

F1 How Ferrari was defeated in Italy

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28 APRIL 2022

Max strikes back and Leclerc cracks

Ferrari beaten on home ground as Red Bull fightback begins

'We attacked from the word go'

CHRISTIAN HORNER

'The spin shouldn't have

happened, I was too greedy'

CHARLES LECLERC



PLUS

**New BTCC era begins with a bang
Rovanpera wins latest WRC thriller**



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Verstappen domination poses title questions for Ferrari

Red Bull's Formula 1 fightback was always likely to come sooner rather than later, but it was unfortunate for Ferrari and its fans that the blue team's first 1-2 for six years should arrive on Italian soil last weekend.

As Matt Kew shows in our race report on page 14, Red Bull had a small but significant edge at Imola, while a few Ferrari slips – most notably Charles Leclerc's first big error of the year – made it an emphatic success. Max Verstappen's maximum haul of 34 points puts him where the performance has always been this year – up near the top of the table battling Leclerc. Ferrari now has to respond, which will be the true test of the team's championship mettle.

One thing Ferrari shouldn't be criticised for is giving Leclerc a second pitstop. It was clear he wasn't going to beat Sergio Perez as things stood. Fresh rubber gave him the chance of fastest lap, a potential advantage if a safety car was called, and asked Red Bull a question. That Leclerc then went off is, as the Monegasque knows, entirely down to him and is something he must not repeat. That was the sort of race where Verstappen or Lewis Hamilton would have perhaps snatched a second, or at least bagged third, during their epic 2021 title tussle.

An equally exciting (possibly!) championship contest kicked off at Donington Park last weekend. The new British Touring Car era got going with some close racing, intra-team fighting and three different winners. Marcus Simmons explains all on p36.



Kevin Turner

Kevin Turner
Chief Editor

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**NEXT WEEK
5 MAY**

How F1 cracked America
After a torrid time in the US,
F1 will soon have three
GPs there. Here's why



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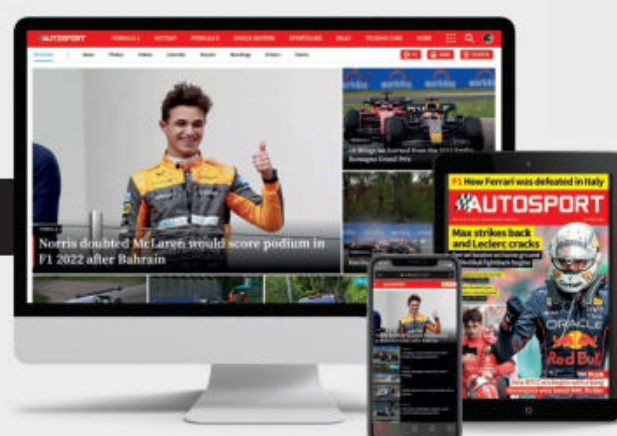
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PIT + PADDOCK



Brawn pushing for six 2023 sprint

FORMULA 1

Formula 1 is revisiting the push to expand to six sprint races next year through talks with teams in the wake of last Saturday's event at the Emilia Romagna Grand Prix.

F1 managing director Ross Brawn originally wanted to hold six events this season but, after a debate with the teams about the potential cost of damage within the constraints of the budget cap, it was agreed to stick with three sprints, as was the case when they debuted last year.

Sprint races were on the agenda of this Tuesday's meeting of the F1 Commission. "We'd like to have six races next year," Brawn explained following the 21-lap sprint race at Imola last weekend. "I think [the teams] can see the success and I think we didn't know quite where we were last year with the old cars, but I think they can see the way this is feeding into the new cars, and the philosophy of the new cars.

"So I'm optimistic that they'll all see the value in it and what we're giving the fans. The thing you should always remember

about the sprint is it gives you a great Friday as well. We have qualifying on Friday, three days of action for the fans, so we can't ignore that."

Brawn said the priority for the meeting was to agree on a number of sprints for 2023, rather than discuss any changes to the format, amid suggestions that it could switch to a standalone event and not set the grid for Sunday's race.

"I think if we try and implement too many changes... what I'd like to do is at least get six races settled," said Brawn. "And then after these three races [in 2022], we can see if there are some format developments we want to do. But I'd like to just move on to six races, get that bedded in and settled. Then if there's any format changes that we feel are worthwhile, we can consider those.

"The six races needs to pass on a simple majority. Any format changes in the future would have to pass on a supermajority, so eight teams will have to agree. The important thing is to get the simple thing done first. And then there may be scope in the future for evolving even further."

The only tweak to the format for the sprints in 2022 was an expansion of the points on offer to the top eight instead of a 3-2-1 award to the top three, which Brawn felt had made it "more valuable" and "more attractive" for drivers to push.

"The great thing is we're doing this





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races

through race trial again, to see how it evolves," he said. "I think we can apply that to other changes in format or other developments in the sport, where we can take a small number of races, and evaluate the change and see how it works. And I think it's a great way of moving forward."

Brawn insisted that Saturday's event at Imola, in which Max Verstappen passed Charles Leclerc for the lead in the closing laps after the Ferrari driver suffered tyre graining, showed the value of the format.

"Racing drivers are racing drivers, so any thoughts they were going to take it easy for the race, I don't think was the case," he said. "I think we were fortunate, and the tyres were perfect for the sprint race, because they started to degrade. And of course, in a normal race, you would have had the driver coming into the pits, changing the tyres – it all comes down to strategy. But we had one shot at the race and the drivers had to make the tyres last."

"We're very pleased with the sprint race, great entertainment, lots of racing going on, plenty of overtaking. We've demonstrated the cars can follow. You may say it was DRS, but you can't use the DRS unless you get on the back of the car. So I think overall, it was a great success."

ADAM COOPER

➔ P14 EMILIA ROMAGNA GP

SAINZ SIGNS ON THE DOTTED LINE AT FERRARI

FORMULA 1

Carlos Sainz will remain with Ferrari until the end of the 2024 Formula 1 season after agreeing a new two-year contract with the team.

Sainz joined Ferrari in 2021 as Charles Leclerc's team-mate, and has fitted in well at Maranello. He scored four podiums last year and a second-place finish in Bahrain at the start of this season.

Ferrari opened talks with Sainz over the winter and swiftly sewed up a deal, having not considered any other options to partner



Leclerc, and announced the deal ahead of last weekend's race at Imola.

Team principal Mattia Binotto said Sainz was the "obvious" driver to continue with, and confirmed it was a two-year deal running to the end of 2024.

Sainz said talks had been "easy going" and that a "good plan" was put together for the announcement to be made in front of the

Tifosi. He also revealed his amusement over reports days earlier that they had hit a stalemate.

"You can imagine how much I was laughing at home when people started writing these things!" he said. "I had everything pretty much done and we were just waiting for Imola to announce. Funny times, like always in Formula 1, with the gossip and all that."

LUKE SMITH



Vettel needs Aston to improve

FORMULA 1

Sebastian Vettel says his Formula 1 future with Aston Martin hinges on how he and the team respond to "the mountain ahead of us" in trying to improve the car.

"It will depend on obviously how this year goes and then take it from there," said Vettel. "The focus is on the now and on the mountain ahead of us that we try to climb, and we won't climb it in a day, we won't climb it in a month."

"But we will choose the path that we climb, which will determine the next three to four years, so that's why

I feel it's really important to focus on that and it takes all the attention."

Aston Martin team principal Mike Krack added that it would be "foolish" not to try to retain Vettel beyond the end of this season, but that he understood the four-time world champion's comments.

"He wants to see progress, he wants to see the car moving forward, because he's not a driver that wants to fight for P18 or P16 or whatever," said Krack. "So I fully understand his comments and it's up to us to deliver the tool that is needed for him to perform."

ALEX KALINAUCKAS & ADAM COOPER

Hybrid praised after exit of success ballast

BTCC

The British Touring Car Championship's new hybrid regulations have been hailed as a success following the inaugural round with the Cosworth-built system at Donington Park last weekend.

The implementation of hybrid power has sounded the death knell for the unpopular 'handicap' system of success ballast. Instead, the leading drivers are given restrictions on usage of the hybrid, which gives a boost increase for 15 seconds per lap.

Even with an increase in base weight of 70kg to allow for the weight of hybrid and battery, BMW driver Jake Hill smashed Gordon Shedden's qualifying record by 0.576 seconds (set in 2021 with 15kg of success ballast on his Honda). Hill also set the new

race lap record, 0.272s below the old mark set by Ash Sutton's unballasted Infiniti in the 2020 season-opener.

"I thought it was really good, genuinely," said 1992 BTCC champion and ITV pundit Tim Harvey. "I had my doubts, but the reality is the cars were faster overall, and we're only two events away from when they raced at Donington before."

Speeds should improve further, with series organiser TOCA cutting base weights by 15kg for round two at Brands Hatch, in part to relieve the pressure on tyres.

"It seemed like the drivers worked out quickly where to use it for an optimum lap for qualifying, but then it all changed in the races in terms of you use it in specific targeted points to overtake or put pressure on people,"



added Harvey. "For example, you might do a large burst out of the Old Hairpin where you'd do only a couple of seconds in qualifying. It definitely worked, and it made the racing interesting."

Donington winner and early

series leader Tom Ingram said: "This is probably the most enjoyable race weekend I've had for a while, because we can all be quick all weekend. We're going to end up with bloody fast cars this year."

MARCUS SIMMONS

TOCA engine users given extra boost

BTCC

Teams using the British Touring Car Championship's new TOCA customer engine were given a boost increase in time for qualifying for last weekend's opening round at Donington Park.

Cumbrian motorsport powerhouse M-Sport has replaced Swindon Powertrain for 2022-26 as supplier of the TOCA engine, which was used by 13 cars at Donington, and calls had been made during pre-season testing for concessions. This was granted in the form of an additional 40 millibars of boost after further evaluation by TOCA technical boffins, in the wake of allowing two cars the extra boost in free practice.

"We were using them to generate new data," explained series chief Alan Gow. "That validated what we thought and we issued a bulletin to increase the boost for qualifying."

Even with the boost increase, the highest-placed qualifier using the TOCA engine,



which is based on a Ford EcoBoost block, was veteran Jason Plato in 10th place at the wheel of his BTC Racing Honda Civic Type R.

Plato argued that the concessions did not go far enough. "It's no one's fault, but my theory is don't give us a little bit, give us what we want and if it's too much take it off us," he said.

But Gow added: "How many people do you know who say they haven't got enough power in their engine? It's brand-new, it's on its first competitive outing, and we're continuing to look at it."

The situation was complicated by the misfortunes of expected TOCA-engined

frontrunners. Plato's team-mate Josh Cook qualified 16th but recovered to finish third in the final race. Speedworks Motorsport Toyota ace Rory Butcher suffered a broken driveshaft on Saturday, sustained damage in the first race, but raced through to seventh in the finale. Plato also received a setback when his left-front tyre punctured while running 10th on the final lap of race one.

The top TOCA-engined speed recorded in qualifying in the fastest speed trap, on the Craner Curves, was Rick Parfitt's Infiniti on 134.2mph, ninth overall and 2.7mph short of Dan Rowbottom's chart-topping Honda.

MARCUS SIMMONS

Vancouver axes its 2022 date

FORMULA E

Canada continues its wait to host its second Formula E round with the cancellation of this summer's Vancouver race.

The electric series was scheduled to visit the British Columbian city on 2 July, five years after its previous Canadian event in Montreal (right) in 2017. The Quebec city then canned its race, which was labelled by the city's mayor Valerie Plante as a "financial fiasco".

The Vancouver race was planned as the focal point of the Canadian E-Fest festival, a weekend dedicated to promoting sustainability across motorsport and the automotive and business sectors. The festival and race would have been held around the False Creek area of Vancouver, which previously held CART and Champ Car rounds from 1990 to 2004. Canadian news outlets have reported that the race was not granted the correct permits because of a failure to submit the relevant paperwork before the deadline.

Promoter OSS Group stated: "After intensive review with the City of Vancouver, OSS Group has had to make the incredibly difficult decision to postpone Canadian



E-Fest until 2023. The City of Vancouver fully supports the postponement. Delivery of a world class event is of the utmost importance to the organisation."

It is unknown whether the Vancouver round will be replaced for 2022 but, as it stands, its departure from this year's calendar leaves a gap of nearly six weeks between the Jakarta E-Prix on 4 June and

the New York round on 16-17 July.

If Vancouver hosts a race in 2023, it will join another confirmed new venue in the form of South African city Cape Town, which will host a race around the Green Point area. Formula E has also stated its intent to host a race in the Indian city of Hyderabad in 2023.

JAKE BOXALL-LEGGE



Shwartzman to use Israeli licence

FORMULA 1

Ferrari has said that its Russian tester Robert Shwartzman will drive under an Israeli licence during any outings with its Formula 1 team this year.

Shwartzman, the 2019 FIA Formula 3 champion, serves as Ferrari's official test driver after spending the past two seasons in F2 under the continued patronage of the Ferrari Driver Academy.

Drivers are not permitted to be fielded under a Russian licence following the country's invasion of Ukraine, but Ferrari revealed that Shwartzman is eligible for an Israeli one by virtue of his place of birth.

"First, Robert is born in Israel," said

Ferrari F1 boss Mattia Binotto. "He's got an Israeli passport and, in terms of licence, he has not a Russian one. He was in agreement as well with Russian companies to interrupt any agreement he had with those countries.

"So, at the moment, he is still our test driver and he will remain that. And if we have in the future any opportunity to let him drive, we will probably let him drive."

Ferrari has not yet made a decision about when during the season it will run its rookie sessions, but Shwartzman would appear to be first in line for the opportunity. He has already tested Ferrari's 2018 car privately, and featured in last year's end-of-season rookie running in Abu Dhabi in its 2021 car.

JONATHAN NOBLE

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Inaugural season finished at Pau-Arnos. Now Blomqvist and Tambay are in Cupras (inset)



PURE ETCR

Blomqvist, Martin, Michelsz join electric tin-top field

ETCR

A host of big names has joined the all-electric ETCR series for 2022, which has gained FIA World Cup status and kicks off next month on the streets of Pau. Daytona 24 Hours winner Tom Blomqvist, former Aston Martin GT factory star Maxime Martin, 2019 World Touring Car Cup champion Norbert Michelisz and ex-DTM racer Adrien Tambay will all enter the fray.

Anglo-Swede Blomqvist, who already has experience of electric motorsport from Formula E, has joined the Cupra EKS team run by Swedish tin-top hero Mattias Ekstrom. Blomqvist will line up alongside

reigning Pure ETCR (the name for the series in 2021) champion Ekstrom, marque veteran Jordi Gene and Tambay, the son of 1980s Ferrari Formula 1 racer Patrick Tambay.

"I believe this is going to be a massive experience for me, as the FIA ETCR championship is a step forward in electric racing," said Blomqvist. "We are really determined, and the goal is to win."

Martin, meanwhile, has joined the Italian Romeo Ferraris squad to pilot an Alfa Romeo Giulia. The Belgian redhead enters the team alongside the incumbent Luca Filippi, with the two other drivers yet to be decided in the build-up to the Pau event, which takes place on 7-8 May. "I have a long

experience with tin-tops, but now there is the curiosity and enthusiasm provided by a new technical challenge," said Martin.

Over at Hyundai it's a formidable line-up that's been assembled. Jean-Karl Vernay, narrowly defeated to the 2021 crown by Ekstrom, remains on board, and Michelisz gets his first taste of electric motorsport. Furthermore, the South Korean marque has snaffled Spanish hotshoe Mikel Azcona – third in the 2021 ETCR points – away from Cupra for both this series and its WTCR sister contest. The final Veloster will be shared by 2021 TCR Italy runner-up Kevin Ceccon (who drives the first three rounds) and GT and tin-top ace Nicky Catsburg.

World tin-tops to race on Muller home ground

WTCR

The World Touring Car Cup has continued its quest for unusual venues by fixing a date for the little-known Anneau du Rhin circuit in France on 6-7 August.

Following last year's visit to the picturesque Pau-Arnos track in the south-west of France, WTCR will now venture to the Alsace homeland of uncle-nephew world tin-top champions Yvan Muller and

Yann Ehrlacher. The 2.25-mile Anneau du Rhin layout (right) is inspired by Paul Ricard, but thankfully is surrounded by trees rather than horrid blue lines. Caroline Bugatti, granddaughter of Bugatti founder Ettore, is a board member at the circuit.

That round comes two weeks after a stop-off in Italy at Vallelunga. That circuit, north of Rome, was a regular fixture for the European Touring Car Championship



– a forerunner of the WTCR – in the 1970s and 1980s.

The changes have been forced upon WTCR promoter Discovery Sports Events by the

cancellations of the events at Sochi in Russia and Most in the Czech Republic, with the latter nation on alert following the Russian invasion of Ukraine.



FRAVER/PEC

Power and Herta in test scare

INDIANAPOLIS 500

Last week's pre-Indy 500 two-day test at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway's 2.5-mile oval threatened to be more about incidents at pit exit than lap speeds.

In the morning session on the first day, Andretti Autosport's Alexander Rossi had a harmless spin on the warm-up lane alongside the short chute between Turns 1 and 2, but managed to avoid touching the wall or grass. But in the afternoon, four-time 500 winner Helio Castroneves was further along that warm-up lane when his Meyer Shank Racing car snapped into a spin. He went across the grass that separates the lane from the racing surface at Turn 2, up the track and into the outside wall, heavily damaging the right side of his car. Castroneves took no further part in the test.

Barely 20 minutes after the Brazilian veteran's incident, Castroneves's former team-mate Will Power (above) had a potentially calamitous incident, when his Team Penske car suddenly spun at pit exit and partially crossed the strip of grass on the inside of Turn 1. The rear of his car was still protruding onto the racing line when Colton Herta arrived full speed on track. The Andretti driver flicked up half a lane in avoidance, but that sent Herta's car

into a long drift, which became a spin. Miraculously, he damaged just the rear and front wings, and all other cars avoided him.

Following inspection of the pit exit, which was covered in sealant last autumn, IndyCar officials shut down on-track activities. Overnight the surface was scrubbed and had rubber added, and there were no further incidents.

The following day, Josef Newgarden (below) led the field in his Chevrolet-engined Penske car, with his nearest rivals Honda-powered two-time Indy winner Takuma Sato (Dale Coyne Racing) and Chip Ganassi Racing's fifth car of Tony Kanaan.

In speeds set without the aid of a tow, Chevrolet occupied the top seven slots, with Ed Carpenter Racing, Penske and AJ Foyt Racing featuring prominently.

DAVID MALSHER-LOPEZ



JONES/PEC

GT STARS AND ROSSI SET FOR BRANDS OPENER

GT WORLD CHALLENGE

The GT World Challenge Europe Sprint Cup kicks off at Brands Hatch for the second time in the history of the fixture this weekend.

The entry stands at 26 cars, two down on last year, although the Pro Cup class is on a par with 2021 at 12 cars. The rest of the field is made up of eight Silver Cup entries and five in Pro Am, with the class of one car yet to be confirmed.

Audi factory drivers Dries Vanthoor and Charles Weerts begin their bid for a third consecutive Sprint Cup title with the WRT Audi team. They share one of three R8 LMS GT3 Evo IIs entered in Pro by the Belgian team. Factory drivers Frederic Vervisch and Christopher Mies respectively share with two-wheel legend Valentino Rossi and Jean-Baptiste Simmenauer.

The French Auto Sport Promotion squad, runner-up in the overall GTWCE teams' points last year, fields two Mercedes-AMG GT3s. Raffaele Marciello and overall GTWCE 2020 champion Timur Boguslavskiy are paired together for a third season, while Jules Gounon has a new team-mate in Jim Pla.

The Brands fixture maintains its traditional short-and-sharp two-day format. Qualifying takes place on Saturday afternoon, with both races on Sunday.

GARY WATKINS



SRO/HECO

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IN THE HEADLINES

HAMILTON'S BLUES BID

Lewis Hamilton is involved in a bid to acquire Premier League football club Chelsea. The former Arsenal fan and Stevenage Borough local plus tennis superstar friend Serena Williams could each invest £10million in a bid led by ex-Liverpool and British Airways chairman Martin Broughton. Hamilton wants to improve education and inclusivity in the local area.

AUDI'S N24 LINE-UP...

Audi has firmed up its factory assault on next month's Nurburgring 24 Hours. Phoenix and Car Collection will each run a solo R8 LMS Evo II under the Audi Sport banner in the Nordschleife enduro on 28-29 May. Robin Frijns and Kelvin van der Linde move over from Land, which is not part of the works assault this year, to share the Phoenix car with Dries Vanthoor and Frederic Vervisch. Rene Rast comes in to replace Markus Winkelhock in the Car Collection entry alongside Nico Muller, Christopher Haase and Patric Niederhauser.

...AND WORLD TIN-TOPS

With all his GT3 activity, Vervisch has dropped out of Audi's World Touring Car Cup squad after finishing runner-up in 2021. Mehdi Bennani, the 2020 TCR Europe champion, returns to 'world' level in an otherwise-unchanged Comtoyou Racing-run quartet alongside Nathanael Berthon, Gilles Magnus and veteran Tom Coronel.

GOFF STANDS DOWN

British Touring Car Championship ace Jack Goff split with Cupra squad Team Hard on the eve of the 2022 season starting at Donington Park last weekend. The five-time winner's departure has left the Kent squad looking for a replacement in time for next month's second round at Brands Hatch, after it received a one-event dispensation not to surrender one of its TBL entrants' licences.

MIDDLETON HURT IN PITS

British Lamborghini racer Stuart Middleton was injured in a pitlane accident in last weekend's Italian GT round at Monza. Middleton was preparing to take over from co-driver Alberto Di Folco when he was struck by the incoming BMW of Jens Klingmann. He sustained fractures to a wrist and toe, as well as tendon and ligament damage in his left leg.

Gethin claimed 1970 F5000 crown with Taylor, who is pictured (inset) with author Titchmarsh



MAIN: MOTORSPORT IMAGES; INSET: BINGHAM/MOTORSPORT IMAGES

Sid Taylor 1932-2022

OBITUARY

Sid Taylor, renowned as one of the leading racing team entrants of the 1960s and 1970s, died on Good Friday at the age of 89 from the combined effects of COVID-19 and pneumonia.

Born and brought up in Rathfarnham, south of Dublin, Taylor moved to the West Midlands and established a successful plant hire business. After being seriously injured in a motorcycle accident, which left him with a permanent limp, he switched to cars, winning the Leinster Trophy on the Dunboyne road circuit with a Lotus Elite in 1963.

For 1965, Taylor acquired from Team Elite the two-litre Brabham-Climax BT8 with which the Brabham team's junior driver Denny Hulme had begun to enjoy some notable results. Moving to Sidney Taylor Racing with the car was Team Elite's ace mechanic Ron Bennett, who was to remain with Sid for many years, always ensuring that the team's cars were immaculately prepared in the distinctive white-with-green-stripes livery inherited from Team Elite.

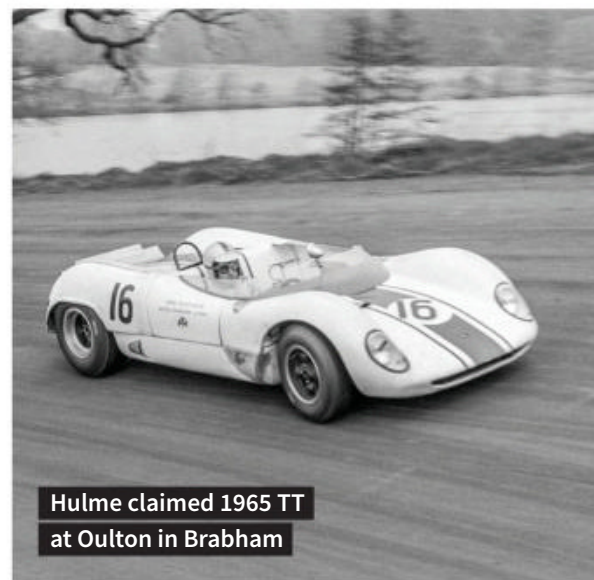
In 1965, among other successes Hulme won the RAC Tourist Trophy at Oulton Park against the V8-powered Lola T70s and McLaren-Elva Mk1s. The following year Taylor and Hulme returned and won again with a T70 of their own. The combination of Taylor, Hulme and Bennett became almost unbeatable and won the British Sports Car championship in 1966. Taylor also raced the Brabham and the Lola successfully himself in numerous national

events around the UK and set a new lap record at Phoenix Park.

By 1967, with Hulme on course to win the F1 World Championship for Brabham, Taylor's team was attracting other drivers of the highest calibre. Peter Gethin won the 1970 European Formula 5000 title in a McLaren M10B and was runner-up in the 1971 Interserie. Brian Redman won 13 races for the team across both sportscars and Formula 5000, and Jody Scheckter was the US Formula 5000 champion in 1973 driving Taylor's Trojan T101.

In 1974, Sid merged his team with Teddy Yip's Theodore Racing and managed the Asian entrepreneur's motorsport activities, which included Keke Rosberg's legendary victory with the Ralt-derived Theodore TR2 in the F1 BRDC International Trophy at a very wet Silverstone in 1978, and Desire Wilson's victory in the Wolf WR4 at Brands Hatch in a British F1 race in 1980.

IAN TITCHMARSH



Hulme claimed 1965 TT at Oulton in Brabham

SUTTON/MOTORSPORT IMAGES



How Russell led the line

Amid Mercedes' travails, George Russell again shaded his seven-time world champion team-mate. His three-year stint at Williams is likely serving him well now

ALEX KALINAUCKAS

Tiny things can swing a Formula 1 race weekend. Consider the Mercedes team at Imola. It would only have taken a few things going slightly differently and its whole weekend may well have been altogether rosier – although still far from gaining a glittering result.

The Silver Arrows were struggling badly for tyre warm-up in the cool, wet conditions across the event. The new car rules have made it much harder for the teams to deploy their previous trick of using high brake temperatures to heat the rubber from within to the desired level. As one engineer at another team describes it, understanding modern F1 tyres is something of a 'pseudo-science' – it changes from track to track – and it seems that not even the best squads are immune from struggling in this respect. For more evidence of this, see Red Bull's unexpected Albert Park graining and how that swung around to bite Ferrari last weekend...

At Imola, the Mercedes drivers needed to complete two consecutive flying laps to have anywhere near decent tyre temperature for qualifying fliers, which the frontrunners did not have to do, but in Q2 Carlos Sainz's crash came just too soon and they were dumped out in 11th and 13th. The pair were then stuck in the sprint, unable to make progress in the DRS/dirty air train that really stretched back from Daniel Ricciardo's McLaren. The W13's launch-spec draggy rear-wing arrangement continues to put an

“Russell is wisely not celebrating what amounts to a drubbing of his legendary team-mate”

extra anchor on Mercedes' campaign.

At the GP start, Russell benefited from being on the rubbered-up racing line, shooting past Mick Schumacher and Fernando Alonso, then working his way to the inside for the second apex. Right place, right time, a weekend swung in a split-second thanks to the Ricciardo/Sainz tangle that also delayed Valtteri Bottas. Having neatly passed Kevin Magnussen at the Variante Alta, Russell's second stint, in which he held off the charging Bottas, was not helped by Mercedes having an issue with its front-wing adjusters at his pitstop. This left him still running a wet aero-balance set-up even in the fully dry second half. And yet he coped magnificently, sealing his fourth top-five finish of the season, despite the understeer from running the wet set-up costing him lap time.

Lewis Hamilton was back in 13th. He started on the slippery side

of the grid, couldn't make early progress and then got caught in a DRS train, which meant he couldn't show his pace in clean air. The resulting gap between the Mercedes team-mates was stark, and the seven-time world champion was not in an effusive mood afterwards. That is understandable – this is far from the year he and Mercedes were expecting. Russell did offer more post-race, but he is wisely not celebrating what effectively amounts to a drubbing of his legendary team-mate for the second time in three races.

Russell has suggested that his three years with Williams is helping him cope with Mercedes' problems, saying after last Sunday's race that “perhaps with my struggles at Williams driving very difficult cars, maybe that's helped in some small regard”. Often in 2019, Williams and Russell treated race weekends as extended test sessions, to implement radical set-ups and car arrangements in a bid to improve their performances, even far adrift at the back. That squad is certain that Russell benefited from such trying times, when he also learned to work closely with engineers also facing the pressures that come with running a bad car.

It is legitimate to wonder about Hamilton's motivation given it's clear it will take Mercedes a while to unlock the potential that it insists is there in its W13 design – if it ever does in a cost-capped season. Early in his F1 career – and here Hamilton points out to his detractors who say he's never had a bad car that he has, in 2009 with McLaren – there was a regular criticism that he would let his head drop when things were against him. Last year, he needed the fightback fury that his qualifying disqualification in Brazil unlocked to reach a driving level that eclipsed the best Max Verstappen offered all year. He was bullish before testing, but has already conceded that the 2022 title is out of reach.

Mathematically that's wrong but, as Mercedes director of trackside engineering Andrew Shovlin says: “We need to move forward in the next two races if we are to keep the leaders within any kind of reach this year.” Plus, Russell, who notes Hamilton will “come back strong”, is right, and retirement talk about the seven-time world champion is very premature.

Russell needs Mercedes to address its porpoising problem, especially as it's now leaving him in pain post-race. Such a step would help Hamilton too, and Mercedes' small selection of Imola upgrades was not about fixing such a fundamental issue. When the team's big update comes, F1 will discover whether Mercedes can pull off a McLaren-like 2009 reversal, turning a title no-hoper into a winner. If that happens, Russell can bank the credit he is now building with his dream team. And if not, he has time on his side. Team and driver will be additionally bonded by their current adversity – a lesson Hamilton has taught Mercedes many times over. ❧

➔ P22 MERCEDES' IMOLA WOES



Final lesson Leclerc has to learn?

The increased stakes of a title fight have tightened the focus on the Ferrari driver's spin at Imola, but he's not dwelling on it — it's now logged under 'don't do it again'

MATT KEW

Charles Leclerc was too determined in his chase of Sergio Perez as he tried to turn a definite third place into a possible second at Imola. In pursuit of the Red Bull driver, he nibbled too much inside kerb at the Variante Alta chicane. That spat his Ferrari off. The car escaped from underneath him to spin into the tyre wall. Fortunately, the impact was side-on, and he sustained front-wing damage rather than terminally buckled suspension.

It was a minor error of judgement, but an error nonetheless — something that comes with the territory of a driver racing with the bit between their teeth and ultimately pushing too hard. It was an easy mistake to make and yet still an inexcusable one.

Being accident prone every now and again appears to be Leclerc's lingering final weakness. It was a flaw many thought had been eradicated given how coolly he came out on top in the DRS battle with Max Verstappen in Bahrain, and for the way in which he dominated events in Australia to grab pole, victory, lead from start to finish and bag fastest lap.

Blunders of the nature of the one Leclerc made last weekend were more reminiscent of his early years at Ferrari — think missing out on a likely pole when he binned it in Baku qualifying in 2019, or losing the rear at Monza in 2020. Then securing pole on his home turf in Monaco in 2021 before promptly finding the barrier.

“Blunders of this nature were more reminiscent of Leclerc's early years at Ferrari”

It seemed that the red-hot form he was displaying at the start of Formula 1's second ground-effect era meant such incidences were largely banished. Events on lap 53 of 63 in the Emilia Romagna Grand Prix last weekend proved otherwise.

Opting to drive at nine-tenths rather than 100% — with no margin for error — can be the way forward. Title rival and race winner Max Verstappen appeared to embrace that notion around the 2018 campaign, his fourth in F1. Leclerc is now four rounds into his fifth term racing in the top-flight, but isn't quite there yet.

Part of the continued learning process comes with the increased stakes in 2022. Leclerc is now battling at the sharp end of a title fight, something he hadn't yet experienced in F1. Verstappen and Lewis Hamilton have been through that and, as

a result, proved content in the past two seasons to settle for the bottom step of the podium or squeaking into the top five rather than put it all on the line for a gold or silver medal.

Leclerc's ability to learn from last weekend and not make the same error again should be aided by the nature of his blunder. Having identified where he could steal a march on Perez to tuck into the Mexican's slipstream and gain DRS, he was deliberately attacking the chicane most of all. It was the Ferrari driver being overzealous rather than cracking as Verstappen disappeared into the distance to land a maximum 34 points for the sprint weekend.

Ahead of the Australian Grand Prix, Leclerc said he “never particularly struggles with pressure”. He was quick to reinforce that after he crossed the line for sixth place at Imola in front of the somewhat disappointed tifosi. “I tried to push a bit more, and it was too much,” he explained. “But apart from that, I don't think I've taken any unnecessary risk... No, there wasn't [pressure]. I mean, that's what I think at least.

“Obviously we've had pressure not only today but for the whole weekend and I don't think I've done many mistakes before today. It was the mistake that cost me a lot and I'll learn from it. But no, on my side, there was no particular added pressure whatsoever.”

Leclerc is correct that his error denied him a podium, but it could have cost a lot more. It therefore might be considered a cheap way to enhance his learning. For one, it has happened at a relatively early stage in this record-breaking 23-round season. Two, although his championship lead has been cut, he's still ahead of second-placed Verstappen by 27 points — more than a race win and fastest lap.

Leclerc continued: “It's one of those mistakes where it is a bit more the mental approach that you've had at that particular moment of the race. But I've always been strong of knowing exactly which particular feeling I felt at that moment of the race, and I know how to correct it. So again, a mistake but I'll learn from it and won't do it again.”

When Ferrari rolled the dice to pit Leclerc for a set of soft tyres to lead into his crash, it was to try to improve on an almost certain third. Leclerc did not throw away a likely last-minute win but instead, having recovered past Kevin Magnussen, Sebastian Vettel and Yuki Tsunoda, shed a more palatable three positions.

In other words, if Leclerc does not repeat a similar mistake for the rest of this oh-so-promising campaign for him and Ferrari, it will have been worth the comparatively acceptable seven-point drop he sustained on the day. 🏁



P14 EMILIA ROMAGNA GP REPORT

YOUR SAY

I'll throw in a suggestion for F1 to use the Q1 times for the sprint race. It could shake things up just enough and make sure the top teams aren't merely cruising into Q2

STUART GROVES

Nips and tucks to the rulebook

I was pleasantly surprised that the British GT Championship (Club Autosport, 21 April) had a rule to cover the situation that unfolded during race two at Oulton Park, with the red flag flying during the pitstop sequence. I can sympathise with the crews who lost out when their pitstop penalties were applied post-race, however, and it does seem there is an easy solution.

Given that the restart was ordered by the positions in which the cars found themselves immediately before the window opened, perhaps the penalties could be applied to the 'result' of race one, and any affected cars moved back accordingly for the restart? It's not likely to have a massive impact on the running order (unless a safety car has been called before the stoppage) and would give the second driver a chance to make up the deficit, as would be the case under normal circumstances.

That being said, it'll probably now be several seasons before the situation repeats itself...

While I'm at it then, I'll throw in a suggestion for F1 sprint-race weekends to use the qualifying order for Sunday, but the Q1 times for the short Saturday race. It could shake things up just enough and make sure the top teams aren't merely cruising into Q2. If we must persevere with sprint races, that is...

Stuart Groves
Birmingham

You can be too careful?

The 'abundance of caution' principle is essential in many safety critical environments, medicine and civil aerospace being obvious examples.

However, can or should it be applied to motor racing? Were the record five red flags in Imola qualifying warranted by a series of, at worst, innocuous fender-benders? Is it really necessary for every stopped car to be completely removed, regardless of where it is parked?

Are the plethora of safety car deployments we see in other categories truly justified?

Graeme Innes-Johnstone
Elland

In defence of Lewis Hamilton

I am extremely disappointed that the letter from Mike Kelly (21 April) was deemed worthy of publishing.

Lewis Hamilton has had to work hard to win all his F1 titles and was cheated last year. It is sad if people like Mr Kelly are unable to appreciate his phenomenal talent.

I hope Lewis is able to challenge again for a record eighth championship, and that Max Verstappen makes more of an effort to stay within track limits.

Andrew Cowling
Lincolnshire

Memories of Le Mans in the 1950s and 1960s

Picking up on the picture in the 7 April edition (From the Archive). I diverted that way recently to stay in the Hotel-de-France where John Wyer based his teams. It is something of a shrine to Le Mans, with rooms named after famous drivers and lots of pictures bringing La Sarthe of old to life.

The oddest thing is that it is about 40km from the circuit and the race cars really were prepped there in the square and in an alleyway behind, then driven to the circuit. That seems like a very long way to go and fetch spare parts!

Martin Harrold
Birmingham



Have your say, get in touch

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RACE CENTRE

FORMULA 1

MAX'S FIGHTBACK BEGINS AS FERRARI BLUNDERS

*The Red Bull RB18 was quicker than the Ferrari F1-75 at Imola — just.
And several Ferrari errors made life easy for its rival on Italian soil*

MATT KEW

PHOTOGRAPHY RED BULL AND  **motorsport
IMAGES**



“It might look easy on the TV...”
Verstappen kept his focus to take second win of 2022



R

ed Bull had been quicker than Ferrari every time it mattered heading into the grand prix at Imola last weekend. But it was only in front by a whisker. Charles Leclerc and Carlos Sainz therefore had the capacity to make their rivals break into a sweat in the fight for victory during the full-length Sunday race. Instead, facing

the pressure of a home event, the Maranello pair made critical errors and enabled Max Verstappen to escape with the spoils in dominant fashion. In truth, after only a few hundred metres the reigning champion never looked under threat.

Neither Verstappen nor Leclerc nailed their final laps in qualifying on Friday but, by better adhering to the slippery conditions with a gentle right foot, the Dutchman was able to seize pole for the sprint contest. His launch was impeded by some suspect clutch work that generated too much wheelspin, before patchy gear synchronisation allowed Leclerc to sweep into the lead. Yet, as per the indications from FP2, Verstappen had the edge over his opponent's graining soft-compound Pirelli rubber. He recovered to claim eight points for a Saturday triumph.

If the pace of the F1-75 had been second-best in the dry, Ferrari spirits should have been buoyed when the clouds over the Emilia Romagna region burst three hours before the race. What's more, the rain shower lingered long enough to ensure that the entire field had to start the 63 laps on intermediates. The weather might have been the joker needed to stop Red Bull from stitching together its strongest weekend of the 2022 Formula 1 season so far.

It was not to be, however, as Leclerc immediately eased the challenge facing Verstappen courtesy of a duff launch. Having rocketed so well out of his box 23 hours earlier to get the jump on the RB18 well before the braking zone into Tamburello, switching to the right-hand side

Damp squib for Tifosi who'd packed out the circuit in expectation of Ferrari glory



of the grid would prove far less kind. Leclerc endured the worst of both worlds. He bogged down off the line after pulling away in second gear and, when Leclerc then shifted into fourth, a spike of torque belatedly delivered the wheelspin he'd been trying to avoid.

Despite the kink on the pitstraight, which briefly gave Leclerc the inside line and shortened how far he had to travel, Verstappen was already clear. Worse still, third-starting Sergio Perez and Lando Norris from fifth also scarpered away better from the left-side of the grid to get the jump. And to compound the initial Ferrari misery, Sainz copied his team-mate. The Spaniard was lethargic off the line, then the rear wheels broke traction and he violently jerked to right. He caught the slide, but ceded a position to the second McLaren of Daniel Ricciardo on the approach to Tamburello.

Following the race's post-mortem, Ferrari team principal Mattia Binotto said of the start: "We have done our analysis and discussing



Verstappen's job at the start was made easier after Leclerc's launch went south



Sainz was sanguine after being knocked out of contention by Ricciardo

with the drivers. We looked at the data. I think that both drivers managed very well the procedure at the start, and they were spot-on. What happens is that we are lacking grip. On that side of the track, I think that there was really more, let me say, wet patches.”

Ferrari's credentials diminished even further when two red cars became one. News of Sainz's freshly inked contract extension broke on Thursday ahead of a GP that would take place in front of a sell-out 65,000 crowd comprising mainly the Tifosi. He was hoping to bounce back after his error in Australia that caused him to spin into the gravel, but no dice. After Ricciardo had got alongside on the inside on the dash to the first chicane on lap one for fifth spot, Sainz left racing room. But Ricciardo took too much of the painted inside kerb and, with the track damp, he skated into the side of the Ferrari, and it rotated. For the second race in a row, Sainz was beached.

Many have been quick to declare Leclerc's championship lead as >>

QUALIFYING



SUTTON

“Yellows ahead, Max. Yellows, yellows, yellows!” Race engineer Gianpiero Lambiase left Max Verstappen in little doubt about the status of the final sector. The reigning champion obliged, lifted off and gently pulled for a downshift in respect of Valtteri Bottas parking up with a broken exhaust. That deliberate hesitation meant he kept his lap to snare pole for the first sprint contest of 2022.

In truth, the Red Bull racer was far from perfect in Q3. He'd corrected a slide at Tamburello and locked up at Rivazza to concede a tenth to Charles Leclerc on his first hot lap on intermediates. But when it counted, Verstappen was respectful of the slippery surface and remarkably patient on the throttle to avoid any oversteering theatrics.

He ultimately topped the times by 0.779 seconds over Leclerc, who'd backed off for a cool-down lap in anticipation of one final flier, which never came thanks to the flurry of interruptions.

Verstappen also hit the gravel after locking up at Tamburello. Fortunately for him, the Bottas stoppage morphed into a red flag to prevent any improvements, before Lando Norris also went off to leave the session abandoned with 40s to go.

A treacherous track exaggerated the intra-team pecking orders. Verstappen was left to fight Leclerc alone after Sergio Perez skated off at Acque Minerali to bleed 1.8s and land only seventh. Carlos Sainz clumsily rotated his car into the wall at Rivazza on an ill-fated second push lap in Q2 to start the sprint in 10th.

Even though Norris punched in two consecutive flying runs to leave himself without full battery assistance on either, he excelled again in low-grip conditions to seal third before his off and romp clear of McLaren team-mate Daniel Ricciardo's sixth.

Despite causing one of the red flags in Q3, Kevin Magnussen just kept the Haas out of the wall and avoided stalling in the gravel to return to the track and nail fourth. While Esteban Ocon was hobbled by a poorly gearbox, Fernando Alonso pounded his Alpine to fifth in a murky session when the leading lights shone.

But the mood was grey across the board at Mercedes, where a lack of downforce and persistently cold tyres tied George Russell to 11th, while Lewis Hamilton only squeezed into Q2 by 0.004s to eventually qualify 13th.

“VERSTAPPEN WAS REMARKABLY PATIENT ON THE THROTTLE TO AVOID ANY OVERSTEERING THEATRICS”

reason enough to give him the status of de facto number one Ferrari driver this term. That wasn't quashed by Sainz's latest shunt, as he bids to find a run of form and defy the support role for which he has already been cast. Sainz was perhaps less perturbed than many expected. "Oh, well it is very simple," he said. "In Australia, I was completely at fault. And here after reviewing the footage, I think I couldn't have done anything more to give Daniel more space. So, two completely different incidents with very similar outcomes.

"The tough thing is that they come in a consecutive manner because over the season, there's always going to be one race where

"THERE'S ALWAYS ONE RACE WHERE YOU DO A MISTAKE. AND ALWAYS ONE WHERE YOU GET BUMPED OUT"

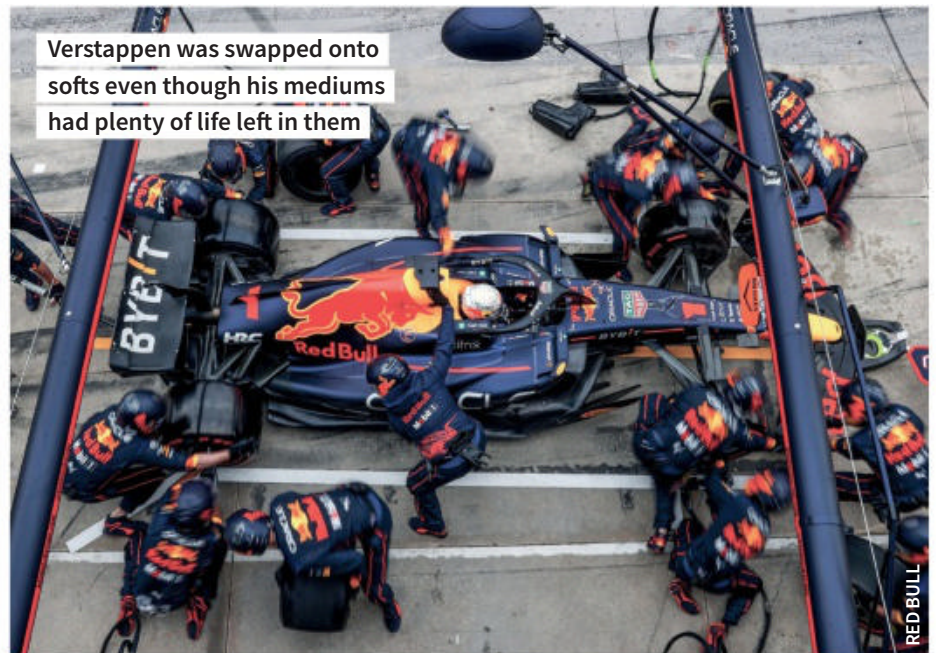
you do a mistake. And there's always going to be one race where you get bumped out. And for me, unfortunately, it has happened consecutively. It's why it hurts more and it's tougher. But hopefully we get them done nice and early in the season and now we can start focusing on the rest of the year."

While Sainz sought to put an optimistic spin on his hasty retirement, it inescapably weakened the Ferrari challenge as Leclerc was left to do battle on his own.

The sole use of the safety car came at the end of the opening tour to mop up the Sainz mess, it peeled back into the pits three laps later, and the RB18s dashed away unchallenged. It took until lap eight for Leclerc to relieve Norris of third, passing with the aid of the slipstream on the run to Tamburello. But the Monegasque was now 2.8s adrift of Perez, who in turn had slipped 3.3s behind Verstappen.

As the field increasingly began to weave off a drying racing line in search of patches of water to cool the fading intermediate tyres, Leclerc could slightly exceed Perez's race pace to close to within 1.3s. Verstappen, meanwhile, was quicker than the pair of them and his advantage climbed towards a full 7s.

Following the collision with Sainz, and having pitted for a fresh set of inters, Ricciardo's race was already in tatters. That allowed McLaren to switch to a glorified test programme, including pitting the Australian for slicks on lap 16. Equipped with medium tyres, Ricciardo soon turned in a series of personal best sectors to indicate that the crossover had arrived.



Perez was the first of the leaders to blink, stopping for the yellow-walled C3s on lap 18 before Leclerc — the Prancing Horse mechanics had dashed out into the pitlane the previous lap — followed Verstappen in for slick tyres next time around. Here Ferrari made another error. Both rears were slow getting serviced to bleed away another 1.4s as Red Bull aced its champion's change.

The new-for-2022 blanket temperatures, down from 100 to 70C, ensured that Perez was slow on his out-lap and Leclerc initially had the jump for second. But then he felt the shackles of the cooler rubber and was a sitting duck for the recovering Red Bull into Villeneuve as the 2-3 running order was restored. And when Perez locked his front-left into Variante Alta and skipped over the chicane to hit the grass, Leclerc couldn't capitalise.

Verstappen swiftly re-established his 7s cushion after stopping. If anything, as per his FP2 simulations and late form in the sprint, he was even happier on slick tyres. The gap eventually exceeded 13s to Perez, with Leclerc another 3s in arrears. It was becoming more and more apparent with 15 laps to run that Ferrari didn't have an answer for the speed of the lead Red Bull or the track position of Perez. It had to roll the dice.

On lap 49, Leclerc pitted for a set of the quickest tyres that were on offer in Italy, the C4 softs. Ferrari was seemingly only on course for third in a straight fight so, when the fronts started to grain and Leclerc approached lapped cars, the team had to ask the question of Red Bull. At the very least, Leclerc might nab a point for fastest lap. >>



SPRINT RACE



Formula 1 should have been on a hiding to nothing by staging a sprint race at Imola. Ross Brawn wanted to run the alternative weekend set-up at the first European round “to remind everyone what it was about”. But at a venue where overtaking has proved notoriously difficult, it seemed unlikely that the supposedly snappy, high-octane format would produce anything other than a procession.

But the Saturday race last weekend might be considered the best of the four sprints to date. That’s thanks to the late crescendo that brought Max Verstappen back into contention to pass Charles Leclerc and bag the increased eight points for victory, plus pole position for the proper Emilia Romagna Grand Prix.

Qualifying pacesetter Verstappen looked to have immediately spurned his chance to cut the

standings deficit to Leclerc when he struggled for traction off the line. “I let off the clutch and immediately had a lot of wheelspin,” said the Red Bull driver. “Then I had no gear sync in the most important gears at the start, which is very strange.”

In the press conference, Leclerc would be quick to rebut the suggestion that he and Verstappen were neck and neck into Tamburello. Rightly so – the Ferrari racer was well ahead and nipped into the lead.

The safety car was hastily brought into play courtesy of a first-lap coming together between Zhou Guanyu and Pierre Gasly at Tosa, for which neither driver copped the blame. But when it returned to the pits, Leclerc bolted away. Come the end of lap five of 21, he’d built a lead of 1.027 seconds to put himself out of DRS range. That margin crept up to its peak of 1.7s after 13 laps and it

seemed inevitable that members of ‘Charles Leclerc: The Official Marche Fan Club’ sitting in the grandstand would watch their hero cross the finish line first.

But Leclerc had asked too much of his soft Pirellis too early and, thanks to the Friday deluge, the track surface hadn’t been sufficiently rubbered in, and so began to tear his front-right. Verstappen soon had the bit between his teeth, telling his race engineer to get off the radio and leave him be, as he pumped in a series of personal best sectors.

The Red Bull did suffer spikes of oversteer as Verstappen gave chase. He soon tucked into the powerful slipstream out of Rivazza and thumbed DRS to launch past into Tamburello. In the latest display of mutual respect between the pair, Leclerc gave the reigning champion just enough room. Verstappen perfectly kept the RB18



on the asphalt through the tight chicane to take the position and run to the spoils by 3s as Leclerc’s tyres continued to fade.

The dry conditions helped the natural competitive order be restored insofar as Sergio Perez (third, from seventh) and Carlos Sainz (fourth, from 10th) made the major gains after their underwhelming qualifying performances. Both used DRS and made the braking zone of Tamburello their hunting ground to work past Daniel Ricciardo and a slow-starting Fernando Alonso before finally completing their respective ascents by outdragging Lando Norris over the timing line.

Fourth-starting, medium-shod Kevin Magnussen knew immediately when the tyre blankets came off his rivals’ cars to reveal the red writing of the softs that his Haas would be a moving target. He slipped to eighth behind Valtteri Bottas.

MATT KEW



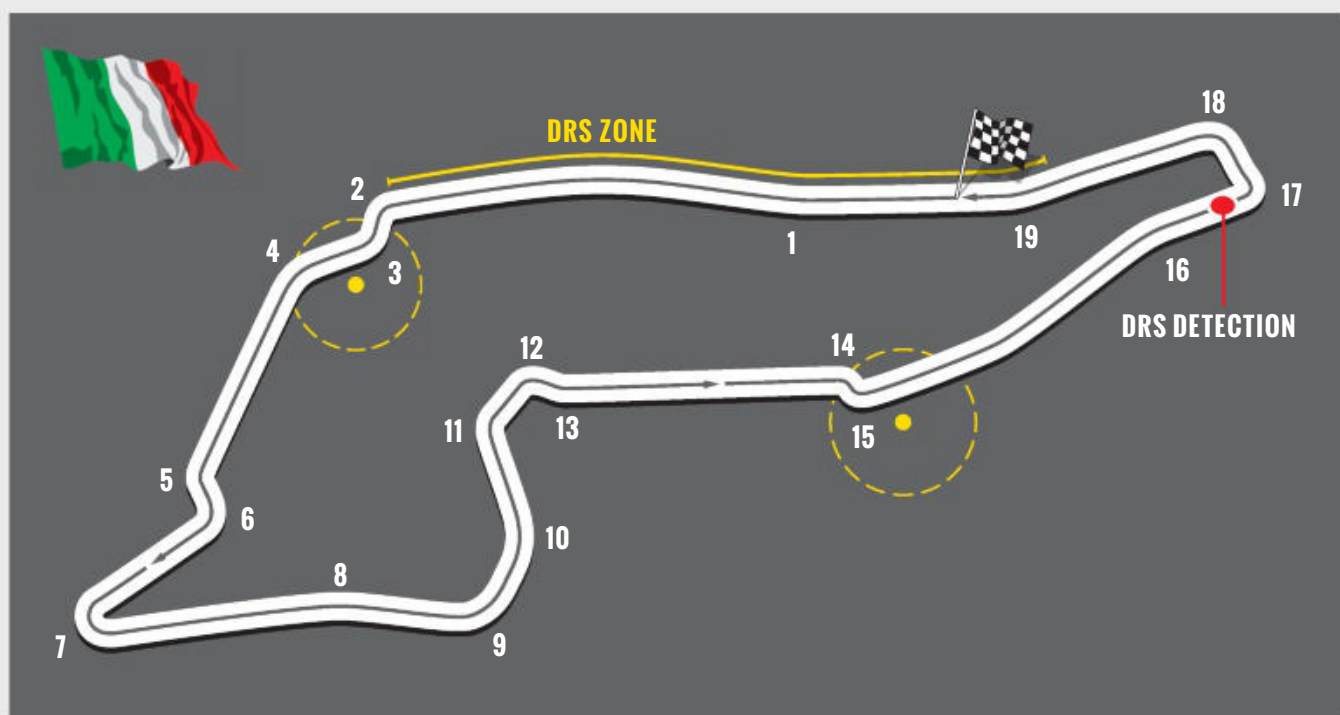


TRACKSIDE VIEW

Every now and again, it's important to get some perspective. Standing at the exit of a sodden Tamburello for FP1, it comes in the form of appreciating the difference between an underwhelming Mercedes and an underwhelming Formula 1 car full stop.

Not counting the half-baked attempt during Barcelona testing to artificially wet the track, which then dried almost immediately in the Spanish sun, this is the first time all the 2022 machines have taken to a rain-soaked circuit. Unhelpfully for the drivers, the puddles have formed at the first apex of the chicane and on corner exit. In other words, right on the racing line.

Despite this and the latest extreme porpoising to hit the W13, Lewis Hamilton appears to find an affinity with the low-grip conditions, his dayglo helmet popping into view to help separate the Silver Arrow from a similarly shaded overcast sky. Even though he is among many struggling with low tyre temperatures, he still seems able to rely on the front axle as he darts into the left-right. The car has by no measure set the world



alight so far, but it at least looks convincing at these lower speeds.

Compare that to the Aston Martin. It's been easy to lampoon the AMR22 given its lowly positions in every meaningful session classification so far this season. But seemingly with good reason, because the treacherous conditions expose a particularly tricky ride.

For the sake of comparison, let's

focus on Sebastian Vettel. Initially it's the ears hardest at work for Autosport since the German must quickly lift off on corner exit as the cold full-wet rear Pirellis repeatedly break traction with little notice.

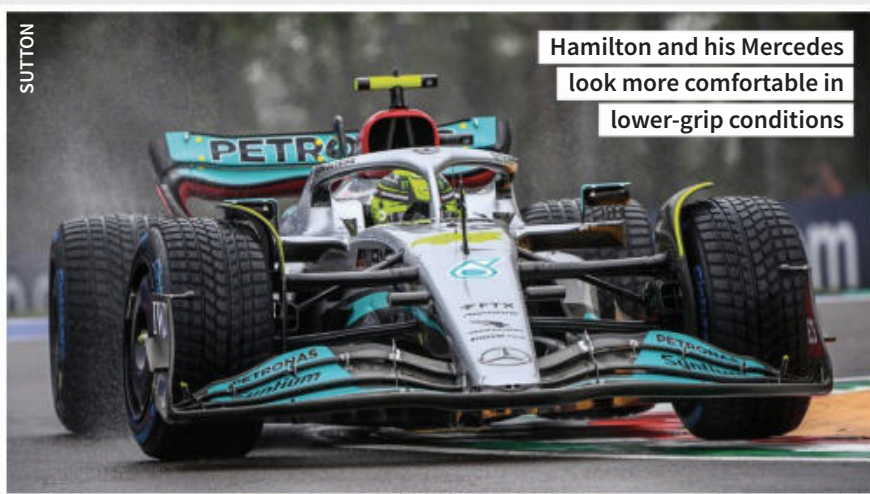
After 25 minutes, he reappears as the first driver to brave a set of intermediates. Five laps into his brief stint, Vettel is forced into a huge save exiting this infamous turn as he hurriedly applies opposite lock to avoid the approaching wet grass. Thirteen minutes later, he aborts the second apex altogether and runs over the gravel after a clumsy entry.

It appears that the Aston,

"VETTEL IS FORCED INTO A HUGE SAVE AS HE HURRIEDLY APPLIES OPPOSITE LOCK"

another 'porpoiser', is running a super-stiff set-up and that doesn't change for the duration of the hour. Whereas Hamilton's front axle gently leans into the corner with a more compliant tune, the slower speeds exaggerate how Vettel has to hang on to a car that is easily deflected and wants to retaliate against its driver.

MATT KEW





All smiles for Verstappen and Perez after Red Bull's first 1-2 since 2016

"We were not running out of front tyres," Binotto confirmed. "But we believed that there was no opportunity for us to attack and overtake Perez with those tyres anymore. We saw there could have been an opportunity and a possibility, and we went for it."

Perez pitted the next lap to cover off the immediate threat from Leclerc, while Verstappen came in a lap later. The champion had requested to be put on the same strategy as his Ferrari rival, but Red Bull was already one step ahead and swapped him onto softs, despite the mediums already fitted having enough life to make the chequered flag.

Back behind Perez, Leclerc had spent much of the race observing where the RB18 was weakest. That was through Variante Alta, site of Perez's excursion. Given that it fed into the DRS detection zone, if Leclerc could carry more speed through the right-left, he stood a chance of closing and deploying the overtaking aid in tandem with a strong tow. Fastest lap helped shrink the gap to just five tenths.

But the Bahrain and Australia winner was too greedy. On lap 53, Leclerc clattered over the inside kerb through the first part of the

chicane. The car was unsettled, and he spun. The F1-75 squarely glanced the tyre wall to prevent terminal suspension damage, but the front wing was broken, and all hope of a podium vanished. Leclerc recovered the car to the pits to emerge in ninth after the most critical of all the Ferrari mistakes at Imola.

"I felt like it was probably one of the corners where Checo was a bit less competitive than me," said Leclerc. "Obviously on that lap, I knew that there was an opportunity. I tried to push a bit more, and it was too much. It was the mistake that cost me a lot and I'll learn from it."

Kevin Magnussen, Sebastian Vettel and Yuki Tsunoda fell victim to Leclerc late on, but sixth was the best the Ferrari could manage. Verstappen, meanwhile, could cruise across the line with 16.5s in hand over Perez to tie with Leclerc on two GP wins apiece so far this term. His late fastest-lap dash plus victory in the sprint combined for a maximum possible haul of 34 points in his efforts to make amends for the car unreliability at Sakhir and Albert Park.

"The start of the season in general wasn't amazing so we needed a good weekend," said Verstappen. "I didn't expect it to be like this. The way we handled the race, we didn't make any mistakes, the team made the right calls with switching from the intermediates to the slicks and from then on just controlled the race. It might look easy on the TV, but we still have to be focused, avoid the backmarkers as it is easy to go off-line or to lock up or go over a wet patch and go over the track. We managed that and the car was handling really well."

With Perez third in the sprint and second on Sunday, Red Bull was only one point shy of the maximum possible team score too. Reflecting on the squad's first 1-2 since the 2016 Malaysian GP, boss Christian Horner added: "This has to be one of our best-ever results. [It was a] phenomenal team performance because we took a bit of a risk coming into the weekend with a couple of small parts we introduced on the car, which is always tricky when you've only got one [practice session during a sprint weekend]. But we attacked the weekend from the word go, and both drivers have been unbelievable."

Verstappen and Perez were not far shy of perfect on the day. So much so, Ferrari had to ask a question of them late on in the GP, the red cars having stumbled multiple times throughout the weekend. But Red Bull quite comfortably had an answer to take what looked only to be a small gap in performance between the two and make it seem like something of a chasm. 🏆

"THIS HAS TO BE ONE OF OUR BEST-EVER RESULTS. WE ATTACKED THE WEEKEND FROM THE WORD GO"



Leclerc crestfallen after pushing too hard proved costly

NEXT F1 REPORT

**MIAMI GRAND PRIX
12 MAY ISSUE**

MAGNUSSEN SCORES AGAIN FOR HAAS

Kevin Magnussen came away with points for Haas in both Imola races last weekend, but went backwards in each event.

He qualified fourth, albeit after causing one of five red flags in qualifying when he spun off at Acque Minerali. He and team-mate Mick Schumacher were the only drivers to run medium tyres in the sprint race, where Magnussen was overcome by four soft-shod rivals, having been in the thick of the action with the McLarens into Tamburello at the start. He also picked up a black-and-white-flag warning for weaving in front of Sergio Perez exiting the sequence.

In the grand prix, Magnussen made better initial progress, but couldn't hang onto the fifth place he inherited after Carlos Sainz and Daniel Ricciardo tangled. George Russell hunted him down in the Mercedes, getting past with an unexpected move into the Variante Alta. Magnussen was then jumped by Sebastian Vettel's undercut stop at the switch to slick tyres and came home ninth between the Aston Martins, the last unlapped runner.

Schumacher had passed Vettel late in the sprint to claim 10th on the GP grid, but a slide exiting Tamburello on that race's opening lap put him on the grass and towards the back, where he remained. As he slid, Schumacher's left-rear clipped Fernando Alonso's right sidepod, which eventually blew off just as Lewis Hamilton was passing the Alpine for 11th. Alonso was already slowed by the additional damage to his floor from the first-lap clash.



Mercedes struggles continue but Russell stars in grand prix

Mercedes F1 chief Toto Wolff called his team's Imola weekend a "complete write-off" even before the main race had taken place, such were the Silver Arrows' struggles with tyre warm-up and porpoising.

Of the latter problem, George Russell said after the grand prix that "this is the first weekend I've truly been struggling with my back, and almost like chest pains from the severity of the bouncing".

Mercedes' existing tyre warm-up struggles were exacerbated by the cool and wet conditions in Italy.

The sprint was warmer, but was yet "another humbling experience", according to Wolff. After Russell had qualified 11th and Hamilton 13th – Mercedes' worst qualifying result since the 2012 Japanese Grand Prix – Russell made no progress in the sprint, while Hamilton was outmuscled by Yuki Tsunoda and Lance Stroll at the Villeneuve chicane on lap one (he repassed Stroll after the safety car but climbed no higher). Russell put this result down to another issue Mercedes has been grappling with all year: that the W13 is draggy and

struggles for top speed. After qualifying, Hamilton was spotted having an animated discussion with Wolff, but the team boss dismissed suggestions of a fracture within the camp, with Hamilton later vowing there's "no one that's giving up".

But he has already conceded that his chances of winning the 2022 title are all but over, after finishing a lapped 14th in the GP. Hamilton only just maintained his place off the less grippy side of the track at the start of the GP thanks to the Tamburello incidents. He was then stuck behind Pierre Gasly after having to take avoiding action when Esteban Ocon was released into his path at the stops, and also struggled massively to get the mediums warm. He then got stuck in a DRS train.

Russell did have an excellent GP, climbing five spots at the start and then running fifth ahead of the charging Valtteri Bottas. This became fourth when Charles Leclerc spun, a result made all the more impressive by Mercedes failing to give Russell the necessary front wing adjustments at his stop to deal with the drying conditions.

BIG NUMBER

34

Max Verstappen's perfect haul of 34 points from two wins on the Imola weekend (plus the GP fastest lap) is the third-highest in F1 history, behind Lewis Hamilton and Felipe Massa respectively taking 50 and 36 from the 2014 Abu Dhabi double-points finale.



Albon impresses for Williams despite missing out on points

Alex Albon said his Emilia Romagna Grand Prix performance was “just as good as Melbourne”, despite ending up 11th and without points.

The Williams driver had beaten team-mate Nicholas Latifi to 18th in the sprint, both gaining two places from Pierre Gasly and Zhou Guanyu clashing on lap one, after Albon had started last thanks to his Q1 brake fire and explosion.

In the GP, being one of the first to stop for medium-compound slicks meant

Albon gained with warmer tyres as the midfield pack rejoined, and this delayed Gasly and Lewis Hamilton, allowing him to nip ahead. He held them off to the finish, despite not having the benefit of DRS behind Esteban Ocon (shuffled back from 11th on the road to 14th with his penalty for an unsafe release ahead of Hamilton). This was thanks to a new drag-reducing rear-wing configuration boosting Albon's straightline speed. Latifi lost a long battle with Zhou and took 16th.



ASTON GETS OFF THE MARK FOR 2022

Aston Martin ended the Emilia Romagna GP weekend with its first points of the 2022 season, after Sebastian Vettel and Lance Stroll finished eighth and 10th respectively.

Vettel qualified ninth for the sprint, aided by the delay from Carlos Sainz's Q2 crash that meant others, including the two Mercedes drivers, could not improve. He slipped back to 13th in the sprint. But this meant he started on the grippy, racing line side for the main race and was a big gainer at the start.

He held eighth for the rest of the first stint after Fernando Alonso went backwards and out, and was then the second driver to stop for slicks, aiding his cause further. With fresher tyres on the effective undercut, he climbed to seventh. That reverted to eighth after Yuki Tsunoda chased him down and passed late on.

Vettel said his result was “like a victory” for Aston, which also scored with Stroll after the Canadian too had an excellent start and then ran in the final points-paying position for most of the race.

He held off Esteban Ocon at the end and later theorised that the cooler conditions all weekend compared to the previous flyaway races “suited us a little bit better”, since the Aston hadn't been massively updated since the previous race in Australia.

Q&A

VALTTERI BOTTAS
ALFA ROMEO DRIVER

Did you have fun going from seventh to fifth in the GP?

“It was good fun. To be honest, when we went to the slicks, I really could push like a qualifying lap every lap, so that made it pretty fun. Especially the middle to the end of that stint, we had really good performance, good pace. Only the last few laps once I got close to George, my rear right started to grain a bit once I was demanding a bit more traction and so on. I couldn't quite get him but maybe next time.

Did you have any thoughts



about crashing with Russell in 2021 as you caught him?

I tried not to think about it. But Mercedes and George – that was my motivation throughout the race,

to push every lap and hopefully get the chance towards the end. But didn't quite get it. I lost like 10 seconds in the pitstop [with a slow right-front change] so without that, could've been a bit different.

Did you have front-wing damage from clipping Ricciardo after he'd hit Sainz?

Initially, I was worried, because it was a decent hit – I could feel it. But luckily maybe I hit in the right angle. Suddenly there was

Sainz coming from the right sideways and Ricciardo hit him and I had no time to react and just hit them. But actually I was surprised I could still carry on pretty well and didn't lose any positions in the start.

How are you feeling about Mercedes' struggles after been dropped from that team?

I'm very happy to be in the place where I am at the moment. I'm really enjoying it and obviously we had better race pace in the end. I don't know the reasons why they are struggling, I don't know their technical details, but I focus on our things and improving our car, which we did this weekend. Hopefully we can do it in the next races as well.

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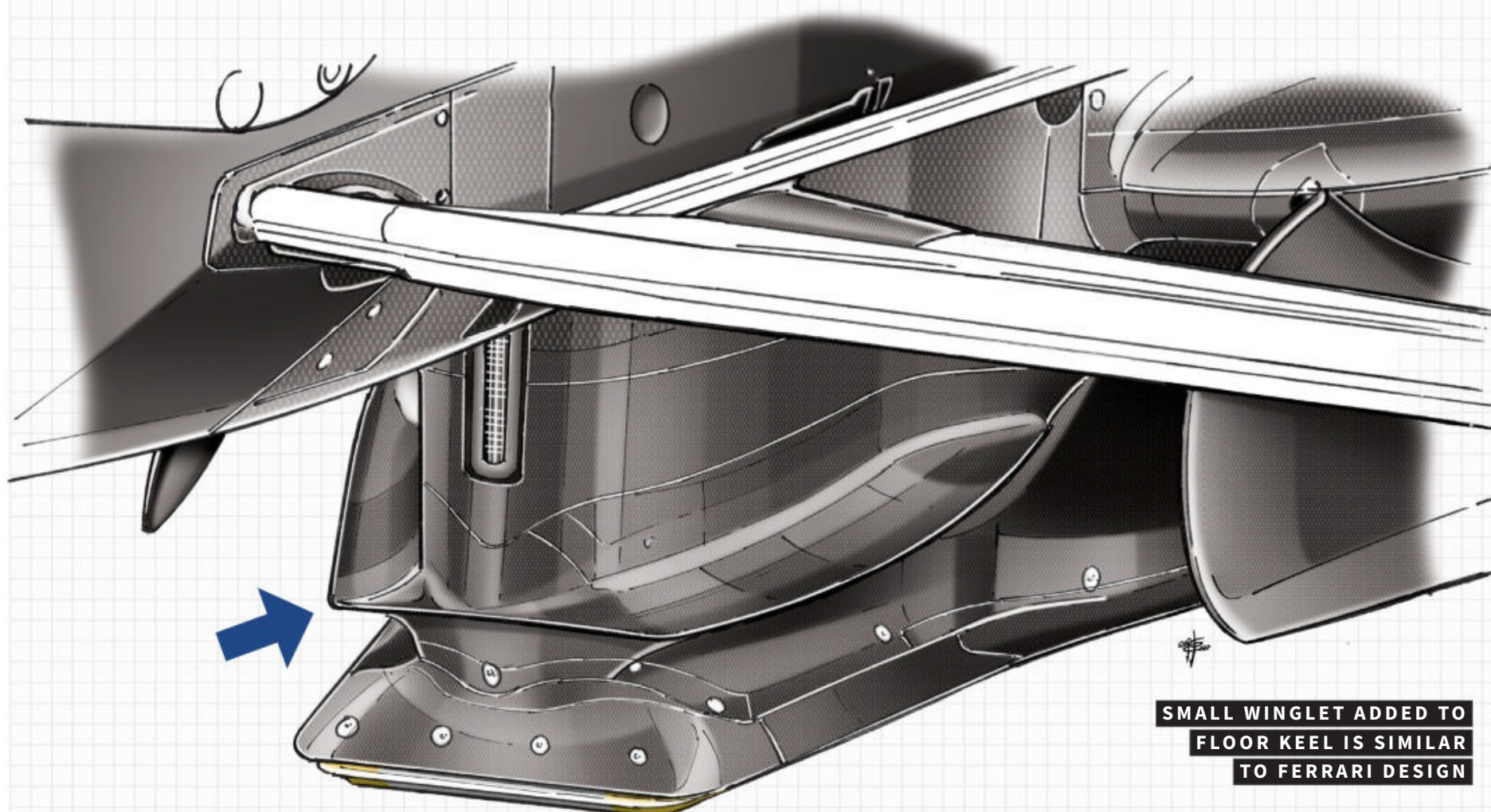
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DRAWING BOARD

GIORGIO PIOLA



SMALL WINGLET ADDED TO FLOOR KEEL IS SIMILAR TO FERRARI DESIGN

RED BULL ADDS DOWNFORCE – AND RELIABILITY

For the first European grand prix of the season, Red Bull introduced a small winglet on its floor keel, akin to the design Ferrari has been running this season, to offer a slight downforce boost. Ahead of the weekend, the team noted that “local load has been added by the fitment of a narrow span secondary wing to the keel panel, which has been narrowed towards the leading edge”.

The splitter flicks up at the trailing edge,

bidding to control any vortex production and increase the energy of the airflow passing underneath the car into the venturi tunnels.

The team also added an update to its rear brake cooling to improve the overall reliability of the system. This has, according to the team, “enhanced mass flow for additional rear brake material and brake caliper cooling from inlet and exit duct revisions”. There have been no

changes to any of the internal cooling within the brake system.

The change to an 18-inch wheel design has influenced how the teams focus on developing their brake cooling solutions, since the heavier wheels have more inertia and thus require more energy to stop. The wheel covers also make heat transfer away from the brakes more difficult.

JAKE BOXALL-LEGGE

MERCEDES MAKES TWEAKS BUT NO REVOLUTION

Mercedes continued its struggles at Imola, qualifying well outside the top 10 – and it was only due to George Russell’s opportunism at the start of the race that it was able to score a fourth place.

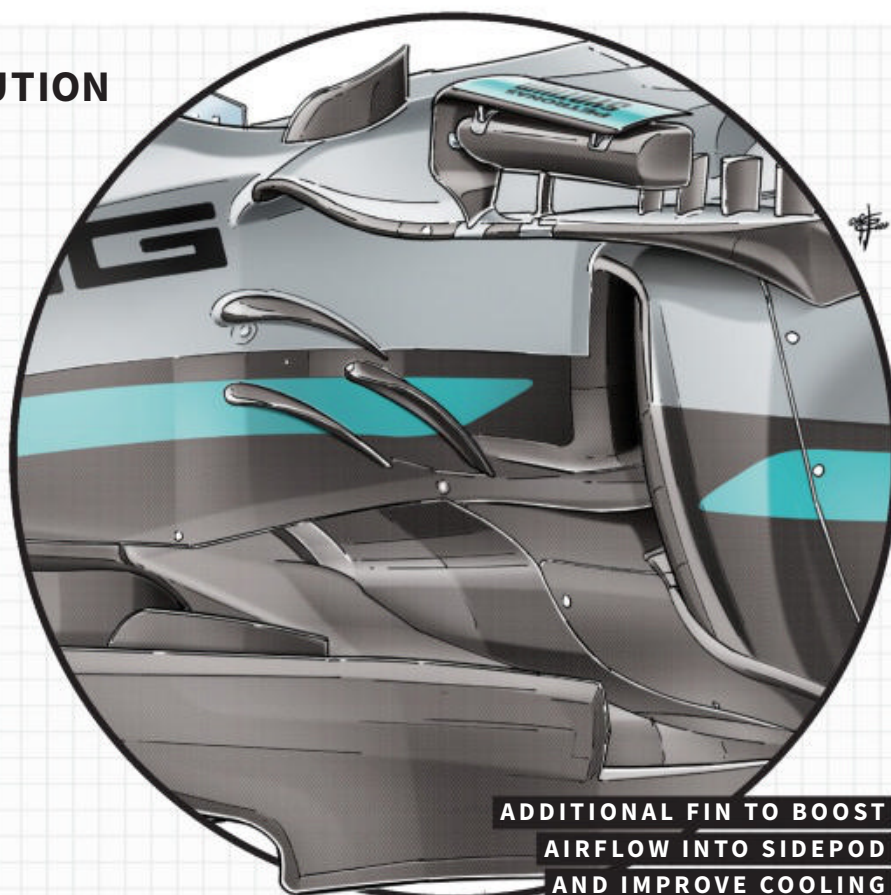
Regardless, the team is making updates, adding an additional fin to the flanks of the car. The German manufacturer squad stated that “these vanes improve the air flow quality into the sidepod radiator duct and therefore improve the overall cooling of the car”. The team also changed the shape of its side-impact spar housing “to remove small areas of separated airflow” and “improve airflow to the rear of the car”, continuing its pursuit of performance.

There were minor changes to the floor, with the curl ahead of the rear tyre changed to reduce airflow separation, suggesting that the car is producing numerous aerodynamic inconsistencies that are hampering the W13’s performance.

Mercedes also reworked the deflectors at the rear of the car to increase the “local load”, which has a run-on effect of improving the overall diffuser performance.

That Mercedes categorised all of its updates as performance-driven means that the team is at least active in its bid to return to the front, but is currently not willing to make wholesale changes.

JAKE BOXALL-LEGGE



ADDITIONAL FIN TO BOOST AIRFLOW INTO SIDEPOD AND IMPROVE COOLING



FREE PRACTICE 1			FREE PRACTICE 2		
POS	DRIVER	TIME	POS	DRIVER	TIME
1	Leclerc	1m29.402s	1	Russell	1m19.457s
2	Sainz	1m30.279s	2	Perez	1m19.538s
3	Verstappen	1m30.867s	3	Leclerc	1m19.740s
4	Magnussen	1m32.439s	4	Hamilton	1m19.992s
5	Schumacher	1m32.988s	5	Alonso	1m20.174s
6	Perez	1m33.012s	6	Sainz	1m20.258s
7	Alonso	1m33.160s	7	Verstappen	1m20.371s
8	Vettel	1m33.365s	8	Tsunoda	1m20.381s
9	Tsunoda	1m33.611s	9	Gasly	1m20.439s
10	Russell	1m34.262s	10	Zhou	1m20.498s
11	Bottas	1m34.615s	11	Albon	1m20.591s
12	Gasly	1m35.104s	12	Magnussen	1m20.740s
13	Ocon	1m35.420s	13	Schumacher	1m20.977s
14	Norris	1m35.502s	14	Stroll	1m21.149s
15	Ricciardo	1m35.625s	15	Vettel	1m21.155s
16	Stroll	1m36.033s	16	Ocon	1m21.179s
17	Albon	1m36.461s	17	Latifi	1m21.263s
18	Hamilton	1m36.464s	18	Norris	1m23.821s
19	Zhou	1m37.450s	19	Ricciardo	no time
20	Latifi	1m39.698s	20	Bottas	no time

WEATHER Wet, overcast and cool, air 11-12C track 14-15C

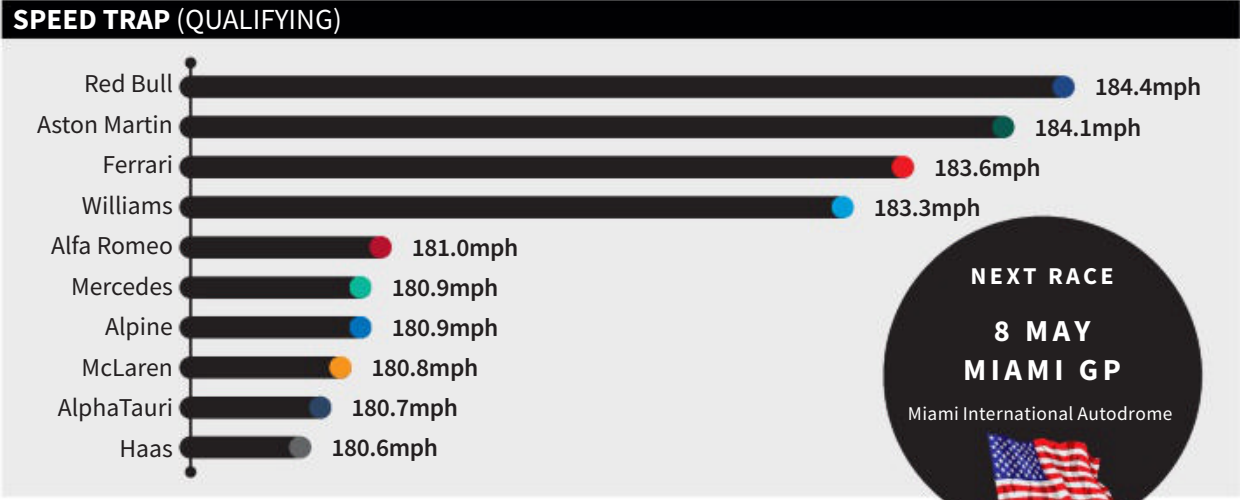
QUALIFYING		
POS	DRIVER	TIME
1	Verstappen	1m27.999s
2	Leclerc	1m28.778s
3	Norris	1m29.131s
4	Magnussen	1m29.164s
5	Alonso	1m29.202s
6	Ricciardo	1m29.742s
7	Perez	1m29.808s
8	Bottas	1m30.439s
9	Vettel	1m31.062s
10	Sainz	no time
QUALIFYING 2		
11	Russell	1m20.757s
12	Schumacher	1m20.916s
13	Hamilton	1m21.138s
14	Zhou	1m21.434s
15	Stroll	1m28.119s
QUALIFYING 1		
16	Tsunoda	1m20.474s
17	Gasly	1m20.732s
18	Latifi	1m21.971s
19	Ocon	1m22.338s
20	Albon	no time

WEATHER Dry-wet, air 12-13C track 13-15C

SPRINT RACE 21 LAPS - 63.92 MILES					
POS	DRIVER	FINISH TIME	LED	TYRE	FASTEST LAPS
1	Verstappen	30m39.567s	2	Sn	1m19.154s
2	Leclerc	+2.975s	19	Sn	1m19.044s
3	Perez	+4.721s		Sn	1m19.012s
4	Sainz	+17.578s		Sn	1m19.251s
5	Norris	+24.561s		Sn	1m20.030s
6	Ricciardo	+27.740s		Sn	1m20.328s
7	Bottas	+28.133s		Sn	1m20.219s
8	Magnussen	+30.712s		Mn	1m20.557s
9	Alonso	+32.278s		Sn	1m20.639s
10	Schumacher	+33.773s		Mn	1m20.567s
11	Russell	+36.284s		Sn	1m20.756s
12	Tsunoda	+38.298s		Sn	1m20.909s
13	Vettel	+40.177s		Sn	1m21.044s
14	Hamilton	+41.459s		Sn	1m20.663s
15	Stroll	+42.910s		Sn	1m20.948s
16	Ocon	+43.517s		Sn	1m20.995s
17	Gasly	+43.794s		Sn	1m20.599s
18	Albon	+48.871s		Sn	1m21.020s
19	Latifi	+52.017s		Mn	1m21.437s
R	Zhou	0 laps-accident		Sn	



WEATHER Overcast, air 20-21C track 27-28C
WINNER'S AVERAGE SPEED 125.092mph
FASTEST LAP AVERAGE SPEED 138.980mph



SEASON STATS			
DRIVERS' CHAMPIONSHIP	PTS	BEST FINISH	BEST QUAL
1 Leclerc	86	1	1
2 Verstappen	59	1	1
3 Perez	54	2	1
4 Russell	49	3	6
5 Sainz	38	2	3
6 Norris	35	3	3
7 Hamilton	28	3	5
8 Bottas	24	5	6
9 Ocon	20	6	5
10 Magnussen	15	5	4
11 Ricciardo	11	6	6
12 Tsunoda	10	7	13
13 Gasly	6	8	9
14 Vettel	4	8	9
15 Alonso	2	9	5
16 Zhou	1	10	13
17 Albon	1	10	14
18 Stroll	1	10	15
19 Schumacher	0	11	12
20 Hulkenberg	0	12	17
21 Latifi	0	16	18

CONSTRUCTORS' CHAMPIONSHIP	
1 Ferrari	124
2 Red Bull	113
3 Mercedes	77
4 McLaren	46
5 Alfa Romeo	25
6 Alpine	22
7 AlphaTauri	16
8 Haas	15
9 Aston Martin	5
10 Williams	1

QUALIFYING BATTLE			
Hamilton	2	2	Russell
Verstappen	3	1	Perez
Leclerc	4	0	Sainz
Ricciardo	0	4	Norris
Alonso	2	2	Ocon
Gasly	3	1	Tsunoda
Vettel	2	0	Stroll
Stroll	1	1	Hulkenberg
Latifi	1	2	Albon
Zhou	0	4	Bottas
Magnussen	3	1	Schumacher

Based on Q1/Q2/Q3 sessions, not sprint races.
Events removed when one driver in a team could not record a representative time for reasons outside their control

WINS		POLE POSITIONS	
Leclerc	2	Leclerc	2
Verstappen	2	Perez	1
FASTEST LAPS		Verstappen	1
Leclerc	3		
Verstappen	1		

STARTING GRID



RACE RESULTS ROUND 4/23 (63 LAPS - 192.03 MILES)					
POS	DRIVER	TEAM	FINISH TIME	LED	TYRES
1	Max Verstappen (NLD)	Red Bull	1h32m07.986s	63	In, Mn, Sn
2	Sergio Perez (MEX)	Red Bull	+16.527s		In, Mn, Sn
3	Lando Norris (GBR)	McLaren-Mercedes	+34.834s		In, Mn
4	George Russell (GBR)	Mercedes	+42.506s		In, Mn
5	Valtteri Bottas (FIN)	Alfa Romeo-Ferrari	+43.181s		In, Mn
6	Charles Leclerc (MCO)	Ferrari	+56.072s		In, Mn, Sn, Su
7	Yuki Tsunoda (JPN)	AlphaTauri-Red Bull	+1m01.110s		In, Mn
8	Sebastian Vettel (DEU)	Aston Martin-Mercedes	+1m10.892s		In, Mu
9	Kevin Magnussen (DNK)	Haas-Ferrari	+1m15.260s		In, Mu
10	Lance Stroll (CAN)	Aston Martin-Mercedes	-1 lap/+9.292s		In, Mu
11	Alexander Albon (THA)	Williams-Mercedes	-1 lap/+13.977s		In, Mn
12	Pierre Gasly (FRA)	AlphaTauri-Red Bull	-1 lap/+14.578s		In, Mn
13	Lewis Hamilton (GBR)	Mercedes	-1 lap/+15.279s		Iu, Mn
14	Esteban Ocon (FRA)	Alpine-Renault	-1 lap/+17.355s		In, Mn
15	Zhou Guanyu (CHN)	Alfa Romeo-Ferrari	-1 lap/+23.378s		In, Mn
16	Nicholas Latifi (CAN)	Williams-Mercedes	-1 lap/+26.034s		In, Mn
17	Mick Schumacher (DEU)	Haas-Ferrari	-1 lap/+43.921s		In, Mu, Sn
18	Daniel Ricciardo (AUS)	McLaren-Mercedes	-1 lap/+1m02.657s		In, Iu, Mn, Hn
R	Fernando Alonso (ESP)	Alpine-Renault	6 laps-accident damage		In
R	Carlos Sainz (ESP)	Ferrari	0 laps-accident		In

FASTEST LAPS				
POS	DRIVER	TIME	GAP	LAP
1	Verstappen	1m18.446s	-	55
2	Leclerc	1m18.574s	+0.128s	63
3	Perez	1m18.949s	+0.503s	52
4	Schumacher	1m18.999s	+0.553s	55
5	Tsunoda	1m20.544s	+2.098s	61
6	Bottas	1m20.758s	+2.312s	43
7	Norris	1m20.903s	+2.457s	61
8	Russell	1m20.962s	+2.516s	57
9	Vettel	1m21.211s	+2.765s	47
10	Magnussen	1m21.238s	+2.792s	61
11	Zhou	1m21.286s	+2.840s	61
12	Latifi	1m21.338s	+2.892s	62
13	Hamilton	1m21.419s	+2.973s	50
14	Ricciardo	1m21.577s	+3.131s	61
15	Gasly	1m21.713s	+3.267s	34
16	Stroll	1m21.750s	+3.304s	46
17	Albon	1m21.757s	+3.311s	61
18	Ocon	1m21.887s	+3.441s	37
19	Alonso	1m39.685s	+21.239s	5
20	Sainz	no time	-	-

WEATHER Wet-dry, overcast, air 12-14 track 15-18C
WINNER'S AVERAGE SPEED 125.058mph FASTEST LAP AVERAGE SPEED 139.983mph

TYRES

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

HARD

MEDIUM

SOFT

INTERMEDIATE

WET

C1

C2

C3

C4

C5

INTERMEDIATE

WET

RACE BRIEFING

GRID PENALTIES

ZHOU required to start from the pitlane following unsupervised work in parc ferme after accident in sprint race

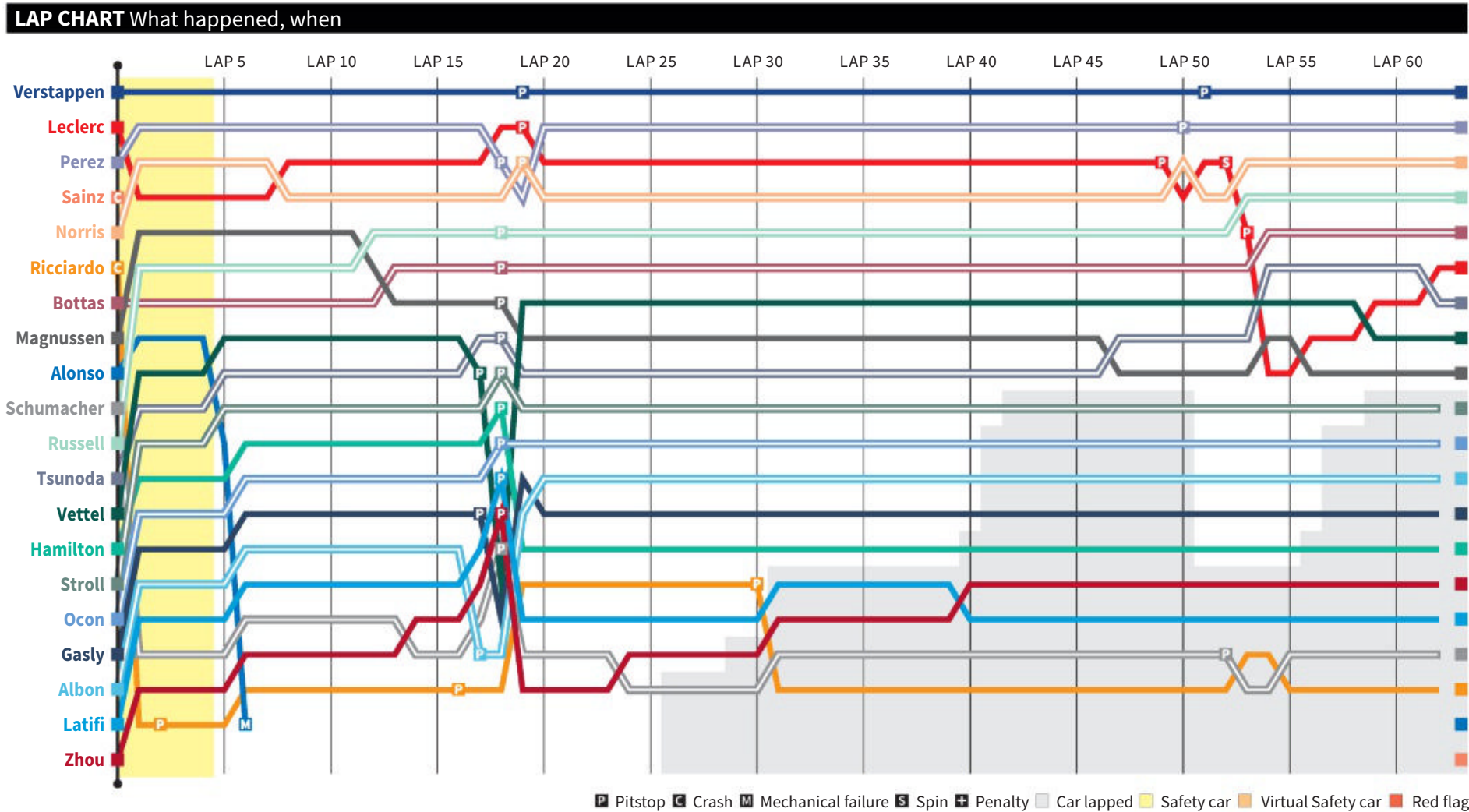
RACE PENALTIES

OCN Five-second penalty for unsafe pitstop release

STAT

22

Verstappen now has as many F1 GP wins as 1996 world champion Damon Hill



VERSTAPPEN AND RUSSELL EARN FULL MARKS AT IMOLA

While the world champion romped to a dominant win – and his Ferrari rivals dropped the ball big-time – the Mercedes driver defied his car's limitations

MATT KEW

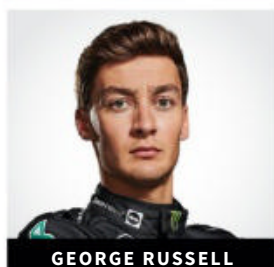
MERCEDES



LEWIS HAMILTON

Started **14th** – Result **13th**

5 Only squeaked into Q2, where he was 13th and 0.4s slower than Russell. Squeezed out on the opening sprint lap numerous times to shed three places before recovering to 14th. Undercut and DRS train hurt his GP. A new team-mate is doing things with a bad car that Hamilton can't yet match.

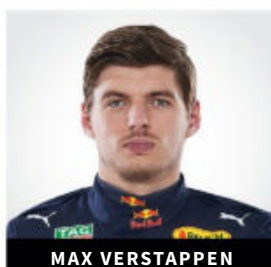


GEORGE RUSSELL

Started **11th** — Result **4th**

10 Top marks because he earned a result the W13 didn't deserve. Tyre heating troubles and lack of downforce meant he missed Q3, but again had measure of Hamilton. Endured a quiet sprint to finish where he started in 11th. Brilliant first GP lap preceded holding off a racy Bottas.

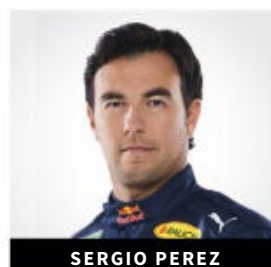
RED BULL



MAX VERSTAPPEN

Started **1st** — Result **1st**

10 Patient on the throttle in the damp and shrewdly lifted to keep hold of the one Q3 lap he didn't mess up. Those errors, plus fumbling the clutch at the start of the sprint, don't quite cost a perfect score since he reeled in and passed Leclerc late on to win. Then he bossed the GP.



SERGIO PEREZ

Started **3rd** — Result **2nd**

7 Lost the rear to run off at Acque Minerali on his Q3 lap. As such, was 1.8s off Verstappen's pole time, having already been 0.5s slower in Q1 and Q2. Recovered to third in the sprint thanks to DRS and, in the GP, nipped past Leclerc before matching the Ferrari pace to complete a distant 1-2.

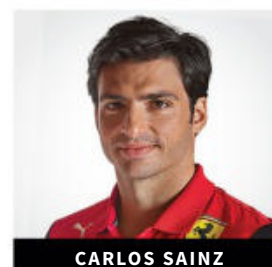
FERRARI



CHARLES LECLERC

Started **2nd** — Result **6th**

4 Banker Q3 lap was 0.8s adrift of Verstappen. Aborted second flier to better prep the tyres, but red flags nixed that so started sprint in second. Nailed launch to lead until overworked tyres lost him GP pole. Fluffed the getaway and was too greedy over kerbs to spin and throw away a podium.



CARLOS SAINZ

Started **4th** — Result **R**

4 The faster Ferrari in Q2, but made a major error by clipping painted lines at Rivazza and spun into the wall. Went some way to making amends by slipstreaming to fourth in the sprint. Bugged down off the line in the GP to drop into the clutches of Ricciardo. Left room but was hit into retirement.

McLAREN



DANIEL RICCIARDO

Started **6th** — Result **18th**

4 An offbeat run plan meant he only had time for one conservative Q3 lap, 0.6s slower than an imperfect Norris effort. Realised the error in his claims – was not hit from behind when he slid into Sainz in the GP. He took too much kerb and damaged his car to tee up a glorified test session.



LANDO NORRIS

Started **5th** — Result **3rd**

8 Two consecutive flying laps in Q3 meant he didn't have full battery assistance for either, so slipped behind Leclerc but still recorded a mega third. Misses full marks for causing a red flag, and asked too much from his softs in the sprint to cede two places. Picked up the scraps expertly in the GP for a fine podium.

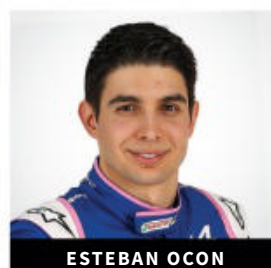
ALPINE



FERNANDO ALONSO

Started **9th** — Result **R**

5 Picked straight up from Australia with blistering one-lap pace to snare fifth in Q3. Too much wheelspin at the sprint start and tyre degradation sent him backwards to ninth. In the GP, was innocent when collected by Schumacher. That damaged his floor and triggered terminal sidepod rupture.

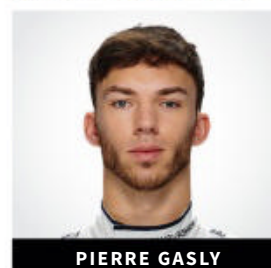


ESTEBAN OCON

Started **16th** — Result **14th**

6 Q1 was ruined by gearshift issue that left him on the sidelines. Pace never arrived thereafter. From 19th in the sprint, made light work of Latifi at Tamburello, then inherited two spots when Zhou and Gasly crashed. Similarly tepid in the GP, his 5s unsafe release penalty notwithstanding.

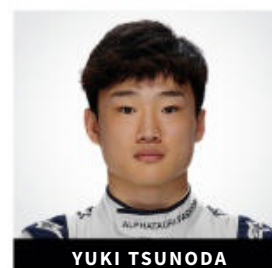
ALPHATAURI



PIERRE GASLY

Started **17th** — Result **12th**

6 Can't access the better scores for ceding 0.25s to Tsunoda on a Q1 lap without an obvious error. Tangled with Zhou in the sprint, although neither was apportioned blame. The resulting safety car prevented a pitstop ruining his Saturday. Was then stuck in a train in the GP.



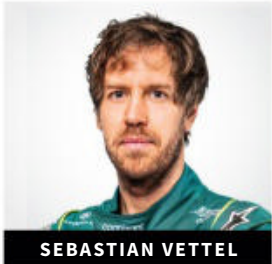
YUKI TSUNODA

Started **12th** — Result **7th**

8 Sent out too early on a green track as both AlphaTauris struggled to heat their tyres. Q2 was therefore missed by 0.004s. But still got one over Gasly. Wet-dry pace was then ace as he marched forward in the sprint and GP. Survived a busy start on Sunday to prompt a fine save.



ASTON MARTIN



Started 13th — Result 8th

8 Seized what's probably a rare opportunity for points by putting mixed conditions to good use. Earned a first Q3 run of the year, where he landed ninth. His score is hurt by shipping four places in the sprint before managing the tyres wonderfully to disguise a lack of pace in the GP.



Started 15th — Result 10th

7 Like Vettel, made it count while the Aston seemed far happier in changeable weather. After squeaking into Q2 thanks to late track evolution, locked up on his second hot lap to end Q3 aspirations. No tangible progress in the sprint, but impressively kept Hamilton behind in the GP.

WILLIAMS



Started 19th — Result 16th

5 Flirting with the phrase 'annus horribilis' in 2022 as he struggles to adapt to ground-effects. No confidence or speed in quali to be faster than only Ocon and Albon, who both hit car trouble. Kept it on the road at least in the GP to inherit a few positions and showed decent medium-tyre pace.



Started 18th — Result 11th

9 Team didn't tell him to flick the right switch to compensate for changing from inters to slicks, which caused fiery Q1 brake failure. Not his fault. More tyre conservation mastery in the GP made most of a wildcard strategy to far exceed the car's true ranking. Coolly absorbed pressure from Gasly too.

ALFA ROMEO



Started 20th — Result 15th

6 Was a mighty fourth in Q1, but the Sainz red flag ended Q3 designs. Another slow Alfa launch and some rookie caution on the first lap dropped him two places in the sprint before he and Gasly collided. Repairs forced pitlane start for the GP. Made some decent moves to climb to 15th.



Started 7th — Result 5th

9 Matched Alfa's potential over one lap and exceeded expectation in races. Recovered from C42 slow start to win battle with Alonso for seventh in sprint. In GP, might have passed Russell for fourth until last-lap graining, or even scored a podium but for wheelnut pitstop delay.

HAAS



Started 8th — Result 9th

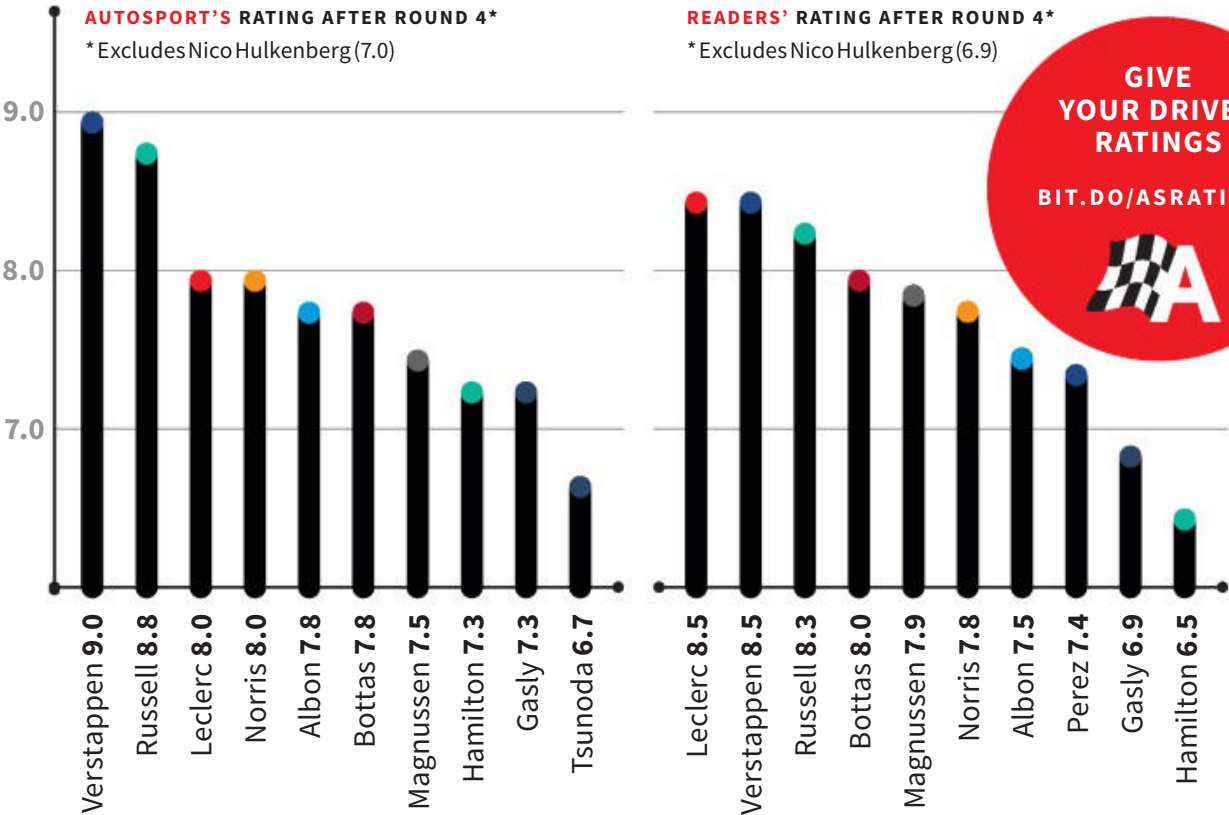
7 Drops a mark for causing a red flag in quali. But did well to miss the barrier and kept on top of anti-stall to nail a brilliant fourth. Was wrongly put on medium tyres for the sprint and he was powerless in his drop to eighth. Caught out by the undercut on a drying track in the GP to miss a possible fifth.



Started 10th — Result 17th

4 By our rules, a textbook four. Missed Q3 by 0.7s after running over the grass at Tosa, and score suffers further thanks to mighty benchmark set by Magnussen. Quiet sprint managing mediums worked well enough to tee up a possible point in the GP. But twice he spun unprompted.

TOP 10 AVERAGE RATINGS



WRC RALLY CROATIA

Rovanpera stuns the WRC in dramatic showdown

Toyota's young star snatched an against-the-odds victory on an event made all the more thrilling by treacherous weather conditions

TOM HOWARD

PHOTOGRAPHY MCKLEIN



W

ritten on Kalle Rovanpera's crash helmet are the words 'full send'; and it was seemingly this approach that allowed the World Rally Championship's new star to somehow conjure up an against-the-odds victory in a Rally Croatia thriller.

Rally fans are being spoiled this season; Croatia's unique asphalt roads served up a second final-stage showdown in three events, following January's Sebastien Loeb versus Sebastien Ogier Monte Carlo blockbuster. Perhaps Croatia's dramatic WRC debut 12 months ago, when Ogier defeated Toyota team-mate Elfyn Evans by 0.6 seconds — the third-closest winning margin in WRC history — was an omen. But nobody could have predicted the climax that unfolded.

Mother Nature played a starring role in this latest piece of top-notch sporting theatre as treacherous wet and foggy conditions plagued the three days. Few would have listed eventual winner Rovanpera as a favourite given his limited knowledge of the roads after last year's Zagreb dalliance lasted all of five kilometres before

a huge accident prompted a swift exit. Since then, the 21-year-old has been on a journey ripping up the record books, becoming the youngest WRC winner last year courtesy of dominant triumphs in Estonia and the Acropolis. And the 2022-spec Rovanpera appears to be an upgrade of that — a more mature, self-confident, pragmatic, cool and (perhaps most importantly) mindblowingly fast version.

Rovanpera raised the bar again after dominating the majority of the event until the weather gods' final offering on the penultimate stage washed away a commanding 28.4s lead, creating a grandstand finish. It was here where Rovanpera summoned a maximum attack 'full send' drive to overhaul a 1.4s deficit and snatch victory from Hyundai's Ott Tanak by 4.3s. It left onlookers and even his own Toyota team dumbfounded.

Such a finish was the perfect tonic to waken the WRC from its eight-week slumber since Rovanpera's dominant triumph in the snow in Sweden back in February. In a peculiar quirk, the break between Sweden and Croatia was longer than



“Mother Nature played a starring role in this latest piece of top-notch sporting theatre”

the frantic off-season in which the teams were burning the midnight oil to ready their all-new hybrid beasts for the new Rally1 era that began in Monte Carlo. The hiatus allowed Toyota, Hyundai and M-Sport Ford valuable time to rest their troops and develop their new hybrid machines. For Hyundai in particular this was welcome, allowing the South Korean marque, which was significantly on the back foot in Monte Carlo but showed signs of recovery in Sweden, an opportunity to reset.

Impending inclement weather dominated much of the pre-event discussions, with drivers predicting that the addition of rain to >>

M-SPORT CALLS FOR STRONGER WRC WET TYRE AFTER PUNCTURES



Tyre issues were a hot topic in Croatia, resulting in M-Sport calling for Pirelli to improve its wet-compound tyre following a spate of failures. Five of the 11 cars in the Rally1 field suffered punctures on the wet compound across the event, including rally winner Kalle Rovanpera.

Pirelli's full wets have been rarely used in the championship, with many of the teams and drivers lacking experience on the rubber. A combination of that and tricky wet conditions, and Croatia's unique asphalt featuring numerous cuts, created a perfect storm.

M-Sport was the worst-affected team. It suffered seven failures, leading team principal Richard Millener (below) to call for tougher wet tyres: “I want a stronger tyre. We rarely use the wet tyre and before this rally we knew it was going to be wet and we were looking back to find out where we could get some relevant data, but I don't think we have used the tyre for a good few years. We should sit down and give our feedback and see what we can do, it's not a hit at Pirelli at all. The last thing they want is this but we do need to sort that out.”

But Pirelli rally activity manager Terenzio Testoni said there was no reason for a “big panic” and that the number of punctures was not unusual. “In total, in Rally1 we had eight damaged tyres, which with three the wheel rim was broken completely, so for me really we had five punctures,” he said. “Five punctures in one day, I cannot say it is a big panic.

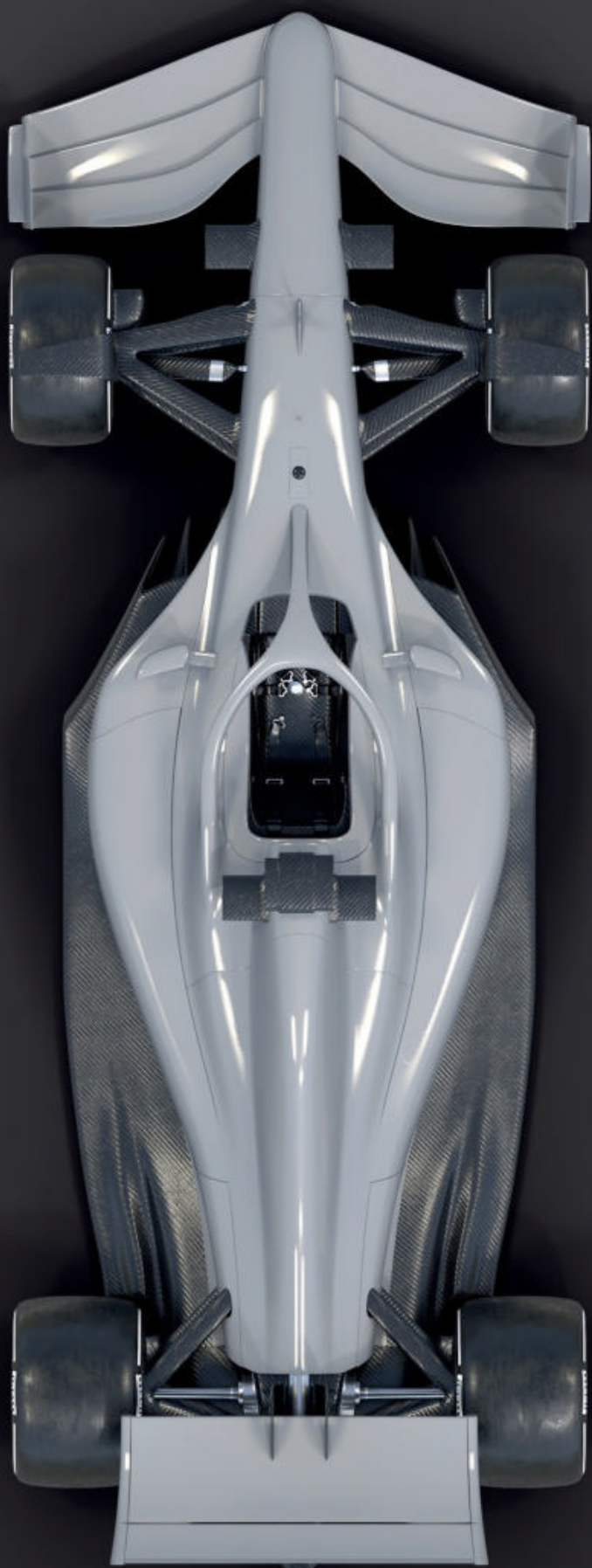
“This is also the first time the teams are running on full-wet specification, the first time in two years. The teams need to get some experience [on the tyre]. In the [pre-event] test [with Hyundai] everything was fine [with the tyres].

“For sure we will meet with all the teams to see what they think. I would panic if we had like 20 punctures.”





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Tanak was on fine form
and only narrowly failed
to snatch a late victory

the mix would create seriously challenging conditions that would benefit those first on the road. “There are a lot of cuts on the rally, and some are like gravel, so it’s maybe worse sometimes than the mud because it’s just like a lot of stones in the road,” said M-Sport’s Adrien Fourmaux. “We will have also a lot of cuts with mud, so it will be really tricky.”

That pre-event prediction was absolutely on the money – the combination of weather and drivers cutting corners, bringing dirt onto the road, would provide a breeding ground for punctures and create headaches in the Zagreb service park (see page 31).

After a dry Thursday shakedown, as forecast, the wet weather rolled in on Friday. Toyota’s Esapekka Lappi emerged as the first Rally1 retirement when he clipped a huge boulder used as an anti-cut device. The impact was enough to rip the front-right corner out of his GR Yaris, ending the Finn’s day before it had really started. He returned on Saturday and racked up four stage wins.

Worse was to come for Toyota when Evans, desperate for a result after retirements in Monte Carlo and Sweden, suffered the first of a series of punctures for crews. The Welshman’s front-left came off the rim, costing him 1m20s. After bouncing back to win stage three, he picked up a second puncture on stage four and never recovered.

M-Sport’s new signing Pierre-Louis Loubet was next to encounter tyre troubles, suffering the misfortune of puncturing



Evans finally got off
the mark with troubled
run to fifth place



“There are a lot of cuts on the rally. It’s worse than the mud because of stones in the road”

both front wheels, reducing him to a crawl. Luckily he was carrying two spares, but a third puncture on stage two signalled an early end to his first day back in the WRC, after sustaining a broken hip from being hit by a speeding driver in Paris last October.

Team-mate Gus Greensmith was the first to really test his luck in the conditions. He ran wide on a right-hander on the opening stage that resulted in a spectacular ride up a grass bank, narrowly avoiding a tree. Greensmith recovered, but without a front splitter.

Fourmaux was not so lucky as M-Sport’s difficult morning worsened when the Frenchman was caught out by a wet patch on stage three, losing the rear of his Puma before spearing through a hedge, coming to rest in the back garden of a residential property just in front of a concrete duck statue. Both he and co-driver Alexandre Coria were unharmed, but chassis damage ruled the Puma out of the rally, spelling a third consecutive retirement. The crew returned to the service park, but not before the house owner had offered the pair some local cheese to try.

While his rivals were falling foul of the conditions and punctures, up front Rovanner capitalised on the cleanest of surfaces, thanks to his road position, to win three of the four morning stages. The Finn was simply in a different league, perfecting the amount of cuts to take. He went on to win six of Friday’s eight stages to lead Hyundai’s Thierry Neuville by 1m04s after a performance Toyota boss Jari-Matti Latvala declared “his best ever in a World Rally Car”.

Neuville had emerged as Rovanner’s nearest challenger and had ended Friday morning just 12.5s adrift, but it was here where the Belgian’s victory hopes unravelled. An alternator failure after stage four ultimately required Neuville and co-driver Martijn Wydaeghe to push the stricken i20 N for 800 metres to the service park, where they collapsed on the floor in exhaustion. To make matters worse they checked in four minutes late, incurring a 40s penalty.

This matter was not over. A further one-minute penalty, €1900 fine and two days’ public service was issued by the FIA stewards >>

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to the pair after the car was clocked at 156km/h (97mph) on a road section limited to 80km/h (50mph). They fell to fourth, elevating team-mate Tanak into second, 1m23s behind Roanperera. Tanak had been delayed by a puncture and hybrid issue.

M-Sport's Craig Breen sat third after a solid Friday, barring a 10s time loss for an overshoot, that had him ahead of Hyundai's Oliver Solberg, Evans and Greensmith, until the last-named picked up four punctures in the afternoon that put him out of the running.

Roanperera's dominance was halted on Saturday when he became the sixth driver to suffer a front-left puncture on the wet tyres as rain and heavy fog descended, reducing visibility to 10 metres in places. It wiped 54.5s from the lead, with Tanak now only 16.8s adrift. The 2019 world champion turned the screw, closing the gap to as low as 13.0s, before Roanperera responded with a blistering run on the day's final stage. "This is my reply! It was a good stage – full send," said Roanperera as he opened a 19.9s lead over Tanak heading into Sunday.

Breen remained in third, counting himself lucky to have emerged through the fog ahead of Neuville. Despite a loss of power, the Hyundai closed to 4.9s adrift of the Irishman. "I'm happy just to get to the end of that," said Breen. "They were the worst conditions I've seen in my life and I could see absolutely nothing. This guy [co-driver Paul Nagle] did a cracking job. He was always keeping me updated on what I needed to see."

The fog accounted for stage 15 when organisers cancelled the test due to poor visibility, while the day's first stage was also scrubbed after a high-speed crash for Solberg, ending in his i20 N catching fire. Driver and co-driver Elliott Edmondson escaped unharmed. The fire did promote Evans to fifth ahead of Toyota team-mate Takamoto Katsuta, the last of the Rally1 runners.

And so came Sunday, which *seemingly* looked to be a calm affair. The hard-tyre-shod Roanperera extended his lead to what seemed an unassailable 31.1s advantage in dry conditions with three stages to go as a gamble to fit softs appeared to have backfired for Tanak. But a twist was coming in the form of dark grey clouds. Roanperera and Tanak were the only drivers to take any wet tyres in their package, two each, but Hyundai's weather team had info that Toyota didn't.

"Our information for the weather was it is cloudy but the rain should not come down," said Latvala. "But this gamble that Hyundai did, it seems maybe they have some different information."

It prompted Tanak to take softs, a much better tyre to deal with rain should his team info ring true. Come the penultimate stage

"They were the worst conditions I've seen in my life and I could see absolutely nothing"



Team boss Latvala was amazed by Roanperera's final-stage charge

Hyundai was smiling. Tanak monstered through the torrential rain, turning a 28.4s deficit into a 1.4s lead as a floundering Roanperera looked crestfallen, while the rest of the Rally1 runners slithered their way through desperately tricky conditions on slicks. It was here where Neuville managed to pull a decisive gap on Breen, having leapfrogged the Ford driver for third early on Sunday morning.

The stage was set for a showdown and yet another twist, since the final power stage was bathed in sunshine. But Roanperera was up against it, knowing his hard tyres would be no match for Tanak's softs on the dry but muddy road. There was only one thing for it – another dose of Roanperera in 'full send' mode, as he performed the unimaginable to beat Tanak. Cue stunned faces in the Toyota and Hyundai camps. "I think this is one of the toughest weekends for sure, and everyone had issues," said Roanperera. "To be driving to the last corner flat-out, it was nice to win."

"When I saw the pictures from the power stage, how muddy it was and knowing that Ott had the soft tyres, I was pretty sure it was going to be difficult to match him, but I decided to try anyway."

Latvala: "He is a miracle kid. It was an amazing performance. I did not think he could win the stage and the rally. I don't know where he pulled that speed. I have no words to describe the drive."

Tanak also paid tribute to Roanperera's display after scoring his first podium since Finland last October. "It is nothing to do with [hard] luck, just pure speed and performance from Kalle," he said. "It was the best we could do."

While Roanperera's heroics stole the show, Neuville did his best to throw away third when he ran wide into a ditch, pitching his i20 N into a near-flip. He limped to the end with a front and rear puncture, 46.3s ahead of Breen, with Evans a lonely but important fifth.

So, what was learned from Rally Croatia? The answer is simple: Roanperera is the driver to beat for this year's world title. ✘



Breen led M-Sport's charge and sits third in the points table

NEUVILLE'S NEVER-GIVE-UP ATTITUDE DELIVERS PODIUM



No matter what was thrown at Thierry Neuville, the Hyundai driver “never gave up” on a podium despite a host of penalties, misfortune and a wild final-stage crash.

The Belgian incurred two minutes of penalties across an eventful three days. He was also handed a €1900 fine for speeding on a road section, alongside engine, alternator and hybrid issues. Somehow he held on to a deserved third-place finish.

“Despite the issues, we never gave up,” said Neuville, who sits second in the points. “We fought hard and at the end the team has been rewarded with a 2-3 result, and strong points for the manufacturers’ championship. We have improved our pace, the car is much nicer to drive.”

Such was his determination that he even remained confident of a podium finish despite almost flipping his i20 N on the final stage after running wide into a ditch, which triggered two punctures and a loss of his intercom to co-driver Martijn Wydaeghe.

“To be honest, no,” he added when asked if he thought he had thrown away the podium. “I didn’t know where the car had gone. I knew there was the ditch and I tried to save the car, but you know how it goes. It looked very spectacular, but from the inside it wasn’t that spectacular and I got away with only two punctures. Luckily only two because if not it would have been difficult to reach the service. It has been a challenging, emotional, up and down weekend.”



RESULTS ROUND 3/13, RALLY CROATIA, 21-24 APRIL

POS	DRIVER / CO-DRIVER	TEAM / CAR	TIME
1	Kalle Rovanner (FIN) Jonne Halttunen (FIN)	Toyota Gazoo Racing WRT / Toyota GR Yaris Rally1	2h48m21.5s
2	Ott Tanak (EST) Martin Jarveoja (EST)	Hyundai Shell Mobis WRT / Hyundai i20 N Rally1	+4.3s
3	Thierry Neuville (BEL) Martijn Wydaeghe (BEL)	Hyundai Shell Mobis WRT / Hyundai i20 N Rally1	+2m21.0s
4	Craig Breen (IRL) Paul Nagle (IRL)	M-Sport Ford WRT / Ford Puma Rally1	+3m07.3s
5	Elfyn Evans (GBR) Scott Martin (GBR)	Toyota Gazoo Racing WRT / Toyota GR Yaris Rally1	+3m46.0s
6	Takamoto Katsuta (JPN) Aaron Johnston (GBR)	Toyota Gazoo Racing WRT NG / Toyota GR Yaris Rally1	+8m08.5s
7	Yohan Rossel (FRA) Valentin Sarreaud (FRA)	PH Sport / Citroen C3 Rally2	+10m01.0s
8	Kajetan Kajetanowicz (POL) Maciek Szczepaniak (POL)	Skoda Fabia Rally2 Evo	+11m01.2s
9	Emil Lindholm (FIN) Reeta Hamalainen (FIN)	Toksport WRT 2 / Skoda Fabia Rally2 Evo	+11m11.9s
10	Nikolay Gryazin (RUS) Konstantin Aleksandrov (RUS)	Toksport WRT 2 / Skoda Fabia Rally2 Evo	+11m48.5s

OTHERS

15	Gus Greensmith (GBR) Jonas Andersson (SWE)	M-Sport Ford WRT / Ford Puma Rally1	+16m26.7s
47	Pierre-Louis Loubet (FRA) Vincent Landais (FRA)	M-Sport Ford WRT / Ford Puma Rally1	+1h07m36.5s
49	Esapekka Lappi (FIN) Janne Ferm (FIN)	Toyota Gazoo Racing WRT / Toyota GR Yaris Rally1	+1h21m31.7s
R	Oliver Solberg (SWE) Elliott Edmondson (GBR)	Hyundai Shell Mobis WRT / Hyundai i20 N Rally1	SS9-accident/fire
R	Adrien Fourmaux (FRA) Alexandre Coria (FRA)	M-Sport Ford WRT / Ford Puma Rally1	SS3-accident damage

STAGE TIMES

STAGE	FASTEST	LEADER	SECOND
SS1 Mali Lipovec-Grdanjci 1 (11.93 miles)	Rovanpera 12m44.6s	Rovanpera	Neuville +4.1s
SS2 Stojdraga-Gornja Vas 1 (12.91 miles)	Rovanpera 13m14.2s	Rovanpera	Neuville +11.6s
SS3 Krasic-Vrskovac 1 (6.90 miles)	Evans 6m08.0s	Rovanpera	Neuville +11.8s
SS4 Pecurkovo Brdo-Mreznicki Novaki 1 (5.66 miles)	Rovanpera 5m11.2s	Rovanpera	Neuville +12.5s
SS5 Mali Lipovec-Grdanjci 2 (11.93 miles)	Rovanpera 13m00.9s	Rovanpera	Tanak +54.7s
SS6 Stojdraga-Gornja Vas 2 (12.91 miles)	Rovanpera 13m32.8s	Rovanpera	Tanak +1m02.3s
SS7 Krasic-Vrskovac 2 (6.90 miles)	Rovanpera 6m10.5s	Rovanpera	Tanak +1m22.5s
SS8 Pecurkovo Brdo-Mreznicki Novaki 2 (5.66 miles)	Neuville 5m27.9s	Rovanpera	Tanak +1m23.3s
SS9 Kostanjevac-Petrus Vrh 1 (14.76 miles)	Evans 13m39.8s	Rovanpera	Tanak +1m23.3s
SS10 Jaskovo-Mali Modrus Potok 1 (6.28 miles)	Lappi 5m52.8s	Rovanpera	Tanak +1m12.7s
SS11 Platak 1 (9.85 miles)	Tanak 9m57.9s	Rovanpera	Tanak +18.2s
SS12 Vinski Vrh-Duga Resa 1 (5.46 miles)	Neuville 4m39.9s	Rovanpera	Tanak +16.8s
SS13 Kostanjevac-Petrus Vrh 2 (14.76 miles)	Lappi 13m19.8s	Rovanpera	Tanak +13.0s
SS14 Jaskovo-Mali Modrus Potok 2 (6.28 miles)	Lappi 5m43.6s	Rovanpera	Tanak +14.8s
SS15 Platak 2 (9.85 miles) Stage cancelled			
SS16 Vinski Vrh-Duga Resa 2 (5.46 miles)	Rovanpera 4m36.0s	Rovanpera	Tanak +19.9s
SS17 Trakoscan-Vrbno 1 (8.17 miles)	Lappi 7m05.8s	Rovanpera	Tanak +31.1s
SS18 Zagorska Sela-Kumrovec 1 (8.76 miles)	Neuville 8m25.8s	Rovanpera	Tanak +28.4s
SS19 Trakoscan-Vrbno 2 (8.17 miles)	Tanak 8m15.5s	Tanak	Rovanpera +1.4s
SS20 Zagorska Sela-Kumrovec 2 (power stage) (8.76 miles)	Rovanpera 9m01.8s	Rovanpera	Tanak +4.3s



DRIVERS' CHAMPIONSHIP 1 Rovanner 76; 2 Neuville 47; 3 Breen 30; 4 Loeb 27; 5 Tanak 27; 6 Katsuta 26; 7 Greensmith 20; 8 Ogier 19; 9 Evans 17; 10 Lappi 15.

MANUFACTURERS' CHAMPIONSHIP 1 Toyota Gazoo Racing WRT 126; 2 Hyundai Shell Mobis WRT 84; 3 M-Sport Ford WRT 80; 4 Toyota Gazoo Racing WRT NG 30.

NEXT REPORT

RALLY PORTUGAL
26 MAY ISSUE



BTCC DONINGTON PARK

Ingram scores as BMWs trip over each other

The cheeky Hyundai star nipped into the gap left by the warring Hill and Turkington, and now leads the championship standings

MARCUS SIMMONS

PHOTOGRAPHY JEP



Hill is about to dive inside Turkington, with Ingram and Sutton in pursuit

Hybrid power arrived in the British Touring Car Championship with a punch at Donington Park. Its first lap of usage in a race resulted in countless lead changes, an intra-team controversy, and provided the foundations for Tom Ingram to emerge from the Leicestershire venue at the end of the day with a seven-point advantage he felt flattered his performance.

What we arguably should have seen was either of those ‘intra-team controversy’ enactors – Colin Turkington and Jake Hill – at the top of the pile. Hill, of course, is the newcomer within the squad of West Surrey Racing-run BMWs; Turkington very much the man who has made this team his own after spending the best part of 20 years there. On his qualifying debut in a rear-wheel-drive BTCC car, young pup Hill had captured pole from the Northern Irish four-time champion to the tune of 0.018 seconds. Could he effectively pedal an NGTC machine with the driven axle at the correct end for a racing car? Of course he could.

But Turkington has made hundreds of race starts in such weaponry; Hill had none under his belt. “I got an all right start, but Colin got a great one,” summarised the diminutive Kentishman. They built an advantage on the first lap – during which hybrid cannot be deployed – over Ingram’s Excelr8 Motorsport Hyundai i30 N, and then started fighting...

WSR may be responsible for three 330e M Sports, but only two of them – those of Turkington and Stephen Jelley – are run under official Team BMW nomenclature; Hill’s as ROKiT MB Motorsport in deference to the biggest of what seem to be zillions of sponsors and his management from Mark Blundell. And it looked very much as though the gloves were off.

There was side-to-side contact as they battled down the Craner Curves, before Hill darted down the inside into the Old Hairpin, tyres smoking, his BMW squirming. Turkington used his momentum to sweep back around the outside of Schwantz Curve and claim the inside line



for McLeans, where Hill hung around the outside. Turkington allowed himself to drift out wide enough to force part of Hill’s car briefly onto the grass, more side contact was made as they accelerated up to Coppice, and there was now a gap easily big enough on the inside for Ingram to insert his Hyundai into. This he did, and Hill was marooned on the outside as Ash Sutton and George Gamble railroaded him down to fifth.

Now began Hill’s recovery. He demoted the Ciceley Motorsport BMW of Gamble, then the Motorbase Performance Ford Focus ST of Sutton, and set off after Turkington, who in turn was applying pressure to Ingram. Along the way, he illustrated how hard he was trying by clouting the tyre stack on the first apex of the chicane, causing

damage to the right-front of his BMW. But there were no more changes of position.

“I did my bit cleanly, but others caught us up and it all got a bit argy-bargy,” proffered Hill in the immediate aftermath. Turkington, the old stager renowned as a class act of the BTCC, but who showed he can be as hard as anyone, smiled: “That was intense.” When asked whether he had ever experienced such a scrap with a WSR team-mate, you could almost see the comic-strip halo appear over his head as he added: “Maybe not quite as intense... I felt we could maybe get our heads down and pull lengths on the others, but it turned into more of a fight.”

Hill is understood to have been miffed, feeling that Turkington wasn’t allowing him a car width of track to play with while alongside. Later on he offered: “We’ve both got to team up and try not to let the others past. We’ve had our chat, shaken hands.”

And right in there was Ingram. After the discovery of a clutch issue had caused worries and work overnight at Excelr8, he used all his impudent racecraft to spoil the BMW party. “I was surprised,” he remarked of his grandstand view. “I would have thought Dick [Bennetts, WSR boss] would have knocked them into shape beforehand. For him to let that happen, I’m amazed. I thought, ‘Thank you, Jake.’”

“I could see that coming a mile off. I’ve raced against Jake for yonks, since 2009 – I’m not slagging him off, but I know how he races. I know he’s hard, I know he wants to win, but equally I would have thought Colin



Ingram claimed a win and then a second



“I felt we could get our heads down and pull lengths on the others, but it turned into more of a fight”

would have backed out of it, I would have thought Dickie would have had that one nipped in the bud before then. And it was quite interesting then later on in the race when they started to come back. ‘I wonder if there’s going to be a little bit of tactics going on there...’ I honestly expected Colin to roll over and Jake to come past. It’s definitely two different teams there!”

From the chequered flag at the end of the first race to 100 yards into the start of the second, everything seemed to fall apart for WSR. It transpired that Hill’s contact with the chicane tyres had damaged his BMW to the extent that it failed the post-race rideheight check at the right-front corner. He was excluded, and banished to the rear of the grid for race two. Jelley, a solid eighth in the opener, then coasted to a halt on the green-flag lap when his propshaft gave up. And Turkington, from his second front-row start of the day, suddenly stalled at lights out and got away last by a long distance. “It was a problem with the clutch,” he explained after recovering to 14th. On >>

CHARGING UP THE BTCC



The introduction of the new Cosworth-supplied hybrid system provided a host of new variables for the teams and drivers to get their heads around – and the end of the much maligned old success-ballast system. There had been whispers going around during the winter of some squads digging in their heels and hoping for a year’s grace, but those would be the teams scarcely troubled by ballast anyway.

So how did it go? Pretty well, although there’s one team that was not among the first to install the hybrid, and occasionally struggled to get it to work – just remember to charge the battery, chaps.

To be fair to Cosworth, it’s onto a bit of a loser here. As one BTCC sage pointed out, not only is there the hybrid, but at least half the cars were running brand-new engines (13 with the new M-Sport TOCA powerplant, plus the four bespoke Swindon-built Hyundai mills), and there was the general introduction of the latest spec of electronics... “Because the electronics are also supplied by Cosworth, they’ve just had a lump of the s*** given to them,” remarked our insider. In short,

at this point it can be difficult for some teams to pinpoint exactly what is responsible for any given glitch that arises.

As far as the sporting regulations were concerned, the hybrid limitations in races did seem to work well at Donington. For the second and third of the scheduled 16-lappers, the winner of the previous race had a 10-lap ‘penalty’ on deployment, decreasing in increments of one down to a one-lap reduction for 10th place. It is also stipulated that hybrid cannot be used on the opening lap of a race, or the opening tour after a restart, and here’s where there was an amusing knock-on in the battle for the lead between winner Gordon Shedden and runner-up Tom Ingram in race two.

After finishing fourth in race one, Shedden (below left) had a seven-lap deduction of hybrid use in the sequel; as the winner, Ingram had 10 taken away. Each had one lap spare at the finish... “I’d goofed up and not used it all because I got my numbers wrong,” chuckled Shedden. “The laps on my dashboard weren’t changing until halfway round the lap, so I opted not to use it. Too early and you get a 15-second penalty, and that’s massive.”

“We were both scared!” laughed Ingram. “Both of us got out of the car and we were like, ‘Were you scared to use yours? Yeah.’ Because the penalty for getting it wrong is 15 seconds. However, now we know you *can’t* get it wrong. You *can’t* use too much!”

Indeed, that 15s time penalty is only applied for first-lap usage. What TOCA boss Alan Gow gratifyingly described, in a revival of pre-smartphone-hotspot internet-access terminology, as “a dongle” prevents the boost being deployed beyond the number of laps permitted. Do we think they’ll get to grips with it soon? Yeah...





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the green-flag lap, when I took off the pedal went to the floor, so I knew I was in trouble. At the start, as I engaged first gear the car bolted forward and stopped. It was out of our control.”

And this played perfectly into the hands of Ingram, who went on to narrowly lose an intriguing cat-and-mouse battle for victory

“For a front-wheel-drive car, we’re starting to lose *rear* tyre performance, which is amazing”

in race two with the Team Dynamics Honda Civic Type R of Gordon Shedden, and then claimed a strong fifth from ninth on the grid in the reversed-grid finale. The big change at Exce1r8, of course, is the new Hyundai engines prepared by former TOCA power supplier Swindon. These performed well, and that’s a credit to all, but it was the chassis that excelled. “For a front-wheel-drive car, we’re starting to lose rear tyre performance, which is amazing,” enthused Ingram. “Gordon getting past [in race two] just allowed me to reset a little bit, and take stock, and then go, ‘Right we’ve got six laps left, use the hybrid and close the gap back up’”

The characteristics of Ingram’s Hyundai were a stark contrast to the Motorbase



Fords, which suffered with a lack of front-end grip as races wore on. But that was the last of the team’s worries on Saturday. The two Focuses running under the NAPA Racing banner for new superstar line-up Sutton and Dan Cammish looked in contention in free practice, and Sutton, who missed out on pole by a mere 0.023s, felt pole was on until “I got a bit keen with the boost button” exiting the chicane. This can’t be used until the car reaches 120km/h, and if pressed temporarily locks the driver out of boost for two seconds. Sutton’s urgency had, he reckoned, cost half a tenth.

Meanwhile, everyone else at Motorbase was surveying the charred remains of Cammish’s car. On his first push-lap, fuel

began spraying onto the windscreen as he accelerated up to McLeans, quickly followed by flames licking from under the bonnet. He steered into the gravel trap as close as possible to a marshals’ post and tumbled out – Dan’s a lanky chap, after all – by which time the front end was ablaze. The cause was a fault in a fuel-system union, yet the team got it back together for Sunday’s racing – the crew left the track at 3.30am, and had the repaired car on the TOCA scales by 7.

Such heroism allowed Cammish to score just three points for a 13th place in the reversed-grid race, and his front-left tyre even delaminated in the second stanza, forcing a pitstop. For his part, Sutton faded to fifth on the road (behind Shedden) in >>

CICELEY’S GAMBLE THAT PAID OFF

The leading BMW driver in the BTCC standings after Donington isn’t Jake Hill. Neither is it Colin Turkington. It’s actually Ciceley Motorsport’s Adam Morgan, who lies in fifth spot heading into the

second round at Brands Hatch.

This was a great weekend for Ciceley pair Morgan and series debutant George Gamble. They qualified fifth and eighth in Gamble’s favour, although Morgan

didn’t get a second run because of a high-pressure fuel-pump failure. Morgan, the proud father of new-born twins (to add to the baby born in summer 2020), then delivered 5-4-6 results, despite his hybrid system breaking with five laps to go of the opening race. He had no further use of it for the rest of the day.

But the Ciceley driver on the podium was Gamble, the ex-Carrera Cup ace back in racing after a layoff of a couple of years. Third place in race two was a superb effort for his first BTCC outing. “We’ve had a good start to the year definitely,” he grinned. “We’re just building on it really. In testing we were going really

well and we put it all together in qualifying.”

It was a great story for a squad whose second car alongside Morgan, son of team boss Russell, has been regarded in some quarters as a Lotus F1-style poisoned chalice. Perhaps now Ciceley has a Ronnie Peterson on its hands instead of a Dave Walker or Satoru Nakajima.

“From the moment he did his first test in the old 1 Series, he’s been on the pace straight away,” pointed out Ciceley engineer Steve Farrell. “Adam always said he wanted a strong team-mate – now you’ve got one mate! And George is such a nice bloke – oh my God, he’s a normal person.”

Gamble claimed a podium on his debut in the BTCC





Watch the tyres, Jake!
Hill stayed out of trouble
to win the final race...

race one, although was promoted to fourth on Hill's exclusion. He then lost a good battle for fifth in race two with the resurgent Josh Cook, whose BTC Racing Honda had been plagued with problems on Saturday. From fourth on the reversed grid, Sutton soon worked his way past the Excelr8 Hyundai of Dan Lloyd to claim second in the finale. The net result is that the reigning champion is third in the points – a great result given his Sunday travails.

"In races one and two, we were only about 20% there," reflected Sutton. "We made changes to pre-empt understeer but nowhere near enough. Race two we threw the kitchen sink at it, but it wasn't good. In race three we made more drastic changes and unlocked something. There was a bit of head-scratching going on and we kept persevering, but there's still work to do. These are the days that count in my opinion. When things aren't going your way, that's when you need to score the key points."

In between Sutton and leader Ingram in the standings is Shedden. "It's a better start than I normally make in a championship – first rounds have never been my forte!" chirped the Scottish three-time title winner.

"These are the days that count. When things aren't going your way, you need to score the key points"

In common with other front-wheel-drive contenders, the Dynamics Honda man felt the red flag for Cammish's fire had disrupted tyre-preparation runs to the benefit of the rear-driven brigade (all five BMWs qualified in the top eight). But he had a good run to a post-Hill-exclusion third in race one – "Some good, clean moves; that's what you go racing for" – and took advantage of Ingram getting lairy on the Old Hairpin kerbs to take the lead and win in the sequel. Shedden added a ninth, behind the recovering Turkington, in the finale, where contact from Bobby Thompson's Team Hard Cupra knocked him sideways and cost him ground.

In this race, Cook rescued a podium from finally breaching Lloyd's defences that no

one at BTC would have thought possible after qualifying – and it was the first for the new M-Sport-built TOCA engine (see Pit & Paddock). His crew left the circuit only a couple of hours before Cammish's on Saturday night. "For some reason with this engine, the exhaust temperatures are melting everything around it," he sighed after qualifying. "It fills the car with toxic smoke and started before I even did a lap. I tried to do another but it was so bad. I've done four push laps all day." The recovery on Sunday was superb: "Damage-limitation; I'm happy with that." "It was outstanding," offered new BTC team chief Danny Buxton. "Josh was outperforming where the car is."

At the top of that podium? To paraphrase the late Murray Walker: "It's Hill!" It was a case of the TOCA technical department taketh away, and TOCA boss Alan Gow giveth – the Australian pulled the number '9' ball out for the reversed grid, the position to which Hill had charged from the back of the grid in race two. This time, he used rear-wheel drive to get that BMW into Redgate first, and was never troubled. "Starting last, coming back to ninth and now a win... I can go home happy I think. WSR delivered a masterclass of a car for me. It was honestly so chilled." That's something of a contrast to what had happened six hours earlier. ❧



...and was greeted by
Dick Bennetts as WSR's
latest race winner



[P68 SUPPORTS REPORT](#)

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RESULTS ROUND 1/10, DONINGTON PARK (GBR), 24 APRIL RACE 1 (19 LAPS – 37.563 MILES)

POS	DRIVER	TEAM / CAR	TIME
1	Tom Ingram (GBR)	Excelr8 Motorsport / Hyundai i30 N	24m40.599s
2	Colin Turkington (GBR)	West Surrey Racing / BMW 330e M Sport	+0.659s
3	Gordon Shedden (GBR)	Team Dynamics / Honda Civic Type R	+4.122s
4	Ash Sutton (GBR)	Motorbase Performance / Ford Focus ST	+5.067s
5	Adam Morgan (GBR)	Ciceley Motorsport / BMW 330e M Sport	+5.466s
6	George Gamble (GBR)	Ciceley Motorsport / BMW 330e M Sport	+7.173s
7	Stephen Jelley (GBR)	West Surrey Racing / BMW 330e M Sport	+7.477s
8	Josh Cook (GBR)	BTC Racing Honda / Civic Type R	+13.266s
9	Dan Rowbottom (GBR)	Team Dynamics / Honda Civic Type R	+14.668s
10	Tom Chilton (GBR)	Excelr8 Motorsport / Hyundai i30 N	+16.553s
11	Dan Lloyd (GBR)	Excelr8 Motorsport / Hyundai i30 N	+17.067s
12	Bobby Thompson (GBR)	Team Hard / Cupra Leon	+21.532s
13	Aron Taylor-Smith (IRL)	Team Hard / Cupra Leon	+21.554s
14	Michael Crees (GBR)	Power Maxed Racing / Vauxhall Astra	+21.689s
15	Aiden Moffat (GBR)	Laser Tools Racing / Infiniti Q50	+23.967s
16	Dan Cammish (GBR)	Motorbase Performance / Ford Focus ST	+23.969s
17	Dexter Patterson (GBR)	Laser Tools Racing / Infiniti Q50	+24.774s
18	Ash Hand (GBR)	Power Maxed Racing / Vauxhall Astra	+25.482s
19	Nicolas Hamilton (GBR)	Team Hard / Cupra Leon	+36.505s
20	Jason Plato (GBR)	BTC Racing / Honda Civic Type R	+49.372s
21	Rick Parfitt (GBR)	Team Hard / Infiniti Q50	+57.207s
22	Jade Edwards (GBR)	BTC Racing / Honda Civic Type R	+31.250s
23	Sam Osborne (GBR)	Motorbase Performance / Ford Focus ST	+1m00.860s
EX	Jake Hill (GBR)	West Surrey Racing / BMW 330e M Sport	+1.150s
R	Jack Butel (GBR)	Excelr8 Motorsport / Hyundai i30 N	15 laps-electrical
R	Ollie Jackson (GBR)	Motorbase Performance / Ford Focus ST	7 laps-throttle
R	Rory Butcher (GBR)	Speedworks Motorsport / Toyota Corolla GR Sport	3 laps-acc damage
R	Ricky Collard (GBR)	Speedworks Motorsport / Toyota Corolla GR Sport	1 lap-lost drive

Winner's average speed 91.33mph. **Fastest lap** Ingram 1m09.440s, 102.60mph.

QUALIFYING

1 Hill 1m08.418s; 2 Turkington 1m08.436s; 3 Sutton 1m08.441s; 4 Ingram 1m08.481s; 5 Gamble 1m08.637s; 6 Shedden 1m08.653s; 7 Jelley 1m08.679s; 8 Morgan 1m08.710s; 9 Rowbottom 1m08.794s; 10 Plato 1m08.898s; 11 Collard 1m08.932s; 12 Lloyd 1m09.042s; 13 Osborne 1m09.108s; 14 Thompson 1m09.228s; 15 Chilton 1m09.244s; 16 Cook 1m09.254s; 17 Jackson 1m09.397s; 18 Crees 1m09.485s; 19 Hand 1m09.554s; 20 Butel 1m09.604s; 21 Edwards 1m09.967s; 22 Taylor-Smith 1m10.014s; 23 Moffat 1m10.182s; 24 Hamilton 1m10.437s; 25 Parfitt 1m11.370s; 26 Butcher 1m11.802s; 27 Patterson 1m12.976s; 28 Cammish no time.



GRID RACE 2 Decided by result of Race 1.

RACE 2 (16 LAPS – 31.626 MILES)

1 Shedden 18m42.545s; 2 Ingram +0.197s; 3 Gamble +2.250s; 4 Morgan +3.230s; 5 Cook +5.712s; 6 Sutton +7.362s; 7 Thompson +7.832s; 8 Lloyd +7.988s; 9 Hill +10.230s; 10 Butcher +14.089s; 11 Taylor-Smith +16.632s; 12 Rowbottom +17.079s; 13 Plato +18.368s; 14 Turkington +18.440s; 15 Crees +20.749s; 16 Moffat +22.069s; 17 Hand +23.567s; 18 Patterson +26.830s; 19 Edwards +27.727s; 20 Osborne +59.648s; 21 Cammish -1 lap; 22 Chilton -2 laps; 23 Hamilton -2 laps; R Collard 8 laps-accident damage; R Jackson 8 laps-throttle; R Butel 4 laps-engine loom; R Jelley 0 laps-propshaft; R Parfitt 0 laps-wheelbearing.

Winner's average speed 101.42mph.

Fastest lap Shedden 1m09.214s, 102.93mph.

GRID RACE 3 Decided by result of Race 2, with top nine reversed.

RACE 3 (16 LAPS – 31.626 MILES)

1 Hill 18m41.379s; 2 Sutton +2.148s; 3 Cook +9.261s; 4 Lloyd +9.878s; 5 Ingram +10.104s; 6 Morgan +10.466s; 7 Butcher +11.045s; 8 Turkington +11.247s; 9 Shedden +12.314s; 10 Thompson +14.651s; 11 Taylor-Smith +20.502s; 12 Plato +20.988s; 13 Cammish +21.233s; 14 Jelley +22.330s; 15 Collard +23.525s; 16 Crees +26.255s; 17 Osborne +26.431s; 18 Patterson +27.474s; 19 Jackson +33.598s; 20 Gamble +34.042s; 21 Butel +34.372s; 22 Edwards +35.111s; 23 Hand +35.119s; 24 Hamilton +44.729s; 25 Parfitt -1 lap; 26 Moffat -1 lap; R Chilton 3 laps-accident damage; R Rowbottom 0 laps-throttle sensor.

Winner's average speed 101.53mph.

Fastest lap Hill 1m09.211s, 102.94mph.

CHAMPIONSHIP

1 Ingram 51; 2 Shedden 44; 3 Sutton 40; 4 Cook 34; 5 Morgan 34; 6 Hill 30; 7 Turkington 28; 8 Lloyd 26; 9 Gamble 25; 10 Thompson 19.

NEXT EVENT

BRANDS HATCH 19 MAY ISSUE

What difference will the hybrid make on the short, tight and twisty Indy circuit?



Pourchaire back on top amid drama

FIA FORMULA 2
IMOLA (ITA)
23-24 APRIL
ROUND 3/13

Theo Pourchaire made it two out of three feature-race victories this season in a dramatic Formula 2 round at Imola. The French Sauber junior lined up seventh for Sunday's race after a disappointing qualifying, but kept his nose clean through three safety cars to secure his fourth series win with ART Grand Prix.

Combined with seventh in the sprint race, it means that Pourchaire has vaulted from fifth position back into the championship lead, two points clear of MP Motorsport's Felipe Drugovich, who was out of luck

when a late safety car ruined his strategy.

Hitech-run poleman Juri Vips and front-row starter Ayumu Iwasa (DAMS) both got sluggish getaways, with Ralph Boschung firing his Campos Racing car through the middle of them. Jack Doohan and Dennis Hauger tried to follow him, but a collision between the two ex-F3 title rivals put the Norwegian in the pitwall, and both of them out of the race.

Roy Nissany, meanwhile, had made a great start from sixth on the grid after going to the right of Iwasa, and the DAMS-run Israeli veteran held on around the outside of Boschung into Tamburello to lead the Swiss, Iwasa, Vips and Pourchaire.

Following the restart, Vips ran wide exiting the Villeneuve chicane and spun

across the track into the barriers on the right-hand side of the road, bringing out another safety car. Now those who had started on the soft Pirellis pitted for mediums, putting Prema Racing's Jehan Daruvala out front on the alternate strategy.

Pourchaire passed Boschung for a net second place after half-distance, just before a crash from the effective leader Nissany, who ran wide exiting Rivazza and was pitched into the wall before trickling into his pitbox with the right-front wheel askew.

This promoted Pourchaire to the net lead, which he converted to the win as those ahead pitted. "I'm really happy about this win, I was not expecting that, but the pace was good, the start was good, the pitstop was good, everything was good," he said.

After the virtual safety car for Nissany's shunt ended, Daruvala began to stretch his lead over second-placed Marcus Armstrong and Liam Lawson in third. Daruvala pitted for soft rubber, while Armstrong followed suit the next lap but suffered a poor pitstop, with a rear-right problem leaving his wheels spinning on the jack.

With five laps remaining, the yet-to-stop trio of championship leader Drugovich, Marino Sato and Olli Caldwell headed Pourchaire. Logan Sargeant had moved ahead of Boschung for a net second place on lap 31, but a mistake at Variante Alta dropped the Carlin driver behind Boschung and a charging Enzo Fittipaldi. Williams



Pourchaire celebrates with
 Fittipaldi (left) and Boschung

GOODEN/DPPI



GOODEN/DPPI

junior Sargeant was then shuffled back further positions by Clement Novalak, Iwasa (who had been forced to double-stack behind Nissany in the pits) and Frederik Vesti to finish a frustrated seventh.

Moments after Fittipaldi had passed Sargeant, the Charouz Racing System driver took his chance to get past Boschung around the outside of Tamburello for what would become second place.

A crash for Lawson out of Acque Minerali prompted the final safety car period, which lasted until the chequered flag. That really hampered Drugovich, who emerged from his pitstop in 10th, behind Daruvala. Just ahead in eighth was David Beckmann, standing in for the injured Cem Bolukbasi at Charouz.

Saturday's sprint race provided Hitech driver Armstrong with his second career F2 win. The New Zealander passed polesitter Sargeant at the start and managed to hold off the quick Daruvala to take his first win of the season. Sargeant had suffered excess wheelspin off the grid, leaving him to flounder in fifth as he was also swallowed up by Daruvala, Hauger and Nissany.

Nissany's excellent start briefly put him into third, before reigning FIA Formula 3 champion Hauger cleared him to score his maiden F2 podium. Nissany gradually pulled away from Sargeant, who lost out to Drugovich on the main straight in the closing laps to finish sixth.

MEGAN WHITE

RESULTS ROUND 3/13, IMOLA (ITA), 23-24 APRIL FEATURE RACE (35 LAPS – 106.625 MILES)

POS	DRIVER	TEAM	TIME	QUALIFYING
1	Theo Pourchaire (FRA)	ART Grand Prix	1h01m56.611s	1 Vips 1m40.221s;
2	Enzo Fittipaldi (BRA)	Charouz Racing System	+0.388s	2 Iwasa 1m40.378s;
3	Ralph Boschung (CHE)	Campos Racing	+0.729s	3 Doohan 1m40.431s;
4	Clement Novalak (FRA)	MP Motorsport	+1.497s	4 Boschung 1m40.496s;
5	Ayumu Iwasa (JPN)	DAMS	+1.806s	5 Hauger 1m40.572s;
6	Frederik Vesti (DNK)	ART Grand Prix	+2.122s	6 Nissany 1m40.621s
7	Logan Sargeant (USA)	Carlin	+2.592s	7 Pourchaire 1m40.862s;
8	David Beckmann (DEU)	Charouz Racing System	+3.229s	8 Daruvala 1m40.886s;
9	Jehan Daruvala (IND)	Prema Racing	+4.191s	9 Armstrong 1m41.004s;
10	Felipe Drugovich (BRA)	MP Motorsport	+4.396s	10 Sargeant 1m41.062s;
11	Marino Sato (JPN)	Virtuosi Racing	+4.893s	11 Beckmann 1m41.129s;
12	Jake Hughes (GBR)	Van Amersfoort Racing	+5.044s	12 Drugovich 1m41.131s;
13	Olli Caldwell (GBR)	Campos Racing	+6.745s	13 Novalak 1m41.173s;
14	Richard Verschoor (NLD)	Trident	+7.271s	14 Lawson 1m41.199s;
15	Calan Williams (AUS)	Trident	+7.763s	15 Fittipaldi 1m41.235s;
16	Marcus Armstrong (NZL)	Hitech Grand Prix	+11.287s	16 Vesti 1m41.434s;
17	Amaury Cordeel (BEL)	Van Amersfoort Racing	+1m26.403s	17 Hughes 1m41.520s;
R	Liam Lawson (NZL)	Carlin	30 laps-steering/accident	18 Cordeel 1m41.592s;
R	Roy Nissany (ISR)	DAMS	20 laps-accident	19 Verschoor 1m42.144s;
R	Juri Vips (EST)	Hitech Grand Prix	5 laps-accident	20 Williams 1m42.498s;
R	Jack Doohan (AUS)	Virtuosi Racing	1 lap-accident	21 Caldwell 1m42.954s;
R	Dennis Hauger (NOR)	Prema Racing	0 laps-accident	22 Sato 1m43.311s.

Winner's average speed 103.279mph. Fastest lap Daruvala 1m28.353s, 124.286mph.

SPRINT RACE (25 LAPS – 76.122 MILES)

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

1 Armstrong 40m50.545s; 2 Daruvala +1.431s; 3 Hauger +2.243s; 4 Nissany +2.803s; 5 Drugovich +7.045s; 6 Sargeant +9.821s; 7 Pourchaire +12.372s; 8 Lawson +12.826s; 9 Iwasa +13.436s; 10 Vesti +17.714s; 11 Doohan +20.179s; 12 Fittipaldi +21.059s; 13 Verschoor +21.493s; 14 Williams +22.942s; 15 Vips +23.275s; 16 Sato +24.216s; 17 Caldwell +24.637s; 18 Hughes +25.856s; 19 Novalak +26.299s; R Boschung 9 laps-mechanical; R Beckmann 0 laps-accident; NS Cordeel accident.

Winner's average speed 111.828mph. Fastest lap Vips 1m28.841s, 123.604mph.

CHAMPIONSHIP 1 Pourchaire 52; 2 Drugovich 50; 3 Daruvala 36; 4 Lawson 35; 5 Verschoor 32; 6 Boschung 32; 7 Armstrong 30; 8 Vips 30; 9 Iwasa 20; 10 Fittipaldi 18.



Daruvala leads Hauger as they chase sprint-race winner Armstrong

ROZENDAAI/DUTCH PHOTO AGENCY/REDBULL CONTENT POOL



Stanek leads from
Bearman and Crawford
on way to victory

VAN ELDIK/DUTCH PHOTO AGENCY

It's Roman who becomes the emperor in Italy

FIA FORMULA 3
IMOLA (ITA)
23-24 APRIL
ROUND 2/9

After a pointless weekend at the Bahrain season opener, Roman Stanek needed a far better FIA Formula 3 round at Imola. And he certainly got one, finishing fourth in Saturday's chaotic sprint before taking his maiden series victory in the feature race.

The Czech series veteran, competing in his third season in F3 (despite being only 18 years old!), took a 33-point haul from the weekend, putting him behind only Victor Martins and Arthur Leclerc in the title fight.

Stanek qualified second behind his rookie Trident team-mate Zane Maloney and briefly ran out front at the start of a dramatic feature race before Caio Collet, running wet-weather tyres on the damp track, moved in front and Maloney got into second position. Pepe Marti, another on wets, also had a short stint in front, but those who had started on the grooved

Pirellis pitted for slicks during the series of early safety cars.

Maloney, the 2019 British Formula 4 champion, was in front as he prepared for the second restart, but spun on the approach to Rivazza as he was warming his tyres, handing Stanek the lead. But his grip on the top spot was brief: reigning German and Italian F4 champion Ollie Bearman got the better jump in his Prema Racing car and swept ahead into Tamburello.

With Maloney's car beached, the safety car was required again, after which Bearman made his bid to escape from Stanek and set the fastest lap to date. But the Ferrari junior couldn't make a decisive gap and Stanek replied with a fastest lap of his own four tours later before finally making it past on the main straight at the beginning of the penultimate lap.

Red Bull Junior Crawford was next to pass Prema team-mate Bearman into Tamburello on the final lap, securing his second podium of the weekend after finishing third in race one, before a move from Gregoire Saucy

(ART) around the outside of Rivazza ended with Bearman oversteering into the reigning Formula Regional European by Alpine champion, who was out of the race. Hitech's Red Bull Junior Isack Hadjar scampered through to third for Hitech, while Bearman recovered to cross the line in fourth, thanks to Leclerc having to brake to avoid the incident in front of him.

It was nevertheless a fine recovery for Bearman's Ferrari and Prema team-mate Leclerc, who started 21st after a crash with Enzo Trulli in qualifying. And a 20s post-race penalty for Bearman (for the Saucy collision) dumped him to 17th, promoting Leclerc to fourth. That put the Monegasque level on points with ART's pre-race championship leader Martins, who was classified ninth after tumbling to the back of the field at the start.

Saturday's sprint was similarly chaotic, with Bahrain polesitter Franco Colapinto taking his maiden win for series newcomer Van Amersfoort Racing. The Argentinian started on reversed-grid pole before losing the lead to MP Motorsport driver Collet, who was using DRS, at the start of the fourth lap.

Colapinto was able to regain the lead from Collet on the run to the Tamburello chicane beginning the final tour after a virtual safety car period had ended. Hadjar, in third place, attempted to position himself to the Brazilian's outside approaching the left-handed entry, but Collet drifted over on the Frenchman. Both cars went into the gravel, allowing Martins to just hold off Crawford for second at the line, while Stanek also took advantage of the incident to take fourth place. Maloney followed the recovering Hadjar home in sixth, while Collet was out of the race.

MEGAN WHITE



Sprint-race winner
Colapinto chases group
through Acque Minerali

BINGHAM/MOTORSPORT IMAGES

Dylan bringing it all back home

PORSCHE SUPERCUP
IMOLA (ITA)
24 APRIL
ROUND 1/8

Lechner Racing driver Dylan Pereira took a lights-to-flag win as the Porsche Supercup got under way at Imola.

The 2020 series runner-up beat GP Elite's two-time and reigning champion Larry ten Voorde to pole by 0.249 seconds, with impressive Carrera Cup Germany graduate Bastian Buus lining up third for

his Supercup debut in a Lechner car.

Rain delayed the race start and caused the first three laps to be run behind the safety car. Pereira then aced the rolling start, while ten Voorde came under pressure from Buus. Behind, 2020 Carrera Cup GB champion Harry King (Lechner) took advantage of Marvin Klein and Dorian Boccolacci delaying each other at Piratella to nab fifth.

King, returning for a second year of Supercup after racing for Team Parker in 2021, then ambushed Laurin Heinrich for fourth at Rivazza, and inherited third when Buus ran wide at Acque Minerali and dropped behind Heinrich to fifth.

A safety car robbed Pereira of his 1.557s lead, but the Portuguese-Luxembourger was unfazed and cruised to victory by 2.014s over ten Voorde and King, while Heinrich just held off a determined Buus to the flag. King's fellow Briton, the 2021 PCCGB runner-up Lorcan Hanafin, finished eighth on his Supercup debut with Fach Auto Tech.

Heinrich's SSR Huber team-mate, three-time Supercup champion Michael Ammermuller, had a disappointing return after two years away. The 2017-18-19 dominator qualified 18th and only advanced to 12th in the race. MotoGP legend Jorge Lorenzo was a steady 30th in the guest car.



WEEKEND WINNERS

FIA FORMULA 3
IMOLA (ITA)

Race 1 Franco Colapinto
Van Amersfoort Racing
Race 2 Roman Stanek
Trident

PORSCHE SUPERCUP
IMOLA (ITA)
Dylan Pereira
Lechner Racing

FORMULA REGIONAL EUROPEAN
MONZA (ITA)

Race 1 Dino Beganovic
Prema Powerteam
Race 2 Paul Aron (below)
Prema Powerteam



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Mercedes and Ferrari juniors win in Italy

FORMULA REGIONAL EUROPEAN
MONZA (ITA)
23-24 APRIL
ROUND 1/10

Formula 1 juniors and Prema Powerteam stablemates Dino Beganovic and Paul Aron took a win apiece as each began their second season in the Formula Regional European Championship by Alpine in changeable Monza weather.

Swedish Ferrari protege Beganovic set the fastest time overall in qualifying for race one, while R-ace GP-run Balearic Islander Lorenzo Fluxa topped the other group to join him on the front row.

Gabriele Mini was just pipped to the top of the group by Fluxa, but the Sicilian ART Grand Prix ace wasted no time in moving straight into second place at the start of the race, which was held in wet conditions. An early safety car — Eduardo Barrichello had been nerfed into a spin at the Rettifilo chicane amid the numerous



incidents — presaged disaster for Mini. As they prepared to restart, he hit Beganovic at Parabolica, and was forced into the pits with damage to his front wing. Michael Belov (MP Motorsport) passed Fluxa into the Roggia chicane for second, but an incident further back resulted in another safety car.

This was followed by yet another caution, leaving time for one lap of racing. Belov's squirm at the restart gave Beganovic breathing space, while Fluxa took third from team-mate Hadrien David, who somehow kept the place despite straightlining the Rettifilo to his advantage on the final lap.

Aron pitted for a new nose in that race,

but the Estonian Mercedes F1 protege grabbed pole on Sunday morning from Beganovic after the duo towed each other around; Mini topped the other group.

Mini stayed ahead of Beganovic at the start, but the Prema driver looked to benefit from the new push-to-pass as he surged into second at the start of lap two. This time, on a dry track, there were just the two safety car periods. Aron mastered everything to defeat Beganovic and Mini. Belov was once again on the move, passing Mari Boya (ART) for fifth, but unable to prise fourth from the Van Amersfoort Racing car of Kas Haverkort.



Matsushita breaks his duck in the rain

SUPER FORMULA
SUZUKA (JPN)
24 APRIL
ROUND 2/7

Ex-Formula 2/GP2 veteran Nobuharu Matsushita took a long-awaited first Super Formula win after a late pass on championship leader Tomoki Nojiri in treacherous conditions at Suzuka.

Poleman Nojiri had controlled the opening half of the race, building a comfortable lead of more than 10 seconds as the only driver without a wall of spray to obstruct his vision. But in a race characterised by tyre management on a wet-but-somewhat-drying track, the Team Mugen driver was reeled in by fellow Honda-powered racers Tadasuke

Makino and Matsushita in the latter stages.

Dandelion Racing's Makino had got the gap to Nojiri down to less than four seconds when he was passed by the B-Max Racing machine of Matsushita at the final chicane with four laps to go. Matsushita then made short work of Nojiri's remaining advantage, lining up a pass exiting the chicane two laps later and completing the move around the outside into Turn 1.

It was not only Matsushita's maiden Super Formula win, but also the first for the minnow one-car B-Max squad helmed by Japanese racing legend Satoshi Motoyama.

Behind Nojiri, Makino matched his best Super Formula finish in third. He finished ahead of Sacha Fenestraz (Kondo Racing) and KCMG pair Kamui Kobayashi and Yuji Kunimoto, all three with Toyota engines.

Fenestraz's Kondo team-mate Kenta Yamashita had started from the front row and maintained second on the opening lap, but soon started to struggle for pace, dropping behind Makino and Matsushita. Yamashita pitted out of fourth place in a race in which tyre changes were not mandatory, but a slow stop cost him dearly, leaving him a distant 16th. Sho Tsuboi (Inging) had similar misfortune after running fourth on the opening lap.

Nojiri now has an enhanced 16-point lead over Ryo Hirakawa (Team Impul), who qualified a lowly 12th in the dry but was able to fight through to seventh.

JAMIE KLEIN

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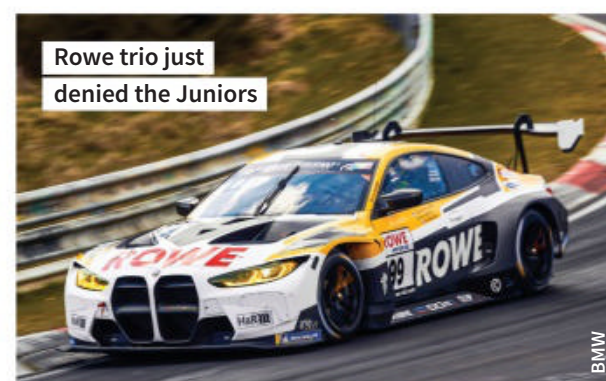
NLS
NURBURGRING (DEU)
23 APRIL
ROUND 2/8

Brazilian BMW veteran Augusto Farfus combined with Briton Nick Yelloly and American Connor De Phillippi to head a marque 1-2-3 in the last Nordschleife battle before the all-important Nurburgring 24 Hours, after a last-minute thriller to end the four-hour race.

While De Phillippi qualified the Rowe Racing M4 GT3 on pole, it was the Junior Team trio run by ex-DTM team RMG who

looked as though they might take victory. Dan Harper, Max Hesse and Neil Verhagen lost half a minute, which would later prove crucial, when they served a mid-race stop/go penalty for a pitstop that was one second below the minimum allowed time.

Farfus, who coaches the Juniors, took the lead with a couple of laps remaining, but got delayed in traffic heading into the Dottinger Hohe straight on the final lap. Hesse challenged, and skimmed the grass, but Farfus held on by 0.582 seconds. One minute behind in third was the Walkenhorst Motorsport M4 of Christian Krognes, Andy Soucek and Sami-Matti Trogen.



Top non-BMW was the Toksport WRT Porsche of Julien Andlauer, Matt Campbell and Mathieu Jaminet in fourth, while the TF Sport Aston Martin claimed seventh spot.

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Chastain sits tight for win number two

NASCAR CUP
TALLADEGA (USA)
24 APRIL
ROUND 10/36

Superspeedway racing in the NASCAR Cup Series often comes down to making the right move at the right time. But Ross Chastain’s victory in Sunday’s race at Talladega came by making no move at all. Entering the final of 188 laps, Chastain had got his TrackHouse Racing Chevrolet up to third, behind leader Erik Jones and Kyle Larson. Chastain gave Larson’s Hendrick Chevy a nudge, which moved up the track in an attempt to pass the Petty GMS Chevy of Jones. Jones, however, left the bottom lane and went high to block Larson, which left Chastain on the bottom and with the momentum to reach the chequered flag 0.105 seconds ahead of Austin Dillon. “I’m always the one going to the top too early, making the mistake,” Chastain said.



“There at the end it was eight to go, I was like, ‘I’m not going up there again. I did that a couple times today.’ I was like, ‘I’ll just ride on the bottom.’ If it worked, I’m not going to lose the race for us, I’ll just let them. They kept going up, kept moving out of the way!” The win is the second of Chastain’s career, both coming this season and in the past five races. This is Chastain’s first season driving for TrackHouse Racing, which is co-owned by former driver

Justin Marks and Grammy Award-winning rapper Pitbull. “We started the year with a lot of races open [for sponsorship],” said Chastain. “We’re almost full now. It’s because of the vision of Justin Marks.” Larson ended up fourth and Jones sixth. Kyle Busch was third and Martin Truex Jr fifth. “That top lane was getting some momentum,” said Jones. “I didn’t realise they were coming with that much speed.” **JIM UTTER**



Phoenix Audi wins a tight one

24H SERIES
SPA 12 HOURS (BEL)
23-24 APRIL
ROUND 4/8

Audi stalwart Pierre Kaffer led Phoenix Racing to victory in the two-part Spa 12 Hours last weekend, after the team’s R8 LMS GT3 Evo II started Sunday’s action down in third position. Saturday’s opening stanza of five and a half hours had ended with the leading trio on the same lap. Daniel Keilwitz set the quickest time in qualifying to assist the WTM Racing Ferrari 488 GT3 onto pole, but it was the American-crewed CP Racing Mercedes-AMG GT3 of Shane Lewis, Charles Espenlaub and Charles Putman that was on top as the garage doors closed on Saturday evening.

The Audi, which Kaffer co-drove with Elia Erhart, Patryk Krupinski and Michael Doppelmayr, moved in front on Sunday when it was kept on track as others pitted under a Code 60 period. But the Ferrari, crewed by Keilwitz, Jochen Krumbach and father-son duo Georg and Leonard Weiss, was back ahead with 10 minutes remaining when Weiss Jr pitted for a late splash and a handover to his dad, allowing Erhart to take the flag by a lap from the Mercedes, with the Ferrari third. Among the classes, there was a runner-up placing in the GT4 division for the Ginetta G56 of Mike Simpson, Freddie Tomlinson and Colin White.

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WEEKEND WINNERS

SUPER FORMULA
SUZUKA (JPN)
Nobuharu Matsushita
B-Max Racing Team (Dallara-Honda)

NLS
NURBURGRING (DEU)
Augusto Farfus/Nick Yelloly/
Connor De Phillippi
Rowe Racing (BMW M4 GT3)

NASCAR CUP
TALLADEGA (USA)
Ross Chastain
TrackHouse Racing (Chevrolet Camaro)

24H SERIES
SPA 12 HOURS (BEL)
Pierre Kaffer/Elia Erhart/Michael Doppelmayr/
Patryk Krupinski
Phoenix Racing (Audi R8 LMS GT3 Evo II)

ADAC GT MASTERS
OSCHERSLEBEN (DEU)
Race 1 Ricardo Feller/Jusuf Owega
Land Motorsport (Audi R8 GT3 Evo II)
Race 2 Jules Gounon/Fabian Schiller
ZVO Racing (Mercedes-AMG GT3 Evo)

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Quartararo finally kickstarts his title defence

MOTOGP
ALGARVE (PRT)
24 APRIL
ROUND 5/21

The 2022 MotoGP season took another twist at the Portuguese Grand Prix when a fourth different winner in five races was crowned. But this one felt altogether more expected – and, in some ways, needed.

Fabio Quartararo's form in last year's Portuguese GP sent him well on the way to the 2021 world title. But the Algarve International Circuit was a venue he felt ahead of time was "fifty-fifty" for Yamaha in terms of how competitive it could be around the Iberian coast's rollercoaster. All of the races so far have hinged on two things for Yamaha to excel: the amount of grip on offer at a track, and how the first lap goes. If the grip was lower and Quartararo got jumped

by some faster bikes, his afternoon would get much harder. But if he could nail the start and have enough grip to really make the most of the strong points of the M1, he would be in the ball game.

Unfortunately, both of those things would only come to light at 1300 last Sunday. The weekend was a washout through to Q2, with Sunday's 20-minute warm-up the only dry track time on offer where set-ups for the race could be fettled.

By Turn 1, it was clear that Quartararo had both things he needed. From fifth he was up to second, with only 2020 champion Joan Mir in front of him.

Mir was the favourite for many, the Suzuki rider quick all weekend and scoring his best-ever qualifying result of second, plus he'd put on a podium display in November's Algarve GP at the same venue last year. But, after streaking 0.6 seconds

clear by the end of lap one, it became clear to the Spaniard that his medium-compound front tyre wasn't the option he needed to provide the best support on the front end – a consequence of the lack of dry track time through the weekend.

Quartararo made his move into Turn 1 on lap four, and Mir later slipped further behind, losing second to the Pramac Ducati of poleman Johann Zarco on lap 17 of 25 before he was wiped out of third by Ducati's Jack Miller at Turn 1 two laps later.

Had Mir been in better shape, it's still doubtful that he could have challenged Quartararo. The Frenchman put on full display the speed and talent that brought him last year's world championship, and he never looked like being caught, taking the flag 5.4s clear.

Quartararo had scored just one podium from the first four races and no other top-six finishes. So a return to winning ways for the first time since last August's Silverstone contest was a "special" moment in which he struggled to suppress his emotions. It's well-timed too. Not only does it thrust him into the lead of the championship, but it comes in the middle of a negotiating battle with Yamaha over his future that Quartararo is now winning.

With Le Mans coming up next month, a second place for Zarco will get a few more punters through the door, while Aleix Espargaro benefited from the Miller/Mir shunt to claim his second podium of the year on the Aprilia in third.



Mir stormed into an early lead for Suzuki but would fade later



Rins brilliantly charged from 23rd on the grid to take a fine fourth



Zarco (5) overcame Mir and took second

A rider of the day vote would surely have put Alex Rins in first place, the Suzuki man blasting through from 23rd on the grid after a strategy blunder in a wet qualifying Q1 session to finish an incredible fourth. Level on points with Quartararo and now second in the standings, the Rins of 2021 who crashed too often is a reformed rider well on his way to a title tilt.

The same can't be said of Marc Marquez. Still "not in my special moment", the six-time world champion is struggling to adapt to the 2022 Honda, and sixth in Portugal was all he could muster behind home hero Miguel Oliveira on the KTM. When that 'special moment' arrives is still an unknown. He beat his brother Alex by 0.020s, with Pol Espargaro ninth. But after such a strong start to 2022, Honda seems all at sea and without wind in its sails with its new bike.

A heavy qualifying crash left 2021 Algarve winner Francesco Bagnaia last on the grid, but he enjoyed a strong run to eighth after finding an "incredible" feeling on his Ducati. With Quartararo's title charge now kicking on, his expected foe must follow suit soon.

LEWIS DUNCAN

NEXT REPORT

SPANISH GP
5 MAY ISSUE

RESULTS ROUND 5/21, ALGARVE (PRT), 24 APRIL (25 LAPS – 71.333 MILES)

POS	RIDER	TEAM	TIME
1	Fabio Quartararo (FRA)	Yamaha	41m39.611s
2	Johann Zarco (FRA)	Pramac Ducati	+5.409s
3	Aleix Espargaro (ESP)	Aprilia	+6.068s
4	Alex Rins (ESP)	Suzuki	+9.633s
5	Miguel Oliveira (PRT)	KTM	+13.573s
6	Marc Marquez (ESP)	Honda	+16.163s
7	Alex Marquez (ESP)	LCR Honda	+16.183s
8	Francesco Bagnaia (ITA)	Ducati	+16.511s
9	Pol Espargaro (ESP)	Honda	+16.769s
10	Maverick Vinales (ESP)	Aprilia	+18.063s
11	Andrea Dovizioso (ITA)	RNF Yamaha	+29.029s
12	Luca Marini (ITA)	VR46 Ducati	+29.249s
13	Franco Morbidelli (ITA)	Yamaha	+33.354s
14	Remy Gardner (AUS)	Tech3 KTM	+40.205s
15	Marco Bezzecchi (ITA)	VR46 Ducati	+46.052s
16	Takaaki Nakagami (JPN)	LCR Honda	+49.569s
17	Darryn Binder (ZAF)	RNF Yamaha	+50.303s
R	Lorenzo Savadori (ITA)	Aprilia	24 laps-accident
R	Fabio Di Giannantonio (ITA)	Gresini Ducati	21 laps-technical
R	Joan Mir (ESP)	Suzuki	18 laps-accident
R	Jack Miller (AUS)	Ducati	18 laps-accident
R	Brad Binder (ZAF)	KTM	17 laps-accident
R	Enea Bastianini (ITA)	Gresini Ducati	9 laps-accident
R	Jorge Martin (ESP)	Pramac Ducati	4 laps-accident
NS	Raul Fernandez (ESP)	Tech3 KTM	Injury (Q1 crash)

Winner's average speed 102.736mph. **Fastest lap** Quartararo 1m39.435s, 103.303mph.

QUALIFYING 2 1 Zarco 1m42.003s; 2 Mir 1m42.198s; 3 A Espargaro 1m42.235s; 4 Miller 1m42.503s; 5 Quartararo 1m42.716s; 6 Bezzecchi 1m42.716s; 7 A Marquez 1m42.903s; 8 Marini 1m43.179s; 9 M Marquez 1m43.575s; 10 P Espargaro 1m43.832s; 11 Oliveira 1m44.066s; 12 B Binder 1m44.710s.

QUALIFYING 1 A Marquez 1m46.316s; Marini 1m47.199s; 13 Martin 1m47.936s; 14 Vinales 1m49.332s; 15 Di Giannantonio 1m49.639s; 16 Dovizioso 1m49.695s; 17 Nakagami 1m49.889s; 18 Bastianini 1m50.618s; 19 Morbidelli 1m50.702s; 20 Gardner 1m50.953s; 21 Savadori 1m51.308s; 22 D Binder 1m51.639s; 23 Rins 1m52.300s; 24 Bagnaia no time; NS Fernandez 1m53.603s.

RIDERS' CHAMPIONSHIP 1 Quartararo 69; 2 Rins 69; 3 A Espargaro 66; 4 Bastianini 61; 5 Zarco 51; 6 Mir 46; 7 B Binder 42; 8 Oliveira 39; 9 Miller 31; 10 Bagnaia 31; 11 M Marquez 31; 12 P Espargaro 30; 13 Martin 28; 14 Vinales 25; 15 Morbidelli 17; 16 Marini 14; 17 A Marquez 13; 18 Nakagami 12; 19 Bezzecchi 8; 20 Dovizioso 8; 21 D Binder 6; 22 Gardner 3; 23 Fernandez 0; 24 Di Giannantonio 0; 25 Stefan Bradl 0.

MANUFACTURERS' CHAMPIONSHIP 1 Ducati 106; 2 KTM 70; 3 Suzuki 70; 4 Yamaha 69; 5 Aprilia 67; 6 Honda 44.



WEEKEND WINNERS

MOTO2

ALGARVE (PRT)

Joe Roberts (below)
Italtrans Racing Team
(Kalex)

MOTO3

ALGARVE (PRT)

Sergio Garcia
Aspar Team
(Gas Gas)



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New light panels in full use for the first time

AUTOSPORT

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Ginetta Junior thrills as BTCC supports begin

First-time winners galore in eventful Donington Park openers




PRYCE IS RIGHT ON THE PACE ON FIRST **BRC** ROUND




ADAM AND HAIGH TO REUNITE IN **BRITISH GT**



CLOSE CONTESTS AS **BRITISH HILLCLIMB** SEASON STARTS



A photograph of Gordon Shedden, a British touring car driver, celebrating his victory at Donington Park. He is wearing a racing helmet with logos for GS YUASA, Walker Logistics, and J&D Pierce. His racing suit features logos for halfords, J&D Pierce, and Dynamics. He is raising his right fist in a celebratory gesture.

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Everyone at **Walker Logistics** would like to congratulate **Gordon Shedden** for his fantastic victory at Donington Park in the opening round of the BTCC, wishing him and Team Dynamics all the best for the rest of the season.

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A photograph of Gordon Shedden holding a large silver trophy. He is wearing a white cap with the Goodyear logo and a racing suit with logos for halfords, CATA CLEAN, J&D Pierce, and Dynamics. The background features a large blue banner with the Kwik Fit logo and the text 'BRITISH TOURING CAR CHAMPIONSHIP'.

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Haigh and Adam plan three British GT outings in 2 Seas Mercedes

JEP

Haigh and Adam to reunite in Mercedes

BRITISH GT

Flick Haigh will make her first British GT appearance since claiming the 2018 title with Jonny Adam when the pair reunite at Silverstone next month.

Haigh, the first female outright champion in British GT history after triumphing with Optimum Motorsport, will partner four-time series champion Adam aboard the second 2 Seas Mercedes-AMG GT3 at the Silverstone, Snetterton and Brands Hatch rounds.

It marks the end of a competition hiatus dating back to the end of 2019, when Haigh drove a Spirit of Race Ferrari with Chris Froggatt under the Team GB banner at the FIA's Motorsport Games.

Haigh, who tested last week at Silverstone, told Autosport that Adam had been the instigator for her return.

The Aston Martin factory driver has been freed up to drive for another brand for the first time since his series debut in 2011, as no Aston customers have entered the GT3 class this year.

"He knew I'd already tested the Merc and got on with it and I'd already driven the new [for 2019] Aston and hadn't really got on with it," said Haigh. "So, when he knew that he could do something else, he approached me and said, 'Do you want to do something in British?'"

"It's great to be back out there and it's just hopefully a stepping stone to being able to put something together for a full championship next year."

Haigh said that she and Adam have "fitted right in" at 2 Seas and were enjoying getting to grips with the Mercedes, but stopped short of setting any targets.

"The car is just brilliant," she said. "It reminds me of the old Aston [V12 Vantage] actually in the way it behaves and it's just a really nice car to drive. We'll see how it goes. I've got two years of catching up to do, I'm very aware that I can't just jump back in and start from where I left off."

Adam added: "We have tested with 2 Seas Motorsport and the team have been great to work with, so we have high hopes to try and achieve some solid results for Flick on her return to British GT."

JAMES NEWBOLD

Pair took the British GT title in 2018 with Optimum



JEP/MOTORSPORT IMAGES

NO FULL BRIT GT CAMPAIGN FOR HETHERINGTON

BRITISH GT

Valluga Racing boss Benji Hetherington says he expects to remain behind the wheel of his team's Porsche 718 Cayman GT4 CS for next month's Silverstone British GT round, but a funded driver could then replace him.

Hetherington made his first series appearance since 2013 alongside 2014 GT4 champion Ross Wylie in the Oulton Park opener, and qualified second for race one with "my first set of new tyres in nine years".

The 30-year-old came away with third and fifth places in class, with series newcomer Valluga one of the few GT4 squads not to be penalised for a short pitstop in the first race.

Hetherington told Autosport that he "couldn't be more satisfied" with his own performance but that "the harsh realities of the finances required" meant he was unlikely to complete the season.

"Potentially you might see me at Silverstone," he said. "But, past Silverstone, the hope is that we can find someone suitably equipped, suitably funded of course, but hopefully someone who can take us forward."

Hetherington added that the team had received some offers from interested parties prior to Oulton, but he was determined to leave nothing to chance and showcase the team's potential.

"We know the car is quick," he said. "It boiled down to, 'If you want a good job done, do it yourself', a little bit of that was on my mind."

"We had no team penalties, no technical infringements, we've dotted all the 'i's and crossed all the 't's, which is great to see."

JAMES NEWBOLD



JEP/MOTORSPORT IMAGES



While light panels are now being used, marshals still have an important role

JEP/MOTORSPORT IMAGES

Light panels replace flags at TOCA opener

DONINGTON PARK

New light panels almost entirely replaced flag signals for the first time during the British Touring Car Championship's season-opening event at Donington Park last weekend.

It was announced over the winter that investment from governing body Motorsport UK, circuit operators and the British Motor Sport Training Trust would result in light panels being installed at all UK tracks of FIA International Grade 3 and above this year to help improve safety for drivers and marshals. The panels were used alongside in-car signalling at Donington, whereby messages could be sent to specific drivers from officials in race control.

The only flags in use at Donington were those on the startline – new regulations were issued beforehand

to allow the light panels to legally replace flag signals – with the increased visibility of the lights proving popular with drivers.

“We’ve used the light system now for the guts of a year at Knockhill,” said three-time BTCC champion Gordon Shedden, who is also business development manager at the Scottish circuit. “It’s really good, because the lights are a lot brighter in all weather conditions, and even more when it’s dull.

“It’s like everything – new technology takes a bit of getting used to. It’s supplemented by marshals, and it’s safer for them because it allows them to be behind debris fences without being exposed.”

Event director Ian Watson added: “I’m pleased with the way it went and I think most of the competitors were very pleased and feel it’s a step in the right direction. There were a lot of good comments about the visibility of the panels.”

However, some marshals were left

disgruntled at the way the system was implemented. Watson explained that organisers could not give more warning about the light panels’ use, given uncertainty over whether the system would be fully operational in time for the event.

“I think some of the flag marshals are concerned they’re losing their job – in fact, they might not be waving a flag, but they still have to control these lights and these lights are then the methodology of giving signals to drivers,” he explained. “We will still need two ‘flag’ marshals on a post.”

Watson added that organisers have since contacted all of the marshals who volunteered for the Donington event to thank them for adopting the new system and explaining the lack of advanced information about the changes.

STEPHEN LICKORISH & MARCUS SIMMONS

Extensive resurfacing work at Brands Hatch

MOTORSPORT VISION

Brands Hatch has undergone its most extensive resurfacing work for over a decade in recent weeks with swathes of the Kent circuit benefiting from fresh asphalt.

A large section of track from before the Paddock Hill Bend braking point to the end of the exit kerb on Hailwood Hill has been resurfaced, along with an area around Graham Hill Bend. The Grand Prix loop has also received attention, with new

asphalt laid from the exit of Westfield to the entry of Sheene Curve.

This follows other improvement works at the venue over the winter, including replacing barriers and tyre walls.

“We want to ensure Brands Hatch continues to offer all participants a first-class on-circuit experience, and this major resurfacing work underlines that commitment,” said Brands Hatch circuit manager Mike Lally. “Indeed, this has been one of the most



Graham Hill Bend is one of the corners to get fresh asphalt

significant venue improvements we’ve made in the past decade.

“This, following another extensive winter improvement programme, ensures that the

circuit is in the best possible shape ahead of a very busy summer headline event schedule, starting from this weekend’s GT World Challenge event.”

Mitchell secures late Mini deal and joins Motorbase young driver ranks

MINI CHALLENGE

British GT racer Jack Mitchell was a late addition to the Mini Challenge grid for the opening round last weekend and yet left Donington Park third in the standings.

Mitchell also contested one weekend of the Mini series last season before landing a drive with Team Hard in the British Touring Car Championship. The 2018 GT4 champion then made

a return to the GT ranks this year with a Speedworks Motorsport Toyota Supra.

He now aims to combine a full Mini season at JW Bird Motorsport with continuing to compete in British GT.

“Pete Osborne from Motorbase was kind enough to give me this opportunity in Minis and be part of the Motorbase Young Driver Programme,” explained Mitchell. “I hadn’t done any testing and was straight in

the mix. The race pace was good and I’m really happy.”

Despite his lack of preparation, Mitchell qualified second for the opener but admitted that getting better starts was an area he needed to improve upon as he lost three positions off the line before ultimately finishing fourth after a close scrap with Alex Denning. Mitchell then followed that up with two third places.

STEPHEN LICKORISH



Motorbase Young Driver was in thick of the Mini action

Brian Chatfield 1942-2022

OBITUARY

One of British motorsport’s most colourful characters, Brian Chatfield, died in Thailand earlier this month, following a stroke.

Trowbridge scrap dealer Chatfield’s successful driving career spanned autocross Minis in the 1960s to cameo British Saloon Car Championship roles. He was best known, however, as the works BMC rallycrosser who subsequently circuit raced an extraordinary variety of cars.

“Brian was an incredible driver, but absolutely crazy,” said fellow west country racer Jonathan Buncombe. “He towed his rallycross Mini on a trailer behind an E-type Jaguar, once at 140mph on the way to Lydden – in snow!”

A crowd favourite at Castle Combe, Chatfield first competed and won there in a Mini in 1968. After 15 years out, he returned to his local stamping ground in 1986, taking 19 outright Saloon/GT victories and was Special GT Class A champion from 1986-88.

“Racing was everything to Brian,” said Buncombe. “When his BMW 320i failed scrutineering at Combe, he recalled seeing an ex-Gordon Spice Capri for sale locally, shot off, bought it and raced it in the afternoon.” Another Combe veteran, Nigel Mustill, recalls a spur of the moment dash to Germany to buy two ex-DTM Mercedes!

Chatfield later raced an ex-Laurence Bristow Sierra RS500 in Thundersaloon events, before disappearing from the scene.

MARCUS PYE

IN THE HEADLINES

RAM’S GT PROTEST FAILS

RAM Racing’s protest into the result of British GT’s second race at Oulton Park (Autosport, 21 April) last Monday was rejected by the stewards of the meeting, but the team has lodged its intention to appeal to the National Court. RAM drivers Ian Loggie and Jules Gounon finished first on the road in the red-flagged contest before their pitstop success seconds were added to their race time. Martin Plowman and Kelvin Fletcher took victory, but the result remains provisional.

CARBON OFFSET AGAIN

Historic rallying organisation HERO-ERA has offset its carbon emissions for the second year running, via a programme that features both direct and indirect contributions to emissions offsetting. Among the initiatives supported are conservation projects in five countries including the UK, United States, Egypt, China and Indonesia.

GREEN FUEL FOR BRITISH F4

Continuing the environmentally friendly theme, British Formula 4 has become the latest category to adopt sustainable fuel. The series is using a fuel from Carless that contains second-generation ethanol and renewable hydrocarbons, which means greenhouse gas emissions are reduced by 18% compared to current pump fuel.

BUMPER BARC VIEWING

The British Automobile Racing Club has reported some more strong viewing figures for livestreams from its early club events this year, amassing over 350,000 views. Leading the way was the British Endurance Championship season-opening meeting at Silverstone (below) in March with 110,000, while 100,000 tuned in to watch the Easter Brands Hatch British Truck Racing action.



Jackson and Kivlochan in car switches

HISTORICS

Historic racing champions Cam Jackson and Kevin Kivlochan both switched to different steeds at Snetterton last weekend, when Jackson made his Historic Formula Ford 2000 debut in a Delta and Kivlochan raced a newly acquired Ford Mustang.

Jackson, who topped last year's Autosport National Driver Rankings as well as claiming the Historic FF1600 crown, raced Simon Ayliff's T80 in Norfolk, having only driven the car for the first time in Friday testing.

"It's going to be a baptism of fire," said Jackson after qualifying third, 1.5 seconds off pole. It was just the second outing for the car since a total rebuild, after Benn Tilley drove it at Donington Park last year.

Jackson was able to guide the car to second place in the opener, before the Neil Fowler team set to work stiffening the front suspension. "We can see from some photos that the car is rolling too much in the corners, so hopefully our adjustments will get me closer to the pace," said Jackson prior to race two.

But the car cut out partway through



Jackson raced Delta, and (inset) Kivlochan was in Mustang

RICHARD STYLES

the opening lap. "Sad end as I could tell the adjustments were an improvement," said Jackson, who is set to return to his Winkelmann FF1600 machine and Lenham sports-racer at Silverstone next month.

Kivlochan, meanwhile, raced Steve Soper's old Mustang in Historic Touring Cars, and drove it for the first time in qualifying.

"I would have been at Brands earlier in the month but Steve used the engine from the car as his wasn't ready, so I'm trying to convince myself to treat the day as a test

session," said Kivlochan. "My first ever race car was a Mustang Shelby 350 and I made my debut in an American Independence Day race at Oulton Park on 4 July 1992 and the bug bit!"

He finished fourth in the opener, but greater confidence in the car allowed Kivlochan to take second later in the day. "It's unreal," he said. "It goes where you point it and the second race was really exciting, battling with a host of Lotus Cortinas."

LEWIS BEALES

Lamplough back to single-seaters in Historic F3



Lamplough took a best result of fifth in race one

PAUL LAWRENCE

HISTORIC F3

Long-time historic racer Mike Lamplough has joined the Historic Formula 3 grid with the ex-Steven Smith Chevron B15.

The Chevron, which was originally a Jolly Club car raced in Italy in the late 1960s, had not run for

a couple of years.

Lamplough had his first outing in the car at the Historic Sports Car Club's Snetterton meeting last weekend, after a few laps of testing. "This is my first single-seater race since 1994 when I ran a Van Diemen RF82 in Classic Formula Ford 2000," said

Lamplough, who more recently has been racing an MG Magnette and a Gilbern. "I thought it was time to do something a bit different and this is a voyage into the unknown."

Lamplough took a best result of fifth in the opening race.

PAUL LAWRENCE

ANGELO R. DRIVE

RACE 2
BRITISHGT
OULTON PARK

WHOOPS, SORRY!

RED FLAG!

OH NO, ANGELO HAS CRASHED AGAIN...

... AND FLETCHER AND PLOWMAN TAKE MAIDEN WIN! YESS!!

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Grid numbers hit 30-year high for Clubmans series

CLUBMANS SPORTS PROTOTYPE

The Clubmans Sports Prototype category enjoyed its largest entry in over 30 years at Silverstone last weekend when 33 cars took part.

The series has enjoyed growing popularity since the Clubmans Register decided to take over the promotion of the championship, with MotorSport Vision Racing appointed the organising club, for the 2020 season.

“We saw an immediate uplift in entries and it’s carried on since then,” said Clubmans Register vice-chairman Peter Richings. “We’ve got new cars – Mallock and Phantom have built new cars – we’ve had new drivers join us and people have come back to Clubmans. Tom Bellamy won the championship in 2000 and he’s come back this year.

“We’re delighted – we’ve worked really hard to communicate with competitors and prospective competitors and create a really friendly and helpful atmosphere in the paddock. The racing is fierce and competitive



but we’re all good pals in the paddock.”

Richings is optimistic of attracting another bumper entry for the next round at the end of May, which will be the Clubmans Register’s first visit to the Brands Hatch Grand Prix circuit for 25 years.

The three Silverstone races were won by different drivers: Cody Tree (Phantom P94) triumphed in the first, Alex Champkin (Phantom PR21) won the second, while Mark Charteris (Mallock Mk20B/21) just edged Tree by 0.402 seconds in the finale, with plenty of other close battles throughout the field.

STEPHEN LICKORISH

Romanek can’t stop Queen in FF1600 as Law takes a brace

MSVR

Colin Queen took both United Formula Ford victories at MotorSport Vision Racing’s Silverstone meeting last weekend, but only by the slenderest of margins.

The Ray GR18 driver beat Lucas Romanek each time, but only pipped the Van Diemen JL13 by 0.044 seconds and 0.051s respectively, while Andre Lafond shadowed the pair in each race.

Joshua Law was another double victor in the Sports 2000 Duratec Championship,

his MCR S2 getting the better of Michael Gibbins’s similar machine in both races. Reigning champion Tom Stoten could only manage a best result of third in the opening contest.

BMW’s were the car of choice in the Turismo X category, where Jasver Sapra used his E46 to win the second race after taking third in the opener. Bryan Bransom’s similar car took the top spot in race one.

John Lyne (E36) and Charlie Palk (Renault Clio) claimed the Trackday Championship and Trophy honours.



IN THE HEADLINES

SUPERKARTS AT CADWELL

The first rounds of the Motorsport UK British Superkart Championships take place at Cadwell Park this weekend. After taking a win in the British Superkart Racing Club contests at the Lincolnshire venue last weekend, Lee Harpham will be looking for further success. But he will face stiff opposition from 2021 Division 1 title winner Ross Allen and multiple champion Liam Morley.

IN SUPPORT OF McRAE

Ladies World Rally champions Louise Aitken-Walker and co-driver Tina Thorner will attend the McRae Rally Challenge at the Knockhill circuit in July. The duo, who took the title in 1990, will get behind the wheel of a number of machines from their careers. Swede Thorner also partnered Colin McRae in 2004 and 2005 for long-distance Safari-type events.

TATHAM ESCAPES BLAZE

Hillclimber Peter Tatham was fortunate to escape unharmed after his OMS 25 single-seater caught fire on one of its practice runs at Prescott hillclimb last Saturday. The fire grew and it was only extinguished when the car stopped at the bottom of the hill return road, having caused significant damage. To continue competing at Prescott, Tatham switched his entry to share the OMS Hornet of his brother David in the 1100cc racing car class.

HALL’S NEW VENTURE

Will Hall has a new Gould GR59 on order for the 2023 British Hillclimb Championship. This year Hall and Matthew Ryder are sharing Sean Gould’s GR59 (below) and both started well at Prescott, with Ryder finishing third in the opening run-off. “It’s a new challenge and it’s very different,” said Hall, after moving from his two-litre turbocharged Force. “I’ve just got to fine-tune myself – this is a relearning year,” he added of the four-litre Gould.





A new beginning

It's taken TCR UK four years to find its feet but, with 25 cars for its season opener earlier this month, it's finally heading in the right direction

STEFAN MACKLEY

A new season of the British Touring Car Championship got under way last weekend at Donington Park, with a bumper grid and an eclectic mix of machinery featuring hybrid technology for the first time. But it was not the only touring car championship that kicked into life this month with a healthy grid and several different manufacturers' models represented. Just a week earlier, 25 cars lined up for the opening round of the TCR UK Championship at Oulton Park for what, to many, also felt like the start of a new era.

"This day has been a long time coming," said Stewart Lines, whose Maximum Motorsport company has been running TCR UK since 2019, just one year after the concept was launched in the UK.

The championship has come a long way since its creation, with interest in the low-cost formula having built up since 2015 when the TCR International Series was founded. Seven domestic championships were created the following season and it didn't take long for anticipation to build in the UK, with a number of teams initially keen to join the new tin-top contest.

Interest was so high and grids so packed elsewhere around the globe that it led some to suggest that TCR UK could even become a direct rival to the BTCC – something that the latter series' boss Alan Gow always downplayed.

On paper, though, it looked like the success of the new

"You can take this car and race anywhere in the world. It opens a door for more opportunities"

championship would be a no-brainer – a more affordable package for touring car aspirants in front-wheel-drive machinery based on production saloons and featuring 1.75 to two-litre turbocharged engines.

BTCC race winner Dan Lloyd became the inaugural champion, and now three-time BTCC title holder Ash Sutton also competed in one round. But, while the calibre of the grid might have been impressive, entries throughout the year remained low and inconsistent – 13 the highest for the opening Silverstone round and a low of just eight at Croft – while only five drivers entered every round.

It led to TCR creator World Sporting Consulting appointing Lines's Maximum concern as promoter of the championship. Lines had already created the Touring Car Trophy – a category

that allowed older-spec British Touring Cars (NGTC or S2000) – and TCR UK became a class within this.

Only 12 TCR UK registered entries took part in that 2019 season, and eventual runner-up Lewis Kent was the sole driver to contest every round. Things went from bad to worse the following season, with just nine drivers competing in the category at any point of the year in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic. It led to Lines having "a few sleepless nights" and questions with his wife Nicki about whether the concept was going to work.

"Over the last two years, people bought cars and we just slowly but surely pointed it in the right direction, but it hasn't been easy," said Lines. "It's been a hard slog, we've had a lot of obstacles in the way with COVID-19, and not saying BTCC are a fan of ours but they're not. They didn't want us to get to this stage, but there's no stopping it now. It's giving people an opportunity to race in a touring car who will never be able to go to BTCC, that's what it's about really."

A much-needed increase in numbers last season coincided with a radical approach of leaving traditional national racing events and instead switching to a calendar mainly consisting of hugely popular Time Attack fixtures.

The series then blossomed for this year's opening round, where in support of British GT and with its races livestreamed, TCR UK has arguably cemented its position in the national motorsport landscape. Perhaps the biggest endorsement was from the fans, with nearly every car obscured in the paddock as onlookers crowded around to catch a glimpse of some impressive bits of kit.

Despite the growing appeal of the championship, Lines has dismissed any suggestion that his series is a direct rival to the BTCC, but says that TCR UK could be an alternative for drivers. This point was in evidence at the opening round, as BTCC race winner Chris Smiley took victory, while fellow ex-BTCC driver Jessica Hawkins also won on her debut in the category in the partially reversed grid race.

"TCR is a global championship," said Smiley. "BTCC is what it is, but you can take this car and race anywhere in the world. It opens up a door for more opportunities."

Lines believes this new-found success stems from the current financial climate, with a budget for TCR UK capped at £100,000 making it a viable option for many drivers wishing to race competitive tin-top machinery.

In this writer's opinion, there's certainly no reason why the BTCC and TCR UK can't co-exist and, based on the numbers for the latter, it appears as though it's turned a corner.

As Smiley added: "Any national championship with 25/26 cars is doing something right." ❄

Despite the attentions of Graham (r), Stewart emerged as a double Fiesta victor



Doubles all round at Kirkistown as Stewart heads repeat winners

KIRKISTOWN
500MRCI
23 APRIL

The bar was closed at Kirkistown last Saturday, but nevertheless there were doubles all round for the second meeting of the year at the Northern Ireland circuit, with all of the classes featuring back-to-back victors.

While the winners may have been the same, the races were far from boring. The Fiestas topped the excitement stakes with a cast featuring the Stewart brothers – Mark and Paul – along with the Grahams, father Derek and son Michael, plus some spirited intervention from Neville Anderson.

Mark Stewart got ahead in the first encounter, leaving Paul to fend off the attentions of Derek Graham, which he did by just 0.044 seconds at the flag. Michael Graham took fourth spot from Anderson, who set fastest lap.

The usual suspects were in action in

race two, but closer together this time and it took all of the 13 laps to sort out the order after Mark Stewart and Derek Graham circulated side-by-side for much of the contest. Stewart gained an advantage on the final tour, while Michael Graham, Anderson and Paul Stewart were equally close as they crossed the line behind.

David McCullough started his Van Diemen RF01 from pole for both of the poorly supported Formula Ford 1600 races despite two uncharacteristic spins during qualifying. And in both it was McCullough who stayed ahead of Dave Parks's borrowed Ray all the way, with Alan Davidson's Mondiale third from the similar, but overheating, car of Brandon McCaughan.

The top two were undisturbed in the second race, while mechanical problems sidelined both the Mondiales, allowing Henry Campbell's Reynard to take the third podium spot.

Saloons and Mazda MX-5s kicked things off at the start of the day, and provided Peter Baxter with the chance to stamp his authority on the field – which he duly did, his SEAT winning race one by almost 50s from the BMW M3 of Ralph Jess. Donal O'Neill's older SEAT, which had been damaged in a practice encounter with Baxter at the Hairpin, was the only other unlapped runner.

It looked as though race two would provide the same podium party, but O'Neill dropped back in the closing stages, allowing Greer Wray to claim the place in his BMW 330i. Newcomer Gareth Blaine topped the BMW field in the opener, but dropped out of race two. The concurrent MX-5 battles went to Gavin Kilkey in the first encounter, while Francie



Baxter took two dominant Saloons wins in his SEAT

WEEKEND WINNERS

FORD FIESTA ZETEC

Races 1 & 2 Mark Stewart

FORMULA FORD 1600

Races 1 & 2 David McCullough
(Van Diemen RF01, below)

SALOONS/MAZDA MX-5s

Races 1 & 2 Peter Baxter (SEAT Leon)

ROADSPORTS

Races 1 & 2 Jim Larkham (Radical PR06)

SUPERKARTS

Races 1, 2 & 3 Aaron Newell (Anderson PVP)



For full results visit: speedhive.mylaps.com

Allen took the spoils in the second.

Jim Larkham and his Radical PR06 dominated both Roadsports races, but this time he had some family opposition in the shape of nephew Steven in a similar car. In the first race, 'Uncle Jim' finished 10s clear of Steven, with the Radical Clubsport of Brian Elliott third. An opening lap adventure in the second race dropped Steven to the tail of the field, while John Stewart took the runner-up spot in his PR06 ahead of Bernard Foley's Crossle. Steven eventually placed fifth, but had the consolation of setting fastest lap as he fought back.

Superkarts was the odd category out from the double winners, as instead there was a treble victor! All three races fell to Aaron Newell, from Alan Witherow and Brian Jones.

RICHARD YOUNG

TOCA SUPPORTS DONINGTON PARK 23-24 APRIL

Flying start for Smalley as Burton suffers

PORSCHE CARRERA CUP GB

Picking a winner for the 350th Porsche Carrera Cup GB contest was always going to be tricky. There was no shortage of contenders on a grid packed with talented drivers. And, after a dramatic race, it was new Porsche Junior Adam Smalley who landed the first blow of the 20th anniversary season.

While Smalley's Redline Racing squad was on the grid for the very first Carrera Cup GB race – along with Team Parker Racing – it had looked for much of the contest as though a driver from a team making its series debut would triumph.

Gus Burton, full of confidence after winning last year's British GT4 crown, had laid down a marker by taking pole for Century Motorsport. And then the first lap was the perfect demonstration of how hard-fought this year's title is set to be.

Burton maintained the lead from 2021 frontrunner Kiern Jewiss at the start but the Team Parker man was soon on the attack. He attempted a move at Coppice and did edge ahead, before Burton cut across, sending Jewiss into the gravel and plummeting down the order. "The rookies want to push hard and they want to win, but sometimes you have to give



Smalley was surprised to go one better than predecessor King and win on Porsche debut

it [the place] up," said a frustrated Jewiss.

While Burton continued, Smalley began reeling him in as Burton was battling a slow puncture. And that pressure told, Burton locking up and going straight on at the chicane, gifting Smalley the win. "I never imagined I would be winning on my debut race – it's a dream come true," he enthused.

Burton also slipped behind Theo Edgerton (JTR) and Matt Graham (Redline) as he struggled to stay on track. "I had a warning light on, so the tyre pressure was going down," he said. "The positive is we're definitely capable of winning."

Another positive was that Burton got a point for fastest lap – having set an identical time to Smalley – and he was drawn on pole for the partially reversed-

grid second contest. But that positive did not last long as fellow front-row starter Graham made a blistering launch and stormed to the win. Burton, meanwhile, dropped behind Edgerton before striking the chicane's tyre stack, ending his race.

Behind, the main focus was on Jewiss's progress. His opening lap was stunning as he surged from 14th to sixth and he eventually took third, behind Edgerton. "It's what I needed," admitted Jewiss, who felt second was possible. "I did kill the tyres a bit but I'd rather do that and miss out on second than be seventh."

After such an eventful opening round, it suggests all the ingredients are in place for an enthralling anniversary campaign.

STEPHEN LICKORISH

Weller on tune with brace but Brown left in a jam

MINI CHALLENGE

Reigning Mini Challenge rookie champion Sam Weller got his 2022 season off to a superb start by claiming two race wins to head home from Donington to Suffolk as the early series leader. But it was a case of what might have been for Lewis Brown.

Brown, who has moved to Graves Motorsport this year, topped qualifying from British GT racer Jack Mitchell, but a poor start from Mitchell in race one allowed Weller's Hybrid Tune car into second. Brown appeared set fair for victory when, with six laps to go, a vibration since the start manifested itself in a front-left

puncture. Weller shot through to win from Jack Davidson, up from eighth, while 2020 Irish Fiesta ST champion Alex Denning won a superb scrap with Mitchell for third.

Weller took another win in race two from Davidson, but the LUX Motorsport-run Scot had a massive fight on his hands for second. He held on from Mitchell and Ronan Pearson, while damage for Denning from this battle left him stricken at McLeans, prompting a last-gasp red flag.

Brown had recovered from the rear of the grid to 13th in race two, but hit drama again when he was wheeled off the startline for the partially reversed-grid finale. This had reigning overall champion Dan Zelos on pole, but the Excelr8 Motorsport man lost places in the early laps. Team-mate Pearson wriggled free at the front, while Jason Lockwood emerged in second to beat Mitchell, Robbie Dalglish and Weller.

MARCUS SIMMONS



Two wins and a fifth gave Weller a strong start to 2022

Irishman's F4 wins a Dunne deal

BRITISH F4

It was a driver who only confirmed his place on the grid days before the season began that was the star of British Formula 4's new era at Donington Park as Alex Dunne claimed two wins and a second.

The Hitech recruit blasted into the lead at the start of the opener as Carlin's polesitter Ugo Ugochukwu was unable to complete his



Hitech driver was in a class of his own

15th birthday in style as he fell to third off the line, also dropping behind team-mate Oliver Gray. That was how it stayed to the finish, with Ugochukwu never quite able to challenge Gray. Dunne then added another dominant win in the finale, this time pulling clear from Aiden Neate and Gray.

Reversed-grid specialist Georgi Dimitrov maintained the lead at the start from pole in race two, while Neate and Gray clashed at Redgate a few laps later. The race came alive with five minutes remaining as Joseph Loake began pressuring JHR team-mate Dimitrov. A failed attempt at the chicane left Loake cutting the corner and vulnerable from behind and sure enough it was Dunne who surged through to second from ninth.

He says he will "take the rest of the year as it comes" but, after such a convincing series debut, dovetailing a British title bid alongside his main Italian campaign could be on the cards.

STEPHEN LICKORISH

RACE RESULTS

PORSCHE CARRERA CUP GB

Race 1 (both 23 laps) 1 Adam Smalley;

2 Theo Edgerton +2.727s; 3 Matthew Graham; 4 Gus Burton; 5 Seb Morris; 6 Nathan Harrison.

Fastest lap Burton and Smalley 1m05.769s (108.32mph). **Pole** Burton. **Starters** 25.

Race 2 1 Graham; 2 Edgerton +3.004s; 3 Kiern Jewiss; 4 Smalley; 5 Harrison; 6 Morris. **FL** Jewiss 1m05.871s (108.16mph). **P** Burton. **S** 25.

Points 1 Graham 18; 2 Smalley 18; 3 Edgerton 18; 4 Morris 8; 5 Jewiss 7; 6 Burton 7.

MINI CHALLENGE

Race 1 (17 laps) 1 Sam Weller; 2 Jack Davidson +8.639s; 3 Alex Denning; 4 Jack Mitchell; 5 Jason Lockwood; 6 Ronan Pearson. **FL** Lewis Brown 1m12.918s (97.70mph). **P** Brown. **S** 28.

Race 2 (13 laps) 1 Weller; 2 Davidson +6.384s; 3 Mitchell; 4 Pearson; 5 Lockwood; 6 Dan Zelos. **FL** Mitchell 1m12.714s (97.98mph). **P** Weller. **S** 28.

Race 3 (15 laps) 1 Pearson; 2 Lockwood +3.846s; 3 Mitchell; 4 Robbie Dagleish; 5 Weller; 6 Zelos. **FL** Pearson 1m13.278s (97.22mph). **P** Zelos. **S** 28.

Points 1 Weller 134; 2 Pearson 125; 3 Mitchell 123; 4 Lockwood 112; 5 Davidson 108; 6 Zelos 94.

BRITISH FORMULA 4

Race 1 (19 laps) 1 Alex Dunne; 2 Oliver Gray +4.549s; 3 Ugo Ugochukwu; 4 Aiden Neate; 5 Joseph Loake; 6 Edward Pearson. **FL** Ugochukwu 1m05.423s (108.90mph). **P** Ugochukwu. **S** 15.

Race 2 (18 laps) 1 Georgi Dimitrov; 2 Dunne +0.197s; 3 Loake; 4 Michael Shin; 5 Eduardo Coseteng; 6 Daniel Guinchard. **FL** Shin 1m06.106s (107.77mph). **P** Dimitrov. **S** 15.

Race 3 (19 laps) 1 Dunne; 2 Neate +6.059s; 3 Gray; 4 Coseteng; 5 Ugochukwu; 6 Dimitrov. **FL** Dunne 1m05.732s (108.38mph). **P** Dunne. **S** 15.

Points 1 Dunne 70; 2 Gray 33; 3 Neate 30; 4 Ugochukwu 27; 5 Dimitrov 25; 6 Coseteng 23.

GINETTA GT5 CHALLENGE

Race 1 (9 laps) 1 Will Orton; 2 Will Jenkins +1.552s; 3 Nat Hodgkiss; 4 Mikey Doble; 5 Sam Smith; 6 Connor Grady. **FL** Ruben Hage 1m17.202s (91.69mph). **P** Harley Haughton. **S** 23.

Race 2 (9 laps) 1 Jenkins; 2 Hodgkiss +1.462s; 3 Haughton; 4 Doble; 5 Grady; 6 Smith. **FL** Haughton 1m17.109s (92.39mph). **P** Haughton. **S** 23.

Race 3 (11 laps) 1 Grady; 2 Harry Mangion +0.811s; 3 Hage; 4 Ignazio Zanon; 5 Kian Donaldson; 6 Dave Sutton. **FL** Orton 1m17.523s (91.90mph). **P** Jenkins. **S** 22.

Points 1 Hodgkiss 167; 2 Grady 149; 3 Jenkins 128; 4 Haughton 109; 5 Smith 108; 6 Doble 104.

GINETTA JUNIOR

Race 1 (10 laps) 1 Josh Rowledge; 2 Sonny Smith +0.828s; 3 Harri Reynolds; 4 Luke Watts; 5 Joe Warhurst; 6 Ian Aguilera. **FL** Warhurst 1m24.595s (84.22mph). **P** Smith. **S** 25.

Race 2 (14 laps) 1 Reynolds; 2 Rowledge +0.068s; 3 Warhurst; 4 Aqil Alibhai; 5 William Macintyre; 6 Liam McNeilly. **FL** Rowledge 1m24.618s (84.19mph). **P** Reynolds. **S** 25.

Race 3 (15 laps) 1 Reynolds; 2 Warhurst +0.478s; 3 Rowledge; 4 Macintyre; 5 McNeilly; 6 Fergus Chalmers. **FL** Macintyre 1m24.138s (84.67mph). **P** Reynolds. **S** 25.

Points 1 Reynolds 96; 2 Rowledge 92; 3 Warhurst 77; 4 Macintyre 57; 5 Smith 50; 6 McNeilly 50.

Familiar pattern to GT5 event

GINETTA GT5 CHALLENGE

It was less than a week since the opening Ginetta GT5 Challenge event and round two at Donington Park continued many of the same themes. There were again three different winners, there was again an unfortunate failure on frontrunner Will Jenkins' G40 and there were again shortened races with red flags.

The opener's first stoppage was not the fault of the drivers, instead troublesome start lights meant some competitors reacted and others did not. But, on the second attempt, a safety car period and second red flag for incidents reduced the contest to five racing laps.

During those, Nat Hodgkiss passed

polesitter Harley Haughton — who was later given a false start penalty — on the opening lap, before Hodgkiss was shuffled back to fourth. Instead, Will Orton grabbed the lead and claimed his maiden series win from Jenkins.

Race two was also halted early but this time it was Jenkins who was ahead, having passed Hodgkiss and then Orton on the inside at Redgate on consecutive laps. But the Elite driver's weekend ended in misery as a rear-right suspension failure sent him spinning out of the lead through the Craner Curves in the finale, causing another red flag. Connor Grady was the winner, Orton and Hodgkiss having tangled at the Old Hairpin.

STEPHEN LICKORISH



Jenkins (l) had a mixed weekend, with a win, a second and suffering suspension failure

TOCA SUPPORTS DONINGTON PARK 23-24 APRIL

Reynolds and Rowledge top Junior thrillers

GINETTA JUNIOR

There seems to be something about Donington Park and Ginetta Junior. On the category's last visit to Leicestershire six months ago, there were some brilliant lead battles between Aston Millar and Liam McNeilly, and the circuit played host to some more scintillating racing last weekend.

Three sophomore drivers were in the thick of the action, Winter Series victor Josh Rowledge being joined by Harri Reynolds and Joe Warhurst in fighting at the front. Yet, discounting November's standalone contest, none of them had

achieved a podium in the main series prior to the weekend. Things were certainly different after the Donington dicing.

It was one of the rookies, R Racing's Sonny Smith, who was quickest in qualifying but he was instantly demoted at the start of race one by Reynolds. However, his lead did not last long either as Rowledge snuck ahead at the end of the second tour. Despite the best efforts of Reynolds and Smith, Rowledge was able to cling on to win as the race finished behind the safety car – Rowledge just crossing the line after the 15 minutes were up to prevent a nervy one-lap restart – after Flynn McHardy's off.

While the opener was close, race two

provided the pick of the action, with the second half of the contest being frantic at the front. Reynolds maintained his lead from pole for the first eight laps before he ran slightly wide at the Old Hairpin and Rowledge pounced. Reynolds tried to fight back the next time around, a huge lunge at Redgate proving unsuccessful, but he did creep ahead at Coppice, only for Rowledge to get a better run out of the corner.

Reynolds still didn't give up and, on the penultimate tour, reclaimed the lead impressively around the outside of the chicane. Rowledge tried to fight back through the Craner Curves the final time through, but ended up briefly losing out to Warhurst. He was soon back ahead though and was only 0.068 seconds behind Reynolds on the drag to the line.

Having achieved Assetto's first series win, Reynolds then doubled up in the finale. He scampered clear at the start as Warhurst was busy defending from the next five cars. Eventually, the Elite driver broke clear from the pack and homed in on Reynolds, attempting a move at the Old Hairpin on the final lap but could not quite squeeze past.

"It's never easy!" laughed Reynolds about the close nature of the series. "Two months ago, I didn't think I would be racing, so to get two wins is amazing."

STEPHEN LICKORISH



ASSETTO THE LATEST TEAM TO JOIN THE GINETTA JUNIOR WINNERS' CIRCLE

For much of the past three years, the Ginetta Junior victories have been shared by the leading Elite Motorsport and R Racing squads, with some triumphs for the Fox Motorsport and Richardson Racing outfits. But now there is a new name among the winners' circle following Harri Reynolds' Donington Park brace.

Assetto Motorsport was founded by 2000 Renault UK Clio Cup champion Jim Edwards Jr and his son-in-law Simon Traves in 2017, originally successfully competing in the Ginetta G40 Cup. But, for 2020, the team expanded into Ginetta Junior with a single entry for Joe Wheeler. Four cars followed for 2021, including Reynolds, and the operation continues to run four drivers this year.

Prior to last weekend, Assetto's best series result was third, but Reynolds bettered that in style by winning race two in Leicestershire. Edwards then noted how the successes were "like buses" as his young charger doubled up

in the finale. "It's so nice to see the rewards of the hard work," said a delighted Edwards of the victories. "We're a family team and I'm so pleased for everyone involved in Assetto Motorsport."

Reynolds' impressive weekend – he was also in contention for the win in the opener before ultimately finishing third – therefore means he has grabbed the initial points lead. But Edwards is not getting carried away by the early-season success.

"We're keeping our feet on the ground – we're racing against such well-established teams in the championship," said Edwards. "We won't take anything for granted, we will keep our heads down but this is such a long championship."

There may be a long way to go, but it was a thrilling start to the season, with Edwards describing the Donington action as "a great advert for the championship". "They put some of the adults to shame!" he added of the teenagers.

But the team's 2022 campaign is about far more than Ginetta Junior, with the squad expanding into



GT3 racing for the first time. "We've got an involvement with Jade [Edwards' daughter] in touring cars, we've got the Bentley in GT3, we've got drivers in the Ginetta GT Academy – we've got so much going on," Edwards said.

Preparing for a possible Ginetta Junior title campaign is therefore just one element of Assetto Motorsport's hectic season ahead.

STEPHEN LICKORISH

Spinning Spire on cold tyres costs Woolfitt

**CADWELL PARK
BARC
23-24 APRIL**

Jon Woolfitt's Spire GT-R was the class of the CNC Heads Sports/Saloon field at Cadwell Park, but an error in the opener meant he just missed out on a hat-trick.

He led race one until the Mountain on the opening lap, when a spin on cold tyres left him fighting back to challenge Paul Dobson's Locost Mazda. Dobson took the win by just 0.36 seconds, with Stephen Riley's Caterham a comfortable third.

Woolfitt got his revenge with victories in the other two races. He led the second throughout, from Dobson and Riley, but found himself chasing Dobson again in race three. The decisive move came at Mansfield on lap four of 12, when Dobson defended the inside so Woolfitt took him around the outside. Riley again completed the podium.

Junior Saloons driver Harry Hickton was another to win two of their three races. Despite Hickton making a flying start in the opener, Adam Harding had taken charge before the end of the first lap. But, on lap three, Harding exited wide at Hall Bends and dropped to third, leaving Hickton and Max Hall duelling. Hall snatched his maiden win onto the Mountain for the final time, with Harding retaining a distant third.

Hickton took charge from the start of race two, with Daire Flock in his wheeltracks. Hall managed to split the duo approaching the Mountain on lap six of eight and was close to threatening for the lead at the flag. Hickton then secured his second win in a restarted finale, comfortably heading home Harding and Jensen Bell.

It was all looking good for Lee Harpham in the first Superkart race, until he caught a backmarker on the last lap, lost aero and spun down to third. Matt Robinson fought



Woolfitt (l) and Dobson had some close Sports/Saloon battles

BOURNE PHOTOGRAPHIC

back to take the surprise win, having bogged down at the start, while Ross Allen was second. Harpham's lead was under pressure from Robinson at the end of the second race, but his rival's challenge was thwarted when he coasted over the line behind Allen and Carl Hulme after suffering engine woes.

All three Caterham Graduates classes had two standalone races, Max Haynes winning both SigMax encounters to keep his 100% record intact. Andy Molsom was second in race one from Park Corner, leaving Gareth Cordey to head home the fight for third. Molsom briefly headed Haynes in race two but, after the opening lap, he was busy holding off Kevin Barrett for second.

There was a double win for Harry Senior in the Sigma 150s, too, as he headed home a battling Ben Winrow and Jamie Ellwood in each race. Continuing the theme, Jamie Winrow twice kept Ben Wheatley at a safe distance in the Sigma 135s, while James McCall and Richard Groom each had a third.

Safety cars dominated both 2CV races. David O'Keeffe was first on the road in race one, but was penalised for overtaking under yellow flags as the safety car came out. Gary Adnitt was therefore declared the winner from Nick Crispin with O'Keeffe third.

Adnitt was in charge in the restarted second race, after taking Crispin into Park on the opening lap. Luca Proietti and Lien Davies had a close tussle for second, with Davies ahead as the race ended behind the safety car again.

There was yet another double victory in the Hyundai Coupe Cup courtesy of Alex Cursley. Luca Staccini held second from lap two in the opener, while Paul Lawrie was runner-up in race two.

PETER SCHERER

WEEKEND WINNERS

CNC HEADS SPORTS/SALOON

Race 1 Paul Dobson (Locost Mazda)

Races 2 & 3 Jon Woolfitt (Spire GT-R)

JUNIOR SALOONS

Race 1 Maximus Hall

Races 2 & 3 Harry Hickton

SUPERKARTS

Race 1 Matt Robinson

(Anderson/Redspeed VM)

Race 2 Lee Harpham (MS Kart/Harvey VM)

CATERHAM GRADUATES – SIGMAX

Races 1 & 2 Max Haynes

CATERHAM GRADUATES – SIGMA 150

Races 1 & 2 Harry Senior

CATERHAM GRADUATES – SIGMA 135

Races 1 & 2 Jamie Winrow

2CVs

Races 1 & 2 Gary Adnitt

HYUNDAI COUPE CUP

Races 1 & 2 Alex Cursley

For full results visit: tsl-timing.com



Hickton was one of many double winners at Cadwell

BOURNE PHOTOGRAPHIC

Fitting tribute to Jim Russell as Historic FF1600 stages epic fight

**SNETTERTON
HSCC
23-24 APRIL**

The Jim Russell Trophy meeting at Snetterton fittingly produced two stunning Historic Formula Ford 1600 races last weekend, with Tom McArthur's Titan Mk4 triumphant in both.

An early three-way battle enlivened the opening encounter. McArthur and the Merlyn Mk20s of Callum Grant and Samuel Harrison all led, before the top two pulled away in the latter stages. McArthur positioned himself perfectly to lead on the final lap but nearly tripped up with a slow exit from Murrays, holding off Grant's lunge to the line by just 0.063 seconds.

The sequel produced an even closer finish. McArthur and Harrison quickly dropped Grant, but Harrison's lap-seven challenge looked to have ruined his chances after he ran wide at Nelson. Slowly, he closed in on McArthur and snatched the lead on the final lap at Brundle, but the Titan popped out of the Merlyn's slipstream to grab victory by 0.041s. Grant finished a lonely third, suffering with understeer.

A three-way battle raged behind the Lola T540 of Jordan Harrison in the opening Classic FF1600 race, with Richard Tarling (Royale RP26) drafting past McArthur (now in a Merlyn Mk20) into Brundle on the last lap. But McArthur squeezed back in front through Nelson and kept the position to the line. Ben Tinkler (Van Diemen RF80) shadowed the pair in fourth.

Seven cars disputed the lead of race two, with a slick move at Riches putting Tarling in command, after pushing McArthur down the order. But, in the closing laps, Harrison stamped his authority upon proceedings again and won at a canter, with Tarling having left Tinkler to fend off Joseph Ahrens's similar RF80 for third.

Benn Simms (Reynard SF77) clinched victory in the opening Historic FF2000 race after leading from pole, but was harried

constantly by reigning champion Graham Fennymore, before his Reynard SF81 faded away with a snapped suspension wishbone. This elevated series newcomer Cam Jackson (Delta T80) to second, with Ben Glasswell completing the podium – he'd started from 11th after his SF77 lost a wheel in qualifying.

Simms's grip on the series tightened further with another comfortable victory in race two. Jackson's retirement on lap one promoted Glasswell, who gave chase before he retired with ignition issues. Fennymore, who had started ninth, therefore took over the position, with Greg Robertson's SF79 completing the podium.

A broken fuel rail at Coram for Ashley Dibden's Dallara F301 allowed Tony Bishop (Dallara F307) to slip through and claim victory in the F3 Monoposto race, after Dibden had powered past on lap one.

Dibden and Bishop clashed going into Agostini on the opening lap of race two, allowing Chris Davison to lead before Dibden reclaimed the position on the Bentley Straight. Bishop recovered to third after his spin, behind Davison's F301.

Bishop was triumphant again in the third encounter after Dibden retired with a flat sounding engine mid-race, leaving Davison and Moto 1400 class winner Jason Timms to complete the podium.

Mark Betts had to repair the front suspension of his Jedi Mk6 after qualifying fourth for the first Monoposto Group 2 race. He soon made his way into the lead, however, dispatching Karl O'Brien's Leystone into Riches to secure victory. And he did the same in race two, this time powering past on the start/finish straight. O'Brien faded, leaving Nigel Davers in second until he was tripped up at Wilson on the last lap, leaving Morgan McCourt as a surprised runner-up.

Betts completed the perfect hat-trick later on Sunday, declaring the weekend "couldn't have gone any better". Happy to see the chequered flag for the first time during the weekend was David Heavey, who



McArthur just had the beating of Grant and Harrison in FF1600

finished second, with McCourt's similar Leystone completing the podium.

Try as he might, Morgan +8-mounted Richard Plant was unable to pressure Kevin Kivlochan into an error, and had to settle for second to the AC Cobra in both Road Sports races, including the handicap contest.

Series debutant Samuel Harrison (Chevron B15) had no opposition in the opening Historic F3 race as Ian Bankhurst messed up his start. "I couldn't see the lights," said the poleman, who salvaged second. It was Harrison's turn for a tardy getaway in race two, which allowed Bankhurst to lead early on, but Harrison eventually blew past to complete a double.

Jack Moody slipped inside of Mike Gardiner at Oggies on the opening lap of the first Historic Touring Car thrash and



No-one could prevent Kivlochan and his AC Cobra from winning the two Road Sports races



Betts forced his Jedi Mk6 to the front in all three Monoposto contests



pulled a gap that reigning champion Gardiner couldn't close. But a late race gearbox issue forced Moody to retire his Lotus Cortina, which handed victory to Gardiner's similar car. Neil Wood's Ford Anglia, which in the earlier laps had pushed the race winner briefly back to third, would have taken second but the car cut out on the last tour, gifting Bob Bullen's Cortina the spot.

Moody flew through the pack in race two and, when Gardiner faded mid-race, he coasted to victory. Kivlochan picked his way through to take second in his new Ford Mustang, with Sam Attard's Cortina emerging out of a large dust storm at Turn 3 on the final lap for third.

A scintillating start by Howard Payne allowed the Lotus Europa driver to lead away from fourth on the grid in 70s Road

Sports, but poleman Jeremy Clark soon slipped back ahead in his Lotus Elan S4 before disappearing into the distance. Charles Barter also demoted Payne on the opening lap at Agostini, but the Datsun 240Z was pushed back to third once more at Murrays. Barter had another taste of second before Payne was able to repass and pull decisively away. The best battle was for Class E between Gary Thomas (Lotus 7) and David Tomkinson (TVR Vixen S2), with the Lotus prevailing.

The Jaguar Mk1 of Darren McWhirter held off early Ecurie Classic leader Martin Stowe (TVR Grantura) to clinch the win, while Nic Strong powered his Marcos GT past the entire Classic Challenge grid to claim victory.

LEWIS BEALES



Gardiner (left) and Moody took a win apiece in Historic Touring Cars

WEEKEND WINNERS

HISTORIC FF1600

Races 1 & 2 Tom McArthur (Titan Mk4)

CLASSIC FF1600

Races 1 & 2 Jordan Harrison (Lola T540E)

HISTORIC FF2000

Races 1 & 2 Benn Simms (Reynard SF77)

MONOPOSTO (F3/M1400/M1600)

Races 1 & 3 Tony Bishop (Dallara F307)

Race 2 Ashley Dibden (Dallara F301)

MONOPOSTO (M1000/CLASSIC/2000/1800)

Races 1, 2 & 3 Mark Betts (Jedi Mk6)

HISTORIC ROAD SPORTS

Races 1 & 2 Kevin Kivlochan (AC Cobra)

HISTORIC F3

Races 1 & 2 Samuel Harrison (Chevron B15)

HISTORIC TOURING CARS

Race 1 Mike Gardiner (Lotus Cortina)

Race 2 Jack Moody (Lotus Cortina)

70s ROAD SPORTS

Jeremy Clark (Lotus Elan S4)

ECURIE CLASSIC RACING

Darren McWhirter (Jaguar Mk1)

CMMC CLASSIC CHALLENGE

Nic Strong (Marcos 3.0 GT)

For full results visit: tsl-timing.com

Hammersley and Tongue took their VW Scirocco to victory at Thruxton



Fives Garage delight after double Tin Tops success

**THRUXTON
CSCC
23-24 APRIL**

The Classic Sports Car Club's Thruxton Thriller lived up to its title in parts, although too many competitors attracted penalties, mainly for pit infringements. Nonetheless, Saturday's combative Tin Tops and Turbo Tin Tops contests rewarded Adam Brown (Ford Fiesta ST) and John Hammersley/Nigel Tongue (VW Scirocco Type R), who scored a memorable double in Fives Garage-prepared cars.

Andrew Windmill (Honda Civic) negated his 30-second Snetterton Tin Tops success penalty and a stop/go, only to cop a further 30s, which left him third, behind the Field family's Proton Persona. Brown took the win, having scrapped with Manoj Patel, who had a minute added to his time for not switching his Civic's ignition off at the stop.

Hammersley took a 10s hit for jumping the Turbo start, but relayed the lead to

Tongue. With Carl Chambers's Peugeot 208 GTI out, they beat Simon Smail (Ford Fiesta) after Charlie Newton-Darby (Mini), second on the road, was among seven docked 60s for pitlane speeding.

Open Series and New Millennium winner Brad Sheehan (BMW E46 M3) relied on his daughter's stopwatch to time his stops. When second-placed Nathan Wells/Mark Steward were penalised for stopping short, Kevin Clarke (M3 CSL) was promoted.

Sheehan finished behind Jamie Sturges's VW Golf TCR after a tough New Millennium fight, but Sturges rejoined 0.8s too soon and was exasperated to be demoted to third behind Michael Vitulli (M3).

A five-place Magnificent Sevens grid drop for his Snetterton win didn't hinder Christian Pittard, who passed Ben Simonds for a Team Leos Caterham CSR 1-2 over 40 minutes. A leaking brake caliper cost Tim Davis (C400) third, advancing Richard Carter (R300). Pittard withdrew from the sprint race in which Davis and Simonds

jumped the chicane, whereupon a heavy landing sidelined Simonds. Duellists Carter and David Holroyd (CSR 1600 turbo) completed the podium.

"I'm 73, Chris [Conoley] is 75 and the car is 60," smiled Allen Tice, who "drove around" oil surge to nurse their faithful Marcos-Volvo to victory in Sunday's one-hour Classic K race. With runaway leader Murray Shepherd pitting Anthony Hancock's Lotus Elan for its exhaust to be lashed up prior to engine problems, and chaser Paul Tooms's Elan GTS out on lap one in a plume of smoke from a melted oil capillary, the veterans were surprised to win. Alex Thistlethwayte soloed his Ford Mustang to second, ahead of Ollie Streek, utterly brilliant in his Mini Cooper S, which finished with a bald left-front tyre.

TVR Tuscan drivers Alex Taylor and Stuart Daburn won Modern and Future Classics respectively. Oliver Smith's rapid BMW E36 M3 was about to lap Taylor, having passed his shadow Matt Holben in the safety car-disrupted former race, when it broke at Church on the penultimate lap.

Daburn's success came after Mark Chilton's ballistic Nissan Skyline split another engine block. Following a caution period when Bob Searles's Aston Martin DBS and Chris Pidcock's Porsche 924 sideswiped at Church, Miles Masarati's 911 Turbo wouldn't restart at the stops. It left David Burke (Porsche RSR clone) to hunt down Ryan Mone's well-driven 944 for second. Burke fell just short, but was demoted to sixth behind Rob Hardy (944), Ian Knight (VW Golf GTI) and Matthew Irons/Jake Severs (BMW 323i).

Attrition decimated the small Special Saloons & Modsports field. Jack Gadd put



Sheehan (left) romped to victory in both the Open and New Millennium races

WEEKEND WINNERS

TIN TOPS

Adam Brown (Ford Fiesta ST)

TURBO TIN TOPS/PUMA CUP

John Hammersley/Nigel Tongue
(VW Scirocco Type R)

OPEN SERIES

Brad Sheehan (BMW M3 E46)

NEW MILLENNIUM

Brad Sheehan (BMW M3 E46)

MAGNIFICENT SEVENS

Race 1 Christian Pittard (Caterham CSR)**Race 2** Tim Davis (Caterham C400)

CLASSIC K

Allen Tice/Chris Conoley (Marcos 1800 GTS)

MODERN CLASSICS

Alex Taylor (TVR Tuscan)

FUTURE CLASSICS

Stuart Daburn (TVR Tuscan, below)

SPECIAL SALOONS & MODSPORTS

Race 1 Jack Gadd (Ford RSR Escort-Millington)**Race 2** Clive Anderson (BMW E30 V8 turbo)

SWINGING SIXTIES

Ray Barrow (Chevrolet Camaro)

SLICKS SERIES

Sam Allpass (BMW-Chevrolet M4)

For full results visit: tsl-timing.com

his 2.8-litre RSR Ford Escort on pole and stormed the first race, restarted after Tom Carey's Honda CRX's engine bay erupted into flames at Allard. Gadd's closest rival Clive Anderson spun his BMW E30 on the first and last laps, advantaging Ian Hall (Darrian Wildcat) and Rod Birley (E36 M3). In the sequel, Gadd shot from the back to the front as Hall's fifth gear exploded, before Anderson blasted back past Gadd.

Swinging Sixties dominator Jamie Keevill (Elan) was disgruntled to receive a jumped-start penalty, which promoted Ray Barrow's Chevrolet Camaro. Jack Smith hustled his MGA superbly, relaying dad Steve to third before Dean Halsey's Datsun 240Z hit the barrier at Allard and brought out red flags.

MARCUS PYE



A PHOENIX FROM THE ASHES BMWs generally don't feature rear-mounted six-litre Chevrolet V8 engines, but Sam Allpass's unique M4 – built by Geoff Steel Racing on a French Solution F tubeframe chassis – is the exception. Raced sparingly since it caught fire in testing for the Classic Sports Car Club's 2020 Thruxton event, the BMW carried Allpass to Slicks Series honours following a perfectly timed pit call, as pursuer Chris Griffin spun and rolled his Aston Martin GT4 at Village.



A HISTORY OF PORSCHE PREPARING Parr Motorsport has been synonymous with preparing Porsches since 1984, and David Burke's 1974 911 Carrera RSR lookalike, which graced the Open Series and Future Classics grids, showcased its work. It was originally a 1982 three-litre SC, but Parr reconfigured it with the whale-tailed RSR bodykit to resemble the Modsports contender raced in the 1970s by John Cooper and Allan Broad. Burke lost third in the Future race for exceeding the pit speed limit.



FROM ROAD CAR TO RACE WINNER Clive Anderson's Prism Racing BMW E30, powered by a 5.1-litre twin-turbo Rover V8 engine developing 525bhp, went better than ever at Thruxton, winning the second Special Saloons & Modsports race. Designed and built in-house by Anderson, the machine has evolved from Anderson's wife Dee's standard road car. British-born to Jamaican parents, he proudly celebrates his heritage by flying the nation's flag on the car.

Pryce is on the money as he gets redemption

RALLY TENDRING & CLACTON
BRC
23-24 APRIL

Osian Pryce's British Rally Championship title hopes were turned, quite literally, upside down just over five months ago, as his Volkswagen Polo R5 lay the wrong way up in a field on the penultimate stage of the Ulster Rally.

Last weekend was the best possible start to his redemption. The Welshman snatched a sensational victory from four-time BRC champion Keith Cronin and took the spoils at the opening round of the season, Rally Tendring & Clacton. Pryce grappled with Cronin during the final two loops and wrestled the lead from the grip of the ultra-experienced Irishman to secure the perfect start to his campaign.

"That win is really special," said Pryce. "I didn't think it was possible to be honest, but big thanks to the team, they turned the car around this morning and made it into that sweet thing that we were really looking for."

It had been a hard week for Pryce, who suffered from last-minute funding issues and the loss of a close friend. "I'm well chuffed really," he added. "I almost wasn't coming on Thursday. We have had a rocky road but I'd really like to dedicate this win to a good friend Richard Lewis who sadly left us this week, so this one is for him."

With the Essex-based event on the calendar for the first time in the BRC's 64-year history, there was no formbook to draw from. And with stages reminiscent of a Belgian and Scottish Borders crossbreed, any one of the top-tier crews could have thrown up some surprises. But some things



never change, and it was Cronin who stole the march over the chasing pack during the opening two seafront stages on Saturday evening and headed into day two with a slender 0.6-second lead.

After bedding into his Polo R5 and the tyre lottery that befell crews on the uncharted surfaces, Cronin was on a mission. Closest challenger on the morning loop, Ruari Bell, was forced out after his Skoda Fabia R5 suffered radiator damage, which left Pryce and Cronin to fight all the way to the finish, with set-up adjustments to Pryce's Polo the saviour of his rally.

James Williams quietly set about doing his own thing during the weekend, working his way towards the front in his Hyundai i20 R5. His very first BRC fastest stage time came on the second test. Technical issues kept him at arm's length from the

frontrunning Polos, but third was a welcome result.

Equally as enthralling as the battle for the top-flight honours, the Junior BRC contenders hustled their way through the lanes within a whisker of each other all weekend too. Norwegian Ola Nore Jr made light work of his British debut and dispatched 2021 Junior BRC runner-up Eamonn Kelly's similar Ford Fiesta Rally4 in the final throes of the event. The European Rally Championship ace showed impressive pace to take a somewhat surprising victory. "I really can't believe I've managed to do this," he said. "I just want to get the experience and mileage, but I had such a comfortable feeling, I just kept going."

Kelly salvaged second spot, while Kyle White took his Peugeot 208 Rally4 to third after initially leading the class.

MATT COTTON



RALLY RESULTS

1 Osian Pryce/Noel O'Sullivan (Volkswagen Polo GTI R5) 42m38.4s;
2 Keith Cronin/Mikie Galvin (Polo GTI R5) +5.4s; 3 James Williams/Dai Roberts (Hyundai i20 R5); 4 Elliot Payne/Tom Woodburn (Ford Fiesta Rally2); 5 Ola Nore Jr/Jack Morton (Ford Fiesta Rally4); 6 Eamonn Kelly/Conor Mohan (Fiesta Rally4). **Junior BRC** Nore/Morton.

For full results visit:
britishrallychampionship.co.uk



Moran and Summers share wins at competitive opening round

**PRESCOTT
BRITISH HILLCLIMB
23-24 APRIL**

The 2022 British Hillclimb Championship started in superb style at Prescott on Sunday with run-off victories for Scott Moran and Alex Summers.

To open up the 75th anniversary season of Britain's longest running national championship, a fantastic entry gathered at the Gloucestershire venue, with a number of contenders going after places in the coveted top 12 run-offs. After the opening class runs came a ferociously competitive first run-off, with 0.1 seconds covering the top five cars in an absolute thriller, which could be the closest top five for a run-off in the championship's history.

Moran proved to be the only man to break the 36s mark to take victory in round one with a 35.99s climb in Graham Wynn's Gould GR59. But his rivals ran him

incredibly close, and Summers was just 0.02s back, while Trevor Willis, top-class newcomer Matt Ryder and reigning champion Wallace Menzies all ran in the very low 36s bracket.

"I'm pleased with that," said Moran as he opened his bid for a record-breaking seventh BHC crown. "Avon has come back fighting and the tyres were working very well."

At the end of the afternoon, the big guns came out for the second points-scoring run-off, and this time it was Summers who delivered with a 35.43s climb to better Moran by just 0.20s. "We got there in the end, but it took a while to scrub the tyres in," said Summers. Menzies improved on what was, by his own incredibly high standards, a middling first run to take third, but the half-second gap to Moran will keep Wallace and engineer Tom New occupied this week.

One of the stars of the day was 26-year-old Ryder, making his debut in the big league in Sean Gould's eponymous GR59, which he is sharing this season with Will Hall. Stepping up from being a competitive 1600cc class runner was a huge challenge for Ryder, but he rose to the occasion magnificently and finished joint third and fifth to show that he is already a contender even at this early stage of the season. "I didn't think we'd be this high up at the first meeting," said Ryder. "It's a massive step up."

Ryder had a scare in the second class runs when a problem with the traction control system caused the car to stutter away from the line, and he only just scraped into the top 12 times to qualify for the run-off.

The stage is set for a supremely



PRESCOTT RESULTS

ROUND 1

1 Scott Moran (4.0 Gould-Judd GR59J) 35.99s; 2 Alex Summers (2.7 DJ Firestorm-Cosworth) 36.01s; 3= Trevor Willis (3.2 OMS-RTE 28) & Matthew Ryder (4.0 Gould-Judd GR59JB) 36.05s; 5 Wallace Menzies (3.3 Gould-Cosworth GR59M) 36.09s; 6 David Uren (3.5 Gould-NME GR55B) 36.69s; 7 Paul Haines (1.3 Gould-Suzuki GR59) 36.76s; 8 Will Hall (4.0 Gould-Judd GR59JB) 36.83s; 9 Richard Spedding (1.6 GWR-Hayabusa Raptor 2) 37.10s; 10 David Warburton (1.6 Gould-Suzuki GR59) 37.42s.

ROUND 2

1 Summers 35.43s; 2 Moran 35.63s; 3 Menzies 36.14s; 4 Willis 36.44s; 5 Ryder 36.76s; 6 Uren 36.81s; 7 Hall 36.82s; 8 Spedding 36.93s; 9 Haines 37.06s; 10 Warburton 37.34s.

POINTS

1= Moran & Summers 19; 3 Willis 15; 4= Ryder & Menzies 14; 6 Uren 10.

For full results visit: britishhillclimb.co.uk

competitive season in the 1600cc single-seater class with a whole gaggle of likely winners. Richard Spedding, David Warburton and Maltese commuter Zach Zammit all qualified for the run-offs and it was Spedding, now with a 1600cc normally aspirated Hayabusa engine in his GWR Raptor, who took the class spoils.

Paul Haines topped the two-litre division to get his Gould GR59 into both run-offs. Meanwhile, Damien Bradley lopped more than a second off the class record in his mighty Subaru Legacy.

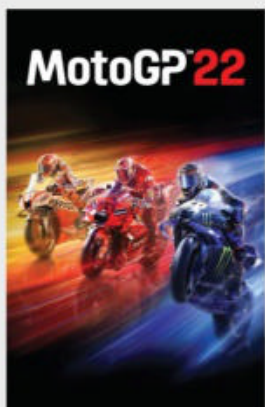
The action resumes almost immediately, with the top guns heading to Craigantlet in Northern Ireland this Saturday.

PAUL LAWRENCE

FINISHING STRAIGHT



Blast from the MotoGP past



VIDEO GAME MOTOGP 22

RRP £59.99

(available on PC, PlayStation 4, PlayStation 5, Xbox One, Xbox Series X|S and Nintendo Switch)

When it comes to reviewing the yearly official game of Grand

Prix motorcycle racing, the usual format would be to run through the gameplay changes and discuss alterations to the career mode. But for *MotoGP 22* – released last week by publisher Milestone – the focus is on a brand-new narrative-led feature that recaps the 2009 real-world season.

As with every official MotoGP game, you are still able to choose between all riders, teams and tracks from the current Moto3, Moto2 and top-class campaigns. But the *NINE Season 2009* is an additional documentary mode covering Valentino Rossi's ninth MotoGP title – perhaps unsurprising given the nine-time champion's retirement from the premier class. It mixes archive footage featuring voiceover work plus gameplay where you relive moments out on track.

The mix of footage and gameplay

is seamlessly integrated, flowing from one race to the next almost as if you're inside an interactive museum. It's an enthralling addition that delivers something innovative for the genre, but it also highlights some of the glaring omissions in the *MotoGP* games.

The fourth round from 2009 took place at Le Mans' Bugatti Circuit and featured a flag-to-flag race with changeable weather conditions. *NINE* sets you up with the weather context and places you in the race when Jorge Lorenzo is trying to stay upright with slick tyres on a damp track.

Except, when you take control, it's a bone-dry track because *MotoGP 22* can't simulate mixed conditions. You either have dry, or wet, but the circuits don't evolve and nor can you switch motorcycles in the pitlane.

The long lap penalty, introduced in last season's game, returns but sometimes frustrates as the clear rulings of the real world don't quite translate. If Jack Miller rode over the green kerb sections at the weekend it would count as a violation. Here, not every off-track section counts.

One surprising new element that is featured, however, is the latest Spielberg Red Bull Ring layout. You can try the Schikane before the real heroes head there in August. This sits alongside the Indonesian venue Mandalika and new circuits or layouts are

always welcome for a yearly motorsport game to help add variety.

The way you slow down is also heavily revised. Irksome for players who were not experienced, the braking technique used in the previous two games required a 2000-word essay to explain the basics. This year, the process is streamlined. Overshooting a curve is par for the course during your first few hours, but you will eventually find a rhythm.

Reduce your speed earlier than initially anticipated, don't forget the rear brakes during big stops and watch out for the front pushing wide. The bikes are also far less likely to snake around or be unsettled by bumps. The net result is more controlled, yet it still has a learning curve. However, the interminable front push upon corner entry can still feel a little numb.

The rideheight device first popularised initially to speed up standing start launches, but now used down every straight, also makes an appearance and can be manually controlled. Tap the appropriate button at the right time, and the rear hunkers down, helping prevent wheelies.

This is what *MotoGP 22* is about. Refining the on-track physics and trying to balance simulation with accessibility. You can tell that has been the primary goal too, as the main career mode is largely unchanged.



Rideheight device can be activated manually on every straight to help prevent wheelies



Relive moments from the 2009 season

Aside from the menus receiving a lick of paint, there are no major structural renovations. If it isn't broken...

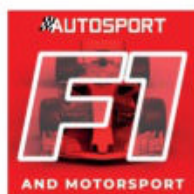
The *NINE* narrative mode is a fun addition, the braking much improved and the new locations very welcome. The game continues to deliver class-leading visual prowess and there are more recognisable riders included than Marc Marquez has trophies.

But there is also this deep-rooted sense that some of the fundamentals need tweaking to keep the authenticity at the required level. Despite that, *MotoGP 22* remains one of the finest games based upon a motorsport series there currently is.

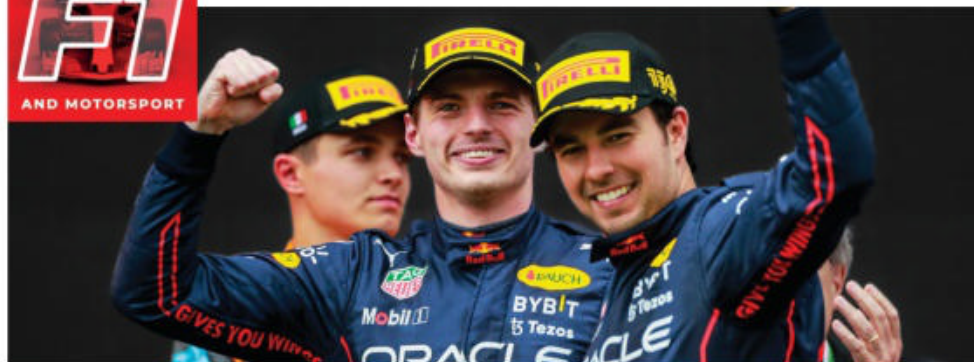
THOMAS HARRISON-LORD

For daily racing game news, visit traxion.gg

FINISHING STRAIGHT



[autosport.com/podcast](https://www.autosport.com/podcast)



F1 Emilia Romagna GP review

Max Verstappen produced a dominant performance at the Emilia Romagna Grand Prix to lead a Red Bull 1-2, as Ferrari's Charles Leclerc let a podium slip away. Grand Prix Editor Alex Kalinauckas, F1 Reporter Luke Smith and Motorsport Network Director of Digital Strategy Jess McFadyen discuss the race with host Martyn Lee in the latest Autosport Podcast.

WHAT'S ON

Formula E

Round 4/9

Monte Carlo, Monaco

30 April

TV Live Channel 4, Sat 1330, Eurosport 2, Sat 1330

IndyCar Series

Round 4/16

Barber, USA

1 May

TV Live Sky Sports F1, Sun 1730

Indy Lights

Round 2/11

Barber, USA

1 May

DTM

Round 1/8

Portimao, Portugal

30 April-1 May

TV Live BT Sport 3, Sat 1215, BT Sport Extra 1, Sun 1215

TCR Europe

Round 1/7

Portimao, Portugal

30 April-1 May

Euroformula Open

Round 1/9

Estoril, Portugal

30 April-1 May

International GT Open

Round 1/7

Estoril, Portugal

30 April-1 May

Australian Supercars

Round 4/13

Neerabup, Australia

30 April-1 May

TV Live BT Sport Extra 3, Sat 1115, BT Sport ESPN, Sun 0515, Sun 0830

IMSA SportsCar

Round 4/12

Laguna Seca, USA

1 May

NASCAR Cup

Round 11/36

Dover, USA

1 May

TV Live Premier Sports 1, Sun 1930

NASCAR Xfinity

Round 10/33

Dover, USA

30 April

MotoGP

Round 6/21

Jerez, Spain

1 May

TV Live BT Sport 2, Sun 1230

TV Highlights ITV4, Mon 2000

UK MOTORSPORT

Brands Hatch MSVR

30 April-1 May

7 Race Series (1600s, 420R), GT Cup, GT World Challenge, Porsche Club Championship
Livestream via gt-world-

challenge-europe.com

Donington Park MSVR

30 April-1 May

'60s Touring Car Challenge/U2TC, Amon Cup, Group C1, Historic Touring Car Challenge/Tony Dron Trophy, Jaguar Classic Challenge, Pall Mall Cup, Pre-War Sports Cars, Woodcote Trophy/Stirling Moss Trophy

Livestream via doningtonhistoric.com

Silverstone 750MC

30 April-1 May

5Club MX-5, 750 Formula, Alfa Romeo, Armed Forces Race Challenge, Classic Stock Hatch, Clio Sport, F1000, Hot Hatch, Locost, MR2, Roadsport
Livestream via alphalive.co.uk

Cadwell Park CTA

1-2 May

Civic Cup, Superkarts, Time Attack

Castle Combe CCRC

2 May

CCRC (FF1600, GT, Hot Hatch, Saloon), MGOC, Mighty Mini, Track Attack

British Hillclimb Championship

Round 2/13

Craigantlet, NI
30 April





FINISHING STRAIGHT

FROM THE ARCHIVE

World championship leader Jochen Rindt waits his turn, lunch in hand (and what appears to be chip in mouth), in the queue at Brands Hatch's self-service eatery of choice at the 1970 British Grand Prix. Rindt (Lotus 72) started the race, run on Saturday 18 July, from pole position, but immediately lost out to Jacky Ickx (Ferrari 312B) and Jack Brabham (Brabham BT33). On lap seven, at the same time that Ickx's transmission packed up, Rindt got past Brabham to take the lead and what followed was a protracted pursuit of Austrian by Australian, which ended on lap 69 of 80 when Brabham took over at the front and the result seemed settled... until the final corner of the last lap, when the BT33's fuel tank ran dry, allowing Rindt to take the flag.



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MY FAVOURITE... **TRACK**

Portimao

JOSH COOK



MAIN: MCLAREN; INSET: JEP

You'd be forgiven for thinking that British Touring Car Championship star Josh Cook would name Thruxton – scene of seven of his 13 race wins in the series – as his favourite circuit. But while the West Countryman indeed has a soft spot for the Hampshire speedbowl, his local BTCC venue, it's a track he has never raced on that he rates as the best.

“Here in the UK, Thruxton is my favourite probably, but Portimao is a phenomenal track, with a lot of undulations, a lot of blind corners, a lot of crests,” asserts Cook. “It's really good fun. I've done a lot of work there [testing and coaching] in McLaren GT cars. The corners are quite open, and they funnel in – it really rewards bravery. It has slow-speed and then the really high-speed corners – there's just a mix of everything, and the venue's really nice.”

The BTC Racing Honda ace has mentioned the undulations and crests, and the best part, he reckons, is Turns 7

and 8... and what follows: “My favourite bit is probably the really tight blind double-right after you get up to the top of the hill, and the circuit just falls away, and you get that rollercoaster feeling – your stomach goes as you drop down.” What's it like compared to Paddock Hill Bend at Brands Hatch? “It's a sharper drop, so you get more of a sensation in your stomach. You can liken it as similar to that. But if you were to do Cadwell Park in reverse and drop down over that Mountain bit – that's what it feels like.”

It's not just the layout of the ribbon of asphalt to be enjoyed. The Autodromo Internacional do Algarve, to give it its formal name, also offers superb facilities. “Every time we go there, there's a fountain with a shallowish pond there,” laughs Cook. “Man-made, and it's like a shallow swimming pool. And every time we go there... it's always very hot there, but they always have to remind us that we're not allowed to dive in!”

MARCUS SIMMONS



IN NEXT WEEK'S ISSUE

F1 booming in the USA

HOW IT'S HAPPENED, AND HOW MIAMI IS GEARING UP

BINGHAM/MOTORSPORT IMAGES



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