Goodwood Crash overshadows Members' Meeting

AUTOSPORT

BRITAIN'S BEST MOTORSPORT WEEKLY

14 APRIL 2022

LECLERC WINS, VERSTAPPEN WOES

Ferrari star on another level as Red Bull falters again

'We were all surprised by our pace'

CHARLES LECLERC

'We're already miles behind – unacceptable'

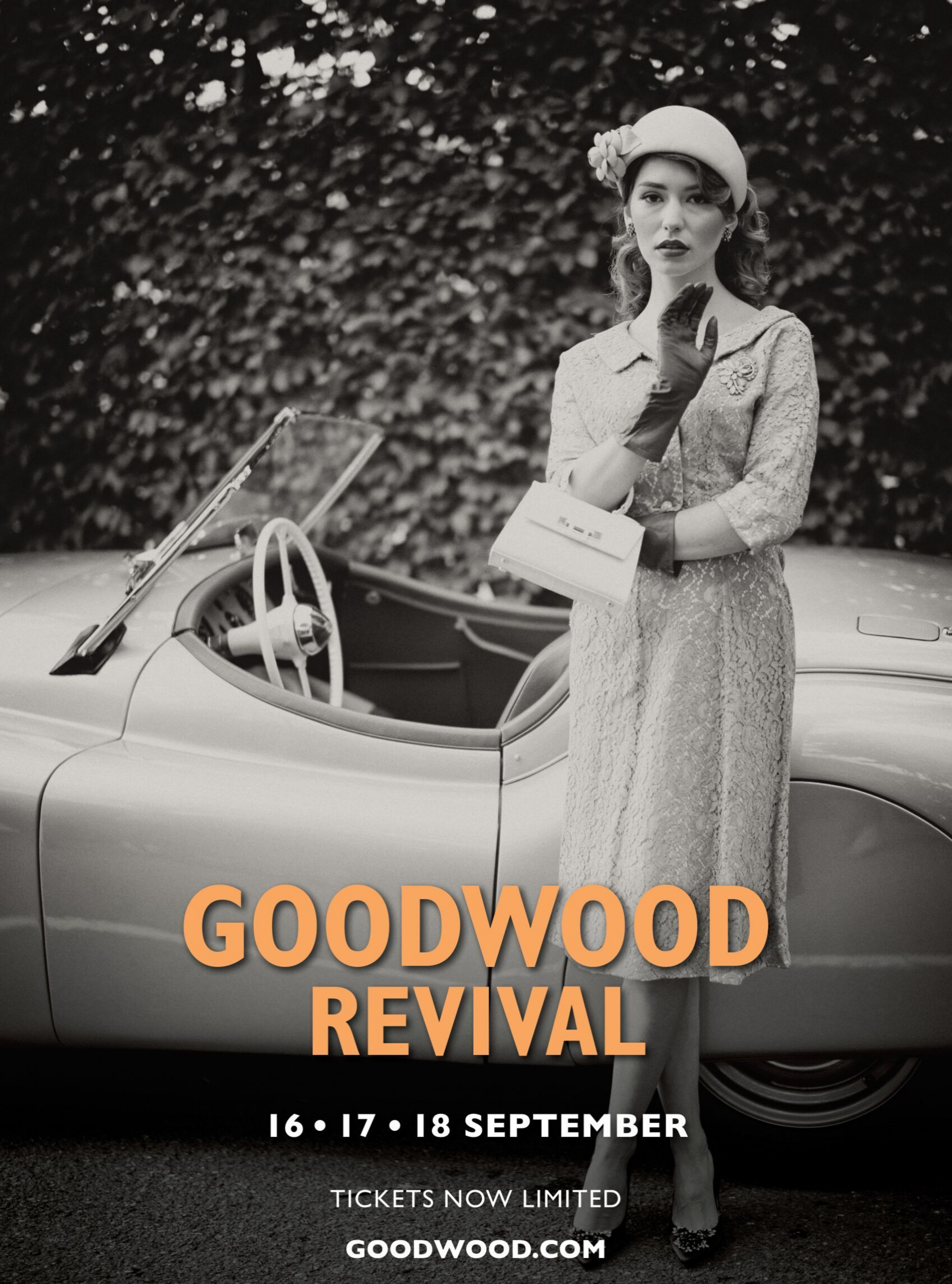
MAX VERSTAPPEN

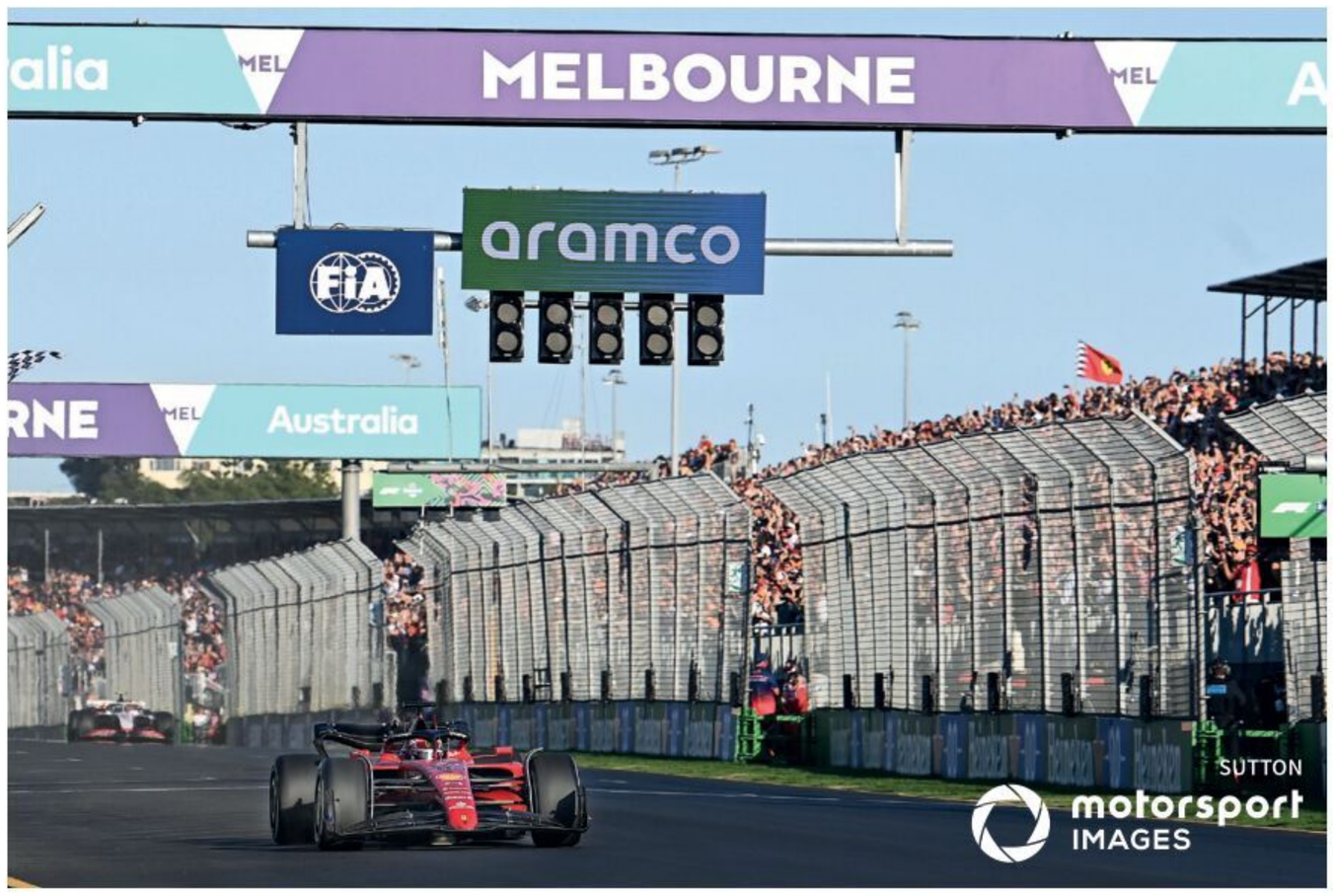


PLUS

Newgarden pips Grosjean at Long Beach

Jaguar's electric double in Rome


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Leclerc shows his class as Ferrari continues to impress

Can Ferrari fans start to believe? Charles Leclerc's performance as Formula 1 returned to Australia last weekend was imperious.

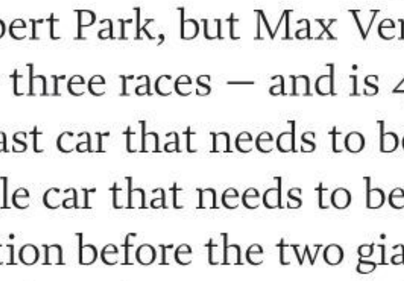
Forget the nonsense about 'Charles 2.0'. It's been obvious since before Leclerc made it to F1 that he had the potential to be a star. As Alex Kalinauckas shows on page 10, it's merely the circumstances that have changed in 2022, which are allowing Leclerc to deliver.

We'll be looking at the challenges Ferrari has to face to maintain its momentum in next week's issue but, as our report on p12 demonstrates, Red Bull has some work to do too. Not only did it go the wrong way with its set-up at Albert Park, but Max Verstappen has now failed to finish two of the first three races – and is 46 points behind Leclerc.

So, Red Bull has a fast car that needs to be more reliable, and Mercedes has a reliable car that needs to be faster. Ferrari has to make the most of the situation before the two giants of the past decade get things sorted – and, at the moment, it is doing just that. Having said that, Carlos Sainz Jr will want a change of fortune, and needs it quickly if he is not to be cast into the role of Ferrari number two...

• The Frazer Nash accident at last weekend's Goodwood Members' Meeting was another reminder that motorsport must not get complacent on safety (p59), at any level. We wish Paul Waine and his family all the best during his recovery.





Kevin Turner
Chief Editor
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NEXT WEEK 21 APRIL

Ferrari's big F1 challenge
Things are going well, but can Ferrari keep up in the development race?



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Motorsport Images: Mauger; Hone

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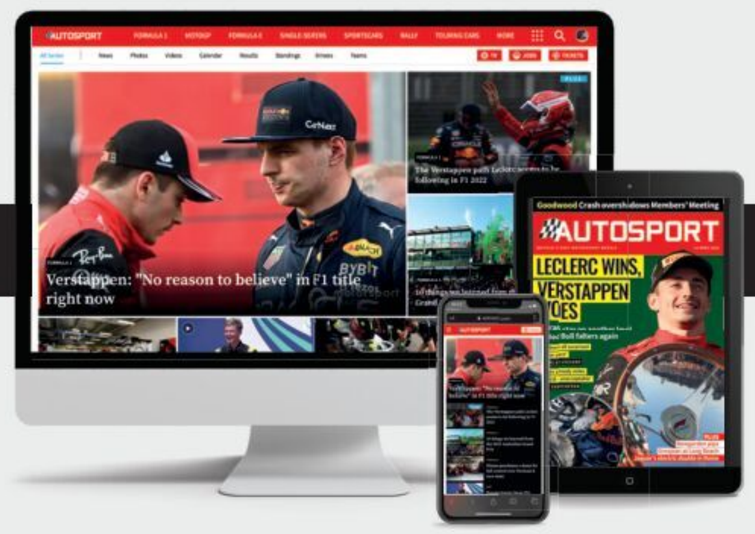
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Porsche and Audi keep powder dry until 2026 F1 rules finalised

FORMULA 1

Audi and Porsche want to wait until after Formula 1's 2026 engine regulations are announced before committing to entering the championship, the German car makers have indicated.

After months of speculation that point to the companies joining F1, a short statement issued after a board meeting last Thursday formally laid out the road map for its involvement. While there was no confirmation that it had given the final green light to an entry, as had been anticipated, it was made clear that both Audi and Porsche would likely get the go-ahead once the rules are finalised by the FIA.



Talks over the next generation of power units have been ongoing for some time, involving the existing engine manufacturers and other interested parties. Both Audi and Porsche have been clear that the new engine formula must be cost-effective, and do away with complex technology such as the MGU-H, with which other manufacturers have had a head start.

In a short statement issued after the supervisory board meeting at parent company Volkswagen, it was confirmed that both Audi and Porsche discussed plans for a "potential F1 entry".

"This gives our company the opportunity to demonstrate 'Vorsprung durch Technik' in the pinnacle of motorsport from 2026," the statement read. "We have not yet made a decision as we are currently in the final evaluation phase. At this point, the new regulations for 2026 and subsequent years are not yet available. These will set out far-reaching changes to make the sport more sustainable, which is a prerequisite for Audi's possible entry.

"Audi Sport is discussing these matters directly with the FIA. Our decision will be announced as soon it has been made."

While there is not yet an official go-ahead for the entry, the plans for Porsche and Audi in F1 are understood to be quite advanced. On the Porsche front, it looks almost certain to tie up from 2026 with Red Bull, where it could make use of the team's new powertrains division to help fast-track its arrival as a competitive force in F1.

Red Bull team boss Christian Horner would not be drawn directly on talks with Porsche, only saying that it would be "natural for us to hold discussions" with any incoming engine supplier. He said it was "great news for Formula 1" that both VW marques were looking at joining the grid, and did acknowledge that a possible partnership with Red Bull would be "eyewateringly exciting".

Red Bull formed its own powertrains division following Honda's decision to quit F1 at the end of last season. The team is racing with frozen Honda power units at present, and the new Red Bull Powertrains facility is set to be up and running by May. Horner said it would be "very easy" to adjust Red Bull Powertrains' plans to work with another manufacturer, but that it would "have to be with the right partner" and was never dependent on finding one.

While Porsche looks bound to work with Red Bull if final approval is given to enter F1, Audi's plans look less concrete. It has been most strongly linked with the McLaren team, but sources have indicated that the chances of a deal appear to be fading.

With Audi wanting to take ownership of a team rather than just be engine supplier, it has been suggested that the option of a



Porsche-built TAG engines propelled McLaren to F1 titles in 1984, 1985 and 1986 (Alain Prost pictured)



Aston Martin has emerged as possible Audi team for F1

McLaren takeover may be too expensive and not something that the Woking-based team is especially eager for.

That has opened the door for other opportunities, and Aston Martin could now be in the frame for an Audi partnership. Sources suggest that talks have already taken place, and the opportunity of an Audi buyout could offer an alternative long-term plan for Aston Martin owner Lawrence Stroll, whose squad has failed to make progress in F1 since its rebranding last year.

Aston Martin is currently powered by Mercedes, and a team spokesman said that while there were "no alternative plans at this time[...] you should never say never in F1 and we are actively exploring options with our new strategic partner Aramco."

A significant complication of a potential deal is that one of Audi's main German rivals, Mercedes-Benz, has a 20% share in the Aston Martin road car company.

JONATHAN NOBLE, CHRISTIAN NIMMERVOLL & LUKE SMITH

VERSTAPPEN SAFETY CAR TACTICS CLAMPDOWN

FORMULA 1



Not all Verstappen-Leclerc side-by-side is approved by FIA

The FIA has clarified Formula 1's safety car restart rules to prevent drivers employing tactics such as the side-by-side move Max Verstappen has used twice against Charles Leclerc in 2022.

Verstappen drew alongside Leclerc in Bahrain and Jeddah as they approached the final corners before the restart once the safety car had moved ahead to return to the pits.

Ahead of qualifying for last weekend's Australian Grand Prix, race director Niels Wittich issued updated event notes that highlighted Article 55.14 of F1's sporting rules, to reinforce its meaning to the drivers and teams and therefore clamp down on such moves.

Autosport sources have indicated that the clampdown is also related to various manoeuvres drivers have been employing at safety car restarts, as well as those of Verstappen, but that his tactic is simply a high-profile example.

The stewards also suggested a further review of the safety car protocols following Mick Schumacher's near-miss with Yuki Tsunoda in Australia, and that it needs to be "a point of emphasis in future driver briefings, to ensure the drivers agree on how best to address this challenge before an unfortunate incident occurs".

ALEX KALINAUCKAS



Second Singapore GP on cards

FORMULA 1

Formula 1 could hold a second race in Singapore should plans for Qatar to replace the cancelled Russian Grand Prix in September fall through, Autosport has learned.

After cancelling the Sochi race following Russia's invasion of Ukraine, F1 was looking to fill the gap on the calendar by returning to Qatar's Losail circuit, which hosted its first F1 grand prix last year.

But Autosport has now learned that some uncertainty from the event organisers in Qatar over the heat in September and proximity to the football World Cup starting in November has led to alternative options being explored, including running two races in Singapore.

The idea has been discussed with the promoters in Singapore, which could possibly host the two races on consecutive weekends at Marina Bay Street Circuit at slightly different times of day, with one dusk race and one full night race.

Two races in Singapore is just one alternative should a deal with Qatar not be finalised, with another option being a return to Bahrain to user the outer-loop layout of the track that hosted the Sakhir Grand Prix in 2020.

LUKE SMITH

Button to race electric rallycross machine

NITRO RALLYCROSS


Button pushes on at Pembrey in Ford Fiesta Supercar

Jenson Button will make his full debut in rallycross this year. The 2009 Formula 1 world champion has joined Xite Energy Racing in Travis Pastrana's much-expanded Nitro Rallycross series.

Button, whose father John made his name in rallycross, has dabbled in off-road racing since his retirement from F1. He contested the Baja 1000 in 2019, and raced for his own JBXE team in last year's first round of the Extreme E series in Saudi Arabia.

The 42-year-old, who remains active in F1 as a senior advisor to the Williams team and a pundit for Sky Sports, has signed up to drive the Nitro series' new electric-powered FC1-X racer alongside Xite team owner and Nitro Rallycross regular Oliver Bennett.

"I love racing and I want to have fun," said Button, who recently tested Bennett's Ford Fiesta Supercar and the Mini Cooper he raced in last year's Nitro RX series at Pembrey. "Xite Energy has great experience of not just rallycross but also racing electric vehicles. And I get to race alongside my mate Oli. He's a great character, great for the sport and comes with a lot of experience of competing on the dirt.

"It's going to be a fun partnership, but I think it's going to be a good partnership as well and hopefully we can take it to the big boys in rallycross."

Nitro RX began last year with five races, all staged in the US and for Supercars using internal combustion engines. The series will expand to 10 races, including three in Europe, for the 2022-23 campaign, with the first round at Lydden Hill on 18-19 June. Following trips to Sweden and Finland, it will move to the US and Canada, plus a round in Saudi Arabia. The US season finale is scheduled for next March.

The 800kW FC1-X, developed by Olsbergs MSE and QEV Technologies, made its global debut at the Race of Champions in February.

Button explained that he was looking forward to continuing his "family connection with rallycross".

JAMES NEWBOLD

F1 sporting role goes to DAMS chief Sicard

FORMULA 1/FIA


PORTLOCK/MOTORSPORT IMAGES

The FIA has chosen Francois Sicard, managing director of the DAMS single-seater team, to fill a role equivalent to that of Formula 1 sporting director.

The conclusions of the FIA report into last year's Abu Dhabi Grand Prix safety car controversy noted that "a new F1 sporting director will be recruited (process finalised)". Sicard will fill that role, although his definitive title and full job description have yet to be determined.

The sporting director title was previously one of several held by Michael Masi, but the job has now been repositioned between FIA single-seater department head Peter Bayer and the organisation's key F1 players, including new race directors Niels Wittich and Eduardo Freitas.

Sicard's tasks are expected to include overseeing the development of the sporting regulations, along with liaising with the F1 organisation on matters such as the calendar and circuit licensing. As well as F1, he is expected to oversee FIA-run single-seater categories F2, F3, F4 and Formula Regional.

It is understood that the FIA canvassed a number of people about the appointment, including several current F1 team sporting directors, none of whom were available to take it. While Sicard has not previously had any involvement in F1, the Frenchman has amassed a lot of experience at other levels of the sport and has worked with several current grand prix drivers.

During a stint with Renault, he was involved in the creation of the World Series by Renault, which he managed until the end of its third season in 2007. He then moved to Oak Racing before joining DAMS in 2012. Davide Valsecchi and Jolyon Palmer both won GP2 titles with the squad, while DAMS secured the F2 teams' title in 2019. He has also worked with Kevin Magnussen, Carlos Sainz Jr, Alex Albon and Pierre Gasly at DAMS, as well as in Formula E (see p8).

Sicard's start date in his new job is not yet known, but is likely to be a few weeks away as he finalises his commitments to DAMS.

ADAM COOPER



AUSTRALIAN SUPERCARS Formula 1 stars Sergio Perez and Fernando Alonso 'went for a hoon' in machinery from the Australian Supercars series last Thursday at Albert Park as they took advantage of the two championships sharing the bill in Melbourne. Perez got behind the wheel of the Triple Eight Racing Holden Commodore of Broc Feeney, while Alonso sampled the Tickford Racing Ford Mustang of Thomas Randle. Feeney's team-mate, series leader Shane van Gisbergen, quipped: "He ain't driving my thing! I've seen [Alonso] sail off at Turn 1, and Perez buzzed ours to 88[00rpm]." **Photograph by Horsburgh/Motorsport Images**

Ex-Sutton rival Hand gets final BTCC seat

BTCC

Former British GT4 champion Ash Hand has filled the final seat in this year's British Touring Car Championship, thanks to what is described as "a multi-year deal" with Vauxhall Astra team Power Maxed Racing.

Hand, 29, came to prominence in the Renault Clio Cup in 2015, when he lost the title in a dramatic final-round showdown with team-mate Ash Sutton and accused the team of sabotaging his car's set-up. He joined the British GT ranks in 2019 and won the GT4 crown at the wheel of an Aston Martin.

"I absolutely loved watching the battles between Ash Sutton and Ash Hand, many of which I watched again when I got home," said PMR boss Adam Weaver. "I have watched them all again on YouTube recently, just to remind myself of why I've worked so hard to get him in a BTCC car."

Hand was not one of the 22 drivers on track as BTCC pre-season testing continued at Croft last week. As he had the previous week at Donington Park, four-time champion Colin Turkington emerged on top in his West Surrey Racing-run BMW 330e M Sport. Team-mate Stephen Jelley was fastest in the afternoon, and second overall, ahead of Dan Cammish's Motorbase Ford Focus.

MARCUS SIMMONS



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Maserati with Venturi for return

MOTORSPORT NETWORK



BAGNALL motorsport IMAGES

Venturi will replace Mercedes with Maserati, whose last proper single-seater effort was F1 1957 (inset)

FORMULA E

Maserati has selected Venturi's Formula E squad to front its return to motorsport, with the Italian company signing a multi-year deal with the team. The partnership will commence from the incoming Gen3 era for 2022-23, with Maserati — which ends a six-decade hiatus from single-seater racing — replacing Mercedes as the Monegasque team's powertrain supplier.

It is expected that Maserati's powertrain will share parts with that of fellow Stellantis marque DS, used by Techeetah, although the software will be a key point of difference.

"Uniting with Maserati marks the start of a new chapter," said Venturi CEO Susie Wolff, "and represents the best possible outcome for the team following our successful partnership with Mercedes. Being entrusted with the return of one of motorsport's most recognisable brands to international single-seater competition underlines our success in recent seasons."

Venturi has been united with Mercedes ever since the 2019-20 season, following the German manufacturer's entry into FE. This came after a spell in which Venturi was a manufacturer of its own powertrains, supplying the Mercedes proxy HWA squad at the advent of the Gen2 regulations before the teams swapped supply deals.

"Returning to motorsport with Formula E was a natural choice for Maserati," said Maserati CEO Davide Grasso. "We're happy to share this adventure with a partner that abides by the same values as we do and is looking ahead to the future, just like us."

Meanwhile, Nissan has bought the e.dams operational arm of its FE team, taking full control over the squad following the Japanese manufacturer's commitment to the Gen3 rules cycle. This tightens up the relationship between the two halves of the team, with Nissan already sending 'elite' engineers from Japan to France to help it return to the front of the grid. The e.dams operation, an offshoot of GP2/Formula 2 mainstay DAMS, won the first three Formula E teams' titles with Renault and the 2015-16 drivers' title with Sebastien Buemi before the French marque withdrew to allow sister manufacturer Nissan's entry.

JAKE BOXALL-LEGGE

Ekstrom's team takes over Cupra project


S BLOXHAM/MOTORSPORT NETWORK

ELECTRIC TOURING CARS

Versatile Swede Mattias Ekstrom's race team has taken over the operation of Cupra's works squad in the eTouring Car World Cup.

EKS replaces Hungarian tin-top specialist Zengo Motorsport, which fielded the Cupras in the inaugural season of the electric tin-top series in 2021, when it was known as Pure ETCR before gaining 'world' status from the FIA for 2022.

Ekstrom won the Pure ETCR title in 2021 with Zengo, and although no drivers have been confirmed he is all but certain to lead the Spanish marque's title defence this season under the Cupra EKS banner.

Two-time DTM champion Ekstrom began EKS in 2014 as Audi's team in the World Rallycross Championship, and claimed the 2016 title. The team has also enjoyed class success on the Dakar Rally.

Ekstrom confirmed that "the team is fully focused on the forthcoming season. We share the passion of the sport and together we look forward to score many more race wins and titles".

The eTouring Car World Cup kicks off on the streets of Pau in France on 6-8 May, supporting the conventional World Touring Car Cup, its sister series.



WEC The new Vanwall Le Mans Hypercar developed by the German-based ByKolles squad ran on a race circuit for the first time last week. Approaching 200 laps of the Most track in the Czech Republic were completed by the Gibson-engined Vanwall Vandervell LMH over the course of two days in what was described as a successful test by the team. Touring car star Esteban Guerrieri undertook the majority of the running last Thursday and Friday, with 1993 Le Mans 24 Hours winner Christophe Bouchut also getting some laps. **Image by ByKolles**

Hyman's winning return in US

FORMULA REGIONAL

Remember Raoul Hyman, the Anglo-South African who was one of George Russell's main rivals for the 2014 BRDC Formula 4 title? He's now back in action in the US, and has taken the joint lead of the Formula Regional Americas championship following the opening round at NOLA Motorsports Park in New Orleans last weekend.

After F4, Hyman went on to win one of the first FIA-approved Regional F3 titles – the 2018 Asian crown – and competed up to 2019 in FIA F3 as a member of the Sauber Junior programme. Now 25, he has ended a sabbatical from racing and has secured a ride with TJ Speed as a beneficiary of the PMH Diversity Program.

Hyman had two days of official pre-season testing at NOLA to get up to speed with the spec Ligier-Honda, before topping qualifying by almost one second. But he was beaten off the line in the opening race by Canadian rookie Mac Clark, who stayed in front of Hyman through the duration.

Hyman made a much better start to the second race. He instantly got ahead and defeated second-year FRegional racer Dylan Tavella to the chequered flag.

He also led the third race in the early stages, but broke his right-front wing during a battle with Tavella and Nico Christodoulou. This relegated him to an eventual third behind American pair Tavella and Jason Alder.

With Hyman and Tavella each securing a win, a second and a third at NOLA, they cannot be separated in the points prior to the second round of six, which takes place at Road America on 21-22 May.

IN THE HEADLINES

FIA IN UNDERWEAR PROBE

As well as clamping down on safety-car restart tactics (see p5), Formula 1 race director Niels Wittich told drivers during a lengthy briefing at last weekend's Australian Grand Prix that their underwear will be monitored. Gloves, long underwear, balaclavas, socks and boots must be homologated to the FIA's standards. Lewis Hamilton, who noted that most of the FIA officials were not wearing masks, said: "Are we really talking about that sort of thing?"

LECLERC JR LEADS F3 TEST

The FIA Formula 3 Championship teams were in action last week at Jerez with a slightly-into-the-season two-day official test. Ferrari junior Arthur Leclerc headed three of the four sessions with Prema Racing, pipping ART Grand Prix's series leader and Alpine protege Victor Martins. Third quickest was Red Bull Junior Isack Hadjar with Hitech GP. The other driver to top a session, on the damp opening day, was Leclerc's Prema/Ferrari stablemate Ollie Bearman.

CORREA'S FOOT FRACTURE

ART driver Juan Manuel Correa suffered pain in his left foot during the FIA F3 test, and it has subsequently been found that he has a fracture. He will therefore miss the opening round of his parallel European Le Mans Series programme with Prema this weekend. Correa has been replaced for the Paul Ricard race by Prema's WEC 'silver' Lorenzo Colombo, who joins Louis Deletraz and Ferdinand Habsburg in the team's LMP2 ORECA.

KESELOWSKI'S ILLEGAL CAR

NASCAR star Brad Keselowski and the RFK Racing team he co-owns have been docked 100 driver and owner points, with crew chief Matt McCall fined $100,000 and suspended for four races, for illegal modifications to spec parts at last month's Atlanta race. Keselowski, who did occupy a playoff spot, is now 31st in the points.

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Leclerc was already 'Charles 2.0'

Ferrari's world championship leader isn't a new man this year, he's just experiencing a chance he's never had before — and is making the absolute most of it

ALEX KALINAUCKAS

"I never particularly struggle with pressure." Charles Leclerc said that ahead of FP1 in Australia last weekend, and it was clear throughout the rest of the event, which he utterly dominated.

The result of the Melbourne race, with Verstappen and Carlos Sainz Jr retiring, leaves Leclerc in a commanding championship position after three races. Yes, that's still a very small chunk of the season, but in 2021 the biggest gap between Verstappen and Lewis Hamilton was only 32 points (33 if you count the brief time between the sprint race and GP at Silverstone). Leclerc is 34 to the good over George Russell, with Mercedes in damage limitation mode so far this season.

Back on Friday, Leclerc had offered another intriguing line. He rejected suggestions that his strong start to 2022 — the Bahrain victory and a close second in Jeddah — represented a step up in performance on 2021, that he now must be considered 'Charles 2.0'. The tag came from inside Ferrari, comments team ambassador and long-time test driver Marc Gene made after the Bahrain 1-2.

It's understandable why Leclerc would dismiss such a tag. It's overused and tired, especially in F1 terms after Valtteri Bottas's various false dawns and reiterations at Mercedes played out without a world title. But the cliche has taken away from Gene's true observation — that Leclerc seems somehow different in 2022. And Leclerc actually confirmed this after his Albert Park win.

"The mindset is different because I know I've got a car that is capable of winning"

"The mindset is a bit different compared to the last two years," he said. "Because now I know that underneath me I've got a car that is capable of winning and I don't really have to overdo things or do something extremely special and spectacular to get one or two positions. I know it's in the car and I just have to do the job."

So, Leclerc's key change stems from a much more important one at Ferrari overall: it's produced a title-challenging car.

There can be no doubt about it now — the F1-75 is a genuine frontrunner. The sculpted, svelte dark scarlet machine has been in the hunt for race victory on three different track types, in Bahrain, Jeddah and Melbourne. The first and third of those also offered very different tyre challenges — to avoid overheating them on an abrasive surface in Bahrain, and to keep them warm and stay there in Australia. That said, it does make them outlier events compared to races to come. But now, holding the lead of both championships, Ferrari must be considered the favourite.

Red Bull is still a major threat. The RB18 is a very fast car. Verstappen was close to matching Leclerc for ultimate pace during last Sunday's race, but couldn't stay at that level without destroying his tyres. Red Bull's biggest concern isn't its car's aerodynamic concept, or its star driver — it's the engine reliability weakness that has left it with a shocking 50% finishing rate so far. But Verstappen's career journey is an important consideration when we assess what Leclerc is doing now.

Once he'd got used to his surroundings at a crack F1 squad following his surprise promotion from Toro Rosso early in 2016, Verstappen's first go at mounting a title challenge went awry. That was 2018, when Red Bull, Ferrari and Mercedes were closely matched before the latter two pulled clear. Four years ago, Verstappen produced a run of mistakes, which cost him high-profile results, particularly in Monaco.

Red Bull wasn't clear of the rest — the drivers had to make the difference and Verstappen overdid it. He calmed down, not that he'd ever admit it, and got better. But that impetuousity to score a major result in a car that wasn't the class of the field was still just under the surface as time passed. It emerged when he spun attacking future team-mate Sergio Perez in the wet 2020 Turkish GP. But Verstappen did have a world-beating car in 2021. And he didn't miss his shot. Sure, there were minor errors, but he contained these to the early season and built from there.

In 2022, Leclerc seems to be following the same path. And so, we can look back on his mistakes in 2019, 2020 and 2021 in a new context — he knew he had to take massive risks to get in the hunt. Now he's expected to lead and is delivering. Just as Verstappen did.

A repetition of Leclerc's past errors seems unlikely because of how well he's driving. He's been calm in battle against F1's most ferocious wheel-to-wheel driver, and worked with Ferrari to find a tyre wear sweet spot others can't match. It's championship-winning stuff, although of course it is indeed very early in the campaign.

We must add caveats, because every time we note Leclerc's abilities in these pages it results in snarky feedback. For some reason, the suggestion that a rookie GP3 and Formula 2 champion who ended Sebastian Vettel's Ferrari era might be the real deal gets some inexplicably hot under the collar. But at his first real title chance Leclerc isn't letting himself down.

Who knows what's next for Charles Leclerc? He might never win another F1 race — there are so many possibilities in life. But the path Verstappen trod only leads to one destination, and if he can follow it too it'll lead all the way to the world championship.

P12 AUSTRALIAN GP REPORT

YOUR SAY

No sport can stand still and new fans may not be soaked in the history but the classic grands prix retain their big-event status

PAUL NEAL

Time for a motorsport Masters

Stefano Domenicali's suggestion that there might be up to 30 races on the Formula 1 calendar and that certain races would have to rotate brings back memories of when Silverstone was being asked to stump up more money to keep its race against state-funded races.

Maybe locking some of the great races into a Masters or Monuments category is due. Sports such as golf and cycling go to new places but they retain their Masters events. No sport can stand still and new fans may or may not be soaked in the history but these classics retain their big-event status.

A starter for 10 would be Monza, Spa, Silverstone, Monaco and Suzuka for the Grand Prix Masters and they could have Indianapolis or Le Mans for additional points.

Secondly, in welcoming new circuits could they have a'gradient clause'built into their contracts so we won't end up only identifying the track by their sponsorship? Pretty sure with some strategic use of JCBs that pushing some earth from one end of the site into another to create a modern-day Eau Rouge ought to be possible?

Paul Neal
Via email

Can Aston pull off its ambitious targets?

I have four concerns for Aston Martin F1:
1. How has Otmar Szafnauer's departure affected team morale?
2. Will Lance Stroll prove better than Sergio Perez?
3. From where AM are today, how feasible is it to compete with Ferrari, Mercedes and Alpine on road *and* track? Let alone rumoured McLaren/Audi and Red Bull/Porsche partnerships...
4. F1, World Endurance/Le Mans Hypercar and new road cars in next few years, all successful?

Well, good luck. Hard to think of any other manufacturer pulling this off simultaneously in automotive history.

Steve Singleton
Yorkshire

Some of those questions are harder to answer than others (!), but we proffer Mercedes (1955) and Ferrari (1958 and 1964) on the subject of successful parallel F1/sportscar programmes — ed



Existing F1 tracks should be improved

I am pleased that the Japanese GP (above) is back on the F1 calendar. However, I am frustrated that, over 30 years after the Ayrton Senna and Alain Prost collisions, there have been no alterations to Suzuka to improve overtaking opportunities. I would change Turn 1 from a fast kink to a slow hairpin, and make the first part of Spoon Curve much tighter so cars are almost coming to a stop.

I am not yet convinced that ground-effects will lead to more passing. Perhaps other fans would like to suggest track tweaks.

DA Cowling
Lincolnshire

Aston Martin picture reveals even more

The wonderfully evocative photograph of the 1953 factory Aston Martin DB3S being unloaded for Le Mans (From the Archive, 7 April) tells a far bigger story than your caption. It was the first time that team manager John Wyer (in short-sleeved shirt) used the Hotel de France at Chartre-sur-Loire as his base, from where he would oversee his 1959 victory with Aston Martin, and his 1968 and 1969 wins with the Gulf Ford GT40s.

Reg Parnell crashed the DB3S after just 16 laps, the Derbyshire farmer admitting to Wyer that he was thinking of his pigs!

Mark Cole
Buckingham

Have your say, get in touch

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RACE CENTRE

MAUGER

FORMULA 1

LECLERC STEPS UP A GEAR AS RED BULL FALTERS AGAIN

Even Ferrari expected a close fight as F1 returned to Australia, but a sublime performance from Charles Leclerc and problems for Max Verstappen made things *look* simple

ALEX KALINAUCKAS

PHOTOGRAPHY motorsport IMAGES


Leclerc's start from pole was just about good enough to keep the advantage

SUTTON

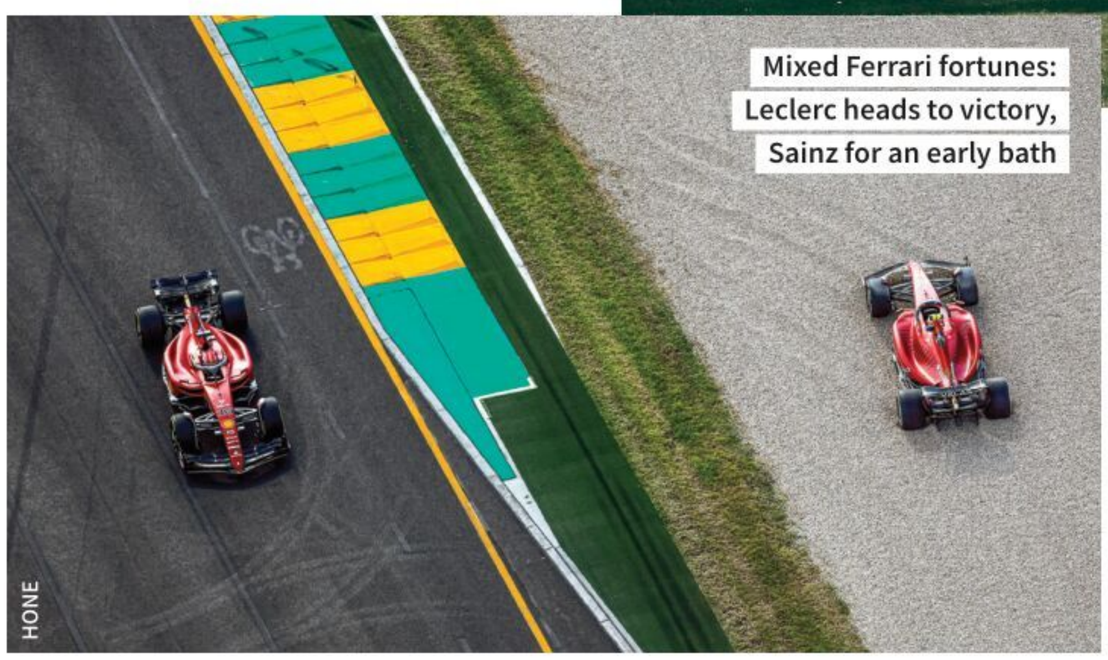
Well, that wasn't in the script. So far in Formula 1 2022, Ferrari and Red Bull, Charles Leclerc and Max Verstappen, had engaged in thrilling, lengthy fights for victory. When they shared the front row for the first Australian Grand Prix for three years — in front of a packed and expectant bumper crowd — more was predicted.

But chapter three wasn't like the previous two. Instead, Leclerc utterly crushed his opposition, leading every lap from pole position to take a fourth F1 career victory and claiming the fastest lap to boot. Verstappen, from far behind in second, retired with yet more engine trouble.

At the start of 58 laps in the dazzling Melbourne sunshine, Verstappen appeared to react fractionally faster to the lights than Leclerc. But the polesitter made a good enough start to swing right in front of his rival and ward off any attempt to attack to the inside for the first corner. Instead, Verstappen was obliged to go to the outside for the reprofiled and now faster right-hander, which meant the following Sergio Perez had to check up and the fast-starting Lewis Hamilton dived into the free space next to the second Red Bull to slice into third.

That immediately removed Perez from the lead fight, but in any case it was neutralised on the third lap after Carlos Sainz Jr's miserable weekend in the other Ferrari ended in the Turn 10 exit gravel trap. The Spaniard had been trying to pass Haas's Mick Schumacher in the preceding fast left, but turned in from too far wide on hard tyres that were yet to reach the best temperature operating window. These quickly cried enough and Sainz squirmed onto the grass, where he lost control and was spat across the road and into his eventual beached retirement.




Mixed Ferrari fortunes: Leclerc heads to victory, Sainz for an early bath

HONE

HONE

The safety car was called after an initial virtual safety car activation. This meant, when racing resumed at the end of lap six, that F1 would get to see how the latest 'Verstappen rule' would play out — the drivers are no longer allowed to put any part of their cars in front of the rearmost elements of a rival, as the Dutchman had done to Leclerc in Bahrain and Jeddah (and Hamilton back in the contentious 2021 Abu Dhabi finale), as part of a wider FIA crackdown on safety-car-period driving.

Newly appointed Red Bull head of race engineering Gianpiero Lambiase warned Verstappen to respect the new "rules of engagement", as Leclerc prepared to take the pack back to racing speed. He shot clear through the final corners but found the start of lap seven "a bit tricky", because "I had it [severe porpoising] before Turn 1". The Ferrari was bouncing almost comically badly on a full tank, but Leclerc was unfazed. "I don't know why, but I am not very sensitive to it," he said, even when "it looks extremely bad on the onboards". He quickly established a lead of 0.6s, which was 1.023s and out of Verstappen's DRS threat by the end of the following tour.

With Perez bottled up behind Hamilton, the top two raced clear — the only drivers able to lap in the 1m23s bracket at this stage. Verstappen was dropping back, but not by much each time. That was until lap 11, when he shipped over a second in the final sector alone. The reason for this was a heavy left-front lock-up that almost had him off the road, after which he complained to Lambiase that "my left front is completely grained".

Ahead, Leclerc "didn't have too much graining" on the medium tyres the leaders had started on, and could therefore press home his advantage. Simply put, with Verstappen unable to match his searing pace in the 1m23s or risk further opening up his front-left medium, Leclerc ran clear. Over the next six laps, after which came Verstappen's lap 18 pitstop to take the hards, Leclerc's lead grew from 3.1s to 8.3s. "Especially on race pace, we were extremely strong," he later reflected.

Hamilton snatches third from Perez and Russell has a look too after the Red Bull driver had to back off

"Tyres felt great from the first lap to the last lap."

Leclerc's lead was so large that Ferrari didn't feel the need to bring him in until four laps after Verstappen. At the end of his out-lap, the gap between them stood at 6.9s, although both were running to their safety car delta times, because the race had been nullified once again.

This time, Sebastian Vettel's Aston Martin was the cause — the four-time world champion had speared off into the wall on the outside of the tight Turn 4 left that runs across the car park adjacent to the Victorian Institute of Sport. He'd hit the exit kerb too hard, unfamiliar with how much the new ground-effect machines detest such treatment, especially when running behind other cars (Vettel was chasing Alex Albon in a net 17th place), due to missing the first two races of the year with COVID-19.

Vettel's car needed to be recovered after he'd pulled up past the following Turn 5 fast right, which now has no room for error with the wall close on the left-side exit, and the debris he'd strewn across the approach to the corner had to be cleared. The drivers therefore spent three laps running behind the safety car — for this weekend the Aston Martin Vantage. That's an important note because, in the words of Mercedes' George Russell, it's "like five seconds" slower than the Mercedes-AMG GT Black Series used in Bahrain and Jeddah (F1 has an alternating sponsorship deal with both manufacturers).

Whatever the real pace gap between the two GT machines, it became important to this F1 race because each of the leading pair felt it was going too slowly to help them maintain tyre temperature — a critical factor to succeeding last weekend due to the smooth new surface at Albert Park making it tough to warm up the Pirellis.

"I WANTED TO COMPLAIN, BUT THEN I CHECKED HOW MUCH THE SAFETY CAR WAS SLIDING IN THE CORNER"

"The safety car was driving so slow, it was like a turtle," Verstappen observed. "I was struggling massively to put some temperature in then, so I also struggled," said Leclerc. "Then, to be honest, I wanted to complain, but then I checked how much the safety car was sliding in the corner and I don't think there was anything more that he could give, so I didn't want to push too much pressure."

This all mattered at the end of lap 26, the point just before racing resumed. As he led the pack through the final corner — Lambiase felt the need to again remind Verstappen that he couldn't pull his previous intimidation trick as the safety car was exiting the scene — Leclerc was "staying on the left" of the right-hander in a bid to slingshot around and surge clear of Verstappen.

But he understeered at this point, likely with the hard tyres too cold (Verstappen's extra four laps on that compound give him a heat-retention benefit all through the second safety car period) and ran onto the tyre marbles littering the run onto the main straight. "I just »



Verstappen's best chance came at the restart but he couldn't make it past

SUTTON

couldn't turn for the last corner," said Leclerc. "So, I lost so much. And then we were side by side with Max."

The Red Bull had been quickly into the Ferrari's tow, but was again shown to the outside, as the relatively short main Melbourne straight meant Verstappen ran out of time to blast ahead. He had a look approaching the tight Turn 3 right but to no avail, Leclerc escaping to a restored 1.2s lead at the end of the first lap back racing.

And things then played out in a very familiar fashion. Just like in the first stint, Leclerc romped away from Verstappen. He was able to run in the 1m22s, and forged a metronomic run in that bracket as he increased his advantage by 4.3s over the next nine laps. Verstappen then popped in a 1m21.677s that was at the time the quickest of the race. It raised hopes of a fightback, but Leclerc's immediate 1m21.291s response flattened that, and what happened next dashed it completely.

Late in lap 38, Verstappen reported "I smell some weird fluid," then quickly said "it's shitting itself" and, as he headed into Turn 1 on the next tour, Lambiase ordered him to stop by a fire marshal's post. Verstappen pulled off at the exit of the second corner and retired, his RB18's airbox smoking. "It looks like a fuel system issue, external to the tank, that has caused the issue," explained Red Bull team boss Christian Horner. "We could see from the data that something was wrong, and Max could smell it as well. Something totally separate [to the fuel system vacuum issue that caused both Red Bulls to retire in Bahrain]."

Red Bull had been concerned about Verstappen's hydraulic system ahead of the race, topping it up with fluid in a bid to ease its worries. That meant he "knew there was a possibility [of retiring]", but he'd "tried not to think about it and just focus on my race".

"WE WERE ALL SURPRISED BY OUR PACE, WE EXPECTED RED BULL TO BE CLOSER. WE HAD THE UPPER HAND"

Leaving Melbourne, 46 points down on Leclerc after two retirements from three races, the world champion can't think of anything but his reliability woes, let alone successfully defending his crown: "Clearly, we are struggling with reliability. And as a whole team, we need to fix it. At the moment there is no reason to believe in [retaining the title]."

As Verstappen wallowed, Leclerc celebrated. For the final 18 laps that followed the second VSC – required while the Melbourne marshals were pulling Verstappen's car behind the Turn 2 barriers – his only concern was making sure he secured the fastest lap. Twice he begged to be allowed to put in another flier, despite having a commanding lead. Ferrari rebuffed these requests but, on the final lap, even while lapping both Haases, Leclerc popped in a stunning 1m20.260s.

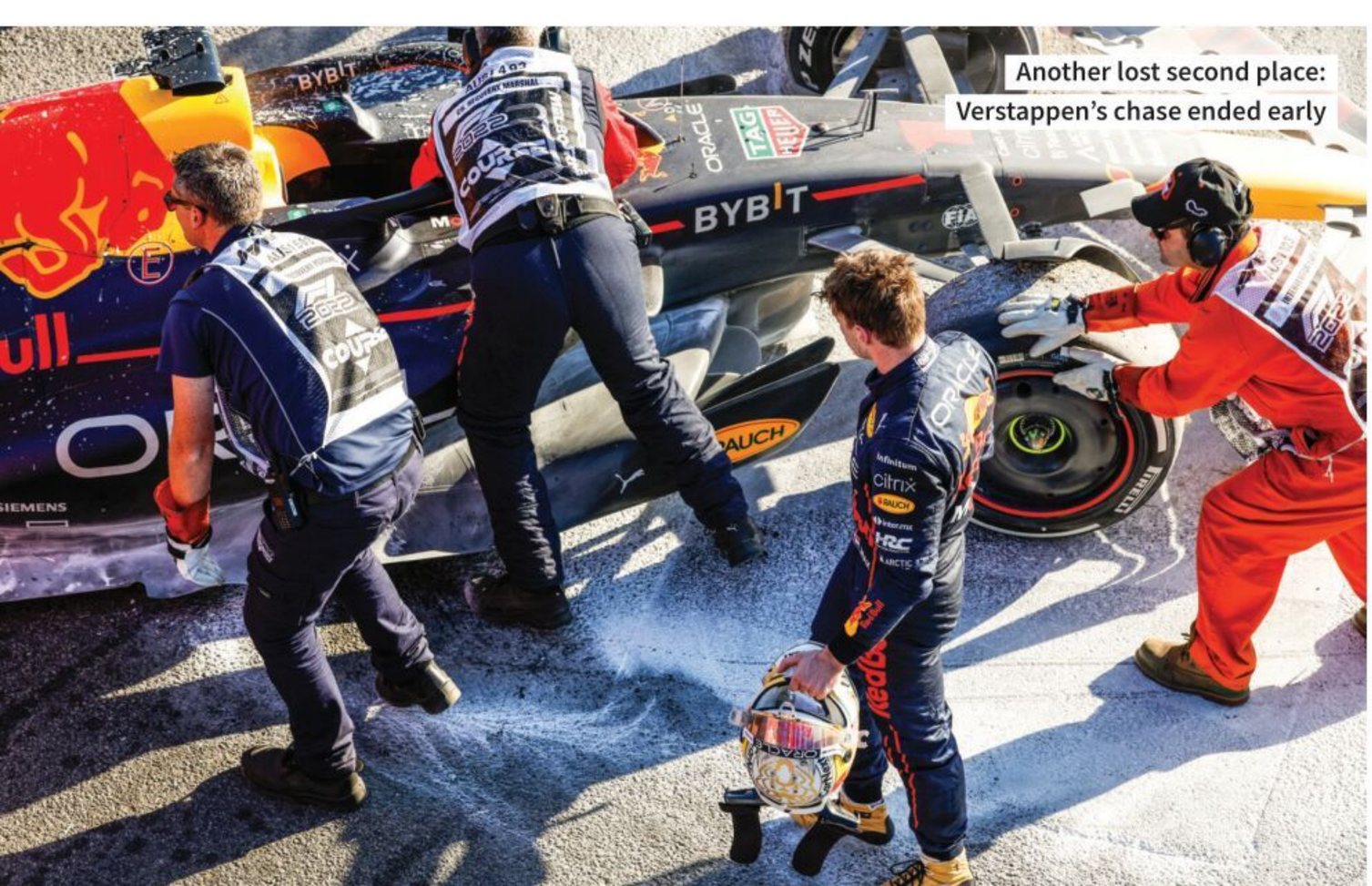
And it was lucky he did, because Fernando Alonso's late stop for fresh medium tyres – his second-stint mediums were ruined in the battles at the fringes of the points that followed far from Leclerc's serene triumph up front – meant the Alpine driver produced a 1m20.846s. This was 0.1s quicker than the winner's previous personal best.

"We were all surprised by our pace," Leclerc reflected in the post-race (podium) press conference, in which he has now appeared as many times in 2022 as he did in the previous two seasons combined. "On the hard, we probably expected Red Bull to be a bit closer in terms of pace, but also there we seemed to have the upper hand. And yeah, after qualifying and FP2, we didn't see that performance difference between us and Red Bull. So, it was a very good surprise."

Far behind the winner, there was a race for the inherited second place. This battle stretched all the way back to Hamilton's opportunistic pass on Perez at the first corner.

Once DRS was activated after the first restart, Perez had used it to put in a smart pass on Hamilton on the inside of Turn 3 on lap 10. By then he faced a 6.4s gap to Leclerc, who he never got near again. This was because, like Verstappen, Perez struggled badly for pace as the first stint on the mediums wore on. He initially pulled away and gapped Hamilton to a maximum advantage of 3.3s at the end of lap 15, but from there the Mercedes came back.

Hamilton's pace was so strong that when Perez



Another lost second place: Verstappen's chase ended early

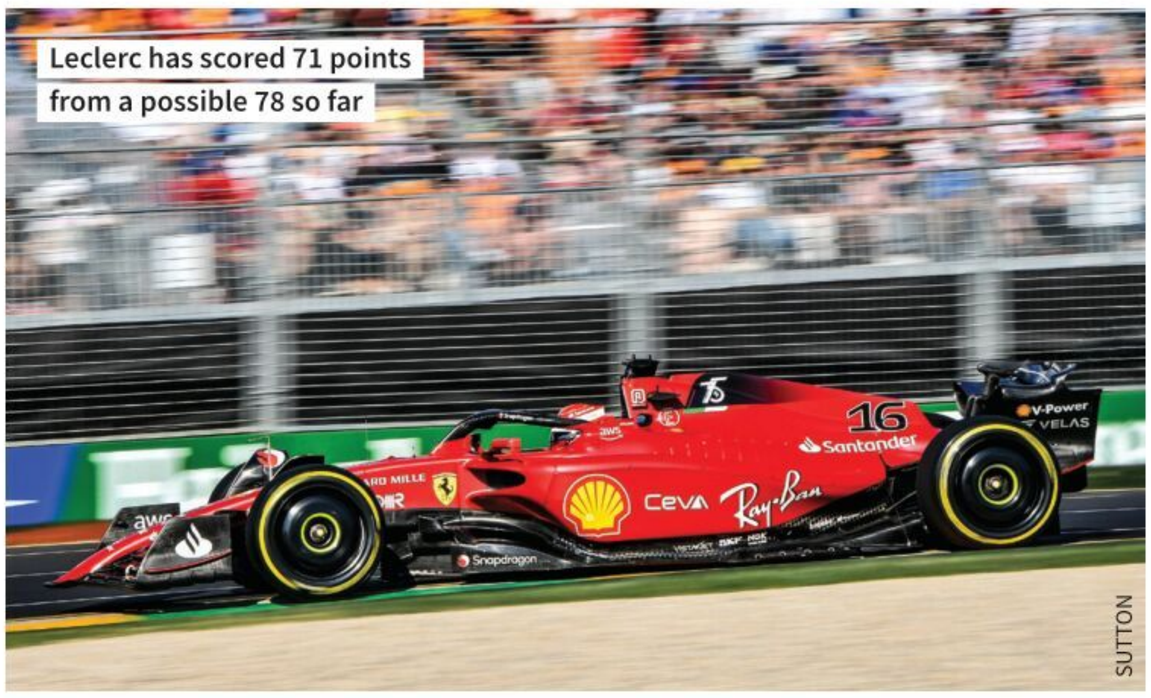
HONE





Hamilton led Russell before safety car timing swapped the Mercedes order

ETHERINGTON



Leclerc has scored 71 points from a possible 78 so far

SUTTON

was called in for his sole stop two laps after Verstappen, for the same compound swap, the Mercedes actually overcut ahead of the Mexican.

Mercedes stopped Hamilton two laps after Perez (just after Ferrari pitted Leclerc) and he emerged ahead. But the two laps already firing up the hards meant Perez had been able to complete the tyre warm-up challenge on the white-walled rubber that Mercedes engineer Peter Bonnington was hurriedly warning Hamilton to expect. Perez therefore ran down his rival and pounced as they roared towards the Turn 9 left kink, the Red Bull ahead on the outside line as they turned in. It was an important move for Perez, since it meant he had one car fewer to overtake after the second safety car period, which began seconds after this pass.

But he did have an unexpected rival. Not Alonso, whose hard-tyre starting strategy meant he was running ahead of Perez at the second restart. It was Russell, who completed his one pitstop during the Vettel safety car. With his rivals' pace restricted, he left the pits to run behind Verstappen. "I was thinking 'happy days!'" he later joked. "No, we obviously had a bit of fortune there – but that's part of the game." »

QUALIFYING



Pole winner Leclerc with retired MotoGP ace Casey Stoner

DUNBAR

Saturday had plenty of Formula 1 driver hits: complaints on a late track change, shocking crashes, scintillating speed. Q1, which Max Verstappen topped, was heavily disrupted by a collision between Lance Stroll and Nicholas Latifi. Stroll copped the blame for moving over as the Williams passed at Turn 5.

Q2 passed without issue, other than the setting sun. Having fitted darker visors for the Q3 showdown, the contenders produced quite the show. Leclerc led after the opening runs on a 1m18.239s, but only just got his first effort in before the session was halted again following Fernando Alonso's Turn 11 crash. The Spaniard had just topped the middle sector, where the DRS zone running through the new sweeping section of track that replaced the old chicane had been removed ahead of FP3. This benefited the teams without a porpoising problem, forcing those that had relied on DRS activation settling the bouncing to either raise rear rideheight or live with it. Alpine is thought to have gained significantly, along with McLaren. Alonso immediately blamed the crash on a hydraulics problem stopping his downshifts and braking.

The red flag stopped Carlos Sainz Jr completing a first run that might have matched Leclerc's. After another near-15-minute delay, Sergio Perez, who had topped Q2, completed a run of two extra Q3 efforts, each with two tyre preparation laps. The challenge was getting the C5 soft rubber warm and staying at the right temperature on the smoother new asphalt.

"THE RED FLAG STOPPED SAINZ COMPLETING A RUN THAT MIGHT HAVE MATCHED LECLERC"

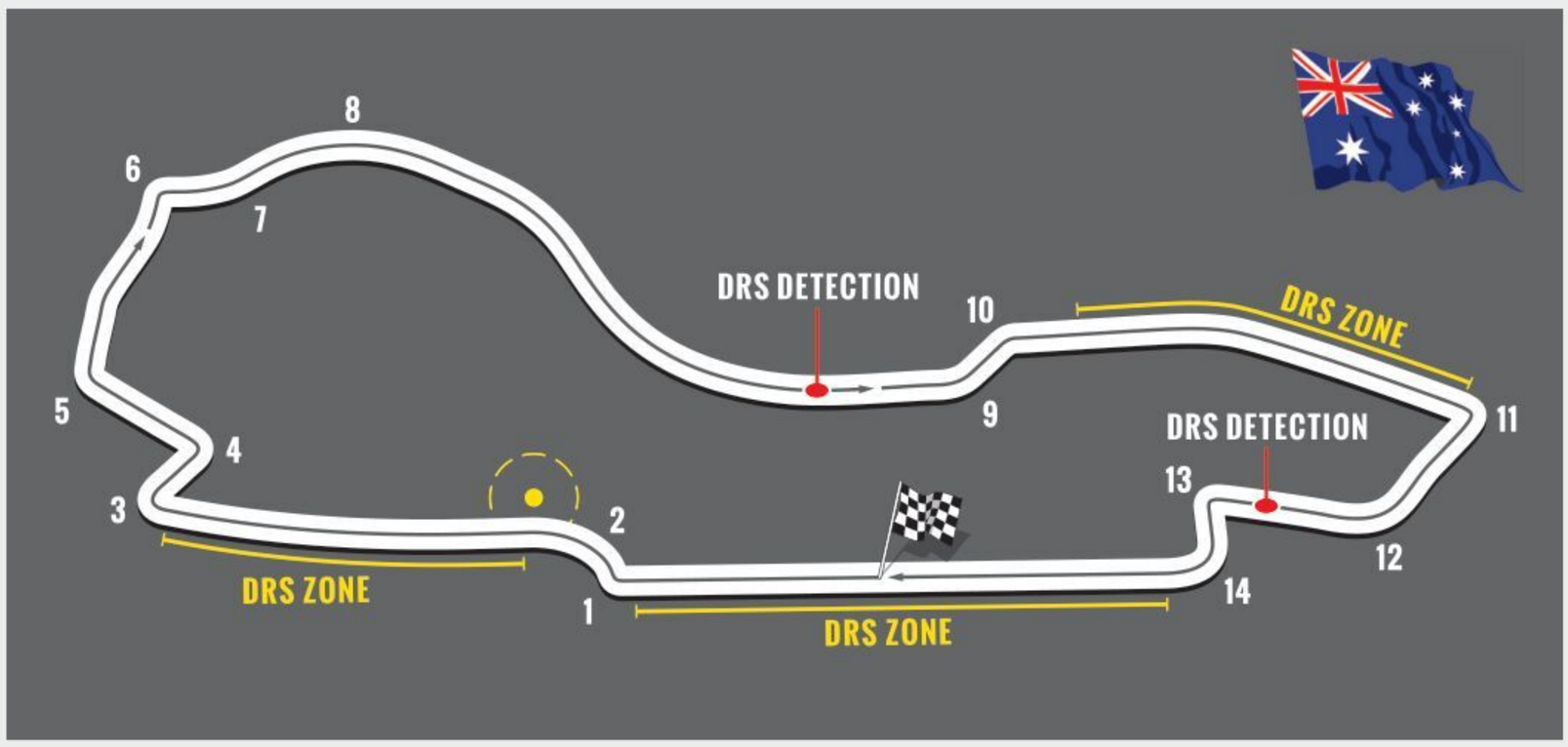
The extra fuel weight didn't pay off for Perez, as his second run only scraped Leclerc's first by 0.001 seconds and his third was slower. In the other Red Bull, Verstappen "struggled a lot with the balance of the car", which robbed his confidence – a hesitant final two corners (where Ferrari's higher downforce package paid off all weekend) proved costly. He was second, 0.286s behind Leclerc, and objected to the missing DRS zone, Red Bull's system understood to be particularly efficient for drag dumping.

Track temperatures fell by four degrees between Q1 and Q3 thanks to the long delays. This seemed to undo Red Bull more than Ferrari, with Leclerc also taking "quite a bit of risk" in the now much faster Turn 6 right, as he blitzed to a 1m17.868s and pole. Sainz was ninth after his car did not fire up as expected and he was left without enough time to do the two warm-up laps his team-mate managed and so was "sliding everywhere".

McLaren's Lando Norris produced a stunning late lap to take fourth and best-of-the-rest status, ahead of Lewis Hamilton's Mercedes.



TRACKSIDE VIEW



It has taken 756 days, but Formula 1 cars are finally back lapping Melbourne's Albert Park. The sun is shining; the grandstands and spectator viewing banks are packed. Australian Grand Prix practice is under way and Autosport is having an absolute blast.

The returning event fizzes with eager energy all weekend – the total crowd figure hits 420,000, a tremendous achievement for an event and city that endured so much pandemic pain. We saunter through the excitement on our way down to the fence on the inside of the exit from the now 3.28-mile track's first two corners. There, the new F1 cars provide quite a show.

First up, Lewis Hamilton saves a massive wiggle running hard onto the kerbs that line the inside of Turn 2, opposite our vantage point. It's a violent snap, the seven-time world champion reacting with lightning-quick reflexes to gather things up. And he's far from the only one having drama.

Sebastian Vettel gathers a similarly big slide in his Aston Martin. But he's further to the right of the kerbs and having to calm things down later than Hamilton. Team-mate Lance Stroll also puts in a big save at the same point, while both AlphaTauri drivers cut across the grass on the inside of Turn 2, their problems stemming from clouting the kerb inside Turn 1 and being spat out wide, which Lando Norris does later on.

The Alfa Romeo drivers are running hard over the Turn 2 kerbs more consistently than most during the early laps of the one-hour session, where the McLarens generally look calmer than the other machines.

Inevitably, the Red Bull and Ferrari drivers can shoot through faster and more planted than the rest – they, after all, have the best packages of the season so far. But it's notable how Max Verstappen and Sergio Perez are leaning harder on their rear tyres each time through, the back-left kicking out and glancing the kerbs.

"HAMILTON SAVES A MASSIVE WIGGLE RUNNING HARD ONTO THE KERBS AT TURN 2"

There are various challenges for the drivers. For a start, the resurfaced track is very green, which exacerbates sliding through the two corners, and it's notable that come the end of the session (which we watch from atop a photographers' tower overlooking the sequence) moments are less wild and there are fewer overall.

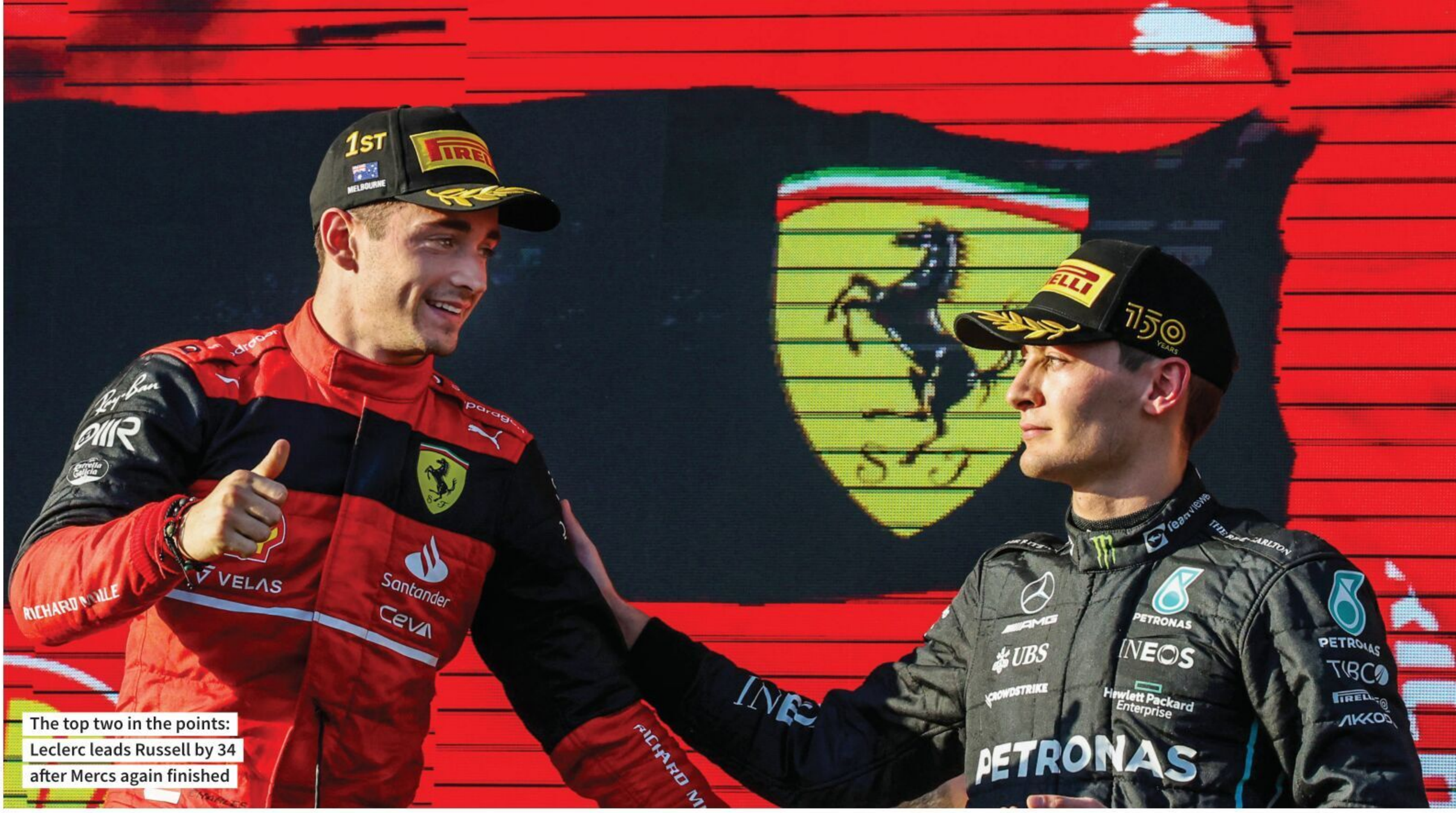
The drivers are also having to deal with end-of-straight porpoising while braking for Turn 1, where they can't afford too tight a line, as the AlphaTauris demonstrate. Having hit the gas in the right, the drivers' lines from 2019 take them onto the Turn 2 left kerbs – but the ground-effect cars hate this, which is where the unsettlement is coming from.

"I guess we took it for granted in previous years that was something we could easily do," says Williams driver Alex Albon. "But on these ones, you kind of have to drive around them and there's definitely a style in that."

ALEX KALINAUCKAS



Keep off the kerbs: Albert Park is alive to F1 for the first time in three years



The top two in the points: Leclerc leads Russell by 34 after Mercs again finished

DUNBAR

Another key part of F1 is tyre management, which became a critical factor in the outcome of the race for the final podium spots. For six laps after Perez had got past Alonso to run fourth, Russell defied the Red Bull's attentions. But on lap 35, with Hamilton by this point clear of the Alpine and homing in on the fight, engineer Riccardo Musconi warned Russell "tyre management is more important than position". Russell replied that was "not what I wanna hear" but, when Perez used DRS to get a run on the outside going into the Turn 11 right at the end of the back straight on the subsequent lap, Russell didn't fight him too hard.

"I really wanted to push it further, but I recognised that we probably would have just fell off a cliff if I went even harder," he explained afterwards. "The Red Bull was just too quick for us."

Perez pulled a five-second gap on Russell over the race's final third, which became about whether the younger Briton could stay in front of Hamilton. The gap between them dwindled to as little as a second but, as things looked poised for an intra-team showdown, it never came.

On lap 54, Hamilton complained "you guys put me in a really difficult position", but this was in reference to him being unable to "race for position because the car was overheating, so I had to back off". Russell felt Hamilton "was pushing flat-out until the end, but I think it was well managed and was always able to stay out of the DRS detection".

In any case, the result was not just Russell's first podium for Mercedes but also, amazingly given the Silver Arrows' shocking pace deficit to Ferrari and Red Bull, second in the drivers' standings behind Leclerc. That alone is a damning indictment of Red Bull's reliability woe, but that wasn't the cause of its defeat to Ferrari last Sunday.

Instead, the key reason appears to be the respective post-FP2 decisions each team took on how they'd set up their machines in anticipation of certain types of tyre wear in the hottest conditions of the event, which came on race day.



Perez eventually got the better of Russell to salvage second for Red Bull

SUTTON

"I REALLY WANTED TO PUSH IT FURTHER, BUT WE PROBABLY WOULD HAVE JUST FELL OFF A CLIFF"

Red Bull, said Horner, "thought the race was going to be rear limited" based on "a lot of graining on rear tyres" in FP2. But this focus was on the wrong axle, which meant Red Bull "ran a higher downforce level than what they had, for example, in Jeddah" (according to Ferrari team boss Mattia Binotto) in a bid to keep its rears in better shape. But the track "rubbering in and particularly the temperature [climbing on Sunday]", said Horner, meant that was the wrong way to go. Perez said this was still a compromise aimed at dumping as much drag as possible to gain a straightline speed boost.

It meant the RB18s were "very sensitive" in the slower, technical final corners of sector three where "it was really easy to get it wrong", said Perez, as evidenced by Verstappen's lap 11 lock-up on the medium tyres and Perez also sliding off at the same point with seven tours remaining. "It is part of our issue," said Perez. "Sector three was really weak for us. And we had to do a lot of compromises for that, which really affected us throughout the circuit."

That 'issue' was one Ferrari did not have, and it came down to car balance. Red Bull's work to keep straightline speed while running a bigger downforce package meant its drivers were rarely confident all weekend. Leclerc's car was compliant, even when porpoising badly. "Having a well-balanced car was a key element in the view of tyre management," said Binotto. "Charles did a pretty good job in that."

But the key factor in Ferrari's second victory of the season concerned its own post-FP2 choice. Having led the way there on pure pace but been a fraction behind Verstappen on the long-run data gathering averages, Ferrari correctly identified that, with Sunday set to be hotter, it had to adjust its plans to avoid front-left tyre graining. This was a decision it aced and from which it reaped the ultimate race reward.

"It was an issue which we were concerned about and we knew would certainly be a concern on the mediums," Binotto explained. "So, we worked on it since Friday. We set up on the balance and tyres management with the drivers. Finally, luckily enough I would say, we didn't suffer in the race, and we had a better pace."

NEXT F1 REPORT

EMILIA ROMAGNA GP
28 APRIL ISSUE

McLAREN UPTURN DUE TO CIRCUIT, NOT UPGRADES

McLaren team principal Andreas Seidl has tempered expectations for the rest of 2022, despite a strong showing in Australia.

He believes that Lando Norris's fifth-place finish, crossing the line just four tenths ahead of team-mate Daniel Ricciardo, was due to Albert Park suiting the MCL36 rather than any lasting upturn in form.

The team-mates found extremely similar pace in the race, enough for Seidl to say both had maximised the car. But he conceded there was nothing left in the tank to truly take the fight to the Mercedes duo that finished 25 seconds up the road.

"We're obviously very happy with the result," said Seidl. "It's mainly down to three reasons. We brought some small upgrades here to the car, which worked. The track layout suits our current package, a fluid layout. And we learned about the car in Jeddah and applied that here. That put us in a more competitive position. Heads down, let's not get overexcited."

Similarly, Norris cautioned that the result "might be as good as it gets for a while" after both cars made it into Q3 for the first time this season and the team jumped from eighth to fourth in the standings, where it ended the 2021 campaign.



SUTTON



BINGHAM

Nightmare weekend for Vettel and beleaguered Aston Martin

Sebastian Vettel has a penchant for naming his cars. After dubbing the 2021 Aston Martin 'Honey Ryder' in deference to the first Bond Girl, this season's challenger might soon gain the nickname 'Jinx'.

The removal of a DRS zone led to set-up tweaks for the team, which left it to battle porpoising. Vettel stopped in FP1 with a fiery engine issue and then copped a "joke" fine for his scooter ride back to the pits. He was benched for the duration of FP2 while the team fixed the AMR22, crashed out of FP3, and repairs left time for only a single flying lap in Q1. Then he shunted out of the race on lap 23 when he lost control on the high Turn 5 exit kerbs and smacked the wall. All told, he managed just 51 laps over the entire weekend.

"Obviously, I tried to get the best out of the car and with hindsight maybe I was pushing too hard," said Vettel. "Once I lost it there was no chance to come back. It was more challenging not to have the running, partly because we lost time with the car, and then the Saturday morning incidents didn't help, but I'm sure it will get better. It can't get any worse."

Meanwhile, Lance Stroll courted the stewards' attention. He was handed a three-place grid drop for colliding with Nicholas Latifi in Q1. Stroll then copped a five-second penalty and a point for his licence after he was adjudged to have weaved excessively while defending against Valtteri Bottas. He ended up 12th.

But Stroll queried the hard-line stance taken by the FIA: "I don't get it. It was two guys weaving all the time, it's just the last move really. You can weave down the straight as long as you don't weave when the guy's approaching very close behind you. I'm weaving to try and break the slipstream, not to try and defend, and then they penalise me for it. I don't get it.

"I guess a lot of funny decisions are going on right now."


Scooter ride proved expensive for Vettel
BINGHAM

"I WAS REALLY HOPING TO GET TO MONTREAL, WHERE I WOULD HAVE PASSED PROST"

Valtteri Bottas had his run of 103 consecutive Q3 appearances come to an end at Albert Park, stopping shy of the 109 top-10 qualifying streak Alain Prost recorded. The Frenchman retains second on the all-time list, behind the 137 in a row clocked by Ayrton Senna.


MAUGER



HONE

UNFORTUNATE HAAS MISSES THE POINTS

Haas suffered a blip in form after its impressive start to the second Formula 1 ground-effect era.

Awry car set-up and an ill-timed safety car prevented either driver from adding to the points haul, with Mick Schumacher taking 13th, ahead of Kevin Magnussen.

Schumacher gained a place on the slow-starting Carlos Sainz Jr, who was held up in a scrap with Yuki Tsunoda, only to run wide at Turn 10. He was also lucky not to hit the Japanese under the safety car, locking up to avoid a stack-up of traffic in front. Magnussen's hard-tyre strategy gamble was undone by the safety car.

Team boss Gunther Steiner said: "It didn't work out as we planned. The car was strong, and the drivers did a good job, so we know if we qualify better we can score points, and that is what we keep on trying to do. It's one of three which was difficult. Here we go again in Imola."

Alonso 'speechless' as Oz GP opportunity squandered

The Australian Grand Prix had the potential to offer Fernando Alonso a front-row start and a decent points haul. But the Alpine driver instead came away "speechless", declaring "everything is going the wrong way".

A hydraulics issue in qualifying forced his car to shut down moments after setting a fastest sector time in Q3 and he crashed. He then appeared set for a strong recovery from 10th on the grid, only to have his hopes of making an alternative tyre strategy work scuppered. A second safety car was called on lap 23 after Sebastian Vettel's crash. It was too soon for Alonso to switch from hard to medium tyres. As a result, when he did eventually pit, he was released into traffic and then forced into an extra stop to finish 17th – last of the on-track runners.

"I'm speechless to be honest," said the double F1 champion. "It's hard to accept that everything is going in the wrong way. We lost a guaranteed P6 in Saudi. Here I think we were looking for P6 or P7 before the safety car. And obviously, if we take into account [qualifying], the podium was very easy with Max [Verstappen] out."

Team-mate Esteban Ocon, meanwhile, had a comparatively quiet afternoon with his run to seventh. He admitted to conceding a top-five in qualifying due to wrong set-up, and was slightly hampered in the race by having to cool his engine.



MAUGER

Q&A

ALEX ALBON
WILLIAMS
DRIVER



How happy are you to score a point?
Very happy. I feel like we came in today, we looked at our race predictions and we looked a bit sad. It was a race where we took risks because we felt like no matter what we did, we were going to finish 19th or 20th. We took a bit of time to build the tyres up into a nice window – when you start last you can afford to do that. Then it just got better and better and, by the end of it, it felt like qualifying laps for the last 25 laps of the race. It's completely unexpected but it really highlights all the work that's been done at the factory and here at the track. That's where determination and motivation get you.

When in the race did the team switch to such a bold strategy?
I was surprised we were never boxing under the VSC or the safety cars. I thought, 'OK, well they know something I don't.' But once we got clear air, we just went. We were on much older tyres than the guys around us and we were keeping pace more or less with the McLarens and, at the very end, pulling away from the Alpines too. What's interesting is the C2 tyres really suit our car. We almost need to understand why, because it's a bit unexpected. Maybe we need to qualify, race, do everything on that tyre!

How does a point at Williams compare to your Red Bull podium?
We're not spraying champagne or raising a trophy – that bit always is very nice. But it feels just as sweet. Honestly, how unexpected it was too. If you'd told me I would finish P10 in the morning, I would have said there was a massive shunt at Turn 1.

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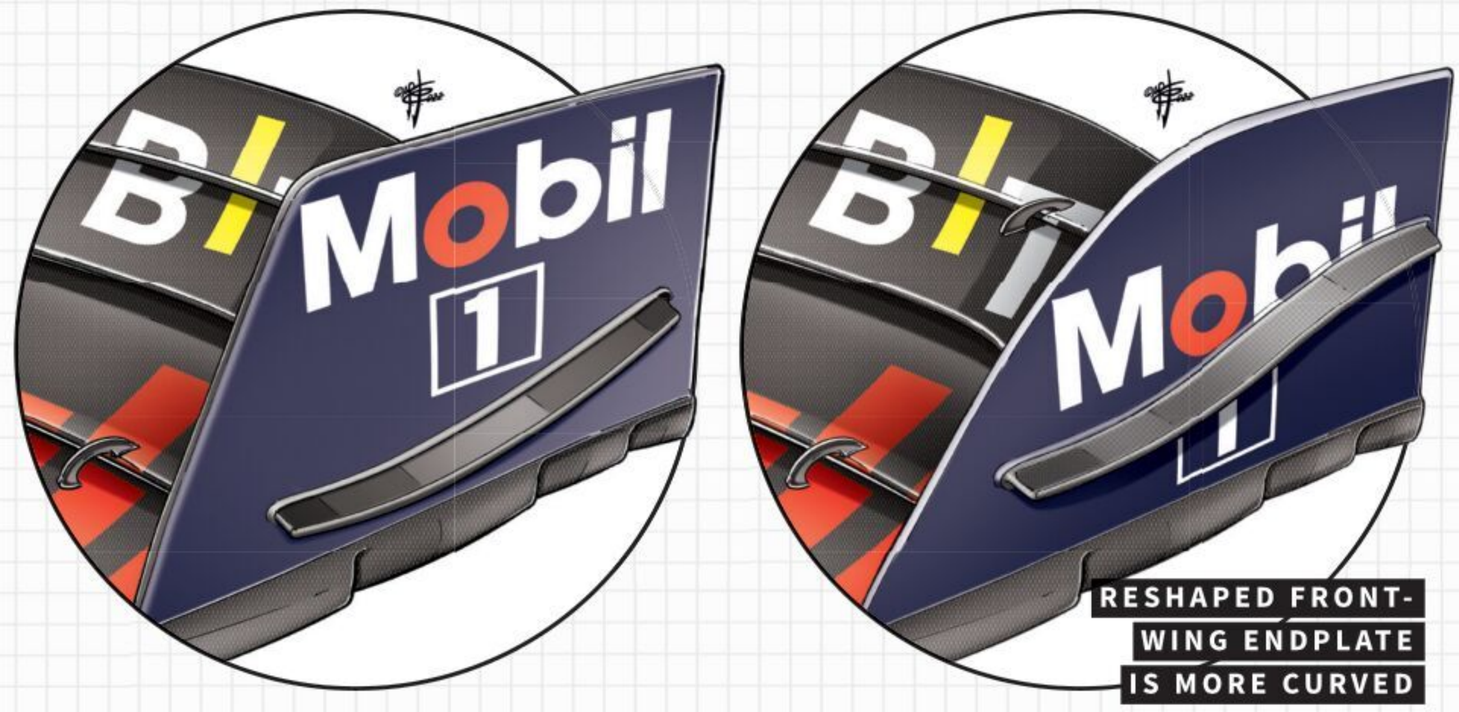
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DRAWING BOARD

GIORGIO PIOLA

WING TWEAKS DON'T PREVENT RED BULL ISSUES

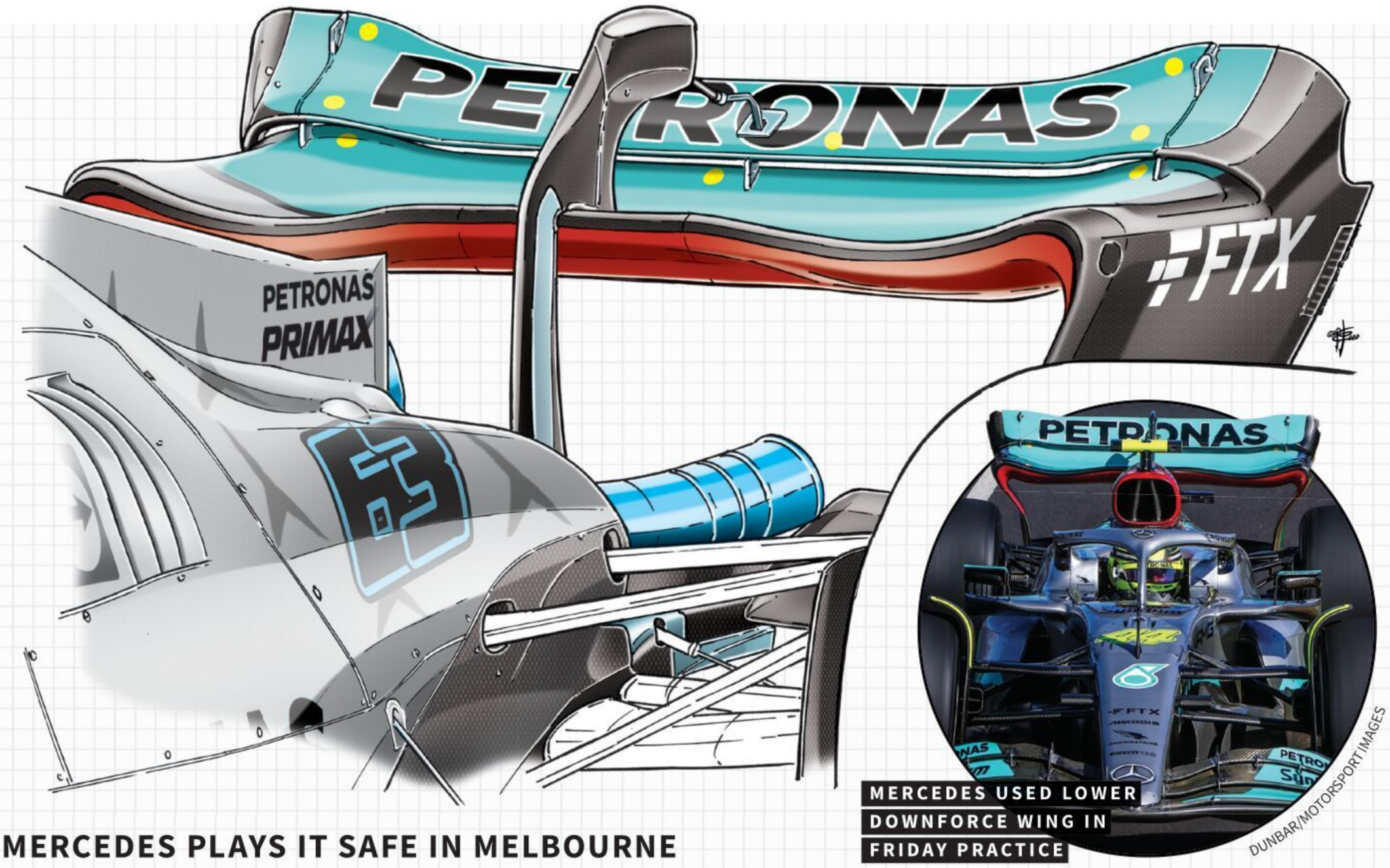


Red Bull arrived in Australia with a small tweak to its front wing and reworked the shape of the endplate, particularly at the leading edge. This was cut back slightly, making the endplate less trapezoidal and creating a more curved upper edge.

Part of the rationale behind this appears to be to reduce the overall weight of the wing, and to interact with the airflow later to limit any effects of separation. The diveplane has also been reshaped, where the trailing edge position has been changed to affect the placement of any vortices produced at the exposed corner.

It appeared that the wing changes bore fruit, as Red Bull kept it on the car for qualifying and the race, although any benefits were perhaps shrouded as Max Verstappen spent the weekend struggling with overall balance and Sergio Perez faced heavy tyre degradation at Melbourne. "We were definitely out of the window," Christian Horner explained. "What we saw on Friday was we thought the race was going to be rear limited. We could see quite a lot of graining on rear tyres, and I think a combination of perhaps a surface rubbering in and particularly the temperature today, it then was almost an inverse problem and, having tried to counter the issues that we expected from Friday, we ended up with a car that was very front limited."

JAKE BOXALL-LEGGE



MERCEDES PLAYS IT SAFE IN MELBOURNE

Mercedes put its new low-downforce rear wing on hold for Australia, and it is expected to make its debut at either the Emilia Romagna or Miami GPs. To that end, the team elected to experiment in practice with the wing it used in Saudi Arabia, running it with and without the Gurney flap on the trailing edge to knock back some of the downforce in a bid to cure its porpoising problems. But in the end, Mercedes changed tack and installed the higher downforce wing it used in Bahrain, perhaps feeling that it offered more around the slower corners at Albert Park.

The team brought no 'proper' upgrades to the W13 as it attempts to understand its car back at base. "It's going to take time and I think we just have to be disciplined and patient," George Russell explained. "We are so far behind and, because of the cost cap, we can't afford just to throw things at it and 'trial and error' at race weekends. We need to trust the process and bring the upgrades when we have total faith and confidence they will do as we expect. It will be a number of races before we start seeing that."

JAKE BOXALL-LEGGE

20 Albon #23 *excluded*

19 Stroll #18 *no time*

18 Latifi #6 *1m21.372s*

17 Vettel #5 *1m21.149s*

16 Magnussen #20 *1m20.254s*

15 Schumacher #47 *1m20.465s*

14 Zhou #24 *1m20.155s*

13 Tsunoda #22 *1m19.424s*

12 Bottas #77 *1m19.410s*

11 Gasly #10 *1m19.226s*

FREE PRACTICE 1

POS	DRIVER	TIME
1	Sainz	1m19.806s
2	Leclerc	1m20.377s
3	Perez	1m20.399s
4	Verstappen	1m20.626s
5	Norris	1m20.878s
6	Ocon	1m21.004s
7	Hamilton	1m21.027s
8	Ricciardo	1m21.155s
9	Alonso	1m21.229s
10	Bottas	1m21.247s
11	Tsunoda	1m21.289s
12	Russell	1m21.457s
13	Vettel	1m21.661s
14	Gasly	1m21.701s
15	Zhou	1m21.821s
16	Stroll	1m21.869s
17	Albon	1m22.754s
18	Magnussen	1m23.186s
19	Latifi	1m23.924s
20	Schumacher	1m24.349s

WEATHER Sunny, air 21-22C track 36-39C

FREE PRACTICE 2

POS	DRIVER	TIME
1	Leclerc	1m18.978s
2	Verstappen	1m19.223s
3	Sainz	1m19.376s
4	Alonso	1m19.537s
5	Perez	1m19.658s
6	Ocon	1m19.842s
7	Bottas	1m20.055s
8	Norris	1m20.100s
9	Gasly	1m20.142s
10	Ricciardo	1m20.203s
11	Russell	1m20.212s
12	Tsunoda	1m20.424s
13	Hamilton	1m20.521s
14	Stroll	1m20.611s
15	Zhou	1m21.063s
16	Magnussen	1m21.191s
17	Albon	1m21.912s
18	Schumacher	1m21.974s
19	Latifi	1m22.307s
20	Vettel	no time

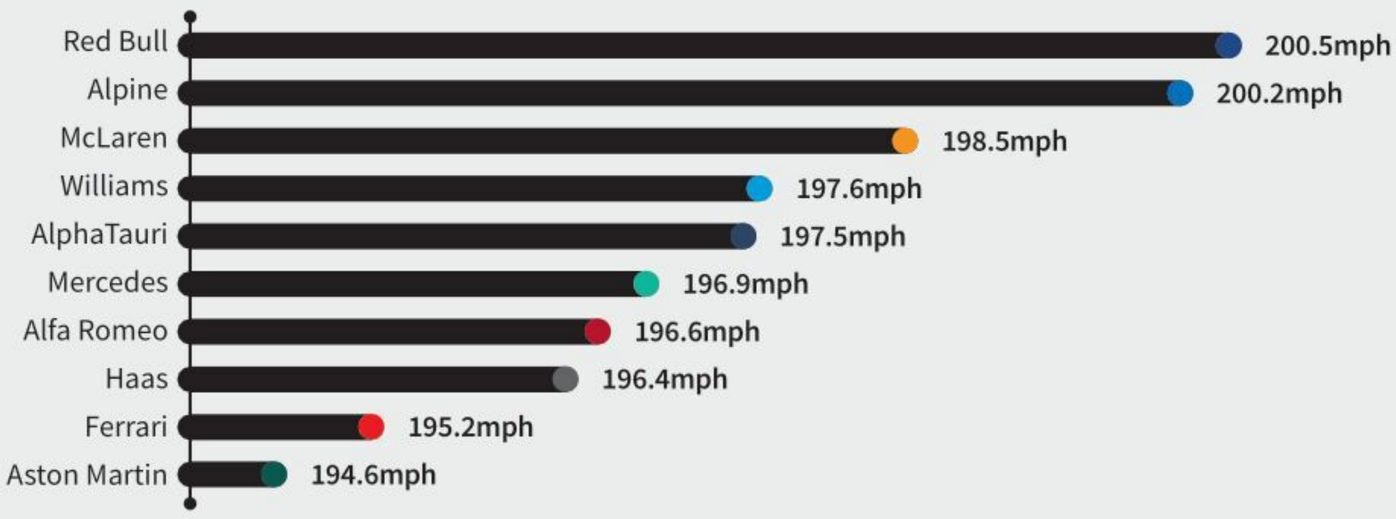
WEATHER Sunny, air 22-23C track 26-29C

FREE PRACTICE 3

POS	DRIVER	TIME
1	Norris	1m19.117s
2	Leclerc	1m19.249s
3	Perez	1m19.265s
4	Alonso	1m19.275s
5	Sainz	1m19.419s
6	Ricciardo	1m19.693s
7	Verstappen	1m19.809s
8	Hamilton	1m19.896s
9	Bottas	1m20.008s
10	Tsunoda	1m20.071s
11	Russell	1m20.096s
12	Gasly	1m20.133s
13	Ocon	1m20.205s
14	Schumacher	1m20.692s
15	Zhou	1m20.836s
16	Albon	1m20.958s
17	Magnussen	1m21.025s
18	Latifi	1m21.050s
19	Stroll	1m21.636s
20	Vettel	no time

WEATHER Overcast, air 24C track 31-32C

SPEED TRAP (QUALIFYING)



QUALIFYING 1

POS	DRIVER	TIME
1	Verstappen	1m18.580s
2	Perez	1m18.834s
3	Leclerc	1m18.881s
4	Sainz	1m18.983s
5	Alonso	1m19.192s
6	Bottas	1m19.251s
7	Norris	1m19.280s
8	Hamilton	1m19.401s
9	Russell	1m19.405s
10	Gasly	1m19.580s
11	Ocon	1m19.605s
12	Ricciardo	1m19.665s
13	Tsunoda	1m19.742s
14	Zhou	1m19.910s
15	Schumacher	1m20.104s
16	Albon	1m20.135s
17	Magnussen	1m20.254s
18	Vettel	1m21.149s
19	Latifi	1m21.372s
20	Stroll	no time

QUALIFYING 2

POS	DRIVER	TIME
1	Perez	1m18.340s
2	Sainz	1m18.469s
3	Leclerc	1m18.606s
4	Verstappen	1m18.611s
5	Alonso	1m18.815s
6	Norris	1m19.066s
7	Russell	1m19.076s
8	Hamilton	1m19.106s
9	Ricciardo	1m19.130s
10	Ocon	1m19.136s
11	Gasly	1m19.226s
12	Bottas	1m19.410s
13	Tsunoda	1m19.424s
14	Zhou	1m20.155s
15	Schumacher	1m20.465s

QUALIFYING 3

POS	DRIVER	TIME
1	Leclerc	1m17.868s
2	Verstappen	1m18.154s
3	Perez	1m18.240s
4	Norris	1m18.703s
5	Hamilton	1m18.825s
6	Russell	1m18.933s
7	Ricciardo	1m19.032s
8	Ocon	1m19.061s
9	Sainz	1m19.408s
10	Alonso	no time

WEATHER Sunny, air 22-24C track 26-31C

NEXT RACE

24 APRIL
EMILIA ROMAGNA GRAND PRIX

Imola

SEASON STATS

	DRIVERS' CHAMPIONSHIP	PTS	BEST FINISH	BEST QUAL
1	Leclerc	71	1	1
2	Russell	37	3	6
3	Sainz	33	2	3
4	Perez	30	2	1
5	Hamilton	28	3	5
6	Verstappen	25	1	2
7	Ocon	20	6	5
8	Norris	16	5	4
9	Magnussen	12	5	7
10	Bottas	12	6	6
11	Ricciardo	8	6	7
12	Gasly	6	8	9
13	Tsunoda	4	8	13
14	Alonso	2	9	7
15	Zhou	1	10	13
16	Albon	1	10	14
17	Schumacher	0	11	12
18	Stroll	0	12	15
19	Hulkenberg	0	12	17
20	Latifi	0	16	18
21	Vettel	0	-	17

CONSTRUCTORS' CHAMPIONSHIP

1	Ferrari	104
2	Mercedes	65
3	Red Bull	55
4	McLaren	24
5	Alpine	22
6	Alfa Romeo	13
7	Haas	12
8	AlphaTauri	10
9	Williams	1
10	Aston Martin	0

QUALIFYING BATTLE

Hamilton	**2**	1	Russell
Verstappen	**2**	1	Perez
Leclerc	**3**	0	Sainz
Ricciardo	0	**3**	**Norris**
Alonso	1	**2**	**Ocon**
Gasly	**3**	0	Tsunoda
Vettel	**1**	0	Stroll
Stroll	**1**	**1**	**Hulkenberg**
Latifi	1	**2**	**Albon**
Zhou	0	**3**	**Bottas**
Magnussen	**2**	1	Schumacher

Qualifying head-to-head taken from usual Q1/Q2/Q3 session, not the result of sprint races

WINS

Leclerc	2
Verstappen	1

POLE POSITIONS

Leclerc	2
Perez	1

FASTEST LAPS

Leclerc	3

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STARTING GRID

10 Alonso #14 *no Q3 time*	**9** Sainz #55 *1m19.408s*	**8** Ocon #31 *1m19.061s*	**7** Ricciardo #3 *1m19.032s*	**6** Russell #63 *1m18.933s*	**5** Hamilton #44 *1m18.825s*	**4** Norris #4 *1m18.703s*	**3** Perez #11 *1m18.240s*	**2** Verstappen #1 *1m18.154s*	**1** Leclerc #16 *1m17.868s*

RACE RESULTS ROUND 3/23 (58 LAPS – 190.22 MILES)

POS	DRIVER	TEAM	FINISH TIME	LED	TYRES
1	**Charles Leclerc** (MCO)	Ferrari	1h27m46.548s	58	**M**n, **H**n
2	**Sergio Perez** (MEX)	Red Bull	+20.524s		**M**n, **H**n
3	**George Russell** (GBR)	Mercedes	+25.593s		**M**n, **H**n
4	**Lewis Hamilton** (GBR)	Mercedes	+28.543s		**M**n, **H**n
5	**Lando Norris** (GBR)	McLaren-Mercedes	+53.303s		**M**n, **H**n
6	**Daniel Ricciardo** (AUS)	McLaren-Mercedes	+53.737s		**M**n, **H**n
7	**Esteban Ocon** (FRA)	Alpine-Renault	+1m01.683s		**M**n, **H**n
8	**Valtteri Bottas** (FIN)	Alfa Romeo-Ferrari	+1m08.439s		**M**n, **H**n
9	**Pierre Gasly** (FRA)	AlphaTauri-Red Bull	+1m16.221s		**M**n, **H**n
10	**Alexander Albon** (THA)	Williams-Mercedes	+1m19.382s		**H**n, **S**n
11	**Zhou Guanyu** (CHN)	Alfa Romeo-Ferrari	+1m21.695s		**M**n, **H**n
12	**Lance Stroll** (CAN)	Aston Martin-Mercedes	+1m28.598s		**H**u, **M**u, **H**u, **H**u
13	**Mick Schumacher** (DEU)	Haas-Ferrari	-1 lap/+2.263s		**M**u, **H**n
14	**Kevin Magnussen** (DNK)	Haas-Ferrari	-1 lap/+3.928s		**H**n, **M**u
15	**Yuki Tsunoda** (JPN)	AlphaTauri-Red Bull	-1 lap/+6.311s		**M**n, **H**n
16	**Nicholas Latifi** (CAN)	Williams-Mercedes	-1 lap/+10.483s		**M**n, **H**u, **H**n
17	**Fernando Alonso** (ESP)	Alpine-Renault	-1 lap/+30.521s		**H**n, **M**n, **M**n
R	**Max Verstappen** (NLD)	Red Bull	38 laps-fuel system		**M**n, **H**n
R	**Sebastian Vettel** (DEU)	Aston Martin-Mercedes	22 laps-accident		**H**u
R	**Carlos Sainz Jr** (ESP)	Ferrari	1 lap-spun off		**H**u

FASTEST LAPS

POS	DRIVER	TIME	GAP	LAP
1	**Leclerc**	1m20.260s	-	58
2	**Alonso**	1m20.846s	+0.586s	57
3	**Perez**	1m21.094s	+0.834s	58
4	**Russell**	1m21.495s	+1.235s	53
5	**Bottas**	1m21.651s	+1.391s	54
6	**Verstappen**	1m21.677s	+1.417s	37
7	**Hamilton**	1m21.886s	+1.626s	51
8	**Norris**	1m22.248s	+1.988s	55
9	**Ricciardo**	1m22.451s	+2.191s	54
10	**Ocon**	1m22.469s	+2.209s	58
11	**Zhou**	1m22.541s	+2.281s	55
12	**Albon**	1m22.589s	+2.329s	54
13	**Gasly**	1m22.731s	+2.471s	52
14	**Schumacher**	1m23.006s	+2.746s	55
15	**Magnussen**	1m23.071s	+2.811s	44
16	**Tsunoda**	1m23.342s	+3.082s	56
17	**Stroll**	1m23.592s	+3.332s	48
18	**Latifi**	1m23.882s	+3.622s	49
19	**Vettel**	1m25.189s	+4.929s	17
20	**Sainz**	1m39.027s	+18.767s	1

WEATHER Sunny, air 26-28C track 33-39C

WINNER'S AVERAGE SPEED 130.024mph **FASTEST LAP AVERAGE SPEED** 147.103mph

TYRES

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



RACE BRIEFING

GRID PENALTIES

ALBON Three-place penalty for causing a collision in the Saudi Arabian GP, then excluded from qualifying for insufficient fuel sample

STROLL Three-place penalty and two licence points for causing a collision with Latifi

RACE PENALTIES

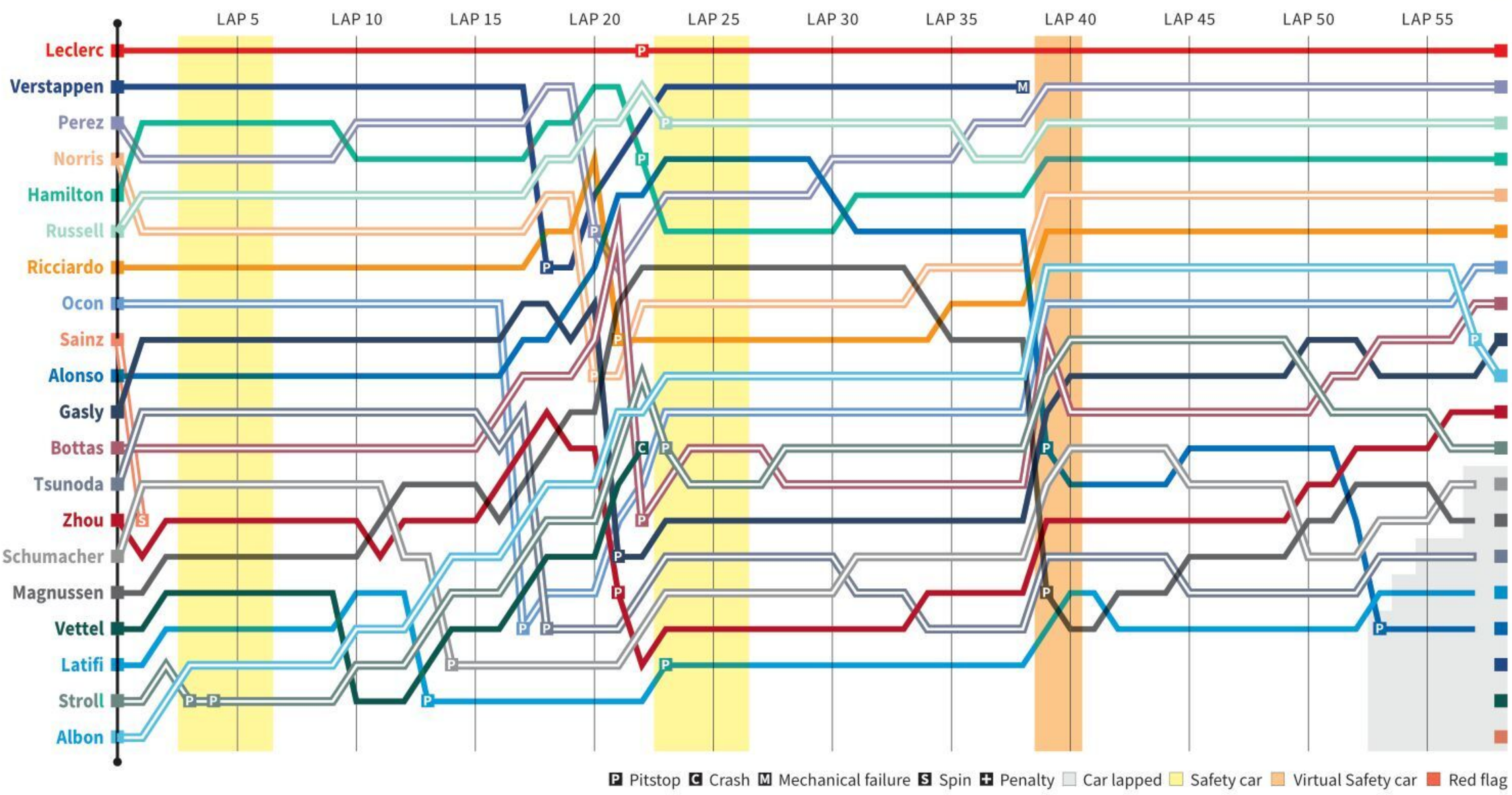
STROLL Five-second penalty and one licence point for weaving on straight

STAT

4

Leclerc now has as many world championship GP wins as Dan Gurney, Bruce McLaren and Eddie Irvine

LAP CHART What happened, when



YOU WANT THE LONG STORY? ALEX ALBON MADE HIS POINT

His remarkable 57-lap stint landed Williams a vital score in Australia and means the Thai joins race winner Charles Leclerc on a maximum

ALEX KALINAUCKAS

MERCEDES


LEWIS HAMILTON

Started **5th** — Result **4th**

9 Was the lead Mercedes driver, barring Russell's safety-car-stop fortune. Made a great start to pass Perez, and superior tyre management helped him overcut at the stops too. Felt he couldn't challenge Russell's podium because his car was overheating in his team-mate's wake.


GEORGE RUSSELL

Started **6th** — Result **3rd**

9 Nearly beat Hamilton in qualifying, did get outqualified by Norris, but made a decisive pass at the first corner and from there raced well. Lucked in on timing of second safety car, but defied Perez before wisely choosing not to fight a much faster car. Comfortable in front of Hamilton late on.

RED BULL


MAX VERSTAPPEN

Started **2nd** — Result **R**

8 Low-drag set-up choice meant a compromise on balance, and a lack of confidence in qualifying. In the race he was undone by the tyres graining before the reliability woe he'd feared got him. Hard to see what else he could have done, other than avoiding the first-stint Turn 13 lock-up that added tyre stress.


SERGIO PEREZ

Started **3rd** — Result **2nd**

7 Felt he made the wrong call on two late Q3 fliers since that meant carrying extra fuel for no gain. Getting passed by Hamilton at the first corner and again in the pitstops hurts his score, although his Turn 9 pass on the Mercedes was nifty. Hunted down Russell to rescue something for Red Bull.

FERRARI


CHARLES LECLERC

Started **1st** — Result **1st**

10 Took easy pole largely thanks to his boldness in Turn 6, then nailed the start and covered Verstappen before he retired. Running wide onto the final-corner marbles for the second restart was his only mistake, but still gains maximum marks from us because Verstappen didn't pass.


CARLOS SAINZ JR

Started **9th** — Result **R**

6 Pushing too early on hard tyres led to his Turn 9 off while fighting Schumacher, but that was his only mistake. Missing his Q3 banker to the Alonso red flag, then his car not firing up quickly ahead of the final fliers and a late pre-race steering wheel change was terrible misfortune.

McLAREN


DANIEL RICCIARDO

Started **7th** — Result **6th**

8 Ended up behind Russell in Q3. Might have got ahead with his best sectors but struggled on final set of softs. Held his ground despite start wheelspin, then put in a race-long pursuit of Norris, using DRS to make up for tyre-wear time loss. Felt this was worse on hards, but was close by the finish.


LANDO NORRIS

Started **4th** — Result **5th**

9 Rode McLaren's impressive form turnaround on the smooth track surface to score fourth on the grid. Made a "small misjudgement" with wheelspin at the start and dropped behind both Mercedes. Pushed to keep up and wore his tyres, but soaked up pressure from his chasing team-mate.

ALPINE


FERNANDO ALONSO

Started **10th** – Result **17th**

6 Must score this for his poor second stint. In qualifying he claimed he could have got in the pole hunt before the hydraulics problem led to crash. Ran strongly early in the race, but second safety car blighted his strategy. Battling in a DRS train late on ruined his mediums and so stopped again.


ESTEBAN OCON

Started **8th** — Result **7th**

6 A decent result but could have been so much more. Felt a lack of rear confidence cost him a higher grid spot, and couldn't gain on Ricciardo at the start. Did bring it home for points, but couldn't pass Albon for more than half the GP. Lift-and-coast need for rising temperatures didn't help his cause.

ALPHATAURI


PIERRE GASLY

Started **11th** — Result **9th**

7 AlphaTauri's slip back into the midfield fight made reaching Q3 tough, but had he hooked up his best Q2 sectors he'd have made it. Gained at start, then undone by stopping just before second safety car. Fought back from 14th to score, but late Turn 13 off on worn rubber gifted Bottas eighth.


YUKI TSUNODA

Started **13th** – Result **15th**

5 Struggled in Q2 with lost rear confidence, then impeded his team-mate (he said sorry) but did beat an Alfa. In the race he was another out of luck stopping just before the second safety car, but lacked pace on both the medium and hard tyres and so struggled to stay in the DRS-train scrap.



ASTON MARTIN


SEBASTIAN VETTEL

Started **17th** — Result **R**

4 Tough to score given how he's missed two races of experience with the new cars. His FP3 crash was unfortunate, then did enough on his one Q1 lap to outqualify Latifi's absent Williams. Crashed out pushing too hard in the race. Hitting the Turn 4 kerb too hard was a key mistake.


LANCE STROLL

Started **19th** – Result **12th**

3 Several things mean a three. First his FP3 shunt, after Aston made late set-up changes to cope with porpoising. In his crash with Latifi he should have been more aware of what was happening. Raced and battled well on a net two-stopper after his early stops, other than his weaving gaffe.

WILLIAMS


NICHOLAS LATIFI

Started **18th** – Result **16th**

5 Was unfortunate in his Q1 crash with Stroll. In the race he lapped at the back, even with a free second safety-car stop, struggling with graining on both compounds. It's what his team-mate did to earn points for Williams when that's such a challenge in 2022 that hurts his score the most.


ALEX ALBON

Started **20th** – Result **10th**

10 Discretion at play here: if he'd pulled his best sectors before the Q1 stoppage he'd have made Q2. Did a 57-lap race stint on the hards from last after quali fuel disqualification. Held off Ocon with many qualifying-spec laps, building a gap to seal 10th after an incredibly late stop.

ALFA ROMEO


ZHOU GUANYU

Started **14th** – Result **11th**

7 Showed well compared to Bottas. Decent qualifying with a car set up for the race, then aced the start, helping Alfa solve its previous weakness. Others gaining under the safety car hurt him in second stint and he ran out of rubber while battling, which meant he slid at Turn 2 on last lap as Albon escaped.


VALTTERI BOTTAS

Started **12th** — Result **8th**

7 Felt prioritising race set-up meant he lacked downforce to reach Q3, but he'd have beaten Gasly if he'd hooked up his best sectors. Pushed throughout the race to climb the order and make key passes. Briefly lost a place to Stroll at the VSC restart – might've accelerated quicker beforehand.

HAAS


KEVIN MAGNUSSEN

Started **16th** – Result **14th**

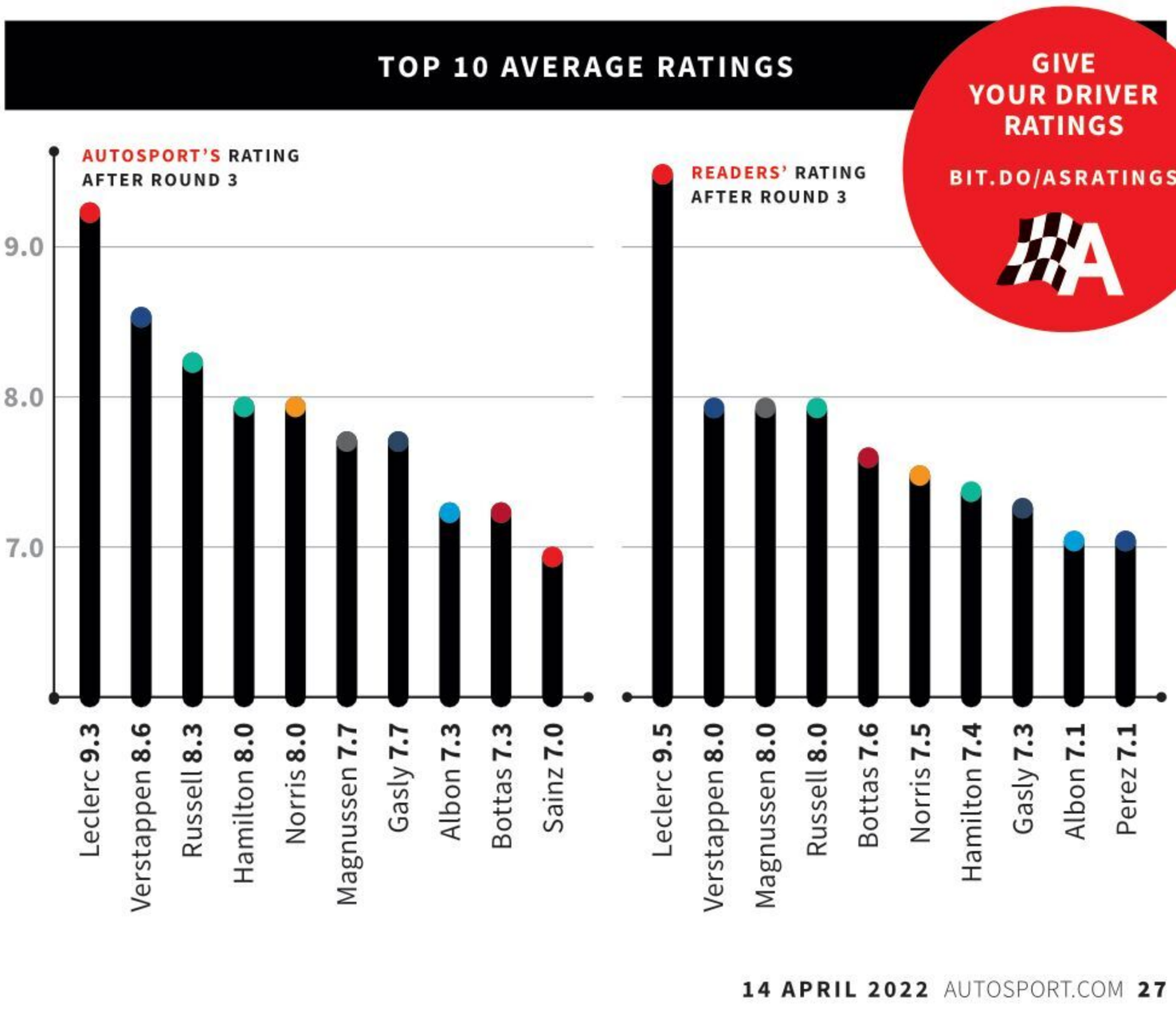
5 Battled nausea coming into the weekend, and he struggled to get into the groove, which he felt led to his Q1 exit. Much better in the race, but was undone by the second safety car wrecking his strategy of starting on the hards. Did gain with a VSC stop, but it wasn't enough to score points.


MICK SCHUMACHER

Started **15th** – Result **13th**

6 Beat Magnussen in qualifying, as Haas struggled to get the tyres into the temperature working range. In the race he lost positions with a pair of offs – at Turn 10 in short early medium running, and at Turn 1 late on the hards. His Tsunoda safety-car near-miss was scary, prompting a rules review.

TOP 10 AVERAGE RATINGS



FORMULA E ROME

Evans is the new electric emperor

Jaguar's Mitch Evans was in imperious form as he scored a Roman double to revive his bid to conquer Formula E

JAKE BOXALL-LEGGE

PHOTOGRAPHY motorsport IMAGES

GALLOWAY



Start of race one: pole winner Vandoorne (5) locks up as Frijns (4) looms

S BLOXHAM

When the Western Roman Empire fell in 476, its child emperor Romulus Augustulus was deposed, with its former lands across Europe shattered and split between numerous barbarian tribes. Rome, although later commanded by kings, viceroys and popes across its rich history, has not watched an emperor assume rule over the city in over 1500 years. Until now, it seems. (*OK, we'll let you get away with this once! — ed*)

In deference to his team-mate's complete domination of both Rome E-Prix races, Jaguar's Sam Bird declared Mitch Evans as the new Emperor of Rome. Whether Bird has the authority to formally bestow such an honour is of little relevance, such was Evans's command of the double-header around Rome's EUR district. *Veni, vidi, vici.*

In the opening three races of the Formula E season, Jaguar had been off-colour. A double-points finish in the first Diriyah race got the team off the mark, but abject results in the second Saudi race and in Mexico City left it with much to do. Jaguar needed Rome, the host of its first Formula E victory in 2019, to work its magic once again.

Not that it looked like it would happen from the outset. There were hints of Jaguar's pace in the opening brace of free practice sessions: Evans was second quickest in FP1, with Bird third fastest in FP2. But once qualifying beckoned, neither Jaguar made it into the knockout duels. Evans missed out on displacing Pascal Wehrlein from Group A's top four by a tenth of a second, while Bird was baulked by Sebastien Buemi and caught the chequered flag ahead of what was intended to be his flying run. Furious, Bird ripped off his gloves and slapped the Swiss driver's halo in the pitlane with them.

The Mercedes of Stoffel Vandoorne captured pole position, seeing off both DS Techeetahs on his road to the final; Jean-Eric Vergne was beaten by half a second in the quarter-final, while a mere 0.015s split Vandoorne and Antonio Felix da Costa in the semi to pit the Belgian against the Envision Audi of Robin Frijns. Although he just missed out on securing pole for the first race owing to a Turn 2 mistake, Frijns was in fine form and gamely queued up on the front row. Evans lined up ninth, Bird 13th.

At lights out, Evans was able to take two positions with one fell swoop off the line, dispatching both Porsches after Wehrlein and Andre Lotterer were comparatively sluggish in leaving their grid slots. The timing of that move, Evans explained, was considerably important in his run to victory.

"When you've got two team-mates together, they can work with each other," the Kiwi reflected. "And they were quite conservative at the start; they weren't really a threat for me, which allowed me to be conservative. But I also had good pace so I could keep to the guys ahead."

The Andretti BMW of Jake Dennis was next on Evans's checklist, although it was put on ice for a spell following a first-lap pile-up into the uphill Turn 7. Edoardo Mortara had been dumped out of the qualifying group stages and was looking to make up ground to preserve his championship advantage, but rashly tipped Oliver Rowland into a spin, which collected Venturi Mercedes driver Mortara's team-mate Lucas di Grassi as the two Nissans came together. Of the two, Maximilian Guenther came off worse, suffering damage that eventually contrived to tip him into the wall two corners later. Therefore, the safety car appeared.

Once the Porsche Taycan pace car pulled in after Guenther's Nissan was moved aside, Evans began hounding Dennis for position. The two were stuck together for the first 10 laps, clearing da Costa as Dennis got his elbows out more than the stewards felt he should have — he copped a five-second penalty in the process. When Dennis took his second dose of attack mode a lap later, Evans disarmed his own activation and stuck to the racing line at the hairpin centrepinned by the Marconi obelisk, moving ahead of the Andretti driver and clearing Vergne in the process. With fourth place in his pocket, Evans's next task was to reel in the leading trio of Frijns, Vandoorne and Nyck de Vries.

It was at this point when de Vries began to drop, and the reigning champion was easy prey for the Jaguar to get its teeth into. With Vandoorne and Frijns now battling fiercely over the lead, Evans used the opportunity to pick up his second attack mode and resume his pursuit of victory. »



Team game: Sam Bird played his part in Mitch Evans scoring a double

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The two in front had been trading places all through the race but, on lap 17, Vandoorne was in second and the next to fall to Evans.

After shadowing him on the run up to Turn 7, Evans hung to the outside and positioned himself within Frijns's wake, giving Vandoorne no chance to fight back. Frijns could now be forgiven for feeling hot under the collar with pressure from the charging Jag building. He was powerless to halt the inevitable on the following tour.

Evans, still with a minute and a half remaining on his attack mode duration, once more sat on the outside on the road to Turn 4, making Frijns take to the inside in preparation — but to no avail: the lead belonged to Evans and he immediately began to scarper off up the road.

"When you've got good pace and energy, you can be in control of it"

There was no answer for the Jaguar's pace; Frijns was 2.5s behind by the end of the next lap as Evans built a mammoth break that, with two of the 27 laps remaining, got him 8.9s up the road. In that moment, the Aucklander made the choice not to emulate Porsche's Mexico City tactics, in which the German squad had built up such an energy advantage that it could afford to stretch the race to an extra lap. Instead, Evans backed off on the penultimate tour to bring the lap count down to 27, a move that he explained was to "eliminate risks" and seal a hard-fought victory by 5.7s.


Evans and his Jaguar were in perfect harmony. Here, the Kiwi leads the Porsches

STALEY

"When you've got good pace and good energy, you can be in control of it," he noted. "That's what I had today. I had an energy advantage; I could use that but then opted to make the race a little bit shorter. I didn't need to, but I thought, 'It's motorsport, you eliminate risks', unlike [Mexico] where we got burned. I thought I'd just bring it home."

Frijns eventually won his battle with Vandoorne, feeling that his strategy to expend his attack mode activations early on was the right call on his way to second place. Although he felt his "fair but hard" battles with Vandoorne — and eventually Vergne — caused him to sink energy into defending his position, Frijns admitted that Evans had "dropped us dead" when the Jaguar eventually came to play.

Vandoorne agreed, explaining that Evans "was in a different league", while fourth-placed Vergne said that he elected not to fight too hard for a podium position in the event of Evans taking the race to an extra lap. But the Frenchman was convinced that "it's going to work out" in Sunday's race, a promise he looked set to deliver on after the opening sessions.

The two-time champion plonked his DS Techeetah on top of the pile in Sunday's sole free practice session, chiselling Mortara off top spot at the climax of the session. Vergne then, by the skin of his teeth, managed to get his car into the qualifying duels and rode the train all the way to the final, beating Frijns and Lotterer to book his place into a pole shootout with Dennis.

Dennis had underlined his credentials for pole by beating Evans, in his first duels appearance, by half a second to make the final. But he failed to replicate the magic of his semi-final lap, giving Vergne ample leeway to claim his 14th Formula E pole. »

GLORY TO THE UNDERDOGS

Due to the eclectic nature of the second race, and thanks to some canny energy saving, NIO 333 finally got off the mark for the season as Oliver Turvey crossed the line in a scintillating seventh. Sure, the veteran Brit was assisted by a good helping of attrition and time penalties served by Nyck de Vries and Lucas di Grassi, but the Anglo-Chinese squad was delighted to bag its first points – its haul of six added to later when Oliver Askew also received a penalty to lift Dan Ticktum into the top 10.

"We just executed the race perfectly," said Turvey. "We took opportunities when there were incidents, and everything worked out really well. To start in P22 and finish P7, it's an amazing result. It feels like a small victory for us."


Joy for Turvey who was in seventh heaven in Rome

GALLOWAY

Dragon Penske's Sergio Sette Camara also starred, getting up to 10th on the grid – but it could have even yielded a spot in the duels. The Brazilian was on course to reach them in the first qualifying session but encountered a slow Nick Cassidy in the final sector, and his chance of nudging Jean-Eric Vergne out of the top four in the second day's groups ended at the chicane when he hit the wall.

Of the 11 teams, only Dragon is yet to score, while Mahindra's Alexander Sims is also still without a point. The British driver is "a little bit lost and lacking in confidence. We need to understand where that is coming from and make those incremental improvements."

IN THE HEADLINES

PROBLEMS FOR THE CHAMP

A podium contender early in Saturday's Rome race, Nyck de Vries cited a lack of race pace pushing him into a "downward cycle" as his Mercedes fell through the order. "When you're struggling for pace, you're spending more energy and the tyres are overheating," the Dutchman explained, copping a three-place grid penalty for Sunday after contact with Pascal Wehrlein, and a 10-second penalty in race two for a skirmish with Sergio Sette Camara.

CASSIDY'S CHARGE DENIED

Envision Audi racer Nick Cassidy turned in a magnificent display in Rome's second race, rising from 18th on the grid to be well in the mix for a good haul of points, before his charge was ended by his crash with Sam Bird. "I'm super-frustrated because we've had really big braking issues all weekend and I haven't been able to do the push laps," said a disappointed Cassidy. "But in the race you don't brake, and my car was good."

FRIJNS FRUSTRATED

Cassidy's team-mate Robin Frijns reckoned the final safety car in race two robbed him of back-to-back second places, feeling he had an energy advantage over Jean-Eric Vergne: "If it wasn't for the last safety car [I'd have beaten him] because I had 1% more than JEV and was quite close and ready to overtake him. But at the end, I'm happy to be on the podium again."

DENNIS OUT OF LUCK

Jake Dennis showed a great deal of promise in qualifying with his Andretti BMW in Rome but left the Italian capital without troubling the scoresheet after a miserable weekend, which ended thanks to a "divebomb" from Venturi Mercedes driver Lucas di Grassi. "We had a good qualifying car, but the race car just wasn't there," said Dennis (below). "We just lacked efficiency. It's a difficult one to take."


GALLOWAY


BLOXHAM

True to Vergne's Saturday proclamation, it rather appeared to be working out just fine. Although Dennis put the screw on Vergne at the start, the polesitter was able to bat him away and start to build up a lead, while the Brit spent his time in a futile bid to keep Lotterer behind. The Andretti team had got its sums wrong in race one and was hoping for a points reprieve in the second Rome event, but Dennis struggled for pace and Evans was soon past him too.

Once more, Evans was out for blood. He cleared Lotterer on the seventh lap and began to cut the lead to Vergne before the race was interrupted for a safety car, brought out while Antonio Giovinazzi's unresponsive Dragon Penske was cleared. After just a lap sitting behind the Porsche Taycan, Evans kept on Vergne's coat tails through the restart, and on the 11th lap simply breezed past the Techeetah. From there, you could be forgiven for expecting Evans to waltz off into the distance once again, but the nature of the change in attack mode activation threw an extra dimension into the mix, as Formula E introduced a single eight-minute activation for the second encounter to introduce a different tactical approach.

Frijns used his on lap 12 to rocket into the lead, having passed Dennis beforehand, picking his way past Lotterer, Vergne and Evans in quick succession to continue his excellent weekend. Lotterer duly followed suit on the next lap, which set his own upward trajectory into motion, prompting Vergne to do the same and drop behind Bird.

Evans, however, would not be moved. His plan was to wait until lap 18, then take the wide line at the Marconi hairpin and begin a late-race ascent once his rivals had exhausted their own supply of extra power. Then Alexander Sims came to a stop at Turn 14, prompting the safety car's return and giving Jaguar a colossal scare, since it became apparent that Evans might not be able to cycle through the full attack mode duration by the end. To ensure drivers use the power boost, arming attack mode can't be done under a safety car, and nor can a driver end a race with attack mode time remaining without incurring a penalty.

Luckily for Evans, the race was going to extra time; Giovinazzi's and Sims's stoppages topped the timer up with an extra five minutes and 15 seconds of racing. With another swift safety car period over, Evans finally took his attack mode on lap 20 to drop to fourth behind Vergne – and, thanks to the efforts of Bird, nobody else. Vergne was quickly disposed of on the run to Turn 4, allowing Evans to charge up to Lotterer


Second in race one and third in race two was a decent return for Frijns
GALLOWAY



Polesitter Vergne heads Jake Dennis in the early stages of the second race

"Sam really helped me today, so I owe this one to him. A dream weekend"

and Frijns by the start of the 22nd lap. Seven corners later, Evans was back in the lead after another swashbuckling display.

Not that it was over quite yet. Bird, for all his work in doing Evans a few solid favours, was unable to react in time to a late Nick Cassidy charge and unceremoniously dumped the 'other' Kiwi into the Turn 7 wall. Another short, sharp safety car stood in Evans's way of victory, with Vergne now looking to harry him after clearing the Frijns-Lotterer duo. But Evans had too much energy and cruised to the double.

"Sam really helped me today, so I owe this one to him," Evans gushed. "He held off JEV a little bit, not intentionally but what he had to do just to make sure I had a nice gap. It's been a dream weekend."

In firm juxtaposition to Evans's joy, Vergne labelled his race a "mess", getting embroiled in a fraught radio discussion over strategy despite moving to the top of the standings. Frijns, meanwhile, collected another podium to complete a consistent weekend.

Evans, however, could celebrate more after 'treating' himself to a zero-alcohol beer following his race one win; after all, only the finest wines would be befitting of Rome's new emperor. He came into the weekend on a miserable run; he saw off his competition – and he absolutely conquered.

NEXT REPORT

MONACO
5 MAY ISSUE

POWERED BY motorsport STATS



Vergne now heads the standings despite a "mess" of a race two

STALEY

RESULTS ROUND 3/10, ROME (ITA), 9-10 APRIL (27 LAPS – 56.706 MILES)

POS	DRIVER	TEAM/CAR	TIME
1	**Mitch Evans** (NZL)	Jaguar Racing / Jaguar I-TYPE 5	51m59.632s
2	**Robin Frijns** (NLD)	Envision Racing / Audi e-tron FE07	+5.703s
3	**Stoffel Vandoorne** (BEL)	Mercedes / Mercedes EQ Silver Arrow 02	+6.966s
4	**Jean-Eric Vergne** (FRA)	DS Techeetah / DS E-Tense FE21	+7.553s
5	**Sam Bird** (GBR)	Jaguar Racing / Jaguar I-TYPE 5	+7.877s
6	**Antonio Felix da Costa** (PRT)	DS Techeetah / DS E-Tense FE21	+8.971s
7	**Edoardo Mortara** (CHE)	Venturi Racing / Mercedes EQ Silver Arrow 02	+13.356s
8	**Pascal Wehrlein** (DEU)	Porsche / Porsche 99X Electric	+14.216s
9	**Nick Cassidy** (NZL)	Envision Racing / Audi e-tron FE07	+14.543s
10	**Andre Lotterer** (DEU)	Porsche / Porsche 99X Electric	+19.339s
11	**Lucas di Grassi** (BRA)	Venturi Racing / Mercedes EQ Silver Arrow 02	+19.731s
12	**Alexander Sims** (GBR)	Mahindra Racing / Mahindra M7Electro	+24.758s
13	**Jake Dennis** (GBR)	Andretti / BMW iFE.21	+25.029s
14	**Oliver Askew** (USA)	Andretti / BMW iFE.21	+28.039s
15	**Sergio Sette Camara** (BRA)	Dragon Penske Autosport / Penske EV-5	+28.645s
16	**Sebastien Buemi** (CHE)	Nissan e.dams / Nissan IM03	+28.865s
17	**Oliver Turvey** (GBR)	NIO 333 / NIO 333 001	+58.372s
18	**Dan Ticktum** (GBR)	NIO 333 / NIO 333 001	+1m19.306s
19	**Antonio Giovinazzi** (ITA)	Dragon Penske Autosport / Penske EV-5	+1m37.231s
R	**Nyck de Vries** (NLD)	Mercedes / Mercedes EQ Silver Arrow 02	25 laps-accident damage
R	**Oliver Rowland** (GBR)	Mahindra Racing / Mahindra M7Electro	17 laps-accident damage
R	**Maximilian Gunther** (DEU)	Nissan e.dams / Nissan IM03	0 laps-accident

Winner's average speed 65.438mph. **Fastest lap** **di Grassi** 1m41.653s, 74.378mph.

QUALIFYING **1 Vandoorne 1m39.151s**; 2 **Frijns** 1m39.500s; 3 **de Vries** 1m38.949s; 4 **da Costa** 1m38.986s; 5 **Vergne** 1m39.105s; 6 **Dennis** 1m39.288s; 7 **Wehrlein** 1m39.363s; 8 **Lotterer** 1m39.482s; 9 **Evans** 1m40.375s; 10 **Rowland** 1m40.748s; 11 **Mortara** 1m40.554s; 12 **di Grassi** 1m40.770s; 13 **Bird** 1m40.836s; 14 **Cassidy** 1m40.833s; 15 **Sims** 1m40.930s; 16 **Gunther** 1m40.999s; 17 **Buemi** 1m40.945s; 18 **Turvey** 1m41.304s; 19 **Askew** 1m40.950s; 20 **Ticktum** 1m41.410s; 21 **Giovinazzi** 1m41.756s; 22 **Sette Camara** 1m41.570s*.

RACE 2 (27 LAPS – 56.706 MILES)

1 Evans 52m55.224s; 2 **Vergne** +0.584s; 3 **Frijns** +1.606s; 4 **Lotterer** +2.093s; 5 **Vandoorne** +2.756s; 6 **Wehrlein** +4.655s; 7 **Turvey** +7.097s; 8 **di Grassi** +8.680s; 9 **Buemi** +8.796s; 10 **Ticktum** +11.130s; 11 **Gunther** +11.221s; 12 **Sette Camara** +12.309s; 13 **da Costa** +13.134s; 14 **de Vries** +14.207s; 15 **Askew** +20.429s; R **Bird** 26 laps-accident damage; R **Cassidy** 25 laps-accident damage; R **Dennis** 21 laps-accident damage; R **Sims** 16 laps-accident; R **Rowland** 14 laps-accident damage; R **Mortara** 7 laps-accident; R **Giovinazzi** 7 laps-mechanical.

Winner's average speed 64.292mph. **Fastest lap** **Frijns** 1m41.256s, 74.670mph.

QUALIFYING **1 Vergne 1m38.268s**; 2 **Dennis** 1m38.489s; 3 **Lotterer** 1m38.361s; 4 **Evans** 1m38.499s; 5 **Bird** 1m38.425s; 6 **Frijns** 1m38.433s; 7 **Wehrlein** 1m38.566s; 8 **Vandoorne** 1m38.776s; 9 **da Costa** 1m39.765s; 10 **Sette Camara** 1m40.012s; 11 **Mortara** 1m39.880s; 12 **di Grassi** 1m40.065s; 13 **de Vries** 1m39.852s*; 14 **Rowland** 1m40.068s; 15 **Buemi** 1m40.114s; 16 **Gunther** 1m40.328s; 17 **Askew** 1m40.165s; 18 **Cassidy** 1m40.375s; 19 **Sims** 1m40.469s; 20 **Ticktum** 1m40.565s; 21 **Giovinazzi** 1m40.574s; 22 **Turvey** 1m40.749s. * = grid penalty.

CHAMPIONSHIP **1 Vergne 60**; 2 **Frijns** 58; 3 **Vandoorne** 56; 4 **Evans** 51; 5 **Mortara** 49; 6 **Lotterer** 43; 7 **Wehrlein** 42; 8 **de Vries** 38; 9 **di Grassi** 29; 10 **Dennis** 26.



INDYCAR LONG BEACH

Newgarden hoses them down

The two-time champion wasn't the quickest, and neither was his Penske-run car. But he and the team were fast and smart to deliver another victory

DAVID MALSHER-LOPEZ

PHOTOGRAPHY motorsport IMAGES

Josef Newgarden has scored many fine victories among his 22, but his conquering of the 47th Grand Prix of Long Beach was one of his greatest triumphs. By no means did Team Penske have the best package around the classic 1.968-mile street course — this is still an Andretti Autosport track. But the 2017 and 2019 champion was fast and error-free, and the team's strategy and execution of its duties was similarly flawless. All those qualities prevailed in qualifying and the race.

Saturday's race against the clock laid the foundation for the battle. Colton Herta, last year's winner, took pole position by almost half a second, the Firestone Fast Six shootout having been ruined by Romain Grosjean making an error as he tried to match his Andretti team-mate's time and crashing at Turn 5 after falling 0.196s short on his first attempt.

Another of the Honda-powered Andretti aces, Alexander Rossi, should have joined Herta on the front row with a time around 0.15s off the youngster's best, but Grosjean's red flag interrupted Rossi's run. Grosjean, who had only made it through to Q3 by outpacing Will Power by the margin of 0.0001s, when the Aussie's true fastest lap was ruined by traffic backing up at the final Turn 11 hairpin, had his best times deleted and would thus start sixth, while Rossi's only flier left him fifth. Immediately ahead for the start would be reigning series champion Alex Palou of Chip Ganassi Racing, and Felix Rosenqvist, who for the second straight weekend appeared to have the measure of his exuberant team-mate at Arrow McLaren SP, Pato O'Ward.

On the front row with Herta was Newgarden, who had looked a tick off fellow



LEVITT



ABBOTT

Chevrolet-engined Penske stars Power and Scott McLaughlin (the series leader) in practice but found a clear lap – and delivered when it mattered. Grosjean's faux pas and how it compromised Rossi thus elevated Newgarden to the front row.

After seeing off a stern challenge from Palou down to Turn 1 on lap one, Newgarden tried to keep pace with leader Herta for the first stint of the race. As in the second half of the 2021 event here (the season finale), it looked more as if Herta was merely keeping his pursuers at arm's length, without taking too much life from his Firestone alternate tyres. He surely had this all in hand… Didn't he?

After the race, Newgarden said: "You know, the funniest bit about this whole weekend was when I left this press conference yesterday after qualifying, there was some dude from the *LA Times* and he came up to me and he goes, 'Hey, Josef, Josef, one question: at what point does Colton Herta check out tomorrow? Like when is that?' And I thought it was just such a bizarre question that I went to bed last night, and I go, 'You know what? That kid is not checking out tomorrow; there's no way! He's just not going to do it after I heard this from this person.' And he didn't."

Newgarden added later: "Man, that was ballsy to say that. You've got to be really confident to think that in the IndyCar Series you know exactly what's going to happen. I would not bank on that these days, not in IndyCar."

A fair assessment, exemplified by the first round of pitstops. Palou was brought in after only 27 laps and, on his second tour on fresh black tyres, he delivered the fastest lap of the race. Herta went two laps longer and emerged behind the Ganassi car, and gathered fresh salt in the wound when Newgarden went a lap longer and emerged between them. Herta admitted that he "didn't know how that happened".

The Andretti driver worked hard to separate Newgarden from second, but couldn't quite get the run he needed before the best outbraking zones. As they tussled during the second stint, Palou initially briefly pulled out a three-second lead, but the champ was also playing it canny, well aware that, by stopping slightly early, he needed to save fuel.

Behind this trio was Palou's Ganassi team-mate Marcus Ericsson, who had demoted Grosjean and Power at the start, and then added Rossi to his list of scalps toward the end of the first stint, as the Californian's pace faded after muscling past Rosenqvist. Ericsson was well able to stay clear of six-time champion team-mate Scott Dixon because the Kiwi had stopped on lap 21, his famed #9 crew rolling the dice to promote its driver from his wretched 16th on the grid after a major set-up error in qualifying. Dixon ran ahead of Grosjean at the start of the second stint, but the need to save fuel meant he had to concede a position to the Frenchman on lap 47 of the 85-lap race.

Tension mounted as the round of second

"You know what? That kid Herta is not checking out tomorrow. There's no way!"

stops approached, and at the end of lap 55 Palou was again the first of the leaders to pit, taking on a set of scrubbed primaries. A lap later, Ericsson and Grosjean stopped too but, while the Swede also chose scrubbed blacks, Grosjean – who had started on used 'reds' (softer alternate-compound tyres) – went for fresh alternates.

Herta was trying to make time on Palou and Newgarden on lap 56, his in-lap, when he missed his braking point for Turn 9, locked up his inside-front and pushed out to the wall on the exit of the corner, eliminating himself. The mortified Herta admitted it was all his own error while, despite the debris, Race Control held off on throwing a full-course caution in order to allow all to finish their pitstops.

Newgarden stopped on lap 57, and emerged a car length ahead of Palou. The Ganassi driver, who had two laps' worth of temperature on his rubber, tried alongside cold-tyred Newgarden into Turn 5, and then around the outside into Turn 6, but the Penske driver held firm and stayed ahead. »

Then Simon Pagenaud made a failed attempt to pass Takuma Sato at the Fountain turn (Turn 3), and dumped his Meyer Shank Racing car among the flowers, forcing the hand of race director Kyle Novak to throw out the yellows.

That allowed Ericsson, Grosjean and Power to close up but, following the lap 66 restart, Ericsson spun exiting Turn 4 and clipped the concrete wall, bending his suspension. That allowed Grosjean and Power into third and fourth respectively but, when Ericsson moved right to park in the safe zone, he accidentally got in the way

"If you fight really hard and you come with a good game plan you can get the job done"



of Dixon, who'd lost out to Power in the recent pit exchange, and that lost momentum for the senior Ganassi driver allowed O'Ward to sneak through into fifth.

Grosjean was desperately trying to take advantage of his fresh reds, and tried to pass Palou around the outside into Turn 1 on lap 69. He took only one more lap to get a better exit off the final hairpin so he was much further ahead of the champion into Turn 1, able to carve across from the outside to claim second and home in on Newgarden.

But when the yellow flew on lap 76 for a crash at Turn 8 involving Jimmie Johnson and rookie David Malukas, Grosjean was running out of time, and was completely out of push-to-pass boost. His only chance was at the final restart on lap 80, when P2P wasn't activated.

But Newgarden was wise to the plans of his foe and, despite running wide at a couple of corners, the Penske driver remained in command. Grosjean was forced to settle for second – his fourth podium finish in IndyCar – while staving off Palou. The matter was put beyond doubt one lap early, in fact, because Sato had a shunt at Turn 8 and couldn't get restarted, ensuring the final lap was run under yellow.

"The first yellow [in the closing stages], he had a definite tyre advantage with the reds," said Newgarden of battling Grosjean, "but then he was out of push-to-pass and I was too, to be quite honest. I think I had two seconds left leading into that last restart, so I didn't really have any either.

"But his tyres were just not quite as good as at the first restart, so I think I had a better opportunity to hold ground, whereas that first restart I was really vulnerable and fortunately we just hung on. I had to make sure that if I got off line, if I was defending, I wanted to make someone go to the outside. The outside seemed to be the worst place on track. You could deal with the inside marbling and off-line dirt a lot better than the outside. It was tricky."

In fourth, Power admitted he didn't have

GRIPPING UP IN CALIFORNIA



Extreme heat on Friday – ambient nudging toward 100F, and track temp at 130F – left many drivers puzzled as to why they were able to turn track-record threatening times. Running exclusively on primary tyres – Firestone's harder, more durable but less grippy compound – drivers were able to eclipse Colton Herta's best time from FP1 at last year's overcast finale by a gnat's over two seconds. Some cited new sealant at certain corners as the reason for the improvement, others gave credit to Firestone's improved street-course tyre compound, while still more attributed it to IMSA's Michelin rubber on corner exit also working well with the sealant and providing improved traction for IndyCar's Firestones.

Whatever the case, it was clear that Helio Castroneves's qualifying record from 2017 would be under threat, especially if the temperature sank to 75F on Saturday. The Brazilian's current team-mate at Meyer Shank Racing-Honda, Simon Pagenaud, set the pace on Friday and should have started in the first couple of rows but got held up by Scott McLaughlin in Q2. On Friday he said: "A lot of it is how the tyres are going to suit the track, how hot the track is… When it's colder, the tyre actually doesn't overheat and produces more grip for you and the downforce works better also."

The ambient temperature did indeed drop to 75F on Saturday and, despite Castroneves setting his benchmark when IndyCars ran with downforce-drenched manufacturer aerokits, Herta improved the qualifying record by around 0.9s.

Oddly, race day's even lower temperatures – 67F peak – didn't help keep the Firestone reds intact, so another layer of mystery was added to tyre performance on IndyCar's temporary tracks.

POWERED BY motorsport STATS



DOLE



GALSTAD

quite enough to tackle the lead trio but was reasonably content with his third top-four finish of the year, which is his most consistent three-race opening to a season since his championship year in 2014. He had to work hard to hold off O'Ward after the final restart, but he ultimately succeeded, partly due to the Mexican watching his mirrors for Dixon.

The Penske driver who was mad at himself was erstwhile points leader McLaughlin, who has now been replaced at the top by Newgarden. The series sophomore had his qualifying ruined by Ericsson and so qualified ninth, then failed to complete a lap in the race day warm-up due to a suspected electrical problem. The team elected to change his engine, and his decision to start the race on primaries looked set to pay off when he emerged from the first stops ahead of Grosjean and Power. Then the Kiwi clipped the wall at the final hairpin and dropped to 20th before recovering to finish 14th.

Newgarden graciously said: "Alex Palou was super-fast today. I thought he was a very deserving winner if it would have played out that way." But he admitted he was proud of his latest triumph.

"Sometimes you might not be quite the quickest, but if you fight really hard and you come with a good gameplan you can get the job done, and I feel like that's how we performed this weekend."

NEXT REPORT

BARBER MOTORSPORTS PARK
5 MAY ISSUE

RESULTS ROUND 3/16, LONG BEACH (USA), 10 APRIL (85 LAPS – 167.280 MILES)

POS	DRIVER	TEAM / CAR	TIME
1	**Josef Newgarden** (USA)	Team Penske / Dallara-Chevrolet	1h46m48.0102s
2	**Romain Grosjean** (FRA)	Andretti Autosport / Dallara-Honda	+1.2869s
3	**Alex Palou** (ESP)	Chip Ganassi Racing / Dallara-Honda	+1.7594s
4	**Will Power** (AUS)	Team Penske / Dallara-Chevrolet	+2.9654s
5	**Pato O'Ward** (MEX)	Arrow McLaren SP / Dallara-Chevrolet	+3.7122s
6	**Scott Dixon** (NZL)	Chip Ganassi Racing / Dallara-Honda	+5.0605s
7	**Graham Rahal** (USA)	Rahal Letterman Lanigan Racing / Dallara-Honda	+5.3931s
8	**Alexander Rossi** (USA)	Andretti Autosport / Dallara-Honda	+7.3084s
9	**Helio Castroneves** (BRA)	Meyer Shank Racing / Dallara-Honda	+8.9521s
10	**Kyle Kirkwood** (USA)	AJ Foyt Enterprises / Dallara-Chevrolet	+12.8631s
11	**Felix Rosenqvist** (SWE)	Arrow McLaren SP / Dallara-Chevrolet	+14.2930s
12	**Conor Daly** (USA)	Ed Carpenter Racing / Dallara-Chevrolet	+15.2177s
13	**Rinus van Kalmthout** (NLD)	Ed Carpenter Racing / Dallara-Chevrolet	+16.2460s
14	**Scott McLaughlin** (NZL)	Team Penske / Dallara-Chevrolet	+17.9291s
15	**Jack Harvey** (GBR)	Rahal Letterman Lanigan Racing / Dallara-Honda	+18.7807s
16	**Tatiana Calderon** (COL)	AJ Foyt Enterprises / Dallara-Chevrolet	-1 lap
17	**Takuma Sato** (JPN)	Dale Coyne Racing / Dallara-Honda	83 laps-accident
18	**Christian Lundgaard** (DNK)	Rahal Letterman Lanigan Racing / Dallara-Honda	-2 laps
19	**Simon Pagenaud** (FRA)	Meyer Shank Racing / Dallara-Honda	-4 laps
20	**Jimmie Johnson** (USA)	Chip Ganassi Racing / Dallara-Honda	73 laps-accident
21	**David Malukas** (USA)	Dale Coyne Racing / Dallara-Honda	72 laps-accident
22	**Marcus Ericsson** (SWE)	Chip Ganassi Racing / Dallara-Honda	66 laps-accident
23	**Colton Herta** (USA)	Andretti Autosport / Dallara-Honda	55 laps-accident
24	**Callum Ilott** (GBR)	Juncos Hollinger Racing / Dallara-Chevrolet	55 laps-accident
25	**Devlin DeFrancesco** (CAN)	Andretti Autosport / Dallara-Honda	35 laps-accident
26	**Dalton Kellett** (CAN)	AJ Foyt Enterprises / Dallara-Chevrolet	5 laps-accident

Winner's average speed 93.977mph. **Fastest lap** **Palou** 1m07.2359s, 105.372mph.

Q3 **1 Herta 1m05.3095s**; 2 **Newgarden** 1m05.7550s; 3 **Palou** 1m05.8667s; 4 **Rosenqvist** 1m05.9349s; 5 **Rossi** 1m06.0674s; 6 **Grosjean** no time.

Q2 **Herta 1m05.4057s**; **Rossi** 1m05.5775s; **Rosenqvist** 1m05.6344s; **Palou** 1m05.7662s; **Newgarden** 1m05.8194s; **Grosjean** 1m05.8744s; 7 **Power** 1m05.8745s; 8 **Ericsson** 1m05.9548s; 9 **McLaughlin** 1m06.0507s; 10 **Pagenaud** 1m06.0678s; 11 O'**Ward** 1m06.0726s; 12 **Kirkwood** 1m06.2604s.

Q1 – GROUP 1 **Herta 1m05.7283s**; **Rossi** 1m05.8363s; **Rosenqvist** 1m06.1005s; **McLaughlin** 1m06.1076s; **Kirkwood** 1m06.4676s; **Ericsson** 1m06.5757s; 13 **Rahal** 1m06.6896s; 15 **van Kalmthout** 1m06.7049s; 18 **Malukas** 1m06.7925s; 20 **Harvey** 1m06.9708s; 22 **Sato** 1m07.1001s; 23 **DeFrancesco** 1m06.7418s*; 25 **Johnson** 1m09.0287s.

Q1 – GROUP 2 **Grosjean 1m05.7468s**; **Pagenaud** 1m05.8908s; **Power** 1m06.0788s; **Newgarden** 1m06.0819s; **Palou** 1m06.1452s; O'**Ward** 1m06.1781s; 14 **Castroneves** 1m06.2467s; 16 **Dixon** 1m06.3241s; 17 **Daly** 1m06.4489s; 19 **Lundgaard** 1m06.5049s; 21 **Ilott** 1m06.6672s; 24 **Kellett** 1m06.7679s; 26 **Calderon** 1m07.4789s. * = grid penalty.

CHAMPIONSHIP **1 Newgarden 118**; 2 **McLaughlin** 113; 3 **Palou** 103; 4 **Power** 102; 5 **Dixon** 83; 6 **Grosjean** 75; 7 **van Kalmthout** 67; 8 **Ericsson** 66; 9 **O'Ward** 63; 10 **Rahal** 60.



Bryant celebrates after snatching a last-gasp victory from Hall at the end of the Surtees Trophy contest

GOODWOOD MEMBERS' MEETING

Bryant ambushes Hall in Lola vs McLaren thriller

As Ukrainian flags fluttered above the pits in the sunshine, historic sports-prototype stars delivered the greatest modern-era MM finish

MARCUS PYE

March 19 1960: six-time world motorcycle racing champion John Surtees's stunning second place to Jim Clark on his car racing debut in Ken Tyrrell's Formula Junior Cooper at the 39th British Automobile Racing Club Members' Meeting was a landmark in Goodwood Motor Circuit's history. Big John was a Formula 1 rising star and added another two-wheeled crown by year's end, but his 1966 Can-Am title-winning days in a Lola T70 Spyder were pulled into focus at last weekend's 79th MM, the eighth of its GRRC heyday.

April 10 2022: the mesmerising high-octane battle for Surtees Trophy sports-prototype honours between Rob Hall in Andrew Wareing's Nickey Chevrolet McLaren M1A and Olly Bryant in Lash McCall's Dana Chevrolet T70, which had raged through Saturday's practice, was resolved on the exit of Lavant corner on the final lap of Sunday's race, when Bryant squeezed ahead to win by 0.443 seconds.

Hall had led from lap two and repelled the tenacious Mark Shaw in another M1A for eight breathless laps before the Scot touched the grass at Madgwick, advantaging the shadowing Bryant. "That's motor racing," grinned Hall. "As leader I was always first to find the traffic." Plotting a way past the T70s of Ewen Sergison and Ian Simmonds, engrossed in their own battle for sixth, then thundering through the kink in their mirrors, side by side with Bryant, presaged the greatest modern Members' Meeting finish.

The podium trio were among 12 handed three-place grid penalties for technical non-compliance in practice, which left Rob Huff, German Christian Glaesel and Dutchman Olivier Hart populating a photogenic Ford GT40 front row. Hall and Bryant — both deep into the 1m18s — composed themselves on row two. Huff did well to lead the first lap and finish fourth ahead of Glaesel.

Lotus Eleven drivers won more MM races between 1956 and 1962 than those representing any other marque across its 71-event period history. It was apposite therefore that Andrew Kirkaldy aced Saturday evening's Robert Brooks Trophy in fellow Scot Sandy Watson's example. Following engine failure in practice, Martin O'Connell's



Davies leads at the start of Gerry Marshall enduro but Tetley's Chevy will soon pounce

STYLES



Rainsford won Weslake Cup after Colburn went off in his similar Lenham

HAWKINS

J BLOXHAM/MOTORSPORT IMAGES

"'That's motor racing,' grinned Hall. 'As leader I was always first to find the traffic'"

team changed its 1460cc Coventry-Climax FWB unit and the diff in the nick of time, enabling the pro to start from 15th.

Poleman Billy Bellinger in Susan Ahlers's 1216cc FWE-powered Lola Mk1 Prototype — rolled here in 1958 by creator Eric Broadley — was outdragged by Martin Stretton in Philip Champion's 1460cc Lotus streamliner as the Union Flag fell. Unfazed, Bellinger scooted back ahead into Madgwick, then strove to extend an early lead over Stretton, Canadian Ian Dalglish (Lotus 17), Nick Finburgh in Peter Adams's Lola Mk1 (winner of the final period MM race with Dickie Metcalfe up) and the Lotuses of Italian Andrea Stortoni and Malcolm Gammons.

The tiny sports-racers jostling down the Lavant Straight, bright sunshine glinting off their bodywork, made a wonderful sight, but Kirkaldy was on the warpath. Seventh inside a lap, he carved swiftly through the tight gaggle until only Bellinger's highly polished Lola lay ahead. "My biggest fear was a 1500 nibbling at me on the straights," said Bellinger, powerless to resist a clinical pass into the kink before St Mary's on lap seven. Dalglish did well to protect third, tantalisingly just beyond reach of Finburgh, Stretton (who Finburgh repassed brilliantly) and Stortoni. Best of three East Sussex-built Elvas was Malcolm Paul's MkV in 16th.

Saturday's Gerry Marshall Trophy 'pro-am' feature promised a classic Ford versus General Motors V8 slugfest. Jason Plato's pole »

Dynamic demos: special Porsches and F1 'V10s'



STYLES

Regular Le Mans 24 Hours attendees of a certain age spectating on Goodwood's main straight at dusk on Saturday were transported back to the 1980s when 20 or so Porsche 956 and 962Cs took to the track. It was difficult not to be reminded of a period in those halcyon days when the German manufacturer's Group C design ruled the French enduro as the pack burbled past behind a pace vehicle in the first of two demos over the Members' Meeting weekend.

Porsche brought both the 1982 Le Mans-winning 956 and the victorious 962C from 1987. Also out on track was the famous Newman-sponsored 956 that claimed victory with Joest Racing in the great race in both 1984 and 1985 (above, right).

"John Watson made a rare appearance at the wheel of a racing car"

Among the drivers for the demonstrations that celebrated the 40th anniversary of one of the most iconic sportscars ever were sometime Porsche factory driver John Watson, making a rare appearance at the wheel of a racing car, and Anthony Reid.

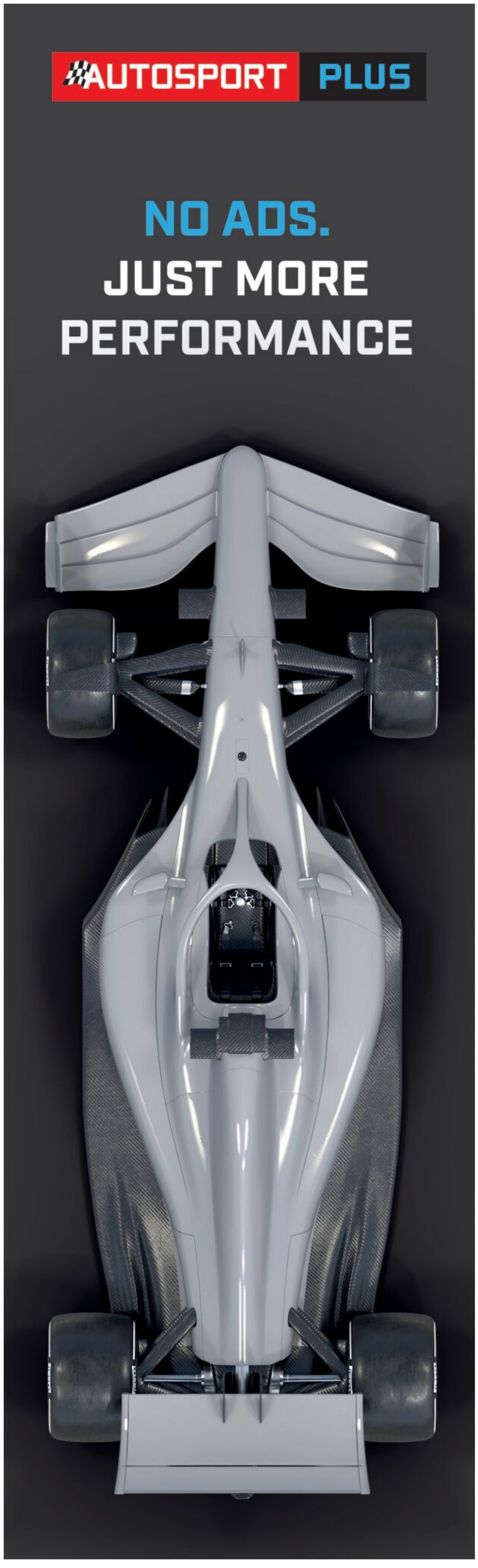
The Porsches' gruff turbocharged flat-sixes heightened the shrill note of 'V10 era' F1 engines. Two beautiful Jordans ran: Steve Griffiths's Peugeot-powered 195 and American Michael Fitzgerald's 194 (with Judd instead of Hart motivation). Alastair McCaig made sparks fly in a Damon Hill Brabham-Judd BT60B, while Jon Hughes's run in Jamie Constable's Tyrrell-Yamaha 021 was a 60th birthday treat.

Bruno Senna returned with uncle Ayrton's Honda V10-engined 1990 McLaren MP4/5B (below, leading) and Matt Wrigley exercised an MP4/7. British Touring Car racer Jake Hill made his 'F1 debut' in Fred Fatien's Footwork Arrows-Mugen Honda FA14, but had to be patient since it wouldn't start on Saturday.

GARY WATKINS AND MARCUS PYE



J BLOXHAM/MOTORSPORT IMAGES





J BLOXHAM/MOTORSPORT IMAGES

time in Craig Davies's five-litre Mustang — the first 100mph MM touring car lap — shaded Alex Buncombe and Olly Bryant in 5.7-litre Chevrolet Camaros. It didn't disappoint, Davies showing who was boss in the Sub-Zero Wolf Mustang before Buncombe's partner Jack Tetley blasted past at Fordwater in Grant Reid's Chevy, the brakes of which Crowne Racing's crew finished replacing just minutes before.

The race was thrown into confusion when 2009 Le Mans winner David Brabham, "blinking" to bring John Saunders's Rover SD1 into the pits, was clobbered by Phil Keen, completing his out-lap in the Escort RS2000 started by Jason Minshaw. The Rover nailed the tyre wall and spun luridly back broadside into the track, whereupon — with a brave marshal in attendance and cars passing on both sides — the obscured pit entrance was temporarily closed and the Porsche safety car was deployed for four laps. Gone already was Darren Turner, who parked the Bryant Camaro at St Mary's, and Steve Soper's Ford Capri V6.

Once Plato was in the maroon Mustang, leader Buncombe set a startling record lap as the BTCC hero went after him, only to retire at Madgwick with a broken throttle cable. Andy Priaulx, finishing Fred Shepherd's Mustang, now led the chase, with Gordon Shedden third in John Young's Camaro, pursued spectacularly by Jake Hill in Ric Wood's Capri. The British Touring Car star had shaken off Sam Hancock in Ludo Lindsay's ex-Stuart Graham Faberge Brut Capri and James Wood in the Rover that Marino Franchitti had autocrossed away from the grid. The gallant Datapost Fiesta of Mat Jackson and Simon Goodliff was a fine eighth, on the lead lap!

Tetley won Sunday's 'owners' sprint finale from 15th on the reversed grid, outgunning Davies's and Shepherd's Mustangs and Padmore's rorty UFO Jeans BMW 530. Former Goodwood staffer Tetley's only moment came when his interior mirror, which had fallen off on the



Blakeney-Edwards leads the Frazer Nash field away in ex-Fane 200bhp Monoposto

HAWKINS



Kirkaldy charged through Robert Brooks Trophy pack to defeat Bellinger's Lola Mk1

"David Brabham's Rover nailed the tyre wall and spun luridly back broadside into the track"

warm-up lap, slid under the pedals. His lurid slide exiting the chicane for the last time was not showboating...

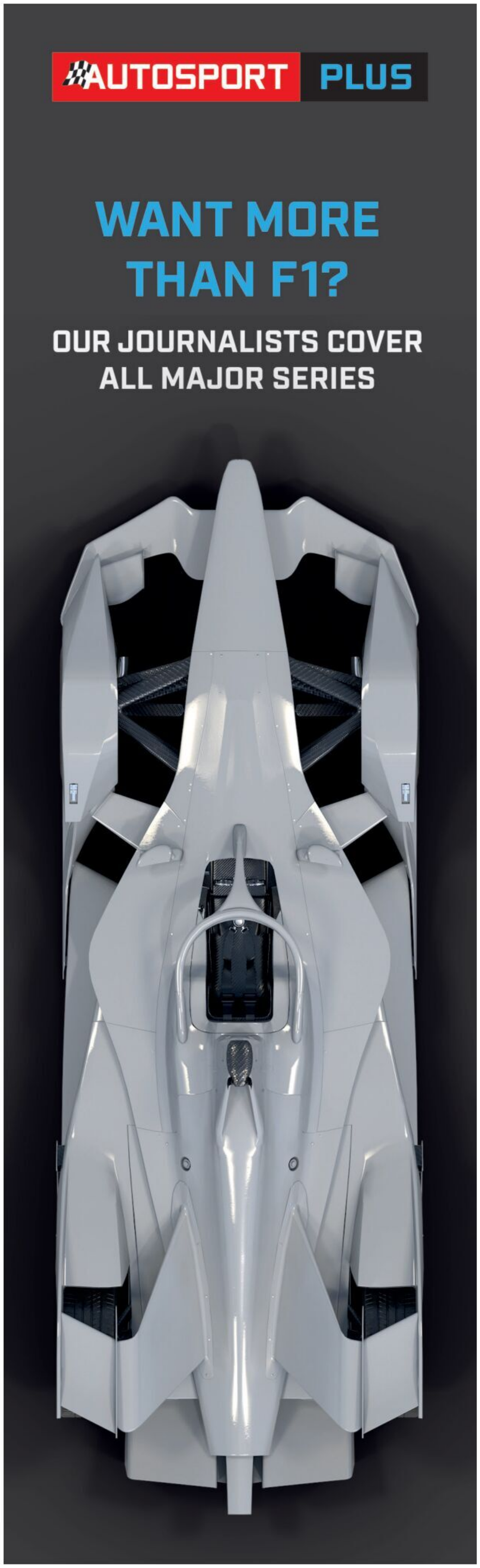
Kamm-tailed 1965 Lenham GTs sat 1-2 on Sunday morning's Weslake Trophy grid, but poleman Ben Colburn's quest to emulate brother James's 2017 win ended when he spun into the gravel entering Lavant, triggering a full-course caution. Porsche Carrera Cup racer Charles Rainford in CCK's John Britten tribute Lenham and early second place man Nick Padmore in Roland Lewis's Rochdale Olympic — which underwent an engine transplant after practice — thus prepared to duke it out. At the green, sixth-placed Jon McDonald's early Ashley Works GT shot off the chicane's exit kerbs, speared across the track and clumped the bank, bringing the safety car out again. Rainford scarpered when signalled, but the ailing Rochdale fell prey to Mike Haigh (Lenham) and Mark Burnett, whose pacy Fletcher Ogle outdragged Dominic Mooney in Brian Small's Ashley GT every time the combo edged ahead.

Behind the powerful Weber-carburetted cars, ex-Formula Renault 1700 racer Rob'Pret A'Manger in Peter Alexander's Ashley GT won an epic tussle with Aston Martin Le Mans hero Darren Turner (in buddy Andrew Thornton's Turner Mk1 950S) for SU-carbed honours by 0.6s.

A stylish Sopwith Cup 1950s saloon drive by James Colburn in Westbourne Motorsport's Standard Vanguard Six ensured that the family team snared one gold. His task was eased when top qualifier Charles Rainford's Nash Metropolitan wouldn't go into gear. Everybody missed Rainford, who then tricycled the American-styled, British-built jelly mould back to second, but overheating precluded a victory tilt. Rowan Atkinson was overjoyed with an unprecedented third on the "notional podium" after a spirited run in his magnesium alloy-bodied Jaguar MkVII.

With 2.1s in hand over Steve Seaman in practice, Andrew Hibberd started the Historic F3 race cautiously, slipping to third. He passed Seaman's Brabham BT21 into Madgwick and reigning champion Jeremy Timms's ex-Reine Wisell Chevron B15 into Lavant on lap two of 14, then screamed to his third Derek Bell Trophy victory in the ex-Chris Irwin Chequered Flag Brabham BT18.

Timms kept second, but veteran Peter Thompson (BT21A), Howden Ganley's dapper protege Horatio Fitz-Simon — who impressed on his Goodwood debut in Mike O'Brien's stunning Chevron B15 — and Simon Armer (March 703) enjoyed a slipstreaming fight for third. Thompson narrowly prevailed over HF-S. On Armer's exit, Paul Kite (B17C) gratefully grabbed fifth from Swiss visitor Christoph Widmer in Australian privateer Wal Donnelly's period BT18A. »



STAR CARS



HAWKINS

AUSTIN-HEALEY SPRITE

Successor to the fabled 'Mk1' Sebring Sprites, this streamlined works prototype finished 18th (fifth in class) in the 1966 Sebring 12 Hours, driven by Australian Paul Hawkins and Finnish rally star Timo Makinen. Head gasket failure in the 21st hour forced Paddy Hopkirk and Andrew Hedges to retire at Le Mans that summer. It's back home with Castle Combe stalwart Julian Ellison, who finished 21st in the Weslake Cup.



STYLES

BORGWARD ISABELLA TS

Carl Borgward's company in Bremen grew out of Hansa, Lloyd and Goliath. The independently suspended Isabella arrived from 1954-61. Borgward's 16-valve engines successfully powered sports-racers, then F2 Coopers that contested 1500cc F1 GPs from 1961. Tuning wizard Bill Blydenstein raced an Isabella from 1958, winning at Spa and Goodwood in 1961. Gavin Watson's car finished 13th in the Sopwith Cup.



STYLES

BRABHAM BT21

Better known for his BIP Lola sportscar exploits in the 1970s, Portugal's Carlos Gaspar won the 1967 Portuguese F3 GP at Monsanto Park (Montes Claros), the 1968 Spanish GP support event at Jarama, and a heat at Barcelona's Montjuich Park in this Brabham. It was acquired from Peter Bloore by Dick Crosthwaite in the 1970s. Simon Diffey saddled it at Goodwood but it broke before the Derek Bell Trophy race.



STYLES

FRAZER NASH NURBURG

Several Frazer Nashes driven by AFP Fane featured in the marque event commemorating the racer, who lost his life as an heroic photo reconnaissance Spitfire pilot in July 1942. The spartan supercharged Meadows-engined 'Nurburg', which Fane drove to the Nurburgring in 1932 for the German GP support race, was later a successful hillclimb car. Mechanical gremlins sidelined Cumbrian dentist Andrew Smith.



STYLES

PORSCHE 550 RS SPYDER

The fourth customer 550 Spyder, chassis 0020 was built in 1955 with a 1500cc flat-four quad-cam engine and raced in the US by Missouri VW/Porsche dealer Art Bunker. He practised for the 1955 Sebring 12 Hours, then competed in SCCA events before winning the Nassau Speed Week Porsche race in the Bahamas. Now owned by Rainer Becker, it is prepared by Andy Prill, but failed to finish the Robert Brooks Trophy.



HAWKINS

LANCIA DILAMBDA

Italy's North East African colonies of Eritrea and Tripolitania staged racing and hillclimbs in the 1930s. Italians in Eritrea's capital Asmara would have known this unique Lancia special, a semi-monocoque chassis powered by a narrow angle four-litre V8 engine, with Vincenzo Lancia's sliding pillar front suspension and hydraulic drum brakes. Restored by Walter Heale in the US, Michael Peet drove it at Goodwood.



Thorpe became a Goodwood winner in 1950s sportscar encounter with Lister-Jag

HAWKINS

The double-driver Graham Hill Trophy GT race was punctuated by a lengthy safety car period after Gary Pearson couldn't keep Carlos Monteverde's AC Cobra out of the wall having left the chicane grossly on the opening lap. Rob Huff resumed ahead after marshals had restored the conveyor belting and the mangled car was removed, chased by another Jaguar E-type in the hands of Jon Minshaw, David Hart (Bizzarrini), Bentley's 2003 Le Mans winner Guy Smith enjoying Mike Whitaker's TVR Griffith, and Marino Franchitti, first time out in Roelofs Engineering's Ferrari 250GTO/64.

Minshaw relayed Phil Keen, who endured a second safety car (for the retrieval of Ian Burford's inert Cheetah from Madgwick's infield) for a comfortable victory. Huff's partner Chris Lillingston-Price emerged from the pits 3.3s adrift, but was swallowed by the pack. Nicky Pastorelli guided the Ferrari home second after rivals fell. Hart Jr and James Cottingham (AC Cobra) performed a 'double axel' into the greensward at St Marys, then Sam Hancock (in Historic newcomer Saif Assam's Cobra) half-spun there on his own coolant, having just relieved Whitaker of third. William Paul/Rory Butcher (E-type) were fourth ahead of the recovering Hancock and Hart, who had gyrated at Lavant.

The frenetic lead duel between master-twitchers Patrick Blakeney-Edwards and Martin Stretton in British Racing Green Monoposti in the magnificent Fane Trophy Frazer Nash field looked set to go the distance when Paul Waine rolled his newly rebuilt Elektron Nash at St Mary's, bringing out red flags (see National News). PB-E's joy at his ex-Fane twin-supercharged car's success was thus muted.

Despite dropping to fifth with axle tramp at the start in Peter Neumark's ex-Philippe Etancelin Alfa Romeo Monza, PB-E doubled up in the Varzi Trophy race as the fast-starting Bugatti T35 of Duncan Pittaway broke, then challenger Tim Dutton parked his T51 alongside Rod Spollon's example, used by Achille Varzi to win the 1933 Monaco GP and abandoned by Charlie Martin at Lavant. PB-E avoided oil from Marshall Bailey's T35 to beat Ross Keeling's Delahaye by a distance. Chris Mann's Alfa closed on the French car towards the end.

Mastering his CKL Developments-run Lister-Jaguar 'Flat Iron', an ecstatic James Thorpe resisted stout challenges from David Hart (Maserati 300S) and Gary Pearson (ex-Jim Clark Jaguar D-type) to win the Peter Collins Trophy. Darren Turner's early promise evaporated when his HWM-Jaguar's water temperature gauge told him to stop.

RESULTS GOODWOOD 79TH MEMBERS' MEETING, 9-10 APRIL

SURTEES TROPHY: SPORTS-PROTOTYPES 1962-68 (19 LAPS) 1 Olly Bryant (Lola-Chevrolet T70 Spyder); 2 Rob Hall (McLaren-Chevrolet M1A) +0.443s; 3 Mark Shaw (McLaren-Chevrolet M1A); 4 Rob Huff (Ford GT40); 5 Christian Glaesel (Ford GT40); 6 Ewen Sergison (Lola-Chevrolet T70 Spyder). **Pole** Huff. **Fastest lap** Bryant 1m18.443s (110.14mph). **Starters** 23.

ROBERT BROOKS TROPHY: SPORTS-RACING CARS UP TO 2.5 LITRES 1955-60 (17 LAPS) 1 Andrew Kirkaldy (Lotus Eleven); 2 Billy Bellinger (Lola Mk1 Prototype) +8.936s; 3 Ian Dalglish (Lotus 17); 4 Nick Finburgh (Lola Mk1); 5 Martin Stretton (Lotus Eleven); 6 Andrea Stortoni (Lotus Eleven). **P** Bellinger. **FL** Kirkaldy 1m28.991s (97.08mph). **S** 26.

GERRY MARSHALL TROPHY: GROUP 1 TOURING CARS 1970-82 (26 LAPS) 1 Jack Tetley/Alex Buncombe (Chevrolet Camaro Z28); 2 Fred Shepherd/Andy Priaulx (Ford Mustang Boss 302) +18.864s; 3 John Young/Gordon Shedden (Chevrolet Camaro Z28); 4 Ric Wood/Jake Hill (Ford Capri III 3.0S); 5 Ludovic Lindsay/Sam Hancock (Ford Capri III 3.0S); 6 Marino Franchitti/James Wood (Rover 3500 SD1). **P** Jason Plato (Ford Mustang Boss 302). **FL** Buncombe 1m25.783s (100.71mph) record. **S** 28. **SPRINT RACE (10 LAPS) 1 Tetley**; 2 Craig Davies (Ford Mustang Boss 302) +10.552s; 3 Shepherd; 4 Nick Padmore (BMW 530); 5 Lindsay; 6 Mike Whitaker (Ford Capri III 3.0S). **P** Martin Overington (Triumph Dolomite Sprint)*. **FL** Tetley 1m27.196s (99.08mph). **S** 20. * reversed top 16.

WESLAKE CUP: BMC A-SERIES-POWERED SPORTS & GT CARS 1958-66 (11 LAPS) 1 Charles Rainford (Lenham GT); 2 Mike Haigh (Lenham GT) +3.909s; 3 Mark Burnett (Fletcher Ogle GT); 4 Dominic Mooney (Ashley GT); 5 Tom Grindall (William & Pritchard MG Midget); 6 Nick Padmore (Rochdale Olympic). **P** Ben Colburn (Lenham GT). **FL** Rainford 1m36.129s (89.87mph). **S** 28.

SOPWITH CUP: SALOON CARS 1950-59 (12 LAPS) 1 James Colburn (Standard Vanguard Six); 2 Charles Rainford (Nash Metropolitan) +6.504s; 3 Rowan Atkinson (Jaguar MkVII); 4 Paul Alcock (Morris Minor); 5 Charles Knill-Jones (Austin A35); 6 Drew Pritchard (VW Beetle). **P** Rainford. **FL** Rainford 1m41.067s (85.48mph). **S** 25.

DEREK BELL CUP: 1000cc FORMULA 3 1964-70 (14 LAPS) 1 Andrew Hibberd (Brabham BT18); 2 Jeremy Timms (Chevron B15) +5.958s; 3 Peter Thompson (Brabham BT21A); 4 Horatio Fitz-Simon (Chevron B15); 5 Paul Kite (Chevron B15C); 6 Christoph Widmer (Brabham BT18A). **P** Hibberd. **FL** Hibberd 1m23.909s (102.96mph). **S** 21.

GRAHAM HILL TROPHY: CLOSED-COCKPIT GT CARS TO 1966 (29 LAPS) 1 Jon Minshaw/Phil Keen (Jaguar E-type); 2 Marino Franchitti/Nicky Pastorelli (Ferrari 250 GTO/64) 15.398s; 3 Guy Smith/Mike Whitaker (TVR Griffith 400); 4 William Paul/Rory Butcher (Jaguar E-type); 5 Saif Assam/Sam Hancock (AC Cobra); 6 David & Olivier Hart (Bizzarrini 5300GT). **P** Minshaw (time set by Keen). **FL** Keen 1m24.831s (101.84mph). **S** 28.

AFP FANE TROPHY: FRAZER NASH CARS 1926-35 (6 LAPS) 1 Patrick Blakeney-Edwards (Monoposto); 2 Martin Stretton (Monoposto) +0.897s; 3 Tom Waterfield (Super Sports); 4 Julian Grimwade (Norris Special); 5 Geraint Lewis (Shelsley Single-Seater); 6 Eddie Williams (Super Sport). **P** Blakeney-Edwards. **FL** Waterfield 1m37.647s (88.48mph). **S** 29.

VARZI TROPHY: GRAND PRIX CARS, VOITURETTES AND SPECIALS 1925-37 (9 LAPS) 1 Patrick Blakeney-Edwards (Alfa Romeo 8C 2300 Monza); 2 Ross Keeling (Delahaye 135) +26.093s; 3 Christopher Mann (Alfa Romeo 8C 2600 Monza); 4 David Cooke (Alfa Romeo 8C 2300); 5 Bo Williams (Bugatti T35B); 6 Fritz Burkhard (Bugatti T51). **P** Blakeney-Edwards. **FL** Blakeney-Edwards 1m42.551s (84.25mph). **S** 20.

PETER COLLINS TROPHY: WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP SPORTSCARS 1952-58 (10 LAPS) 1 James Thorpe (Lister-Jaguar Flat Iron); 2 David Hart (Maserati 300S) +1.023s; 3 Gary Pearson (Jaguar D-type); 4 Marino Franchitti (Jaguar D-type); 5 James Cottingham (Ferrari 500 TRC); 6 Bill Shepherd (Ford Thunderbird 'Battlebird'). **P** Thorpe. **FL** Hart 1m30.581s (95.38mph). **S** 23.



Van Gisbergen and Mostert split the wins

AUSTRALIAN SUPERCARS
MELBOURNE (AUS)
8-10 APRIL
ROUND 3/13

Shane van Gisbergen and Chaz Mostert took an even share of the four Supercars wins on offer at Albert Park for the Melbourne 400 supporting the Australian Grand Prix.

It could have easily been a clean sweep for the Triple Eight-run Holden of an in-form van Gisbergen had it not been for mistakes that bookended his weekend. The first came in the opening qualifying session when he lost his first lap to a kerb hop and was then caught out by a red flag that left him at the rear of the grid.

Van Gisbergen showed his pace in the first race, charging through the field to a remarkable third place behind Mostert's Walkinshaw Andretti United Holden and David Reynolds (Grove Racing Ford).

Once he started near the front, there was no stopping van Gisbergen, who was the class of the field – he dominated the second and third races of the weekend.

The Kiwi looked to have sewn up Sunday morning's finale too, losing track position to Mostert during the pitstops, but holding a clear pace advantage. But just as he was stalking the leading Holden, van Gisbergen pinched his front-left brake into Turn 9. The resulting flat spot meant he had to call off his charge, while efforts to nurse the car home in second place were undone when the tyre let go a couple of laps from home.

That dropped van Gisbergen to 20th, although he secured the Larry Perkins Trophy for most points across the event.

ANDREW VAN LEEUWEN

Mawson takes Oz GP support

S5000
MELBOURNE (AUS)
8-10 APRIL
ROUND 3/6

Joey Mawson took control of the Australian Drivers' Championship with a dominant display at Albert Park.

The weekend got off to a nervy start for Mawson, who sprinted from the rest of the field in the early stages of the nine-lap opener, only to have a front-wing element break midway through the race. That meant he faced enormous pressure from second-placed Aaron Cameron in the closing laps, but ex-German Formula 4 champion and European Formula 3 racer Mawson defended hard as he held on for a narrow win.

A 75% reversal of the grid put Mawson outside the top 10 for Saturday evening's second race, and any chance of real progress was hampered by a first-lap crash between James Davison and Zane Goddard that prompted a safety car. The lengthy clean-up and fading light meant the race was called while still under caution after five laps.

Still Mawson had enough points to start Sunday's feature race from pole, where he put in a controlled performance to comfortably beat Nathan Herne and Tim Macrow.

He now leads the Gold Star by 27 points over Macrow, while Cooper Webster and James Golding have slipped to 50 and 51 points behind respectively.



Mawson leads thundering horde at opening turns

ANDREW VAN LEEUWEN

Hirakawa for Toyota; Nojiri for Honda

SUPER FORMULA
FUJI (JPN)
9-10 APRIL
ROUND 1/7


Hirakawa chases Nojiri on way to win in first race
ISHIHARA

Tomoki Nojiri and Ryo Hirakawa shared the honours as Super Formula got its 2022 season off to a thrilling start with a Fuji double-header. Hirakawa came through from third on the grid to win the opening race on Saturday ahead of reigning champion Nojiri, who took revenge on Sunday with a dominant victory, with Hirakawa behind.

The bonus score for securing the Sunday pole position has given Nojiri an early two-point lead as he bids to become the first back-to-back champion since Tsugio Matsuda in 2008.

Nojiri's Mugen team-mate Ukyo Sasahara took a surprise pole on Saturday ahead of Team Goh's Red Bull-backed rookie Ren Sato, but both front-row starters had disastrous opening laps, with Sasahara stalling on the grid and Sato getting tipped into a spin by Hiroki Otsu. That cleared the way for Hirakawa to score his first win since 2020 in his Toyota-powered Team Impul car, although he had to see off an early challenge from Sacha Fenestraz and then pass Nojiri, who briefly got ahead with an undercut strategy but was powerless on worn tyres to resist Hirakawa.

Fenestraz (Kondo Racing) came home third for his second SF podium finish, ahead of Yuhi Sekiguchi (Impul) and leading TOM'S runner Ritomo Miyata.

Top Honda runner Nojiri was never truly threatened in Sunday's race after beating second-place starter Miyata off the line, helped by Hirakawa qualifying eighth and losing time early on battling other cars. Once clear of traffic, Hirakawa was able to undercut Miyata to grab second, with Kenta Yamashita (Kondo) and star rookie Atsushi Miyake (Goh) completing the top five.

JAMIE KLEIN

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Byron leads Logano on tight half-mile oval
MILLER

Byron is first to two victories

NASCAR CUP SERIES
MARTINSVILLE (USA)
9 APRIL
ROUND 8/36

William Byron survived a late charge from Joey Logano to win an otherwise lacklustre NASCAR Cup Series race at Martinsville last Saturday night.

Byron dominated much of the race in his Hendrick Motorsports Chevrolet, leading 212 of 403 laps, but a late caution sent the event into a two-lap overtime and bunched the field one last time. Byron cleared for the lead and took the white flag before Logano tried to get to his rear bumper off Turn 4 for a pass, but couldn't complete it. Byron took the chequered flag by 0.303s from the Team Penske Ford to become the first repeat winner of the 2022 season.

"When that last caution came out I thought everyone behind us would pit, and luckily we stayed out," said Byron. "We were aggressive; we felt like we could refire on the tyres and be OK, and you've got one of the most aggressive guys behind you in Logano. I chattered the tyres in [Turns] 3 and 4 and kind of left the bottom [lane] open but was able to block my exits and get a good drive off."

Austin Dillon ended up third, from Ryan Blaney and Ross Chastain.

JIM UTTER

WEEKEND WINNERS

AUSTRALIAN SUPERCARS
MELBOURNE (AUS)
Races 1 & 4 Chaz Mostert
Walkinshaw Andretti United
(Holden Commodore ZB)
Races 2 & 3 Shane van Gisbergen
Triple Eight Racing (Holden Commodore ZB)

S5000
MELBOURNE (AUS)
Joey Mawson
Team BRM

SUPER FORMULA
FUJI (JPN)
Race 1 Ryo Hirakawa
Team Impul (Dallara-Toyota)
Race 2 Tomoki Nojiri
Team Mugen (Dallara-Honda)

NASCAR CUP
MARTINSVILLE (USA)
William Byron
Hendrick Motorsports (Chevrolet Camaro)

BRAZILIAN STOCK CARS
GALEAO (BRA)
Race 1 Daniel Serra
Eurofarma RC (Chevrolet Cruze)
Race 2 Ricardo Mauricio
Eurofarma RC (Chevrolet Cruze)

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Ganassi Cadillac led, dropped to last, then charged back in hands of Bourdais and van der Zande

Bourdais blunders, then thunders to victory

IMSA SPORTSCAR
LONG BEACH (USA)
9 APRIL
ROUND 3/12

Sebastien Bourdais provided a masterclass in controlled aggression on his way to winning Saturday's IMSA SportsCar Championship race in Long Beach. Which was just as well, because he certainly made life a lot more difficult than was absolutely necessary for himself and Chip Ganassi/Cadillac Racing co-driver Renger van der Zande.

Fifteen years after claiming the third of his back-to-back-to-back Indycar victories on the famed street circuit, Bourdais produced a stunning lap in qualifying to secure his second successive IMSA pole. The evergreen Frenchman's time was almost two seconds faster than the previous record set in 2019 by Helio Castroneves, and a relatively comfortable 0.361s clear of the field, which was led by Ganassi team-mate Alex Lynn.

Bourdais leapt immediately into the lead at the start, opening up a gap of almost three seconds inside just five laps. But he then misjudged his attempt to lap a Porsche GTD car at the notoriously tight Turn 11 hairpin that leads onto Shoreline Drive. Bourdais carried a little too much speed into the corner and understeered wide, such that he had to bring the car to a halt in order not to impact the wall at the exit of the corner. By the time he had selected reverse and rejoined, first place had transformed into sixth, more than 20s adrift of the new leader.

Despite initially believing the victory would be out of reach, Bourdais made up a deficit of more than 16s to the fourth-placed JDC Miller Motorsports Cadillac of countryman Tristan Vautier in just 10 laps. Over the course of the next 14 laps he caught and overtook Tom Blomqvist's Meyer Shank Acura, Pipo Derani's Action Express Cadillac and, finally, Lynn to resume his position at the front of the field.

It was a remarkable performance. Just as impressively, Bourdais completed a total of 40 laps, almost exactly halfway through the 100-minute race, before pitting for service and a driver change to van der Zande.

A flurry of full-course cautions in the latter half of the race kept the Dutchman on his toes but he was comfortably able to edge clear of Earl Bamber, in for Lynn, to ensure a magnificent victory and a 1-2 sweep for the Ganassi Cadillac team. The comeback was all the more important given that the #01 car had finished last among the DPi contenders in each of the opening two endurance races of the season at Daytona and Sebring.

Vautier and Richard Westbrook finished third and now lie just two points behind Lynn and Bamber in the title chase.

An exciting GTD Pro battle featured Jordan Taylor's Corvette holding a slender lead over the Pfaff Porsche of Mathieu Jaminet throughout the opening stint. But there was a bizarre incident in the pitlane when the Corvette team fumbled a wheelnut during its tyre change... whereupon the errant nut lodged itself in the Porsche's radiator, ending its day. A drivethrough penalty for the miscue took the Corvette out of contention, paving the way for the Heart of Racing Team Aston Martin of Ross Gunn and Alex Riberas to bounce back from a disappointing start to the season and claim the victory. Jack Hawksworth and Ben Barnicoat finished second aboard their Vasser Sullivan Lexus.

Madison Snow and Bryan Sellers combined to lead the GTD class throughout in their Paul Miller Racing BMW M4 GT3.

JEREMY SHAW

WEEKEND WINNERS

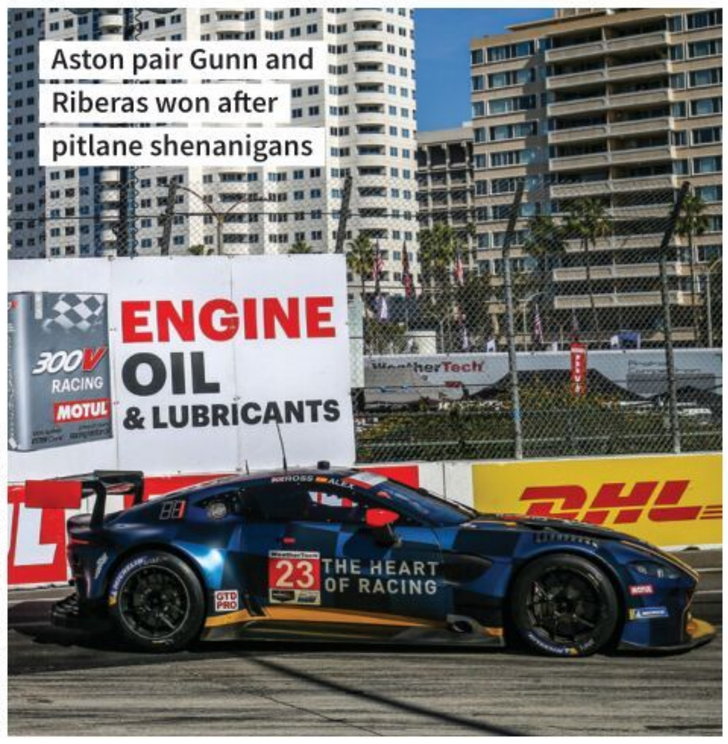
IMSA SPORTSCAR
LONG BEACH (USA)

DPi	Sebastien Bourdais/ Renger van der Zande Chip Ganassi Racing (Cadillac DPi-V.R)
GTD Pro	Ross Gunn/Alex Riberas Heart of Racing Team (Aston Martin Vantage GT3)
GTD	Bryan Sellers/Madison Snow Paul Miller Racing (BMW M4 GT3)

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Aston pair Gunn and Riberas won after pitlane shenanigans

GALSTAD/MOTORSPORT IMAGES

Bastianini wins as Marquez (lone) stars

MOTOGP
AUSTIN (USA)
10 APRIL
ROUND 4/21



There are two places on the MotoGP calendar where a Marc Marquez victory is virtually nailed on: Sachsenring and Austin. In the States, the six-time world champion has scored seven poles and seven victories. Marquez has a love affair with American circuits – their anti-clockwise nature plays to his flat-track background – that has led to him winning all but once on US soil since he stepped up to MotoGP in 2013. But this year's Americas Grand Prix was different. Marquez was absent from the previous weekend's round in Argentina due to the return of vision problems he suffered in one of the most violent crashes of his career.

At least in public, the goal was never to win. He needed to rebuild his confidence and there was no better place to do that than at the Circuit of The Americas. A worst-ever CoTA qualifying of ninth came as a result of a "scared" Marquez "not believing in myself". But still, his rivals pegged him as favourite. Reigning world champion Fabio Quartararo pulled out two names: Marquez and Enea Bastianini.

The Yamaha rider's observations were astute: one of those riders did win, but not the one most people thought...

For the first time since Motegi 2003, a manufacturer locked out the top five slots on the grid in qualifying. On that occasion it was Honda; last weekend it was Ducati. While the true potential of the 2022 Ducati remains uncertain, it's at least still a weapon over a single lap.

Pramac's poleman Jorge Martin led factory rider Jack Miller, the pair swapping positions at the start of the 20-lap race as Gresini racer Bastianini settled in behind.

Meanwhile, Marquez was going nowhere. An alarm made his Honda "crazy" at the start and he barely got his RC213V into motion up to Turn 1, dropping him to dead last. From there it was "a sprint race".

On any other day, it surely would have been Marquez against Bastianini, the Spaniard likely coming out the strongest, given how rapid his ride to sixth was. When Marquez moved into 10th on lap seven, ahead of his sick team-mate Pol Espargaro, he was 5.1s off the lead, with Bastianini third.

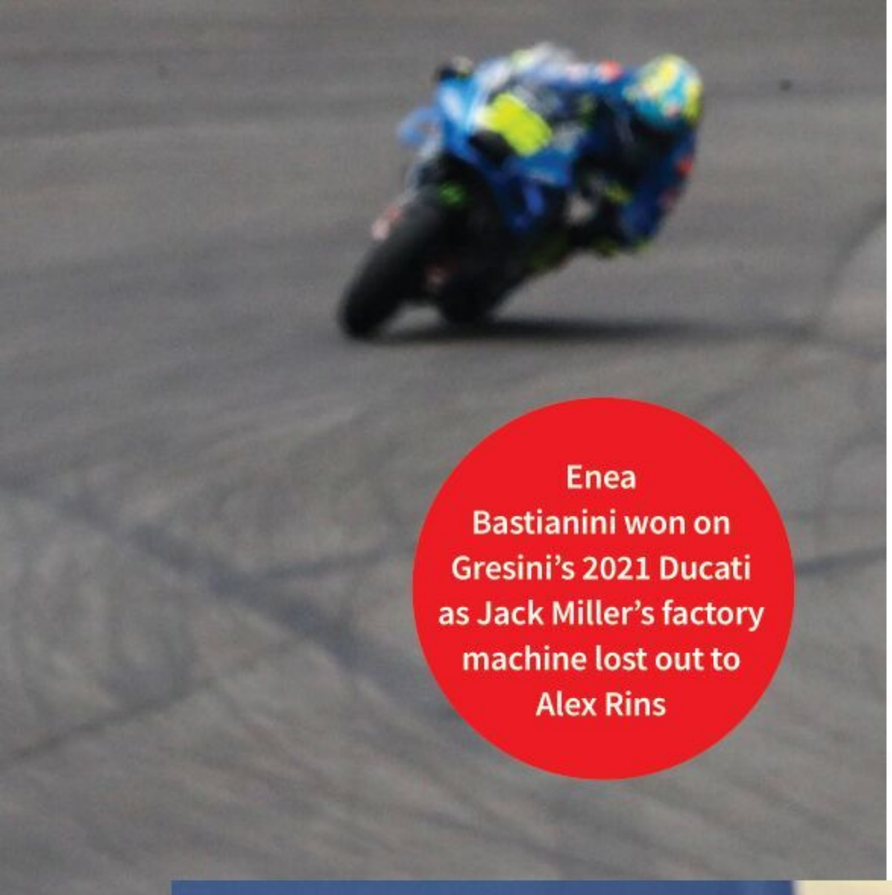
Up front, Miller was beginning to open up a lead of close to a second by the end of lap 11 of 20. Bastianini, managing his soft rear tyre better than most, saw this and pounced on the fading Martin for second. On lap 16, Bastianini made his decisive move on Miller into the Turn 12 hairpin and closed the book on his second win of the campaign on a 2021-spec Ducati still clearly better than the 2022 version.

Marquez's charge continued through Argentina winner Aleix Espargaro, the fading Pramac bikes and Quartararo, although the last-named offered a stiff resistance reminiscent of the pair's 2019 battles when the Frenchman was a rookie. The pace was there for fifth, but Marquez's body cried enough. Physically, he was worn out after his sprint and sixth place, 6.6s behind the victor, was a result that offered "satisfaction" upon a tricky return.

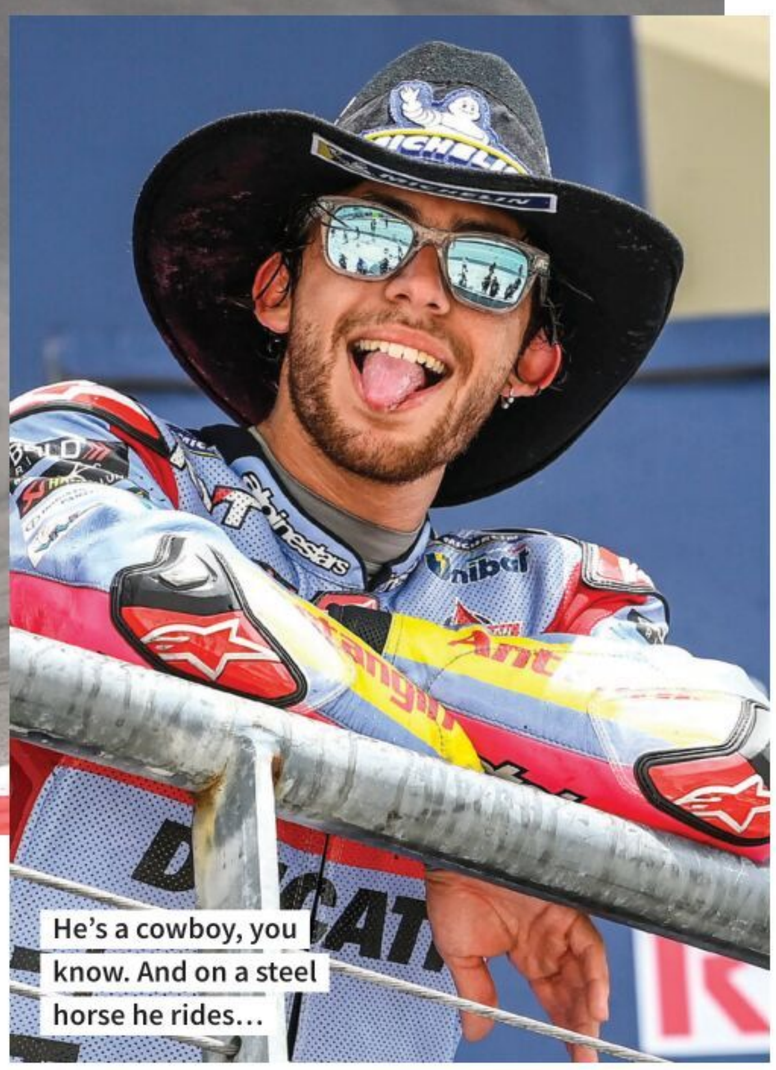
Miller succumbed to a hard-charging Alex Rins's advances on the final lap, the 2019 CoTA winner brilliantly carving through from seventh on the grid to claim Suzuki's 500th podium. Team-mate Joan Mir cast aside his dislike of the Texan circuit to make a strong run to fourth, and feels that Suzuki is now starting to "make races like in 2020", while Francesco Bagnaia faded from the front row to fifth, the "maximum" result he could achieve on his works Ducati.



Tired Marquez still finished sixth on his happy hunting ground



Enea Bastianini won on Gresini's 2021 Ducati as Jack Miller's factory machine lost out to Alex Rins



He's a cowboy, you know. And on a steel horse he rides…

Quartararo's frustrating title defence on underpowered Yamaha machinery continued with a seventh position he admits he learned more from than many of his wins, while Martin and Johann Zarco slumped to eighth and ninth.

Aleix Espargaro was caught out by a pre-heated tyre he was forced to use as a consequence of his Q1 crash, and had to give best to his Aprilia team-mate Maverick Vinales in their tussle for 10th. His Honda-mounted brother Pol gritted his teeth through food poisoning for 13th behind Brad Binder after a miserable weekend in Texas for KTM.

Bastianini's latest triumph now poses a headache for Ducati. Miller's seat at the factory Ducati squad is up for grabs, the Australian admitting to Autosport that he has been "left in the dark" over his future. Before CoTA Martin appeared favourite for his seat. Bastianini, now five points clear in the championship, has complicated this. At least it's a positive problem for Ducati.

LEWIS DUNCAN

NEXT REPORT

PORTUGUESE GP
28 APRIL ISSUE

POWERED BY motorsport STATS

RESULTS ROUND 4/21, AUSTIN (USA), 10 APRIL (20 LAPS – 68.512 MILES)

POS	RIDER	TEAM	TIME
1	**Enea Bastianini** (ITA)	Gresini Ducati	41m23.111s
2	**Alex Rins** (ESP)	Suzuki	+2.058s
3	**Jack Miller** (AUS)	Ducati	+2.312s
4	**Joan Mir** (ESP)	Suzuki	+3.975s
5	**Francesco Bagnaia** (ITA)	Ducati	+6.045s
6	**Marc Marquez** (ESP)	Honda	+6.617s
7	**Fabio Quartararo** (FRA)	Yamaha	+6.760s
8	**Jorge Martin** (ESP)	Pramac Ducati	+8.441s
9	**Johann Zarco** (FRA)	Pramac Ducati	+12.375s
10	**Maverick Vinales** (ESP)	Aprilia	+12.642s
11	**Aleix Espargaro** (ESP)	Aprilia	+12.947s
12	**Brad Binder** (ZAF)	KTM	+13.376s
13	**Pol Espargaro** (ESP)	Honda	+17.961s
14	**Takaaki Nakagami** (JPN)	LCR Honda	+18.770s
15	**Andrea Dovizioso** (ITA)	RNF Yamaha	+29.319s
16	**Franco Morbidelli** (ITA)	Yamaha	+29.129s
17	**Luca Marini** (ITA)	VR46 Ducati	+29.630s
18	**Miguel Oliveira** (PRT)	KTM	+32.002s
19	**Raul Fernandez** (ESP)	Tech3 KTM	+37.062s
20	**Remy Gardner** (AUS)	Tech3 KTM	+42.442s
21	**Fabio di Giannantonio** (ITA)	Gresini Ducati	+42.887s
22	**Darryn Binder** (ZAF)	RNF Yamaha	+1m42.171s
R	**Alex Marquez** (ESP)	LCR Honda	5 laps-accident
R	**Marco Bezzecchi** (ITA)	VR46 Ducati	2 laps-accident

WEEKEND WINNERS

MOTO2
AUSTIN (USA)
Tony Arbolino (below)
Marc VDS Racing (Kalex)

MOTO3
AUSTIN (USA)
Jaume Masia
Ajo Motorsport (KTM)



Winner's average speed 99.328mph. **Fastest lap** **Bastianini** 2m03.521s, 99.839mph.

QUALIFYING 2 **1 Martin 2m02.039s**; 2 **Miller** 2m02.042s; 3 **Bagnaia** 2m02.167s; 4 **Zarco** 2m02.570s; 5 **Bastianini** 2m02.578s; 6 **Quartararo** 2m02.634s; 7 **Rins** 2m02.694s; 8 **Mir** 2m02.947s; 9 **M Marquez** 2m03.038s; 10 **Nakagami** 2m03.054s; 11 **Marini** 2m03.059s; 12 **P Espargaro** 2m03.096s.

QUALIFYING 1 **Martin 2m02.487s**; **Rins** 2m02.723s; 13 **A Espargaro** 2m02.922s; 14 **Vinales** 2m03.121s; 15 **Dovizioso** 2m03.133s; 16 **Bezzecchi** 2m03.328s; 17 **B Binder** 2m03.467s; 18 **di Giannantonio** 2m03.576s; 19 **Morbidelli** 2m03.579s; 20 **Oliveira** 2m03.983s; 21 **Fernandez** 2m04.140s; 22 **Gardner** 2m04.185s; 23 **A Marquez** 2m04.229s; 24 **D Binder** 2m04.646s.

RIDERS' CHAMPIONSHIP **1 Bastianini 61**; 2 **Rins** 56; 3 **A Espargaro** 50; 4 **Mir** 46; 5 **Quartararo** 44; 6 **B Binder** 42; 7 **Miller** 31; 8 **Zarco** 31; 9 **Oliveira** 28; 10 **Martin** 28; 11 **P Espargaro** 23; 12 **Bagnaia** 23; 13 **M Marquez** 21; 14 **Vinales** 19; 15 **Morbidelli** 14; 16 **Nakagami** 12; 17 **Marini** 10; 18 **Bezzecchi** 7; 19 **D Binder** 6; 20 **A Marquez** 4; 21 **Dovizioso** 3; 22 **Gardner** 1; 23 **Fernandez** 0; 24 **di Giannantonio** 0; 25 **Stefan Bradl** 0.

MANUFACTURERS' CHAMPIONSHIP **1 Ducati 86**; 2 **KTM** 59; 3 **Suzuki** 57; 4 **Aprilia** 51; 5 **Yamaha** 44; 6 **Honda** 34.



Pack climbs the hill to Turn 1 as Marquez drops to the rear

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- Creation of work instructions and operating standards within composite manufacture focussing on waste reduction and operating efficiency.
- Work alongside procurement team to determine value in bought out products
- Report on improvement success and ensure robust implementation feedforward into the operation
- To attend and proactively participate in meetings as required.
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GB3 The key single-seater contenders to watch this season

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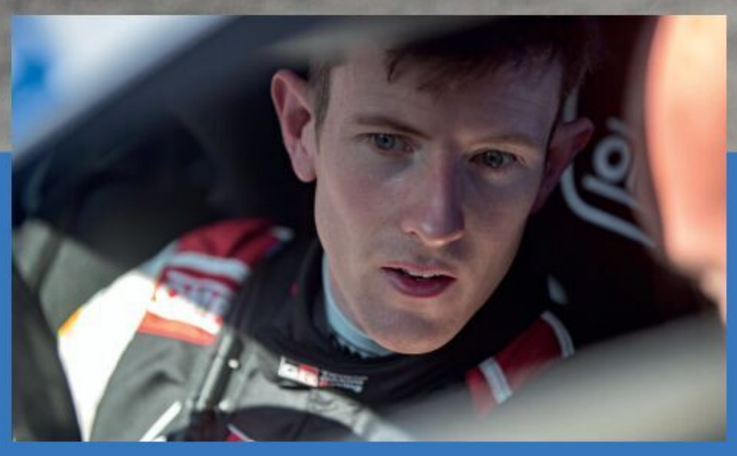
The team aiming to rule the British GT waves

2 Seas Motorsport has a new car and driver line-up since its last full campaign and has big ambitions





SPECIAL HAMILTON DISPLAY FOR SILVERSTONE CLASSIC



ELFYN AND GWYNDAF EVANS TO McRAE RALLY CHALLENGE



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Waine suffered multiple injuries after crash in 'Elektron Nash'

STYLES

Frazer Nash racer injured in crash

GOODWOOD

Experienced Frazer Nash racer Paul Waine remains in hospital with multiple injuries after his 1935 chain-ganger — known as 'The Elektron Nash' and fresh from restoration — rolled during the AFP Fane Trophy marque race at Goodwood's 79th Members' Meeting last Sunday afternoon.

Waine, lying 20th and having just recorded his best lap — seven seconds inside his practice best following a sequence of improvements — is understood to have run wide onto the grass on the fast approach to the left-handed St Mary's corner on lap seven of the 20-minute race.

As the Nash's narrow tyres dug-in, it flipped and Waine was ejected. The race was stopped immediately. Rescuers and medics were quickly in attendance and stabilised the driver at the scene. He was subsequently airlifted by emergency helicopter to Southampton hospital, 30 miles away.

According to friends and associates, Waine's chest injuries include broken sternum and several ribs, and a damaged shoulder. Surgeons removed his ruptured spleen on Sunday night to stem bleeding and a further procedure to reattach a rib was scheduled.

Waine, who is the cousin of 1979 Formula Ford Euroseries champion John Village and also competes in Historic F3 and in an F1 Cooper T53, remained sedated as Autosport closed for press on Tuesday. With doctors assessing his recovery positively, our thoughts are with him, wife Sarah and family.

MARCUS PYE

Quick Pre-66 GT cars reined in by organisers

GOODWOOD

A Jaguar E-type victory in the Graham Hill Trophy Pre-1966 GT race at the Goodwood Members' Meeting suggested the Goodwood Road Racing Club's measures to rein-in the performance of the quickest opposition — AC Cobras and TVR Griffith 400 and Bizzarrini 5300GT singletons on this occasion — had achieved its aim.

Jon Minshaw and Phil Keen triumphed by 15.398 seconds over Marino Franchitti/Nicky Pastorelli (Ferrari 250 GTO/64) and 2003 Le Mans victor Guy Smith and Mike Whitaker in the latter's TVR, the 2017 race winner.

New regulations initially stipulated a maximum rear anti-roll bar diameter of 19mm on the frontrunning cars, with one specified bump rubber on the dampers but no packers to restrict suspension droop. Following extensive testing of the quickest Cobras, preparers sought a compromise of 25mm ARBs, which brought them back into contention, although rival cars were affected less.

Keen's 1m24.900s pole shot was 0.503s quicker than Olivier Hart (Bizzarrini), with Rob Huff (E-type) and Sam Hancock (in historic racing debutant Saif Assam's Cobra) in the Dutchman's wake. Second to sixth were covered by 0.584s, which looked good on paper as the top nine averaged over 100mph.


Cobras struggled against E-types in Graham Hill Trophy

J BLOXHAM/MOTORSPORT IMAGES

"You have to say Keeny is worth half a second round here," said Gary Spencer, whose Classic Racing Cars team prepares several of the quickest Cobras, "but two days of testing with Sam proved that the original restrictions were too much, hence we requested the change. He's been consistently in the 24s before. Now that looks beyond reach."

In the race, Keen's 1m24.831s was 0.432s better than Hart's. Huff also lapped in the 25s, but the Cobras of Hancock and 2016 winner James Cottingham — who set a 1m23.981s then — were in the 26s.

Hancock was philosophical, saying: "It's OK, but they have taken the edge off our lap times. The changes are not 'one-size-fits-all', but we'll find a new balance."

MARCUS PYE

Hamilton's F1 title-winners to form display

SILVERSTONE CLASSIC


The McLaren MP4-23 from 2008 will join Hamilton's Mercedes conquerors

FERRARO/MOTORSPORT IMAGES

Lewis Hamilton's seven title-winning Formula 1 cars are set to be displayed together for the first time at this year's Silverstone Classic.

A special celebration of Hamilton's achievements as the most successful British F1 driver in history will be incorporated into this year's edition of the Classic, which has moved from its traditional mid-summer slot to the late August bank holiday weekend. The central theme of the 2022 festival is 'Best of British' and Hamilton's title successes will form part of the show.

The McLaren MP4-23 that powered Hamilton to his first title in 2008 will be in attendance, alongside the six Mercedes cars that carried him to championship crowns between 2014 and 2020.

"It's a real privilege for us to have all seven of Lewis' title winners on show at The Classic this summer," confirmed Nick Wigley, CEO of The Classic promoter Goose Live Events. "Lewis is already a legend and his incredible successes will forever be celebrated as a major milestone in motorsport history. This very special display will also be another of the standout highlights under this year's 'Best of British' banner at The Classic."

While the Hamilton showcase will feature modern cars, far older F1 machinery is due to take to the track during the event. Races will be held catering for grand prix cars that date back to the pre-WW2 era up until the mid-1980s, while V8, V10 and V12-powered 1990s examples will be demonstrated.

Aside from the F1 machinery, birthday celebrations for several iconic British cars will also be held. The anniversaries of the launch of the MGB, Austin 7, Ford Cortina and AC Cobra are all set to be commemorated.


ETHERINGTON/MOTORSPORT IMAGES

Excelr8 reserve Zelos to defend Mini crown

MINI CHALLENGE

Reigning Mini Challenge champion Dan Zelos will continue in the series this season as he attempts to become the first driver to successfully defend their JCW class crown.

Zelos had targeted a move into the British Touring Car Championship for this year but admitted he "couldn't really get the budget together to go and do it properly", believing it is "better to wait for when the time was right" as he eyes a long-term future in the series.

He has, however, been named as the Excelr8 Motorsport team's reserve for the 2022 BTCC season and will drive one of its Hyundais in the mid-season Oulton Park tyre test. "It's a small step but it's a step in the right direction," added Zelos of the reserve role.

He will also continue with Excelr8 for another season in the Mini Challenge, having considered joining a variety of other categories. "We did look at other packages – TCR UK seems to be getting bigger and bigger and that's a more competitive grid this year, but for me and my current partners, I've got the exposure from the ITV4 coverage [with Minis]," Zelos explained. "My sponsors have been with me for many years and I've been on the BTCC package with big trackside audiences.

"We also looked at Porsche Carrera Cup and Ginetta GT4 Supercup as well for something different but all of my development has gone into front-wheel drive over the last six years and to then move to a rear-wheel-drive car would put me on the back foot."

Zelos described this year's Mini line-up as being "even more competitive" than when he claimed the title in a nail-biting final race decider last October.

STEPHEN LICKORISH


Zelos will continue in Minis and is Excelr8's BTCC reserve

HAWKINS


JEP/MOTORSPORT IMAGES



JEP/MOTORSPORT IMAGES

Smiley's sole BTCC win came driving for Taylor in 2018 (inset)

Smiley to reunite with Taylor for Honda TCR UK attack

TCR UK

Former British Touring Car driver Chris Smiley will switch to racing a Honda in TCR UK this year as he reunites with his old BTCC team boss Bert Taylor.

Smiley spent three seasons driving for the BTC Racing squad when it was headed by Taylor, during which time he took his one and only series win, at Rockingham in 2018. The Northern Irishman subsequently drove for Excelr8 Motorsport in the BTCC but lost his drive for this year and efforts to stay on the grid in partnership with Taylor were unsuccessful.

He has now put together a late deal to join the Honda-supported Restart Racing operation – with Taylor as the team principal and his son Ben as race engineer – driving an FK7 Civic in TCR UK, starting with this weekend's opener on the British GT support bill at Oulton Park.

"It's a fresh challenge for me with a brand-new team and a brand-new car," said Smiley. "Working alongside both Bert and Ben, we have everything in place to get our season off to a positive start. I'm very confident in the team and looking forward to getting to grips with the new car."

The Restart Civic's addition to the entry means Honda is set to be regularly represented on the TCR UK grid for the first time since the category's second season in 2019.

Last-minute GT pairings agreed

BRITISH GT

A 31-car grid will contest this weekend's British GT season-opener at Oulton Park, with several last-minute pairings confirmed prior to Monday's pair of hour-long races.

Only one of the two Steller Motorsport Audi R8 LMS GT4s featured on the full-season entry list will make the trip, with team regulars Richard Williams and Sennan Fielding reprising the partnership that yielded GT4 wins in 2019 at Snetterton and Donington Park. Motus One Racing's McLaren 570S GT4, which has Will Powell and Dave Scaramanga entered for the full season, also misses out.

Meanwhile, Valluga Racing founder Benji Hetherington will return to contemporary competition for the first time since 2014 aboard a Porsche 718 Cayman GT4 RS. The 30-year-old, a podium finisher at Oulton Park in 2013 aboard Fortec Motorsport's Mercedes SLS GT3, will partner the previously announced 2014 GT4 champion Ross Wylie.

The Academy Motorsport Ford Mustang squad will pair Matt Cowley with Marco Signoretti, whose last British GT appearance came in a one-off with the Multimatic-run Mustang in 2019.

It was announced last week that Chris Froggatt and Kevin Tse will contest their first of three British GT events under the Tempesta Racing banner in Cheshire. The Anglo-Macanese pairing will drive a second 2 Seas Motorsport Mercedes-AMG GT3 this weekend, Tse returning to the scene of his debut win in RAM's Mercedes last year.

JAMES NEWBOLD

IN THE HEADLINES

RED BULL TOUR PRIZE

The drivers leading the GB3 and GB4 championships after the Donington Park round in May will be offered a tour of the Red Bull Formula 1 team's factory in Milton Keynes. The prize is being offered up by long-time series supporter John Cavill, who placed a winning bid for the experience at the Autosport Awards earlier this year.

CHAPLIN'S UNFUNNY ENDING

Elation turned to dejection for racing debutant Michael Chaplin in the first Caterham 270R race at Brands Hatch last weekend. Chaplin, whose only prior experience was karting as a teenager, ducked out of Hugo Bush's slipstream and the pair were initially credited with shared victory for a dead heat. But Chaplin was excluded when his car was found to be underweight after losing its nosecone in earlier contact.

HEAD ON TOP ON RETURN

Two-time Caterham Superlight champion Aaron Head scored a pair of wins on his return to competition at Brands Hatch last weekend following a two-year absence. Adapting to racing a Caterham on slicks for the first time, Head claimed 420R pole but stalled on the line before recovering to fourth. He then edged Henry Heaton in the second race before taking a comprehensive 13-second win in race three.

MONDELLO PARK LAP RECORD

Resurfacing of a large portion of the Mondello Park National circuit is part of a number of upgrades at the Irish venue for 2022. The increased grip meant that lap records would be under threat and, with conditions cold but clear, the timekeepers were kept busy last weekend. Notably, Cian Carey's Dallara F317 (below) took the outright record, eclipsing Nigel Greensall's mark of 50.220s, set back in 1997 in a Formula 1 Tyrrell. Carey left the mark at 49.275s, but opined that a 48s lap might have been possible in better conditions.


CHESTER

Evans duo to attend McRae Challenge

RALLYING


Gwyndaf will drive MG ZR at event, while son Elfyn (inset) will pilot Toyotas

JEP/MOTORSPORT IMAGES

World Rally Championship star Elfyn Evans and his 1996 British Rally Championship-winning father Gwyndaf Evans are set to drive at Knockhill's McRae Rally Challenge.

The father and son duo are the latest names to join the line-up for the 2-3 July event at the Scottish venue, which will celebrate the famous McRae rally dynasty and commemorate the achievements of the late 1995 WRC champion Colin McRae.


McKLEIN

Factory Toyota WRC driver Elfyn Evans, who has finished runner-up in the WRC for the past two seasons, is set to pilot an array of classic Toyota machinery across the event, which will utilise Knockhill's own rally stages.

"It's a shame there is no WRC round in Great Britain this year, so instead I'm really excited to attend the McRae Challenge weekend, which will be a great festival for all the fans," said Evans.

His father Gwyndaf will take part in the event's own competitive stage rally, featuring 50 leading national and international crews, driving a Ford Escort Mk2.

The Welshman will also take part in a special 'parade of champions' behind the wheel of the factory MG ZR he drove in the British Rally Championship in 2002-03.

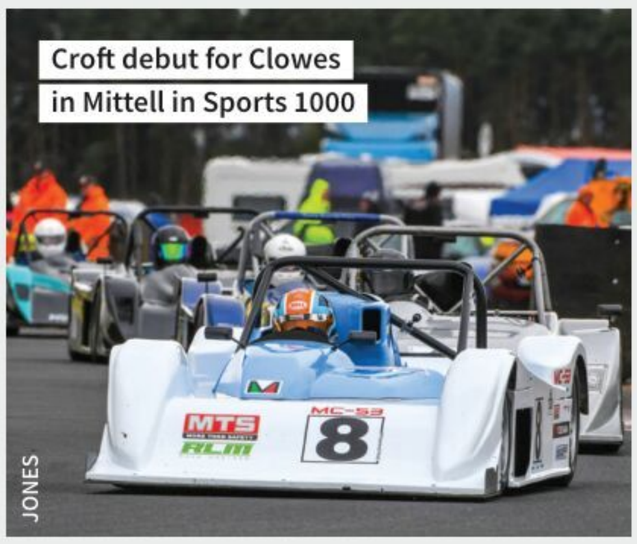
"I am thrilled to be invited to take part in the event," said Gwyndaf Evans. "I am really looking forward to meeting all my old friends from the rally world and I'm being reunited with my works MG ZR for the parade of champions, which will be fun too."

The entry list will also include six-time Olympic champion cyclist Sir Chris Hoy, who will be making his rally debut.

To complete the festivities, five-time British Rally Championship title winner Jimmy McRae will take on his son Alister and grandson Max in a 'Battle of the McRae's' as three generations of the famous family go head-to-head.

TOM HOWARD

Clowes to contest both F1000 and Sports 1000


Croft debut for Clowes in Mittell in Sports 1000

JONES

750MC

Dan Clowes will contest both the 750 Motor Club's F1000 and Sports 1000 championships in 2022 after making his debut in the latter category at Croft.

The 48-year-old took a fifth and a sixth in the two races aboard his Mittell Cars-run Mittell MC-53.

He will continue to be run by JFK Racing in F1000, however, as he attempts to regain the title he won in 2020.

"I've thoroughly enjoyed racing the Mittell, it's got less mechanical but more aero grip so is quite floaty compared to the F1000," said Clowes.

"Hopefully the timetables at Donington in August and at Snetterton's season finale where both categories are racing will be kind to me – I don't fancy the run from parc ferme back to the collecting area there!"

CARL McKELLAR





Walker took best result of eighth in Fiesta Junior at Brands last weekend

HAWKINS

Rowland and 2 Seas partnership to help karters into car racing

FIESTA JUNIOR

British GT squad 2 Seas Motorsport has created a junior driver development programme in partnership with Formula E racer Oliver Rowland's karting team that will place teenagers in Fiesta Junior.

Nick Cristofaro, co-founder of 2 Seas, and Rowland have known each other for 20 years since they were karting rivals and have forged this new collaboration amid interest from karters in gaining track knowledge and understanding of how to step into cars.

"We hope that this programme will help the next generation of drivers and make the transition from karting through to sportscar racing easier," explained Cristofaro, while Rowland added that "giving something back to those just starting out is very important" for him.

The first driver to benefit is karting graduate Aaron Walker, who took a best result of eighth in the British Racing and Sports Car Club series' season opener last weekend.

BRSCC head of formulae development Greg Graham has described 2 Seas' entry as "exciting" for the championship, adding: "The hope would be that other teams, whether that's from GTs or British Touring Cars or elsewhere, might look at it as well."

Walker was one of just two drivers to race the new-for-2022 Mk7 Fiesta Zetec S machine in the opener but Graham is optimistic more will join later in the season. He said: "There will be a transition — in a couple of years, I think the whole grid will be the new cars."

STEPHEN LICKORISH

Taylor switches to GT Cup for 2022

GT CUP

James Taylor — Team Hard's 2022 Scholarship winner — made a last-minute switch from the Ginetta GT4 Supercup to the GT Cup and competed in last weekend's season opener.

Using the squad's older Porsche 991 GT3 Cup car, which Taylor shared with 2018 champion Chris Murphy, the duo took a best result of third in GTC at Donington Park.

Taylor told Autosport: "It was a difficult choice as GT4 Supercup provides a strong platform [on the TOCA package] but I wanted to raise my profile and both Tony [Gilham] and I agreed that I might not fully achieve this with the lower-spec car.

"Straightaway, he offered me the opportunity to switch to the Porsche alongside former champion Chris Murphy.

"It's a huge step up and a uniquely different car to race. It's an eye-opener, but one that allows me to work with the team in building sponsorship opportunities, while developing as a driver ahead of what we hope will be a future campaign in Porsche Carrera Cup."

STEVE HINDLE

IN THE HEADLINES

PEARSON MISSES CROFT

Reigning BMW Car Club champion Ben Pearson missed the season's opening rounds at Croft last weekend due to his new premier M1 class-spec car (a freshly built F22 M235i) not being ready in time. The Exeter racer said: "It's due back later this week with the roll cage fitted and a few other parts – the aim is to be all ready for Oulton Park in mid-May."

SIMPSON'S FUN CUP DEBUT

Sports-prototype, GT racer and Ginetta development driver Mike Simpson made his Fun Cup debut at Oulton Park last weekend, sharing the Kaizen Motorsport car with Ginetta Academy driver Ravi Ramyead and Riley Phillips, and finished fourth. He said: "There was a spare seat for the race and Ravi offered it to me. Great fun, nice people and very close racing. I would certainly do it again."

BROOKES' CARS IN ACTION

A rare collection of cars driven by two-time British Rally champion Russell Brookes will go on display later this year. The cars include three Ford Escort Mk2s, two Opel Mantas, a Ford Sierra Cosworth, Vauxhall Chevette HSR, and a Group A Vauxhall Astra and will appear at the inaugural Firle Beacon motorsport event on 30-31 July. The cars, which will all run with the iconic blue and yellow livery of sponsor Andrews Heat For Hire, will also be driven on the 2.4-mile rally stage.

F5000 TREBLE FOR COLLINS

Fifty years after New Zealander Graham McRae won the Lady Wigram Trophy Formula 5000 race on neighbouring Wigram airfield in one of his own creations, Michael Collins scored a Tasman Cup Revival Series treble in a Leda GM1 (below) at Ruapuna's Mike Pero Motorsport Park last weekend. David Banks (Talon MR1) chased Collins and Steve Ross home in a 1-2-3 for McRae-designed chassis in the handicap.





Get set for a dark-arts revolution

Pirelli has completely overhauled its British GT tyres for this year, and that presents teams with an extra challenge for this weekend's season opener

JAMES NEWBOLD

Balance of Performance is never going to get universal approval. But one of its upsides is that multiple manufacturers are capable of winning and setting virtually identical laptimes. Take the Pro qualifying session at British GT's Oulton Park round last year, where 0.088 seconds split the top four — which included a Porsche, two Lamborghinis and a Mercedes.

But, while BoP will theoretically allow all seven GT3 constructors a shot at achieving similar times when the Cheshire track hosts British GT's season-opener this weekend, it still boils down to the teams and drivers to find the perfect set-ups and extract their cars' full potential. And that engineering nous will be more important than ever this year as the arrival of Pirelli's new P Zero DHF tyre compound threatens to change the status quo.

"I think that's going to change the whole grid throughout the season," reckons 2 Seas Motorsport co-owner Nick Cristofaro. "Everyone is starting with a blank piece of paper."

Pirelli UK motorsport manager Jonathan Wells describes the new rubber, which will be used on GT3 and GT4 cars and contains an increase in renewable materials, as "the single biggest change we've really had in our GT range in the last 10 years". It's the result of a need to keep pace with car development and ongoing demands to improve sustainability. "It is the first time that we've changed pretty much everything, so it's genuinely a ground-up thing," Wells explains. "Everything else has very much been about evolution, but this is more of a revolution for the first time."

"Everything else has been about evolution, but this is more of a revolution for the first time"

Feedback from teams is that the new tyre is faster — Wells admits the laptime gain had proven "bigger than we expected" — and thereby exerts more wear. "If you're inherently going quicker, the tyre has to be generating more energy and therefore the potential for it to go wrong at this early stage is of course there," says Wells. "You can easily over-stress the tyre perhaps a bit too much, so it's a big learning process."

Coming after a period in which the tread compound "has been remarkably consistent", Wells says teams will have much to unpick: "They have to think, 'What aspect of the performance is coming from the mechanical changes we've made to the tyre and what's coming from the compound, and how do we best utilise that to not only get the ultimate peak performance but also to manage that over a longer run?'"

Cristofaro says "tyre management is going to be a massive factor" as teams manage the graining effect. "It's very circuit-dependent as well," he points out. "It's not the case of having one set-up that works everywhere and you tweak the pressures. We'll run different set-ups for different circuits to manage the tyre." He adds that the DHF also needs particular care to make sure it's in the optimal range for qualifying runs and can be unforgiving when dropping out of it: "If you're outside that window, then you're nowhere, a difference between one or two seconds."

Sandy Mitchell, the British GT champion in 2020 with Barwell Motorsport, has already raced the DHF in the opening round of the GT World Challenge Europe Endurance Cup at Imola earlier this month. The Lamborghini factory driver agrees that "to get the optimum out of the tyre seems to require a bit more effort and a bit more precision in everything you do, whether it's temperature, management or driving style".

"I think we might see teams and drivers having to just try different things," explains Mitchell, who will again share with Adam Balon this season. "Everybody is still learning what the best way to do everything is, but I think it's clear that it maybe takes a bit more management from everyone's side."

Mitchell believes that, based on Imola, "front-engined cars in the cooler conditions are having a bit of a better time at switching the tyres on". But the question is, will anybody unlock something special come qualifying on Saturday? While Cristofaro concedes that "a lot of teams have done a lot more [test] days than us", he believes that off-track work on rolling roads and damper dynos could have a tangible benefit. "There's a lot of investment from our side to make it work," he says. "But who knows? Until you do the first race, we could have gone the complete opposite way and someone might have found something by doing laps that's better."

Mitchell is well accustomed to tyre saving, having spent his 2020 campaign alongside Rob Collard carrying extra weight as a Silver pairing. Could this experience, and the knowledge Barwell has gained from Imola, play in his favour? "It could be a good advantage for us, we've definitely learned some information," he says. "It was pretty cold, so it could be quite comparable to British GT, especially at Oulton Park at this time of year!"

Tyres are a frequently overlooked element of racing, especially when there's a single supplier and compound. But, until the teams get on top of it, the old adage that it doesn't matter how good your car is if the thing that connects it to the ground doesn't work could be oft-repeated in the early rounds.

P72 BRITISH GT SEASON PREVIEW



Horrobin is 'helped' around Druids by Brickley in Fiestas

HAWKINS

Horrobin holds on to win Fiesta double at Brands season opener

BRANDS HATCH
BRSCC
9-10 APRIL

Simon Horrobin twice withstood race-long pressure to open his account for 2022 with a pair of Fiesta Championship victories at Brands Hatch.

After polesitting debutant Jenson Brickley was jumped by both Horrobin and Alastair Kellett at the start, Horrobin then passed Kellett at McLaren on the opening lap before fighting a rearguard action. A failed attack from Kellett let Brickley into second, before the Fiesta Junior champion's last-lap challenge for the lead at Druids was also rebuffed, with light contact. Kellett nipped back through at Graham Hill Bend, and the Irishman fell less than 0.2 seconds shy of Horrobin, who was short on brakes.

A slow green-flag lap by Horrobin ahead of race two may have contributed to a first-corner spin on cold tyres for Kellett and a huge tankslapper for Zachary Lucas, who'd climbed from the back of the ST240 class to fourth in the opener after gearbox trouble in qualifying. While most avoided the confusion, Kellett was collected by reigning champion Rob Smith and was out. Brickley was unable to find a way past Horrobin when the race went green, while John Cooper drove a lonely race to third.

A large Modified Ford field was split for drivers to contest two races from three. Dave Cockell put mechanical woe at the Silverstone opener behind him to take a pair of comfortable wins in his four-wheel-drive Escort Cosworth. Behind, Malcolm Harding's Smith & Jones-engined Escort Mk2 just held off the closing BDX-powered example of Dan Minton in the opener. Minton enjoyed a close contest for second with Neil Jessop's Duratec-motivated Zakspeed-style version in race two before losing out when he tangled in traffic.

With no Cockell in race three, the spaceframe Escort RSR Mk1 driven by Jack Gadd – who spun from third in the opener – looked to have beaten Harding, only to lose the lead while lapping his father Dave.

After dominating the opening race for Caterham 310Rs (which also ran a two-from-three races format), Pete Walters had to fight back from being shuffled down the order in race three. A late safety car set up a two-lap dash to the flag, where a twitch at McLaren for Stephen Lyall allowed Walters to pip him by just 0.073s. Lyall also lost out in race two, when a 5s track-limits penalty handed Tom Wyllys victory.

Sid Smith steered clear of chaos to claim a maiden Fiesta Junior win. Front-row starters Deagen Fairclough and Albert Webster slid off at Paddock Hill Bend and, while both initially dragged their cars back on track, the oil deposited around the circuit by Fairclough before his engine blew contributed to multiple spins. Just three cars stayed on the lead lap, Thomas Lee and Jake Maynard trailing Smith home. Maynard's last-lap spin gifted Lee the sequel after both had passed Smith, while Fairclough salvaged third with a replacement engine.

Mikey Doble's second BMW Compact Cup win required an impressive fightback after a slow getaway. After climbing up to second, Doble was eating into Ian Howes's advantage before a late safety car left Howes a sitting duck, with Lee Dendy-Sadler also demoting him. Polesitter Doble won the opener after repassing Dendy-Sadler, who secured his maiden series podiums.

MARK PAULSON



Cockell won both his Modified Ford races

HAWKINS

WEEKEND WINNERS

FIESTA CHAMPIONSHIP
Races 1 & 2 Simon Horrobin (ST240 Turbo)

MODIFIED FORDS
Races 1 & 2 Dave Cockell (Escort Cosworth)
Race 3 Malcolm Harding (Escort Mk2)

CATERHAM 310R
Races 1 & 3 Pete Walters
Race 2 Tom Wyllys

FIESTA JUNIORS
Race 1 Sid Smith (Mk6 ST150)
Race 2 Thomas Lee (Mk6 ST150)

BMW COMPACT CUP
Races 1 & 2 Mikey Doble

CATERHAM SEVEN UK
Race 1 Henry Heaton
Races 2 & 3 Aaron Head

CATERHAM 270R
Race 1 Hugo Bush
Race 2 Taylor O'Flanagan

CATERHAM ROADSPORT
Races 1 & 2 Charlie Lower

TRACK ATTACK RACE CLUB
Races 1 & 2 David Shead (BMW Compact)

For full results visit: tsl-timing.com



Old beats new as Edgar's 182 battles Griffiths's 197 in new-look Clio championship

Edgar and Keir win hard-fought Clio races

CROFT
750MC
9-10 APRIL

Scott Edgar and, in bizarre circumstances, Christopher Keir — both notably in older 182 models — took the wins in the new-look Renault Clio Sport Championship as the 750 Motor Club's 2022 season got under way amid intermittent hail at Croft.

Former karting ace Owain Rosser, in a newer 197, qualified on pole for the opening Clio encounter — his car racing debut — but a loss of power off the start meant he ended the opening lap in 16th. In contrast, Edgar made a rocket launch to go from seventh into the lead at the opening bend, Clervaux, but then came nine very hard laps to stay ahead of those behind.

Tim Bentley (182) initially took up the chase before giving way to Justin Griffiths's 197. Bentley, though, retaliated, diving back past exiting the Jim Clark Esses and taking fellow 182 racers, reigning champion Jack Dwane and Keir, with him. Dwane closed in but Edgar held strong for his second win in the category. Dwane took second, while Griffiths held off Keir for his first outright podium result in third.

After lap one of race two on Sunday, a first victory for a 197 looked a very real possibility. Rosser again started on pole, but Griffiths got the jump on him at the start and, together, they started to build a gap to the following Keir and Dwane.

On lap two, though, there was contact between Griffiths and Rosser entering the complex. Both were eliminated, and suddenly Keir was leading a Clio race for the first time. Like Edgar the day before, he had Dwane in his mirrors, but also like Edgar he held his nerve to record a first ever win — and at his home circuit.

But things had been far from straightforward inside the car for the Newcastle-upon-Tyne driver. "The right-hand air vent popped out of the dashboard and got caught under the pedals — I spent a lap trying to fish it out with my hand and managed to sling it over my shoulder, only for the left one to then do the same!" said Keir. "Luckily I managed to grab that one too and throw it in the boot with the other one. They spent the rest of the race rattling around behind me."

As expected, the Honda Civic Type Rs of Philip Wright and Ryan Polley were the winners of two very entertaining Hot Hatch races, but both were almost defeated by Kris McCloy's older Civic, much improved with a punchier KT24 Honda Accord engine.

McCloy qualified on pole for the opener and led it for the first five laps until a slight hesitation lapping a backmarker created the tiniest of gaps for Wright to wriggle



Hammond has a slide at the head of the Classic Stock Hatch field

ALL PHOTOGRAPHY: JONES





Cutt fought back from brake woes to win second BMW contest



Nylan was a winner on Type R Trophy debut



There was no stopping Webb's Spire in Sports 1000

through as they approached Barcroft. By Sunny In, Polley was also through as McCloy kept going to take third.

Wright's win gave him pole for race two, but he knew beforehand he would be beaten off the line. "We'd needed to change the gearbox on Friday night/Saturday morning before qualifying and, with the new one, I couldn't change from first to second so needed to start in second," he explained.

Sure enough, Polley and McCloy were ahead of him on the run to Clervaux and another intense three-way fight between them followed. But McCloy was again out of luck when his engine spluttered exiting the chicane, Wright's Type R rear-ending the Civic as he swerved to avoid it.

Undeterred, Wright was then able to close in on Polley but there was no way through, hence a win and a second apiece.

Importantly in the outright championship, Paul Jarvis (Citroen Saxo VTS) took a pair of Class B wins. Reigning champion David Drinkwater (BMW Compact) won Class C in race one, but in race two suffered a rare defeat as Paul Dyrdal (Saxo VTR) took the honours.

Christopher Nylan impressively took pole and victory on his debut in the Type R Trophy, taking advantage of a ferocious scrap for second behind him to build a seven-second lead by the end. Mark Dicken finished runner-up but later confessed he'd "never defended like that in my life" to keep Jake Hewlett behind. Hewlett, a semi-pro sim racer, had remarkably qualified second fastest to Nylan for his first ever car race before finishing it in third.

Another third for Hewlett in race two (starting with race one's top 10 reversed) was to follow, but in different circumstances. Travis Coyne was the winner on the road and believed he had secured his first win in the category, only for officials to later disqualify him from the results after he momentarily lost control under double waved yellow flags at Clervaux.

This meant Joe Jessup, who'd muscled his way past Hewlett in a hard but fair move at Clervaux to be second on the road, thus inherited the victory. Matt Digby was second, with Hewlett third after falling back in his clash with Jessup.

With chief rival Michael Cutt starting from the rear after braking problems in qualifying, Graham Crowhurst dominated the opening BMW Car Club Racing encounter, which finished behind the safety car. Cutt was able to come through for second ahead of Paul Cook as M3s inevitably filled the lead positions. Cutt was not to be denied in race two, leading from start to finish, but he had Crowhurst right behind him all the way. Cook was again third.

Richard Webb in his newly built Spire RGBR was untouchable in both Sports 1000 races. Michael Roots (Mittell MC-53) and reigning champion Ryan Yarrow (Spire GT3-Y) were second and third each time. Yarrow's two outings were not without incident: in race one he survived a spin while avoiding Paul Smith's faltering Mittell SSRD MC-53, and in race two he finished second on the road but dropped to third with a five-second penalty for exceeding track limits.

Pip Hammond (Vauxhall Nova GTE) survived attacks from Stewart Place and Chris Dear (both in Peugeot 205 GTIs) to win the opening Classic Stock Hatch race. Place was pressing him hard until he retired with a suspected blown valve, which prevented him starting race two from pole. Pete Morgan (Ford Fiesta XR2) won race two ahead of Hammond, these two well clear of the rest after Dear had slowed with electrical problems.

CARL McKELLAR

WEEKEND WINNERS

RENAULT CLIO SPORT CHAMPIONSHIP
Race 1 Scott Edgar (182)
Race 2 Christopher Keir (182)

HOT HATCH
Race 1 Philip Wright (Honda Civic Type R)
Race 2 Ryan Polley (Honda Civic Type R)

TYPE R TROPHY
Race 1 Christopher Nylan
Race 2 Joe Jessup

BMW CAR CLUB RACING
Race 1 Graham Crowhurst (E46 M3)
Race 2 Michael Cutt (E36 M3)

SPORTS 1000
Races 1 & 2 Richard Webb (Spire RGBR)

CLASSIC STOCK HATCH
Race 1 Pip Hammond (Vauxhall Nova GTE)
Race 2 Pete Morgan (Ford Fiesta XR2)

MX-5 CUP
Races 1, 2 & 3 Ben Short (below)

MA7DA
Race 1 Daniel Sibbons
Race 2 Jonathan Lisseter

116 TROPHY
Harry Ormerod/Tim Crighton/Peter Ormerod



For full results visit: 750mc.co.uk

CLUB AUTOSPORT

McLaren 3, Mercedes 1 as GT Cup begins

DONINGTON PARK
MSVR
9-10 APRIL


READ

A grid of nearly 40 cars assembled for the opening round of the 2022 GT Cup Championship, which featured four races at Donington Park last weekend.

Only minutes into Saturday's free practice, the Mercedes-AMG GT3 of reigning champions Richard and Sam Neary suffered a brake disc failure that forced the Team Abba car to miss qualifying, just as they had done nine months earlier. But, unlike the events of 2021, there would be no fairytale ending for the father-son duo.

Fellow British GT runner Ian Loggie placed his RAM Racing Mercedes-AMG GT3 on pole for the opener, and a strong start bought him time to focus on bringing his Pirelli tyres up to temperature before leaving the rest behind. Neary Sr not only had to work his way through the order, but also had to safely bed in new brake discs. He too measured his race and, from 35th and last, he finished seventh and picked up fastest lap, which awarded him pole for the afternoon's endurance race.

As a lone amateur, fellow front-row starter Loggie gained from a shorter stop in the second contest, but struggled in traffic, which allowed Marcus Clutton's McLaren 720S to close up. Loggie did his best to defend but, approaching Coppice, the leaders hit yet more traffic. This wrong-footed Loggie, who headed through the gravel, allowing Enduro Motorsport duo Clutton and Morgan Tillbrook to repeat their success from last year's Donington Park British GT finale. Simon Orange and Michael O'Brien came home second in their McLaren, while Loggie finished fifth behind the Neary Mercedes.

Sunday's races were all-McLaren affairs. Orange and O'Brien had shown pace all weekend, and Orange was rewarded in race three. Greystone GT also had something to cheer about in race four, when Oli Webb (sharing with Iain Campbell) was able to hunt down Loggie before holding off the Neary Mercedes in the closing stages.

The GT4 cars in GTH produced a constant stream of three-wide battles, with the Stephen Walton/Chris Hart Mercedes winning twice, while in GTO the McLaren MP4-12C Cam Am of Paul Bailey and Ross Wylie couldn't find the pace to overhaul the lone Radical RXC of Steve Burgess and Ben Dimmack.

Radical brought two grids to Donington, with wins shared out across the Radical Challenge. The first encounter was hit by a burst of rain. While some drivers pitted, others stayed out, with Jason Rishover heading home Ben Stone, John Macleod and Elliot Goodman by less than half a second. Anthony Ayres and Chris Short claimed the other two wins.

James Beckett's new United Formula Ford series attracted a healthy grid of 18 cars spanning five decades. James Hadfield's beautifully prepared Van Diemen RF03 earned pole with Matt Rivett's RF91 behind. Heading into Redgate for the first time, Rivett sold Hadfield the dummy and took the lead but, with an oil-gushing car behind, an immediate red flag and extensive track repair was required.

At the restart, Hadfield went defensive, so Rivett simply drove around his outside, the 2006 Castle Combe FF1600 champion looking certain of victory, only to coast out of contention a few laps later.

In a reversal of fortunes, race two should have been Hadfield's, but a collision at the final corner between other drivers left fluid on the racing line, sending Hadfield through the gravel and promoting Rivett before the race was stopped.

The Clubmans Sports Prototypes continue to attract well-supported grids and, despite sizeable differences in performance, positions were keenly contested throughout. Clive Wood's Mallock Mk23 won the first two of three races, but Cody Tree's outstanding race two drive from the back to third in his Phantom, and then race-three win, was the highlight.

There were some tremendous battles elsewhere, such as in the Racing Saloons encounters that were shared with Z Cars. Callum Bates came out on top overall and in the latter category in race one, with Matt Dance emulating him in the sequel. Chris Boon's Jaguar XK8 and Kris Dean's Renault Clio 172 enjoyed an unlikely ding-dong in the Racing Saloons, and were separated by just over a tenth at the line in race two.

STEVE HINDLE


Rivett (leading) and Hadfield were locked in an FF1600 battle
READ



Neary and Loggie get their Mercs up close and personal at the start

WEEKEND WINNERS

DONINGTON PARK

GT CUP
Race 1 Ian Loggie (Mercedes-AMG GT3)
Race 2 Morgan Tillbrook/Marcus Clutton (McLaren 720S GT3)
Race 3 Simon Orange (McLaren 720S GT3)
Race 4 Iain Campbell/Oli Webb (McLaren 720S)

RADICAL CHALLENGE
Race 1 Jason Rishover (SR3 RSX)
Race 2 Anthony Ayres (SR3)
Race 3 Chris Short (SR3 XX)

UNITED FORMULA FORD
Race 1 James Hadfield (Van Diemen RF03)
Race 2 Matt Rivett (Van Diemen RF91)

CLUBMANS SPORTS PROTOTYPES
Races 1 & 2 Clive Wood (Mallock Mk23)
Race 3 Cody Tree (Phantom P94)

Z CARS & RACING SALOONS
Race 1 Callum Bates (BMW Z4)
Race 2 Matt Dance (BMW Z4)

PRODUCTION GTIs
Race 1 Henry Riley
Race 2 Simon Vercoe

RADICAL SR1 CUP
Race 1 Ben Caisley
Race 2 Daryl De Leon

OULTON PARK

FUN CUP
Team Stobart (Colin Kingsnorth/Jonathan Hoad)

NORTHERN & SUPER CLASSIC FF1600
Races 1 & 2 John Murphy (Van Diemen RF90)

CITYCAR CUP
Race 1 Richard Bliss (Toyota Aygo)
Race 2 Stuart Bliss (Toyota Aygo)

ST-XR CHALLENGE
Races 1 & 2 Chris Jones (Fiesta ST150)

For full results visit: tsl-timing.com



Stobart Sport team (green car on far left) came through to win in Fun Cup

ROBERTS

Fun Cup battles go down to the wire at Oulton Park

OULTON PARK
BRSCC
9 APRIL

Four hours of Fun Cup racing at Oulton Park came down to an 11-minute sprint to the flag following the final safety car intervention.

At the green, Neil Plimmer led for PLR Racing, from Stobart Sports' Jonathan Hoad, Greenheath's Gary Bate and Kaizen Motorsport's Riley Phillips. Both Plimmer and Phillips had to serve stop-go penalties and Bate had an off at Brittens, which left Hoad out in front, pursued by Craig Butterworth (GCI Racing) and Ellis Hadley (GT Radial).

The Stobart pair of Hoad and Colin Kingsnorth just held on by 0.529 seconds over Butterworth/Ian Wood, with Hadley/Jimmy Broadbent/Steve Brown third.

John Murphy won both Northern & Super Classic Formula Ford races in his Van Diemen RF90. Andrew Schofield (Reynard 89FF) stayed close in the first race as Peter Daly's Van Diemen RF88 ran with them. As the lead battle intensified, Alaric Gordon joined the trio with his Swift SC97 and there was less than a second between all four at the flag.

Murphy was more dominant in race two, with Schofield and Daly holding station. But the duel for fourth went down to the wire, before Nick Barnes's Swift FB89 finally saw off Gordon.

Toyota Aygo pilot Richard Bliss won the restarted CityCar Cup opener, with Seb Melrose's Citroen C1 heading home Stuart Bliss (Aygo) and Elliot Lettis (Peugeot 107) before a penalty for Melrose for a jumped start dropped him to sixth.

The second race was placed under caution after Charles Mackenzie went off at Island Bend on the opening lap, only for the safety car to be called out again when Liam Browning crashed at Old Hall on the restart. Stuart Bliss headed home brother Richard and Melrose, with the race completed under caution.

There was little between Chris Jones and Chris Grimes in the first ST-XR Challenge race, as they left Michael Blackburn and Sam Beckett to duel for third. Despite a track-limits penalty, Grimes was still a safe second, while Blackburn managed to retain the final podium spot.

With Grimes left at the start, Jones led the field away again in race two, but had Blackburn shadowing him. It was a second win for Jones, though, with Blackburn just 0.351s behind. Beckett just managed to retain third as the recovering Grimes closed in.

PETER SCHERER



Murphy took the spoils in both FF1600 counters

ROBERTS

Dempsey clash means it's not such a merry Queen of Scots

KNOCKHILL
SMRC
10 APRIL

Two drivers stole the headlines as the National Formula Ford 1600 Championship made the trip over the border to Knockhill last weekend. Ammonite Motorsport's Colin Queen and points leader Jordan Dempsey of Kevin Mills Racing put on a sensational show in the opener for the David Leslie Trophy, but then collided in an equally frenetic second encounter.

Dempsey replicated his season-opening form by putting his Spectrum on pole for race one, and maintained the lead either side of an early safety-car period following an incident between Shawn Rashid and Andrew Rackstraw at Clark.

Queen followed Dempsey throughout, and the Ray driver made his decisive move for the lead on the final lap, surprising Dempsey by slicing down the inside under braking for McIntyres. "I was setting him up all race, but I didn't expect him to leave me that much room into the corner," reflected Queen, who beat Dempsey to the line by under half a second. Behind, Lucas Romanek got the better of Jamie Sharp for third after a late lunge to the inside of Duffus Dip on the final tour.

Queen and Dempsey resumed their battle in the early stages of race two, but made contact at the Hairpin on the fifth lap of 22. That sent both onto the grass, giving Sharp's BM Racing Medina the lead from Romanek's Van Diemen. But Sharp's lead didn't last long either, as he spun while fighting Romanek at the same corner. Romanek therefore took the victory ahead of Morgan Quinn and Ben Cochrane.

Michael Weddell started the defence of his Mini Cooper Cup title with two wins and a third place as car racing rookie Jack Irvine prevailed in race three. Weddell got the better of polesitter Neil Hose after a safety car restart to build a healthy margin at the front, beating Chad Little to the line by just over half a second.

The top two duked it out on the entry to Duffus at the start of race two, with Weddell using the inside line to maintain the lead. His cause was helped by Ian Munro, who seized second with a late dive to the inside of Little at McIntyres, giving Weddell enough of a break to double up.

Each of the first two races was won outright by S class driver Craig Blake, but the finale ran without those three cars. Newcomer Irvine started the reversed-grid





Corson leads Dunn and Brunton in frenetic C1 scrap

MOIR

Mullins and Fildes win as Carey breaks lap record

MONDELLO PARK
MPSC
9-10 APRIL

Sylvie Mullins's fearsome Gould-Judd fought off the attentions of double F3 Cup champion Cian Carey to take the first BOSS Ireland race as the Irish championship circuit racing season began at Mondello Park last weekend.

Carey did at least have the honour of breaking the outright lap record in his efforts to track down the F1-engined machine. Carey lowered the mark again in race two in his Dallara F317, crossing the line first, but both he and Mullins were adjudged to have passed early leader Jonathan Fildes under yellows, with Fildes's F3000 Lola promoted to the top of the podium after the penalties were applied. Carey was disappointed with the decision, but consoled himself with his second lap record of the day!

Anthony Cross took two well-earned Formula Vee victories, holding off Sean Newsome in race one and Jordan Kelly, after a great scrap, in race two. Elsewhere, Philip Sheane took a pair of impressive Formula Sheane triumphs on a poignant weekend following the passing of his cousin and Irish FVee creator David Sheane. Sheane's opening victory featured the move of the day when he relieved Richie Kearney of the lead around the outside at Southside corner.

The new Mondello surface appeared to play havoc with the Future Classic barrier time. After eight cars received penalties, David Hammond's little Fiat Uno was awarded the win, with Aidan Byrne's Toyota Celica taking race two after crossing the line far enough ahead to negate the penalty.

Shane Murphy took SEAT Supercup honours in race one, while graduating Fiesta ST champion Graham McDonnell took an impressive win in race two. In the concurrent Supercars and Irish Touring Car races, Paul Parr and Stephen Traub took two wins and a class lap record apiece.

A delighted Ian Fishbourne battled past 2021 champion Michael Barrable to win the first Fiesta Zetec race, ahead of a capacity grid, while Barrable hit back with a win in race two, once he displaced early leader



Close battle between Fishbourne (centre) and Barrable (right) in Fiesta Zetecs

CHESTER



Dempsey led Queen for much of the opener, before they tangled in race two

BOURNE

contest from pole and made a superb getaway to break clear. He was never headed, although Little got to within half a second on the final lap, with Weddell third.

Reigning C1 Cup champion Ross Dunn edged a thrilling opening race by just 0.016s from Finlay Brunton in a sensational photo finish. Dunn took the lead from polesitter Andrew Davidson around the outside of McIntyres on lap one and recovered from a last-lap pass from Brunton at the same corner to come out on top. Sam Corson prevailed in a similarly competitive second race, with Dunn and Brunton half a second adrift at the flag.

V8 power dominated the Scottish Classic races, with Russell Paterson leading Tommy Gilmartin in a Morgan 1-2 in the opening bout. But contact between the pair in race two handed John Kinmond's Rover 3500 the victory.

Steven Gray took the spoils in both Scottish Fiesta ST Cup races, beating his long-time rival Dave Colville and Liam McGill respectively.

STEPHEN BRUNSDON



Mullins heads Carey and Fildes (right) in BOSS Ireland

CHESTER

Andy Kavanagh, Alan Dawson shadowing the pair across the line.

Gareth Thompson's MGB GTV8 took the first Historic Racing Car Association race when Billy Crosbie retired from the lead, while Jackie Cochrane's V8 Tiger just held Crosbie's Crossle 9S off in a drag race to the line second time around.

Five-time autotest champion Eddie Peterson took an impressive Fiesta ST win in race one from team-mate Dave Maguire, with Victor Cullen a delighted third. Cullen's father Michael failed to usurp Maguire from the lead in the second contest, despite trying everything for the duration of the race. Peterson completed the podium, having climbed from sixth on the grid.

Despite being in considerable pain with a back injury, Peter Barrable took the opening Irish Legends race, fighting off a challenge from 2021 champion Geoff Richardson, with Richardson's brother Greg completing the podium. Geoff Richardson fought back, taking the wins in races two and three and increasing his points lead in the title chase.

Another champion on form was Michael Cullen, who picked up where he left off in Irish Strykers, clinching pole position and converting it into two dominant wins.

Matthew McCord and Ethan Campbell shared the Ginetta Junior Ireland wins, while Codey Keogh was first of the Junior Mini Challenge cars on both occasions.

LEO NULTY

WEEKEND WINNERS

KNOCKHILL

NATIONAL FORMULA FORD 1600 CHAMPIONSHIP
Race 1 Colin Queen (Ray GR18)
Race 2 Lucas Romanek (Van Diemen JL13)

SCOTTISH MINI COOPER CUP
Races 1 & 2 Craig Blake (Cooper R53)
Race 3 Jack Irvine (Cooper)

SCOTTISH C1 CUP
Race 1 Ross Dunn
Race 2 Sam Corson

SCOTTISH CLASSIC SPORTS & SALOONS
Race 1 Russell Paterson (Morgan +8)
Race 2 John Kinmond (Rover 3500)

SCOTTISH FIESTA ST CUP
Races 1 & 2 Steven Gray

For full results visit: smart-timing.co.uk

MONDELLO PARK

BOSS IRELAND
Race 1 Sylvie Mullins (Gould GR37)
Race 2 Jonathan Fildes (Lola T96/50)

FORMULA VEE
Races 1 & 2 Anthony Cross (Sheane)

FORMULA SHEANE
Races 1 & 2 Philip Sheane

FUTURE CLASSICS
Race 1 David Hammond (Fiat Uno)
Race 2 Aidan Byrne (Toyota Celica)

SEAT SUPERCUP IRELAND & IRISH SUPERCARS & IRISH TOURING CARS
Race 1 Shane Murphy (SEAT)
Race 2 Graham McDonnell (SEAT)

FIESTA ZETECS
Race 1 Ian Fishbourne
Race 2 Michael Barrable

HISTORIC RACING CAR ASSOCIATION
Race 1 Gareth Thompson (MGB GTV8)
Race 2 Jackie Cochrane (Sunbeam Tiger)

FIESTA STs
Race 1 Eddie Peterson
Race 2 Dave Maguire

IRISH LEGENDS
Race 1 Peter Barrable
Races 2 & 3 Geoff Richardson

IRISH STRYKERS
Races 1 & 2 Michael Cullen

GINETTA JUNIOR IRELAND & JUNIOR MINI CHALLENGE
Race 1 Matthew McCord (Ginetta G20)
Race 2 Ethan Campbell (Ginetta G20)

For full results visit: timing.ie



BRITISH GT PREVIEW

2 Seas sets sail on a title-bid voyage

The Mercedes squad is returning full-time this year with a strong line-up and is confident heading into this weekend's Oulton Park opener

JAMES NEWBOLD

Much has changed since Anglo-Bahraini squad 2 Seas Motorsport was last a full-season entrant in the British GT Championship in 2020. Although it won at Snetterton that year with Jack Mitchell and Jordan Witt, the team's frequent struggles with unreliability on the McLaren 720S GT3 were a drain on time and resources.

"We were employing really good guys, but all of their expertise couldn't be used," recalls team co-owner Nick Cristofaro, "because we were always focusing on having to keep the thing going. Motorsport is all about making things better and faster, where with the McLaren we never had any performance meetings — it was always meetings of how to make things better within that car."

After exploring options with Porsche, and finding that only one car was available, 2 Seas changed allegiances to Mercedes last year. Then, Cristofaro says, "everything was flipped, we literally just focused on performance." But plans to field cars in both the Pro ranks of GT World Challenge Europe and the DTM came to naught, and the team ran only a limited programme in 2021, although it won on its sole British GT

Returning 2 Seas team is confident that switch to Mercedes machinery will pay off

BATHIE/XYNAMIC PHOTOGRAPHY

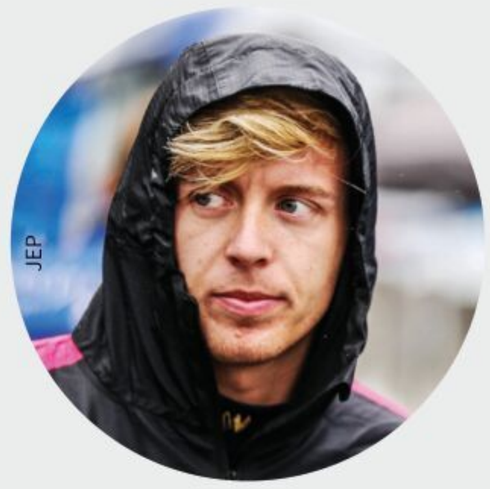
“We were employing really good guys, but all of their expertise couldn’t be used”

appearance with Hunter Abbott and Martin Kodric at Silverstone, and claimed two victories from as many weekends in International GT Open with Kodric and Ethan Simioni.

The squad won too on its most recent race outing in January’s Gulf 12 Hours, Kodric, Ben Barnicoat and Cristofaro’s 2 Seas co-owner Isa Al Khalifa following up their victory from the previous year’s event with the McLaren. It’s not a team interested in half measures and, with a significant contingent of former Strakka Racing engineers and mechanics on the staff who have plenty of experience with the car, there’s every reason to expect 2 Seas to be in the thick of the fight in 2022 with Lewis Williamson and James Cottingham on driving duties.

“The guys we have are really intelligent and we’re lucky to have them because it’s all about those little two per cents that add up at the end of the day,” says Cristofaro, who has also expanded 2 Seas into the Fiesta Junior Championship with a single-car entry for karting graduate Aaron Walker. “With the Merc, we can work to maximise those two per cents and, when you put it all together as a package, that was why Silverstone went so well.”

For accomplished historics racer Cottingham, this will be a first full season in modern machinery, but he gave an indication of what to »



JEP

Mitchell back from BTCC to bid for second GT4 crown

After a tough rookie British Touring Car campaign last year, Jack Mitchell has a clear objective on his return to the British GT ranks with the Speedworks-run Toyota GR Supra GT4. The 2018 GT4 champion with BMW squad Century Motorsport, Mitchell was a GT3 podium finisher in Century’s venerable M6 the following year, then took a maiden overall race win with 2Seas Motorsport’s McLaren in 2020.

But joining the BTCC with Team Hard’s brand-new Cupra Leon meant he had an uphill battle to learn the series while developing the car, and Mitchell didn’t trouble the points. Unable to secure a drive “with a package that could really get me some strong results but also get me noticed”, he’s opted to try to get a foot in the door at Christian Dick’s Speedworks operation, a serial BTCC winner in recent years that has been present in the GT4 class since 2020.

“We looked at it as a step to get to know everyone, hopefully having a good future together and working our way back into touring cars,” says Mitchell. The 24-year-old will pair up with Ginetta Junior graduate Tom Edgar and, although the Supra has yet to win in British GT, its pace was proven last year. The target is to get that elusive first win and build a title challenge, which Mitchell, who shared with three different drivers in his 2018 campaign, believes is eminently possible with the stability afforded by a constant presence alongside.

“Results-wise it wasn’t great last year, but I felt like I learned a lot,” he says. “I’ve improved as a driver, we have a strong car and I’ve got a team-mate now for the whole year who I have no doubt can be as quick as me. A win shouldn’t be too far away; it’s definitely our goal to win outright.”

If he were to do so, Mitchell would become the first ever double GT4 champion, although he will have two rivals for the honour. Reigning champion Will Burns, who claimed honours with Gus Burton last season, is back at Century but is this time alongside Jack Brown, while 2014 title winner Ross Wylie returns with a Porsche run by series newcomer Valluga Racing.



WING - CAPTURE YOUR CAR PHOTOGRAPHY

Mitchell is back to GT4 in Speedworks-run Toyota


BATHIE/XYNAMIC PHOTOGRAPHY

Williamson (right) relishes chance to help Cottingham develop



expect with a stirring drive in last season's Brands Hatch opener in RAM Racing's Mercedes before tangling with Adam Balon at Paddock Hill Bend. If he can build on that, then Cottingham could be a dark horse for the title together with 2010 McLaren Autosport BRDC Award winner Williamson, a driver with plenty of Mercedes experience and eager to capitalise on the latest opportunity of a stop-start career.

The 32-year-old Scot, who beat the likes of Tom Blomqvist and Jack Harvey to earn the prestigious prize and a test with the McLaren Formula 1 team, was a GP3 race winner in 2011 and appeared destined for the top as part of Red Bull's junior roster. But, after being abruptly axed by Helmut Marko only five races into the 2012 Formula Renault 3.5 season with series newcomer Arden Caterham, his career lost momentum. A GP3 return beckoned, but no more wins came. By the end of 2013, his single-seater dreams were over.

"No-one took it harder than myself," Williamson says. "It was my career and it got cut short there. Time went on, I went back to a normal day-to-day life and working as an apprentice fabricator and welder and I thought to myself, 'How can I get back into racing?'"

The "life-changing" answer came in the form of Strakka boss Nick Leventis, who brought him into the fold in 2016. Williamson made a winning debut in the short-lived Renault Sport Trophy at Motorland Aragon and raced the team's venerable Gibson LMP2 four times in the World Endurance Championship. He continued with the team for the next three years for its switch to GT racing – like 2 Seas, initially with McLaren before swapping to Mercedes for 2018 and winning the Blancpain Endurance Series Pro-Am title with Leventis and Chris Buncombe.

Williamson credits his time at Strakka with helping to rebuild his confidence, but Leventis was banned for violating anti-doping rules and the team folded after the 2019 season. Williamson made only two competition appearances in the following two years, racing McLarens for 59Racing at Imola in 2020 and 2 Seas in last year's Gulf 12 Hours, intended as a precursor to a full season.

But now he's a man in demand once again. Williamson has a parallel programme in Lamborghini Super Trofeo Europe with Oregon Team – a squad he'd impressed in his 2016 RS01 outings – and has linked up with 2 Seas for his first participation in a domestic championship since he finished runner-up in the 2010 Formula Renault 2.0 UK series.

"If I could, I'd race every single weekend, every day," says Williamson, who doesn't have a manager or "anybody else shouting my corner" to open doors. "I'm very grateful this year for the opportunity with 2 Seas.

CALENDAR

DATE	EVENT
18 April	**Oulton Park** (2x 1 hour)
8 May	**Silverstone** (3 hours)
29 May	**Donington Park** (3 hours)
26 June	**Snetterton** (2x 1 hour)
24 July	**Spa** (2 hours)
11 September	**Brands Hatch** (2 hours)
16 October	**Donington Park** (2 hours)

What's changed in GT3?

New cars, drivers and teams mean there's an air of change about British GT this year.

Century Motorsport returns to the GT3 ranks for the first time since 2019 with the new M4 GT3, which makes its UK debut with Taiwanese driver Betty Chen. Her co-driver had yet to be announced as Autosport went to press.

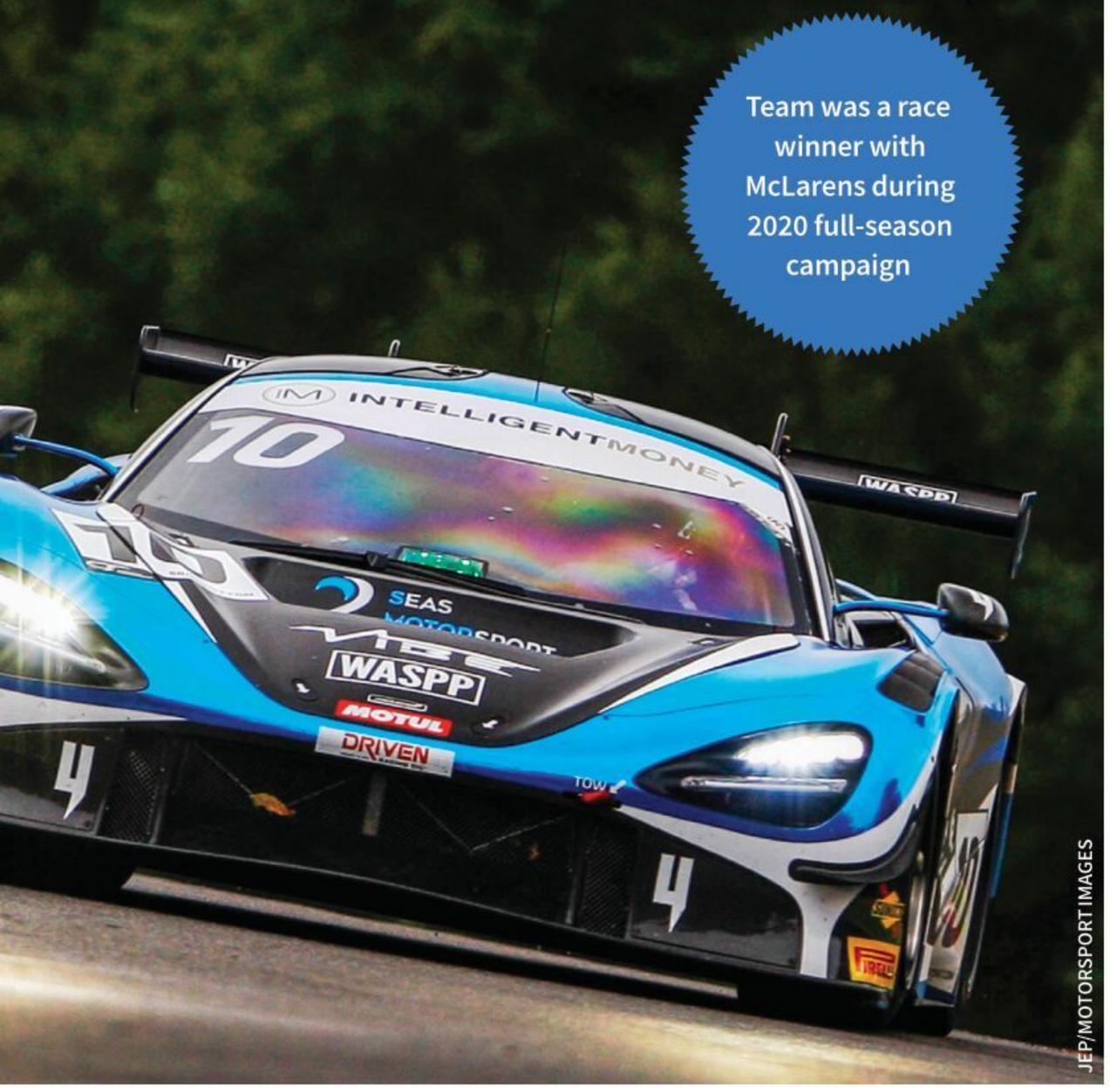
Among the highest-profile newcomers is factory Mercedes driver Jules Gounon, who joins RAM Racing to partner two-time reigning Pro-Am champion Ian Loggie. Calendar clashes mean Gounon will be replaced by Callum Macleod, who won at Silverstone alongside Loggie in 2019, for the Silverstone, Donington Park (May) and Snetterton meetings. RAM is back to two full-season entries, with 2020 GT4 champion Jamie Caroline stepping up to the top class alongside John Ferguson, his co-driver for two rounds last year in the Speedworks Toyota.


Plowman and Paddock team is swapping Bentley for McLaren

JEP

Caroline isn't the only GT4 champion to make his debut in the domestic GT3 class – 2017 winner Will Tregurtha will partner GT4 graduate Mark Sansom in an Assetto Motorsport-run Bentley. Another GT4 Pro-Am contender from last year, Nick Halstead, steps up in a Fox Motorsport McLaren 720S alongside Jamie Stanley.

There are new and returning teams, too. Multiple Porsche Carrera Cup GB title-winning squad Redline Racing enters 2019 GT4 race winner James Dorlin and Porsche Sprint Challenge GB graduate Alex Malykhin in a Lamborghini Huracan. 7TSIX (pronounced '76') will run a McLaren for 2020 GT4 Pro-Am champions Euan Hankey and Mia Flewitt, who entered three races with Team Rocket RJN last year. That team makes its full-time return with GT4 graduate James Kell and



JEP/MOTORSPORT IMAGES



BATHIE/XYNAMIC PHOTOGRAPHY

Williamson is 2010 McLaren Autosport BRDC Award winner

"It was my career and it got cut short there. I went back to a normal day-to-day life"

Now we've just got to keep the ball rolling."

There's everything to play for this season following the withdrawal of Barwell's reigning champions Leo Machitski and Dennis Lind, with the adoption of Pirelli's new P Zero DHF tyres another unknown Cristofaro says will require a "completely different approach" to manage. Williamson certainly isn't lacking in motivation, but says he's focused more on the bigger picture of helping Cottingham than benchmarking himself against RAM Racing's Mercedes factory driver Jules Gounon. He was, after all, satisfied with his performances relative to long-time works driver Gary Paffett and IMSA ace Tristan Vautier when they raced together for Strakka in the 2019 Intercontinental GT Challenge. He's also reunited with his engineer that year, Barclay Danaher, and is optimistic of hitting the ground running.

"Two or three years ago, that might have been a big thought on my mind," Williamson says, "but I drove with some factory drivers in 2018 and 2019, so I'm well aware of what I can do in that car and I did more than a good enough job back then. I'm just there to do the good job for the team — I hope people can see I'm capable of driving as fast as a Pro, but also being a good team-mate to a less experienced driver and working well with him.

"Barclay has got a really good understanding of the car and I know the car really well from previous years. I've got no doubt in my mind that 2 Seas can do the job required, and I've got no doubt that the car can do the job too. If we just work together as a team and smile, then results will come in the end."

Williamson praises 2Seas for its "phenomenal job in preparations", not least in managing to continue with a planned test at Oulton Park the day after an electrical fire at its Aylesbury premises threatened to jeopardise its pre-season. "It was painful to see something like that when you've put every minute of every day into it, and that you've woken up for the last two years thinking about how to build it up," says Cristofaro. "It was two years of struggling through a pandemic and this year we thought, 'We've got customers, it's going to start getting easier.' But the whole team is unbelievable. We've got a lot of guys where the harder it gets, the more determined we are. Everybody makes it happen."

If determination is anything to go by, 2 Seas will surely be a British GT Championship contender in 2022. More will be needed than that, of course, but the ingredients are in place for a new challenger to shake up the established order.



JEP



JEP

Simon Watts, while Greystone GT steps up from the GT Cup to run Stewart and Lewis Proctor, whose former Balfe team has cut ties with McLaren and thrown its lot in with Audi after running an R8 LMS GT3 in International GT Open last year. The now Evo-upgraded model will be raced by two returning drivers: Balfe team patron Shaun Balfe and the vastly experienced Adam Carroll, both previous race winners who will be strong if they can adapt the car to suit the new Pirellis after running on Michelins last year.

Meanwhile, Paddock Motorsport pair Martin Plowman and Kelvin Fletcher have switched from Bentley to McLaren, making the Woking marque the best-represented on the grid with six entries.

GB3 PREVIEW

A bright new start as GB3 raises its game

A healthy grid and a new, quicker car make for a promising season in the UK's premier junior single-seater series

STEFAN MACKLEY

PHOTOGRAPHY **JEP**


GB3 steps up a gear this season with the new, more powerful and safer Tatuus MSV-022

The beginning of a new season dawns for the GB3 Championship this weekend, and one which promises to be its most successful to date. More than 20 drivers have been confirmed – many signed up months in advance – across nine teams, while a new car promises a significant lowering of lap times.

One of the championship favourites will likely be Luke Browning, who joins the series full-time in 2022 with Hitech GP after spending last season in the German ADAC Formula 4 Championship, where he finished third overall. This weekend's Oulton Park opener will not be the first time the 20-year-old will have raced in GB3 – he impressed in a one-off outing last season with Fortec Motorsports at the same venue, taking a win and a further podium (which he was stripped of post-race following a technical infringement).

This came off the back of Browning winning the British F4 title in 2020 by the slimmest of margins over Zak O'Sullivan, who would go on to dominate GB3 last season with Carlin.

Browning is talking up his move into GB3 at this stage of his career, citing the performance increase of this year's cars as significant. "I actually don't think it's a sidestep this year because with the new car it's just such a big step [in performance], close to three seconds quicker than it was last year," says the Brit. "In racing terms that's huge.

"We want to win the championship, that's what we're here for. That's what I've been drafted in for and that's what I believe the team is capable of. I'll be disappointed if we're not on the front row when it comes to the start of the season."

The new car, the Tatuus MSV-022, is a step forward in performance and safety, with the tub featuring the halo cockpit protection device. The total output of the two-litre, four-cylinder Mountune engine has increased by 20bhp to 250bhp, while there is a 20-25% increase in downforce levels. This equates to lap times in the region of two seconds quicker around most tracks and performance closer to FIA F3, where the past three GB3 champions have moved on to.


Luke Browning will be a title favourite with Hitech GP


New car could help Tom Lebbon and his Elite team

The new machine could well offer a chance for less established teams in the championship, such as Elite Motorsport, to make a mark. Eddie Ives's squad entered single-seater racing for the first time last term, using the 2021 campaign as a learning year ahead of the introduction of the new car.

Tom Lebbon, the 2020 Ginetta Junior champion, returns with the squad and believes there's every chance they can be fighting at the front. "I think the new car has helped us out whereas other teams obviously ran the other one for years," says Lebbon, who finished ninth overall last season. "It was our first year and we were constantly developing whereas they'd already done that years ago. Now everyone is in that phase with the new car, we're already in the rhythm of that and I think it's an advantage. Other teams are going to have to start again, more so than we have had to, I believe."

Lebbon isn't the only driver remaining for a second full season, with Carlin fielding both Brazilian Roberto Faria and Spaniard Javier Sagrera, who showed glimpses of speed in 2021. Faria finished fifth in the standings and is the highest-placed driver from last year staying in the series. Carlin is also the in-form team – it has won the past three drivers' titles.

A determining factor in the pecking order could be how much each team was able to test the new car pre-season. Supply delays of the new

CALENDAR	
DATE	TRACK
16-18 April	**Oulton Park**
7-8 May	**Silverstone**
28-29 May	**Donington Park**
25-26 June	**Snetterton**
23-24 July	**Spa**
30-31-July	**Silverstone**
10-11 September	**Brands Hatch**
15-16 October	**Donington Park**



machines mean seat time has been at a premium, with Browning only getting his first drive in the new car at Donington Park a month before the start of the new season, while teams running three drivers — including Carlin, Douglas Motorsport, Elite, Fortec and Hitech — have had to share out driving duties prior to the past few weeks.

Despite a lack of seat time, Browning is confident heading into the season, having "matured so much over the last year", and isn't feeling pressure despite being touted as a title favourite. "When I'm at the front or when I'm on pole, when I'm winning races, that's when I feel comfortable," he says. "It only starts to feel uncomfortable when you start slipping back, but hopefully that won't happen this season."

Browning isn't the only former British F4 title winner to move into GB3 this season, as reigning champion Matthew Rees makes the step up with JHR Developments. The 16-year-old has high hopes, despite being new to the series. "Every driver always wants to win otherwise we wouldn't bother being here, but I think it's just a case of taking it round by round each time," he says. "I think in the first two rounds I'll just focus on learning because obviously I've never driven a GB3 car in a race. It's just learning how to use the new car, because obviously the downforce is so much more so you've got to learn how to follow cars a bit more effectively."

The season will comprise 24 races across eight triple-header rounds, with trips to Oulton this weekend, Silverstone (May/July), Donington Park (May/October), Snetterton, Spa-Francorchamps and Brands Hatch, with only the second visit to Silverstone not in support of British GT.

Exposure of the championship will also be boosted by live TV coverage this season, while the title winner will again be handed a two-day FIA F3 test to help them follow in the hallowed footsteps of previous champions.



Matthew Rees steps up from British F4 with JHR

A change of pace for WRC legend



MUSIC

HEIZER MONKEYS – THE TF SONG (PINEAPPLE KING)

ft. Walter Rohrl & Olaf Manthey

Many things spring to mind when you think of Walter Rohrl. A man who won the World Rally Championship on two occasions – in 1980 and 1982. A driver who tamed the fearsome Lancia 037 and Audi Sport Quattro S1 during the popular Group B era of rallying. And, for a while, the record holder of the fastest time up the Pikes Peak International Hill Climb.

His list of success and accolades in motorsport is lengthy, but one thing that doesn't spring to mind when thinking of Walter Rohrl is music, and more specifically a music video. Yet here we are, in 2022 and with the successful German rally driver centre stage in a video that was released last month, entitled 'The TF Song'.

This isn't the first time the worlds of motorsport and music have collided. Who could forget 1997 Formula 1 world champion Jacques Villeneuve's attempts at a music career when he released *Private Paradise*, which Autosport went to great pains to listen to (26 October, 2017)?

Perhaps thankfully, Rohrl's participation in this video doesn't actually have him singing so we're none the wiser as to his acoustic qualities. The five-minute-plus video has been released by band, the Heizer Monkeys, and is an attempt at promoting safety at the Nurburgring's Nordschleife during public days, or the 'TF' season.

The plot of the video follows 'The Chosen One' as he wishes to tackle the famous German circuit but requires guidance and training. Think Anakin Skywalker in the *Star Wars* saga, just without lightsabers or the killing of younglings.

Ring-based YouTuber Misha Charoudin's alter ego – Boosted Boris – spots the protagonist and sends him to Rohrl for training, which basically involves running up snowy hills and washing a car.

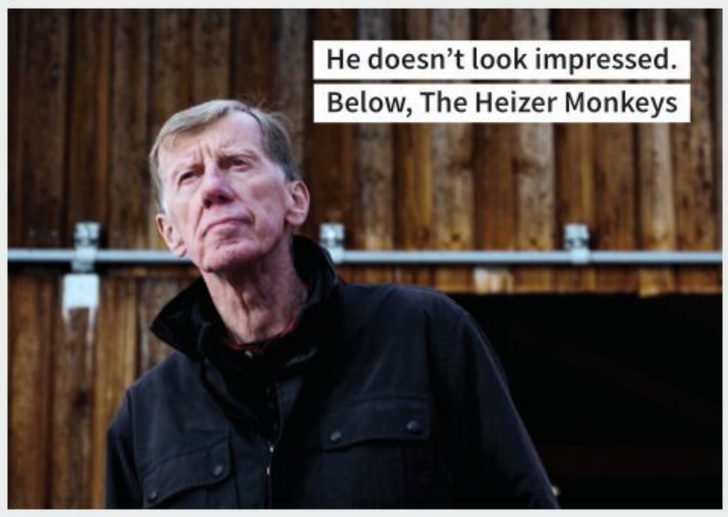
Rohrl's performance throughout is generally a case of him looking like a disapproving grandparent, with hands in pockets and a disgruntled shake of the head thrown in here and there until 'The Chosen One' is ready. And even then, he doesn't crack a smile.

The 75-year-old isn't the only motorsport figure to feature in the music video, with renowned Porsche team boss Olaf Manthey hard to miss in a marshal's orange jacket, and there's even a cameo from former Lamborghini works driver and FIA GT1 World Championship race winner Stefan Rosina.

The Heizer Monkeys themselves are also a race team, with drummer Leo Willert the reigning Porsche Challenge Middle East champion. Lead singer Joey Kotrie, who raced a 911 GT3 Cup at the Le Mans Classic, says the video is a means of trying to generate respect for the Nurburgring.

"I loved the 'Ring from the first stroll around the car park during a TF day, but


Walter (rock 'n) Rohrl: unlikely music video star


He doesn't look impressed. Below, The Heizer Monkeys




Olaf Manthey joins the orange army

I really had no clue," he said. "More specifically, I had no clue about what I didn't know, and that of course can be dangerous.

"The 'Ring is such a magical place, the people are so warm, and on a busy Saturday during TF there can sometimes be almost a carnival vibe. But driving fast can be dangerous.

"If people have serious crashes on the 'Ring or even worse on the local roads, there's a risk of bad consequences, not just for the people in the cars, but for TF itself. TF is allowed to happen only because people respect the danger."

As for the song itself, it's nothing to write home about, not being particularly catchy or memorable in this writer's opinion. With that being said, proceeds from the song will go to VLN race drivers' charity EiFelkind which has been helping disabled children in the region for more than a decade, and now is aiding Ukrainian refugees. Certainly not a bad thing, and neither is the participation of Rohrl if it can help generate improved awareness and safety at the Nurburgring.

And who knows, maybe he will be remembered as much for his brief music career as he was for his rallying. (*ahem – ed*)

STEFAN MACKLEY

To watch the video, visit youtube.com/watch?v=mIMBq9o8rwM

autosport.com/podcast



F1 Australian GP review podcast
Charles Leclerc took victory at the first Australian Grand Prix since 2019, Ferrari's second win from three rounds to continue a strong start to the season. Editor of Motorsport.com Australia Andrew van Leeuwen joins Autosport's Luke Smith and Matt Kew to discuss the race.

WHAT'S ON

INTERNATIONAL MOTORSPORT

European Le Mans Series
Round 1/6
Paul Ricard, France
16-17 April
Livestream on Motorsport.tv, Sat 1245, Sun 0940

Super GT
Round 1/8
Okayama, Japan
16-17 April
Livestream on Motorsport.tv, Sat 0600, Sun 0530

NASCAR Cup
Round 9/36
Bristol, USA
17 April
TV Live Premier Sports 1, Sun 2330


Can William Byron win again in Bristol?
MOTORSPORT IMAGES

NASCAR Truck Series
Round 6/23
Bristol, USA
17 April
TV Live Premier Sports 2, Sun 0030

UK MOTORSPORT

Oulton Park MSVR
16, 18 April
British GT, GB3, GB4, Ginetta GT5 Challenge, Northern Saloons/Sports, TCR UK
Livestream via britishgt.com

Donington Park MSVR
15-16 April
Formula Junior, HGPCA, Masters Pre-66 Touring Cars, Masters Racing Legends, Masters Sports Car Legends

Brands Hatch BARC
16-17 April
British Truck, CTCRC (BOSS/Thunder, Pre-66, Pre-83/Pre-93, Pre-03/Jaguars), Kumho BMW, Legends, MGOC, Pickup Truck
Livestream Search 'BARC' via YouTube.com

Cadwell Park VSCC
16 April
500cc F3, Frazer Nash/GN, Handicap, Pre-1966 Racing Cars, Pre-War MGs, Pre-War Sports Cars, Scratch, VSCC Specials

Snetterton BRSCC
16-17 April
BMW 1 Series Supercup, C1 Endurance, ClubSport Trophy, Mazda MX-5 (Championship, Clubman, Mk4 Trophy, Supercup/Supercup Clubman), Mini Miglia, Mini Se7en, Zeo Prototype Series

Castle Combe CCRC
18 April
750MC Sports Specials, BCV8, CCRC (FF1600, GT, HH, Saloon)

Donington Park 750MC
18 April
Bikesports, CALM Porsche, Club Enduro, Formula Vee, Toyota MR2
Livestream via alphalive.co.uk

Snetterton Equipe
18 April
Equipe GTS, Equipe Libre, FISCAR, Snetterton Saloons

British Drag Racing Championship
Santa Pod
15-17 April

British Rallycross
16, 18 April
Lydden Hill, England

FROM THE ARCHIVE

A marshal protects his ears as Carlos Reutemann guns the flat-12 Alfa Romeo engine in his Brabham BT45 out of Rascasse at Monaco in 1976. Our shot is from practice as the team tries new, unpainted air scoops ahead of the rear tyres. In a performance that sums up his miserable final season at Brabham, 'Lole' qualifies 20th and last, then collides with fellow back-row starter and future Williams nemesis Alan Jones on the first lap. Up front, Niki Lauda waltzes to his fourth win in six races. Neither could know what dramas the rest of 1976 held in store – or how they would soon be paired at Ferrari.

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When the Galles and Kraco Indycar teams merged for the 1990 season, it thrust two of the championship's top driving talents into partnership. Al Unser Jr had largely spent his open-wheel career with Galles and Doug Shierson's teams in single-car operations and his only team-mates had been part-timers Pancho Carter and Tom Gloy in 1984. Therefore, it came as a culture shock to be working closely with an established double champion in the form of Bobby Rahal, with Unser at first wary of giving up his hard-earned secrets.

But Unser believes Rahal's input was crucial as he went on to win his first title in 1990, beating Michael Andretti to make up for losing out to his father Al Unser Sr by one point in 1985.

"Without Bobby being my team-mate and sharing that common goal to have the team win the championship, I know I wouldn't have won the championship that year," says Unser Jr, who later added the 1994 title in his first year with Team Penske. "It was because of Bobby being my team-mate and being open-minded and helping the whole effort, that's the reason why we won the championship that year."

Unser cites Rahal as "the most unique" team-mate he worked with during a career that also yielded two Indianapolis 500 victories, and says he was "the one who I was closest to". After struggling for pace at Indy in 1990, Unser explains that his attitudes were transformed.

"I pretty much learned my lesson at Indy," he says. "I tried to do my own way and my own set-up at Indy and Bobby clearly had the better set-up. It wasn't going to happen again and so whenever I was a little bit slower than Bobby, I wanted his set-up on the car to feel it during practice and then go forward. And eight times out of 10, race day showed up and I was on his set-up! He was definitely a great race car driver."

Unser reckons working alongside Rahal also had a beneficial impact when he joined Penske. "It made me a better team-mate when I started driving with Penske and working with Emerson [Fittipaldi]," he adds.

JAMES NEWBOLD



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