

F1 2022 IS GO! Leclerc wins Bahrain thriller

AUTOSPORT

NEW ERA BEGINS

24 MARCH 2022

FERRARI IS BACK

Leclerc defies Verstappen as Red Bull implodes

- How Ferrari scored sensational 1-2
- The issues that denied Max
- Mercedes in trouble... but Lewis salvages third



PLUS FIA reveals findings on Abu Dhabi GP controversy

A NEW ERA BECKONS

EXPERIENCE IT LIVE WITH



motorsport
TICKETS

ON A NEW ERA



Scan the QR code to visit our website and join our mailing list to be the first to know when tickets for 2022 races go on sale. You'll receive on-sale notifications, offers, competitions and newsletters to put you on pole position for getting to races this season.

motorsporttickets.com/f1

A
motorsport
NETWORK
COMPANY



A promising start for F1's new era – and Ferrari

Formula 1 couldn't have asked for much more from the Bahrain season-opener. Its most famous and successful team returned to winning ways, there was a fine battle for the lead, late drama, and the new ground-effect cars seem to be able to run close together.

Most neutrals will be pleased to see Ferrari back on top after two winless seasons. What's more, the whole operation looked slick. Not only were both cars quick and reliable, but the pitstops were strong and Ferrari didn't crack under the pressure from a fierce Red Bull attack.

The RB18 looks like it could be the fastest car, but Max Verstappen – who fought Charles Leclerc brilliantly *and* cleanly – already has some ground to make up in the points race. And then there's Mercedes...

- From next week, 31 March issue, Autosport magazine's cover price will increase to £4.99. We worked hard to keep the price stable during the challenges of the coronavirus pandemic, but recent increases in fuel, paper, printing and distribution costs have unfortunately made the rise unavoidable. The price for existing subscribers will stay at its current level until they renew at the end of their subscription period, when it will increase by £1 per issue. We have offered different terms in recent years, so please check your account for your specific situation. We will, of course, continue to provide our extensive, expert and in-depth coverage of all the major motorsport series, from Formula 1 all the way through to grassroots UK club racing. Thank you to all our readers for your support.



Kevin Turner

Kevin Turner
Chief Editor

kevin.turner@autosport.com

**NEXT WEEK
31 MARCH**

Saudi Arabian GP report
Will Red Bull bounce back
at high-speed Jeddah?



COVER IMAGES

Mark Sutton/Motorsport Images;
Scuderia Ferrari Press Office

PIT & Paddock

- 4 FIA reveals Abu Dhabi GP findings
- 6 LMDh sportscars could race in 2022
- 8 Vision problem puts Marquez in doubt
- 11 Saudi Arabian Grand Prix preview
- 12 Opinion: Alex Kalinauckas
- 13 Opinion: Matt Kew

RACE CENTRE

- 14 Bahrain GP report and analysis
- 30 WEC Sebring: Alpine victory, Toyota crash
- 36 Ganassi Cadillac wins Sebring 12 Hours
- 42 Newgarden pips McLaughlin in Texas
- 46 World of Sport: Formula 2; Formula 3; NASCAR Cup; S5000; MotoGP

CLUB AUTOSPORT

- 61 Obituary: Tim Jackson
- 62 Mitchell to return to British GT in Toyota
- 64 Record entry for Classic Tourers
- 65 Opinion: Ben Tuck
- 66 National reports: Silverstone; Brands Hatch

FINISHING STRAIGHT

- 70 What's on this week
- 72 From the archive: 1969 Targa Florio
- 74 My favourite team-mate: John Fitzpatrick

SUBSCRIPTION OFFER

- 52 Special deals for Autosport

VISIT AUTOSPORT.COM


For other ways to read Britain's best motorsport weekly




Have your say, get in touch


Autosport editorial
Autosport Media UK Ltd
1 Eton Street
Richmond
TW9 1AG

@
E-mail
autosport@
autosport.com


Visit our website
autosport.com


Twitter
twitter.com/
autosport


Facebook
facebook.com/
autosport


Instagram
instagram.com/
autosport


YouTube
youtube.com/
AUTOSPORTdotcom

PIT + PADDOCK



Abu Dhabi fiasco was human error,

FORMULA 1

The FIA has concluded that “human error” was at the heart of last year’s controversial Formula 1 season finale in Abu Dhabi in the findings of its investigation.

The governing body announced over the winter that it would be conducting a full analysis into the events that led to the last-lap restart in which Max Verstappen overtook Lewis Hamilton to win the world championship, and finally released its report



There'll be no talking to Wittich on the radio, thank you very much

on Saturday — hours before the first qualifying session of the 2022 season.

During the 97 days that had passed since the Abu Dhabi Grand Prix, the FIA had already announced some initial steps, including the axeing of Michael Masi as race director and the introduction of a new virtual race control room to offer greater support.

Masi failed to implement at least two articles of the sporting regulations in the closing stages of the Abu Dhabi race, but the FIA report deemed that he acted in “good faith”, and that the error was made due to the immense pressure that had built up in the role, and a lack of clarity in the rulebook. The FIA also acknowledged that Masi was “bombarded” by teams over the radio in the closing laps. Direct communications between the pitwall and the race director — a role that is now shared by Niels Wittich and Eduardo Freitas — are now banned.

“In combination with the objective to finish under green flag racing conditions applied throughout the 2021 season, the report finds that the Race Director was acting in good faith and to the best of his knowledge given the difficult circumstances, particularly acknowledging the significant time constraints for decisions to be made and the immense pressure being applied

by the teams,” said the report.

The report acknowledged the accumulation of duties for the race director through the years, leading to the restructure that has commenced under new FIA president Mohammed Ben Sulayem. It also stressed the need for an improvement in communication between the FIA and F1 staff working at the track and remotely.

This is set to be aided by the appointment of a new F1 sporting director by the FIA, who will oversee the writing of the regulations. There will also be additional legal support for race control to assist in interpreting the regulations during and outside of race weekends.

The first details about the virtual race control room have also been revealed. It will offer support “in an advisory capacity and will not interrupt the workflow of the race direction team onsite or cause any delay to the decision-making process”, harnessing data equivalent to 10 simultaneous football matches with more than 140 video and audio sources. Ben Sulayem said he came up with the idea after visiting a team’s remote race control over the winter.

Ben Sulayem said he was “satisfied and relieved” that the report had been published, and how it was clear that race control could

ALARM BELLS FOR GRANDS PRIX IN F1 HEARTLANDS

FORMULA 1

Formula 1 boss Stefano Domenicali has warned that some current races will likely lose their calendar slots to new venues, with even historic circuits told that their places are not guaranteed.

F1 chiefs are facing a growing number of requests for races. Qatar and Las Vegas are set to become permanent from next year, taking the series to the maximum of 25 races allowed under the terms of the Concorde Agreement.

While there is some scope now to expand



Monaco contract runs out this year

without dropping any of the current grands prix, F1 CEO Domenicali reckons that some existing venues are going to have to make way, either on a rotation basis or disappear altogether.

“There are some promoters who have expiring agreements, and probably some of the current grands prix will no longer be part of the calendar,” said Domenicali. “Others will remain but in a different

form, such as rotating between different tracks.”

It is understood that France, Monaco, Belgium and Mexico have yet to conclude deals beyond this year. Domenicali said that while F1 had to “balance the arrival of new races with historic grands prix”, it was “not enough to have a pedigree anymore. You also have to demonstrate that you are keeping up.”

JONATHAN NOBLE & ROBERTO CHINCHERO

says FIA

not function as it used to. He also revealed that talks are ongoing with Masi about a new role within the FIA, although the report’s citing of human error has led to questions in the paddock about why he was sacked. Autosport also understands that Masi was not interviewed as part of the investigation.

In the wake of the report being published, Mercedes team boss Toto Wolff called for F1 to “close the chapter” surrounding Abu Dhabi. “For us, there is the sentence or the words that say ‘human error’, and human error and the acknowledgement of it is very important,” he said. “I know it’s come out today, but I’ve not been thinking about Abu Dhabi anymore since our car has proven to not be competitive on the track for this year.” Hamilton said on Saturday at last weekend’s Bahrain Grand Prix season opener that he was yet to read the report, but he “wasn’t expecting an apology” and was pleased by the transparency shown by the FIA.

Another change for the Bahrain GP was the return of Colin Haywood, an FIA veteran who served as deputy race director in 2019 and 2020 before retiring last May. He will take the role at four further races this year.

LUKE SMITH & ADAM COOPER

P14 ACTION FROM BAHRAIN



Sportsmanship: Hamilton and Verstappen after the Abu Dhabi GP



MAUGER

Sainz closes on new Ferrari deal

FORMULA 1

Carlos Sainz Jr looks set to extend his Formula 1 contract with Ferrari after team boss Mattia Binotto said they have “found an agreement”.

Following talks between Sainz and Ferrari over the winter, it appears that the Spaniard’s future in Maranello has been secured, with the team suggesting that a deal is done and that it just needs signing.

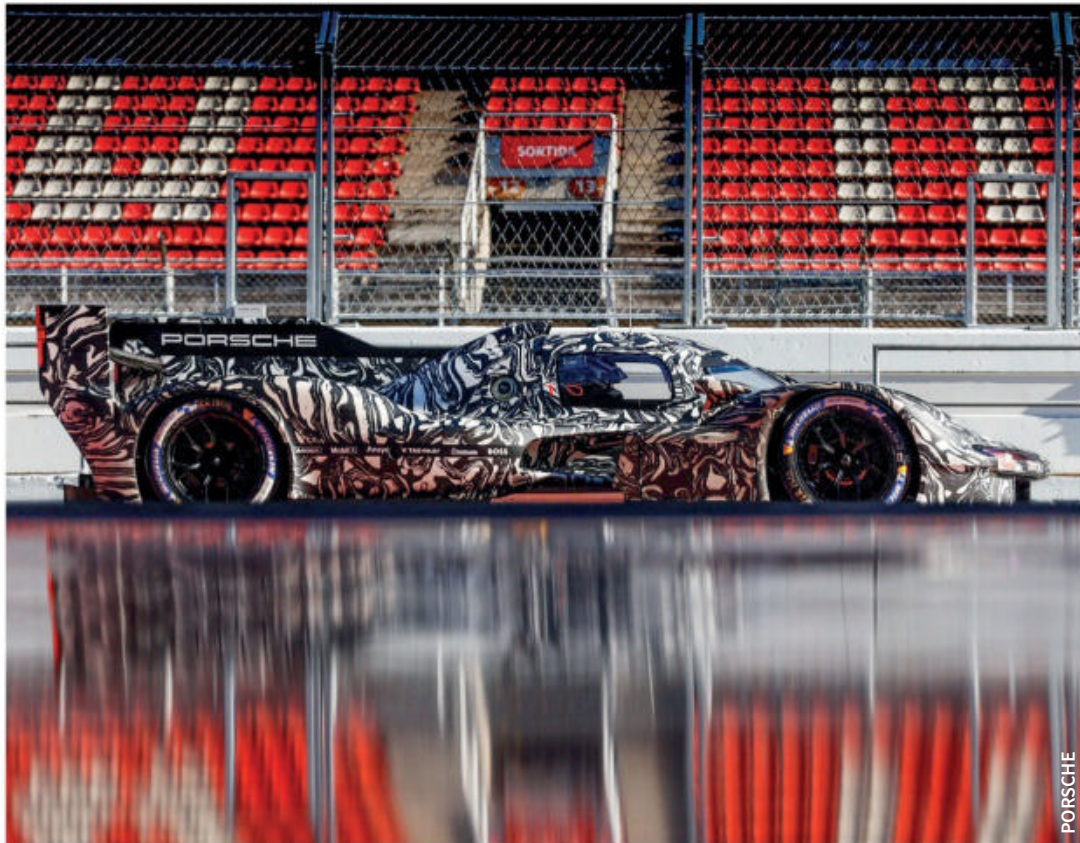
Asked after last weekend’s Bahrain Grand Prix about a new contract, Sainz said: “I think we are close. Very close. Very, very close.

Extremely close. Nearly there.”

Binotto added: “I think we found an agreement. It’s only a matter to translate it into paper.”

Sainz has impressed since joining Ferrari at the start of the 2021 season, scoring five podium finishes, including his run to second place in Bahrain last weekend. The team indicated at the end of last season that it was planning to open talks over a new contract amid the moving driver market. Team-mate Charles Leclerc is locked in at Ferrari until the end of the 2024 season.

JONATHAN NOBLE



LMDh cars given green light to make race starts in 2022

WEC

An LMDh prototype could grace the grid of the World Endurance Championship this year ahead of the arrival proper of the class in the WEC and the IMSA SportsCar Championship in 2023. A plan to allow the new breed of hybrid machinery to compete on a non-points basis was given the go-ahead by last weekend's FIA World Motor Sport Council.

The FIA stated in the WMSC bulletin that the move was designed "to ensure the seamless introduction of cars built to the LMDh regulations in 2023". That suggests that the rulemakers – the FIA and the Automobile Club de l'Ouest – are keen to have a car out racing this year as part of the data-gathering exercise necessary to fix the Balance of Performance for next season.

The chances of an LMDh joining the WEC this year appear to rest with Porsche, the only manufacturer with a car up and running (above). Cadillac, the other marque committed to a 2023 WEC programme, isn't due to hit the test track until the summer.

What is not clear is whether Porsche, or anyone else, would be able to race on some kind of interim homologation. The rules for LMDh, like the sister Le Mans Hypercar class, largely freeze the specification of the car for a period of five years on the homologation of a design.

Porsche Motorsport boss Thomas Laudenbach welcomed the WMSC

decision. "It could be an interesting option for Porsche," he said. "We will take a close look at this possibility and decide at a later date based on the development status of our LMDh car."

The new generation of LMP2 machinery out of which the LMDhs are being developed was due to come on stream one year after the arrival of the top-class machinery. That has now been delayed to two.

A second postponement of the introduction of the 'next-gen' P2 car inside eight months was rubberstamped by the WMSC last weekend. The new P2s were pushed back to 2024 last July, and now until 2025 as the rulemakers undertake a thorough review of the category in the name of cost reduction.

The GTE Pro class could continue into 2023 in the WEC, even after class stalwarts Ferrari and Porsche switch their focus to prototype campaigns. ACO president Pierre Fillon has stated that the class could get a stay of execution prior to the GT classes going entirely pro-am on the introduction of GT3 rules for 2024, if certain conditions are met. "We need at least two brands, and a minimum of four cars from the two brands," he said.

It has emerged since Fillon's comments, however, that the WMSC has already voted against GTE Pro continuing alongside GTE Am in 2023. The decision was made some time last year, but never released into the public domain.

GARY WATKINS

Hybrid penalties get softened

WRC

The FIA has amended the World Rally Championship sporting regulations to limit the damage of hybrid-unit failures for Rally1 competitors.

Hyundai and Toyota led calls for changes to the new hybrid regulations after Ott Tanak and Elfyn Evans were forced to retire from last month's Rally Sweden due to faults with the control Compact Dynamics-designed 100kW hybrid unit. Tanak (below) was fighting for the victory when his hybrid unit displayed a red warning light that forced his Hyundai team to retire the car under safety grounds.

At last weekend's World Motor Sport Council, the FIA moved to reduce the penalty issued to crews forced to restart after retiring due to a hybrid problem. From next month's Rally Croatia, the penalty for crews that miss a stage start as a result of hybrid issues has been reduced from 10 minutes to two. The rule change should allow afflicted crews to be in a position to fight for championship points should a team be forced to retire a car.

"The penalty for re-start after retirement as a result of a safety issue to the Rally1 hybrid unit operating within the defined tolerances permitted has been set to two minutes for every stage missed, instead of the normal 10-minute penalty," read a statement from the FIA.

The FIA confirmed that in the event of a hybrid issue, the Hybrid Electric Vehicle refuge points on special stages, where assistance is available, will now be designated by a bespoke HEV sign.

WRC teams competing in the Rally1 class will also be awarded an additional day of testing to help develop the new cars.

TOM HOWARD





GT3 Ferrari's new GT3 racer for 2023 will be based on the 296 GTB road car unveiled last June. The confirmation of one of motor racing's worst-kept secrets came with the publication last week of the first images of what will be known as the 296 GT3. The race car will be powered by a V6 engine like its road-going sister, but by regulation the GT3 cannot incorporate its plug-in hybrid system. Assembly of the first cars is already underway at ORECA, Ferrari's new partner in the GT3 arena, and a shakedown for the car is understood to be imminent. **Image by Ferrari**

Top NASCAR squad plots Le Mans entry

LE MANS 24 HOURS

A Next Gen NASCAR running a hybrid system is set to race at the Le Mans 24 Hours in 2023. A plan has been outlined for Hendrick Motorsports to take a Chevrolet Camaro ZL1 over to France next June to fill the 'Garage 56' grid spot reserved for an innovative machine.

The entry is still subject to the agreement of race organiser the Automobile Club de l'Ouest's selection committee, but it seems certain that NASCAR will reprise its appearance at Le Mans in 1976 with a pair of stock cars entered by Junie Donlavey and Hershel McGriff.

NASCAR and Chevrolet haven't revealed the technical specification of the car, only that such details will be

"announced at a later date".

But ACO president Pierre Fillon confirmed after the launch of the project at the SuperSebring WEC/IMSA double-header last week: "It has to have a hybrid system. Garage 56 is for a car dedicated to innovative technology; it needs to be something innovative."

"When Jim [France, NASCAR boss] told me there would be a new generation of car in NASCAR using a hybrid and that he had this crazy idea to enter a NASCAR in Garage 56 in 2023, I was immediately enthusiastic."

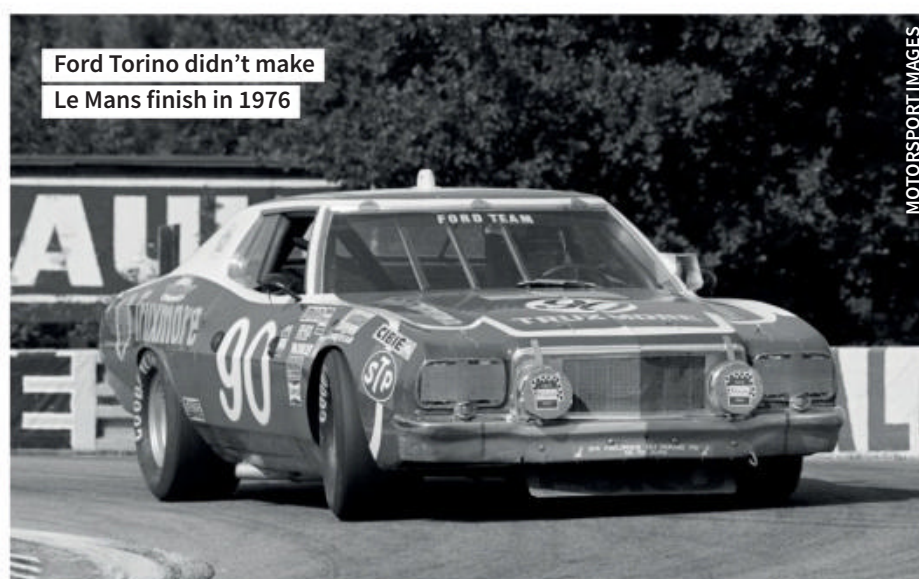
The project will give NASCAR the chance to blood a hybrid system that will be added to the new-for-2022 Next Gen Dallara one-make chassis sooner rather than later. NASCAR president

Steve Phelps stated as recently as last November that the latest generation of Cup car could incorporate hybrid technology as early as 2024, though there has been no official confirmation of the plan.

Fillon revealed that work with

the FIA has already begun to ensure that the tubeframe Next Gen car fulfils the necessary crash test requirements, and outlined a desire for the car to lap at the same speed as GTE Am machinery.

GARY WATKINS



AUTOSPORT

Enjoying our magazine?

SUBSCRIBE NOW

www.autosportmedia.com

VISION PROBLEM PUTS MARQUEZ IN DOUBT AGAIN

MOTOGP

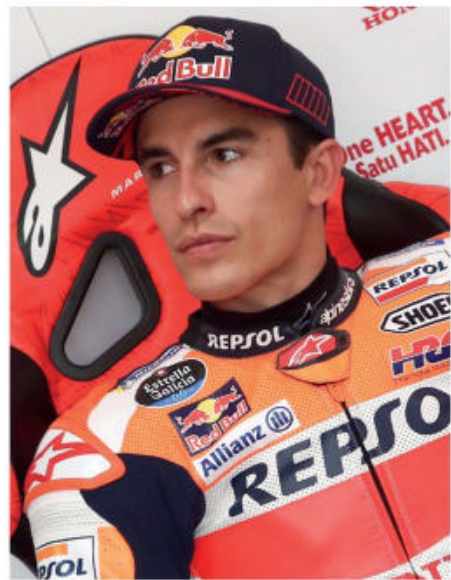
The vision problems that ruled six-time MotoGP world champion Marc Marquez out of the final two rounds of the 2021 season have returned following a violent crash at last weekend's Indonesian Grand Prix, placing his participation in next week's Argentinian round in doubt.

The Honda rider was flung from his bike in a heavy accident in the warm-up session on Sunday at the new Mandalika track and suffered a concussion. He was ruled out of the race, and began to experience problems with his vision on the flight home.

An immediate check-up with doctors in Barcelona revealed a return of the diplopia – or double vision – he suffered last year after sustaining a concussion in a training accident, and which sidelined him for three months. A recovery time will be determined after further checks next week, although Marquez took to social media to say his vision problem is not as bad as it was last November.

Honda wants an in-depth discussion with tyre supplier Michelin over its decision to take a four-year-old tyre construction to Indonesia. The tyre was selected to cope with heat after problems in the pre-season test, which Honda topped, but caused all Honda riders extreme rear grip problems, and was potentially a contributing factor to Marquez's crash.

LEWIS DUNCAN



GOLD AND GOOSE



Takahashi at speed at Fuji in 1977 Japanese GP

ALL PHOTOGRAPHY
motorsport
IMAGES

Kunimitsu Takahashi 1940-2022

OBITUARY

Kunimitsu Takahashi, who has died aged 82, achieved a lot during a motorsport career that was almost as diverse as it was long. Over the course of seven decades, he became the first Japanese rider to win a world championship motorcycle race, started a Formula 1 grand prix, won his class at the Le Mans 24 Hours and, in his dotage, claimed a brace of Super GT titles as a team owner.

Takahashi wrote his name into the motorcycling history books in 1961 when he scored Honda's second world championship bike victory – and first in the 250cc division – at Hockenheim. Three more victories followed, all in the 125cc ranks, before he switched to four wheels in 1965.

He became a stalwart of Japan's premier single-seater championship, known as Formula 2000, in which he finished second in the points in 1977. Even into his mid-fifties, he was still racing in the series we call Super Formula today in 1994 under its Formula 3000 regulations of the time.

By then he had already claimed five

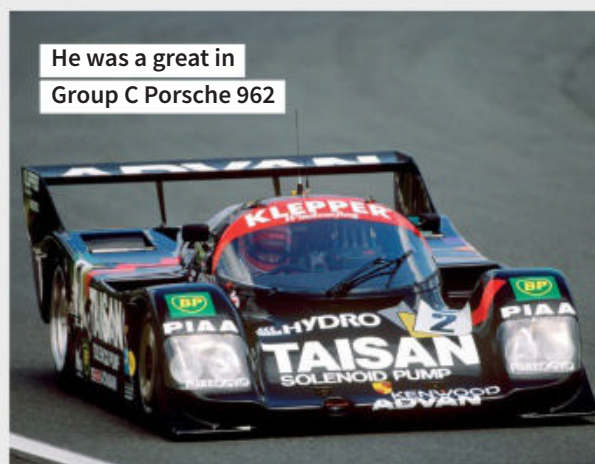
All-Japan Sports-Prototype Championship titles racing Porsche 962Cs. The Team Kunimitsu operation he had established in 1992 took GT2 honours at Le Mans in 1995 with a Honda NSX.

His one-off F1 appearance came at the wheel of an ageing Tyrrell-Cosworth 007 at the Japanese Grand Prix at Fuji in 1977. His ninth-place finish was the best by a local entry across the country's F1 fixtures in 1976 and 1977. Team Kunimitsu won the Super GT title in 2018 with Jenson Button and Naoki Yamamoto in a Honda NSX and again two years later with Yamamoto and the promising Tadasuke Makino.

Kenny Acheson, who co-drove the Nova-run Porsche in which Takahashi won the 1987 Japanese prototype title, remembers a driver who could still hold his own against the younger generation.

"I was 30 and he was nearly 50, but there were races where he was really quick," recalls Acheson. "He was a good driver and the nicest person, and he had the best ever autograph. He would draw a picture of himself with his helmet and sign it."

GARY WATKINS



He was a great in Group C Porsche 962



MURENBELD

Wisell flies as Fittipaldi's
team-mate at Lotus at
the Nurburgring in 1971



SCHLEGELMILCH

Reine Wisell 1941-2022

OBITUARY

Reine Wisell, one of the elite group of drivers to finish on the podium in their first grand prix start, has died aged 80. The Swede drove for the works Lotus, BRM and March teams before a career that started so promisingly faded away, and he slipped into the shadow of his close contemporary and long-time rival Ronnie Peterson.

Wisell began his career in saloon cars in 1962. He graduated to F3 in 1966, winning his national title the following year. By 1969 he had established a rivalry with Peterson.

Peterson made it to F1 first, racing a private March from early in 1970. But Wisell, who won races in F5000 that year, eventually landed the bigger opportunity. After Jochen Rindt's death at Monza and the subsequent departure from Team Lotus of John Miles, he was called up by Colin Chapman, and finished third in his first race at Watkins Glen behind winner and team-mate Emerson Fittipaldi.

That was enough to earn a full-time Lotus seat in 1971. Wisell earned an encouraging fourth in the first race in South Africa and scored points three more times. In 1972 he moved to BRM as part of an expanded multi-car line-up, and



SUTTON

at the end of the year he was called back to Lotus for the final two GPs.

By now Wisell's single-seater career was losing momentum. In 1973 he made only a couple of F1 appearances in private March chassis, but scored a famous F2 victory for GRD at the Nurburgring. He made one more start, in a works March at Anderstorp in 1974, before his F1 career fizzled out. He never quite came to terms with the fact that Peterson had become one of the superstars of the sport.

Wisell would continue to compete in GTs and touring cars. He made four starts at Le Mans between 1969-74, and latterly his highest profile appearances were in the Spa 24 Hours, where he last competed in 1981. After walking away from the sport he spent his later years in Thailand, and would make occasional visits to the paddock at the Malaysian GP.

ADAM COOPER

IN THE HEADLINES

SHUNT RULES HARVEY OUT

British IndyCar racer Jack Harvey was forced to stand down from his Rahal Letterman Lanigan Racing car for last weekend's Texas Motor Speedway round following a heavy crash in the post-qualifying practice session. Harvey hit the Turn 3 wall, and failed medical checks on race day morning. Santino Ferrucci was drafted in for the race, and finished ninth.

FIA SAYS MACAU F3 IS ON

The Macau Grand Prix took one step closer to becoming a Formula 3 race again for 2022 with the announcement last week by the FIA World Motor Sport Council that the category's World Cup will be held on the street track on 17-20 November. COVID restrictions have meant that the race has been for Chinese Formula 4 in 2020 and 2021. It was also confirmed that the Formula 2 calendar will slim to 13 rounds, with the cancelled Russian GP support not replaced.

JACKIE CHAN RETURNING

Jackie Chan DC Racing will return to competition in the IMSA SportsCar Championship next year after an absence of two seasons. The 2017 Le Mans 24 Hours LMP2 class winner with the British Jota team is establishing its own infrastructure on the US west coast in Washington for what looks certain to be an LMP2 entry with either one or two cars.

LOUBET BACK IN THE WRC

World Rally Championship regular Pierre-Louis Loubet is back in the series this year thanks to a seven-round programme to pilot a fourth M-Sport Ford Puma Rally1. The Frenchman, who won the 2019 WRC2 title, terminated his 2021 campaign with a 2C Competition Hyundai early after being knocked down by a car in a road traffic accident and breaking his hip. His first outing comes on next month's Rally Croatia. Meanwhile, M-Sport refugee Teemu Suninen has secured a WRC2 attack with Hyundai.

AUTOSPORT

Get even more motorsport online
with our **Print + Digital Bundle**

SUBSCRIBE NOW

www.autosportmedia.com



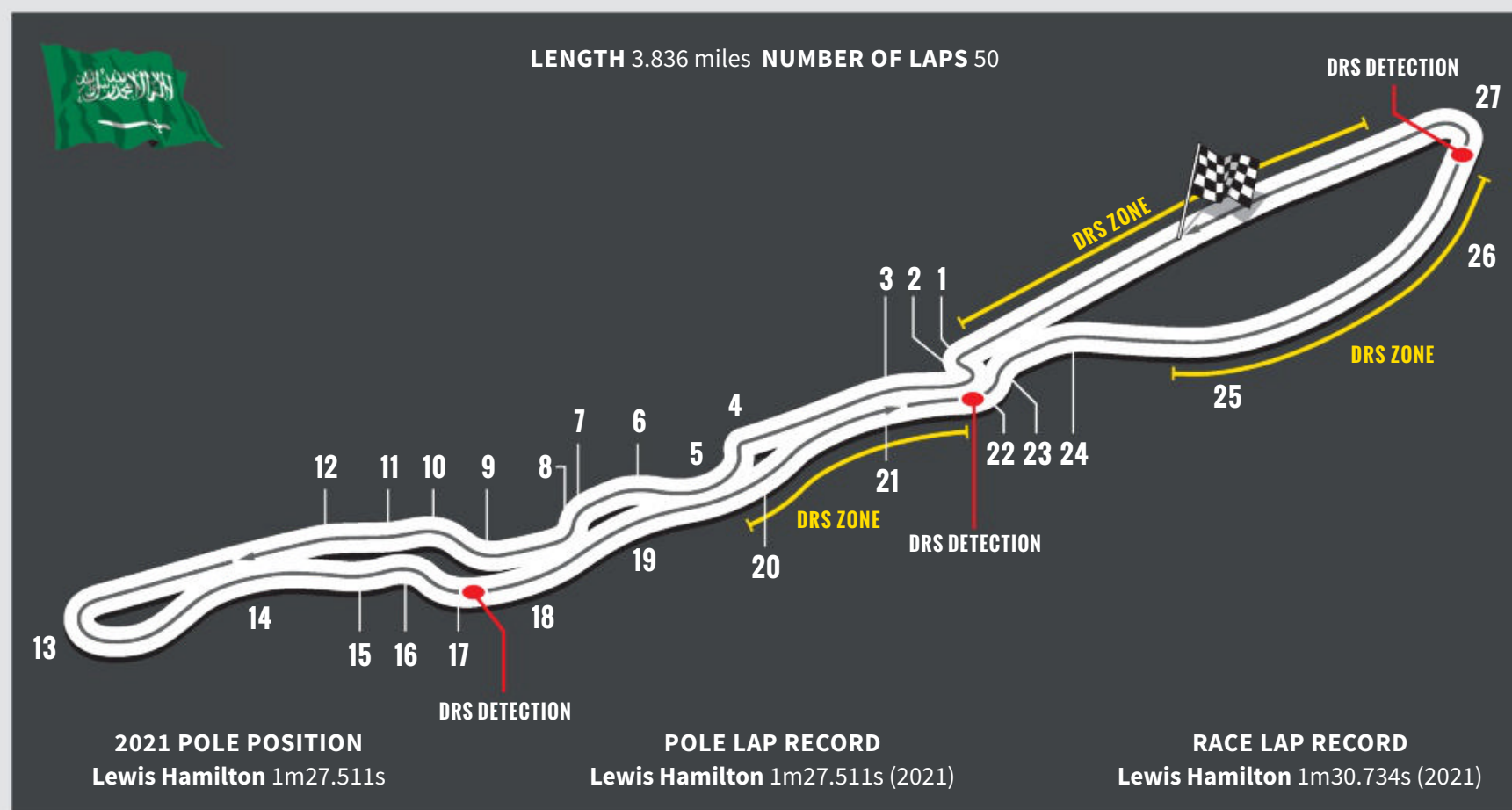
GRANDE PRÉMIO DE PORTUGAL

#portugueseGP

22 - 24 ABRIL / APRIL 2022



F1 SAUDI ARABIAN GRAND PRIX PREVIEW



UK START TIMES

Friday 25 March

FP1 1400 FP2 1700

Saturday 26 March

FP3 1400

QUALIFYING 1700

Sunday 27 March

RACE 1800

CATCH THE RACE LIVE

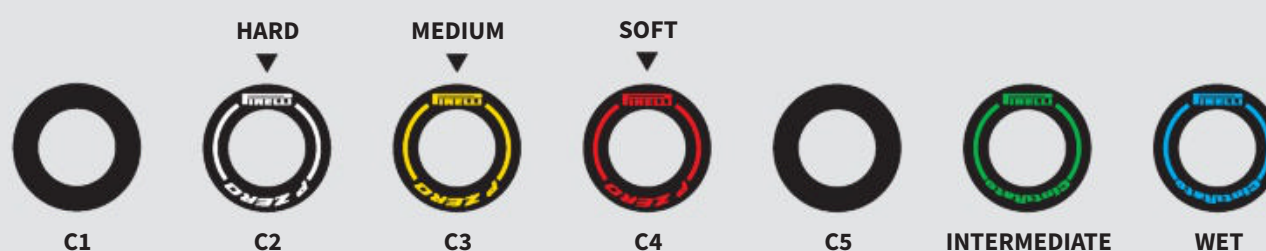
SKY SPORTS F1

BBC RADIO 5 LIVE

HIGHLIGHTS

CHANNEL 4 2230

TYRE ALLOCATION



CHAMPIONSHIP

Drivers

1	Leclerc	26
2	Sainz	18
3	Hamilton	15
4	Russell	12
5	Magnussen	10

Constructors

1	Ferrari	44
2	Mercedes	27
3	Haas	10
4	Alfa Romeo	9
5	Alpine	8



RACE STATS

Previous winner

2021 Lewis Hamilton Mercedes



Jeddah points tallies

Hamilton	26
Verstappen	18
Bottas	15
Ocon	12
Ricciardo	10
Gasly	8
Leclerc	6
Sainz	4
Norris	1



What the Bahrain GP taught us

There were many positive signs – not least Verstappen and Leclerc’s thrilling tussle – that F1’s new era will deliver on its promise. But it’s too early for a definitive verdict

ALEX KALINAUCKAS

Formula 1 is riding the crest of a wave. There are legions of new fans brought in by the success and profiles of new young drivers from across Europe. Netflix’s *Drive to Survive* is finally giving credence to the idea of the championship cracking North America. The first Chinese driver has started an F1 race and scored a brilliant point on his debut. Across the globe, fans starved of in-person entertainment during the pandemic are buying tickets for returning races in huge numbers.

How great, then, that the fight for the win in last weekend’s season-opening Bahrain Grand Prix contained a thrilling phase of wheel-to-wheel battling, in the wake of F1 and the engineers creating a new formula designed to enhance the championship’s racing product to further please existing fans and bring in even more. Such a spectacle between two of F1’s best drivers – Charles Leclerc and Max Verstappen – was just what the championship hoped would happen, and occur regularly, with the new ground-effect cars. And now everyone wants to know if they can definitely be hailed a success. Well, it was a brilliant start – no doubt about that. But mission accomplished can’t be declared just yet.

For a start, the Bahrain race is usually pretty entertaining. The rough asphalt and long straights mean the pace of the cars often varies considerably, with the wide track encouraging passing overall. The upcoming confines of Melbourne, Imola and Barcelona

“Teams hoping for revitalised fortunes are currently alarmingly off the pace”

– all tracks noted for producing dull races – will provide a more definitive insight. They follow F1’s outlier visit to the ultra-high-speed track in Jeddah, where keeping cars out of the barriers and carbonfibre intact will be the focus. Not that passing is impossible there anyway.

Down the field in Bahrain, Williams driver Alex Albon was involved in plenty of scraps, most notably with Aston Martin’s Lance Stroll. Now that the new cars are sending plenty of dirty air upwards and not backwards, albeit with a smaller slipstream effect, Albon reckons that following closely and then attacking is “OK, but not as easy as people think”. “It is definitely better,” he added. “But when you get very close it gets similar to previous years – so within half a second [of the other car]. But I was pleasantly surprised by it.”

That’s pretty much where the assessment of F1’s new car rules

impacting overtaking must sit for now: promising, but not without issue. And the same goes for other areas of the fresh start.

One key aim of the new regulations was to build a greater spread of success throughout the field. In Bahrain, Ferrari took its first victory since 2019, Haas its first points since 2020. But not only were there other factors principally behind those swings, but really the event boiled down to Ferrari versus Red Bull, and everyone else behind. That is very familiar for F1. Silver simply swapped for red.

Mercedes’ porpoising problem (see page 13) kept it far from the lead fight last weekend, while Ferrari’s 2022 engine is now “the best” to have, says Haas team boss Gunther Steiner. Other teams hoping for revitalised fortunes are currently alarmingly off the pace – there should be big worry at McLaren, Williams and Aston Martin.

Ferrari’s 1-2 *could* also be something of a false dawn. Red Bull should have been on pole and should have been able to cope with the braking demands even before the late-race reliability implosion it suffered. If it had been able to recreate its FP2 pace in free, albeit hotter, air on Sunday, Verstappen surely would have romped to a second successive win following his title-sealing Abu Dhabi triumph. It is Red Bull’s overall threat that is said to occupy Mercedes’ thoughts of which rival it ultimately needs to catch in 2022. Not Ferrari.

Leclerc says his team is concerned “that on some tracks [the porpoising it encountered at Barcelona] might be more of an issue”, which would force it towards set-up compromises that hinder overall pace, like Mercedes now. Jeddah, Leclerc says, and “the fast left where I crashed last year” might be “quite tricky” for porpoising, and is a key test of the work Ferrari has done since it last ran on a smooth surface, such as the one in Spain last month.

There are also other snags being covered by the glow of F1’s new era. The bottom six cars in last Sunday’s race were from the three Mercedes customer squads. That, allied with the Ferrari customers jumping back up the order, will set tongues wagging. Not that there is necessarily anything untoward going on but, with engines now frozen until 2026, pace disparity surely won’t just be politely accepted for long in F1’s political wrangling. And then there was the FIA’s supposed new era of openness, beginning with the release of the findings of its Abu Dhabi 2021 probe. Well, it didn’t bring the closure, transparency or explanations many wanted. It even left some people wondering why former race director Michael Masi had been removed given the report hardly condemned his actions...

So, the surface change surrounding F1’s age is good overall, but concerns remain just below. For now, that’s fine. As the championship’s sporting boss, Ross Brawn, said last Sunday: “It is a sample based on one, so let’s not get ahead of ourselves.” ❧

P14 BAHRAIN GP REPORT



Why Mercedes was right

When the world champion team played down pre-season expectations, it turns out there was no elaborate ruse at play. It just needs to find a fix for its porpoising W13

MATT KEW

Reigning world champion Max Verstappen certainly wasn't buying it. Neither were quite a lot of Formula 1 fans when Mercedes came away from pre-season testing rubbishing its chances of fighting for victories at the start of grand prix racing's second ground-effect generation.

A large part of that is down to the Silver Arrows having previously quelled expectations only to come up trumps. It was the team that cried 'Wolff'. Last year was a case in point when new, clipped floor regulations were set to hurt the squad, only for Lewis Hamilton to win the season opener at Sakhir to tee up a run to an eighth consecutive constructors' title.

But Hamilton qualified fifth last weekend and new team-mate George Russell was down in ninth fastest, the duo seven tenths and 1.7s respectively off the pace set by polesitter Charles Leclerc. That return swiftly confirmed that Mercedes is currently in the worst shape it's known since a 2012 run to fifth in the standings.

The W13 proved to be well off the pace of the Ferrari and Red Bull challengers and was at no point in contention for pole or victory. Mercedes must now contend with being the third-fastest team. Only the fuel starvation issues that led to the demise of both RB18s afforded Hamilton his podium shot and elevated Russell to fourth.

It's remarkable for the dominant force since the advent of the 1.6-litre turbo hybrid regulations to label its most recent result as "an

"Mercedes was the team that cried 'Wolff'. Last year was a case in point"

effective damage limitation weekend" during which the team was "punching above our weight class", as boss Toto Wolff said.

So much of the performance loss stems from the porpoising phenomenon that reared its head in pre-season running at Barcelona, when Autosport observed Hamilton's car violently rocking up and down 350 metres before the braking zone into Turn 1. To combat the issue, rideheights must be raised, which is the opposite to what's needed to unlock ground-effect. It also upsets the car balance when the going gets twisty.

The leading school of thought at present is that the Three-Pointed Star is generating too much downforce. The car has been efficiently sucking the floor to the ground to cause the air to attach and detach on repeat to create the oscillating motion. It's a process that the perfectly flat conditions of a windtunnel

or simulations did not show up for any team.

Further, such was the radical update lavished on the W13 for the second test in Bahrain, when the minimalist sidepods made their debut, that Mercedes effectively left itself with only three days of real-world running to get to grips with the biggest regulation change in F1 history. The more consistent designs of Ferrari and Red Bull had six days of troubleshooting.

Wolff added that problems in Bahrain were compounded by a lack of parts, which meant the car ran with too much wing, and that increased the drag, with some underwhelming returns in the speed traps. Some have been quick to point the finger at the Mercedes powertrain overall, given the lacklustre showings from customer teams McLaren, Aston Martin and Williams in Bahrain. But while Hamilton was 11th in the speed traps and 3.6mph down on straightline king Verstappen, 12 months ago the Briton was 18th and 9mph adrift of the benchmark. The engine isn't markedly worse, so it seems.

Mercedes trackside engineering director Andrew Shovlin said: "In terms of pace, we're more or less on our own. We couldn't realistically put any pressure on Red Bull and Ferrari, and we weren't really under any pressure from behind. We don't have a car to fight for pole or race wins, and that isn't something that we can tolerate for long if we have ambitions to win the championships. The balance was quite tricky, but the main issue is just a lack of grip, caused by the fact that we have to run the car so high to avoid the bottoming."

There is cause for optimism. For one, with every lap completed, more is learned about the quirks of the car. Wolff also reckoned that FP3 was the first time Mercedes had been able to run without porpoising as it homes in on a way to turn it off for good.

The Austrian also remarked that the ultimate performance shown in the windtunnel was enough to bring the gap down to the Ferrari and Red Bull pacesetters. And because it's been a full decade since there were three teams genuinely in championship contention, that's a prospect to be relished.

This weekend in Jeddah for the Saudi Arabian GP will likely arrive too soon for Mercedes to find an ultimate fix. It will more likely have to rely on set-up tweaks to quash its porpoising pains rather than fit new parts. But Australia, Imola and beyond might provide the window of opportunity.

Should the appropriate amendments come, it's inconceivable to already discount F1's reigning superteam from featuring at the front by closing the gap to its rivals. But in the meantime, Mercedes was not constructing an elaborate ruse when it issued that competitive health-warning in pre-season testing. 🏎️

➡️ **P25 SAUDI ARABIAN GP TECH**

RACE CENTRE





FORMULA 1

LECLERC LEADS FERRARI'S REVIVAL AS NEW ERA BEGINS

Max Verstappen and Red Bull provided fierce competition but failed, leaving a superb Charles Leclerc to lead a Ferrari 1-2 as ground-effects returned

ALEX KALINAUCKAS

PHOTOGRAPHY  motorsport
IMAGES

“Ferrari is back. And it is properly back.”

So said Carlos Sainz Jr, fresh from the joyful parc ferme scenes at the 2022 Formula 1 season-opening Bahrain Grand Prix, where he finished as runner-up to team-mate Charles Leclerc. But for all his good work across the weekend, the Spaniard wasn't the story of the first race of the campaign, which acted as the start of the championship's much-vaunted new era. That centred on Leclerc's brilliance against the reigning world champion, who put in a sterling display of his own, battling car issues throughout the contest, long before a dramatic Red Bull reliability meltdown cost Max Verstappen dearly.

Before Leclerc lined up to take the start from the 10th pole of his F1 career, he was surrounded by expectation. Grid revellers and media swarmed his car in scenes reserved only for Lewis Hamilton and Verstappen in recent years, but the 24-year-old nevertheless took time to fulfil his pre-race ritual. He sat by the barrier, facing his machine, taking stock of what was to come.

Ferrari hadn't been sure how its 2022 start performance would match up against Red Bull's with the redesigned machinery, but Leclerc and Verstappen moved off the line in unison. Using the distance advantage of pole, Leclerc moved swiftly to his right to chop off his rival's line to the inside and held the lead through the opening corners. Verstappen braked later for Turn 1 and got fully alongside, but Leclerc's critical move to seal the inside of the tight right-hander was enough.



MAUGER



Fast-starting Hamilton
makes his move on
Perez into Turn 1

BINGHAM

Behind, Sainz was briefly threatened by the fast-starting Hamilton, who attacked to the outside, which became the inside of Turn 2 as the pack's staggered positions unwound. That meant the Mercedes edged out Sergio Perez and took fourth, with resurgent Haas star Kevin Magnussen taking advantage of the second Red Bull sliding to move up too. But through all that jockeying, Leclerc had cemented his lead, weaving once down the short straight to the Turn 4 right, and then pulling clear of Verstappen's DRS threat with a 1.2-second advantage at the end of the first lap of 57.

Ferrari had a plan and it had worked perfectly. The top three on the grid had come into the race with one new set of soft tyres (from four left in total) to deploy, the previous rule of running rubber from Q2 gone for 2022. Ferrari, said Leclerc, opted to "have a bit of a different strategy between our two cars, to hopefully put Max in a bit of a difficult situation". This meant Leclerc had started on his new set of the red-walled Pirellis, with Sainz on one of his older sets, as was Verstappen.

This appeared to be the critical difference for Leclerc, who romped to a significant early lead. This increased by an average of 0.19s from the second lap to the seventh, as the two leaders lost pace on the soft tyres at a slower rate than the field behind. But there was something more problematic at play for Verstappen.

As early as lap five, his race engineer Gianpiero Lambiase was warning him to "increase lift-off" into the braking zones. Two laps later the call came for Verstappen to "increase your lift and coast a little bit more". The Red Bull's brakes were simply overheating and losing major performance. Verstappen was by then "barely braking", and suddenly shipping 0.24s per lap on the six tours that preceded his first pitstop.

Red Bull went aggressive in a bid to put pressure on the lead Ferrari, which really worked. Using the undercut's advantage, plus Leclerc sliding out of the final corners, then Ferrari having "a bit of a problem on the front right at the pitstop" (said Leclerc), Verstappen went from 3.7s adrift at the end of the lap before his stop to running right with the leader when



Leclerc has already chopped off Verstappen's line to hold the lead at the start of the race

“OK, THIS IS NOW TWO TIMES THAT I TAKE IT EASY ON THE OUT-LAP. I’M NEVER, EVER DOING IT AGAIN”

the Ferrari emerged from its covering service. Verstappen had taken his new softs, with Leclerc now on used softs, and suddenly there was a fantastic fight unfolding. But, although it didn't appear to from the outside, Verstappen's brake problem impacted it all. First Lambiase told his charge that he'd "have one go at it before we have issues with the brakes again", a call that came as Verstappen emerged onto the pitstraight, 0.8s in arrears as they crossed the line to start the 17th lap.

Into Turn 1 he dived from way back, armed with DRS to pull off an audacious move, and he got ahead despite his braking limitation. But Leclerc wasn't to be resisted. He immediately fought back onto the subsequent short straight and swooped around Verstappen's outside to retake the lead with the move of the race, so fine was the margin against a famously ruthless opponent.

This was merely the first chapter. The next time around, Verstappen pulled off a near-identical late move. But Leclerc had learned to "brake very early into Turn 1 to get the DRS for Turn 4". So, he was able to get back ahead again, on this occasion by going to the inside of the Red Bull. Leclerc, however, was "struggling quite a lot with my [battery deployment] energy and had to manage that too".

But as the battle entered its third thrilling chapter, Lambiase warned "eyes on dash for the brakes, Max – we need lift-off at this stage". Shortly afterwards, Verstappen's third Turn 1 pass went wrong as he locked his right-front heavily and went deep, Leclerc nipping past on the inside and shooting clear of Verstappen's DRS threat once again. Frustrated behind, Verstappen was warned again to "increase lift-off".

As a result, the second stint then played out in much the same way as

the first. Verstappen lost 0.38s per lap to Leclerc over the next six tours, on lap 21 complaining "it's really impossible to race like this with these brakes". On the next lap, Lambiase informed Verstappen that his brake temperatures were finally under control again, but by this point he was 2.9s behind and now struggling with "a shit balance". The reigning world champion was grappling with turn-in understeer and poor traction on corner exit – the best of his new tyre life was gone.

Red Bull therefore attacked strategically again. It brought Verstappen in for a second time on lap 30, when he'd slid to 4.2s adrift. But Leclerc's second stop was better, and that meant he emerged well clear. Now on the mediums, Verstappen had been warned "you have to bring these tyres in gently this stint", and that the gap had been "too big for the undercut" to bother overstressing the yellow-walled rubber. Not that he agreed.

Reacting to Leclerc's continued lead, which stood at 2.3s at the end of the Monegasque's second out-lap, Verstappen simply raged. "OK, this is now two times that I take it easy on the out-lap and I could've easily >>



Verstappen makes a spectacular pass on Leclerc into Turn 1, only for the Ferrari to nip back ahead at Turn 4



MAUGER



MAUGER

SUTTON

SUTTON

been in front," he fumed. "I'm never, ever doing it again."

It's intriguing that Verstappen's second out-lap was actually 0.17s faster than his first on the new softs, during which he'd also been told not to "hit these tyres hard". The problem facing the drivers on the abrasive Bahrain surface this year was not keeping the rears alive, but rather making sure not to overly stress the fronts, such is the new challenge of getting the ground-effect cars to turn best and consistently through slower corners. And in chasing and attacking Leclerc as hard as Verstappen did, Red Bull was wary of the Dutchman being too hard on his rubber, as well as losing time with the brake issue. Not long after Verstappen's tirade, Lambiase stated he was "free to push". But the gap still grew once again and, again, the brake problem held Verstappen back. As he later reflected, they were "overheating a lot if I wanted to attack, so after the fighting I had with Charles, I had to let him go".

But just when it seemed that Leclerc would cruise to his third F1 career win, the race was rather upended. In scenes eerily like the Abu Dhabi saga that ended the 2021 season and controversially resulted in Verstappen's maiden crown, there was a safety car intervention that briefly threatened to leave Leclerc out on much older tyres compared to his rival – as was infamously the case with Hamilton and Mercedes 98 days earlier.

The circumstances were slightly different. For a start, this time Verstappen had made a third green-flag pitstop to move back to used softs at the end of lap 43, by then trailing Leclerc by 4.9s. The leader questioned if he should come in "for safety" – he later explained that he "just wanted to make sure that they questioned all the scenarios before we took a decision".

Ferrari opted to leave Leclerc since he was on the mediums, which he said at that point "felt quite nice" and was confident could "go to the end" even without covering Verstappen. Ferrari's choice made, Leclerc felt "if they were confident to do so, it gave me the confidence to also just get on with my work and bring the car home".

But that choice was taken away from Ferrari when, on Leclerc's 46th lap, Pierre Gasly's AlphaTauri suddenly shut down coming out of Turn 3 and he pulled over just off the track. A suspected

MGU-K failure then resulted in a fierce fire breaking out, which meant the virtual safety car that had been quickly activated had to be replaced by the actual safety car. Unlike the Abu Dhabi situation, Leclerc was half a lap from the pits and so could come in for a third time, go back to used softs to cover Verstappen, and rejoin way ahead, with his rival obliged to trundle to the safety car delta speed.

The race neutralisation lasted five laps, but the focus throughout concerned more developing reliability drama for Verstappen. On his final out-lap, he'd reported suddenly heavy steering. Verstappen waggled his steering wheel on each subsequent straight, convinced that debris

"AT THIS LEVEL, AFTER HAVING SO MUCH INFORMATION WITH ENGINES AND STUFF, IT SHOULDN'T HAPPEN"

or a stuck part was causing the issue that left him turning "like a robot". A bent trackrod was actually to blame, the damage occurring when "the car got dropped [off its jacks] at the final pitstop," said Red Bull team boss Christian Horner, who added that this "made the car inconsistent between left and right". But Verstappen's lap times were still competitive – he set a personal best in the 1m35s on the one full lap he got back on the softs before Gasly's drama.

Ahead of the lap 51 restart, Verstappen attempted what has become a regular trick of drawing alongside a leader, trying to up the pressure. This was probably unwise with a hobbled car, but the bigger problem was that he did it as he and Leclerc approached the penultimate corner, the last real turn that feeds right onto the main straight. So, with Verstappen pinched on a tighter-than-ideal line, Leclerc calmly hit the gas through the right-hander and shot clear.

Verstappen was therefore actually becoming Sainz's prey. He'd been



Hamilton chased Perez hard in post-safety-car soft-shod final stint



Verstappen coasts into the pits and retirement due to fuel pump problem

running nearly 20s adrift of Leclerc before the safety car bunched the field up and, with Verstappen's car damaged and being assailed by Sainz, Leclerc simply disappeared up the road. Leclerc's 1m34.570s on the first lap back to full speed was the fastest of the race, and this immediately brought him a restored 1.7s lead. That grew to 5.6s at the finish.

That was a point Verstappen never saw. With three laps remaining, he urgently enquired about a possible battery problem, which Red Bull initially could not explain, despite Verstappen colourfully insisting that his RB18 was "shitting itself". His team were soon aware of what was really going on, later explained as a fuel pump problem. "We don't know exactly what it is yet," Horner said in the immediate aftermath. "Whether it's a lift pump, whether it's a collector or something along those lines."

The third car drama Verstappen was saddled with meant Sainz was easily able to seize second place with a DRS run down the back straight on lap 54. Then, on the run down the penultimate straight mere moments later, Verstappen suddenly slowed and his car cut out completely as he ran through Turn 14. He crawled back, drive-less, to the Red Bull garage. "At this level, after already having so much information with engines and stuff, it shouldn't happen," said Verstappen.

The bad news was still coming for Red Bull. With Sainz clear in second, Perez now ran third. After his poor opening lap, he'd battled past Magnussen through the fast right, downhill swoop of Turn 6 on the third lap, after the Dane had locked up and shipped time at Turn 1, and then set off after Hamilton. The Briton had "thought for a second that I was going to have a little bit of a battle with Carlos" during the early stages as he ran fourth, but it was "only for five laps and then after that they were gone".

As the W13's current race pace deficit to Ferrari and Red Bull was revealed, Perez promptly cruised back up to the back of Hamilton and dispatched him with a DRS-assisted pass on the straight to Turn 4 on lap 10. From there, Perez had taken the medium tyres at his first stop to gain a tyre offset against Sainz's new softs, and he used the harder tyres to close in on his rival. But the gap stabilised through their respective reversed third stints and Sainz quickly covered off Perez's third stop, >>

QUALIFYING



SUTTON

The result of Bahrain Grand Prix qualifying could have been very different. If Charles Leclerc's lightning-quick reactions hadn't caught a wild oversteer snap as he raced through the rapid swoop of the Sakhir track's Turn 7 left on his final Q3 lap, pole surely would have gone to Red Bull's Max Verstappen. No wonder he was keen to demonstrate exactly how he'd caught it to team-mate Carlos Sainz Jr in parc ferme.

In Q1, the Ferrari drivers led the way, Mercedes' very real 2022 deficit revealed as George Russell and Lewis Hamilton trailed in ninth and 10th. But in Q2, Verstappen edged back ahead, with Sainz now heading his team-mate for the first time all weekend. Even in Formula 1's new era, Q3 played out as it now traditionally does – two tries for the frontrunners. After the first, Sainz led the way on a 1m30.687s, as Leclerc and Verstappen respectively trailed by 0.044 seconds and 0.056s.

Verstappen was frustrated with his out-lap approach on his first attempt, feeling it was too slow and cost him critical tyre temperature. After a front-wing adjustment, he returned to the fray behind his two red rivals, but also having to follow Kevin Magnussen's Haas, and so had to back off late to create a gap, which he felt again cost him tyre heat – it was unusually cold for Bahrain until Sunday – for the final fliers.

Leclerc led the way. He felt his session was "a bit too messy" overall, and even on the last effort was "struggling with the tyres, especially for the first sector". Missing the Turn 1 apex lost him time to both his rivals, and the Turn 7 snap was his most costly moment – "I nearly lost it" – but despite it he set the best time in the middle sector. In the final sector he was quickest too, roaring to the line – the Ferrari accelerated quicker than the Red Bull, which had better end-of-straight speed – to record 1m30.558s.

Sainz was ultimately undone by 0.129s, lost while having to hesitate accelerating out of the Turn 8 hairpin as the rear squirmed, then correcting a small oversteer snap through Turn 13 before the penultimate straight. Verstappen's understeer at Turn 8 was costly, but he shipped time overall after going quickest in sector one, his tyres out of the ideal window.

In the pack behind, Hamilton rescued fifth behind Sergio Perez, while Russell's decision to push hard on his final Q3 out-lap backfired and he slid wildly through the opening corners, ending up back in ninth. Magnussen took a sensational seventh on his sole Q3 run, after Haas had worked to fix a hydraulic problem affecting his power steering late in Q2, the US team's best qualifying result since Brazil 2019.

"MAGNUSSEN TOOK A SENSATIONAL SEVENTH, THE HAAS TEAM'S BEST QUALIFYING RESULT SINCE BRAZIL 2019"



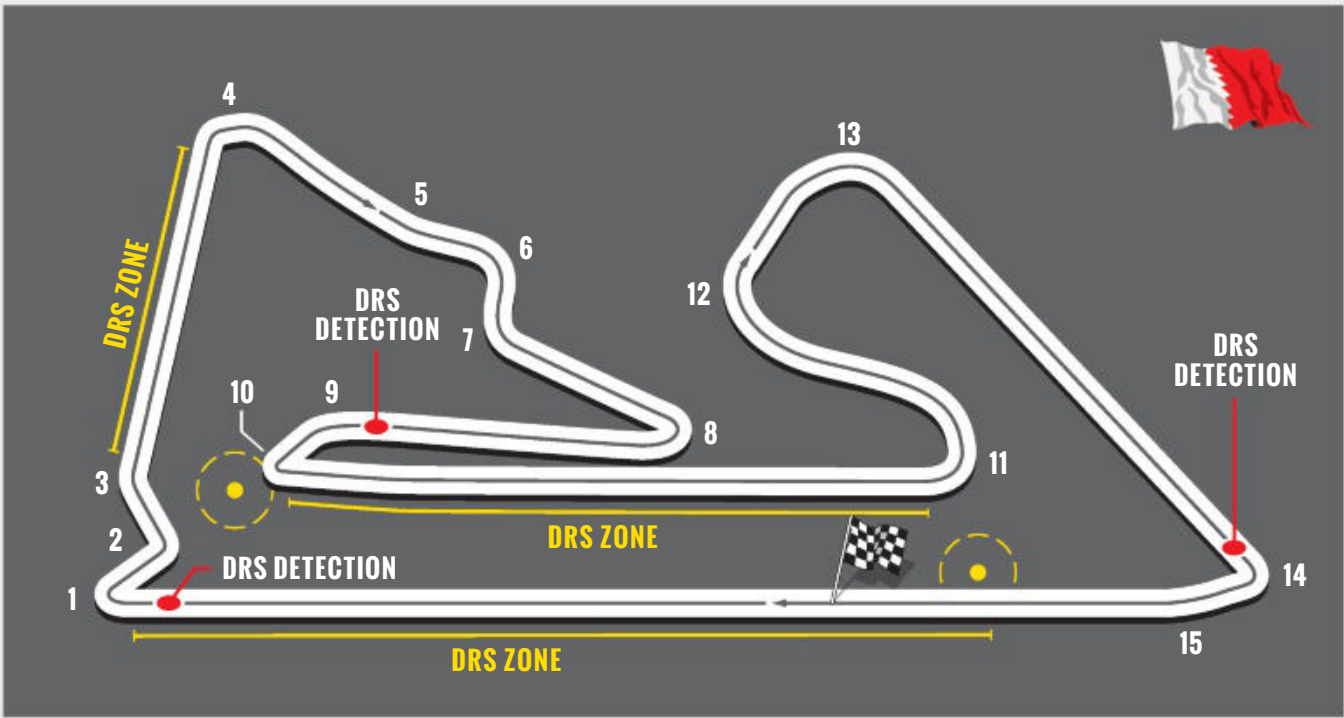
TRACKSIDE VIEW

As FP1 for the 2022 Formula 1 season opener commences, Autosport is back in its trusty position from pre-season testing a week earlier. That's behind the exit of the tricky, downhill double-left Turns 9/10 complex in the middle of the Bahrain circuit. We want to compare how the cars are behaving at this spot to a week earlier.

It's quite a turnaround. Where in testing there'd been mistakes galore here, locked left-fronts regularly sending plumes of smoke skywards, this time all is calm. The wind has turned 180 degrees, blowing a strong headwind down the pitstraight and a tailwind onto the back straight, which starts at our vantage point. This means conditions on Friday and Saturday are unusually cool for the region, and the drivers are having a far easier time through this sequence. Mick Schumacher's small lock-up and slippery oversteer exit is the only moment of note throughout the whole of FP1.

As that wasn't going to cut it on our word count here, we find a new plan for FP3. Armed with a different tabard, we head for the pitlane. Positioning ourselves just outside the Mercedes garage, we settle down to learn what life is like for the team during the final hour of qualifying preparation.

Lewis Hamilton and George Russell are sent out almost immediately for early sighters, at the end of which they're called back in so set-up adjustments can be made. Mercedes uses their return for a spot of live pitstop practice, burly mechanics ushering TV camera operators and photographers out of the approach path, which for the Silver Arrows drivers is longer and straighter than the rest due to its 2021



“AS WE DEPART, THE PHOTOGRAPHER IS BEING INFORMED OF HIS PERIL”

constructors' triumph. But the approach is not as easy as it was last year, with an LED floor board installed between the FIA weighbridge and the garages requiring the drivers to turn sharply right, then left, for a straight run to the box. Hamilton sweeps in gently, Russell is more angular and aggressive.

The team works through its programme, hurriedly erecting cordons when the cars are in the garage to keep the media at bay. It's a busy spot for those who usually inhabit this area, TV reporters from UK, Austrian and Danish broadcasters wandering up and down, although spending most of their time at the sharp end where the top teams reside. Scrutineers and mechanics



Photographers warned not to get too close. Above: Autosport's vantage points marked on track map



Mistakes of recent test replaced by drama-free running in unusually cool conditions

ask regular questions to prowling FIA officials. With five minutes of the one-hour session remaining, Russell heads in and immediately jumps from his W13. But his session isn't

over – he just needs to get something out of his race boot. Back aboard, he heads out for the post-chequered flag, grid-based practice starts. But there's drama when he returns. After Hamilton is wheeled back in for the final time, a photographer continues to shoot towards the pitlane's far end, unaware that he's straddling the white line Mercedes had earlier made clear wasn't to be crossed when a car is on its way in. Russell negotiates him with professional precision, but it's still very close. As we depart, the photographer is being informed of his peril, the message clear: *don't* do that again.

ALEX KALINAUCKAS



which came on the same lap as Verstappen's pre-safety car service.

Hamilton was nearly half a minute adrift of Perez when the race was neutralised. He'd gone a different route to the green-flag three-stoppers, taking used hard Pirellis at his first pit visit and from there going to the mediums. But Mercedes' tried and tested trick of fitting the hards and pushing on just didn't work as well as it had for much of the ultra-high-downforce F1 era, with Hamilton also having to fight his way past former team-mate Valtteri Bottas's Alfa Romeo after his first stop and ahead of Gasly following his second.

Perez and Hamilton were both back on the softs under the safety car, with the seven-time world champion chasing hard when racing resumed. But just when it looked like Perez was safe, on the penultimate lap he reported a power loss, after feeling it coming for "maybe five or six laps or so when Lewis was right behind me". He continued ahead to Turn 1 on the final tour, where he was most vulnerable to attack. But having critically made the apex ahead, his engine died, locking the rears and sending him spinning out. "It looks suspiciously like the failures are relating to each

"THROUGH TESTING IT WAS KILLER. IT'S A LONG RACE TO BE BOUNCING UP AND DOWN"



other," said Horner of his cars' retirements. "The symptoms looked very similar. We know the fuel was in there."

And so, a surprise leading trio took the chequered flag first. Ferrari's first 1-2 since the 2019 Singapore GP followed two painfully fallow years for the squad. This was down to the engine power deficit it faced from the start of 2020 and the result of its controversial settlement with the FIA over its previous engine arrangement. Now it seems back to having F1's best power punch. Red Bull has greater end-of-straight speed, but the Ferrari accelerates faster. "It's a good starting point no doubt," said Ferrari team boss Mattia Binotto. "We were not expecting the 1-2 or were even not hoping for it. Charles did a fantastic race, Carlos as well."

But it's more surprising to consider Hamilton's 183rd F1 podium as a shock, which reflects how far adrift the Silver Arrows squad is, primarily because the car is still porpoising badly when running a low set-up, critical to getting the ground-effect working best.

"It was a lot better than it had been," a clearly delighted Hamilton said in the post-race press conference. "Through testing it was killer. It's a long race to be bouncing up and down. But I'll take it with the performance that we managed to squeeze out."

And so, F1 heads for its second Jeddah race with Ferrari fulfilled, mighty Mercedes just about managing, and Red Bull reeling.

The race day temperatures were the hottest of the weekend, up 4C over the FP2 race-data-gathering period. This exacerbated Verstappen's brake problems and meant he could not replicate his FP2 long-run form, which was over a second per lap clear of the best that Ferrari could manage on a similar stint length (albeit with Sainz, who couldn't match his team-mate's overall pace as he struggled for rear grip).

Binotto explained that his team's cars "did not have problems with the brake system", but is clearly wary of Ferrari's rival posing an ominous threat. "Max, on used tyres, was keeping Charles's pace," he said when asked if Ferrari could possibly

go on to claim the 2022 titles. "Red Bull are still the favourites. What we can try to do is our best. Jeddah in a week's time can be a completely different picture and I think we need to wait at least four or five races before answering that question." ❄️

NEXT F1 REPORT

SAUDI ARABIAN GP
31 MARCH ISSUE

HAAS LIVES THE DREAM THANKS TO MAGNUSSEN

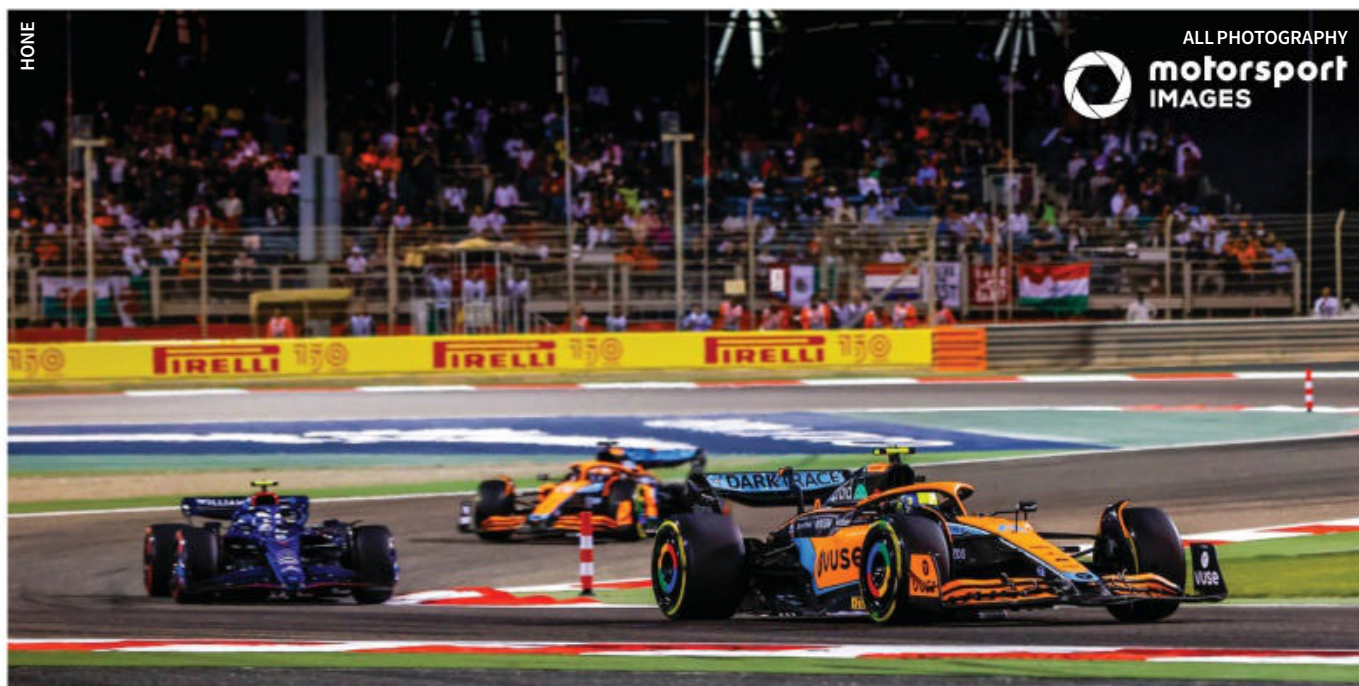
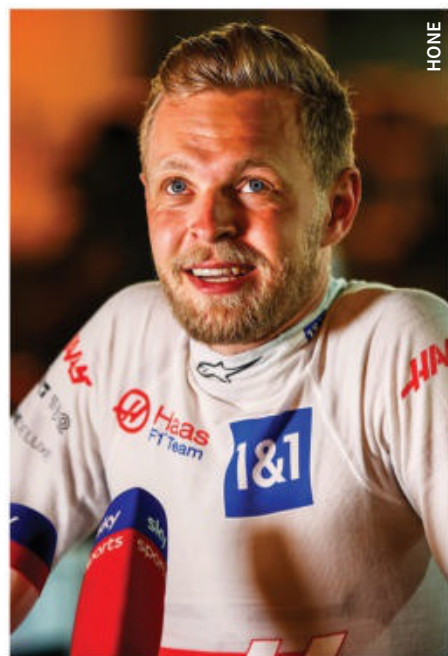
Team principal Gunther Steiner didn't "want to understand" how Haas and its recalled driver Kevin Magnussen had landed fifth place in Bahrain, instead preferring to "live the dream".

It was the best finish since the 2018 Austrian GP for a team that opted against developing its tepid 2021 car to pile resources into the seismic rule change, then had to tear up another contract with a title sponsor before splitting with Nikita Mazepin.

Propelled by the potent Ferrari power unit, Magnussen qualified seventh before taking home the mantle of 'best of the rest' behind the victorious Prancing Horses and the Mercedes duo. That came after a sturdy battle against Pierre Gasly following a second pitstop for the Dane that left him prey on cold tyres at Turn 4 until he recovered the place with DRS. The pressure was ultimately relieved when Gasly's AlphaTauri endured a total shutdown to leave him vaulting out of the AT03 on lap 45 as it burst into flames.

The Frenchman reported: "The whole car just switched off outside of Turn 1, and then I started to smell the burning."

Magnussen's Haas team-mate Mick Schumacher, meanwhile, enjoyed a net gain of one place to classify 11th after he was turned around by Esteban Ocon on lap one, which prompted the German to pull off a fine catch to ship only two positions.



McLaren looking for answers following disastrous race

Lando Norris arrived at the post-race media pen wearing a "brave face" after the promise McLaren had shown in testing could only return 14th for Daniel Ricciardo and 15th for the Brit in Bahrain.

The team had been tipped by many, including Lewis Hamilton, to be the fourth best at the very least after impressing in the Barcelona running. But McLaren hadn't resolved the brake and cooling issues that came to blight its pre-season running at Sakhir, for which Ricciardo was sidelined by COVID-19. Beyond the suspected power disadvantage of the Mercedes engine, both drivers complained about an overall lack of downforce that revealed itself with critical under and oversteer.

Norris worked his way into Q2 to qualify 13th behind Mick Schumacher, before any progress in the race was blunted by a slow second pitstop that dropped him to the back of the midfield. His pointed assessment was: "I'm sure it looks just

as bad as it felt. It's just where we are, quite simply. We just have to get a little bit used to it now. We just haven't got it right at the minute. We're a long way off.

"We're a long way down on downforce. The handling therefore is very poor. It's a tricky car and tricky tyres to optimise."

Ricciardo, who was eliminated in Q1, fell to last as he avoided Schumacher's spin on lap one, but recovered sufficiently to trump Nicholas Latifi and Norris. The Australian added: "There's a lot to try and understand. I knew there would be. It's the first race distance as well I've done this year and trying all compounds in the race. I tried to treat it like a test session.

"Obviously, we're lacking some pace. I think it's general. I don't think it's necessarily just one area. I think we lack just probably a little bit of downforce and that's really the key. I don't think the car actually feels like it's massively out of balance. We're just lacking overall grip."

BIG NUMBER

525

The number of days between COVID supersub Nico Hulkenberg's previous appearance in the 2020 Eifel Grand Prix (eighth, Racing Point) and Bahrain (17th, Aston Martin) last weekend. He replaced fellow German Sebastian Vettel, who tested positive for coronavirus.



Albon buoyed by 'out-of-place' Williams's upturn in pace

The returning Alexander Albon was pleasantly surprised by Williams's upturn in pace that allowed him to gain three positions at the start to hold 11th place.

He launched well to leapfrog Lando Norris and inherited a place when Mick Schumacher was spun by Esteban Ocon, which delayed a slow-starting Valtteri Bottas. Albon sat on the fringes of the points for five laps before slipping to 17th, eventually placing 13th after the Red Bull

powertrain woes. Team-mate Nicholas Latifi climbed from last to 16th.

"It went pretty well," was Albon's verdict. "We had a good start to the race, and were even further up and you could even say a little bit more out of place than what we were expecting. Inevitably cars overtook us, and we slipped back down. But considering where we were on Friday and last week with our race pace, it was a great step forward."



BINGHAM



MAUGER

ALFAS STAR IN CONGESTED MIDFIELD

Alfa Romeo drivers Valtteri Bottas and debutant Zhou Guanyu recovered from shaky first laps to land only the fourth double points finish for the former Sauber team since its Italian rebranding in 2019.

Bottas, who made his 102nd consecutive Q3 appearance to qualify sixth, was hampered off the line by excess wheelspin and then kept it cautious for the remainder of the opening lap to fall to 14th. But potent race pace combined with a well-executed three-stop strategy meant he recovered to where he'd started in his first race since leaving Mercedes.

Zhou, meanwhile, initially fell from 15th to last after triggering anti-stall as the field bunched up into Turn 1 and he bogged down in second gear. But he fought back to bag the final point in 10th.

An elated Zhou said: "I am so happy, I am speechless. My biggest dream was to race in F1, then to score points and tonight we did both."

Team principal Frederic Vasseur didn't mind the wasteful starts as they proved "an even more promising sign as we were able to mount a comeback, which means our car is genuinely competitive".

Splitting the Alfas were Esteban Ocon, Yuki Tsunoda and Fernando Alonso. The AlphaTauri driver found 1.6 seconds on lap 40 of 57 to relieve Alonso of what would become eighth with the aid of DRS on the main straight.

Q&A

GEORGE RUSSELL MERCEDES DRIVER

Is there a shortfall with the Mercedes power unit?

I wouldn't necessarily say it's purely engine. There are a number of contributing factors – we are quite draggy. This bouncing and porpoising is going to slow you down because we're smashing into the ground, rather than going forwards. The laptime deficit we have, it's probably 50% on the straights and 50% in the corners. We all believe we can solve the issue, but we truly just don't know how long it is going to take.



How does the porpoising affect you in the car?

It was just uncomfortable. You want a nice, smooth ride. That's definitely not what we had. It was affecting the tyres quite a lot because every braking zone, you're bouncing into the corner. The rears are skipping under braking because the car is so unsettled. If we unlock this performance, it's going to benefit everything. It's going to help the tyres, the brakes, we're going to find more grip. We've sort of made one step forward, one step backwards. We're trying so many different things, which is limiting our weekend because

we're so focused on porpoising, we're not looking at other parts of the car.

Does Red Bull not scoring points soften the blow?

Ultimately, this is a sport all about results. It doesn't matter if you're the fastest car or the slowest car. It's who ended up standing on that top step of the podium. And if you told us we're going away this weekend with a P3 and P4, we absolutely would have taken it. We weren't that much quicker than the midfield. That was really more of a concern than the cars ahead. We knew we'd be a long way behind Red Bull and Ferrari, but we equally saw how quick Haas or how great Alfa Romeo were. We've got a lot of work to do.



ALGARVE RACE RESORT

SOMETIMES YOU JUST NEED TO SLOW DOWN



At a short distance from Algarve International Circuit,
Algarve Race Resort is the ideal place to stop and rest.
We'll be waiting for you at the Hotel, the Spa or at our Restaurant.

SÍTIO DE ESCAMPADINHO
8500-148 MEXILHOEIRA GRANDE
ALGARVERACERESORT.PT

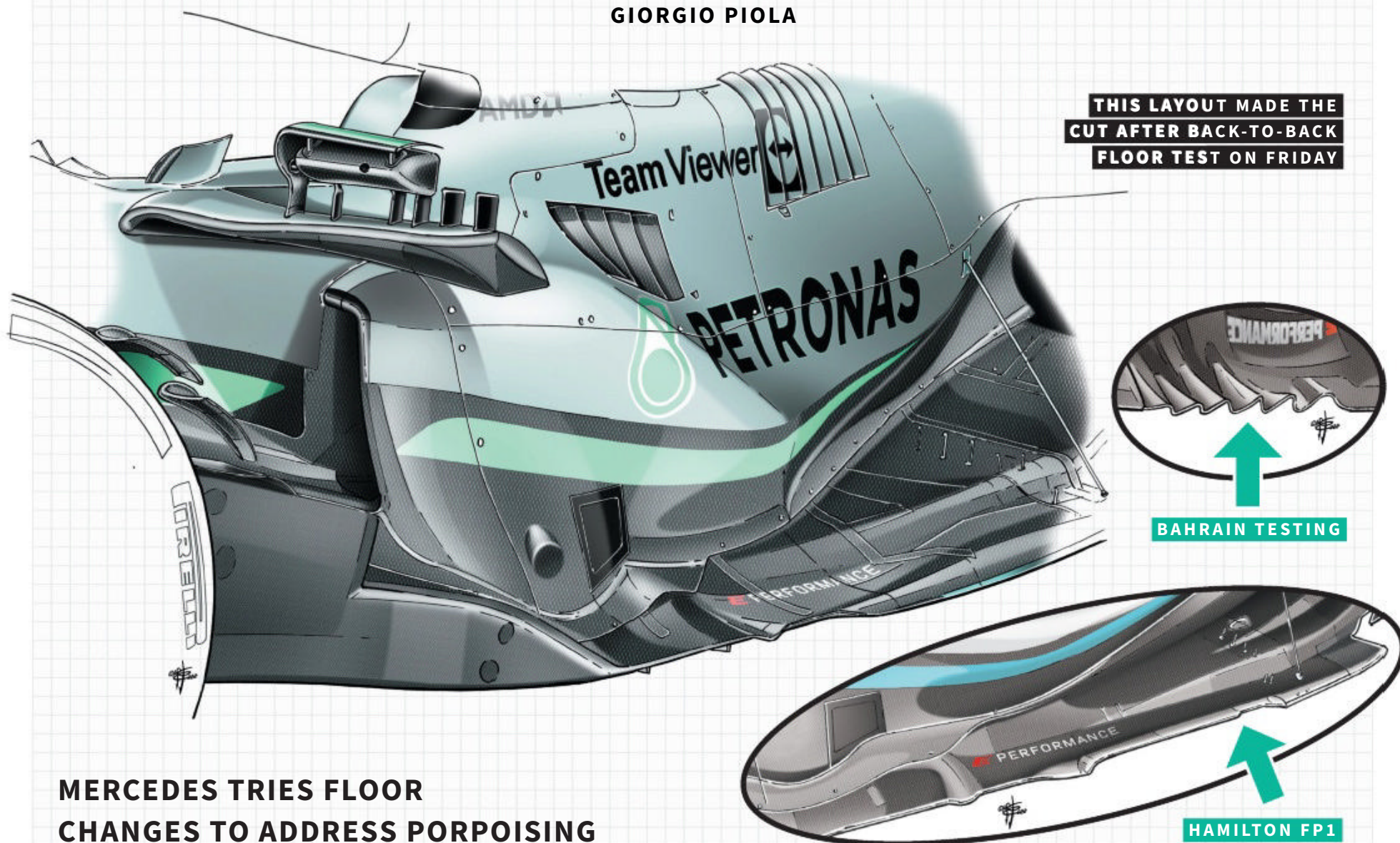


GIORGIO
PIOLA

BAHRAIN GP **TECH**

DRAWING BOARD

GIORGIO PIOLA



MERCEDES TRIES FLOOR CHANGES TO ADDRESS PORPOISING

Despite coming away from the Bahrain Grand Prix with a podium, Mercedes still has considerable issues to fix with its ominously titled W13. In a bid to get on top of the bouncing and porpoising that has plagued the car so far, the team introduced a back-to-back floor test in the opening practice session to see if a slightly revised edge profile would help ease the pain. Lewis Hamilton trialed a floor featuring a

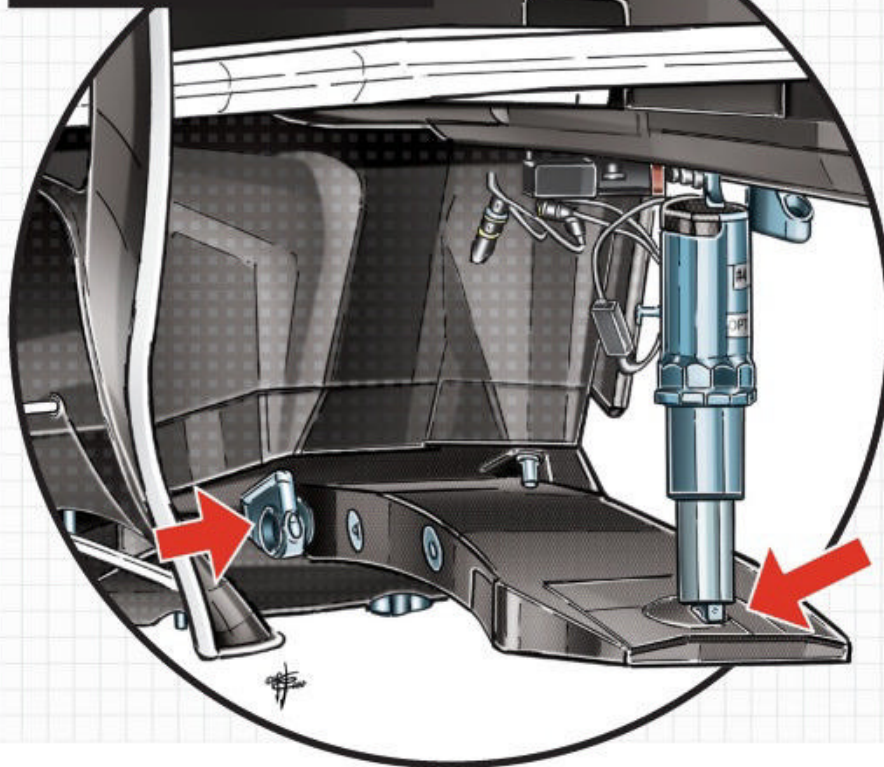
small raised lip to try to redistribute the position of the vortices produced ahead that help to create a seal. With the change in sidepod design, Mercedes moved away from the rippled solution it ran at Barcelona but is still hunting for the best option to iron out the car's problems.

George Russell, fresh from his first race in the 2022 car, explained that Mercedes' problems run beyond porpoising but remained hopeful that

the team could find a cure: "I think the lap time deficit we have is probably 50% in the straight and 50% in the corners. [Bouncing] was affecting the tyres a lot because every braking zone, the rears are just skipping under braking because the car is so unsettled. If we unlock this performance, it's just going to benefit everything. It's going to help the tyres, it's going to help us on the brakes."

JAKE BOXALL-LEGGE

**SHOCK ABSORBER HELPS
LIMIT DAMAGE WHEN THE
SPLITTER HITS THE GROUND**



FERRARI'S SPECIAL SHOCK ABSORBER

Although the end result in Bahrain doesn't accurately display the stiff level of competition it received from Red Bull, Ferrari appears to have turned the corner after a difficult past two seasons and began 2022 in swaggering style. It elected not to tinker too much with its F1-75 car between tests, and focused on getting more out of its package before introducing larger-scale developments.

One interesting aspect of the car is the small shock absorber situated within the front splitter structure ahead of the floor, which under the increased loading from the venturi tunnels means that the floor can take a

bit of a battering. The FIA has allowed teams to introduce a limited amount of flexibility in this area to minimise damage when the car hits the floor, so Ferrari has introduced a small shock and lever system.

This cannot be used for any aerodynamic purpose, and may not be used to lift the splitter above the level of the floor as that would allow for a variable rideheight. Instead, it allows the splitter to return to its initial position after hitting the ground or after a kerb strike. This shock can move a maximum of 5mm under applied pressure.

JAKE BOXALL-LEGGE

20 Latifi #6
1m33.634s

19 Stroll #18
1m33.032s

18 Ricciardo #3
1m32.945s

17 Hulkenberg #27
1m32.777s

16 Tsunoda #22
1m32.750s

15 Zhou #24
1m33.543s

14 Albon #23
1m32.664s

13 Norris #4
1m32.008s

12 Schumacher #47
1m31.998s

11 Ocon #31
1m31.782s

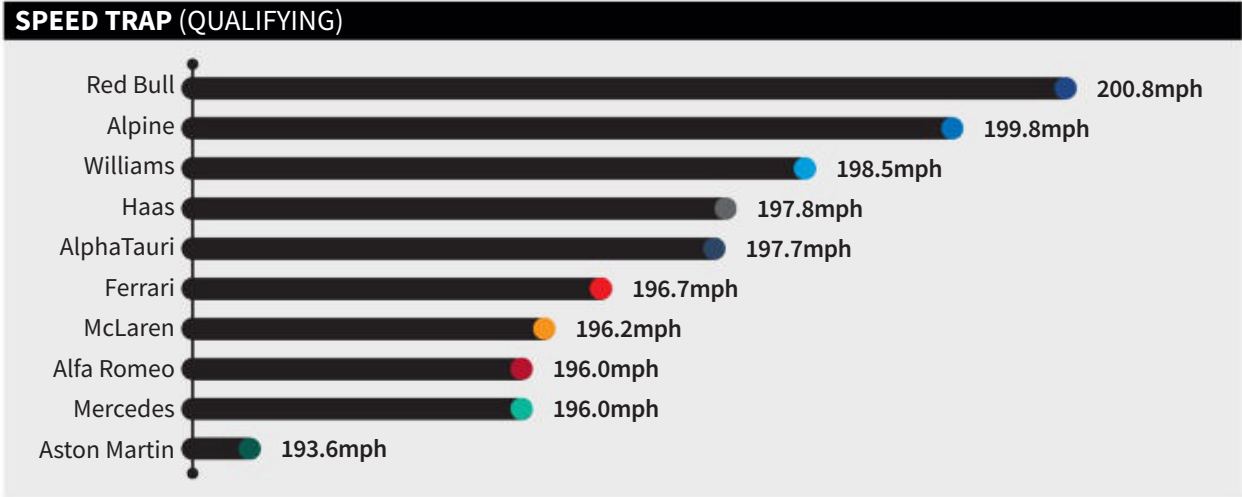
FREE PRACTICE 1			FREE PRACTICE 2			FREE PRACTICE 3		
POS	DRIVER	TIME	POS	DRIVER	TIME	POS	DRIVER	TIME
1	Gasly	1m34.193s	1	Verstappen	1m31.936s	1	Verstappen	1m32.544s
2	Leclerc	1m34.557s	2	Leclerc	1m32.023s	2	Leclerc	1m32.640s
3	Sainz	1m34.611s	3	Sainz	1m32.520s	3	Perez	1m32.791s
4	Russell	1m34.629s	4	Russell	1m32.529s	4	Russell	1m32.935s
5	Verstappen	1m34.742s	5	Alonso	1m32.877s	5	Sainz	1m33.053s
6	Stroll	1m34.814s	6	Bottas	1m32.951s	6	Hamilton	1m33.121s
7	Hamilton	1m34.943s	7	Perez	1m32.958s	7	Magnussen	1m33.437s
8	Alonso	1m35.000s	8	Schumacher	1m33.085s	8	Bottas	1m33.733s
9	Tsunoda	1m35.028s	9	Hamilton	1m33.144s	9	Zhou	1m33.880s
10	Perez	1m35.050s	10	Magnussen	1m33.183s	10	Stroll	1m33.920s
11	Zhou	1m35.053s	11	Norris	1m33.280s	11	Norris	1m33.955s
12	Ocon	1m35.151s	12	Ocon	1m33.360s	12	Hulkenberg	1m33.971s
13	Latifi	1m35.644s	13	Gasly	1m33.621s	13	Gasly	1m34.176s
14	Hulkenberg	1m35.815s	14	Tsunoda	1m33.789s	14	Schumacher	1m34.295s
15	Albon	1m35.923s	15	Zhou	1m33.953s	15	Ricciardo	1m34.378s
16	Norris	1m36.304s	16	Stroll	1m33.958s	16	Alonso	1m34.628s
17	Ricciardo	1m36.402s	17	Hulkenberg	1m34.061s	17	Albon	1m34.868s
18	Schumacher	1m36.536s	18	Ricciardo	1m34.166s	18	Ocon	1m34.957s
19	Magnussen	1m36.804s	19	Latifi	1m34.486s	19	Latifi	1m35.667s
20	Bottas	notime	20	Albon	1m34.735s	20	Tsunoda	notime

WEATHER Sunny, air 19-20C track 32-36C

WEATHER Night, air 17-18C track 22-24C

WEATHER Sunny, air 22C track 34-38C

SEASON STATS			
DRIVERS' CHAMPIONSHIP	PTS	BEST FINISH	BEST QUAL
1 Leclerc	26	1	1
2 Sainz	18	2	3
3 Hamilton	15	3	5
4 Russell	12	4	9
5 Magnussen	10	5	7
6 Bottas	8	6	6
7 Ocon	6	7	11
8 Tsunoda	4	8	16
9 Alonso	2	9	8
10 Zhou	1	10	15
11 Schumacher	0	11	12
12 Stroll	0	12	19
13 Albon	0	13	14
14 Ricciardo	0	14	18
15 Norris	0	15	13
16 Latifi	0	16	20
17 Hulkenberg	0	17	17
18 Perez	0	18	4
19 Verstappen	0	19	2
20 Gasly	0	-	10



CONSTRUCTORS' CHAMPIONSHIP	
1 Ferrari	44
2 Mercedes	27
3 Haas	10
4 Alfa Romeo	9
5 Alpine	8
6 AlphaTauri	4
7 Aston Martin	0
8 Williams	0
9 McLaren	0
10 Red Bull	0

QUALIFYING 1			QUALIFYING 2			QUALIFYING 3		
POS	DRIVER	TIME	POS	DRIVER	TIME	POS	DRIVER	TIME
1	Leclerc	1m31.471s	1	Verstappen	1m30.757s	1	Leclerc	1m30.558s
2	Sainz	1m31.567s	2	Sainz	1m30.787s	2	Verstappen	1m30.681s
3	Verstappen	1m31.785s	3	Leclerc	1m30.932s	3	Sainz	1m30.687s
4	Bottas	1m31.919s	4	Perez	1m31.008s	4	Perez	1m30.921s
5	Magnussen	1m31.955s	5	Hamilton	1m31.048s	5	Hamilton	1m31.238s
6	Ocon	1m32.041s	6	Russell	1m31.252s	6	Bottas	1m31.560s
7	Gasly	1m32.096s	7	Magnussen	1m31.461s	7	Magnussen	1m31.808s
8	Norris	1m32.239s	8	Alonso	1m31.621s	8	Alonso	1m32.195s
9	Russell	1m32.269s	9	Gasly	1m31.635s	9	Russell	1m32.216s
10	Hamilton	1m32.285s	10	Bottas	1m31.717s	10	Gasly	1m32.338s
11	Perez	1m32.311s	11	Ocon	1m31.782s			
12	Alonso	1m32.346s	12	Schumacher	1m31.998s			
13	Schumacher	1m32.380s	13	Norris	1m32.008s			
14	Zhou	1m32.493s	14	Albon	1m32.664s			
15	Albon	1m32.726s	15	Zhou	1m33.543s			
16	Tsunoda	1m32.750s						
17	Hulkenberg	1m32.777s						
18	Ricciardo	1m32.945s						
19	Stroll	1m33.032s						
20	Latifi	1m33.634s						

WEATHER Night, air 19C track 24-26C

NEXT RACE

27 MARCH

SAUDI ARABIAN GP

Jeddah

QUALIFYING BATTLE

Hamilton

1

0

Russell

Verstappen

1

0

Perez

Leclerc

1

0

Sainz

Ricciardo

0

1

Norris

Alonso

1

0

Ocon

Gasly

1

0

Tsunoda

Stroll

0

1

Hulkenberg

Latifi

0

1

Albon

Zhou

0

1

Bottas

Magnussen

1

0

Schumacher

WINS

Leclerc

1

FASTEST LAPS

Leclerc

1

POLE POSITIONS

Leclerc

1

STARTING GRID



RACE RESULTS ROUND 1/23 (57 LAPS - 191.53 MILES)

POS	DRIVER	TEAM	FINISH TIME	LED	TYRES
1	Charles Leclerc (MCO)	Ferrari	1h37m33.584s	55	Sn, Su, Mn, Su
2	Carlos Sainz Jr (ESP)	Ferrari	+5.598s	2	Su, Sn, Mn, Su
3	Lewis Hamilton (GBR)	Mercedes	+9.675s		Su, Hu, Mn, Su
4	George Russell (GBR)	Mercedes	+11.211s		Su, Hu, Mn, Su
5	Kevin Magnussen (DNK)	Haas-Ferrari	+14.754s		Sn, Su, Mn, Su
6	Valtteri Bottas (FIN)	Alfa Romeo-Ferrari	+16.119s		Su, Mn, Mn, Su
7	Esteban Ocon (FRA)	Alpine-Renault	+19.423s		Sn, Mn, Hn, Su
8	Yuki Tsunoda (JPN)	AlphaTauri-Red Bull	+20.386s		Sn, Mn, Sn, Su
9	Fernando Alonso (ESP)	Alpine-Renault	+22.390s		Su, Mn, Hn, Sn
10	Zhou Guanyu (CHN)	Alfa Romeo-Ferrari	+23.064s		Sn, Mn, Mn, Su
11	Mick Schumacher (DEU)	Haas-Ferrari	+32.574s		Sn, Mn, Su
12	Lance Stroll (CAN)	Aston Martin-Mercedes	+45.873s		Sn, Sn, Mn, Sn
13	Alexander Albon (THA)	Williams-Mercedes	+53.932s		Sn, Mn, Mu, Su
14	Daniel Ricciardo (AUS)	McLaren-Mercedes	+54.975s		Mn, Sn, Hn, Sn
15	Lando Norris (GBR)	McLaren-Mercedes	+56.335s		Mn, Hn, Sn, Su
16	Nicholas Latifi (CAN)	Williams-Mercedes	+1m01.795s		Sn, Sn, Mn, Su
17	Nico Hulkenberg (DEU)	Aston Martin-Mercedes	+1m03.829s		Sn, Sn, Mn, Sn
18	Sergio Perez (MEX)	Red Bull	56 laps-fuelsystem		Su, Mn, Su, Su
19	Max Verstappen (NLD)	Red Bull	54 laps-fuelsystem		Su, Sn, Mn, Su
R	Pierre Gasly (FRA)	AlphaTauri-Red Bull	44 laps-engine		Su, Mn, Hn

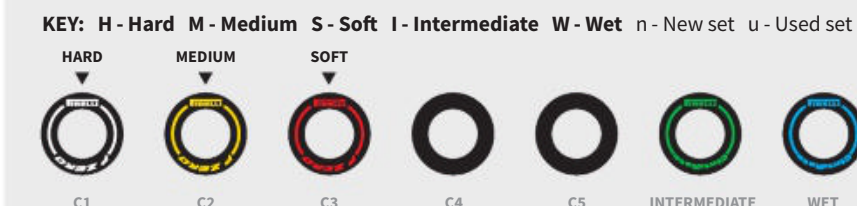
FASTEST LAPS

POS	DRIVER	TIME	GAP	LAP
1	Leclerc	1m34.570s	-	51
2	Verstappen	1m35.440s	+0.870s	51
3	Sainz	1m35.740s	+1.170s	52
4	Perez	1m36.089s	+1.519s	52
5	Hamilton	1m36.228s	+1.658s	53
6	Russell	1m36.302s	+1.732s	56
7	Bottas	1m36.599s	+2.029s	53
8	Magnussen	1m36.623s	+2.053s	53
9	Zhou	1m36.685s	+2.115s	39
10	Alonso	1m36.733s	+2.163s	44
11	Schumacher	1m36.956s	+2.386s	37
12	Norris	1m36.988s	+2.418s	51
13	Tsunoda	1m37.104s	+2.534s	53
14	Ocon	1m37.110s	+2.540s	53
15	Stroll	1m37.146s	+2.576s	49
16	Ricciardo	1m37.261s	+2.691s	50
17	Gasly	1m37.324s	+2.754s	34
18	Albon	1m37.355s	+2.785s	50
19	Hulkenberg	1m38.201s	+3.631s	49
20	Latifi	1m38.251s	+3.681s	51

WEATHER Night, clear, air 22-24C track 26-29C

WINNER'S AVERAGE SPEED 117.79mph FASTEST LAP AVERAGE SPEED 128.01mph

TYRES



RACE BRIEFING

RACE PENALTIES

OCON Five-second penalty and two licence points for causing a collision with Schumacher

STAT

10

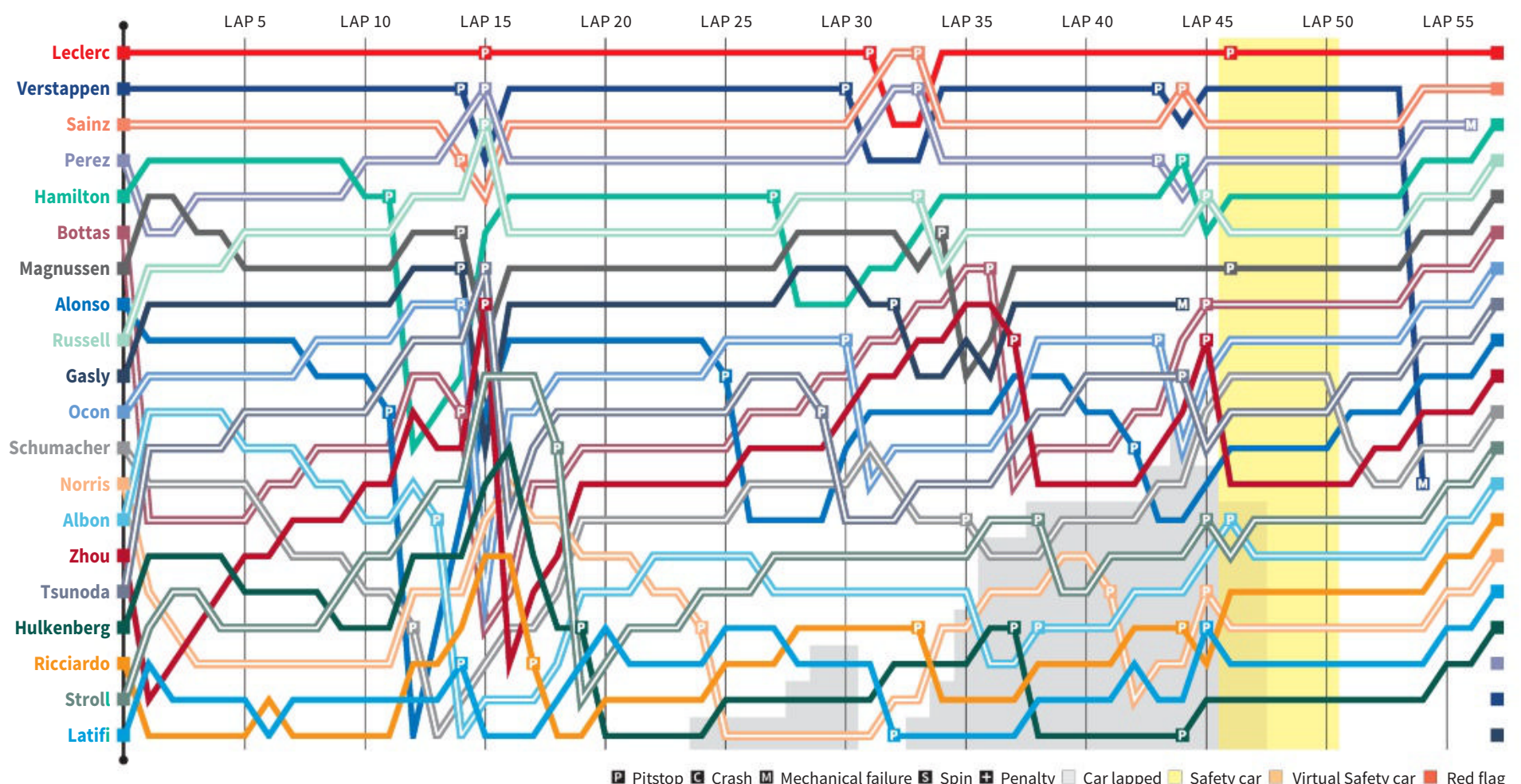
Leclerc now has as many world championship F1 poles as Jochen Rindt

STAT

85

This was Ferrari's record 85th 1-2 in world championship history

LAP CHART What happened, when



LECLERC STARTS ON FERRARI'S RETURN TO THE LIMELIGHT

Pole position, fastest lap and the race victory earn the Monegasque maximum points, while F1 returnee Magnussen, Hamilton and Verstappen get closest

ALEX KALINAUCKAS

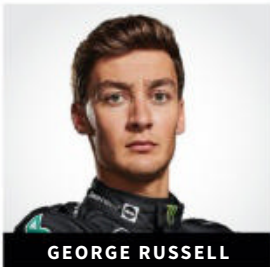
MERCEDES



LEWIS HAMILTON

Started **5th** — Result **3rd**

9 His team has genuinely started a season out of the lead fight for the first time since 2013, but Hamilton still showed his class. He qualified best of the rest, getting close to Perez – but not as close as he might have if he'd nailed his best sectors at the death in Q3.

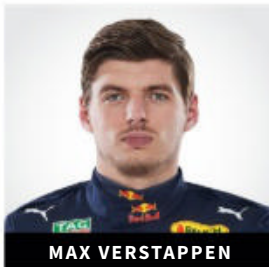


GEORGE RUSSELL

Started **9th** — Result **4th**

7 Going too hard on final Q3 out-lap backfired when he had no traction through the first turns, resulting in a ninth place grid spot. Made up ground with a good start, then chased his team-mate for most of the event. Encouragingly, he closely tracked Hamilton's pace on a similar strategy.

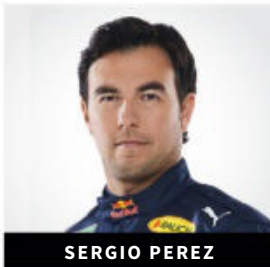
RED BULL



MAX VERSTAPPEN

Started **2nd** Result **19th** (R)

9 Blamed his out-laps being too slow and his car balance going off after Q2 for his qualifying defeat, but the margins were tiny. Then in the race he coped magnificently with brake, steering and power problems before the last – caused by a fuel pump failure – stopped him.



SERGIO PEREZ

Started **4th** Result **18th** (R)

5 Ultimately it didn't matter, but yet again his lead battle absence hurt Red Bull's victory chances. A final corner mistake on his last Q3 lap meant he qualified 0.24s slower than his team-mate, then he slid wide and lost out to Magnussen after being passed by Hamilton on lap one.

FERRARI



CHARLES LECLERC

Started **1st** — Result **1st**

10 A brilliant display under intense pressure. Turn 1 and penultimate corner slides on final Q3 lap, and just before his first stop, don't cost the maximum because he still delivered pole and the win, fending off a sustained and fantastic assault from Verstappen, one of F1's fiercest foes.



CARLOS SAINZ JR

Started **3rd** — Result **2nd**

8 Probably as close to a seven as is possible but, given how near he got to Leclerc in qualifying and helped deliver a 1-2, he can't score lower. Despite the success, he called this his "most difficult" weekend for Ferrari, which centred on not yet being at one with the F1-75, lacking rear grip and confidence.

McLAREN



DANIEL RICCIARDO

Started **18th** — Result **14th**

6 Understandable performance given he missed the second test. McLaren's lack of overall pace cost its drivers dearly, and Ricciardo was a Q1 elimination. Dodging the aftermath of Schumacher's spin caused his fall to last, but he rallied to beat Latifi and hold off Norris post-restart.



LANDO NORRIS

Started **13th** — Result **15th**

6 Also had to cope with McLaren's various ailments. At least made Q2, although he might have beaten Schumacher. On lap two he had to back out of the Turn 4 exit when Stroll ran him wide, then couldn't escape the battle towards the back after running longest of all in the first stint.

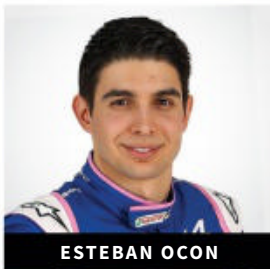
ALPINE



FERNANDO ALONSO

Started **8th** — Result **9th**

6 Made it through to Q3. Was one of the minority to sampled all three tyre compounds on the three-stopper, but struggled with degradation on all of them. Felt pushing too hard early in the race contributed extra wear. Was ultimately caught and passed by Tsunoda, who'd started down in 16th.

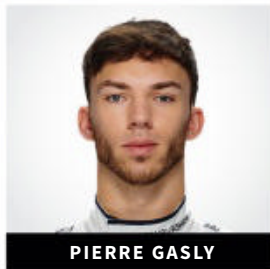


ESTEBAN OCON

Started **11th** — Result **7th**

6 Two factors give him this score. First was a Turn 2 oversteer snap in his final Q2 lap, which cost him a Q3 berth that Alonso managed, although he missed the performance advantage of the sidepod update he lost in FP1. The main issue is tagging Schumacher on lap one, which earned a penalty.

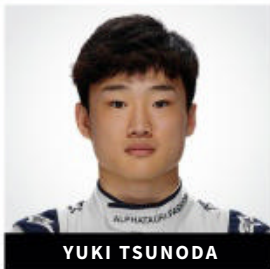
ALPHATAURI



PIERRE GASLY

Started **10th** — Result **R**

8 Doesn't feel that Q3 is on AlphaTauri's radar naturally anymore, so was delighted to make the cut. In the race he enjoyed battles with Magnussen and Alonso and was set for eighth when his car suddenly lost power and quickly caught fire after a suspected MGU-K failure.



YUKI TSUNODA

Started **16th** — Result **8th**

7 Lost FP3 to a hydraulic problem, with that lack of running contributing to his Q1 exit. Started strongly, gaining four places. Battled the Alpines well in middle phase of the race, then outmuscled Schumacher at Turn 4 on the restart lap to move into the points for good.



ASTON MARTIN



NICO HULKENBERG

Started **17th** – Result **17th**

7 Gets a bonus for being plunged into a tough situation. Also did well to outqualify Stroll and get close to Tsunoda. In the race he and Stroll had to cope with big lift-and-coast demands to aid engine cooling and tyre temps, but he acquitted himself well in backmarker battle.



LANCE STROLL

Started **19th** – Result **12th**

5 Even if a high grid placing wasn't expected with Aston's porpoising severity, he shouldn't have been outqualified by a temporary team-mate with no 2022 testing experience. Put awful qualifying down to a set-up tweak going wrong. Battled hard in the race and rose to the fringe of the points.

WILLIAMS



NICHOLAS LATIFI

Started **20th** – Result **16th**

4 More was expected entering his third F1 season, but tyre temperature struggles meant he was badly off the Q1 pace and brought up the rear as a result, six places behind his new team-mate. Struggled in the race, unable to hold a decent pace without encountering major tyre wear.



ALEX ALBON

Started **14th** – Result **13th**

8 Produced a Russell-esque Q1 escape in a car that looks to be closer to the back than many expected. Gained three spots with a good start and Ocon's Haas-bashing ahead, then fell prey to faster rivals afterwards. Blamed cold tyres for nearly collecting Sainz on his second out-lap.

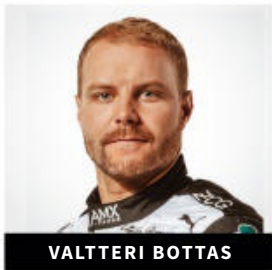
ALFA ROMEO



ZHOU GUANYU

Started **15th** – Result **10th**

7 An error means he can't score higher – the narrow cutting of Turn 5 that cost him his best Q2 lap and meant he started 15th. Chased Bottas and impressed in battle across the race. Passing Schumacher on the back straight one lap after the restart was crucial to his debut point.



VALTTERI BOTTAS

Started **6th** — Result **6th**

7 So close to an eight, but losing eight spots on lap one with “a lot of wheelspin” goes down as a major error. Worked his way back to the points nicely, though, and gained when the Red Bulls retired. Also qualified a sensational sixth – Alfa's highest grid spot since Belgium 2019.

HAAS



KEVIN MAGNUSSEN

Started **7th** — Result **5th**

9 Qualified a brilliant seventh, only getting one Q3 run since Haas had to address his Q2 power-steering issue. Passed Perez on lap one, then pushed his tyres too hard and locked up ahead of the Red Bull, and also conceded a place to Russell two laps later. Those moments cost the maximum.

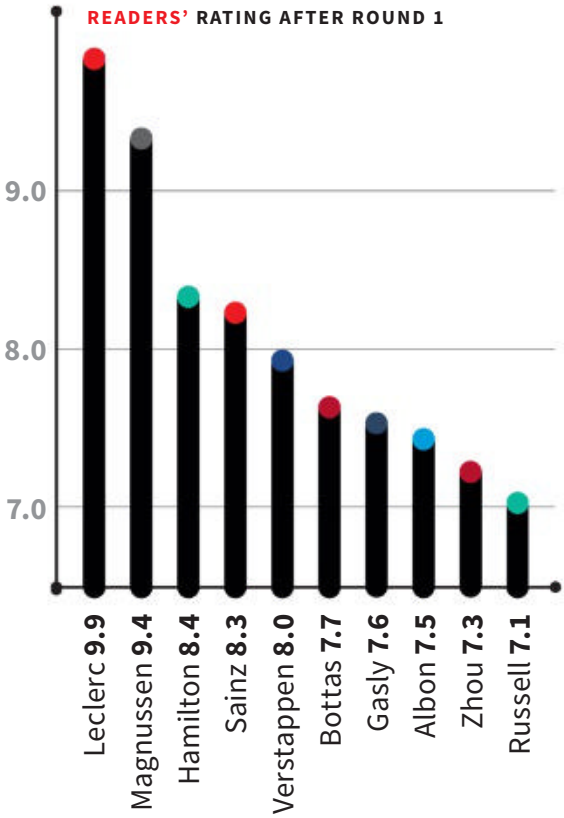


MICK SCHUMACHER

Started **12th** – Result **11th**

7 Qualified 12th after losing time with a Turn 11 slide. Got knocked around by Ocon on lap one and felt his car was damaged from there. Dropped back to race Zhou and Albon, then tried staying out on a two-stopper under the safety car and was overcome by Alonso and Zhou late on.

TOP 10 AVERAGE RATINGS



- SCORING SYSTEM EXPLAINED
- 10** Exceptional performance, maximising the result and excelling, either through overturning a major obstacle or dominance over rivals.
 - 9** Outstanding performance, but without quite reaching the heights required for a maximum score.
 - 8** Very good performance with no major errors and a final result that reflected the car's pace.
 - 7** Good performance, and a reasonable result, but a little inconsistent in some aspects or without extracting the maximum from the car.
 - 6** Solid performance but without getting the most out of the car or nailing it when it really mattered.
 - 5** Patchy performance, not necessarily off the pace but failing to string together the weekend well and coming away short of a good result.
 - 4** Disappointing effort, failing to maximise the car and making mistakes.
 - 3** Poor performance, either through struggling to get the most out of the car or falling short through a massive error.
 - 2** Very poor performance, with mediocre pace and mistakes, a wasted weekend.
 - 1** Terrible. A performance with no redeeming features.



WEC SEBRING

Alpine wins as rulemakers hamper Toyota

Balance of Performance blessed the French machine with an advantage that its crew made the most of around the quirky and bumpy Sebring layout

GARY WATKINS

PHOTOGRAPHY JEP  motorsport
IMAGES



Ten laps into the Sebring 1000 Miles, Alpine's old LMP1 car was running almost that many seconds up the road from the best of the rest in the Hypercar pack. The French machine had already claimed the pole by 1.3 seconds, and nothing occurred over the remainder of the World Endurance Championship season-opener last Friday to suggest that it didn't have a clear performance advantage around the quirky airfield circuit. A 37s margin of victory for Alpine drivers Matthieu Vaxiviere, Nicolas Lapierre and Andre Negrao revealed little about this race.

A more telling figure was the one minute and 15 or so seconds advantage held by the car in the third hour, shortly before the red flags came out for the first of three times over the course of a race stopped early as a result of lightning strikes. The Toyota and Glickenhaus Le Mans Hypercars couldn't hold a candle to the Alpine-Gibson A480 around the 3.74-mile Sebring International Raceway.

A honed system of Balance of Performance, which now includes the speed at which a hybrid LMH car can go into four-wheel-drive mode, was meant to equalise the cars. An increase in the hybrid activation speed for the Toyotas from 120km/h (75mph) in the dry last year to 190km/h certainly pulled the GR010 HYBRID back and put it on a par with the Glickenhaus-Pipo 007 LMH. But the grandfathered Alpine, an ORECA design that started life as the Rebellion R-13, was just plain quicker.

The #8 Toyota that finished second in the hands of Sebastien Buemi, Brendon Hartley and new signing Ryo Hirakawa was a second down on the average of the fastest 100 laps; the third-placed Glickenhaus of Romain Dumas, Olivier Pla and Ryan Briscoe slower



Lopez put the #7 Toyota on its roof, triggering the first red flag

than the Alpine by 0.8s.

It is difficult to reach any other conclusion than the rulemakers from the FIA and WEC promoter the Automobile Club de l'Ouest got it spectacularly wrong last weekend. Or rather over the last two weekends. The first BoP of the season came out ahead of the prologue pre-season test the weekend prior to the race marked 'Sebring competition', and remained unchanged throughout even in the face of the evidence from the test and free practice to suggest that some kind of revision was required. Whether or not it was possible isn't clear because the document governing the BoP isn't in the public domain.

Buemi reckoned he knew early doors that Toyota's unbeaten sequence of victories stretching through last season and back

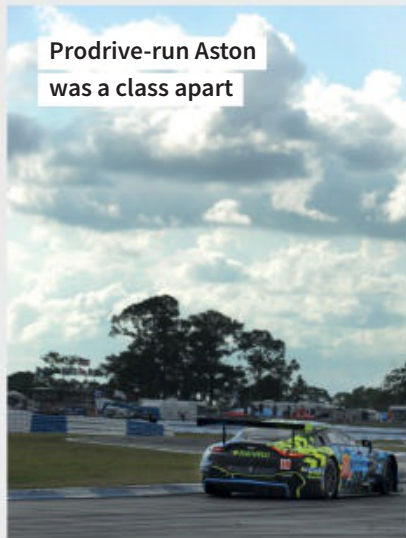
into the LMP1 era to Spa in August 2020 would come to an end. "We knew after five laps of the prologue that we weren't going to be competitive," said Buemi. "That's all it took to confirm what we were expecting from the data."

The Alpine simply worked better around Sebring, a bumpy circuit with multiple surface changes between asphalt and the concrete of the Second World War airfield on which the venue was built. Heavy cars don't like bumps, of course, and the Alpine tipped the scales at 952kg, which compares with the 1070kg and 1030kg minimum weights for the Toyota and Glickenhaus LMHs respectively. The car almost certainly has more downforce than its rivals too.

"Our car is more in accordance with this circuit with the bumps," said Signatech

ASTON MARTIN UNTOUCHABLE IN GTE AM

Prodrive-run Aston was a class apart



Aston Martin claimed a dominant victory in GTE Am with the Prodrive-run NorthWest AMR car of Paul Dalla Lana, David Pittard and Nicki Thiim. Their Vantage GTE was the quickest car in Am last week, but the introduction of the new biofuel threatened to undermine its chances.

Had the race run its full duration without any cautions, the winning Aston would have needed to make an extra stop. The car couldn't do a full hour on the fuel allocated to it

under the BoP at Sebring. Even after the first stoppage, this might have undone Aston's chances. Thiim hadn't met the one-hour minimum drive-time required for the pro driver, which would have forced the team to make an extra stop to put him back in the car had the race restarted.

Dalla Lana starred against his fellow bronze-rated drivers at the start, and Pittard continued the good work on his WEC debut. The car was a minute up the road from

its rivals at the first stoppage.

When the race was stopped again, its advantage stood at 45s, though the confused end meant it was credited with a winning margin of more than three minutes over the TF Sport Aston shared by Ben Keating, Marco Sorensen and Florian Latorre.

"The team gave us an amazing car this week," said Dalla Lana. "I can't really explain why we were so much quicker than everyone else."



boss Philippe Sinault. He conceded that it is a more agile car.

Toyota reckoned that the rulemakers' simulation models had been thrown out by the quirks of the Sebring track. "BoP is done with simulations, and simulations struggle to take into account circuits like Sebring with a lot of bumps," argued Toyota Gazoo Racing Europe technical director Pascal Vasselon. "The models are probably not combining accurately on a circuit like this, the effect of weight, power and downforce when the cars are very different in terms of the performance profile."

The GR010 had taken a "big hit" ahead of Sebring, Vasselon explained. The advantage that comes with deploying power through the front wheels had been all but removed. Only at the Turn 1 left-hander and the

"We knew after five laps of the prologue that we weren't going to be competitive"

Turn 17 right-hand loop was it actually being used in the corners. A bit of electrical grunt on the straight offers no advantage in the new era of sportscar racing. The maximum power allowed for hybrids is a combined figure from its internal combustion and electric powerplants.

Alpine may have had a clear upper hand last weekend, but it still had to overcome the deficit that blunted its performances last season. The ORECA design, based on its 07 LMP2 monocoque, can't accommodate >>

PORSCHE WINS GTE PRO AS CORVETTE TYRE GAMBLE THWARTED



Porsche prevailed over Chevrolet in a GTE Pro battle that was engaging rather than thrilling. Kevin Estre and Michael Christensen were classified nine seconds ahead of Nick Tandy and Tommy Milner, although the Porsche 911 RSR had led the Chevrolet Corvette C8.R by half a minute before the race was stopped by lightning for the first time.

The race would almost certainly have been much closer but for its interruptions and early curtailment. The stoppages certainly didn't play into the hands of the Corvette Racing team's tyre strategy.

Tandy got the 'Vette up to second ahead of Gianmaria Bruni's Porsche on lap 16, and then took over the lead after the first round of stops when he didn't change tyres and Christensen got two new Michelins when he took over from Estre. More to the point, the Chevy driver was just able to hang on in the lead on ageing rubber through to his handover to Milner.

The Porsches, which had qualified 1-2, each lost 15s at the second round of stops, a time penalty for not following the correct procedure at the start: they'd left too much space to the LMP2 pack ahead of them.

That time was made back at the first stoppage, and both Porsches quickly made

it past Milner, who was struggling after taking only right-side tyres in the middle of his double stint: "The red really put us on the back foot because I was on pretty old tyres by then. Our strategy kind of unravelled."

The #92 Porsche led for the remainder of the race after Estre got past Milner. The German car appeared to have the edge as the temperatures dropped in the early evening. But the balance might have switched around had the race gone to the full eight hours. Chevrolet had more fresh tyres in the bank, and might have been able to mount a comeback in the closing stages.

"We saw them doing a double without a tyre change and thought that's brave and could be a problem for us," said Porsche's Alexander Stehlig. "Their strategy could have played into their hands if it had been green flag all the way to the end."

The #91 Porsche that Bruni shared with Richard Lietz was right with the Corvette before the second red flag, but it wasn't a match for the sister car after the opening hour. Stehlig couldn't explain why.

Ferrari was nowhere at Sebring. Neither of the two AF Corse-run factory 488 GTE Evos was within a second of the pace of the winning Porsche and the Chevrolet on the way to fourth and fifth. There was a firm "no comment" from anyone you cared to ask at Ferrari as to the reasons why.

This time there was no BoP rhetoric from Ferrari. One theory over the lack of speed from the 488s was linked to the switch to a new biofuel introduced by WEC supplier TotalEnergies for this season. The fuel has a slightly lower energy content than its predecessor, although the BoP for Sebring was arrived at after running an engine from each manufacturer on the official dyno used by the series.



all the fuel allowed to it under the BoP, even with a small and so-far-undisclosed increase in capacity for the Le Mans 24 Hours last September.

That meant Lapierre and co would have needed to make at least one extra pitstop had the Sebring race run through to its eight-hour duration with little or no interruption. They were well on the way to achieving that inside the first three and a bit hours. The car was 1m15s to the good before pitting, and just after that Jose Maria Lopez put the #7 Toyota on its roof in the Bishop Bend on three and a half hours. The ensuing red meant the Alpine drivers had to do it all over again, but that's what they did.

Lopez was leading the race in the car he shared with Kamui Kobayashi and Mike Conway when he clipped the #88 Dempsey-Proton GTE Am Porsche with Julien Andlauer at the wheel on the exit of the hairpin and spun into the barriers. He misjudged the damage to the car as he headed back to the pits and, the team believed, the front splitter collapsed as he tried to negotiate the left kink. He went straight into the tyres, which sent the car into the air and onto its roof, though he was able to climb out unaided.

That resulted in the first red flag of the Sebring 1000 Miles. The second and third



were thrown because circuit rules call for an immediate halt to proceedings if lightning is reported within eight miles. The race was halted with 70 minutes left and again after two laps behind the safety car, with the result backdated to 194 laps.

The #8 Toyota was classified a lap up on the Glickenhaus, which was a minute or so behind when the lightning started. The American car was at the very least a match for the Toyota, a penalty for Briscoe after he overtook before the start/finish line at the first restart and a couple of slow stops blunting its challenge.

There is more to come, however, from the 007. The fly-by-wire brake activation on the rear axle was shelved by the team after two sessions of free practice and it is confident it will yield a significant gain. Outspoken team boss Jim Glickenhaus reckoned the team would have had a shot at second had the race gone the full duration. "We were turning some good laps there at the end," he said. "We weren't going to go quietly into the night." ❄️

 **motorsport.tv**
Relive this race at Motorsport.tv

TEENAGE SENSATION KEY TO LMP2 VICTORY

Josh Pierson turned 16 last month, yet last Friday he maintained a 100% record at the wheel of a United Autosports ORECA and followed up on his two Asian Le Mans Series victories in February with a debut victory in the WEC alongside Oliver Jarvis and Paul di Resta. An impressive triple stint from the American on the same four Goodyear tyres set the car up for the win.

Pierson took over from di Resta in the second hour and closed in

on Phil Hanson in the other United ORECA-Gibson 07 that was leading the race. He was able to shadow his team-mate and then take over the lead when Hanson stopped to hand over to Will Owen.

"When Josh was out in the car we asked him over the radio if he could do a triple and he came back and told us he was up for it," said United boss Richard Dean. "Him being able to do that really put us in a strong position. It was

impressive from such an inexperienced driver."

United could have won the race with either of its two ORECA. Filipe Albuquerque led the early going in the car he shared with Hanson and Owen, but a spin for the last-named at the restart and an early stop resulting from it lost the car time and compromised its strategy over the remainder of the race.

The other car truly in the mix last weekend was the Prema

Powerteam ORECA shared by Robert Kubica, Louis Deletraz and Lorenzo Colombo. When the reds came out in the fourth hour, it looked like they were the only combo that might take the fight to the United cars. Deletraz was in the lead when the stoppage came, but committed to a triple on the tyres and he struggled afterwards. Colombo then got bottled up behind Roberto Gonzalez in the #38 Jota ORECA and lost more time.

The Prema car ended up fourth behind the two WRT ORECA, which were beneficiaries of the first red. They were both 40s off the lead at that point, before the field bunched up at the safety car restart. Robin Frijns, Rene Rast and Sean Gelael ended up only 3.7s behind the winning United car, while the sister Realteam by WRT entry of Ferdinand Habsburg, Norman Nato and Rui Andrade completed the podium.



RESULTS

WORLD ENDURANCE CHAMPIONSHIP ROUND 1/6, SEBRING 1000 MILES (USA), 18 MARCH (194 LAPS – 725.566 MILES)

POS	DRIVERS	TEAM	CAR	CLASS	TIME
1	Matthieu Vaxiviere (FRA) Andre Negrao (BRA) Nicolas Lapierre (FRA)	Alpine (Signatech)	Alpine-Gibson A480	Hypercar	7h15m37.293s
2	Sebastien Buemi (CHE) Brendon Hartley (NZL) Ryo Hirakawa (JPN)	Toyota Gazoo Racing	Toyota GR010 HYBRID	Hypercar	+37.466s
3	Olivier Pla (FRA) Romain Dumas (FRA) Ryan Briscoe (AUS)	Glickenhause Racing	Glickenhause-Pipo 007 LMH	Hypercar	-1 lap
4	Paul di Resta (GBR) Oliver Jarvis (GBR) Josh Pierson (USA)	United Autosports	ORECA-Gibson 07	LMP2	-2 laps
5	Sean Gelael (IDN) Robin Frijns (NLD) Rene Rast (DEU)	WRT	ORECA-Gibson 07	LMP2	-2 laps
6	Rui Andrade (PRT) Ferdinand Habsburg (AUT) Norman Nato (FRA)	Realteam by WRT	ORECA-Gibson 07	LMP2	-2 laps
7	Robert Kubica (POL) Louis Deletraz (CHE) Lorenzo Colombo (ITA)	Prema ORLEN Team	ORECA-Gibson 07	LMP2	-2 laps
8	Ed Jones (ARE) Oliver Rasmussen (DNK) Jonathan Aberdein (ZAF)	Jota	ORECA-Gibson 07	LMP2	-2 laps
9	Roberto Gonzalez (MEX) Antonio Felix da Costa (PRT) Will Stevens (GBR)	Jota	ORECA-Gibson 07	LMP2	-2 laps
10	Filipe Albuquerque (PRT) Phil Hanson (GBR) Will Owen (USA)	United Autosports	ORECA-Gibson 07	LMP2	-2 laps
11	Felipe Nasr (BRA) Dane Cameron (USA) Emmanuel Collard (FRA)	Team Penske	ORECA-Gibson 07	LMP2	-2 laps
12	Nicklas Nielsen (DNK) Francois Perrodo (FRA) Alessio Rovera (ITA)	AF Corse	ORECA-Gibson 07	LMP2	-3 laps
13	Matthieu Lahaye (FRA) Jean-Baptiste Lahaye (FRA) Francois Heriau (FRA)	Ultimate	ORECA-Gibson 07	LMP2	-4 laps
14	Steven Thomas (USA) James Allen (AUS) Rene Binder (AUT)	Algarve Pro Racing	ORECA-Gibson 07	LMP2	-4 laps
15	Charles Milesi (FRA) Lilou Wadoux (FRA) Sebastien Ogier (FRA)	Richard Mille Racing (Signatech)	ORECA-Gibson 07	LMP2	-5 laps
16	Miro Konopka (SVK) Mathias Beche (CHE) Tijmen van der Helm (NLD)	ARC Bratislava	ORECA-Gibson 07	LMP2	-6 laps
17	Kevin Estre (FRA) Michael Christensen (DNK)	Porsche GT Team (Manthey)	Porsche 911 RSR	GTE Pro	-11 laps
18	Nick Tandy (GBR) Tommy Milner (USA)	Corvette Racing (Pratt & Miller)	Chevrolet Corvette C8.R	GTE Pro	-11 laps
19	Gianmaria Bruni (ITA) Richard Lietz (AUT)	Porsche GT Team (Manthey)	Porsche 911 RSR	GTE Pro	-11 laps
20	James Calado (GBR) Alessandro Pier Guidi (ITA)	AF Corse	Ferrari 488 GTE Evo	GTE Pro	-11 laps
21	Paul Dalla Lana (CAN) Nicki Thiim (DNK) David Pittard (GBR)	NorthWest AMR (Prodrive)	Aston Martin Vantage GTE	GTE Am	-14 laps
22	Antonio Fuoco (ITA) Miguel Molina (ESP)	AF Corse	Ferrari 488 GTE Evo	GTE Pro	-14 laps
23	Ben Keating (USA) Florian Latorre (FRA) Marco Sorensen (DNK)	TF Sport	Aston Martin Vantage GTE	GTE Am	-14 laps
24	Brendan Iribe (USA) Ollie Millroy (GBR) Ben Barnicoat (GBR)	Team Project 1	Porsche 911 RSR	GTE Am	-14 laps
25	Christian Ried (DEU) Seb Priaulx (GBR) Harry Tincknell (GBR)	Dempsey-Proton Racing	Porsche 911 RSR	GTE Am	-14 laps
26	Sarah Bovy (BEL) Rahel Frey (CHE) Michelle Gatting (DNK)	Iron Dames (Iron Lynx)	Ferrari 488 GTE Evo	GTE Am	-15 laps
27	Tomonobu Fujii (JPN) Satoshi Hoshino (JPN) Charlie Fagg (GBR)	D'Station Racing (TF)	Aston Martin Vantage GTE	GTE Am	-15 laps
28	Simon Mann (USA) Christoph Ulrich (CHE) Toni Vilander (FIN)	AF Corse	Ferrari 488 GTE Evo	GTE Am	-16 laps
29	Claudio Schiavoni (ITA) Matteo Cressoni (ITA) Giancarlo Fisichella (ITA)	Iron Lynx	Ferrari 488 GTE Evo	GTE Am	-16 laps
30	Thomas Flohr (CHE) Francesco Castellacci (ITA) Nick Cassidy (NZL)	AF Corse	Ferrari 488 GTE Evo	GTE Am	-16 laps
31	Fabio Scherer (CHE) Jakub Smiechowski (POL) Esteban Gutierrez (MEX)	Inter Europol Competition	ORECA-Gibson 07	LMP2	174 laps-clutch
32	Fred Poordad (USA) Patrick Lindsey (USA) Julien Andlauer (FRA)	Dempsey-Proton Racing	Porsche 911 RSR	GTE Am	-25 laps
33	Nico Muller (CHE) Ryan Cullen (IRL) Mike Rockenfeller (DEU)	Vector Sport	ORECA-Gibson 07	LMP2	157 laps-handling
R	Franck Dezoteux (FRA) Pierre Ragues (FRA) Gabriel Aubry (FRA)	Spirit of Race (AF)	Ferrari 488 GTE Evo	GTE Am	122 laps-electrical
R	Kamui Kobayashi (JPN) Mike Conway (GBR) Jose Maria Lopez (ARG)	Toyota Gazoo Racing	Toyota GR010 HYBRID	Hypercar	110 laps-accident
R	Matteo Cairolì (ITA) Niki Leutwiler (CHE) Mikkel Overgaard Pedersen (DNK)	Team Project 1	Porsche 911 RSR	GTE Am	86 laps-acc damage

In each car, first-named driver started race. **Winners' average speed** 99.935mph. **Fastest lap** Vaxiviere 1m49.033s, 123.486mph.

LMP2 Stevens 1m50.836s, 121.477mph.
GTE Pro Tandy 1m57.734s, 114.360mph.
GTE Am Cairolì 1m59.194s, 112.959mph.

QUALIFYING 1 Lapierre 1m47.407s; 2 Pla 1m48.741s; 3 Nielsen 1m49.014s; 4 Hartley 1m49.217s; 5 Albuquerque 1m49.388s; 6 di Resta 1m49.510s; 7 Lopez 1m49.581s; 8 Rast 1m49.670s; 9 Habsburg 1m49.688s; 10 Kubica 1m50.057s; 11 Aberdein 1m50.178s; 12 da Costa 1m50.596s; 13 Cameron 1m50.629s; 14 Milesi 1m50.916s; 15 M Lahaye 1m50.954s; 16 Muller 1m50.955s; 17 Beche 1m51.182s; 18 Allen

1m51.332s; 19 Christensen 1m57.233s; 20 Bruni 1m57.383s; 21 Tandy 1m57.696s; 22 Keating 1m59.204s; 23 Calado 1m59.299s; 24 Fuoco 1m59.388s; 25 Dalla Lana 2m00.570s; 26 Iribe 2m00.649s; 27 Bovy 2m01.140s; 28 Hoshino 2m01.379s; 29 Ried 2m02.079s; 30 Flohr 2m02.264s; 31 Dezoteux 2m02.800s; 32 Ulrich 2m03.116s; 33 Poordad 2m03.560s; 34 Schiavoni 2m03.726s; 35 Scherer NT; 36 Leutwiler NT.
CHAMPIONSHIP Hypercar drivers 1 Negrao/Vaxiviere/Lapierre 39; 2 Hartley/Hirakawa/Buemi 27;

3 Pla/Dumas/Briscoe 23; 4 Lopez/Kobayashi/Conway 0.
Hypercar manufacturers 1 Alpine 38; 2 Toyota 27; 3 Glickenhause 23.
LMP2 drivers 1 Pierson/Jarvis/di Resta 38; 2 Rast/Frijns/Gelael 27; 3 Habsburg/Nato/Andrade 23; 4 Colombo/Deletraz/Kubica 18.
LMP2 Pro-Am drivers 1 Rovera/Nielsen/Perrodo 38; 2 Lahaye/Lahaye/Heriau 27; 3 Allen/Binder/Thomas 23; 4 Beche/van der Helm/Konopka 18.
GTE drivers 1 Estre/Christensen 39; 2 Tandy/Milner 27; 3 Bruni/Lietz 23;

4 Pier Guidi/Calado 18; 5 Pittard/Thiim/Dalla Lana 15; 6 Fuoco/Molina 12.
GTE manufacturers 1 Porsche 62; 2 Ferrari 33; 3 Chevrolet 27.
GTE Am drivers 1 Pittard/Thiim/Dalla Lana 38; 2 Keating/Latorre/Sorensen 28; 3 Barnicoat/Iribe/Millroy 23; 4 Ried/Tincknell/Priaulx 18.

NEXT REPORT
SPA 6 HOURS
12 MAY ISSUE

IMSA SEBRING 12 HOURS

Bamber's rollercoaster ride wins it for Ganassi

The Kiwi admitted to making a meal of his contribution to victory in the Sebring 12 Hours, but he produced the goods when it counted

GARY WATKINS

PHOTOGRAPHY  motorsport
IMAGES



Earl Bamber endured a rollercoaster ride on the way to victory in the 70th running of the Sebring 12 Hours aboard the Chip Ganassi Racing Cadillac he shared with Alex Lynn and Neel Jani. He went from hero to zero twice over and then back to hero one last time in the closing hour and a bit of the IMSA SportsCar Championship blue-riband last Saturday.

The #02 Cadillac DPi-V.R emerged as the car most likely to win the second round of this year's IMSA series in hours nine and 10 of the race. Yet Bamber's travails ensured it wasn't a done deal until 45 minutes from the end, and even then he faced a challenge from the JDC-Miller Caddy shared by Tristan Vautier, Richard Westbrook and Loic Duval over the closing laps. The final margin of victory was 6.5 seconds, but it could and should have been half a minute or more.

That it wasn't a clear victory for the Ganassi squad, whose pair of Daytona Prototype internationals are entered under the Cadillac Racing banner, was a result of two mistakes for which Bamber was happy to hold his hand up. "I made a meal of it to be honest," said the Kiwi. "I did some of my best driving and some of my worst driving in the space of two stints today."

The best came after Bamber took the car for a second time in the ninth hour. He was able to pull away into a lead of 33s, which was the foundation stone of Ganassi's second victory at Sebring. Lynn cemented that advantage through the double stint that followed, handing the car back to his full-season team-mate 25s to the good. A race that was devoid of safety cars for the final five hours was theirs to lose. And they almost did lose it.

Bamber climbed back in with an hour and 15 minutes left on the clock and was back in the pits inside two minutes. On his out-lap he made a misjudgement passing an LMP3 car at the Turn 3 left-hander, nerfing it into a spin and inevitably landing a penalty. He returned to the track just under five seconds in arrears of Westbrook in the JDC-Miller Caddy, but the Ganassi car still had a clear pace advantage. He was right with the leader inside six laps and made the pass into Turn 10, only to lose it again a handful of corners later when he tagged AF Corse's GT Daytona-class Ferrari at Turn 16. He spun, lost six seconds to Westbrook, and had to do it all over again.

It took Bamber exactly seven laps to get back ahead of the Brit: he made the pass out of Turn 16 with 45 minutes left when the JDC-Miller machine was baulked.

The gap between the two Caddys was a second and a half when Westbrook ducked into the pits to hand over to Vautier. Bamber came in a lap later, emerging with seven seconds in hand. The

"I did some of my best driving and some of my worst driving in the space of two stints"

gap came down to as little as 2.8s, but the race leader always looked as though he had something in hand.

The winning Cadillac had lost time in the opening hour with a drivethrough for overtaking under yellows. The car was back on terms after the first of seven safety cars, but it wasn't until after a protracted period of green-flag running following the seventh and final caution starting bang on the seven-hour mark that the #02 entry emerged as the clear favourite.

Bamber knew he had the car to win the race as early as the first time he drove it after taking over following doubles from Lynn and late stand-in Jani, who replaced Kevin Magnussen thanks to the Dane's return to Formula 1 with Haas. "After my first stints, I said to our engineer, 'Get us clean air and we can win this thing,'" he said. "We definitely had a quick car, but we were always bottled up among everyone else with all the yellows. It seemed like we ➤➤

FIRST WIN FOR CORVETTE IN NEW GT ERA



Chevrolet claimed a first victory of the new era of GT racing in IMSA. Antonio Garcia, Jordan Taylor and Nicky Catsburg prevailed in GT Daytona Pro by four seconds with the reworked version of the GTE-spec Corvette C8.R.

The Corvette Racing entry led 247 of the 323 laps completed by GTD Pro frontrunners. And if you listened to the drivers of the Lamborghini that finished second, Garcia and co had it easy after a mid-meeting change in the Balance of Performance that gave the American car an extra 20bhp courtesy of a larger-diameter engine air-restrictor.

Mirko Bortolotti, who shared the second-place TR3 Racing Huracan GT3 Evo with fellow Lamborghini factory drivers Andrea Caldarelli and Marco Mapelli, reckoned the

'Vette was in a "different class". "They were too fast for us," he said. "Second was as good as it was going to get."

The Chevrolet drivers weren't convinced that they had it easy last weekend. Catsburg pointed out that the Lambo had been able to close down on Garcia at the end. "Bortolotti went from 16 seconds down to four seconds down," said Catsburg. "Suddenly they were flying at the end of the race."

Corvette Racing had a clean race at its home from home; this was its 12th win at Sebring. But the Lambo had to fight back when Mapelli missed his pit and was penalised.

The Proton-run WeatherTech Racing Mercedes-AMG GT3 shared by Maro Engel, Jules Gounon and Cooper MacNeil ended up a lap down on the top two. It inherited the final podium spot when the Vasser Sullivan Lexus RC F GT3 shared by Ben Barnicoat, Jack Hawksworth and Aaron Telitz ran out of fuel with two laps to go. BMW would almost certainly have made it onto the podium rather than fourth with its new M4 GT3 shared by Philipp Eng, Marco Wittmann and Nick Yelloly but for the need for a couple of top-ups of gearbox oil.

Antonio Fuoco, Giorgio Sernagiotto and Roberto Lacorte took honours in the regular GTD class for pro-am line-ups aboard the AF Corse-run Cetilar Ferrari. It was the fastest car in class in the hands of Fuoco, who came back from a penalty in the eighth hour to seal the victory. He had been penalised for hitting the Turner Motorsport BMW M4 GT3 as he battled with Bill Auberlen, and less than four hours later he overhauled the American to take the win. The Turner BMW, co-driven by Robby Foley and Michael Dinan, ended up fourth after the team had to replace Auberlen near the end to avoid a drive-time infraction. That handed the Gilbert Korthoff Mercedes and the AF Corse Ferrari second and third positions respectively.

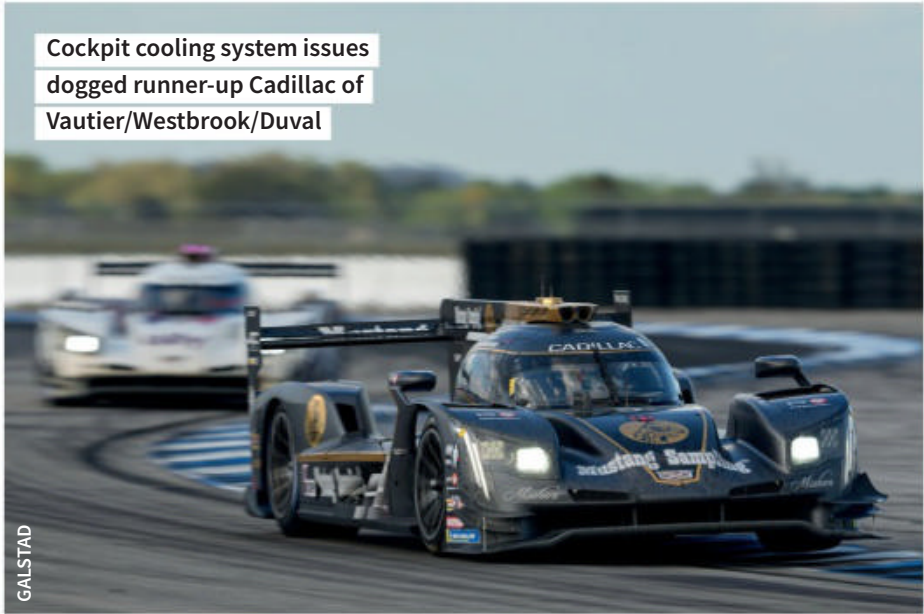


were always getting jumped in the pits.”

The clean air he was looking for came after Jani completed his second stint behind the wheel following the run of seven yellows in just over four hours. The Swiss, driving a DPi for the first time, put in the car’s fastest lap up until that point before being brought in early to hand the car back to Bamber. The team was seeking the undercut and got it. Bamber then hit the front and was gone.

Westbrook conceded that the Ganassi car was quicker, and not just at the end of the race when it counted, though a problem with the car’s cockpit cooling system didn’t help JDC-Miller’s cause. It meant they had to change driver at every stop in the latter stages. “They just seemed to have that little bit more than us,” he said. “It’s surprising to see someone quick at the beginning of the race, in the middle when it’s hot and the track is awful, and again at the end in the night.”

Westbrook was still disappointed that he didn’t make a better fist of holding Bamber back one last time. “I got screwed by a GTD going really slowly in Turn 16,” he explained. “If I’d held back, Earl would have dived inside me, so the only way was to go around the





Polesitter Bourdais led at the start, then gear-selection problems struck

“It’s surprising to see someone quick at the start, in the middle and again at the end in the night”

outside. I got pushed onto the marbles and he got a run on me. I would have liked to have given it a better shot.”

Action Express Racing claimed third position with the Caddy shared by Pipo Derani, Tristan Nunez and Mike Conway, the first-named bringing it across the line eight seconds down on Vautier. It was in the fight throughout and led more of the event’s 351 laps than any other car, although it didn’t actually sit atop the leaderboard after the seventh hour.

The team’s bid for a third Sebring victory started to unravel late in the race. Nunez had a couple of offs late on, before Derani tangled with Stoffel Vandoorne in Turn 16 early in the ninth hour. The Brazilian made an optimistic lunge on the IMSA debutant’s Meyer Shank Racing Acura ARX-05 but was fully alongside when contact was made. The Action Express car was given a new nose as a precaution but, with no yellows late in the race, it never got back on terms.

Acura was unable to follow up on its victory in the Daytona 24 Hours in January on a day when the ARX-05 didn’t have the pace of the Cadillacs. The two factory-backed cars ended up fourth and fifth, Wayne Taylor Racing heading home Daytona-winner Meyer Shank Racing.

WTR was at the front when what can only be described as a bizarre incident dropped it to the back of the lead pack early in the ninth hour. Will Stevens, making his second appearance with the team alongside full-season drivers Ricky Taylor and Filipe Albuquerque, exited the pits in an incorrect manner and was penalised with a drivethrough. The cars are required to pass through IMSA tyre supplier Michelin’s Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) beam at the end of the pitlane. Stevens >>



AUTOSPORT PLUS

**WANT MORE
THAN F1?**

**OUR JOURNALISTS COVER
ALL MAJOR SERIES**

somehow went wide of it, even though the correct route was marked with a giant illuminated arch.

WTR needed a safety-car period to get back on terms, but it never came. Taylor came through to overtake the Shank car in the closing stages, but he wasn't sure that he could have taken the fight to the winning car. "Hats off to Ganassi," he said. "They were the class of the field today. I don't know if we had enough for them."

Tom Blomqvist, who shared the Shank car with Oliver Jarvis and Vandoorne, was struggling with floor damage at the end as a result of the Belgian's clash with Derani. Taylor won out in the battle for Acura honour 13 laps from the end, though the Briton kept him honest to the flag, finishing just seven tenths behind. "There were times we were at the front, but that was more through our strategy," said Jarvis. "I think the ultimate pace just wasn't there."

The second Action Express Cadillac was up towards the sharp end for the majority of the race, but not when it counted when the clock stopped. Toyota World Endurance drivers Kamui Kobayashi and Jose Maria Lopez – who like Conway in the #31 car didn't turn their first laps in the car until the warm-up on race morning at the behest of their regular employer – and Mike Rockenfeller were out of sequence on fuel and yoyoing between the front and the back of the DPi pack when it needed an extended stop to fix braking issues.

“Hats off to Ganassi. They were the class of the field today. I don't know if we had enough for them”



Third-place Derani/Nunez/
Conway Caddy led more
laps than any other car

DOLE

The left front disc required changing, the loss of 10 minutes meaning they could finish no better than sixth.

Ganassi only had one Cadillac in the hunt last weekend after the car Sebastien Bourdais had put on pole position pitted at the end of the first lap. The Frenchman, who shared the car with Renger van der Zande and Ryan Hunter-Reay, made it into Turn 1 at the head of the field, but by the end of the lap he was dropping positions as he struggled to select gears.

Bourdais dived into the pits for a stop to investigate, and there was another unscheduled stop in hour two, shortly before a trip back to its awning in the paddock for a 50-minute gearbox change. The car completed the race in 35th position. ❄

REPEAT WINNERS IN LMP2 AND LMP3

The PR1/Mathiasen squad made it three Sebring LMP2 victories in a row as Mikkel Jensen, Ben Keating and Scott Huffaker reprised their 2021 win together. It was a dominant performance: they headed the leaderboard for the majority of the duration on the way to a one-lap victory.

Keating blitzed off into the distance at the beginning of the race and there was no stopping the trio, even if Jensen did fall ill mid-race. He had to get out of their ORECA-Gibson 07 because he was feeling dizzy, but recovered from suspected dehydration to

complete the final stints.

Life for the winning crew might have been more difficult had not the second-placed Racing Team Nederland ORECA shared by Giedo van der Garde, Dylan Murry and Frits van Eerd lost two laps during the first run of safety cars.

Another potential winner was out

“Sebastian Montoya starred in the DragonSpeed ORECA on his sportscar debut”

of the race late in the third hour. Sebastian Montoya starred in the DragonSpeed ORECA on his sportscar debut. He closed down Keating after taking over the car from Henrik Hedman and handed the car over in the lead to his father Juan Pablo. Montoya Sr was then an innocent bystander in a Turn 1 melee. He tagged both the spinning Muhlner Motorsport Duqueine LMP3 and the slowing Miller Motorsports BMW M4 GT3, to the detriment of both front corners on the DragonSpeed ORECA.

Joao Barbosa claimed a class victory in LMP3 to go with his

2015 overall win with Action Express aboard the Sean Creech Motorsport Ligier-Nissan JSP320 he shared with Malthe Jakobsen and Lance Willsey. They overcame early clutch problems that lost them time at their early stops to take a 48.6s victory over the Jrlll Racing Ligier of Garrett Grist, Ari Balogh and Dakota Dickerson.

Their task was helped by the retirements of the Ligiers fielded by 2022 IMSA P3 champion Riley Motorsports and Andretti Autosport, which went out in hours 10 and one with accident damage and engine failure respectively.



Third Sebring LMP2 win in a
row for PR1/Mathiasen squad

GALSTAD



LMP3 class victory for
Barbosa/Jakobsen/Willsey

DUMOND

RESULTS SEBRING 12 HOURS, SEBRING (USA), IMSA SPORTSCAR CHAMPIONSHIP ROUND 2/12, 19 MARCH (351 LAPS – 1312.74 MILES)

POS	DRIVERS	TEAM	CAR	CLASS	TIME	GRID
1	Alex Lynn /Earl Bamber /Neel Jani	Chip Ganassi Racing	Cadillac DPi-V.R	DPi	12h01m46.148s	4
2	Tristan Vautier /Richard Westbrook /Loic Duval	JDC-Miller Motorsports	Cadillac DPi-V.R	DPi	+6.471s	7
3	Pipo Derani /Tristan Nunez /Mike Conway	Action Express Racing	Cadillac DPi-V.R	DPi	+14.616s	2
4	Ricky Taylor /Filipe Albuquerque /Will Stevens	Wayne Taylor Racing	Acura ARX-05	DPi	+26.958s	3
5	Tom Blomqvist /Oliver Jarvis /Stoffel Vandoorne	Meyer Shank Racing	Acura ARX-05	DPi	+27.621s	6
6	Mike Rockenfeller /Kamui Kobayashi /Jose Maria Lopez	Action Express Racing	Cadillac DPi-V.R	DPi	-5 laps	5
7	Ben Keating /Mikkel Jensen /Scott Huffaker	PR1/Mathiasen Motorsports	ORECA-Gibson 07	LMP2	-6 laps	8
8	Frits van Eerd /Giedo van der Garde /Dylan Murry	Racing Team Nederland (TDS)	ORECA-Gibson 07	LMP2	-7 laps	11
9	Dwight Merriman /Kyle Tilley /Ryan Dalziel	Era Motorsport	ORECA-Gibson 07	LMP2	-7 laps	10
10	Steven Thomas /Josh Pierson /Jonathan Bomarito	PR1/Mathiasen Motorsports	ORECA-Gibson 07	LMP2	-8 laps	15
11	Jim McGuire /Guy Smith /Duncan Tappy	United Autosports	ORECA-Gibson 07	LMP2	-9 laps	14
12	Dennis Andersen /Anders Fjordbach /Fabio Scherer	High Class Racing	ORECA-Gibson 07	LMP2	-11 laps	13
13	Lance Willsey /Joao Barbosa /Malthe Jakobsen	Sean Creech Motorsport	Ligier-Nissan JSP320	LMP3	-20 laps	22
14	Ari Balogh /Garrett Grist /Dakota Dickerson	Jr III Racing	Ligier-Nissan JSP320	LMP3	-20 laps	23
15	Daniel Goldburg /Rasmus Lindh /Cameron Shields	Performance Tech Motorsports	Ligier-Nissan JSP320	LMP3	-28 laps	20
16	Antonio Garcia /Jordan Taylor /Nicky Catsburg	Corvette Racing (Pratt & Miller)	Chevrolet Corvette C8.R GTD	GTD Pro	-28 laps	32
17	Mirko Bortolotti /Marco Mapelli /Andrea Caldarelli	TR3 Racing	Lamborghini Huracan GT3 Evo	GTD Pro	-28 laps	27
18	Cooper MacNeil /Jules Gounon /Maro Engel	WeatherTech Racing (Proton)	Mercedes-AMG GT3 Evo	GTD Pro	-29 laps	46
19	Nick Yelloly /Philipp Eng /Marco Wittmann	BMW M Team RLL	BMW M4 GT3	GTD Pro	-29 laps	36
20	Matt Campbell /Mathieu Jaminet /Felipe Nasr	Pfaff Motorsports	Porsche 911 GT3-R	GTD Pro	-29 laps	34
21	Julien Andlauer /Cooper MacNeil /Alessio Picariello	WeatherTech Racing (Proton)	Porsche 911 GT3-R	GTD Pro	-29 laps	42
22	Giorgio Sernagiotto /Roberto Lacorte /Antonio Fuoco	Cetilar Racing (AF Corse)	Ferrari 488 GT3 Evo	GTD	-30 laps	31
23	Mike Skeen /Stevan McAleer /Daniel Juncadella	Gilbert Korthoff Motorsports	Mercedes-AMG GT3 Evo	GTD	-30 laps	37
24	Simon Mann /Luis Perez-Companc /Toni Vilander	AF Corse	Ferrari 488 GT3 Evo	GTD	-30 laps	38
25	Robby Foley /Bill Auberlen /Michael Dinan	Turner Motorsport	BMW M4 GT3	GTD	-30 laps	29
26	Aaron Telitz /Jack Hawksworth /Ben Barnicoat	Vasser Sullivan	Lexus RC F GT3	GTD Pro	320 laps-out of fuel	35
27	Kyle Marcelli /Ashton Harrison /Tom Long	Racers Edge Motorsports with WTR	Acura NSX GT3 Evo	GTD Pro	-31 laps	40
28	Brendan Iribe /Ollie Millroy /Jordan Pepper	Inception Racing (Optimum)	McLaren 720S GT3	GTD	-31 laps	51
29	John Potter /Andy Lally /Spencer Pumpelly	Magnus Racing	Aston Martin Vantage GT3	GTD	-32 laps	50
30	Orey Fidani /Kuno Wittmer /Lars Kern	AWA	Duqueine-Nissan M30-D08	LMP3	-32 laps	24
31	Daniel Serra /Davide Rigon /Eddie Cheever	Risi Competizione	Ferrari 488 GT3 Evo	GTD Pro	-33 laps	26
32	Frankie Montecalvo /Scott Andrews /Richard Heistand	Vasser Sullivan	Lexus RC F GT3	GTD	-33 laps	45
33	Rob Ferriol /Katherine Legge /Stefan Wilson	Team Hardpoint	Porsche 911 GT3-R	GTD	-33 laps	52
34	George Kurtz /Jon Bennett /Colin Braun	CORE Autosport	Ligier-Nissan JSP320	LMP3	-43 laps	21
35	Sebastien Bourdais /Renger van der Zande /Ryan Hunter-Reay	Chip Ganassi Racing	Cadillac DPi-V.R	DPi	-44 laps	1
36	Michael de Quesada /Daniel Morad /Maximilian Gotz	Alegra Motorsports	Mercedes-AMG GT3 Evo	GTD	-45 laps	41
37	Zacharie Robichon /Ryan Hardwick /Jan Heylen	Wright Motorsports	Porsche 911 GT3-R	GTD	-46 laps	28
38	Till Bechtolsheimer /Kyffin Simpson /Mario Farnbacher	Gradient Racing	Acura NSX GT3 Evo	GTD	-46 laps	44
39	Russell Ward /Philip Ellis /Marvin Dienst	Winward Racing	Mercedes-AMG GT3 Evo	GTD	-64 laps	53
40	Robert Megennis /Corey Lewis /Jeff Westphal	CarBahn with Peregrine Racing	Lamborghini Huracan GT3 Evo	GTD	-64 laps	47
41	Jon Miller /Patrick Gallagher /Paul Holton	Crucial Motorsports	McLaren 720S GT3	GTD	276 laps-mechanical	43
42	Max Hanratty /Todd Archer /James Vance	FastMD Racing	Duqueine-Nissan M30-D08	LMP3	-89 laps	19
43	Ian James /Roman DeAngelis /Tom Gamble	Heart of Racing Team	Aston Martin Vantage GT3	GTD	-95 laps	48
44	Madison Snow /Bryan Sellers /Erik Johansson	Paul Miller Racing	BMW M4 GT3	GTD	-95 laps	30
45	Augusto Farfus /Connor De Phillippi /John Edwards	BMW M Team RLL	BMW M4 GT3	GTD Pro	-105 laps	39
46	Gar Robinson /Felipe Fraga /Kay van Berlo	Riley Motorsports	Ligier-Nissan JSP320	LMP3	232 laps-acc dam	16
47	Alex Riberas /Ross Gunn /Maxime Martin	Heart of Racing Team	Aston Martin Vantage GT3	GTD Pro	230 laps-braking/ABS	33
48	John Farano /Louis Deletraz /Rui Andrade	Tower Motorsport	ORECA-Gibson 07	LMP2	220 laps-damage	12
49	Anthony Mantella /Mark Kvamme /Matthew Bell	Forty7 Motorsports	Duqueine-Nissan M30-D08	LMP3	204 laps-steering	25
50	Harry Gottsacker /Alec Udell /Ugo de Wilde	Muhlnet Motorsport	Duqueine-Nissan M30-D08	LMP3	128 laps-accident	18
51	Don Yount /Jaden Conwright /Mateo Llarena	NTE Sport	Lamborghini Huracan GT3 Evo	GTD	105 laps-clutch	49
52	Henrik Hedman /Juan Pablo Montoya /Sebastian Montoya	Dragonspeed USA	ORECA-Gibson 07	LMP2	83 laps-accident	9
53	Jarett Andretti /Josh Burdon /Gabby Chaves	Andretti Autosport	Ligier-Nissan JSP320	LMP3	1 lap-engine	17

In each car, first-named driver started race.

Winners' average speed 109.126mph.

Fastest lap Conway 1m47.018s,

125.810mph. **LMP2** van der Garde

1m48.311s, 124.308mph. **LMP3** Jakobsen

1m57.347s, 114.736mph. **GTD Pro** Gounon

2m01.299s, 110.998mph. **GTD** Fuoco

2m01.213s, 111.076mph.

POINTS DPi 1 Duval/Westbrook/Vautier

676; 2 Albuquerque/R Taylor/Stevens 665;

3 Jarvis/Blomqvist 663; 4 Lynn/Bamber

653; 5 Conway/Derani/Nunez 636;

6 Lopez/Kobayashi/Rockenfeller 566.

LMP2 1 Keating/Jensen/Huffaker 385;

2 Murry/Eerd/van der Garde 348;

3 Merriman/Tilley/Dalziel 330;

4 Bomarito/Pierson/Thomas 303.

LMP3 1 Barbosa/Willsey/Jakobsen 374; 2

Balogh/Dickerson/Grist 343;

3 Shields/Goldburg/Lindh 326;

4 Wittmer/Kern/Fidani 302.

GTD Pro 1 Nasr/Jaminet/Campbell 668;

2 Garcia/J Taylor/Catsburg 655; 3 Serra/

Rigon 595; 4 Caldarelli/Mapelli/Bortolotti

577; 5 Barnicoat/Hawksworth 571;

6 Gounon/Engel 542.

GTD 1 Skeen/McAleer 672; 2 Perez-

Companc/Mann/Vilander 619;

3 Heylen/Hardwick/Robichon 615;

4 Lally/Potter/Pumpelly 609.

NEXT REPORT

LONG BEACH
14 APRIL ISSUE



This is what a
200mph-plus
0.0669s winning
margin looks like

INDYCAR TEXAS

Newgarden nabs it at the last gasp

The two-time champ had resigned himself to letting Scott McLaughlin make it two in a row in 2022. Then he changed his mind and went for it

DAVID MALSHER-LOPEZ

PHOTOGRAPHY  motorsport
IMAGES

In 2021, it took until the 10th race for Team Penske to score its first win of the season. Two races into 2022, and The Captain's armada has yet to be beaten. And this latest victory, scored by 2017 and 2019 champion Josef Newgarden, was achieved in dramatic style, by passing his St Petersburg-winning team-mate Scott McLaughlin on the last turn of the final lap to win by 0.0669 seconds.

As Newgarden said, had his attempt on the high line failed, had his car slithered sideways into the wall, Penske was still going to triumph. And that was important, because this was Team Penske's 600th

victory across all disciplines.

As the defeated McLaughlin admitted, he was just a tad too tentative, but in fact he was being a touch too hard on himself. Yes, he could have gone two-wide to overtake the backmarker ahead and used up the two lanes, thereby leaving Newgarden short of options to make the winning pass, but by then his Chevrolet-powered car, which had led 186 of the 248 laps, was trying to push up the track in Turns 3 and 4. If you have an understeering car, then to start the long sweeper already on the less grippy outside lane is flirting with fate.

No, McLaughlin did everything right in a compromised situation, took the safer

and shorter line, and just discovered, as so many of his rivals have done over the past five years, that Newgarden is a fantastic opportunist. "At the end I was like, 'Scott is going to be hard to beat with traffic. He's been strong this whole time,'" explained Newgarden. "He was strong last year, strong at the test. I thought if we just had clear running, we would have a great fight. We probably would have been dicing back and forth the entire time..."

"I literally conceded with two laps to go, 'It's just not going to happen'. I literally almost lost it off T4 pushing hard to get close. He did a good job, he was in position... But that mindset changed



as soon as I got to corner 3! The traffic just presented a great opportunity to really... get after it, try to do something to win this race.

"I went high side. 'If I hit the fence, I hit the fence. Scott is still the winner, it will be a great day for the team.' I was so pumped. I've never been so excited. I got on the radio like in the middle of Turns 3-4, I was like, 'No way!'

Newgarden would go on to describe his 21st as his "coolest win" – and it's not hard to see why. But it was hard not to also feel sorry for McLaughlin, who had stated his intention almost from the very start of the race. Felix Rosenqvist had driven his Arrow McLaren SP car to his second IndyCar pole position, his first on an oval, but fellow front-row starter McLaughlin hadn't let him even lead the opening lap before sweeping past and moving to the front of the field. Behind this pair, Dale Coyne Racing's Takuma Sato, who had qualified third, had briefly lost out to his friend Will Power in another Penske car, and the Meyer Shank Racing machine of Helio Castroneves, but soon the Japanese veteran was back up to third, and Colton Herta (Andretti Autosport) had also jumped Power and Castroneves.

"I went high side. 'If I hit the fence, I hit the fence. Scott's still the winner, it'll be a great day for the team'"

Herta's team-mate Alexander Rossi had jumped the start from 12th and was in the process of obeying Race Control to give back his falsely gained spots when his car started losing power, and he brought out the first of what would be four caution periods as he sauntered down the back straight in the slowdown lane. None of the frontrunners were going to pit this early to go off strategy, so the order in the top half barely changed on the restart, the notable exception being Marcus Ericsson demoting Newgarden to ninth, and joining his Chip Ganassi Racing team-mate Scott Dixon in the pursuit of Power and Castroneves.

Also on the move was the second Arrow McLaren SP car of Pato O'Ward, who passed Newgarden and Ericsson, and remarkable AJ Foyt Racing rookie Kyle Kirkwood, who had stopped under that early caution and stormed his way onto O'Ward's tail.

Now Newgarden was down in 10th, but he was one of the early pitters at the first round of stops, and those extra laps on fresh rubber paid dividends. By the time everyone had been in, McLaughlin led by a dozen seconds, while Newgarden had vaulted up to second, chased by fellow early stopper O'Ward and Rosenqvist.

Sato had run long in his first stint and thereby briefly led but, when pitting, he found rookie team-mate David Malukas in his path, last year's Indy Lights runner-up having stalled as he left his pitbox. The subsequent delay dropped Sato out of contention and, as he tried to claw his way back up the field, his left-front tyre made contact with the right-rear of another rookie, Devlin DeFrancesco. The very »

THE FINE ART OF SURFACING



The PJ1 TrackBite compound that was applied to Texas Motor Speedway in the fall of 2019, to aid passing opportunities for NASCAR cars on Goodyear rubber, has hurt the racing at the 1.5-mile oval ever since. The Firestones used by IndyCar have been incompatible with the surface, and drivers have compared turning into Turn 1 on the wide line as akin to hitting black ice.

Recently, TMS officials have covered these patches with a resin in the hope of improving the show once more, but Will Power was convinced that forcing drivers to use the second lane in practice would open it up to allow more passing. IndyCar agreed, and so scheduled a 30-minute session after qualifying, in which drivers could apply Firestone rubber to the higher groove. Only seven took up the invite – Power (below), Ed Carpenter, Pato O'Ward, Felix Rosenqvist, Graham Rahal, Takuma Sato and Helio Castroneves.

How much difference their efforts made remains open to question. Most drivers felt that yes, the septet did clear dust from, and add rubber to, the higher line, but it remained slower than the inside line because those in the second lane needed to back off the throttle sporadically to make it through, where those down low could just get hard on the power, at least while on fresh rubber.

It was probably the newly applied resin, therefore, that opened up the second lane and helped foster the intense racing witnessed last weekend, which should have reminded everyone how vital it is to retain TMS on the schedule.



slight impact sent the two-time Indy 500 winner into the wall, bringing out the second caution on lap 98.

Now all the leading contenders pitted again, and this is when Arrow McLaren SP's hopes turned to ashes. Rosenqvist, who had passed team-mate O'Ward for third in the previous stint, slid partly through his pitbox and resumed in 16th, while the Mexican came in slightly crab-wise and struck his left-front tyre changer, so that he emerged in 17th and would later receive a drivethrough penalty for his misdeed.

When the race resumed, Kirkwood attempted to get around DeFrancesco while running partly in the higher line and in the wake behind Graham Rahal, who was trying to (successfully) pull off the same manoeuvre on Castroneves. Kirkwood's car looped out of control and into the Turn 4 wall.

This yellow dragged on until lap 128, and at the restart things went horribly wrong in

“Johnson had looked very much in his comfort zone, and even made it up to a legitimate fifth”

the midfield. Castroneves, eager to repass Rahal for 10th, got a strong enough run to draw alongside on the outside down the back straight. Their compromised line and combined tow lured DeFrancesco into attempting a passing attempt on the inside, making the battle three-wide. Unfortunately, the rookie's Andretti Autosport car hit the transition of the flat pit-in slowdown lane and he wriggled up into Rahal, who was knocked into Castroneves. The trio's cars all struck the outside wall as a result, and



Left to right: Castroneves, Rahal and DeFrancesco try high-speed parallel parking

out came the caution for a fourth time.

This lasted for 20 laps, until finally the green flew on lap 149, with all drivers having to tiptoe on fuel to make it to the end on just one more stop. Rinus VeeKay and his Ed Carpenter Racing team appeared not to have got this memo, and over the next 10 laps the Dutchman, who was in bigger trouble than most as he had made his third stop before those around him, surged past not only Ericsson and Dixon but also the three Penske cars to lead within 10 laps. No

sooner had he hit the front than he started backpedalling to save fuel, and Power got tired of his and McLaughlin's tardiness and passed them both to lead for 20 laps.

Then Power too started backing off, the handling of the #12 Penske car not quite right due to a damaged front wing, possibly the result of running over debris from one of the shunts. As the Aussie slowed, the first man to pass him into the lead was the (briefly) charging Ericsson, and then McLaughlin.

By the time all had made their final stops, McLaughlin was out front pursued by Newgarden, while VeeKay only briefly held up Ericsson and Power before his feather-footing on the gas pedal caused him to tumble to 10th by the chequered flag.

McLaughlin had everything under control at the front, or so it appeared, the gap between the Kiwi and Newgarden concertinaing according to traffic. Then in the final couple of laps McLaughlin played it safe, Newgarden went for it, and on the final lap carried so much more momentum into Turn 3 that only a blatant block – a pretend drift up the track – from his sophomore team-mate would have stopped him.

Behind them, Ericsson was happy to collect third ahead of the stymied Power, who from mid-distance had felt his car was trying to swap ends on him whenever he was in dirty air. He just held off Dixon, who only repassed team-mate Jimmie Johnson for fifth with under four laps remaining.



Johnson was sixth in first IndyCar oval race, by far his best in the series

LEVITT



RESULTS ROUND 2/16, TEXAS MOTOR SPEEDWAY (USA), 20 MARCH (248 LAPS – 357.120 MILES)

POS	DRIVER	TEAM/CAR	TIME
1	Josef Newgarden (USA)	Team Penske / Dallara-Chevrolet	2h09m29.7270s
2	Scott McLaughlin (NZL)	Team Penske / Dallara-Chevrolet	+0.0669s
3	Marcus Ericsson (SWE)	Chip Ganassi Racing / Dallara-Honda	+1.3537s
4	Will Power (AUS)	Team Penske / Dallara-Chevrolet	+15.2230s
5	Scott Dixon (NZL)	Chip Ganassi Racing / Dallara-Honda	+15.6736s
6	Jimmie Johnson (USA)	Chip Ganassi Racing / Dallara-Honda	+18.0939s
7	Alex Palou (ESP)	Chip Ganassi Racing / Dallara-Honda	+19.1937s
8	Simon Pagenaud (FRA)	Meyer Shank Racing / Dallara-Honda	+22.4649s
9	Santino Ferrucci (USA)	Rahal Letterman Lanigan Racing / Dallara-Honda	+24.4149s
10	Rinus Van Kalmthout (NLD)	Ed Carpenter Racing / Dallara-Chevrolet	+25.4840s
11	David Malukas (USA)	Dale Coyne Racing / Dallara-Honda	+26.0503s
12	Colton Herta (USA)	Andretti Autosport / Dallara-Honda	-1 lap
13	Ed Carpenter (USA)	Ed Carpenter Racing / Dallara-Chevrolet	-1 lap
14	JR Hildebrand (USA)	AJ Foyt Enterprises / Dallara-Chevrolet	-1 lap
15	Pato O'Ward (MEX)	Arrow McLaren SP / Dallara-Chevrolet	-1 lap
16	Callum Ilott (GBR)	Juncos Hollinger Racing / Dallara-Chevrolet	-1 lap
17	Dalton Kellett (CAN)	AJ Foyt Enterprises / Dallara-Chevrolet	-2 laps
18	Conor Daly (USA)	Ed Carpenter Racing / Dallara-Chevrolet	-3 laps
19	Christian Lundgaard (DNK)	Rahal Letterman Lanigan Racing / Dallara-Honda	233 laps-damage/retired
20	Takuma Sato (JPN)	Dale Coyne Racing / Dallara-Honda	140 laps-damage/retired
21	Felix Rosenqvist (SWE)	Arrow McLaren SP / Dallara-Chevrolet	138 laps-breakage at rear
22	Graham Rahal (USA)	Rahal Letterman Lanigan Racing / Dallara-Honda	128 laps-accident
23	Helio Castroneves (BRA)	Meyer Shank Racing / Dallara-Honda	128 laps-accident
24	Devlin DeFrancesco (CAN)	Andretti Steinbrenner Autosport / Dallara-Honda	128 laps-accident
25	Kyle Kirkwood (USA)	AJ Foyt Enterprises / Dallara-Chevrolet	113 laps-accident
26	Romain Grosjean (FRA)	Andretti Autosport / Dallara-Honda	103 laps-exhaust
27	Alexander Rossi (USA)	Andretti Autosport / Dallara-Honda	11 laps-electrical
NS	Jack Harvey (GBR)	Rahal Letterman Lanigan Racing / Dallara-Honda	practice crash/injury

Winner's average speed 165.467mph. **Fastest lap** O'Ward 23.4930s, 220.661mph.

QUALIFYING 1 Rosenqvist 221.110mph; 2 McLaughlin 221.096mph; 3 Sato 221.094mph; 4 Power 221.016mph; 5 Dixon 221.011mph; 6 Castroneves 220.768mph; 7 Newgarden 220.758mph; 8 van Kalmthout 220.748mph; 9 Herta 220.602mph; 10 O'Ward 220.579mph; 11 Palou 220.571mph; 12 Rossi 220.458mph; 13 Grosjean 220.412mph; 14 Ericsson 220.364mph; 15 Pagenaud 220.338mph; 16 Daly 219.987mph; 17 DeFrancesco 219.888mph; 18 Johnson 219.865mph; 19 Malukas 219.864mph; 20 Ilott 219.462mph; 21 Carpenter 219.212mph; 22 Kellett 219.038mph; 23 Kirkwood 219.013mph; 24 Harvey 218.781mph; 25 Lundgaard 218.687mph; 26 Hildebrand 218.584mph; 27 Rahal 218.410mph.

CHAMPIONSHIP

1 McLaughlin 97; 2 Power 69; 3 Palou 67; 4 Newgarden 65; 5 Ericsson 58; 6 Dixon 55; 7 Herta 50; 8 van Kalmthout 50; 9 Pagenaud 39; 10 Grosjean 35.

NEXT REPORT

LONG BEACH
14 APRIL ISSUE



Pourchaire on top as luck deserts Vips

FIA FORMULA 2
SAKHIR (BHR)
19-20 MARCH
ROUND 1/13

Theo Pourchaire emerged from Bahrain on top of the Formula 2 points after victory in a chaotic feature race. Just like ART Grand Prix team-mate Victor Martins had already done in the FIA Formula 3 action (see p48), the Frenchman bounced back from a non-finish on Saturday with redemption on Sunday.

An oil leak sidelined Pourchaire early on in the reversed-grid race, but the following day he lined up alongside Virtuosi Racing's polesitter Jack Doohan on the front row. Both lost places at the start, with Juri Vips bursting through from third into the lead.

Pourchaire was down in fifth, but

immediately repassed Liam Lawson. After an early safety car, he took advantage of a battling Doohan and Ralph Boschung to get ahead of the Swiss for third.

Vips's Hitech Grand Prix car was 5.5 seconds in front of Doohan before he suffered a catastrophic pitstop when he pitted to exchange his hard Pirellis for softs. There were struggles at the front left, and his car was dropped off the jack, costing the Estonian 10s. One lap later Doohan stopped, but the Australian's hopes of victory were dashed when he rejoined. He made contact with Pourchaire at Turn 1, damaging his front wing and forcing him to pit again.

Pourchaire was then in a position to stake his claim for victory. The early-stopping Felipe Drugovich had moved his MP Motorsport machine into the net lead,

but Pourchaire soon cleared the Brazilian to move into second place behind Ayumu Iwasa. The Japanese went long on his opening stint with the soft tyres but, once he pulled his DAMS car into the pitlane for hard rubber, Pourchaire assumed control.

Pourchaire now had to keep enough life in his tyres to hold a gap over Carlin-run Red Bull Junior Lawson, while the charging Vips also got ahead of Drugovich for third.

Then came a late safety car. Sprint-race winner Richard Verschoor was spun around by Enzo Fittipaldi as they battled for 10th, and there was time for just one lap of racing when the green flag flew. Pourchaire kept Lawson and Vips behind him to the chequered flag. Boschung and Hitech's Marcus Armstrong – who was rapid in the early stages on the alternate soft-starting



Lawson gets the inside line in Boschung scrap

ALL PHOTOGRAPHY
motorsport
IMAGES



Verschoor was the sprint-race victor



Pourchaire had a fight in first stint with Armstrong

SUTTON

strategy – cleared Drugovich on the final restart to move up to fourth and fifth, leaving the Brazilian sixth.

Despite no fewer than three pitstops, Doohan made it back up into the points in 10th. But poor pitstops were a theme, with both Dennis Hauger (Prema Racing) and Calan Williams (Trident) having their races ended after wheels became detached during stops under the last safety car.

Carlin's Logan Sargeant was embroiled in a number of midfield battles, but cleared Roy Nissany ahead of the final safety car to claim seventh. Nissany, who finished ahead of ninth-placed Jake Hughes (who gave Van Amersfoort Racing points on its F2 debut), had a number of close calls. His driving was branded “dangerous” by Verschoor, who said the Israeli “shouldn’t have a licence”. Iwasa had fallen off on his out-lap in qualifying and started both races from the rear, but was up to seventh in an excellent drive before an overheating engine forced him out.

Verschoor's win on Saturday came after leading all the way in his Trident car. When reversed-grid poleman Drugovich made a poor getaway, front-row starter Verschoor got in front and was hardly troubled.

Campos Racing's Boschung enjoyed a long battle with the Prema Racing car of Red Bull protege Jehan Daruvala for second. Daruvala finally made it through as the race moved into its closing stages, while Boschung was also passed by Lawson for third. Drugovich was fifth, Sargeant deposed Vips from sixth, and Iwasa had his first charge from the back of the grid to claim the final point in eighth.

MEGAN WHITE

RESULTS ROUND 1/13, SAKHIR (BHR), 19-20 MARCH FEATURE RACE (31 LAPS – 104.096 MILES)

POS	DRIVER	TEAM	TIME
1	Theo Pourchaire (FRA)	ART Grand Prix	1h01m54.454s
2	Liam Lawson (NZL)	Carlin	+0.925s
3	Juri Vips (EST)	Hitech Grand Prix	+1.714s
4	Ralph Boschung (CHE)	Campos Racing	+3.863s
5	Marcus Armstrong (NZL)	Hitech Grand Prix	+4.606s
6	Felipe Drugovich (BRA)	MP Motorsport	+5.722s
7	Logan Sargeant (USA)	Carlin	+6.539s
8	Roy Nissany (ISR)	DAMS	+7.256s
9	Jake Hughes (GBR)	Van Amersfoort Racing	+8.008s
10	Jack Doohan (AUS)	Virtuosi Racing	+8.854s
11	Marino Sato (JPN)	Virtuosi Racing	+11.353s
12	Jehan Daruvala (IND)	Prema Racing	+14.361s
13	Enzo Fittipaldi (BRA)	Charouz Racing System	+15.074s
14	Cem Bolukbasi (TUR)	Charouz Racing System	+15.965s
15	Amaury Cordeel (BEL)	Van Amersfoort Racing	+22.704s
16	Ayumu Iwasa (JPN)	DAMS	+31.170s
17	Olli Caldwell (GBR)	Campos Racing	-1 lap
18	Calan Williams (AUS)	Trident	27 laps-lost wheel
19	Dennis Hauger (NOR)	Prema Racing	27 laps-lost wheel
R	Richard Verschoor (NLD)	Trident	26 laps-accident
R	Clement Novalak (FRA)	MP Motorsport	12 laps-engine
R	Frederik Vesti (DNK)	ART Grand Prix	1 lap-spun

Winner's average speed 100.887mph. **Fastest lap** Vips 1m46.845s, 113.307mph.

QUALIFYING 1 Doohan 1m40.542s; 2 Pourchaire 1m40.683s; 3 Vips 1m40.755s; 4 Sargeant 1m40.760s; 5 Boschung 1m41.000s; 6 Lawson 1m41.100s; 7 Daruvala 1m41.115s; 8 Hughes 1m41.121s; 9 Verschoor 1m41.178s; 10 Drugovich 1m41.210s; 11 Nissany 1m41.218s; 12 Williams 1m41.313s; 13 Armstrong 1m41.354s; 14 Sato 1m41.374s; 15 Hauger 1m41.509s; 16 Fittipaldi 1m41.529s; 17 Caldwell 1m41.752s; 18 Novalak 1m41.865s; 19 Vesti 1m42.083s; 20 Bolukbasi 1m42.089s; 21 Cordeel 1m42.880s; 22 Iwasa no time.

SPRINT RACE 1 (23 LAPS – 77.193 MILES)

GRID Decided by result of qualifying, with top 10 reversed.

1 Verschoor 43m34.983s; 2 Daruvala +1.853s; 3 Lawson +4.975s; 4 Boschung +6.981s; 5 Drugovich +8.801s; 6 Sargeant +9.263s; 7 Vips +13.350s; 8 Iwasa +15.749s; 9 Hauger +17.665s; 10 Doohan +21.472s; 11 Fittipaldi +22.902s; 12 Nissany +26.574s; 13 Vesti +27.490s; 14 Bolukbasi +31.921s; 15 Williams +49.959s; 16 Sato +50.640s; 17 Cordeel +52.671s; 18 Novalak +1m18.205s; 19 Caldwell 22 laps-DNF; R Hughes 14 laps-damage; R Pourchaire 6 laps-oil leak; R Armstrong 2 laps-collision/stalled.

Winner's average speed 106.270mph. **Fastest lap** Cordeel 1m43.848s, 116.577mph.

CHAMPIONSHIP 1 Pourchaire 25; 2 Lawson 24; 3 Vips 18; 4 Boschung 17; 5 Drugovich 12; 6 Verschoor 10; 7 Armstrong 10; 8 Sargeant 9; 9 Daruvala 8; 10 Nissany 4.



A very happy Frenchman now tops the F2 points

BINGHAM



Martins has taken the lead,
and Colapinto now has
Leclerc right behind him

SUTTON
motorsport
IMAGES

Martins goes from zero to hero in F3 opener

FIA FORMULA 3
SAKHIR (BHR)
19-20 MARCH
ROUND 1/9

As the highest-placed driver from 2021 staying on for this season, Alpine Academy protege Victor Martins faced big expectations heading into the FIA Formula 3 season opener in Bahrain. The Frenchman certainly met them, claiming a convincing victory in the feature race to take the lead in the standings. That was a strong bounceback from a retirement after colliding with team-mate Gregoire Saucy in Saturday's sprint race.

Martins is back this season at ART Grand Prix, the team with which he won the 2020 Formula Renault Eurocup title, after his rookie F3 campaign with MP Motorsport. He qualified third behind Franco Colapinto, who earned pole for Van Amersfoort Racing on his and the

team's FIA F3 debut, and Roman Stanek.

Colapinto had a great start to hold the lead from Stanek's Trident car and Martins. After an early safety car, Martins immediately passed Stanek, who then sustained a right-rear puncture thanks to contact from Alexander Smolyar's front wing exiting Turn 10, sending the Czech to the pits for a new tyre.

Martins' pass for the lead came on lap 15 of 23. His move on Colapinto at Turn 1 didn't quite come off, and he had to brave it out to get past the Argentinian into Turn 4. He then built enough of an advantage to ensure he was well protected from a late-race charge from Arthur Leclerc. The Ferrari junior made an astonishing charge through the field from 13th on the grid, and passed Colapinto on lap 18.

Colapinto crossed the line third, but was demoted to fifth thanks to a five-second penalty for exceeding track limits. That benefited Martins' ART team-mates Saucy

and Juan Manuel Correa, who moved up to third and fourth respectively.

Correa and Smolyar had endured a fierce battle for third on lap eight, with the American emerging in front. Isack Hadjar then got past Smolyar, only to become another to sustain a right-rear puncture as a result of contact with the Russian. Smolyar's battered car finished eighth, but two penalties for his clashes placed him way down the order.

Leclerc's team-mates Ollie Bearman and Jak Crawford ended the race in sixth and seventh, after starting from 10th and 20th respectively.

Bearman took victory on track in the sprint race, but the win was handed to Hitech GP's French Red Bull junior Hadjar after the reigning double Formula 4 champion was penalised 5s for track-limits offences.

Bearman lined up alongside Carlin-run polesitter Zak O'Sullivan on the reversed grid, and the Aston Martin Autosport BRDC Award winner held on for four laps before Bearman moved in front. Zane Maloney was the next to demote the fading O'Sullivan with a few laps to go, before the Trident-run Barbadian was passed by Hadjar. MP driver Smolyar also got past Maloney to complete the podium behind Hadjar and Bearman.

Maloney, the 2019 British F4 champion, had a disastrous feature race. As his car slowed on the opening lap, Caio Collet was forced to take avoiding action and wrecked his suspension on a kerb, before Maloney was then collected by Francesco Pizzi at Turn 8, causing the early safety car interruption.

MEGAN WHITE



Bearman leads O'Sullivan
in their sprint-race battle

SUTTON/MOTORSPORT IMAGES

Sheer poetry as Byron lords it in NASCAR

NASCAR CUP SERIES
ATLANTA (USA)
20 MARCH
ROUND 5/36

Hendrick Motorsports continued its early-season dominance as William Byron became the organisation’s third different driver to win in the NASCAR Cup Series’ first five races after Alex Bowman and Kyle Larson.

Byron held off repeated challenges for the lead in the final two laps, the last from Christopher Bell’s Joe Gibbs Racing Toyota, to win Sunday’s race at the revamped and reconfigured Atlanta Motor Speedway. As it turned out, Bell was ruled by NASCAR to have passed below the red line on the last lap, and was sent to the tail end of the lead lap as a penalty. That left Ross Chastain (TrackHouse Racing Chevy), who was originally credited with third, as the runner-up for the second consecutive week. This was despite Chastain causing a caution when he hit the wall early on, and incurring a two-lap penalty for illegal refuelling.

Sunday’s race was the first in the Cup



Byron was at liberty to do post-race donuts

KINRADE/NKP/MOTORSPORT IMAGES

series on the newly revamped Atlanta track. The circuit was re-repaved and the banking increased from 24 to 28 degrees. In addition, the track width decreased from 55 feet to 40 in the corners. The race featured 46 lead changes among 20 different drivers – both track records – and was very similar to the pack racing seen typically only at Daytona and Talladega.

“It was so different,” said 24-year-old Byron. “Honestly, the last few laps there and trying to manage the gap to Bubba [Wallace] and trying to not get too far out front. Had a

pretty rough practice [Saturday] and worked hard on it and got it handling well. It was kind of an intermediate style with a little bit of speedway into it, so a lot of fun.”

Kurt Busch took third in his 23XI Racing Toyota. Daniel Suarez factored in the battle for the lead in the early part of the third stage, but eventually finished fourth, while Corey LaJoie rebounded from a wreck to take his first career top-five finish for Spire Motorsports. Another Hendrick driver, Chase Elliott, was sixth and leads the points.

JIM UTTER

Mawson on top down under

\$5000
PHILLIP ISLAND (AUS)
19-20 MARCH
ROUND 2/6

Joey Mawson pipped James Golding to the flag in the final to set up an ultra-tight four-way lead fight for Australia’s premier single-seater crown heading into the Grand Prix support round.

Golding scored a comfortable win over ex-European-based Sydneysider Mawson in the opening heat, before Mawson claimed a strong third in the reversed-grid follow-up, with Golding fifth.

Golding’s slightly higher points tally



Mawson just beat Golding to the flag

JACK MARTIN / \$5000

from the heats put his Garry Rogers Motorsport machine on pole for the final, with Mawson’s Team BRM entry alongside. Golding made the better start, but Mawson braved it out around the outside of the Turn 1 sweeper to claim the inside line for the Southern Loop. He then held on under intense pressure, despite a severe lock-up on the final lap.

Aussie open-wheel veteran Tim Macrow won the reversed-grid heat and took fourth in the final behind Cooper Webster. Thanks to Macrow’s round win in the opener at Symmons Plains, he holds a one-point lead over Mawson heading into Albert Park, with Golding and Webster just three adrift.

Audis dominated the opening round of the GT World Challenge Australia. Chaz Mostert took over the leading R8 LMS Evo from Liam Talbot to head home the sister car of Christopher Mies. The German and Yasser Shahin then turned the tables to lead another 1-2 on Sunday.

 **motorsport.tv**
Relive this race at Motorsport.tv

WEEKEND WINNERS

- FIA FORMULA 3**
SAKHIR (BHR)
Race 1 Isack Hadjar (below)
Hitech Grand Prix
Race 2 Victor Martins
ART Grand Prix
- NASCAR CUP**
ATLANTA (USA)
William Byron
Hendrick Motorsports (Chevrolet Camaro)
- NASCAR XFINITY**
ATLANTA (USA)
Ty Gibbs
Joe Gibbs Racing (Toyota Supra)

\$5000
PHILLIP ISLAND (AUS)
Joey Mawson
Team BRM



POWERED BY
 **motorsport**
STATS
For full results visit motorsportstats.com

Oliveira splashes to victory for KTM

MOTOGP
MANDALIKA (IDN)
20 MARCH
ROUND 2/21

Between his previous podium in Germany in July of 2021 and his stunning romp to a wet-weather win in last weekend's Indonesian Grand Prix, Miguel Oliveira's scoresheet read just 20 points in 11 races. For a rider of the Portuguese's calibre, who now has the fourth-most wins of any rider on the current grid after his fourth career success last weekend, this is as surprising a stat as it is unacceptable.

KTM lost its way in 2021, a brief mid-season surge standing out in a campaign in which the marque underachieved. But general improvements to the 2022 bike, allied with a new approach to development, have allowed KTM to start the new year as the best of the field, getting two of its RC16s to one of the top two spots in the first two races, which were run in different conditions.

How KTM would have performed had the Indonesian GP been run in dry conditions is an unknown that needs answering to truly assess where it lies as a title contender, but a qualifying career-best fourth for Brad Binder and seventh for Oliveira put them in the mix.

As it happened, a thunderous downpour turned the race on its head, although things were already far from ideal. Asphalt break-up at certain sections in the extreme heat led organisers to shorten the planned race distance from 27 laps to 20 as a safety precaution. How many bikes would have

survived that also doesn't bear thinking about. Blistering problems on tyres at the pre-season Mandalika test forced Michelin to bring a stiffer tyre carcass not used since 2018. While most coped, it badly affected those on Honda and Suzuki machinery.

And on Sunday morning in the warm-up, Marc Marquez had a shocking highside crash when the rear of his Honda let go through the Turn 7 right-hander that left him with a concussion, forcing him out of the race. It's no wonder those hindered most by the tyre change were scared about making it to the finish.

But MotoGP's first race in Indonesia since 1997 got under way in soaking conditions without incident. A rapid start for Oliveira put him into second behind poleman Fabio Quartararo, and a mistake for the Yamaha rider exiting the last corner made him easy prey for the KTM on the run over the line to start lap two.

Ducati's Jack Miller briefly took the lead away from Oliveira on the second tour, but

simply had no more pace to give.

Conversely, Oliveira was flying, the KTM rider seven tenths quicker on the fifth lap, when he returned to the lead by pouncing on Miller at Turn 12.

From here, Miller faded to fourth while Oliveira put himself over four seconds clear at one stage. And the shortened distance ultimately secured Oliveira's victory.

Quartararo had slid to fifth in the early stages of the race but had good pace. The Yamaha's wet prowess has been lacking for a number of years, and Quartararo admitted that he simply didn't realise how much he could push his M1 in the conditions. When he climbed back to second with five tours remaining, he effortlessly lapped quicker than Oliveira. But time was not on his side, and the runner-up spot was all that was on offer to him, while KTM celebrated a long-awaited success for Oliveira.

Johann Zarco on the Pramac Ducati denied Miller the final step of the podium, while Suzuki salvaged fifth and sixth with



Truncated race distance assisted Oliveira in taking his fourth MotoGP win



Yamaha star Quartararo has Ducati man Miller in his sights



ALL PICS: GOLD AND GOOSE
motorsport
IMAGES



Puzzling front-end
problems consigned
Bagnaia to 15th place

Alex Rins and Joan Mir (who started 17th) from a difficult weekend.

Binder battled a broken ride device to finish eighth – “that feels like a win” – behind Yamaha’s Franco Morbidelli, while Aleix Espargaro (Aprilia) and Binder’s RNF Racing Yamaha rookie brother Darryn beat championship leader Enea Bastianini (Gresini Ducati) to 10th.

After topping the Mandalika test in February on his Honda, Pol Espargaro’s hopes of fighting for a maiden win crumbled into a dangerous ride to 12th when dirt in the vast spray from the circuit left him with “half vision” for the 20 laps.

After a dismal Qatar, Francesco Bagnaia’s Indonesian GP was another headscratcher – mystifying front-end problems meant he scored just a single point in 15th, and he survived an almighty moment on the way into Turn 1 early doors. This has left him last in the championship – a sorry state of affairs for the Ducati rider and Valentino Rossi protege pegged as a title favourite before the start of a season already proving hellish.

LEWIS DUNCAN

NEXT REPORT

ARGENTINIAN GP
7 APRIL ISSUE

RESULTS ROUND 2/21, MANDALIKA (IDN), 20 MARCH (20 LAPS – 53.450 MILES)

POS	RIDER	TEAM	TIME
1	Miguel Oliveira (PRT)	KTM	33m27.223s
2	Fabio Quartararo (FRA)	Yamaha	+2.205s
3	Johann Zarco (FRA)	Pramac Ducati	+3.158s
4	Jack Miller (AUS)	Ducati	+5.663s
5	Alex Rins (ESP)	Suzuki	+7.044s
6	Joan Mir (ESP)	Suzuki	+7.832s
7	Franco Morbidelli (ITA)	Yamaha	+21.115s
8	Brad Binder (ZAF)	KTM	+32.413s
9	Aleix Espargaro (ESP)	Aprilia	+32.586s
10	Darryn Binder (ZAF)	RNF Yamaha	+32.901s
11	Enea Bastianini (ITA)	Gresini Ducati	+33.116s
12	Pol Espargaro (ESP)	Honda	+33.599s
13	Alex Marquez (ESP)	LCR Honda	+33.735s
14	Luca Marini (ITA)	VR46 Ducati	+34.991s
15	Francesco Bagnaia (ITA)	Ducati	+35.763s
16	Maverick Vinales (ESP)	Aprilia	+37.397s
17	Raul Fernandez (ESP)	Tech3 KTM	+41.975s
18	Fabio Di Giannantonio (ITA)	Gresini Ducati	+47.915s
19	Takaaki Nakagami (JPN)	LCR Honda	+49.471s
20	Marco Bezzecchi (ITA)	VR46 Ducati	+49.473s
21	Remy Gardner (AUS)	Tech3 KTM	+55.964s
R	Jorge Martin (ESP)	Pramac Ducati	7 laps-accident
R	Andrea Dovizioso (ITA)	RNF Yamaha	6 laps-electronics
NS	Marc Marquez (ESP)	Honda	accident

WEEKEND WINNERS

MOTO2

MANDALIKA (IDN)

Somkiat Chantra (below)
Honda Team Asia (Kalex)

MOTO3

MANDALIKA (IDN)

Dennis Foggia
Leopard Racing (Honda)



Winner's average speed 95.864mph. **Fastest lap** Quartararo 1m38.749s, 97.429mph.

QUALIFYING 2 1 Quartararo 1m31.067s; 2 Martin 1m31.280s; 3 Zarco 1m31.378s; 4 B Binder 1m31.433s; 5 Bastianini 1m31.504s; 6 Bagnaia 1m31.507s; 7 Oliveira 1m31.566s; 8 Rins 1m31.582s; 9 Miller 1m31.714s; 10 A Espargaro 1m31.723s; 11 Di Giannantonio 1m31.829s; 12 Morbidelli 1m32.336s.

QUALIFYING 1 Bagnaia 1m31.219s; 2 Di Giannantonio 1m31.631s; 13 Marini 1m31.666s; 14 Bezzecchi 1m31.695s; 15 M Marquez 1m31.830s; 16 P Espargaro 1m31.831s; 17 Dovizioso 1m31.870s; 18 Mir 1m31.875s; 19 A Marquez 1m31.987s; 20 Vinales 1m32.006s; 21 Fernandez 1m32.122s; 22 Gardner 1m32.140s; 23 D Binder 1m32.299s; 24 Nakagami 1m32.330s.

RIDERS' CHAMPIONSHIP 1 Bastianini 30; 2 B Binder 28; 3 Quartararo 27; 4 Oliveira 25; 5 Zarco 24; 6 P Espargaro 20; 7 A Espargaro 20; 8 Rins 20; 9 Mir 20; 10 Morbidelli 14; 11 Miller 13; 12 M Marquez 11; 13 D Binder 6; 14 Nakagami 6; 15 Marini 5; 16 Vinales 4; 17 A Marquez 3; 18 Dovizioso 2; 19 Gardner 1; 20 Bagnaia 1; 21 Fernandez 0; 21 Di Giannantonio 0; 23 Bezzecchi 0.

MANUFACTURERS' CHAMPIONSHIP 1 KTM 45; 2 Ducati 41; 3 Yamaha 27; 4 Suzuki 21; 5 Honda 20; 6 Aprilia 20.



Underachievement of
last year forgotten by
jubilant KTM crew



The race is on!
Don't miss any of the
action this season



Enjoy our Print + Digital Bundle
Now 20% off

Get this exclusive offer here



www.autosportmedia.com/offer/ASPMAR22

Terms and conditions: Offer valid for new UK subscriptions by Direct Debit only. After your first 6 months, your subscription will continue at £11.99 a month for the print and digital bundle. Direct Debit rates are valid for one year after which they are subject to change. Should you wish to cancel your subscription it will be cancelled on expiry of the current term. You will be emailed instructions of how to gain access to your digital subscription. Savings based on the standard UK subscription price. Offer ends 31st of March 2022

**AUTOSPORT****PLUS**

SUBSCRIBE TO AUTOSPORT PLUS AND GET CLOSER TO THE ACTION



COVERAGE THAT GOES BEYOND THE TRACK

Comprehensive driver news,
team announcements and
the latest from the paddock.



NATIONAL MOTORSPORT COVERAGE

Touring Car, Rally and National
coverage from across the UK.

SMART INSIGHT, PUBLISHED DAILY

Expert opinion and technical
insight from the best team
of motorsport writers.



NO ADS, MORE PERFORMANCE

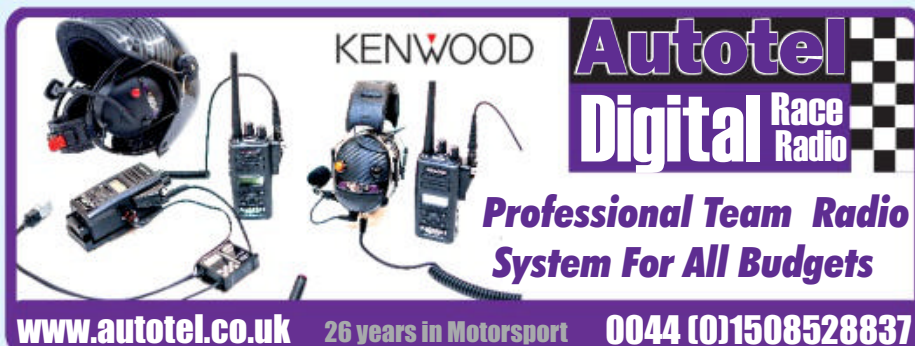
A faster, premium,
ad-free website experience.



**SAVE 25% WITH
PROMO CODE:
AS25M**

AUTOSPORT.COM/PLUS

RACE RADIO



KENWOOD
Autotel Digital Race Radio
Professional Team Radio System For All Budgets
www.autotel.co.uk 26 years in Motorsport 0044 (0)1508528837

MEMORABILIA



F1 COLLECTORS .COM #1 FOR F1 MEMORABILIA & AUTOGRAPHS
 We buy and sell F1 items
AYRTON SENNA specialists
 Call CHRIS GRINT
01763 274448
 email:- sales@f1collectors.com

INSURANCE



Insurance for Drivers and Race Teams
 Contact: 0800 138 7535
Tom_Ellis@ajg.com
Gallagher

TRAILERS & TRANSPORTERS



www.woodfordtrailers.com

RACE PARTS



Co-ordsport **PartBOX**
 Performance and Tuning Parts
Leading performance brands online
www.part-box.com

RACE PARTS



Passionate About Motorsport
JJC race and rally
www.jjcraceandrally.com



TO ADVERTISE IN AUTOSPORT
 CLASSIFIEDS PLEASE CONTACT
 OUR ADVERTISING SALES MANAGER

INSURANCE



Motorsport Insurance Specialists
 Save money on your insurance
reis.co.uk | 0115 965 1040

RACE PREPARATION



OMP **YBRACING**
[WWW.YBRACING.COM](http://www.ybracing.com)

RACE PARTS



Gearboxman.com
 COMPETITION TRANSMISSION SERVICES
 Gearboxes & Axles for Road, Race, Rally and more
 Telephone: 01582 840008 Fax: 01582 840007

RACE PARTS



ARE DRY SUMP SYSTEMS
 ARMSTRONG RACE ENGINEERING INC.
[WWW.DRYSUMP.COM](http://www.drysump.com) (916) 652-5282

TRAILERS & TRANSPORTERS



Signature RV.co.uk
RV SALES AND SERVICE

MOTORSPORT LEGAL ADVICE



Motor Sport Legal Advice
Tudor Alexander, LL.B Solicitor
07887 713512

Ben Fullick
 T: +44 (0)7884 117 237
 E: ben.fullick@motorsport.com



motorsport
JOBS

RECRUITMENT
DRIVEN BY
PASSION



MOTORSPORT JOBS

Find your dream job

Here at Autosport we've been helping people find great jobs in motorsport for over 60 years. Today we're launching a new global motorsport jobs site, where you can:

- Find the latest jobs in motorsport
- Apply for a job with just one click
- Upload your CV and let recruiters find you
- Set up job alerts - don't miss out on your dream move

Register at motorsportjobs.com today 🔍

motorsport
NETWORK

Motorsport Jobs
- A Motorsport
Network Company



motorsport
JOBS



Client Success Executive
Veloce Esports

As Client Development Executive at Veloce, you will be in charge of supporting project delivery for our esports & racing sponsorship & media partnerships. You will be dealing with some of the coolest and well known brands in Gaming and Racing to build on our client base. This role will take ownership of managing partnership deliverables for Veloce Esports, Veloce Racing and Quadrant (Lando Norris's Gaming and Lifestyle Brand), providing 5* service to all of the brands we work with.

- Project delivery & account management for our major partners, working with a variety of brands & agencies to ensure benefits and rights are delivered as per contractual agreements, including internal and external partnership kickoff calls, reporting and campaign reviews.
- Great professional and personal attitude, and the ability to present yourself with an eager to learn attitude, always keeping best-in-class client servicing at the forefront.
- Manage multiple tasks on a daily basis to ensure projects are delivered on time.
- From time to time, support on reaching out to potential new partners, ensuring a filled up early-stage pipeline, including working closely with the Partnerships team to ensure leads are generated and converted to meetings.
- Establishing new, collaborative relationships with leaders across the motorsport and Esports sectors.
- To input and maintain all partnership information in Salesforce, our CRM system and deliver high quality outputs in MS Office / Google Workspace.

To apply now visit www.motorsportjobs.com



motorsport
JOBS



Race Engineer
Sainteloc Racing

Sainteloc was founded in 2004 by Sebastien Chetail. After nearly 20 years of successful championships in Sports Cars, Rallye and Andros Trophy, Sainteloc is launching a new venture in single seater, starting with the new Tatuus F4 Gen2 but quickly wanting to climb the ladder of the single seater championships in the coming years. Sainteloc is looking for a full-time race engineer with experience reporting directly to the Chief Technical Officer.

Key responsibilities:

- Responsible for all aspects of setup and performance for one of the race cars, including data acquisition and driver interaction.
- Attendance of all races and tests.
- Preparation of reports, graphs, tables etc both trackside and at the factory, pre and post events summarizing car and driver performance.
- Setup, development, and maintenance of engineering software.
- Preparation and maintenance of engineering technical worksheets and operational procedures.
- Setting up of IT and radio system equipment on track.
- Assist in the operation of the garage and its infrastructure.
- Assumes responsibilities and duties delegated by the Chief Technical Officer or his designee.

To apply now visit www.motorsportjobs.com



motorsport
JOBS



Racewear and Parts Sales Administrator
Grand Prix Racewear

Grand Prix Racewear is one of the countrys leading retailers of Motorsport Racewear and Raceparts based at Silverstone Circuit just outside Towcester Northants.

We are looking for a mature confident individual to join our sales and web team . Your role will include Showroom and telephone sales, stock control and processing web orders.

You enjoy working as a team along with customer interaction both on the telephone and in our showroom. You enjoy working using your own initiative and have a warm friendly engaging manner with customers and other team members.

A background or keen interest in Motorsport along with customer service experience will be beneficial. Your skills would ideally include some experience of Sales, Stock, Word, Excel but full training will be offered to the right candidate.

Any hands on experience working with parts would also be an advantage as full training on extinguisher servicing and Goodridge hoses will also be given.

Your role will involve working a 5 day week including a rota weekend.

This is a full time position with huge potential to create your own role in a growing business.

To apply now visit www.motorsportjobs.com



motorsport
JOBS



Test Engineer for Electric Drive in the Field of Motorsport Formel E
AVL Software & Functions

One of our large customers in the Stuttgart region needs on-site support. You will work in a highly motivated dynamic team to improve racing performance at the highest level. You will work with the latest technologies for simulation, modeling and race drives. The scope includes all software for all vehicle classes the customer is active in.

Your responsibilities:

- Testing and high-precision measurement of inverters and electrical machines on state of the arte test benches
- Independet definition, planning, implementation, troubleshooting and analysis of above mentioned scope as well as coordination with test bench operators
- Determination of optimisation potential
- Fine-tuning and calibration
- Transfer of analyses into Simuling models for performance simulation

To apply now visit www.motorsportjobs.com



motorsport
JOBS

Want to advertise a motorsport job?

If you are recruiting in motorsport and wish to advertise with Autosport in print and digital please contact james.robinson@motorsport.com or call or call +44 (0)7717 883 990



Number 1 Mechanic HiTech GP

Hitech Grand Prix have the requirement for a qualified and experienced Number 1 Mechanic to be employed full time at its Silverstone HQ to be part of its successful FIA Formula 2 team.

This is an exciting opportunity for an individual to thrive in this challenging yet highly rewarding role.

Job description:

- Reporting to the Chief Mechanic.
- Responsible for the preparation and maintenance of the assigned car during race prep, including sub-assembly and car set-up.
- Previous relevant experience in F2, F3, FE or WEC.
- Attend all tracks tests and race events throughout the season.

Additional attributes our candidates should possess are:

- A proven ability to work to tight deadlines in a group or alone and remain calm under pressure.
- Willingness to work in a dynamic and multicultural environment.
- Self-motivation with a will to contribute to the end goal.
- Good English written and oral communication skills.
- Good computer skills.

To apply now visit www.motorsportjobs.com



Car Build Technician Historika Classic Porsche

Historika provides a friendly and relaxed working environment and a company that cares about their staff. We also care about Porsche and our finished product and attention to details in a necessity as our cars have won trophies on the racetrack and concours lawn.

We have the position of car build / workshop technician becoming available. The successful candidate will need to:

- To build, restore and rebuild road and race cars to the highest standards
- To be self motivated and be able to work with minimum supervision
- But to also be a strong team player and work well in a small team environment
- To communicate and problem solve effectively
- Have good organisational and time management skills and to be able to work to deadlines
- Have an acute attention to detail
- Car build experience is essential
- Porsche build experience not essential but preferred
- Full driving licence essential
- Event support is optional

To apply now visit www.motorsportjobs.com



Production Support Assistant/Test Technician Life Racing

Production Support Assistant – an entry level manufacturing position. The successful candidate is expected to support production tasks by assembling, building and testing electronics. Demonstrating initiative, attention to detail and good productivity whilst taking care and attention with fragile, sensitive items. A commitment to 'getting things done' and a willingness to pick up a variety of office support tasks with a positive attitude. Adaptable and flexible to the task in hand is very important.

Role outline:

- Supporting with the basics of production tasks
- Soldering connectors to boards
- Preparing ECU's ready for sale -packing in boxes with silicon sealant
- Packaging and shipping
- Understanding task requirements and completing as assigned.
- Asking questions and assisting wherever possible.
- Raising concerns and making suggestions for improvement where appropriate.
- Establishing professional relationships with staff.
- Maintaining a high degree of professionalism and diligence.

To apply now visit www.motorsportjobs.com



Composite Repair Technician/Laminator Optimum Motorsport

Optimum Motorsport are a leading International GT racing team who specialise in the servicing and operation of McLaren GT3 and GT4 cars. We are currently recruiting enthusiastic professionals to join our team. One such role we have to offer is that of a Composite Repair Technician.

Your roles and responsibilities will include:

- Produce first class work, in both repairs, and in production
- Work alongside engineers and chief mechanic to ensure deadlines are met
- Work with own initiative and manage workload effectively
- Read engineering drawings when required
- Create procedures for repair, and manufacture, that can be followed in a repeatable manner
- Have a flexible approach to working hours and availability for a large amount of international travel, including, Europe, USA and ASIA
- Manage stock levels of the department with chief mechanic
- Be responsible for the presentation of the bodywork on the car, and the spare bodywork
- Manage the stock of stickers, and ensure that all panels are showing the correct sponsor logos
- Manage the stock level of spare bodywork for each car with the chief mechanic, and ensure their safe storage and transport to the event with the Logistics manager
- Willingness to perform a role within the pitstop crew

To apply now visit www.motorsportjobs.com



Want to advertise a motorsport job?

If you are recruiting in motorsport and wish to advertise with Autosport in print and digital please contact james.robinson@motorsport.com or call or call +44 (0)7717 883 990

Oooh, I don't half
fancy a man who has Pirelli
Cinturatos on his car!

Longstone
CLASSIC
TYRES

www.longstone.com
+44(0)1302711123

They come from
Longstone tyres who have a
great range of Pirellis and Michelins
as well as being Borrani agents
don't you know.

PIRELLI
CINTURATO™



Tribute to former Renault UK motorsport boss Tim Jackson

AUTOSPORT

NATIONAL

CLUB RACING • HISTORICS • FEATURES

Dempsey delight with FF1600 double

Irishman on top after late call-up
as more clubs begin their seasons



MITCHELL BACK TO
BRITISH GT IN TOYOTA



CLASSIC TOURERS SET FOR
RECORD ENTRY AT OPENER



HOW TUCK'S CAREER IS
PROGRESSING IN **NLS**

NUR

OPEN PITLANE TRACKDAY

20. JUNE 2022

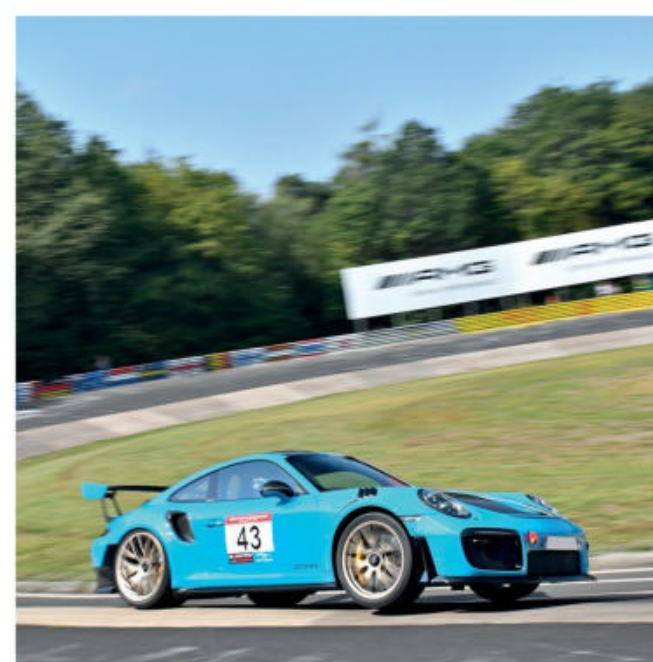
ENTRY PRICE: 995€

DRIVE WITH YOUR OWN CAR
RENT A TRACK CAR TO DRIVE

BURG



GRING



RSRNURBURG - THE NURBURGRING EXPERTS

TRACKDAYS - CAR RENTALS

DRIVING ACADEMY - TAXI LAPS

ROAD TOURS - INSTRUCTION

FIND OUT



MORE INFO!

RSRNURBURG

ANTONIUSWEG 1A, 53530 NÜRBURG, GERMANY

TEL: +49 2691 931 952

DRIVE@RSRNURBURG.COM • WWW.RSRNURBURG.COM



SUTTON / MOTORSPORT IMAGES



Formula Renault UK was one of the categories in which Jackson played a pivotal role

Tim Jackson 1953-2022

OBITUARY

Tim Jackson, who died last week aged 68, was one of the most influential figures in British motorsport for over two decades.

As Renault UK's press and PR chief, Jackson was actually the company's de facto head of motorsport. Under his watch, Formula Renault UK changed the British single-seater landscape in the 1990s, running alongside its sister series, which passed through 5 Turbo, Clio and Spider phases. In addition, the company dived into the three most prestigious UK motorsport series: the British Touring Car Championship (where Alain Menu claimed the 1997 title), the British Rally Championship (titles for Martin Rowe in 1998 and Tapio Laukkanen in 1999), and British Formula 3.

"Tim's enthusiasm drove Renault UK's whole motorsport programme," says BTCC boss and former chairman of UK motorsport's governing body Alan Gow. "Above him the decisions were made about how much they were going to spend, but without his enthusiasm I don't think they'd have agreed those programmes. He was a great driver of all of them."

Behind the scenes, Jackson was a big supporter of talent emerging from his series. One of the most notable is Jason Plato. A star in FRenault UK in 1991, he returned from a finance-enforced hiatus to dominate the inaugural Spider Cup in 1996, and famously used his prize test in the Williams Renault Laguna to badger team boss Frank Williams into giving him a BTCC break in 1997.



Jackson was an important figure in many drivers' careers

JEP

"He was a really super bloke," recalls Plato. "He put a lot of effort into convincing me that Spiders was the place to go. I was in a right pickle at that point, very close to pulling the plug. Tim brought me back from the brink. He really donned his flak jacket and helmet and tried hard to work on Frank [Williams]. We even spoke about how we could put together a deal to run a privateer car. He played a massive role in UK motorsport – Tim was square and centre in all those Renault projects, in the thick end of making it happen for many, many people."

Gow, who after Jackson had left Renault UK brought him onto the Motor Sports Association board as a non-executive director, adds: "He was a delight to work with, and a real gentleman with a fantastic sense of humour."

Jackson is survived by his wife Ann, son Timmy and daughter Helen.

MARCUS SIMMONS

IN THE HEADLINES

GB3 ON SKY SPORTS F1 TV

Hour-long highlights from each round of the GB3 Championship will feature on Sky Sports F1 this season the following weekend after the event. All three races from GB3 and the new-for-2022 GB4 series at each meeting will also be livestreamed via YouTube and Facebook, with each event featuring a pre-race build-up and post-race analysis.

BROWN MOVES TO GRAVES

Mini Challenge frontrunner Lewis Brown will swap to the expanding Graves Motorsport for this season. Brown snatched third in last year's standings with a double win at the finale for LDR Performance Tuning – results he says "reignited the hunger inside me". Meanwhile, Paul Manning will again drive for the family Mannpower Motorsport team in the Mini Challenge Trophy and will promote the Racing Carbon Neutral initiative that allows drivers and teams to offset carbon emissions.

ASSETTO'S JUNIOR LINE-UP

Assetto Motorsport has revealed its four-car line-up for Ginetta Junior this year, which will be spearheaded by Harri Reynolds – who claimed his maiden podium in the Winter Series and has since joined Motorbase Performance's young driver programme. He will be joined at Assetto by Liona Theobald and James Wyres – both having made their debuts in the Winter Series – and karting graduate Ella Lloyd.

INGRAM WINS NW STAGES

WRC2 contender Chris Ingram was the star of last Saturday's North West Stages Rally, run over nearly 60 miles of closed Lancashire roads. Ingram headed an entry featuring some of the best UK asphalt drivers to score a resounding victory in his Skoda Fabia with Craig Drew. Despite damage from clipping a hedge on stage seven (below), he won by over 50 seconds from Paul MacKinnon and Paul Beaton in their Ford Fiesta Rally2.



LAWRENCE

Mitchell's GT4 title bid with Speedworks Toyota Supra

BRITISH GT

Speedworks Motorsport has recruited 2018 GT4 champion Jack Mitchell to lead its British GT Championship attack with its Toyota GR Supra GT4, alongside Ginetta Junior graduate Tom Edgar.

Mitchell, 23, claimed the 2018 GT4 title solo in a Century Motorsport BMW M4, and was an overall race winner in the series in 2020 in the GT3 class. He switched to the British Touring Car Championship last year, but failed to score any points.

Mitchell and 17-year-old Edgar will form a Silver-Silver line-up at Speedworks, which is again entering its car under the Toyota Gazoo Racing UK banner. Mitchell has coached the Northern Irishman in Ginetta racing and said "our prior knowledge of each other's driving style and approach will stand us in good stead".

The Supra took two third places last season with Scott McKenna and John Ferguson, and Mitchell said he felt optimistic of winning another title in the car, describing it as "very confidence-inspiring" after a first test at Snetterton. "With the car we have underneath us, the team we have behind us and our close working relationship, I'm confident that Tom and I can do a very good job," he said. "There's no reason at all why



we shouldn't be right in the hunt."

Team boss Christian Dick said Mitchell's previous experience "will be hugely beneficial as we seek to put together a consistent title challenge".

"We believe Jack, Tom and the Toyota GR Supra GT4 will make for a very potent combination," he said. "Both guys are clearly up-and-coming talents with a great deal of potential, and their existing relationship

means there should be minimal time spent getting used to working together – which, as we know, is half the battle in GT racing."

• Euan Hankey, the 2020 British GT4 Pro-Am champion, will partner Mark Hopton in a third Greystone GT entry in this year's GT Cup at the wheel of a McLaren 570S GT4.

JAMES NEWBOLD

Humanitarian trip for Park to offer support for Ukrainians

UKRAINE

Historic single-seater racer Andrew Park travelled to Poland last week to deliver a trailer load of humanitarian aid for distribution in the Ukraine.

Park and his friend Mark James drove from Cumbria with an articulated truck full of goods needed by Ukrainians following the invasion by Russia.

"The goods were palletised in categories and loaded onto

a trailer ready to ship out," said Park, who is best known in historic racing as a four-time champion in Historic FF2000.

"We only took goods that had been requested by the people. I was glad to be doing it, but also very sad that we were doing this and that this is actually happening to the people of Ukraine.

"We had an address in Poland where the goods were unloaded into a collection point, and then delivered

to locations where they are needed."

A 'GoFundMe' page set up to cover their fuel and toll costs of around £3000 has already raised nearly £10,000.

"Any money we didn't need to use towards tolls or fuel will be donated to a suitable charity," said Park (right), who will shortly start the racing season in his Reynard SF81.

• British karter Jarlath Sayer



will also be raising funds for Ukrainians after coming up with the idea of holding a charity karting event in the build-up to the British Grand Prix at Rye House.

PAUL LAWRENCE

Eaton to make Revolution debut on racing return

SPORTS PROTOTYPE CUP

W Series driver Abbie Eaton will make her debut at the wheel of a Revolution A-One in the Sports Prototype Cup at Zandvoort next month.

It will be a racing return for the 30-year-old, who broke her back last October at the Circuit of The Americas during a W Series race.

"I'm really looking forward to getting back into a race car again," said Eaton, who will share the car with Jorge Calado at the event on 9-10 April. It'll be my first time on track in a proper race car since the accident, so I can't wait to see how my physiotherapy and rehabilitation is paying off. I need to learn where I am in



Broken back has kept Eaton out of racing since October last year

MOTORSPORT IMAGES

the process and what areas are good, and what areas I need to target more to be strong on track again."

Six-time Olympic cycling gold medallist Chris Hoy will also be racing a Revolution, staying on in the series after taking a victory at Silverstone last year.

IN THE HEADLINES

J-TYPE CELEBRATIONS

The MG Car Club's Triple-M Register celebrated the 90th anniversary of the J-type at Brands Hatch on Sunday, with two examples entered among a field of 12 cars. Fred Boothby's J2 – effectively a C-type replica built on a J2 chassis – placed third in both races, while Richard Frankel's J4, one of only eight built, managed eighth before withdrawing from race two. Andrew Long's N-type took two dominant victories.

NO SHORTAGE OF SHORTS

Marcus Short became the third member of his family to race a Rover 216 GTI when he contested the MG Cup races at Brands Hatch last weekend. Short's father Martin raced in the original one-make series for the model and built the car Marcus is now using, which elder brother Morgan also piloted two years ago. Despite his only previous racing experience being in the Citroen C1 24 Hours at Silverstone last year, 17-year-old Short Jr finished third, and second in class.

LIVESTREAMS CONTINUE

The Classic Sports Car Club will continue to provide a livestream of its racing this year, with all races from five meetings being made available on the club's YouTube channel and Facebook page. The coverage will begin at its Snetterton season opener on 2-3 April, before taking in the club's events at Anglesey, Castle Combe, Donington Park and Silverstone. The 750 Motor Club will also livestream its April Croft and Donington Park Easter Monday meetings with more planned.

VOLVO'S RACING RETURN

Following a four-year restoration, clutch problems stopped John Pearson's FIA Appendix K-spec Volvo P1800 (below) four laps into Saturday's Equipe Libre race at Brands Hatch. The model's best international race result was 13th in the Ferrari P4-dominated 1967 Daytona 24 Hours.



HAWKINS

Martin Davidson 1940-2022

OBITUARY

Plucky privateers were the lifeblood of international sportscar racing in the 1970s, when the ambition, romance and sheer fun of competing often overrode the practicalities.

For Martin Davidson, who has died aged 81, and his friend Jack Wheeler, the lure of challenging Sicilian roads meant they entered the Targa Florio over eight successive years until 1973.

The diminutive Davidson raced Minis initially under parental radar as 'Harry Martin'. He competed in the British Saloon Car Championship in 1964 and 1965, in an ex-Doc Shepherd one-litre Cooper S.

Structural engineer Wheeler and film



equipment hire boss Davidson's racing hub became the tuning workshop of Coburn Improvements in Netherhall Gardens, Hampstead, managed by Mini racer Mike Darrieulat.

Davidson and Wheeler first took the latter's ex-works Austin-Healey Sebring Sprite to the 44.7-mile Piccolo Madonie circuit in 1966, but non-started. Undeterred,

they travelled to Mugello two months later. The following season they achieved a remarkable 18th on the Targa (left), their best international result.

They also finished at their second attempt with the Ginetta G12-based Jerboa, powered by a 1000cc BMC engine, in 1971 and the last of six Daren Mk3s in 1973.

Debuted in the 1971 Nurburgring 500Km, the emerald green Daren, brainchild of John Green, was halted by an expensive engine failure there in the 1973 1000Km. It hibernated in Wheeler's garage, reminding them of the fun they had racing against the world's best on a shoestring, until sold in 2020.

MARCUS PYE

WILLIAMS BACK TO METRO CUP AS MG CUP CHANGES

METRO CUP

Reigning MG Cup champion Mike Williams has switched back to the Metro Cup, which he won in 2017, after a regulation change outlawed his previous chassis/engine combination.

Until last year, the MG Cup's Class C, for race-modified cars, allowed Rover Metros to use the 1.8-litre VHPD version of the K-series engine. But for 2021, Williams had to switch to the more standard VVC derivative. A further rules update for 2022 requires race-modified Metros to use the 1.4-litre powerplant.

"I could run [modified] cams and this, that and the other, but it's just stress on the engine, loads of money to try and get the power out of it," he said. "It's just spending money to not really change anything."

"I'm happy to come and fight with the guys in the Metro Cup. I want to turn up without any stress and have some fun."

Williams was third – having initially been declared the victor amid safety car confusion – and first in last weekend's Metro Cup opener at Brands Hatch.

MARK PAULSON



The 2017 Metro Cup champion made a triumphant return

HAWKINS



The combined Pre-'66 and Pre-'83 grid is set to be largest at Silverstone

JONES

Record entry for Silverstone Classic Touring Car opener

CTCRC

The Classic Touring Car Racing Club has received a record entry for its component of this weekend's British Automobile Club Racing meeting on the Silverstone International circuit.

Nearly 150 entries have been lodged across the club's eight series, which will be combined into four grids.

The first event for the new Super Tourers series is set to feature 11 cars after a number of potential entries could not be readied in time. Joining period British Touring Car stars John Cleland (Vauxhall Vectra) and Anthony Reid (Nissan Primera) will be Jason Minshaw in his 1998 title-winning Volvo S40, while Steffan Irmeler is set to bring his ex-Mike Briggs Opel Astra.

Jason Hughes will share his BTC-T MG ZS with four-time BTCC champion Colin Turkington, as his Vauxhall Vectra's engine is currently being serviced by Spiess.

The CTCRC's second new category, the Jaguar Challenge, has raised an entry of

more than 20 cars for its first round, headed by multiple Jaguar Enthusiasts' Club champion James Ramm (XJS), while last year's JEC title winner Mike Seabourne switches from his XJ40 to an ex-Gail Hill XJS.

The largest field comes from the Pre-'66 and Pre-'83 championships, where a combined 48-car entry means a reserve list is in operation for the 44-car grid.

"This is the biggest event in the club's history," said CTCRC chairman Stuart Caie, "and it's the hard work of the committee who have made this happen after five years of rebuilding the club."

"We are delighted and the new Super Tourers series has created a real buzz around this meeting. We were close to 15 Super Tourers at one point but some haven't quite made it. They'll be joined on track by our Pre-'03 championship, which features cars similar to the Super Production class of the same era so should look right aesthetically."

MARK PAULSON

ANGELO R. DRIVE

NEW F1 SEASON
MEANS -NEW CARS...
HEAVIER CARS...

...BIGGER WHEELS...
WIDER TYRES...

STRONGER CHASSIS...
RADICAL AERODYNAMICS...
LONGER NOSES...

ATTENTION!
FAST, EXPERIENCED
DRIVER AVAILABLE
CONTACT
ANGELO R. DRIVE
angelo@aoil.co.uk
...SAME INEXPERIENCED
SLOW DRIVERS SADLY!!!
BAHRAIN GP



+44 (0) 1929 551557
www.aoil.co.uk





Learning on the 'Ring

How a BRDC SuperStar has progressed from club racing to the Nordschleife and is now targeting a factory drive

BEN TUCK

Last year was my first year racing a GT3 in the NLS (Nurburgring Langstrecken-Serie) and it got off to a bit of a shaky start. The first race got snowed off, and the second race was affected by COVID-19, so I didn't get my chance to race the car properly until the third round of the year.

We went into the Nurburgring 24 Hours with a strong line-up. Unfortunately, we had a bent steering arm after contact on lap two, which meant we had to pit to repair it, so we finished a couple of laps behind. It's one of those stories that we know for sure the pace was there, it's just unfortunate what happened at the start.

After the 24 Hours was NLS 4 and by then I had a couple of races under my belt, so I qualified the car and got P3. I did a 7m53s lap time, which – at the time – was exactly one second off the record for qualifying. I'd had less than half a year driving the car, and with two races cancelled, so to go in after only three races and qualify one second off the record was great. Since then, my team-mate has gone out in the same car and beaten that record again. I'm about a second and a half behind the lap record, but in my first year in a GT3, I'm more than happy with that. Unfortunately, the rest of the year just kind of went like that. We always had the pace to win, and we got a few pole positions, but we had quite a few punctures by the end of the year and just a lot of bad luck.

Thankfully, NLS 6 was the one that we did manage to win, so that was cool. We had pole position in that race as well and during my

stint I managed to pull out a 22-second gap in the lead. It was just a little bit of an unfortunate year in terms of how things played out that were out of our control, but our pace was strong all season.

It's kind of hard to imagine that my career would progress this far. Growing up in Bedfordshire, I started karting in Letchworth and then progressed to outdoor karting. After I did a couple of years of club racing in the UK, I got into British GT in 2018 and that's the first time that I started driving a BMW, in the M4 GT4. It was the first year for the M4 GT4 with full BMW support and, halfway through the season, we took the first European SRO championship win for the M4 GT4 at Snetterton. It was really cool to claim that and, since then, I've been racing BMWs, mainly in Germany in the NLS.

I'm really happy to be back with Walkenhorst Motorsport this season. I knew what my 2022 plans were back in December. It's just taken a while to announce because the team had to decide who my team-mates were going to be. I'm happy I'll be sharing the car with former BMW professional driver Jorg Muller and a young guy called Mario Von Bohlen.

Walkenhorst is a great team with amazing links with BMW. I ended up racing with them because, at the end of the 2018 season, I got invited on to the BMW Junior scholarship shootout, where they were able to pick a winner out of 20 drivers across the world to become a BMW Junior. I got through to the final-four shootout, which is a simulator shootout in Munich, at the BMW Motorsport headquarters. I didn't quite win the shootout but, because of that, I was contacted by five or six teams in Germany, and it ended up being that the one that I raced with was Walkenhorst, and I've been with them ever since.

My aim for this year is to focus on myself and making sure that, every time I drive the car, I'm at the front. I need to make sure that I do the best in qualifying, and I do the best in the race compared to my team-mates and to ensure that I stand out. My aim is to get a factory drive, so I need to maximise every opportunity in the car to get spotted by someone. We'll also have the new M4 GT3, so I'm mindful that we as a team must get on top of that and learn how to extract the most from the new car, but that also allows me to demonstrate my abilities to learn and adapt to new surroundings.

I'm honoured to be invited back for another year on the BRDC SuperStars programme. I really feel I got the full benefit from it last year and working with Andy Meyrick and the team was really helpful. It's designed to help young drivers become professionals, so we have the same focus. Competing in the Le Mans 24 Hours is my objective, but I don't really mind where or what I ended up driving. If it's GTE, LMP, Formula E, touring cars or anything, just as long as it's a factory drive. That's all I care about, making sure that I'm in the best position to get noticed by the manufacturers. 🏁

“We'll have the new M4 GT3 so that allows me to demonstrate my abilities to learn and adapt”





Reigning Northern Ireland champion Dempsey was a double winner in National FF1600

Dempsey's late FF1600 call-up leads to early season success

SILVERSTONE
BRSCC
19-20 MARCH

Jordan Dempsey was straight into top form in the National Formula Ford 1600 Championship after an unexpected call from Kevin Mills created the opportunity to secure a full-season drive with the team.

Just a fortnight before, the reigning Northern Ireland champion and 2019 Walter Hayes Trophy winner had been expecting to watch most of this year's action from the sidelines. Instead, here he was on Silverstone's International circuit, straight to the top of the timing sheets,

and determined to make the season count.

"Two weeks ago, I didn't even think I'd be racing so I'm over the moon to be back," said Dempsey, who added he is eyeing a move into GT racing in the future. "I love Formula Ford, it's probably the best class of single-seater racing anywhere in the world. It's close, it's fast and you have to be at your absolute best to make each lap count."

Dempsey did just that as he started both of the weekend's races strongly from pole in his Spectrum, gaining immediate command of his cold ACB10 tyres that allowed him to push seemingly out of the reach of the chasing pack of fast-paced returnees and newcomers. Behind, battles raged as Rory

Smith, Tom Mills (making a one-off appearance before heading to GB4), Colin Queen and Lucas Romanek traded places for the right to hunt the leader. Mills was seen by some as a tailgunner to Dempsey but, in truth, he was just as keen to take the fight to his team-mate.

Inevitably, safety car periods meant that Dempsey was never free from danger, but he managed the restarts well, pacing his progress to keep those behind busy with each other and far enough away from him.

There were podiums for Romanek (Van Diemen) and Mills (Spectrum) in race one, and Smith (Medina) and Queen (Ray) in the second contest. Another one to shine was former Locost and Classic FF2000 champion Murray Shepherd, seventh in race two on his first weekend in the series. But, more importantly, it was the perfect start to an unexpected campaign for one young man from Ireland and for all who enjoy the spirit that this ageless category delivers.

While duels in Formula Ford rely mostly on set-up and slipstreaming, the competition between the blue ovals of the Modified Ford Series pitches horsepower against agility, front-wheel drive against rear, and classics from the 1970s and 1980s against the best the noughties can muster.

Dave Matthias seemingly timed his race-one start to perfection, launching his Escort Cosworth into the lead from



Disqualification for Allen meant Harding's excursion didn't cost him a win



Hyde-Andrews-Bird was another double victor



Defending Fun Cup champions got season off to a strong start



Callum (l) and Jason Greatrex took a win apiece in MX-5s on a good family outing

way back on the third row. Sadly for him, just as the end of the first lap beckoned, contact with polesitter Jack Gadd left Matthias beached.

Behind, Ashley Shelswell was putting his Sierra to good use, scything his way from the back towards the top five. But it was James Allen who looked most likely, using the power and traction of his Focus RS to bring him within striking distance of Malcolm Harding, leading in his Escort Mk2. Pressure applied, Harding ran wide through the chicane, opening the gap for Allen to make the pass and race to the finish – only to later be disqualified for a yellow flag infringement, gifting Harding the spoils.

Race two was more straightforward. Harding led from pole, always a tenth or two quicker than Shelswell, but also never letting paceman Gadd's charge from the back (having also been disqualified earlier) get any closer than fourth.

Defending Fun Cup champions, the UVio/Hofmann's Lotus crew of Scott Fitzgerald and Fabio Randaccio, finished as they meant to start (following a lowly qualifying effort). Poleman Nigel Greensall made the most of his pace to lead the way in the CCS Media car, joined by the #263 Greensall machine of Sam Smeeth.

For much of the first stint, these two seemed never more than a length apart but, as teams made their first and second

driver changes, so positions were traded, the Greensall cars slipping down the order while UVio, GCI Racing, MJ Tec, Team Olympian and PLR Racing all used consistency and pit strategies to make progress and become the top five.

As the clock counted down, the leaders' pace never faltered and, despite four hours of hot running, each single set of tyres also held firm, gripping to the extent that five of the first eight finishers all delivered their fastest laps in the final quarter.

Nearing race end, it was clear that UVio/Hofmann's Lotus wouldn't be caught, despite some out of position wheel-to-wheel dicing with the ninth-placed Kaizen Motorsport car (Riley Phillips at the wheel). But, with four others chasing the final two podium spots, it looked to be race-on, until disaster – in the form of a failed gearbox – struck MJ Tec with just over 15 minutes remaining. This left GCI safe in second and Team Olympian to hold off PLR in the race for third.

A total of 115 Mazda MX-5 entries filled three grids for eight bruising races. A worthy highlight was the second race of the MX-5 Championship for Mk1 models, where the lead pack of seven crossed the line for lap after lap with less than a second between them. Callum Greatrex won this encounter, his first in the championship, while his father Jason topped the Masters' class before going on to win the third

WEEKEND WINNERS

NATIONAL FORMULA FORD 1600

Races 1 & 2 Jordan Dempsey (Spectrum 011)

MODIFIED FORD SERIES

Races 1 & 2 Malcolm Harding (Escort Mk2)

FUN CUP ENDURANCE

UVio/Hofmann's Lotus
(Scott Fitzgerald/Fabio Randaccio)

MAZDA MX-5 CHAMPIONSHIP

Race 1 Fraser Fenwick

Race 2 Callum Greatrex

Race 3 Jason Greatrex

MAZDA MX-5 SUPERCUP

Races 1, 2 & 3 Aidan Hills

SUPER SALOONS & SOUTHERN TIN TOPS

Races 1 & 2 Charles Hyde-Andrews-Bird
(BMW M3 E92 GT4)

INTERMARQUE SILHOUETTES

Race 1 Daniel Smith (Mercedes SLK)

Race 2 Steve Burrows (Vauxhall Tigra, below)

MAZDA MX-5 CLUBMAN

Races 1 & 2 Ali Bray



For full results visit: tsl-timing.com

encounter outright. Fraser Fenwick triumphed in the opener.

Then there was Aidan Hills' emphatic MX-5 Supercup treble in his hire Mk3 car, a feat he might not be able to repeat as he was keenly touting for future customers before both he and the engine had even cooled.

Alex Sidwell's Aussie V8 Holden Commodore Supercar endured a time-sapping battle against Rod Birley's Escort in the Super Saloons and Tin Tops opener, leaving polesitter Charles Hyde-Andrews-Bird's BMW with a clear run home. Race two could and should have reversed the places as Sidwell charged straight into the lead off the line, only to find that the Holden couldn't match the BMW through the tricky stuff and ran wide under pressure, making it two out of two for the GT4 M3.

Elsewhere, Daniel Smith (Mercedes SLK) and Steve Burrows (Vauxhall Tigra) took a win apiece from a depleted Intermarque grid.

STEVE HINDLE

Smith holds off TVRs for MGB glory



Smith (left) pulled off a thrilling pass on Atkins at Surtees to win

BRANDS HATCH
ECR/MSVR
19 MARCH

Fabled writer George Orwell never saw an MGB or a TVR Grantura Mk3, but his assertion that “all animals are equal, but some are more equal than others” could have described the British sportscars.

Both are powered by 1800cc BMC engines, but the low volume tubular-chassised TVR was homologated for competition at 600kg to the sturdy MG’s 830kg, thus the ‘Grannies’ are rarely beaten in straight historic fights.

But Tom Smith doesn’t dwell on statistics and, driving dad Doug’s MGB

Roadster, he exploited the sure-footedness of the B’s five-inch longer wheelbase, audaciously overtaking Lee Atkins’ Grantura round the outside at Surtees to win the Equipe GTS ‘A’ race at Brands Hatch. Opening the B’s 60th anniversary year, keeping Rob Cull’s Grantura and Atkins behind to the flag tasted even sweeter.

The GTS ‘B’ race had fallen to TVR pilot Simon Ashworth, breaking a three-year layoff. A swarm of Bs, headed by Peter Smith and Simon Milner, who spun away his initial lead at Surtees, led the chase.

Having driven neither the car nor the circuit previously, Alex Causer found himself soloing in Sandy Watson’s 1500cc Lotus Eleven in the Equipe Libre and Pre-’63

& ’50s races, but he won both stylishly.

Unfazed by a six-lap safety car interlude – which annulled his lead over Rick Willmott (Jaguar E-type) and Nick Matthews (whose Lotus Elan had capsized gently in the Paddock Hill gravel during qualifying) – Causer calmly beat Nick Maton/Jack Tetley (E-type) and Willmott to the Libre chequer. Rob Cull’s TVR finished fourth from the back, having shed a wheel in the morning.

Early leader Nigel Winchester (AC Cobra) kept the pressure on Causer second time out, with Joe Willmott (Austin-Healey 3000) a strong third. Sam Wilson wriggled Sir John Chisholm’s ex-Lord Angus Clydesdale Lola Mk1 through to fifth,

Winning Brands returns for Bridge and Watkins

BRANDS HATCH
MGCC
20 MARCH

After each sitting out the past two seasons, Richard Bridge and Stephen Watkins made winning returns to the MG Midget & Sprite Challenge in a pair of thrilling races at the MG Car Club’s



Williams came out on top in Ecurie in Jaguar Mk2

season opener at Brands Hatch.

Multiple champion Paul Sibley, following his own winning return at the end of last year, could count himself unlucky after twice leading until beyond half-distance. Bridge’s Austin-Healey Sprite Mk2 led the chase in the opener and, as Watkins dropped back with understeer, used traffic to his advantage to make a move for the lead. He cut under Sibley exiting Druids, albeit making side-to-side contact on the way, with Sibley’s response thwarted when he was boxed in by more traffic a lap later.

With Bridge slowed by a part-opening throttle, the rematch was a Sibley-Watkins duel, the pair cleanly exchanging the lead on multiple occasions. Watkins’s decisive move came on the inside at Druids on the penultimate lap as Sibley’s Midget increasingly battled understeer.

Sam Kirkpatrick was given a workout by Adam Jackson in the MG Trophy’s

opener. Jackson jumped the reigning champion off the line, briefly slipped to fourth on cold tyres, then returned to the front with some fine passes. Having then dropped behind Kirkpatrick when baulked by a backmarker, Jackson kept in touch and set a new lap record before a trip through the gravel at Paddock Hill Bend turned his attention to staving off Graham Ross.

Kirkpatrick, who’s unlikely to contest the full season, was untroubled in race two after lurid spins for Jackson and Patrick Booth caused chaos and meant he was the only Class A runner to take the restart from the grid.

Confusion reigned during a late caution period in the MG Metro Cup opener, when leader Mark Eales thought he was being directed into the pits, only for the rest of the pack to continue behind the safety car. Next in line for the single-lap restart, Dick Trevett was then thrown off by a collapsed

WEEKEND WINNERS

**BRANDS HATCH ECR/MSVR
EQUIPE GTS A**

Tom Smith (MGB Roadster)

EQUIPE GTS B

Simon Ashworth (TVR Grantura Mk3)

EQUIPE LIBRE

Alex Causer (Lotus Eleven Le Mans)

EQUIPE PRE-'63 & '50s

Alex Causer (Lotus Eleven Le Mans)

MG BCV8**Races 1 & 2** James Wheeler (B GT V8)**BRANDS HATCH MGCC
MIDGET & SPRITE CHALLENGE****Race 1** Richard Bridge

(Austin-Healey Sprite Mk2)

Race 2 Stephen Watkins (MG Midget)**MG TROPHY****Races 1 & 2** Sam Kirkpatrick (ZR 190)**MG METRO CUP****Race 1** Mark Eales**Race 2** Mike Williams**MG CUP****Race 1** Richard Buckley

(Rover 220 Tomcat Turbo)

Race 2 Karl Green (MG ZS 180)**ECURIE CLASSIC RACING**

Grant Williams (Jaguar Mk2)

TRIPLE-M CHALLENGE**Races 1 & 2** Andrew Long (MG N-Type)For full results visit: tsl-timing.com

Wheeler took a double
victory in the MGCC
BCV8 races at Brands

behind Roberto Giordanelli's hooded E-type. The scrap of the race was for sixth, however, as Robin Ellis (Lotus Elite) pipped David Gardner (Turner Mk2).

Debuted in 1977, the MG Car Club's BCV8 Championship showcases Britain's most successful and sustainable sportscars, of which over half a million were made until 1980. Equipe is hosting half of 2022's eight double-headers and the opening races were spectacular as competitors sought to succeed absent champion Ollie Neaves.

James Wheeler and Simon Cripps outdragged poleman Neil Fowler at the first start, but Fowler was second within a lap and harassing Wheeler inside five. Fowler dived for the kill switch when his

oil light flickered at Druids on lap 16 of 23, while Wheeler repelled the resurgent Cripps to win, as dad Jonnie aced Class C after a mighty brawl with Ben Tovey.

Minus Fowler, Cripps and Jonnie Wheeler, whose bonnet detached on the green-flag lap, the sequel was rescued by Ian Prior in his sage green coupe. Steve Wells led at the initial scramble, but Tovey reached Paddock first before Prior got ahead into Surtees. For 11 breathless laps, Prior staved off James Wheeler, who eventually skittered past into Paddock. Prior's V8 failed almost immediately, promoting Tovey to second with rival Jim Bryan homing-in.

MARCUS PYE



Bridge chases Sibley in the opening
Midget & Sprite Challenge contest

shock absorber. Returning champion Mike Williams appeared to inherit the win, having taken longer to clear polesitter Robbie Kenning's twitchy car, which eventually spat him off at McLaren. But the caution mix-up meant the result was declared two laps earlier, with Eales winning from Trevett.

Williams responded with victory in race two, run alongside the MG Cup, while Eales's race ended when he was collected after spinning while attempting to cut

under Richard Garrard at Graham Hill Bend.

MG Cup successes were shared by 2019 champion Richard Buckley and Brands debutant Karl Green, guesting in the invitational class. Buckley's Rover Tomcat fended off Green's closing MG ZS 180 to take the opener, before the pair clashed when Green dived inside at Druids in race two. Green recovered quicker from the delay and both chased down Ian Boulton's Class B MG ZR, which had nipped ahead.

The 40-minute Ecurie Classic Racing

contest was slugged out by two Jaguars competing in the Mike Hawthorn Challenge. Grant Williams's Mk2 handed the initiative to the Mk1 of Nigel Webb/John Young after waiting a lap to pit from the lead under the safety car. But Williams fought back to reclaim the advantage at McLaren with a third of the race remaining. First of the bona fide Ecurie runners was Geoff Gouriet in fourth after a spirited battle with Steve Spink's similar MGB.

MARK PAULSON

FINISHING STRAIGHT



Thrilling romp's ample appeal



VIDEO GAME REVIEW GRID LEGENDS

RRP £59.99

Available on PC, PlayStation 4, PlayStation 5, Xbox One and Xbox Series X|S

GRID Legends, the fifth entry in the racing game series by Codemasters,

has the weight of the franchise resting upon its shoulders.

Ever since the 2008 original – *Race Driver: GRID* – it could be argued that it has struggled to find a clear identity. There have been some high points, *GRID Autosport* for example, but the 2019 reboot, simply entitled *GRID*, was something of a misstep.

GRID Legends, which was released last month, begins with a slick cutscene of two racers duking it out at new fictional race venue Strada Alpina. They collide, with Seneca Racing's driver Yume Tanaka out of the race, and Ravenwest's Nathan McKane seemingly at fault. You're then thrust into the race midway through, and so begins our journey through the game.

This is the Driven to Glory story mode, and it's a new take on the *GRID* formula, where you are Driver 22 competing for the upcoming Seneca team led by Marcus Ado. This takes the form of a near-seamless mix of story and driving events, which does its best to enthrall you. The aim is to reach The Gauntlet, a knockout style event for the world's best racing teams.

While this writer enjoyed the characters and McKane's machismo, apart from the opening salvo, every hands-on moment is either a straight-up race or time trial. There's a lack of pre-determined on-track scenarios, and as a result it doesn't grab you in

the same way as Codemasters' stablemate, *F1 2021*'s Braking Point.

The career mode may seemingly take a back seat, but it's the main portion of the game. A familiar tale of starting from the bottom, rising to the top. Renault Clio Cups and Ginetta GT5s will be your staple diet for the opening hours before you progress to quicker machinery and sterner rivals, including a 1990s-era Renault Laguna touring car.

That progress, however, isn't quite as straightforward as the minimalist menu may have you believe. In order to advance, you not only have to achieve strong race results, but you must also manage car upgrades and sponsor objectives.

Earn credits, spend those credits on upgrades and then level up your car, ergo unlocking new tiers of events. Except the enhancements don't seem to have a noticeable effect in



ALL PICS: GRID LEGENDS



can be fleeting

racing and the sponsor objectives feel superfluous.

The addition of the Race Creator is more engaging, thankfully. This is where you can set up a combination of race parameters and share them online. You can let your imagination run wild, such as Suzuka backwards at night, in the snow with jump ramps and an Aston Martin Valkyrie.

Some of the new street circuits, such as Moscow in the snow or London in the rain, are sensory overloads. It's magical how *GRID Legends* can pull off such visual finesse using an aged game engine. But then at other times, it struggles to mask its origins, Okutama GP and Mount Panorama looking decidedly second-hand in comparison.

When it comes to the driving experience, there are times when this is a superb racer, since each vehicle feels unique, accessible and with a modicum of authenticity. There's a sense of purpose that was missing in previous iterations, and you can use a steering wheel peripheral in combination with a detailed interior camera for every car.

With heavily populated grids and lively AI performances, the pack is condensed at the start and it's elbows-out throughout. But slowing a car down feels like driving into a sand pit.

With a promising, yet ultimately lightweight, story and an expansive career that stumbles with its upgrade progression, *GRID Legends* gives with one hand and takes away with the other. There are a lot of brilliant ideas here, without feeling as cohesive as they could do. It's a fun romp that can deliver some edge-of-your-seat thrills and a satisfying driving experience — it's just that the appeal can be fleeting.

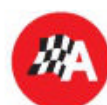
THOMAS HARRISON-LORD

For daily racing game news, visit traxion.gg

FINISHING STRAIGHT



autosport.com/podcast



F1 Bahrain GP review

The 2022 Formula 1 season is officially up and running following the opening round, with Charles Leclerc leading a Ferrari 1-2 at the Bahrain Grand Prix, while reigning champion Max Verstappen hit trouble. To discuss all the talking points, host Martyn Lee is joined by Autosport F1 reporter Luke Smith, Autosport F1 editor Matt Kew and Autosport.com editor Haydn Cobb in the latest Autosport podcast episode.

WHAT'S ON

INTERNATIONAL MOTORSPORT

Saudi Arabian GP

Formula 1 World Championship
Round 2/22

Jeddah, Saudi Arabia

27 March

TV Live Sky Sports F1,
Sun 1755

TV Highlights Sky Sports F1,
Sun 2130, Channel 4 2230

FIA Formula 2

Round 2/13

Jeddah, Saudi Arabia

26-27 March

TV Live Sky Sports F1,
Sat 1225, Sun 1450

NASCAR Cup Series

Round 6/36

Circuit of The Americas, USA

27 March

TV Live Premier Sports 2,
Sun 2100

24 Hour Series

Round 3/8

Mugello 12 Hours, Italy

26-27 March

Australian Supercars

Round 2/13

Symmons Plains, Australia

26-27 March

TV Live BT Sport 3,
Sat 0515, BT Sport ESPN,
Sun 0245, Sun 0430

NLS

Round 1/8

Nurburgring, Germany

26 March

UK MOTORSPORT

Kirkistown 500MRCI

26 March

FF1600, Fiestas, Formula Vee, Legends, Mazda MX-5s, Roadsports, Saloons/GTs, Superkarts

Silverstone BARC

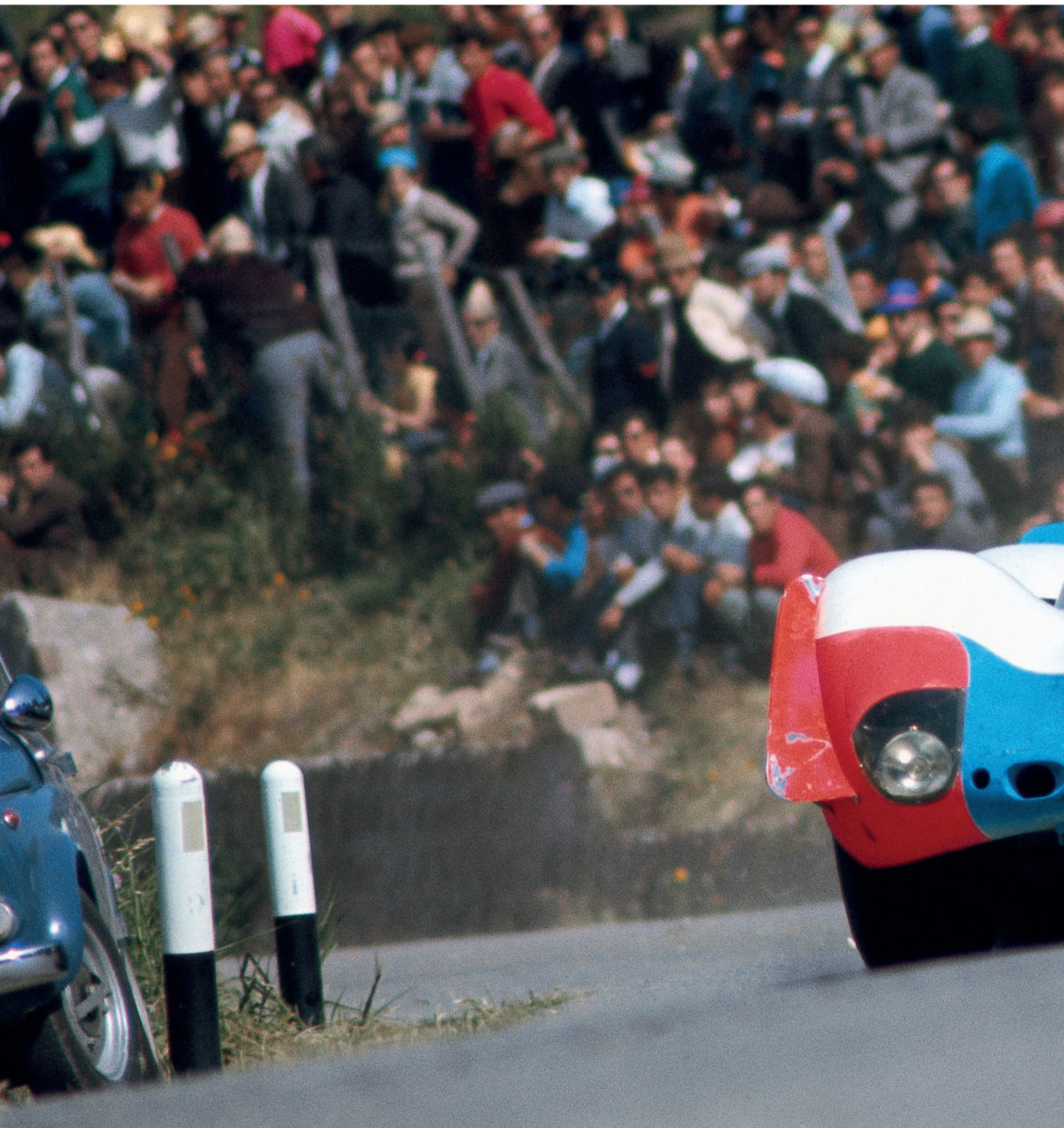
26-27 March

Caterham Graduates (Sigma 135/Sigma 150/Sigmax), CTCC (Blue Oval/Thunder, Pre-'66/Pre-'83, Pre-'93/Jaguar, Super Tourers/Pre-'03), JSCC, Kumho BMWs, Mini Miglia, Mini Se7en

YouTube Livestream

Search 'British Automobile Racing Club' on YouTube

FINISHING STRAIGHT



FROM THE ARCHIVE

Vic Elford presses on in his Porsche 908/02 as he strives to win the Targa Florio for a second successive time, on 4 May 1969. A year earlier, he'd made up 18 minutes after losing a

wheel in one of motorsport's great comeback drives. This time a broken fan belt delayed him, but there was to be no repeat fairytale. Sharing once again with Umberto Maglioli, Elford charged to make up the lost

time, nerfing Nanni Galli's Alfa Romeo off at a hairpin along the way. But 'Quick Vic' still finished nearly three minutes behind another of the factory 908s, driven by Gerhard Mitter and Udo Schutz.



For classic motorsport DVDs
head to dukevideo.com



Autosport Media UK Ltd, 1 Eton Street, Richmond, TW9 1AG
Tel +44 (0) 20 3405 8100 **Email** autosport@autosport.com
Individual email firstname.surname@autosport.com
Website www.autosport.com **Twitter** @autosport

SUBSCRIPTIONS

UK +44 (0) 344 848 8817 **Overseas** +44 (0) 1604 251451
Email help@asm.secureorder.co.uk **Back issues** 0344 8488817

EDITORIAL

Chief Editor **Kevin Turner**
 Deputy Editor **Marcus Simmons**
 Grand Prix Editor **Alex Kalinauckas**
 F1 Reporter **Luke Smith**
 F1 Editor **Matt Kew**
 Technical Editor **Jake Boxall-Legge**
 Production Editor **Peter Hodges**
 Group National Editor **Stephen Lickorish**
 Performance and Engineering Editor
James Newbold
 Deputy National Editor **Stefan Mackley**
 Art Director **Lynsey Elliott**
 Art Editor **Michael Cavalli**



Photography

Steven Tee
 Glenn Dunbar
 Sam Bloxham
 Zak Mauger
 Jakob Ebrey
 Mark Sutton

Special Contributors

Ben Anderson
 Alan Eldridge
 David Malsher-Lopez
 Jonathan Noble
 Marcus Pye
 Nigel Roebuck
 Gary Watkins
 Tim Wright

AUTOSPORT.COM

Editor **Haydn Cobb**
 International Editor **Lewis Duncan**
 News Editor (ASP) **Megan White**
 News Editor (ASP/Mcom) **Tom Howard**
 Technical Team Leader **Geoff Creighton**

CORRESPONDENTS

Argentina Tony Watson **Australia** Andrew van Leeuwen
Austria Gerhard Kuntschik **Belgium** Gordon McKay
Brazil Lito Cavalcanti **Germany** Rene de Boer
Greece Dimitris Papadopoulos **Italy** Roberto Chinchero
Japan Jiro Takahashi **New Zealand** Bernard Carpinter
Russia Gregory Golyshev **Spain** Raimon Duran **Sweden** Tege Tornvall
USA Jeremy Shaw **UK & Ireland** Stephen Brunsdon, Dom D'Angelillo,
 Rachel Harris-Gardiner, Mark Libbeter, Dan Mason, Jason Noble,
 Mark Paulson, Brian Phillips, Hal Ridge, Peter Scherer, Ian Sowman,
 Ian Titchmarsh, Steve Whitfield, Richard Young

ADVERTISING

Tel +44 (0) 20 3405 8117
 Head of Print Advertising **Ben Fullick**
 Sales Executives **Kieran Rennie, Harvey Falshaw**

RECRUITMENT

Tel +44 (0) 20 3405 8105
 Head of Motorsport Jobs **James Robinson**

ADVERTISING PRODUCTION

Production Controller **Ben Webster**

Autosport, ISSN number 0269946X, is published weekly by Autosport Media UK Ltd, 1 Eton Street, Richmond, TW9 1AG, United Kingdom. Airfreight and mailing in the USA by agent named Air Business Ltd, c/o Worldnet Shipping Inc., 156-15, 146th Avenue, 2nd Floor, Jamaica, NY 11434, USA. Periodicals postage paid at Brooklyn, NY 11256. Subscription records are maintained at Autosport Media UK Ltd, 1 Eton Street, Richmond, TW9 1AG. Air Business Ltd is acting as our mailing agent.

MANAGEMENT

President, Motorsport Network
James Allen
 Vice President of Editorial **James Dickens**
 Publishing and Facilities Director
Sunita Davies

We abide by the Editors' Code of Practice and are committed to upholding the highest standards of journalism. If you think we haven't met those standards and want to make a complaint, contact 0203 405 8100.



CIRCULATION TRADE ENQUIRIES

Seymour Distribution Ltd,
 2 East Poultry Avenue,
 London, EC1A 9PT.
Tel: +44 (0) 20 7429 4000.
 Printed by William Gibbons
 & Sons Ltd, 28 Planetary
 Road, Willenhall,
 Wolverhampton WV13 3XT.
 ISSN 0269-946X. Autosport
 is published weekly by
 Autosport Media UK Ltd,
 1 Eton Street, Richmond,
 TW9 1AG.

© 2022, AUTOSPORT MEDIA UK LTD

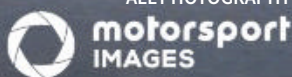
Trading as Autosport Media UK. Publishing, trade and further subscription details on www.autosport.com. While due care is taken to ensure the contents of Autosport are accurate, the publishers and printers cannot accept liability for errors and omissions. Advertisements are accepted for publication in Autosport only upon Autosport Media UK's Standard Terms of Acceptance of Advertising, which are available from the Advertising Department.

JOHN FITZPATRICK

MY FAVOURITE... TEAM-MATE

David Hobbs

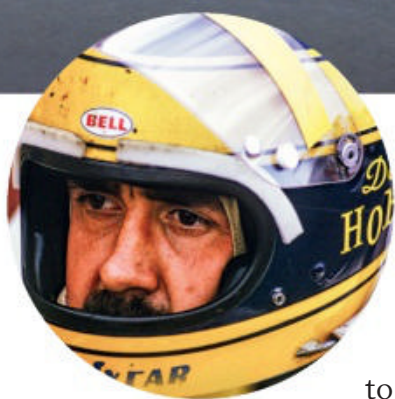
ALL PHOTOGRAPHY



John Fitzpatrick is one of the unsung heroes of tin-top and sportscar racing, with a British Touring Car title, European GT and IMSA crowns, and wins at Daytona, Sebring and Bathurst to his name, not to mention a successful racing team. So it's appropriate that he picks another underrated Briton as his best team-mate: David Hobbs.

Hobbs started six world championship grands prix, contested the Indianapolis and Daytona 500s, scored class wins at Le Mans, and took titles in Formula 5000 and Trans-Am. When Fitzpatrick set up his eponymous team in 1981, Hobbs was near the top of his list.

"I had a lot of terrific co-drivers, like Derek Bell, but the one that stands out is David," explains Fitzpatrick. "First of all, he was great company in the team, easygoing. When I decided to run my own team, I knew him – and I had it in mind to have him drive with me. The team loved him and we liked the same sort of set-up. He'd go out after I'd been in the car and wouldn't want to change a thing.



"Secondly, David was also a very fast driver. There was nothing between us and he'd done quite a lot of endurance racing, so he knew how to look after the car.

"The personal factor is more important than pure speed, and we weren't trying to outdo each other. Sometimes co-drivers can be more obsessed with being quicker than they are with finishing the race, which isn't what you need."

One of the most memorable races for the duo was the 1982 Le Mans 24 Hours. Driving one of the modified John Fitzpatrick Racing Porsche 935s, they won the IMSA GTX class and were only beaten by Porsche's new Group C wondercar, the 956.

"That stands out," says Fitzpatrick. "We finished fourth in the special Porsche 935 'Moby Dick' copy, behind the three works 956s. That was really satisfying.

"David is unsung over here. He is far better known in the States, where he's been a TV personality for years, than he is in Europe. He did a lot more over there."

KEVIN TURNER

IN NEXT WEEK'S ISSUE

SUTTON



Saudi Arabian GP

CAN FERRARI WIN AGAIN OR WILL VERSTAPPEN PREVAIL?



TM



THE OFFICIAL REVIEW OF THE 2021 FIA Formula One World Championship™

Buy now from dukevideo.com/F1A

7 hours 28 mins 2 disc DVD RRP £22.99 **Website £19.99** Blu-ray RRP £25.99 **Website £23.99**



Every F1 season 1970 to 2021. Own them forever and save with our exclusive 10-DVD box sets. From £59.99 on the website.

The 'full monty' package: 5 box sets of 10 DVDs **plus** 2020 and 2021 Reviews. 52 DVDs RRP £609 **Your price: £399.99**

The F1 FORMULA 1 logo, F1 logo, FORMULA 1, F1, FIA FORMULA ONE WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP, GRAND PRIX and related marks are trademarks of Formula One Licensing BV, a Formula 1 company. All rights reserved.



SCAN ME

Buy now at **dukevideo.com/F1A** or call **+44 (0)330 088 5045**



FREE POSTAGE ON ALL CD, DVD & BLU-RAY ORDERS OVER £25



4.8 out of 5 based on 8998 customers



Duke and the Duke logo are registered trademarks of Duke Marketing Limited. All rights reserved.

DUKE®
VIDEO



NEW CUPRA FORMENTOR.

LET YOUR HEART CHOOSE FOR ONCE.

YOU CAN CHOOSE THE STRAIGHT PATH, LIKE ALWAYS.
IT'S EASIER, LESS TROUBLE. OR YOU CAN CHANGE
COURSE AND CHOOSE ANOTHER WAY, ONE THAT YOU'D
NEVER HAVE THOUGHT TO TAKE. AND IF THAT FEELS
RIGHT, THE NEW CUPRA FORMENTOR IS FOR YOU.

DRIVE ANOTHER WAY.

Official fuel consumption for the CUPRA Formentor range mpg (litres/100km):
31.4 (9.0) – 235.4 (1.2). CO₂ emissions 33-203 (g/km).

*Figures shown are for comparability purposes; only compare fuel consumption and CO₂ figures with other vehicles tested to the same technical procedures. Figures may not reflect real life driving results. Data correct at May 2021.

[CUPRAOFFICIAL.CO.UK](https://www.cupraofficial.co.uk)

