

F1 The tech upgrades that brought Ferrari victory



Le Mans What next for the new hypercar era?

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26 SEPTEMBER 2019

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How Vettel stole Leclerc's Singapore GP

'Seb's strategy was more powerful than we expected'

MATTIA BINOTTO



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AWARD FINALISTS
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Our search for the next British F1 star

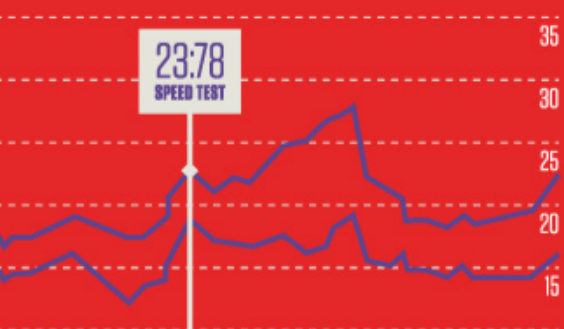


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Good fortune that could be a stroke of luck for Formula 1

On the face of it, Ferrari did Sebastian Vettel a huge favour in the Singapore Grand Prix last weekend at the expense of Charles Leclerc, its new star. But, as Edd Straw shows on page 16, the strategy that swapped the two red cars at the front of the field was forced on the team by circumstances and nobody expected the pace gain on fresh rubber to be *quite* that significant.

While the result will be frustrating to Leclerc and his fans, it's probably good for Formula 1. With any luck, the victory will finally arrest Vettel's slide into a supporting-cast role, which seemed to be gaining momentum. Having two competitive Ferraris can only be a good thing. And now just six points cover Leclerc, Max Verstappen and Vettel in the fight for third in the drivers' table.

Perhaps even more encouraging is that Ferrari was right on the pace on a high-downforce circuit. The upgrade (see p11) it brought unexpectedly put the SF90 right at the front on a very different track to high-speed Spa and Monza.

Lewis Hamilton, who could consider himself unfortunate to have finished off the podium at Marina Bay, is almost certain to be world champion (again) this year – he extended his lead to 65 points with six rounds to go. But, with Ferrari showing promising signs of being on the right development path and F1 having already had some good races this year, the hopes of a proper battle in 2020 are increasing.

- Congratulations to the four finalists who have been selected to fight it out for the 2019 Aston Martin Autosport BRDC Young Driver of the Year Award (p8). The tests will be demanding, but we hope they'll also be rewarding as we search for Britain's next F1 star.



Kevin Turner

Kevin Turner
Editor

kevin.turner@autosport.com

**NEXT WEEK
3 OCTOBER**

Can Ferrari continue
its winning run
in Russia?



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Motorsport Images/Dunbar; Giorgio Piola

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IMAGES

GROSJEAN DEAL PUTS HULKENBERG IN DOUBT

FORMULA 1

Two more pieces of the driver-market puzzle slotted into place at last weekend's Singapore Grand Prix, with Haas announcing that Romain Grosjean will remain at the team in 2020 alongside Kevin Magnussen, and Robert Kubica revealing he will not continue with Williams.

The Haas decision means that the Formula 1 future of Nico Hulkenberg, who will be replaced by Esteban Ocon at Renault next year and missed out to Grosjean for the Haas drive, is in doubt. Only four teams have yet to confirm their line-ups — Williams, Alfa Romeo and the two Red Bull squads — meaning the 32-year-old German has few opportunities.

Red Bull wants to run its current quartet, with its driver-programme boss Helmut Marko saying that Daniil Kyvat will stay at Toro Rosso, and that the decision for the Red Bull drive alongside Max Verstappen is between incumbent Alex Albon and Pierre Gasly. Hulkenberg would only be a contender here should Red Bull need to bring a driver in from outside. That's a very long shot.

This leaves Williams and Alfa Romeo. Williams already has Mercedes-contracted George Russell signed for 2020, but will likely require a second driver with budget. Hulkenberg said in Singapore that he cannot offer any financial backing to a team.

Williams deputy team principal Claire Williams said Hulkenberg could be of interest, although admitted commercial considerations are also part of the equation. Formula 2 frontrunner Nicholas Latifi, the team's test driver, is well-placed given his backing, but needs to complete this season to ensure he has sufficient superlicence points to qualify to race in F1.

"It's not an easy predicament that we're in when it comes to that second seat and our financial considerations," said Williams. "But that's not to say that we can't potentially make a driver work that doesn't come with backing. We haven't had any conversations with Nico, though. Someone of Nico's competence or capability is always going to appeal to a team."

A return to the Alfa Romeo team, which Hulkenberg raced for in its Sauber guise in 2013, is the most likely option and would reunite him with team principal Frederic Vasseur, whose ART Grand Prix squad ran him to the Formula 3 Euro Series title in 2008 and the GP2 Series crown in 2009. But with Kimi Raikkonen already under contract, Hulkenberg would need to be backed by Ferrari, which has control of the second seat currently occupied by Antonio Giovinazzi.

Ferrari has made it clear it supports Giovinazzi, although team principal Mattia Binotto suggested that the Italian needs to consistently turn his speed into results in the coming races to ensure he can continue. Tenth place in Singapore despite a poor strategy, two weeks after finishing ninth at Monza, will help his cause, but he has scored only four points to Raikkonen's 31.

"We are really focused with Antonio," said Vasseur. "He had an off at Spa but a recovery a week after at Monza. We want to help him develop and improve. He is doing step by step a good job."

Hulkenberg has admitted that his 2020 prospects are largely out of his hands, meaning he can now only play the waiting game and ensure his performances at Renault are as strong as possible. He stressed that he saw Haas's decision to keep Grosjean coming, with team principal Gunther Steiner confirming that a formal contract offer was never made to Hulkenberg.



Steiner stressed the decision was not a financial one, although Hulkenberg would surely have come at a greater cost than Grosjean.

"It was a close call," said Steiner. "I like him and he's a good driver but in the end we decided to stay with Romain. He is with the team for four years, we know his highs and his lows. Changing the driver now, I don't know if it would help us make the car better."

Kubica's decision not to continue with Williams did not come as a surprise, given he was expected not to have the opportunity to remain after a difficult comeback season. He stressed that he wants to race next season, and with no realistic chance of racing in F1 that means a move to another series — most likely the DTM — is his best shot.

Kubica has held discussions with teams about a simulator role in F1, although stressed that he would only consider this alongside a racing programme and on a limited basis. "I would say low chance," he said about a full-blown simulator role. "I don't see myself, after working hard for being back racing at a high level, closing myself in a dark room for a hundred days and driving in the loop, unless the simulator is next to my house. I am not excluding it, but I would say just this is very low chance."

EDD STRAW



Why Evans reckons Jaguar can shoot for electric title

FORMULA E

Mitch Evans has recommitted to the Jaguar ABB FIA Formula E Championship squad and hopes a "whole new package" for the 2019-20 season can land him and the manufacturer a first FE title in the electric single-seater category.

New Zealander Evans has opted to stay with the squad where he made his FE debut in the 2016-17 championship after a race-winning stint in GP2 despite having "a lot of interest" from other teams for the upcoming campaign. He says it was a "no-brainer" decision to stay with Jaguar, where he will be on a rolling season-by-season deal.

Since its disastrous FE debut in 2016-17, Jaguar has made steps in performance in each subsequent season. It scored a podium and a pole during the 2017-18 campaign and then took its first win with Evans at the Rome round in 2018-19. That season was the first time Evans was in the title hunt, and he was in contention until the final race before Jean-Eric Vergne was crowned, only for a last-lap-of-the-season crash with Audi's Lucas di Grassi to potentially cost him a higher final position.

But Evans contends that last season could have ended in a more obviously positive way had Jaguar not gone "down the wrong direction" on its development path and ended up in "a lot of dark moments". He says the team

only pulled out of its slump after he finished ninth at Sanya — incidentally the final race of his former team-mate Nelson Piquet Jr's time with Jaguar — and it opted to abandon the package path it had picked after the early races. From there came Evans's win in Rome, which visibly eased the pressure on the team, and a brace of second places in Bern — where he pushed Vergne hard for the win — and the first New York race. That American performance was arguably the drive of the season as he charged from 13th on the grid, pulling off a series of bold moves to stay in title contention.

This time around, Evans explains that Jaguar has learned from what went wrong in 2018-19 and made "a big change from last year" with its powertrain, which he hopes has the "little 0.5 to 1% differences that are going to make the difference".

The 25-year-old also feels the breakthrough in Rome will aid Jaguar's 2019-20 plans, adding: "We've got runs on the board at least and that's really important for everybody's confidence in the team, and my confidence as well. That first win in Rome was extremely important. The dream for me is to reward them with a championship."

Jaguar will formally launch its team on 2 October, when Evans's 2019-20 team-mate is set to be revealed.

ALEX KALINAUCKAS

FIA begins investigation into Hubert fatality



FORMULA 2

The cars involved in Anthoine Hubert's fatal Formula 2 accident at Spa last month have been received by the FIA following Belgian police investigations, allowing the governing body to begin its examination.

Arden driver Hubert spun trying to avoid an accident triggered by Giuliano Alesi losing the rear end of his Trident-run car at Eau Rouge. Hubert hit the barriers at the exit of Raidillon and cannoned back towards the track, and Sauber Junior Team racer Juan Manuel Correa was unable to avoid him.

Correa suffered serious leg injuries in the impact and has breathing issues. He came

off a life-support machine last week but faces extensive surgery on his legs in what was described in a statement released last week as a "race against time" to be strong enough to undergo the surgery required.

The FIA confirmed after the crash that an investigation would take place into the incident, with Formula 1 race director Michael Masi saying there would be no duration placed upon it.

Trident, Arden and the Charouz-run Sauber Junior Team all ran with one car in the following round at Monza. But each team has a spare chassis, and these have been shipped to Sochi for this weekend's penultimate round of the F2 season.

Sauber Junior Team and Trident have confirmed 2017 Formula V8 3.5 runner-up Matevos Isaakyan and F2 regular Ralph Boschung respectively for Sochi, while 2017 F2 runner-up Artem Markelov returns to the series with Arden.

"First of all I want to give my best to the family of Anthoine," said Markelov. "This guy was not only a good driver, he was a great man who was happy all the time and always gave us a smile. He showed everyone his talent. Thanks to the team for trusting me in this situation and I'm going to do my best for them. We are going to drive together in memory of Anthoine."

JACK BENYON

Anderstorp joins Monza on DTM schedule

DTM

The DTM has announced a new-look calendar for 2020 that includes first visits to Monza and Anderstorp, with one "exciting" addition still to be confirmed.

The two new venues will host races in June, with 1970s Swedish Grand Prix track Anderstorp's round on 13-14 June and Monza's two weeks later.

Brands Hatch stays on the

schedule on 22-23 August, while the series hosts its opening round on 25-26 April at 2019 returnee Zolder – the first time the curtain raiser has not been at Hockenheim since the DTM was revived in 2000.

DTM boss Gerhard Berger said: "I'm delighted that DTM will be racing in Sweden for the very first time. It's an exciting addition for us. And, personally, I have some

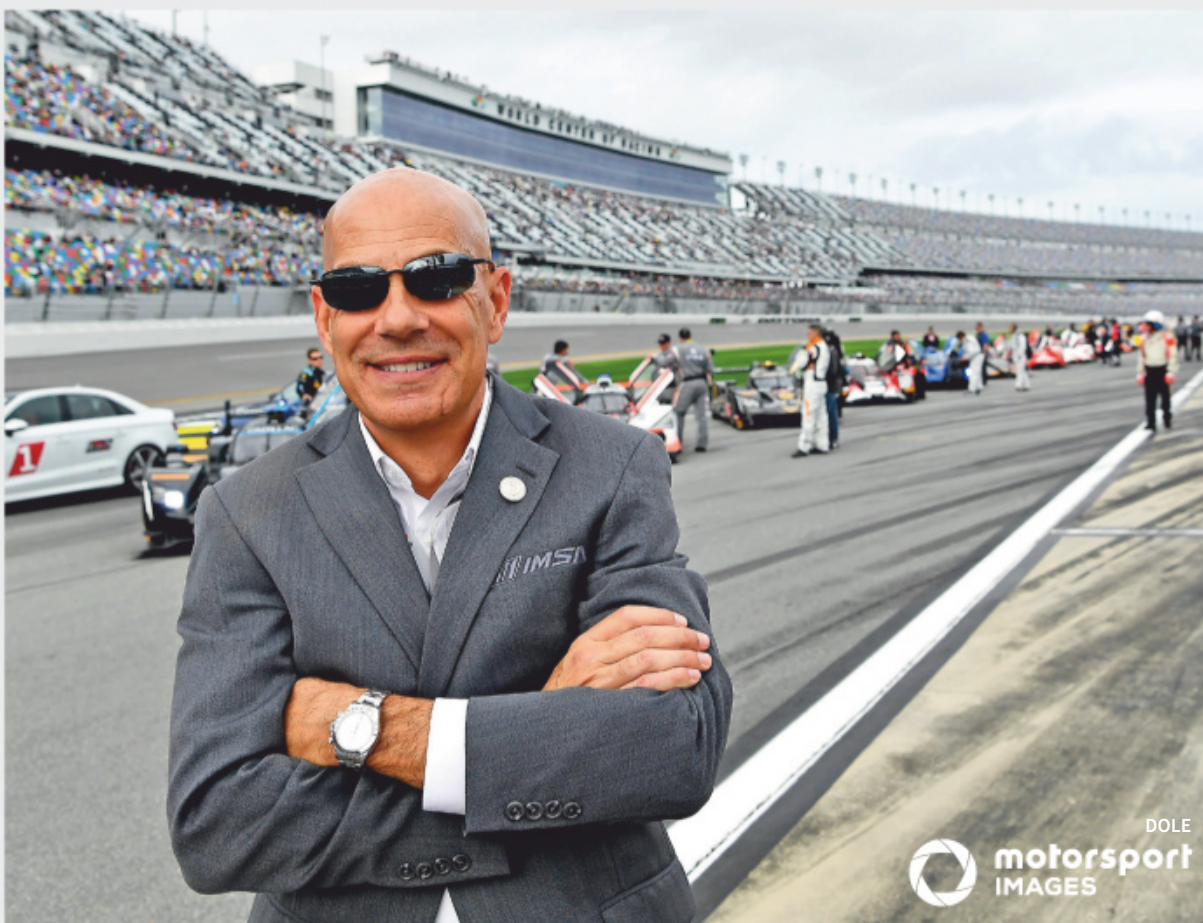
very fond memories of Anderstorp: I raced a Schnitzer BMW 635 CSi there in the 1980s – it's a really fantastic track."

The DTM's visit is the first appearance for Anderstorp on a top-level schedule since the World Touring Car Championship raced there in 2007 (right).

The retention of Brands comes after discussions with Silverstone for the UK date.

TOM ERRINGTON





Atherton stands down at IMSA

IMSA SPORTSCAR

Scott Atherton, a calming hand on the tiller of North American sportscar racing for 20 years, is standing down at the end of this year. He is relinquishing the presidency of IMSA with the series that bears its name in good health.

It's difficult to disagree with Atherton's claim that helping to steer sportscar racing through the takeover of the American Le Mans Series by the France family has been his biggest achievement. What emerged, the series we now know as the IMSA SportsCar Championship, truly is a merger between the ALMS and the Frances' Grand-American Road Racing Series.

Atherton had been at the helm of the ALMS as CEO of the Panoz Motor Sports Group, always the good cop to the bad cop that late series owner Don Panoz could quite often be. Over the course of 2012, Grand-Am boss Jim France made an approach aimed at unifying sportscar racing in North America.

"Having started that dialogue myself with Jim France approaching me, the two of us had some very private offsite meetings even before I raised it to Don's attention," said Atherton. "Really having the outline of what a merged entity would be, scribbled out on a yellow pad, before going in to talk to Don about what could happen, without question that is the highlight."

That process resulted in the creation of what was initially called the United

SportsCar Championship for the 2014 season. "I would say the second highlight is the outcome of that merger and what we've been able to do as a whole since then," he added. "I'm confident that we'll continue to grow and prosper – it's never been in a better place."

There have been lows for Atherton too, through the ALMS years. Not least when Audi, a fixture in the championship since 2000, withdrew ahead of the 2009 season.

"It was Thanksgiving Day when my cellphone rang, and I looked down at the screen and it was Dr [Wolfgang] Ullrich," recalled Atherton. "The first words were, 'Scott, there's something wrong with your phone system – I keep trying to dial your office.' I explained to him that it was Thanksgiving Day holiday here in the States. He paused for about one second and said, 'Well, unfortunately I have bad news: I'm calling to tell you that Audi is withdrawing from the ALMS.'"

Atherton, who turns 60 early next year, isn't walking away from IMSA. The man who formerly ran the Laguna Seca, Nazareth and Fontana circuits will remain on the board of directors and will continue to handle its relations with the Automobile Club de l'Ouest, organiser of the Le Mans 24 Hours.

IMSA has already decided on Atherton's successor and an announcement will be made in the wake of the Petit Le Mans series finale at Road Atlanta next month.

GARY WATKINS

IN THE HEADLINES

SCHUMACHER'S FIA F3 DEBUT

David Schumacher, the son of Formula 1 race winner Ralf, will make his FIA Formula 3 debut this weekend at the Sochi finale. Schumacher, a race winner in Formula Regional this season, replaces the injured Alex Peroni at Campos Racing. Also on the grid in Russia will be Macanese teenager Charles Leong. The Asian F3 racer will pilot a Jenzer Motorsport car and hopes to contest the Macau Grand Prix. Two-time Macau GP winner Dan Ticktum, dropped by the Red Bull Junior programme in June, is also seeking a return to the Far East classic after making his comeback in FRegional last weekend at Barcelona.

TORDOFF, HAMILTON OUT

British Touring Car Championship star Sam Tordoff has relinquished his AmD Tuning Honda Civic for the final two rounds at Silverstone and Brands Hatch following the passing away of his baby son. Mike Bushell will again fill the seat, as he did last time out at Knockhill. Nicolas Hamilton, brother of Lewis, is also off the grid due to sponsorship issues preventing him taking the wheel of his Motorbase Performance Ford Focus.

BUTCHER IS 'OLYMPIAN'

BTCC race winner Rory Butcher will represent the UK in the touring car element of the Olympics-style Motorsport Games at Vallelunga in November. Butcher is down to drive an MG6 from the Chinese TCR series in a deal brokered by Rob Huff.

CARS IN AT SILVERSTONE

The Silverstone Experience, a £20million new visitor attraction created in a restored WW2 Wellington Bomber hangar at the circuit, has begun moving in exhibits ahead of its opening on 25 October. Cars and bikes from the past 80 years raced at Silverstone by legends including Nigel Mansell and Barry Sheene will be on display, alongside trophies, helmets, suits and signing-on sheets. The Silverstone Experience will be home to the BRDC archive in a brand new research and collections centre.





MOTORSPORT IMAGES/MAUGER

Finalists selected for Aston Martin Autosport BRDC Award

YOUNG DRIVER OF THE YEAR

The four finalists who will contest the 2019 Aston Martin Autosport BRDC Young Driver of the Year Award have been selected.

Japanese Formula 3 Championship race winner Enaam Ahmed, W Series and MRF Challenge champion Jamie Chadwick, and BRDC Formula 3 frontrunners Johnathan Hoggard and Ayrton Simmons are the finalists. Only Ahmed has been selected before, in 2017.

There will be fitness and simulator elements at Aston Martin Red Bull Racing before a two-day test at the Silverstone

Grand Prix circuit in MotorSport Vision Formula 2, Ligier LMP3 and Garage 59-run Aston Martin Vantage GT3 machinery.

Prizes for the winner, who will be announced at the Autosport Awards on 8 December, include a test in a Red Bull Formula 1 car, £200,000, a run in Aston Martin's GTE World Endurance Championship challenger, full BRDC membership and an Arai helmet. All finalists will also receive a TAG Heuer watch.

British Racing Drivers' Club vice-president Derek Warwick is the chairman of the judging panel, which includes Award

winners Darren Turner, Andrew Kirkaldy and Alexander Sims, double British Touring Car champion Jason Plato, successful Lola and McLaren designer Mark Williams, Le Mans-winning engineer Leena Gade, leading commentator Ian Titchmarsh and Autosport magazine editor Kevin Turner.

Aston Martin is a new partner for the Award, which has previously been won by 2009 F1 world champion Jenson Button, 13-time grand prix winner David Coulthard, current F1 drivers Lando Norris and George Russell, triple Indianapolis 500 winner Dario Franchitti, and 2014 World Endurance champion Anthony Davidson.

THE CONTENDERS



RCNEW PHOTOGRAPHY

ENAAM AHMED Aged 19 3rd in Japanese F3 with B-Max with Motopark

It's been a familiar car for Ahmed this year, but a different culture. After a race-winning F3 European Championship campaign, he has switched to Japan and is third in points – with two wins – with one round left. Also made a Euroformula Open cameo at Silverstone, taking second in both races.



MOTORSPORT IMAGES/TRENITZ

JAMIE CHADWICK Aged 21 1st in W Series; 1st in MRF Challenge

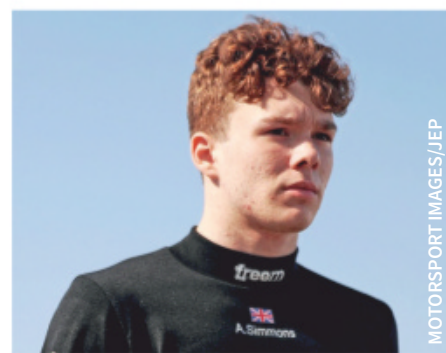
An impressive victory in the Indian-run MRF Challenge upgraded Chadwick from a likely frontrunner in W Series to surefire title contender. She lived up to this by bursting out of the blocks with a win in the inaugural Hockenheim race, also topped the podium at Misano, and was never headed in the points.



MOTORSPORT IMAGES/JEP

JOHNATHAN HOGGARD Aged 18 2nd in BRDC British F3 with Fortec Motorsports

Third in British F4 last year – and the form man at the end of the season – Hoggard remained with Fortec for the step up to F3 and was on the pace immediately. His tally of seven wins is far greater than anyone else's, but he lost the title to the consistent Clement Novalak on reversed-grid results.

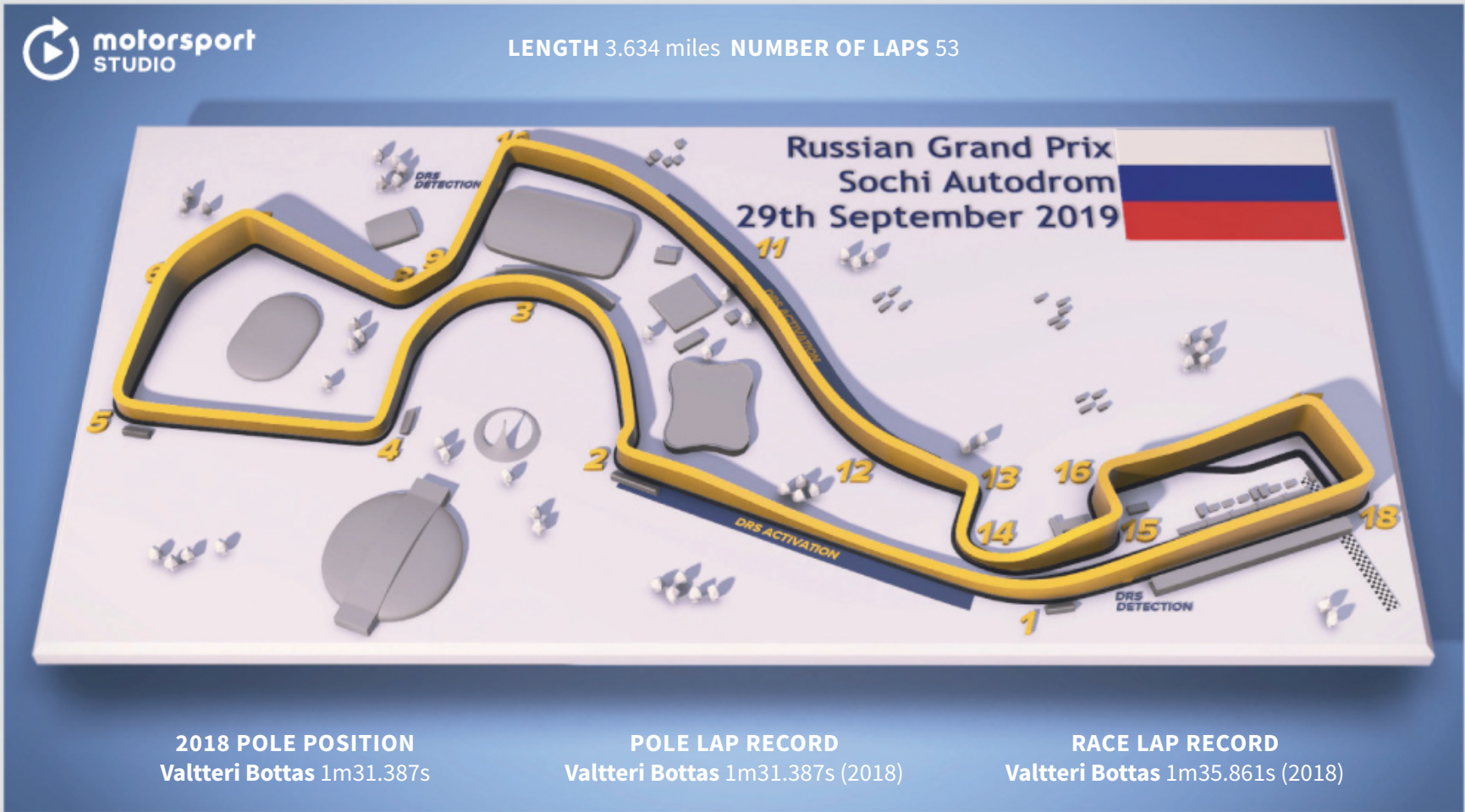


MOTORSPORT IMAGES/JEP

AYRTON SIMMONS Aged 18 3rd in BRDC British F3 with Chris Dittmann Racing

After a toe in the water in British F3 last year, the 2018 British F4 runner-up stepped up full-time with the small Dittmann team. Simmons proved a star of the season, staying in the championship hunt until the finale and, like Hoggard, scoring more race wins than Novalak. Has also raced in Asian F3.

F1 RUSSIAN GRAND PRIX PREVIEW



UK START TIMES

Friday 27 September

FP1 0900

FP2 1300

Saturday 28 September

FP3 1000

QUALIFYING 1300

Sunday 29 September

RACE 1210

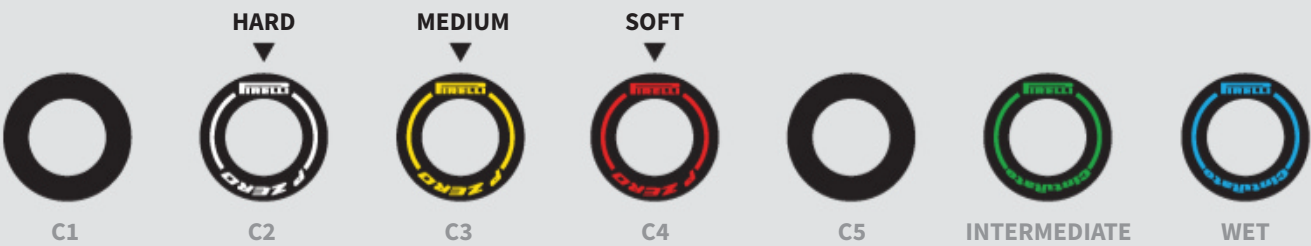
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TYRE ALLOCATION



CHAMPIONSHIP

Drivers

1	Hamilton	296
2	Bottas	231
3	Leclerc	200
4	Verstappen	200
5	Vettel	194

Constructors

1	Mercedes	527
2	Ferrari	394
3	Red Bull	289
4	McLaren	89
5	Renault	67



RACE STATS

Previous winners

2018	Lewis Hamilton	Mercedes
2017	Valtteri Bottas	Mercedes
2016	Nico Rosberg	Mercedes
2015	Lewis Hamilton	Mercedes
2014	Lewis Hamilton	Mercedes
1914	Willy Scholl	Benz
1913	Georgy Suvorin	Benz



Sochi masters

Average points per race Sochi from the current F1 drivers.	Hamilton	21.00
	Bottas	14.00
	Vettel	11.00
	Raikkonen	9.60
	Leclerc	6.00
	Perez	5.40
	Verstappen	5.25
	Magnussen	5.00
	Ricciardo	2.80
	Kvyat	2.50



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0 - 160 KPH 5.0 sec*
MAX SPEED 300kph*

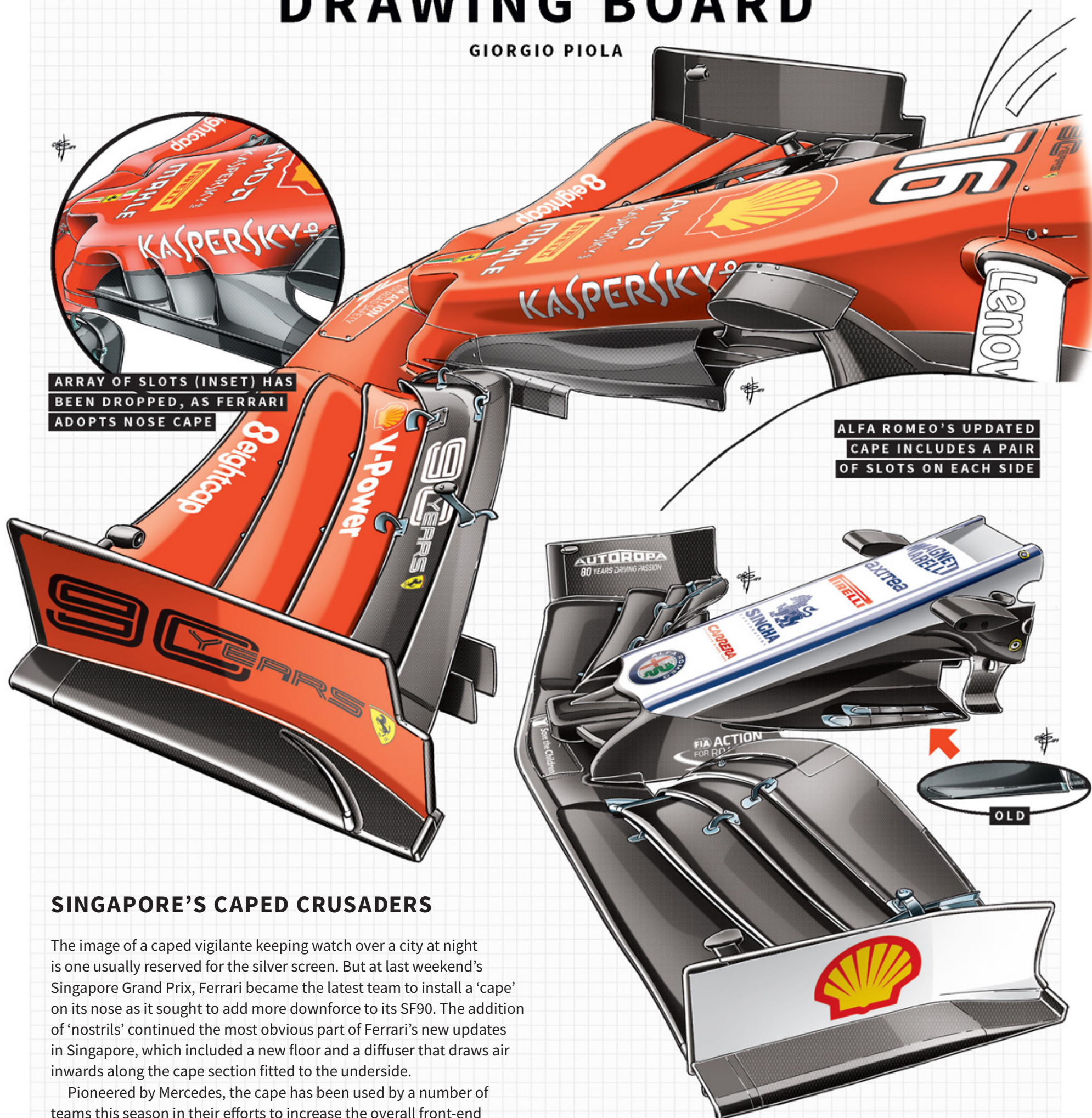
*Subject to conditions and aero configuration

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GIORGIO PIOLA



SINGAPORE'S CAPED CRUSADERS

The image of a caped vigilante keeping watch over a city at night is one usually reserved for the silver screen. But at last weekend's Singapore Grand Prix, Ferrari became the latest team to install a 'cape' on its nose as it sought to add more downforce to its SF90. The addition of 'nostrils' continued the most obvious part of Ferrari's new updates in Singapore, which included a new floor and a diffuser that draws air inwards along the cape section fitted to the underside.

Pioneered by Mercedes, the cape has been used by a number of teams this season in their efforts to increase the overall front-end downforce, and Ferrari has now followed suit. The inclination of the nostrils' leading edge forces airflow passing underneath to take a longer path to match the air speed above, and hence creates a lower-pressure area to limit any effects of lift.

In addition, the cape is also shaped to link up with the bargeboards further down the car and, as a result, the front-wing mounting pylons have changed, losing the array of slots. Although there will be less control over the airflow here, the cape section offers different options in managing the air moving underneath the chassis bulkhead.

Equipped with greater downforce, Ferrari didn't suffer from its usual lack of performance on a high-downforce circuit, instead looking at ease with the point-and-squirt nature of the corners and adeptly absorbing the bumps of Marina Bay.

Alfa Romeo also enjoyed an update to its cape in Singapore. The team's cape has been part of the C38's front end for a number of rounds, but now includes a pair of slots on each side to provide airflow with an opportunity to transition outwards. This helps to break up the cape to reduce any separation effects, while also boosting the interaction with the bargeboards further down the car.

Maximising load from the aerodynamics is crucial around a street circuit, and a mixture of medium and low-speed corners requires differing levels of aero sensitivity. Having a predictable front end offers a driver more confidence when turning in and, when tackling Singapore's wealth of 90-degree corners, it's a vital characteristic to have.

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The enigma of Romain Grosjean

The Haas team has chosen to retain the services of a driver who confounds almost as much with his high points as his off days. For some that's a key part of his appeal

EDD STRAW

Romain Grosjean is one of the most infuriatingly brilliant drivers in the history of grand prix racing. Brilliant because he's as fast as anyone when things are right and has produced some scintillating drives during his decade in Formula 1; infuriating because he is an erratic, mercurial performer whose average performance level falls short of the sum of his parts.

The 33-year-old is unlikely ever to perform at the top end of his ability day-in, day-out. If that were possible he'd have reached that promised land by now and therefore emerged as one of the best drivers in F1. Instead, he's a curate's egg of a driver. Judge him by his best days and he's outstanding; use his worst days and he is poor. He evens out at somewhere in the middle over a season.

The Haas team's decision to keep on this exasperating performer alongside Kevin Magnussen next year came as a surprise, and triggered a predictable torrent of gifs, witticisms and, reprehensibly, abuse on social media. But setting aside the potential consequences for Nico Hulkenberg, who now faces an uncertain future having seemed to be the favoured candidate to take the seat, Grosjean staying on is good for F1 — although George Russell may well disagree given what happened in Singapore.

That doesn't mean Grosjean isn't very fortunate to keep his seat. Despite the team's emotional ties to a driver who has delivered its best results and has been there from the start, there were those who

“He's the latest in a long line of drivers who make grand prix racing a more interesting place”

believed it was time to move on. Perhaps — even though the team has denied this — pay requirements played a part in Hulkenberg not being offered a deal, or maybe it really was the positives he brings that tipped the balance. Whatever, few would have challenged Gunther Steiner and Gene Haas had they made the change.

But whatever the rationale, Haas and Grosjean are stuck with each other. So what driver has Haas kept on — the outstanding one, or the disastrous one? The answer is both, for the evidence now seems conclusive that you cannot have one without the other. Just as it would be ridiculous to absolve Grosjean of all his on-track sins and focus only on the good, so too is it unfair to do what many do and sieve out the positive performances and leave only the bad.

Grosjean is still the driver who led the 2013 Japanese Grand Prix against the run of play during a second half of the season with

Lotus where he tantalisingly did appear to achieve his potential. He was the only driver to hold a candle to Sebastian Vettel during that phase of the season and could easily have come away with a win.

He has eight podium finishes for a reason, and has also done some great things for Haas, not least those two top-six finishes in its first two races and a great run to fourth place in Austria last year. And who can forget that terrific drive to third at Spa in 2015 in a Lotus that had no business being in such a position?

But he is also still the driver who shunted in the Silverstone pitlane this year, the one who has crashed both on a lap to the grid and under the safety car — after accidentally knocking the brake-bias switch to maximum rearwards in Baku in 2018 — and who was banned from a race for triggering a start shunt at Spa in 2012.

He's part of a proud tradition of racing drivers — the ones with great ability but who are unable to string it together. It's impossible to know the reasons for this save for the fact that it will be in some way mental, despite the work he's done with a sports psychologist.

He's offered glimpses of the driver he might have been. Perhaps he would have reached and stayed at that level had he remained in a big, well-established team such as Lotus was at times in 2012-13 before the money dried up. But that wasn't the path his career took.

If we know exactly what we are going to get from Grosjean next year, why is it a good thing he's still around? Some would argue that he's had his time and should let some other deserving driver take his place. But Grosjean can stay around as long as he can find a drive. Haas knows it will get some very good weekends out of him.

He's the latest in a long line of drivers who make grand prix racing a more interesting place. Unpredictable but very quick, capable of great things on their day, the Jean-Pierre Jarriers, the Jarno Trullis, the Jean Alesis have had such an impact. You can also always hope such drivers will produce something remarkable.

After all, Grosjean has had great days with Haas. In races where the team has been all at sea, often it's Magnussen who has been thrown off his game, whereas Grosjean has plugged away. While he can be knocked off his stride, many times when something is awry he drives around it brilliantly — such as at Suzuka last year when his left-rear wheel was hanging off for most of the race.

Drivers like this have a strong fascination. Too often people boil things down to some innate, magical ability to produce a lap time, but how does that work for a driver who can deliver something remarkable one day, something disastrous the next? Grosjean's performances are all over the map like no other, and it's not because he's sitting on the edge every lap and sometimes flukes it.

And therein lies the frustration. Grosjean is fundamentally quicker than Magnussen, but he isn't. He is a great F1 driver, but he isn't. He is a poor F1 driver, but he isn't. He's one of the great enigmas in grand prix history and that's what makes him so interesting. 🍷

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YOUR SAY

Charles Leclerc must have been gutted and his maturity in this situation was outstanding and truly telling

BRIAN McCAUSLAND

Singapore GP should have been Leclerc's race

I wish Sebastian Vettel's grin had been a little more subdued than it was in Singapore. Can you imagine what he would have been saying 'on the phone' if positions were the other way round with Charles Leclerc?

It should have been Charles setting a record-equalling first three wins in a row with Damon Hill and Mika Hakkinen. Charles must have been gutted and his maturity in this situation was outstanding and truly telling.

Watch out Seb, because you won't beat Charles much anymore. Don't be surprised to see 'shock news' at end of season with Seb retiring.

Brian McCausland
Portishead

Vettel's not done winning yet

Time for Vettel to call it a day (Your Say, 19 September)? After winning in Singapore, I don't think so! Lewis Hamilton and Mercedes will not be beaten to this year's championships, but the racing over the past few races (post-France) has been far from predictable, with great excitement and intrigue.

Hopefully there's more of the same before the season's end; if there is, I think 2019 will be seen as one of Formula 1's best in recent times.

David Hammond
Dublin

Speaking out for the Hulk

It was a relief to read Edd Straw's scrutiny of Nico Hulkenberg's record (Opinion, 19 September). I've been a fan and advocate of the Hulk (pictured) for some years, and find myself defending him on Formula 1 forums where the view is often 'no podiums, no talent'.

Yes, he can be his own worst enemy, with a handful of big results lost through unforced errors. But he was robbed of just as many likely podiums, which few remember as readily (Spa and Brazil 2016 could be added to Monaco from that year).



And isn't it funny how when conditions dampen and driver skill prevails, he's invariably battling at the sharp end – whichever car is under him? It'll be criminal if Haas's snub means he's not on the grid next year; let's hope Ferrari sees sense and brings him into the family for a future drive.

Alex Roache
Leamington Spa

Grand slam idea highlights ridiculous penalties

Peter O'Donnell's idea of an F1 Grand Slam would make for an interesting comparison of drivers (Your Say, 19 September). Except that tennis players are not penalised for fitting new strings into their racquets or using a third new pair of shoes in a season (there's also DNFs and mechanical problems), which highlights both the ridiculousness of the current F1 drivers' penalty system, and why it wouldn't make for a fair comparison.


However, the stats are out there and it would be easy enough to do retrospectively.

John Carter
Wimbledon

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ETHERINGTON

HOW A BAD LAP HELPED VETTEL WIN IN SINGAPORE

Sebastian Vettel blew his final Q3 lap, but it put him in the perfect position to exploit the unexpectedly potent undercut on race day

EDD STRAW

PHOTOGRAPHY



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Driver grasping for a cliché to fill the Saturday silence often remind the world that the race is on Sunday and not decided in qualifying. Sebastian Vettel proved that this is not always true by apparently losing his shot at victory with a poor, and ultimately aborted, final lap in Q3 that perversely proved to be the foundation stone of his victory.

By inadvertently hiding in plain sight in third on the grid, and holding that position at the start, Vettel was perfectly placed to capitalise on the surprisingly potent advantage of the undercut on race night. Inevitably, some with an overly sensitive nose for conspiracy smelled a rat, but the reality was that the Ferrari pitwall didn't realise that Vettel was going to gain such a big advantage – 3.9 seconds – by stopping a lap earlier than team-mate Charles Leclerc until the die had unwittingly been cast.

Ferrari headed to Singapore with no expectations of being in the hunt for victory, but did have a significant aerodynamic upgrade including a modified front wing/nose, floor, diffuser and rear wing. After a difficult Friday, during which Leclerc suffered a gearbox failure that cost him most of first free practice, Ferrari, as expected, didn't seem to be at the races either on single-lap or long-run pace.

Work on understanding the package overnight meant it was a car transformed in Saturday practice, and Ferrari carried that form through to qualifying. Since possession of pole position is nine tenths of the law on the streets of Singapore, Ferrari biased its set-up efforts more towards qualifying than usual. Toto Wolff later admitted that his Mercedes team had taken too conventional an approach and set its cars up for race conditions with the usual understeer to protect the rears. That left Leclerc a clear run to take pole, despite a lively rear end that required a couple of big opposite-lock moments to keep the car out of the wall.

Vettel's 12 months of misery seemed to be continuing as he converted what had been provisional pole after the first Q3 runs into third on the grid thanks to a final lap that was messy even before he made his Turn 18 error. Lewis Hamilton split the Ferraris and Vettel believed his best chance would be to get ahead of the Mercedes at the start. Instead, he got his second slice of good fortune that would keep him in what proved to be the box seat for the race that followed.

“OFF THE BACK OF THIS GROUP WAS THE BEMUSED MIDFIELD LEADER LANDO NORRIS IN SEVENTH, UNABLE TO MAKE USE OF THE SOFT RUBBER THANKS TO BEING HELD UP BY THE FASTEST CARS IN F1”

After a good start, Vettel menaced Hamilton during the first lap and forced the Mercedes driver to defend into Turns 7 and 8 before slotting into third. Once the race had settled down, Ferrari then enacted the next stage of its plan and shut down the race entirely. Leclerc was given a target time of 1m49.5s – a painful 13.3s off qualifying pace – that he proceeded to hit, give or take a few tenths, from laps 3–14.

This neutralised the race. Hamilton sat behind, often with DRS available but never close enough to threaten, Vettel was behind him with a gap that floated around the 1.1–1.6s mark. Then there was Max Verstappen, puzzled by the Red Bull's lack of pace in the corners at a circuit where expectations were high, around a second behind and chased by the other Mercedes of Valtteri Bottas. Alex Albon, in the other Red Bull, sat at the back of the top-team queue in sixth.

Off the back of this group was the bemused midfield leader Lando Norris in seventh, unable to make use of the pace of the soft rubber on his McLaren thanks to being held up by the fastest cars in F1. Given that everyone outside of the top nine starters, who were all on softs, started on mediums – save for hard-shod Pierre Gasly – this meant his grasp on seventh place was less firm than it should have been.

Ferrari's all-out qualifying approach meant that its only chance was to keep a tight leash on the race. The spread of the field in qualifying had been almost five seconds, but during this phase of the race everyone was lapping at more or less the same pace. Thanks to the rolling roadblock, the fastest of all from laps 3–14 was Williams driver George Russell, >>





running on hards after a first-lap stop for a front-wing change because of a first-corner clash with Daniel Ricciardo's Renault.

But as the field thinned out thanks to several midfielders deciding to make early stops and take advantage of clear track down the order, an inviting gap appeared between Lance Stroll's Racing Point and Nico Hulkenberg's Renault. Hulkenberg had also stopped at the end of the first lap after suffering a puncture in a misjudged first-lap move on Carlos Sainz that also put the McLaren driver out of points contention, and was lapping at a pace that might have given him the lead had he not got stuck behind Romain Grosjean's Haas. The question was, who would take the gap first?

Ferrari was never going to bring Leclerc in first. It's unusual for the leader to make the first move in such situations and the Ferrari pitwall had no idea how fast Hamilton might be able to go once in clear air, so it made no sense to expose him to a potential overcut.

Verstappen was struggling with his rear Pirellis and headed to the pits at the end of lap 19, so Ferrari made a late call to Vettel, then at Turn 20, to stop too. This was a sensible strategy, ensuring he maintained track position over Verstappen and had a shot at undercutting Hamilton. Vettel was 3.6s behind leader Leclerc at the moment he pulled into the pits and emerged 31.7s behind after an adequate, but not super-quick, stop to take on hards. But his out-lap was rapid.

At this point, Ferrari and Vettel were only thinking about undercutting Hamilton, whom they anticipated would pit on the next lap along with Leclerc. But so powerful was the undercut, even by Singapore standards, that Ferrari was oblivious to the fact that Vettel was also attacking Leclerc. During Vettel's out-lap, all the radio chatter was about needing to attack Hamilton – Leclerc wasn't even mentioned. So Vettel was surely surprised and delighted in equal measure to see the sister car cruising out of the pitlane and destined to emerge just behind him after stopping next time around.

"When we stopped Sebastian, first Verstappen was ready to stop so we had to protect his position," said Ferrari team boss Mattia Binotto. "It was the best opportunity for us to try and overtake Hamilton. He drove very well on new tyres and that's racing – he was ahead of Charles. We could not have stopped Charles at that stage because, if you are leading, you will not stop first. It was simply the proper window for Seb.



"LECLERC WAS BAFFLED AND ANGRY. ALTHOUGH HE HAD BEEN GIVEN THE HURRY-UP ON HIS OUT-LAP, LECLERC WASN'T AWARE VETTEL WAS A THREAT – BECAUSE FERRARI HADN'T REALISED IT"

"The undercut was more powerful than expected, it was 3.9s and we were not expecting such a big number. When we stopped Sebastian, we thought Charles stopping a lap later would have remained ahead."

Leclerc was baffled and angry. Although he was given the hurry-up on his out-lap to ensure that Hamilton was covered, he wasn't aware Vettel was a threat – because Ferrari hadn't realised it. The strategic decision by Ferrari was correct as it converted what would likely have been a 1-4, had Verstappen been allowed to undercut Vettel, into a 1-2 – just with its drivers reversed. But it was understandable that Leclerc felt he could have pushed more earlier in the stint to build a gap to Vettel, even though after the race he accepted the strategic decision once it had been explained to him.

Mercedes, in hindsight, should have pitted Hamilton on the same lap as Vettel and Verstappen since it would have allowed him to undercut Leclerc and stay ahead of the other Ferrari. But Mercedes didn't want to take the risk of making the first move given the uncertainty over



what pace the Ferraris might unleash should Hamilton stop, and the risk of losing time to the midfielders he would drop behind.

Instead, Hamilton not only stayed out for longer but actually extended his stint after it became clear that he'd lost out to Vettel when the Ferrari driver was halfway round his out-lap. Despite the looming threat of Verstappen, who pitted at the same time as Vettel and was running 3.5s further back, Hamilton was left out but lacking the grip to have any chance of making an unlikely overcut work.

But Mercedes did have some hope. Firstly, Hamilton was in a position that meant a timely safety car or virtual safety car would allow him to pit and retain the lead. Secondly, the slow pace early in the race meant that Vettel, Leclerc and Verstappen – the Red Bull star moving into 'virtual' third place on lap 22 thanks to his pace on fresh rubber – had four midfielders ahead of them to clear.

With Albon (lap 20) and Bottas (lap 22) both having stopped and continued, Hamilton was well out of phase with the rest of the top six runners and searching for unlikely time gains over those on fresher rubber. Vettel reached the first of the traffic and gained the DRS on the Racing Point of fifth-placed Lance Stroll on the back straight on lap 26.

At this point, Vettel was only 20.7s behind Hamilton, so it was extremely unlikely that the traffic could cost him enough time to let the temporarily leading Mercedes gain the seven seconds-plus it required. With Leclerc 1.3s further back and Verstappen just 1.1s behind the other Ferrari, Hamilton was on course to emerge well behind all three. Plus, Bottas was about to move into position to jump ahead of Hamilton too, and might have done had Mercedes not given him a target lap time to prevent this happening and also hold back Albon.

As Vettel started to make his way through the traffic, Mercedes decided the best policy was to bring Hamilton in and hope any delay among the net leaders would allow him to close up. This also minimised any time loss for Bottas. But it was during this phase of the race that Vettel excelled and comfortably outperformed Leclerc. As they made their way through Stroll, Ricciardo, Gasly's Toro Rosso and the Alfa Romeo of Antonio Giovinazzi, Vettel made significant gains. His incisive move on Gasly, in particular, was an exemplary piece of driving.

Vettel took the lead from Giovinazzi – who later said he hoped his family had been watching his cameo at the front – on lap 31. At this >>

QUALIFYING



Charles Leclerc called it “the most unexpected pole”. His delighted reaction after claiming his fifth pole position of the season backed this up as he yelled incredulously that he had survived losing control three times during the lap.

His big moment was through the Turn 11 right-hander, which took some sorting out and did cost him time. There was also a big opposite-lock slide for the Ferrari out of Turn 3, with a couple of lesser moments elsewhere that didn't cost him much. But the upside of the aggression was that he was quick over enough of the lap to preserve most of the 0.231-second advantage that he had built in the first sector.

“It was a very good lap, but there were some moments where I thought I'd lost the car,” said Leclerc. “We came here knowing this would be a difficult track for us but the team has done an amazing job to bring the package we needed.”

Hamilton's lap was more controlled, even though he made negligible gains over the second and third sectors. While Mercedes team boss Toto Wolff pointed to the Ferrari power advantage, the fact that Leclerc was within half a tenth of Hamilton over the rest of the lap shows its performance in the corners was better than expected.

Sebastian Vettel held provisional pole after the first runs in Q3, but fluffed his lines when he attempted to outqualify team-mate Leclerc for the first time in eight attempts. He was slightly behind his previous best when he carried too much speed into the Turn 18 left-hander and then aborted to the pits, leaving him third in the final reckoning.

Red Bull's Max Verstappen was puzzled by his lack of pace in fourth, six tenths off pole, but comfortably ahead of the Mercedes of Valtteri Bottas. The start of the Finn's lap was compromised by Hamilton passing him on the run to the last corner. Neither Bottas nor sixth-placed Alex Albon were a threat to their team-mates.

McLaren had the fastest midfield car, but while Carlos Sainz Jr delivered on it in seventh, miscounting a downshift cost Lando Norris and left him 10th. This became ninth when Daniel Ricciardo, eighth and 0.169s ahead of Renault team-mate Nico Hulkenberg, was disqualified for his MGU-K momentarily kicking out more than the allowed 120kW in Q1.

Perhaps the real winner was Antonio Giovinazzi. Ricciardo's disqualification and 11th-fastest Sergio Perez's five-place grid penalty for a gearbox change – self-inflicted after crashing in FP3 – promoted the Alfa Romeo man to 10th on the grid with free tyre choice.

“IT WAS A VERY GOOD LAP BUT THERE WERE SOME MOMENTS WHEN I THOUGHT I'D LOST THE CAR”





TRACKSIDE VIEW

Charles Leclerc hurtles towards Turn 5 on his best lap in FP3. Autosport is watching from the outside of the corner and, as he approaches the braking zone, there's no thought in mind that he and Ferrari can be a serious threat for pole position. A few seconds later, as he guns it down the long, flat-out blast down to Turn 7, it's clear that Ferrari has taken a step forward that could make it a genuine pole contender. And so it proves, three hours later.

While it's the speed on the straight that gives Ferrari its advantage in the first sector of the lap – worth almost a quarter of a second over Mercedes – it's immediately clear that the SF90 has made a step forward in the corners. On his push lap, Leclerc carries in impressive speed, to the point where you immediately expect one end or the other to slide. But it sticks. Unlike some, who drift a little wide, or others who find themselves running out of road at the exit and have to rotate the car more aggressively in the exit phase, Leclerc looks superb.

The Ferrari is already clearly riding the bumps more effortlessly than its rivals, but to carry that speed into, through and out of the corner transforms the perspective of what this car is capable of.



Often this season, the Ferrari's reluctance to turn in to slower corners in particular has been clear, but Leclerc gets the car rotated on entry without hesitation. It looks decisive in a way that hasn't always been the case this year and to the eye looks quicker than anything here. And that's the real surprise.

We are yet to see how the car will respond in longer corners, but Turn 5 isn't as short as many on the Singapore circuit. It hints that, just

maybe, this step will continue to benefit on the upcoming run of tracks where Ferrari wasn't expected to be a contender.

What's hard to factor in is the role the Ferrari's absorption of the bumps plays in the gain relative to Mercedes. As Pierre Gasly explains, this is hugely significant in Turn 5.

"It is really bumpy, quite aggressive," he says. "Under braking, you have the front axle bouncing a lot, which makes it

difficult to really nail it into the apex. You need to anticipate everything and at the start of the weekend it's a reference that you don't have. It's quite a tricky braking zone.

"I had a problem with front locking, so we had to adjust a lot of mapping to carry the speed on the entry. There is quite a lot of lap time to be gained because of the long straight after."

EDD STRAW



“WHILE VETTEL HAD SOME GOOD FORTUNE, THIS WAS RACE DRIVING OF THE HIGHEST CALIBRE”



TEE

time, Leclerc was still down in fourth and trying to find a way past Gasly. It wasn't until lap 33 that Leclerc had cleared both the Toro Rosso and Giovinazzi, by which time he had fallen to 6.6s behind. In that brief spell, Vettel pulled a massive 5.3s on his team-mate. While Vettel had some good fortune, this was race driving of the highest calibre.

Verstappen had followed Leclerc through, while Hamilton had slotted into fourth when he stopped thanks to the Mercedes pitwall ensuring Bottas didn't undercut his way ahead. Behind, Albon was back into sixth and the race returned to normal.

The leaders still had half of the race to go but, with no more pitstops likely and a big performance gap needed to make a pass, the expectation was that things would remain unchanged, with Ferrari continuing to control the pace. But there were curveballs — three of them in fact — in the form of a rapid-fire trio of safety-car periods.

The first of these struck when the leaders were on their 36th lap. This was triggered by Haas driver Romain Grosjean's attempt to pass Russell at Turn 8. Russell defended the inside at the right-hander and Grosjean attempted to go around the outside. Contact followed, and left Russell's Williams stranded.

The safety car closed up the field, but Vettel made a sharp restart and crossed the line with eight tenths in hand over Leclerc. But it wasn't long before the safety car was again deployed, this time to allow the recovery of Sergio Perez's Racing Point, which had stopped thanks to an oil leak while running 10th.

Leclerc was a little closer this time, 0.5s behind across the line, but unable to threaten. The third and final safety car was caused by Kimi Raikkonen not spotting Daniil Kvyat sending his Toro Rosso up the inside of his Alfa into Turn 1 in an attempt to take 12th place. It was a bold and legitimate move, but Raikkonen turned in and retired with front-left suspension damage after the resulting contact.

Again, Vettel held the lead at the restart and Leclerc, who used the safety-car periods to gripe about how unhappy he was with the situation,

wasn't able to threaten. The pitstop phase had shuffled the top-six pace and the race situation didn't change during the rest of a race that lasted almost two hours.

Behind the top six, Norris did hang onto his seventh place, although the safety cars meant he was under pressure from Gasly in the closing stages, with the recovering Renault of Hulkenberg also not far behind and ahead of erstwhile race leader Giovinazzi.

But as furious as Leclerc was, so Vettel was delighted. He'd ridden his luck, certainly. And had he qualified ahead of Hamilton, or passed the Mercedes at the start, he'd have never been in the position to jump Leclerc as he wouldn't have been allowed to undercut him.

For Ferrari, which did consider reversing the positions, it was a fortuitous piece of happenstance. With no serious title considerations, a victory for Vettel to end his calamitous run since last winning in Belgium in August last year is a boost for the team. But that doesn't mean it was deliberate. To its credit, Ferrari secured a most unexpected 1-2 with the way it played its strategy, and that should not be overlooked given it earned justified criticism for squandering so many opportunities in the first half of the season.

While Leclerc can take solace from the fact that he should have won, and this doesn't change anything in terms of his recently established supremacy within Ferrari, Vettel is right to be happy. Yes, he benefited from his own failure on Saturday, but he was still quick and, as he showed during the phase that he and Leclerc were clearing traffic, there's still a thing or two he can show his young team-mate. 🏆

NEXT F1 REPORT

RUSSIAN GRAND PRIX 3 OCTOBER ISSUE

As its championship hopes begin to look less forlorn, will Ferrari be able to continue its newly found run of form on the smooth asphalt of Sochi?



PORTLOCK

Giovinazzi gets penalty for crane drive-by

Alfa Romeo driver Antonio Giovinazzi was given a 10-second post-race penalty for driving too close to a crane during the first safety-car period.

The crane was on track to recover the stricken Williams of George Russell, which had stopped after colliding with Romain Grosjean's Haas. Although Giovinazzi was driving to the safety-car delta as demanded by the rules, he passed close to the crane rather than keeping to the right of the track as requested.

A statement said: "While the stewards accepted the explanation of the driver that he felt he was going sufficiently slowly, and while he was driving to his SC delta time, he did however end up driving closer to the crane and marshals than was felt safe by either the marshals on location or the race director. The stewards concur.

"The driver had been told of the location of the incident and to stay right, but may not have considered that the crane was moving. The stewards consider this to be potentially seriously dangerous."

Giovinazzi still held on to his 10th-place finish, having crossed the line 17s clear of 11th-placed Grosjean on the road.

Giovinazzi had run eighth early in the race and ran long. He led for four laps, pitting only after being hit by Daniel Ricciardo's Renault. He recovered from 15th to 10th on fresh rubber, although he was slowed by minor suspension damage.



Hulk clash scuppers Sainz's 'Class

Carlos Sainz Jr's hopes of taking another 'Class B' victory at the front of the midfield were ruined by a collision with Renault driver Nico Hulkenberg on the first lap of the race.

McLaren star Sainz held seventh place and was chasing Alex Albon's Red Bull into the Turn 5 right-hander that leads onto the back straight. He had to take a conservative approach into the corner, which allowed Hulkenberg to dive up the inside. Hulkenberg's front-left wheel made contact with Sainz's right-rear.

Sainz suffered bodywork damage in the clash but was able to recover to the pits and come home 12th. Hulkenberg picked up a puncture and also headed to the pits, then raced through to ninth place.

The stewards took no action over the incident, although Sainz felt that Hulkenberg's

attempted pass was too aggressive.

"I was thinking about overtaking Albon," said Sainz, "and so Nico was not really on my radar. I really got a good start, Albon defended on the inside and I went around the outside, and then I wanted to close the door, which meant I had to brake and maybe Nico saw it as an opportunity.

"[It was an] opportunistic, ambitious move, which honestly after the race he came to me and said he's sorry about it! It's a shame because it could have been P7 and P8 for us today and maybe he's regretting it now."

Hulkenberg said he tried to back out of the move once Sainz turned in, but that it was not possible to avoid him. "I was attacking him, he was on the left preparing for the exit of [Turn] 5, and I went on the inside," said Hulkenberg. "I was well alongside him, but then I saw that he just

Q & A

SEBASTIAN VETTEL FERRARI DRIVER



Sebastian Vettel ended a 392-day win drought with victory in Singapore after undercutting his way ahead of Charles Leclerc and Lewis Hamilton.

What's your overriding emotion after the win?

Happy! Obviously it's been a good night. I knew it would be tricky from where we started. I knew Charles would probably take it easy to control the race, which he did. And I knew before the race that, as soon as I get my call to box, that's when I can try to make something with this race. I pushed as hard as I could on the out-lap and then really tried to slice through traffic to have a bit of a cushion and maybe control the race from

there. It didn't need the safety cars to make it work.

Talk us through the strategy that gave you the undercut on Charles...

It was a very late call. I wasn't sure we could make the tyres last in the second stint. I was then very surprised to come out ahead.

How satisfying does it feel to answer your critics?

Maybe less than you think. I don't think there was anything wrong, so it wasn't like we were lacking speed or anything. Things weren't maybe falling in place. I've been around for a long, long time and it's how the tide turns sometimes. I have the highest expectation of myself and I'm not happy when I'm not delivering what I know I can. If you've been around for a long

time and you've had so many good moments then you get hammered when there are bad moments. It's part of the game.

Is there a sense of relief?

It's a confirmation but it's not like, 'Finally I can breathe again.' It's not like I felt in a bad place.

Was this a team win or more of a personal victory for you?

You're very misled if you ever think you're bigger than this team. It's a victory for the team because if you look at the facts, we got destroyed in Hungary. To [now] be in a position where we were able to fight for pole and take control of the race, that's a team success. I was very down after Monza for myself but up for the team, and today I'm a bit more up for myself but still very up for the team because it was also a very positive surprise with how we were able to be more competitive here.



B' win hope

turned in quite aggressively and wasn't going to leave space, so I tried to back out of it.

"I went on the inside kerb, but couldn't avoid the wheel-to-wheel contact. I picked up a puncture and he also had some damage."

Later in the race, Romain Grosjean and George Russell clashed at the Turn 8 right-hander. Grosjean was attempting to go around the outside, but caught the left-rear of Russell's Williams towards the exit of the corner. Russell hit the wall and retired, while Grosjean recovered to the pits and finished 11th.

"He said I left him no room and that he was in the wall before he hit me," said Russell, who spoke to Grosjean about the incident shortly after the race. "I said, 'Well, that's absolutely not the case', because I had the last hour to be able to watch the video. It's a shame it just ruined my race and not his too. That's probably why he doesn't feel he was in the wrong."

Magnussen points thwarted by sandwich bag



Kevin Magnussen was in contention to take the Haas team's first points finish in four races before a plastic bag became wrapped around the left side of his front wing.

He scraped into Q2 and climbed from 13th to ninth on the first lap, aided by the collision between Nico Hulkenberg and Carlos Sainz Jr, then undercut his way past Alfa Romeo driver Antonio Giovinazzi, who opted for a long first stint.

Magnussen held the position when the

flurry of safety cars began, but lost places to Pierre Gasly and Hulkenberg after the second restart. He then collected the bag, causing him to lose places after the third restart and plummet out of the points.

After making a stop five laps from home to remove the bag, Magnussen went on to set fastest lap on his way to 17th place on fresh soft tyres. He did not earn a point because to qualify for this you must finish in the top 10.

Ricciardo thrown out of qualifying

Daniel Ricciardo was excluded from qualifying after setting the eighth-fastest time because his MGU-K put out more than the power limit of 120kW during Q1.

Renault claimed the power spike offered just one microsecond of lap-time benefit and argued it was not on the lap that he set to reach Q2.


"Disgracefully," said Ricciardo when asked how he took it. "I had a very restless night's sleep trying to [understand] why a penalty would be so harsh. It happened

on one occurrence on one lap; we didn't even gain an advantage from this yet they delete the whole session."


FIA stewards accepted there was no real gain, but cited previous technical infringements as the precedent for the penalty. Renault took action to prevent a repeat of the overrev, which was caused by a kerb strike.

Ricciardo started from the back, climbing to 12th. He ran a long first stint, but pitted after clashing with Antonio Giovinazzi and suffering a puncture. He ultimately finished 14th.







19 Kubica #88
1m41.186s




17 Grosjean #8
1m40.277s




15 Perez #11
1m38.620s




13 Magnussen #20
1m39.650s




11 Gasly #10
1m38.699s




20 Ricciardo #3
Excluded from quali




18 Russell #63
1m40.867s



16 Stroll #18
1m39.979s



14 Kvyat #26
1m39.957s



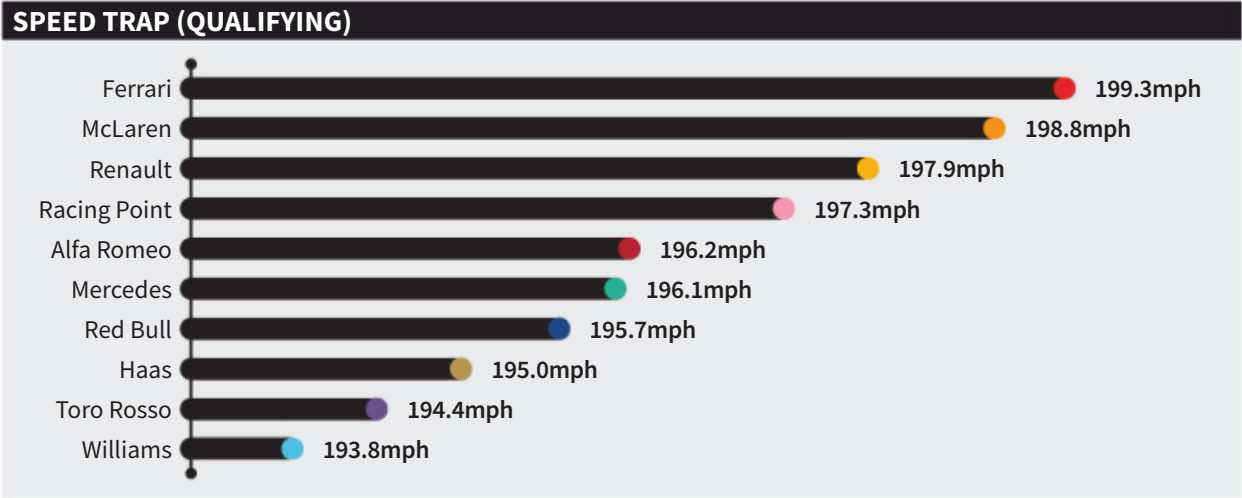
12 Raikkonen #7
1m38.858s

FREE PRACTICE 1			FREE PRACTICE 2			FREE PRACTICE 3		
POS	DRIVER	TIME	POS	DRIVER	TIME	POS	DRIVER	TIME
1	Verstappen	1m40.259s	1	Hamilton	1m38.773s	1	Leclerc	1m38.192s
2	Vettel	1m40.426s	2	Verstappen	1m38.957s	2	Hamilton	1m38.399s
3	Hamilton	1m40.925s	3	Vettel	1m39.591s	3	Vettel	1m38.811s
4	Bottas	1m41.336s	4	Bottas	1m39.894s	4	Bottas	1m38.885s
5	Albon	1m41.467s	5	Albon	1m39.943s	5	Albon	1m39.258s
6	Hulkenberg	1m41.812s	6	Leclerc	1m40.018s	6	Verstappen	1m39.366s
7	Sainz	1m41.966s	7	Sainz	1m40.145s	7	Sainz	1m39.507s
8	Norris	1m42.180s	8	Hulkenberg	1m40.324s	8	Norris	1m39.709s
9	Kvyat	1m42.305s	9	Norris	1m40.361s	9	Hulkenberg	1m40.118s
10	Gasly	1m42.377s	10	Gasly	1m40.637s	10	Ricciardo	1m40.153s
11	Ricciardo	1m42.527s	11	Kvyat	1m40.713s	11	Stroll	1m40.209s
12	Grosjean	1m42.630s	12	Ricciardo	1m40.811s	12	Gasly	1m40.339s
13	Giovinazzi	1m42.677s	13	Perez	1m40.875s	13	Raikkonen	1m40.953s
14	Raikkonen	1m42.786s	14	Giovinazzi	1m41.128s	14	Perez	1m40.985s
15	Stroll	1m42.791s	15	Stroll	1m41.128s	15	Russell	1m41.156s
16	Magnussen	1m43.150s	16	Raikkonen	1m41.232s	16	Giovinazzi	1m41.169s
17	Kubica	1m43.336s	17	Grosjean	1m41.392s	17	Magnussen	1m41.494s
18	Perez	1m43.369s	18	Russell	1m41.445s	18	Grosjean	1m41.542s
19	Leclerc	1m43.618s	19	Magnussen	1m41.564s	19	Kubica	1m41.954s
20	Russell	1m43.993s	20	Kubica	1m42.177s	20	Kvyat	no time

WEATHER 31C, sunny

WEATHER 29C, dark

WEATHER 29C, hazy



QUALIFYING 1			QUALIFYING 2			QUALIFYING 3		
POS	DRIVER	TIME	POS	DRIVER	TIME	POS	DRIVER	TIME
1	Bottas	1m37.317s	1	Leclerc	1m36.650s	1	Leclerc	1m36.217s
2	Hamilton	1m37.565s	2	Vettel	1m36.720s	2	Hamilton	1m36.408s
3	Leclerc	1m38.014s	3	Hamilton	1m36.933s	3	Vettel	1m36.437s
4	Vettel	1m38.374s	4	Verstappen	1m37.089s	4	Verstappen	1m36.813s
5	Verstappen	1m38.540s	5	Bottas	1m37.142s	5	Bottas	1m37.146s
6	Norris	1m38.606s	6	Norris	1m37.572s	6	Albon	1m37.411s
7	Sainz	1m38.882s	7	Albon	1m37.865s	7	Sainz	1m37.818s
8	Hulkenberg	1m39.001s	8	Sainz	1m37.982s	8	Ricciardo	1m38.095s
9	Gasly	1m39.085s	9	Ricciardo	1m38.399s	9	Hulkenberg	1m38.264s
10	Albon	1m39.106s	10	Hulkenberg	1m38.580s	10	Norris	1m38.329s
11	Giovinazzi	1m39.272s	11	Perez	1m38.620s			
12	Ricciardo	1m39.362s	12	Giovinazzi	1m38.697s			
13	Raikkonen	1m39.454s	13	Gasly	1m38.699s			
14	Perez	1m39.909s	14	Raikkonen	1m38.858s			
15	Magnussen	1m39.942s	15	Magnussen	1m39.650s			
16	Kvyat	1m39.957s						
17	Stroll	1m39.979s						
18	Grosjean	1m40.277s						
19	Russell	1m40.867s						
20	Kubica	1m41.186s						

WEATHER 30C, dark

NEXT RACE

29 SEPTEMBER

RUSSIAN GP

Sochi



SEASON STATS			
DRIVERS' CHAMPIONSHIP	PTS	BEST FINISH	BEST QUAL
1 Hamilton	296	1	1
2 Bottas	231	1	1
3 Leclerc	200	1	1
4 Verstappen	200	1	1
5 Vettel	194	1	1
6 Gasly	69	4	4
7 Sainz	58	5	6
8 Albon	42	5	6
9 Ricciardo	34	4	4
10 Kvyat	33	3	6
11 Hulkenberg	33	5	6
12 Norris	31	6	5
13 Raikkonen	31	7	5
14 Perez	27	6	5
15 Stroll	19	4	9
16 Magnussen	18	6	5
17 Grosjean	8	7	6
18 Giovinazzi	4	9	8
19 Kubica	1	10	18
20 Russell	0	11	16

CONSTRUCTORS' CHAMPIONSHIP	
1 Mercedes	527
2 Ferrari	394
3 Red Bull	289
4 McLaren	89
5 Renault	67
6 Toro Rosso	55
7 Racing Point	46
8 Alfa Romeo	35
9 Haas	26
10 Williams	1

QUALIFYING BATTLE			
Hamilton	10	5	Bottas
Vettel	6	8	Leclerc
Albon	0	1	Verstappen
Gasly	1	10	Verstappen
Ricciardo	9	5	Hulkenberg
Grosjean	5	9	Magnussen
Norris	8	5	Sainz
Perez	14	1	Stroll
Raikkonen	9	5	Giovinazzi
Gasly	1	0	Kvyat
Albon	5	5	Kvyat
Russell	15	1	Kubica

Scores ignore sessions if a driver didn't participate in qualifying or had a serious technical problem

WINS		FASTEST LAPS	
Hamilton	8	Hamilton	3
Bottas	2	Verstappen	3
Leclerc	2	Bottas	2
Verstappen	2	Gasly	2
Vettel	1	Leclerc	2
		Vettel	2
		Magnussen	1
POLE POSITIONS			
Leclerc	5		
Bottas	4		
Hamilton	4		
Verstappen	1		
Vettel	1		













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STATS

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STARTING GRID

	9 Norris #4 1m38.329s		7 Sainz #55 1m37.818s		5 Bottas #77 1m37.146s		3 Vettel #5 1m36.437s		1 Leclerc #16 1m36.217s
10 Giovinazzi #99 1m38.697s		8 Hulkenberg #27 1m38.264s		6 Albon #23 1m37.411s		4 Verstappen #33 1m36.813s		2 Hamilton #44 1m36.408s	

RACE RESULTS ROUND 15/21 (61 LAPS - 191.83 MILES)

POS	DRIVER	TEAM	FINISHTIME	LED	TYRES
1	Sebastian Vettel (DEU)	Ferrari	1h58m33.667s	31	Su, Hn
2	Charles Leclerc (MCO)	Ferrari	+2.641s	19	Su, Hn
3	Max Verstappen (NLD)	Red Bull-Honda	+3.821s		Su, Hn
4	Lewis Hamilton (GBR)	Mercedes	+4.608s	7	Su, Hn
5	Valtteri Bottas (FIN)	Mercedes	+6.119s		Su, Hn
6	Alexander Albon (THA)	Red Bull-Honda	+11.663s		Su, Hn
7	Lando Norris (GBR)	McLaren-Renault	+14.769s		Su, Hn
8	Pierre Gasly (FRA)	Toro Rosso-Honda	+15.547s		Hn, Mn
9	Nico Hulkenberg (DEU)	Renault	+16.718s		Su, Hn, Mn
10	Antonio Giovinazzi (ITA)	Alfa Romeo-Ferrari	+27.855s	4	Mn, Hn, Sn
11	Romain Grosjean (FRA)	Haas-Ferrari	+35.436s		Mn, Hn, Sn
12	Carlos Sainz Jr (ESP)	McLaren-Renault	+35.974s		Su, Hn, Mn
13	Lance Stroll (CAN)	RacingPoint-Mercedes	+36.419s		Mn, Hn, Sn, Sn
14	Daniel Ricciardo (AUS)	Renault	+37.660s		Mn, Hn
15	Daniil Kvyat (RUS)	Toro Rosso-Honda	+38.178s		Mn, Hn, Sn
16	Robert Kubica (POL)	Williams-Mercedes	+47.024s		Mn, Hn, Mn
17	Kevin Magnussen (DNK)	Haas-Ferrari	+1m26.522s		Mn, Hn, Sn
R	Kimi Raikkonen (FIN)	Alfa Romeo-Ferrari	49laps-accident		Mn, Hn
R	Sergio Perez (MEX)	RacingPoint-Mercedes	42laps-oil leak		Mn, Hn
R	George Russell (GBR)	Williams-Mercedes	34laps-accident		Mn, Hn

FASTEST LAPS

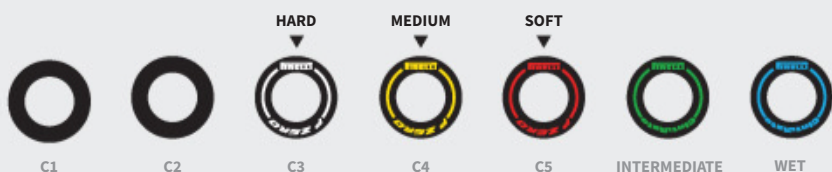
POS	DRIVER	TIME	GAP	LAP
1	Magnussen	1m42.301s	-	58
2	Bottas	1m43.534s	+1.233s	58
3	Kvyat	1m44.371s	+2.070s	57
4	Leclerc	1m44.723s	+2.422s	59
5	Vettel	1m44.802s	+2.501s	57
6	Stroll	1m44.896s	+2.595s	57
7	Hamilton	1m44.914s	+2.613s	58
8	Verstappen	1m45.176s	+2.875s	56
9	Albon	1m45.260s	+2.959s	59
10	Giovinazzi	1m45.630s	+3.329s	59
11	Norris	1m45.716s	+3.415s	58
12	Hulkenberg	1m45.765s	+3.464s	59
13	Gasly	1m45.769s	+3.468s	58
14	Ricciardo	1m45.915s	+3.614s	55
15	Sainz	1m45.969s	+3.668s	41
16	Grosjean	1m46.274s	+3.973s	54
17	Perez	1m46.683s	+4.382s	15
18	Kubica	1m46.793s	+4.492s	59
19	Raikkonen	1m47.062s	+4.761s	18
20	Russell	1m48.285s	+5.984s	29

WEATHER 30C, dark

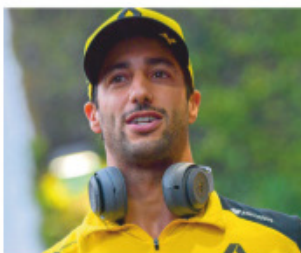
WINNER'S AVERAGE SPEED 97.08mph FASTEST LAP AVERAGE SPEED 110.71mph

TYRES

KEY: H - Hard M - Medium S - Soft I - Intermediate W - Wet n - New set u - Used set



RACE BRIEFING



MOTORSPORT IMAGES/ANDRE

GRID PENALTIES

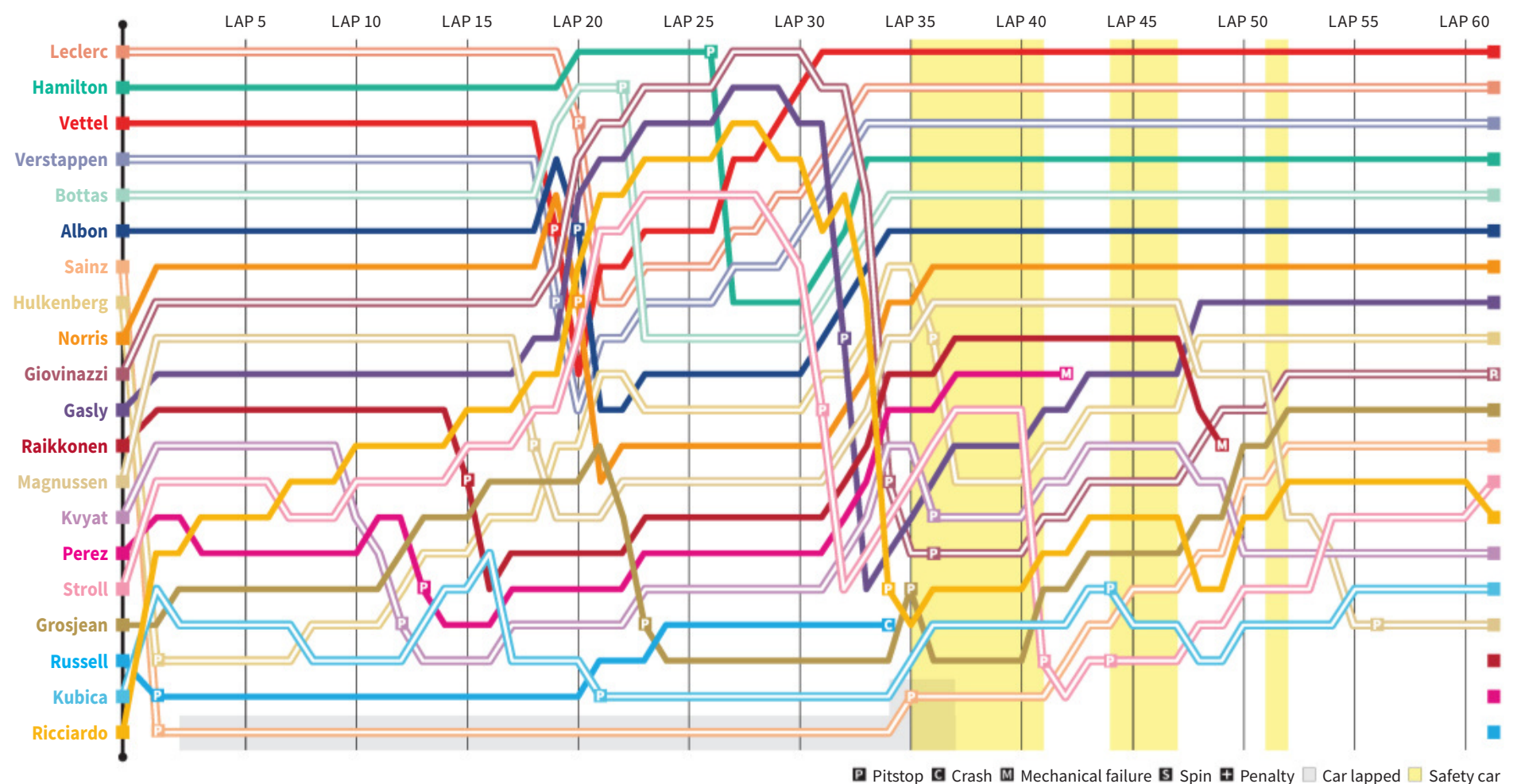
PEREZ Five-place penalty for replacement gearbox
RICCIARDO Disqualified from qualifying for MGU-K exceeding the power limit during Q1, then 10-place penalty

for additional power unit elements used

RACE PENALTIES

GIOVINAZZI 10-second penalty for not following race director's instructions

LAP CHART What happened, when



P Pitstop C Crash M Mechanical failure S Spin + Penalty Car lapped Safety car

NICKED VICTORY PROVES EVERY LOSER WINS

Circumstances robbed Charles Leclerc of a well-deserved victory in Singapore, but he earns maximum points from us after a flawless weekend performance

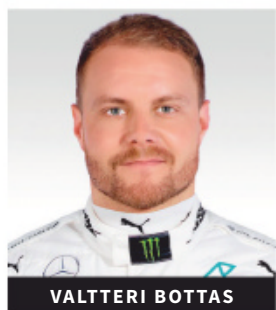
EDD STRAW

MERCEDES



LEWIS HAMILTON

8 Hamilton was able to split the Ferraris but didn't beat Leclerc to pole – and you do wonder if he could have done with a perfect lap. He spent the first stint stuck behind Leclerc but ended up running long in a futile attempt to make something happen, which left him in fourth.



VALTTERI BOTTAS

7 Bottas got off to a bad start with an FP1 shunt. He was never on Hamilton's level, although the gap was exaggerated in Q3 and he should have been more like four tenths down than 0.738s off. Drove a solid race and did his duty by holding back rather than jumping Hamilton and taking Albon with him.

FERRARI



SEBASTIAN VETTEL

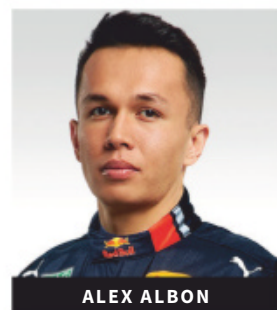
9 Held provisional pole after the first runs in Q3 but dropped to third. This proved the making of his race, allowing him to undercut not only Hamilton but also Leclerc. He gained 5.3s on Leclerc while clearing traffic to consolidate his lead, before safety cars pegged him back.



CHARLES LECLERC

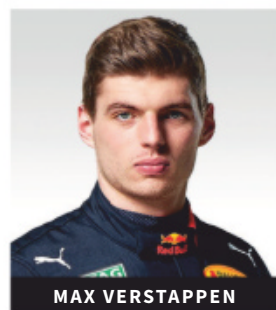
10 Survived a couple of opposite-lock moments to take pole and, as instructed, controlled the pace early on to protect Ferrari's track position. He was furious to be jumped by Vettel but, given the undercut and the pace he was told to set, there was nothing he could do about it.

RED BULL



ALEX ALBON

6 This was the first time Albon was on equal terms with Verstappen since his move to Red Bull given penalties that muddled the picture at Spa and Monza. He was disappointed to be 0.598s behind him in qualifying, then spent the race circulating at the back of the top-six traffic jam.



MAX VERSTAPPEN

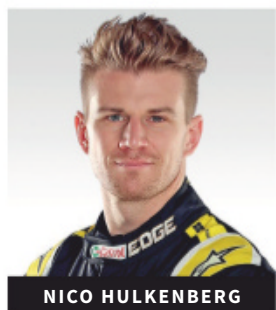
9 The pace on Friday was encouraging, but performance over the bumps wasn't and from Saturday onwards the Red Bull lacked pace in the corners. Verstappen outqualified Bottas, then used the undercut to get ahead of Hamilton and deliver a podium he was satisfied with.

RENAULT



DANIEL RICCIARDO

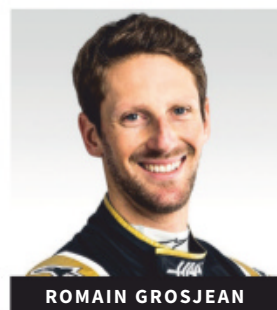
8 Did the best that a Renault could achieve in quali by being eighth fastest before being excluded for a momentary spike in MGU-K power in Q1. "Had blast" climbing through the field early on, but his long first stint was curtailed by a clash with Giovinazzi that put him out of points contention.



NICO HULKENBERG

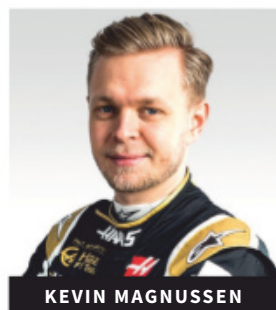
7 Wasn't quite as quick as Ricciardo but made Q3 relatively easily. He picked up a puncture with his first-lap move on Sainz and dropped to the back but quickly climbed back into contention, using a safety-car pitstop to minimise the loss of his second stop and finishing ninth.

HAAS



ROMAIN GROSJEAN

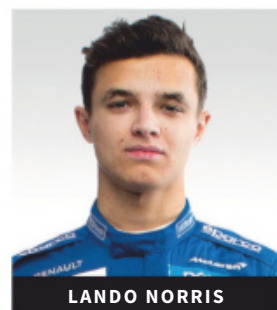
5 Switched back to the start-of-the-season floor, bargeboards and rear wing (he kept the latest front wing) after Friday practice on the basis there was "not anything to lose". The set-up reset made qualifying difficult and his race was compromised by a needless collision with Russell.



KEVIN MAGNUSSEN

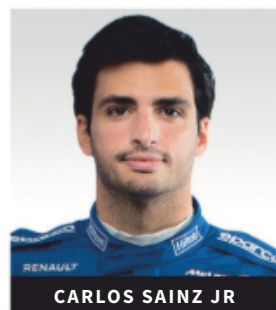
9 Sneaking into Q2 was the best he could have done with the Haas in qualifying considering the gap ahead. He held ninth early on and was on course for a points finish before safety cars (and a plastic bag in his front wing) conspired against him. Fastest lap after a late stop was little consolation.

MCLAREN



LANDO NORRIS

9 Norris played his way in steadily on his first visit to Singapore, but started to show real pace before making one downshift too few during his qualifying lap. He capitalised on Ricciardo's exclusion and the Sainz/Hulkenberg incident to lead the midfield from start to finish under pressure.



CARLOS SAINZ JR

8 McLaren was back at its midfield-leading best in Singapore and it was Sainz who led the way in qualifying despite Norris looking to have the edge on pace. But his race was ruined by Hulkenberg's move at Turn 5, leaving him to struggle to 12th in a car that was carrying damage.



RACING POINT



SERGIO PEREZ

7 A crash during FP3 proved hugely costly for Perez as it forced a gearbox change and resulting five-place grid penalty. But his pace in qualifying limited the damage and he was holding 10th place after opting for an early pitstop when an oil leak manifested itself and forced him to retire.



LANCE STROLL

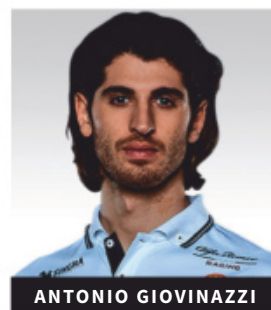
5 Was frustrated to be too close to Grosjean on his final qualifying lap but didn't look to have the pace to be up with team-mate Perez. He was in points contention but struggling a little in the midfield, then hit the wall and picked up a puncture that condemned him to an anonymous finish.

ALFA ROMEO



KIMI RAIKKONEN

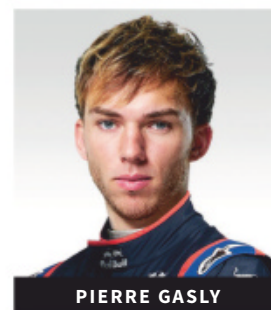
5 Raikkonen qualified behind Giovinazzi and seemed to lack a little pace. He got the Alfa into a points position after a relatively early stop, but was already fading on aged rubber when he turned in on Kvyat, who surprised him with an entirely legitimate first-corner lunge.



ANTONIO GIOVINAZZI

9 Giovinazzi had the edge on Raikkonen on pace and used that to good effect to set 12th-fastest time in qualifying. Running long in the first stint didn't help him, although did let him lead the race, but he recovered well to score a point and could have climbed higher with fewer safety-car laps.

TORO ROSSO



PIERRE GASLY

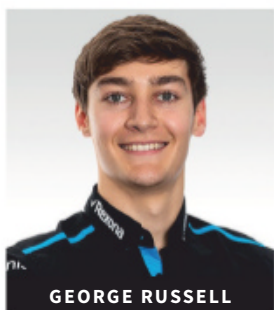
8 While Gasly left a couple of tenths on the table in Q2, it wouldn't have been enough to get him to Q3. He held 10th place in the first stint and ran as high as second before making his pitstop before the first safety car. This timing didn't help, but he was able to come through to eighth and pressure Norris.



DANIIL KVIAT

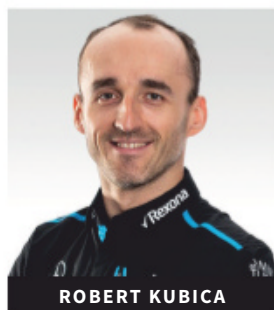
6 A messy run in qualifying meant Kvyat failed to escape Q1 after lap that started in the wrong engine mode, threw traffic at him and that he failed to hook up. He was up against it, but he was climbing the order after pitting when the Russell/Grosjean clash happened before Raikkonen hit him.

WILLIAMS



GEORGE RUSSELL

7 Going late in Q1 in an attempt to make the most of the track evolution backfired and led to him aborting his lap. He was unfortunate to be sandwiched between Ricciardo and Kubica at the start, resulting in contact that broke his front wing, then was eliminated after a clash with Grosjean.

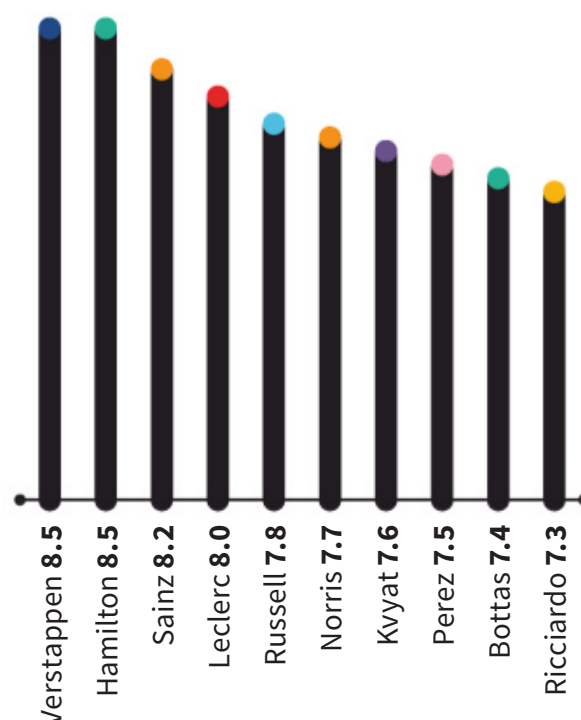


ROBERT KUBICA

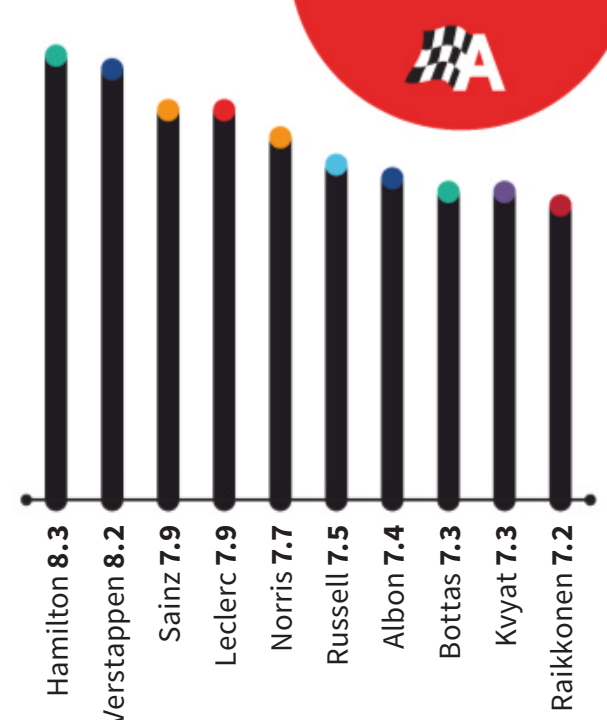
6 Started the weekend by announcing he wouldn't drive for Williams next year, then qualified three tenths off Russell – although just missed out on his final lap thanks to a delay with the fuel-filler cover. Had a solid race to last and mixed it with the midfield when he had the chance.

TOP 10 AVERAGE RATINGS

AUTOSPORT'S RATING AFTER ROUND 15



READERS' RATING AFTER ROUND 15



GIVE
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[AUTOSPORT.COM/F1/
DRIVER-RATINGS](https://www.autosport.com/f1/driver-ratings)



No Zanardi pass! Herta leads Dixon, Pagnaud and Power at the Corkscrew



Herta keeps it in the family as Newgarden is crowned

Colton Herta was a foetus when dad Bryan scored the second of his two Laguna Seca Indycar wins. Now he's added another. But that wasn't the biggest prize won in California

DAVID MALSHER

PHOTOGRAPHY



There were several great performances in the 2019 IndyCar Series finale at Laguna Seca last Sunday. One of them came from Colton Herta, who took the second win of his rookie season. None of them came from Josef Newgarden, who nevertheless did enough to be crowned champion for the second time. But perhaps the most surprising star turn was the 2.238-mile course itself. Top-rank US open-wheel racing hadn't raced here since 2004 and, ever since the track was confirmed as a replacement for Sonoma Raceway, there had been several doom merchants stating that IndyCar was swapping like for like — a beautiful

California setting and a wonderfully challenging track, but one where wheel-to-wheel dicing would be at a premium.

But just as the Dallara aerokits introduced in 2018 have improved the racing at Barber Motorsports Park, and transformed it at Mid-Ohio, here was another road course where the current downforce package allowed cars to run close enough to make passes. The other key to an action-packed race was high tyre degradation caused by a coarse surface that doesn't pick up rubber, and the different ways in which the teams reacted to that ahead of the race.

Simon Pagnaud, who provided much of the action, remarked: "The biggest thing this track has to do is absolutely not repave!

Leave it as it is. The track is absolutely perfect. No need to change anything.

"It creates the perfect racing because there's some tyre degradation... That's the biggest thing. Tyre degradation always creates great racing because it differentiates aggressive cars on set-up versus more conservative like we had. I hope nothing changes because I think they've got the perfect format."

Herta and the Honda-powered Harding Steinbrenner Racing team scored their third pole position of the season, just holding off strong challenges from Chip Ganassi Racing's outgoing champion Scott Dixon (who mathematically had an extremely outside shot of the title) and Alexander Rossi



NEWGARDEN BLOOMS AGAIN



The statistical reason for Josef Newgarden falling to fifth in the 2018 IndyCar standings, following his hard-earned 2017 title, was that despite three wins – the same as champion Scott Dixon, runner-up Alexander Rossi and third-placed Will Power – he scored no other podiums. That wasn't entirely down to him, but silly mistakes and pitlane errors crippled his title bid.

This season a more mature Newgarden has emerged and, aside from two attempted passes that were never going to work in Detroit and at Mid-Ohio – “Sometimes I just can't help myself!” he honestly admitted – he has been largely flawless. He scored four wins (more than anyone else) but also secured runner-up placings at Austin and Long Beach, a third at Road America and five other top-five finishes.

Was Newgarden lucky on occasion? Of course. Team Penske president Tim Cindric is a great tactician to have in your corner, and there were times when mechanical failures or badly timed yellows cut the legs from under Rossi, Dixon and Power. But Newgarden also has a Dixon-like ability to make the most of the bad days. Working with his new-for-2019 race engineer Gavin Ward, formerly at Red Bull in F1, he overcame what started out as a dreadful weekend for Team Penske at Barber this year to climb through the field and claim fourth, and produced a similarly smart drive at Portland after his qualifying gaffe.

If it's true that IndyCar drivers don't reach their peak until their early thirties, then 28-year-old Newgarden, already with two titles to his name, could prove to be the next series colossus.



of Andretti Autosport, who was second in the title race, 41 points behind Team Penske star Newgarden. To earn his first title, Rossi needed to win with Newgarden finishing fifth or lower, while Newgarden's team-mate Pagnaud was just one point behind, and needing something similar.

All three Penske drivers threw away their polewinning chances in qualifying with errors on their fastest laps, so that Newgarden and Pagnaud would line up fourth and sixth, and Will Power wouldn't even make it into the Firestone Fast Six, instead lining up seventh.

The only man likely to have threatened Herta's pole time was fellow rookie Felix Rosenqvist, who spun on a Q1 lap: despite not bringing out the red flag, he was adjudged to have interfered with another driver's qualifying run, and would therefore have his top two laps deleted and wouldn't be allowed to advance to Q2. It is the rule but, in as innocuous a case as this, it seemed unreasonably harsh. Rosenqvist set three laps that would have graduated him to the next round, but now the Ganassi driver was consigned to 14th on the grid.

At the start of the race, Herta and Dixon went through Turn 2 (Turn 1 is merely a kink in the front straight) side by side, but the youngster held off the veteran on corner exit. Dixon then had to defend from Rossi who, unlike the front two on brand-new 'soft' red tyres, had elected to start on used reds that came up to temperature quickly.

Newgarden, whose pre-race plan was simply to shadow Rossi, was a conservative fourth ahead of James Hinchcliffe and Pagnaud (another guy on used reds).

In seventh ran Power, who was the only frontrunner to start on Firestone's harder black compound. Yes, he'd have to fend off aggressive red-tyred drivers such as Ryan Hunter-Reay in the early stages, but he'd be able to run longer in that first stint and, if his rubber was good enough, he could lay down some fast times and 'overcut' a car or two in front. All three Penske drivers had practised long runs in Thursday's open test and in Friday practice, and their times had held up well. Those who thought there would be little passing at Laguna Seca and that it would therefore be a race all about track position had focused more on aggressive qualifying set-ups. They would pay the price.

Pagnaud was the first frontrunner to stop, to switch from his used reds onto fresh reds, and a lap later Rossi and Newgarden pulled in together. The pair had fallen six seconds behind the Herta-vs-Dixon battle, Rossi because he couldn't make his rear tyres last, and Newgarden because he was unwilling to pull an attempted pass on a potentially desperate and aggressive rival. Now Rossi, like Pagnaud, took on fresh reds while Newgarden went on to used blacks, and his #2 Penske crew jumped him ahead of the Andretti car in the pitlane. The pair emerged just ahead of Pagnaud, but the 2016 champion was flying and had >>



IndyCar is back at Laguna.
Herta leads Dixon and Rossi at the start

warm tyres. When Rossi moved right to cover the inside line between the two right-handers at Turns 3 and 4, Pagnaud had the momentum to go even further right and draw alongside so that exiting Turn 4 he was able to force Rossi to run his left wheels through the sand, lose momentum and fall in line behind. Two laps later, both of them would be past Newgarden, who was not only driving conservatively but also not happy with his car's handling on primary tyres.

Up front, Dixon stopped a lap before Herta. Both went on to fresh black tyres, but Dixon couldn't quite build up enough momentum on his out-lap to undercut Herta. Power went a lap longer still, and emerged fifth, having vaulted not only the tentative Newgarden but also Hinchcliffe,

who had a long first stop. Power then charged onto the tail of Rossi, who was already struggling with his rear tyres, and the Penske car shot past the Andretti Autosport machine into the fast uphill left-hander at Turn 6 to claim fourth. Power would then swiftly move in on team-mate Pagnaud, who was now filling Dixon's mirrors.

Power again extended his stint, so by the time the leaders made their second round of stops – in which the top four all took harder black tyres – the Australian emerged just in front of Dixon in second place. But the Kiwi's warm tyres and controlled aggression meant he was past Power within three corners. Power, as a non-title contender, was then told by his team to let Pagnaud past to resume his attack on

Dixon, so moved aside on the following lap.

Then came the only full-course caution period of the day, after Conor Daly spun at Turn 2 while trying to pass Marco Andretti. When action resumed three laps later, Rosenqvist – who had charged hard and had already dispensed with Newgarden and Rossi on his way up to fifth – spied Power spinning his wheels out of the final turn and aimed to pass him into Turn 2. But Power braked later and resumed his tailgunner role for the still-feisty Pagnaud, who was still anxiously seeking a way past Dixon.

Harding Steinbrenner kept Herta ahead of Dixon as they pitted simultaneously for their third and final stops. Pagnaud stopped a lap later and emerged between the lead pair but, like Power at the start of the previous stint, couldn't find the cold-tyre grip to keep Dixon back. He protected the inside into Turn 5, but Dixon outbraked him on the outside and carried his momentum up the hill.

Power was a different matter, however. With the aid of push-to-pass, he slammed in two more fast laps before his final stop, and this time emerged from the pits 'comfortably' ahead of Dixon and Pagnaud, and right on Herta's tail.

Over the remaining 22 laps, despite an arguably slightly faster car on slightly fresher rubber, Power could not find a way past Herta, for he was now down to just four seconds of push-to-pass boost, while the HSR car had 43s left – a sign that Herta had everything in hand for most of the race. On one lap, Power had superior momentum up the hill out of Turn 5 so that he might consider having a go at Herta into the Corkscrew, but the Penske Dallara-Chevrolet



Charging drive to
fifth netted Rosenqvist
Rookie of the Year

ABBOTT



“Rookie honours went to Rosenqvist, who pulled off the hero move of the race in the last stint”

squirmed briefly but viciously over the Turn 6 compression and cost Power his superior speed. An overshoot at Turn 11 three laps from the end also lost him a second, which he was quickly able to recoup, but Power would still pass the chequered flag just under 0.6s behind Herta.

He would not, however, clinch Rookie of the Year honours. Those went instead to Rosenqvist, who pulled off the hero move of the race in the final stint. After seeing Pagnaud drag his left-side wheels through the sand exiting Turn 3, Rosenqvist moved in, tailed Pagnaud closely through the following corners, and then dived inside at the left-hand entry to the infamous Corkscrew plunge, which drops 59 feet in just 450 feet of track distance. Being the savvy guy that he is, he left Pagnaud just enough room to recover without needing to bang wheels.

Pagnaud, still fired up, would repass the 28-year-old Swede at Turn 2, and then zoom off to apply pressure to Dixon, twice pulling alongside through Turn 2. But Dixon would hold on to claim third, while Pagnaud was left satisfied that his fourth place had been enough to move him up to second in the championship table ahead of Rossi, who could do no better than sixth.

Meanwhile, Newgarden had to let the Dale Coyne Racing car of Sebastien Bourdais – up from 19th on the grid – past him and into seventh in the closing stages, but his uncharacteristically tentative and anonymous run to eighth in an atypically mediocre-handling Penske car was worth the effort. The 28-year-old from Hendersonville, Tennessee is now a multiple IndyCar Series champion. 🏆

RESULTS ROUND 16/16, LAGUNA SECA (USA), 22 SEPTEMBER (90 LAPS – 201.420 MILES)

POS	DRIVER	TEAM/CAR	TIME
1	Colton Herta (USA)	HardingSteinbrenner Racing/Dallara-Honda	1h53m56.9845s
2	Will Power (AUS)	Team Penske / Dallara-Chevrolet	+0.5878s
3	Scott Dixon (NZL)	Chip Ganassi Racing / Dallara-Honda	+6.2404s
4	Simon Pagnaud (FRA)	Team Penske / Dallara-Chevrolet	+6.3545s
5	Felix Rosenqvist (SWE)	Chip Ganassi Racing / Dallara-Honda	+9.5206s
6	Alexander Rossi (USA)	Andretti Autosport / Dallara-Honda	+10.3637s
7	Sebastien Bourdais (FRA)	Dale Coyne Racing with Vasser Sullivan / Dallara-Honda	+10.6831s
8	Josef Newgarden (USA)	Team Penske / Dallara-Chevrolet	+19.0447s
9	James Hinchcliffe (CAN)	Arrow Schmidt Peterson Motorsports / Dallara-Honda	+22.8186s
10	Ryan Hunter-Reay (USA)	Andretti Autosport / Dallara-Honda	+24.7944s
11	Marcus Ericsson (SWE)	Arrow Schmidt Peterson Motorsports / Dallara-Honda	+25.7806s
12	Graham Rahal (USA)	Rahal Letterman Lanigan Racing / Dallara-Honda	+26.6517s
13	Max Chilton (GBR)	Carlin / Dallara-Chevrolet	+27.0743s
14	Marco Andretti (USA)	Andretti Herta Autosport / Dallara-Honda	+54.4314s
15	Charlie Kimball (USA)	Carlin / Dallara-Chevrolet	+56.5862s
16	Tony Kanaan (BRA)	AJ Foyt Enterprises / Dallara-Chevrolet	+1m05.8739s
17	Matheus Leist (BRA)	AJ Foyt Enterprises / Dallara-Chevrolet	+1m06.5640s
18	Zach Veach (USA)	Andretti Autosport / Dallara-Honda	+1m07.9267s
19	Jack Harvey (GBR)	Meyer Shank Racing with Arrow SPM / Dallara-Honda	+1m10.7956s
20	Spencer Pigot (USA)	Ed Carpenter Racing / Dallara-Chevrolet	-1 lap
21	Takuma Sato (JPN)	Rahal Letterman Lanigan Racing / Dallara-Honda	-1 lap
22	Conor Daly (USA)	Andretti Autosport / Dallara-Honda	-1 lap
23	Ed Jones (ARE)	Ed Carpenter Racing / Dallara-Chevrolet	51 laps-suspension
24	Santino Ferrucci (USA)	Dale Coyne Racing / Dallara-Honda	48 laps-accident

Winner's average speed 106.057mph. **Fastest lap** Dixon 1m12.2310s, 111.542mph.

Q3 1 Herta 1m10.1405s; **2** Dixon 1m10.1831s; **3** Rossi 1m10.2105s; **4** Newgarden 1m10.6719s; **5** Hinchcliffe 1m10.8003s; **6** Pagnaud 1m10.8616s.

Q2 Herta 1m09.9828s; **Dixon** 1m10.0845s; **Rossi** 1m10.2332s; **Newgarden** 1m10.2674s; **Hinchcliffe** 1m10.4387s; **Pagnaud** 1m10.6031s; **7** Power 1m10.6086s; **8** Rahal 1m10.6296s; **9** Hunter-Reay 1m10.6919s; **10** Chilton 1m10.7257s; **11** Ericsson 1m11.1666s; **12** Ferrucci 1m12.4137s.

Q1 – GROUP 1 Newgarden 1m10.3081s; **Rossi** 1m10.3097s; **Dixon** 1m10.3256s; **Pagnaud** 1m10.4809s; **Chilton** 1m10.5276s; **Hunter-Reay** 1m10.5860s; **13** Daly

1m10.7787s; **15** Pigot 1m10.8275s; **17** Veach 1m10.8407s; **19** Bourdais 1m11.0095s; **21** Kanaan 1m11.2454s; **23** Leist 1m11.5180s.

Q1 – GROUP 2 Herta 1m10.2892s; **Power** 1m10.4489s; **Ericsson** 1m10.5296s; **Hinchcliffe** 1m10.6462s; **Ferrucci** 1m10.7253s; **Rahal** 1m10.7920s; **14** Rosenqvist 1m10.5649s*; **16** Sato 1m10.8393s; **18** Jones 1m10.9806s; **20** Kimball 1m10.9865s; **22** Andretti 1m11.0527s; **24** Harvey 1m11.2710s. * penalty.

CHAMPIONSHIP 1 Newgarden 641; **2** Pagnaud 616; **3** Rossi 608; **4** Dixon 578; **5** Power 550; **6** Rosenqvist 425; **7** Herta 420; **8** Hunter-Reay 420; **9** Sato 415; **10** Rahal 389.

No catching Marquez in Aragon

MOTOGP

MOTORLAND ARAGON (ESP)

22 SEPTEMBER

ROUND 14/19

The most fondly remembered races of a rider's career tend to be the ones where they engaged and prevailed in pulsating battles. Seldom recalled are the races where a rider devastated the field, dominating from lights to flag in a borderline-embarrassing display of their talent. But except for a few, those events tend to be won by the truly exceptional.

For five-time 500cc world champion Mick Doohan, it's his march to victory in Austria in 1997 by 22 seconds. For Jorge Lorenzo, it's his romp to French GP victory in 2016 by over 10s. When the dust settles on his career, Marc Marquez's utter domination of the 2019 Aragon Grand Prix could well fall into that same category.

Regardless of his 'bigger picture' comments after his last-lap defeats in Austria and Britain, Marquez was very much cut deep by these. But the spring was back in the Honda star's step after beating Fabio Quartararo in the San Marino GP, and he was quick to file his letter of intent last Friday at Motorland Aragon.

Over a second clear of the field at times during practice, untouchable in qualifying, and metronomic during race runs, Marquez made the win a mere formality come Sunday.

He had done all his work in practice on the soft rear tyre, while the Yamaha duo of Quartararo and Maverick Vinales had to go for the hard option. Marquez made the early grip advantage count, grabbing the holeshot and opening up a lead of over a second by the end of lap one.



Marquez was head and shoulders above the rest throughout the weekend

Five laps in, his advantage was up to 3s. Two tours later, it stood at 4.5s. Marquez labelled his strategy to check out from the off as "clever" and, such was his confidence in the bike, he was running with the same set-up with which he had started FP1.

His Austin crash did occupy the fringes of his mind but, barely having to unleash his potential, he eased to his 78th career win on his 200th grand prix start and has put one hand on a sixth MotoGP title courtesy of a 98-point standings lead heading to Thailand.

Andrea Dovizioso proved his nearest 'challenger'. But the Ducati rider, struggling for most of the weekend, was no threat. The lower grip for the race meant he was able turn in a solid pace and make his way past Vinales and Pramac Ducati rider Jack

Miller to claim second place, his first podium since his Red Bull Ring win last month.

Miller "pushed for three corners" when he made his way past the Petronas SRT Yamaha of Quartararo at Turn 12 on lap one to try to reel in Marquez. On the fourth, reality struck him. Vinales soon moved into second and looked to have the pace to make it a comfortable runner-up spot. But the grip began to fade and, as the supersonic Ducatis closed in, Vinales "had no chance" when they followed him onto the back straight, the GP19s some 5mph quicker.

Quartararo just about completed his objective of securing a top-five finish, with Cal Crutchlow emphasising Marquez's brilliance by coming home 10.4s adrift in sixth on an unwieldy LCR Honda. Crutchlow narrowly denied Aleix Espargaro a first top-six finish in 12 months and, despite a strong weekend on the Aprilia, Espargaro warned the "reality" is that the RS-GP is still a lacklustre package.

The same can be said of Valentino Rossi's Yamaha, which chewed through its hard rubber after just five laps and consigned him to a confusion-inducing eighth. Alex Rins recovered from a long-lap penalty, awarded for wiping out Franco Morbidelli on lap one, to salvage ninth ahead of Takaaki Nakagami (LCR Honda) in a scrappy race for the Suzuki rider.

Ahead of the Aragon weekend, KTM announced it would be dropping Johann



Marquez ran away at the head of the field from the off

ALL PICS: GOLD AND GOOSE
motorsport
IMAGES



Third for Miller on Pramac Ducati put his tail up

Zarco from its line-up with immediate effect. It had “lost hope” in salvaging the situation over his continued negativity over the bike after a strong Misano event. In his place came test rider Mika Kallio, who ended his first race in 15 months a creditable 17th. Team-mate Pol Espargaro fractured his wrist in a crash on Saturday and missed the race. Lorenzo dismissed suggestions that he could quit Honda a year early amid his woeful season. But how much longer can his iron will stand up to races like last weekend’s, where he finished 20th, 46s behind his race-winning team-mate?

LEWIS DUNCAN

RESULTS ROUND 14/19, MOTORLAND ARAGON (ESP), 22 SEPT (23 LAPS – 72.558 MILES)

POS	RIDER	TEAM	TIME
1	Marc Marquez (ESP)	Honda	41m57.221s
2	Andrea Dovizioso (ITA)	Ducati	+4.836s
3	Jack Miller (AUS)	Pramac Ducati	+5.430s
4	Maverick Vinales (ESP)	Yamaha	+5.811s
5	Fabio Quartararo (FRA)	Petronas Yamaha	+8.924s
6	Cal Crutchlow (GBR)	LCR Honda	+10.390s
7	Aleix Espargaro (ESP)	Aprilia	+10.441s
8	Valentino Rossi (ITA)	Yamaha	+23.623s
9	Alex Rins (ESP)	Suzuki	+27.998s
10	Takaaki Nakagami (JPN)	LCR Honda	+31.242s
11	Andrea Iannone (ITA)	Aprilia	+32.624s
12	Danilo Petrucci (ITA)	Ducati	+33.043s
13	Miguel Oliveira (PRT)	Tech3 KTM	+33.063s
14	Joan Mir (ESP)	Suzuki	+33.363s
15	Tito Rabat (ESP)	Avintia Ducati	+36.358s
16	Francesco Bagnaia (ITA)	Pramac Ducati	+41.295s
17	Mika Kallio (FIN)	KTM	+42.983s
18	Karel Abraham (CZE)	Avintia Ducati	+43.880s
19	Bradley Smith (GBR)	Aprilia	+44.279s
20	Jorge Lorenzo (ESP)	Honda	+46.087s
21	Hafizh Syahrin (MYS)	Tech3 KTM	+47.308s
R	Franco Morbidelli (ITA)	Petronas Yamaha	0 laps-accident
NS	Pol Espargaro (ESP)	KTM	wrist fracture

Winner's average speed 103.768mph. **Fastest lap** Marquez 1m48.330s, 104.836mph.

QUALIFYING 2 1 Marquez 1m47.009s; 2 Quartararo 1m47.336s; 3 Vinales 1m47.472s; 4 Miller 1m47.658s; 5 A Espargaro 1m47.733s; 6 Rossi 1m48.015s; 7 Crutchlow 1m48.322s; 8 Morbidelli 1m48.372s; 9 Mir 1m48.458s; 10 Dovizioso 1m48.608s; 11 Iannone 1m49.240s.

QUALIFYING 1 1 Morbidelli 1m48.292s; 2 Iannone 1m48.330s; 3 Rins 1m48.449s; 4 Nakagami 1m48.477s; 5 Petrucci 1m48.682s; 6 Bagnaia 1m48.748s; 7 Oliveira 1m48.827s; 8 Rabat 1m48.916s; 9 Kallio 1m49.085s; 10 Lorenzo 1m49.282s; 11 Syahrin 1m49.315s; 12 Abraham 1m49.517s; 13 Smith 1m49.756s.

RIDERS' CHAMPIONSHIP 1 Marquez 300; 2 Dovizioso 202; 3 Rins 156; 4 Petrucci 155; 5 Vinales 147; 6 Rossi 137; 7 Quartararo 123; 8 Miller 117; 9 Crutchlow 98; 10 Morbidelli 80; 11 P Espargaro 77; 12 Nakagami 68; 13 Mir 49; 14 A Espargaro 46; 15 Iannone 32; 16 Bagnaia 29; 17 Oliveira 29; 18 Johann Zarco 27; 19 Lorenzo 23; 20 Rabat 18; 21 Stefan Bradl 16; 22 Michele Pirro 9; 23 Sylvain Guintoli 7; 24 Syahrin 7; 25 Abraham 5; 26 Smith 0; 27 Kallio 0.

MANUFACTURERS' CHAMPIONSHIP 1 Honda 306; 2 Ducati 241; 3 Yamaha 228; 4 Suzuki 181; 5 KTM 88; 6 Aprilia 66.



Dovizioso, Marquez and Miller take the plaudits

WEEKEND WINNERS

MOTO2

ARAGON (ESP)

Brad Binder (below)
Ajo Motorsport
(KTM-Triumph)

MOTO3

ARAGON (ESP)

Aron Canet
Max Racing Team
(KTM)



NEXT REPORT

THAI GRAND PRIX
3 OCTOBER ISSUE

Can Marquez further cement his legend-in-the-making status and secure his sixth world crown at Buriram?

US Racing co-boss
Ralf Schumacher
leans in for a chat
with his son

Schumacher does double at Barcelona

**FORMULA REGIONAL EUROPEAN
BARCELONA (ESP)
21-22 SEPTEMBER
ROUND 6/8**

Runaway Formula Regional European Championship leader Frederik Vesti didn't have things all his own way at Barcelona last weekend, but a 10th win of the season and a further podium maintained a healthy points advantage over Prema team-mate Enzo Fittipaldi with two rounds to go.

Indeed, it was something of a missed opportunity for Fittipaldi who, after taking pole for Saturday's wet-dry opening race, failed to capitalise on what was an off weekend by the lofty standards of Vesti.

The Brazilian fended off the attentions of the weekend's double race winner David Schumacher into Turn 1, but threw away any chance of significantly reducing the deficit to Vesti by slewing off track at Turn 4.

Vesti initially lost ground at the start and fell two places to fourth behind Schumacher and Sophia Florsch. The Dane soon made amends by getting by Florsch at Turn 10, before slicing past Schumacher for the lead following Fittipaldi's off.

Schumacher had pole for races two and three and led each from start to finish, taking his season's victory total to three. The US Racing driver battled heavy tyre wear in race one, but avoided such trouble in the other two by beating Fittipaldi to

honours in race two, and former Red Bull Junior Dan Ticktum in the finale.

Ticktum was called up at the last minute by Van Amersfoort Racing, and in the opening race he climbed from sixth on the grid to pass Schumacher for second. He matched that result in the finale – after a fifth in race two – despite not driving the car until Friday's free practice.

Vesti was third in race two, but added just a solitary point to his tally in the finale with a surprisingly scrappy drive to 10th, after spinning late on. Nevertheless, the 17-year-old still leads Fittipaldi by 73 points, with two race weekends remaining at Mugello and Monza.

STEPHEN BRUNSDON

Lawson stars with brilliant win as Sato claims the crown

**EUROFORMULA OPEN
BARCELONA (ESP)
21-22 SEPTEMBER
ROUND 8/9**

Marino Sato sealed the Euroformula Open title on his championship return, as Liam Lawson starred with a brilliant win in the wet opening race.

Torrential rain led to the cancellation of qualifying for the first race, so the grid was based on free practice times, leaving Billy Monger on pole. He was immediately passed by Carlin team-mate Nicolai Kjaergaard, then lost more places.

Kjaergaard established a healthy lead over Double R Racing's Linus Lundqvist, but neither could hold off eighth-placed starter Lawson. After feinting attacks at

the high-speed Turn 9 on both drivers, the Motopark-run Red Bull Junior made simple outside moves at Turn 1, passing Kjaergaard for the win on the last lap.

Lundqvist was third, while an anonymous run to 10th for Motopark driver Sato – back after missing the Silverstone round to compete in Formula 2 – gave him the title.

Carlin was the team to beat in the dry the next day, converting a top-four lockout in qualifying into the same result in the race, a feat it last achieved in British F3 in 2012. Honda junior Teppei Natori dominated from pole for his first win in Europe, followed by Kjaergaard, Monger and Christian Hahn.

Sato held off his Red Bull-backed Motopark team-mates Lawson and Yuki Tsunoda for fifth position.

ELLIOT WOOD



Lawson went from eighth on grid to grab last-lap win

Nissan ends its drought with soggy Sugo win

SUPER GT
SUGO (JPN)
22 SEPTEMBER
ROUND 7/8

Frederic Makowiecki and Kohei Hirate scored their first win as a Super GT partnership in yet another rain-marred race, as a typhoon loomed closer to Japan.

The B-Max-run pair gave Nissan its first victory of 2019 in a race where Michelin tyres came into their own. The French manufacturer's rubber is only used by two of the GT500 field, and the other Michelin-shod Nissan of NISMO pair Ronnie Quintarelli and Tsugio Matsuda was third.

It was a Honda 1-2 on the grid, with Real Racing's Kodai Tsukakoshi claiming pole from Team Kunimitsu driver Naoki Yamamoto. Tsukakoshi struggled from the start as Real gambled on slicks, allowing Jenson Button to move into the lead in the Kunimitsu NSX from the TOM'S Lexus of Nick Cassidy. Button built up an advantage over the Kiwi, before Cassidy handed over to Ryo Hirakawa. Button was in nine laps later to relay Yamamoto.

Hirakawa passed Yamamoto as the reigning champion got up to speed on cold tyres, but their Bridgestone-shod cars struggled as the rain intensified. Now Makowiecki came to the fore. Hirate had started the Nissan from seventh on the




grid, and Makowiecki took the lead with a third of the race to go.

Also flourishing in the conditions was the sole Dunlop-tyred car – the Nakajima Racing Honda. After Narain Karthikeyan's opening stint, Tadasuke Makino took over and raced up to second, while Matsuda completed the podium.

Hirakawa won the Bridgestone 'class' in fourth from the recovering Real Honda, now in the hands of Bertrand Baguette. Championship leaders Kazuya Oshima and Kenta Yamashita took sixth in their Le Mans Lexus, while Yamamoto made a further pitstop before taking eighth behind the SARD Lexus of Heikki Kovalainen.

JIRO TAKAHASHI

 Relive this race at Motorsport.tv

WEEKEND WINNERS

FORMULA REGIONAL EUROPEAN BARCELONA (ESP)
Race 1 Frederik Vesti
Prema Powerteam
Races 2 & 3 David Schumacher
US Racing

EUROFORMULA OPEN BARCELONA (ESP)
Race 1 Liam Lawson
Motopark (Dallara-Spiess)
Race 2 Teppei Natori
Carlin (Dallara-Spiess)

INTERNATIONAL GT OPEN BARCELONA (ESP)
Race 1 Daniel Zampieri/Loris Spinelli
Antonelli Motorsport
(Mercedes-AMG GT3)
Race 2 Norbert Siedler/Mikael Grenier
Emil Frey Racing
(Lamborghini Huracan GT3 Evo)

SUPER GT SUGO (JPN)
Kohei Hirate/Frederic Makowiecki
B-Max Racing (Nissan GT-R)

NASCAR CUP SERIES RICHMOND (USA)
Martin Truex Jr (below)
Joe Gibbs Racing (Toyota Camry)

NASCAR XFINITY SERIES RICHMOND (USA)
Christopher Bell
Joe Gibbs Racing (Toyota Supra)




For full results visit motorsportstats.com

Truex continues run of form

NASCAR CUP
RICHMOND (USA)
21 SEPTEMBER
ROUND 28/36

Martin Truex Jr made it two out of two in the NASCAR playoffs by winning at Richmond for the second time in 2019.

Truex survived a spin in the final stage to claim victory in a race dominated by Joe Gibbs Racing. The team's Toyotas locked out the top four positions, with Kyle Busch finishing second from Denny Hamlin and Erik Jones, before Jones became the first driver to be excluded from a Cup race, due to a discrepancy in rear-wheel alignment.

Busch led a race-high 202 laps but couldn't stick with Truex as the pair navigated lapped traffic late in the race.

Brad Keselowski was the only non-Gibbs driver to lead. The Penske Ford man led 90 laps after starting from pole position, and mounted a late challenge for the win, before finishing fifth on the road.

Ryan Newman finished sixth – fifth after Jones's exclusion – after running as high as third in his Roush Fenway Ford.

Kyle Larson was next up ahead of Kevin Harvick, who was classified seventh. Stewart-Haas Ford driver Harvick ran in the top 10 all night, but only featured at the very front of the field in the opening few laps, despite starting on the front row of the grid.

Harvick's SHR team-mates Clint Bowyer and Daniel Suarez were eighth and ninth, with Jimmie Johnson 10th.

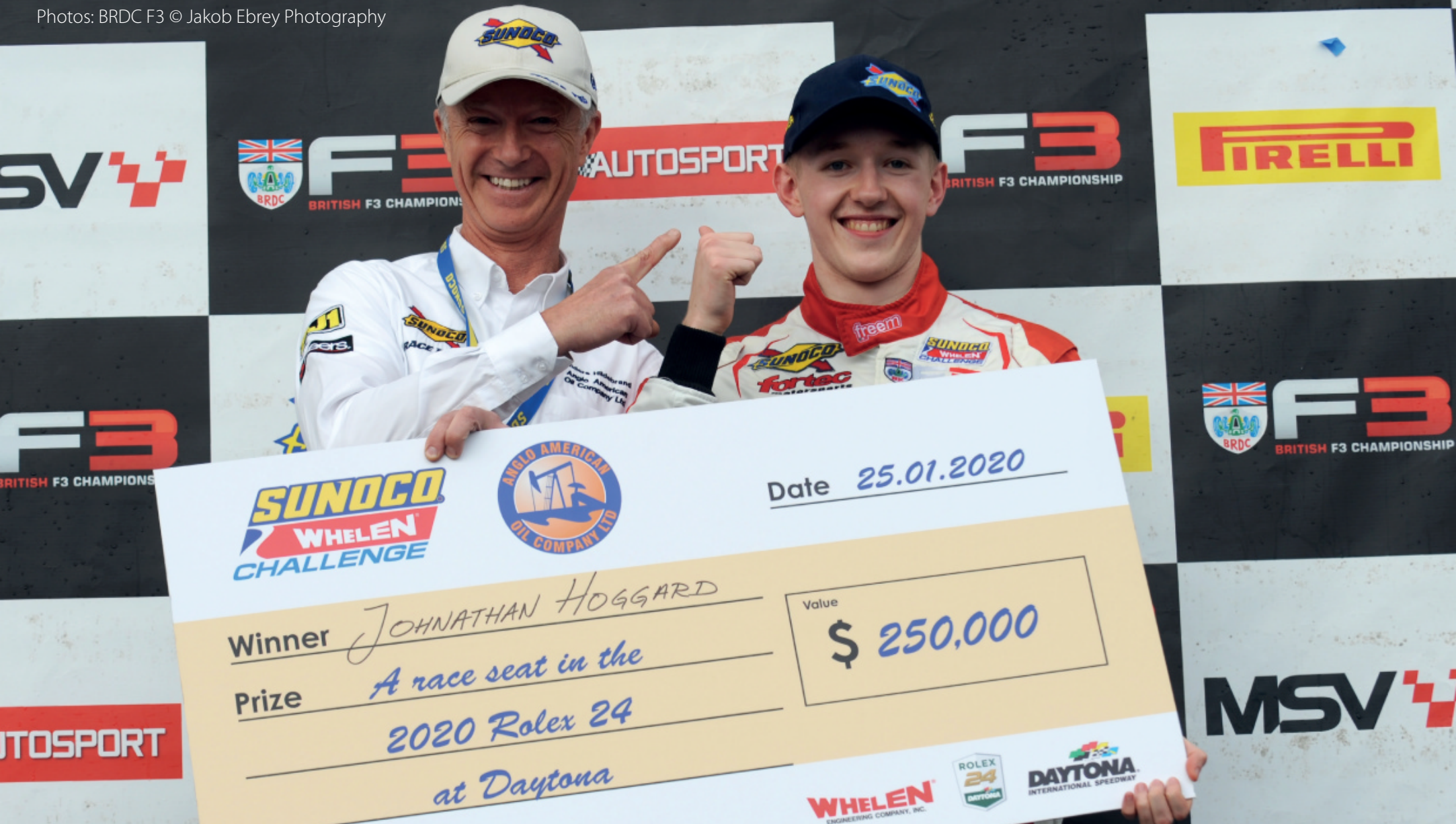
DOMINIK WILDE



WELCOME TO VICTORY LANE JOHNATHAN HOGGARD



Photos: BRDC F3 © Jakob Ebrey Photography



2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Derek Johnston	Ross Kaiser	Filipe Nasr	Ivan Bellarosa	Bradley Smith	Phil Keen	Jonny Adam	Seb Morris	Stuart Middleton	Linus Lundqvist
									

BRDC Formula 3 Championship driver Johnathan Hoggard has become the 11th driver to win the prestigious Sunoco Whelen Challenge, and joins an impressive list of previous winners.

Since the programme began in 2009, when Derek Johnston became the first winner, a steady stream of racing

talent has flowed through the Sunoco Whelen Challenge, including former Formula One driver, Filipe Nasr, factory Lamborghini and Aston Martin drivers Phil Keen and Jonny Adam, and 2018 Rolex 24 At Daytona second place finisher Stuart Middleton. Johnathan now proudly joins that list and will take up his prize seat in the 2020 Rolex 24 At Daytona in January.

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Winning car heads through La Source on its way to victory

New United ORECA gives Philip and Filipe a fillip

EUROPEAN LE MANS SERIES

SPA (BEL)

22 SEPTEMBER

ROUND 5/6

United Autosports took its first win since switching from Ligier to ORECA, as Phil Hanson and Filipe Albuquerque profited from a late drivethrough penalty for the Graff ORECA of Tristan Gommendy.

Hanson, who led the opening stint from pole, had reduced the gap from 12 seconds to five before Gommendy's unscheduled pit visit for improper full-course-yellow procedure, while co-driver Jonathan Hirschi also spun behind the safety car.

After resuming in second, Gommendy lost out on the final lap to the Cool Racing ORECA Nicolas Lapierre shared with Antonin Borga. Borga was initially given a 10s penalty and demoted to third for his forceful move at the Bus Stop, but

the stewards later rescinded their decision.

G-Drive Racing's Roman Rusinov and Job van Uiter finished a subdued fourth along with Jean-Eric Vergne, but extended their points lead over main title rivals Paul-Loup Chatin, Memo Rojas and Paul Lafargue. A practice crash for Chatin forced the IDEC Sport team to source a new ORECA and prepare it overnight, but they took sixth.

EuroInternational pair Mikkel Jensen and Jens Petersen took their third LMP3 victory of the season in dramatic fashion on the final lap, Jensen passing Nigel Moore and Tony Wells to pip second-placed Moore by 0.3s. The Luzich Racing Ferrari trio of Alessandro Pier Guidi, Nicklas Nielsen and Fabien Lavergne wrapped up the GTE title with a round to spare as Pier Guidi held off Riccardo Pera's Proton Porsche.

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WEEKEND WINNERS

EUROPEAN LE MANS SERIES

SPA (BEL)

Filipe Albuquerque/Phil Hanson
United Autosports (ORECA-Gibson 07)

S5000

SANDOWN (AUS)

James Golding
Garry Rogers Motorsport

INDY LIGHTS

LAGUNA SECA (USA)

Race 1 Rinus van Kalmthout
Juncos Racing

Race 2 Rinus van Kalmthout
Juncos Racing

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Golding is lord of the fliers in S5000's debut

S5000

SANDOWN (AUS)

22 SEPTEMBER

ROUND 1/2

A frightening crash for Alex Davison marred the first feature race for the new V8-powered S5000 series.

Davison smashed into both sides of the wall midway up the long back straight, after being hit from behind by Matt Brabham. He walked away from the shunt, but damage to the barriers meant the race was never restarted.

That left James Golding as the



Macrow leads as Barrichello goes wide

somewhat surprising winner, the Supercars regular having inherited the lead when polesitter Tim Macrow fired off the road at Turn 1 after a safety car restart. It was Golding's second win for the weekend, his first having come in the second qualifying race after early leader Brabham ran wide and hit the wall at Turn 9.

Rubens Barrichello, who was flown in from Brazil as a star attraction, was classified

second in the feature race. It was a solid finish to what was at times a challenging weekend for the 11-time grand prix winner, which included first-lap contact with Bart Mawer in the first qualifying race, and a momentary loss of power in the second qualifying race.

Former Superleague Formula driver John Martin rounded out the podium.

ANDREW VAN LEEUWEN

MAIN PIC: MOTORSPORT IMAGES/JEP



TIME TO GET HYPER OVER

HYPERCA

They're the future of the top class of the World Endurance Championship, and some believe new manufacturers will join in to tackle Toyota and Aston Martin

GARY WATKINS

Toyota and Aston Martin are coming for 2020-21, we know that. But if the World Endurance Championship's new hypercar era is going to become a golden age for sportscar racing, it's going to need more manufacturers. They are most definitely circling, but will they come?

Toyota Motorsport GmbH technical director Pascal Vasselon is sure they will. He's an enthusiast for a set of rules in which the Japanese manufacturer played a central role in shaping, and is confident about the prospects of the hypercar category. "At the moment it looks like the new hypercar format is attracting a lot of interest," he says. "It seems that many manufacturers who were

not considering racing in endurance are now looking at it. It was important to get started with two manufacturers, but we feel that very quickly the number will grow."

The original hypercar regulations calling for prototypes only were devised from the outset to be inclusive. What we've ended up with is even more so, now that 'real' hypercars – machinery built for the road – have been allowed to come and play.

The key tenets of the rulebook published last December have been retained, most notably limitations on the engine power and aerodynamics of the car. The targets that have been set are relatively modest in an attempt to limit costs. The new division

Aston Martin
Valkyrie was
demoed at the
British GP

TOYOTA



Toyota is committed
to the new WEC era

GLICKENHAUS



'Niche' manufacturer
Glickenhaus plans entry

BRABHAM



New concept seems
made for Brabham BT62

MAIN PIC: ASTON MARTIN

that replaces LMP1 for 2020-21 includes the Balance of Performance. Vasselon reckons it "casts a shadow over the rules", but he concedes that it was something Toyota had to accept. It was an inevitable consequence of bringing together pure-bred racing cars with road-based machines.

Toyota will be racing a hybrid prototype come the start of the 2020-21 WEC next autumn with a car that will probably look something like the GR Super Sport – confusingly a concept for a hypercar for the road feeding off development of the racing prototype – that is already up and running. Aston, one of three manufacturers that led the push for a change in the original rules last spring, will compete with a non-hybrid race version of the Valkyrie street car that ran in front of a packed house at the British Grand Prix in July.

Opening up the top category in the WEC and at the Le Mans 24 Hours to road-based machinery has definitely widened the appeal of the class. Lamborghini has admitted interest in the class, with company CEO Stefano Domenicali suggesting

that its Aventador-based SC18 Alston trackday car could be a natural starting point for a WEC contender.

The fledgling Brabham Automotive organisation, headed up by Le Mans winner David Brabham, may take a similar route. It put what he calls "a flag in the sand" when it announced back in January that it had the WEC in its sights with a 2021-22 entry in the GTE Pro class. The shift in the hypercar rules has resulted in a bit of a rethink that's still ongoing. "We are evaluating what the options are with the change in the rules, which now lend themselves more to where we are," says Brabham. "We've got to evaluate where we sit with the rules, what we are doing as a company with our cars and whether we can be competitive. The intent is still to get to the WEC in some shape or form."

Put simply, Brabham already has a hypercar, albeit not a fully homologated road car, in the million-pound BT62 trackday weapon. What it doesn't have yet is a street vehicle made in sufficient numbers to be homologated for the GTE division. It looks like an easy choice. >>



“PORSCHE HASN’T FORGOTTEN ITS SPIRITUAL HOME IS AT THE FRONT END OF THE GRID AT LE MANS”

McLaren was one of the three manufacturers along with Aston and Ferrari that asked the ACO and the FIA to rethink the hypercar rules during the early part of this year. A WEC programme is still on its radar and, according to McLaren Racing chief executive Zak Brown, it’s “not ruling out a season-two entry”. He concedes, however, that if McLaren is to be ready for 2021-22, a decision will have to be made soon.

Ferrari’s position isn’t entirely clear, not to the outside world or those sitting around the table with the Italian marque in the rules meetings. What shouldn’t be forgotten, however, is that the last time it started talking up a top-level sportscar entry back in 2013 coincided with talk of a budget cap in Formula 1. Those restrictions appear set to finally come into play for the 2021 F1 season, which could allow for resources, financial and otherwise, for Ferrari’s first factory assault on Le Mans since 1973.

Porsche is another manufacturer with a surplus of resources right now. Its Formula E campaign that kicks off at the start of season six later this year requires a fraction of the manpower involved in its ultra-successful LMP1 programme of 2014-17. The German manufacturer withdrew from the hypercar rulemaking process in the summer of 2018, citing that it was only interested if there was a common set of regulations straddling the WEC and the IMSA SportsCar Championship in North America, but it was sympathetic to the idea of a category dubbed GTE-plus that briefly raised its head in the spring. That proves, if nothing else, that Porsche hasn’t forgotten that its spiritual home in motorsport is at the front end of the grid at Le Mans.

There are manufacturers eyeing the prototype route too. Bentley has made positive noises about the category, and its new motorsport boss, Paul Williams, was a visitor to the Silverstone WEC round. Le Mans, he pointed out, is in Bentley’s blood, saying that it was “looking and thinking” right now.

Hugues de Chaunac, boss of the French constructor ORECA, has ambitions to be on the grid in year two of the hypercar formula. He says he is talking to multiple manufacturers about a prototype.

GTE PRO LACKS QUANTITY, NOT QUALITY

Shock, horror – only three manufacturers in GTE Pro! The disappearance of Ford and BMW – the former on schedule, the latter against initial expectations – from the WEC this season has left the category with a trio of full-time factory players, some say *just* three manufacturers. But if the new hypercar category was kicking off with that many OEMs, they’d be organising street parties in Le Mans.

The WEC’s premier GT division is down to its hardcore: Ferrari, Porsche and Aston Martin who’ve been slugging it out in Pro since 2012. No one seemed to complain about there being just three marques before Ford made it four in 2016.

As Aston Martin Racing boss John Gaw points out,

there were rarely more than three manufacturers fighting it out for the win at any one race during the so-called halcyon years from 2016 through to the 2018-19 superseason. And that’s how many we had in contention for the win first time out at Silverstone this season.

Porsche won GTE Pro at that 2019-20 opener earlier this month, but Ferrari and Aston could have taken the victory laurels. And that was despite each of the three manufacturers opting for different tyre strategies when the rain came mid-race: Porsche went straight to wets; Aston went for warm slicks and then wets; and the Ferraris stayed on dry-weather tyres throughout. On the evidence of Silverstone, there should be no complaints about the

quality of the racing on the return to a three-way GTE Pro battle in the 2019-20 WEC.

Three manufacturers, though, probably means just half a dozen cars until Le Mans and the return of Chevrolet and, most likely, an expanded Porsche assault. Six cars is a slim field for any class of any championship, but what we shouldn’t forget is that the privateer element of GTE has long since been hived off into a separate division. The GTE Am class was created back in 2011, the year of the first full season of the Intercontinental Le Mans Cup that led into the WEC.

GTE Am is part of the movement that has enshrined the place of the amateur driver across the spectrum of international



Aston leads Porsches in exciting Silverstone opener



What we shouldn't forget is that the new class already has a third manufacturer. Glickenhaus isn't a major manufacturer – 'niche' or 'boutique' would probably be better ways to describe the company – but it's a car maker nonetheless, and it has committed to being on the WEC grid come September next season with at least one car. "It looks like we will build to the prototype rules," says company founder Jim Glickenhaus, who adds that he then intends to build road-going versions of that car. "We are leaning towards a non-hybrid with a small-capacity V6 twin-turbo."

There could be some announcements soon. He's promising a tie-up with a well-known motorsport engineering specialist

to help develop a car that will be known as the Glickenhaus 007 and even hinting at a link with a *major* manufacturer. The marque shouldn't be overlooked. It has already proved its credentials in endurance racing at the Nurburgring 24 Hours: its Honda-engined SCG003 took pole for the German enduro in 2017.

WEC stalwart ByKolles is building a prototype too, and is promising to be ready for season one. It believes there's room for the privateer, but the hypercar category will live and die by the manufacturers it attracts.

They are out there, and it seems one or more could be ready to pull the trigger on an entry soon. ❧

sportscar racing. The idea of categorising or rating drivers, now largely centralised under the remit of the FIA, made that possible. There are 11 cars with pro-am line-ups competing for their own silverware in the WEC season. Would there be quite so many if they were

racing without the chance of the driver footing the bill climbing up on the podium? The answer to that one is undoubtedly no.

The next question must be whether there's a place for the privateer in GTE Pro. Remember that Ferrari, Porsche and Aston all sell their GTE cars, whereas

Ford, at least initially, and BMW didn't or don't.

Risi Competizione has proved that it is possible to challenge the factories in both the WEC and, over in North America, in the GT Le Mans class of the IMSA SportsCar Championship. It famously ran Ford close at Le Mans in 2016.

The problem, reckons longtime Risi engineer Rick Mayer, is not the ability of a customer team to perform at the level of the factories – "We've showed we can race and beat them over the years", he says – it's finding the money to do it. "The class has gotten more expensive over the years,"

he explains. "The 430 [Ferrari's GT2 contender in 2006-10] was more reasonable to run than the 458, and costs have gone up again with the 488. And in the case of IMSA you've got to do so much testing."

Privateer efforts in sportscar racing are for the most part funded by wealthy individuals. But for every Giuseppe Risi who wants to take on the big guns, there are a dozen Francois Perrodos who want to climb behind the wheel themselves, and they have a natural home in the pro-am section of the class.

So, if you're concerned about the numbers in GTE Pro, look at it as one half of a 17-car class. If not, just focus on some more of the cracking racing that Silverstone produced.



Risi Ferrari came close to Le Mans glory in 2016

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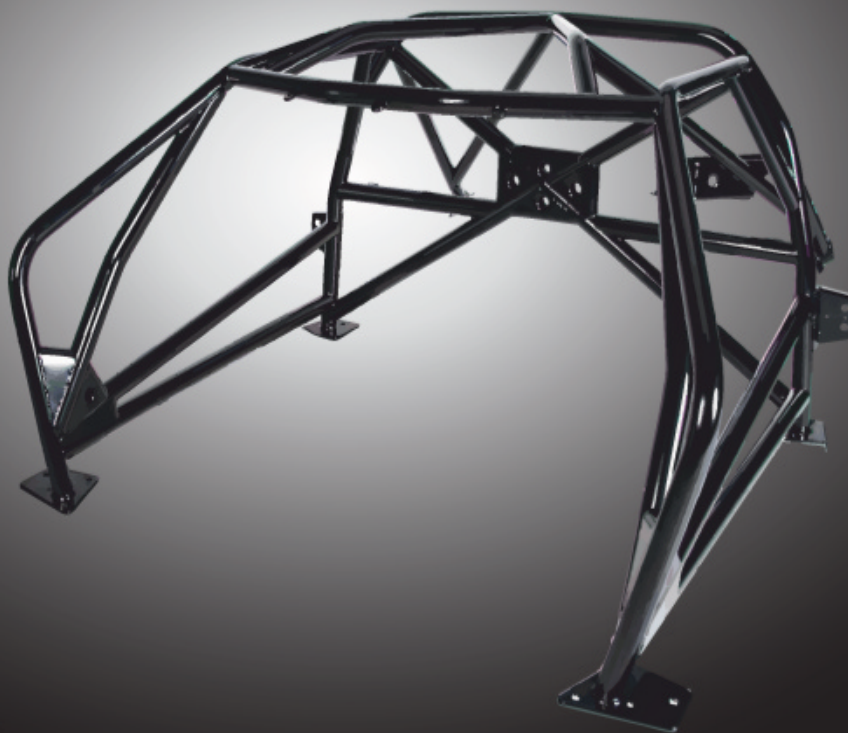
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BRITISH F3 TO RETAIN ITS CAR FOR 2020 SEASON

BRDC BRITISH F3

The BRDC British Formula 3 Championship will keep its existing car for next season after weighing up a switch to a halo-equipped machine.

MotorSport Vision, which operates the championship, has looked at trying to gain FIA Regional F3 status for the past two seasons. This would mean a change to a halo-fitted car but, after consultation with teams, the series will continue to use the machine that first came into use in 2016.

The Tatuus-Cosworth cars will undergo small upgrades to increase performance and create a slightly different look for next year.

“We are doing an upgrade package to improve the aerodynamics a little bit,” said MSV chief executive Jonathan Palmer. “The key thing is we were working in coordination with the teams to understand what they would like to see in terms of future development with the car and in terms of cost.

“We are certainly open and we would like to upgrade our British F3 cars to the latest FIA regulations. We put proposals forward

to the FIA for a new British F3 car, which used a halo, and that is still due to be considered and discussed. But until that happens our current car is doing a very good job.”

The decision not to become a Regional F3 championship means that the series could lose the ‘Formula 3’ name, having already been granted an extension for 2019 by the FIA.

Palmer is keen that the name should remain and is optimistic that the governing body will agree to this.

“Certainly we’re hopeful that British F3 retains the F3 title,” he added. “In Britain we’ve got a long history with the British F3 name. It’s understood by the drivers, teams and public – everyone understands it. There’s no real reason why we shouldn’t keep it.”

The 2020 British F3 calendar was also revealed earlier this month, and remains unchanged from this season. The championship will begin at Oulton Park and include visits to Snetterton, Silverstone (twice), Donington Park (twice), Spa and Brands Hatch.

Josh Mason has become the first driver to commit to 2020. The two-time race winner will remain with Lanar Racing for his third season.

STEFAN MACKLEY

Ginetta GT5 champs eye Brit GT move

GINETTA GT5 CHALLENGE

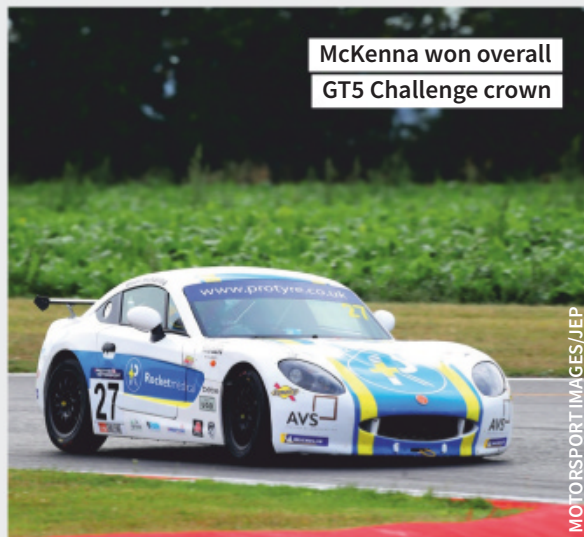
Newly crowned Ginetta GT5 Challenge champions Scott McKenna and Dale Albutt have their sights set on a British GT drive next season.

McKenna, 18, took the overall title at the final round at Donington Park earlier this month with second place in the opener. It was his first full season in car racing, having run a part-time GT5 campaign in 2018.

He now intends to race GT4 machinery next year and has tested with several teams.

“British GT4, that’s the plan,” he said. “That’s what we’re looking to do and hopefully that’s where you will see me next year. It’s quite a jump, but we think it’s the best series to go to to aid my career.

“I’m not saying I’m going to smash it from the first round – it will very much be a learning experience. But that’s not to say we’re not going to try to win races.”



Albutt, whose consistency helped him seal the Am class title at Donington, is also eyeing a move to GT4 and has held talks with teams.

“As an amateur driver in only my second year of racing, it was a bit unexpected in a way, and you don’t expect to have major team bosses saying, ‘Do you fancy coming along for British GT or GT4 Supercup with us next year?’” he said.

“A good friend of mine, Graham Davidson, has just won British GT, and I would love to race there if I had the right offer. I’m in talks with a couple of people.”

STEFAN MACKLEY AND STEPHEN LICKORISH



Compact Cup racer tests GT4 Aston

BRITCAR ENDURANCE CHAMPIONSHIP

BMW Compact Cup racer Aaron Morgan is looking at a move to Britcar next year after testing Team BRIT’s Aston Martin Vantage GT4 earlier this month.

Morgan, who uses a wheelchair after being paralysed from the waist down in a motocross crash when he was 15, was invited to test the Aston at Donington Park by Team BRIT founder Dave Player.

“The plan is to race in Britcar but, as with everything in motorsport, it’s all down to money,” said Morgan. “I’ve known Dave Player for a while and earlier this year he

was like, ‘Aaron, let’s get serious now, I’ve been following your progress and I would love you to be a part of it [Team BRIT].’

“The car was amazing – it just had so much more power, the brakes were better and the grip levels were fantastic.

“My aim of the day was just to get a feel for it in the first session and then, as and when I felt more confident, get more on the pace. My lap times in both sessions were tumbling and I was nowhere near the limits of the car.”

Morgan added that he was impressed with how the hand controls worked, as he didn’t have to take his hands off the steering wheel.

STEPHEN LICKORISH

JUNIOR RACE WINNER EMSON SWAPS SERIES

GINETTA GT4 SUPERCUP

Ginetta Junior race winner Tom Emson will switch to the GT4 Supercup for the final two events of the season as he prepares for 2020.

Emson won the second race of the Ginetta Junior campaign at Brands Hatch (below), but has struggled to replicate that form and has only taken one top-six finish since then.

As he plans to graduate to the GT4 category next season, Emson and his Elite Motorsport squad have decided to make the switch early, starting this weekend at Silverstone.

“He’s going to prepare for next year – we’ve bought a car and he’s pretty committed to that,” explained Elite team boss Eddie Ives. “The Ginetta Junior season hasn’t gone as planned for all sorts of reasons and he was going, ‘Next year I want to do Supercup, we could jump across early and get a bit of experience.’ It would be different if he was in the top five in the championship.

“We’re going at it with a two-year plan, just like I did with him in Juniors. He’s had two full days in a G55 – a day at Snetterton and a day at Thruxton. I’m sure he will go quite well, but it’s about getting a bit of experience.”

Replacing Emson in the team’s Junior line-up will be Swedish karting champion Suleiman Zanfari. The Moroccan will make his car racing debut this weekend.

“We’ve had a manic couple of weeks trying to prepare him for Silverstone,” added Ives. “He’s an exciting talent and he’s going well in testing.”

STEPHEN LICKORISH





PALMER BACK BEHIND THE WHEEL MotorSport Vision chief executive Jonathan Palmer (in the black overalls, above) returned to the track at Brands Hatch last week as he drove an original Austin Mini Cooper S, raced by Jack Davies in period, and now owned by Davies's sons John, Tony and Mike. It was the Davies family that took Palmer to motorsport events for the first time as a teenager and Palmer was therefore delighted to get behind the wheel of the restored Mini. "I've never driven a racing Mini before, so that was tremendous fun," he said. "The car looks terrific and drives really nicely too. I have a lot of great memories of my time at circuits with Tony, Mike, and John, as well as their father Jack, who I remember very clearly." **Photograph by Gary Hawkins**

Chadwick to race E-type in Spa Six Hours contest

HISTORICS

Newly-crowned W Series champion Jamie Chadwick, Olympic cycling legend-turned-Le Mans prototype racer Sir Chris Hoy and double Historic Formula Ford title winner Cameron Jackson are tackling Roadbook's Spa Six Hours race – for Pre-1966 GT, GTP and Touring Cars – for the first time this weekend.

Chadwick, who raced at Spa during her 2015 British GT4 title-winning campaign with Beechdean's Aston Martin, shares a Jaguar E-type with Slovakian Katarina Kyvalova.

Hoy and Jackson are in fellow newbie Lee Penson's Lotus Elan.

The 27th edition of the race has been oversubscribed for many months. More than 100 cars will take part in qualifying, with teams from Japan and the US joining a plethora of European-based drivers, including last year's winners Marcus Graf von Oeynhausen/Nico Verdonck (Ford GT40).

Thirteen GT40s built to FIA-homologated 1965 spec will rule in dry conditions. The 4.7-litre V8-engined machines have won 13 times to date and were last defeated in 2010. GT40 drivers include

Eric van de Poele and 2011 winner Ralf Kelleners.

Should the Ardennes weather be inclement, however, the race into darkness will be wide open. Previous winners in the field include Simon Hadfield, Martin Stretton, the Minshaw brothers, Christian Glaesel, Michael Schryver and Shaun Lynn.

Also in action at Spa this weekend will be British GT4 frontrunner and regular historics racer James Dorlin. The 2018 Renault UK Clio Cup runner-up will tackle the Masters Pre-'66 Touring Car race in Nick Swift's Mini.

MARCUS PYE



Latest outing for Chadwick will be at Spa in a Jaguar

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RYAN
MOTORSPORT INSURANCE

Gibson won two of the three races on his return at Croft



Clubmans ace Gibson returns to prove the pace of his Nemesis

CLUBMANS SPORTS PROTOTYPES

Multiple Clubmans champion Dan Gibson says people questioning whether his Nemesis GK18 still had the pace to compete in the Clubmans Sports Prototype Championship was the reason behind his category return at Croft last weekend.

The car, built by the Gibson Motorsport team run by Dan and father Paul, last competed in the series when Phil Weaver drove it to the title in 2016.

Since then, a slight change in the regulations meant the team had to alter the front suspension to fit the new, smaller Hankook tyre as well as detune the engine from 225 to 200bhp.

"I had a few people say we'd be a bit

slower now with the new regulations, so I brought the Nemesis out of retirement just to show what the car's still got," Gibson explained.

"We made the changes to fit the new regulations but the car is so adjustable that it didn't take too much work. The engine has less power now, but the new Hankook tyres have so much grip that you're probably not losing too much time over a lap."

Despite Gibson not competing in Clubmans since 2014, the Croft local took pole by 1.5 seconds ahead of series frontrunner Clive Wood and claimed a pair of wins, and was only denied a hat-trick by a rear-rollbar failure in race three.

JOE HUDSON

Pearson's busy FF1600 weekend

FF1600

Formula Ford racer Ted Pearson completed a cross-country double as he raced at both Brands Hatch and Croft last weekend.

The Merlyn racer (right) took a pair of fifth-place finishes in the Historic Sports Car Club's Historic Formula Ford Championship before making the five-hour drive north to join Nigel Grant Motorsport team-mate Callum Grant in the British Automobile Racing Club Classic Formula Ford

Championship.

"I got here [to Croft] at 2230 last night," Pearson explained. "I don't normally sleep too well after races because of all the adrenalin but, I tell you what, after a five-hour drive I ended up sleeping pretty well!"

In the first race, the Merlyn Mk11A/19 racer charged through from the back of the grid to finish fourth, before improving to second in the final encounter – despite an opening-lap spin.

Pearson said: "I'd call that



a pretty successful weekend! The spin was frustrating but I'm happy with a podium here and the two wins in the Over-50 class at Brands Hatch – it doesn't get much better than that really."

JOE HUDSON

IN THE HEADLINES

YOUNG IMPRESSES IN TCR

Renault UK Clio Cup title contender Jack Young made an impressive TCR Europe debut at Barcelona last weekend, bagging a pair of fourth places in the two races. Young had only previously tested his Renault Megane TCR once before his first race outing.

SWR PLOTS MINI ENTRY

Former single-seater squad SWR is set to return from a sabbatical next year as it plans to enter two cars in the Mini Challenge. The team previously raced in BRDC British Formula 3 and was most recently competing in the inaugural season of TCR UK with a Honda Civic, prior to interest in the series collapsing.

ANOTHER MARSHAL SHORTAGE

The MotorSport Vision Racing event at Donington Park last weekend was affected by a shortage of marshals, leading to a switch from the full Grand Prix circuit to the shorter National layout. The Team Abba Mercedes GT3 of Richard and Sam Neary won three of the four GT Cup races at the meeting, with Dan de Zille's Ferrari 488 taking the other.

WHITE IS FIRST CHAMPION

Oliver White became the inaugural Heritage Formula Ford champion with a double victory at Donington Park last weekend. White has dominated the season in his Souley Motorsport-entered Van Diemen RF89 and clinched the championship with two races remaining. Heritage FF1600 is a James Beckett-run category for pre-1993 Kent-engined cars.

SNOWBALL'S RARE PLYMOUTH

American car nut Matt Snowball contested his second Bernie's V8s event within last weekend's Special Saloon & Modsports races at Thruxton in his self-built Plymouth 'Cuda (below). Not since Tony Lanfranchi raced an example of the muscle car in the 1975 British Saloon Car Championship has one competed at the Hampshire circuit.





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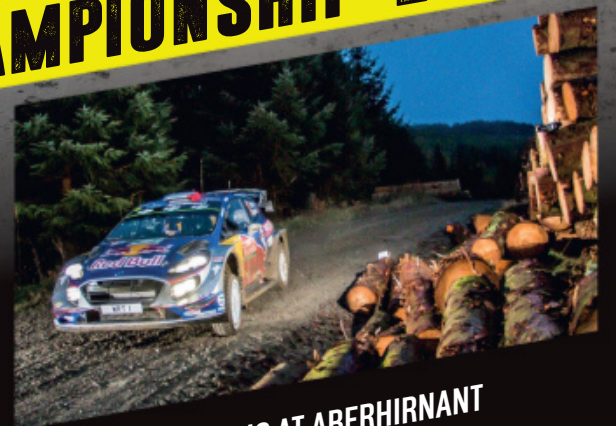
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No to historic hysterics

This month's Goodwood Revival was distinguished by clean, respectful racing, and the spectacle was in no way diminished by the relative absence of door-banging

MARCUS PYE

Variety is among the elements I have always enjoyed most about my work as a motorsport journalist and commentator. Certainly no two days are the same. September is a frantic month, with the big historic racing events at Zandvoort, Goodwood and Spa – the finest of their genre packed into four weeks. Amid them though, last weekend, was an unmissable opportunity to witness a great club event. The hard-working and customer-focused Classic Sports Car Club's 'Thruxton Thriller' has delivered for its members annually since 2016.

I've commented and reported at every Goodwood Revival Meeting since the sensational inaugural edition in 1998, immortalised by Ray Hanna flying his Spitfire beneath our sightline in the pit-top box. This year's 22nd was without doubt among the very best. That the Duke of Richmond & Gordon continues to surprise and amaze enthusiasts with staggering content year on year is quite remarkable.

What struck me most about the latest Revival was the performance of the Le Mans champions called up to fill the breach left by the British Touring Car crew, on duty at Knockhill. Contact is anathema to endurance aces and their conservative ethos shone brightly. Very little bodywork damage was inflicted in the feature Royal Automobile Club Tourist Trophy Celebration GT and St Mary's Trophy Touring Car contests.

"An object lesson in fingertip control mastering a rampant machine courting the limits"

Panelbeaters may fear for their craft and cashflow, but clean racing made for a better spectacle.

The drivers were no slower either. Returnee Andre Lotterer's pole lap in Chris Wilson's AC Cobra was sensational, an object lesson in delicate fingertip control mastering a rampant machine courting the limits of adhesion. Caressed, not bullied, it brought the desired result. The three-time 24 Hours winner was also magnificent when the priceless Ferrari 250 GT Berlinetta he had just taken over in Friday evening's Kinrara Trophy race sustained a puncture. Did he panic? No, he nursed it back half a lap to the pits on the grass, saving both car and track surface, and resumed once mechanics had changed the wheel.

The British Automobile Racing Club, which transferred its core activities to Thruxton in neighbouring Hampshire

following the closure of Goodwood in the summer of 1966, has been back in charge throughout the latter's new heyday. Driving-standards moderator Martin Donnelly commented that he had not made many jottings in his black book this year. Fewer disciplinary hearings is always a good thing on a high-speed track which can – and does – bite.

Talking of Thruxton, revisiting the amateur discipline that enthused me in my youth, and at the venue where I cut my teeth as a race assistant, marshal, commentator's lap charter and reporter in the 1970s, was a welcome treat. The CSCC brand of inclusive club motorsport appears to sustain a lot of happy competitors, although numbers were down on some grids this time. Some of that can be attributed to those consciously saving cars and precious resources for the organisation's first trip to Dijon in a couple of weeks' time. The rest, quite reasonably, to the dreaded B word and its wholesale knock-on effects.

Fire reared its ugly head at Thruxton, not once but four times, thankfully without injury. The marshals' 'live' practice started when a Porsche 924 was ravaged by flame in the pitlane during qualifying on Saturday. After the track went green, a hefty rearward impact at Allard ruptured a TVR Griffith's fuel tank, leaving a 30-yard swathe of charred grass to the wreck. Two saloons also ignited, one in a Saturday race, the other in Sunday practice. Exceptional camaraderie meant the drivers sharing the latter were offered alternative race seats. Following the season closer, the circuit staff now have plenty of extinguishers to refill before 2020.

Highlights of the racing, for cars spanning 1960 to date, were many. The 200th race victory for indefatigable Darrian Wildcat-tamer Ian Hall – winning in a Mini Jem when I first visited Thruxton in 1973 – was well deserved. A stunning New Millennium SEAT success, to add to his Castle Combe GT crown, for Jamie Sturges from neighbouring Kimpton village stood out too. Experience rewarded both, but marshals on posts around the 2.356 miles shared the glory when one of their number, Jonathan Dee, deservedly if unexpectedly landed his first chequer in a Honda Integra.

Before this issue hits newsstands, laptop or doormat I'll be making the pilgrimage to Belgium for my 23rd successive Spa Six Hours. A slow burner from the get-go in 1993, which lost promoter Alain Defalle much money, it was beginning to thrive when I competed in Lotuses owned by Bob Tabor and Gerard MacQuillan (Elan to 26R spec) four years later. Now it's massive.

Inextricably hooked by Francorchamps' majesty – even in truncated modern F1 form – and history, I couldn't imagine missing one. And the legend continues to grow with Roadbook's Vincent Collard and his brilliant team. 🏆



Jackson and Langridge claim HSCC titles at Brands

BRANDS HATCH
HSCC
21 SEPTEMBER

Championship titles for Cameron Jackson and Adrian Langridge topped an entertaining day of Historic Sports Car Club action on the Brands Hatch Indy Circuit.

While Langridge bagged his first Classic Formula 3 crown with a brace of wins, Jackson retained his Historic Formula Ford 1600 title, even though his view for the two races largely comprised the gearbox of Richard Tarling's Jamun. Not to be outdone, the 70s Road Sports turned in two barnstorming races topped by Will Leverett winning from the back of the grid.

Langridge arrived at Brands with one hand on the CF3 title and a fresh engine in the family March 803. But he didn't want to cruise around and take safe points – he wanted to try to win races. His day in the sunshine achieved both goals.

In the opener, Langridge was under serious attack from the flu-ridden Steve Maxted (Ralt RT3), and it got so close that Maxted bent a front fin on the back of the March under braking for Druids.

Two laps later the fin came off completely and Maxted slipped back into the clutches of the RT3s of Paul Smith and David Thorburn. Maxted held on, but worse was to come in the second race.

While Langridge fired into the lead, Maxted was slow away. He spent the race fighting back up to third and onto Smith's tail. "It feels good, but I got a bit lucky as Steve managed to help me out," said new champion Langridge.

Ben Stiles blitzed the Formula Ford 2000 class, but the second race proved beyond doubt that a Van Diemen RF82 does not have the grip of a Ralt RT3 after a lurid spin while chasing Maxted into Clearways.

Just as he had on the Brands Grand Prix layout in June, Tarling parachuted back into Historic FF1600 to give Jackson a hard time. In both races, the Jamun got off the line best and, despite two relentless pursuits by Jackson's Winkelmann, Tarling was able to make it three wins from his past three starts.

In the opener, restarted after a spinning Clive Richards was mounted by Simon Toyne at Graham Hill Bend, Jackson really had his hands full as Linton Stutely went

with them in his Royale. Late-race traffic cost Stutely a shot at moving up, but he was back with them at the flag.

A broken engine mount sidelined Stutely early in the second race, but Jackson didn't have it any easier as Pierre Livingston went with the two leaders. "I sat behind Richard to block Pierre when I should probably have had a go to overtake Richard," said Jackson, who duly sealed his second title.

Both 70s Road Sports races were superb, as up to five cars contested the lead. First time around, Charles Barter managed to wriggle his Datsun 240Z to the head of the pack as Dave Karaskas had his best race in the championship so far to take second in his TVR 3000M. John Williams (Porsche 911), championship favourite Jeremy Clark (Lotus Elan) and Mark Leverett (Elan) made up the pack.

For the second race, Leverett handed his Elan to son Will, as his Lotus Europa was still broken from Oulton Park. Leverett Jr started from the back of the grid and hared up the order to slice through the battling lead pack and take an impressive victory. Williams thought he'd done the hard work until the white Elan appeared in



Adrian
Langridge (50)
sealed the Classic
Formula 3 title with a
Brands Hatch
double

BRANDS HATCH WEEKEND WINNERS

CLASSIC FORMULA 3/ CLASSIC FORMULA FORD 2000

Races 1 & 2 Adrian Langridge (March 803)

HISTORIC FORMULA FORD

Races 1 & 2 Richard Tarling (Jamun T2)

70s ROAD SPORTS

Race 1 Charles Barter (Datsun 240Z)

Race 2 Will Leverett (Lotus Elan)

HISTORIC FORMULA FORD 2000

Races 1 & 2 Andrew Park (Reynard SF81)

HISTORIC TOURING CARS

Races 1 & 2 Mark Martin (Ford Lotus Cortina)

FORD ESCORTS

Races 1 & 2 Terry Davies (Mk2, below)



For full results visit: tsl-timing.com

his mirrors, while Karaskas took third from recovering spinner Clark, and Barter parked the 240Z with more engine woes.

Andrew Park made the eight-hour trek from the Lake District worthwhile with a double win in Historic FF2000 to close in on a fourth straight title. Ian Pearson was the big threat, but was fortunate to retain second when the race was halted just after he'd had a wild ride through the gravel at an oily Paddock in the opener. Park had a slightly easier time in the second race as Nelson Rowe again completed the podium.

Mark Martin dropped in from Masters to bag both Historic Touring Car races in his Ford Lotus Cortina, but left it late in the second race after passing Richard Belcher at Clearways on the final lap when Belcher's Cortina went in too deep.

PAUL LAWRENCE

JACKSON TAKES UNFASHIONABLE MOTOR TO GLORY



Jackson took his
Winkelmann
to title spoils

Cameron Jackson claimed his second Historic Formula Ford title on Saturday on the back of a remarkable run of 10 wins and three second places from 13 races. Only former champion Richard Tarling has topped Jackson – at Brands Hatch – this season, and Jackson was able to miss four rounds and still seal the honours with two races to run.

His 2018 crown was won in a Lola T200, but this year, working again with Neil Fowler's team, he opted to run the unfashionable Winkelmann, the US brand for the UK-built Pallisers. Never before had a Palliser or a Winkelmann won the title in 24 years of the series, although Jamun and Macon have both enjoyed more success in historics than they did in period.

"It was a really good car out of the box and it dispels these things that people think about what is a good car, and that's why I got it in the first place," said Jackson of the Winkelmann. "It's unbelievable what Neil Fowler and I, and all of his guys, have been able to do over the past two years. We dialled the Winkelmann in but we've not done anything drastic to it. Neil and I bounce ideas off each other and he's obviously a top driver as well as a great engineer – he raced the car at Anglesey in July and won first time out."

Jackson arrived at Brands Hatch on

Saturday fresh from guiding a Crossle 5S sports-racer to a podium finish in the hugely competitive Whitsun Trophy at Goodwood, a race won by former F1 racer Karun Chandhok. Earlier in the year, Jackson won at the Members' Meeting in the unfashionable Crossle, which is now for sale.

This weekend will bring another new challenge when Jackson contests the Spa Classic Six Hours in the freshly prepared Lotus Elan 26R of fellow Historic Formula Ford racer Lee Penson, with Sir Chris Hoy also due to join the driver line-up. But Formula Ford racing is still number one for Jackson.

"I'm just completely addicted to Formula Fords," he said. "I think it's pretty safe to say I'll be racing Formula Ford for a long time. I don't mind losing to Richard – he's always quick and he's a very good driver and good fun to race with."

"We try hard and we don't hide that fact and we think a lot about it. That's part of the enjoyment and we get results to show for it."

Clearly Jackson's plans for 2020 will heavily feature Formula Ford with Fowler's standard-setting team. With the Classic Formula Ford Championship, for pre-1982 cars, joining the HSCC roster next year, a challenge on both championships becomes logistically possible for a driver with the time pressures of a young family and business commitments.

"I may even try to win a third Historic title in three years in three different cars," Jackson said. "I'd quite like to do that; that would be amazing!" It just so happens that he has a car in mind and, if that tentative plan comes off, another marque could be joining the nine already listed on the Historic Formula Ford roll of honour.

PAUL LAWRENCE



Only Richard Tarling (1)
beat Jackson (7) to wins

Sturges surges to dramatic double victory

THRUXTON

CSCC

21-22 SEPTEMBER

“That was quite something,” reflected circuit neighbour Jamie Sturges, having won the New Millennium climax to the Classic Sports Car Club’s fourth ‘Thruxton Thriller’ against the odds in his SEAT Leon TCR. Sturges was unexpectedly victorious over zippy Caterhams in the earlier Open Series race, and then he relentlessly hounded down Peter Challis (Porsche 997 Cup) after the mandatory pitstops and “threw one down the inside” decisively into Campbell on the final lap.

“After the first race I was praying for rain, but it stayed dry,” said Sturges, whose 1m28.202s (96.16mph) charge on a drying track had earned pole by 2.154s from Michael Vitulli (BMW E46 M3) with Challis third. “The rear-wheel-drive cars all mugged me at the start, as expected, and I found myself sixth after three laps.” By then Challis, Vitulli, Chris Griffin (Lotus V6 Cup R), Lucky Khera (E46 M3, from eighth) and Mark Smith (E36 M3) were ahead.

A collision with a Mazda RX-8 ended Khera’s bold race, but Russell Humphrey forged his E46 M3 past Sturges before a big spin at Segrave gifted the SEAT pilot the place back. An early stop shuffled Sturges back into the fray expediently and his chase resumed as others stuck to gameplans, Smith and Griffin taking successive turns ahead after stopping later than Challis.



Sturges (right) won against the odds in New Millennium race

Unbeknown to rivals, not that onlookers had a clue, Sturges was wrestling with a car problem. “Just before the pitstop the paddleshift came off the steering wheel,” he explained. “Luckily, I was able to hold and operate it with three fingers, but then dropped it. Having grabbed it again, I battled my way back [to Challis], overshooting corners as I tried to lap quicker.”

A series of fastest laps culminated with a remarkable 1m22.060s (103.35mph) two laps from home, with the Porsche getting ever larger. “If you mirror-watch you’re going to get caught,” said Challis. “My crew was telling me [plus] nine, five, then four seconds, then the SEAT appeared! Fair play to Jamie, he drove very well.”

James Moulton-Smith (in for dad Mark) overcame a 20s previous-winner penalty to scoop third from Vitulli and Griffin, who had a late spin at the chicane. E46 M3 duellists Jasver Sapra and David Fielder arrived at the lap-ending chicane abreast

on the final tour, whereupon Fielder, hung out on the outside, spun on the grass.

Despite shredding another nose splitter when squeezed off-piste while lapping at Noble, Thruxton devotee Ian Hall won both of Saturday’s attritional Special Saloon & Modsports bouts, the first his 200th race win. Only Paul Sibley (Lotus Elan-BDG) kept Hall in sight. Marcus Bicknell (ASCAR Ford Fusion) and Danny Morris (Peugeot 309-Cosworth turbo) shared third places.

Richard Merrell finally grasped his first Swinging Sixties win after Charles Tippet (BMW 2002Ti) “overcooked it” at the chicane trying to pass Merrell’s Alfa on the last lap. Jamie Keevill, after an early scrape with Malcolm Johnson’s Lotus Europa, dominated the Group 2 race in his Elan as Peter Thompson’s TVR Griffith shed a wheel. Phil Otley drove his immaculate Reliant Scimitar GTE superbly into second.

Spark-plug failure left Tim Davis at the back of the Open Series grid, but he fired



Thruxton devotee Hall claimed a double win in his Darrian Wildcat

THRUXTON WEEKEND WINNERS

NEW MILLENNIUM

Jamie Sturges (SEAT Leon TCR)

SPECIAL SALOONS & MODSPORTS

Races 1&2 Ian Hall (Darrian Wildcat T98 GTR)

SWINGING SIXTIES GROUP 1

Richard Merrell (Alfa Romeo Giulia GT)

SWINGING SIXTIES GROUP 2

Jamie Keevill (Lotus Elan S2)

OPEN SERIES

Jamie Sturges (SEAT Leon TCR)

MAGNIFICENT SEVENS

Tim Davis (Caterham C400)

TURBO TIN TOPS

Charles Hyde-Andrews-Bird (Renault Megane R26)

TIN TOPS

Jonathan Dee (Honda Integra DC2)

FUTURE CLASSICS

Mark Chilton (Nissan Skyline GTR)

MODERN CLASSICS

Trevor Pickard/Ray West (BMW M3 E36)

JAGUAR SALOONS & GTs

Race 1 Colin Philpott (XJS)

Race 2 Tom Robinson (XJR)

For full results visit: tsl-timing.com

his Caterham C400 through to finish second, behind Sturges's SEAT and clear of polesitter Jonathan Pittard's 295bhp supercharged Caterham CSR. On this form, Davis was unmatchable in Magnificent Sevens, cutting a 1m21.048s (104.64mph) best lap in beating BOSS team-mate Colin Watson. John Cutmore screamed his revised Spire-Suzuki RB-7 from 15th to third on his first visit since 2005.

In Turbo Tin Tops, Charles Hyde-Andrews-Bird's Renault Megane repelled Dan Ludlow/Stuart Emmett, debuting their ex-Synchro Honda Civic Type R. Marshal Jonathan Dee aced the 'atmo' Tin Tops race in his Honda Integra after favourite Martin Addison (Peugeot 106 GTi) inexplicably made his stop at the end of a caution.

Mark Chilton's Nissan Skyline won in Future Classics, and Porsche 944 duo Antony McEvoy and Ryan Mone scrapped for second. Thruxton-based engine tuner Ray West stormed Trevor Pickard's BMW E36 M3 past Alan Thompson's version for Modern Classics honours.

Jaguar poleman Tom Robinson recovered brilliantly from a lairy spin at Church on lap one of Saturday's race to shadow winner Colin Philpott. On Sunday, Robinson and the impressive Michael Seabourne (XJ40) made it a saloon 1-2.

MARCUS PYE



DAYTONA PORSCHE 997 HITS THRUXTON A stunning ex-Daytona Porsche 997 Grand-Am car turned heads on its CSCC debut. Factory-built for IMSA racing in 2011, it was uprated by 935 veteran Paul Miller's team for the 2012 24-Hour race, and was imported to the UK by specialist Mark Donaldson. John Cockerton took it to ninth place in Sunday's New Millennium set.



MARSHAL POSTS SURPRISE FIRST VICTORY The most surprised winner of the weekend was Jonathan Dee, who delighted the 'orange army' by coolly guiding his Honda Integra home to win Saturday's frenetic Tin Tops race. "I've been marshalling for 25 years, much of it at post 16 here, but always wanted to have a go [at racing]," said Dee.



ALLARD SPAWNS AUSTIN-HEALEY '6600' John and James Plant's radical tubular-chassised homage raced for the first time at Thruxton. Utilising parts from John's mighty green 'Allard', it carries its 6.6-litre Chevrolet power unit well back and boasts more advantageous aerodynamics. The car took sixth place in the second Special Saloons and Modsports race.

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Blackman shadowed the leaders but didn't take a race win

Blackman takes Silhouette crown

CROFT
BARC
21-22 SEPTEMBER

A hat-trick of second places was enough for Malcolm Blackman to secure his fourth Super Silhouettes title with a round to spare after a weekend of battling through mixed conditions at Croft.

Blackman needed to collect just 300 points from the three races at Croft (with 220 available for a win and pole) and the two at the Brands Hatch finale, so elected to take a cautious strategy in his Vauxhall Tigra to avoid a potential non-finish.

In the sunny first race, the Tigra of title rival Chris Brockhurst proved too quick to catch, while in Sunday's two encounters, peppered by intermittent showers, Mazda RX-8 racer Danny Hunn mastered racing on slicks in the wet to take his first series win in the opening event. Brockhurst then capitalised on a rare mistake from Blackman to take his fourth win of 2019 in the finale.

"It was fun to drive all weekend – slicks in the wet is always fun," Blackman said. "But I knew I didn't want to push it too hard because I didn't need the wins. I just needed to keep banking the points and that proved to be enough to take the title."

Although he didn't add to his tally of 12 wins this season, his haul of 593 points has given him an unassailable lead of 752 with just 420 available in the final round.

Callum Grant secured a clean sweep of pole position and a pair of race wins as he joined Classic Formula Ford for the first time this year in his Merlyn Mk20A. Familiar with the resurfaced track after a podium finish during Historic Formula Ford's visit to North Yorkshire in August, Grant made his experience count with two dominant wins in the damp, winning both races by more than 15 seconds.

Jordan Harrison (Lola) finished second in the first encounter while Ted Pearson – who drove five hours from Brands Hatch on Saturday night to compete at Croft on Sunday – finished as runner-up in the second to add to his earlier fourth place in his Merlyn Mk11A/19.

Championship leader Rick Morris struggled in the wet with his Royale, taking a sixth and an eighth, but maintained his lead in the standings after nearest rival Tim Harvey elected to skip the trip north for logistical reasons.

Dan Gibson was only denied a trio of wins on his return to the Clubmans Sports Prototype Championship after a five-year absence by a broken rear rollbar on his Nemesis GK18. The mechanical issue allowed Mallock-mounted Peter Richings to take his third win of the season by 0.519s ahead of Gibson in the finale.

Car trouble also denied Reece Jones all three victories in the Pickup Truck Racing Championship. After a fight from fourth

WEEKEND WINNERS

SUPER SILHOUETTES

Races 1 & 3 Chris Brockhurst (Vauxhall Tigra)
Race 2 Danny Hunn (Mazda RX-8)

CLASSIC FORMULA FORD 1600

Races 1 & 2 Callum Grant (Merlyn Mk20A)

CLUBMANS SPORTS PROTOTYPES

Races 1 & 2 Daniel Gibson (Nemesis GK18)
Race 3 Peter Richings (Mallock Mk30 PR)

PICKUP TRUCK RACING CHAMPIONSHIP

Races 1 & 2 Reece Jones
Race 3 George Turiccki

CITROEN C1 CHALLENGE

Amigo Motorsport (Mathew Dawson/
Rhys Lloyd)

MICHELIN CLIO CUP SERIES

Races 1 & 2 Ronan Pearson

For full results visit: tsl-timing.com

to win the opener, he made a remarkable charge from the back of the grid to win the second race. Jones was leading the third when he was shown the mechanical flag after a first-lap collision broke off his passenger door.

Jones's retirement gave points leader George Turiccki a fifth win of the year having passed a spinning Daniel Petters – who finished third – on the run to the line.

Mathew Dawson and Rhys Lloyd took their second Croft win of the season as the three-hour Citroen C1 Challenge race was decided in their favour in the final five minutes. The Amigo Motorsport pair were two minutes down on long-time leader Old Hat Motorsport at the point when the first-placed C1 ran out of fuel while Daniel Bruce was on his in-lap for a late splash. Slowing at Tower, Bruce tried to limp the car back to the pits for half a lap before finally admitting defeat at Sunny Out.

JOE HUDSON

Grant put his track knowledge from earlier in the season to good use in Classic FF1600



Clarke's late run ensures Ferrari title

SILVERSTONE
BRSCC
21-22 SEPTEMBER

There were many reasons to be unsure what to expect from the Ferrari Challenge UK in 2019. This was its inaugural season, and it's the only single-country Ferrari Challenge championship. It also cast a wide net: it's open to all UK Ferrari clients who own a 488 Challenge, and around half its field began as novices.

Quickly there appeared to be clarity about who would be the championship winner. Ex-Ginetta GT4 Supercup and Lotus racer Jason Baker won the first four races of what was slated as an eight-race schedule, albeit with a consistently close challenger. Jamie Clarke – a former Legends racer who has competed only intermittently in the past 12 years – was next home every time.

But at Croft, the third two-race meeting of four, events started to turn against Baker. First he tangled with a backmarker late in race one and was classified fourth, while Clarke bagged his first win. After that, race two was cancelled owing to barrier damage.

At the final round at Silverstone Baker



Clarke resists
Baker to win race
two and the title

missed the first race to attend a wedding. Clarke again took full points advantage with an imperious pole, fastest lap and victory, after a lengthy safety-car period. "We just did what we had to do," Clarke said. "It now all hangs on the last race."

Indeed so, and it left Baker needing a perfect Sunday – pole, win and fastest lap – to pip Clarke to the title on countback should Clarke finish second. And his task soon got even harder, as Clarke took the point for race two pole. "Coming straight into qualifying – Jamie had done the day before – was always going to be a tall order," Baker

noted. "I was pleased with my lap time, but it wasn't enough." Clarke meanwhile was delighted with his pace. "[I've] finally found my flow around here," he said.

The track was wet for the deciding race, giving Baker hope that it might aid his required 'mixed-up' result. And in the race he attacked leader Clarke relentlessly. But it was for naught, as the pair checked out at the front as usual and Clarke – although he could have waved Baker by and cruised home in second place – remained resolute to seal the title in style, even with rain falling near the race's end.

McIntyre resists Jay for Anglesey double win

ANGLESEY
BARC
21-22 SEPTEMBER

Scott McIntyre took another step towards the Junior Saloon Car Championship title with a hard-fought double win at Anglesey.

After an initial skirmish with outgoing champion Lewis Saunders, McIntyre was locked into a duel with double Mallory Park winner Alex Jay. They remained inches apart for the duration, but



Danny Bird scored a
treble top in his Spire

McIntyre got home 0.067 seconds before Jay, with Owen Hizzey snatching third from an ailing Saunders at Peel on the last lap.

The same cast duelled for the lead in race two, and McIntyre again kept his nose ahead. Jay made a late challenge out of the final turn, missing out on this occasion by 0.064s. Behind, Harry Ashley fended off Charlie Hand and Saunders to take third.

Danny Bird (Spire GTR) won all three CNC Heads Sports & Saloons races, though he didn't have it all his own way. In race one, Paul Dobson's Locost Mazda led as far as Rocket on lap one, but Bird slipped by and led thereafter. Robert Burkinshaw (Honda Integra) took third after ousting Tim Foxlow's Ford Escort three laps from home.

Dave Harvey (Locosaki) proved to be Bird's toughest opponent, and in race two it took until lap 11 of 14 for Bird to breach his defence. Once ahead, Bird consolidated his lead, while Dobson shadowed second-placed Harvey. Harvey led again in race three, but Bird was ahead by Peel on lap two,

leaving Dobson again a lonely third.

The Classic VW Cup, BARC Saloons and Honda VTEC Challenge were combined to make a 21-car grid. Chris Sparks's Honda Civic and Mark De'Ath's Subaru Impreza had been fairly close in race one, after dropping poleman Steve Rothery (Peugeot 308). But Rothery reclaimed second and De'Ath briefly fell back after a three-lap safety-car intervention. Sparks retained his lead, while De'Ath fought back to retake Rothery on the penultimate lap.

Although David Matthias (Ford Sierra Cosworth) charged away at the start of race two, Rothery was ahead by Seaman's on the opening lap and was never again headed. De'Ath and Sparks also passed Matthias, who fell away even as they battled for second. De'Ath ran wide exiting the final turn on lap nine of 12, enabling Sparks to slip through and pursue Rothery, who crossed the line just 0.469s ahead.

Newly crowned MaX5 champion Paul Roddison took two wins out of three. His

Marrs (left) took Ferrari Classic opener before radiator woe allowed Mogridge (right) to win



WALKER

WALKER

"I'm delighted," Clarke said. "The whole weekend went as well as it possibly could. Jason gave me a real good run for my money today. That's the last three races that we've won, so a real shift in momentum."

And Baker was generous in defeat. "It's a shame having led the championship all year to not get it but that's that," he said. "I had a couple of opportunities to overtake but it would have been a real fifty-fifty move; the last thing I wanted to do is punt him off and win that way. I knew that it would have been tough to go away with the championship when losing a whole round."

Wayne Marrs dominated Silverstone's opening Ferrari Formula Classic race in his F355 Challenge. He didn't last long in race two as his radiator failed, and fellow frontrunner Tris Simpson pitted his F355 at the end of the warm-up lap to investigate a smoky exhaust, caused by a kink in his oil-return pipe and an overfill. The other habitual frontrunner, Tim Mogridge also in an F355, therefore cruised to victory. He also won race three, as Marrs and Simpson rose from the back to complete the podium.

GRAHAM KEILLOH

McIntyre (right) twice held off Jay in Junior Saloons



BOURNE

was a lights-to-flag victory in race one, with Ian Loversidge a safe second and Andrew Pretorius third after duelling throughout with Jeremy Shipley.

Although Roddison led from the start of race two, Loversidge nosed ahead a couple of times and finally got a decisive run on his rival into the hairpin with two laps to go, with Shipley getting the better of Pretorius for third after a protracted tussle. But in the third race Roddison

signed off with another lights-to-flag win from Loversidge and Pretorius.

Lee Harpham took a treble win in Division 1 of the British Superkarts. In race one it was a last-lap victory, after Andy Bird had led from the off. Bird lost out on the third lap in race two, and Tom Rushforth took over the chase of Harpham. Rushforth was the main challenger again in race three.

PETER SCHERER

WEEKEND WINNERS

SILVERSTONE

FERRARI CHALLENGE

Races 1 & 2 Jamie Clarke

FERRARI FORMULA CLASSIC

Race 1 Wayne Marrs (F355 Challenge)

Races 2 & 3 Tim Mogridge (F355 Challenge)



WALKER

For full results visit: tsl-timing.com

ANGLESEY

JUNIOR SALOONS

Races 1 & 2 Scott McIntyre

CNC HEADS SPORTS SALOONS

Races 1, 2 & 3 Danny Bird (Spire GTR)

CLASSIC VW CUP/BARC SALOONS/ HONDA VTEC CHALLENGE

Race 1 Chris Sparks (Honda Civic)

Race 2 Steve Rothery (Peugeot 308, below)

MAX5

Races 1 & 3 Paul Roddison (Mk4)

Race 2 Ian Loversidge (Mk4)

BRITISH SUPERKART DIVISION 1/ F250 NATIONAL/F450 NATIONAL

Races 1, 2 & 3 Lee Harpham (MS Kart/VM)

BRITISH SUPERKART F125 OPEN

Race 1 Matt Robinson
(Anderson/Redspeed TM)

Race 2 Liam Morley (Anderson/DEA)

Race 3 Mark Bramhall (Anderson/IAME)

MIGHTY MINIS


Race 1 David Kirkpatrick

Race 2 Neven Kirkpatrick



BOURNE

For full results visit: tsl-timing.com



Carlin driver
Novalak was
ultra-consistent
this year

SEASON
REVIEW

NOVALAK WINS THE BATTLE OF CONSISTENCY

Thirteen drivers were winners, but finishing every race paid off for Clement Novalak

STEFAN MACKLEY

The adage that ‘points make prizes’ is perhaps the most fitting way to describe how Clement Novalak won the 2019 BRDC British Formula 3 Championship. The Carlin driver secured the title with a race to spare and eventually by a handy 23 points, but he took only two wins during the season – five fewer than the season’s best – and scored just a further six podiums in a 24-race season.

Perhaps even more startling is that after scoring 81 points in the opening round at Oulton Park – courtesy of a win and second place – Novalak’s average continually decreased every weekend to the point where he picked up just 42 points at the final round.

You have to dig much deeper to assess how Novalak’s ability came to fruition and secured him the title. Until the penultimate race of the season at Donington Park, where Novalak clinched the championship, he’d finished every race in the top 10. Perhaps an even more impressive feat is that in the full-reversed-grid second races, where points are awarded for each position gained by a driver, Novalak comfortably scored the most with 48.

It all serves to paint a picture of a driver who seized chances when they came his way, but who didn’t take needless risks.

“I think at the beginning of the year we had a bit more performance compared to the others than we did towards the end of the year,” says Novalak. “So obviously that helped with the wins etc. But the whole team was at the front, we were showing strong pace and I think from around round four onwards everyone else started developing a really strong pace.

“I think that the ability we’ve had this year of going through the reversed grids and managing to pick up a lot of positions has been a deciding factor in the championship. We’ve outscored everybody and by quite a big margin.”

Novalak’s nearest challengers were the top three drivers from British F4 last season: Kiern Jewiss, Ayrton Simmons

and Johnathan Hoggard. Of the three Brits it was Hoggard who came into the season as arguably the favourite, having taken the most wins during the 2018 F4 campaign and the greatest amount of points in the second half of the year. Pre-season he also admitted that the higher downforce of the British F3 Tatuus-Cosworth machine suited his driving style, and so it proved to be the case as he was Novalak’s nearest challenger.

By the midway point of the season, Fortec Motorsports racer Hoggard was just 28 points behind Novalak, courtesy of wins at Oulton Park, Snetterton and Donington Park. This was despite two retirements, both after collisions with other drivers. But then came Spa. Although he finished all three races, his best result was seventh.

“I didn’t qualify as well as I normally do at Spa and I think that really set the tone for the weekend,” admits Hoggard. “It was quite tough in the races because everyone was sort of the same speed. So up Eau Rouge and down the [Kemmel] straight, any sort of slipstream opportunity you did get was limited because everyone was just holding the same gap.”

Hoggard had dropped 55 points behind his title rival with nine races to go. Ultimately, it was a gap he couldn’t recover, but he still proved to be a star of the season in many ways, collecting three more wins at Brands Hatch and Donington to take his total to seven. His seven poles and nine fastest laps were almost double the next best, but he admits a lack of consistency cost him.

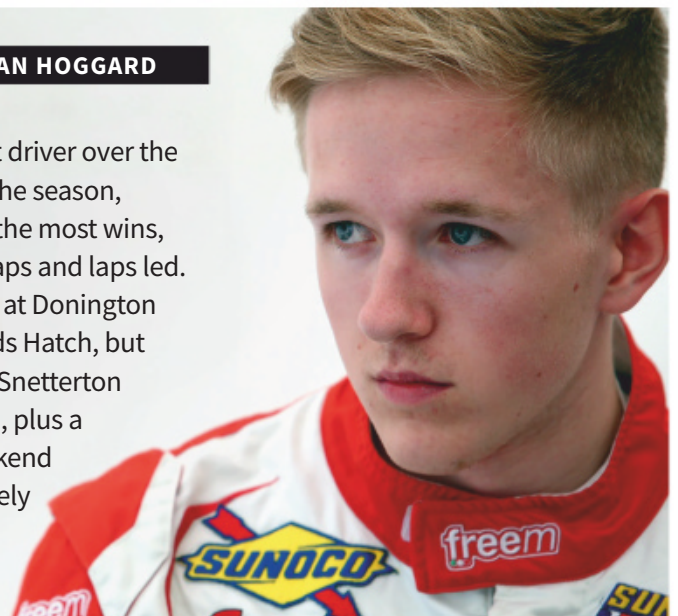
“I think it’s where we’ve non-finished [Snetterton and Donington] that’s cost us the championship,” says Hoggard. “Clement’s done a good job of finishing every race, so that’s where he’s gained most of his points.”

Consistency was also what let Simmons down, as on his day the Chris Dittmann Racing charge was unstoppable. He took three wins – two at Silverstone and one at Spa – and at Silverstone

AUTOSPORT'S TOP 5 DRIVERS

JOHNATHAN HOGGARD

1 The fastest driver over the course of the season, recording the most wins, poles, fastest laps and laps led. He was mighty at Donington Park and Brands Hatch, but retirements at Snetterton and Donington, plus a lacklustre weekend at Spa, ultimately cost him the 2019 title.



BRDC BRITISH F3 TOP SIX

POS	DRIVER	TEAM	WINS	PTS
1	Clement Novalak	Carlin	2	505
2	Johnathan Hoggard	Fortec Motorsports	7	482
3	Ayrton Simmons	Chris Dittmann Racing	3	450
4	Kiern Jewiss	Douglas Motorsport	1	438
5	Neil Verhagen	Double R Racing	0	357
6	Manuel Maldonado	Fortec Motorsports	1	348

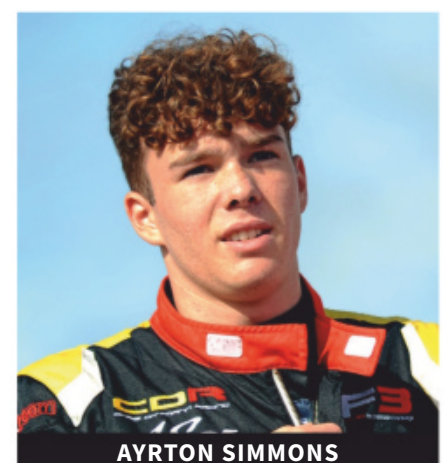
Hoggard took comfortably the most wins with seven

ALL PICS: JEP

motorsport
IMAGES



CLEMENT NOVALAK



AYRTON SIMMONS

in June he scored the highest amount of points anyone managed over a single weekend in 2019. But two nightmare events at Donington meant he had to settle for third in the standings.

“The biggest thing is definitely consistency,” says Simmons. “Sometimes it’s not about risking it all to win or finish on the podium, which is something I didn’t do this year and it cost me a championship.”

Arguably the biggest disappointment of the season was Jewiss. Big things were expected of the 2018 British F4 champion, but it took time for the 17-year-old to get on the pace of the frontrunners. Qualifying down the order meant he was in the thick of the action, and on more than one occasion he was left with a damaged car and dropped points.

But the Douglas Motorsport team helped him find his way in the second half of the season and, over the final three rounds at Brands Hatch, Silverstone and Donington, he comfortably took more points than the leading three drivers in the championship.

While this quartet were the class of the field, they weren’t the only ones to stand on the top step, as no fewer than 13 drivers won a race throughout the season. Kaylen Frederick (Carlin), Lucas Petersson (Carlin), Benjamin Pedersen (Douglas), Josh Mason (Lanan), Nicolas Varrone (Hillspeed), Nazim Azman (CDR) and Manuel Maldonado (Fortec) all benefited from the full-reserved-grid race two. Aside from the top four drivers in the standings, only Frederick, Hampus Ericsson (Double R) and Sasakorn Chaimongkol (Hillspeed) took a victory in either race one or three.

But regardless of how many people stood on the top step of the podium, the year belonged to Novalak. “You push every race to get the best result you can and it just turns out we didn’t have the pace to score the best results all the time,” he says. “But we kept finishing races, scored the maximum points we could, and it turns out it was the way to win the championship.”

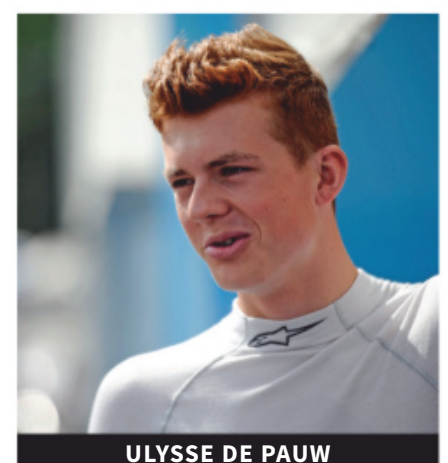
2 Novalak arguably didn’t put a foot wrong all year and despite only scoring two wins (Oulton Park and Silverstone) was a worthy champion. He ironed out the mistakes of 2018 and showed great maturity by finishing every race and making up the most positions in reversed-grid outings.



KIERN JEWISS

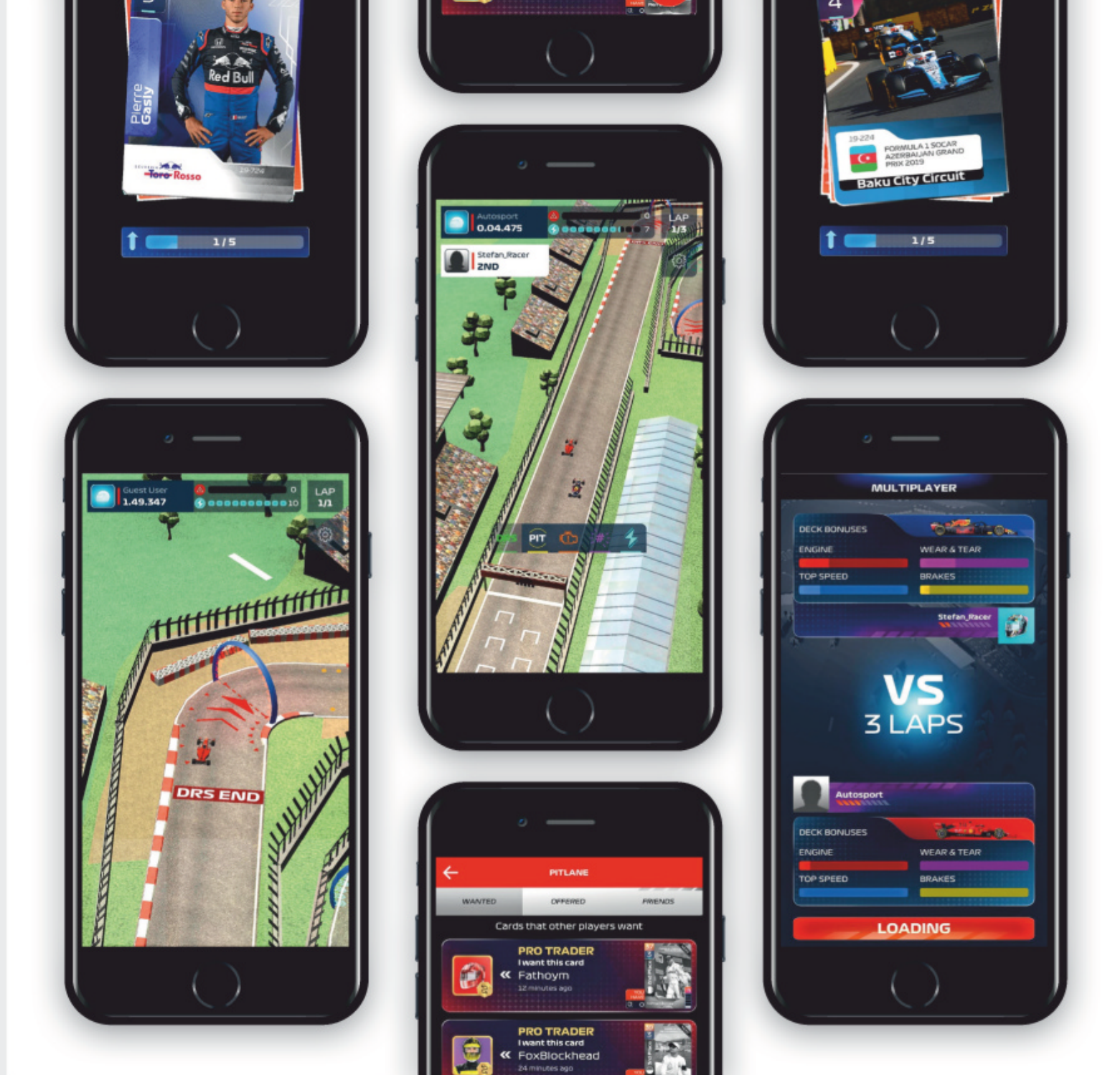
4 The 2018 British F4 champion struggled for the first half of the year with pace and as a result of getting caught up in incidents. But he became the in-form driver in the second half, taking a maiden win at Brands, and should have added at least another victory at Silverstone.

3 Simmons could be the fastest thing around in his rookie full F3 season – after a handful of outings in 2018, and the Essex driver was a star on the fast sweeps of Silverstone. But there was a little too much inconsistency, which prevented a serious championship bid.



ULYSSE DE PAUW

5 In only his second season in single-seaters, the Belgian just lost out to the much more experienced Neil Verhagen and Manuel Maldonado in the final standings. He improved throughout the year, netting two podiums, and was towards the sharp end of the grid by the end of the season.



F1 TRADES UP WITH NEW APP



SMARTPHONE APP F1 PACK RIVALS

Free for iOS and Android via
Apple App and Google Play Store

“F1 Pack Rivals is the ultimate F1 fan app featuring an action-packed racing game.” That’s how F1’s latest officially licensed trading card game app sells itself. It’s an increasingly popular game format, but one that is much harder to adapt to a 20-driver racing series than football (FIFA Ultimate Team) for example. There’s been a 2019 facelift, with the races now in 3D and redesigned menus.

When Autosport first loaded up the game, it was difficult to make sense of how exactly you play it, despite several tutorials. Particularly confusing is the merits of each individual card. But once you grasp an understanding of the complex tactics and strategies, the game is both fun and challenging.

There are over 700 different cards to collect in the game, and this is aided by the live updates the game receives after every real-life race. This helps to keep the game fresh and playable throughout the year. For example, it’s the only game where you can see Alexander Albon in a Red Bull. The game also rewards frequent users with free gifts and, although microtransactions exist within the game, it isn’t a barrier to success. You can easily enjoy it without spending a real-life penny, something that can’t be said for a lot of supposed ‘free-to-play’ mobile games.

You can trade cards with other gamers and, like with FIFA’s Ultimate Team, trading is critical to your success. Having said that, it’s difficult to know the worth of your cards, and the potential value of what your friend or other gamers are offering you. Worst of all is a recent update to the game, that means trading is now a monthly subscription. You get the first month free, but then, rather unnecessarily, you have to pay for the privilege thereafter.

Moreover, Autosport experienced a number of slow loading times and bugs, that are not unexpected in a free-to-play game, but were a little too frequent for a modern game.

A common problem in any virtual trading card game is duplicate cards but, thankfully, F1 Pack Rivals allows users to combine these duplicates and turn a ‘common’ card into a ‘rare’ card. As well as the race drivers, pit crew and race tracks, there’s even test drivers such as Alfa Romeo’s Tatiana Calderon included. This level of depth is appreciated, and crucial for the game’s longevity.

The crucial sticking point is the accessibility of the game or lack thereof. Unless you’re a hardcore F1 fan that is used to or enjoys this style of game, it would be easy to see how it could be deleted out of pure frustration just 10 minutes into playing. If you’re a fan of these strategy trading card games, then F1 Pack Rivals gives you another reason to never look away from your mobile phone.

JOSH SUTTILL


youtube.com/AUTOSPORTdotcom


When the Reynard Formula 1 project didn't come off for the 1992 season, the design was first taken to Benetton. Two years later it appeared again as the Pacific. One won the world championship, the other regularly failed to qualify. **Go to bit.ly/94F1BvW**


autosport.com/podcast


Tim Harvey – the 1992 British Touring Car champion and ITV4 commentator – joins the Autosport team to reminisce about the most revered, most competitive and most expensive era of tin-top racing as he reflects on a remarkable past and present career.

WHAT'S ON

INTERNATIONAL MOTORSPORT

Russian Grand Prix
F1 World Championship
Round 16/21
Sochi, Russia
29 September

TV Live Sky Sports F1,
Sun 1030

TV Highlights Channel 4,
Sun 1800. Sky Sports F1,
Sun 1800

FIA Formula 2
Round 11/12
Sochi, Russia

28-29 September
TV Live Sky Sports F1,
Sat 1435, Sun 0910

FIA Formula 3
Round 8/8
Sochi, Russia

28-29 September
TV Live Sky Sports F1,
Sat 0805, Sun 0745

Super Formula
Round 6/7
Okayama, Japan

29 September
Livestream
Motorsport.tv, Sun 0600

Japanese Formula 3
Round 8/8
Okayama, Japan
28-29 September



Blancpain GT
Endurance Cup
Round 5/5
Barcelona, Spain

29 September
Livestream
Motorsport.tv, Sat 1200,
Sun 1200

Formula Renault
Eurocup
Round 8/10
Barcelona, Spain
28-29 September

NASCAR Xfinity Series
Round 28/33
Charlotte, North Carolina, USA
28 September

NASCAR Cup
Round 29/36
Charlotte,
North Carolina, USA
29 September
TV Live Freesports,
Sun 1900

ADAC GT Masters
Round 7/7
Sachsenring,
Germany
28-29 September

European Rally
Championship
Round 7/8
Cyprus Rally, Cyprus
27-29 September

UK MOTORSPORT

Silverstone BARC
28-29 September
BTCC, Formula 4, Carrera
Cup, Renault Clios, Ginetta
GT4, Ginetta Juniors
TV Live ITV4, Sun 1020

Kirkistown 500MRCI
28 September
Martin Donnelly and
Emerson Fittipaldi Trophy,
Road Sports, Ford Fiesta
Zetecs/Mazda MX-5s,
FF1600, Saloons/GTs,
Formula Vee, Legends Cars

Donington Park MSVR
28-29 September
Porsche Club, Radical
Challenge, Focus Cup,
Minis, F3 Cup, Heritage
FF1600, Allcomers, Z Cars

Brands Hatch BRSCC
28-29 September
FF1600, Caterham
Roadsports, Caterham
270Rs, Caterham 310Rs,
Caterham 420Rs, Caterham
Academy, Production
GTis, Classic and Modern
Saloons, Classic and
Modern Modified Saloons



FROM THE ARCHIVE

Juan Manuel Fangio (Maserati 250F) is the image of relaxed mastery as he powers out of the then Station hairpin en route to victory in the 1957 Monaco Grand Prix.

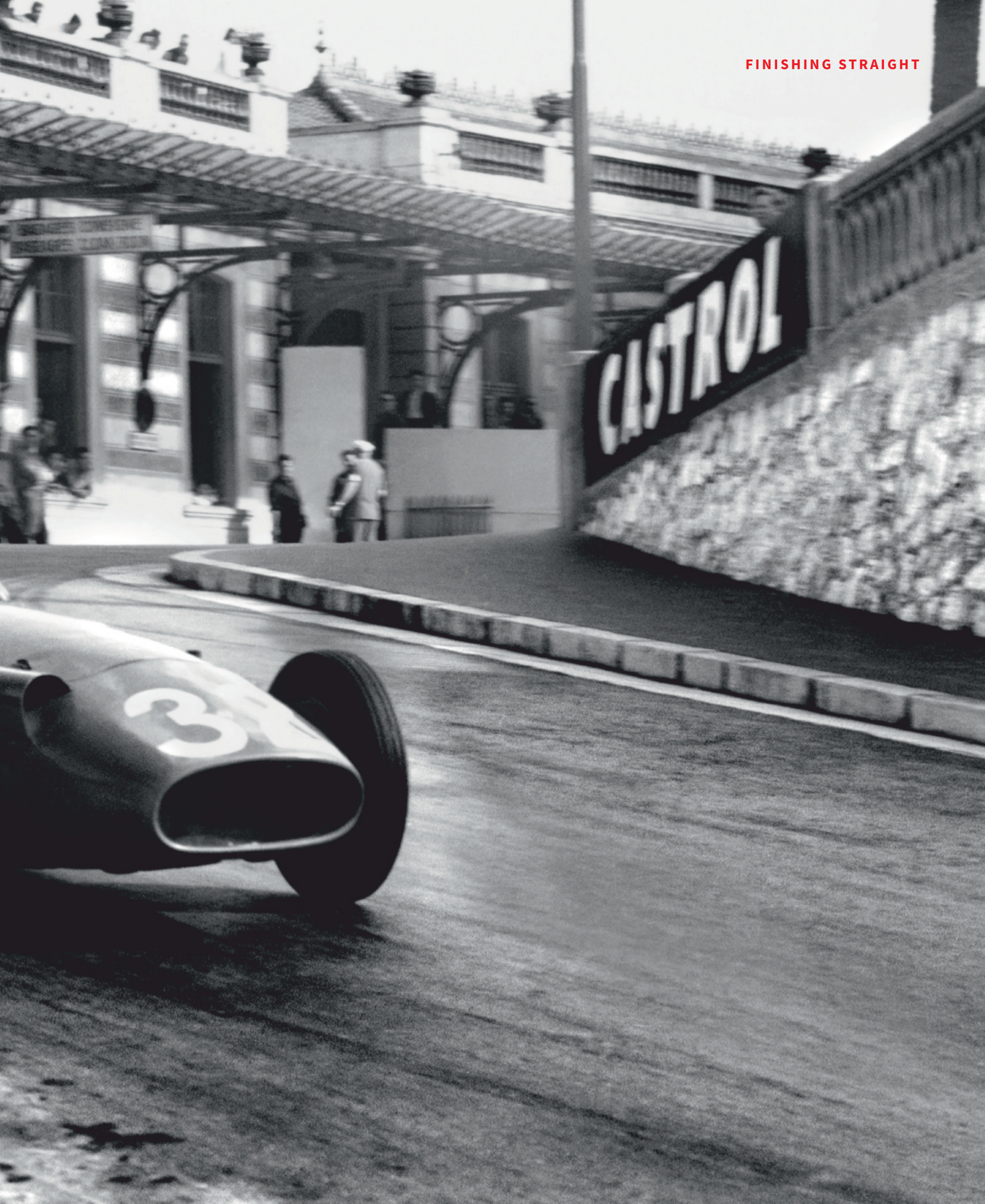
Polesitter Fangio had been demoted to second place at the start by Stirling Moss (Vanwall VW3), then third by Peter Collins (Ferrari D50) on lap two, but the loss of Moss, Collins and Mike Hawthorn (Ferrari)

in a crash at the chicane a couple of laps later left him unchallenged. He finished 25.2 seconds ahead of Tony Brooks's Vanwall VW7; Masten Gregory (Maserati) was two laps adrift in third.



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FINISHING STRAIGHT



QUIZ



1) Who, what, where, when?

2) Who is this?

This journeyman racer took any old port in a storm as a means of finding a berth at the top table.

There were signs of promise at the start, as he became a domestic star of a fledgling series, before moving to a more established version among old allies. He made it a new home, and became the top man in its fastest series, driving for a national hero.

He made the step up to international competition with minor success, but it was probably a step too soon for the big time. There were a lot of early starts, and a lot of quick departures too, in a forgettable campaign.

He stepped back but found results just as hard to come by, although at least he took the start!

After putting a roof over his head, he switched stages and rediscovered his touch as a national hotshoe.

3) On this day...

A Which team scored its only Formula 1 win on this day in 1999?

B It's Patrick Friesacher's birthday. How many points did the Austrian score in his F1 career?

C Which country staged its first Formula 1 Grand Prix on this day in 2004?

D It's Daryl Beattie's birthday. In which year did he finish runner-up to Mick Doohan in the 500cc World Motorcycle Championship?

E Which marque made its final Formula 1 World Championship race start on this day on 1993?

4) Name the helmet

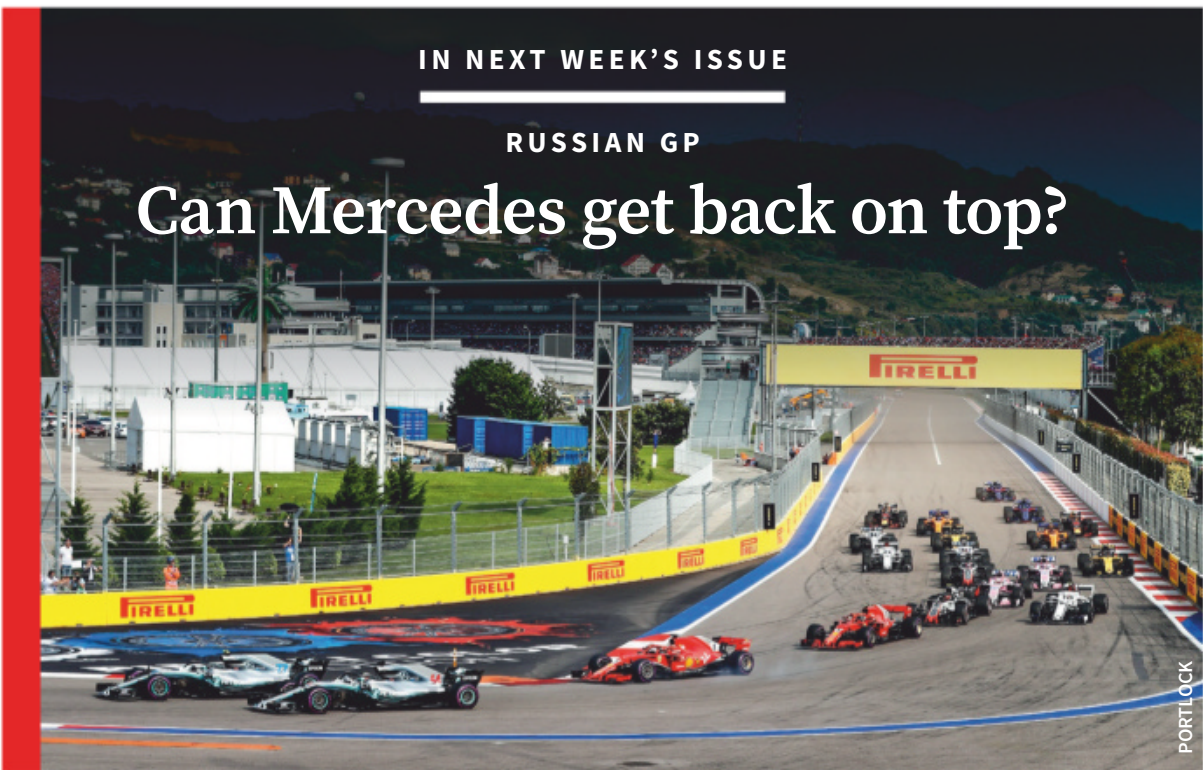


LAST WEEK'S ANSWERS **Who, what, where, when?** Chris Amon, Amon-Ford AF1, Jarama, 28 April 1974. **Who is this?** Mike Thackwell. **On this day** A) Japanese Grand Prix, Suzuka, 2003. B) Canadian GP, Mosport. C) Lotus, March, Boro, Toleman, Arrows, Tyrrell. D) Algarve Circuit. E) Regis Laconi. **Name the helmet** Denny Hulme.

IN NEXT WEEK'S ISSUE

RUSSIAN GP

Can Mercedes get back on top?



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