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FERRARI'S FINAL STEP TO TOPPLING MERCEDES?

That the current Ferrari team can build a car good enough to win Formula 1 world championships is no longer in doubt. The SF70H *could* have won in 2017. The SF71H *should* have won in '18. But other factors, such as operational errors and driver mistakes, mean that it's now a decade since Ferrari's last (constructors') crown.

Mattia Binotto (above) replacing Maurizio Arrivabene as team boss could be the final piece in the jigsaw. His technical success has illustrated his ability to get the best out of good people, which has arguably been Ferrari's biggest weakness in recent years.

As Edd Straw points out in our cover piece on page 16, Ferrari isn't far away from toppling Mercedes. There are just some key areas it needs to look after in 2019.

Long before we find out if Ferrari can end its wait, the World Rally Championship will kick off in Monte Carlo. Like F1, the WRC has had some seat-swapping over the winter, most notably Sebastien Ogier returning to Citroen. He was one of the many stars who appeared at Autosport International last weekend, with the WRC launch on Saturday one of the big highlights. Look out for our season preview in next week's issue.

McLaren's new F1 drivers Carlos Sainz Jr and Lando Norris opened the show on Saturday and appeared on our main stage. They are unlikely to be challenging the frontrunners this year, but the hiring of highly rated ex-Porsche man Andreas Seidl (p4) is a big plus. *If* he is allowed to make the changes required, it could be the start of McLaren's climb out of the midfield.

There was plenty more going on in Birmingham, so turn to p34 to see our coverage of the event that kicked off the 2019 season.



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GORIA; ETHERINGTON



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McLAREN RECRUITS PORSCHE MASTERMIND TO LEAD F1 TEAM

FORMULA 1

McLaren has completed the management overhaul that it hopes will steer it back to prominence in Formula 1 with the capture of ex-Porsche LMP1 chief Andreas Seidl.

The British team is the second most successful in F1 history, but has not won since Jenson Button took victory in the 2012 season finale or got a driver onto the podium since Kevin Magnussen and Button scored a two-three in the '14 opener. McLaren expected to challenge for podiums following its switch to Renault engines last season, after three years of pain with Honda, but the performance of its MCL33 was disappointing.

Since racing chief Eric Boullier left at the start of last summer, McLaren has made a number of major changes, culminating last week in Seidl joining as managing director. He joins a structure that includes Indycar hero Gil de Ferran as sporting director and will feature Toro Rosso man James Key as technical boss once he is released by Red Bull.

Seidl (right) joins McLaren after overseeing three World Endurance drivers' and manufacturers' championship doubles in 2015-17, as well as Le Mans 24 Hours successes in all three years. Porsche then withdrew from the series to focus on its impending Formula E move slated for 2019-20. Seidl had been due to take on a new role with overall control of motorsport at Porsche had he remained.

"I'm very happy with the Formula 1 team that we have in place," McLaren CEO Zak Brown said. "They haven't all joined yet, so this is still a work-in-progress."

Seidl has worked in F1 before, with BMW Sauber, before following the German manufacturer out of grand prix racing and initially heading up its successful DTM

"I'M HAPPY WITH THE TEAM WE HAVE IN PLACE. THEY HAVE NOT ALL JOINED YET"



effort. "This is an enormous privilege and challenge, which I am ready for and committed to," said Seidl. "To have an opportunity to contribute to the McLaren legacy is extremely special and inspiring. McLaren has the vision, leadership and experience but, most importantly, the people to return to the front, and that will be my absolute focus and mission."

McLaren says it understands the errors that led to its MCL33's fundamental aerodynamic shortcoming in 2018. Two-time world champion Fernando Alonso, who has stepped away from F1 for 2019, scored a best finish of fifth in the season opener, but McLaren finished in the points just twice in the nine races after the summer break. Alonso and Stoffel Vandoorne have since been replaced by Carlos Sainz Jr and Lando Norris.



SEIDL: VIEW FROM THE WEC

Organisationally strong, politically savvy and technically adept. It became clear that Andreas Seidl was all those things during his stint at the helm of Porsche's successful World Endurance Championship squad.

Seidl was one of the architects of Porsche's phenomenal run of LMP1 success in the WEC during its four-year stint back in the top-flight of sportscar racing. As team principal he was in charge of trackside operations throughout that period.

Porsche quickly became a well-oiled racing machine under his charge, as it should have done given the resources available. Perhaps his greatest achievement was managing a squad of big-name drivers when it came to enforcing team orders, and averting civil war in the camp, as it pursued its first world title double in 2015.

He also took on the role of technical director vacated by Alex Hitzinger ahead of the 2016 season and showed no desire to vacate it, proving his technical prowess.

Seidl was part of a management team that had close links before arriving at Porsche: he had joined from BMW along with team vice-president Fritz Enzinger, the link between the racing programme and upper management at Porsche. Seidl also appointed key allies with whom he already had a working relationship within the rank and file of the team.

Turning around the fortunes of an ailing F1 team after being parachuted is a different task. Seidl doesn't have the support around him he enjoyed at Porsche, but he does have everything else in his armoury to succeed.

GARY WATKINS

Brown joked: "All the men and women back at McLaren have been working extremely hard to make sure we build a better car than 2018, because I know these guys won't want to drive last year's car! We're anticipating a good car. The off-season development has gone according to plan, but you ultimately don't know what the competition's been up to and the competition's tough, and getting tougher."

Former Red Bull protege Sainz, who joins McLaren from Renault, hopes the Woking team "remembers" how to win, but reiterated that patience was needed given how far McLaren had fallen back. "We cannot get overexcited; we need to work hard," he said. "The team last year was really far away from that."

SCOTT MITCHELL

Sim work used for grid change study

FORMULA 1

Formula 1 is evaluating changing how the grid lines up in the future, and has created a bespoke simulation tool after initially weighing up the use of Esports to sample potential tweaks.

Title-winning F1 team technical boss Pat Symonds now works for the championship as a leader of several projects trying to find ways to improve the quality of grand prix racing.

Last year, Symonds (below) said F1 was evaluating changing the staggered one-by-one grid structure and targeted doing so in the virtual world using Esports. But that approach has now changed.

"We asked ourselves what would happen if we moved the cars closer together and put them side-by-side again," said Symonds at last week's Autosport International Show. "Maybe not four and three like they used to be, but two-by-two."

"When you want to simulate something like that, if you just do it as a physics problem you just get a trivial answer: if you start cars closer together, and they all accelerate at the same rate, they arrive at the first corner closer together."

"So we built a simulation that uses artificial intelligence, but we can also put a human in."

F1's method works by having 19 cars controlled by artificial intelligence and one that is human controlled, and running "50 races of two laps".

It has built a strong Esports platform alongside the official F1 game, but it is understood that simply using the official F1 game to trial changes such as reversed-grid races was not a viable option because it would not have closely reflected the situation in reality.

The 'dirty air' impact of following another car is reduced in *F1 2018* to make it a better gaming experience.

SCOTT MITCHELL





Verstappen sent to Formula E race as FIA punishment

FORMULA E

Come to a one-day race event, see 22 top-level drivers do battle in what was a brilliant spectacle, get to witness exactly how some of the most contentious issues of the contest are adjudicated. That's not a 'punishment'.

That's pretty much how the howling Twitter mob greeted the news that Red Bull Formula 1 bad boy Max Verstappen would spend last Saturday at the ABB FIA Formula E Championship race in Marrakech.

To a certain extent they were not wrong. But the FIA, which made Verstappen travel to Morocco to serve one day of the public service he was slapped with for shoving Esteban Ocon after the 2018 Brazilian Grand Prix, was keen to highlight that this was about education rather than saying FE was the place to send errant F1 drivers.

Not everyone in the paddock saw it that way. As Virgin Racing's Sam Bird told the post-race press conference: "I mean, to call coming to an FE race community service I think does FE a bit of a disjustice [sic]. This is an amazing category, and people pay to come and watch us – it shouldn't be a punishment to come here."

Sending Verstappen to observe the FE stewards in action was part of the FIA's educational philosophy

regarding episodes such as that at Interlagos. It was not that FE racing in itself was selected as a 'punishment', simply that it was the first suitable single-seater event of a high-profile nature for him to attend to see how incidents similar to ones he may be involved with in the future are dealt with.

The benefits of Verstappen seeing how the stewards operate were summed up by Audi team principal Allan McNish: "You see the job they're doing, you see why they're doing it and you also see the background to what the circumstances are that we all don't necessarily understand."

BARCLAY BANKS ON JAG

Jaguar team principal James Barclay has stated that the manufacturer remains committed to racing in FE despite its parent company recently announcing that it will cut thousands of jobs.

Last week Jaguar Land Rover revealed that it will cut 4500 jobs from its global operations, with the majority of the changes hitting management roles in the UK, and that the company is set to start a voluntary redundancy programme.

"We have to take some key decisions now to protect our future and this activity is very much about our future," said Barclay.

ALEX KALINAUCKAS

Button stays as Honda rejigs SF

SUPER GT/SUPER FORMULA

Jenson Button will bid for a second consecutive Super GT title in Japan this season with Honda, after the manufacturer as usual became the first of the country's 'big three' motorsport marques to announce its full racing programme for the season ahead.

Button will remain in the Team Kunimitsu NSX alongside Honda's top gun of domestic racing, Naoki Yamamoto, who gained most of the credit for the duo's success in 2018, the Briton's rookie season in Japan. They spearhead a Honda line-up that is largely unchanged from last year in the Super GT category.

But that's certainly not the case in the single-seater Super Formula series, where the Tokyo Auto Salon announcement revealed that not a single Honda driver remains with the team with which they raced in 2018. As expected, two-time champion Yamamoto switches across from Team Mugen to Dandelion Racing following the departure from Mugen of his long-time engineer Kazuya Abe. Autosport understands that Abe has gone to Team Le Mans, but Yamamoto couldn't move there because that's a Toyota team.

Yamamoto is joined at Dandelion by his 2018 SF team-mate Nirei Fukuzumi, who abandons his F2 activities to go full-time in Japan. Heading in the other direction from Dandelion to Mugen is Tomoki Nojiri, who partners Red Bull junior Dan Ticktum.

F2 race winner Tadasuke Makino lines up with Nakajima Racing alongside European F3 ace Alex Palou, meaning an all-rookie line-up there. Ditto for B-Max with Motopark, which runs Lucas Auer and Harrison Newey. Finally, an eyebrow-raising appointment is Frenchman Tristan Charpentier at Real Racing – he has mediocre BRDC British F3 form but is said to be strongly connected to 2017 SF ace Pierre Gasly.

Popular veteran Narain Karthikeyan has dropped out of the SF ranks, but the Indian ex-F1 racer remains with Nakajima Racing for a shift across to Super GT, where he joins Makino in an intriguing line-up. Bertrand Baguette shifts from Nakajima to Real Racing, while 2018 co-driver Kosuke Matsuura is downgraded to a GT300 NSX.

MARCUS SIMMONS



MOTORSPORT IMAGES/JSHIHARA



SUPER GT Do we like this? Yes! As well as Honda's announcement of its 2019 programme (see left), the Tokyo Auto Salon last week also played host to the launch of a concept version of Toyota's new Supra challenger for Super GT, which will race next year when the series officially ties in with the DTM's new Class 1 rules. The switch back to the Toyota badge will come after 14 years of representation by the car giant's luxury brand Lexus, which started in 2006.



GT RACING

There should be a contemporary Brabham out racing later this year for the first time since the 1992 demise of the Formula 1 team that carried the famous name. Brabham Automotive is aiming to start competing with its BT62 trackday car as it gears up for its entry into the World Endurance Championships GTE Pro ranks.

Brabham Automotive plans to race the million-pound machine it unveiled last year on the launch of the new company on an invitational basis in events that allow cars that are not homologated in a particular class. Managing director David Brabham regards it as an essential lead-in to its WEC entry in 2021-22 with a racing version

(pictured) of the next model to emerge from its Adelaide factory.

"The BT62 does meet all FIA safety requirements as a racing car so, although there isn't a particular class or championship for it, it is raceable," said Brabham. "We are starting out on the road to Le Mans and we need to get out there and go racing, rather than waiting for three years – we need to develop ourselves as a team."

"We would need permission from whatever series we end up doing, so there is quite a lot of work to be done. We won't be doing a full championship, but we intend to pick and choose some races, and every indication is that we will be out there this year to get the ball rolling."

Brabham wouldn't be drawn on which

events the BT62 may compete in this year, but a race it could potentially do is the Gulf 12 Hours at the Yas Marina circuit in Abu Dhabi. The new Aston Martin Vantage GT3 and the McLaren 720S GT3 both competed in the 2018 event last month ahead of their respective homologation for the 2019 racing season.

Brabham, whose F1 career included a season in 1990 with the team his father Sir Jack founded in '61, hasn't ruled out driving the car. He also pointed out that there was a pool of family talent in his own son Sam, who ended a layoff from the circuits with a one-off in the Porsche Carrera Cup GB last year, and elder brother Geoff's son Matthew, a former Indycar driver.

GARY WATKINS

Gronholm commits to 'birthday present' comeback in Sweden



WRC

When Marcus Gronholm starts Rally Sweden in a Toyota Yaris WRC next month at the age of 51, he has one more chance to make World Rally Championship history.

If the Finn – who will drive a privately entered Yaris run by Toyota Gazoo Racing – wins, he will move ahead of Stig Blomqvist to become the most successful driver in Rally Sweden's WRC history.

Two-time world champion Gronholm has won his favourite event five times. While a record-breaking sixth is a mighty long

shot, it's not long before he mentions the preferable position on the road that will be afforded him by missing the Monte Carlo Rally. And, let's not forget, he's driving the fastest rally car in the world.

"This is about me enjoying my birthday present on the great roads of Rally Sweden," smiled Gronholm, who completed promotional runs of the Harju street stage on the 2017 Rally Finland in a Yaris WRC – and came within an ace of the fastest time. "I'm kind of over-aged as a rally driver, so I'll be driving accordingly. But my starting place will be good behind the others, so I guess

we could still come up with something..."

Gronholm last competed in the WRC when he drove a Ford Focus RS WRC on the 2010 Rally Sweden. An electrical problem ruled him out of contention, but he still managed to set fastest time on Sagen.

Sagen's not on the menu next month, but a Gronholm return means one last battle for fans to savour. And it's not just Blomqvist he looks to eclipse – there's the small matter of his old foe Sebastien Loeb, who will compete on the WRC's only snow rally in a Hyundai i20 Coupe WRC.

DAVID EVANS

Ticktum stumbles in superlicence quest

FORMULA 3

Red Bull junior Dan Ticktum's bid to gain the last few superlicence points he requires began with what he called a "disaster" last weekend in the opening round of the Asian F3 Winter Series in Thailand.

Ticktum ended the Buriram triple-header sixth in the points, with a best result of second, after claiming a double pole position in his Hitech GP car.

Formula Renault Eurocup star Yifei Ye beat him away in race one (right), before a frantic four-car scrap between Ye, early spinner Ticktum, Pro Mazda champion Rinus van Kalmthout and South East Asian F4 title winner Alessandro Ghiretti. Van Kalmthout won, while Ye and Ticktum retired, with overheating and punctured radiator respectively.

After an early lead battle with team-mate Ticktum, van Kalmthout doubled up to win



race two from Ye. Ticktum finished third, but a track-limits penalty dumped him to sixth.

Ye held on to win the finale in his Absolute Racing car, despite

Ticktum swarming all over his back end in the closing laps. Third place means van Kalmthout leads the points.

MARCUS SIMMONS



Neal buoyant on Civic FK8

BTCC

Three-time British Touring Car champion Matt Neal has said that knowledge gained with the new-shape FK8 Honda Civic Type R last season can help turn the Team Dynamics-built machine into a constant threat for the 2019 crown.

Neal and team-mate Dan Cammish, who won two races in his rookie BTCC season last year, are back in the series for 2019 and have targeted improvements at circuits that were a struggle in '18 in a bid for more consistency from the Civic.

"There was a lot to learn and a lot to process," said Neal. "We had some great results, but it didn't always go well: there was fantastic speed in the car at certain events, but not at all of them. We've now got a year's data with the car and I've had a year working alongside Dan. I'm looking forward to expanding on that."

Neal finished ninth in the standings last year with two wins, one place in front of Cammish, who won the Jack Sears Trophy.

"In 2019, I'm no longer a GT driver pretending to become a BTCC driver," said former one-make Porsche specialist Cammish. "I'm a fully fledged BTCC driver now. I'm going to start the season with the intention of being right in the shake-up at the end of the year."

Elsewhere in the BTCC, Tom Chilton will remain at the Motorbase Performance Ford Focus RS squad alongside the team's new recruit Ollie Jackson.

Chilton, who returned to the BTCC for 2017 with Power Maxed Racing after a five-year sabbatical, finished third in the standings last year and won one race in the Shredded Wheat-liveried Motorbase Ford.

Jackson (below) took his first BTCC podium last term at the wheel of an AmD Tuning Audi S3 during a wet-but-drying race at the Brands Hatch season opener.

Motorbase has another entrants' licence to run a third car in the series, and is in talks with drivers. An announcement is expected soon.

MATT JAMES



IN THE HEADLINES

HONDA LAD AT CARLIN

Honda has added another protege to the FIA Formula 3 Championship for this season. Teppei Natori, who was runner-up in Japanese F4 last season behind Jenzer Motorsport-bound Yuki Tsunoda, will race with Carlin. The move brings the orbits of Carlin and its revered first champion Takuma Sato back together – the 2017 Indy 500 winner has been appointed principal of Honda's SRS-Formula junior programme, with Shinji Nakano as vice-president.

NANNINI JR'S DEBUT WIN

Want to know who the next rising 'nephew of' is in motorsport? Step forward 15-year-old karting graduate Matteo Nannini, whose uncle Alessandro won the 1989 Japanese GP. Nannini Jr won on his car racing debut last week in the F4 UAE opener in Dubai, and added two seconds and a fifth to lead the points. Other wins went to F4 veteran Lucas Roy, Oman's French F4 racer Shihab Al Habsi and Paraguayan kart ace Joshua Duerksen.

STANAWAY SAVED

Ex-GP3 title contender Richie Stanaway's Australian Supercars career has been saved, despite being dropped by Tickford Racing after a disastrous rookie season. Backing has enabled Kiwi Stanaway to secure a slot in a Garry Rogers Motorsport Holden, at the expense of veteran Aussie superstar Garth Tander. Top team Triple Eight immediately swooped for three-time Bathurst 1000 winner Tander, who will line up with 2016 champion Shane van Gisbergen for the enduros in one of the strongest pairings in history.

TRACY AT BATHURST

Indycar hero Paul Tracy will make his Mount Panorama debut in next month's Bathurst 12 Hour. The 50-year-old Canadian will race a MARC Cars Ford Mustang in the invitational class with 2014 Bathurst 1000 winner Paul Morris and team owner Keith Kassulke.

RENAULT STAR IN JAPAN

Formula Renault Eurocup star Charles Milesi, who won in Monaco as a rookie in 2018, is switching to Japanese F3. The redheaded Frenchman has joined OIRC Team YTB, which is now being assisted by Carlin.



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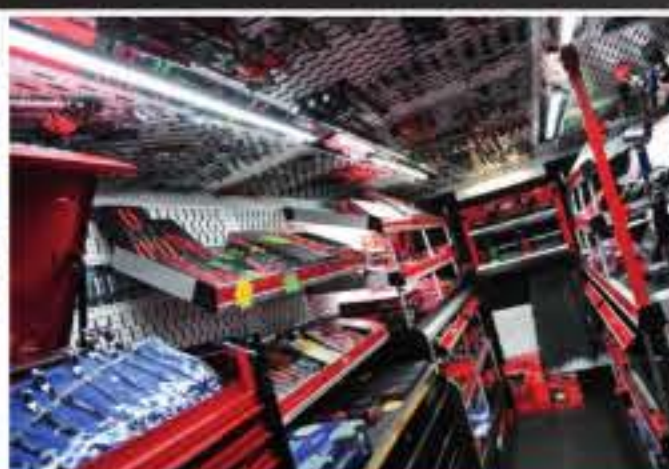
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KIMI'S HAPPY PLACE

Long past justifying a place with one of the leading teams, Kimi Raikkonen can still perform a vital function for Sauber over the next two seasons

EDD STRAW

Kimi Raikkonen has cut a frustrating figure in Formula 1 in recent years. A driver capable of great things but delivering them sparingly, one inspiring great fan devotion yet rarely rewarding it with his results. In the 99 starts of his second Ferrari stint, he resembled a top liner only in brief flashes and rarely strung together the consistently strong race weekends required of a true top gun.

He clogged up a top seat for five years, occupying a car that could have been put to better use by others, and made the battle at the front more one-dimensional. He looked like a man of the past and, save for that glorious day at Austin last year where he nailed it with victory, he largely was — despite last year being the best season of his Ferrari comeback.

But by moving to Sauber, he becomes something else. Some argue that the 39-year old should have retired rather than returning to Sauber simply to pick up some midfield results and blocking an up-and-comer from taking his place. But as a Sauber driver, he is immediately a more positive influence in F1.

First and foremost, it keeps a star name on the grid. Raikkonen consistently performs well in F1 driver popularity polls thanks to his distinctive brand of anti-charisma. And, although his more

feel of the front end and not often enough in a window where he can deliver the searing speed that still does turn up in the occasional flash. But he's consistent, very rarely gets into on-track scrapes, and should be able to pick up a decent amount of points if the car is up to it.

And while Raikkonen wasn't always the most incisive driver when up front, he's clean in battle and doesn't often make race-ending errors. But what he needs to be careful of are performances such as the days when he faded to the back of 'Class A', since in the tight midfield that could be the difference between an eighth place and 18th rather than third and sixth.

The hope is that his all-round impact on the team will more than compensate for the days when he goes missing and falls on the wrong side of the split between 10th and nowhere. Charles Leclerc placed himself on the right side of this divide with great regularity.

Superb as Leclerc was, and as underrated as the handy but very streaky Marcus Ericsson was, Raikkonen brings a new dimension to Sauber. Often you hear of those working with drivers mention what having a top-liner brings in terms of the way they work. Raikkonen's biggest strength at Ferrari has been the precision of his feedback, which he usually acquires quickly and communicates with his trademark brevity. While the premium on-track time thanks to the lack of testing makes it more difficult to give Raikkonen the ideal front-end feel (the lack of resilience of the tyres also plays a huge part in this), Sauber will revel in his feedback.

By pairing him with the inexperienced Antonio Giovinazzi, Sauber has a classic combination of the grizzled veteran ready to bring their knowledge to bear and the ambitious young gun. Tempting as it is to suggest Sauber would benefit from two star rookies, the danger there is that driver inexperience means you get lost. There's little chance of that with Raikkonen. And he is the perfect benchmark for Giovinazzi to compare himself with — and for Ferrari to evaluate the Italian's performances.

Raikkonen is set to be at Sauber for two years and, while it's not out of the question that he would race in F1 beyond that point, when he does walk away from Sauber he will likely have left it a better place for his successors. First time around, he departed with the team fourth in the constructors' championship, and it's not impossible he could repeat the trick second time round.

While he's not the right man for a top team, and hasn't been for some years, he's an ideal horses-for-courses selection for one battling its way up the order to establish itself decisively as a credible force in F1.

And to see a driver of his standing — one of just 33 to have won the world championship — making such a positive contribution is far better than seeing him underachieve at the front. Even if the overall results will be less impressive. *✽*

"THE HOPE IS THAT HIS IMPACT WILL MORE THAN COMPENSATE FOR WHEN HE GOES MISSING"

aggressive fans make bizarre excuses for his results, most simply enjoy supporting him regardless of the final outcome. And there's nothing wrong with that — it's what sports fandom is about.

The move also showcases a little of what makes Raikkonen so popular. While he was evasive about his reasons for joining Sauber when quizzed about it shortly after the deal was announced, at heart it's clear he is willing to race in the midfield because he genuinely does enjoy competing in F1.

But Sauber itself gets nothing out of Raikkonen having a good time and, although his popularity will have some value commercially, he hasn't been signed as an entertaining sideshow. What's most important is that he can be of genuine value to team boss Frederic Vasseur and his (so far) successful attempt to rebuild a team that was on its uppers not so long ago.

Raikkonen will still be the same driver at Sauber as he was at Ferrari. Just as he has always been, he will be too sensitive to the

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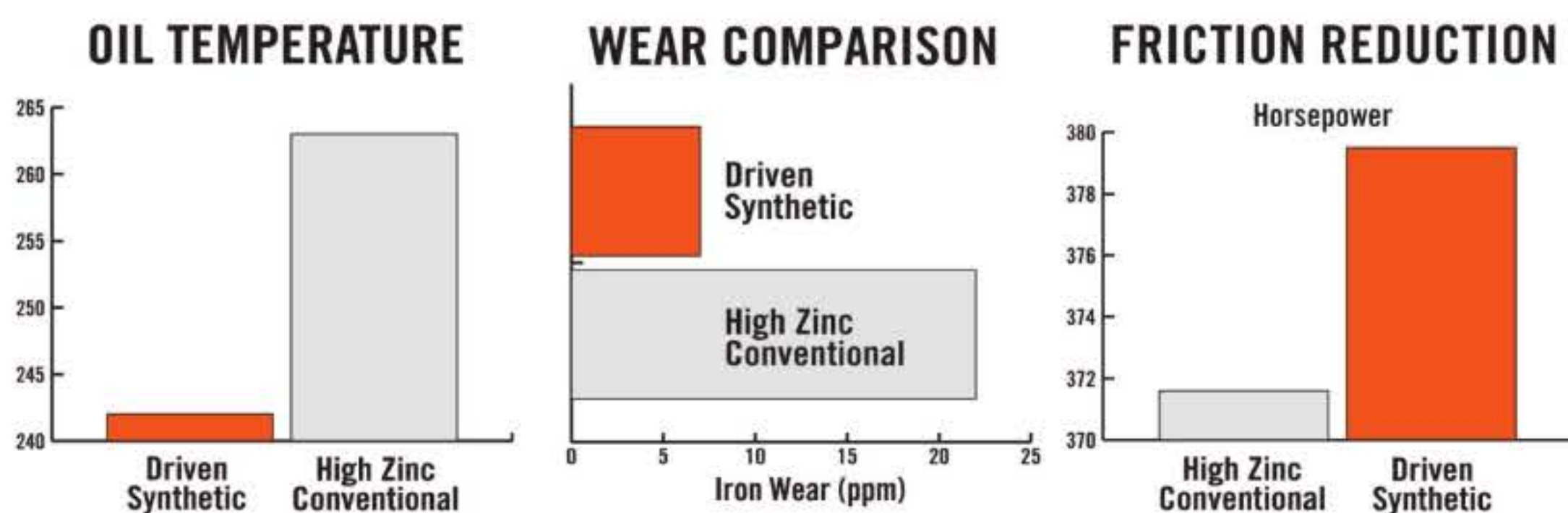
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OUT OF AFRICA

A bunch of old A1GP cars looks set to form the basis for a pan-African racing series that could spur the continent into rediscovering its love of motorsport

GARY WATKINS

I made a promise to myself a few years back. Once one of the Ferrari-powered A1 Grand Prix cars was up and running again, I told myself that I wasn't going to write another word about the things. That was one resolution that went out of the window early in the new year.

My job was done back in December 2015, or so I thought. I'd followed the long-running and, at times, sorry saga of the fleet of second-generation A1GP machinery almost from the day the series hit the rocks in 2009, and quite frankly I was getting a bit sick of it. But the cars were in new ownership in South Africa, a couple were out testing and there was a one-make championship for them in the pipeline for 2016-17.

The series didn't happen, not in the winter – that's our winter, not theirs in the southern hemisphere – of 2016-17, nor the following winter. That probably explains why I've become intrigued once again by the fate of 21 racing cars that were last used in anger nearly 10 years ago.

The story continues after a few more twists and turns, and I wanted to find out about it. The AFRIX group, which purchased the 'Ferrari' A1GP cars (designed and built by

"THE CARS ARE ALL BUT 10 YEARS OLD, BUT DOES IT REALLY MATTER FOR A ONE-MAKE SERIES?"

Force 10 Technology in southern England) nearly three years ago, has new investment and, it seems, firm plans to host a pan-African championship. The idea is to hold a handful of pilot races from December 2019, most likely starting out at Kyalami in South Africa, ahead of a full series the following winter.

AFRIX GP, as it is now called, has come up with a business model that loosely follows that of A1GP. The series is being billed as the African Cup of Nations, there will be national franchises and the idea is to run predominantly on street circuits. It all sounds familiar, doesn't it?

Will it happen? That's the big question, of course, and we don't know yet. It needs buy-in from countries and cities looking to put on races, but it seems there is good interest. There's a group in Botswana talking to AFRIX and it appears that Durban, which hosted A1GP events in 2006-08, and Cape Town want to put on races too.

The next question is does anyone care whether or not a bunch of cars that raced in the dim and distant past run in anger again? It would be a shame if they didn't, because they are nice pieces of kit, even if they don't have the flat-plane-crank bark that reverberated from the Zytek V8s of the original A1GP cars.

The cars may now be all but 10 years old, but does that really matter for a one-make series? It should be remembered that the original Zytek-powered A1GP design was in its dotage when it was superseded for the 2008-09 season by the Force 10 'Ferrari', which is said to share only its wing mirrors with the F2004 Formula 1 car on which it was supposedly based.

Those original cars were Lola B02/50 F3000s save for a few wacky bits of carbonfibre. That made it a 2002 design, which was still going – though I can't say strong – in AutoGP early in '15.

The Dallara GP2/11 went on for seven years, as did the Italian constructor's IRO5 IndyCar. But they are both trumped by its obsolete Indy Lights car. What started out as the Infiniti Pro racer in 2002 was still the basis of IndyCar's feeder series in '14. So that's a 13-season lifespan.

One-make racing cars are a bit like that tin of peas at the back of your kitchen cabinet. The use-by date is so far in the future as to make it irrelevant. So long as the cars meet all the necessary safety criteria of the day, and the Ferrari A1GP racer now does courtesy of higher cockpit sides and Zylon side-intrusion panels, then why shouldn't they compete against each other?

The Ferrari A1GP cars may be ageing, but they don't have many miles on the clock. They only did one season, remember, before the series imploded.

My obsession with the Ferrari A1 cars aside, what really matters to me is that the African Cup of Nations would bring international motor racing back to what is a largely barren continent for our sport.

It hasn't always been that way of course. South Africa had its own Formula 1 championship as late as 1975, and there were the Springbok sportscar races of the winter months of the 1960s and early '70s. The series didn't just race in South Africa – there were events on the streets of what was then known as Lourenco Marques, now Maputo, in Mozambique and on a pukka circuit near Bulawayo in Rhodesia, now Zimbabwe.

I don't want to sound like some kind of evangelist, but Africa needs reconquering by motorsport. The people with the brains and money behind AFRIX, and its bold plans for the African Cup of Nations, could well be the people to do it. ✎

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Formula 1 will be faced with a simple choice – become electric (Super FE) or plough its own furrow and return to simple non-turbo petrol engines

GUY DORMEHL

Grand prix racing's looming existential issue

What a dilemma F1 faces... It would appear it's stuck with the unloved hybrid turbo engines for the foreseeable future despite their anaemic sound, complexity, cost and weight. It is understandable in light of the cost to develop alternative power units – and, at least, they are known and reliable.

Hybrid F1 engines were developed to be 'green', fuel efficient and to lead the way for road engines. Ironically this is a complete dead end as the hybrid engine for road use is just a temporary sideshow between petrol/diesel engines and electric (whether battery, fuel cell or something else). Hybrids will die out as road-engine options even quicker than they appeared due to their complexity and cost, being 'neither fish nor fowl'.

When most new road cars become pure electric, F1 will be faced with a simple choice in seven-10 years' time – become electric too (Super FE) or plough its own furrow and return to simple non-turbo petrol engines (and hang the fuel efficiency). These would have to be built by specialist engine builders and would have absolutely no relevance to road transport! We would have a completely separate industry for historics (and perversely current F1 cars) specialising in cars that would only stretch their legs on special occasions and give people their desired 'noise fix'.

Why would mainstream car manufacturers continue to showcase their hybrid expertise when transport is electrified?

Guy Dormehl
South Africa

A step in the right direction

Will the 2019 rules update work (January 10)? The answer won't be known until after the first race. Simplifying the aero, especially around the front wing, has been an obvious solution for a long time, even to the technically uninitiated like myself.

Surely it would save millions to have (and I hate saying it) a standard front and rear wing set-up (and no, I don't want to go as far as a standard car). This would eliminate unnecessary spending on something that makes close racing difficult.

I applaud the fact that the F1 rulemakers are trying to do something in the interim, before the big rules shake-up in



a couple of years, to aid overtaking, instead of burying their heads in the sand like they have in the past. I just hope with the 2021 rules revolution they tackle the length, and weight, of the current cars as well, as they seem to keep getting longer and heavier year after year, and this hardly ever gets talked about.

The drivers won't need a superlicence, but an HGV licence to drive the cars if it carries on like this.

Michael Skeet
Southampton

Revelling in the sight and sound of 'real' F1

To my surprise and delight, I see you selected the shot of my Benetton B190 at Brands Hatch during, I suspect, the Festival Italia event, with me at the wheel (National pictures of the year, December 20-27). The sight and sound of years-gone-by Formula 1 cars and the glorious howl of a Cosworth HB V8 at 12,000rpm is simply a thrill.

I enjoy meeting and chatting with enthusiasts, introducing them to a real F1 car, getting up close to see and hear the preparation and warm-up. All good things to be enjoyed.

John Reaks
By email

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INSIGHT

THE WAY FORWARD FOR FERRARI

F1
2019

HOW FERRARI CAN BEAT MERCEDES

The Italian giant has gone a decade without a title, but there's nothing wrong with its people or its machinery. All it needs is a new way of thinking and working

EDD STRAW

PHOTOGRAPHY





Ferrari has not won a Formula 1 title in the past 10 seasons. But for the fact that the team has a history of lean spells between its glory years – notably the 15 fallow campaigns between its 1983 and '99 constructors' successes – you'd reckon it unthinkable for a team of this size and fame to go so long without clinching the ultimate prize.

But Ferrari is a uniquely challenging beast. The recent decision to axe Maurizio Arrivabene from his role of team principal after four campaigns, with former chief technical officer Mattia Binotto replacing him, is the price for a relative lack of success. It was the right decision, for it wasn't simply the lack of results that did for Arrivabene, but the impact he had on the team. Leading a title-contending grand prix operation is never easy, but arguably it is harder at Ferrari than

anywhere else, and Arrivabene's leadership qualities proved not to be compatible with the unique pressures at Maranello.

Mercedes is now the team Ferrari once was – a tight-knit, ferocious race-winning machine that has enjoyed five consecutive double world championship successes. To knock Mercedes, and star driver Lewis Hamilton, off their perch has been within Ferrari's reach for the past two campaigns. Never has the phrase 'so near and yet so far' seemed so appropriate because, while Ferrari pushed Mercedes close in both 2017 and '18, in the final reckoning it was a long way off after slumps in the closing stages of both contests.

So what must Ferrari do to bridge that gap and make the step from being a thorn in Mercedes' side to defeating it? It's clear that there's no need for a revolution, but in his new role Binotto must focus on several key areas that, collectively, could help get the job done. >>

1

EASE THE PRESSURE

This is easier said than done, but what was clear was that outgoing team principal Arrivabene's leadership style was based more on piling on pressure and allowing a culture of blame to emerge. This is an inadequate approach to get the best out of an F1 team, populated mostly with highly

motivated and intelligent people, and is often the approach taken by a second-rater put in such a position. There will always be pressure, but the team culture – and the team boss in particular – can alleviate it.

New team principal Binotto is one of those highly motivated and intelligent individuals, and has shown during his successful spell as chief technical officer that he can get the best out of a team of people. There's every chance that Binotto can do this while in charge of the whole operation. Last year, he was asked by Autosport about how he had turned around the technical department, and his response reveals a little of what he's about.

"I think it's fair to say that our team, in terms of individuals, is very strong," said Binotto. "We've got very high skills; it's a fantastic team in that respect, whatever areas. And from the power unit to the chassis and to the aero. I think what we're benefiting from in the last seasons is certainly stability in terms of the organisation, which in F1 is very important, because through the stability somehow you may start to set down a way of working, improve your procedures, your internal process. I think, relative to myself, I'm certainly not an expert in all the areas. Twenty-five years of experience in F1; great time with Ferrari at the race track in the time of Michael Schumacher, but always as a power-unit man. When I grew up in that final role I think what for me was important was to set the objectives and to make sure that the people were comfortable in their role, understood the internal process and worked better not only as individuals but as a team.

"And where we've focused all the effort is, I think, to make sure that the team was working properly as a team, and forgetting about the individuals. And that's why, again, I think we are thinking about the car as a full package, and not try to split down in terms of different components or units, because we are a team and what is running is not a power unit or a wing but a full car. So, again, all the effort was to build the team as a team and set the right objectives, deal with them, try to be ambitious. I think that's somehow what happened in the last two years."

The elimination of a blame culture is essential. Sometimes, including in certain F1 teams, this objective is misinterpreted as not encouraging

"ELIMINATION OF BLAME CULTURE IS ESSENTIAL. EVERYONE MAKES MISTAKES"

the isolation of problem areas. What it actually represents is the knowledge by individuals that they can highlight problems or mistakes, even if of their own making, with confidence that the focus will be on correcting them rather than issuing blame. Everyone makes mistakes – the biggest of all is for leadership not to recognise that and multiply the errors and the politics by thinking otherwise.



Binotto says focus is on making Ferrari function as a team, "forgetting individuals"

SUTTON

2

DO NOT FOCUS ONLY ON RESULTS

This might sound counter-intuitive, but strong results are the consequence of a focus on sound processes and resisting the temptation to overreach. Yes, there are times when you can choose to be a little more aggressive or slightly more conservative according to the competitive situation, but F1 teams are at their best when they rely on good decision-making and working practices.

Technically, Ferrari has been very impressive in recent years, producing a strong car in 2017 that was particularly good on slower tracks, then building on that in '18 with a machine that was stronger on a wider range of circuits. This suggests that, fundamentally, it is on the right path technically.

Where things went wrong last year was with upgrades after the Italian Grand Prix, where the team gave off the air of overreaching itself. Not only did the parts not improve matters, but they sometimes made the car less competitive (falling back not just from Mercedes, but down towards Red Bull), and they were also a distraction. Exactly why these errors, related to the sealing of the floor among other problems, were made is not clear. But there's every chance it was down to the pressure of the title fight and the need to catch up with Mercedes in the points. Mercedes, meanwhile, redoubled its efforts based on the practices and processes that had won it the previous four titles and was rewarded.

Sometimes teams overreach. This was emphasised at Suzuka when a ridiculous gamble was made in qualifying of sending both Ferraris

"SOMETIMES YOU HAVE TO ACCEPT THAT YOUR BEST IS ONLY GOOD ENOUGH FOR SECOND"

out in Q3 on wet-weather tyres on a dry track. Ultimately, it didn't prove too costly, but sometimes you have to accept that your best is only good enough for second, and make sure you don't risk dropping further back with a futile roll of the dice. If Ferrari focuses on getting the best out of what it's got, something it was good at in the first half of last season, this will stand it in good stead.



PORTLOCK



Ferrari overreached itself at Suzuka with qualifying tyre gamble



Vettel needs sensitive handling in order to give of his best

3 GET THE BEST OUT OF VETTEL

Sebastian Vettel rightly drew plenty of criticism for his string of errors in 2018, which at the very least cost him the chance to take the title much closer to the wire than he did. He has to carry some of that responsibility, but drivers do not exist in a vacuum, and increasingly he had the air of a man carrying the weight of the world on his shoulders in a team that was losing control operationally.

He is an emotional character — during Vettel's Red Bull pomp, race engineer Guillaume Rocquelin was exceptionally good at keeping his charge focused during races. Vettel would still complain over the radio, but during this period this was turned into an effective way to vent. At times last season, the Ferrari environment seemed to lack the pressure-relief valve Vettel needed.

In an interview for an upcoming edition of *The Autosport Podcast*, former Ferrari test driver Luciano Burti, who still follows grand prix racing very closely in his role as a television commentator, suggested the team could have done more to get Vettel back on track after his disastrous crash while leading the German Grand Prix.

"It was a really tiny mistake, which happens, and he was unlucky it happened in the wrong time and the wrong place and had a big consequence," said Burti. "From then on, I really think that someone like Jean Todt [the FIA president was Ferrari team principal from 1993-2007] would give him good feedback. I think Vettel felt maybe on his own to fight back from his mistake. Once you have that pressure, if you say as a racing driver, 'I cannot make a mistake on the next lap or the next corner', you make a mistake. Once I think about it, that's it. I think that's what happened to him. Although he's a great champion, he's too human and when you have those feelings it doesn't do you any good.

"He was on his own and someone like Jean would have made the difference to put him back on track, because it's not normal to see a four-time champion make so many mistakes, and silly mistakes sometimes."

This does not mean Vettel can't take any blame for what happened, >>



but any team must operate to get the most out of its star driver. They all have their idiosyncrasies and are at their best in the right environment. If Binotto can make Ferrari into a more rational, studious and calm operation — very much in his own image — then Vettel could be back

**“IF YOU SAY
AS A DRIVER,
‘I CANNOT
MAKE A
MISTAKE’,
YOU MAKE
A MISTAKE”**

to his crushing best.

Many have assumed Vettel is now a busted flush in F1. It's possible that he is, but he didn't win four world championships for nothing, and some of his performances in the first half of last season were exceptional. Get Vettel in the right operating window, and much of the points gap to Mercedes and Lewis Hamilton last season would have been eliminated.





...especially after he dropped the ball during the German Grand Prix

4 LET LECLERC HAVE HIS CHANCE

For all Vettel's troubles last year, he does go into the 2019 season as Ferrari's team leader and title hope. But that does not mean, actually *must* not mean, that newly promoted team-mate Charles Leclerc is not given his head.

Leclerc has shown himself equal to every challenge thrown at him during his racing career, but the 21-year-old faces a bigger test than ever before by being thrown into the pressure-cooker environment of Ferrari for only his second year in F1. It was the right decision by Ferrari after Leclerc excelled at Sauber but, just as the team must ensure it gets the most from Vettel, the same applies to Leclerc.

Even at the end of last season there was evidence that Ferrari was working hard to ensure it does just that, with engineer Jock Clear confirming in November that he'd be working with Leclerc. "I have a lot of experience with young drivers and a lot of experience with experienced drivers as well," said Clear. "With Charles coming in I'll help in any way I can to make his life easier, to ease some of the pressure, to make sure we get the best out of Charles and out of the team as a whole over the next few years."

Nobody doubts that Leclerc has already reached a high level in F1 and will perform well for Ferrari, but the team has to be adaptable to how effective he is early on. It must not fear the possibility that he could outperform Vettel, but should also accept that he will likely

need time to adapt to life in a top team and that he must be allowed to work towards fulfilling his prodigious potential.

What it must not do is simply cast him as a number two from the off. Ferrari has made the right call and backed a young driver with serious ability, so it must be willing to make the most of him – and if necessary deal with the resulting fallout if it upsets the balance of power in a team Vettel has led for four years. >>

"WHAT THE TEAM MUST NOT DO IS CAST LECLERC AS A NUMBER TWO FROM THE OFF"

TODT'S TOUGH LEGACY



FERRARI'S TROUBLED SUCCESSION PLAN

Since winning five consecutive double world championships – from 2000-04 – under the leadership of Jean Todt, success has been patchy for Ferrari. Todt (above, right) handed over the reins of the team to Stefano Domenicali (above, left) in '08, remaining on the board until March '09. Since then the team has endured 10 seasons without a title.

Todt, who started work with Ferrari at the 1993 French Grand Prix after a successful spell leading the Peugeot Group C sportscar project, oversaw almost 100 race victories. While Domenicali was a popular successor, he was eventually axed early in the 2014 season when it became clear that Ferrari had missed the mark with its new V6 hybrid turbo engine. Ironically, many of the changes Domenicali's regime made at the start of '14 laid the foundations for the team hitting back, but he was no longer there to reap the benefits.

Domenicali's successor, Marco Mattiacci, lasted just eight months and was removed by Ferrari chairman Sergio Marchionne at the end of the 2014 season. While Mattiacci was not held responsible for that season's disappointing results, there were question marks over his motivation and his political skills – particularly in his relationship with Bernie Ecclestone, which was not considered close enough.

This is what made Maurizio Arrivabene the logical successor. In his role with Ferrari sponsor Philip Morris, he was a long-time member of the F1 Commission and knew the political landscape well. But after four seasons, he too was considered not to be the right man and, before his untimely death, Marchionne was already planning to make a change.

Mattia Binotto is the fourth man to attempt to live up to the Todt legacy. History suggests he will be up against it but, given the positive impact he has had on the team in his time as chief technical officer, there is reason to believe he may have the best chance of success.

5

BE WILLING TO MAKE THE TOUGH DECISIONS

One of the starkest contrasts between the management of Mercedes and Ferrari last season was the approach to team orders. While the concept of team orders is understandably a source of fury for many fans, it is sometimes a necessarily evil for teams.

At last year's Russian Grand Prix, Mercedes boss Toto Wolff ordered Hamilton past Valtteri Bottas because of the threat of Vettel behind. In the final reckoning, it wasn't necessary but at the time it was a valid move. Wolff didn't like making that decision and, if anything, had been a little indecisive by suggesting pre-race that it wouldn't happen, in the hope that such an unusual situation wouldn't materialise. But when it came to the crunch, he made the difficult call.

At Ferrari, Arrivabene seemed unwilling to do this. At Monza, it was deemed to be Vettel's turn to go ahead of Kimi Raikkonen on the final run of qualifying, ultimately giving Raikkonen a tow and the boost he needed to take pole position. This put Vettel on a direct course to his clash with Hamilton on the opening lap, a moment that marked the turning point in the title battle. There was also hesitancy in the German Grand Prix to order Raikkonen to let Vettel past after Vettel had made a pitstop – a needless reticence, given they were on offset strategies at that moment.

In a tight title fight, clarity of thinking in such situations can make a decisive difference in the outcome. While Binotto should not allow a situation like the 2002 Austrian Grand Prix to arise – an egregious misuse of team orders – there must be a willingness to make the tough decisions. And that doesn't just mean that Ferrari should help Vettel, for if Leclerc were to be the better performer then

there must be a willingness to cast even a multiple world champion as the support act should the need arise.

Comparisons to the Todt era are unavoidable, and one characteristic of his leadership was a refusal to care what the outside world thought. He made decisions for the good of the team. The new management must not cower from such tough choices.

"IN A TIGHT TITLE BATTLE, CLARITY OF THINKING CAN MAKE A DECISIVE DIFFERENCE"

6

WORK BETTER WITH THE MEDIA

This sounds like a very self-serving suggestion given that Autosport is a publication that specialises in motorsport journalism, but interacting with the media is important.

Arrivabene had a strange attitude to the media, with his offish attitude towards it suggesting a genuine fear. In particular, there was too much concern about what the Italian media was saying. When Ross Brawn joined Ferrari, he stopped the practice of newspapers and newspaper cuttings being shared with all departments within Maranello, to eliminate the outside pressure and ensure greater focus internally.

Keeping the media happy should not be an objective for a team, but it is of value, both in terms of playing the paddock political games and also communicating to your team members. F1 teams today are massive, and it's impossible to have the kind of relationship between the leadership and staff that you'd hope for. As such, many people inside the teams will consume the media not just to understand the wider storylines of grand prix racing, but also what's going on inside their own operations.

It's also a good way to solidify the culture of your organisation.

"KEEPING THE MEDIA HAPPY SHOULD NOT BE A TEAM OBJECTIVE, BUT IT IS OF VALUE"

At Mercedes, Wolff's public comments on what his team are doing generally match what's happening internally and underpin a culture not built on fear and reprisals, but collaboration and communication.

An F1 team can use its public comments to its advantage, which is what Ferrari must do. In previous years, too often its attitude to the media has reflected a fear and pressure.





Decisions made by Ferrari
in qualifying put Vettel
in the Monza firing line



7 DON'T CHANGE TOO MUCH

Ferrari doesn't need a revolution in order to beat Mercedes. Since its faltering start to the V6 hybrid turbo era it has generally been on an upward curve, with the technical changes in 2016 particularly important. It has good personnel, a proven record for producing competitive cars, a multiple world champion driver and one of the hottest young talents grand prix racing has seen in recent times, a big budget, and a capacity to win races in a tight battle with a formidable opponent.

Elite sport these days is all about the aggregation of marginal gains and, with most of the fundamental building blocks in place, the priority should be to make small improvements where possible and ensure the culture is right to maximise the team's potential.

Do that, and Ferrari's title drought may be about to end. >>



Ferrari has so much in its
favour that just small changes
could tip the title balance



WHY BINOTTO IS THE MAN FOR FERRARI

JONATHAN NOBLE

Mattia Binotto's promotion to Ferrari team principal as replacement for Maurizio Arrivabene could be interpreted as a kneejerk reaction to yet another failure by the team to win the Formula 1 World Championship.

In an era when stability has paid such dividends for Mercedes, some may question why Ferrari has once again appeared to fiddle rather than focus on the small improvements it needs to turn its promise into championship trophies.

But to understand why the move has been made, it's important to realise that, away from the race victories and championship challenges Ferrari has mounted in recent years, it has found itself severely lacking in several areas — particularly in the way the racing team was being run. In the end, those factors highlighted that change and a new culture were not only desirable, but needed.

Sure, the timing of the move isn't ideal, but what's clear is that Ferrari's top chiefs have quickly come to realise that behind the Harry Potter-style glasses of the quiet and unassuming Binotto is someone who not only understands how a racing team works, but can also help inspire staff and lift them — rather than act as a crushing force as his predecessor so often did.

If you dig a little deeper into the reasons for Ferrari's turnaround since its disastrous first year with the turbo hybrid engines that prompted the split with Fernando Alonso at the end of 2014, it's Binotto rather than Arrivabene who has been most influential in lifting its form. Firstly, he helped turn around its engine situation after taking control of that department in the wake of Luca Badoer's departure in '14. His efforts swiftly pulled the red cars towards the front of the grid,

and set Ferrari on a path to rival Mercedes for the accolade of having the best power unit on the grid.

That work made it obvious to then-Ferrari president Sergio Marchionne that Binotto was the right man to take over responsibility for the overall car in the wake of James Allison's departure in the summer of 2016, even if outsiders were sceptical at the time. After all, despite a lengthy career at Ferrari, Binotto's CV had never included the design of any racing car. And here was the man who the team was hoping would be able to take on the might of Adrian Newey at Red Bull.

But Binotto's move was not about having the technical department led by the best design genius the team could get its hands on. It was about having things run by the man who could get the most out of the brilliant brains Ferrari already had.

Some of the world's best film directors can't act; championship-winning football managers may be unable to score goals; and renowned orchestra conductors may not be experts in playing all instruments. But what they all have in common is the ability to know which people they need around them, how to get them to work together and how to extract the best from them. This is where Binotto fitted in.

The same qualities that had helped Binotto guide Ferrari's engine department back from its terrible 2014 effort were exactly what were needed to improve its chassis too. F1 design is no longer about one man at a drawing board: it's the pooling of hundreds of personnel to simulate, create and test new ideas to make progress. Decisions are based on hard data and feedback, not the whim of an individual.

Binotto very much wanted a new approach to running Ferrari's technical department. Rather than opting for a power grab and direct

control over everything that went on, he set about getting support for a new structure. Gone was the old vertical organisation of the technical boss sitting on top of each department head. In came a more horizontal system, where all staff had a better say in how things were done, and were better able to get involved in the decision-making process.

The outcome of this approach was a team better at thinking outside the box, rather than having a mindset of trying to keep the tech chief and team principal happy. Ideas were allowed to flourish. This way of working opened the door to a number of Ferrari innovations in recent years, including its unique sidepods, mirror solutions, a double-battery arrangement and even auxiliary oil-tank use.

The horizontal structure also meant the different departments worked better as a cohesive unit to help produce the best overall cars. It wasn't the case of one group vying to become 'teacher's pet' to get free rein for their part of the car to take priority – an overall chassis performance target was laid out, and everyone had to contribute the best way they could to get to that goal. The aero department, gearbox department and chassis department were no longer working in isolation before having merging everything together at the end.

Of course, there were some hiccups along the way. The reliability dramas of late 2017 proved costly for Ferrari's championship ambitions, but Binotto had been mindful of quality control being a weak area and had already started working on a solution before the failures hit.

The end of 2018 was also blighted by problems in extracting the best from a series of car upgrades as the team failed to capitalise on the overall strong base of the SF71H. And while that stall in technical progress contributed to Ferrari's championship situation, the driver, management and team-strategy errors were ultimately much more costly. And those failures were placed firmly at the door of Arrivabene.

The ebb and flow of car development – with teams sometimes getting it wrong as they strive to improve – is part and parcel of life at the front of the grid. Even Mercedes hasn't been perfect in this regard, and has found itself dealing with a 'diva' of a chassis in recent years.

Binotto's organisational talents will be a bonus when it comes to pooling the best from Maranello. He has an intense understanding of the car operations, both inside the factory and at the race track. His umbrella approach, of being able to cover all areas while trusting those underneath him, should allow the team's quality to rise rather than slump in an atmosphere of fear. His calm nature can also help ease



Binotto has a long history at Ferrari
– here he's on the Indy podium
with Rubens Barrichello in 2004

“HIS NEW WAY OF WORKING OPENED THE DOOR TO A NUMBER OF FERRARI INNOVATIONS”

the siege mentality the team has been under with Arrivabene, whose media lockdown added unnecessary pressures.

By pushing the press away, Ferrari was unable to control the message. It lost the PR war from the off, so when things turned bad the criticisms piled up, making the team think the world was out to get it. This served only to increase the pressure to succeed far beyond manageable levels, and left the team trapped in a negative spiral.

As Ferrari has shown in recent years, having a very quick car is no guarantee of winning the world championship, but it's an essential element if you want to have any chance of success.

Binotto played a key role in giving Ferrari that important first part. Now, the same philosophies and qualities are what he now needs to bring to the table to produce a team that operates better. If he does that, Ferrari's rivals had better watch out. *W*



With Binotto now at the helm, is
Ferrari on the brink of breaking
Mercedes' winning streak?

GALLOWAY

RACE CENTRE

FORMULA E • DAKAR RALLY • TOYOTA RACING SERIES • DUBAI 24 HOURS

PORTLOCK





D'Ambrosio cashes in on BMW implosion

Da Costa berated himself; Sims was a good sport; Vergne went for self-chastisement... and Mahindra's Belgian snuck onto the podium top step

ALEX KALINAUCKAS

PHOTOGRAPHY  **motorsport**
IMAGES

In two alternative universes, Jean-Eric Vergne and Antonio Felix da Costa left Marrakech possessing a pair of victories from the opening two rounds of the 2018-19 ABB FIA Formula E Championship. In our actual universe, they are locked together on 28 points in joint second place in the standings, and each left Marrakech rueing a costly mistake that helped define a brilliant, action-packed and unpredictable race in the shadow of the Atlas mountains won by the Mahindra of Jerome d'Ambrosio.

Reigning champion Vergne, sporting a striking buzzcut for the new calendar year, had arrived in Marrakech still smarting from the regen software error that cost him an almost-certain win in the season opener in Riyadh. The pace advantage enjoyed by the DS Techeetah driver and team-mate Andre Lotterer in that race had appeared to be on another level entirely to the rest. But they were careful to play down expectations for the second round, which was taking place at an entirely different type of FE track that was expected to throw up a very different style of race.

Where the Saudi Arabian circuit was tight and flowing, the Circuit Moulay El Hassan is wider and more open, with more big stops and acceleration blasts. The higher average speed in Morocco meant the teams were expecting the race to be a more typical energy efficiency test than had been the case in round one. With efficiency levels now in the spotlight – and no wet weather set to arrive unexpectedly in this particular desert – the Marrakech race would be the first real chance for the teams to see the first shapes of a definitive pecking order.

Given how dominant DS had appeared to be in round one, and how the BMW Andretti squad had followed up a clean sweep of testing with pole at the Ad Diriyah race, paddock observers were intrigued to see if that pattern would be repeated.

But both were usurped in qualifying by Sam Bird and the Virgin Racing squad. The Briton had been frustrated at round one by a qualifying penalty that left him and team-mate Robin Frijns at the back of the grid and unable to get in among the scrap for the podium – which Bird was confident one of them could have managed. With no such problems in Marrakech, Bird topped group qualifying and then set a wild-but-scintillating fastest lap in the first superpole session of the campaign to claim his first FE pole since July 2017 in New York.

Vergne would start second, ahead of Nissan e.dams driver Sebastien Buemi, who produced yet another notable qualifying performance. Alexander Sims was starting fourth in just his second FE race for BMW, ahead of the ever-impressive Mitch Evans (Jaguar) and the second BMW of da Costa, demoted from third for exceeding the maximum permitted 200kW power limit



Vergne's Turn 1 move
on Bird was bound
to end in failure

on non-flying laps in group qualifying.

When the lights went out, Bird made the better getaway from the front row, with Vergne fractionally slower away and playing catch-up on the run to Turn 1. But, as he swung left to cover off his 2017-18 title rival, it appeared that Bird had the lead sealed and would emerge from the long left-hander comfortably in front.

He did, but it had all got a bit dramatic. As they arrived at the apex, Vergne suddenly lunged down the inside of Bird,

arriving at a much higher speed in what looked like an out-of-character move of desperation. With Bird so far ahead and taking the racing line, Vergne wrestled his car onto the runoff area on the inside, came alongside the Audi-powered Virgin-run car and clattered into its sidepod. Fortunately, given that he was not at fault for the collision, Bird was able to escape without too much deviation, although he suspected that his machine did nevertheless pick up some damage



Fortune favoured d'Ambrosio,
but he worked hard to
capitalise and take the win



that would hamper his progress later on.

Vergne's error was catastrophic for his own race and that of several others. Sims had to brake hard but was able to get around the spinning French driver, but Evans and Buemi had to slow and go hard to the right to get around, which dropped them from fourth and fifth to 13th and 14th by the end of lap one. While that was unfolding, Pascal Wehrlein's first FE start for Mahindra Racing was brought to an unceremonious early end when he was rear-ended by Lucas di Grassi. The Brazilian and his Audi team felt he was boxed in with nowhere to go, but nevertheless he had arrived into the melee at much higher speed than those around him after locking up, and he was perhaps fortunate to avoid picking up a penalty for that collision, which also included a touch with Nelson Piquet Jr and nudged Wehrlein into Evans.

Another driver who was probably lucky to get away from Turn 1 without a stewards' investigation looming over him was Vergne, who crossed the line to start lap two in 19th – the last of the runners to make it out of the first corner and remain in the race.

"I was an idiot," he later reflected. "I always try to go for the gap, like I did in New York last year on Seb [Buemi], but I guess this year the car is a bit different. I didn't stop and I obviously didn't want to crash into Sam – I didn't want to ruin his race,

ruin my race and have a penalty for the next race. So, I went completely on the inside and I spun because there was no other way. I either spin or take us both out, so I chose that option."

Bird raced off at the front, hotly pursued by the BMW pair, Frijns, who had cut across the runoff area at Turn 1 to rise from eighth on the grid, d'Ambrosio and di Grassi. This was the front pack that would now fight it out for the win.

Da Costa moved ahead of Sims in what looked like a possibly orchestrated move at the Turn 3 attack-mode corner on lap four of what would become a 31-lap event, although Sims later suggested no team orders were implemented by BMW in the race. That was a decision that came back to bite the Munich marque quite spectacularly.

Bird was eventually overhauled at the Turns 4/5 chicane on lap 11, with Sims following da Costa by on the following straight. From there, Bird appeared to struggle for pace and was overhauled by Frijns, d'Ambrosio and di Grassi, although the quartet swapped around regularly as the attack-mode strategies played out in entertaining fashion.

In yet another alternative universe, this race finished with the winner prevailing from the perfect tactical execution of attack mode. The system was placed at a logical corner, slowed down the drivers sufficiently, while the rest of the track allowed them to use the higher power on offer to overtake. Approaches appeared to differ nicely throughout the pack, with those behind free to attack early, while drivers ahead were unable to risk losing position by going offline first.

But in the end, it was da Costa's error that produced the real race winner. The BMW pair looked as if they had the race won by the end of lap 21, with a 5.132s gap to d'Ambrosio, running line astern and on for a second victory in succession. But Sims was not lagging behind da Costa – he was glued to the rear of his team-mate's car. Over the course of the next five laps, their gap to d'Ambrosio reduced steadily to almost nothing at all. Although both drivers still had an attack mode to spare, things suddenly looked perilous for BMW. But there was no predicting what would happen next.

Approaching the big stop at Turn 7 on lap 26, Sims got a run on his team-mate and moved to the outside. The Briton locked up, and a fraction later da Costa did so too. This meant da Costa slid wide and they came together as Sims, who had regained control, turned in and found he had been left with nowhere to go. Sims was able to make it through the turn and emerge in fourth, but da Costa was in the barriers and wanting "to find the deepest hole in Marrakech and put myself in it".

The safety car led the pack around as da Costa's car was recovered, with >>

MULLER TOPS THE ROOKIE RUNNING

For the second year in a row, Formula E held a rookie test session in Marrakech the day after the race, and it was again topped by Audi's Nico Muller.

For two three-hour sessions, 21 drivers pounded around the Circuit Moulay El Hassan. They all had one set of new Michelin tyres available for the day, in addition to two sets used by the regular drivers over the race event.

Just like in 2018, the test produced faster times than the race day, with Muller's afternoon best of 1m17.074s eclipsing Mitch Evans's 1m17.262s from FP2. Given the Gen2 machines' leap forward in performance, Muller's time is a comfortable FE track record, with the faster times largely put down to a cleaner track after the main event.

Muller (below), who was fastest in both sessions, headed DS Techeetah's James Rossiter and Antonio Fuoco (Dragon Racing). Rossiter also set the fourth fastest time of the day – he drove both DS cars in the afternoon as the team wanted to have continuity across its machines to validate a particular test. Nyck de Vries rebounded from losing 90 minutes in the morning after damaging his Virgin Racing Audi's suspension on a kerb to end the session fifth, ahead of Nissan e.dams driver Jann Mardenborough, Bruno Spengler (BMW) and HWA's Raffaele Marciello, with Venturi pair Arthur Leclerc – younger brother of Ferrari Formula 1 recruit Charles – and Norman Nato rounding out the top 10.

The field was 21 rather than 22 – Felipe Nasr appeared on the entry list and was in the Marrakech paddock in Dragon team kit, but never drove the car for reasons officially unclear at this stage.

Tatiana Calderon ended the morning in second, 0.142s slower than Muller, for DS – a time that would have put her fourth on the race grid – and ended up seventh in the overall test times.

There was an impressive quality of drivers taking part. With Sergey Sirotkin, Jamie Green, Daniel Juncadella, Harry Tincknell, Marco Wittmann and Benoit Treluyer also running, this would have been an impressive FE race line-up.



IN THE HEADLINES



VIRGIN'S PIT DRAMA

Sam Bird was involved in a bizarre incident at the end of group qualifying. The Virgin Audi star had completed his run and returned to the pitlane, stopping in front of team-mate Robin Frijns. But both were then rear-ended by NIO's Tom Dillmann, who suspected a brake problem was behind his failure to slow (above). Dillmann slammed Frijns's car into Bird's diffuser. The device was damaged, but not sufficiently to stop Bird's flight to pole.

CURFEW CALAMITY...

HWA was hit with a €5000 fine for breaking the 6.30am race day curfew. The reason, remarkably, was that a member of the squad's organisational team had arrived to make an early start on his work, and by opening the garage door triggered a penalty. No sporting punishment was applied as he did not work on the cars and was apparently on his laptop when officials arrived.

...FOR DISASTROUS HWA

HWA's fine kicked off a day called "nothing short of disastrous" by boss Ulrich Fritz. Stoffel Vandoorne and Gary Paffett suffered power-shutdown and drive problems respectively in qualifying that left them down the grid, and they then collided at the rear of the first-corner melee. Both retired as a result of the contact.

OLIVERS WANT MORE

Oliver Rowland and Oliver Turvey took 15th and 16th places respectively. Rowland started 12th after making "a little mistake" in qualifying, with the Nissan e.dams team suspecting a technical glitch had hampered his performance. Turvey made the most of the first-corner chaos to rise from 14th to seventh, but the NIO man faded because he could not maintain the pace while managing energy.



d'Ambrosio leading Frijns, Bird and Sims. A frantic one-lap shootout ended the race as the 45-minutes-plus-one-lap limit ticked over, with d'Ambrosio just prevailing ahead of the Virgin pair to take his first on-the-road FE win – the third overall victory of his career in the category – by 0.143s.

"The race was really hard-fought; it's definitely how it felt from the inside of the cockpit," said d'Ambrosio. "I knew I could do top-five because the race pace was amazing in Riyadh and it was amazing here as well. But a couple of things played out, and winning this race just means a lot."

Da Costa took the blame for the BMW implosion and did it with a dignified air. "I'm sorry – that's a mistake and a mistake

coming from me only," he said. "It's terribly frustrating in this story because we lost a win, we lost a one-two, and even if it was just me Alex could have won the race. He was quicker today, especially at that point. In the last 15 laps he was building an edge on me, he had more pace than me. I should have accepted that and let him go. I didn't."

Sims said "we all take responsibility for it", but suggested that BMW could have communicated more effectively together.

The spectre of team orders hung in the air. From BMW's point of view, they should have been implemented. Racing fans would have understandably been furious but, given that the win needed to be protected, and even if a one-two was lost to the close



Frijns beat Virgin Audi team-mate Bird to claim second place



Da Costa leads Sims in BMW one-two. "Wunderbar," thought the bigwigs...

d'Ambrosio, it might have ordered da Costa to let Sims go – or ordered the Brit to hold station and protect his team-mate.

But even if that had happened, in yet another alternative universe the winner could have been the remarkable Vergne. From the back of the pack he recovered to fifth at the flag ahead of team-mate Lotterer, who had started down in 20th after making a costly mistake at Turn 7 in qualifying. And this was no safety-car-aided result. Vergne's gap to the leader dragged out to 15.591s on lap five, but this was as big as it ever got. From there, despite battling a host of rivals, he cut that gap to 4.884s by the time of the BMW collision. Given the time left on the clock and the DS Techeetah car's clear speed advantage – although some speculated that BMW had held back somewhat – the win was probably there for the taking despite his Turn 1 blunder.

"I clearly had the pace to win today," said Vergne. "I didn't need to be first in the first corner to win that race. It's a mistake – it won't happen again."

If DS is out front, there's an almighty scrap just behind. The pack is headed by BMW, but Audi (and therefore Virgin) are right in among it too, with di Grassi confident he could have secured a podium had the safety car and attack-mode timings played out differently.

But after his win, coupled with his third place in Riyadh, it's a Mahindra driver – d'Ambrosio – who leads the standings by 12 points over da Costa and Vergne. That's a fact that few in this universe would have predicted pre-season. ❄



Vergne, here chasing Gunther, could have won without late safety car

RESULTS ROUND 2/12, MARRAKECH (MA), JANUARY 12 (31 LAPS – 57.166 MILES)

POS	DRIVER	TEAM/CAR	TIME
1	Jerome d'Ambrosio (B)	Mahindra Racing/Mahindra M5Electro	46m45.884s
2	Robin Frijns (NL)	Virgin Racing/Audi e-tron FE05	+0.143s
3	Sam Bird (GB)	Virgin Racing/Audi e-tron FE05	+0.461s
4	Alexander Sims (GB)	BMW/BMW iFE.18	+0.740s
5	Jean-Eric Vergne (F)	DS Techeetah/DS E-Tense FE19	+1.232s
6	Andre Lotterer (D)	DS Techeetah/DS E-Tense FE19	+1.457s
7	Lucas di Grassi (BR)	Audi Sport Abt/Audi e-tron FE05	+1.633s
8	Sebastien Buemi (CH)	Nissan e.dams/Nissan IM01	+2.455s
9	Mitch Evans (NZ)	Jaguar/Jaguar I-TYPE 3	+2.980s
10	Daniel Abt (D)	Audi Sport Abt/Audi e-tron FE05	+4.014s
11	Jose Maria Lopez (RA)	Dragon Racing/Penske EV-3	+4.528s
12	Maximilian Gunther (D)	Dragon Racing/Penske EV-3	+6.034s
13	Edoardo Mortara (I)	Venturi/Venturi VFE-05	+6.790s
14	Nelson Piquet Jr (BR)	Jaguar/Jaguar I-TYPE 3	+6.833s
15	Oliver Rowland (GB)	Nissan e.dams/Nissan IM01	+7.529s
16	Oliver Turvey (GB)	NIO/NIO 004	+9.241s
17	Tom Dillmann (F)	NIO/NIO 004	+9.665s
18	Felipe Massa (BR)	Venturi/Venturi VFE-05	+10.250s
R	Antonio Felix da Costa (P)	BMW/BMW iFE.18	25 laps-accident
R	Gary Paffett (GB)	HWA/Venturi VFE-05	3 laps-accident damage
R	Pascal Wehrlein (D)	Mahindra Racing/Mahindra M5Electro	1 lap-accident damage
R	Stoffel Vandoorne (B)	HWA/Venturi VFE-05	1 lap-accident damage

Winner's average speed 73.345mph. **Fastest lap** di Grassi 1m20.296s, 82.767mph.

SUPERPOLE 1 Bird 1m17.489s; 2 Vergne 1m17.535s; 3 Buemi 1m17.738s; 4 Sims 1m18.400s; 5 Evans 1m29.379s; 6 da Costa 1m17.626s*.

QUALIFYING Bird 1m17.851s; Buemi 1m17.906s; Sims 1m17.935s; da Costa 1m17.950s; Vergne 1m18.042s; Evans 1m18.106s; 7 Wehrlein 1m18.126s; 8 Frijns 1m18.200s; 9 Piquet 1m18.347s; 10 d'Ambrosio 1m18.440s; 11 di Grassi 1m18.595s; 12 Rowland 1m18.604s; 13 Lopez 1m18.612s; 14 Turvey 1m18.624s; 15 Massa 1m18.780s; 16 Abt 1m18.921s; 17 Mortara 1m19.133s; 18 Dillmann 1m19.338s; 19 Paffett 1m19.516s; 20 Lotterer 1m19.633s; 21 Gunther 1m23.332s; 22 Vandoorne 1m33.404s. * grid penalty.

CHAMPIONSHIP 1 d'Ambrosio 40; 2 da Costa 28; 3 Vergne 28; 4 Lotterer 19; 5 Frijns 18; 6 Bird 18; 7 Evans 14; 8 Sims 12; 9 Buemi 12; 10 di Grassi 9.

WORLD OF SPORT

Al-Attiyah is on
course to claim
Toyota's first win



Al-Attiyah takes command of early stages

**DAKAR RALLY
(INTERIM REPORT)
LIMA-SAN JUAN DE
MARCONA (PE)
JANUARY 7-13**

Nasser Al-Attiyah took control of the 2019 Dakar Rally after six stages, putting Toyota on the cusp of a milestone first victory in the gruelling enduro.

The Qatari rally-raid ace, who has already won the Dakar in 2011 with a Volkswagen and in '15 with a Mini, headed into this year's Peru-exclusive 10-stage route as the favourite after Peugeot shuttered its all-conquering works programme.

By topping two of the first six stages, and minimising time losses against the respective pacesetters on the other days, Al-Attiyah and his co-driver Mathieu Baumel established a sizeable advantage over the chasing pack.

The opening two days of the event were closely contested. A promisingly tight battle

appeared to be developing between the Toyota camp, the PH Sport-run Peugeot of surprise returnee Sebastien Loeb and the X-raid Mini team, which was fielding three of its new buggies for Loeb's former factory Peugeot squadmates Carlos Sainz, Stephane Peterhansel and Cyril Despres.

But Dakar's familiar brutal attrition rate manifested itself soon enough. Defending champion Sainz was ruled out of contention on day three, breaking his buggy's suspension in an unsighted ditch, for which he blamed the roadbook.

In that same stage, a rock dealt a terminal blow to then-leader Giniel de Villiers' victory hopes, breaking the engine mounting in his Toyota. An electrical tower wrongly marked in the roadbook then inflicted major navigational time losses on Loeb.

Having topped the previous stage, nine-time World Rally champion Loeb continued to set a blistering pace after the setback, dominating the marathon's longest test – 332 miles between Tacna and

Arequipa – and beating Al-Attiyah on the first stage after the mid-event rest day.

This allowed Loeb, still searching for his first Dakar victory, to fight back up to second overall, but after six stages he still had to overcome a 38-minute deficit to Al-Attiyah with four stages remaining.

With Sainz hitting trouble early and Despres gradually dropping back, responsibility for leading Mini's charge fell to 13-time Dakar champion Peterhansel. He claimed a maiden stage win for its buggy and initially kept Al-Attiyah within reach.

However, Peterhansel then lost a good chunk of time wading through 'fesh-fesh' sand before the rest day. He then struggled again as the rally resumed, dropping to third place just behind Loeb.

The only other driver within an hour of Al-Attiyah as Autosport closed for press was two-time champion Nani Roma, the highest-placed driver of the long-serving Mini rally 4x4 cars.

VALENTIN KHOROUNZHIY

RESULTS

POSITIONS AS OF SUNDAY JANUARY 13

1 Nasser Al-Attiyah/Mathieu Baumel (Toyota Hilux) 27h01m31; 2 Sebastien Loeb/Daniel Elena (Peugeot 3008 DKR) +37m43s; 3 Stephane Peterhansel/David Castera (Mini Cooper Buggy); 4 Nani Roma/Alex Haro (Mini Cooper Buggy); 5 Cyril Despres/Jean-Paul Cottret (Mini Cooper Buggy); 6 Jakub Przygonski/Tom Colsoul (Mini Cooper Buggy); 7 Martin Prokop/Jan Tomanek (Ford Raptor); 8 Yazeed Al-Rajhi/Timo Gottschalk (Mini Cooper Buggy); 9 Bernhard Ten Brinke/Xavier Panzeri (Toyota Hilux); 10 Benediktas Vanagas/Sebastian Rozwadowski (Toyota Hilux).



Navigational error
left Loeb chasing a
huge time deficit

Lawson steals limelight for debut double

**TOYOTA RACING SERIES
HIGHLANDS (NZ)
JANUARY 12-13
ROUND 1/5**

Liam Lawson stole the thunder from higher-profile rivals with a brilliant double win on his Toyota Racing Series debut at Highlands Motorsport Park.

The 16-year-old Kiwi, who has runner-up slots in Australian and German Formula 4 on his CV, beat polesitter Raoul Hyman away from the lights in the opening race, and dominated in his M2 Competition car. Ferrari protege Marcus Armstrong had been fastest in qualifying but hadn't seen yellow flags on his pole lap, and a three-place grid penalty relegated him to fourth. Armstrong latched on to second-placed Hyman, while DTM Mercedes refugee Lucas Auer closed in rapidly on the duo. Armstrong and Auer made it by to join Lawson on the podium.

Lawson's best drive came in the finale, in wet conditions. Auer led, while Armstrong



defended second before Lawson performed a quite brilliant pass around the outside of the final corner. The two cars briefly touched wheels along the start-finish straight. Lawson then caught Auer – who was driving a hastily rebuilt car after a shunt in the reversed-grid second race – and claimed the lead at half-distance.

Armstrong and Hyman also passed Auer to complete the top three.

It was a clean sweep for local drivers, as TRS veteran Brendon Leitch claimed

honours in the reversed-grid second race. Belgo-German French F4 graduate Esteban Muth, a protege of Andre Lotterer, led all the way on the road, but a five-second jump-start penalty dropped him to fourth behind Leitch, Hyman and Armstrong.

Audi dominates in Dubai

**DUBAI 24 (24H SERIES)
DUBAI (UAE)
JANUARY 11
ROUND 1/7**

The Car Collection Motorsport Audi R8 LMS driven by Dirk Parhofer, Christopher Haase, Frederic Vervisch and Rik Breukers earned a dominant victory in the Dubai 24 Hours last weekend.

Its closest challenger for much of the running was the Black Falcon Mercedes-AMG GT3 shared by Luca Stolz, Khaled Al Qubaisi, Jeroen Bleekemolen, Ben Keating and Manuel Mezger. The five-driver car kept in close attendance until a broken front-right suspension arm dropped it out of contention. That meant only during the pitstop phases did the lead Audi squad relinquish its first place on the road.

After 607 laps in charge the #88 car brought home the manufacturer's second Dubai 24 Hours win. Audi previously triumphed in 2016.

The sister R8 LMS entered by WRT, and shared by Mohammed Al Saud, Michael Vergers, Christopher Mies and

Dries Vanthoor, followed the winners home for an Audi one-two.

Polesitters Mirko Bortolotti, Christian Engelhart, Rolf Ineichen and Mark Ineichen in the Grasser Lamborghini Huracan GT3 fell just shy of the podium after losing time to suspension damage. The #11 Scuderia Praha Ferrari 488 GT3 of Jiri Pisarik, Josef Kral and Matteo Malucelli crossed the line third.



WEEKEND WINNERS

**TOYOTA RACING SERIES
HIGHLANDS**

Race 1 Liam Lawson

M2 Competition

Race 2 Brendon Leitch

Victory Motor Racing

Race 3 Liam Lawson

M2 Competition

**DUBAI 24 HOURS
DUBAI**

Dimitri Parhofer/Christopher Haase/

Frederic Vervisch/Rik Breukers

Car Collection Motorsport Audi R8 LMS

For full results visit:
motorsportstats.com

THE RACING CAR SHOW



AUTOSPORT INTERNATIONAL

McLaren's all-new Formula 1 driver line-up of Lando Norris and Carlos Sainz Jr, along with team boss Zak Brown, were among the headline guests to launch proceedings at Autosport International 2019 last week.

At the recommendation of six-time World Rally champion Sebastien Ogier, the show also played host to the official launch of the WRC season in front of a capacity crowd on the Saturday.

But it's the rich tapestry of other attractions that really makes Autosport

International a fantastically compelling way to kick off the racing season. The cavernous halls of the Birmingham NEC also housed celebrations of the Mini's 60th anniversary and half a century of Formula 5000 on UK shores. New chapters in motorsport history added further intriguing themes as the W Series made its public debut and gamers battled for a share of \$10,000 in the Le Mans Esports qualifying round.

The Autosport Stage hosted a plethora of guests (see full list right), including Motorsport UK and Prodrive chairman David Richards, plus ex-F1 drivers Johnny

Herbert and Karun Chandhok. Fans had their chance to interact too, when Autosport recorded a special live edition of its podcast on Saturday.

At the event's neighbouring Performance Car Show, Motorious.com made its public launch, complete with a McLaren P1 on display, while Silverstone Auctions held its inaugural sale at the show.

And, of course, there were plenty of tyre-shredding antics in the Live Action Arena, where Mark Higgins, Billy Monger and even a monster truck all burned rubber for our entertainment.



ATIONAL 2019

AUTOSPORT STAGE GUESTS

Jonny Adam, Gary Anderson, Miikka Anttila, Dick Bennetts, Carl Boardley, David Brabham, Zak Brown, Martin Brundle, Pierre Budar, Mike Bushell, James Cameron, Karun Chandhok, Oliver Ciesla, David Coulthard, Michael Crees, David Croft, Carlos del Barrio, Martin Donnelly, Tio Ellinas, Elfyn Evans, Janne Ferm, Tom Gamble, Nicolas Gilsoul, Alan Gow, Dan Harper, Jack Harvey, Esme Hawkey, Jessica Hawkins, Johnny Herbert, Anders Hildebrand, John Holden, Oscar Hope-Frost, Tim Hope-Frost, Tom

Ingram, Julien Ingrassia, Mario Isola, Anders Jager, Martin Jarveoja, Kiern Jewiss, Andrew Jordan, Marcel Kiefer, Esapekka Lappi, Jari-Matti Latvala, Linus Lundqvist, Tommi Makinen, Alexandra Marinescu, Sebastian Marshall, Charlie Martin, Scott Martin, Yves Matton, James McNaughton, Kris Meeke, Chris Mellors, Andreas Mikkelsen, Andrea Mladovic, Billy Monger, Catie Munnings, Thierry Neuville, Lando Norris, Michael O'Brien, Sebastien Ogier, Giorgio Piola, Ilaria Rattaro, Sally Reynolds, David Richards,



MOTORSPORT IMAGES/JEP

Andy Rouse, Dan Rowbottom, Carlos Sainz Jr, Marko Salminen, Gordon Shedden, Shmee150, Mark Skaife, David Sonenscher, Dani Sordo, Teemu Suninen, Ash Sutton, Pat Symonds, Ott Tanak, Bobby Thompson, Ian Titchmarsh, Colin Turkington, Darren Turner, Miss Emma Walsh, Derek Warwick, Tom Williams, Malcolm Wilson, Caitlin Wood.



HHF FEVER AWARD

ANNUAL AWARD LAUNCHED IN HONOUR OF HENRY HOPE-FROST

The first Autosport International without Henry Hope-Frost was always going to be extremely emotional for everyone he had worked with, inspired and entertained during his years as the Autosport Stage's lead presenter, and it was only right that the show paid a suitably 'fever' tribute.

Hope-Frost's father Tim and son Oscar joined host Alan Hyde on stage as ASI 2019 honoured Henry, who died last year aged only 47, with memories and clips of classic moments from his career and the launch of a new journalism award in his name.

Lucy Morson became the first recipient of the HHF Fever Award, which will be presented annually to the most promising member of the Autosport Academy training scheme. The winner receives a year's paid internship on the Autosport newsdesk and will be allocated a race series to cover.

Andrew Jordan, the 2013 British Touring Car champion, also regaled the audience with his recollection of working with Hope-Frost at Goodwood.

Tim Hope-Frost said the outpouring of "love and affection" for Henry "was something that really bowled me over".

He added: "This has made a huge difference to our grief at such a sad event. By and large, certainly from my point of view, the grief has been replaced by pride."

Award winner Morson, 20, has been training with the Autosport Academy since 2015, and is now in the final year of an English degree at Oxford Brookes University.

Autosport Academy founder Matt Beer said: "Everyone who shared the Autosport office with Henry will remember his loudly expressed disdain for bad writing and grammatical errors, so it's entirely appropriate that the award winner is someone whose copy would've delighted him every time it landed on his desk. And given that Lucy's grandfather worked for BRM, her dad is an amateur off-road racer and she first went rally spectating in a pram when just a few months old, Henry would definitely approve on the 'fever' front too."

EXHIBIT WINNERS

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BTCC

ROUSE VOTED THE GREATEST

Touring car icon Andy Rouse was presented with a trophy on the main stage at Autosport International after being voted Autosport's and Motorsport News's greatest-ever British Touring Car Championship driver.

The four-time champion raced in the series across the 1970s, '80s and '90s,

earning 60 races wins along the way. His accolade was voted for by a panel of experts and drivers in celebration of the the championship's 60th anniversary.

Motorsport News editor Matt James joined Rouse on stage to present the award and share memories of Rouse's astonishing career.

WRC**CITROEN MUST WIN WITH OGIER**

Citroen team principal Pierre Budar has said his team has to win the 2019 World Rally Championship after acquiring the services of six-time world champion Sebastien Ogier.

The team has not won a WRC title since the full-time exit of Sebastien Loeb at the end of the 2012 season, during which period it has triumphed on only seven rallies.

Ogier won the 2017 and '18 world titles with M-Sport but has moved back to his former team. Uncertainty over Ford's investment into M-Sport prompted his departure.

"We have to win, of course we are here for that," Budar said during the

launch of this year's WRC at the Autosport International Show. We start the season with this goal, and with this driver line-up we have very good reason to think about it."

Budar took over from Yves Matton as team principal ahead of February's Rally Sweden last year.

The team has implemented a number of changes in that period. Esapekka Lappi joins Ogier in a revised driver line-up, and there has been a reshuffling of the technical staff and a change of approach to the development of the C3.

"We will see if the progress is good enough, but we've had one year to redesign the team," said Budar.

**MOTORSPORT NETWORK****FAN SERVICES ANNOUNCED**

Motorsport Network launched two brand-new platforms at Autosport International in the form of Motorsport Live and, in partnership with Speed Digital, Motorious.com.

Motorsport Live is a global ticketing and travel operation that will provide a full service for fans planning all aspects of race attendance – from ticketing to travel arrangements.

From launch, it will offer customers both experience and valuable insight into building trips and itineraries to Formula 1, MotoGP and World Endurance Championship races, ahead of further expansion.

Meanwhile, Motorious.com aims to become the leading international car collector digital platform, launching with a start-up inventory of over 50,000 classic, sports and muscle cars for sale.

FORMULA 1**BINOTTO HIRE A MISTAKE, WARNS ANDERSON**

Ferrari made the "wrong decision" picking Mattia Binotto to replace Maurizio Arrivabene as its Formula 1 team principal, says Autosport technical consultant Gary Anderson.

Binotto took charge of Ferrari's engine programme after its dismal performance at the start of F1's V6-turbo-hybrid era in 2014.

He was then promoted to a role as overall technical chief in mid-2016 as part of an overhaul instigated by then-president and CEO Sergio Marchionne. Ferrari has since produced two cars capable of fighting for wins on a regular basis, although errors from the team and Sebastian Vettel last season meant its title bid unravelled.



Speaking in a special 'live edition' of the Autosport Podcast on stage at Autosport International, former Jordan technical chief Anderson said: "Binotto is someone who has been very good at being a technical manager. You've got to allow him to be a technical manager. That is a full-time job, seven days a week. It's not a part-time thing.

"That is going to dilute their technical effort for sure. I think it's the wrong decision. They should have brought someone else in."

It is unclear who will replace Binotto as head of Ferrari's technical department, but sources suggest the team may hand more responsibility to aero chief Enrico Cardile and engine-department boss Corrado Iotti.

AUTOSPORT
INTERNATIONAL

THE RACING CAR SHOW



MAKING THE BOLD FIRST STEP

W Series has faced vociferous criticism since its launch. At Autosport International, it had the chance to fight its corner

LUCY MORSON

That the launch of the women-only W Series last October provoked such seismic differences of opinion across social media was neither unexpected nor surprising.

In the past, when faced with criticism over its very male-dominated population and the undeniable lack of female participation in top-tier competition, motorsport has been able to fall back on one unique selling point not afforded to the likes of football, tennis or athletics.

Motorsport is one of the few disciplines in the world where men and women can compete on an equal footing at the highest level. And so the introduction of a female-only Formula 3-level championship surely seems to undermine all of that.

Perhaps it's necessary to think about W Series in a wider-world sense and acknowledge the way that the past 18 months can be considered seminal in the renewed push for gender equality, be that on a political front, with the historic Women's Marches last year, or with the campaigners now found on the entertainment industry's red carpets as part of the Time's Up movement.

The cynicism and criticism faced by W Series has been vociferous and at times not without fair reason or concern. Questions over how damaging it could be to have any future W Series champion

struggle upon returning to competing against men are valid, particularly considering how hard it is for women to break into motorsport in the first place.

"I spent six months doing research and initially I was sceptical about the idea, for all of the reasons that have been raised," says W Series CEO and sports lawyer Catherine Bond Muir, who embarked on the project while on an extended career break three years ago.

"But I'd like to bring up this very emotive word that people are using: segregation. We aren't segregating; what we are doing is creating a new platform for drivers to go on. We're giving them a free drive to get an experience that otherwise they wouldn't have had.

"If you look at motorsport at the moment, women are just getting test drives or they're just a reserve driver. Most importantly what we're doing is putting 18 women on the grid, full-time, getting driving and racing experience.

"There is an assumption that our women are stopping competing by joining W Series. To 'go back' to competing with men would mean they'd have had to have stopped – and they've never stopped competing with men."

Indeed, some competitors will still be competing in mixed-gender championships alongside any W Series commitments. Esmee Hawkey, who ►

THE RACING CAR SHOW



raced in the Porsche Carrera Cup GB in 2018 on the British Touring Car Championship-supporting TOCA package, is keen to ensure that she still enjoys a full race programme outside of W Series should she make it through both stages of driver selection.

Six of the 60 drivers who will take part in the first round of selection at Melk in Austria from January 24-28 were at the show: Hawkey, Alice Powell, Sarah Moore, Alexandra Marinescu, Megan Gilkes and Caitlin Wood. An important part of the W Series ethos is to get the names and faces of its participants outside of just the motorsport world, furthering its aim to reach the next generation of girls and young women by providing them with role models.

The long-list of qualifiers is diverse within itself. At 17, Canadian Gilkes is one of the youngest drivers, while there are also two mothers hoping to line up at the first round in May at Hockenheim.

The field of 60 will be halved after

the first selection process, which features a range of aptitude tests devised by motorsport figureheads brought in by W Series: Alex Wurz, David Coulthard, Adrian Newey, ex-McLaren sporting director Dave Ryan and PR high-flyer and one-time *F1 Racing* editor-in-chief Matt Bishop.

Wurz will employ the same testing criteria as used in his role as part of the FIA's Young Driver Institute, with focus on road-car control and driving techniques, simulator exposure, and technical, fitness and media testing.

The successful qualifiers will then have a secondary session at a circuit in southern Europe in the early spring, this time testing the Tatuus T-318 F3 cars for the first time to decide the final grid of 18.

W Series will line up on the DTM support bill for six rounds in 2019, from Hockenheim in May through to Brands Hatch in August. This condensed calendar over just three months is another way in which W Series

is keen to show that it's not a destination series, according to Bond Muir, but rather a stepping stone for women aiming for top-tier motorsport.

"I think this is a great starting point for creating female role models in motorsport," says Hawkey. "They're not creating a series just like Formula 1 solely for women – for me that would be segregation. F1 is the top level any driver wants to get to, so to create a top level just for women it would mean there is nothing to aim for."

Given the generational shift and the way in which the world is changing, there is every chance that the lack of female participation in top-level motorsport will organically solve itself in years to come. But considering how drastically skewed the gender balance on the world's grids currently is, maybe it doesn't hurt to try a bold first move – even one that has created a polarising minefield of opinions. ■



Q&A DAVID COULTHARD

WHY HAVE YOU CHOSEN TO PUBLICLY BACK W SERIES?

I had a younger sister, who is unfortunately no longer with us, but I believe she was more naturally talented at driving than I was. It just so happened that the opportunity and the weight of the family support went to me as I was six years older and I think there is a more obviously established route for a professional career for men than there has been for women. I love the world of motorsport and the people that are involved because I think it brings out the best in all of us. I want this to bring out the best of the women's talent out there.

WHAT WILL IT TAKE FOR W SERIES TO BE CONSIDERED A SUCCESS?

For me, it would be if we could create positive role models and take away this glass ceiling. That would bring more

women into racing, creating more female racing drivers. It's exactly what my sister could have been if she was alive and armed with the opportunities I have today.

WHAT'S YOUR RESPONSE TO THE CRITICISM AIMED AT W SERIES?

In terms of the backlash, there are always going to be people who disagree when you are doing something different to what they are doing or what they believe in. All of the people involved in W Series are having a real go at it and giving this our best shot. Someone needs to make the first step and we're all putting our time and effort into this. The racing world will tell us in time whether they also share that vision. There will be six races in 2019 and we will have a champion. That champion will have a spotlight and a big cheque to then progress their career to the next level.



SENSORY ASSAULT

Iconic films, a failed Formula 1 heist and even a monster truck fought for centre-stage in the Live Action Arena

MATT KEW

The lights might be lowered in the Live Action Arena, but this is the area of Autosport International where the senses are truly heightened.

With no car was that more apparent than 2018 British Rallycross champion Mark Higgin's Peugeot 208: the pops and bangs bounced off the hall walls while the smell of burning rubber and fuel hung in the air.

After a 20-second countdown to crank up the anticipation, this year's edition began with a video of hosts David Croft and Miss Emma Walsh attempting to steal a McLaren Formula 1 car to unload into the arena and

act as the show's centrepiece. But when they found their trailer to be empty, YouTuber Shmee150 entered the stage in his new McLaren Senna hypercar and revealed he had made alternative arrangements.

With a clear nod to the style of BAR's launch of its grand prix challengers 1999, and heralded by spotlights and copious quantities of dry ice, the missing McLaren descended from the roof on wires.

Back on the ground, the demonstrations began with a grid of pre-1966 touring cars, including Minis, Morris Minors and a thunderous Ford Falcon all sliding their way around the slippery indoor circuit.

To celebrate the Mini's 60th anniversary, the iconic city car grabbed the limelight once more with a recreation of the car chase from *The Italian Job* complete with the blues and twos of the police and a vintage bus. Naturally, *Get A Bloomin' Move On* was playing in the background.

Billy Monger returned to the Live Action Arena this year, this time smoking the tyres of the Carlin British BRDC F3 car in which he earned four podiums and two pole positions last season. The audience greeted him with rapturous applause every time.

After a run from a grid of Suzuki Swift rallycross cars, Higgins wrung the neck



of a Subaru Impreza World Rally car – a particular highlight for any motorsport fan.

Show favourite Terry Grant orchestrated an all-female drift team, which performed in their Nissan 350Zs to the title track from *The Greatest Showman*. Grant then roared out in an Aston Martin Vantage that he promptly launched off a ramp and onto two wheels past the 5000-strong audience. Once back on all four, he then performed a series of donuts around the feet of Croft.

The Vantage then handed over to its flagship bigger brother. Aston Martin test driver Ross Gunn and Le Mans class winner Darren Turner took turns putting the new 715bhp DBS Superleggera through its paces.

BriSCA F1 and the Superlites Championship made their welcome return to the Arena, and the Pickup Truck Racing Championship held a race too before the show built to its stunt-based climax.

Grant gave a masterclass in performing donuts in a tight space – an eight-metre raised stage – and then, in a trick Ford Fiesta, he drove on two wheels in reverse.

But it was 'Swamp Thing', a donut-crazy monster truck, that brought the curtain down – and for most of the 12 shows didn't roll over... ■



Hang on lads, I've got a great idea...

BINGHAM



Higgins demonstrated his British Rallycross Peugeot 208

SUTTON



The grids kicked off with a classic touring car race

BINGHAM



Monster truck antics ended live action on a high note

SUTTON



Gamers battled in Aston
DBR9s at Brands Hatch

VIRTUAL SUCCESS

*Shaun Arnold reigned supreme in a two-hour thriller
on the road to the Le Mans Esports Series final*

JOSH SUTTILL

Shaun Arnold demonstrated his credentials as one of the fiercest competitors in the Le Mans Esports Series with a third qualifier victory.

He won a thrilling two-hour race on the Sunday of Autosport International and scooped the biggest share of the available \$10,000 prize fund in the process.

As fans flocked around the stage, polesitter Arnold stamped his authority on the race ahead of Forza specialist Tobin Leigh and Williams Esports driver Isaac Price. Arnold was making his debut for the new gaming team JOTA Esports, run in association with the Jackie Chan DC Racing LMP2 team that competes in the World Endurance Championship.

"It was a good, fun race – I really enjoyed it," Arnold told Autosport. "Playing in front of hundreds of people is a little different to playing on my sofa back home, and it was really nice to hear the crowd reaction throughout the race and when I won."

Arnold had already qualified for the Le Mans Super Final – the winner of which will stand on the 2019 Le Mans 24 Hours podium, as well as taking a share of the \$160,000 prize pot – in the opening qualifier at Silverstone. Second-placed Leigh therefore got the nod.

Remarkably, Leigh got his first taste of the competition just one day before the

main race. Along with members of the public and real-life racing stars such as Carlos Sainz Jr and Jonny Adam, Leigh had to lay down a fast enough virtual lap of the Brands Hatch Grand Prix circuit in an Aston Martin DBR9 to go forwards.

Leigh, who had only decided to attend the show earlier in the week, set the fastest time by over a second to ensure his place on the grid. He then battled through from his 11th-place starting slot.

"It's a crazy feeling," Leigh admitted. "Visiting the show on the Saturday and qualifying was insane because I just came to have fun and give it a try."

"I didn't expect to qualify and I even beat professional drivers such as factory Aston Martin driver Ross Gunn. I climbed from the back row of the grid to second on the Sunday. I can't wait for Le Mans." ■

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MOTORSPORT IMAGES/JEP

INNOVATION GAME

The balancing act between sport and entertainment was the hot topic in this year's MIA conference

ANDREW VAN DE BURGT

The Motorsport Industry Association conference that precedes Autosport International has been bringing together thought leaders from within the racing world, and from interested (and interesting) parties outside it, for more than a decade.

It presaged the arrival of 'alternative' fuels that led to the turbodiesel domination of Le Mans and other races, and heralded the need for the move to low-carbon motorsport. Formula E's remarkable growth has demonstrated the wisdom of that. So, the choice of topic for this year's conference should have pricked the

"WHY HAS IT TAKEN THIS LONG TO APPLY A DATA-DRIVEN APPROACH?"

ears of governing bodies and rights holders – the vital link between motorsport and entertainment.

For many, the notion that sport needs to be perceived as entertaining is an affront. But the fact is that all sports are in competition for people's attention; it's simply not enough to expect that the desire to witness great exponents of the craft is sufficient in itself to attract an audience.

The recent revelation that less than 15% of Formula 1's TV audience is under 35 is of serious concern for the most-watched form of motorsport. Technical director Pat Symonds described F1's latest methodology in audience research: through biometric analysis the commercial rights holder has found that it is wheel-to-wheel racing that sets the fans' pulses racing, not overtaking. Now, this might seem like commonsense, but let's not forget it was the first F1 Fan Survey's results

that directly led to the introduction of DRS after an overwhelming response for "more overtaking".

Given that F1 is essentially an exercise in ratifying data (proving the results from windtunnel and CFD research on the track), there's an awkward question here. Why has it taken this long to apply a data-driven approach to the audience?

The insightful Kevin Baughan (once CEO of Innovate UK) provided a window into how using data in storytelling is helping to make sport more engaging. Team Sky's data-led feeding strategy for Chris Froome became a major talking point during the 2018 Giro d'Italia.

There was the predictable scoffing when football data analysts starting measuring EG (expected goals) but it's now creating its own narrative. Expect the same when overtaking probability hits your screens later this year... ■



The MIA conference set the thought-leadership agenda

ALL PICS
motorsport
IMAGES

THE BEST IN SHOW

*Our highlights from a packed
Autosport International*



TRENDING
The bronze Paul Oz sculpture of Ayrton Senna on the F1 Racing stand, which marked a 25-year relationship with the Ayrton Senna Institute, began trending on Twitter.





< UNLEASHED
The Prodrive-run Subaru Impreza World Rally Car, as driven by Kenneth Eriksson in 1996, enjoyed a starring role in the Live Action Arena with Mark Higgins behind the wheel.



↑ > ICONIC CARS

1 March 701

The grand prix car in which Jackie Stewart won the 1970 Spanish Grand Prix was a hit.

2 Moby Dick Porsche's reimagining of the iconic 935 dominated its three-car line-up.

3 WRC launch New names and liveries were unveiled ahead of the 2019 WRC season.

4 Champion diva The W09 that earned Mercedes a fifth consecutive title double headed the grid on the F1 Racing stand.



< STAR GUESTS

1 McLaren Autosport BRDC

Award Head judge Derek Warwick was joined by 2018 winner Tom Gamble and finalist Kiern Jewiss.

2 Meet and greet Fans had the chance to get up close with the stars of WRC.

3 Carlos Sainz Jr The new McLaren signing entertained on the stage.

4 Ribbon-cutters Sky Sports F1 presenters Johnny Herbert and Karun Chandhok opened the show to the public on Sunday.

PICTURE PERFECT

Some of the finest and most iconic shots from the Motorsport Images archive were a feast for the eyes at Birmingham's NEC

EDD STRAW

If a picture paints a thousand words, then the 23million images that comprise the Motorsport Images archive are the most comprehensive library of the history of the sport ever assembled. This was showcased with a popular stand at Autosport International, displaying some of the most famous motorsport images.

The big question is how the selection was whittled down to just a handful of beautifully reproduced images, given that the whole of the Birmingham NEC could have been filled by this display...

On approaching the Motorsport Images stand, the picture that catches your eye is Steven Tee's famous shot of the Benetton pitlane fire at the 1994 German Grand Prix. This sits in the corner of the stand focusing on LAT Images, and its violence is a contrast to the beautiful colours of Tee's father Michael's shot of Peter Collins in action in the 1958 Monaco Grand Prix.

Working your way round the stand, there's Sutton Images. It's a far more recent photo, Fernando Alonso's McLaren flying through the air at the start of last year's Belgian GP after being hit by Nico Hulkenberg's Renault, that draws the attention.

Next up is Ferrari fan nirvana. Ercole Colombo's recently acquired archive features some of the greatest images ever captured of the Prancing Horse in action, and inevitably



it's Gilles Villeneuve sideways that stands out. But most attention-grabbing is, unexpectedly, a shot of a Spyker in 2007 as Adrian Sutil is launched into the air off the kerbs at the Canadian GP.

Alongside is Rainer Schlegelmilch, whose portraits of Jochen Rindt and James Hunt exemplify the fact that he was one of the first motorsport photographers to capture the characters inside the cars and offer a window into their souls. But you can't help but be drawn to probably his

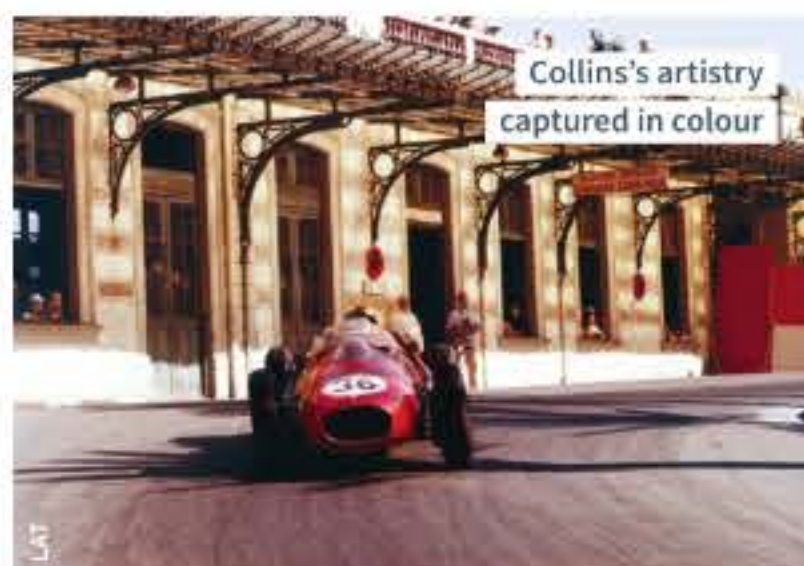
most famous image: Stefan Johansson's Ferrari at Monaco is the greatest example of Schlegelmilch's 'freezing speed' technique.

Last, but not least, are several reproductions of the legendary Giorgio Piola's technical illustrations. Even to those without a technical eye, these are works of great detail and beauty, exposing the secrets of these spectacular machines.

TO FIND OUT MORE, VISIT
www.motorsportimages.com



1994 Benetton
pitlane fire



Collins's artistry
captured in colour



Hulkenberg sent
Alonso flying at Spa



THANK YOU



Autosport would like to thank all the drivers, team bosses, designers and industry specialists, who generously gave us their time, for their valued contributions to this year's show. We would like to give special appreciation to show openers Zak Brown, Lando Norris, Carlos Sainz Jr, Karun Chandhok, Johnny Herbert and Billy Monger, plus Ferrari, Haas, McLaren, Mercedes, Racing Point, Red Bull Racing, Renault Sport, Williams Racing and Aston Martin. The World Rally Championship provided an exciting launch on Saturday and our gratitude also goes to the Citroen, Hyundai, M-Sport and Toyota World Rally teams. Thanks also to Image Innovations, Network Productions, Zee FX and Waltham Services for their work on the Live Action Arena. Finally, our thanks to the tireless Autosport International production team for its amazing work in putting the show together, and to the peerless Kate Woodley and Susana Burguera for their indefatigability over the years.

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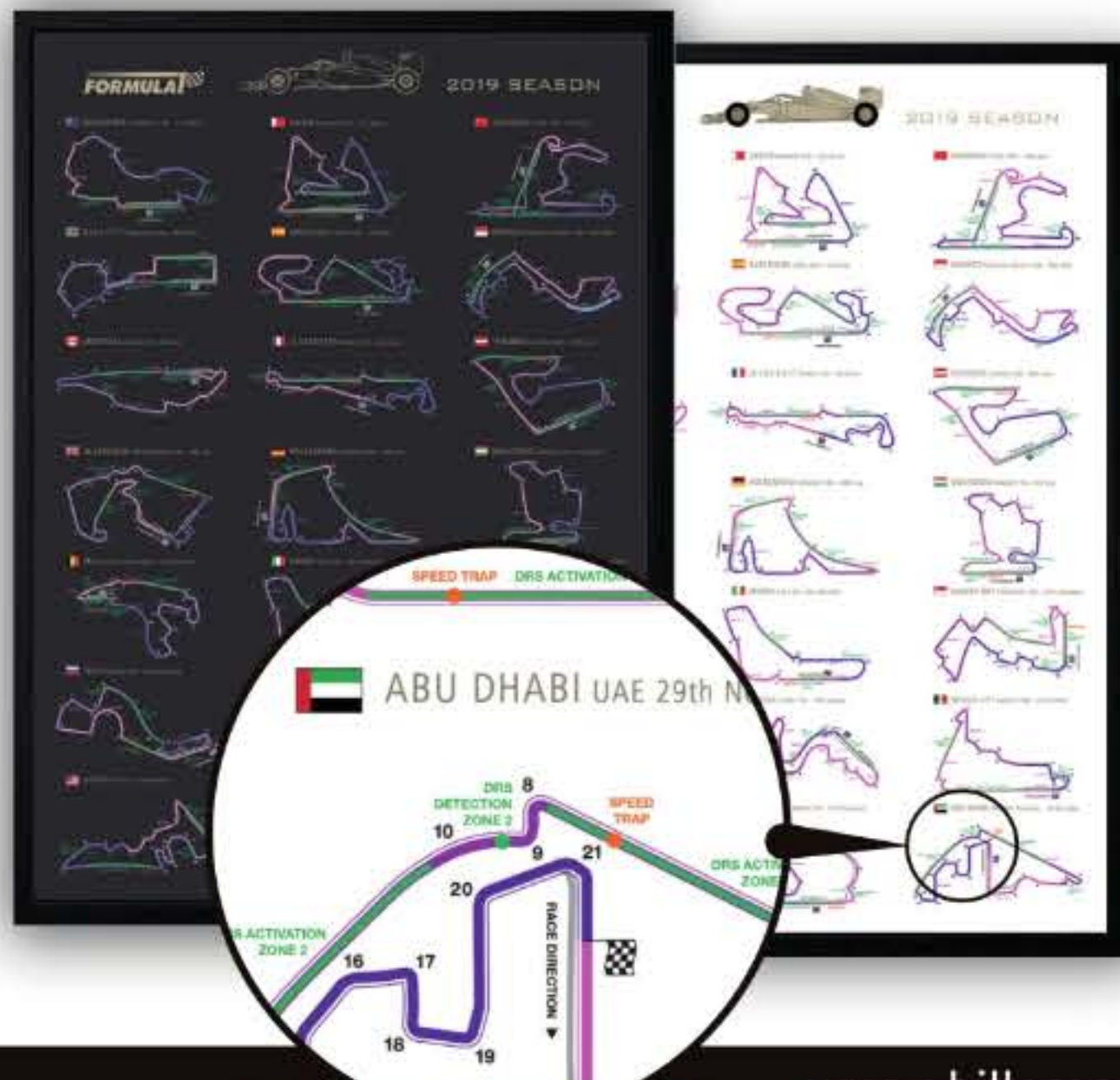
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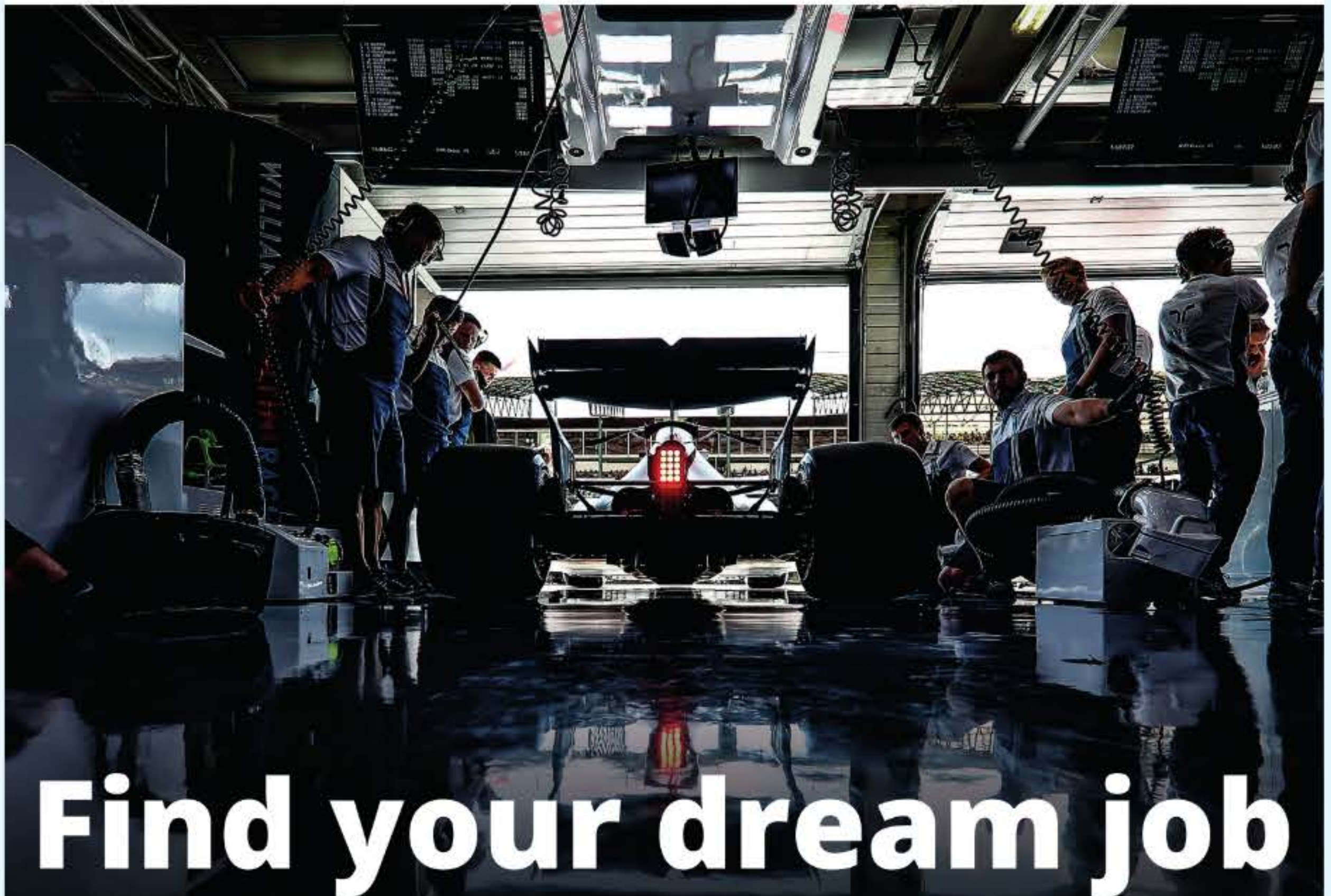


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CRUCIAL EU VOTE ON INSURANCE CRISIS LOOMS NEXT WEEK

VNUK

The future of motorsport competition could be decided next week when a vote within the European Union will help to decide the implementation of the Vnuk insurance ruling.

The legal case known as Vnuk led the European court to determine that the Motor Insurance Directive was being implemented incorrectly, and that all vehicles – even on private land – must have third-party insurance. For grassroots motorsport participants this could add a potentially catastrophic level of cost.

Conservative MEP Dan Dalton sits on the European Parliament's internal market committee, which is currently discussing his suggested amendment to the revised Motor Insurance Directive. Dalton's putative amendment would in effect

exclude motorsport events from the requirement for vehicles on private land to have third-party insurance.

If a vote within the committee on January 22 is successful, it will likely be accepted since parliament generally ratifies the suggestions of its own committees. Dalton, an ex-professional cricket player and son of a club motorsport marshal, said: "This is the kind of legislation that gets people so angry in the UK, where those writing the laws don't understand how bad regulation can hurt individuals and companies.

"I'll be fighting in the European Parliament to make sure that we try and secure an exemption for motorsport."

Dalton said that the success of the vote is too close to call. The vote will be preceded by a meeting in Strasbourg to discuss the amendment.





Formula Atlantic to Anglesey

FORMULA ATLANTIC

The Formula Atlantic class could field its first standalone race on Welsh soil when the Historic Sports Car Club visits Anglesey on July 13-14.

Prime mover in the revival is Iain Rowley, owner of the ex-Howdy Holmes March 79B and co-founder with Alan Morgan of the Historic Formula Ford 2000 category, which has flourished under the HSCC's wing since 2007.

"The potential of Atlantics, with fixed-spec engines developing up to 215bhp, has been demonstrated in the Historic F2 series, which is now booming," said Rowley.

"But too many still lie dormant. Dedicated races will give these fantastic cars a chance to shine once again. Several are currently under preparation and 12 to 15 at Anglesey would be a great start."

Originated as an affordable version of F2, which had similar chassis regulations through that formula's two-litre era, FAtlantic arrived in Britain in 1971. Its Ford/Lotus twin-cam engines mirrored those of the US's Formula B.

The category became a Cosworth BDA/BDD monopoly on both sides of the Atlantic through the decade, showcasing drivers of the calibre of Alan Jones, Tony Brise and Gunnar Nilsson in the UK. Ireland was a particular stronghold.

- The XL Aurora Series is the new title for the Derek Bell Trophy, an HSCC series that houses the fastest UK-based historic racing cars. The rebirth of the series for pre-1979 Formula 5000 and F2 cars is a result of a partnership between the HSCC and supercar leasing specialist XL Limited.

MARCUS PYE AND PAUL LAWRENCE



Dalton has a motorsport background and wants to secure its future

"We have the political groups — the ECR [European Conservatives and Reformists], the Liberal group, and there's the EPP [European People's Party]. The three groups have a narrow majority in that committee, and they are supporting this package. But it's very, very tight. The other groups are generally not supportive of what we are trying to do.

"I'm confident we can get it through. If it goes through them, I imagine it will have to go to the main parliament, which will likely happen in February."

Dalton believes that if the changes pass before Brexit, or during any transition once the UK has left the EU, the Motor Insurance Directive will apply.

Motorsport UK has been lobbying the Department of Transport, while the FIA has also been supportive.

JACK BENYON



Gilles Villeneuve made his name in Formula Atlantic

British F4 to test engines

BRITISH F4

Any driver who wins three races in British Formula 4 this year will have their engine tested, as part of plans to increase the monitoring of competitors.

Once the three wins have been achieved — and they do not have to be consecutive — the engine will be taken to the series' tuning partner Neil Brown Engineering for tests ahead of the next event.

Championship promoter Sam Roach said: "They're not expecting to find anything amiss — it just gives that reassurance to everyone. Neil Brown Engineering are doing an exceptionally good job with equalising these engines and we want to expand on that."

NBE replaced Sodemo as the engine-support provider for the category's turbocharged EcoBoost powerplants from the 2018 season.



MOTORSPORT IMAGES/JEP

- British F4 driver Josh Skelton will remain with the JHR Developments squad for a second season in the series this year after finishing 10th in the standings in 2018. "We went to Valencia to test and he was on fire — he did a very good job," said JHR team boss Steve Hunter. "I would expect him to be running right up at the front for the duration of the season."

STEPHEN LICKORISH



Apollo Motorsport car broke cover at the Autosport show

Donnelly and Lewis start Ginetta Junior team

GINETTA JUNIORS

Ex-Formula 1 driver Martin Donnelly and former single-seater team owner Jonathan Lewis have teamed up again to set up a Ginetta Junior squad named Apollo Motorsport.

The duo have worked together in a 1990s Formula Vauxhall Lotus/Junior programme before Lewis ran the works Van Diemen Formula Ford team. Now Lewis, who has also achieved success in Mini racing, and Donnelly (above right) plan to run four

cars in Ginetta Junior this season. "We want to use the experience and knowledge we have together and have decided to set up the team, although the juniors probably don't even know me and Jonathan from back in the day!" said Donnelly. "We looked at what was available, what was affordable and what was doable. And Ginetta Junior is the same thing [as Vauxhall Junior], just with a bodyshell on it. "Jonathan encouraged Eddie Ives and Elite to do Juniors and we're looking to come along to kick Elite Motorsport's ass."

The new Apollo team has already made two signings for the 2019 season. It will run new Ginetta Junior scholar Ethan Brooks in a Millers Oils-backed car, after the firm entered into a technical partnership with Ginetta, and Brooks's fellow karting graduate Alex Walker. Ginetta motorsport manager Ash Gallagher added: "It's always nice to have some new teams in the series. Although it's a new name, it's a very established team of people."

STEPHEN LICKORISH



MOTORSPORT IMAGES/MAUGER



Pittard returns to Germany in an M6 GT3

Pittard's full Nordschleife deal

VLN

British GT4 graduate David Pittard will contest a full season with the Walkenhorst Motorsport squad in a BMW M6 GT3 in 2019, contesting the VLN series and the Spa and Nurburgring 24 Hours. Pittard took third in British GT4 in 2017 before graduating to compete in selected events in Europe,

including the Nurburgring Nordschleife-based VLN series. He will now make the step up to a pair of the continent's biggest long-distances races at Spa and the Nurburgring. Walkenhorst won the Spa 24 Hours in 2018 with drivers Tom Blomqvist, Philipp Eng and Christian Krognes. "The opportunity is absolutely amazing," said Pittard. "A full season at the Nordschleife, plus arguably

two of the biggest 24-hour GT3 races anywhere. Two big races to challenge myself against the best GT drivers in the world. "The BMW M6 GT3 and Walkenhorst Motorsport have proven to be very competitive. I have no doubt that it's the best place for me to be in terms of showing my potential, achieving competitive results and working closely with BMW."

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Coates targets Clio crown

RENAULT UK CLIO CUP

Renault UK Clio Cup title contender Max Coates will remain in the series this year after entering a new partnership with British Touring Car squad Team Hard.

Coates headed the standings for much of the 2018 season driving for Team Pyro, but ultimately fell to third behind Paul Rivett and James Dorlin.

He had targeted a move into the BTCC for 2019 but, after being unable to find a seat, instead aims to become the final Clio champion, as the series will be scrapped at the end of this season.

"We said all along what we wanted to do was touring cars," said Coates. "I would've loved to have done that, but I also really enjoy racing in the Clio Cup. We've got to be aiming for the championship and

I want to be the last one [champion]."

Coates will be joined by VW Racing Cup driver Ethan Hammerton at the team.

"Tony [Gilham, Team Hard boss] approached me over the winter and said he would like to do something with me and Ethan in Clios," Coates added. "We know what to do in terms of running a team and they are helping to provide the infrastructure to do that under the Team Hard banner. And having that touring car link is great."

• Clio Cup International Final winner Jack Young will also return to the UK Clio Cup this year. The 2017 Clio Junior champion made his debut in the senior series mid-way through last season and will again compete with MRM in '19.

STEPHEN LICKORISH



Palmer makes Mini leap

MINI CHALLENGE

Double Michelin Clio Cup champion Ben Palmer will switch to the Mini Challenge this season, driving for Team Hard.

The 23-year old made his debut in the series at Donington Park last year, instantly impressing by taking pole and two fifth-place finishes.

He will now race in the series full-time in 2019.

"I can't wait to get started in the Mini Challenge for 2019 after

I dipped my toe in the water at Donington Park in 2018," said Palmer. "After two seasons in the Michelin Clio Cup, I felt the time was right to make the next step in my career."

"The Mini Challenge presents a fantastic opportunity to get my name out in the world of motorsport, especially with the news that the championship will be joining the BTCC circus for 2020. I'm delighted to move into the series with an established team in UK motorsport."

IN THE HEADLINES

WOOD GETS V8 SUPERCAR

Special Saloon preparation expert Ric Wood has acquired a V8 Supercar with a view to racing it in the UK. Wood, whose most recent project has been the completion of Vauxhall Dealer Team's 'Mega Bertha' special, has had the 5000cc 2008 Holden Commodore shipped over from Australia but has not made a commitment to a particular series.

WILCOX BACK TO BGT

Former British GT class champion Adam Wilcox will make a series return in a GTC-class Porsche Carrera Cup car entered by WPI Motorsport. Wilcox will share the new 911 GT3 Cup car with British GT newcomer Michael Igoe, reprising the line-up that contested selected Britcar and GT Cup meetings last year. The GTC class is for cars originating from single-make series.

NEW MAZDA TYRES

The British Racing & Sports Car Club's Mazda MX-5 Championship will switch to running on Avon tyres this year. The move from Hankook rubber brings the series for Mk1 MX-5s in line with the BRSCC's two categories for Mk3 MX-5s: the Super Cup and Super Series. A transition period will allow drivers to use up their existing stock of Hankook tyres.

JSCC'S BUMPER GRID

The Citroen Saxo-based Junior Saloon Car Championship is reporting strong interest ahead of the 2019 season. Twenty-eight drivers have so far signed up, as series bosses target 30-car grids for this year. A new rookie prize will also be introduced in conjunction with Dunlop.

LEGENDS PRIZE

Up to 11 drivers from this year's Legends Cars National Championship will take part in the annual end-of-season touring car experience weekend. Former British Touring Car Championship team HMS Racing will once again host the weekend, which will include high-speed passenger laps in the squad's Alfa Romeo Giulietta (below) with driver Rob Austin.



New Mittell car to join Bikesports

BIKESPORTS

Mittell Cars is moving up to the 750 Motor Club's Bikesports series this year after creating a new machine for the category.

The MC-41R broke cover for the first time at Autosport International last week, and has been developed by Scott Mittell along with his father Ian.

The established team has had great success in the 750MC's RGB Sports 1000 series, winning the championship in 2015 and finishing runner-up in '17. The new venture has been prompted by the scope offered by the Bikesports regulations.

"It [Bikesports] is a brilliant category – there's a lot more freedom in it compared with RGB," says Mittell Jr, who will drive the new car this season.



Scott (l) and Ian Mittell with the new MC-41R

"The tight restrictions and things like that in RGB do make for great racing, but from a design perspective, and from the point of view of wanting to go faster, Bikesports is a lot more free.

"We can put some underbody aerodynamics on, and we can make it a central-seat car – which we couldn't do in RGB – as well as putting a wing on the back and fitting slick tyres. So there's a chance to make it the quickest thing

we can do with a 1000cc engine."

The squad hopes the car, fitted with a Suzuki GSXR1000 superbike engine, can beat the Radical PR6s and SR3s that have dominated the category recently.

• AB Performance will also enter the Bikesports series, with three Sabre Escalas fitted with CBR1000RR engines, and driven by Joe Wiggins, Steve Bell and Adrian Moore.

STEFAN MACKLEY

Cottrell returns as clerk of the course

750MC

Veteran race official Bernard Cottrell has taken on the 750 Motor Club clerk-of-the-course role for the next two years.

Cottrell, who has worked with the World Endurance Championship and Blancpain GT series, is one of Europe's most experienced race directors and clerks of the course.

He was also previously clerk for the British Racing & Sports Car Club as well as its chairman. At the 750MC he will replace Viv Ayres, who is stepping down from the role after 30 years.

"I was a [750MC] member many, many years ago and it's always been one of those clubs just under the radar a little bit," said Cottrell, who will work as a steward at this year's British Grand Prix.

"The club has got some



MOTORSPORT IMAGES/JEP

cracking grids and plenty of good people as well, and I just felt it was a bit of an opportunity when they approached me, so I'm looking forward to it."

750MC competitions coordinator Giles Groombridge said: "It's absolutely fantastic to have someone with Bernard's experience and CV to help move the club forward."

STEFAN MACKLEY

REVAMP FOR SUPER TOURING TROPHY

SALOON CAR CUP

The Super Touring Trophy has been revamped and renamed the Dunlop Saloon Car Cup, and will now feature a wider range of racing saloons from 1970 through to 2006.

The Historic Sports Car Club series will feature three distinct groups of saloon and touring cars – Group 1, Group A and Super Touring/S2000, each with a dedicated podium – and will take in eight races at

four historic racing festivals.

The earlier up-to-1982 Group 1 cars will be able to run on slicks or treaded tyres, with all cars on Dunlop rubber.

The HSCC's Andy Dee-Crowne said: "I am delighted to unveil the Dunlop Saloon Car Cup. It will be home to a fabulous array of period racing saloon and touring cars and we are keen to ensure that each group of cars has its own identity."

PAUL LAWRENCE



JONES

Priaulx: GT move a dream

BRITISH GT

British Formula 4 graduate Seb Priaulx has said that the prospect of becoming a professional driver was too good to turn down after signing a deal to race a Multimatic Motorsports Ford Mustang GT4 in British GT this season.

The 17-year-old showed flashes of promise in his first season of single-seaters in British F4 last year with TRS Arden, finishing seventh in the standings with two wins.

But now he has decided to follow his father Andy, a multiple World Touring Car champion, into sportscar racing, and

confirmed the move after impressing team boss Larry Holt in a test at Snetterton.

"I see a very bright future in Multimatic, Ford and in GT racing – it's a great step for me to be a professional driver," said Priaulx, who has also tested with McLaren. "I'm only 17, so it's a dream come true for me. I'm always expecting to win, that's my main goal, and the car is definitely capable of it."

"There's always some routes to go higher in single-seaters, but it costs a lot of money to get to Formula 3. So to be a professional driver with a manufacturer is the best option for my career."

JAMES NEWBOLD



IN THE HEADLINES

ROCKINGHAM RIPPED UP

Councillors have voted unanimously to tear down the grandstands at Rockingham, following the racetrack's closure in December. All signage directing traffic to the venue is also to be removed. As reported by the BBC, seven car thefts plus six cases of property damage have also necessitated improved security measures.

FUN CUP GETS £10k PRIZE

A £10,000 prize pot is on offer for any new crew that takes a victory during the 2019 Fun Cup season. Alongside the top prize, a second place will earn a new crew £3000, and third £1000. Professional and amateur drivers will be eligible for the prize, provided they have never competed in a Fun Cup race prior to this year.

HOGARTH TO RACE M3

GT racer Paul Hogarth will race his ex-Tim Harvey BMW M3 in selected events this season alongside a programme in the new Ferrari Challenge UK. Hogarth only raced the Labatt's-liveried car once last season, taking a Historic Touring Car victory at the Oulton Park Gold Cup. "It's an iconic livery for me," said the Cheshire-based racer.

MANY MINIS FOR CLASSIC

As many as 50 pre-1966 Minis will race at the Silverstone Classic (July 26-28) to mark the 60th anniversary of the original Mini Minor. Masters Historic Racing will deliver a grid for two sprint races on the Silverstone GP circuit, dedicated to FIA Appendix K-specification Minis. Model specialists including Nick Swift, Nick Padmore and Jonathan Lewis are expected to top the entry.

BROMYARD'S BACK

The Bromyard Speed Festival (below) will return to the Herefordshire town on Sunday April 7 after a year's sabbatical. In what is now planned to be a biennial format. The demonstration sessions around the streets of the market town will feature a raft of classic and period competition cars. A special feature will honour the memory of local racer Barrie 'Whizzo' Williams.



Spire expands to CSCC

MAGNIFICENT SEVENS

Multiple 750MC RGB champion manufacturer Spire Sports Cars will enter the CSCC Magnificent Sevens fray for the first time this season, with new RB7 cars already in build at Spire's Derbyshire base for existing customers John Cutmore and David Watson.

"I'd been planning to retire for a while, but Dave and John were very persuasive," said Spire founder Paul Nightingale. "Some of the components used in the front-engined Bikesports car we ran last year, including much of the frame, are carried over to the RB7. Having worked with the scrutineer to

ensure that it conforms to the series' [Group B motorcycle-engined, Class J] regulations, the project is moving along quickly now and the body is being made. Both cars will be powered by 1440cc Suzuki Hayabusa engines."

Long-time RGB Spire racer and former championship class winner Cutmore already has a bike-engined Caterham, which he tested at Snetterton towards the end of last season.

The Suffolk house builder (who initially raced a Westfield Megablade in RGB) is looking forward to the challenge of developing a new bespoke racer with Nightingale, whose rear-engined GT3 designs he has raced for a decade.

MARCUS PYE



Fiesta class structure is tweaked

BRSCC

The British Racing and Sports Car Club's Ford Fiesta Championship has altered its class structure with the aim of increasing competition at the front of the field.

Previously running four classes for models of various ages, the series will now be headlined by a Championship class for the Mk6 ST and Mk7 Zetec S models. The older Mk3 Si and Mk5 Zetec versions will comprise a new Classic class.

Central to the changes is a move to balance the performance of the Championship class cars. Tuning specialist Pumaspeed has developed a new ECU map and cams that, together with a revised airbox and lower minimum weight, will give the Zetec S a power-to-weight ratio similar to that of the ST. The regulations will allow further weight changes during the season to ensure parity.

Multiple class winner Jon Cooper's Zetec S is the first to be fitted with the upgrade kit and will be available for drivers to test at Brands Hatch later this month.

"It's an open test," said Cooper. "Anyone is more than welcome to drive it and evaluate it for themselves."

"We've gained 20bhp but a good lump of torque as well. We have still got slightly less power [than the ST] but the Zetec S handles and stops a little bit better. The idea is to give you a level overall lap time."

"It may be a bit of trial and error for the first few rounds, but everybody's pulling in the same direction. It's generating more momentum and more interest again."

MARK PAULSON

New Caterham enduro race

BRSCC

The British Racing and Sports Car Club will run a special Caterham endurance race at Silverstone at the start of this season.

The four-hour Caterham Motorsport Team Enduro will take place on the National circuit on March 16 and is open to Roadsport, 270R and 310R models.

To establish a level playing field, drivers will be graded based on their finishing position in past seasons and each team's driver grading total will have to match a pre-determined score.

"We wanted to give them an opportunity to get rid of the winter rust," said BRSCC chairman Peter Daly. "It's something we've been looking to do for a few years. It's an opportunity for drivers moving up a series to race their new cars."

There will also be saloon car and sportscar races. The BRSCC believes the success of the annual Plum Pudding event – where 26 drivers took part in the Saloon Car contests last Boxing Day – indicates that there is a market for races outside the main season.

• The Caterham Seven 420R championship will introduce a 'superpole' qualifying format for this season.

The first part of qualifying will run as normal before the top 10 order will be decided by one flying lap for each driver.

"We've decided this with Caterham and believe it's a good idea to spice it up," said Daly. "The top 10 cars will be released in 15- to 20-second intervals in reverse order to do one flying lap to decide the grid."

STEPHEN LICKORISH

Status boost for VW series

CLASSIC VW CUP

The Classic VW Cup has secured championship status for this season and also plans to introduce a new GT Cup class.

The series was originally part of the Classic Touring Car Racing Club's roster, but for 2018 it became a British Automobile Racing Club category in its own right. Now it will become a championship for the first time and has named Nankang as its control tyre supplier for this season.

"It shows it's coming of age," said series coordinator Ian Fowler. "Anyone can run a series but you can't just go to Motorsport UK and say, 'I want a championship permit'. To get that this year shows the hard work is paying off."

While the main series caters for pre-2003 Volkswagens, Fowler plans to run the new GT Cup class at Silverstone, Snetterton and Anglesey. This is open to all Volkswagen Audi Group cars, and they don't have to meet Classic VW Cup regulations.

STEPHEN LICKORISH





FORMULA 5000 AT 50

The US-born stock-block category left an indelible impression on our man at trackside in period. And it still does

MARCUS PYE

Formula 5000, which celebrates its 50th anniversary in Britain and Europe this year, polarised opinion but left an indelible impression. Fans loved its raw brutality and, in the current era of bland one-make F1 feeder classes, I'm sorry for readers too youthful to have witnessed from trackside the American stock-block V8-engined cars in their rampant pomp. The best provided a proper test for world-class drivers globally.

The ground shook when the monsters bellowed past on full throttle. Like drag racing on this side of the Atlantic, except the top cars came round repeatedly.

Big, brash and colourful, the strongest 302cu Chevrolet-motivated chassis outaccelerated F1 cars. At least until their lighter, nimbler rivals' three-litre engines screamed onto cam and revved into five-figure stratospheres when head to head. Nonetheless, 1969 and '70 F5000 champion Peter Gethin beat 'em in the '73 Race of Champions.

First impressions can be rose-tinted, but September 26 1971 was a red-letter day for me. My father, a guest of road-surfacing giant Tarmac (sponsoring the flaccid 1300cc F100 sportscar series on the programme) took me, an excited 13-year old, to

"THE GROUND SHOOK WHEN THE MONSTERS BELLOWED PAST ON FULL THROTTLE"

Brands Hatch where the European F5000 Championship finale topped the GP circuit bill. In these days of motorhomes and articulated transporters at marathon club meetings, it seems inconceivable that MCD's promotion was a one-day affair.

I showed our hosts the F5000 monsters being prepared in the paddock's quaint old scaffolding market stalls, then steered them back to the Grovewood Suite, adjacent to the startline, for the big race in which some Lancastrian magic unfolded. Despite a broken rear-suspension link, Brian Redman – who would become the greatest driver in the category's history, snaring a hat-trick of US titles in Lolas from 1974-76 – won in Sid Taylor's lumpen Team Castrol McLaren M18. Bolder lappery enabled Brian to wrestle his crippled bolide to the chequered flag, repelling Frank Gardner's works Lola T300, which looked like a spaceship by comparison.

More than 47 years later the Historic Sports Car Club hosted an F5000 reunion at Autosport International last Friday, for

the rebranding of its big-banger single-seater series in which the cars race. Indefatigable entrant Sid Taylor, 1974 champion Bob Evans and six of the living seven top nine '71 finale finishers – Alan Rollinson, Mike Walker, Ray Allen, Gordon Spice, Ian Ashley and Tony Trimmer – were there, interviewed by commentator Ian Titchmarsh. Spencer Elton, recent owner of Terry Sanger's Harrier (classified 13th, last of the 16 starters), was selling memorabilia on an adjacent stand.

Rollinson, in Alan McKechnie's vivid green Surtees TS8, staved off Walker and Allen to bag third. He won at Mallory Park in March '72, in the Lola T300 that Sanger sliced in half there at the Devil's Elbow in '73. The smiling Rollinson and his cousin Steve Thompson (also a race winner) were F5000 stalwarts. Despite battling illness, Alan turned up at ASI in his period overalls, with the Mallory trophy. He was still quick in Thundersports in the '80s, driving Gil Baird's Chevron B19.

Ever-youthful Walker, who'd switched horses from a McLaren M10B to a Lola T192 for 1971, competes still in Historic Formula Junior and is planning a return to 1000cc F3, in which he starred in the '60s. Two years after winning Formula Ford's first race at Brands, Allen piloted the Pink Stamps M10B – the livery of which brought constant ribbings, he recalled – with panache.

Serial Lotus F1 crash survivor Trevor Taylor, who died in 2010, finished sixth at that legendary Brands meeting in a Leda LT25. Behind him future saloon ace Spice in a shoestring-run M10B, and 'Crashley' (who would bow out of F1 after his massive '77 Canadian GP practice shunt, race bikes, and is now a multiple sidecar racing champion) fought hard. Trimmer nursed publican Kaye Griffiths's ailing Surtees TS5A home another lap adrift.

Monaco F3 winner in 1970, Trimmer saddled sub-hopeless F1 Makis in '75 and '76 – 13th in the non-championship Swiss GP at Dijon was his badge for perseverance. Perennially overlooked, he drove Melchester Racing's McLaren M23 for the first time on the eve of Silverstone's '78 International Trophy, then put F1 grandees in their place by chasing Keke Rosberg (Theodore) and Emerson Fittipaldi (Fittipaldi F5A) home third in treacherous conditions. Aurora British F1 champion that year, Tony adores F5000 cars and can still pedal them, as I saw from shadowing him at Brands in 2007 in the Lola T332 I co-owned with Simon Hadfield.

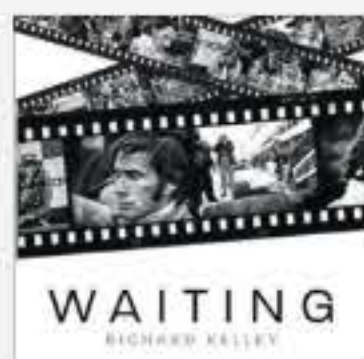
Having raced six F5000s, including two of the six on the HSCC stand at the NEC – the sensational ex-Clive Santo ShellSport Luxembourg Lola T330 and club chairman Frank Lyons's T400 in which I made my last race start at the inaugural Hampton Downs event in New Zealand in 2010 – I'm grateful to have seen them in their heyday. And looking forward to the XL Aurora series visiting Silverstone, Brands Hatch, Anglesey (a first) and Oulton Park this summer. ✽

FINISHING STRAIGHT

IN THE MEDIA • INTRODUCING • ARCHIVE • QUIZ



A PERSONAL TAKE ON



BOOK REVIEW **WAITING** RRP £30.00

"I believe that's the humanity I was trying to preserve back then;

all the laughs, the luck and the laments, with images that tell their story," writes photographer Richard Kelley in the introduction to his book *Waiting*. "It was an immense privilege to have had that chance."

From 1972 through to '84, in what he dubs as 'The Golden Age' of Formula 1, Kelley attended the United States Grand Prix each year. While there, he set about capturing the more emotional side of F1 – showing the drivers' "stories", as he puts it, through his cinematic use of black and white photography. This book is the culmination of that work and contains more than 300 photos.

Kelley demonstrates he was not aiming to capture photos that would be used as "weekend sports headlines", but instead he looked to shoot something more visceral, and more human with his work.

The book is ordered chronologically, with breaks in between the various years to share the more personal stories of several key drivers during that era, including Niki Lauda and James Hunt. At the beginning of each chapter Kelley takes time to contextualise what was happening during that period, focusing on the ever-changing landscape of grand prix racing. He goes on to reflect more personally, often with a mournful tone about many of the drivers who lost their lives, as well as the direction F1 was taking because of rule changes.

Many, but not all the photos, are portraits of drivers and key personnel. They're usually in conversation or preparing themselves (or the cars) for the session ahead. While this might sound mundane



James Hunt enjoys victory in the 1977 US Grand Prix



Niki Lauda in relaxed and less familiar pose

MOTORSPORT IMAGES/PHIPPS

MOTORSPORT IMAGES/PHIPPS



Action imagery, such as Cevert powersliding his Tyrrell, isn't where Kelley's interest lies

PHIPPS
motorsport
IMAGES

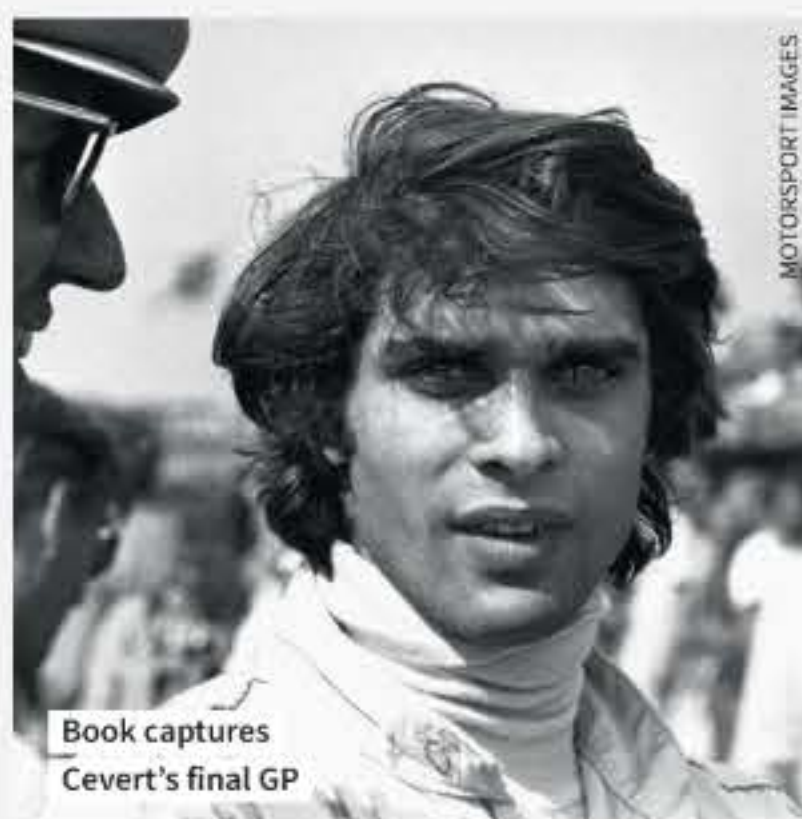
FORMULA 1

compared with the actual racing, it's the nature of the drivers themselves and their dangerous profession that elevates these images, and is what Kelley has attempted to capture. Nowhere is this more apparent than in the chapter devoted to Francois Cevert.

The photos of Cevert are, on the surface, rather ordinary shots of him in a car preparing for qualifying ahead of the 1973 United States Grand Prix at Watkins Glen. What makes these photos extraordinary is the circumstances that followed. Shortly after Kelley captured the shots of Cevert, he died in a fatal accident at the Esses. The ephemeral nature of Kelley's photographs result in truly unique imagery that, taken in conjunction with the stories provided in the book, give a unique outlook into F1 at this time.

To accompany the images, Kelley uses captions with anecdotes and stories about his time in the paddock. If there is a criticism to be made of the book, it's

"KELLEY INSTEAD LOOKED TO CAPTURE SOMETHING MORE VISCERAL AND MORE HUMAN WITH HIS PHOTOGRAPHS"



Book captures Cevert's final GP

MOTORSPORT IMAGES

that at times these captions feel repetitive. Often the chapters devoted to certain drivers will go over familiar facts and tales already related in previous pages.

But this book is not a conventional narrative history of F1 in the 1970s and '80s per se. Rather, and as captured in the quote at the beginning in Kelly's introduction, this book is more about letting the photography shine through and reveal the stories of this age. In that context the overlapping captions can be forgiven. They aren't there to tell the stories of the drivers, they're there purely to provide some context to the photos. It is the images that provide the true narrative.

Waiting is a personal and reflective journey through one of the critical eras in F1, as told in the medium of photography during a time when drivers were a "band of brothers" living, racing and dying alongside each other in the pursuit of glory.

AMANDA SMITH

YouTube

youtube.com/AUTOSPORTdotcom



There has been a major shake-up in the World Rally Championship ahead of 2019. The official season launch at Autosport International offered a first chance for fans to see Sebastien Ogier back in Citroen overalls and the manufacturer's familiar colours giving way to Red Bull branding. M-Sport has given the Ford Fiesta WRC a fresh coat of paint, and Kris Meeke has returned to the epicentre of rallying thanks to Tommi Makinen and Toyota. Watch the cars being unveiled by visiting <http://bit.ly/WRClaunch2019>

WHAT'S ON

INTERNATIONAL MOTORSPORT

Dakar Rally

Lima, Peru

January 7-17



RED BULL

Race Of Champions

Mexico City, Mexico

January 19-20

Toyota Racing Series

Round 2/5

Teretonga, New Zealand

January 19-20

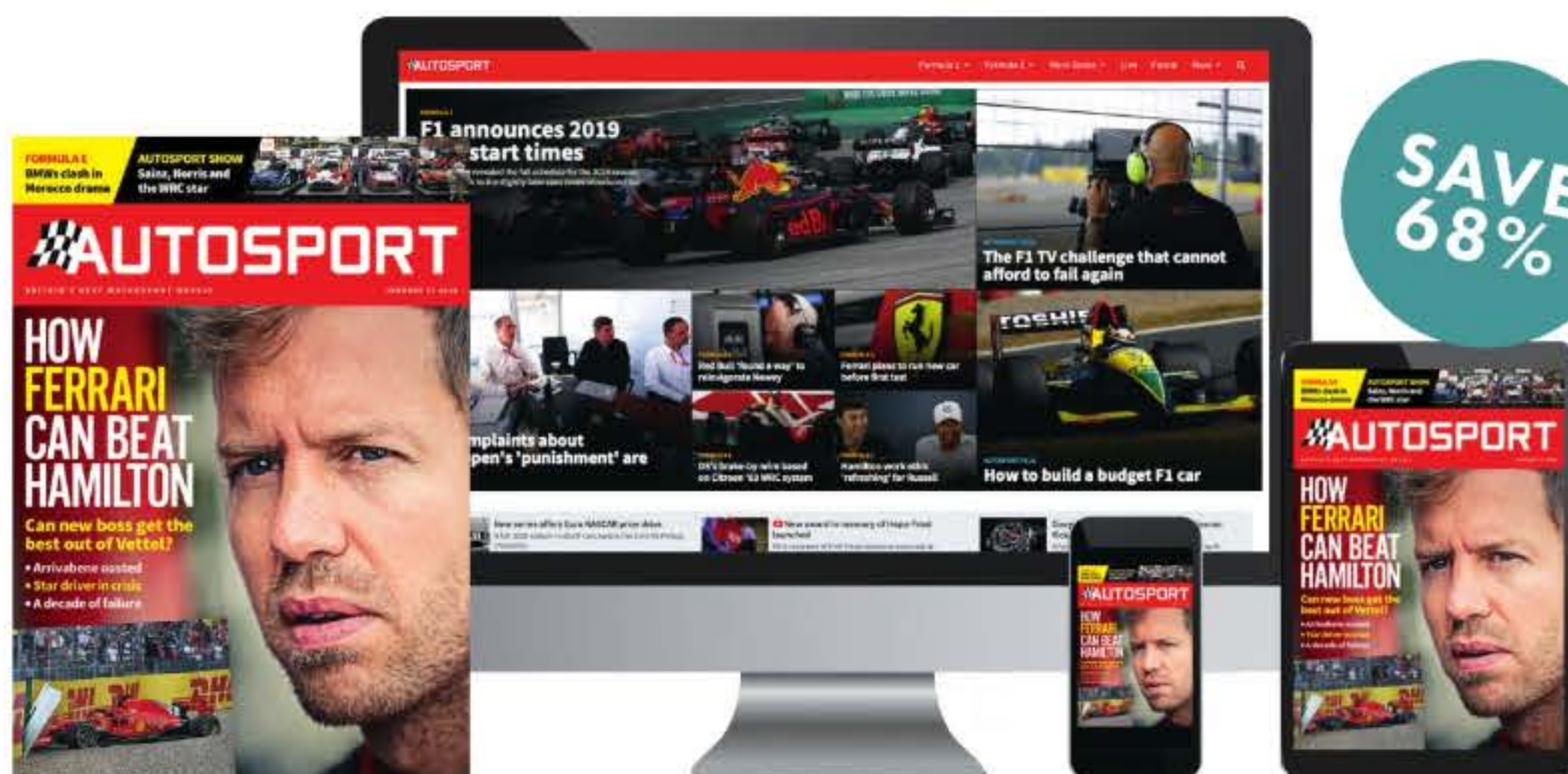
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STAT

514

points in maiden
K&N Pro Series
West season

INTRODUCING

ALL PICS: NKP
motorsport
IMAGES

HAILIE DEEGAN

Stock car rising star aims for heights of success that will render her gender irrelevant

TOM ERRINGTON

Last year, Kevin Harvick made a cameo at California's Kern County for the season-opening K&N Pro Series West race — effectively the final stock car tier before joining the third-level NASCAR Trucks series on the way up to the flagship Cup championship.

Late in the race, Harvick found a better exit onto the oval's back straight and shot to the inside of the #19 Toyota Camry.

Quick thinking from the Camry's driver, Hailie Deegan, allowed her to cut across the bow of Harvick, with the 2014 Cup champion nudging back.

Harvick eventually finished fourth in a race won by Derek Kraus, but the attention was firmly on the seventh-placed Toyota, as driven by 17-year-old Deegan in what was just her third race at that level.

"She has a lot of potential," was Harvick's take.

For those who follow American racing, Deegan is a recognisable name — largely through her father Brian, an X Games motocross legend who has dabbled in racing. By the end of 2018, Deegan was

also the first female winner in the West series, had a further two podiums and a brace of pole positions.

Deegan's big opportunity to impress came in 2017 after she made a chance phone call to team owner Lee McCall, asking to test one of his K&N Pro cars.

She convinced him to let her drive a Toyota against two-time series champion and Kyle Busch-backed driver Todd Gilliland. By the end of her test day, Deegan was lapping fastest of the two.

Slots in the Toyota driver development programme and the NASCAR Next scheme were her rewards. Both will steer and develop her talent and career, and Toyota has already produced several Cup racers.

"The Toyota programme is really what's got me into stock car racing," says Deegan. "I was an off-road racer before they sought me out and tested me and put me with the Late Model team and K&N team. Without them I wouldn't be a stock car racer."

Readers of Autosport are unlikely to hear from Deegan before 2020, when she should step up into the Truck series. But after that, expect to hear her name mentioned more and more.

"In the NASCAR world people have accomplished a lot of things because it's been around for a long time, but there hasn't been a girl to win," she says.

"But in the end, I also want to be the best driver and not just the best girl." ❧



CV

Age	17
2018	5th in NASCAR K&N Pro Series West, four races in NASCAR K&N Pro Series East
2017	Two races in CARS Super Late Model Tour
2016	Modified Kart national champion
2015	Modified Kart regional champion
2013	Junior Karts 2 champion – first female Lucas Oil Off Road Racing Series champion

"I WANT TO BE THE BEST DRIVER AND NOT JUST THE BEST GIRL"





FINISHING STRAIGHT

Jacky Ickx and Claude Brasseur's Porsche 911 SC RS (also known as a 953) is seen through the dense foliage of the north-west African flora on the route of the 1984 Paris-Dakar Rally.

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FROM THE ARCHIVE

The four-wheel-drive Porsche 911 SC RS (also known as a 953) of Jacky Ickx and co-driver Claude Brasseur is framed by the north-west African flora on the route of the 1984 Paris-Dakar Rally, which had been extended through Ivory Coast, Guinea, Sierra Leone and Mauritania. Ickx's car, which finished sixth, was one of three entered by Porsche for its first attack on the gruelling enduro. His team-mates Rene Metge and Dominique Lemoyne won the event, and the Roland Kussmaul/Erich Lerner 911, which had acted chiefly as a support car, was 26th.

McKLEIN PHOTOGRAPHY

TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

QUIZ

WHO, WHAT, WHERE, WHEN?



WHO IS THIS?

This crowd-pleasing trailblazer plumed the lowest lows and scaled the highest heights before coming up short against a familiar foe.

He was a little gem in the early days, but it was only when given the chance to join a proven winner that he came to prominence. National success led to international outings and he starred around some ancient ruins.

Despite lack of factory support he conquered the world, but the sands were shifting and he had only half the drive needed. A move into the lion's den brought instant and sustained success until it was brought to a sudden and devastating stop.

After a long absence he took on the most gruelling challenge and prevailed, and danced his way to the sun in record-breaking style.

Outings would become part-time as he diversified into the affairs of cities. This led to him taking on his former boss for the top job, where he was soundly beaten.

ON THIS DAY

1 Which Frenchman took his only F1 points on this day in the 1954 Argentinian GP?

2 There were five Argentinian racers in that 1954 race. Name them.

3 One-time world championship GP starter John Riseley-Prichard was born on this day in 1924. Where did that one race take place?

4 Which driver took part in his only F1 test on this day in 2008 for Renault?

5 Richard Burns was born on this day in 1971. Where did he claim the first of his 10 World Rally Championship wins?

NAME THE HELMET



LAST WEEK'S ANSWERS

Who, what, where, when Boy Hayje, Penske-Ford PC3, Zandvoort, August 29 1976. **Who is this?** Juan Manuel Fangio. **On this day** 1) Paul Ricard. 2) Wolf. 3) 43.8s. 4) Jaime Alguersuari. 5) Marco Andretti. **Name the helmet** Huub Rothengatter.

IN NEXT WEEK'S ISSUE



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