender for '18. But then things changed. New rules not only obliterated Audi's recent advantage, but they produced a car – in the form of the '18-spec Mercedes C63 – that suited Paffett down to the ground. "The one thing that we had going for us was the rule changes over the winter," he reflects, "especially all the standard aero components that came to the car. We knew over previous seasons that Audi just outdeveloped all of us with regard to aerodynamics. They had a big advantage – when their LMP project stopped, everything went into DTM."

"The other change was they took away the third element, the ride control at the front of the car. That had made the ride of the car very harsh, and I just found it a lot more predictable this year. Maybe that was one of the keys that really helped me."

The end result was that Paffett, always a good racer, was now able to do the business in qualifying, a discipline in which he had struggled in recent seasons. "I found it quite hard to drive [in previous years]," he admits. "Other drivers were able to get a bit more out of it in qualifying sometimes, but it was difficult. And this year that was the key."

It certainly was. The DTM uses the F1 points system for each of its two races over a weekend, but also awards 3-2-1 to the top three qualifiers in each of the two sessions. Paffett beat Rene Rast to the title by four points, but outscored the Audi star by 12 in qualifying – in other words, had qualifying scores not been awarded, Rast would be the 2018 champion by eight points. Paffett's total of 25 qualifying points is almost double that of the next-best scorers in this discipline: Rast and Auer on 13 apiece.

That began with pole for the opener at Hockenheim. "I wasn't confident coming to Hockenheim," he says. "I would say winter testing was worse than previous seasons, which goes to show it means very little until you get to the first race weekend. We got there and it just came alive. That's when you realise what sort of package you've got, when you know how good the car is. In previous seasons we've had a quick car, but we'd never had a dominant car like we had for the first part of this year."

**"OVER PREVIOUS SEASONS AUDI
OUTDEVELOPED ALL OF US. THEY
HAD A BIG ADVANTAGE"**

Paffett illustrates this by recalling Pascal Wehrlein's title for Mercedes in 2015. "We didn't win the manufacturers' championship; we didn't have the best car," he points out. "It was a pretty 'dirty' victory – really hard-fought, a lot of teamwork going into that and producing that result."

The new-found advantage was used to good effect, with Paffett claiming early-season wins in that Hockenheim opener and next time out at the Lausitzring, plus two other podium finishes over the opening four weekends. Next came Zandvoort, where he claimed both poles, a third victory of 2018, and only lost the second race to Rast due to an inspired early-stop strategy call from Audi. It was a pivotal weekend that broke Paffett away from the pack in the points. "I just love driving the circuit and I've had a lot of success there," he enthuses. "I was so confident going there, and my qualifying performance was just incredible; on both days I got pole with my first run, and one of them was four tenths clear of P2 – a huge margin. >>



"We nearly had a perfect weekend, but we got outdone by Rene with his strategy. At that point he certainly wasn't thinking about the championship [Rast was 15th, 104 points adrift of Paffett], and I was leading, thinking I could happily bag P2 here. Which I'm happy I did. When you score that many points on a single weekend it really helps your chances of a championship. It's about making the most of the opportunities you get."

The other crucial weekend, in hindsight, was Brands Hatch – just down the road from where Paffett grew up. This was about maximising points on a weekend where things don't go your way: in his case shunting in Saturday qualifying, clambering back on track and then qualifying his bent Mercedes sixth – which is where he finished the race. "That sticks out as good as qualifying on pole by half a second," he chortles. "I did significant damage. I hit the tyre wall at Paddock and came back on. I had a purple middle sector, which is all the high-speed corners, and I was thinking, 'How did I do that?' It was incredible. That wins you championships as much as winning races when the car's good."

Paffett never won again as Mercedes began to struggle in races (see panel, right), but he was still able to set himself up for strong results from his qualifying performances, most notably on the final day at Hockenheim. Here, he pulled out what he described as the qualifying lap of his life on wilting tyres to go third on the grid. That gave him one crucial point, and the starting position provided him with a launchpad to enable him to take the points he needed, via third position, to defeat Rast and Mercedes team-mate Paul di Resta to the crown. "I remember Rene and his face of disbelief," says Paffett. "He turned up in parc ferme after qualifying second and I guess at that point the team told him I was P9, and then suddenly I pulled up alongside him. His face at that point was nearly of defeat already, because he knew we'd got close enough."

To get to this stage, Paffett had also endured a title fight with di Resta, with the series lead alternating between the British pair as Rast made inroads. "Paul fought so hard and he really pushed me to my absolute limit all year," attests Paffett. "His contribution to Mercedes-Benz has been huge. All the drivers [at Mercedes] performed this year. I wasn't always the quickest guy straight out of the box, so after a session I'd look at the data, pick up little bits here and there, and then it's up to you to go and do it."



That was in contrast to Audi, where the weight was thrown behind Rast: "Rene is a really fast, consistent driver, and the way he was outpacing his team-mates was exceptional. But Audi put every single thing behind that one driver. At Spielberg, they had 'Rocky' [Mike Rockenfeller] and [Nico] Muller giving up places to help him win. At Hockenheim, they had at least two Audis basically giving him slipstreams in qualifying. They were sacrificing everything for Rene, which we didn't."

"Maybe we should have gone and chosen me or Paul early on, but the way it was we were locked in the fight, trying to beat each other, which was helping Rene as well. We nearly compromised ourselves a great deal, but it was just because Mercedes wanted to leave us fighting. And with Rene's outright pace, he made it a real fight too."

For now though, Paffett is DTM champion, and off to Formula E with HWA. Four years ago, when he was rock-bottom, that would have been unthinkable. But, as he says, motorsport goes in waves. And Paffett rode them to perfection in 2018. 🏆





Paffett spent much of the season in a title battle with Merc team-mate di Resta...

MERCEDES TAKING THE PRESSURE

AFTER THE SEVENTH OF the 20 races in the DTM this year, Gary Paffett never once made up places from his qualifying position to the finish of a race. Part of that is down to his qualifying form – after all, you can't gain ground from pole position, which he managed four times in the final 13 sessions. But more significantly, it illustrates the difficulties faced by Mercedes when sporting regulations introduced before the August Misano round dictated new minimum tyre pressures.

"It completely changed the face of the

championship," says Paffett. "We weren't – and still are not – very happy about it. It's difficult to understand. They kind of make the rules as they go along. We hung onto the championship, but it was too close. I don't think the organisers did it to benefit Audi – I think they did it because they wanted to shake it up a bit."

Misano was largely wet, so the full effect of the rule change wasn't really known until the Nurburgring, the first of the final three weekends. "Audi and Mercedes, historically and certainly this year, have a different philosophy on car



...but all he had to do in the Hockenheim finale was follow Rast home to be crowned

set-up," adds Paffett, "even though the cars have a lot of standard components. It [the tyre-pressure ruling] happened at the same time that Audi started to unlock the performance of the car, and when the pressures changed it set them free.

Their car on the longer runs was better with the higher pressures than ours was.

"Everybody was trying every trick in the book to fight with these tyre-pressure limits. It opened up a can of worms. The problem we were in was

we knew we had to change the car to have a better race performance to fight with Audi, but we couldn't because we didn't have any time to test the changes. And if you change the car you're throwing away qualifying performance for potentially gaining race performance, but not guaranteed. I was speaking to my engineers a lot and, based on the gap we had, we just needed to keep qualifying at the front – we might get beaten in the race but we're not going to end up a long way back.

"The impact it had was perfect for the series, because it really brought the championship fight alive between Mercedes and Audi. But certainly for us, we were quite nervous because of the impact it had on our car."

DTM TOP 10 POINTS			
POS	DRIVER	TEAM / CAR	PTS
1	Gary Paffett	HWA Mercedes	255
2	Rene Rast	Rosberg Audi	251
3	Paul di Resta	HWA Mercedes	233
4	Marco Wittmann	RMG BMW	164
5	Timo Glock	RMG BMW	144
6	Edoardo Mortara	HWA Mercedes	140
7	Lucas Auer	HWA Mercedes	121
8	Pascal Wehrlein	HWA Mercedes	108
9	Philipp Eng	RBM BMW	102
10	Nico Muller	Abt Audi	96

DTM WINNERS			
RD	VENUE	RACE 1	RACE 2
1	Hockenheim (D)	Paffett	Glock
2	Lausitzring (D)	Mortara	Paffett
3	Hungaroring (H)	di Resta	Wittmann
4	Norisring (D)	Mortara	Wittmann
5	Zandvoort (NL)	Paffett	Rast
6	Brands Hatch (GB)	Juncadella	di Resta
7	Misano (I)	di Resta	Eriksson
8	Nurburgring (D)	Rast	Rast
9	Red Bull Ring (A)	Rast	Rast
10	Hockenheim (D)	Rast	Rast

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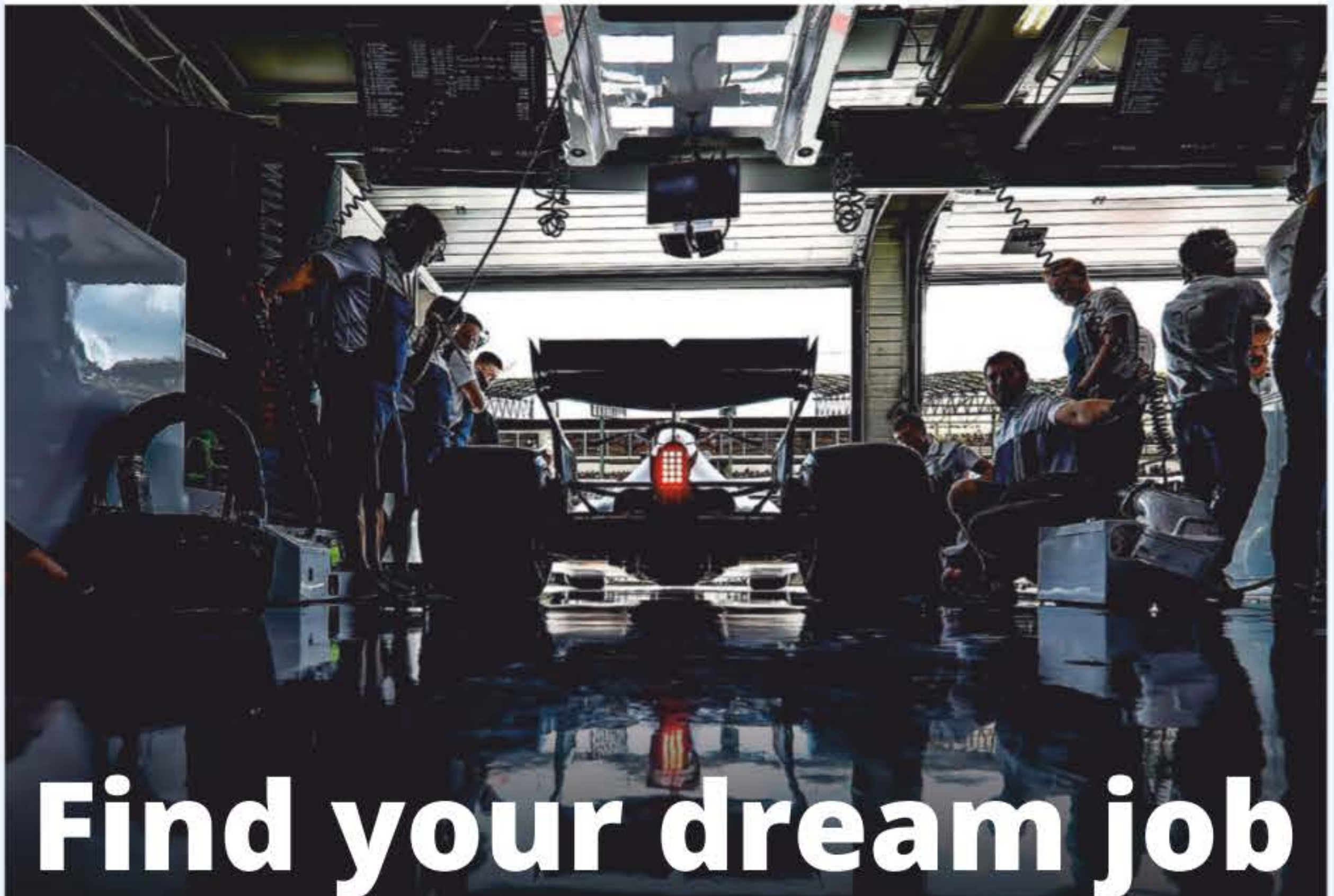
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RIVETT HAS EXCLUSION OVERTURNED AND WINS FOURTH TITLE

CLIO CUP UK

Paul Rivett has become a four-time Renault UK Clio Cup champion after successfully appealing his exclusion from race two at Silverstone in the National Court.

Westbourne Motorsport driver James Dorlin had provisionally claimed the title by five points after winning the Brands Hatch finale – but the result still had a question mark over it pending Rivett's court hearing. Now, over a month after the season

Rivett targets move up in '19

CARRERA CUP GB

Paul Rivett is targeting a step up to the Porsche Carrera Cup GB next season after achieving his fourth Clio Cup title.

The 40-year-old has competed in the Renault UK Clio Cup for the majority of the past 17 years but is now eyeing a switch to Porsches after sampling a car this month.

"My goal is still to move up in motorsport and I'm looking to race in the Porsche championship – that's what I'm trying to do next year," said Rivett.

"I've always been a fan of one-make championships and for me I would like to step up.

"It's an amazing car and Porsche are an amazing company. There are so many things about the championship that attract me to it as a driver and

it's a very level playing field.

"It's a big jump in budget, though, and if that falls through maybe you will see me out in the British Truck Racing Association Championship because I just had so much fun when I had a race in Wayne's [Eason, WDE team boss] truck last year, [so] why not do something a bit different?"

Rivett took a podium on his truck debut when he competed in the Division 2 category at Snetterton in 2017.

• Rivett's Clio title rival Max Coates has also had a test in a Carrera Cup car. The 24-year-old is still aiming to graduate to the British Touring Car Championship next term, but is evaluating alternative options – the Porsche Carrera Cup being one of them.

STEPHEN LICKORISH



Rivett (l) with Dorlin (c) and Coates (r)

concluded, the WDE Motorsport driver has successfully argued that his contact with title rival Max Coates at Woodcote was not worthy of an exclusion and his third-place finish was reinstated.

This result was enough to hand Rivett a fourth title by 17 points over Dorlin and dropped Coates to third in the standings.

"I'm over the moon with the result," said Rivett, who last won the championship in 2011.

"There's only one other driver [Mike Bushell] who has won more than one title in the Clio Cup so to have four is an amazing achievement – and those are spread over three generations of car and they were all with different teams.

"To be 40 years old and racing against these up-and-coming young whippersnappers that I'm sure will be the next generation of British Touring Car champions and British GT champions and Le Mans drivers [is great].

"I was confident [of winning the appeal] but you can never be sure. It's definitely a weight off the shoulders. It's just a shame we didn't get to celebrate at Brands Hatch because it's a team effort."

WDE team boss Wayne Eason added: "As we proved in court, Paul did nothing wrong. I feel for James Dorlin but he knew it could go this way. Westbourne are great guys, so as a team we feel for them but we had to fight for this. I'm

delighted for Paul and for the guys in the team."

Chairman of the court's panel, Steve Stringwell, said in his report: "The National Court finds no conclusive evidence that Paul Rivett failed to comply with general regulation C1.1.5 – driving in a manner incompatible with general safety and/or departing from the standard of a reasonably competent driver.

"In reaching its decision, the National Court was also concerned with the inconsistency regarding penalties and track limits and how they were applied during the race."

STEPHEN LICKORISH



VW VAN HITS TRACK

A Volkswagen Caddy Race Van was among the most eye-catching sights at the Race of Remembrance last weekend at Anglesey, and even challenged for outright victory. Entered by MAK Racing, the van's owner, Chris Webster, was joined in the driving line-up by 2013 World Endurance GTE Am champion Stuart Hall and Michael Kirk. The van had been gathering dust for three years since it last raced at the Anglesey event in '15. It was near the front in the early wet running and led a lap but finished seventh overall, and second in the invitational class.

Photograph by Rachel Bourne

BTCC test 'chance of a lifetime' for Whitelegg

LEGENDS

Legends Cars runner-up Steve Whitelegg sampled a current British Touring Car Championship machine after being awarded the run for his performances this season.

The 49-year-old claimed the award for encapsulating

the spirit of the championship, and he was let loose on the Silverstone Grand Prix circuit in the HMS Alfa Romeo Giulietta that has been raced by Rob Austin this season.

"The car is just something else: the braking and the acceleration are on a whole different level to anything

I am used to," said Whitelegg.

"Rob Austin gave me some pointers first with a passenger run, but there is so much to take in. I had six laps and I don't think I was near the limit – but it was the chance of a lifetime. I am so grateful."

HMS Racing team principal Simon Belcher said: "Steve got

on with it really well. It was wet in the morning so Rob went out on wet tyres, but there was a dry line when Steve went out and he was able to run on slicks – but he had to be very careful.

"He enjoyed it and was very sensible. There was only one little spin, but that means he was trying hard."

Three other Legends racers, Sean Smith, Jack Parker and Nathan Anthony, were given passenger rides with Austin as a reward for their performances this season.

• Ginetta GT4 Supercup runner-up Carl Boardley will step up to the BTCC full-time in 2019 after signing a deal to race with Team Hard. Boardley, a four-time National Hot Rod World Final winner, will join team returnees Mike Bushell and Bobby Thompson in the squad's VW CCs. He made his BTCC debut at Knockhill this year with the team, taking a best result of 23rd.

MATT JAMES



Boost for BMW Z Cars series

Z CARS

The troubled BMW Z Cars series looks set for a big step forwards in 2019, with plans already in place for standalone grids and a provisional schedule of six events.

The MotorSport Vision Racing-organised category was due to begin last year but only two cars ever appeared as a class in Allcomers contests before it fizzled out.

But now it is set to make a full return under new management, with seven cars taking part in the Allcomers races at Brands Hatch last weekend.

Julian Jeffrey, of new organiser Coupes and Convertibles Racing, said: "The problems encountered last year have been overcome, making the cars more predictable and rewarding to drive. We're really pleased with developments so far."

Races are planned at Snetterton (twice), Brands Hatch (Deutsche Festival), Donington Park, Cadwell Park and Oulton Park next year. In addition to these, there should be "guest" outings at Spa and Thruxton and a team entry in the Birkett Relay.

Fourteen cars have so far signed up for next year in three Z3 and Z4 classes,



and Jeffrey added that more taster days are planned.

Those held already have resulted in more than half of participants converting to future entries.

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Austin makes MX-5 debut

RACE OF REMEMBRANCE

British Touring Car Championship racer Rob Austin joined former series rival Dan Welch in Paul Roddison's Mazda MX-5 Race of Remembrance line-up last weekend, replacing Jon Halliwell who was unable to compete due to injury.

Halliwell, who with Roddison is co-founder of the MaX5 championship and won the title in 2017, drove in previous Race of Remembrance events alongside Roddison and Welch, but has been unable to race this year due to a work accident.

Austin had already driven alongside Welch in the Citroen C1 Challenge 24-hour race at Rockingham a couple of months ago, so Roddison invited

him to take Halliwell's place for the Anglesey 12-hour endurance event.

"I jumped at the opportunity," said Austin, who has raced the Alfa Romeo Giulietta in the BTCC this season.

"It's really good fun. I've never driven an MX-5 before, never driven Anglesey before, so the first session was just finding my feet. Night qualifying was my first proper run in the car and I really enjoyed it.

"For the moment it's a one-off, but I certainly love the car so I'd love to have a go in a proper MX-5 race. I'll drive anything with a wheel on it!"

The MX-5 finished fifth and was first in the two-litre class, despite running without ABS in the first half of the race.

GRAHAM KEILLOH

Soldier continues recovery

RACE OF REMEMBRANCE

American IMSA SportsCar Challenge competitor Liam Dwyer continued his comeback from leg operations by taking part in the Race of Remembrance at Anglesey aboard a Mazda MX-5.

Retired Marine Staff Sergeant Dwyer suffered life-threatening injuries and lost most of his left leg in Afghanistan in 2011.

After competing in the 2017 SportsCar Challenge, Dwyer underwent an operation to insert a titanium rod into his left femur, allowing his prosthesis to be attached and removed.

He returned to racing in August, when he met James Cameron, founder and CEO of Mission Motorsport that organises and runs the Anglesey event.

"Diezel and Tiffany Lodder are in charge of Operation Motorsport and between the three of them [with Cameron] we put a plan together for me to come over here and race the Mazda Global MX-5 Cup car," said Dwyer. "The car is properly quick, very fun to drive and quite reliable."

The MX-5's universal joint snapped before the end of the first day's running, forcing the car to retire.

GRAHAM KEILLOH

IN THE HEADLINES

MSA UNDERGOES REBRAND

The Motor Sports Association (MSA) has rebranded, and will now be known as Motorsport UK. The organisation has a new logo, and has claimed this is part of a transition to becoming a body focused on promoting the sport as well as regulating it. Licence holders are set to receive benefits such as high street discounts when renewing licences. A further look at the changes can be found on page 59.

HISTORICS TO THRUXTON

Thruxton circuit and Historic Promotions have teamed up to organise historic races for the Thruxton Motorsport Celebration over the weekend of June 1-2. Following the success of the Hampshire track's 50th anniversary event this year, a deal has been struck with the company fronted by Duncan Wiltshire, the boss of Motor Racing Legends.

DOWN UNDER FOR EATON

Grand Tour TV series test driver Abbie Eaton will head to Australia at the end of the month to test a Super2 car in a bid to forge a career in the Supercars series. The 26-year-old won the British Racing and Sports Car Club's Mazda MX-5 SuperCup in 2014 before outings in series such as British GT.

SPECTRUMS ON TOP

A trio of Kevin Mills Racing Spectrums dominated the last of this year's Champion of Brands Formula Ford 1600 events last weekend, taking five of the six available podium places. Michael Eastwell raised his season's CoB total to four wins with a victorious double, followed home each time by Neil MacLennan. Michael Macpherson joined them on the podium in race two.

PINKERTON CLAIMS TITLE

James Pinkerton clinched the Radical SR1 Cup championship at Brands Hatch last weekend by maintaining his record of finishing on the podium in every race this year. Ryan Harper-Ellam could have overhauled his points rival and played his part by racing away to a double victory on Saturday. This gave him eight wins for the season, but not enough for the title.

SEXTON TROPHY FINALISTS

World Endurance Championship driver Charlie Eastwood, Irish Supercars title contender Cameron Fenton and F2000 Championship Series runner-up James Roe Jr have been selected as finalists for the Sexton Trophy by Motorsport Ireland.



Farmer seals Vee victory on return

FORMULA VEE

Martin Farmer celebrated his first race appearance for a year by winning the 11th Formula Vee Festival at Brands Hatch on a weekend of mixed wet and dry conditions.

Farmer's GAC won all three races, with Ian Jordan's Sheane second in the first two of them after briefly holding the lead.

Farmer survived a scare in race two when his car started smoking and, in the same race, Jordan lost his nosecone.

Having prayed for rain all weekend, Jordan spun off while leading the final in a downpour. The event itself was a shadow of its former best, with only 10 entries and eight finishers in the finale.

Edward Lowndes had a dreadful beginning to the weekend, trying to start race one in third gear, but still finished third in this and race two. He moved up one step in race three to complete the celebration of his first ever podiums.

Jamie Harrison was third man home in the final.

"That was a tough one. We put on dry settings just before race three, then it started raining when we went out," said Farmer, who has taken the year off to develop his racewear business while also becoming a father.

BRIAN PHILLIPS

Zandvoort back for 2019

GINETTA GT5 CHALLENGE

The Ginetta GT5 Challenge will make a return to Zandvoort next July after deciding not to visit Spa.

The popular category joined British GT in having races in Belgium last year but organisers have opted to revert to Zandvoort – where the series had an overseas round in 2017.

Ginetta motorsport manager Ash Gallagher explained: "We just thought we'd mix it up a bit. Spa is great and we will probably go back in the future but we can possibly offer a little bit more track time at Zandvoort and it's [the race meeting] not as busy as Spa. When we spoke to teams and drivers, they were quite happy to go back [to Zandvoort]."

However, the manufacturer has shelved plans to run a winter GT5 competition at the Rockingham send-off meeting later this month after a lack of entries.

The meeting has suffered from a lack of interest, with Autosport reporting last week that it has been reduced from a two-day event to Saturday-only.

Despite not having its own races, Gallagher says there will still be a number of Ginettas entered in the one-hour enduro and sports/saloon contests at Rockingham.

"When we initially approached customers, the feedback was really strong," he said. "People said they would do it, but when it comes down to people entering it's not materialised and I can only put it down to the time of year."

"It's a shame because I genuinely thought it would attract a big grid."

Ginetta has also decided to run completely separate grids for the GT5 series and the G40 Cup next year after the two categories competed together at two events this season.

STEPHEN LICKORISH

Del Sarte tops Junior Winter Series entry

GINETTA JUNIOR

Ginetta Junior driver Ruben Del Sarte heads the entry for the Winter Series at Brands Hatch this weekend.

The Dutchman is the highest-placed driver from this year's main series to return for the winter competition, after finishing fifth in the standings with five

podiums, with the TCR team.

Harry Dyson (Premiership Academy Racing) – a race winner in 2017 – and James Hedley (Elite Motorsport) are the only other drivers on the entry list to have taken a podium in the past.

Currently, 17 drivers have signed up. Six are completely new to the category. Ginetta motorsport



manager Ash Gallagher said: "I've had a look back at the last few years and I think 18 is the biggest we've had."

"It always gives a good indication of how strong the

grid will be the year after. If you have a strong winter series with plenty of new people looking at it for next year, it bodes well."

STEPHEN LICKORISH



MORE THAN JUST SKIN DEEP

The MSA's rebrand runs deeper than the surface, as declining participation and a lack of flexibility are both in the crosshairs

JACK BENYON

By now you've probably read that the Motor Sports Association, or MSA, has a new name: Motorsport UK. The change comes amid one of national motorsport's most difficult periods as a number of challenges rain down, or are at least on the horizon.

They include how we integrate electric cars into grassroots motorsport and keep them safe, how to attract new volunteers – as the current situation is worrying – and how to cope with a beastly calendar that has allowed itself to spread entries too thin, in part by championships and events aimed at extracting money from customers rather than serving the good of the sport.

These questions won't be answered in a day. But how they are dealt with and legislated for will be – at least in part – the job of the governing body. And now, you might be thinking, 'With all of those questions to answer, why is the MSA changing its name and logo?' But there is a reason behind it.

The rebranding is the brainchild of Motorsport UK chairman David Richards – the Prodrive boss and 1981 World Rally champion co-driver – and CEO Hugh Chambers. The latter has worked on the rebrand since the turn of the year. Together, the pair roamed the halls of Prodrive, took on the management of the BAR

“RICHARDS HAS ALREADY FORCED THROUGH CHANGES IN RALLYING IN RAPID FASHION”

Formula 1 team and now have united to save UK motorsport. If they can pull it off, that is.

“No-one is saying changing the name or putting a new logo above the door is going to change the culture of the organisation, but it is hoisting a flag above the building and saying ‘We are going to behave differently from now on,’” says Richards. “We can't get away from the fact that our principal purpose of being there is to regulate, but we also have a responsibility to promote the sport. I think that's the bit that's been missing of late. I believe the MSA in its previous guise has been a good regulator.

“What we are going to do, however, is – and this is what is absolutely necessary in our opinion – promote the sport better.

“If we don't do that, we will have diminishing participation, a loss of interest in motorsport and it would eventually disappear off the page, and we have to address that.”

There are a few simple concepts behind this change: promote

motorsport better and attract new licence holders, and become more flexible when it comes to governing the sport properly.

“The executive team here at the governing body need more authority, need to be better trained, and more appropriate for taking decisions themselves, and helping guide committees and working with committees,” adds Richards.

“I believe we have become too bureaucratic and we have allowed ourselves to slow down the process. This is a dynamic sport that moves quickly and we have to be reactive to that and adjust as a governing body to the needs of the sport.”

At the minute, details on how these new ideas are implemented are sketchy. But you can take solace in the fact that Richards has forced through changes in rallying in rapid fashion, and he is clearly hoping that this can be replicated in other areas of motorsport.

The task of attracting more licence holders isn't an impossible one. While numbers have been declining, other countries have managed to increase their participation. Australia, for example, with half the population of the UK, has increased its licence holder number by 10% – to 30,000, the same as the UK. In Britain, 1 million people go indoor karting per year, so if just some of those could be attracted to give ‘proper’ motorsport a go, numbers could rise. And that's just one area where promotion could help.

Licence holders will gain a number of benefits from high street retailers when they renew next year, with discounts on things like accommodation, travel, outdoor clothing, breakdown recovery products, events and magazine subscriptions. This should also help in getting people to sign up, with Chambers predicting that, with these new benefits, a licence could effectively pay for itself in “a matter of weeks”.

Drumming up support in areas such as trackdays, indoor karting and on video games and Esports championships is an untapped way to help promote the fact that you don't have to have the money necessary to reach F1 to go out and have fun in motorsport at the weekends. There's a whole host of disciplines out there to try.

Not all of the problems with UK motorsport are going to be solved overnight. But increasing participation would increase income into Motorsport UK, which it then wants to be able to pump back into the sport.

Becoming more flexible in its governance will allow the organisation to be fleet of foot, adapting to potential flaws in its regulations and keeping costs as low as possible by removing unnecessary cost for competitors.

Chambers has overseen a similar change for the governing body of world sailing, while Richards is rarely unsuccessful in his pursuit, which is rumoured to be an office in France – namely the president's office at the FIA. This would be the perfect time and place to prove his credentials. ✎



The action takes a backseat for the remembrance service



More than 50 teams entered this year

Caterhams scored a one-two, GPW Racing taking the scenic victory



Sevens head Anglesey centenary remem

ANGLESEY RACE OF REMEMBRANCE NOVEMBER 10-11

A race that pauses partway through for a remembrance service is no ordinary meeting. But the Race of Remembrance makes no claims about being ordinary. As its organisers point out, this is a remembrance service that happens to have a race alongside it. This, its fifth running, was especially poignant, concluding 100 years to the day since The Great War's armistice.

The lack of convention of this Anglesey 12-hour endurance event – organised and run by armed forces charity Mission Motorsport – applies also to its eclectic machinery as well as to its willing and skilled competitors. It applied also to this latest event's conclusion, which

came amid confusion for the winning squad.

Even with the typically diverse machinery, it was clear the Caterhams, all being equal, would set the pace. Most of those who were not in Caterhams anticipated that wet conditions would be their only hope of challenging and the weather was indeed 'typical Anglesey'. But most of the rain fell before and between the two days' running rather than during it. Some competitors ran at the front during the wet early going, but, as the track dried, the Caterhams took over.

The race result is based on an aggregate time from three race segments – defiance of convention again. Yet as the race entered its final minutes, as far as most were concerned, the Sofa King team was on its way to a second overall Race of Remembrance win in a row – this year taking part in a single car rather than in the

relay, and with Russ Olivant added to 2017's victorious trio of Caroline Everett, Jay McCormack and James Beardwell. This was despite the Caterham 310 R being hit by an opponent during a very rainy end to Saturday's night running and having a clutch problem late on.

But in those final minutes another Caterham squad, GPW Racing – competing as three Caterham 7s in a relay with Peter Reynolds, Geoff Price and Pete Walters – appeared ahead on the timing screens. Walters was sprinting to the line in Reynolds' car after his own engine blew, and fighting back as the team recovered from two stop/go penalties. He stayed ahead until the end for the overall win, two better than the trio's third-place finish last year.

"I'm actually quite dizzy," Walters admitted afterwards, "I put everything into that. I didn't know where I was, I knew we were leading the relay, I thought Russ and those guys were out in front [overall]. [I was] just trying to put in as many quality laps as I could."

Those in his pit were none the wiser to the situation.

"We had absolutely no idea [we had won]," said Reynolds.

"This is my third year and the third time I've been staring at it [the timing screen] having no clue how it works. The timing system bounces around all the time trying



The race attracts an eclectic entry

ANGLESEY WEEKEND WINNERS

RACE OF REMEMBRANCE (348 laps)

1 GPW Racing (Peter Reynolds/Geoff Price/Pete Walters – Caterham 7 x3);

2 Sofa King (Caroline Everett/Jay McCormack/Russ Olivant/James Beardwell – Caterham 310 R) +3m25.192s;

3 360 MRC Projector

Absolute Dogs Dangles (Chris Knox/Claire Smith/Duncan Rogers – Mini Cooper S R56);

4 Caterham Works (Neil Winn/James Taylor/Daniel Holland – Caterham 310 R);

5 Roddisons Motorsport 1 (Rob Austin/Dan Welch/Paul Roddison – Mazda MX5);

6 Piston Emotional (Gary Smith/Tim Child/John Shiveral – Caterham 310 R x2/270 R x1).

Class winners Track Scotland 1 (Adam Kindness/Craig Dillon/Lowell Forsyth/Mark Dawson – Mini Cooper R50); Team Slowa (Welsh/Drinkwater/Brookson/Poulton – Citroen C1); Datum Motorsport (Ben Brooks/Lee Brooks/Phil Grayson – Lotus Elise S1); Roddisons Motorsport 1; Sofa King; 360 MRC Projector Absolute Dogs Dangles; GPW Racing. **Fastest lap** Caterham Works 1m39.274s (76.15mph). **Pole** Rob Boston Racing (Rob Boston/Peter Mansfield – Lotus Elise S2). **Starters** 45.

For full results visit:
tsl-timing.com

ALL PICS: BOURNE

Remembrance race

to compensate essentially when you go over a lap line or not. To be honest we're still a bit unsure if we won."

Everett, meanwhile, was sanguine in defeat. "To start with, I was like, 'Why on Earth did that happen?'" she reflected. "What happened was just before the remembrance service they parked us and we crossed the line, so they counted that last lap, which was a very slow lap, everybody else they backtracked to the previous lap.

"It's a little bit unfortunate but you know what, it's a great fun event, it's all in aid of a good charity. Pete drove brilliantly to get back up there, so well done to them, absolutely excellent."

Words that further underline the sort of event this is, as does the special Heroes Trophy awarded to Everett and her team as the first non-relay car.

This year's trophy was a shell that was produced in 1917 in Ontario and, after the SS Luis was torpedoed in April '18 with the loss of four lives, lay at the bottom of the English Channel for a century until it was retrieved earlier this year. The class win trophies were 18-pounder shells, actually fired in the conflict and recovered from battlefields in France.

"This year they rightfully said you can only win it as a Heroes Trophy [entrant]," Everett added. "We came here to win the Heroes Trophy, which is exactly what we did."

GRAHAM KEILLOH

NATIONAL REPORT CLUB AUTOSPORT



POETIC PUSSYCAT Mission Motorsport's Jaguar F-type SVR returned to act as safety car. It arrived at Anglesey fresh from winning a Vehicle Graphics 2018 Special Achievement Award for its wrap, which incorporates poppies and the words of the 'In Flanders Fields' poem. Paralympian Mark Williams, whose company Limb-art (which is based near Anglesey) also designed a special prosthetic leg cover that incorporated Winston Churchill and the 'Lest we forget' message.



LEARNING CURVE The Aero Racing Morgan Plus 4's five-driver line-up included Tony Hirst of *Coronation Street* and *Hollyoaks* fame – fresh from 13 class wins out of 13 in the Morgan Challenge this year – and Craig Hamilton-Smith, great grandson of Morgan founder HFS Morgan. The Morgans were entered as part of the University of Wolverhampton's Motorsport Engineering degree. They finished 22nd, despite trouble with the car's headlights and lack of anti-glare rear-view mirrors.



THINKING BIG The strongest challenge to the Caterhams came from a Mini Cooper S R56. In the capable hands of double Mini Challenge champion Chris Knox, the #360 entry was at points several seconds faster than the next best. "Thankfully, I got my race licence this year," said Knox, who has spent much of 2018 driving in the *Fast and Furious Live* European arena tour. Coming after a last-minute phone call, this was his first Race of Remembrance and Anglesey race in seven years.



SEASON
REVIEW

HOW ADAM AND HAIGH MADE BRITISH GT HISTORY

A formidable line-up of factory talent upped the ante in a season rounded off by an unprecedented third title, aided by an outstanding Am effort

JAMES NEWBOLD

British GT owes a debt of thanks to the Automobile Club de l'Ouest and FIA World Endurance Championship. The decision to move to a winter-series calendar resulted in a transitional 'superseason' with just five races in 2018, leaving drivers with a lot of spare time on their hands. With Aston Martin's venerable V12 Vantage GT3 entering the final season of its seven-year cycle, it was a perfect opportunity for AMR boss John Gaw to sweeten the deal for prospective customers with significant works support. The result was five Aston factory drivers on the grid – 2016 WEC GT drivers' champions Nicki Thiim and Marco Sorensen landed at TF Sport, joined by new signing Maxime Martin at series newcomer Jetstream Motorsport and marque stalwart Darren Turner at the returning Beechdean AMR to face off against

two-time champion Jonny Adam at Optimum Motorsport.

All bar Turner (together with double champion Andrew Howard) won at least one race, while a fire at Spa cost Thiim and Mark Farmer a hatful of points that would have made the title race a closer contest; but none could stop Adam, the original development driver on the V12 Vantage, from becoming the first three-time series champion together with Flick Haigh.

British GT is all about the amateur, and Adam – a driver coach for more than 12 years – understands that better than anyone. His work with Haigh – a series rookie but with international GT3 experience – on the sim and in private testing had a transformative effect on her confidence as the season progressed. This was especially evident at Spa and Brands Hatch, where Haigh was the class of the Am field, and results there



Adam and Haigh proved to be the drivers to beat in GT3 this year



ALL PICS: JEP/LAT

motorsport
IMAGES

GT3 TOP 6 POINTS

POS	DRIVERS	TEAM / CAR	PTS
1	Jonny Adam/Flick Haigh	Optimum Motorsport/Aston Martin V12 Vantage	167.5
2	Phil Keen/Jon Minshaw	Barwell Motorsport/Lamborghini Huracan	159.5
3	Nicki Thiim/Mark Farmer	TF Sport/Aston Martin V12 Vantage	148
4	Yelmer Buurman/Lee Mowle	ERC Sport/Mercedes-AMG GT3	133.5
5	Darren Turner/Andrew Howard	Beechdean AMR/Aston Martin V12 Vantage	102.5
6	Marco Sorensen/Derek Johnston	TF Sport/Aston Martin V12 Vantage	98

GT3 WINNERS

POS	ROUND	DRIVERS	TEAM / CAR
1	Oulton Park R1	Jonny Adam/Flick Haigh	Optimum Motorsport/Aston Martin
2	Oulton Park R2	Phil Keen/Jon Minshaw	Barwell Motorsport/Lamborghini
3	Rockingham	Yelmer Buurman/Lee Mowle	ERC Sport/Mercedes
4	Snetterton R1	Nicki Thiim/Mark Farmer	TF Sport/Aston Martin
5	Snetterton R2	Marco Sorensen/Derek Johnston	TF Sport/Aston Martin
6	Silverstone	Nicki Thiim/Mark Farmer	TF Sport/Aston Martin
7	Spa	Maxime Martin/Graham Davidson	Jetstream Motorsport/Aston Martin
8	Brands Hatch	Jonny Adam/Flick Haigh	Optimum Motorsport/Aston Martin
9	Donington Park	Phil Keen/Jon Minshaw	Barwell Motorsport/Lamborghini

gave them a buffer that meant sixth at Donington Park would be enough for the title regardless of where closest rivals Phil Keen and Jon Minshaw finished in their Barwell Lamborghini.

Against perhaps the toughest field ever assembled in British GT – Mercedes ace Yelmer Buurman shared the spoils with Lee Mowle at Rockingham, the RJN-prepared Nissan flew to pole at Silverstone and Team Parker Racing (which ran Rick Parfitt and Seb Morris to the 2017 drivers' title) posed a perennial threat with its Bentleys – Adam was rightly pleased to come out on top, vindicating his diligent approach to coaching.

"They say the devil is in the detail on the car and that's the team's objective; for me it's the same with the coaching," he says. "It seems to work – I pride myself in it and every Am I've been put with now, including Ahmad Al Harthy in Blancpain [Endurance Cup Pro-Am in 2017], I have won a championship with.

"This year has been the most quality-in-depth GT3 class in British GT that I've raced against, and that's probably shown by the amount of different race winners – it was hard to win more than a couple of races this year.

"It's difficult – in qualifying you're separated by a few tenths here or there and it's whoever gets a clear lap at the peak of the tyre in qualifying. Some of the Ams, Flick included, have made the margin between the Pro and the Am a lot smaller."

Adam brought his Le Mans-winning race engineer Evert van Doorn across with him to Optimum – like Haigh, a new Aston

customer – and the combination worked a treat. Their knowledge helped Shaun Goff's team adapt quickly to the V12 Vantage, Haigh claiming pole and going on to victory in the season opener at Oulton Park, and create a stable base set-up that contributed to the team's remarkable consistency.

Aside from a blip before the second Oulton Park 'race' – which was cancelled after four safety-car laps (Jason Wolfe's GT4 Jaguar set the fastest lap!) – where Adam floated off on the way to the grid, Optimum never finished lower than fourth, and that meant others could ill afford any off-days.

Having made up for a puncture while chasing Adam in race one by winning the second Oulton race, Keen/Minshaw shot themselves in the foot at Rockingham when Minshaw took his helmet off in the pits to earn a 10-second stop/go penalty. They didn't win again until the Donington finale following a post-race time penalty for Thiim and Farmer, by which time overheating problems at Brands – caused by a McLaren wheelarch lodged in the radiator grille – had left the perennial bridesmaids with too much ground to recover. They finished runners-up for a third straight year.

It wasn't until the fourth race, at Snetterton, that TF's championship challenge got under way, with Thiim/Farmer and Sorensen/Derek Johnston sharing the wins. Sorensen claimed the most fastest laps during the season (four), but they're not what win you prizes. Johnston, a champion with Adam in 2016, struggled with the Dane's favoured set-up and >>

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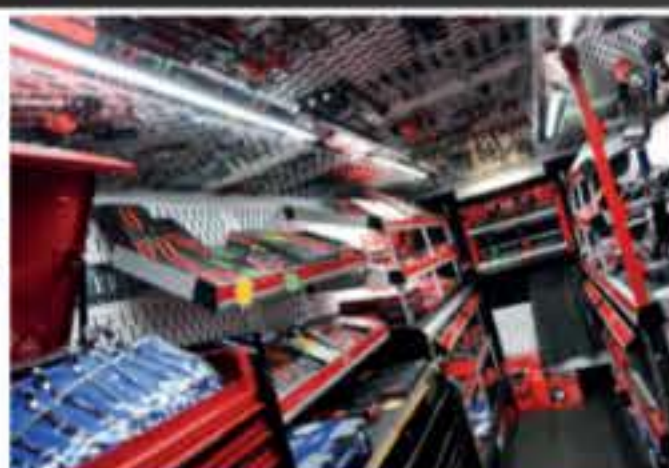
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decided to call it a day before the end of the year.

"A lot of the Pros took the ultimate fastest laps, but that's because they took the new tyre, whereas I would say 60 to 70% of the time Flick started the race on a new set because we needed to give her as much grip as possible to build a gap," reflects Adam. "I was lucky if I got 10 flying laps over the two sessions before qualifying. It's the big picture that you look for."

Farmer and Thiim won again at the showpiece Silverstone 500 after surviving contact with Jetstream's Graham Davidson, who broke his duck next time out at Spa with local hero Martin after Haigh spun out of a comfortable lead with a loose wheelarch. From plumb last, she and Adam salvaged third.

Needing a big result at Brands Hatch after his Spa oil fire,

Farmer spun off in qualifying and had to start from the back, eventually recovering to third, while Haigh and Adam came back from a safety-car interruption and a 10s pitstop success penalty to claim a psychologically crucial victory with a late pass on the second Barwell Lambo of Jonny Cocker/Sam de Haan.

Haigh's and Adam's drive to fourth in a madcap final race at Donington typified the season. As others lost their heads and tripped over one another, the Optimum crew kept theirs and sealed the crown.

It would be easy to paint 2018 as a picture of Aston domination – the Vantages won six of the nine races – but that would be to miss the point. The real magic ingredient was the unassuming Scotsman with the beaming smile. >>

AUTOSPORT'S TOP 5 GT3 DRIVERS



NICKI THIIM

1 Proved local knowledge was no prerequisite in a superb debut season, on pole at Snetterton by half a second – in the dry – and pumped in a crucial sequence of laps to put Farmer in the box seat for victory in showpiece Silverstone 500. Made up 14-second deficit on Keen in monster stint at Donington before the stewards' intervention, although academic after Spa fire.



FLICK HAIGH

2 Well-prepared for rookie campaign and it showed. Showed a cool head under massive pressure at Donington, but laid the groundwork with supreme pace leading to wins at Oulton and Brands. Rockingham qualifying performance is easily overlooked, but quickest Am by a second over Minshaw.



JONNY ADAM

3 Aquaplaning off on the way to the grid at Oulton aside, Adam again showed he is the master of working with Am drivers. Wealth of knowledge was key in Optimum's first year with Aston and instilled confidence in Haigh while strong on pace himself. Late move on Cocker for Brands win gave breathing room.



PHIL KEEN

4 Destroyed everybody in wet qualifying at Rockingham, to the tune of 0.9s, but once again ended the year as the bridesmaid – in the Sunoco Challenge too. Two wins both a little hollow, but did the hard work by getting pole for abandoned second Oulton race. Rightly a Lambo works driver.



YELMER BUURMAN

5 Blancpain GT Endurance champ often started too far back to make an impact, but seized his one shot at victory at Rockingham. Carved through the pros like they were standing still for brilliant podium at Donington, including a rarely seen around-the-outside pass at Goddards on Adam.

MITCHELL COMES OUT ON TOP OF EPIC GT4 BATTLE

In a season when there were different winning combinations in each of the nine races, it would seem only logical that, as the only repeat victor, Jack Mitchell should have been crowned GT4 champion. But that hardly does justice to a title race that was decided by a single point, with the top three crews separated by just two points.

Having scored two GT3 pole positions last year in the Macmillan Aston Martin that became this season's championship-winning chassis, Mitchell was set for another season in the top class before his drive fell through and he was forced to find refuge at Century Motorsport in the new BMW M4. But it was to prove a blessing in disguise for the former Ginetta Junior champion.

Despite completing only 15 laps, during the media day before the Oulton Park opener, Mitchell got the season off to a strong start with a brace of thirds alongside guesting BMW junior Ricky Collard, before two below-par weekends at Rockingham and Snetterton with new co-driver Aleksander Schjerpen yielded only four points. Significantly, his two wins came in the longer races, which carry the greatest share of points – in back-to-back rounds at Silverstone (with Schjerpen) and Spa with his third different team-mate of the season, Dean Macdonald.

Both had an element of fortune about them – broken suspension robbed Equipe Verschuur McLaren pair Finlay Hutchison/Dan McKay of a 35-second lead at Silverstone before an opportunely timed safety car at Spa vaulted him from seventh to the lead, despite the 20s success penalty – but Mitchell still had to deliver. His drive at Spa to hold off the clearly quicker McLaren 570S of Charlie Fagg was judged to perfection and was the turning point in his title campaign.

"The big attribute to Jack is he's very laid back, he doesn't get flustered," says Century boss Nathan Freke. "He gets in the car, knuckles down and does the job. Very seldom does he blame the car – he's always very self-critical, which is important because it's normally the driver that needs to make the difference, not the car."

"We've seen some gritty drives from him and some amazing overtaking moves – he is a very worthy champion."

With ex-Williams chief mechanic Les Jones as team manager, customer support from BMW in the form of a spares truck, and on-site engineer Timo Vogt working with experienced

race engineers Chris Hubbard (Mitchell) and Tim Wright (Ben Tuck/Ben Green), either one of Century's two cars could have won the championship.

Tuck/Green, who had been demoted from second to sixth at round one due to too short a stop, won at Snetterton and kept their title hopes alive with a fighting second at Brands Hatch, only falling short at Donington when Green was penalised for passing under yellow flags. Although Mitchell then had to serve a penalty of his own when the team was unable to connect the earthing cable at his pitstop, it wasn't quite enough. As Freke put it, "a messy way to do it, but it worked out".

Yet it was a crew that didn't win a race and ultimately finished third that had the greatest cause for disappointment. Tolman Motorsport's Fagg and Historic Formula Ford graduate Michael O'Brien dominated at Spa – the scene of Fagg and Matthew Graham's brace of 2017 victories in the Ebor Maserati – and would certainly have won but for the safety car, described by



GT4 TOP 6 POINTS

POS	DRIVERS	TEAM / CAR	PTS
1	Jack Mitchell	Century Motorsport/BMW M4	124
2	Ben Tuck/Ben Green	Century Motorsport/BMW M4	123
3	Charlie Fagg/Michael O'Brien	Tolman Motorsport/McLaren 570S	122
4	Callum Pointon/Patrik Matthiesen	HHC Motorsport/Ginetta G55	116.5
5	Matt Nicoll-Jones/Will Moore	Academy Motorsport/Aston Martin Vantage	87
6	Joe Osborne/David Pattison	Tolman Motorsport/McLaren 570S	82.5

GT4 WINNERS

RD	VENUE	DRIVERS	TEAM / CAR
1	Oulton Park R1	Ben Barnicoat/Adam Balon	Track-Club/McLaren
2	Oulton Park R2	Scott Malvern/Nick Jones	Team Parker Racing/Mercedes
3	Rockingham	Callum Pointon/Patrik Matthiesen	HHC Motorsport/Ginetta
4	Snetterton R1	Joe Osborne/David Pattison	Tolman Motorsport/McLaren
5	Snetterton R2	Ben Tuck/Ben Green	Century Motorsport/BMW
6	Silverstone	Jack Mitchell/Aleksander Schjerpen	Century Motorsport/BMW
7	Spa	Jack Mitchell/Dean Macdonald	Century Motorsport/BMW
8	Brands Hatch	Mike Robinson/Graham Johnson	Balfe Motorsport/McLaren
9	Donington Park	Daniel McKay/Finlay Hutchison	Equipe Verschuur/McLaren





Century's new BMW M4s proved to be the class of the GT4 field

Freke as "a one in a million". That only compounded the frustration of failing to score at Silverstone after contact with Kelvin Fletcher at Brooklands broke the suspension, and a puncture on Fagg's in-lap at Brands Hatch that dropped them to ninth. Another second at Donington meant they finished just two points behind Mitchell.

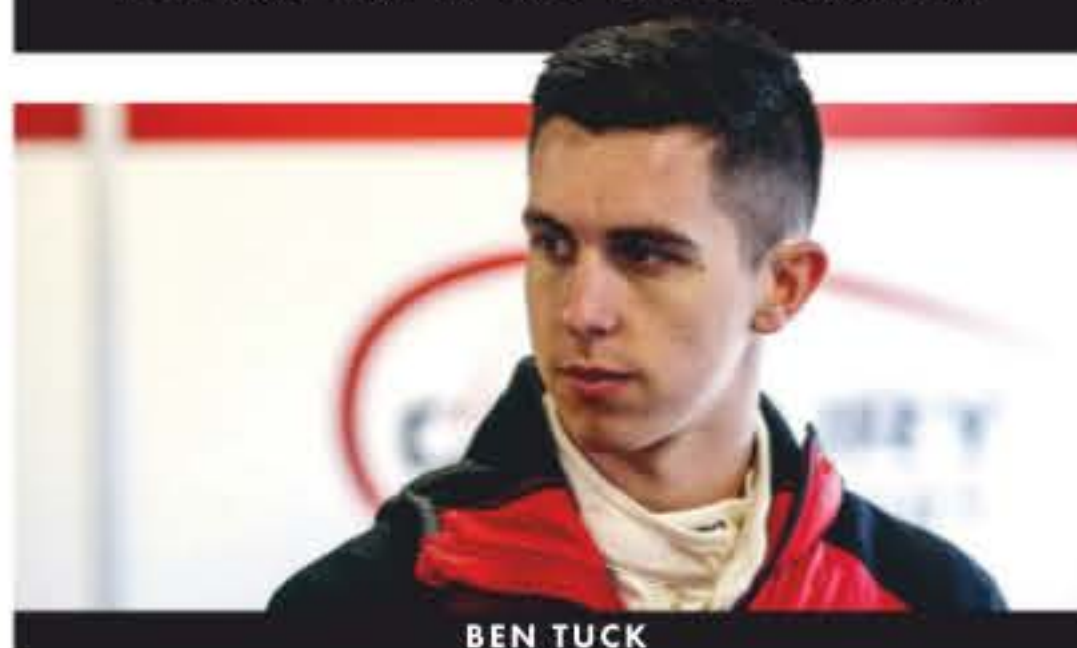
McLarens did however win four times. Adam Balon had a nightmare year with Track-Club and failed to finish any races after Snetterton, but opened the season with victory at the Oulton season opener for the second straight year, joined by former F3 man Ben Barnicoat. Tolman pair Joe Osborne and David Pattison capitalised on the shorter pitstop time for Pro-Am teams at Snetterton when the pit window overlapped a safety car brought out by Graham Johnson/Mike Robinson's stranded Balfe Motorsport example, which ended its run of bad luck with victory at Brands Hatch. Equipe Verschuur's evident promise was finally realised at Donington as McKay recovered from a trip into the gravel in the first stint to deny the chasing Fagg/O'Brien the title.

"IT WAS A MESSY WAY TO DO IT, BUT IT WORKED OUT" - CENTURY BOSS NATHAN FREKE

Having won the last two GT4 titles, Ginetta only mustered a single victory, at Rockingham with HHC Motorsport pair Callum Pointon/Patrik Matthiesen, while Mercedes claimed a first win in the rain-affected second Oulton race with Pro-Am champions Scott Malvern and Nick Jones.

Osborne and Pattison actually finished ahead of Team Parker Racing's Malvern and Jones in the outright standings, but had fallen out of Pro-Am title contention following retirements at Silverstone and Spa. Instead it was left to Martin Plowman and Kelvin Fletcher in the venerable Nissan 370Z GT4, run by Bob Neville's RJN crew, to take the fight to the Mercedes, with Plowman's and Malvern's superb duel at Brands one of the season highlights. The battle went down to the wire at Donington, where Jones went grass-cutting at the Craners on the opening lap, before an oil-pump failure put paid to Fletcher's challenge and gave Malvern an easy run to the Pro-Am title, his first since Formula Renault BARC in 2012. *W*

AUTOSPORT'S TOP 5 GT4 DRIVERS



BEN TUCK

1 The pick of the BMW drivers missed out on the title through factors outside of his control. Consistently had a slight edge on co-driver Green and was on a par with more experienced Mitchell. Unlucky with safety cars at Snetterton and Brands Hatch while leading, but stormed back to second in a photo-finish at the latter.



JACK MITCHELL

2 Unfussed by stepping back to GT4, Mitchell coped well with limited time in the M4 pre-season and constant changing of team-mates to claim the title, despite a nervy finish. Crucial Spa win owed much to luck, but he kept Fagg behind brilliantly in a slower car to give himself a points buffer.



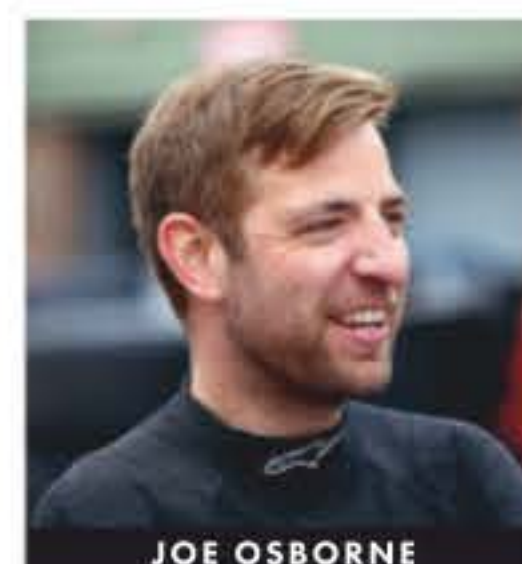
CHARLIE FAGG

3 Had the edge on his fellow McLaren development drivers all year and was unlucky not to end the year with a victory and the title to show for it. Showed superb car control to hold onto his three-wheeled McLaren when the right-rear let go at Brands. Still only 19, he has a very bright future in GTs.



SCOTT MALVERN

4 One of the GT4 benchmarks finally had equipment to match his talents this year and prevailed in the tight Pro-Am title battle with much-improved Jones. Got the best out of the agile Merc to earn pole at Oulton, which yielded victory in the four-lap 'race', and managed well with its lack of grunt in combat.



JOE OSBORNE

5 Drove – like his newly earned factory driver status suggests – with class, but left to rue non-scores at Silverstone (contact) and Spa (overheating). Took an opportunistic win at Snetterton and came from the back to a brilliant fifth at Brands before giving co-driver Pattison farewell Pro-Am win at Donington.



SEASON
REVIEW

SCANDINAVIANS SLICK

Swede Linus Lundqvist was the leader for much of the year, but Donington disaster threatened to hand Dane Nicolai Kjaergaard a shot at glory

STEFAN MACKLEY

“I

d much rather be the hunted than the hunter, I like this position.” It’s just as well that Linus Lundqvist prefers being chased, because the Swede was the man to beat for much of the 2018 BRDC British Formula 3 Championship on his way to the title.

It was a campaign of dominance, with more wins and podiums than anybody else, his consistency arguably just as big an asset as his speed. Another key to his success was managing the British F3 Pirelli tyres, a change from the Hankook rubber that the Stockholm teenager used in British F4 last season.

“I prefer a bit of oversteer, I like rotation, that’s what I want to have,” says Lundqvist. “With the Pirellis, they might not be the best thing considering the rears usually overheat a bit and they really dislike surface temperature, so you really want to avoid the slides. So it took some time just to get used to that and how you handle a race because you can’t really push 100% all the time – you’ve got to decide at what point in the race you want to put down some really good laps.”

The Double R Racing driver put down plenty of good laps, racking up six wins and an additional four podiums in the first 15 races alone, with rostrums in all three races at Rockingham and a double win at Spa being the standout performances.

After the Belgian round he was 120 points to the good over his nearest rival having not recorded a single retirement, and the title looked all but assured with three events remaining. “I like the pressure,” says Lundqvist. “I’m not going to try and compare myself with him, but I read Usain Bolt’s autobiography and it said, ‘Give me a stadium, give me the pressure and give me a championship and you’ll see me grow three centimetres, accelerate a bit quicker and run a bit faster’.

I can sort of relate to that – give me a bit of pressure and I’ll be on it.”

That pressure more often than not was applied by Nicolai Kjaergaard, who had initially led the standings after the opening round at Oulton Park courtesy of a win and another podium. There was a further victory for the Carlin driver at Snetterton, but there were also blips that included two retirements after collisions. Then came a mid-season slump at Silverstone and Spa, which yielded no podium finishes in six races for the Dane as he struggled with understeer through high-speed turns.

“At Spa I was quite down but then obviously we came away and then we revised the strategy again,” says Kjaergaard. “We were like, ‘OK now we need to consolidate second [in the championship] and go for wins, and then we’ll see what happens.’”

At Brands Hatch in August, Kjaergaard bounced back with his third win of the season, but his title challenge seemed over as Lundqvist recorded a brace of podiums. Then came the penultimate round at Donington Park in September, when, on the cusp of the title, the series leader endured a torrid weekend. An engine problem in qualifying put Lundqvist back on the grid for race one before he salvaged eighth, but in the full-reversed-grid race two he was caught up in a first-corner accident, recording his first DNF of the year. He was 11th in race three.

Kjaergaard, meanwhile, scored his fourth and fifth wins of the season and moved to within 50 points with one round remaining at Silverstone. “It’s only when you have tough weekends like at Donington where you actually learn from your mistakes and learn a bit about yourself as well, how you cope with that,” recalls Lundqvist. “I’ll definitely say that I’ve come out stronger because of Donington.”

Stronger he was, as a dominant lights-to-flag race-one victory at



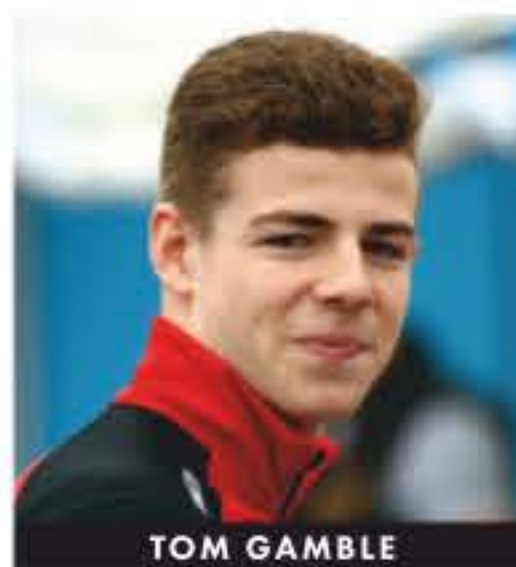
ALL PICS: JEP/LAT
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IMAGES

AUTOSPORT'S TOP 5 DRIVERS



LINUS LUNDQVIST

1 Class of the field, taking most wins and podiums as well as leading more laps than any other driver. Highlights included a triple podium at Rockingham as well as a double victory at Spa. Bounced back superbly from a disastrous Donington Park weekend to seal the title in race one at Silverstone.



TOM GAMBLE



NICOLAI KJAERGAARD

2 Arguably the surprise of the season as a single-seater rookie. The 2017 Ginetta Junior champion claimed the most fastest laps and three poles, including an impressive double at Spa. A lack of single-seater experience showed at times with silly mistakes but he took two impressive wins.

3 The only man to challenge Lundqvist throughout the season. Led the standings after the opening round at Oulton Park and was dominant at Brands Hatch and Donington Park. But lacklustre performances at Silverstone and Spa cost him dearly, as did four DNFs across the year.



JAMIE CAROLINE



BILLY MONGER

4 Only competed in three events but took two wins – on his British F3 debut at Spa and again at Brands Hatch – as well as a further two podiums. The 2017 F4 British champion would more than likely have been a title contender if he had competed for the whole season.

5 Remarkable return to racing less than a year after his life-changing accident and took fairytale podium on debut at Oulton Park. Improved throughout the season, taking a further three rostrums. Claimed two poles on his return to Donington Park and should have won but for his own mistakes.

BRDC BRITISH F3 TOP 6 POINTS

POS	DRIVER	TEAM	WINS	PTS
1	Linus Lundqvist	Double R Racing	7	531
2	Nicolai Kjaergaard	Carlin	5	446
3	Kush Maini	Lanan Racing	1	366
4	Krish Mahadik	Double R Racing	0	358
5	Tom Gamble	Fortec Motorsports	2	346
6	Billy Monger	Carlin	0	301

Silverstone secured the title in a fashion befitting of his season after the retirement of Kjaergaard, who was nursing a damaged hand.

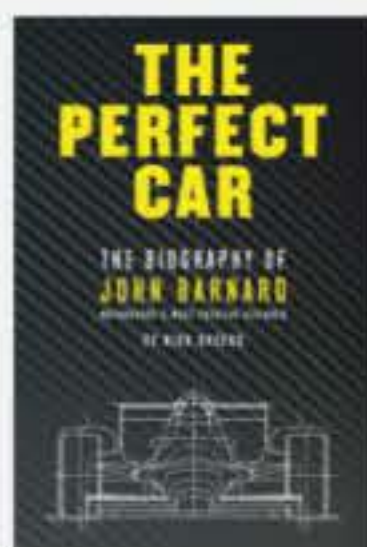
There were 10 different race winners across the season, helped by the addition of the controversial full-reversed-grid second race for 2018, with bonus points awarded per position gained.

Lanan Racing's Kush Maini appeared to be the driver most likely to break the Scandinavians' hold on the standings, the Bangalore youngster collecting seven podiums in the first four events, including a reversed-grid win at Rockingham, but his pace dropped away. He took third in the points, ahead of fellow Indian Krish Mahadik, who partnered Lundqvist at the Double R squad.

In his rookie single-seater campaign, reigning Ginetta Junior champion Tom Gamble surprised many with his outright pace, the Fortec Motorsports driver securing seven fastest laps across the season and three poles, as well as two wins – neither of which was in a reversed-grid race. Indeed, apart from Lundqvist, Kjaergaard and Gamble, the only non-reversed-grid race winner was Jamie Caroline, who contested three rounds with Carlin.

But arguably the biggest story of the British F3 season was another Carlin driver: Billy Monger, on his comeback to racing less than 12 months after his life-changing accident at Donington. His debut at Oulton was a fairytale as he claimed a podium in race one, something he would manage three more times across the season. What's more, on his competitive return to Donington he secured two pole positions. It's a sign of how competitive the 19-year old has been that he was bitterly disappointed to miss out on two wins due to his own mistakes. He completed the top six in the points table, one spot behind Gamble. 🏆

THE FLAWED ARCHITECT



BOOK REVIEW
THE PERFECT CAR
RRP £40.00

The case of legendary designer John Barnard is one that demonstrates the limitations of statistics. Pure numbers of races

and titles won by his cars suggest a good career, but not necessarily a great one. Yet in technical achievements Barnard is possibly unparalleled. Something made plain in his recently released biography, *The Perfect Car*, written by Nick Skeens.

Skeens describes the carbon monocoque of Barnard's McLaren MP4/1 as "the greatest innovation in motorsport since the engine was moved behind the driver", and it's hard to argue. Barnard also introduced into Formula 1 the paddleshift gearbox and coke-bottle chassis that remain in use by all teams three decades on. These landmark developments are but a few examples of his relentless inventions, which this book and its appended list of his milestones make clear. Barnard's perfectionism raised technical standards wherever he went.

This is a biography written with the subject's close involvement. Yet crucially it is no hagiography, as there is another side to Barnard, about as readily associated with him as his innovation: a short and volcanic fuse, a brusque manner and uncompromising 'my (perfect) way or the highway' stubbornness – encapsulated by his 'Prince of Darkness' nickname. He also, at points of his career, seemed – justified or not – quick to mistrust and perceive slights, and was needy of acknowledgement. Together they contributed to many broken relationships and opportunities lost. Some

"BARNARD RAISED THE TECHNICAL STANDARDS WHEREVER HE WENT"



career decisions seem oddly, or quickly, motivated. He regrets more than one of them and they all go some way to explaining the relative shortage of statistical success.

As does Barnard's appetite for step-changes; constant refinery did not motivate him. "I found tweaking really boring," he says. That restlessness also manifested itself in his moving teams often too early as he pursued the next ground-up challenge. When reminiscing about leaving Ferrari in 1989 on the eve its upturn in form, he says: "I never follow it through to the end."

This, Skeens suggests, is "the cost of progress". A more conciliatory character likely would not have forced such vast strides. Therein lies Barnard's paradox.

The Perfect Car is immensely detailed, searching and comprehensive – aided by Barnard's photographic recall as well as by no corner cutting in Skeens' research. It covers each stage of Barnard's life and how they relate to each other forensically, including his childhood years, an early career that included a successful stint in America, when Barnard appeared his most content, then F1.



Nigel Mansell won twice in the 1989 Ferrari 640 – the first F1 car with a paddleshift gearbox



Skeens' background is not in racing but in design, yet you'd never know it as he explores each subject with authority and enthusiasm. In a weighty tome – nearly 600 pages – Autosport only spotted three minor factual errors. The book contains a vast range of contributing voices, including from the 'other side' of disputes. Contentious issues are dissected unflinchingly, including those wherein Barnard does not emerge flattered. The prose is engaging and the necessary technical sections rarely feel inaccessible.

Plenty will endear you to Barnard. He is open and reflective about his own shortcomings and mistakes. His commitment to family is a running theme. He is willing to concede when others have better solutions. He works constructively on the 'big picture' – noting that it's sloppiness on small things that incites his temper. He is loyal to close colleagues and many talk of their invaluable learning as they worked for him. The book also details that Barnard had more than his fair share of genuinely unpleasant experiences.

One criticism is related to the book's weight, however – it could have benefited from greater editing. Some of the anecdotes, digressions and explanations seem wandering and unnecessary, though the latter group, Autosport imagines, was included with a non-motorsport audience in mind. Perhaps, too, the addition of diagrams and sketches could have aided the understanding of technical passages.

Yet these are minor points. *The Perfect Car* is a fitting record of the life and career of one of motorsport's most complex, and most vital, contributors.

GRAHAM KEILLOH



youtube.com/AUTOSPORTdotcom



The verdict on F1's definitive 2019 regulations

Now the FIA has revealed its finalised version of the changes to the 2019 Formula 1 regulations, join the Autosport team as we discuss what impact revised front and rear wings might have, and what the direction means for F1's larger 2021 technical rethink. Go to <http://bit.ly/F1regs2019>

THIS WEEKEND'S EVENTS

INTERNATIONAL MOTORSPORT

Rally Australia World Rally Championship Rd 13/13

Coffs Harbour, Australia

November 15-18

TV Live BT Sport 2, Friday 2000. BT Sport 1, Saturday 0100. BT Sport 2 2130. Red Bull TV, Saturday 0045. BT Sport 1, Sunday 0200 **Live** coverage on wrc.com. **All live** service via WRC+.

TITLE DECIDER

TV Highlights Red

Bull TV, Friday 1200. BT Sport 1, Friday 1215. Red Bull TV, Saturday 1200. BT Sport 3, Saturday 1230. Red Bull TV, Sunday 1200. BT Sport 1, Sunday 1400

World Endurance Championship Rd 5/8

Shanghai, China **November 18** **TV Live** BT Sport 3, Sunday 0230. Eurosport 1, Sunday 0530, 0830

MotoGP

Rd 19/19

Valencia, Spain

November 18

TV Live BT Sport 2, Sunday 1230

Macau Grand Prix Formula 3 World Cup

Macau, China

November 18

TV Live Eurosport 1, Sunday 0730

GT World Cup

Macau, China

November 18

TV Live Eurosport 1,

Sunday 0400

World Touring Car Cup

Rd 10/10

Macau, China

November 17

TV Live Eurosport 1, Saturday 0600, Sunday 0300

NASCAR Cup

Rd 36/36

Homestead, USA

November 18

TV Live Premier Sports, Sunday 1900

UK MOTORSPORT

Brands Hatch BARC

November 17-18

Britcar Endurance, Hyundai Coupes, Tin Tops, Ginetta Junior, Mini Sevens/Miglia, Modified Saloons, Intermark

Anglesey BRSCC

November 18

FF1600/Formula Vee, Sports/Saloons/Caterhams, Global GT Lights, Monopostos





LATIMAGES

FROM THE ARCHIVE

Graham Whitehead (#76 Aston Martin DB3S) leads Tony Brooks (#74 Aston Martin DB3S), Noel Cunningham-Reid (#91 HWM-Jaguar), Roy Salvadori (#73

Aston Martin DBR1), Peter Blond (#80 HWM-Jaguar) and Archie Scott Brown (#92 Lister-Jaguar) at the start of the 1957 Sussex Trophy at Goodwood, very much a highlight of the Easter

meeting. Scott Brown (see Autosport Engineering, November 1, for a mini biog) took a convincing victory ahead of Salvadori and Brooks in the 21-lap race, also setting fastest lap.



TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

QUIZ

WHO, WHAT, WHERE, WHEN?



WHO IS THIS?

Born with racing in his blood, this versatile racer upheld family honour.

Following domestic success, he followed in his uncle's wheeltracks and made the move to foreign lands. He was a nearly man in the third and second tiers, but it was enough to land him a minnow.

He made his point against the odds, but it was his aerial acrobatics that really grabbed the headlines. He hot-footed it down the paddock and bagged a couple of strong results, but with no top-line options he took another well-trodden path across the pond.

After a slow start he eventually became a regular frontrunner until injury interrupted him in his prime. Although he returned to winning ways, he was never a title contender again. He briefly represented the national side and became a three-time winner in a blue-riband enduro, in which he still competes today.

ON THIS DAY

1 Which Italian driver made their Formula 1 debut with Brabham on this day in 1987?

2 Who scored their final point in F1 on this day in 2015?

3 For which team did Roberto Moreno score its maiden points on this day in 1987?

4 On this day in 1993, which ex-F1 driver was confirmed to partner Kieth O'dor at Nissan for the '94 British Touring Car season?

5 'The King' Richard Petty started his final NASCAR Cup race on this day in 1992. In how many top-flight NASCAR races did he compete?

NAME THE HELMET



LAST WEEK'S ANSWERS

Who, what, where, when Dario Franchitti, DJR Ford Falcon V8 Supercar, Surfers Paradise, October 2010.

Who is this? David Coulthard. **On this day** 1) Brabham, Osella. 2) 1961, '62. 3) Three. 4) Narain Karthikeyan.

5) Jochen Rindt (some claim Ed Hugus also drove). **Name the helmet** Anthony Reid.

IN NEXT WEEK'S ISSUE



RALLY AUSTRALIA: THE WRC TITLE DECIDER

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