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Max matches Mansell at Monza

Verstappen defies penalty and Ferrari to take 31st F1 win

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CHARLES LECLERC

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Verstappen wins again as F1 rules come under more scrutiny

Ferrari took a surprise pole position for its home race at Monza and made all the correct strategy calls but still lost the Italian Grand Prix.

As Matt Kew shows in our analysis on page 14, the main reasons for that were Red Bull's novel set-up approach and Max Verstappen's sheer speed. Whatever Ferrari tried, it seemed set to lose.

The late safety car *appeared* to give the team an extra chance, only for that to be dashed because there wasn't time for a restart. This has created some controversy, even within the Autosport office and between experienced and seasoned F1 observers.

From this writer's point of view, the decision was correct. You can't really (rightly) criticise F1 rules not being adhered to last year in Abu Dhabi and then moan when they *were* followed last weekend.

Alex Kalinauckas argues for an alternative approach on p11, one which would surely please many fans but could also be argued would take F1 further away from a meritocratic sport and more towards pure entertainment, not to mention increase the risk of costly damage in the time of a cost cap... Please let us know what you think by sending an email to autosport@autosport.com.

While Verstappen took another step towards a seemingly inevitable second world crown, there were several other championship storylines playing out. Hyundai found controversy on the Acropolis Rally (p30), Toyota set up a World Endurance title showdown with Alpine (p36) and Will Power finally took a second IndyCar success (p44).

Kevin Turner
Chief Editor
kevin.turner@autosport.com

NEXT WEEK
22 SEPTEMBER
How Max has changed
We look at Verstappen in 2022 and bring you the best of the Goodwood Revival

Have your say, get in touch

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

E-mail
autosport@autosport.com

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A new BRM V16, Goodwood Revival preview and ways of forging a career in motorsport all feature in the latest edition of our free supplement.

Hulkenberg in contention for Haas F1 seat

ANDRE

FORMULA 1

Nico Hulkenberg is in contention to make another Formula 1 comeback in 2023 after joining the fight for the vacant seat at Haas.

Hulkenberg last raced full-time in F1 in 2019, and has since made a handful of stand-in appearances in his role as reserve driver at Racing Point and Aston Martin.

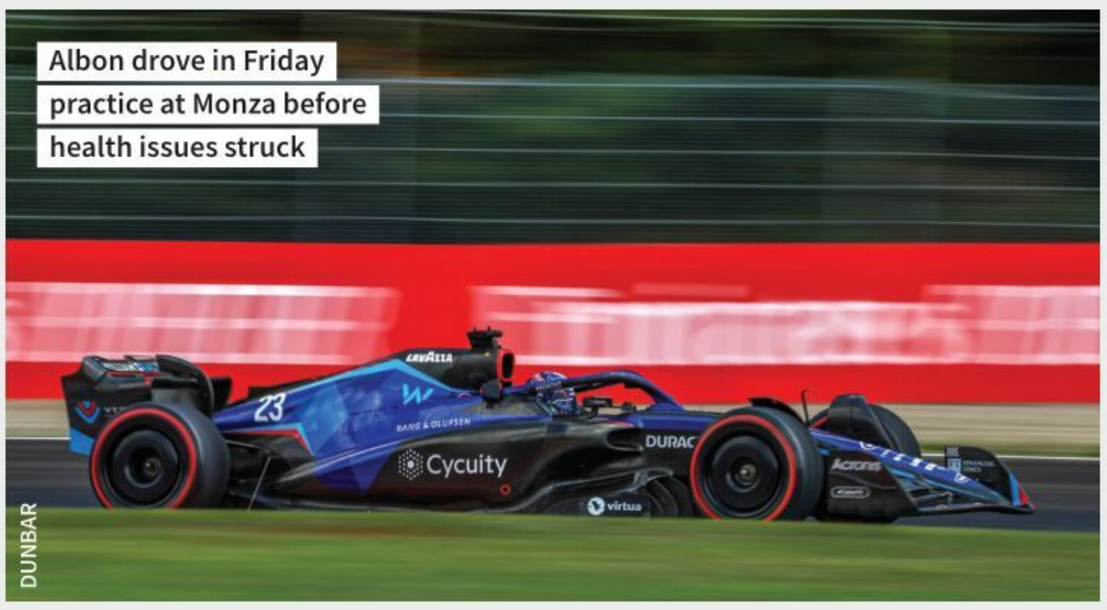
Autosport understands Hulkenberg is now in the mix for a potential return next year with Haas, which looks set to drop Mick Schumacher after two seasons. Ex-Alfa Romeo F1 driver Antonio Giovinazzi is high on the list of options, having driven for the team in FP1 at Monza, while reserve driver Pietro Fittipaldi could also be in contention depending on sponsorship.

"Everybody with a superlicence is on the list," said Haas F1 chief Gunther Steiner. "I think [Hulkenberg is] a candidate like all the other ones, because he's got a superlicence. He has done F1, he has experience. There is nobody who is racing now that you could get if you wanted to change. We just have to see what is the best decision."

Hulkenberg is also thought to be under consideration at Alpine, which may be forced to abandon its plans to sign Pierre Gasly from AlphaTauri because the FIA looks unlikely to grant IndyCar driver Colton Herta an exemption for a superlicence.

Red Bull said it was willing to release Gasly from its sister team with a year remaining on his contract on the condition it could sign Herta, who is just short of the required superlicence points tally. An FIA spokesperson said the governing body would "not be pressured by any teams into decisions on matters such as superlicence points" amid concerns from other squads about the possible use of force majeure to make an exception. FIA president Mohammed Ben Sulayem is understood to be keen on following the existing governance to the letter.

But Herta is set to try and further his F1 credentials by taking part in a private test with Alpine at the Hungaroring in the gap before Singapore at the start of October. Alpine had already arranged the running for Oscar Piastri, who has since been stood down from his extensive test programme after signing with McLaren for 2023. The running is understood to be meant to aid AlphaTauri in its evaluation of Herta for a drive, thus helping Alpine's push to sign Gasly.


Albon drove in Friday practice at Monza before health issues struck

DUNBAR

Alpine is also thought to be weighing up a promotion for one of its academy drivers, Jack Doohan, who has impressed through his rookie season in Formula 2 this year.

Another driver who could appear in the private Alpine test is Nyck de Vries, who staked his claim for a 2023 seat in emphatic fashion with his drive to ninth at Monza for Williams last weekend as a late stand-in for Alex Albon. Williams F1 boss Jost Capito said there was "nothing else he has to do" to convince the team of his worth for a drive next year but noted "he has other commitments as well".

De Vries is currently contracted to Toyota's World Endurance Championship squad as a reserve driver with a view to landing a racing seat in 2023, while the 2021 FE champion has also been linked with a move to Maserati now his current team Mercedes is pulling out of the electric championship.

Williams issued an update on Albon on Monday that revealed the Anglo-Thai driver suffered respiratory failure after undergoing appendicitis surgery, which was "a known but uncommon complication". "He was re-intubated and transferred to intensive care for support," the team said. "He made excellent progress overnight and was able to be removed from mechanical ventilation yesterday morning. He has now been transferred to a general ward and is expected to return home tomorrow. There were no other complications."

Albon was expected to return home on Tuesday (13 September), and Williams said Albon was hopeful of returning for the next race in Singapore at the start of October: "Alex's full focus is on recovery and preparation ahead of the Singapore Grand Prix later this month."

LUKE SMITH, ADAM COOPER & JONATHAN NOBLE

Red Bull-Porsche F1 plans scrapped

FORMULA 1

Red Bull looks set to continue alone – or tempt Honda back

Porsche's plans to enter Formula 1 in 2026 through a partnership with Red Bull Racing have been scrapped.

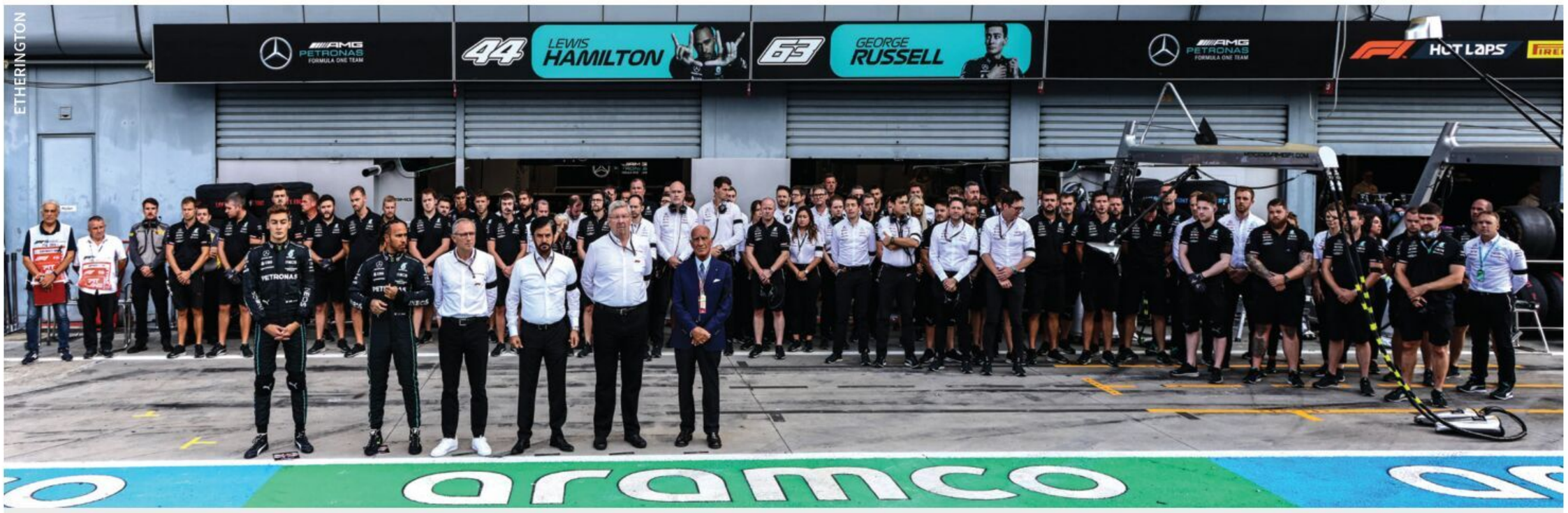
Regular delays to announcement plans, fuelled by uncertainty from Red Bull about Porsche's plan to take a 50% share in the team, have ultimately led to negotiations coming to an end, as confirmed by Porsche in a statement last Friday ahead of the Italian Grand Prix.

"The premise was always that a partnership would be based on an equal footing, which would include not only an engine partnership but also the team," said the statement. "This could not be achieved. With the finalised rule changes, the racing series nevertheless remains an attractive environment for Porsche, which will continue to be monitored."

Red Bull team principal Christian Horner said that a "strategic non-alignment" emerged as talks wore on. "Red Bull has demonstrated what it's capable of in F1," he said. "As an independent team and now engine manufacturer, we look forward to go to competing against the OEMs with the powertrain as well as the chassis."

Red Bull is continuing with its 2026 engine plans for its in-house operation, Red Bull Powertrains, but is open to working with Honda again on the hybrid side should the Japanese manufacturer return under the new rules.

LUKE SMITH AND ADAM COOPER



F1 paddock pays tribute to the Queen

FORMULA 1

The Formula 1 community came together to hold a minute's silence ahead of the Italian Grand Prix in remembrance of Queen Elizabeth II, who died last Thursday at the age of 96.

Teams came out into the pitlane shortly before the start of opening practice at Monza last Friday for a minute's silence, before another opportunity was given to pay respects before the start on Sunday as part of the grid ceremonies.

A number of teams also ran with tributes to the Queen written on their cars throughout the weekend, while team personnel wore black armbands. F1's TV offering was also more muted than usual over the Monza weekend as a mark of respect.

Lewis Hamilton hailed the Queen's "long-lasting" legacy, and recalled meeting her, having been honoured with an MBE in 2008 before being knighted in 2020. "I had the incredible honour of being able to spend time with her," said Hamilton. "It is something I'll never forget. We talked about our shared love of dogs and she was incredibly generous with her time."

LUKE SMITH

GIBSON/MOTORSPORT IMAGES

Finalists selected for Aston Martin Autosport BRDC Young Driver Award

YOUNG DRIVER OF THE YEAR

The four finalists who will contest the 2022 Aston Martin Autosport BRDC Young Driver of the Year Award have been selected.

FIA Formula 3 race winner Ollie Bearman, GB3 championship leader Luke Browning, W Series dominator Jamie Chadwick and recently crowned Indy Pro 2000 champion Louis Foster will battle it out for prizes that include a test in Aston Martin F1 machinery. Chadwick (2019), Bearman and Foster (both 2021) are former finalists.

The Award, which aims to find and assist the best junior British racing drivers, will include fitness and simulator elements before a two-day test at the Silverstone Grand Prix circuit in MotorSport Vision Formula 2, United Autosports-run Ligier LMP3 and Beechdean Motorsport Aston Martin Vantage GT3 cars.

Aside from the F1 test, prizes for the winner — who will be announced at the Autosport Awards on 4 December — include £200,000, full British Racing Drivers' Club membership and an Arai helmet.

BRDC vice-president Derek Warwick is the chairman of the judging panel, which includes Award winners Dario Franchitti, Darren Turner, Andrew Kirkaldy and Alexander Sims, double British Touring Car champion Jason Plato, successful Lola and McLaren designer Mark Williams, Le Mans-winning engineer Leena Gade, leading commentator Ian Titchmarsh and Autosport Chief Editor Kevin Turner.

Previous winners of the Award include 2009 F1 world champion Jenson Button, 13-time grand prix winner David Coulthard, current F1 drivers Lando Norris and George Russell, triple Indianapolis 500 winner Franchitti, and 2014 World Endurance champion Anthony Davidson.

THE 2022 CONTENDERS

PORTLOCK/MOTORSPORT IMAGES

OLLIE BEARMAN — Aged 17

Third in FIA Formula 3 with Prema Racing

"I wasn't expecting to be nominated twice in a row. This year's experience should help massively. In F4 you don't really have tyre degradation, which is a big thing in the F2 car and in F3. I think I've made a big step and I'm a better driver than I was last year. The race run wasn't the best last time so that's where I'm looking to improve."

JEP/MOTORSPORT IMAGES

LUKE BROWNING — Aged 20

Currently leading GB3 with Hitech Grand Prix

"The Award is something I've been looking at since I stepped into car racing. It was a goal coming into the season. I've looked at the Award for years and years, and I was gutted when it didn't run when I won British F4 in 2020, but I'm a much better driver than I was then. I can't wait for the F2 car, it's a monster!"

SUTTON/MOTORSPORT IMAGES

JAMIE CHADWICK — Aged 24

Currently leading W Series with Jenner Racing

"I wasn't expecting this. My single-seater experience the first time was quite low and, although I've been driving in the same series, I feel I've come on a lot in the last three years. The F2 car was a bit of a beast that physically tested me so I'm looking forward to being stronger and seeing what fun I can have with it."

LOUIS FOSTER — Aged 19

Indy Pro 2000 champion with Exclusive Autosport

"It's really nice to be nominated again. Moving to America meant I had new challenges to face, such as ovals, but I was expecting to do well. I've learned a new driving style so I have a bunch more tools in my armoury compared to last year. I'd like to improve in the GT3 car because I was disappointed with my performance in that."

Foster steps up with Andretti

INDY LIGHTS

Recently crowned Indy Pro 2000 champion Louis Foster will race for Andretti Autosport's Indy Lights team next season.

Last year's Euroformula Open runner-up was a finalist in the 2021 Aston Martin Autosport BRDC Award, and moved to the Road to Indy ladder for this year. Joining Exclusive Autosport, Foster scored his first win on the Indianapolis Motor Speedway road course, then added six more victories to triumph convincingly ahead of Juncos Hollinger Racing's Reece Gold.

Now, the 19-year-old from Odiham will graduate to the last step before IndyCar, driving for Michael Andretti's team that has taken five drivers to the Lights title, most recently Kyle Kirkwood in 2021.

"As a driver, you always want to be in the best teams and that's certainly the case here," said Foster. "The Andretti family's commitment to bringing on and helping young talent means this was the first choice for me in 2023. I really hope I can make Michael and my new team proud by getting up to speed as quickly as we were able to in Indy Pro 2000 this season."

Michael Andretti said: "We are excited to have Louis join our team for 2023. I think he will adjust quickly, and I look forward to seeing him take the next step in his American racing career."

Foster will be charged with the task of recapturing the Lights title for Andretti Autosport, as the team's quartet — Sting Ray Robb, Matt Brabham, Hunter McElrea and Christian Rasmussen — were defeated this year by HMD Motorsports with Dale Coyne Racing's Linus Lundqvist. The Swede took five wins and was so consistent he needed only to start the first race at Laguna Seca last weekend to capture enough points to prevail. This was just as well, as Andretti Autosport swept the Lights double-header, finishing 1-2-3 in both races, led by Robb and Rasmussen respectively.

Lundqvist, with a $1.25million scholarship and a guarantee of at least three IndyCar starts in 2023, will be hot property but, as of yet, he has not been confirmed anywhere. Given his HMD/Coyne ties, he may run for the team in the Sebring evaluation test.

DAVID MALSHER-LOPEZ

BAGNALL/MOTORSPORT IMAGES

Gill leaves Mahindra FE team

FORMULA E

Mahindra Formula E principal and CEO Dilbagh Gill will leave the team after being in charge since the very first race in the championship back in 2014.

One of the founding teams in Formula E, Mahindra installed Gill as its team principal for the 2014-15 season ahead of the inaugural race in Beijing. He has overseen all five victories at the squad across its eight seasons in the championship, with Alex Lynn's win at the 2021 London E-Prix (left) its most recent triumph.

A former marketing and tech executive in the US and in his native India before joining Mahindra, Gill departs after 100 races in charge ahead of the 2022-23 season, as Mahindra prepares for the entrance of the Gen3 regulations. His final acts at the team were to sign off on supplying the returning Abt team with Mahindra powertrains for next year, and to sign 2016-17 champion Lucas di Grassi to partner Oliver Rowland for next season as Alexander Sims departed.

Mahindra, which has yet to confirm a replacement for Gill, also debuted its Gen3 car in the public eye at this year's Goodwood Festival of Speed, pedalled by development driver and brand ambassador Nick Heidfeld.

JAKE BOXALL-LEGGE

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JEP/MOTORSPORT IMAGES

Proton set for dual Porsche LMDh attack

WEC/IMSA

The German Proton team has emerged as clear favourite to run the second customer Porsche 963 LMDh prototypes available in both the World Endurance and the IMSA SportsCar championships in 2023.

The long-time Porsche GT entrant with close links to both the factory and 963 development partner Multimatic has looked certain for some time to get one of the two WEC cars where it would join the British Jota team. Now it has emerged as the leading contender to race as a Porsche customer in IMSA alongside JDC-Miller Motorsports.

Proton had made a bid for the remaining car available for North America earlier in the year, but Porsche looked set to go with a new operation set up alongside the IndyCar team run by US racing legend — and 1967 Le Mans 24 Hours winner — AJ Foyt. This deal, which would have involved JR Hildebrand, is now off the table.

Proton Competition team boss Christian Ried confirmed that his team, which races in the WEC in GTE Am with a pair of Porsche 911 RSRs under the Dempsey-Proton Racing banner, is working on a dual programme with the 963 in 2023. "We want to do it, but there is nothing confirmed as yet," said Ried. "We are still interested in both, because it is better to have two cars even if they are running in different championships."

He explained that the plans for the WEC programme are at a more advanced stage than those for North America. He also conceded that it is unlikely that the Proton USA branch of his team, which is running a Mercedes-AMG GT3 in the GT Daytona class this year, could be geared up to run an LMDh in time for the Daytona 24 Hours IMSA series opener in January.

It appears, however, that the North American customers of the 963 are unlikely to get the cars in time for Daytona. Porsche Motorsport boss Thomas Laudenbach said "it will be difficult" when asked if the deliveries of the cars can be made in time for the customers to go up against the factory Porsches fielded by Penske.

Laudenbach admitted that the LMDh programme remains "behind schedule", even though progress is on "an upward curve". That explains Porsche's decision not to race the car on an invitational basis in November's Bahrain WEC finale.

Porsche wants to maximise track time with the 963 ahead of its debut at Daytona and will instead add two more tests in the US.

GARY WATKINS

Ferrari continues racking up Hypercar miles

CAVAZZA/MOTORSPORT IMAGES

Ferrari Hypercar broke cover in July and is being extensively tested

LE MANS/WEC

Ferrari's new Le Mans Hypercar has already completed approximately 5000km of testing. The car that will take the Italian marque back to the pinnacle of sportscar racing as a factory in the World Endurance Championship next year has completed multi-day tests at Mugello and Barcelona since its Fiorano shakedown in July.

Antonello Coletta, Ferrari's sportscar racing boss, has expressed satisfaction with testing so far: "We have done a lot of kilometres and at the moment we are happy, but we know the road is long."

The next test is likely to take place within the next two weeks. The intention is that the Ferrari LMH will be on track every two weeks through the winter.

All eight factory Ferrari GT drivers have now driven the car, along with test driver Andrea Bertolini. Coletta reiterated his position that the WEC line-up will be chosen from the existing roster.

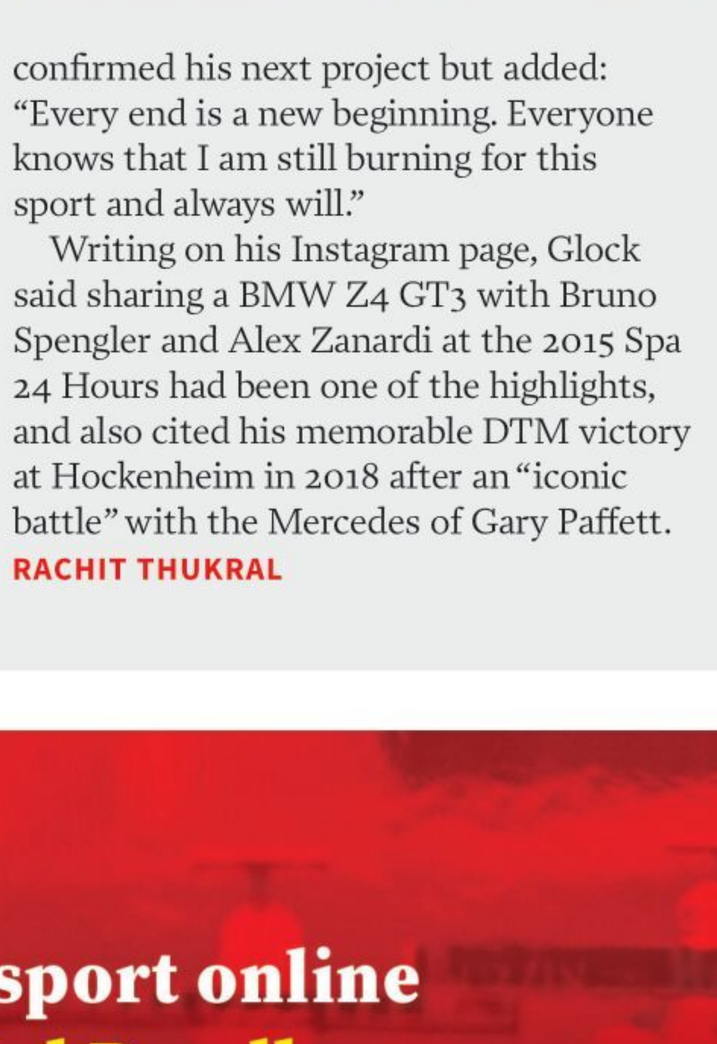
"I am happy with the drivers we have; I don't think we need to make any changes," he said. "We have a big family of drivers at Ferrari. We need to make the choice, but it is still early."

GARY WATKINS

EMMO AT MONZA Classic Team Lotus rolled back the years at Monza last weekend to celebrate 50 years since Emerson Fittipaldi's first Formula 1 title, which was clinched at the famous venue, reuniting him with Lotus 72 chassis 5. A series of runs were organised in support of the Italian Grand Prix with four of Fittipaldi's cars from his time at Lotus: 72/5, the 56B, a 49 and 72/7. Fittipaldi was joined in the demo runs by Karun Chandhok, Johnny Herbert, Mika Salo, Damon Hill and Martin Brundle. **Photo by Glenn Dunbar /Motorsport Images**

Glock calls time on BMW career

GTs/DTM



Ex-Formula 1 driver Timo Glock will leave BMW Motorsport at the end of the 2022 season.

The 40-year-old will call time on a decade-long partnership with the German manufacturer after next month's final round of the Italian GT sprint series at Mugello with Roberto Ravaglia's Ceccato Motors team.

"Thank you BMW Motorsport, spending 10 years together around the world on the best race tracks you can dream of," said BMW's five-time DTM race winner. "I really enjoyed the intense time in DTM with those wonderful Class 1 cars and great wins and podiums.

"Now it is time to move on. A special thanks goes to [former BMW Motorsport director] Jens Marquardt who was the key person behind this journey."

The 91-time F1 starter has not yet confirmed his next project but added: "Every end is a new beginning. Everyone knows that I am still burning for this sport and always will."

Writing on his Instagram page, Glock said sharing a BMW Z4 GT3 with Bruno Spengler and Alex Zanardi at the 2015 Spa 24 Hours had been one of the highlights, and also cited his memorable DTM victory at Hockenheim in 2018 after an "iconic battle" with the Mercedes of Gary Paffett.

RACHIT THUKRAL

IN THE HEADLINES

WRT TO STAY IN LMP2

Crack endurance squad WRT is planning to run two LMP2 ORECAs in the World Endurance Championship next season alongside its test programme with the new BMW LMDh prototype. Team boss Vincent Vosse has insisted that the 2021 WEC class title winners will maintain a two-car presence in the series in 2023 as it gears up to graduate to the Hypercar class with the M Hybrid V8 in 2024.

AUCTION FOR UKRAINE

Porsche World Endurance Championship racer Michael Christensen will put his Rolex Daytona watch up for auction to raise money to support Ukranian children. The Dane won the GTD class in 2017 with an Alegra Motorsports 911 GT3-R and the watch, valued at £30,000-35,000, will be sold at Bruun Rasmussen's Copenhagen saleroom on 28 September.

GHIOTTO BACK TO F2

Series veteran Luca Ghiotto replaced Roy Nissany at DAMS for the Formula 2 races at Monza last weekend. The 27-year-old Italian finished 13th in race one and retired from race two while Nissany served a ban for picking up his 13th penalty point of 2022 in the previous round at Zandvoort.

MORE SUCCESS FOR DUNNE

Irishman and British Formula 4 dominator Alex Dunne took two victories from the four Italian F4 contests at the Red Bull Ring last weekend. The US Racing driver won races one and four, while team-mate Kacper Sztuka and championship leader Andrea Kimi Antonelli (Prema) were the other victors.

PORSCHE CREW'S BIG WIN

Falken Motorsports Porsche drivers Joel Eriksson, Sven Muller, Jaxon Evans and Alessio Picariello won the inaugural 12-hour round of the Nurburgring Langstrecken-Serie, split over two parts, last weekend.

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A healing F1 rule change

The wound of Abu Dhabi 2021 still festers for some, as Monza's safety car farce showed. So how about a soothing balm? Warning: for some it might also chafe!

ALEX KALINAUCKAS

Who would have thought that just nine months after the most controversial ending to a Formula 1 championship since Jerez 1997 some people are still mightily pissed off? Lewis Hamilton said he was "not angry" about the safety car conclusion to the 2022 Italian Grand Prix, but then went on to reveal that the wound opened by the 2021 Abu Dhabi race ending in farce ultimately still festers: "There's only one time in the history of the sport where they haven't done the rules like that..."

But others were angry at Monza. The post-race boos in Italy came from a tifosi livid that their brief hopes of a grandstand finish had been dashed. That emotional outpouring combined with the frustration of many neutral fans, who had spotted a dull race might get a sudden twist, before a damp squib ending played out.

The FIA and its Formula 1 race control officials made the right calls at Monza. But the similarity of the events to Abu Dhabi and the frustrations of a grandstand finish teased and then removed reopened a wound not long closed, if it ever was for some.

There are ways the FIA can heal things — and the F1 organisation should also pay attention given its championship is being sullied by the ongoing furore. For a start, quick and better explanation of what is occurring in race control would be an easy win. It's remarkable the FIA still hasn't acted in this regard, which in my mind is an ex-official explaining on TV what is going on and why.

"Stopping the race creates the safest environment, ensuring excitement over anti-climax"

Another more fundamental and challenging step would be to change the rules in such circumstances so the race is automatically red flagged and restarted. Think Baku 2021. This suggestion is not universally popular *[correct! — ed]*, but it has additional upsides worth considering.

For a start, stopping the race creates the safest environment for marshals and competitors. It also ensures excitement in place of anti-climax. And, perhaps most importantly, it's fair to all competitors. Yes, it's harsh on drivers that have built race-winning leads such as Max Verstappen last weekend and Hamilton in Abu Dhabi. But being able to change tyres with their position preserved surely restores the balance.

The main argument against such a change is that it risks a 'wrong winner' scenario, where the best driver/car package on the day ultimately loses out. At the same time, F1's nature is that such a combination would most likely win a late-race restart scenario because the advantages that made them the best on that given day remain. It was revealed after Monza that such a rule change had even been assessed post-Abu Dhabi but was rejected by the teams. They fear the 'wrong winner' potential for all finishing positions, but this ignores the potential to gain in unexpected circumstances. That is still sport, even if labelled a gimmick in some quarters.

A late-race restart also risks a pack pile-up and so additional parts costs in a time of controlled team spending. But that wasn't an objection raised when the Baku race got a late shootout under the cost cap's first year. The drivers rather seemed to relish it.

One argument vocally put forward in Autosport towers is that a late-race stoppage codified in the rules for such circumstances may cheapen a GP spectacle. This is of course subjective to the individual, but is an understandable concern. It's matched to the thinking: 'sometimes these things just happen'.

But although this is the third instance in under two complete seasons of a late-race neutralisation/restart scenario, it's still rare overall. That makes it harder to agree this should just be accepted when alternatives are available and rules evolution is at F1's core, even in its very name.

An automatic red-flag rule would also bring with it the risk of cheating — one car stopping or crashing, a la Singapore 2008, to benefit a team-mate. Thankfully, this is also a rare scenario and one that is harshly punished. But the 'innocent until proven guilty' principle applies — alongside the understanding all competitors and officials must be open to proper scrutiny as befits any open society.

If the red flag scenario were to be passed, grey areas would need addressing — such as when in a race it becomes a factor, perhaps the final 10 or five laps — and properly explained. And the possibility for a race ending under an effective safety car in the event of a last-lap stoppage ahead of battling leaders surely would remain if time/laps can't be added back on — say as it is in NASCAR. That series also has its own 'Overtime' rules akin to what is being discussed here.

After the events of last weekend, it seems F1 and the FIA have a decision to make. Either the championship's current safety car-ending rules are doubled down on and the specific problems that arose at Monza are addressed — or a change comes. At least with the latter and the automatic red flag proposal there comes the additional benefit of better healing the Abu Dhabi wound, alongside guaranteeing extra exciting racing, which is surely what keeps bringing fans back to motorsport.

P14 ITALIAN GP REPORT

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The new approach that won Power his second crown

A bigger-picture outlook led IndyCar's pole position record breaker to his second championship — without compromising his speed and intensity

DAVID MALSHER-LOPEZ

So Will Power has done it. The fastest IndyCar driver of his generation has nailed his second championship, eight years after his first. The man who scored five wins in 2010, six in 2011 and both times failed to clinch the title, has been victorious in 2022 just once... along with eight other podium finishes and three additional top-fours.

It's been a curious season, watching this lethal weapon of a driver so often slip on the safety catch, refrain from going for long shots. This year he blended less of the go-for-it Tom Sneva and Bobby Unser-style attitude with more of the big-picture thinking of a Rick Mears or Al Unser.

Let no one describe it as a 'new analytical approach', however. The ability to analyse every facet of his craft has been a trait of Power's since he first drove for Derrick Walker, back in 2005. When Walker hooked him up with race engineer Dave Faustino in 2007, it was a match made in heaven. To this day, Power will bench-race with Faustino for hours, Will asking Dave how he can improve his driving, Dave asking Will what he needs from the car.

This side of Power used to occasionally be subsumed by the derring-do on track, the heart-on-sleeve interviews, the barely-contained — sometimes uncontained — rage when things went wrong. That stuff attracted more viewers. Few appreciated, and even fewer saw, all the hard work.

"There are still times when Will gets bothered, but he then gets rid of it quicker than he used to"

This was the year that Power decided to ensure that endeavour was converted into something tangible for all time. In 2014, his first title was all about proving himself to himself and others, and exorcising the demons that taunted him after his near-misses in 2010-12. This year, the title quest was about rewarding his #12 crew members, many of whom had been his loyal soldiers in battles for race victories and pole positions, but had yet to experience the joy of winning the war. Power admitted that the pressure to deliver this year largely came from wanting his crew to feel the satisfaction of posing with that prestigious Astor Cup at Laguna Seca.

So how hard was it for Power to suppress the urge to try and win everything and instead focus on winning the big thing?

"Look, from a championship perspective, every time you get a podium, that's not the day you're looking back on," he said. "You're looking back on the day you finished 19th, like at Road America. They're the days that lose championships. Top-threes don't. We got a lot of them this year. Anytime I got a top-four, I was happy.

"But in the past I would have been really pissed off, when your team-mates are winning. That was a big change. It's like, 'I don't care. I'm going to weather the storm while they're having a good run.' That in itself is a mental change. I'm not getting pissed off with a top-four, where before I would have been seething."

Mears told Autosport: "I think there are still times when Will gets bothered by certain things, but what's changed is that he then gets rid of it quicker than he used to; he won't let it nag away at him. In my career, I said that if someone cuts me off in Turn 1, I want to be over it by Turn 2, because if I'm not then it means my focus is not where it needs to be. Watching Will from the outside, it's fair to say he doesn't let things eat away at him for long. He's more, 'OK, what just happened is bad, but it's done, let's make the best of the next opportunity.' In my book, that's the right attitude to have."

Rest assured, Power hasn't gone soft in his forties. Some of his top-four finishes were the result of stirring comeback drives, where his racecraft appeared flawless, where he could make other aces look flat-footed. And he also delivered five pole positions this year, and there would have been two or three more, but for the vagaries of fate. Someone who used to work with him was particularly impressed with his P1 on the Indy road course in May.

"I think we can say he's still got it, hasn't he?" he said. "That one was a bit special. In all my years racing [approaching 40], I have never seen anyone who can put together a qualifying lap like Will."

And Mears was blown away by Power's effort at World Wide Technology Raceway. "Will said he thought he could go flat through [Turns] 3 and 4, but wasn't sure and went for it anyway," said the legend who scored 40 poles in his career. "And he left himself enough room to catch it and walk it up the track. That's a driver who has great feel for the car."

Even before last weekend when he surpassed Mario Andretti to become the most successful pole-winner in IndyCar history, Power was in the discussion over who's the fastest of all time. By winning the title in the manner he did, with the self-discipline he displayed, the record books will also now reflect the fact that Power can succeed by whatever method he chooses.

P44 INDYCAR FINALE REPORT

FORMULA 1

VERSTAPPEN TAKES THE VETTEL ROAD TO VICTORY

There was controversy about the safety car finish but only one driver was going to win at Monza

MATT KEW

PHOTOGRAPHY **RED BULL** AND motorsport IMAGES

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STAT

116

Verstappen's points lead is so big he could clinch the title next time out…

Of course Max Verstappen won the Italian Grand Prix. On paper, the race on enemy soil was nigh on a perfect fit for the way car and driver find their performance in 2022. The defending champion has been firing on all cylinders this season, much like the Honda engine mounted in the middle of his Red Bull that has produced a top-speed edge over Ferrari so often. As a result, flat-out Monza was surely tailor-made for the leggy RB18, even if the tifosi were desperately hoping for one of their own to win the 100th anniversary event at the 'Temple of Speed'.

Intriguingly, Red Bull somewhat defied expectation last weekend with its approach to set-up. Instead of running with a conventional wafer-thin rear wing to cut through the air as cleanly as possible and let the speedo climb more freely, the engineers actually opted for a higher downforce configuration. For if Verstappen could exploit the greater levels of grip to carry more speed out of the three chicanes, two Lesmos and one Parabolica, then he could spend less time on the straights, even if he wasn't hitting the same ultra-high V-max as the Ferraris.

There was previous here. In fact, a similar strategy allowed Sebastian Vettel to win the fastest race in the 'slowest' car back in 2011. On his way to a second world title, the German opted to use a shorter seventh gear ratio at Monza to sacrifice some speed at the end of the straights, while knowing he'd been much faster than anyone else onto them.

This wasn't quite an exact copy 11 years later, though, as Verstappen didn't edge qualifying. The Red Bull could set the pace through Curva Grande, della Roggia, Ascari and out of the final corner. But everywhere else, the Ferrari F1-75 used its superior battery deployment to streak ahead over the line. All told, Verstappen missed the benchmark set by Charles Leclerc by 0.145 seconds to set the second-fastest time. Even then, he would only form up on the grid in seventh place following a grid penalty for a change of internal combustion engine. That came on the advice of Honda. In the short term, the team felt it was picking the "least bad" circuit left on the calendar to mount a recovery from the midpack. In the longer term, that expanded pool of parts might just pay off later in the year should unreliability rear its head.

As soft-tyre starter Leclerc launched well from pole to keep an artificially promoted George Russell at arm's length into the opening right-left, Verstappen was already matching the mesmeric first-lap gains that had given him the win at Spa a fortnight earlier. His cause was helped by third-starting Lando Norris pulling away in the wrong setting to trigger an anti-stall, while Fernando Alonso and the allied AlphaTauri of Pierre Gasly unsurprisingly offered little resistance.

ETHERINGTON

Russell versus Leclerc at Turn 1. The Mercedes was forced to cut the chicane, to his annoyance

HONE

"IT HELPED THAT I HAD A GREAT FIRST LAP. I CLEARED MOST OF THE CARS BEFORE THEY GOT INTO A DRS TRAIN"

Verstappen kept putting his stickier C4 red-walled Pirellis to good use to pass the medium-starters ahead as 2021 Italian GP victor Daniel Ricciardo was soon relieved of third place under braking into the first chicane. It looked little more than easy pickings for the Dutch racer, who was now trailing Leclerc by just one Mercedes W13 and 2.6s after two of the 53 laps.

Leclerc and Verstappen traded early fastest laps over the timing line, the packed partisan crowd (337,000 over the weekend) cheering the red-and-yellow Ferrari through each corner. But the gap was beginning to go in only one direction. On lap five, Verstappen nailed his exit out of Ascari to close on Russell and then punishingly combined DRS and the limited effects of the tow in 2022 to sail cleanly past the Briton for second place down the main straight. It was now a clear fight for the win between the two main protagonists of the season.

Verstappen's assessment of the opening gambit was: "Of course, it helped a lot that I had a great first lap, and I could clear most of the cars before they got into a DRS train. You never know what is going to happen before Turn 1, right. But it worked out really well for me."

Verstappen kept nibbling a tenth and a bit out of Leclerc's cushion per tour until the lap counter hit double figures. Then 12th-running Vettel pulled up by a gap in the barrier on the exit of the second Lesmo with an ERS failure to mark the end of his final European F1 race. But despite the considerate parking, yellow flags morphed into a virtual safety car. Once again, and quite by accident, Vettel would help Verstappen to his victory.

The neutralised pace was only called into action after Leclerc and Verstappen had crossed the timing line. But one slow circuit later, Leclerc dived in for a pitstop. The Red Bull crew, having been prepared to welcome Verstappen, decided to stand down and do the opposite of their rivals as they watched the F1-75 shed its soft rubber for mediums in 2.2s. However, the full effect of stopping under the VSC was not realised as the green flags were waved as Leclerc trundled down the pitlane and he rejoined in third with 18s to find.

Given that all the pre-race simulations had returned a one-stop proposal, Ferrari was already committing to a maverick strategy. »

Tifosi hopes were raised as Leclerc led Russell early on. But Verstappen was looming

One trade-off for its lower-downforce configuration, in addition to a twitchy looking car, was degradation being a touch exaggerated compared to the more settled RB18s. As such, a second tyre change then became inevitable. But while the decisions from the Scuderia pitwall have repeatedly and justifiably come under so much heavy fire this season, this time team boss Mattia Binotto's now customary defence to the media was backed up by his opposite number. Christian Horner reckoned the red team had made a "fine call" and he understood why Ferrari had let go of track position.

Binotto further justified it by saying: "In hindsight, we [still] believe it was the right decision when the [virtual] safety car came out at that time of the race. We knew that Charles had good pace, but Max got better tyre degradation, and he was already faster for us. Staying on the simple same strategy of him, one-stop, he would have beat us sooner or later. The only chance for us was somehow to move strategy and to stop and not staying on one and pitting at the time of the VSC.

"We have been a bit unlucky because the VSC ended while we were still in the pitlane, so we were not getting all the potential benefit. Having said that, I think of one more note that is interesting. Red Bull were ready in the pitlane so they decided simply [to do the] opposite to us and would have probably likely pitted if we would have stayed out."

To ram home why Ferrari would have to stop again, Verstappen was

"IT'S AMAZING WHAT WE ARE EXPERIENCING WITHIN THE TEAM. IT'S IMPORTANT TO ENJOY IT"

once again a light touch with his tyres. He was able to nurse the now-ageing softs but, crucially, this came while maintaining respectable pace. He could lap a sustainable half a second slower than Leclerc to hold 10s over Russell as the Ferrari trailed by a further 4s. The Silver Arrow would eventually pit before Red Bull finally called time on Verstappen's first stint on lap 25. Once he had put some heat into his new yellow-walled C4s and thanks to a sound 2.4s service, there was barely 9s to find to Leclerc. With the Monegasque still a certainty to stop again, the win was now heading firmly in Verstappen's direction with more than half the GP still to run.

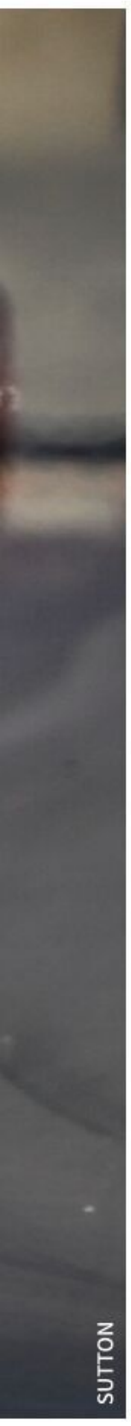
But not content to wait and let the afternoon play out, Verstappen turned up the wick to slash the gap by nearly 0.8s per lap as the interval dropped all the way down to 5.4s before Ferrari reacted 20 tours from home. Leclerc was called in again on lap 33 for some shiny fresh softs to leave him on the quicker rubber for a run to the flag. His pace, initially at least, was best described as subdued because Leclerc could only find three or four tenths a lap on Verstappen, who was by now running with eight-lap older boots.

This was beginning to seem like a foregone conclusion. Leclerc had pitted twice, Verstappen only once. Verstappen had track position; while Leclerc could not find enough of a speed advantage to reel in the Red Bull in time, let alone make a play for the victory with a late lunge.

But then a potential spanner was thrown. Ricciardo, shortly after being passed by team-mate Norris, was forced to stop

Verstappen passed Russell without breaking a sweat

FOX/GETTY IMAGES / RED BULL CONTENT POOL


SUTTON

Sainz slices past Gasly during his impressive charge from the back
HONE

Leclerc prepared for a late dash with used softs. But he didn't get to use them
TEE

suddenly on the approach to the second Lesmo on lap 46. His McLaren MCL36 had cried mercy after springing an oil leak. But with the car stuck in gear and no means for the marshals to make a quick recovery, the full safety car was called out.

In anticipation of a Silverstone or Zandvoort-type sprint finish, both Verstappen and Leclerc bolted for the pits for a final dash on softs. However, the field was by now well spread out. Not helping matters, the safety car collected third-placed Russell instead as the top two respected a minimum lap time delta. And when the lead duo were finally shuffled towards the front, they were still split by the lapped cars of Valtteri Bottas and Yuki Tsunoda.

As such, and amid much controversy, the green flags would not be waved for a final time.

Verstappen crossed the line in neutralised conditions to claim his 31st grand prix victory, fifth in succession, 11th of the season and the first of his career at Monza. Reflecting on the run of form, he said: "It's amazing what we are experiencing within the team. We are having an amazing year. And it's important to enjoy it as well. I think we've had a lot of different challenges on different kinds of tracks and now the car really seems to work at every track. We are extremely pleased."

The ending made for a damp squib, no doubt. But with memories of the acrimony from the 2021 Abu Dhabi title decider still fresh in the memory, the FIA reckoned they had applied the letter of the law. No 'any or all' lapped cars ambiguity this time. The governing body issued an explanation of the final six laps that read: "While every effort was made to recover [Ricciardo's car] quickly and resume racing, the situation developed, and marshals were unable to put the car into neutral and push it into the escape road.

"As the safety of the recovery operation is our only priority, and the incident was not significant enough to require a red flag, the race ended under the safety car following the procedures agreed between the FIA and all competitors. The timing of the safety car period within a race has no bearing on this procedure."

The absence of a sporting showstopper left paying spectators feeling short-changed, even if the rules had been properly applied. Regardless, a chorus of boos soon rang out when, through the red »

QUALIFYING

SUTTON

Deciding the grid at Monza has been a messy business in recent years. Remember the clumsy squabbles for track position out of Parabolica that left drivers crossing the line too late to start a flier? The switch to ground-effects and a reduced significance of the tow avoided a repeat. But it still wasn't a good look as four hours were required for officials to work out a provisional starting order due to another flurry of penalties.

Charles Leclerc wasn't in line for a drop, so wherever he ranked in qualifying would be where he started, aside from any promotions due to others. The Monegasque didn't stitch together any session-best sectors, but his last run in Q3 was still sufficient to snare a first pole since France in July.

While it has been difficult to decipher the extent to which Red Bull has pulled clear and Ferrari has dropped back following the summer break, Leclerc arrested the red cars' recent one-lap dip. "It's a very good surprise, considering where we come from, especially in Spa," he admitted. "We were not expecting to fight for pole."

Leclerc steered his twitchy F1-75 round in 1m20.161s to find a convincing 0.145 seconds over Max Verstappen. The biased grandstand on the main straight naturally erupted. And then the Red Bull was knocked to seventh after Honda advised fitting a new internal combustion engine at the "least bad" circuit left on the calendar for a grid drop.

Following a debrief at Maranello to troubleshoot a pair of fast but scruffy outings at Spa and Zandvoort, Carlos Sainz was in the mix. His final Q3 lap looked good for pole as the micro sectors flashed purple. That reflected a taming of the rear axle that troubled him so greatly at the start of the season. But even with its reduced effects, he felt the pain of running without a tow to bleed time on the straights. The Spaniard buzzed the line 0.268s down on his Scuderia stablemate, only to march to the back of the grid for a haul of new powertrain components.

"SERGIO PEREZ WAS SEEMINGLY IN A DIFFERENT POSTCODE 0.9s DOWN ON HIS TEAM-MATE"

With Sergio Perez – seemingly in a different postcode 0.9s down on his team-mate – also taking a hit, it was left to George Russell to inherit a front-row start over the McLarens.

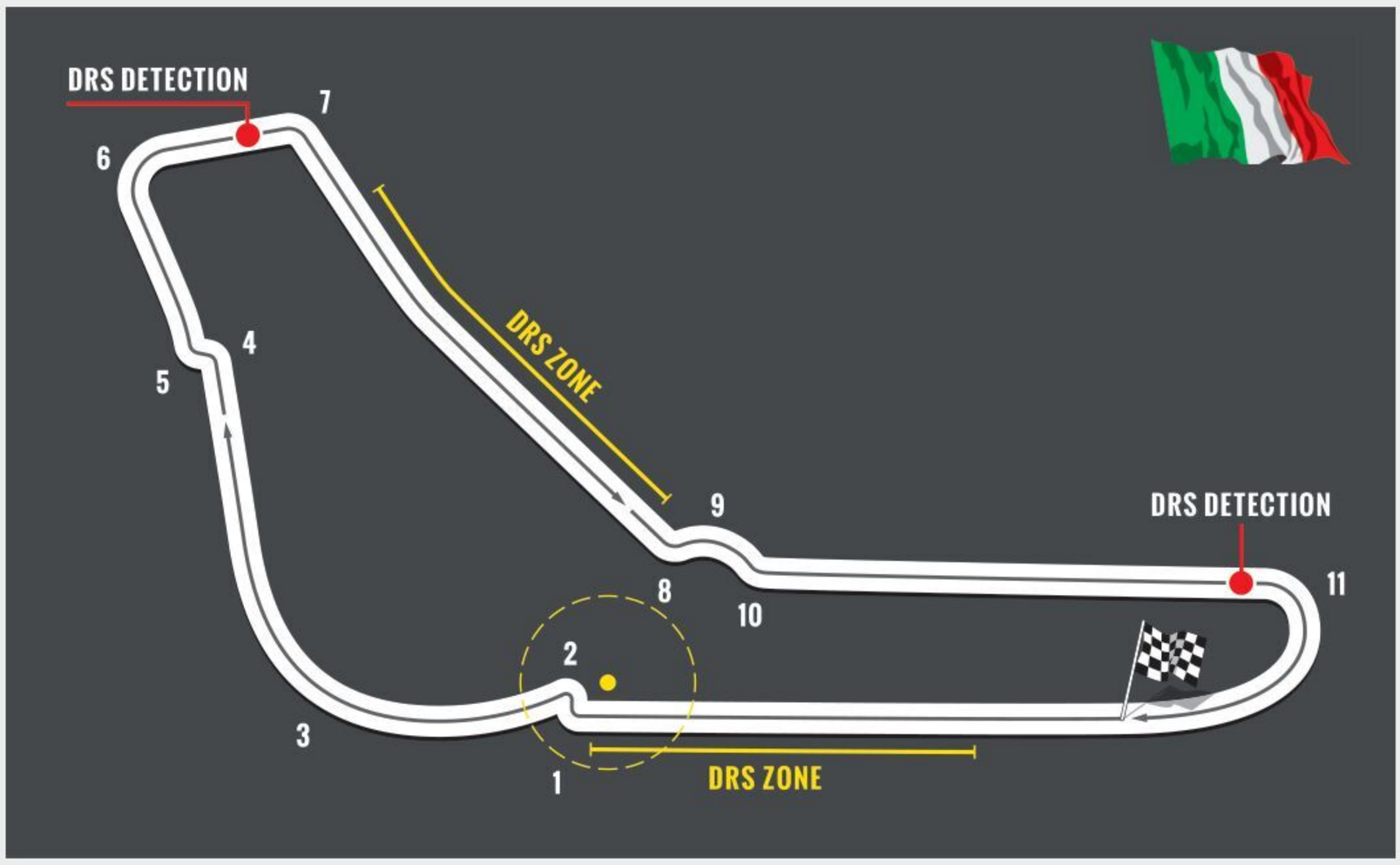
Likewise, Nyck de Vries benefited considerably on his F1 qualifying debut as he subbed for Alex Albon, who was sidelined with an overnight bout of appendicitis. The 2021 Formula E champion, who ran for Aston Martin in FP1, adapted well to clock 13th for eighth on the grid – despite using the wrong brake bias tune to instigate a massive rear end lock that required an entertaining save.

TRACKSIDE VIEW

Whether a royalist or republican, last Friday at Monza will surely live long in the memory for those who attended. Teams assembled in the pitlane ahead of first practice to impeccably observe a minute's silence, with only an occasional camera shutter click and the distant thrum from a TV helicopter to bother the tribute before applause broke out from the fans.

So much has been written about the tifosi that it's become a motorsport cliche. But even the half-full crowd on the rickety grandstand above the old banking at Rettifilo created a cracking atmosphere. The first Ferrari to emerge is Carlos Sainz, his car sporting a revised livery with a flash of yellow that lifts the pretty but matte, and therefore dull, F1-75. The crowd lets out a big cheer. Then comes Charles Leclerc, and it's bedlam. Even nemesis Max Verstappen gets a rapturous welcome.

Romantic elements aside, it's Daniel Ricciardo capturing Autosport's attention most of all through this massive stop from 210mph to just 40 into the tight right-left. The victor here last year has been called out in 2022 for his underperformance that has cost a McLaren seat. Team and driver have churned through the data all season to find a resolution but haven't cracked it at any point. This chicane is microcosm as to why.



"SERGIO PEREZ TRIES TO RETURN SWIFTLY BUT SHEDS CARBONFIBRE AS HE YUMPS"

There are jeers when he careers straight on at his first fast attempt. He must then weave between the markers on the escape road. Next time around, he ploughs straight on again. It's third time lucky for the Australian as he finally slows the MCL36 in time. However, this relative success is short-lived.

With green flow-vis plastered over the rear, he runs wide on exit and dips the back-right Pirelli into the gravel to prompt an armful of opposite lock to hold the slide. This is a single mistake, granted. Nevertheless, for the rest of the hour Lando Norris is notably more effective at picking up the throttle and firing out of view to Curva Grande.

The Alpines appear the stiffest cars at the front as both Fernando Alonso and Esteban Ocon lean into the right-hander of Turn 1 and, as the A522s are deflected by the kerb, they are guilty of popping the inside wheel into the air long enough for it to fully stop rotating.

Of the others to get it wrong here, there's no comfortable-looking way to rejoin the track after making the first apex before aborting the rest of the sequence. Verstappen takes it slow over the sausage kerb, but you can see the jolt sent through the chassis as the floor scraps over. Sergio Perez tries to return much more swiftly but sheds a load of carbonfibre as he yumps.

MATT KEW

The lapped Alfa Romeo of Bottas ran behind leader Verstappen during the safety car run to the finish

flare smoke, Verstappen took to the podium that hangs over the pitstraight. The victor reckoned: "At the end of the day, I'm here to try and win the race, which I've done. Some people, of course, they can't appreciate that. But that's because they're very passionate fans of a different team. And this is what it is. It's not going to spoil my day. I'm just enjoying the moment." However, the jeers might have equally been directed at the FIA, so reckoned Binotto.

Should the race have restarted, what might have awaited? Both drivers were on softs, but Verstappen's were spanking new, and Leclerc's scrubbed. Further, Ferrari had freely admitted the decision to pit under the Vettel-induced virtual safety was the only plausible way of offering a sustained threat to the quicker RB18.

Leclerc toed the party line on that point, adding: "If today was a clear mistake, I don't think so because it was just our choice and looking back at it, you just cannot predict whenever the VSC is going to end. If I had not stopped, Max would have pitted, and he would have had the same problem as I did. So, nothing to blame on anybody there. Just a little bit unlucky, and probably missing a little bit of pace too."

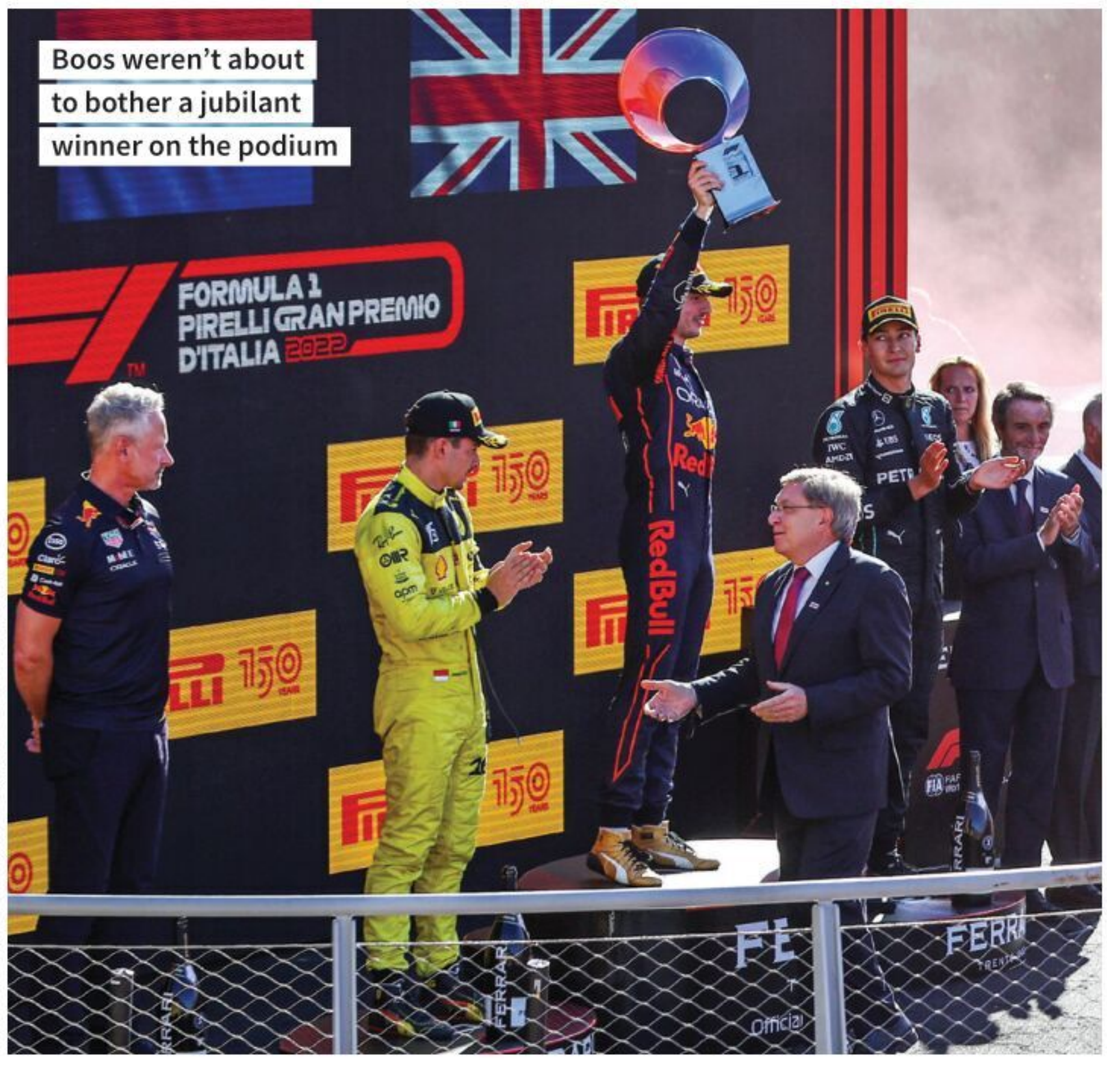
"IF I HAD NOT STOPPED, MAX WOULD HAVE PITTED, AND HE WOULD HAVE HAD THE SAME PROBLEM I DID"

Then, at least in 2022, there's a shortage of evidence to suggest that Verstappen would have dropped the ball in a wheel-to-wheel fight. So, talk of Leclerc being robbed might be a little optimistic. But, perhaps perversely given the way in which the weekend unfolded, Ferrari's lower downforce tune *might* have combined with a late tow just enough to propel Leclerc past for the win.

That will remain an unknown. Much more predictable, however, was Leclerc saying he "really wanted for this race to start again". Verstappen, meanwhile, called it "very unfortunate" but reckoned he wasn't too worried thanks to his tyre situation should a one-lap shootout have commenced. Either way, both drivers and their respective team bosses agreed that this had been an anti-climax.

And perhaps the same is now true of the entire 2022 season. Verstappen can, at least mathematically, wrap up the crown next time out in Singapore. That is not only incredible but shows the combined ill-effects of Ferrari's unreliability, poor pitstops, questionable strategy and a blunder or two from Leclerc — none of which were particularly on show at Monza.

It also highlights the strides forward that Red Bull has made in developing the car. They, by contrast, were plain to see. The RB18 is now known to be running under the weight limit. That enables the mass to be repositioned to best suit Verstappen's pointy driving style. And in turn, that gave Verstappen the comfort he needed to be bold and wade into battle without the top-speed prowess that Monza so often encourages. Yet he could still come away with the spoils of glory as he chases after a rapid-fire second world title, much like Vettel did over a decade ago.



Boos weren't about to bother a jubilant winner on the podium

THOMPSON/GETTY IMAGES / RED BULL CONTENT POOL

NEXT F1 REPORT

SINGAPORE GRAND PRIX
6 OCTOBER ISSUE

DE VRIES STARS ON SURPRISE DEBUT

Nyck de Vries pulled off a famous debut drive as a late call-up at Williams in place of Alex Albon, who missed the Monza race suffering with appendicitis.

De Vries, who had driven for Aston Martin in FP1 for one of its mandatory 2022 rookie practice outings, was having coffee in F1's Paddock Club early on Saturday when he took the call that would lead to his stand-in drive — the Dutchman available as a reserve for Mercedes, Williams and Aston Martin.

The 2021 Formula E champion qualified 13th after locking up his rear wheels and sliding off at the second chicane on his final Q2 effort but started eighth thanks to the many grid penalties for others. In the race, de Vries settled in, then harnessed Williams's top speed prowess to hold his place in the DRS trains.

He came under late pressure from Zhou Guanyu but shrugged off the Alfa Romeo under blue flags for Max Verstappen and cemented his ninth place finish on a soft-medium one-stopper.

An investigation into his sudden braking through Curva Grande in the initial stages of the safety car's appearance resulted in a reprimand as Zhou was forced to brake sharply. But the stewards felt this was only worthy of a reprimand due to de Vries's inexperience with Williams's procedures and because he was "dealing with brake issues", per their decision document.

SUTTON

ETHERINGTON

ALL PHOTOGRAPHY motorsport IMAGES

Frontrunners on the charge following grid penalties

Carlos Sainz led home the trio of drivers from frontrunning squads starting down the order and recovering to score strong results, with the Ferrari ace finishing fourth ahead of Mercedes' Lewis Hamilton and Red Bull racer Sergio Perez.

Sainz and Hamilton were required to start from the rear of the field — with Sainz ahead thanks to his third-place qualifying result — for taking all-new engines ahead of the race. Perez dropped from qualifying fourth to 13th for taking his first additional internal combustion engine over the three allowed by the rules.

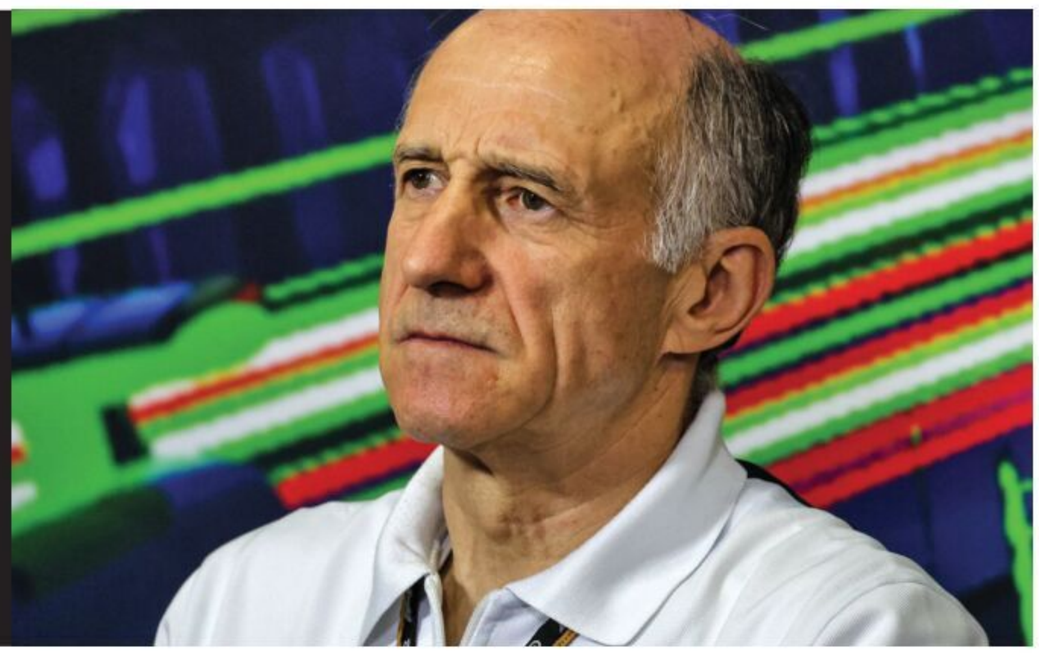
But the Mexican driver got crowded out on the exit of Turn 2 to drop back towards the already surging Sainz, who then dived past Perez the next time into the first chicane, with the pair briefly touching as the Ferrari squeezed the Red Bull. Sainz then made a series of overtakes to pull off the maximum damage-limitation result in such circumstances. Sainz executed the contra-one-stopper — starting on the mediums and then moving to the softs when that compound held up better than expected and the hard proved slower.

Hamilton did likewise, but took longer to progress after getting caught up in the first-corner melee and being hit by debris from Valtteri Bottas's Alfa Romeo. He did though make aggressive progress, including a fine double pass on Lando Norris and Pierre Gasly just after his pitstop.

Perez's late attempt to catch Hamilton on a two-stopper was thwarted by the safety car. That strategy was necessary because of Perez's big lock-up during Sainz's lap-two attack, which caused severe vibrations, plus debris getting into his right-front brake duct. That then caught fire at his first stop for hards, leading to braking problems that eventually cleared.

"THE FANS AND THE CELEBRATIONS FOR THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THIS HISTORIC TRACK DIDN'T DESERVE THE RACE TO FINISH THE WAY IT DID"

AlphaTauri team boss Franz Tost on the controversial late-race safety car period bringing Monza's celebratory event to an uninspiring conclusion.



Q&A

LEWIS HAMILTON
MERCEDES DRIVER

Is racing from 19th to fifth more satisfying than winning from pole?
It's 1000 times more enjoyable – battling with people. When I first started, my go-kart was an old kart, it was all bent and buckled. And we always had to start at the back on old tyres. And that's what I've always enjoyed doing. And so starting today, just having those battles is way more fun than starting first and pulling away. It's a different challenge. But I much prefer the battling with people. When you win it's something completely different and you feel proud for everybody. I love the idea of moving forward. So today I felt like I climbed up a ladder. Progress is a good thing.

How was your double overtake on Norris and Gasly?
This was a key move. If I hadn't pulled that off, then I would have been two places back. It's just about timing and you don't always get it right. But I saw Lando coming out and I was like, 'This is the one moment we have the chance' and fortunately he was getting challenged by someone else down the outside. So they cut across and it felt great to pull alongside them.

Did you get hit at the first turns?
I didn't touch with anybody, I don't think. But I saw some bits flying off other people's cars hit mine. And I think that damaged the front flap over the tyre. Those things, I don't even know what they're for. But it was flapping. That was damaged. They get in the way of your view, that's all.

Did you want the race to restart late on?
Naturally just as a racer, you just want more time, I wanted to be able to challenge the Ferrari ahead of me and see if I could get another position. But I think in hindsight it was probably a good ending. I'm just really grateful to have come back from the last row.

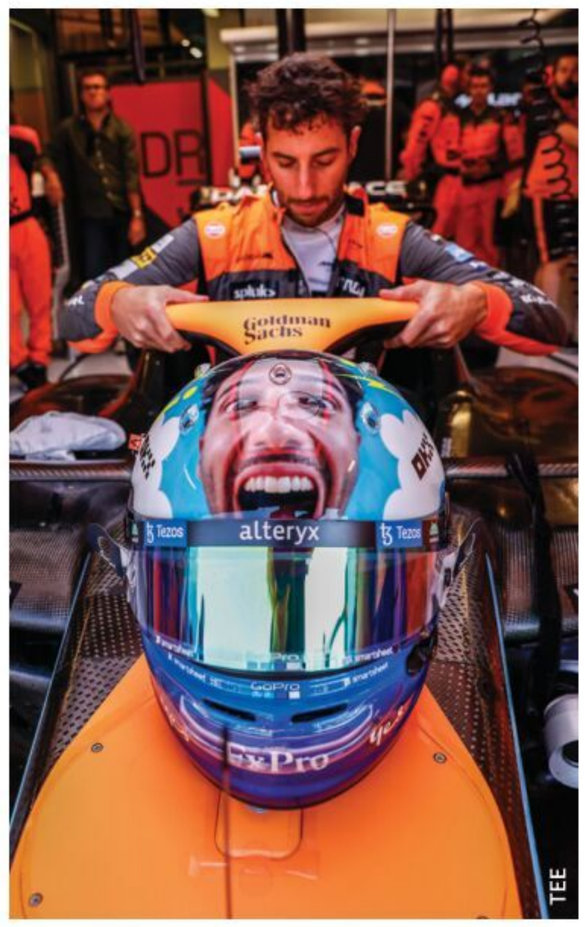
SUTTON

Haas fumes over Magnussen sanction after Turn 1 chaos

Haas was left fuming that it "got done by the officials", according to team boss Gunther Steiner, over a penalty awarded to Kevin Magnussen for his part in the Turn 1 melee.

Magnussen was hit from behind by Alfa Romeo's Valtteri Bottas, which did indeed force him to cut Turn 2 and result in diffuser damage. But, critically, not allowing all the cars he'd been behind back past – principally Williams's Nicholas Latifi, per the stewards' ruling announcing Magnussen's five-second time addition – left the Dane open to sanction.

Magnussen ended up finishing last of the classified runners having dropped to the back following his long pitstop on a planned medium-to-hard one-stopper. Bottas, meanwhile, recovered from last to 13th despite getting considerable front wing damage in the Turn 1 crash, finishing behind Mick Schumacher in the other Haas, who lightly hit Bottas after the Finn had struck Magnussen.



TEE

RICCIARDO, ALPINE AND ASTONS HIT TERMINAL TROUBLE

Four drivers failed to finish the Italian GP – headlined by Daniel Ricciardo's late stoppage leading to the safety car controversy.

The Australian had briefly run third after jumping past his slow-starting team-mate Lando Norris, which the Briton put down to his launch setting being wrong ahead of the formation lap.

Ricciardo slipped down the order as the frontrunners out of position with grid penalties came through the DRS train he led either side of his lap-19 pitstop. But his "engine just switched off" when running solidly in eighth ahead of Pierre Gasly late on and he was forced to pull over between the Lesmos.

This retirement followed Lance Stroll being stopped as a precaution by Aston Martin ahead of the race's final quarter – that in turn following his team-mate Sebastian Vettel coming to a smoking halt on lap 11 due to an ERS failure occurring aboard his AMR22. Vettel had been 12th before his issue occurred, with Stroll running just ahead – the pair boosted from their poor qualifying results.

The other non-finisher was Alpine's Fernando Alonso, who retired on lap 32 due to his engine losing water pressure when running seventh. "It was a challenging race and we seemed to be finding it difficult to keep up with the cars ahead of us on the straights," Alonso said of his pre-retirement action.

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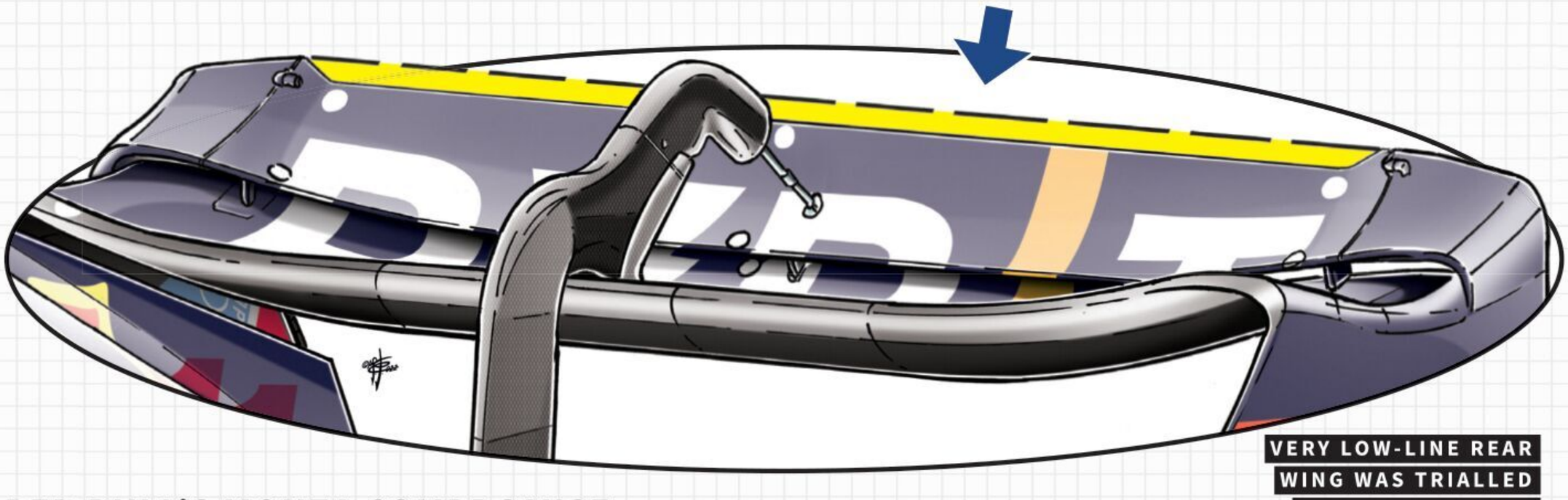
DRAWING BOARD

GIORGIO PIOLA



VERY LOW-LINE REAR WING WAS TRIALLED IN FIRST PRACTICE

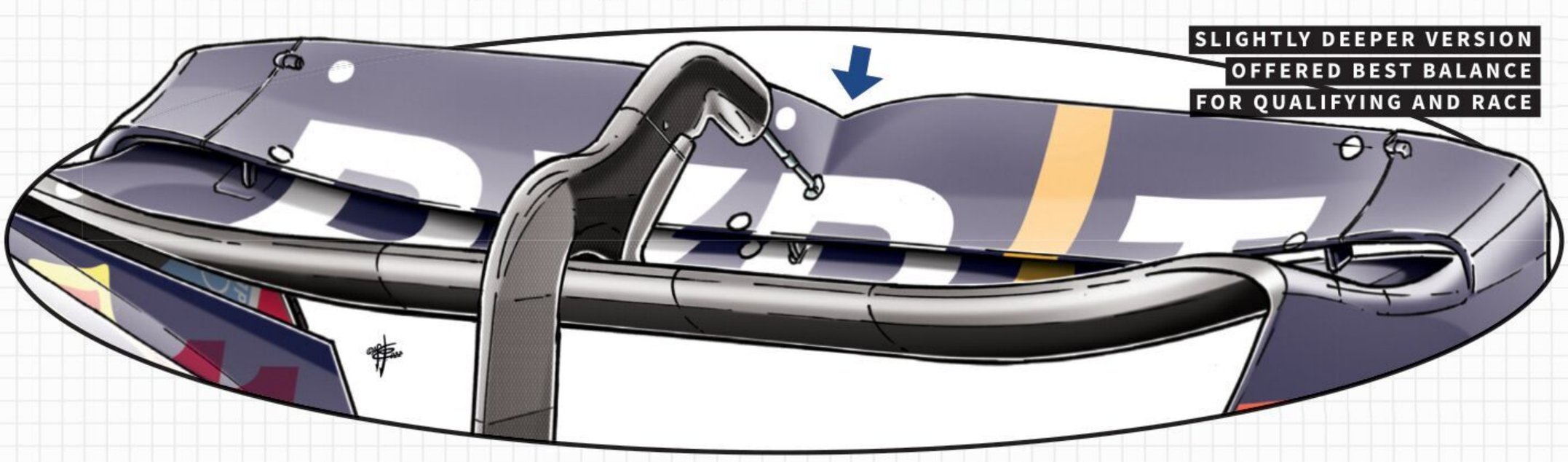
RED BULL'S MONZA COMPROMISE

Every year, Formula 1 teams bring their skinniest rear wings to the Italian Grand Prix to find more top speed on the straights. With the new brand of rear wings produced by the 2022 regulations, the overall designs explored looked a little different compared to the old-school combinations of short-chord and low angle of attack wing planes, but still worked in the same fashion.

Red Bull opted for a very low-line rear wing in FP1 but reverted to a slightly deeper rear wing knowing it could make the compromise for the race. The RB18 has been the best frontrunning car in a straight line, helped by its efficient aero platform and power from its Honda-designed power unit. This meant that Red Bull could remain competitive in qualifying with a slightly higher downforce wing, but quickly make up ground during the race as both drivers had to recover from grid penalties.

Having greater downforce gave Max Verstappen and Sergio Perez more traction on the corner exits, while their pace on the straights in qualifying was still around the middle of the field. It was a good balance, and helped Verstappen to another win after being hit with a grid penalty.

JAKE BOXALL-LEGGE



SLIGHTLY DEEPER VERSION OFFERED BEST BALANCE FOR QUALIFYING AND RACE

MERCEDES ATTEMPTS TO SHED DRAG

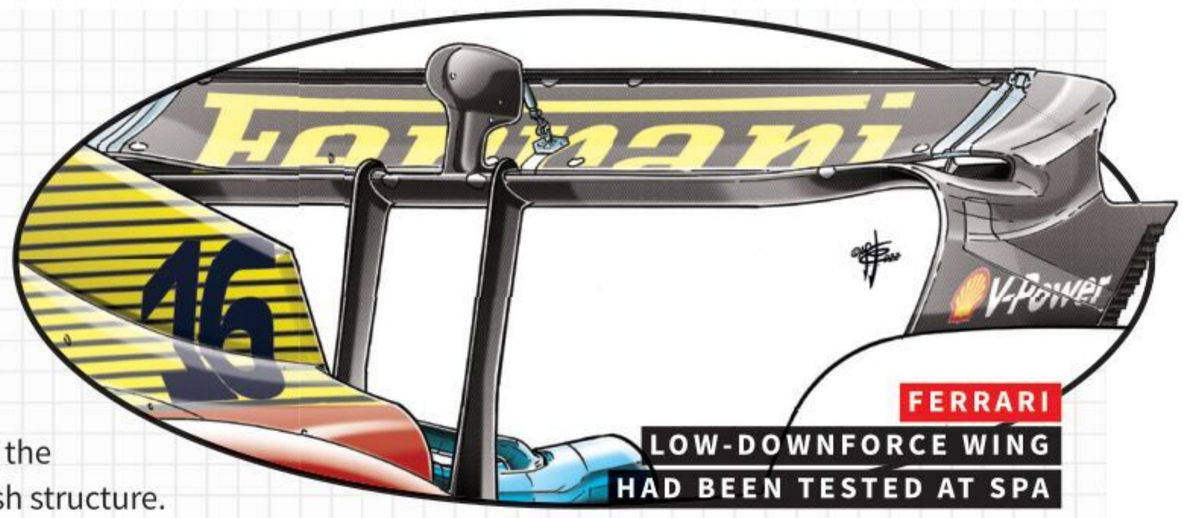
Mercedes, with its W13 a much draggier package, had to try to knock some of its top speed disadvantage out of the car to have any success in Monza.

The rear wing ran with a dip in the upper wing plane to bleed off more drag on the straights, with attention also given to the beam-wing that links the endplates to the rear crash structure. These ran in a low-downforce configuration too, particularly on the outboard area where the upper plane drops down with a shortened chord length. The team also ran with reduced camber on the front wing to balance the load out relative to the rear.

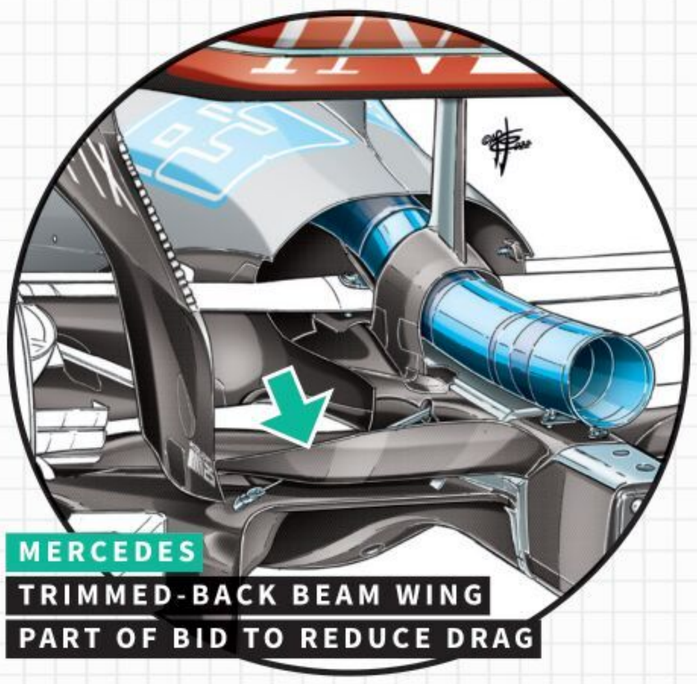
Ferrari employed the low-downforce wing it tested at Spa, also modifying the beam wing to a single-element model to cut down on rear drag. Although this helped the F1-75 relative to the Red Bull in qualifying as Charles Leclerc grabbed pole, it could not stop Max Verstappen from chalking up a fifth victory on the bounce.

Of the other teams who put their Monza package through its paces in Belgium, Aston Martin employed its distinctly low-camber wing to try to dial out drag, but the British squad endured a difficult weekend as the AMR22 proved to be arguably the slowest car in straightline performance.

JAKE BOXALL-LEGGE



FERRARI
LOW-DOWNFORCE WING HAD BEEN TESTED AT SPA



MERCEDES
TRIMMED-BACK BEAM WING PART OF BID TO REDUCE DRAG

FREE PRACTICE 1

POS	DRIVER	TIME
1	Leclerc	1m22.410s
2	Sainz	1m22.487s
3	Russell	1m22.689s
4	Hamilton	1m22.831s
5	Verstappen	1m22.840s
6	Ocon	1m23.075s
7	Alonso	1m23.099s
8	Tsunoda	1m23.260s
9	Bottas	1m23.394s
10	Ricciardo	1m23.511s
11	Albon	1m23.529s
12	Zhou	1m23.570s
13	Gasly	1m23.640s
14	Perez	1m23.661s
15	Stroll	1m23.688s
16	Norris	1m23.856s
17	Magnussen	1m24.006s
18	Giovinazzi	1m24.317s
19	de Vries	1m24.731s
20	Latifi	1m24.941s

WEATHER Cloudy, air 27-29C track 33-41C

FREE PRACTICE 2

POS	DRIVER	TIME
1	Sainz	1m21.664s
2	Verstappen	1m21.807s
3	Leclerc	1m21.857s
4	Norris	1m22.338s
5	Russell	1m22.386s
6	Perez	1m22.394s
7	Hamilton	1m22.503s
8	Ocon	1m22.728s
9	Alonso	1m22.752s
10	Albon	1m22.835s
11	Ricciardo	1m22.911s
12	Zhou	1m22.938s
13	Bottas	1m22.993s
14	Gasly	1m23.135s
15	Tsunoda	1m23.217s
16	Magnussen	1m23.557s
17	Vettel	1m23.731s
18	Stroll	1m23.785s
19	Latifi	1m23.982s
20	Schumacher	1m24.586s

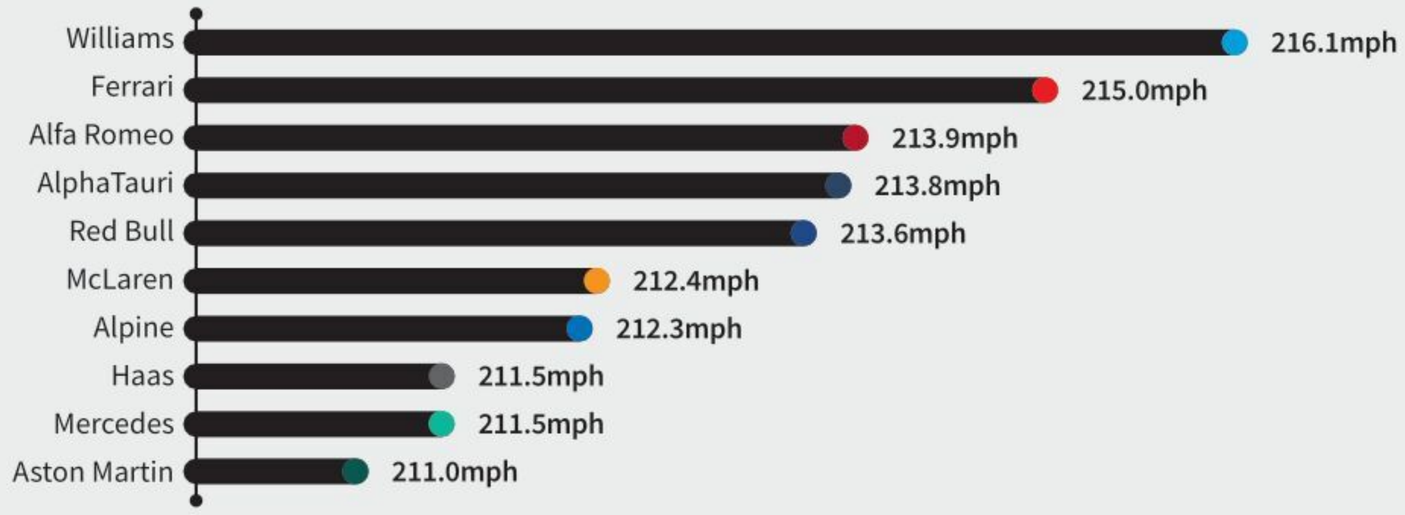
WEATHER Sunny, air 28-30C track 33-36C

FREE PRACTICE 3

POS	DRIVER	TIME
1	Verstappen	1m21.252s
2	Leclerc	1m21.599s
3	Perez	1m21.848s
4	Sainz	1m21.897s
5	Alonso	1m22.306s
6	Norris	1m22.319s
7	Russell	1m22.357s
8	Tsunoda	1m22.430s
9	Ocon	1m22.506s
10	Hamilton	1m22.567s
11	Zhou	1m22.657s
12	Gasly	1m22.755s
13	Latifi	1m22.776s
14	de Vries	1m22.869s
15	Ricciardo	1m22.871s
16	Bottas	1m22.950s
17	Vettel	1m23.104s
18	Magnussen	1m23.203s
19	Schumacher	1m23.392s
20	Stroll	1m23.739s

WEATHER Sunny, air 26-29C track 38-43C

SPEED TRAP (QUALIFYING)



QUALIFYING 1

POS	DRIVER	TIME
1	Verstappen	1m20.922s
2	Leclerc	1m21.280s
3	Sainz	1m21.348s
4	Perez	1m21.495s
5	Russell	1m21.785s
6	Zhou	1m22.003s
7	Gasly	1m22.010s
8	Tsunoda	1m22.020s
9	Hamilton	1m22.048s
10	Alonso	1m22.089s
11	Norris	1m22.130s
12	Ricciardo	1m22.139s
13	Ocon	1m22.166s
14	Bottas	1m22.254s
15	de Vries	1m22.567s
16	Latifi	1m22.587s
17	Vettel	1m22.636s
18	Stroll	1m22.748s
19	Magnussen	1m22.908s
20	Schumacher	1m23.005s

QUALIFYING 2

POS	DRIVER	TIME
1	Sainz	1m20.878s
2	Leclerc	1m21.208s
3	Verstappen	1m21.265s
4	Perez	1m21.358s
5	Hamilton	1m21.708s
6	Russell	1m21.747s
7	Norris	1m21.831s
8	Ricciardo	1m21.855s
9	Alonso	1m21.861s
10	Gasly	1m22.062s
11	Ocon	1m22.130s
12	Bottas	1m22.235s
13	de Vries	1m22.471s
14	Zhou	1m22.577s
15	Tsunoda	no time

QUALIFYING 3

POS	DRIVER	TIME
1	Leclerc	1m20.161s
2	Verstappen	1m20.306s
3	Sainz	1m20.429s
4	Perez	1m21.206s
5	Hamilton	1m21.524s
6	Russell	1m21.542s
7	Norris	1m21.584s
8	Ricciardo	1m21.925s
9	Gasly	1m22.648s
10	Alonso	no time

WEATHER Sunny, air 28-31C track 36-41C

SEASON STATS

	DRIVERS' CHAMPIONSHIP	PTS	BEST FINISH	BEST QUAL
1	Verstappen	335	1	1
2	Leclerc	219	1	1
3	Perez	210	1	1
4	Russell	203	2	1
5	Sainz	187	1	1
6	Hamilton	168	2	4
7	Norris	88	3	3
8	Ocon	66	5	5
9	Alonso	59	5	2
10	Bottas	46	5	5
11	Gasly	22	5	6
12	Magnussen	22	5	4
13	Vettel	20	6	9
14	Ricciardo	19	6	6
15	Schumacher	12	6	6
16	Tsunoda	11	7	8
17	Zhou	6	8	9
18	Stroll	5	10	10
19	Albon	4	9	9
20	de Vries	2	9	13
21	Latifi	0	12	10
22	Hulkenberg	0	12	17

CONSTRUCTORS' CHAMPIONSHIP

1	Red Bull	545
2	Ferrari	406
3	Mercedes	371
4	Alpine	125
5	McLaren	107
6	Alfa Romeo	52
7	Haas	34
8	AlphaTauri	33
9	Aston Martin	25
10	Williams	6

QUALIFYING BATTLE

Hamilton	9	6	Russell
Verstappen	13	3	Perez
Leclerc	11	3	Sainz
Ricciardo	1	14	Norris
Alonso	7	7	Ocon
Gasly	8	6	Tsunoda
Vettel	9	5	Stroll
Stroll	1	1	Hulkenberg
Latifi	0	1	de Vries
Latifi	2	12	Albon
Zhou	4	11	Bottas
Magnussen	12	4	Schumacher

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

WINS

Verstappen	11
Leclerc	3
Perez	1
Sainz	1

POLE POSITIONS

Leclerc	8
Verstappen	4
Sainz	2
Perez	1
Russell	1

FASTEST LAPS

Verstappen	5
Leclerc	3
Perez	3
Hamilton	2
Sainz	2
Norris	1

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STARTING GRID

RACE RESULTS ROUND 16/22 (53 LAPS – 190.59 MILES)

POS	DRIVER	TEAM	FINISH TIME	LED	TYRES
1	**Max Verstappen** (NLD)	Red Bull	1h20m27.511s	34	**S**n, **M**n, **S**n
2	**Charles Leclerc** (MCO)	Ferrari	+2.446s	19	**S**n, **M**n, **S**n, **S**u
3	**George Russell** (GBR)	Mercedes	+3.405s		**S**n, **H**n, **S**u
4	**Carlos Sainz Jr** (ESP)	Ferrari	+5.061s		**M**n, **S**n, **S**n
5	**Lewis Hamilton** (GBR)	Mercedes	+5.380s		**M**n, **S**n
6	**Sergio Perez** (MEX)	Red Bull	+6.091s		**M**n, **H**n, **S**n
7	**Lando Norris** (GBR)	McLaren-Mercedes	+6.207s		**M**n, **S**u, **S**u
8	**Pierre Gasly** (FRA)	AlphaTauri-Red Bull	+6.396s		**M**n, **H**u
9	**Nyck de Vries** (NLD)	Williams-Mercedes	+7.122s		**S**n, **M**n
10	**Zhou Guanyu** (CHN)	Alfa Romeo-Ferrari	+7.910s		**M**n, **H**n
11	**Esteban Ocon** (FRA)	Alpine-Renault	+8.323s		**S**n, **H**n
12	**Mick Schumacher** (DEU)	Haas-Ferrari	+8.549s		**M**n, **S**n
13	**Valtteri Bottas** (FIN)	Alfa Romeo-Ferrari	-1 lap/+0.417s		**M**n, **S**n
14	**Yuki Tsunoda** (JPN)	AlphaTauri-Red Bull	-1 lap/+1.360s		**M**n, **H**u, **S**u
15	**Nicholas Latifi** (CAN)	Williams-Mercedes	-1 lap/+2.792s		**M**n, **H**n, **S**n
16	**Kevin Magnussen** (DNK)	Haas-Ferrari	-1 lap/+4.646s		**M**n, **H**n, **S**n
R	**Daniel Ricciardo** (AUS)	McLaren-Mercedes	45 laps-oil leak		**M**n, **H**n
R	**Lance Stroll** (CAN)	Aston Martin-Mercedes	39 laps-engine		**M**u, **H**u
R	**Fernando Alonso** (ESP)	Alpine-Renault	31 laps-water pressure		**M**n
R	**Sebastian Vettel** (DEU)	Aston Martin-Mercedes	10 laps-ERS		**M**u

FASTEST LAPS

POS	DRIVER	TIME	GAP	LAP
1	**Perez**	1m24.030s	-	46
2	**Leclerc**	1m24.336s	+0.306s	38
3	**Hamilton**	1m24.434s	+0.404s	43
4	**Sainz**	1m24.446s	+0.416s	41
5	**Norris**	1m24.718s	+0.688s	43
6	**Verstappen**	1m24.745s	+0.715s	38
7	**Russell**	1m25.288s	+1.258s	40
8	**Schumacher**	1m25.298s	+1.268s	43
9	**Bottas**	1m25.706s	+1.676s	45
10	**Zhou**	1m26.361s	+2.331s	41
11	**Ocon**	1m26.593s	+2.563s	37
12	**Ricciardo**	1m26.603s	+2.573s	39
13	**de Vries**	1m26.624s	+2.594s	41
14	**Gasly**	1m26.718s	+2.688s	30
15	**Latifi**	1m26.798s	+2.768s	17
16	**Magnussen**	1m26.798s	+2.768s	37
17	**Tsunoda**	1m26.857s	+2.827s	43
18	**Alonso**	1m27.203s	+3.173s	7
19	**Stroll**	1m27.467s	+3.437s	34
20	**Vettel**	1m27.501s	+3.471s	4

WEATHER Sunny, air 29-31C track 41-44C

WINNER'S AVERAGE SPEED 142.126mph
FASTEST LAP AVERAGE SPEED 154.213mph

TYRES

KEY: **H - Hard** **M - Medium** **S - Soft** n - New set u - Used set

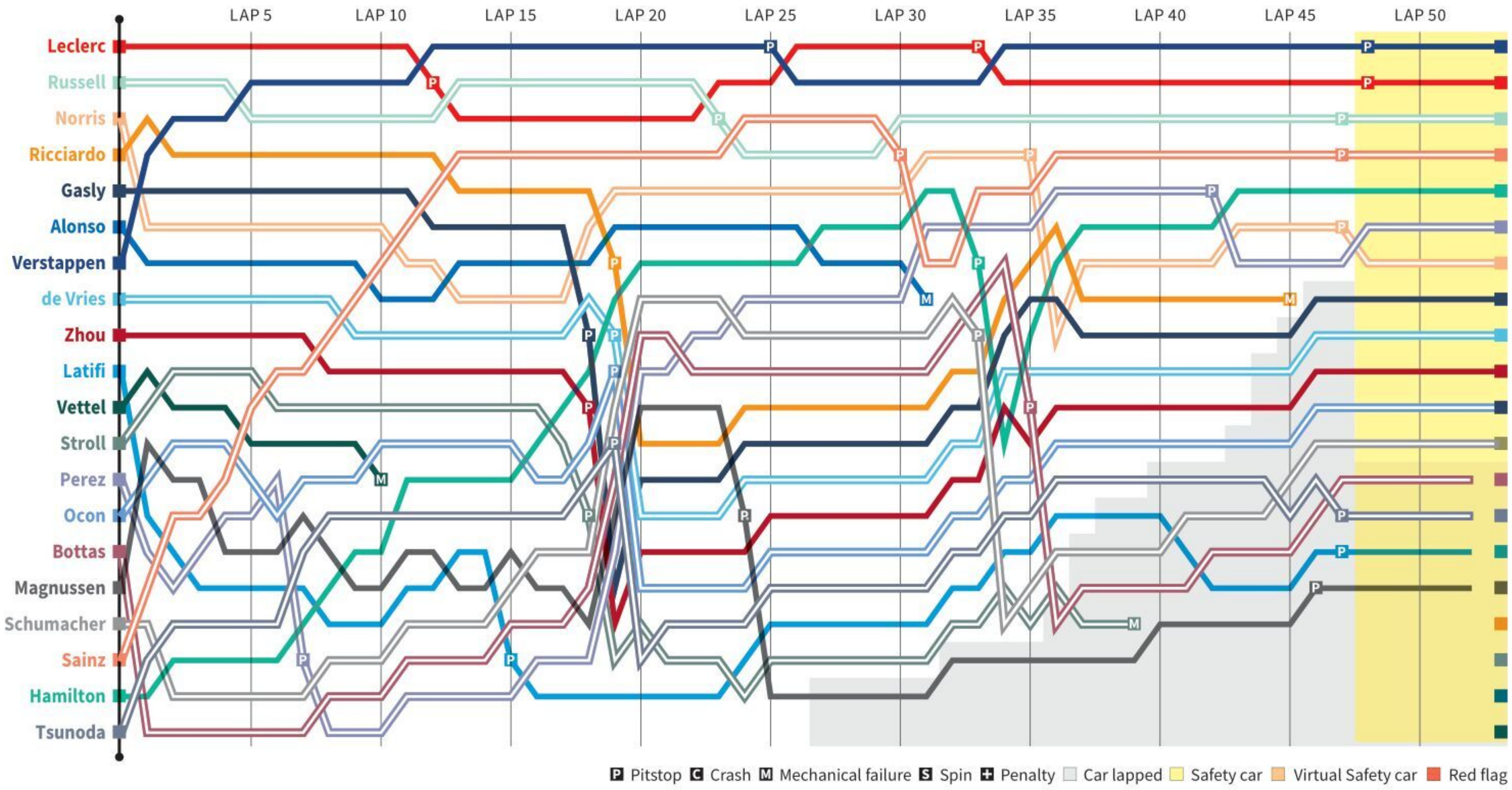
RACE BRIEFING

FP1
ANTONIO GIOVINAZZI replaced **SCHUMACHER** at Haas
NYCK DE VRIES replaced **VETTEL** at Aston Martin

GRID PENALTIES
TSUNODA 10-place penalty for accumulation of five reprimands
TSUNODA, HAMILTON and **SAINZ** required to start from the back for additional power unit elements used
PEREZ 10-pace penalty for additional power unit elements used
BOTTAS and **MAGNUSEN** 15-place penalties for additional power unit elements used
VERSTAPPEN, OCON and **SCHUMACHER** Five-place penalties for additional restricted-number components used
SAINZ and **SCHUMACHER** 10-place penalties for additional restricted-number components used
TSUNODA Three-place penalty and two licence points for failing to slow for yellow flags

RACE PENALTIES
MAGNUSSEN Five-second penalty and one licence point for leaving the track and gaining an advantage

LAP CHART What happened, when



ANOTHER MAXIMUM FOR MAX AS DE VRIES DAZZLES ON HIS DEBUT

A superlative performance from the reigning world champion is what we've come to expect, while Williams's stand-in staked his claim to a seat in 2023

MATT KEW

MERCEDES

LEWIS HAMILTON

Started **19th** — Result **5th**

9 A low-downforce circuit was never going to suit the W13, but he hung on to pass Alonso and deliver superb double overtake on Norris and Gasly. This came after he pipped Russell in qualifying before serving his grid penalty, all while the car was stymied by rear-grip and wider balance maladies.

GEORGE RUSSELL

Started **2nd** — Result **3rd**

8 Not a lot more could have been asked of him last Sunday. Was slowed by the hard tyres, but Mercedes had to try something to combat Ferrari and Red Bull pace. Saved a new set of softs by running one lap fewer in Q3, although was pipped by Hamilton. That and a scruffy first corner denies top marks.

RED BULL

MAX VERSTAPPEN

Started **7th** — Result **1st**

10 Superlatives are running out. He somewhat defied a higher downforce race set-up to only cede 0.145s to Leclerc in qualifying. Rise from seventh after serving penalty was over in a flash as he deposed Russell, had the legs on the Ferrari and would likely have held on if GP restarted.

SERGIO PEREZ

Started **13th** — Result **6th**

5 Q3 lap was scruffy and an irredeemable 0.9s adrift of Verstappen. Then, aboard an RB18 that was faster than the Ferrari, his recovery was less pronounced than Sainz's. While there were no major race day mistakes, his overall weekend performance was little better than average.

FERRARI

CHARLES LECLERC

Started **1st** — Result **2nd**

9 If Verstappen didn't pit under VSC, then Leclerc had to in order to beat faster Red Bull. This came after he tamed twitchy F1-75 to snare a stellar pole, having pipped his personal best in every sector to improve by six tenths at the death. No mistakes, just not quite the heights of Verstappen or de Vries.

CARLOS SAINZ JR

Started **18th** — Result **4th**

8 Ferrari was second-fastest, so for Sainz to beat Perez by two places after starting five spots behind helps his mark. Moves through the pack were clean and race pace within a whisker of Leclerc's once he found clear air on softs. This came after he rued losing a tow for his final Q3 lap.

McLAREN

DANIEL RICCIARDO

Started **4th** — Result **R**

6 Better. Started by making Q3 for first time since Hungary. But while he was only one spot off Norris, the split between team-mates was over three tenths. Disappointingly, race pace was off the sister McLaren, and Gasly's. Was left as a rolling roadblock before the oil leak that scuppered a top-eight result.

LANDO NORRIS

Started **3rd** — Result **7th**

7 Sterling Q3 effort was enough to make Mercedes sweat. But he relieved too much pressure with costly startline anti-stall to ship three places. Coaxed starting medium tyres to lap 35 before a run with softs, during which he showed top-six pace until pitting again behind the safety car.

ALPINE

FERNANDO ALONSO

Started **6th** — Result **R**

7 A mark is lost for exceeding track limits in Q3, a blatant error even if the cost was minimised thanks to others' penalties. Was passed by Verstappen and later Sainz, but got get the better of Norris before a suspected water pump failure ended an afternoon that would have returned sound points.

ESTEBAN OCON

Started **14th** – Result **11th**

6 Distinctly average. Started to bleed marks by failing to make Q3, struggling to tame the rear end at a track that requires precision and momentum. Then satisfied rather than surpassed expectation in the Alpine (fifth-fastest) as he swapped from a competitive first stint on softs to settle on hards for 34 laps.

ALPHATAURI

PIERRE GASLY

Started **5th** — Result **8th**

8 Even with the jumbled grid and Monza's specific traits, he excelled in unremarkable AT03. Battled sliding at higher speeds to land impressive ninth in qualifying before promotion to fifth. Must be docked for exceeding track limits at Turn 6 to critically lose a position to Ricciardo.

YUKI TSUNODA

Started **20th** – Result **14th**

7 Convincingly climbed out of Q1 by running eighth, even if a fraction down on Gasly. But with a grid penalty to follow, it was decided he should not run in Q2. Raced well but was running with cars of similar pace to limit his climb before a late dive for softs went unrewarded by the safety car finish.

Points-scorer de Vries so impressive in maiden GP

ASTON MARTIN

SEBASTIAN VETTEL

Started **11th** — Result **R**

5 Sent for early bath on lap 11 when ERS packed up so not much material to redeem his score. Unfortunate to lose time in Q1 after a blanking panel jettisoned. Even though both Astons were draggy, he fared unfavourably against Stroll to be passed on lap two.

LANCE STROLL

Started **12th** — Result **R**

6 Seven-race run of form came to an end when he stopped to preserve the engine. Racy start left him bothering the top 10 before pitting. A fair mark in the circumstances as Aston Martin was off the pace thanks to its drag. That said, didn't do himself a favour by qualifying 0.1s off Vettel.

WILLIAMS

NICHOLAS LATIFI

Started **10th** – Result **15th**

4 Ignore de Vries for a moment. Latifi would still be marked down for locking up into Turn 1 and snapping through the second Lesmo to be eliminated in Q1 before conceding five places in the GP. Then consider de Vries, who outqualified his temporary team-mate and went on to score points…

NYCK DE VRIES

Started **8th** — Result **9th**

10 Given the late call to replace Albon and for surviving much of the race under extreme pressure, his grand prix debut was top drawer. Did slide wide with a brake bias blunder in Q2, but was nevertheless immense in the circumstances. Best real-world audition for a seat in 2023.

ALFA ROMEO

ZHOU GUANYU

Started **9th** — Result **10th**

6 The point certainly helps, but even with a missing front endplate Bottas was faster Alfa in the race. And as he gets closer to shedding rookie status, 0.35s deficit to team-mate in Q2 is a little too big. The qualifying cause also not helped by flat-spotting his tyres. By our guidelines, it's a fortunate six.

VALTTERI BOTTAS

Started **15th** – Result **13th**

7 Managed missing endplate after first-corner biff from Magnussen that sent him into Tsunoda. That dropped him to last when anti-stall triggered. Then cracked on to run near the points. Showed strongly on Saturday by outqualifying penalty-hit rivals and offsetting damage of his own grid drop.

HAAS

KEVIN MAGNUSSEN

Started **16th** – Result **16th**

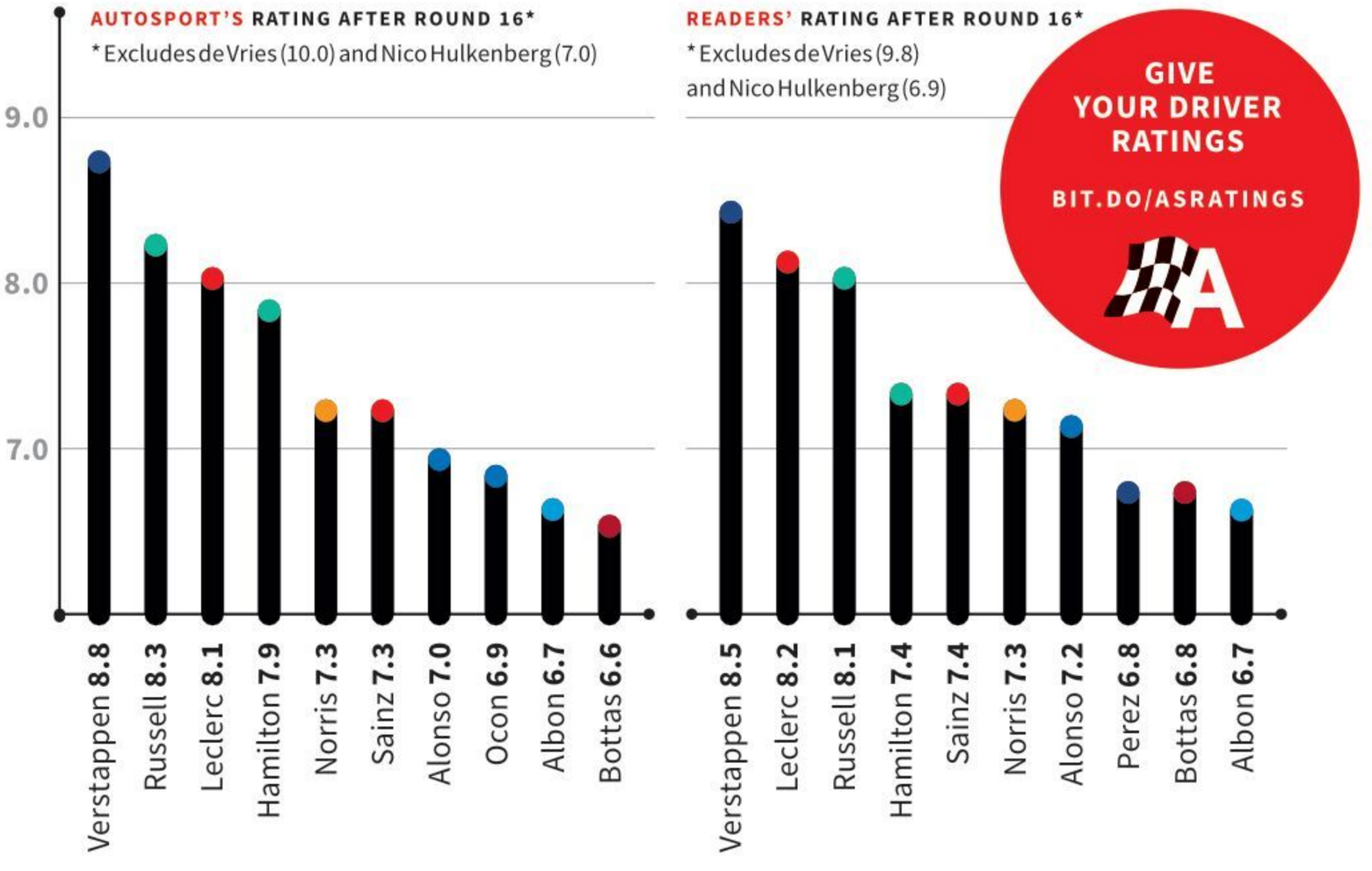
4 Very untidy execution. Almost a tenth quicker than Schumacher in qualifying, but blunders sealed a Q1 exit after he twice exceeded track limits. Poor display continued with his 5s penalty for an improper rejoin at the first chicane after he was poked in the rear.

MICK SCHUMACHER

Started **17th** – Result **12th**

6 Considering he turned in just 17 laps across practice, his management of the mediums was impressive, helping him to 12th before the safety car. In the Haas, that's ace. But can't be absolved for locking up at Turn 1 on his Q1 lap, then running slowest before gaining through grid penalties.

TOP 10 AVERAGE RATINGS



WRC ACROPOLIS

Neuville leads a controversial Hyundai podium lockout

The Belgian star took his first win of 2022, but will the team regret its decision not to assist title contender Tanak?

TOM HOWARD

PHOTOGRAPHY **McKLEIN**

Sport has a strange habit of conjuring up unthinkable results when you least expect them. This year's Acropolis Rally fell into that category as Hyundai – the team that has struggled the most with reliability this year – conquered one of the World Rally Championship's most brutal tests by scoring a history-making podium lockout.

Hyundai's fragile i20 N created headlines for all the wrong reasons in the first half of the season as the South Korean marque, which was late to commit to the WRC's hybrid Rally1 regulations, found itself on the backfoot. A severe lack of development was highlighted at the season-opening Monte Carlo Rally, where Thierry Neuville's sixth place, almost eight minutes adrift of the pace, was the best it could deliver. The list of problems to fix was lengthy but one by one Hyundai has addressed them. Even so, nobody could have predicted the culmination of its recovery to be as emphatic as Neuville leading home Ott Tanak and Dani Sordo to sweep the Greek podium.

De facto leader Julien Moncet perhaps summed it up best: "Nobody was putting even a single euro on us at the start of the season and now we are a regular competitor [for wins]. At the start we were not organised, we were not quick and we had reliability issue after reliability issue. For sure, we were not the favourite and not even challengers in Monte Carlo."

The 2022 Acropolis Rally is now the manufacturer's best WRC result. It also marked the first time the team has won three consecutive rallies, following on from Tanak's success in Finland and Belgium, while matching its highest tally of wins in a single season. While the result was an undeniable success, a decision to deploy team orders made the result bittersweet for one Hyundai driver.

There were suggestions that the famous Acropolis has become a more sanitised version of the brute that terrorised drivers in the past. After an extended three days of recce, talk of much smoother stages rumbled around the service park. This theory was well and truly busted come the end of the 303km, 16-stage epic.

As the WRC celebrates its 50th season this year it was perhaps poignant that organisers of one of the championship's founding events reintroduced an old favourite – its side-by-side Athens Olympic Stadium superspecial. The legendary status of this event has cultivated a strong rally following and they voted with their feet as 64,500 crammed into the stadium to watch Neuville defeat Toyota's Elfyn Evans to win the curtain raiser by 0.1 seconds from Hyundai WRC2 driver and former WRC pilot Teemu Suninen.

A twisty asphalt blast around a circuit that took eight days to construct is »

perhaps not for the purists, but it brought the rally to the people, proving to be a hit with drivers and spectators. It even provided dramas as Esapekka Lappi was lucky after brushing a barrier that would catch out reigning WRC2 champion Andreas Mikkelsen. "It's like it should always be – such great crowds and atmosphere," said Neuville. "Congratulations to the organisers for putting this in place for us and for all the spectators who came. It shows that it's possible to bring huge crowds to the WRC and we should look to do more."

Neuville's lead was short-lived as M-Sport came to the fore when the rally swapped the stadium superspecial for the more familiar mountain gravel roads synonymous with the Acropolis. The British squad desperate to turn around its poor form was offered a beacon of light in the form of nine-time world champion Sebastien Loeb and countryman Pierre-Louis Loubet, who rejoined the squad for Greece, while full-timer Adrien Fourmaux missed out as the team was unable to repair his damaged car in time following his Belgium crash last month.

Three-time Acropolis winner Loeb, aided by an advantageous road position, wasted little time getting up to speed on his return to the Greek gravel for the first time in 10 years, winning the three Friday morning stages to storm into the lead. That in itself set a new record for the rally legend as Loeb became the oldest driver to lead a WRC round at 48, eclipsing the record previously set by 1979 world champion Bjorn Waldegard in 1991.

Dust was an issue, whether it was the loose surface gravel that needed sweeping or seriously reduced visibility. "We have no visibility," said Neuville. "Suddenly it is fifth gear and full flat-out and you see nothing and you don't know where you are. It is unbelievable. We ask for more minutes [between cars], we knew the sun was low, we knew there was dust, we knew there was no wind and nobody gives a s***."

Organisers promptly reacted by increasing the intervals between cars to four minutes, which alleviated the problem. Friday was expected to be the toughest of the days, with crews forced to complete six stages without a mid-point service. However, all 12 Rally1 crews made it back to rally headquarters relatively unscathed.

It was M-Sport's Craig Breen who suffered the worst as his barren run continued – this time the Irishman picked up a puncture, costing him two minutes as he plummeted from fifth to outside of the top 10. "I seem to be getting it all [bad luck] at this point," said Breen, who headed into the rally having crashed out of the previous three events.

That was the only blemish for M-Sport as the team won all six stages. But it was relative WRC rookie Loubet who stunned many to emerge as Loeb's nearest challenger. The impressive Loubet claimed his career first stage win on stage five by capitalising on a rare Loeb overshoot. Incredibly, the 25-year-old not only took the stage win but led a WRC event for the first time in the process. Loubet would then back up his pace by winning stage six to lead Toyota's Lappi by 7.8s, with Loeb 8.3s off the top.

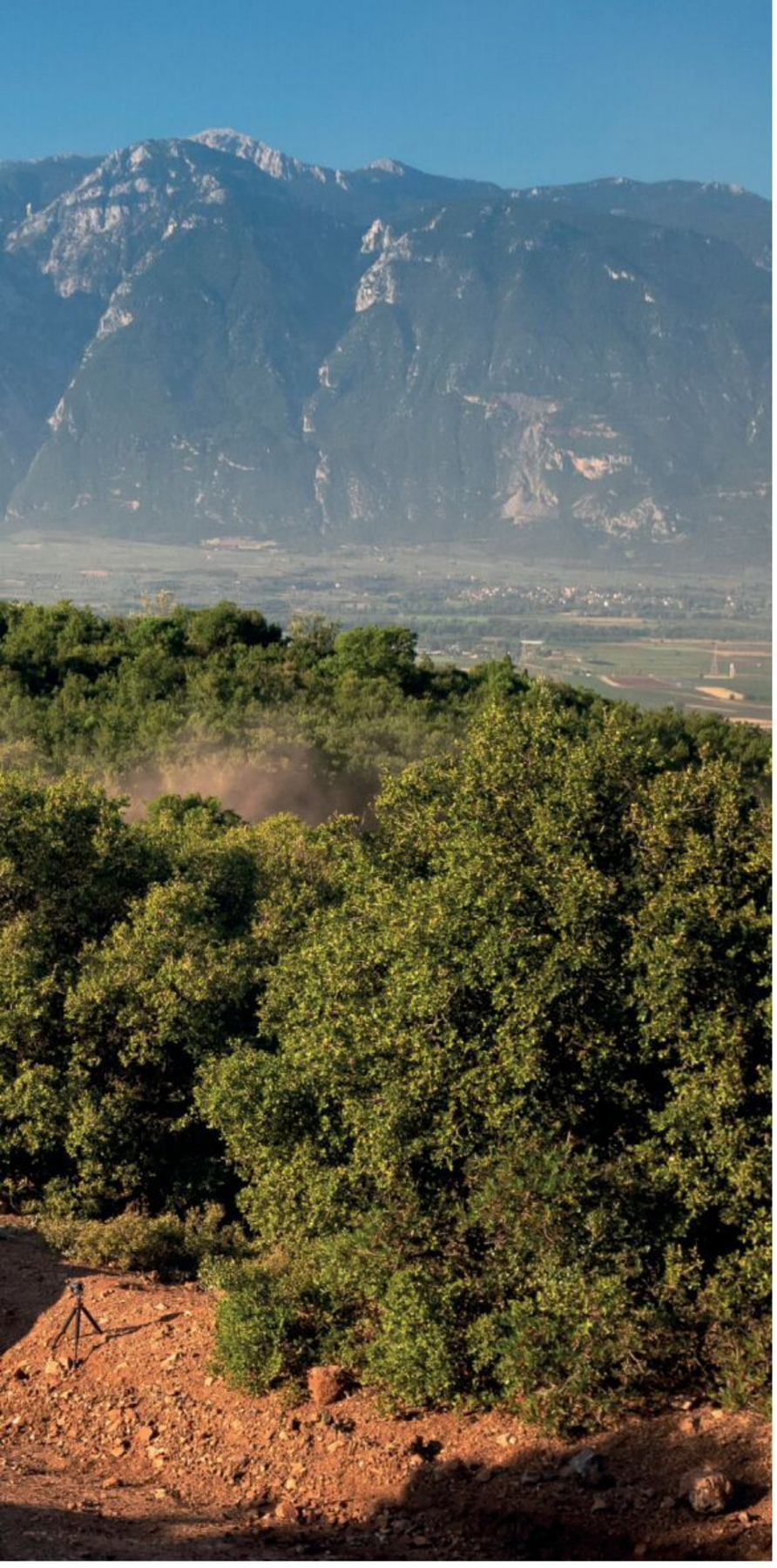
Loeb once again rolled back the years to wrestle the lead back from his team-mate after a push on the day's final stage to end the day leading Loubet by 1.7s, with Lappi third ahead of the Hyundai trio of Neuville, Sordo and Tanak, who was without the use of his hybrid power. Gus Greensmith was seventh, ensuring three M-Sport Pumas inside the top seven.

While M-Sport starred it was a difficult day for Toyota, highlighted the most by Kalle Rovanpera, who was languishing down in ninth, behind Evans and 1m07.8s back. The effects of road cleaning were more extreme than expected while the GR Yaris appeared to be missing the set-up sweet spot. "I think we are just not having the right things on the car at the moment," said Rovanpera. "It feels like the car is not working in the low-speed sections and I think we are going to lose some time."

There was no hiding the delight in the M-Sport camp as Loubet reflected on fighting with his childhood hero Loeb, who was equally impressed by his 2019 WRC2 champion countryman. "It is amazing to fight with him [Loeb]," said Loubet, who ended a nightmare 2021 in hospital with

Still got it: at 48, Sebastien Loeb led the rally on the first day

Lappi led the Toyota charge until he hit trouble. He wasn't alone



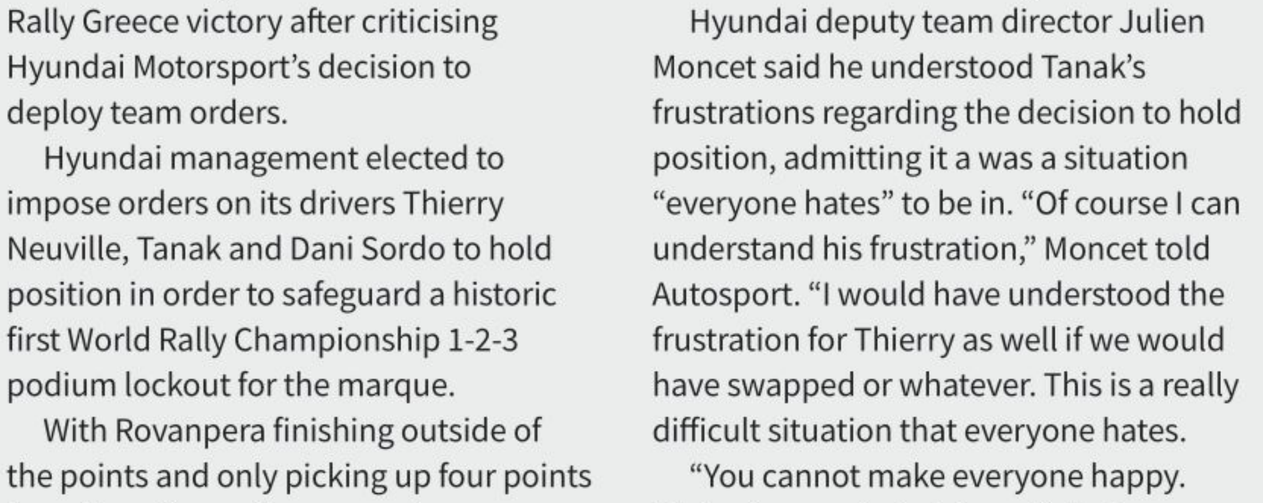
“I was only just born when he was first competing and I was watching him. It is something very nice”

a broken hip after being hit by a car while crossing a road in Paris. “I was only just born when he was first competing and I was watching him [growing up]. It is something very nice.” Loeb added: “He has made a big step compared to what he has been doing before. It is looking good for him.”

The joy was to be replaced by a storyline befitting a Greek tragedy as Loeb and Loubet’s victory chances vanished in a chaotic start to Saturday. Loeb was the only driver able to keep up with a charging Tanak, who won the day’s first stage, but that was the last we would see of the Frenchman in Greece. An alternator failure sparked a hectic attempt at a roadside repair, but it was game over.

Then Loubet picked up a puncture on the next stage costing him more than a minute, dropping him to seventh, having started the day in second. “It is deflating what has happened to us this weekend, but we remain positive and we know we can do it, and we proved that yesterday, but today was not our day,” said M-Sport boss Richard Millener. »

TANAK CRITICAL OF WRC TEAM ORDERS THAT DENIED ‘FAIR FIGHT’



It’s all a matter of perspective. That was Tanak’s take

Ott Tanak says it was a shame to be denied a “fair fight” for the Acropolis Rally Greece victory after criticising Hyundai Motorsport’s decision to deploy team orders.

Hyundai management elected to impose orders on its drivers Thierry Neuville, Tanak and Dani Sordo to hold position in order to safeguard a historic first World Rally Championship 1-2-3 podium lockout for the marque.

With Rovanpera finishing outside of the points and only picking up four points from the rally-ending powerstage, a victory in Greece on top of his powerstage win could have seen the 2019 world champion close to within 46 points of his rival, with 90 points remaining.

When asked if the team had made the right call, Tanak said it was the “correct call” for the team from a PR perspective: “It depends what is the target. If you are to fight for championship then it was wrong and if you want to have good PR it is the right decision.

“It depends whose perspective you are looking from. My perspective is I want to fight for the championship, but it is a shame that we couldn’t do it in a fair fight.

“On Friday we were carrying the [broken] hybrid [unit] for nothing and yesterday morning we had other issues so we were not close enough.”

Hyundai deputy team director Julien Moncet said he understood Tanak’s frustrations regarding the decision to hold position, admitting it a was a situation “everyone hates” to be in. “Of course I can understand his frustration,” Moncet told Autosport. “I would have understood the frustration for Thierry as well if we would have swapped or whatever. This is a really difficult situation that everyone hates.

“You cannot make everyone happy. We had some chats internally but we decided to hold the positions. We have decided, so that is it.”

Reflecting on the impact the call could have on Tanak’s slim title hopes, Moncet believes his driver would still need to benefit from more mistakes from Rovanpera to stand a chance of snatching the crown. “It is always possible and even if you look at Thierry it is possible,” he added. “The chances are quite small. I don’t think they are zero. We would need Kalle Rovanpera to do other mistakes, but it is not impossible and if there is a chance we will continue.

“But we have made a good step today in the manufacturers’ championship, which is very important for us.”

Julien Moncet (left) said he understood Tanak’s frustration

Moncet didn’t let the team orders discussion detract from the 1-2-3 achievement for his team. “It is an absolutely great result for the whole team and everybody,” he added. “I think it has been a perfect weekend for us.

“We started to wake up and improve in Croatia, Portugal and Sardinia. But then in Kenya again we were nowhere and I think that event was so hard for us, and we destroyed so many things, and we had so many issues, that we have learned a lot.

“So maybe from our misfortune we made our luck here.”

A struggling Rovanpera was also in the wars after side-swiping a tree on stage nine, which ripped the entire tailgate from his GR Yaris and damaged his rear brakes and suspension. It would cost the Finn, who could have secured the title in Greece, more than 16 minutes, offering up a golden opportunity for title rival Tanak. "Nothing special," said Rovanpera when asked about the crash. "We just went wide and hit the rear on something. I was struggling this morning like yesterday. Going flat-out everywhere and still being slow is not easy."

If Friday had belonged to M-Sport then Saturday was very much a Hyundai affair. The squad capitalised as the Acropolis began to take its toll on the crews, but it wasn't plain sailing. Extreme ambient temperatures into the 30s put a significant strain on the drivers, co-drivers and cars, with all three Hyundai crews suffering in keeping batteries sufficiently cooled.

However, Neuville, Tanak and Sordo survived two loops of three stages, including the famous Pyrgos and Tarzan tests, to head a 1-2-3. The unlikely result was aided by the demise of Lappi, who had led Toyota's charge in second before a fuel pressure problem saw the Finn grind to a halt on stage 12. His exit followed a retirement for Greensmith from sixth, due to a mechanical issue, while M-Sport privateer Jourdan Serderidis was out, stranded on a road section with a terminal hybrid problem. Keeping track of the leaderboard had become a difficult task as not one driver who started in the top 10 occupied the same position come the end of Saturday.

"It has been a great day for us," said Neuville. "A bit of a hard one this afternoon with some trouble with the car, but we survived and we are here. We had a warning for battery voltage, but it seems OK."

Given Hyundai's stranglehold on the rally, talk soon switched to team orders, with Neuville ahead of its best hope for the drivers' championship in Tanak. The Estonian didn't expect Neuville to move over for him, while the latter was keen to stay ahead to score his first 2022 win.

Loubet revelled in battling Loeb and scored his first WRC stage win

"It has been a tough season so far and to get the victory after a difficult weekend in Belgium is a relief"

It created a tense and difficult situation for Hyundai on Sunday. Tanak, frustrated by the lack of a decision to help his title bid, continued to push and beat Neuville on the first of the final three stages, though he was still 25s behind. Eventually, Hyundai Motorsport president Sean Kim messaged his crews telling them to hold station. It wasn't what Tanak wanted to hear.

Fired up for the final powerstage, Tanak won the stage to bag five extra points while Rovanpera, against the odds, snaffled four points to limit the damage to his championship lead, which is now 53 points. But at the front, Neuville was able to cruse to victory and head a historic yet controversial 1-2-3.

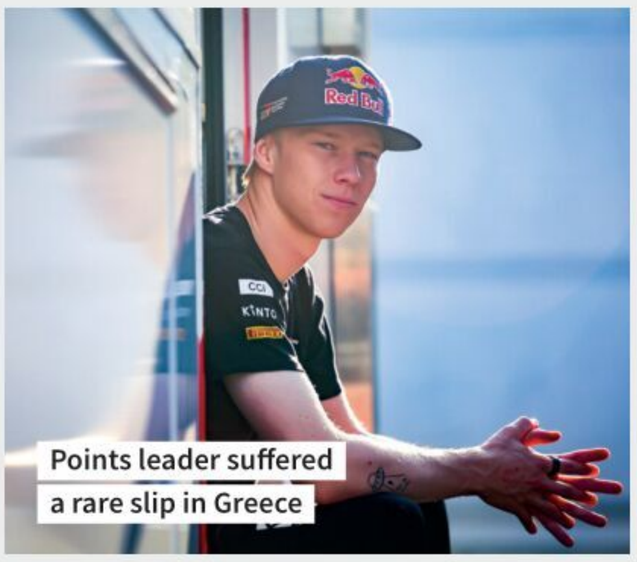
"It has been a tough season so far and to get the victory after a very difficult weekend in Belgium is a relief," said Neuville, who crashed out of the lead on Ypres Rally last month. "The most important thing is we have a 1-2-3 for the team — after all these years we finally got it and it's a historical moment for the brand and the team. Everybody has worked hard for this and it's a nice reward."

There was also reward for M-Sport as the Acropolis's attritional nature handed Loubet a deserved fourth to equal his best WRC result, after a mysterious engine issue forced Evans out before Sunday's first stage. Breen ended up fifth, while Takamoto Katsuta was the top Toyota in sixth.

There is no denying this was a well-deserved victory for Hyundai, but its decision not to favour Tanak could cost it a chance at a drivers' and manufacturers' title double.

Tanak closed the points gap to Rovanpera, but it could have been better

ROVANPERA AND TOYOTA TO STRIKE BACK



Points leader suffered a rare slip in Greece

World Rally Championship leader Kalle Rovanpera vowed to come back stronger in New Zealand after admitting his Acropolis Rally was one of the worst of his career.

The Finn faced the second match point of his quest to become the youngest ever World Rally champion if he could outscore Tanak by 18 points in Greece. However, for the second event in a row, after his spectacular Belgium crash, the magic he has sprinkled at almost every round this season appeared to have dried up. Hampered by opening the roads on Friday, and a crash on Saturday, Rovanpera didn't leave Greece empty handed, claiming four powerstage points that could be vital.

"Of course, I have done many good and bad weekends but this is one of the worst ones," said Rovanpera. "It was a bad weekend for me and bad weekend for the team also, so we need to improve and be stronger for the next one.

"It has been a long and tough weekend, more difficult than we expected and not what we wanted. At least we were able to get some points in the powerstage. We tried to do our best in the powerstage. It wasn't easy, I had to push everywhere, including in the rough parts, but we managed to get some good points so the situation isn't so bad for the championship. Now we need to concentrate on the next one and come back much stronger."

After witnessing his four-car attack struggle for pace in Greece, Toyota boss Jari-Matti Latvala added: "It has been a very difficult weekend for us and our overall results are not good. There has been a combination of many factors contributing to those results and we have to learn from this weekend about why things went wrong and we must improve for the future.

"Elfyn's [Evans] retirement was a particularly disappointing way to start the final day and we are already investigating what happened. The good thing is that we got Kalle and Esapekka [Lappi] to the finish with some really helpful points towards the manufacturers' championship."

RESULTS WORLD RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP ROUND 10/13, ACROPOLIS RALLY GREECE, 8-11 SEPTEMBER

POS	DRIVER / CO-DRIVER	TEAM / CAR	TIME
1	**Thierry Neuville** (BEL) **Martijn Wydaeghe** (BEL)	Hyundai Shell Mobis WRT / Hyundai i20 N Rally1	3h34m52.0s
2	**Ott Tanak** (EST) **Martin Jarveoja** (EST)	Hyundai Shell Mobis WRT / Hyundai i20 N Rally1	+15.0s
3	**Dani Sordo** (ESP) **Candido Carrera** (ESP)	Hyundai Shell Mobis WRT / Hyundai i20 N Rally1	+1m49.7s
4	**Pierre-Louis Loubet** (FRA) **Vincent Landais** (FRA)	M-Sport Ford WRT / Ford Puma Rally1	+3m42.2s
5	**Craig Breen** (IRL) **Paul Nagle** (IRL)	M-Sport Ford WRT / Ford Puma Rally1	+4m09.0s
6	**Takamoto Katsuta** (JPN) **Aaron Johnston** (GBR)	Toyota Gazoo Racing WRT NG / Toyota GR Yaris Rally1	+6m21.1s
7	**Emil Lindholm** (FIN) **Reeta Hamalainen** (FIN)	Toksport WRT 2 / Skoda Fabia Rally2 Evo	+7m46.6s
8	**Nikolay Gryazin** (RUS) **Konstantin Aleksandrov** (RUS)	Toksport WRT 2 / Skoda Fabia Rally2 Evo	+8m22.7s
9	**Alexandros Tsouloftas** (CYP) **Ross Whittock** (GBR)	Volkswagen Polo GTI R5	+10m53.8s
10	**Eyvind Brynildsen** (NOR) **Diego Vallejo** (ESP)	Toksport WRT / Skoda Fabia Rally2 Evo	+10m56.7s
OTHERS			
15	**Kalle Rovanpera** (FIN) **Jonne Halttunen** (FIN)	Toyota Gazoo Racing WRT / Toyota GR Yaris Rally1	+16m49.0s
22	**Esapekka Lappi** (FIN) **Janne Ferm** (FIN)	Toyota Gazoo Racing WRT / Toyota GR Yaris Rally1	+24m39.0s
29	**Gus Greensmith** (GBR) **Jonas Andersson** (SWE)	M-Sport Ford WRT / Ford Puma Rally1	+31m34.4s
R	**Elfyn Evans** (GBR) **Scott Martin** (GBR)	Toyota Gazoo Racing WRT / Toyota GR Yaris Rally1	SS14-engine
R	**Jourdan Serderidis** (GRC) **Frederic Miclotte** (BEL)	M-Sport Ford WRT / Ford Puma Rally1	SS11-hybrid
R	**Sebastien Loeb** (FRA) **Isabelle Galmiche** (FRA)	M-Sport Ford WRT / Ford Puma Rally1	SS8-alternator

STAGE TIMES

STAGE	FASTEST	LEADER	SECOND
SS1 **EKO SSS Olympic Stadium** (1.21 miles)	Neuville 1m58.4s	**Neuville**	Suninen +0.1s
SS2 **Loutraki 1** (11.15 miles)	Loeb 12m26.8s	**Loeb**	Tanak +1.1s
SS3 **Harvati** (8.96 miles)	Loeb 10m34.8s	**Loeb**	Neuville +2.7s
SS4 **Loutraki 2** (11.15 miles)	Lappi and Loeb 12m06.9s	**Loeb**	Neuville +6.4s
SS5 **Dafni** (8.69 miles)	Loubet 7m55.6s	**Loubet**	Loeb +1.9s
SS6 **Livadia** (13.07 miles)	Loubet 13m01.3s	**Loubet**	Lappi +7.8s
SS7 **Bauxites** (14.27 miles)	Loeb 13m50.5s	**Loeb**	Loubet +1.7s
SS8 **Pyrgos 1** (20.63 miles)	Tanak 25m06.1s	**Loeb**	Neuville +19.0s
SS9 **Perivoli 1** (10.82 miles)	Neuville 14m54.7s	**Neuville**	Tanak +18.6s
SS10 **Tarzan 1** (14.52 miles)	Neuville 17m13.6s	**Neuville**	Lappi +31.0s
SS11 **Pyrgos 2** (20.63 miles)	Neuville 24m54.1s	**Neuville**	Lappi +37.4s
SS12 **Perivoli 2** (10.82 miles)	Sordo 14m50.1s	**Neuville**	Tanak +34.2s
SS13 **Tarzan 2** (14.52 miles)	Tanak 16m50.8s	**Neuville**	Tanak +27.9s
SS14 **Eleftherochori 1** (10.50 miles)	Tanak 10m05.3s	**Neuville**	Tanak +25.0s
SS15 **Elatia - Rengini** (7.00 miles)	Neuville 8m00.6s	**Neuville**	Tanak +29.3s
SS16 **Eleftherochori 2** [Power Stage] (10.50 miles)	Tanak 9m54.5s	**Neuville**	Tanak +15.0s

DRIVERS' CHAMPIONSHIP

1 Rovanpera 207; 2 **Tanak** 154; 3 **Neuville** 131; 4 **Evans** 116; 5 **Katsuta** 100; 6 **Breen** 77; 7 **Lappi** 58; 8 **Sordo** 49; 9 **Greensmith** 36; 10 **Loeb** 35.

MANUFACTURERS' CHAMPIONSHIP

1 Toyota Gazoo Racing WRT 404; 2 **Hyundai Shell Mobis WRT** 341; 3 **M-Sport Ford WRT** 214; 4 **Toyota Gazoo Racing WRT NG** 112.

NEXT REPORT

RALLY NEW ZEALAND
6 OCTOBER

Buemi, Hartley and Hirakawa had a one-minute winning margin over their sister crew

WEC FUJI

Toyota domination sets up title showdown

Alpine and Toyota's leading 2022 crew will head to Bahrain to decide the title after the Japanese team finished 1-2

GARY WATKINS

Relive this race at motorsport.tv

There's nothing unusual in Toyota winning a World Endurance Championship round at Fuji. Victory for Sebastien Buemi, Brendon Hartley and Ryo Hirakawa last weekend was the eighth in nine attempts since the rebirth of the series in 2012. What was atypical on Sunday was that they pretty much destroyed their team-mates in the sister GR010 HYBRID on the way to one-minute winning margin at the head of a Toyota 1-2.

The #8 car looked pretty much unbeatable from late in the second hour when Buemi took over the lead from pole winner Kamui Kobayashi in #7 shared with Mike Conway and Jose Maria Lopez. The Swiss more or less disappeared after his team principal ceded position into Turn 10 at the start of the twiddly third sector of the 2.84-mile Fuji Speedway on lap 64.

The winning Toyota was more than three seconds clear by the time Buemi came in to hand over to Hartley, who then extended the lead when he went up against Lopez. Hirakawa then continued to pull away from Conway over the final stages of the race as he increased a lead that stood at a minute and eight seconds after six hours of racing uninterrupted by a single yellow-flag caution.

An unfamiliar-looking contest between two cars that are usually closely matched was the result of some unfamiliar conditions, or rather the reaction of the two driver crews to them. It was significantly hotter on race day than earlier in the week and, explained Toyota Gazoo Racing Europe technical director Pascal Vasselon, Buemi and co anticipated them better with the set-up tweaks they made. "It is absolutely unusual to have such a big gap between the two cars," said Vasselon. "It can be explained by the

race happening in very different conditions to testing [practice]. There has been a better set-up anticipation on #8, and #7 had a balance problem."

The drivers of #7 struggled with oversteer, which was exacerbated as the temperatures rose further in the afternoon. Hartley had the lead up into double figures by the time he stopped for the first time, and when he came in to hand over to Hirakawa he was more than half a minute to the good. The race was as good as over. "I drove the car in the hottest part of the race and we clearly had a big advantage over the other car – the differential between us seemed to grow the

"The differential between us seemed to grow the hotter it got. I was a bit surprised at the gap"

hotter it got," said Hartley. "I was a bit surprised at the gap I was able to build. We went in a different direction on car set-up to #7 and it clearly paid off. I think we worked really well in getting the car in the window."

Conway conceded that it wasn't his and his team-mates' day: "We couldn't do much more; car #8 was just a bit quicker so we couldn't challenge them but we had a clean race and made no mistakes."

A win for Buemi, Hartley and Hirokawa in the penultimate round of the 2022 WEC was the correct result for Toyota in terms of the title battle. They arrived in Japan 10 points down on the championship-leading Alpine crew, winners the previous time out at Monza, whereas the drivers of the sister Toyota were 30 points in arrears. Vasselon didn't rule out invoking team orders during the race in the name of the pursuit of the championship, but the domination of the best-placed crew in the points saved the Toyota Gazoo Racing squad from having to make any difficult decisions.

The rest of the five-car Hypercar field was nowhere in Fuji. The Alpine-Gibson A480 trailed home two laps down in the hands of Andre Negrao, Matthieu Vaxiviere and Nicolas Lapierre, while Peugeot's pair of 9X8 LMHs were seven and 15 laps down after suffering identical technical problems.

Or at least Toyota's rivals were nowhere in terms of the overall result. Vasselon insisted after the race that Alpine and Peugeot were far from uncompetitive in terms of outright performance, and analysis of the full race shows that he wasn't trying to fly some kind of political kite. Buemi, Hartley and Hirakawa enjoyed an advantage of somewhere in the region of two tenths over their team-mates – a veritable country mile in Toyota terms – but neither the Alpine »

TF BOUNCES BACK FROM MONZA SMASH

The TF Sport Aston Martin squad returned to the winner's circle in GTE Am after coming out on top in the battle of the bronzes. The key portion of the race came in the opening two hours when TF's bronze-rated driver Ben Keating went up against opposite number Sarah Bovy in the Iron Dames Ferrari. Keating had a lead of approximately 30 seconds over the Ferrari when he vacated the car and that was more or less the margin in favour of the Vantage GTE co-driven by Henrique Chaves and Marco Sorensen at the finish.

The all-green race played into the hands of the TF Aston and the Iron Dames Ferrari 488 GTE Evo that Bovy shared with Rahel Frey and Michelle Gatting. No one else was able to get on terms with the top two after the best bronzes in the pack by some margin had done their stuff.

Keating had taken the pole by just six hundredths from the Ferrari driver, but Bovy started on the soft Michelin and was initially able to take the lead. Keating, on the medium tyre, had the edge over a full stint, which proved decisive come the end of the race. TF's victory margin was actually a full lap because the winning Toyota finished between the top two in class.

TF's D'Station Aston claimed its first podium of the year with Tomonobu Fujii, Satoshi Hoshino and Charlie Fagg. Bronze driver Hoshino made amends for getting the car sent to the back of the grid for ignoring a double yellow flag in qualifying with a strong performance on his local track, while Fagg had to get back past Ferrari factory driver Davide Rigon after losing out to the AF Corse entry following his final stop.

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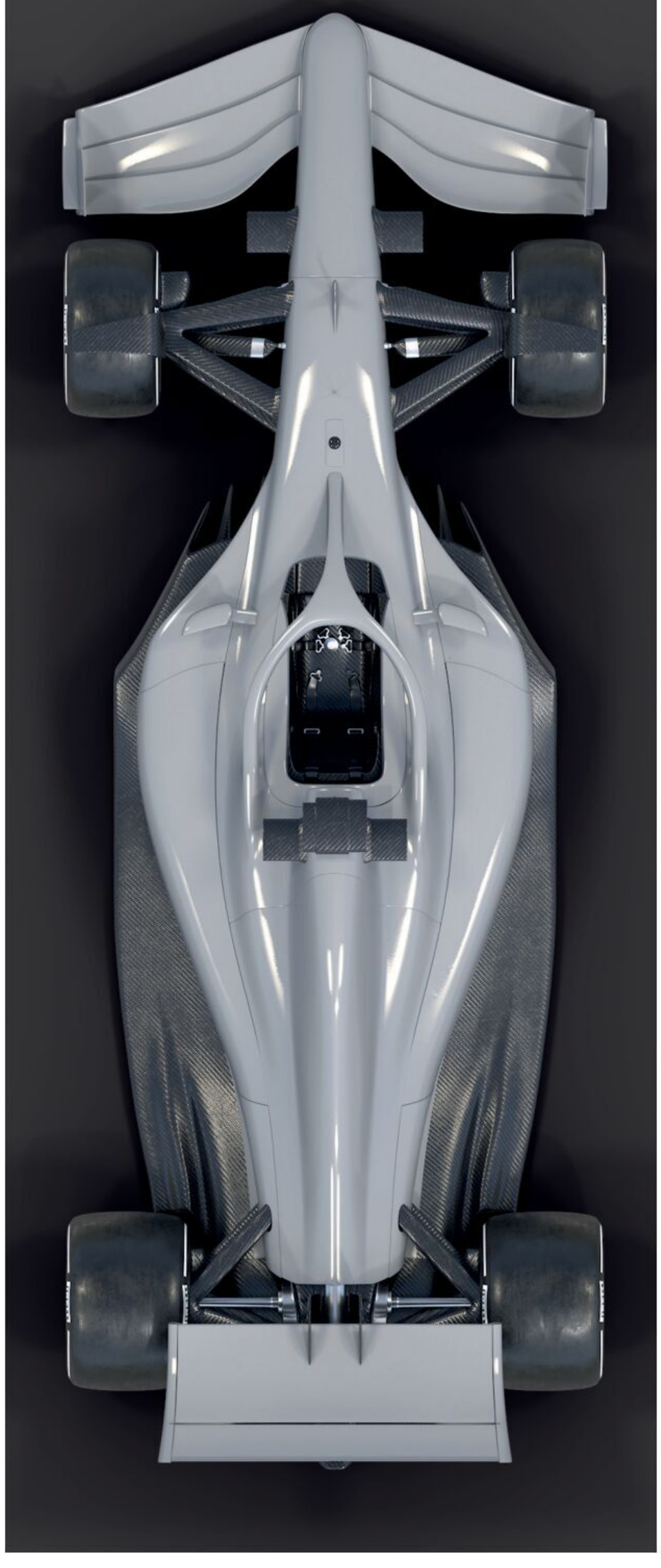

crew nor the combinations in the two Peugeots were far behind the #8 GR010. The fastest of the Peugeots, the fourth-placed car of Jean-Eric Vergne, Paul di Resta and Mikkel Jensen, was only 0.049s behind Kobayashi and his team-mates using a 100-lap average, and the Alpine 0.055s.

"If you look at the first stint on the tyres we are a little faster, but in the second stint we were a lot faster," said Vasselon. "The biggest gap today was in tyre management, but then our drivers are very fast in traffic and then there are the pitstops."

Alpine arrived in Japan looking for no more than a podium after receiving a Balance of Performance hit ahead of the race that robbed the normally aspirated Gibson engine in the back of its old ORECA LMP1 design of 35bhp. The Signatech Alpine team, also the winner first time out at Sebring in March, was racing with its lowest power level of the season. So it was mission achieved even if the Renault brand's drivers were hardly in celebratory mood afterwards.

"We had a great car, but we were too slow overall," said Vaxiviere, who brought the Alpine to the finish. "Clearly, we didn't have the pace to fight. I don't want to talk about BoP, but we can't be satisfied with our race. It's still cool that we will arrive in Bahrain equal on points [at the head of the championship]."

Peugeot made a massive step forward from the debut of its LMH prototype at Monza in July and, but for the reliability issue that afflicted both cars, it might have made it onto the podium. The #94 car shared by James Rossiter, Loic Duval and Gustavo Menezes looked more than capable of taking the fight to Alpine early in the race.

Rossiter, who lost time behind team-mate Vergne early on, jumped Negrao for third during the first round of pitstops and was initially able to edge away. The 9X8 was clearly looking after its Michelins better than the A480. The positions switched around

Duval/Menezes/Rossiter Peugeot eyed third, but ended up 20th

Kobayashi leads initially, but in the second hour the race had swung in #8's favour

"We didn't have the pace to fight. I don't want to talk about BoP, but we can't be satisfied with our race"

at the next round of stops after Rossiter was pushed off circuit by a GT car on his in-lap and then Lapierre was able to pull away on fresh rubber. But everything pointed to a close fight to the end. And that's without factoring in the extra pitstop that the grandfathered LMP1 car always has to make in comparison to the LMHs because its fuel tank can't accommodate the full energy allocation allowed under the BoP.

The end of Peugeot's chances of going home with some silverware was signalled by a stream of oil smoke from the back of the car halfway through hour three. The oil was coming out of a plug in the oil system. "Nothing dramatic," said Olivier Jansonnie, technical director of the 9X8, "but the consequences were quite big."

Twenty minutes were lost to repairs, though when the same problem reared its head on the sister car late in hour four, the in-house Peugeot Sport team were able to get it on its way in only seven and a half minutes.

Jansonnie reckoned third place was possible and so did Rossiter. "I'm confident we could have made a good fight of it without the problem," said Rossier, whose car also lost time with a 60s stop/go for exceeding its energy allowance later in the race. "Negrao came back at me a bit in the middle of my second stint, but I knew I had enough left in the tyres to push a bit more.

"We've made a massive step forward on Monza, so thanks to all the men and women back at Peugeot Sport. We've made a step in reliability, performance and also in terms of all the procedures inside the team. That was positive."

Rossiter and his co-drivers went home unrewarded for their efforts, finishing in 20th place. The sister Peugeot ended up fourth and was the quicker of the two cars over the second half of the race after Vergne haemorrhaged time over the first two stints. The team put it down to a tyre issue without elaborating.

Peugeot conceded that it still has to make another step to get on terms with Toyota, and there may or may not be some help from the rulemakers. A change in the LMH BoP will be allowed for the series finale in Bahrain in November; the tweaks for Fuji were only made in relation to the LMP1 Alpine, witness the fact that both the Peugeot and the Toyota received identical 18kg weight reductions last weekend.

Peugeot's learning curve and Alpine's BoP hit meant Toyota had it easy at Fuji. It made for a dull race, but that didn't bother Vasselon: "I like boring races."

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FERRARI LEADS THE WAY IN GTE PRO

Ferrari took a 1-2 in GTE Pro to put one hand on the final drivers' title to be awarded in the soon-to-disappear division. Alessandro Pier Guidi and James Calado extended their lead to 11 points going into the Bahrain finale on a day that the Italian marque's 488 GTE Evo enjoyed a clear advantage over class rivals Porsche and Chevrolet.

A duo looking for their third WEC title had to overcome a strong challenge from the sister AF Corse-run factory car shared by Antonio Fuoco and Miguel Molina. Fuoco on the fresher rubber was able to charge down Pier Guidi in the fourth hour, eventually moving past with an hour and 20 minutes to go. The pendulum swung the other way after the final stops when Calado had the better Michelins under him for the run to the flag.

The Brit got past Fuoco, who drove the final four stints in the second Ferrari, with 50 minutes to go, though was never more than a second ahead over the remainder of the race. It was unclear if a delay of around three seconds for Fuoco when an airline snagged on the rear wing at his final stop had any effect on the outcome.

Calado and Pier Guidi insisted that there were no team orders involved, even with the championship situation to consider. "It was just strategy," said Pier Guidi. "The sister car was in a different tyre situation, so I let him go. After we pitted, we were on the better tyres, so we could take the position back. Consistency was always going to be the key and I think we made the right choices on the tyres."

Porsche was only briefly in the game despite a Balance of Performance change that gave it a few extra horsepower courtesy of a larger-diameter air restrictor. Kevin Estre took pole, lost out to Calado at the start, got the lead after 10 laps and then lost it again after another 10. More significantly, the #92 Porsche 911 RSR Estre shared with Michael Christensen was 15s down by the first round of pitstops.

Calado (centre) and Pier Guidi (right) extended their points lead

Estre had started on the soft Michelin, like the Ferrari, but the Porsche's performance dropped off the cliff over the second half of the stint. That forced Porsche to switch to the medium tyre, which offered no way back into contention. Instead, the team opted to go into fuel save mode in the hope that a caution period would come to the rescue, but the race remained green for the duration.

The best-placed of the two Porsches was still only 32s down at the finish, half of that deficit lost in the opening hour. The second Manthey-run factory 911 ended up fourth in the hands of Gianmaria Bruni and Richard Lietz, a lap in arrears after an early drivethrough for a track limits violation.

Chevrolet followed its Monza victory with a disappointing weekend and a disastrous day on Sunday. The car edged closer to the pace through practice and qualifying as the Corvette Racing team came to terms with a 10kg weight hit under the BoP, and Nick Tandy was able to run in the lead train early on before getting a drivethrough for exceeding track limits.

Things went from bad to worse when the 'Vette C8.R ran out of fuel 100 or so yards short of its pit at the end of his first stint. The mechanics had to run down and push the car to its pitstall. It turned out that the car Tandy shared with Johnny Milner had a fuel leak when its tank was brimmed, which further compromised a race that it finished fifth and two laps down on the winners.

Ferrari 488 GTE Evo had a clear advantage over Porsche and Chevrolet

#31 car of Gelael/Frijns/ Vanthoor opted to push hard from start to finish…

WRT BEATS JOTA FOR LMP2 GOLD

The best of the WRT and Jota ORECAs were separated by a dozen or so seconds on track at the top of the LMP2 order after six hours at Fuji. But the two teams opted for very different strategies to get to positions one and two in class.

The #31 WRT ORECA-Gibson 07 driven by Sean Gelael, Robin Frijns and Dries Vanthoor took the victory by pushing as hard as possible from lap one to the end. The Jota car driven by Roberto Gonzalez, Antonio Felix da Costa and Will Stevens went off kilter on strategy in what turned out to be an unsuccessful victory bid.

But Jota's decision to go onto an aggressive fuel-save regime to try to save a pitstop had logic to it. The crew of the #38 ORECA arrived at Fuji with a 19-point lead in the championship and much to lose in a tooth-and-nail fight with the WRT car languishing down in fifth in the points.

"As soon as we saw the #31 was going to be doing 27 laps, we went onto a 28-lap strategy," explained Jota boss Sam Hignett. "When you are trying to win a championship, the last thing you want to be doing is racing out of the pits for the lead and banging wheels into Turn 1."

Jota needed to find nine laps to avoid the required late-race splash. It got to six, but the team was left to rue a rare yellow-free race. That short Full Course Yellow virtual safety car that it needed to pull off the win never came.

WRT led most of the way, for 162 of the 225 laps it completed to be precise. Gelael got into the lead at the start and hung on to it until midway through his second stint when Jonathan Aberdein came past in the #28 Jota car. Frijns jumped the leader in the middle of his first double after which WRT only lost the top spot during the pitstop cycles.

Vanthoor, standing in for DTM-contesting Rene Rast, lost time when he got hemmed in during his pitstop, but apart from that the only worry for the WRT team was if Jota or Prema, which also opted to save fuel, got the required yellow. It was still much closer than it looked in the results after Stevens pitted #38 with four laps to go. The victorious Toyota finished between the top two in P2, meaning the winner completed a lap more than the chasing car.

The second Jota entry Aberdein shared with Ed Jones and Oliver Rasmussen took third after the last-named fought a solid rearguard action to hold off Norman Nato in the Realteam by WRT ORECA, which had the benefit of much fresher tyres on the all-important left side of the car.

The race for Nato and team-mates Ferdinand Habsburg and Rui Andrade was compromised by two unscheduled stops, one for a damaged tyre and one for a slow puncture. The #28 Jota, meanwhile, had to fight back from the rear of the field after Aberdein was assaulted on the first lap by the Algarve Pro entry of Steven Thomas.

The United Autosports ORECA shared by Alex Lynn, Oliver Jarvis and Josh Pierson was nowhere for two thirds of the race before coming alive in the final two hours and charging to fifth. Prema ended up sixth after abandoning its fuel-mileage strategy.

…while Jota's aggressive fuel-saving strategy had merit, but didn't pay off

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RESULTS WORLD ENDURANCE CHAMPIONSHIP ROUND 5/6, FUJI 6 HOURS (JPN), 11 SEPTEMBER (232 LAPS– 657.793 MILES)

POS	DRIVERS	TEAM	CAR	CLASS	TIME
1	Sebastien **Buemi** (CHE) Brendon **Hartley** (NZL) Ryo **Hirakawa** (JPN)	Toyota Gazoo Racing	Toyota GR010 HYBRID	Hypercar	6h01m23.341s
2	Kamui **Kobayashi** (JPN) Mike **Conway** (GBR) Jose Maria **Lopez** (ARG)	Toyota Gazoo Racing	Toyota GR010 HYBRID	Hypercar	+1m08.382s
3	Andre **Negrao** (BRA) Nicolas **Lapierre** (FRA) Matthieu **Vaxiviere** (FRA)	Alpine Elf Endurance Team (Signatech)	Alpine-Gibson A480	Hypercar	-2 laps
4	Jean-Eric **Vergne** (FRA) Paul **di Resta** (GBR) Mikkel **Jensen** (DNK)	Peugeot TotalEnergies	Peugeot 9X8	Hypercar	-7 laps
5	Sean **Gelael** (IDN) Robin **Frijns** (NLD) Dries **Vanthoor** (BEL)	WRT	ORECA-Gibson 07	LMP2	-7 laps
6	Roberto **Gonzalez** (MEX) Antonio **Felix da Costa** (PRT) Will **Stevens** (GBR)	Jota	ORECA-Gibson 07	LMP2	-8 laps
7	Jonathan **Aberdein** (ZAF) Oliver **Rasmussen** (DNK) Ed **Jones** (GBR)	Jota	ORECA-Gibson 07	LMP2	-8 laps
8	Rui **Andrade** (PRT) Ferdinand **Habsburg** (AUT) Norman **Nato** (FRA)	Realteam by WRT	ORECA-Gibson 07	LMP2	-8 laps
9	Josh **Pierson** (USA) Alex **Lynn** (GBR) Oliver **Jarvis** (GBR)	United Autosports USA	ORECA-Gibson 07	LMP2	-8 laps
10	Louis **Deletraz** (CHE) Robert **Kubica** (POL) Lorenzo **Colombo** (ITA)	Prema ORLEN Team	ORECA-Gibson 07	LMP2	-8 laps
11	Will **Owen** (USA) Phil **Hanson** (GBR) Filipe **Albuquerque** (PRT)	United Autosports USA	ORECA-Gibson 07	LMP2	-8 laps
12	Lilou **Wadoux** (FRA) Paul-Loup **Chatin** (FRA) Charles **Milesi** (FRA)	Richard Mille Racing Team (Signature)	ORECA-Gibson 07	LMP2	-9 laps
13	Ryan **Cullen** (IRL) Renger **van der Zande** (NLD) Sebastien **Bourdais** (FRA)	Vector Sport	ORECA-Gibson 07	LMP2	-9 laps
14	Francois **Perrodo** (FRA) Nicklas **Nielsen** (DNK) Alessio **Rovera** (ITA)	AF Corse	ORECA-Gibson 07	LMP2	-9 laps
15	Esteban **Gutierrez** (MEX) Jakub **Smiechowski** (POL) Alex **Brundle** (GBR)	Inter Europol Competition	ORECA-Gibson 07	LMP2	-10 laps
16	Francois **Heriau** (FRA) Jean-Baptiste **Lahaye** (FRA) Matthieu **Lahaye** (FRA)	Ultimate	ORECA-Gibson 07	LMP2	-11 laps
17	James **Calado** (GBR) Alessandro **Pier Guidi** (ITA)	AF Corse	Ferrari 488 GTE Evo	GTE Pro	-15 laps
18	Miguel **Molina** (ESP) Antonio **Fuoco** (ITA)	AF Corse	Ferrari 488 GTE Evo	GTE Pro	-15 laps
19	Kevin **Estre** (FRA) Michael **Christensen** (DNK)	Porsche GT Team (Manthey)	Porsche 911 RSR	GTE Pro	-15 laps
20	James **Rossiter** (GBR) Loic **Duval** (FRA) Gustavo **Menezes** (USA)	Peugeot TotalEnergies	Peugeot 9X8	Hypercar	-15 laps
21	Gianmaria **Bruni** (ITA) Richard **Lietz** (AUT)	Porsche GT Team (Manthey)	Porsche 911 RSR	GTE Pro	-16 laps
22	Nick **Tandy** (GBR) Tommy **Milner** (USA)	Corvette Racing (Pratt & Miller)	Chevrolet Corvette C8.R	GTE Pro	-17 laps
23	Ben **Keating** (USA) Henrique **Chaves Jr** (PRT) Marco **Sorensen** (DNK)	TF Sport	Aston Martin Vantage GTE	GTE Am	-19 laps
24	Sarah **Bovy** (BEL) Rahel **Frey** (CHE) Michelle **Gatting** (DNK)	Iron Dames (Iron Lynx)	Ferrari 488 GTE Evo	GTE Am	-20 laps
25	Tomonobu **Fujii** (JPN) Satoshi **Hoshino** (JPN) Charlie **Fagg** (GBR)	D'Station Racing (TF)	Aston Martin Vantage GTE	GTE Am	-20 laps
26	Thomas **Flohr** (CHE) Francesco **Castellacci** (ITA) Davide **Rigon** (ITA)	AF Corse	Ferrari 488 GTE Evo	GTE Am	-20 laps
27	David **Pittard** (GBR) Paul **Dalla Lana** (CAN) Nicki **Thiim** (DNK)	Northwest AMR (Prodrive)	Aston Martin Vantage GTE	GTE Am	-20 laps
28	Niki **Leutwiler** (CHE) Matteo **Cairoli** (ITA) Mikkel **Overgaard Pedersen** (DNK)	Team Project 1	Porsche 911 RSR	GTE Am	-21 laps
29	Franck **Dezoteux** (FRA) Pierre **Ragues** (FRA) Gabriel **Aubry** (FRA)	Spirit of Race (AF)	Ferrari 488 GTE Evo	GTE Am	-21 laps
30	Takeshi **Kimura** (JPN) Ollie **Millroy** (GBR) Ben **Barnicoat** (GBR)	Team Project 1	Porsche 911 RSR	GTE Am	-21 laps
31	Fred **Poordad** (USA) Patrick **Lindsey** (USA) Jan **Heylen** (BEL)	Dempsey-Proton Racing	Porsche 911 RSR	GTE Am	-21 laps
32	Christoph **Ulrich** (CHE) Simon **Mann** (USA) Toni **Vilander** (FIN)	AF Corse	Ferrari 488 GTE Evo	GTE Am	-21 laps
33	Claudio **Schiavoni** (ITA) Matteo **Cressoni** (ITA) Giancarlo **Fisichella** (ITA)	Iron Lynx	Ferrari 488 GTE Evo	GTE Am	-21 laps
34	Steven **Thomas** (USA) James **Allen** (AUS) Rene **Binder** (AUT)	Algarve Pro Racing	ORECA-Gibson 07	LMP2	-33 laps
35	Mike **Wainwright** (GBR) Riccardo **Pera** (ITA) Ben **Barker** (GBR)	GR Racing	Porsche 911 RSR	GTE Am	-39 laps
R	Christian **Ried** (DEU) Seb **Priaulx** (GBR) Harry **Tincknell** (GBR)	Dempsey-Proton Racing	Porsche 911 RSR	GTE Am	128 laps-driveshaft

In each car, first-named driver started race. **Winner's average speed** 109.210mph. **Fastest lap** **Kobayashi** 1m30.735s, 112.493mph.

LMP2 **Aberdein** 1m32.290s, 110.598mph.
GTE Pro **Fuoco** 1m37.515s, 104.672mph.
GTE Am **Rigon** 1m38.321s, 103.814mph.

QUALIFYING

1 Kobayashi 1m29.234s; 2 **Hartley** 1m29.254s; 3 **Vaxiviere** 1m29.446s; 4 **Vergne** 1m30.000s; 5 **Duval** 1m30.152s; 6 **da Costa** 1m31.649s; 7 **Nielsen** 1m31.929s; 8 **Habsburg** 1m32.143s; 9 **Frijns** 1m32.210s; 10 **Bourdais** 1m32.297s; 11 **Albuquerque** 1m32.337s; 12 **Lynn** 1m32.342s; 13 **Jones** 1m32.439s; 14 **Kubica** 1m32.479s; 15 **Milesi** 1m32.529s; 16 **Brundle** 1m32.800s; 17 **Allen** 1m32.879s; 18 **M Lahaye** 1m33.155s; 19 **Christensen** 1m36.371s; 20 **Calado** 1m36.566s; 21 **Bruni** 1m36.800s; 22 **Molina** 1m36.851s; 23 **Tandy** 1m37.127s; 24 **Keating** 1m39.309s; 25 **Bovy** 1m39.371s; 26 **Dezoteux** 1m39.461s; 27 **Leutwiler** 1m39.796s; 28 **Flohr** 1m39.809s; 29 **Kimura** 1m39.853s; 30 **Ried** 1m39.874s; 31 **Poordad** 1m40.052s; 32 **Wainwright** 1m40.271s; 33 **Ulrich** 1m40.418s; 34 **Schiavoni** 1m40.683s; 35 **Dalla Lana** NT; 36 **Hoshino** NT.

CHAMPIONSHIP

Hypercar drivers

1 Hartley/Hirakawa/Buemi 121; 2 **Negrao/Vaxiviere/Lapierre** 121; 3 **Lopez/Kobayashi/Conway** 95; 4 **Olivier Pla/Romain Dumas** 70; 5 **Pipo Derani** 47; 6 **Ryan Briscoe** 23.

Hypercar manufacturers

1 Toyota 147; 2 **Alpine** 121; 3 **Glickenhaus** 70; 4 **Peugeot** 24.

LMP2 drivers

1 da Costa/Gonzalez/Stevens 114; 2 **Pierson/Jarvis** 86; 3 **Habsburg/Nato/Andrade** 80; 4 **Frijns/Gelael** 78.

GTE drivers

1 Pier Guidi/Calado 120; 2 **Estre/Christensen** 109; 3 **Bruni** 106; 4 **Lietz** 96; 5 **Fuoco/Molina** 93; 6 **Tandy/Milner** 75.

GTE manufacturers

1 Ferrari 216; 2 **Porsche** 215; 3 **Chevrolet** 75.

GTE Am drivers

1 Keating/Sorensen 123; 2 **Pittard/Thiim/Dalla Lana** 103; 3 **Chaves** 95; 4 **Ried/Tincknell/Priaulx** 77.

NEXT REPORT
BAHRAIN 8 HOURS
17 NOVEMBER ISSUE

Changed man: Power, 41, is an IndyCar champion again, just as he was back in 2014

INDYCAR LAGUNA SECA

Power hits the target as Palou takes charge

The reigning champion was unstoppable but Will Power's new approach earned him a second title at the age of 41

DAVID MALSHER-LOPEZ

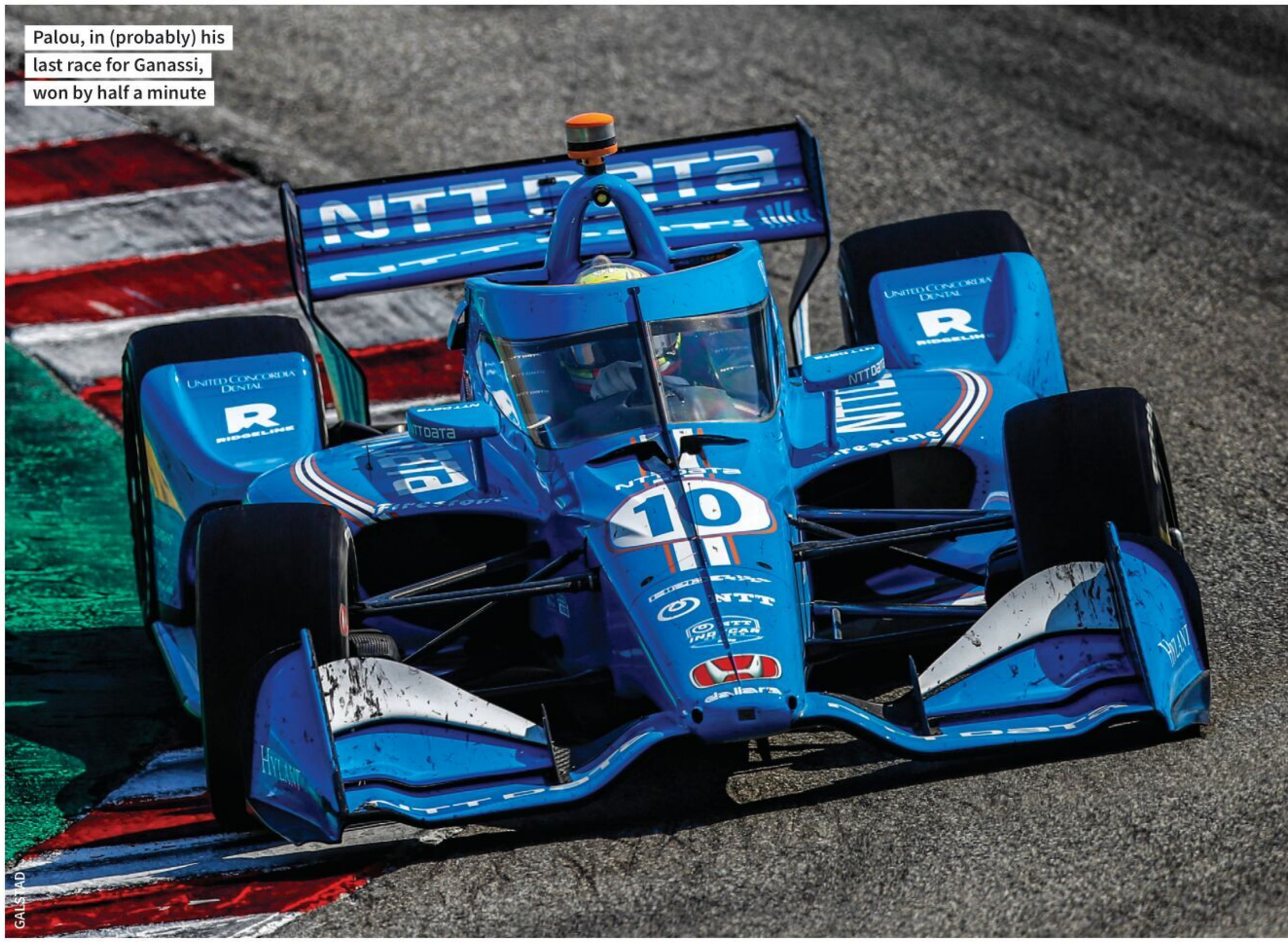
PHOTOGRAPHY motorsport IMAGES

Will Power has driven races differently this year. He's handled bad situations differently this year. And in reinventing himself as a model of consistency and pursuing his goal of earning a second championship with a frighteningly single-minded devotion, he delivered Roger Penske his 16th IndyCar title. Last Sunday at Laguna Seca, Power had to grind it out, his car emphatically not happy for around 50 of the 95 laps but, as has been his wont this year, he stuck to the task at hand, came home third and that was more than enough. No one had any answer to the pace of Alex Palou on what would/could/should be his last race for Chip Ganassi Racing.

Although he arrived at Laguna Seca with a 20-point lead in the championship over Penske team-mate Josef Newgarden and Chip Ganassi Racing's Scott Dixon, Power really didn't want either of those drivers taking the point for pole, a point for leading a lap, two points for leading the most laps and then winning the race. That was well within the capability of both – they are, after all, great champions themselves and in the two best teams – and it would oblige Power to finish at least third to win the championship. And if, say, Dixon was able to dominate in that manner, that would suggest his Ganassi team-mates Alex Palou and Marcus Ericsson would be plenty fast enough to keep Power from that precious podium position. And Palou had topped a recent test there...

But if there's one area where Power hasn't changed it's in qualifying. He just can't stop himself from laying it all on the line. And his job of trying to grab pole was made considerably easier when Newgarden

LEVITT


Palou, in (probably) his last race for Ganassi, won by half a minute
GALSTAD

made an elementary error. IndyCar had installed metal triangles, that looked barely bigger than a Toblerone bar, on the left-side kerbing at turn-in for the infamous Corkscrew and on the right-side a tad further down to discourage drivers from cutting across the legendary S-bend and to prevent disputes over track limits.

In Q1 Group 1, on just his banker lap on primary tyres, Newgarden clipped the first of these on the left, and its rigidity was enough to bounce the car out of control at the point it goes light for the plunge downhill. The #2 Penske Dallara-Chevrolet looped into a spin that sent it up the banked gravel trap on the right, and when Josef tried to let it roll down to rejoin the track, the sharpness of the angle left it propped up on its nosecone and needing rescuing. Out came the red flag, and the two-time champion lost his two fastest laps and was consigned to the back row of the grid.

This had a knock-on effect for another key player in the title fight. As the clock ran out, IndyCar granted the Group 1 drivers a single flyer, and Dixon emerged from the pitlane behind Kyle Kirkwood's AJ Foyt Racing Dallara-Chevy, and the rookie was going far too slow for the Ganassi driver's liking, as he couldn't generate heat in his tyres. Dixon's best effort would not be enough for him to reach Q2 and so he was consigned to 13th on the grid.

Power, meanwhile, got through to the Firestone Fast Six and then did just enough to beat — by two-hundredths of a second — the surprising challenger, ex-Formula 2 ace Callum Ilott (Juncos Hollinger Racing), who was revelling in being back at a track he learned last year.

Power's fifth pole of the season was the 68th of his career, meaning he overtook Mario Andretti at the top of IndyCar's all-time pole-winner list. The great man himself came to congratulate the Penske ace at the end of his run and, while Power was flattered, grateful and humble, he admitted later that he hadn't let it sink in. That pole, he said, had been all about adding a precious point to his tally, making it a tad harder for Newgarden and Dixon to clinch the championship, even if they should find their way to the front.

As things transpired, Dixon wouldn't — he was never a factor — but Newgarden would. With nothing left to lose, he went for a four-stop strategy, allowing him to charge hard with no fuel-saving concerns, and a highly reduced concern over the life of Firestone's softer alternate-compound tyres, which had proven to be easily shredded by the abrasive old surface of the 2.238-mile Laguna Seca track. He'd be short stinting.

At the start, Power led away while Ilott bottled up the Andretti Autosport Dallara-Honda of Romain Grosjean approaching Turn 2 and ran wide, allowing both Alexander Rossi in his last race for Andretti and Pato O'Ward of Arrow McLaren SP to slip up his inside.

"With nothing to lose Newgarden went for a four-stop strategy, allowing him to charge hard"

Rossi, who had started on used reds, initially kept within 1.5s of Power but then felt his rear tyres fall away, allowing O'Ward and Ilott to pass him by the end of lap 11. Power, who had started on fresh reds, stretched his first stint to lap 15 before pitting for primaries.

But the championship leader was in trouble, his pace distinctly unimpressive. Having looked slow in Sunday morning warm-up, the team had reverted his set-up to roughly what he ran here a year ago, and on his first set of primaries it just wasn't working at all, Power describing his car as 'on top of the track' and wayward rather than digging into the asphalt. Meanwhile Palou, who had started 11th after a six-place grid penalty for an early engine change, had moved into the frame.

The #10 team had started him on primaries and, despite the relative lack of grip compared to the alternate-tyred cars around him, he moved up to eighth on the opening lap, passed the (also primary- »

tyred) Penske machine of Scott McLaughlin on lap five and was sixth by the end of lap 10. He would stay out and take the lead before pitting on lap 19. Taking on reds just as his rivals were switching to the more durable but less grippy primaries, Palou swiftly dealt with those ahead and nabbed the lead from Power on lap 27 out of Turn 4.

Further back, Newgarden was charging too. Having sliced through the lower orders in the opening laps he had run to lap 23 on his primaries before pitting and emerging 14th. He then spent 11 happy laps slashing through to seventh, looking like he was running the 2024 2.4-litre spec engine. A pitstop on lap 35 dropped him down to only

"Power wasn't about to jeopardise his car or championship by making a chancy passing attempt"

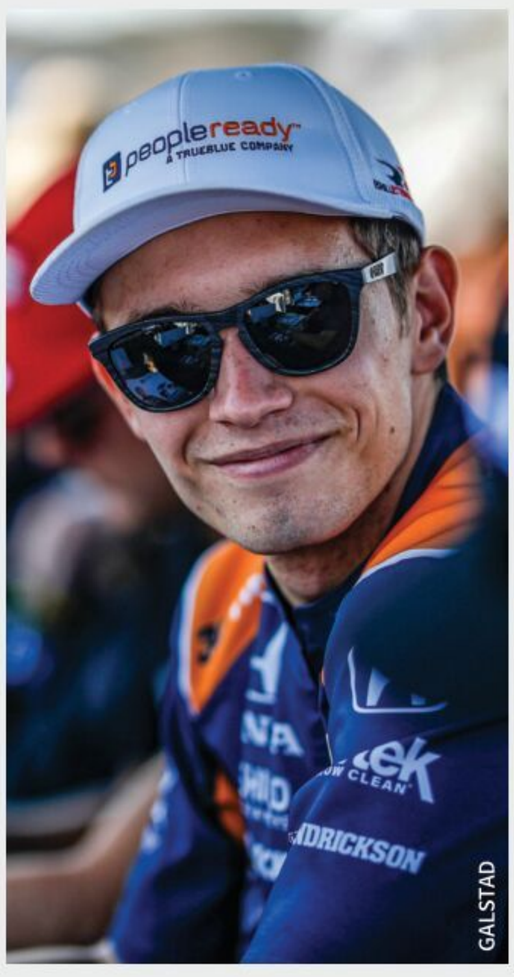
ninth, and then Ilott's car died on the pitlane exit. It wasn't in a particularly dangerous place, and so IndyCar let the drivers who wanted to stop hit the pitlane before the yellows came out and the pits were closed.

Power was among the takers, and asked to take out some front wing to neutralise the car's tail-happiness on the previous stint. But that would prove not to be the answer, the car now lacking grip, front and rear!

On the lap 42 restart, Palou led convincingly away, his advantage exaggerated by Power spinning his wheels – he had to make his car very wide to hold back Felix Rosenqvist at Turn 2.

Having stopped just before the yellow flag and taken on a second set of alternate tyres, Newgarden was moving at a different pace to those around him once more. He was able to move up to a net fifth by not pitting under caution, and following the restart he was swiftly past O'Ward, then Rosenqvist, both scalps claimed at the entry to the Corkscrew. He pulled the same manoeuvre on Power on lap 46, but by then he was already some 7.2s behind Palou and could no longer make any progress. Indeed, Palou edged away before making his final stop on lap 68, a lap later than Power, who this time had more front wing added at his stop.

Palou's pitstop allowed Newgarden to take the lead for five laps before the 2017 and 2019 champ ducked in for his fourth stop to take on primaries. He had pulled enough of a gap on Power in the previous stint that he emerged ahead but by barely more than a second. Power, now with the right balance thanks to the front wing adjustment and a set of Firestones that worked with his car's handling, was easily able to simply track close behind his team-mate. That's all he needed: he wasn't about to jeopardise his car or his championship by making a chancy and unnecessary passing attempt on his team-mate.



HONEST CHANGES HELP LUNDGAARD TO ROOKIE CROWN

Bobby Rahal, the 1982 CART Indycar Rookie of the Year, didn't mince his words about how much his team had needed to turn its form around mid-season to enable Christian Lundgaard to clinch IndyCar's 2022 RotY honours, which he did at Laguna.

Although Lundgaard made a couple of typical rookie errors this year, enabling David Malukas of Dale Coyne Racing with HMD to close to within five points in the rookie standings entering the season finale, what could have prevented Lundgaard from taking the award was Rahal Letterman Lanigan's strangely poor first half of the season.

"It's been a tough year for us," said three-time champion Rahal. "The first third or half of the year, very spotty. We did not give our drivers, Christian, Graham [Rahal] or Jack [Harvey], the cars that they deserved to have… There was a lot of soul-searching going on by halfway in the season. A year earlier we'd been much more competitive. We had embarked on a few development things, and there was clearly a lot of questioning.

"So they all went down and did this test [at Sebring] in the middle of summer. And we found a lot of answers. Some of those answers were not friendly to the things that we believed. We took those answers, and the next race, Toronto, we were back in the hunt.

"I'm proud of our team because… everybody was willing to accept the findings, whatever they may be, and there was no ego involved. All we wanted to do was become better and I think the results of that test were crucial for the remainder of our year."

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RESULTS **ROUND 16/16, LAGUNA SECA (USA), 11 SEPTEMBER (95 LAPS – 212.610 MILES)**

POS	DRIVER	TEAM / CAR	TIME
1	**Alex Palou** (ESP)	Chip Ganassi Racing / Dallara-Honda	2h03m31.0628s
2	**Josef Newgarden** (USA)	Team Penske / Dallara-Chevrolet	+30.3812s
3	**Will Power** (AUS)	Team Penske / Dallara-Chevrolet	+33.8528s
4	**Felix Rosenqvist** (SWE)	Arrow McLaren SP / Dallara-Chevrolet	+35.5322s
5	**Christian Lundgaard** (DNK)	Rahal Letterman Lanigan Racing / Dallara-Honda	+50.8901s
6	**Scott McLaughlin** (NZL)	Team Penske / Dallara-Chevrolet	+56.1091s
7	**Romain Grosjean** (FRA)	Andretti Autosport / Dallara-Honda	+57.9853s
8	**Pato O'Ward** (MEX)	Arrow McLaren SP / Dallara-Chevrolet	+59.9521s
9	**Marcus Ericsson** (SWE)	Chip Ganassi Racing / Dallara-Honda	+1m02.6247s
10	**Alexander Rossi** (USA)	Andretti Autosport / Dallara-Honda	+1m05.3231s
11	**Colton Herta** (USA)	Andretti Autosport with Curb-Agajanian / Dallara-Honda	+1m07.6483s
12	**Scott Dixon** (NZL)	Chip Ganassi Racing / Dallara-Honda	+1m07.9752s
13	**David Malukas** (USA)	Dale Coyne Racing with HMD / Dallara-Honda	-1 lap
14	**Rinus Van Kalmthout** (NLD)	Ed Carpenter Racing / Dallara-Chevrolet	-1 lap
15	**Devlin Defrancesco** (CAN)	Andretti Steinbrenner Autosport / Dallara-Honda	-1 lap
16	**Jimmie Johnson** (USA)	Chip Ganassi Racing / Dallara-Honda	-1 lap
17	**Simon Pagenaud** (FRA)	Meyer Shank Racing / Dallara-Honda	-1 lap
18	**Graham Rahal** (USA)	Rahal Letterman Lanigan Racing / Dallara-Honda	-1 lap
19	**Helio Castroneves** (BRA)	Meyer Shank Racing / Dallara-Honda	-1 lap
20	**Jack Harvey** (GBR)	Rahal Letterman Lanigan Racing / Dallara-Honda	-1 lap
21	**Kyle Kirkwood** (USA)	AJ Foyt Enterprises / Dallara-Chevrolet	-1 lap
22	**Simona de Silvestro** (CHE)	Paretta Autosport / Dallara-Chevrolet	-1 lap
23	**Takuma Sato** (JPN)	Dale Coyne Racing with RWR / Dallara-Honda	-1 lap
24	**Conor Daly** (USA)	Ed Carpenter Racing / Dallara-Chevrolet	-2 laps
25	**Dalton Kellett** (CAN)	AJ Foyt Enterprises / Dallara-Chevrolet	-2 laps
26	**Callum Ilott** (GBR)	Juncos Hollinger Racing / Dallara-Chevrolet	37 laps-mechanical

Winner's average speed 103.277mph. **Fastest lap** **O'Ward** 1m13.8486s, 109.099mph.

Q3 **1 Power 1m11.6127s**; 2 **Ilott** 1m11.6320s; 3 **Rossi** 1m11.7698s; 4 **Grosjean** 1m11.7858s; 5 **O'Ward** 1m12.4542s; 11 **Palou** 1m12.1625s.
Q2 **Rossi 1m11.4238s**; **Grosjean** 1m11.4793s; **Power** 1m11.4871s; **O'Ward** 1m11.5472s; **Palou** 1m11.5857s; **Ilott** 1m11.6215s; 6 **Malukas** 1m11.6295s; 7 **McLaughlin** 1m11.6916s; 8 **Rosenqvist** 1m11.7285s; 9 **Ericsson** 1m12.1359s; 10 **Pagenaud** 1m12.2808s; 12 **Castroneves** 1m12.8856s.
Q1 – GROUP 1 **Rosenqvist 1m11.3471s**; **Power** 1m11.3496s; **Grosjean** 1m11.5631s; **Castroneves** 1m11.6618s; **Ilott** 1m11.9333s; **Palou** 1m12.0990s; 14 **Kalmthout** 1m12.1442s; 16 **Lundgaard** 1m12.2093s; 18 **Herta** 1m12.2720s; 20 **Defrancesco** 1m12.2996s; 22 **Sato** 1m12.4489s; 24 **Kellett** 1m12.8001s; 26 **de Silvestro** 1m13.5181s.
Q1 – GROUP 2 **Malukas 1m11.7507s**; **McLaughlin** 1m11.8474s; **Pagenaud** 1m11.8874s; **Rossi** 1m11.8960s; **O'Ward** 1m11.9993s; **Ericsson** 1m12.0856s; 13 **Dixon** 1m12.1722s; 15 **Daly** 1m12.2661s; 17 **Kirkwood** 1m12.4299s; 19 **Rahal** 1m12.5970s; 21 **Harvey** 1m12.8366s; 23 **Johnson** 1m13.4172s; 25 **Newgarden** no time.

CHAMPIONSHIP **1 Power 560**; 2 **Newgarden** 544; 3 **Dixon** 521; 4 **McLaughlin** 510; 5 **Palou** 510; 6 **Ericsson** 506; 7 **O'Ward** 480; 8 **Rosenqvist** 393; 9 **Rossi** 381; 10 **Herta** 381.

Considering he felt faster than Newgarden now, maybe Power would have attempted to make the pass had it been over a race victory, but Palou was simply in a different class, pulling away from the Penske pair apparently without effort, so that he eventually crossed the line after 95 laps half a minute ahead.

Power allowed himself to back off a tad in the final five laps, no longer at risk from Grosjean, who had started the last stint on reds but had them fall away – 26 laps on a set of reds was never going to work! He lost fourth to Rosenqvist on lap 88, fifth to rookie Christian Lundgaard (see panel) on lap 93 and sixth to McLaughlin on lap 95.

McLaughlin's forceful manner in the final stint saw him pass both Rossi and Marcus Ericsson, and so move into a points tie with Palou, but he will be classified fourth in the championship ahead of Sunday's race winner for having the edge on wins, 3-1. Indy 500 winner Ericsson slipped to sixth in the table by coming home in ninth.

Palou was asked after the race about his situation with Chip Ganassi Racing, but he was non-committal regarding who would prevail in the legal battle between Ganassi and McLaren for his services in 2023. Still, this race was a timely reminder of his capabilities and why two great teams are fighting over him.

Newgarden was gracious enough to admit that even if he had started up front, he probably didn't have anything for Palou's pace and thus doomed his title hopes.

And Power? He was, in his own words, "mentally drained" but happy that switching his focus from race wins to a second title run had been vindicated.

Watching brief for champion Drugovich

FIA FORMULA 2
MONZA (ITA)
10-11 SEPTEMBER
ROUND 13/14

Felipe Drugovich: in the footsteps of Junqueira

PORTLOCK/2022 FORMULA MOTORSPORT LIMITED

Felipe Drugovich was crowned Formula 2 champion after Saturday's sprint despite watching most of it from the pitwall.

The MP Motorsport driver suffered a first-lap retirement after a collision with Amaury Cordeel at Turn 5 broke his suspension, leaving him to return to the pitlane. But he watched on as title rival Theo Pourchaire finished last, leaving his championship-leading margin untouched and paving the way for him to become the first Brazilian to win the main Formula 1 feeder series title since Bruno Junqueira conquered Formula 3000 in 2000.

Juri Vips won the sprint race, having started third for Hitech behind Frederik Vesti (ART) and Logan Sargeant, the Carlin driver making a poor start to drop to fifth. Then Olli Caldwell (Campos) and Charouz driver Tatiana Calderon crashed at Turn 2, prompting a safety car.

As racing resumed, Vips snatched the lead from Vesti at Turn 1, which he held until the end, while Jehan Daruvala finished third for his seventh podium of the season for Prema. Pourchaire lined up 14th and had failed to make initial headway, then made a move on Marino Sato for 13th on lap four. He made it past Ralph Boschung at Ascari later in the lap, up to 12th.

He then cleared Cordeel for 11th out of the second chicane as the Belgian had been embroiled in a three-way battle for ninth with David Beckmann (VAR) and Carlin driver Lawson. But the Frenchman's luck went from bad to worse as he ran wide onto the Turn 2 gravel on lap 14 while trying a move on Lawson, dropping him to 17th before he was handed a five-second penalty for causing the collision. Sargeant settled for fourth, with Lawson in fifth and Jack Doohan in sixth for Virtuosi.

The next day, Daruvala scored his maiden victory of 2022 as the early leaders were thwarted by an ill-timed safety car.

Poleman Doohan had a slow getaway, dropping down the order as Lawson grabbed the lead. Chaos ensued on the exit of the first chicane as Pourchaire made contact with Boschung, who was rejoining after cutting the corner, sending the Campos driver spearing into the barrier on the way into Curve Grande as Pourchaire spun.

Into the second chicane, the recovering Doohan was forced by a swerving Daruvala into a collision with Sargeant, which ended both their races. After a safety car interlude Lawson led from Drugovich and Marcus Armstrong (Hitech), the latter getting a good jump to take second into Turn 1.

The race was red-flagged on lap nine after Trident's Calan Williams was pitched into the barrier midway through the Ascari chicane by Beckmann, initially triggering another safety car intervention. By the time the race was paused the majority of the field had made their mandatory pitstop, with the exception of Williams's team-mate Richard Verschoor – who started on hard rubber – and the Virtuosi machine of Sato.

The leaders had been unable to pit as the safety car was called, coming in a lap after the first group to pit – led by Daruvala – who cycled into third under the red flag.

Verschoor and Sato then finally pitted once racing resumed, releasing Daruvala into a comfortable victory. Vesti finished 2s off in second to complete a double podium, with Ayumu Iwasa completing the rostrum. But the DAMS driver was disqualified after the rear plank of his car was found to be below the maximum thickness required by the technical regulations, handing third to Enzo Fittipaldi.

MEGAN WHITE

WEEKEND WINNERS

FIA FORMULA 2
MONZA (ITA)
Race 1 Juri Vips
Hitech
Race 2 Jehan Daruvala
Prema

FIA FORMULA 3
MONZA (ITA)
Race 1 Franco Colapinto
Van Amersfoort Racing
Race 2 Zane Maloney
Trident

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First win of 2022 for Prema's Daruvala

DUTCH PHOTO AGENCY / RED BULL CONTENT POOL

Franco Colapinto leads the Saturday sprint at Monza in the F3 finale

PORTLOCK/2022 FORMULA MOTORSPORT LIMITED

Martins is crowned after red-flag confusion

FIA FORMULA 3
MONZA (ITA)
10-11 SEPTEMBER
ROUND 9/9

It was a chaotic end to a chaotic FIA Formula 3 season, with Victor Martins becoming champion at Monza after some frenetic post-race calculations.

After Sunday's feature race was red-flagged with five laps remaining, a question mark hung over which of the six contenders would take the title, with Zane Maloney and Oliver Bearman running first and second on track. But it was Martins who was finally declared victorious after the race was not resumed, allaying the ART driver's fears of scenes reminiscent of Lewis Hamilton's 2021 Abu Dhabi debacle.

The race was stopped on lap 16 after Kush Maini (MP Motorsport) spun at the exit of Lesmo 2, collecting Brad Benavides on their way into the barrier. This had prompted the cars to return to the pitlane before Martins was then handed a five-second penalty, having previously been waved the black and white flag for exceeding track limits.

The penalty demoted Martins from third to fifth, but when fourth-placed Jenzer driver William Alatalo was also awarded a five-second penalty, it promoted Martins back up to the fourth place he needed to secure the title.

Maloney's race win earned him second in the championship, with Bearman taking third, while Isack Hadjar's title hopes were scuppered by a qualifying crash.

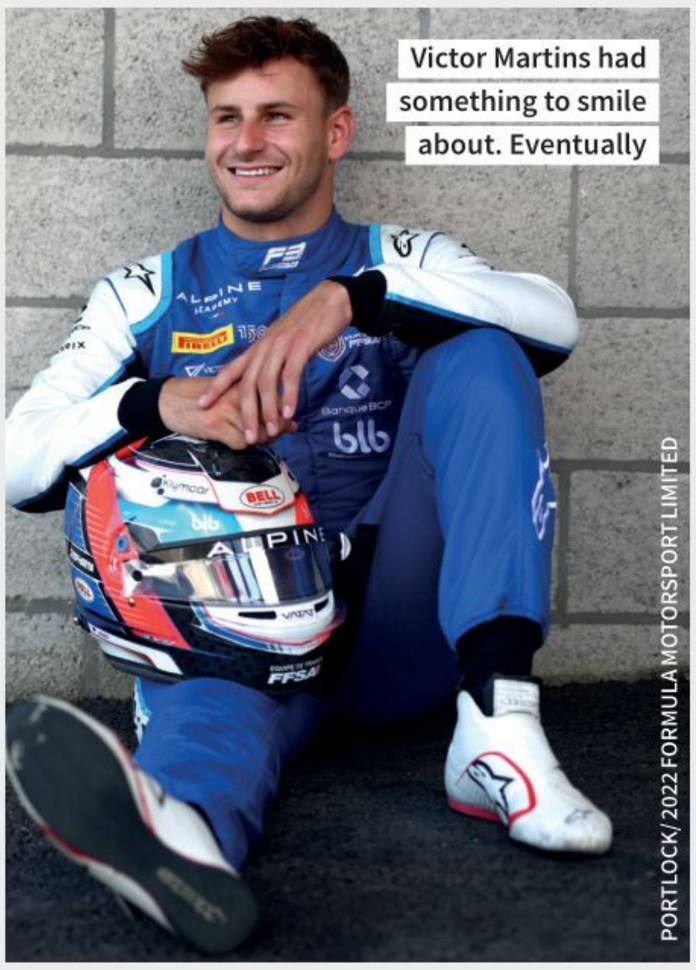
Maloney passed Trident team-mate Roman Stanek off the line before taking the lead from polesitter Alexander Smolyar at Turns 1 and 2. Racing was interrupted by a first-lap safety car prompted by David Vidales and Rafael Villagomez running off at the first Lesmo.

Racing resumed on lap five, Smolyar passing Maloney into Turn 1 before locking up, which allowed Martins to pass both for the lead into the second chicane.

Starting lap eight, Maloney returned the favour and passed Smolyar into Turn 1, before reclaiming the lead from Martins the following tour. Behind, Bearman was brought into play as Stanek and Arthur Leclerc tussled and were forced through the Turn 1 exit road bollards, allowing the Briton through. He then passed Smolyar for third at Ascari, the MP Motorsport driver eventually retiring with suspension damage sustained in a brush with Stanek.

Bearman took second from Martins down to Turn 1 on lap 12 before quickly closing on Maloney. He was within 0.5s of the Trident driver the following lap, almost taking the lead at Turn 1 as Maloney locked up, before the red flag for the collision between Maini and Benavides halted proceedings.

Saturday's sprint saw Franco Colapinto take a lights-to-flag victory, holding off a strong challenge from Bearman. The Van Amersfoort Racing driver started on reversed-grid pole and led from the off, holding at bay an initial challenge from MP Motorsport's Caio Collet.



Victor Martins had something to smile about. Eventually

PORTLOCK/2022 FORMULA MOTORSPORT LIMITED

But it was Bearman who he really had to worry about, the rookie starting seventh before cutting through the field, including a stunning move past both Collet and Trident's Jonny Edgar at Turn 1 to take second.

He came within 0.4s of Colapinto but was unable to make the final move for the lead, telling his team on the radio he "thought he had one more lap".

MEGAN WHITE

Bittersweet goodbye for van Gisbergen

AUSTRALIAN SUPERCARS
PUKEKOHE (NZL)
10-11 SEPTEMBER
ROUND 10/14

Shane van Gisbergen gave Pukekohe Park the perfect send-off with an emotional victory in the circuit's final ever race.

The Kiwi went into his home event as the runaway favourite, but instead met stiff opposition from a rapid Will Davison.

On Saturday van Gisbergen wasn't even second best to Davison, the series leader qualifying just seventh. As Davison ran away with race one, van Gisbergen could only work his way forward to a relatively underwhelming fifth.

That left Andre Heimgartner as the best-performing Kiwi, the Brad Jones Racing Holden driver holding his nerve to finish second in a tense showdown with Cam Waters after a late safety car.

Triple Eight found some speed overnight and van Gisbergen grabbed pole for the first of the two Sunday races. He went backwards in the second qualifying session though, lining up eighth as Davison's Ford took pole.

The start of race two was rocked by a frightening crash for Will Brown, who hit the pit entry wall hard after contact with Mark Winterbottom, which prompted a red flag. Once the race did get going van Gisbergen made light work of it from pole ahead of Chaz Mostert, Waters and Davison.

Pukekohe then turned on a thriller for its final Supercars race. Davison was dominant early on, only for his race to unravel when his left-rear wheel wasn't done up properly during his stop. That left Waters and Heimgartner out front, only for a late-stopping van Gisbergen to charge into contention. After passing Heimgartner, van Gisbergen and Waters staged a remarkable battle for the lead over a handful of laps before the hometown hero finally got through at Turn 11 three laps from home to the delight of the sell-out crowd.

The victory also secured van Gisbergen the Jason Richards Memorial Trophy.

ANDREW VAN LEEUWEN

Shane van Gisbergen brought curtain down at Pukekohe in style

Wallace beats boss Hamlin for Kansas surprise

NASCAR CUP
KANSAS SPEEDWAY (USA)
11 SEPTEMBER
ROUND 28/36

Bubba Wallace held off his boss Denny Hamlin to win in Kansas and become a second consecutive surprise winner in the NASCAR Cup Series playoffs.

Wallace, who failed to qualify for the playoffs, ran down Alex Bowman to take the lead for the first time on lap 200 of 267 and built a comfortable lead after successfully navigating a round of green-flag pitstops.

With 16 laps to go, Hamlin – co-owner of Wallace's 23XI Racing team along with NBA legend Michael Jordan – got around Christopher Bell and chased after Wallace. With no additional cautions to bunch the field, Wallace held off Hamlin to earn his second career victory and first of 2022.

The win replicated that of team-mate Kurt Busch, who won the spring Kansas race. Wallace has replaced Busch in the #45 Toyota while Busch continues to recover from the effects of a concussion, and the victory automatically advances the team into the second round of the Cup Series owners' playoffs.

"Man, I'm just so proud of this team and the effort they put," Wallace said. "I'm just thankful for the opportunity. Took this jump from an idea two years ago from a text from Denny before it all even happened." Bell was third, Bowman fourth and Martin Truex Jr fifth, making it four Toyotas in the top five.

With one race remaining in the first round of the Cup Series drivers' playoffs, the four drivers most at risk of being eliminated are Kyle Busch, Austin Dillon, Chase Briscoe and Kevin Harvick.

JIM UTTER

Wallace scored his second Cup victory and first of the 2022 season

MILLER/MOTORSPORT IMAGES

Hadrien David was never headed in dry race two

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Glory for Haverkort and David

FORMULA REGIONAL EUROPEAN
RED BULL RING (AUT)
10-11 SEPTEMBER
ROUND 8/10

Kas Haverkort and Hadrien David shared the wins in Austria as Dino Beganovic extended his points advantage with two rounds to go in the Formula Regional European Championship by Alpine.

Haverkort's win with Van Amersfoort Racing on Saturday came in a bizarre race on a slippery track after starting 14th. It began behind the safety car with the field on wet-weather tyres. Paul Aron led from pole, but the Prema-run Mercedes F1 protege's bid to claw back ground in the title race was ruined by two errors — one strategic, one driving.

R-ace GP team-mates Gabriel Bortoleto and David had already pitted for slicks when Aron took the same gamble, before Prema stablemate Sebastian Montoya followed suit. The crossover soon came, but by then the slick runners were too far behind to be in contention unless there was a safety car. There was one, but it was too late and it was caused by Aron, who turned in on the later-stopping Montoya as they raced side by side up to Turn 3.

After Aron's stop, Eduardo Barrichello (Arden) inherited the lead, before FRECA returnee Pierre-Louis Chovet (RPM) took over. But Haverkort was on a mission, and surged through in the late stages. So too did VAR team-mate Josh Dufek, who pipped Chovet at the line. Prema's Ferrari junior Beganovic was fourth from Barrichello.

There was precious little action in the dry race on Sunday — no surprise given there were three safety cars, the last of which lasted until the finish. David led all the way from Beganovic and the on-form Dufek, while Gabriele Mini (ART) jumped ahead of Bortoleto after the first restart to complete the leading quartet.

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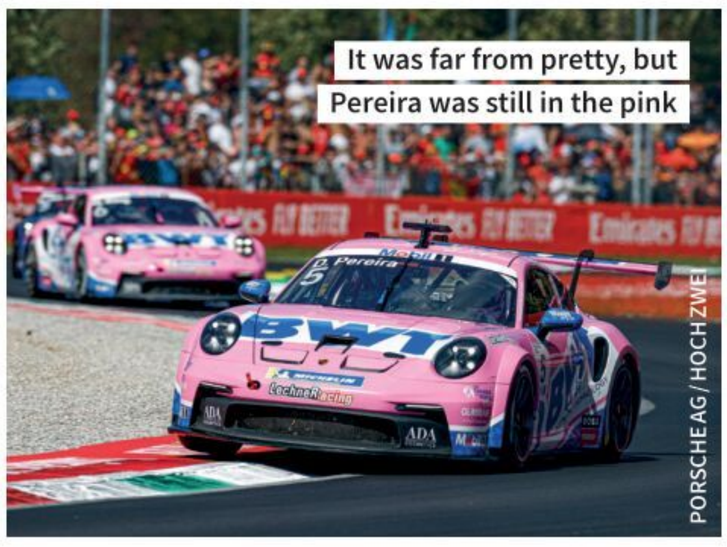
Pereira seals title as Buus conducts win

PORSCHE SUPERCUP
MONZA (ITA)
11 SEPTEMBER
ROUND 8/8


It was far from pretty, but Pereira was still in the pink

PORSCHE AG / HOCH ZWEI

Dylan Pereira brought the 2022 Porsche Supercup season to a close as champion after ending the Monza round in fifth.

It was a scrappy drive as Pereira spent the latter part of the 15-lap race desperately fending off Team GP Elite's Larry ten Voorde for the final step on the podium.

Pereira — three times a winner in 2022 — made several clumsy errors in his defence, the most costly when he locked up and ran through the second chicane. This netted him a three-second penalty, dropping him from third at the chequered flag to fifth.

The champion's Lechner Racing team-mate Bastian Buus started from second on the grid as team-mate Harry King was dumped to fourth from pole due to a penalty. Buus grabbed the lead into Turn 4 on the opening lap from Marvin Klein.

Buus continued to lead following a brief safety car period for a three-car collision on the opening tour. When action resumed on lap five, King quickly found his way up to second to pressure Buus.

But Buus held firm to claim victory from King, as ten Voorde inherited the final podium place. That became second when King was handed a penalty for forcing another driver off track, slipping to third, with Klein fourth and Pereira fifth.

Ten Voorde's Red Bull Ring retirement was the moment that truly hurt his title hopes. The 2020 and 2021 champion, who finished on the podium in every other race, ended up 10 points behind Pereira.

LEWIS DUNCAN

WEEKEND WINNERS

AUSTRALIAN SUPERCARS
PUKEKOHE (NZL)
Race 1 Will Davison
Dick Johnson Racing
(Ford Mustang)
Race 2 Shane van Gisbergen
Tripe Eight
(Holden Commodore)
Race 3 Shane van Gisbergen
Triple Eight
(Holden Commodore)

NASCAR CUP
KANSAS SPEEDWAY (USA)
Bubba Wallace
23XI Racing (Toyota Camry)

FORMULA REGIONAL EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIP BY ALPINE
RED BULL RING (AUT)
Race 1 Kas Haverkort
Van Amersfoort Racing
Race 2 Hadrien David
R-ace GP

PORSCHE SUPERCUP
MONZA (ITA)
Bastian Buus
Lechner Racing

INDY LIGHTS
LAGUNA SECA (USA)
Race 1 Sting Ray Robb
Andretti Autosport
Race 2 Christian Rasmussen
Andretti Autosport

EUROFORMULA OPEN
RED BULL RING (AUT)
Race 1 Oliver Goethe
Team Motorpark (Dallara-Spiess)
Race 2 Vladislav Lomko
CryptoTower Racing (Dallara-Spiess)
Race 3 Francesco Simonazzi
BVM Racing (Dallara-Spiess)

INTERNATIONAL GT OPEN
RED BULL RING (AUT)
Race 1 Kevin Gilardoni/Glenn van Berlo
Oregon Team
(Lamborghini Huracan GT3 Evo)
Race 2 Benjamin Hites/Leonardo Pulcini
Oregon Team
(Lamborghini Huracan GT3 Evo)

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Olsen took pole and then held off the Mercedes challenge for his first DTM win

Olsen and Cassidy take maiden DTM victories

DTM
SPA (BEL)
10-11 SEPTEMBER
ROUND 6/8

Dennis Olsen and Nick Cassidy claimed their maiden DTM victories at Spa last weekend, while Sheldon van der Linde returned home with an extended 32-point lead in the championship.

Porsche-affiliated Olsen had been under the radar for much of the season, not helped by the presence of full factory driver Laurens Vanthoor on the other side of the SSR Performance garage – or Team Bernhard's Thomas Preining picking up Porsche's maiden DTM victory at the Norisring just before the summer break. But, having already proven that he is capable of finishing on the podium in the previous two rounds of the season, the Norwegian marked himself out as a true frontrunner with an impressive victory drive in the opening contest at high-speed Spa.

The 26-year-old laid the foundation of his breakthrough result by claiming pole in a wet qualifying session on full wet tyres, beating Porsche stablemate Preining by more than a tenth of a second.

The track dried out for the opening race of the weekend and Olsen nailed the rolling start to lead into La Source, as Winward Mercedes' Lucas Auer dispatched Preining's Porsche for second with a brave move at Eau Rouge. Olsen's path to victory should have been made easier when Auer lost heaps of time in his mandatory pitstop due to a slow front-left tyre change, but he soon had reigning champion Maximilian Gotz in the other Winward car to contend with. A late bout of rain at certain parts of the track also threw a spanner in the works, testing the skills of Olsen.

But he rebuffed all advances of his more experienced rival Gotz on his way to the chequered flag, taking advantage of rain subsiding as quickly as it arrived to claim the top spot by just under a second.

Preining finished some way behind the leading duo in third, completing a double podium finish for Porsche.

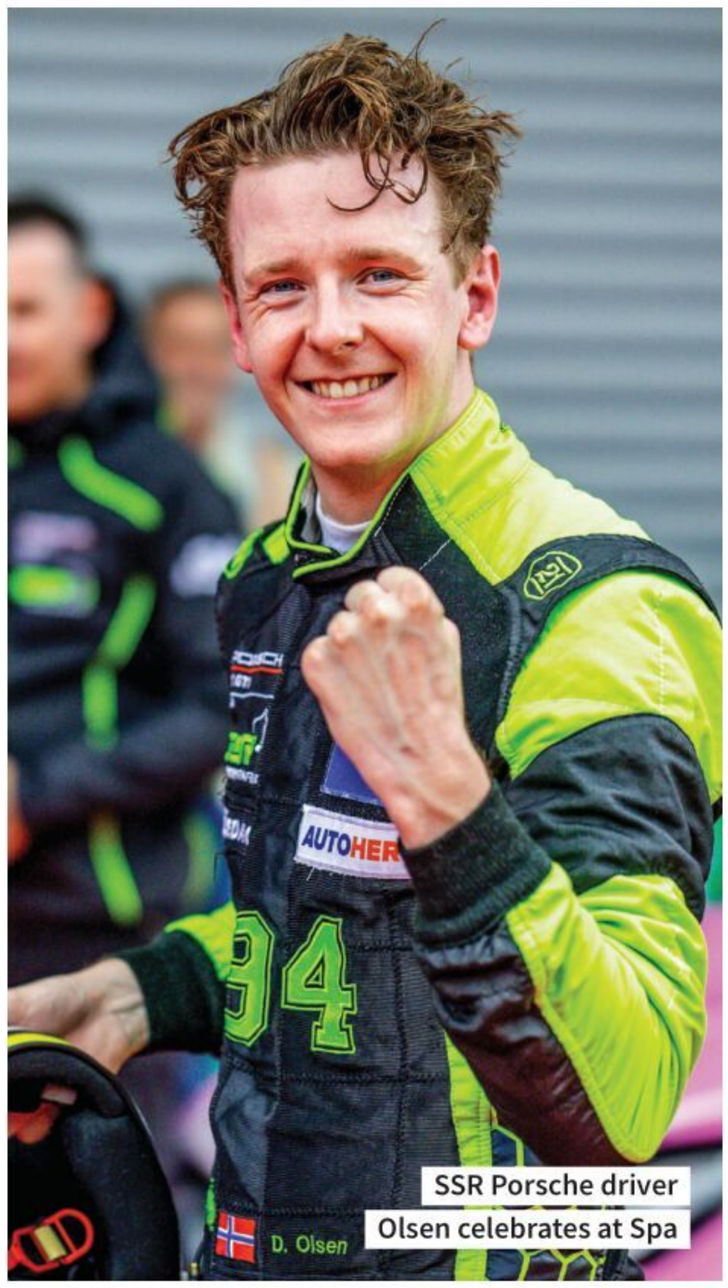
Rene Rast finished a respectable fourth for Abt Audi to thrust himself back into the title fight, on a day van der Linde drew a blank and Mirko Bortolotti could only salvage eighth after both were woefully off the pace in a wet qualifying.

Rast took his second pole of the year for race two on a drying track, further boosting his hopes of a fourth DTM title, but as it turned out the points picture changed yet again in the sixth round of the season.

Lining up alongside van der Linde on the front row, Rast could do little to keep the Schubert BMW driver at bay in the opening sequence of corners, ceding the lead just before the entry to Eau Rouge. To make matters worse, he clattered into the side of Cassidy's AlphaTauri-liveried Ferrari

Cassidy (below and right) beat van der Linde's BMW for race two spoils

ALL PICS: HOCH ZWEI/GRUPPE C/DTM



SSR Porsche driver Olsen celebrates at Spa

heading into La Source several laps later as he retook the racing line, earning a five-second penalty for the offence. And that wasn't all: with just four laps to go, Rast's Abt Audi suffered a catastrophic left-rear puncture while he was running in a points-paying position, forcing him to park his car and take a major hit in the title fight.

By the time Rast retired from the race, Cassidy had taken over the lead by leapfrogging van der Linde in the pits with a rapid tyre change. While the South African's pitstop was clocked at 11 seconds due to a problem on the front-left tyre, AF Corse managed to service Cassidy's car in just 7.6s to send him out on track in the lead. Van der Linde fought valiantly to repass Cassidy as he exited the pits on cold tyres, the two engaging in a close duel through Eau Rouge, Les Combes and Bruxelles, but the Kiwi stamped his authority to retain his position.

Rast's stranded Audi prompted a full-course yellow and an Indy-style rolling start, but Cassidy managed to fend off van der Linde's BMW to claim victory. Preining once again finished on the podium, having overcome the Mercedes of Auer two thirds into the 21-lap contest.

Grasser Lamborghini's Bortolotti suffered another nightmare outing as he could only rise as high as 10th at the finish from 20th on the grid. Having scored just five points since the summer break ended, the Italian has slumped from first to fourth in the standings and now faces a 36-point deficit with just two rounds remaining. Van der Linde sits pretty on top on 130 points, compared to 98 for Auer and 96 for Rast.

RACHIT THUKRAL

POWERED BY motorsport STATS

RESULTS ROUND 6/8, SPA (BEL), 10-11 SEPTEMBER RACE 1 (23 LAPS – 100.098 MILES)

POS	DRIVER	TEAM / CAR	TIME
1	**Dennis Olsen** (NOR)	SSR Performance / Porsche 911 GT3-R	54m34.994s
2	**Maximilian Gotz** (DEU)	Winward Racing / Mercedes-AMG GT3 Evo	+0.818s
3	**Thomas Preining** (AUT)	Team Bernhard / Porsche 911 GT3-R	+6.972s
4	**Rene Rast** (DEU)	Abt Sportsline / Audi R8 LMS Evo II	+16.127s
5	**Kelvin van der Linde** (ZAF)	Abt Sportsline / Audi R8 LMS Evo II	+20.772s
6	**Nico Muller** (CHE)	Team Rosberg / Audi R8 LMS Evo II	+21.102s
7	**Felipe Fraga** (BRA)	AF Corse / Ferrari 488 GT3 Evo 2020	+22.504s
8	**Mirko Bortolotti** (ITA)	GRT Grasser Racing Team / Lamborghini Huracan GT3 Evo	+27.636s
9	**Marco Wittmann** (DEU)	Walkenhorst Motorsport / BMW M4 GT3	+29.319s
10	**Nick Cassidy** (NZL)	AF Corse / Ferrari 488 GT3 Evo 2020	+29.996s
11	**David Schumacher** (DEU)	Winward Racing / Mercedes-AMG GT3 Evo	+31.116s
12	**Sheldon van der Linde** (ZAF)	Schubert Motorsport / BMW M4 GT3	+31.174s
13	**Esteban Muth** (BEL)	Walkenhorst Motorsport / BMW M4 GT3	+31.420s
14	**Arjun Maini** (IND)	HRT / Mercedes-AMG GT3 Evo	+31.666s
15	**Luca Stolz** (DEU)	HRT / Mercedes-AMG GT3 Evo	+32.540s
16	**Maximilian Buhk** (DEU)	Mucke Motorsport / Mercedes-AMG GT3 Evo	+32.817s
17	**Marius Zug** (DEU)	Attempto Racing / Audi R8 LMS Evo II	+35.696s
18	**Ricardo Feller** (CHE)	Abt Sportsline / Audi R8 LMS Evo II	+35.803s
19	**Rolf Ineichen** (CHE)	GRT Grasser Racing Team / Lamborghini Huracan GT3 Evo	+59.316s
20	**Alessio Deledda** (ITA)	GRT Grasser Racing Team / Lamborghini Huracan GT3 Evo	+1m28.293s
21	**Dev Gore** (USA)	Team Rosberg / Audi R8 LMS Evo II	+2m07.883s
22	**Clemens Schmid** (AUT)	GRT Grasser Racing Team / Lamborghini Huracan GT3 Evo	-1 lap
R	**Mikael Grenier** (CAN)	GruppeM Racing / Mercedes-AMG GT3 Evo	16 laps-technical
R	**Lucas Auer** (AUT)	Winward Racing / Mercedes-AMG GT3 Evo	16 laps-puncture
R	**Maro Engel** (DEU)	GruppeM Racing / Mercedes-AMG GT3 Evo	14 laps-acc damage/puncture
R	**Laurens Vanthoor** (BEL)	SSR Performance / Porsche 911 GT3-R	13 laps-vibration
R	**Philipp Eng** (AUT)	Schubert Motorsport / BMW M4 GT3	7 laps-technical

Winner's average speed 110.031mph. **Fastest lap** **Gotz** 2m19.166s, 112.581mph.

QUALIFYING 1 **1 Olsen 2m30.488s**; 2 **Preining** 2m30.634s; 3 **Auer** 2m30.679s; 4 **Gotz** 2m30.800s; 5 **Vanthoor** 2m30.923s; 6 **Engel** 2m31.054s; 7 **Schumacher** 2m31.087s; 8 **K van der Linde** 2m31.233s; 9 **Fraga** 2m31.248s; 10 **Muller** 2m31.335s; 11 **Rast** 2m31.521s; 12 **Cassidy** 2m31.809s; 13 **Maini** 2m32.037s; 14 **Feller** 2m32.095s; 15 **Stolz** 2m32.247s; 16 **Buhk** 2m32.259s; 17 **Wittmann** 2m32.262s; 18 **Muth** 2m32.534s; 19 **Schmid** 2m32.638s; 20 **Bortolotti** 2m32.682s; 21 **Grenier** 2m32.887s; 22 **S van der Linde** 2m33.138s; 23 **Eng** 2m33.183s; 24 **Ineichen** 2m33.756s; 25 **Zug** 2m33.875s; 26 **Gore** 2m34.505s; 27 **Deledda** 2m36.511s.

RACE 2 (21 LAPS – 91.394 MILES)
1 Cassidy 53m20.316s; 2 **S van der Linde** +0.680s; 3 **Preining** +1.673s; 4 **Auer** +2.756s; 5 **Stolz** +3.013s; 6 **Grenier** +4.541s; 7 **Eng** +5.863s; 8 **Fraga** +6.565s; 9 **Wittmann** +6.837s; 10 **Bortolotti** +7.096s; 11 **Maini** +7.948s; 12 **Vanthoor** +8.387s; 13 **Feller** +8.821s; 14 **K van der Linde** +9.372s; 15 **Gotz** +9.735s; 16 **Zug** +11.769s; 17 **Ineichen** +15.768s; 18 **Deledda** +17.150s; 19 **Olsen** +17.239s; 20 **Schumacher** +53.368s; 21 **Buhk** +56.607s; 22 **Muller** +1m09.200s; 23 **Engel** -1 lap; 24 **Muth** -1 lap; 25 **Gore** -1 lap; 26 **Schmid** -3 laps; R **Rast** 17 laps-puncture.
Winner's average speed 102.807mph.
Fastest lap **Ineichen** 2m19.135s, 112.606mph.

Sheldon Van der Linde has healthy points lead with two rounds to go

QUALIFYING 2 **1 Rast 2m23.424s**; 2 **S van der Linde** 2m23.468s; 3 **Cassidy** 2m23.476s; 4 **Grenier** 2m23.703s; 5 **Engel** 2m23.966s; 6 **Gotz** 2m24.041s; 7 **Feller** 2m24.163s; 8 **Preining** 2m24.246s; 9 **Schmid** 2m24.556s; 10 **Auer** 2m24.593s; 11 **K van der Linde** 2m24.604s; 12 **Fraga** 2m24.940s; 13 **Wittmann** 2m24.940s; 14 **Eng** 2m24.994s; 15 **Stolz** 2m25.113s; 16 **Zug** 2m25.258s; 17 **Muller** 2m25.347s; 18 **Maini** 2m25.453s; 19 **Buhk** 2m25.741s; 20 **Vanthoor** 2m25.892s; 21 **Muth** 2m26.196s; 22 **Bortolotti** 2m26.237s; 23 **Olsen** 2m26.385s; 24 **Gore** 2m27.552s; 25 **Schumacher** 2m27.650s; 26 **Ineichen** 2m29.256s; 27 **Deledda** 2m32.494s.

CHAMPIONSHIP
1 S van der Linde 130; 2 **Auer** 98; 3 **Rast** 96; 4 **Bortolotti** 94; 5 **Olsen** 87; 6 **Stolz** 83; 7 **Preining** 81; 8 **Muller** 78; 9 **K van der Linde** 76; 10 **Gotz** 70.

NEXT REPORT
RED BULL RING 29 SEPTEMBER ISSUE

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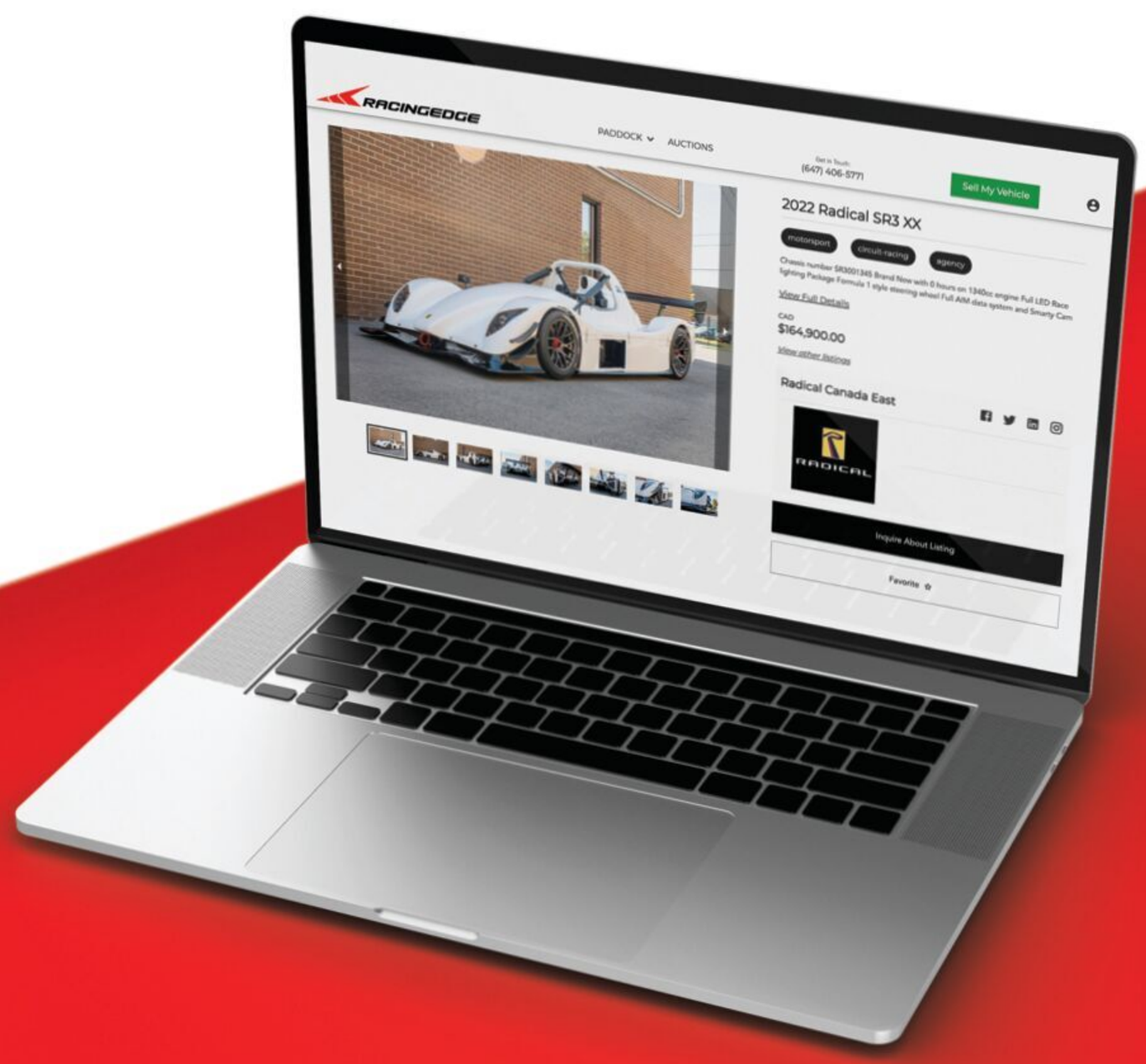

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- Monitoring and driving targets for all emission scopes plus analyse trends and targets to produce informative reports
- Manage initiatives from conception to implementation on a range of sustainability issues, particularly carbon footprint, energy, water, product life cycle, circular economy and social aspects.
- Liaising with the wider team to devise a communication plan for both internal and external, ensuring content is in an engaging format
- Maintain the ISO14001 certification ensuring the scope is reviewed to include the wider campus as it grows and support the auditing process
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- Development of current and future software test environments (HIL and SIL) and associated plant models to provide improved coverage of control systems testing and calibration.
- Provide development support for the current and future F1 Standard ECUs.
- Contribute to development of coding standards and systems engineering development methodologies.
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- To attend and proactively participate in meetings as required
- Seek to minimise costs whilst maintaining good quality design, processes & development.
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Down to the wire

Enduro McLaren still in British GT title hunt after win

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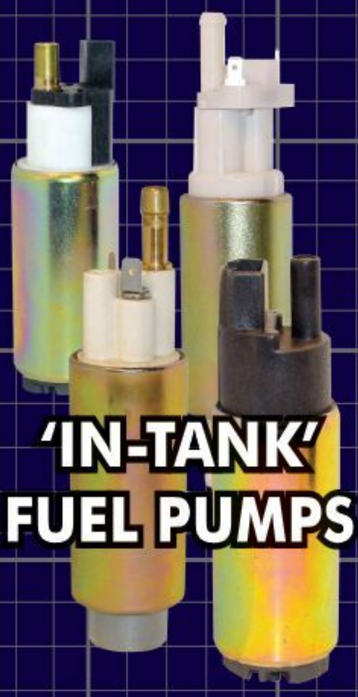

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There was a two-minute silence prior to Brands GT race

JEP/MOTORSPORT IMAGES

Tributes to the Queen as MotoFest is delayed

UK MOTORSPORT

Tributes were paid to Queen Elizabeth II at race meetings held up and down the UK last weekend — including poignant two-minute silences — following Her Majesty's recent death, while the planned MotoFest Coventry event was postponed as a mark of respect.

The Coventry extravaganza features a competitive sprint around the city's ring road but, in light of last Thursday's news, it was deemed inappropriate to run the event as intended. Organisers are yet to give a likely timescale of how long it will be before the rearranged date.

In a statement, organisers said: "MotoFest would like to express how deeply saddened we are at the death of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. Our thoughts are with the King and the Royal Family at this time. Following consultation with our event partners, we have agreed, in line with protocols regarding the death of a monarch, to postpone this weekend's MotoFest festival."

In contrast, all five UK car racing events planned at permanent venues did take place as scheduled, following the green light being given by governing body Motorsport UK. Tributes were held at each of these, including flags flying at half-mast, special stickers being displayed on some cars and two-minute silences being held.

Motorsport UK received guidance from the government that stated there was no obligation for events to be cancelled, but did advise its member clubs to cancel or postpone activities planned for last Friday. "In line with the government guidance, we encourage member clubs to speak to venues, participants, marshals and officials when making any decision on the hosting of events during the National Mourning period," read the Motorsport UK update.

Another event to be postponed is this weekend's Three Shires Stages rally in the Cotswolds. Like MotoFest Coventry, this was due to feature action on closed public roads and the organising Cheltenham Motor Club decided to call off the rally after consulting with local authorities.

Goodwood has confirmed that its Revival meeting this weekend will go ahead as planned. Members of staff will wear black armbands and visitors are encouraged to do the same, while a special short film of the Queen at Goodwood will be shown on big screens during the event.

MotoFest Coventry was postponed

MOTOFEST COVENTRY

IN THE HEADLINES

NUNN CHANGES TEAM

Harry Nunn has followed in the footsteps of his Mini Challenge team-mate Bradley Gravett and left Graves Motorsport, joining Excelr8 for the remainder of the season. Nunn had taken a best result of 17th so far in his rookie campaign, having won the Cooper title in 2020. "I knew this season was going to be a big challenge but I think it's fair to say that I was hoping for more in terms of results by this stage and I feel the time is right for a change," he said.

LAND EYES MA7DA SWITCH

Locost title favourite Craig Land is eyeing a step up to the Ma7da championship for 2023. "I've bought Simon Walker-Hansell's car, which was always at the front, so Ma7das are definitely one of our strongest options," he said. Land took a win and a third at the most recent Locost round at Brands Hatch last month to extend his points lead over main rival Martin West.

MOONEY TO SINGLE-SEATERS

Historic sportscar racer Dominic Mooney is set to race a Formula Ford at this year's Walter Hayes Trophy. The car has not been confirmed but will likely be one belonging to Richard Tarling, who won the Historic FF1600 title in 2017. Tarling and Mooney first worked together when they competed in the Phillip Island Classic in Australia. Despite extensive experience in sportscars, mostly historic, this will be Mooney's first single-seater race.

VSCC IN ACTION AT LOTON

Julian Grimwade and Patrick Blakeney-Edwards (below) claimed a win apiece during the Vintage Sports-Car Club's weekend of hillclimbing at Loton Park. In the penultimate event of the VSCC speed season, Grimwade claimed Saturday's fastest time in his Frazer Nash single-seater when he pipped PBE by a tenth. Blakeney-Edwards dug deep on Sunday in his Frazer Nash Super Sports to defeat Edmund Burgess (Bugatti Type 51).

PAUL LAWRENCE

Spa BGT appeal upheld as Fox retains victory

After waiting nearly seven weeks, Stanley (left) and Halstead celebrate win

JEP/MOTORSPORT IMAGES

BRITISH GT

Fox Motorsport's appeal following victory at the British GT round at Spa-Francorchamps has been upheld by the UK's National Court, meaning Nick Halstead and Jamie Stanley have kept their win.

The McLaren 720s GT3 of Halstead and Stanley, as well as the Paddock Motorsport entry of Martin Plowman and Graham Davidson, raced under appeal in Belgium at the end of July after initially being excluded from the qualifying results for having "failed post-qualifying technical checks".

Both teams stated that the fault lay with McLaren following Balance of Performance changes ahead of the session, rather than anything untoward.

The decision to uphold the appeal was announced last Saturday just hours before qualifying for the Brands Hatch event, but means the Fox Motorsport entry keeps its maiden series victory while the Paddock machine was classified seventh.

"It was a long process and I'm glad that it's done — we're grateful for everyone's help," said Stanley. "The result means we can hold our heads high and it shows we're capable of winning races at this level. It was only the team's fifth race in GT3s and to win, it's an incredible achievement."

The late decision meant championship points and success penalties could also be finalised before the two-hour event in Kent.

Lauren Granville, championship manager said: "Racing at Brands with a provisional Spa result would have had serious consequences for the awarding of our championship titles.

"As it was, the overall titles were not decided but we are still very grateful to Motorsport UK and the National Court for organising a special hearing that allowed us to finalise Spa's result, allocate points and apply success penalties before the race.

"Our competitors knew exactly where they stood while fans could watch knowing that the result and championships would not potentially be decided post-race following an unrelated court hearing."

STEFAN MACKLEY

P65 OPINION

Macleod a late call-up as Gounon recovers

Plans are for Gounon to return at Donington

JEP/MOTORSPORT IMAGES

BRITISH GT

Jules Gounon was forced to sit out last weekend's British GT round at Brands Hatch as he recovers from two cracked vertebrae in his back.

The Mercedes factory driver was due to join Ian Loggie at RAM Racing again, having already raced alongside the Scot at Oulton Park and Spa.

But on Wednesday Callum Macleod replaced Gounon as the Frenchman recovers from a back injury sustained in a crash earlier in the year.

RAM Racing team boss Dan Shufflebottom said: "Over time, he was struggling with pain and he just thought it was going to heal itself.

"He got it checked again and they found two cracked vertebrae. It's going to heal in time and they've said about one month."

STEFAN MACKLEY

McGuiness impressed on four wheels in the Ginetta GT Academy

Ginetta class win for TT legend McGuinness at Brands Hatch

GINETTA GT ACADEMY

Isle of Man TT legend John McGuinness made a surprise debut in the Ginetta GT Academy at Brands Hatch last weekend, taking a class win and not ruling out a return in the future.

McGuinness, whose only previous four-wheeled racing experience came in the Fun Cup last year as well as a few rallycross events, was tempted by the opportunity after a test in a G56 GTA car at Croft.

"It's a lot harder than I've given it credit for — I take it all back," said McGuinness, who has 23 TT wins to his name. "It's how late you have to brake. The lines are different after thousands of laps round here on a bike."

After being taken out at Druids in race one, the 50-year-old had better fortunes in races two and three, winning the Rookie Cup class in the final contest. While admitting he still wants to continue on bikes next year, McGuinness is open to doing more car racing as well in the future.

"I've enjoyed it," he added. "I was completely out of my comfort zone. If I have a go at it, I've got to do it properly. You're never too old to learn.

"I love motorsport, I can't race bikes forever. We'll look at a few options, I'd love to do a few more rounds."

STEVE WHITFIELD

Late podium for Sims on comeback

BRITISH GT

Alexandar Sims praised the work of co-driver Henry Dawes on his return to British GT, as the pair took a podium last weekend at Brands Hatch.

Ex-Formula E driver Sims returned to the championship for the first time since 2016 at the wheel of a Century Motorsport-run BMW M4 GT3, alongside Ginetta GT4 Supercup graduate Dawes.

The pair completed no testing prior to the event but managed to qualify seventh on the Grand Prix layout. Dawes, the 2018 Fun Cup champion, completed the opening stint and had climbed to fourth (avoiding a collision between championship leader Ian Loggie and Adam Balon at Surtees) before handing over to Sims.

Despite serving a five-second penalty with two new drivers in the car, Sims rejoined fourth and was promoted to third just two laps from the end when leader Sam Neary retired.

"He did a superb job," said Sims, who also set the fastest lap of the race. "He was very smart there [to avoid the Loggie/Balon crash] and deserved the luck that came his way. I still can't believe he'd not been in the car or driven a GT3 car before. He didn't put a foot wrong."

STEFAN MACKLEY

IN THE HEADLINES

A TRIP TO THE BEACH

James Coleman missed last Sunday's 40-minute CALM All Porsche Trophy race at Anglesey "because I'd promised the kids I'd take them to the beach". Scaffolder Coleman, 46, had already taken victories in both of Saturday's two sprint races. He said: "We'd travelled a long way as a family, so I put them first and went for a stroll on the beach nearby, bought them an ice cream and still got back in time to watch the second half of the enduro race."

GETINO'S RACE STOPPAGE

Fernando Getino escaped unharmed from a heavy crash that caused the 40-minute CALM Porsche race at Anglesey to be red-flagged midway through. Getino's Porsche Boxster struck the barriers exiting Church corner, but the 60-year-old was able to extricate himself from the wreckage. The race resumed 45 minutes later after barrier repairs.

BUSY WEEKEND AT ANGLESEY

Ivor Mairs contested nine of the 750 Motor Club's 21 races at Anglesey with his total track time, including three qualifying sessions, adding up to some three hours. The retired water-skiing instructor took part in all three triple-header fixtures for BMWs and Hot Hatches (aboard his regular 325ti), and Porsches in a 924 rented from Victoria Garage Motorsport. In BMWs, the 60-year-old took a pair of Cup class wins.

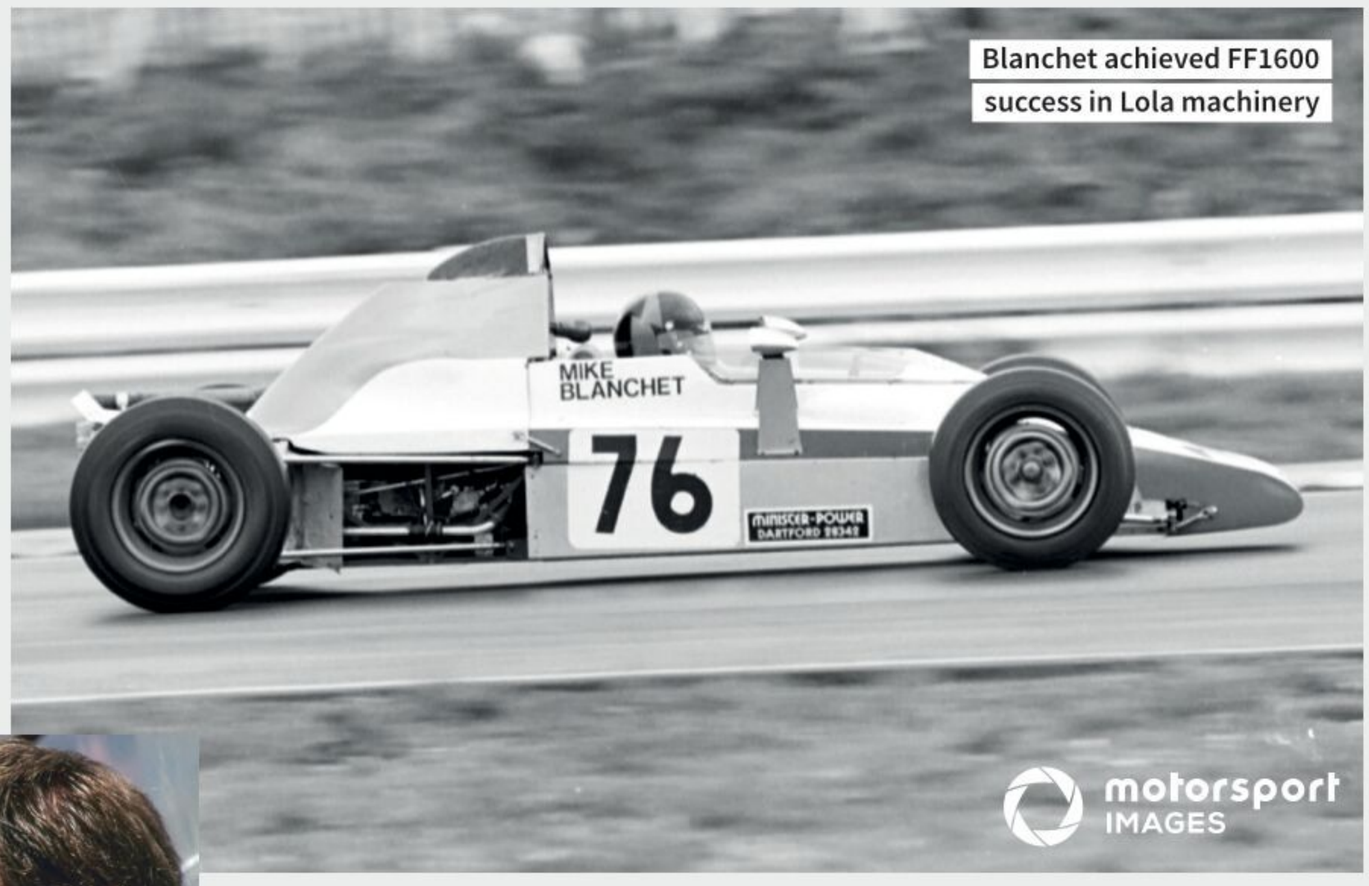
PERSEVERANCE PAYS OFF

Hot Hatch Class B frontrunner Stephen Harrison endured a trying event at Anglesey. A clutch failure in Friday testing resulted in a 350-mile round trip overnight to Lincoln to collect a new component. He then retired his Renault Clio (below) from races one and two with electrical gremlins and broken bonnet pins caused by contact with another car. In race three, it was third time lucky with a ninth-place finish, and third in class, from 22nd on the grid.

STEVE JONES

Mike Blanchet 1948-2022

OBITUARY



Blanchet achieved FF1600 success in Lola machinery

Born on the Channel Island of Jersey on 1 January 1948, Mike Blanchet – who died last week aged 74 – commanded universal respect as a motorsport professional, indeed touched the lives of many beyond his own racing. Synonymous with Lola Cars, of which he progressed from sales director to joint MD, Blanchet was a winner on track and in business.

Standing five feet two and with size five feet, Blanchet was ideally suited to early Formula Ford, before minimum weights were set around regular-sized drivers. After briefly hillclimbing a Lotus 7 locally at Bouley Bay, with brother Terry, Blanchet relocated to England in 1973, where his bold handling of a Lotus 61 Formula Ford 'wedge' caught pundits' eyes.

Second to Geoff Lees (Royale) in the 1975 Festival at Snetterton, having graduated to a Crossle 30F, and fourth at Brands Hatch in 1977 in a Lola T540, Blanchet never found the backing to progress. But he enthusiastically developed and proved Eric Broadley's Lola products, winning in T440 FF1600 (1975-76), T580 FF2000 (1978) and T590 Sports 2000 models. He also scored Thundersports class wins in T594C-VW and T598C-BDG, sharing with Phil Dowsett and Bob Juggins respectively.

Blanchet always excelled at Thruxton, winning the televised FF2000 race in November 1978. While the marque's subsequent F3 chassis were outnumbered and not consistently competitive against growing Ralt opposition, Blanchet landed second there in the T770/2 'wing car' in 1980, before driving low-budget Ralt and March chassis.

Dutchman Gerrit van Kouwen credits Blanchet for saving his career, by building and loaning him a T642E to win the 1983 Dutch FF1600 championship, then the T644E in which he won the 1984 Festival.

"He was such a brave little bugger," recalls Terry Blanchet, outlining Mike's fight against serious illness from the age of 12. He underwent kidney transplant surgery decades ago and throughout his international marketing career had to plan trips to the USA and Japan around dialysis. "It never held him back, and the NHS treated him brilliantly."

Despite further terrible setbacks in his life – first wife Polly was killed in a road accident, and second wife Pat died of cancer this May – Blanchet never gave up. That was a constant in his business life, too.

Having toiled at Lola through difficult times as well as its F3000 and Indycar glory days, early F3000 test driver Blanchet left the Huntingdon fold after its disastrous attempt to turn to F1.

Following a spell with RML, he set up his MBMA motorsport consultancy. Among his major clients was Honda's Mugen engine division, for which he masterminded a UK hub. "While never a particularly able mechanic," according to his brother, Mike also wrote authoritatively for *Racecar Engineering*.

MARCUS PYE

Karting convert Fleming continues to impress

BIKESPORTS

Karting graduate Fleming (l) took win on second car outing

International karter Thomas Fleming took victory on his second car racing appearance in the first of the Bikesports races at Anglesey last weekend and plans to graduate to the Ferrari Challenge next year.

The 19-year-old, who has raced in British and European Senior X30 karts, made his car debut in the Radical SR1 Cup at Silverstone in July, when he took two podiums. But he went better than that in Wales as he fought his way past Valour Racing team-mate and defending champion Leon Morrell to win the opener. He then led race two before Morrell snuck ahead for a second Valour 1-2 result in their Radical SR3s.

Fleming, studying business and finance at the University of Reading, said: "I'm looking to race in the Ferrari Trofeo Challenge in 2023 so I'm here to get signatures on my licence.

"I never expected to be fighting for the win straight away against this calibre of driver – I only had about 10 laps of testing at Donington in between lots of red flags and bad weather – so am very pleased with how it's gone.

"There are lots of similarities between a kart and a Bikesport [car] but the big thing is learning to trust the aero."

CARL McKELLAR

An unnecessary race against time

A last-minute UK National Court decision just hours before British GT's latest round could and should have been avoided

STEFAN MACKLEY

There was a sigh of relief throughout the British GT paddock and from organiser SRO shortly before qualifying at Brands Hatch for the championship's latest round. After waiting just short of seven weeks, the UK's National Court finally announced a decision regarding Fox Motorsport's and Paddock Motorsport's appeal from the previous meeting at Spa all the way back in July.

The overdue decision, which upheld the appeal made by the two teams, was welcomed across the board for several reasons. For the Fox and Paddock squads it was the end of a long process and vindication that they had done nothing wrong after racing under appeal at Spa all those weeks ago.

Both McLaren 720S GT3 machines failed post-qualifying checks, with the manufacturer having been handed a Balance of Performance boost prior to the session. A new engine map had been given to all teams running a McLaren (seven cars in total), over which they had 'zero control' or ability to change anything with regards to performance.

While the full verdict from the National Court has yet to be published, clearly it must have found that any anomalies were outside the control of the teams, with sensor issues believed among the paddock to be the likely cause.

"From our side, it was important to fight this, we were the innocent party and the last thing we wanted was our name and reputation dragged through the mud," says Martin Plowman, driver and co-owner of Paddock. "We were extremely confident in our case and our argument. Had there been a genuine discrepancy you try and minimise the damage and hold your hands up. This was one where we felt very strongly that we were innocent."

"We were the innocent party. We didn't want our name dragged through the mud"

Although Fox Motorsport with Nick Halstead and Jamie Stanley had taken victory, while Plowman and Graham Davidson finished seventh, both teams agreed that the bigger issue was clearing themselves of any wrongdoing rather than the result. A crucial point when you consider reputation is everything to sponsors and customers when considering which team to join next year.

Arguably just as important, the verdict also meant that the race result could be made official, which confirmed where teams and drivers stood regarding championship points and also the success penalties that were to be allocated for the Brands Hatch event. The plan from SRO heading into the weekend was to retrospectively apply the time penalties after the race, depending on the outcome of the Spa appeal. Very much making the best of a bad situation.

It could also have had huge ramifications for the championship on the day itself, with RAM Racing's Ian Loggie mathematically able to win the overall GT3 title at Brands had results gone his way. It would have been an absurd – and bordering on farcical – situation for the Scot and the team if things had played out differently and subsequent celebrations had to be put on hold pending that appeal.

Waiting on the verdict was a difficult situation for all, not least the championship whose hands were tied yet bore the full brunt from disgruntled competitors and fans. As RAM Racing team boss Dan Shufflebottom says: "I know there was a bit of pressure on Lauren [Granville, championship manager] and SRO to get the appeal heard before this weekend. To get it on Saturday is unheard of but I'm pleased we know. It's nice it's no longer hanging over us."

The question that must surely be asked now is why did we end up in this situation in the first place? Must it really take nearly seven weeks for a verdict to be reached and announced just hours before qualifying is due to get under way?

Submissions were made by the teams and McLaren over that nearly two-month period and, while time needs to be taken to consider all the evidence and no conclusions hastily reached, surely more appropriate deadlines could and should have been put in place to avoid this situation.

Let's not forget, a British GT round has already been held this year with the result of the previous meeting still to be confirmed. RAM Racing's appeal against the application of success penalties in the second race at Oulton Park, which was won on the road by Loggie and Jules Gounon, was not decided in time for the Silverstone event.

As a result, SRO was left with no choice but to implement success penalties post-race once the Oulton result was overturned nearly two weeks after the Silverstone event. While the timeframe between Oulton and Silverstone on that occasion was less than a month, there can be no excuse for the situation that was almost left to unfold at Brands Hatch.

A potential PR disaster was thankfully avoided but, with so much at stake for the championship, teams and drivers, surely a deep look at the appeal process needs to be considered for the benefit of all in UK motorsport. Let's just hope we're not waiting seven weeks after the final round at Donington Park before we can officially confirm the champions...

P66 BRANDS BRITISH GT REPORT

Nearys denied late on as Tillbrook/Clutton win

Enduro McLaren only led two laps during the entire two-hour race

BRANDS HATCH
BRITISH GT3
10-11 SEPTEMBER

An unexpected lead change two laps from the end, a collision involving the championship leader and a title battle finely poised all helped to create an intriguing British GT round at Brands Hatch.

Enduro Motorsport's Morgan Tillbrook and Marcus Clutton claimed their second win of the season after being in the hunt for victory throughout the two-hour encounter, while an eventful sixth place for Ian Loggie means he heads to the Donington Park finale next month with a healthy points lead.

Loggie entered the Kent race with a confirmed 39-point advantage, the result of the previous Spa round having been made official after the UK's National Court upheld Fox Motorsport's appeal on Saturday just hours ahead of qualifying (see News).

The RAM Racing team had already endured a difficult meeting up to that point, with Loggie's planned partner Jules Gounon withdrawing from the event and replaced last-minute by Callum Macleod (see News), while a crash for the sister car of John Ferguson and Ulysse de Pauw in free practice one damaged their Mercedes-AMG chassis beyond repair.

Loggie/Macleod qualified fifth but the Scot's main title rivals James Cottingham and Lewis Williamson took pole with each crew set to serve 10 seconds and 15s of success penalties respectively.

Those longer pitstops would prove crucial as three safety-car periods in the opening 50 minutes meant any chance of creating a lead to negate the time loss was gone and it eventually played into the hands of Tillbrook/Clutton.

Their McLaren 720S with no success penalty started on the front-row, with Tillbrook shadowing Cottingham during the opening hour but never looking likely to make a pass around the notoriously difficult Grand Prix circuit.

Behind, Richard Neary's Abba Racing-run Mercedes occupied third having made an aggressive start from sixth on the grid, moving around the outside of Loggie into Paddock Hill Bend before diving to the inside of Alex Malykhin's Redline Racing Lamborghini Huracan at Druids. Via contact, he barged his way ahead and, despite at times dropping back as he

Safety cars aid Topham/Turner as Williams/Fielding

BRANDS HATCH
BRITISH GT4
10-11 SEPTEMBER

A second outright victory of the year for Matt Topham and Darren Turner at Brands Hatch has edged them closer to the GT4 title despite the best efforts of chief rivals Richard Williams and Sennan Fielding.

Topham's Newbridge Motorsport Aston Martin Vantage remained within touching distance during the opening stint having started seventh, as three safety car periods prevented Williams in the polesitting Stellar Motorsport Audi R8 from pulling out a much-needed gap.

Jamie Orton in the Team Parker Porsche 718 Cayman had been the big mover at the start, climbing into second from fourth and proving something of a cork in the bottle as Marco Signoretti (Academy Ford Mustang), Tom Edgar (Toyota Gazoo GR Supra) and Jamie Day (R Racing Aston) all made attempts at passing.

Signoretti fell out of contention with a puncture having been shuffled back in the pack, while Moh Ritson's Paddock McLaren was eliminated after being pushed wide at Sheene Curve by Edgar.

The McLaren suffered wheel damage and Ritson ended his race in the Stirlings gravel a lap later, which necessitated a third safety-car period that only ended two minutes before the GT4 pit window opened.

Williams, Edgar and Topham stopped immediately but, with 14s less to serve due to being a Pro-Am pairing, Turner resumed with a gap of 20s over Bobby Trundley in the Team BRIT McLaren. Fielding, in for Williams, rejoined in a net third place but soon moved ahead of Trundley and progressively closed the gap to Turner.

Day, meanwhile, had stayed out, passing Orton with a neat switchback at Surtees and even took the overall race lead as the GT3 field pitted. Relaying to team-mate Josh Miller towards the end of the pit window,

Sixth spot puts Loggie on the cusp of GT3 title

Neary Mercedes was hit by a late problem

negotiated traffic, was on the rear of the Enduro McLaren when the GT3 pitstop window opened on 62 minutes.

Although serving the same amount of time in the pits, the Abba Mercedes with Richard's son Sam now behind the wheel rejoined just in front of Clutton and in a net race lead, while Williamson's 2Seas Motorsport Mercedes resumed only fifth.

The momentum between the leading duo fluctuated, the gap never exceeding more than 2s and at times coming down to mere inches with traffic playing an integral part as Clutton pressured his rival.

Neary Jr's daring overtake between the battling GT4s of Seb Hopkins (Team Parker Porsche 718 Cayman) and Jack Brown (Century Motorsport BMW M4) down the Cooper Straight — which resulted in light contact with the former — in the final five minutes proved pivotal as Clutton was delayed behind the squabbling pair.

But, approaching the penultimate lap, the Abba Mercedes dramatically slowed and retired with a suspected fuel pump issue, allowing Clutton into the lead and victory.

An unlikely, and quickly closing, second was the Barwell Lamborghini of Adam Balon and Sandy Mitchell, which at one point had been facing backwards after Balon had been tipped into a spin by Loggie in the first hour.

The pair had been battling over fourth when contact was made at Surtees, which damaged the RAM Racing Mercedes' steering. It rejoined sixth and Balon ninth, but officials took no further action.

Their recovery was helped by a second safety car after Spa winner Nick Halstead had plunged his Fox Motorsport McLaren into the gravel in avoidance of the collision. A third caution period to retrieve Moh Ritson's stranded Paddock McLaren 570S at Stirlings just before the hour mark closed the field up again, with Loggie having climbed to fifth and Balon sixth.

With no success penalties to serve, Mitchell leapt to third while the Century BMW M4 of Henry Dawes and ex-Formula E driver Alexander Sims was fourth despite having served a 5s penalty for two new drivers being in the car. They were then elevated to third by the flag.

Macleod initially resumed in sixth behind the Williamson Mercedes but, struggling with damage, dropped to seventh as Euan Hankey's McLaren got ahead at Stirlings. Neary Jr's demise promoted the Mercedes back to sixth at the finish, just ahead of Scott Malvern's Parker Racing Porsche 911.

Despite serving a drivethrough penalty for passing Neary Sr before the startline on the first safety car restart — caused by the stranded Motus One Mercedes — and eventually retiring, Malykhin and James Dorlin clinched the Silver-Am title.

STEFAN MACKLEY

RACE RESULTS

GT3

(78 laps) 1 Morgan Tillbrook/Marcus Clutton (McLaren 720S); 2 Adam Balon/Sandy Mitchell (Lamborghini Huracan) +1.275s; 3 Henry Dawes/Alexander Sims (BMW M4); 4 James Cottingham/Lewis Williamson (Mercedes-AMG); 5 Mia Flewitt/Euan Hankey (McLaren); 6 Ian Loggie/Callum Macleod (Mercedes). **Fastest lap** Sims 1m24.706s (103.41mph). **Pole** Cottingham/Williamson. **Starters** 14. **Points 1 Loggie 135**; 2 Balon/Mitchell 110.5; 3 Cottingham/Williamson 102; 4 Tillbrook/Clutton 101; 5 Alex Malykhin/James Dorlin (Lamborghini) 82; 6 Nick Halstead (McLaren) 72.

GT4

(74 laps) 1 Matt Topham/Darren Turner (Aston Martin Vantage); 2 Richard Williams/Sennan Fielding (Audi R8) +5.284s; 3 Jamie Orton/Seb Hopkins (Porsche Cayman); 4 Jamie Day/Josh Miller (Aston Martin); 5 Aaron Morgan/Bobby Trundley (McLaren 570S); 6 Tom Edgar/Jordan Collard (Toyota Supra). **FL** Matt Cowley (Ford Mustang) 1m32.611s (94.58mph). **P** Williams/Fielding. **S** 13. **Points 1 Topham/Turner 154**; 2 Williams/Fielding 141.5; 3 Miller/Day 133.5; 4 Jack Brown/Will Burns (BMW M4) 101; 5 Marco Signoretti/Cowley 99.5; 6 Orton/Hopkins 98.5.

Clutton (left) celebrates with Tillbrook

For full results visit: tsl-timing.com

fall short

the car initially dropped to a net fifth place after serving a 20s success penalty.

Rejoining just behind the Porsche of Hopkins, in for Orton, the pair both caught and passed the McLaren of Trundley in the final 16 minutes — Hopkins out of Clearways and Miller a lap later into Druids.

Out front, Turner was never headed, although Fielding closed the gap to within 5.3s by the flag, despite a hair-raising moment for the Audi driver while being lapped by Marcus Clutton's McLaren at Westfield, which resulted in contact. Topham/Turner now sit 12.5 points above Williams/Fielding in the standings.

STEFAN MACKLEY

Turner was never headed after the pitstops in GT4

Advantage to Browning with one round left

BRANDS HATCH
MSVR
10-11 SEPTEMBER

Even with no victory to his name across the weekend's three races, Luke Browning took a crucial lead in the GB3 Championship with a battling display at Brands Hatch against title rival Joel Granfors.

Both championship protagonists, though, were relegated to the role of supporting cast in qualifying as Elite's Tom Lebbon secured a brace of poles from JHR Developments' Matthew Rees. It was Rees, however, who occupied the pole slot for race one, Lebbon demoted five-places having carried over a penalty from the previous round at Silverstone for a yellow-flag infringement.

Rees charged into the lead at the start, while front-row starter Granfors bogged down and was passed by both Browning and John Bennett before repassing the latter into Druids. The Fortec driver then looked to the outside of Browning at both Surtees and Hawthorn's on the opening lap, but had to slot into third as difficulty overtaking on the Grand Prix layout meant little changed in the running order over the 14 laps.

Rees withstood the constant presence of Browning, and a light sprinkling of rain, to secure his maiden series victory as Granfors completed the podium. Elite's Bennett was fourth and team-mate Lebbon sixth, behind Arden's Nico Christodoulou.

The most impressive action had been from Carlin's Callum Voisin, who started at the back after crashing in qualifying. He finished ninth having made exceptional overtakes around the outside at Hawthorns.

Lebbon started from his hard-earned pole in race two and went on to claim his third win of the season with a lights-to-flag performance while, behind, Browning once again got the better of Granfors.

Running around the outside of Paddock Hill Bend and Druids, the Hitech GP driver had the inside line for Graham Hill Bend and the position. Third quickly became second as Rees made light contact with the rear of Lebbon, slowing his momentum and allowing Browning to go on the outside through Surtees and the inside for Hawthorn's. Granfors followed through but ran slightly wide at Dingle Dell, allowing Rees back ahead into Sheene Curve.

The top four thereafter remained unchanged until the flag, while Arden's Alex Connor and Bennett completed the top six as Voisin only made it to 13th from the back.

The teenager was involved in a heavy crash at Hawthorn's on the opening lap of the reversed-grid race with Max Esterson, which brought out the red flags. Esterson's Douglas Motorsport team-mate Marcos Flack had led but was put to the back of the restarted race for jumping the initial start, allowing Chris Dittmann Racing's Branden Oxley to win from Hitech's Cian Shields.

Further back, there was drama in the title battle, as Granfors suffered a damaged front wing on the first lap, which eventually failed completely and required a pitstop, as Browning finished ninth. It means the Briton, who trailed Granfors before the meeting, now holds a 15.5-point lead heading to the Donington Park finale.

Harley Haughton scored his fifth consecutive victory in the Ginetta GT5 Challenge opener, finishing 2.7 seconds clear of his Elite Motorsport team-mate Will Jenkins, with Mikey Doble a close third.

Jenkins made an early bid for the lead at Paddock Hill Bend in race two but ran wide, before capitalising on a mistake from Haughton one lap later to move ahead into Druids. Their battle was interrupted by a late safety-car period, with Jenkins prevailing in a final-lap shootout despite contact between the pair at Dingle Dell, while Doble again finished third.

Haughton was slow away in race three, initially dropping to fourth, but quickly dispatched Will Orton and Doble on the opening lap before resuming his squabble with Jenkins. With five minutes left, Haughton lunged up the inside at Stirlings but contact resulted in Jenkins spinning into the gravel, ending the race prematurely. Haughton was penalised 20s for the incident, handing Doble victory from Orton.

Thomas Holland held off Marc Warren to win the first Ginetta GT Academy encounter, with Ravi Ramyead third. Warren beat Holland to victory in race two, having made an early move around the outside at Paddock, and triumphed again ahead of his Raceway Motorsport team-mate in race three to provisionally seal the crown. Ramyead also secured the rookie title.

Harry Foster claimed a hat-trick of wins in the Porsche Sprint Challenge GB, leading home Charles Clark in race one, with Steve Roberts taking runner-up spot in the other two contests.

STEFAN MACKLEY & STEVE WHITFIELD

Haughton leads Jenkins in GT5 Challenge; the duo collided in third race

Browning holds a lead of 15.5 points in GB3 ahead of Donington Park finale

WEEKEND WINNERS

GB3
Race 1 (14 laps) 1 Matthew Rees; 2 Luke Browning +0.723s; 3 Joel Granfors; 4 John Bennett; 5 Nico Christodoulou; 6 Tom Lebbon. **Fastest lap** Browning 1m19.425s (110.29mph). **Pole** Rees. **Starters** 22.
Race 2 (14 laps) 1 Lebbon; 2 Browning +0.718s; 3 Rees; 4 Granfors; 5 Alex Connor; 6 Bennett. **FL** Rees 1m19.231s (110.56mph). **P** Lebbon. **S** 22.
Race 3 (10 laps) 1 Branden Oxley; 2 Cian Shields +0.923s; 3 Roberto Faria; 4 Zak Taylor; 5 Javier Sagrera; 6 Nick Gilkes. **FL** Browning 1m19.602s (110.04mph). **P** Marcos Flack. **S** 22.
Points 1 Browning 430; 2 Granfors 414.5; 3 Callum Voisin 312; 4 Faria 305.5; 5 Lebbon 294.5; 6 Rees 276.5.

GINETTA GT5 CHALLENGE
Race 1 Harley Haughton
Race 2 Will Jenkins
Race 3 Mikey Doble

GINETTA GT ACADEMY
Race 1 Thomas Holland
Races 2 & 3 Marc Warren (below)

PORSCHE SPRINT CHALLENGE GB
Races 1, 2 & 3 Harry Foster

GB4
Race 1 Tom Mills
Race 2 Nikolas Taylor
Race 3 Jack Sherwood

For full results visit: tsl-timing.com

TIDE IS WITH TAYLOR IN GB4

Nikolas Taylor notched up his ninth GB4 win at Brands Hatch, but it was by no means plain sailing in his quest for the title after crashing out from the lead in the opening contest.

After building a one-second advantage, Taylor was caught out by a brief rain shower at Paddock Hill Bend, striking the barriers after sliding through the gravel and ending his race. His crash resulted in three thrilling laps to the chequered flag following a safety-car period to retrieve his Fortec machine, as Jarrod Waberski led Kevin Mills Racing team-mate Tom Mills.

The latter had to fight hard to keep Jack Sherwood behind at the restart, but the Elite Motorsport driver eventually got ahead into Paddock at the start of the penultimate lap before briefly snatching the lead from Waberski two corners later.

But a mistake exiting Surtees allowed Waberski back through, with Mills then pulling off a spectacular overtake on the pair of them around the outside of Hawthorns before he held on to claim a maiden series win ahead of Sherwood, who reclaimed second before the finish.

"We've worked hard for it, it's been a long time coming," said Mills. "There's been a few times where we've been slightly out of luck or we've not had the car [to challenge]. It was so treacherous after the safety car because we lost all tyre temperature." Despite a quiet race to fourth, Max Marzorati profited from Taylor's retirement to move level on points at the top of the standings.

The championship then swung dramatically back in Taylor's favour in races two and three on Sunday. As Marzorati was hampered by an issue, Taylor took a lights-to-flag victory from pole in the second encounter. Mills ended up off the road and out of contention

Mills took his first GB4 win in damp conditions

with front wing damage after contact at Druids with team-mate Waberski, who subsequently pushed Taylor hard but had to settle for second ahead of Sherwood.

Chloe Grant scored her best result of the season in fourth, passing Jessica Edgar and the ailing Hillspeed car of Marzorati, who slipped back to seventh before recovering one place when Logan Hannah spun out at Dingle Dell. "It's quite worrying," said Marzorati of his struggles. "Something is fundamentally wrong and we haven't found it. We haven't been this far off the pace all season."

Hannah stalled from third in the reversed-grid encounter, as her Graham Brunton Racing team-mate Grant led from Edgar. Sherwood climbed from fourth to take the lead on the opening lap with a move around the outside of Hawthorns, before building a comfortable gap by the time Mills and Taylor had also moved past Edgar and Grant.

Taylor took second from Mills in the closing stages to complete a solid recovery from eighth as Marzorati struggled again, trailing home sixth and heading into next month's deciding round 31 points adrift of Taylor. "It's never a comfortable lead in the championship," said Taylor. "Hopefully we should do well at Donington."

STEVE WHITFIELD

Taylor (left) scored ninth victory of the season

Two wins mean Morgan has an outside chance of retaining crown

Morgan on his perpetual march as F1000 title battle closes up

ANGLESEY
750MC
10-11 SEPTEMBER

At a crucial moment in the title race, Rob Welham took over the F1000 championship lead from Matthew Booth as fellow title contender Thomas Gadd and Lee Morgan did the winning in three nail-biting races at the penultimate round at Anglesey.

Mittell Cars' Matthew Higginson had taken a maiden pole position in qualifying and came close to winning for the first time too in the opening encounter. He was under intense pressure from Morgan throughout, the Perpetuum driver drawing alongside through the left-right Rocket sequence of bends on several occasions, but Higginson was able to hold firm — until the final lap.

On that occasion, Morgan was a bit further alongside as they hit the brakes and was able to cling on around the outside to go on and win from the valiant Higginson. But Morgan had a scare just seconds later when, approaching the Corkscrew for the final time, his car's exhaust manifold broke. "Luckily it was with just two corners to go!" he said.

Behind, Welham's bid to pass Booth for third on the final lap ended when he selected a 'false neutral' and dropped instead to fifth behind Gadd who, having qualified second fastest, had come through from seventh after serving a five-place grid penalty (for his part in a crash with Welham last time out at Donington Park).

For the weekend, Gadd was using an all-new chassis after his original was written-off in said crash, and in race two he used it to full effect to take an important win for his title aspirations. Starting seventh from the top-10 reversed grid, he was quickly inside the top three before leading by lap four of 14. From 10th, Morgan had gone with Gadd but, by the time he made it into second, it was too late — and in the closing laps he again had to nurse a broken manifold.

By contrast, Welham became stuck in fifth behind Dan Clowes and Higginson while Booth was a frustrated ninth after being bundled off the track at Peel on the opening lap.

Gadd's hopes of a second win in race three — this time from pole — were over at the start when clutch problems caused him to stall. Morgan, starting alongside him, needed no second invitation and shot off into the distance for an easy win.

Welham pounced to pass Ben Powney for second straight after a safety-car period — caused when Ed Falkingham's Jedi spectacularly blew its engine and, amid a brief fire, spun on its own oil at the high-speed School curve. Fourteenth at the end of lap one, the recovering Gadd

Morrell (l) and debutant Fleming battled hard for Bikesports wins

ALL PHOTOGRAPHY: STEVE JONES

made it back up to sixth by the end, right behind Booth.

Heading to Snetterton's title-deciding final three rounds, Welham has edged ahead of Booth and Gadd, who provisionally are tied for second in the standings. "It'll need me to bring my A-game so maybe I'll try and get some more sleep," said Gadd.

In spite of his six non-scores, Morgan still has an outside chance — just as he did 12 months ago when, at the same venue, he dramatically emerged as champion. "I suppose I had a bit more of a chance last year, but it won't stop me going for it again this time — I've nothing to lose," he said.

There was also a twist in the Bikesports title race as Valour Racing's Leon Morrell closed the gap significantly to leader Simon Walker-Hansell, whose North Motorsport Radical SR3 spluttered through both races with a mystery fuel surge problem.

The first race, initially led by Walker-Hansell before his problems started, was won by debut sensation Thomas Fleming (see News) after he rubbed and squeezed past team-mate Morrell through Church. Next time out, defending champion Morrell took revenge after running second to Fleming for the first 12 laps of the 18.

Kris McCloy proved unbeatable in the Hot Hatch triple-header in his Honda Civic for his first victories in the category. Cameron Elder's Civic led the opening lap of the weekend, but thereafter McCloy was never headed.

Multiple race winner Philip Wright pressed McCloy hard in the first race but it was fellow Civic pilot Joe Bower who emerged as McCloy's closest challenger in the next two encounters.

A second and two thirds in class mean Wright has now won the division A title. But he will need some good fortune in the Snetterton finale to stop David Drinkwater (C class champion in his BMW Compact) from making it four outright titles in a row.

Similarly, Paul Jarvis (his Citroen Saxo VTS having undergone major repairs after being damaged at Donington Park) secured the class B crown after three entertaining battles with Mathew Mandipira's Renault Clio 197, which prevailed in each race.

Jonathan Lisseter is now the favourite to win the Ma7da title after two wins and a second at Anglesey, as chief rival Danny Andrew suffered some misfortune — particularly in the second race, which he led comfortably until a late safety-car period.

In the last-lap dash that followed the restart, Andrew was attacked by Lisseter's Team Sellars team-mate Eddie Mawer into Rocket. The pair ran wide at the exit and Lisseter — struggling to keep up with incorrect tyre pressures — gratefully drove past them both. Mawer won race three ahead of Lisseter and, in spite of a late spin on a damp track, Ben Powney completed a Sellars 1-2-3 result.

WEEKEND WINNERS

F1000
Races 1 & 3 Lee Morgan
Race 2 Thomas Gadd

BIKESPORTS
Race 1 Thomas Fleming (Radical SR3)
Race 2 Leon Morrell (Radical SR3)

HOT HATCH
Races 1, 2 & 3 Kris McCloy (Honda Civic)

MA7DA
Races 1 & 2 Jonathan Lisseter (below)
Race 3 Eddie Mawer

BMW CAR CLUB RACING
Races 1, 2 & 3 Graham Crowhurst (E46 M3)

ROADSPORTS
Colin Gillespie/Phil Dryburgh (SEAT Leon TCR)

WELSH RACING DRIVERS ASSOCIATION
Races 1 & 2 Christian Douglas (Ariel Atom)

CLUB ENDURO
Carl Swift/Robert Baker (SEAT Leon TCR)

CALM ALL PORSCHE TROPHY
Races 1 & 2 James Coleman (Boxster)
Race 3 Roger Coy/Calum Lockie (968)

For full results visit: 750mc.co.uk

Paul Cook led Graham Crowhurst in the first of three BMW races before his overheating E46 M3 slowed and retired. Cue a straightforward hat-trick of wins for Crowhurst's similar car.

Colin Gillespie and Phil Dryburgh (SEAT Leon TCR) won the 45-minute Roadsports race after early leader Will Stacey's Lotus Elise stopped with a major oil leak.

On the Welsh Racing Drivers Association's first event on the Anglesey Coastal layout, Christian Douglas (Ariel Atom) was twice a winner ahead of Chris Everill (Ginetta G55).

Carl Swift and Robert Baker (SEAT Leon TCR) took their fifth Club Enduro win of the season in a sodden, safety car-disrupted two-hour plus marathon, a dozen seconds clear of Rob Boston (Lotus Elise), who must have rued losing a similar amount of time with two grassy moments at The Banking.

CARL McKELLAR

Tin Tops race came to a dramatic conclusion involving Cassar (l), Windmill and Hird

Cassar autocrosses to Tin Tops Derby victory

DONINGTON PARK
CSCC
10-11 SEPTEMBER

A heart-in-mouth trip over the grass amid the Craner Curves on the penultimate lap, having caught and sliced diagonally between long-time leaders Russell Hird and Andrew Windmill at Hollywood, and a phenomenal save as he rejoined the track, earned Danny Cassar victory in Sunday's sensational Tin Tops race at the well-supported Classic Sports Car Club Donington Derby meeting. The event went ahead after poignant daily two-minute silences paying respects to HM Queen Elizabeth II.

Cassar's 1m17.067s (92.44mph) shot had put Nigel Ainge's Hillwood Motors Honda Integra Type R on pole, with Windmill (Civic) and Hird (Integra) within 1.157 seconds. Ainge slipped to seventh from the rolling start, but relayed Cassar from a steady sixth as the pit window opened eight laps into the 40 minutes. Windmill, who followed a lap later, and Ainge/Cassar were obliged to remain stationary for 30s extra at the two-minute stops – for Brands Hatch Grand Prix and Snetterton wins respectively – thus the unfettered Hird eked out a gap with quick and consistent lappery.

When Manoj Patel (Civic) completed the stop sequence, he fell to third, behind Hird and Windmill, but Cassar was on a mission. With three laps remaining, a second split Hird, Windmill and Cassar. Windmill screamed ahead as he and Hird lapped Steven Routledge's Ford Fiesta on either side past race control with two to go. Hird retaliated boldly into Redgate as Cassar joined them prior to the pivotal moment. Windmill slowed suddenly "when my dashboard lit up", but Cassar took the chequer 4.566s before Hird. Windmill limped home third, ahead of Patel.

"A good day in sad times," said BRDC member Piers Masarati having completed brother Miles's job to win Saturday's Modern Classics opener in their stunning Porsche turbo. Oulton Park victor Oliver Smith's 20s success penalty was beyond negating, even before a safety car – covering Stephen Harrington's Honda S2000 that smote the mid-chicane tyre stack backwards – and a Code 60 interlude. Smith finished 5.255s short, clear of Tom Mensley, debuting his similar BMW E36 M3 Evo.

Following wet qualifying, which favoured front-wheel-drivers and left a topsy-turvy grid, Ian Staines (MG Midget) patiently worked his way past Connor Kay (Midget), Clive Tonge and Ralph Budd (Minis) and Sam Polley (Mini Marcos) for Swinging Sixties Group 1 gold. After fire marshals had battled to extinguish Mike Henney's blazing Turner Mk2 in the pits, Charlie Budd relieved his dad and regained second from Polley, carrying a 30s penalty for his Snetterton win.

The Future Classics race was red-flagged when Anglesey double winner Mark Chilton's Nissan Skyline careered headlong into the barrier at Redgate. Aston and Tony Blake, whose Modern Classics challenge wilted when their TVR Tuscan's gear lever pulled out, won from Stephen Scott-Dunwoodie (Sierra RS500) and Tim Bates's Brumos tribute Porsche 911.

Ollie Reuben almost annulled his minute's imposition in Swinging Sixties Group 2 before he relayed dad Nigel into their 'non-FIA' five-litre TVR Griffith. After David Thompson (Tuscan) spun, Jamie Keevill (Lotus Elan) seized second from Malcolm Johnson (Europa) after a fine duel. An eye-catching Gp1 class battle featured Lewis Salmon and Francesca Roodhouse in immaculate Mini Cooper Ss reel in Simon Dawson's Mini and Nick Watling's Turner. Clive Tonge, in for Dawson, came out on top

Baker and Clarke (l) charged through for New Millennium glory

ALL PHOTOGRAPHY: MICK WALKER

WEEKEND WINNERS

TIN TOPS
Nigel Ainge/Danny Cassar (Honda Integra Type R)

MODERN CLASSICS
Miles & Piers Masarati (Porsche 964 Turbo)

SWINGING SIXTIES
Group 1 Ian Staines (MG Midget)
Group 2 Oliver & Nigel Reuben (TVR Griffith)

FUTURE CLASSICS
Aston & Tony Blake (TVR Tuscan Challenge)

CLASSIC K
Jamie Boot (TVR Griffith)

TURBO TIN TOPS
Phiroze Bilimoria (VW Scirocco, below)

NEW MILLENNIUM
Simon Baker/Kevin Clarke (BMW 1 Series Coupe)

SPECIAL SALOONS & MODSPORTS
Race 1 Clive Anderson (BMW E30 V8 turbo)
Race 2 Danny Morris (Peugeot 309 GTI turbo)

MAGNIFICENT SEVENS
John Cutmore (Spire RB7)

OPEN/SLICKS SERIES
Morgan Short (Mosler MT900)

For full results visit: tsl-timing.com

DAVE SMITH

SELF-BUILTS REIGN Clive Anderson (BMW E30) beat Danny Morris's Spirit of RPM Peugeot 309 after a heady duel in Saturday's Special Saloon & Modsports opener. Series debutant Richard Rudd (Ford Escort RSR) was third. Rudd hurtled through Sunday's depleted field to third by Redgate, where contact with Joe Ward's Baby Bertha dispatched the celebrated Superloon into the barrier. Morris won the restart with Tom Carey's Honda CRX in his mirrors after Anderson broke on the first lap.

SPIRE TOPS MAG SEVENS David Watson and John Cutmore fired their Hayabusa-powered Spire RB7s ahead in the Magnificent Sevens feature, which lost polesitter Jonny Pittard's Caterham CSR to fuel pressure issues after a lap. When Watson spun out at the chicane, Cutmore – his engine sounding ghastly with broken exhaust headers – growled to victory over the Caterhams of Tim Davis (with a loaned 260bhp motor, 50bhp down on his regular one) and Colin Watson, who staved off Tim Davies.

from Shaun Haddrell, finishing the Turner.

Jamie Boot won Classic K's contest in his Much Marcle Garage-prepared Griffith. Boot chased Rob Fenn's Elan initially but, having passed its owner Paul Whight after the stops, Whight spun into the gravel at the Old Hairpin, promoting Greg Rumble and Nick Pancisi (Elans).

Sometime British GT racer Phiroze Bilimoria dominated Sunday's Turbo Tin Tops race on his CSCC debut with a pretty VW Scirocco. Mini Cooper S drivers John Wyatt (R56 turbo) and Stephen Berry (supercharged R53) squabbled over second.

Following a tyre problem in practice, Simon Baker and Kevin Clarke borrowed rears and stormed through the BMW-rich New Millennium field to win in Baker's 3.2-litre 1 Series Coupe. Jasver Sapra/Bryan Bransom (E46 M3) and Mark Smith (E36 M3) ran them closest.

MARCUS PYE

IN THE GENES Brothers Morgan (20) and Marcus (17) Short looked impressive taming father Martin's Mosler-Chevrolet MT900R. Chassis MTR GT3 0802 boasts strong period history. Germany's Kenneth Heyer – son of Hans – and Czech Stepan Vojtech raced it in 2008, while Craig Baird won all three 2009 Clipsal 500 supporting races in Adelaide in it. Morgan was ahead in the Open/Slicks Series race, when it was stopped for a heavy shunt from which Porsche 911 veteran Peter Challis walked away.

Atkins ends Equipe season on a high with Silverstone victory

SILVERSTONE
EQUIPE
10 SEPTEMBER

Equipe Classic Racing's flagship series, Equipe GTS, finished the day at Silverstone and finished the season for its participants, bringing the first year of the club promoting its own race meetings to a close. Lee Atkins steered his TVR to the final victory of the day from the sister Grantura of Rob Cull, who had in turn found his way past Neil Fisher's MGB.

Atkins, who has had an up and down season, got a great start and consistently kept a good gap to Cull and Fisher, even through contrasting pitstop strategies. Atkins dived in at half-distance, with Cull opting to stop slightly earlier. This required him to put in some fast laps to ensure he emerged ahead of Fisher and also safely saw off a pack that included Andrew Wenman's Morgan and another TVR driven by Jack Wilmott. Neither of these cars finished, however, with Wilmott ending up backwards in a barrier by Copse. Mark Holme, in his MGB, had earlier scraps with Wilmott and Dominic Mooney's MGB before finishing fourth. Mooney was sixth, behind Marc Gordon's Lotus Elite.

Still in his first full season of racing, Dafyd Richards secured his third win of the year in the Pre-'63/50s race. As a sports-racing car, his Lotus 11 had to start from the pitlane despite qualifying on pole, but he steadily picked off his rivals and took the lead fairly late on from the Jaguar E-type driven by Harvey Stanley and Frederic Laurent.

Stanley had been extremely quick during the first stint but Laurent could not quite keep up the pace and appeared to be struggling with other issues towards the end, being passed by a waiting Richards and then Holme's Austin-Healey 3000 in the closing stages. Alexander Hewitson was fourth in his Healey and looked as if he was jostling for position with the E-type, but he was a lap down. The Healey of Guy and Simon Parry-Williams was involved at the front early on, but retired on lap 27 of 34.

Laurent and Stanley had laid their cards on the table in the Equipe Libre race, starting from pole and surviving a very lairy first trip round Copse, which had several casualties, including Rick Wilmott's E-type and Joseph Wilmott's Austin-Healey 3000, but thankfully no stoppages. The superior power of Matthew Moore and Mark

There was no stopping Atkins's TVR in Equipe GTS

Moore and Daniell took Equipe Libre honours

MICK WALKER

Cullen's win struck off, handing Taylor the title

MONDELLO PARK
MPSC
10-11 SEPTEMBER

Michael Cullen vaulted himself back into title contention with a win in the opening Stryker race at Mondello Park last weekend, his rival Johnny Taylor retiring mid-race with damage. But it was Cullen's turn to suffer in the second encounter, meaning he ultimately missed out on another crown.

Despite a spectacular oil leak and subsequent smoke screen, Cullen did pip Taylor to the flag in race two. However, the officials had shown a mechanical defect flag, and under the chequered flag hung a black one, Cullen's subsequent exclusion handing Taylor the title.

Keith Dawson dominated Fiesta Zetec proceedings in his uncle's borrowed car, even breaking the long-standing lap record on his way to the opening win. In race two, Robert Barrable took the lead with a great start, almost matched by his points-leading father Michael. By mid-distance, Rob had ceded the place to his dad, and he held off a late-race challenge from Johnny Whelan, the trio crossing the line well clear of the rest.

Having not competed in three years, 2019 champion Erik Holstein made a return to the Fiesta ST class and, having been pipped to pole by Michael Cullen, claimed to have dropped a wheel off on his fastest lap. He subsequently led away, holding off Cullen's initial advances before easing clear to a strong win. Eddie Peterson took race-two honours, further increasing his championship aspirations.

David Travers took the first Junior Mini Challenge race while, in horrendous conditions for race two, karter Codey Keogh dominated from pole, with Travers second. In race three Travers grabbed the lead but slid off at Lola, handing Keogh his second win of the weekend.

The Crossle 9S of Dave Griffin led the Historic Racing Car Association grid away from pole but, once Jackie Cochrane got settled in the wet conditions, the V8 Tiger moved up to second and, with the help of some very unconventional lines, closed the gap right down. A rotation on

Griffin's Crossle defeated Cochrane in HRCA opener

MICHAEL CHESTER

MICK WALKER

Daniell's stark aluminium AC Cobra was too great for the Jaguar, however, and they were worthy winners, but they had to work hard to keep their lead mid-race. A safety-car period neutralised their early advantage, before they were able to stretch it out again later. Hewitson did briefly hold second after the stops, while Moore and Daniell got away, but Stanley had left the Healey behind by the time the flag fell.

Elsewhere, James Wheeler was crowned the BCV8 champion after a pair of wins. With dropped scores taken into account, he needed to have some space between him and his nearest challenger, Neil Fowler. Fowler tried his hardest with two second places, but Wheeler still clinched the title.

The Production GTI racers, who shared a grid with the BMWs of Z Cars (twice topped by Edd Giddings), still have a meeting to go. Henry Riley and Simon Hill took a win apiece after polesitter Simon Vercoe was unable to convert his pace to podium finishes.

RACHEL HARRIS-GARDINER

Taylor (l) and Cullen battle for Irish Stryker honours

MICHAEL CHESTER

the final lap for Cochrane ended his hopes, but he had enough in hand to remain second from Steve Kelly's well-driven Mallock. Cochrane made amends in race two, but had to fend off a charging David Kelly late on.

Shane Murphy fought off Graham McDonnell to take the first SEAT Supercup race. In race two, Harry McGovern took the honours, from McDonnell, both lucky to stay ahead of a charging slick-shod Brian Berry. Alan Watkins and Charlie Linnane shared the Supercar wins, with Alan O'Neill's Mazda RX-7 dominating the concurrent Irish Touring Car contests.

Elsewhere, Garrett McKenna took a fine Formula Sheane win in race one, while Mark Keenan took the honours second time around. Owen Kelly upset the frontrunners by taking Formula Vee pole and followed it up with a strong win, Anthony Cross coming out tops in a great battle with Jack Byrne for second.

Richard Shattock's Honda Civic held off Aidan Byrne's Toyota Celica to take Future Classic spoils, before Byrne triumphed in race two. Paul Flanagan (Renault Clio) crossed the line in the Celica's wheeltracks, assuring himself of the 2022 title.

Noel Robinson took the first BOSS Ireland race, but spun his F3 Dallara into the gravel in race two, causing a red flag and restart. Michael Connolly's Radical dominated thereafter to beat the F3 cars.

LEO NULTY

WEEKEND WINNERS

SILVERSTONE

EQUIPE GTS
Lee Atkins (TVR Grantura)

EQUIPE PRE-'63 AND 50s
Dafyd Richards (Lotus 11)

EQUIPE LIBRE
Matthew Moore/Mark Daniell (AC Cobra)

MGCC BCV8
Races 1 & 2 James Wheeler (B GT V8)

PRODUCTION GTI/Z CARS
Race 1 Henry Riley (VW Golf GTI)
Race 2 Simon Hill (VW Golf GTI)

For full results visit: tsl-timing.com

MONDELLO PARK

IRISH STRYKERS
Race 1 Michael Cullen
Race 2 Jonathan Taylor

FIESTA ZETEC
Race 1 Keith Dawson
Race 2 Michael Barrable

FIESTA ST
Race 1 Erik Holstein
Race 2 Eddie Peterson

MINI JUNIOR CHALLENGE
Race 1 David Travers
Races 2 & 3 Codey Keogh

HISTORIC RACING CAR ASSOCIATION
Race 1 Dave Griffin (Crossle 9S)
Race 2 Jackie Cochrane (Sunbeam Tiger)

SEAT SUPERCUP IRELAND/IRISH SUPERCARS/IRISH TOURING CARS
Race 1 Shane Murphy (SEAT)
Race 2 Harry McGovern (SEAT)

FORMULA SHEANE
Race 1 Garrett McKenna
Race 2 Mark Keenan

FORMULA VEE
Owen Kelly (Sheane)

FUTURE CLASSICS
Race 1 Richard Shattock (Honda Civic)
Race 2 Aidan Byrne (Toyota Celica)

FORMULA BOSS IRELAND
Race 1 Noel Robinson (Dallara F307)
Race 2 Michael Connelly (Radical SR8, below)

MICHAEL CHESTER

For full results visit: timing.ie

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motorsport NETWORK

Ericsson takes the European honours as Wallace impresses

SANTA POD
DRAG RACING
8-11 SEPTEMBER

Twice a year, Santa Pod Raceway stages rounds of both FIA European Pro Modified and Motorsport UK British Drag Racing championships combined into a single shootout. The FIA category, suspended for two years thanks to COVID-19, resumed with the first of these joint sessions in May and concluded with the European Finals last weekend. With one further round of the British championship remaining, of which Pro Mod is the designated class, Hampshire's seven-time champion Andy Robinson leads the standings but with rivals closing fast.

Hopes that our long, dry summer would extend for one more week were dashed as rain allowed only two of the four scheduled qualifying sessions to take place, although Sunday's eliminations proceeded untroubled after a late start waiting for wet mist to lift. Pro Mods, drag racing's quickest, fastest 'doorslammers', come with three varieties of V8 motor: supercharged or turbocharged methanol burners and unblown petrol burners of cavernous internal dimensions spiced up by drafts of nitrous oxide. All three engine types made their marks here.

Jan Ericsson was the class of a classy field. The Swedish racer is a comparatively new arrival in Pro Mod, having switched from other classes as recently as 2017. Yet he wasted no time establishing the presence of his bright orange supercharged Camaro, securing his first FIA championship in 2019 and continuing this season where he had left off then.

Having won May's opening round, Ericsson repeated the feat here, 'running the table' with pole position before clocking low elapsed time and top speed of the event on the way to imperious victory. All six of his trips down the track — two qualifiers and four elimination matches — netted 5.8-second timeslips at over 240mph. Low elapsed time and top speed came together in the semi-final at 5.805s/247.76mph.

Ericsson's final-round opponent, Bobby Wallace, has raced unblown nitrous machinery in Pro Mod since 2014 but, as the only entrant still aged under 30, brings an air of youthfulness to the class. Already a three-time UK finalist with a pair of second-place championship finishes to his credit, he has stepped up a gear with the acquisition from America of a booming 14.8-litre nitrous Camaro built for NHRA Pro Mod star Khalid alBalooshi but scarcely used there.

Wallace threatened to give Ericsson a run for his money after a 5.8s/240mph progress to the final almost as impressive as the Swede's, but misjudged the change in conditions as dusk slipped into darkness and shook the tyres to 6.37s/233mph defeat. Wallace beat UK championship leader Robinson in a second-round squeaker, 5.918s to Robinson's 5.973s, to stamp Wallace Motorsport's authority as a genuine heavyweight contender.

Pro Mod is not all Camaros. Estonia's Andres Arnover brought his turbocharged Ford Mustang, the fastest entry in the field, aiming to challenge Ericsson for the FIA crown, only to break in his opening-round match against Robinson. Allowed a solo test run late in the day, the repaired Mustang delivered a 5.84s/252mph performance that would have proved useful in eliminations.

In the realms of motoring eccentricity, there is no greater campaigner than Fredrik 'Fast Freddy' Fagerstrom, whose ancient Chevy C10 pickup has been burning up dragstrips and thrilling crowds for years. Its decrepit, 'rat-look' appearance and contrary aerodynamics conceal potent supercharged mechanicals that, with 6.1s/230mph tuning input from multi-FIA champion Michael Gullqvist, carried the old banger to the semi-final where young Wallace ended its day.

ROBIN JACKSON

Fagerstrom entertained the crowd with his pickup

ALL PHOTOGRAPHY: CALLUM PUDGE/SANTA POD

FINISHING STRAIGHT

A story of survival and family

BOOK

ROMAIN GROSJEAN WITH MARION GROSJEAN: FACING DEATH

RRP £16

It was one of those moments in life where you can recall exactly where you were when it happened. The TV images of a car spearing off the track, a huge impact with the barrier and within a split second an eruption of flames more reminiscent of Formula 1 from a bygone era. Not something anyone ever expected to see again in 2020.

The accident at the start of that year's Bahrain Grand Prix for Romain Grosjean was one of the most violent motorsport crashes in modern times, as for 27 seconds the Frenchman was engulfed in a ball of fire with his life very much on the line.

Footage of him battling his way through the flames to safety – remarkably 'only' with scorched hands and a damaged foot – were beamed across the globe and still to this day it's scarcely believable he survived.

Grosjean's crash, survival and recovery are the focus of an autobiography from the 10-time F1 podium finisher that was released earlier this year. Unusually for most similar works, it's not just Grosjean's voice that is given space but also that of his wife and French broadcast journalist, Marion. She gives her own perspective on events, both in her husband's professional life but also with their family and three young children.

It makes for, at times, an interesting and dynamic read as they recount how they met, why they tried to hide their relationship and difficulties Marion initially suffered trying to do her job while married to an F1 driver.

Mark Webber's comment about how she "can tire him out tonight" ahead of a grand prix are pretty deplorable.

The majority of the book though focuses on Grosjean's motorsport career, from how he initially started racing to the highs of winning the GP2 title in 2011, to the many lows he suffered in his F1 career. Motorsport fans hoping for a deep insight into certain aspects of Grosjean's motorsport career might be left a little disappointed though, as entire seasons are recapped in the space of a few pages with little insight.

There are a few moments that stand out, including his promotion to the Renault team in the wake of 'Crashgate', his reaction to being banned after causing the first-corner crash at the 2012 Belgian GP, and generally interactions with fellow drivers including Kimi Raikkonen, Sebastian Vettel and Lewis Hamilton.

With regards to the Spa crash, and several others during his career, Grosjean does portray himself as the innocent party in most instances and generally seems to complain at the way he was treated – perhaps fairly given the amount of criticism levied at him during his 10 years in the championship.

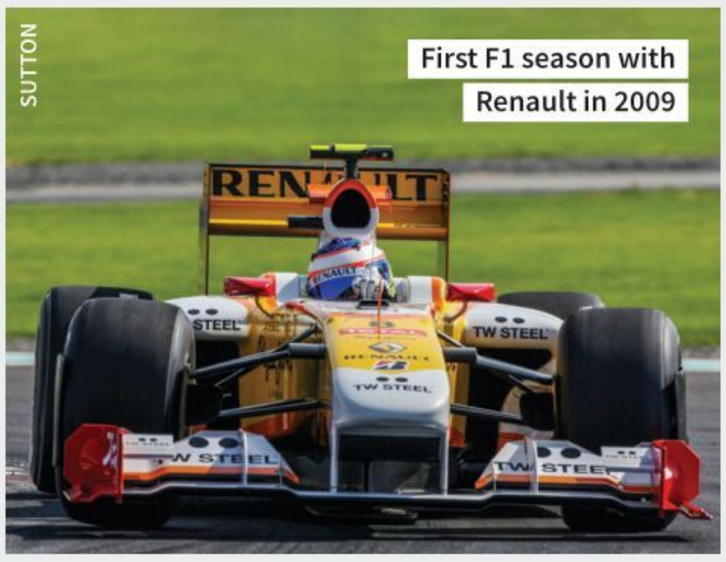
Where the book excels is in Grosjean's description of the accident that nearly claimed his life, his clarity during those agonising seconds trapped in the car and subsequent escape.

The treatment of his hands makes for stomach-churning reading, while his emotions at meeting those who saved him just a week later is heart-warming to say the least.

Marion's account of the accident, while at home with her children, is unsurprisingly

Grosjean and his life-savers Dr Ian Roberts (left) and Alan van der Merwe

MAIN IMAGE AND INSET: HONE



traumatic and perhaps the most gripping part of the book.

Despite intriguing and amusing anecdotes, there is a fundamental problem with the book and how all the content has been presented, with it being in the spoken form rather than written. As explained at the start it is effectively an interview between husband and wife, "the journalist and the driver", and as such the text is laid out almost as a transcript. While normally that might be fine, the book has been translated from French into English which leaves many instances where sentences don't make grammatical sense.

Sadly, it means that large portions of the 320-page book become a tiresome read, not helped either by there being no pictures to break up the constant blocks of text.

While the book might be unremarkable, it certainly doesn't take away from the remarkable journey Romain Grosjean has been on in his life, and most memorably, in those 27 seconds when the world held its collective breath.

STEFAN MACKLEY

autosport.com/podcast

F1 Italian Grand Prix review

With Max Verstappen's Italian Grand Prix victory, the Formula 1 race at Monza came to a controversial conclusion under the safety car – but it wasn't the only controversial moment. Martyn Lee is joined by Alex Kalinauckas and Haydn Cobb to discuss the race and explore the key talking points as the F1 season now enters its final six races.

WHAT'S ON

INTERNATIONAL MOTORSPORT

MotoGP
Round 15/20
Aragon, Spain
18 September
TV **Live** BT Sport 2, Sun 1230
TV **Highlights** ITV4, Mon 2000

Super GT
Round 6/8
Sugo, Japan
18 September
Livestream on Motorsport.tv, Sat 0630, Sun 0530

GT World Challenge Europe Sprint Cup
Round 5/5
Valencia, Spain
17-18 September

NASCAR Cup Series
Round 29/36
Bristol, USA
18 September
TV **Live** Premier Sports 2, Sun 0000

NASCAR Xfinity Series
Round 26/33
Bristol, USA
16 September

NASCAR Truck Series
Round 20/23
Bristol, USA
16 September
TV **Live** Premier Sports 2, Fri 0130

World Rallycross
Round 3/6
Montalegre, Portugal
18 September

UK MOTORSPORT

Goodwood Revival BARC
16-18 September
Classic and historic races. See page 14 in supplement for preview.

Brands Hatch MSVR
17-18 September
911 Challenge & Boxster Cup, Clubmans Sports Prototype, Focus Cup, Modified Fords, MSVR Allcomers, Porsche Club, Sports 2000, United FF1600

Donington Park MSVR
17-18 September
Bernie's V8s & Historic Outlaws, GT Cup, Monoposto, MSVT Trackday Championship, MSVT Trackday Trophy, Radical Challenge, Radical SR1 Cup

Croft BRSCC
17-18 September
C1 Endurance, CityCar Cup, MGCC Cockshoot Cup, ST-XR Challenge/ Civic Challenge, Track Attack

Snetterton BARC
17-18 September
British Trucks, CTCRC (Pre-'66, Pre-'83, Pre-'93/Pre-'03, Thunder/ BOSS/Jaguars), Legends, MGOC, Mini Challenge Trophy, Pickups
Livestream via barc.net

Cadwell Park 750MC
17-18 September
116 Trophy, 5Club MX-5, 750 Formula, Alfa Romeo, Classic Stock Hatch, Formula Vee, Historic 750 Formula, Locost, Toyota MR2, Sport Specials

Silverstone MSVR
17-18 September
Ferrari Challenge, Ferrari Classic

Knockhill BRSCC
17-18 September
BMW Compact Cup, Caterham (270R, 310R, Academy, Roadsport, Seven UK), Fiesta, Fiesta Junior

GOODYEAR
Marlboro
LONGINES
GOODYEAR

FINISHING STRAIGHT

FROM THE ARCHIVE

Michele Alboreto attempts to see what's amiss with his Ferrari 156/85 *[can't imagine those dinky mirrors are much help – ed]* as an oil leak combusts, bringing his attempts to improve on his third-place qualifying position for the 1985 Canadian Grand Prix to an end. Come race day at Montreal, polesitter Elio de Angelis (Lotus-Renault 97T) and his team-mate Ayrton Senna led the opening laps, with Alboreto in pursuit. The Ferrari moved up a place when Senna had to pit, then passed de Angelis to take a lead it would not relinquish. At the finish, Stefan Johansson made it a 1-2 for Ferrari, promoting the squad to the top of the constructors' points, while Alboreto also ended the weekend at the head of the drivers' standings.

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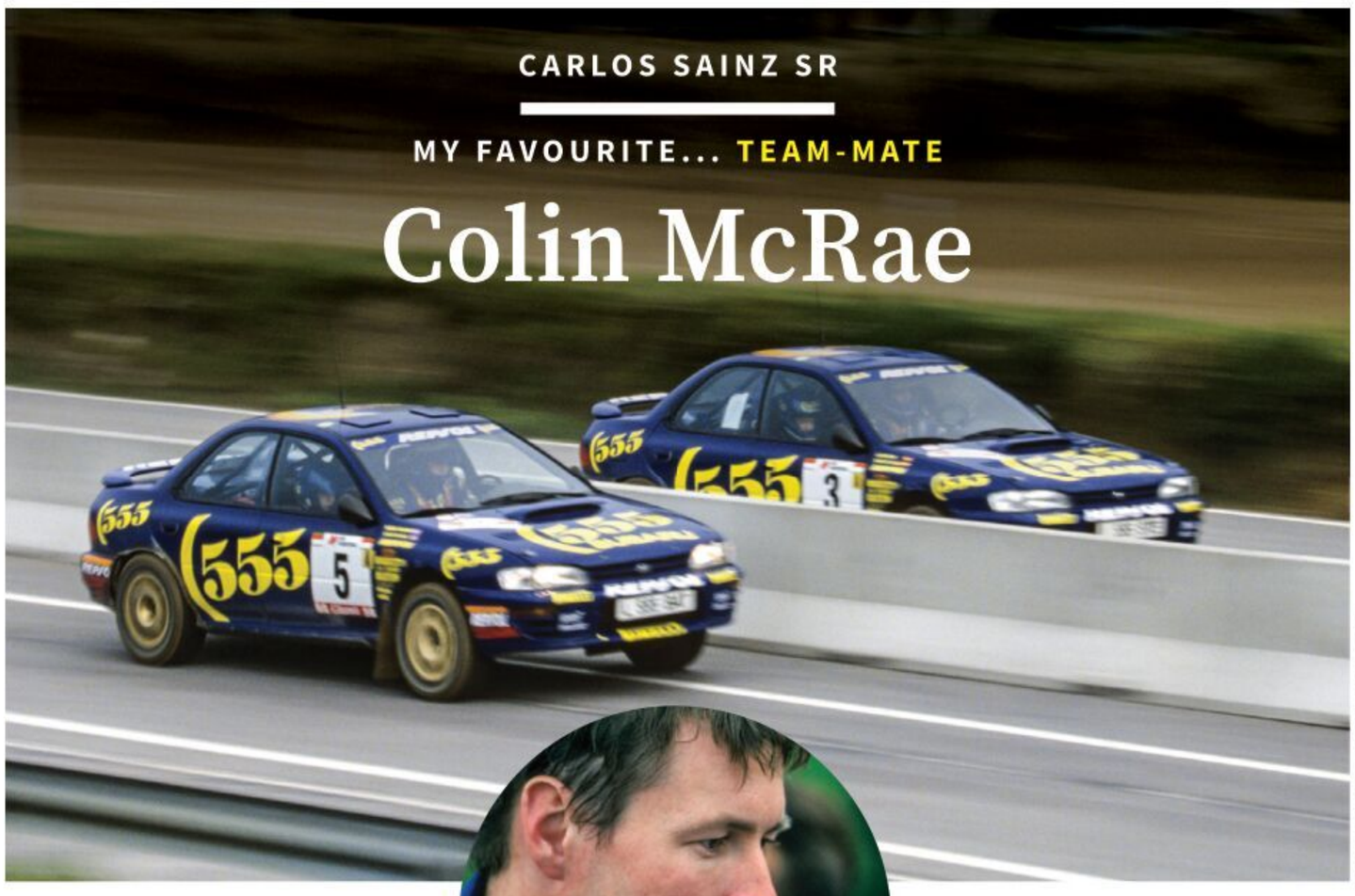
CARLOS SAINZ SR

MY FAVOURITE... TEAM-MATE

Colin McRae



MAIN PIC AND INSET: McKLEIN

When one thinks about rally legends Colin McRae and Carlos Sainz, the acrimonious 1995 World Rally Championship campaign usually springs to mind. But the public breakdown between the then Subaru team-mates doesn't paint a true reflection of their relationship, according to Sainz, who cites McRae as his favourite team-mate and one of his greatest rivals.

Of McRae's 11 full-time WRC campaigns, the Scot spent six as a team-mate to 1990 and 1992 world champion Sainz. The pair spearheaded Subaru's factory programme in 1994 and 1995 before Sainz's split with the Prodrive-run team, then joined forces again at Ford between 2000 and 2002, before moving together to Citroen for 2003.

In 1995, McRae and Sainz went head-to-head for the WRC title, split by five points in McRae's favour prior to the penultimate round on Sainz's home turf in Catalunya. After several lead swaps, Sainz led the rally heading into the final day by eight seconds.

With a 1-2 on the cards, team boss David Richards declared that his drivers should hold position. But McRae ignored the order, pushing his Impreza to such a degree that Subaru crew members were dispatched to the roadside to try and slow him down.

McRae made his point. He had the rally won before checking in late to ensure the team got its desired result and Sainz – who maintains in the book *McRae, Just Colin* that he never asked for team orders – claimed the win to put them level on points. Ultimately, McRae defeated Sainz in the RAC Rally finale to seal the title.

Intriguingly, the 1995 Catalunya scenario was reversed on the 2000 Acropolis Rally, when Sainz checked in late to honour team orders and hand Ford team-mate McRae, who died in a helicopter crash in 2007, the victory.

Sainz says the public perception of his relationship with McRae couldn't be further from the truth: "With Colin we had great battles at Subaru and at Ford and at Citroen. He was the driver I spent the most time with in my whole career. People think that we were not very good friends but actually he was the closest friend I had in the WRC."

TOM HOWARD

IN NEXT WEEK'S ISSUE

A better Max?

HOW THE SOON-TO-BE DOUBLE CHAMP HAS CHANGED IN 2022

RED BULL

AUTOSPORT

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

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

EDITORIAL
Chief Editor **Kevin Turner**
Deputy Editor **Marcus Simmons**
Grand Prix Editor **Alex Kalinauckas**
F1 Reporter **Luke Smith**
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Editor **Haydn Cobb**
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motorsport STATS

motorsport IMAGES

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

Special Contributors
Charles Bradley
Alan Eldridge
David Malsher-Lopez
Jonathan Noble
Marcus Pye
Rachit Thukral
Damien Smith
Gary Watkins
Tim Wright

CORRESPONDENTS
Argentina Tony Watson **Australia** Andrew van Leeuwen
Austria Gerhard Kuntschik **Belgium** Gordon McKay
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ADVERTISING
Tel +44 (0) 1233 228750
Co-Owner/Director Tandem Media **Catherine Rowe**
catherine.rowe@tandemmedia.co.uk

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

ADVERTISING PRODUCTION
Production Controller **Ben Webster**

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

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12/13	DEC	Portimao GTWS

Raceweek I

12/13	JAN	Estoril
14/15	JAN	Estoril GTWS
17/18	JAN	Portimao
19/20	JAN	Portimao
21/22	JAN	Monteblanco

Raceweek II

04/05	FEB	Portimao
06/07	FEB	Portimao
09/10	FEB	Jerez
11/12	FEB	Jerez GTWS
16/17	FEB	Valencia
18/19	FEB	Valencia GTWS
18/19	FEB	Circuito Iberia 9km

Raceweek III

02/03	MAR	Navarra
04/05	MAR	Navarra GTWS
07/08	MAR	Aragón tbc
09/10	MAR	Barcelona Catalunya tbc
11/12	MAR	Barcelona Catalunya GTWS tbc

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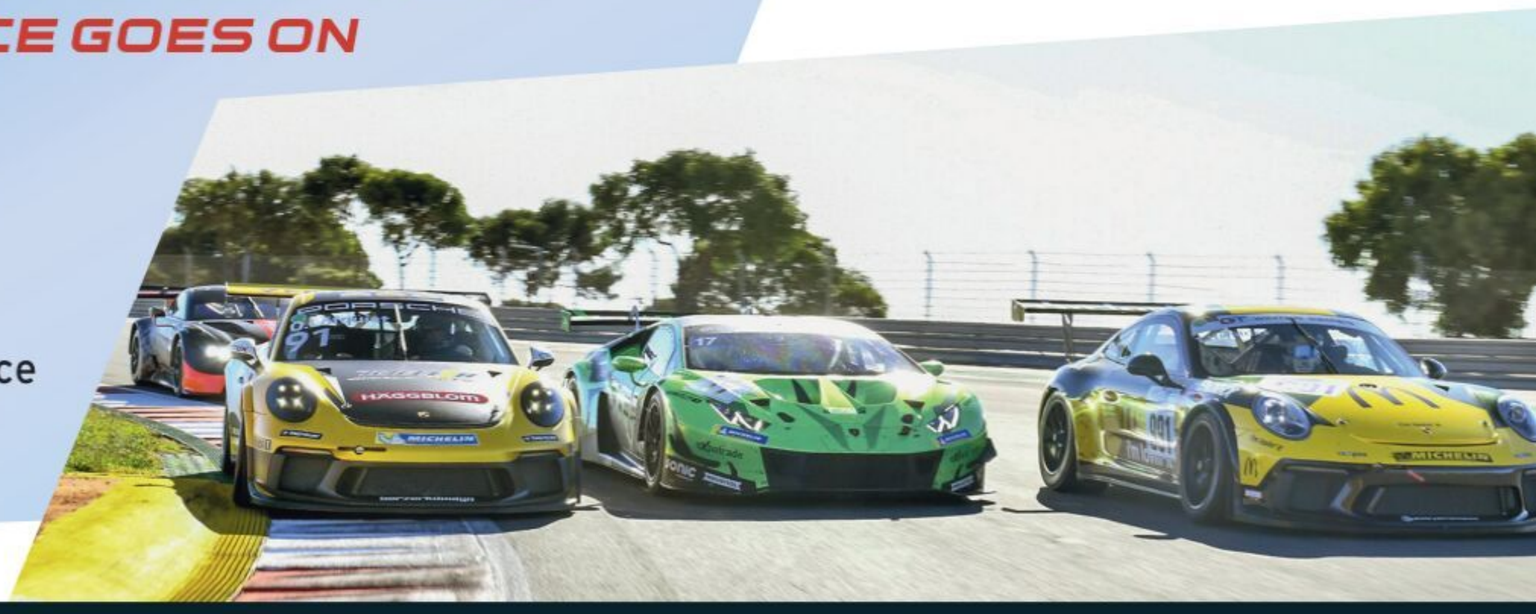

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ENGINEERING

F1'S GREATEST SOUND IS BACK

BRM's newly built V16 is set to bring the 1950s alive – on track

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The BRM V16 will be a highlight of the Revival as it takes to the track in the Goodwood Trophy race

JAMIE BUFTON PHOTOGRAPHY

CAPTURING V16 HISTORIC FEVER FOR A MODERN AUDIENCE

It's a testament to the appeal – and growing importance – of historic racing that the Goodwood Revival is regarded as one of the keystones of Britain's motorsport calendar, an event that professional racers attend in their droves with one common aim: winning. Having fun in period garb is an added bonus.

While the atmosphere on a weekend that celebrates the past is likely to be sombre, following the death of Queen Elizabeth II last week, there will at least be plenty to entertain spectators making the trip, as Marcus Pye outlines in his preview on page 14. Even if the thought of Jimmie Johnson doing battle with top drivers from touring cars, sportscars and even rallying doesn't get the mouth watering, then the sight (and sound) of the BRM V16 surely will.

The fourth Mk1 to roll off the production line, a mere 70 years after its siblings, made its public debut last year in a demo capacity and will be in action in the Goodwood Trophy race. As Kevin Turner writes in the cover feature on page 8, while the machine didn't achieve success at first, it did go on to win in non-championship competition. And the newcomer can show contemporary audiences just what it is capable of.

The historics arena is a broad one, and opportunities to get involved are availing themselves all the time, with new series such as the DTM Classic Cup (page 18) offering the owners of classic tin-tops a chance to race on the same bill as the modern-day GT3-based series. And that can only be good news for the industry's many preparation specialists and engine builders. One of these, Richard Langford, reflects on his remarkable career on page 26.

COVER IMAGE
BRM

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JAMES NEWBOLD
EDITOR
james.newbold@autosport.com

EDITORIAL
SUB-EDITOR
Peter Hodges

ART DIRECTOR
Lynsey Elliott

CONTRIBUTORS
Lucas di Grassi, Kevin Turner, Marcus Pye, Marcus Simmons

ADVERTISING ENQUIRIES
Catherine Rowe
catherine.rowe@tandemmedia.co.uk
01233 228750

autosport.com/engineering

SUPERCARS' GEN3 ERA TAKING SHAPE

Teams have started building cars ahead of the 2023 revamp

Australian Supercars continues to work on its Gen3 regulations as teams are bracing for a busy off-season building the new cars.

The Gen3 design and development programme, led by Triple Eight Race Engineering, recently hit a significant benchmark with Brad Jones Racing taking delivery of the first control chassis built by Pace Innovations. Initially the chassis was supplied without the front clip, which was only approved after the Sandown SuperSprint in August, but chassis makers and teams are now free to begin working on the entire control tube frame.

Pace will build chassis for the majority of teams, as well as supplying chassis kits to the likes of Walkinshaw Andretti United and Erebus Motorsport. Triple Eight is building its own chassis to the control spec. The 5.7-litre Chevrolet and 5.4-litre Ford motors, meanwhile, are now undergoing the latter stages of reliability and parity testing on the dyno in the US.

One of the few question marks left is the final shape of the Ford Mustang, which won't be revealed until the global unveiling of the S650 model. But despite the progress on the Gen3 programme, teams are still concerned about getting cars built in time for the 2023 season-opener in Newcastle next March.

Erebus boss Barry Ryan believes there isn't a single day to spare when it comes to the build if he wants to have two Camaros on the grid for Brodie Kostecki and Will Brown for the Newcastle 500.

"We just can't afford to lose a day on the Gen3 project at the moment," he said during the Auckland SuperSprint weekend, where Brown's Gen2 car was badly damaged in a race-two crash. "It's not just the chassis. The chassis we can finish in the next four weeks, but our fabricators need to build suspension arms and brackets. They have got everything up until February.

"There's not really a day spare on our timeline to build these things."

ANDREW VAN LEEUWEN

Teams face a tight deadline to be ready for 2023 season

MARK HORSBURGH/EDGE PHOTOGRAPHICS

HANSEN: NEW ELECTRIC WORLD RALLYCROSS CARS HAVE 'MORE POTENTIAL'

Rallycross legend Kenneth Hansen says the FIA world championship's new electric cars can be the fastest ever, but still have "more potential" to extract.

The 14-time European champion operates two Peugeot 208 RX1es, fitted with spec twin-motor Kreisel Electric powertrains that produce 500kW, for sons Timmy and Kevin. All three races so far have been won by VW Polo driver Johan Kristoffersson.

Hansen Sr told Autosport he was "very positive" about the championship's electric revamp, but believes the cars have the potential to "be quite [a lot] faster than we are" with more mileage to optimise mapping and some software improvements. This will be subject to talks with the FIA to ensure that the driver still predominantly has control and that teams aren't granted so much freedom that those with the best funding dominate.

Hansen believes the new cars can be the fastest ever

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Depending on the circuit and conditions, Hansen believes the cars are already "very close or even on 100%" of their potential in some cases, "but sometimes perhaps we are on 85%".

"What we've started with is very good," he said. "Now we just need to work and take it more forward. I think if we get a little more [performance], for sure these are the fastest cars that ever will be at the moment on a rallycross track. I'm very positive we started like we did. But it has more potential, so we look forward to get that out of the cars."

STEVE JONES

East Surrey College (#57) and Oxford Brookes University (#77) in action at Cadwell

STUDENT MOTORSPORT CHALLENGE TARGETS MORE ENTRIES

The organiser of the Student Motorsport Challenge is targeting a doubling of entry numbers next year and is also working on plans for a second series.

The Challenge sits within the British Racing and Sports Car Club's CityCar Cup contest and enables college and university teams to compete against each other in Citroen C1s, Peugeot 107s and Toyota Aygos. Educators can either convert the cars themselves, buy a ready-to-race machine or partner with a driver who already has a car and run it for them. The concept was launched last year and began this season, with 10 teams competing so far. Student Motorsport founder JP Latham said this was an "incredible achievement".

"I set out to start something that was going to make motorsport more sustainable, accessible and inclusive for colleges and universities," explained Latham. "The short-term goal is to double the size of the grid to have 20 teams – and the interest has been tremendous."

He is also developing a more advanced contest, which he says will "suit the designing, developing and analysing requirements of their courses".

STEPHEN LICKORISH

EXTREME E LAUNCHES RACING FOR ALL SCHEME

Electric off-road series Extreme E has launched a new initiative intended to create opportunities to gain hands-on experience. Called Racing for All, the "action-based programme" is designed to tackle "the substantial barriers of opportunity and bias that exist throughout the motorsport talent pipeline".

Individuals with less than one year's professional motorsport experience will be able to join XE teams as a sixth crew member – outfits are currently capped at five engineers or mechanics – with the teams responsible for the selection and integration of their desired candidates. Females and people from minority ethnic or lower socio-economic backgrounds are encouraged to apply.

Lewis Hamilton, who co-owns the X44 team and launched the Hamilton Commission whose findings informed the initiative, welcomed it as a programme that "will be creating genuine opportunities for the next generation".

S BLOXHAM/MOTORSPORT IMAGES

TOMPILSTON.COM

WAE REVEALS 'TURNKEY' EV PLATFORM FOR HYPERCARS

Williams Advanced Engineering has launched a new platform designed to assist brands building high-performance electric hypercars.

Revealed earlier this month at the Low Carbon Vehicle Show, the 'EVR' platform offers what the supplier of Formula E's first-gen battery calls a "complete turnkey solution" that allows startups and OEMs to reduce development costs and shortcut their path to getting a product on the market. It also boasts "maximum design flexibility", coming embedded within a lightweight composite chassis.

Powered by an 85kWh battery that produces peak power of 1650kW, the EVR is reportedly capable of accelerating from 0-100km/h (62mph) in less than two seconds, up to a maximum speed exceeding 248mph with a vehicle mass less than 1800kg. It supports all-wheel and rear-wheel-drive vehicle configurations, can be charged in under 20 minutes and has a range of 279 miles.

WAE has targeted delivery of a first EVR-based prototype within 12 months and a first production vehicle in 24 months. An EVR-H fuel cell variant is also being developed.

IN BRIEF

ARIEL

COSWORTH POWERS EV

Cosworth has partnered with Ariel Motor Company to build a new road-legal electric car, called HIPERCAR, which is eyeing lap records currently held by combustion vehicles. Powered by batteries developed at Delta Cosworth, the HIPERCAR was unveiled earlier this month. It is still in development, but power figures of around 1200hp are reported. Its 150-mile range can be extended by fitting Cosworth's Catalytic Generator.

NEW HQ FOR WOLF RACING

Italian sportscar manufacturer Wolf Racing Cars, which owns the rights to the name of the 1970s Formula 1 outfit, has announced it is building a new headquarters close to its current base in Brescia. A statement from the company that builds hillclimb and sports-prototype machinery said its investment demonstrated an intention "to provide a 100% Wolf car from the engine to the gearbox to the electronics".

GARAGE 56 NASCAR TESTS

The NASCAR Next Gen-based car that will contest the Le Mans 24 Hours next year as a Garage 56 entrant has begun testing. Mike Rockenfeller, who recently made his Cup debut at Watkins Glen, got behind the wheel of the mule car that is being developed by Chevrolet and Hendrick Motorsports at Road Atlanta.

RLL HIRES F1 MAN SORDO

IndyCar outfit Rahal Letterman Lanigan Racing has hired top Formula 1 engineer Stefano Sordo as its new technical director. He spent six years with McLaren as its head and director of vehicle performance, and previously worked as Red Bull's head of aerodynamic performance. Team boss Bobby Rahal said Sordo "will bring to us a perspective that will raise our game".

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DRIVING CHANGE

LUCAS DI GRASSI

Di Grassi favours set-up changes based on data rather than hunches

HOW ENGINEERS CAN GET THE BEST OUT OF DRIVERS

An engineer's primary role is to help a driver go faster. There are no easy shortcuts, but there are plenty of pitfalls to avoid

When new engineers arrive into motorsport, it's understandable that they want to make a good impression. And one way of doing that is to work well with a driver. Of course, it takes time to understand how to work with a new engineer and how the communication process is, because it's different with every driver. Some will say 'it's understeering a little bit' – or 'too much', or 'not enough'. How much is this? What kind of changes are needed?

All driver personalities are different, too. Some are very direct, and others are very political, never saying what they really think. So clearly there's no easy solution for how engineers should work with drivers. However, there are some misconceptions that young engineers can avoid.

One of the first lessons to remember is that motorsport is a team game. A lot of motorsport engineers are very smart, but a good team culture always beats one smart person. Just like a football team that doesn't have the star players but works very well together will 90% of the time beat a group of stars out for themselves. While it can be tempting for young engineers to show initiative and take on more than their remit, it's important that there is some degree of separation between the different roles so enough attention is being devoted to each and that the responsibility for certain tasks doesn't fall between the cracks. Take responsibility for your own area, make decisions, stick to them and move forward. Sometimes you make mistakes, but collecting information to explain these and avoid repeating them is very valuable.

Taking responsibility can result in some difficult conversations and lead to disagreements – especially when the driver and the engineer are both very direct personalities. When I first joined Venturi, my engineer and I quickly found that 90% of the time we would agree, but there was another 10% where he had a reason to do things one way and I wanted to do it how I'd done it successfully with Audi. We got to a middle ground, but it took time and friction.

> "Trying to make your way without upsetting anybody isn't going to fix problems"

Conflict sometimes can be necessary and isn't something to be afraid of, so long as there's willingness to compromise. Trying to make your way without upsetting anybody and not saying the truth won't fix problems. There are many ways to move forward, but there's rarely an easy answer.

To really improve performance, the most effective way is just to say what is wrong – especially if it's something the driver is doing! There are a lot of egos in motorsport, so if you feed back that 'OK, the suspension is wrong', the guy who designed the suspension might take it personally, but if you are consistent then people will understand that you mean what you say.

Something I always find helpful is when an engineer comes to me with a change in mind and can support their view in the data. That's something I always ask for. Especially if it's an important decision, I like to go into the detail of why we're doing that. If it's borne out in the data, I'll be the first one to support the change. But if there's no data to support it, I'm not going to be convinced by a hunch. Taking bias out of the equation and exchanging that for data and objective reality is most important.

That doesn't mean that everything has to follow conventional theory, though. That's one lesson that all young engineers who are still gaining experience have to understand.

At first, graduates are often eager to put into practice the theory they've learned. But there are sometimes scenarios that don't match expectations; the optimum solution on a lap time simulation model isn't always as useful as an average solution that fits different scenarios. Desire to apply theory is totally understandable, but it won't always correlate to performance on the track.

In my experience, the best engineers and people generally you encounter in work are the ones that consistently say the truth. If you follow the data, tell the driver what you think, can be flexible and understand what the driver needs, I believe you can't go too far wrong. That's the approach I favour. ■

Di Grassi believes it is important for engineers to be honest with drivers

RETURN OF A MOTORSPORT BEHEMOTH

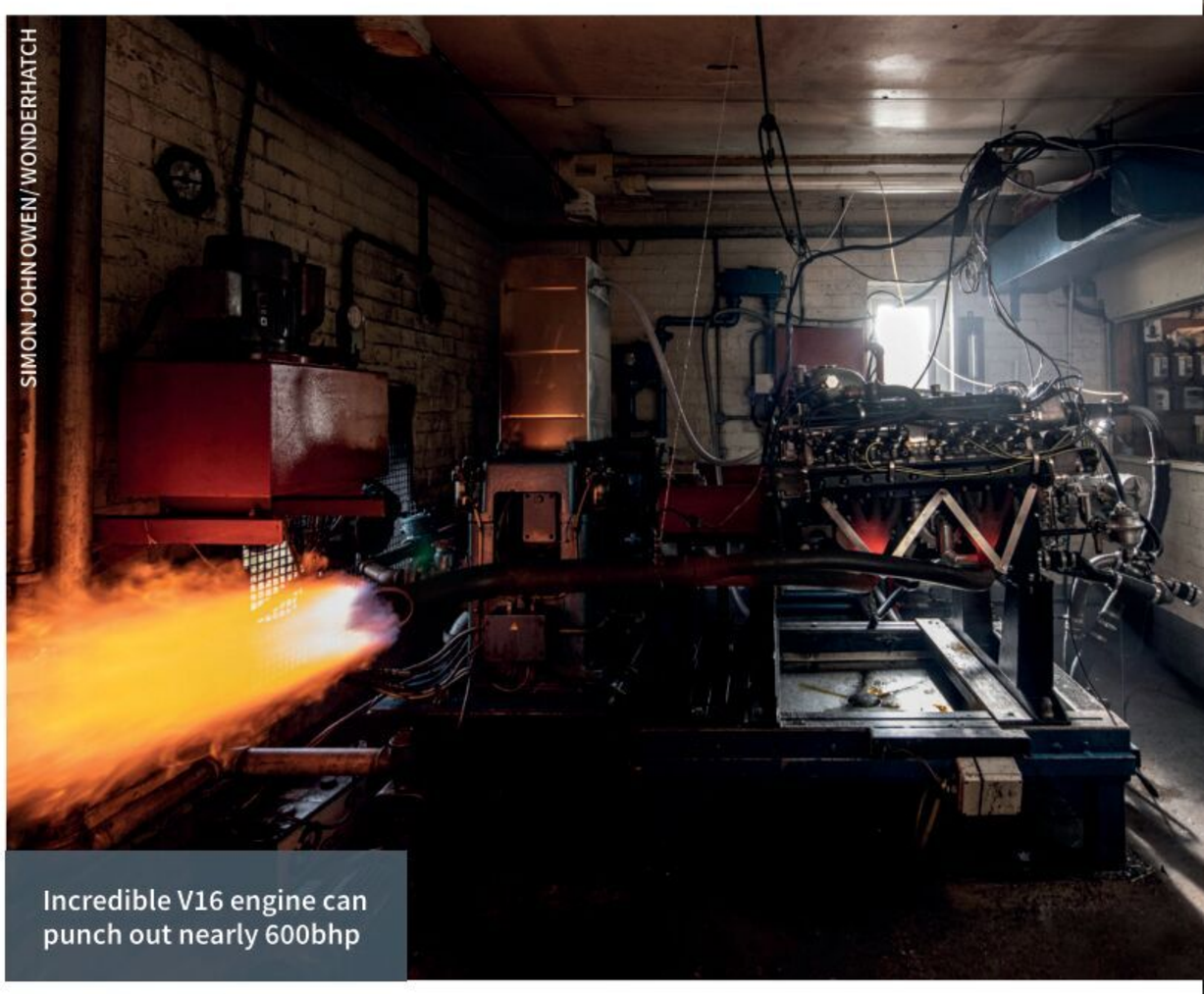
The first of three new BRM V16s is bringing the greatest-sounding engine to a new audience – and back to the race track

BY KEVIN TURNER

PHOTOGRAPHY BRM AND motorsport IMAGES

"We were approached by the Owen family because John remembered as a lad the three BRM V16s on the grid at Goodwood," says ace historic preparer and former BRM mechanic Rick Hall. "No one was running the original ones because they were very tired, very old and had not had a lot of money spent on them for many years. His dream was to hear three V16s at Goodwood and race."

The final part of that dream should become a reality this weekend when Hall's son Rob contests the Goodwood Trophy for grand prix and Voiturette racers from either side of the Second World War in BRM V16 chassis IV, the first of three new cars. It will be the first race for a car only completed last year, but the idea has been to stay as close as possible to the originals and show what the much-maligned but also romantically remembered machine can really do.


SIMON JOHN OWEN/WONDERHATCH

Incredible V16 engine can punch out nearly 600bhp

TOO MANY PROBLEMS

A glorious failure or technical folly. Depending on how charitable the commentator, those two summaries were often used to describe the BRM Type 15, or V16 as it is better known.

Famously, British Racing Motors arrived with big national enthusiasm shortly after the Second World War, became a laughing stock, rose to win both the Formula 1 drivers' and constructors' world titles in 1962, and then had a rollercoaster ride in the late 1960s and early 1970s before finally closing its doors.

Designer Peter Berthon's 135-degree V16 Mk1, BRM's first car aimed at providing an all-British challenger to take on Italian might in GP racing, had a troubled life that is often used to summarise some of the team's early strife. Although the project was started in 1947, problems in getting materials during post-war austerity and organising the many suppliers and partners from the British engineering industry caused huge delays. The car didn't run in public until December 1949 and, under intense pressure, was forced into its competition debut before it was ready. The result was an embarrassing disaster when the back axle output shaft failed and left the car stranded as French ace Raymond Sommer let in the clutch at the start of the 1950 BRDC International Trophy at Silverstone. Pennies were thrown at the car in disgust.

Part of the problem was the complexity of the 1.5-litre, two-stage supercharged engine, capable of producing well in excess of 500bhp (on some occasions more like 600bhp), significantly more than any of its rivals and a remarkable figure from such a small engine. When it worked. With 584 individual parts in the supercharger alone, there was a lot that could go wrong, and having well-made parts to exact specifications was essential. Think watch engineering.

"On the broad basis of the more cylinders the more power, Peter had set out originally with a 12-cylinder conception and ended with a 16, each cylinder smaller than that of an Austin Seven," explained Raymond Mays in *BRM*, written with Peter Roberts. But the team led by Mays, the originator of the project following his pre-war ERA (English Racing Automobiles) success with Berthon, never seemed to have enough time or money to get on top of the car. At least, not in time for it to achieve its goal of world domination.

"The original budget was too low," wrote motorsport historian and BRM expert Doug Nye in Autosport in 1976. "The planners had not allowed for anything going wrong. When it did go bad, there was no time to recover before the next disaster. From the word go, the ambitious team management were fighting a losing battle. They were always one step behind."

When Alfa Romeo withdrew from F1 at the end of 1951 — Ferrari had finally proved that the legendary 158/159 needed replacing — and BRM still seemed incapable of consistent and reliable entries, the world championship was switched to F2 regulations. BRM had no interest in developing a two-litre unsupercharged car, so continued with the V16 in non-championship Formula 1 and Libre events, largely in the United Kingdom.

SIMON JOHN OWEN/WONDERHATCH

Original 1949 body buck has helped inspire the next project, chassis V

FINALLY PROVING THE CONCEPT

After the Silverstone debacle in 1950, Reg Parnell had won two short races at Goodwood — the Woodcote Cup and the Goodwood Trophy — but things had not improved much in 1951. Parnell scored the V16's only world championship points in the 1951 British GP, five laps behind the winning Ferrari of Jose Froilan Gonzalez. And then gearbox issues forced the team's withdrawal from the Italian GP.

Problems and developments continued throughout 1952, with Juan Manuel Fangio and Gonzalez joining the driver strength. In September, Gonzalez led a BRM 1-2-3 in the Goodwood Trophy, but it was too late. With many of its supporters gone (including from the BRM Association itself) and the world championship switching to F2, the Board of BRM Ltd recommended the sale of the company, only British buyers considered. Its future hung in the balance but Sir Alfred Owen, head of the Rubery Owen Group that was one of BRM's first supporters, stepped in. His backing, with Mays and Berthon kept on and engineer Tony Rudd becoming an ever-more important figure, gave the project a much-needed boost.

Reliability was improved and in May 1953 came the non-championship Albi GP. At Albi, where separate heats for F1 and F2 cars then produced a combined grid for the main event, BRM had a rare opportunity because Ferrari entered a 375 for Alberto Ascari, then on his way to a world title double. Giuseppe Farina was also present in the Ferrari-based Thin Wall Special (a project started ▶

Rick Hall burns some rubber at Shelsley before making the climb (below)

SIMON JOHN OWEN/WONDERHATCH

THE SOUND OF INSPIRATION

The V16 powered the first BRM. And it was also the only BRM engine that didn't win a world championship grand prix (albeit the H16 won in the back of a Lotus) so it could be regarded somewhat as unfinished business. But there was another reason the Owen family decided the Type 15 needed to be a key part of the BRM celebration story.

"Going through my grandfather's papers, we found Car Development Committee minutes that said the plan was to build six Mk1 V16s," says Paul Owen. "They built three, then the regulations changed, so they didn't build the other three."

With John Owen wanting to see, hear and share the remarkable V16, discussions moved swiftly. "The only truly original Mk1 V16 is owned by Beaulieu and is considered by Beaulieu to be too old and too valuable to be driven in earnest," says Paul.

"Part of the reawakening project is to tell the story, introduce it to a new audience and go racing. We thought what better way to do that than build another one? It's a truly spectacular sound that can hopefully inspire the next generation of engineers and bring back memories for those who heard it in period.

"The plan was always for it to be raced. It's a sound we wanted others to hear."

There was an enthusiastic reception for the car at the Shelsley Walsh Classic Nostalgia meeting, and Owen has an open mind about which other events the car could attend after the Goodwood Revival. "Since Shelsley Walsh we've had various approaches from venues," he says. "It does put bums on seats – it always did.

"We don't want to overuse it – once or twice a year it'll go out in anger. We want to tell the story and introduce it to new audiences, so we don't want to always be preaching to the choir. A V16, for example, has never been to the States and it's not got to Europe much either. Our plans are pretty fluid at the moment, but we want to do things that stimulate, things that people find interesting – that's all part of the DNA of BRM."

> "We want to do things that stimulate, things that people find interesting"

by former BRM supporter Tony Vandervell following frustration with the V16), so all three world champions were present, with the three fastest F1 cars in the world going head to head.

Fangio beat Ascari to pole by 2.9 seconds for their heat and was ahead of his rival when the Ferrari failed. Farina also dropped out, leaving Fangio to lead a BRM 1-2-5 and make himself favourite for the final. Sadly, the BRM's power and new-found reliability outstripped the rubber technology and all three cars hit tyre trouble, Ken Wharton suffering a major crash and Gonzalez salvaging second behind Louis Rosier's Ferrari. But for Mays the point had been made.

"This race meant the earth to us," he wrote. "The BRM had redeemed itself. It was one of the great moments of my life as I listened to the cheering. Albi was the turning point."

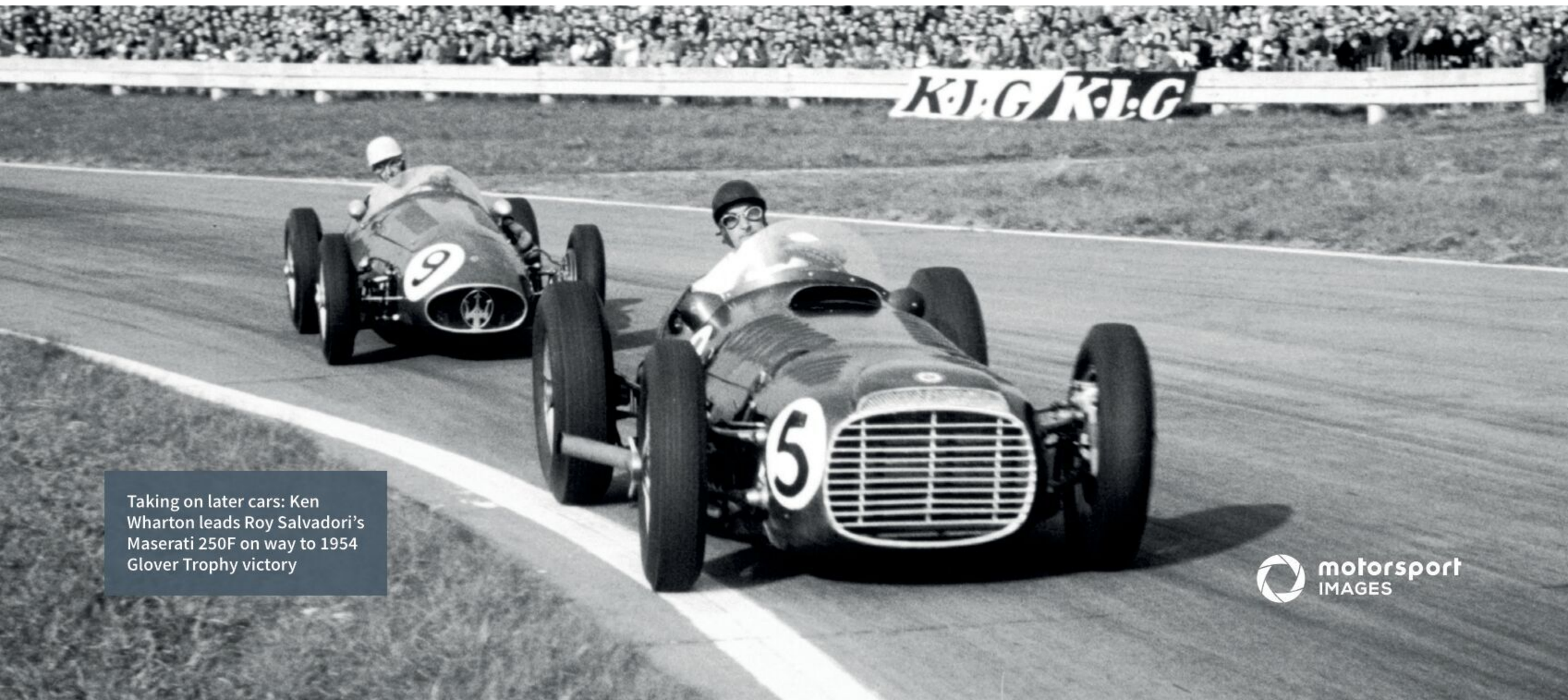
The V16, later in lighter, short-wheelbase Mk2 P30 form, would go on winning into 1955 and proved itself capable of taking on the new generation of 2.5-litre F1 cars. But its successes were mainly in minor events and the car is largely remembered for its world championship failure rather than its eventual refinement. The point is that BRM *did* get it working, eventually...

RETURN OF A SLUMBERING MONSTER

BRM V16s have made occasional outings at events over the years, but the complexity (and expense) that made them so tricky in the 1950s generally precluded serious running. As nearly 1.5 million views of the V16 YouTube clip on Nick Mason's *Into the Red* shows, though, interest in perhaps the greatest-sounding machine humanity has yet produced remains high. And the Owen family now wants to share the joy, which is where we came in.

"The first option was to sort the originals but nobody wanted to spend the money on those," continues Rick Hall. "So John Owen said, 'Can we make one?'" The discussions moved swiftly in 2019, and soon Hall & Hall found itself building chassis IV.

There was only ever going to be one partner for the endeavour. Former BRM man Hall was always involved in the discussion and his operation was the obvious team for the job. "We certainly didn't put it to tender," concedes Paul Owen, grandson of Sir Alfred. "The plans were developed in conjunction with Rick and we talked about building another one, how much it would cost, what we would do with it, and in the end we just got on with it."



Taking on later cars: Ken Wharton leads Roy Salvadori's Maserati 250F on way to 1954 Glover Trophy victory

Hall had also been involved in an earlier project to build three new V16 engines for Tom Wheatcroft, only for the initiative to be shelved when the Donington Park impresario died in 2009. But Hall was able to do a deal to pick the project up again – including the blocks, heads and a few internals that had been produced – for the new Owen venture.

With six cars originally laid down and only three Mk1s built (see left), the momentum for chassis IV was growing. The discovery of the original 1949 body buck, which has inspired the current construction of chassis V to the specification of the first, smooth-bodied V16 prototype, added to the excitement.

The COVID-19 pandemic in early 2020 had a mixed impact. "Because there was no racing we could get stuck in to the V16," says Hall. "But some of the material we wanted, it was like history repeating itself after the war when materials were short! People were shut down and out of stock."

But work continued. Hall & Hall and BRM have 22,000 original BRM drawings and manufactured much of the parts in-house, though some specialists – including Laranca Engineering with supercharger internals and Ark Racing manufacturing various parts– also contributed.

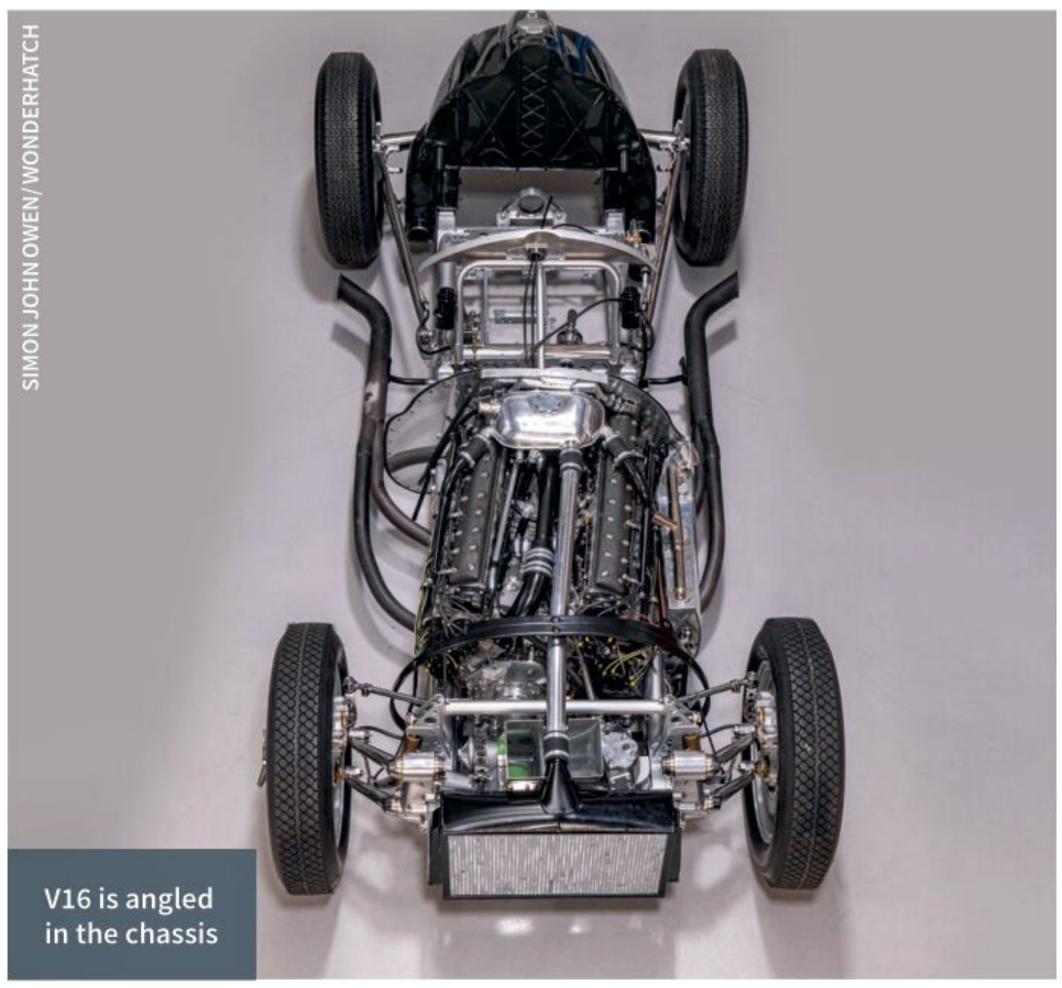
The car was ready in 2021 and did appear at September's Goodwood Revival, demonstrated alongside four original V16s. The originals were beautifully made and the new car follows that tradition. Given the car's unreliable reputation, you could be forgiven for thinking that Hall's journey was only just beginning, but things have gone pretty smoothly so far.

"A lot of the problems we'd experienced running the other cars was to do with the magnetos – heat soak because they were so old, and they had laminated armatures and the pins that held them together used to work loose," he explains. "We're still on the original bodies of the magnetos, but we've changed the armatures to a Magneti type, which were fitted in the Magneti Marelli magnetos, and Ferraris and Maseratis in period. We've also changed the coil – it looks the same but we've got more windings and we've changed some of the points and condensers.

"We could have gone to electronic engine management, but we thought it's got to be as per the original. It's the fourth chassis that would have been made."

JAMIE BUFTON PHOTOGRAPHY

Simon (third left) and Paul Owen (orange) have brought BRM figures together in 2022


SIMON JOHN OWEN/WONDERHATCH

V16 is angled in the chassis

Another issue in period was the aluminium seal for the cylinder heads to the block, so Hall & Hall went to a later BRM P25-period spec with Cooper rings. Stainless steel has been used instead of alloy, so the block and head now fit together better. Other minor glitches, such as an oil leak and a selector fork issue, have been easily solved. Like the originals, the car suffered from brake knock-off but valves have been put in to eliminate that.

"If we're going to race the car we need it to be reliable," says Hall. "So far it's been good. The supercharger is very complex but it's mainly behaved itself. It's learning the wrinkles of assembly really."

SHOWING THE CAR'S POTENTIAL

Ahead of Rob Hall's Goodwood outing, Rick entertained spectators with some lively runs at Shelsley Walsh's Classic Nostalgia meeting in July. Unsurprisingly, he's impressed. "It's awesome, it's the power," enthuses Hall, who has driven all the original and two reconstruction Mk1s and the two Mk2s. "It feels fantastic, really lively and powerful. It's a pleasure to drive.

"Everything is more precise, the gearchange is a little slicker than the originals, and the supercharger feels more progressive. With Tom's Mk2 when you were going through a bend it was either on the supercharger or off it – when it came in it went from 150bhp to about 500bhp! This is more progressive and powerful all the way through."

Testing at Silverstone revealed that the BRM needed higher gearing, and Hall Sr estimates that the V16 will be able to hit 160mph down the Lavant Straight at Goodwood. In period, on a fast track the cars were capable of 190-200mph.

Somewhat ironically, the main opposition this weekend is likely to be the quickest of the ERAs rather than the foreign opposition Mays had been so keen to beat, but it will still be fascinating to see (and hear) how the car goes. As well as the impressive engine, the V16 was the first GP car to race with disc brakes, though handling and traction were always issues.

"It should have the power, but it's got a long wheelbase and you can't adjust much," explains Hall Jr. "The other cars have been modified over the years, but we don't think we'll disgrace ourselves and be at the back.

"I don't want to repeat history. It wasn't ready to go. I want it to be right." ■

Ex-Surtees/ Bandini/ Rodriguez Ferrari 1512 is a star attraction

10 REASONS TO ENJOY A WEEKEND OF ESCAPISM

Away from this world of bad news, the Goodwood Revival Meeting is the greatest show in historic motorsport, and it's back in front of a full house!

BY MARCUS PYE

1 PRANCING HORSES HONOUR FERRARI'S RACING LEGACY

Goodwood's celebration of Enzo Ferrari's marque's 75th anniversary, which started at the Festival of Speed in July, brings a priceless gathering of cars to the motor circuit each day, respecting its contemporary 1966 timeline. From a trio of 166 MM Barchettas to a 330 P3/412P, the cavalcade leaves no gaps. Some are racing, including Lawrence Auriana's sensational ex-John Surtees/ Lorenzo Bandini/Pedro Rodriguez 1965 1512 '0008', star among the single-seaters, in which 2018 victor Joe Colasacco returns to the Glover Trophy fray.

From the Louwman Museum in Holland comes the 1952 375 'Grant Piston Ring Special' – Johnnie Parsons' Indianapolis 500 contender – to join a 500/625A, Lancia-Ferrari D50A, 375MM, 500 Mondial, 750 Monzas and Testa Rossas. There are front-engined 246 Dinos in Formula 1 and sportscar forms from the early 1960s, and one of the magnificently recreated 156 sharknoses represents Phil Hill's 1961 world championship triumph. Plus groups of 250 GT Berlinettas (SWBs) – including Stirling Moss's 1960 and 1961 Tourist Trophy winners, and GTOs, 275 GTBs, 275 P, 365 P and a sublime 250 LM corralled from private collections.

GARY HAWKINS

2 FREDDIE MARCH MEMORIAL TROPHY FRIDAY FUN

The race card opens on Friday evening, remembering the Nine Hour endurance races that graced the circuit in 1952, 1953 and 1955. Despite Jaguar's pomp over 24 hours at Le Mans, David Brown's reliable Aston Martins trounced the quicker C-types in all three years. Peter Collins/Pat Griffith (DB3), Reg Parnell/Eric Thompson and Peter Walker/Dennis Poore (DB3Ss) were Aston's heroes.

Seventy years after the *News of the World* International opened this rich inter-marque era, the old rivalry is renewed, albeit with different odds. Wolfgang Friedrichs and Matthias and Carlos Sielecki (DB3Ss) face several C-types, of which Sam Hancock/Fred Wakeman's is likely to be quickest, and a particularly strong Ferrari challenge. F1 veteran Karun Chandhok and Gary Pearson – the driver with more Goodwood historic era wins than any other – look strong in a 750 Monza, while David Franklin/Emanuele Pirro share a 225S like those which finished second and third in 1952.

Porsche racer Simona de Silvestro shares Katarina Kyvalova's Cooper-Jaguar in a pack replete Austin-Healey 100Ss, Frazer Nash Le Mans Replicas, Cooper Bobtails and period race veteran Malcolm Harrison's Cooper-Bristol.

J BLOXHAM/MOTORSPORT IMAGES

BRM

3 BRM V16 IS GOODWOOD TROPHY STAR

Experiencing the spectacle of a BRM V16 being fired up and raced hard by a fine driver is unmissable to petrolheads. Rob Hall will exercise the first of three new Type 15s, built by family firm Hall & Hall in Saturday's Goodwood Trophy race. Commissioned by John Owen, son of BRM's industrialist owner Sir Alfred, chassis IV with its shrieking 12,000rpm centrifugally supercharged 1500cc engine will set cameras clicking 60 years after Graham Hill won BRM's F1 world championship title in rear-engined 1500cc V8 chassis.

Before founding British Racing Motors, Raymond Mays and Peter Berthon's English Racing Automobiles occupied them in the 1930s. Eight A-D type ERAs provide the BRM's principal opposition, alongside a shapely Maserati 4CLT/48, a sister to Reg Parnell's period winner, and stablemates from Modena. US-domiciled Briton Mark Gillies will be out to extend his run of success in Dick Skipworth's ERA R3A, but faces old friend David Morris in R11B, raced here by John Bolster in 1948. The pack also embraces Alta 61 IS, Alfa Romeo 308, Bugatti T72, Ferrari 212 and Talbot Lago T26C.

GARY HAWKINS/MOTORSPORT IMAGES

4 JIMMIE JOHNSON JOINS ST MARY'S THRONG

Seven-time NASCAR Cup champion turned IndyCar racer Jimmie Johnson's participation in the St Mary's Trophy is a massive coup for the tin-top contest. With 83 victories on his slate and five successive stock car titles from 2006-10, the Californian is amply qualified to max Gregor Fisken's Ford Galaxie 500 in Saturday's pro leg of the two-parter.

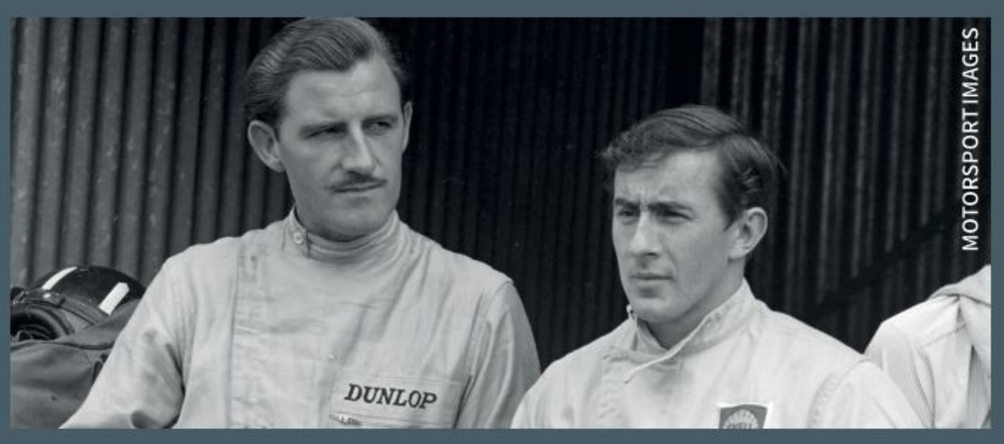
Le Mans winners David Brabham, 'Dindo' Capello, Romain Dumas, Marcel Fassler, Brendon Hartley, Andre Lotterer, Neel Jani and Tom Kristensen are among his rivals. Tiff Needell, Anthony Reid, Darren Turner, Nic Minassian, Karun Chandhok, Esteban Gutierrez, Frank Stippler, Stoffel Vandoorne and Jean-Eric Vergne are in, with touring car champions Matt Neal, Gordon Shedden, Andrew Jordan, Steve Soper, Andy Priaulx and Rob Huff, rally man Craig Breen and Goodwood hillclimb record holder Max Chilton.

Alfa Romeo GTAs, Lotus Cortinas, BMW TiSAs and Mini Cooper Ss galore, plus Jaguar Mk2s and a Plymouth Barracuda, colour the action. Hot combos include Bill Shepherd/Dumas and Ian Dalglish (Galaxies), Alex Furiani/Stippler (Alfa), Andy Wolfe/Soper and Mike/Andy Jordan (Cortinas) and Nick Swift/Hartley and Bill Sollis/Alex Brundle (Minis).

5 JACKIE STEWART LEADS GRAHAM HILL TRIBUTE

Graham Hill was born in February 1929, seven months before Stirling Moss, but his racing career – underpinned by graft rather than privilege – started later, in the early 1950s. Hill first raced at Goodwood at Easter 1957, but made his F1 debut in 1958, with Colin Chapman's Team Lotus. His career blossomed with BRM in 1962, when a fourth GP victory in South Africa's finale – having finished every round – wrested the world championship from Lotus's Jim Clark, who had won thrice but retired while leading the decider.

Back with Lotus, Hill won a second crown in 1968, but his career statistics speak for themselves. Fourteen GP victories, five at Monaco, in an F1 career that endured until 1975, plus wins in the 1966 Indianapolis 500 (Lola) and the 1972 Le Mans 24 Hours (Matra-Simca, with Henri Pescarolo) at his 10th attempt, four Tasman races and non-championship F1 events is a remarkable CV. Son Damon (the 1996 world champion), grandson Josh and BRM team-mate Sir Jackie Stewart lead a throng demonstrating a fleet of cars showcasing his wonderful career on all three days.



MOTORSPORT IMAGES

6 HUFF RETURNS TO HIS MGB RACING ROOTS

Rob Huff cut his post-karting racing teeth in father Peter's MGB, and went on to win the British Formula Vauxhall championship in 2000. Having switched to touring cars he became world champion driving a Chevrolet Cruze in 2012, but has often returned to compete in MGs for fun between professional gigs. Now 42, the current Zengo Motorsport driver still loves Bs and starts favourite as a full field of Britain's most accessible 1960s sportscars contests Sunday's Lavant Cup race in the model's 60th anniversary year.

Opposition will surely come from ex-Porsche driver Mark Cole in former Chevron B8 racer Tim Greenhill's car and versatile historic specialist Jason Minshaw in Mark Hope's. Chris Ryan saddles the late Barry Sidery-Smith's Le Mans MGB in a pack that contains Mark Ashworth, Formula Fordster Josh Barnett and Goodwood commentator Ed Foster. Of interest is the special-bodied WSM coupe derivative of Tony Wilson-Spratt whose father Douglas (1921-2011) built this and others based on frogeye Sprites at Delta Garages in Leighton Buzzard.

GARY HAWKINS

J BLOXHAM/MOTORSPORT IMAGES

7 F1 CARS GUN FOR GLOVER TROPHY GOLD

Despite the prevailing 1500cc regulations, V8-engined F1 cars lapped Goodwood quickest in period, Scottish stars Jackie Stewart (BRM P261) and Jim Clark (Lotus-Climax 25) sharing the ultimate record at 1m20.4s (107.46mph) on Easter Monday 1965. Clark won the circuit's final F1 race from Stewart's team-mate Graham Hill.

Both types of car are engaged in Saturday's Glover Trophy showpiece, although Swiss Philipp Buhofer (BRM) is outnumbered by the monocoque Lotuses driven by seven-time winner Andy Middlehurst and 2016 interloper Nick Fennell. A quartet of tubeframe Lotus 24s are in the mix too, piloted by wet 2017 victor Martin Stretton, John Milicevic (BRM powered), Andrew Beaumont and Stephan Jobstl (Climax).

American legend Dan Gurney raced his Brabham-Climax BT7 at Goodwood in 1965. Compatriot James King, among his greatest fans, earned Glover gold in it in 2008 and is back. Nobody overlooks Joe Colasacco in the flat-12 Ferrari, which Lorenzo Bandini screamed to fourth in the '65 Italian GP. Cooper's period fortunes were waning, but Chris Wilson drives Bruce McLaren's 1962 Monaco-winning T60 V8, its only 1500cc GP victor.

J BLOXHAM/MOTORSPORT IMAGES

8 ON YOUR MARQUES, IT'S JUNIOR SHOWTIME

No grid boasts more variety than Historic Formula Junior, curated by Duncan Rabagliati and his daughter Sarah Mitrike. This year's Chichester Cup field – showcasing rear-engined drum-braked cars on FJHRA's three-crop rota – spans 20 chassis marques, far more than raced together in the category's 1958-63 contemporary heyday.

Current UK champion Nic Carlton-Smith (Kieft) had his only hiccup of the season at Classic Silverstone, but it's difficult to see anybody matching past masters Andrew Hibberd (Lotus 20), Peter de la Roche (Lola Mk3), Italian-American Joe Colasacco (RAM 4), Stuart Roach (Alexis Mk3) and Chris Drake (Elva 300). However, Australian Marty Bullock has been flying in his Wren in Europe of late.

Other Aussie cars come from Elfin, Jolus and Lynx. Italy is represented by the RAM, De Tomaso and Wainer, all with Fiat power, while the Swebe Cooper was made by Swedish baker Bengt Peterson, Ronnie's father, Crispian Besley, Stuart Tizzard (ex-Timmy Mayer) and period FJ racer Jeremy Bouckley are in Cooper T56s. James Hicks saddles the last of three Caravelles built by his late father Bob.

9 REMEMBERING FIRST WINNER AT GOODWOOD

RAF Westhampnett's post-war history as a celebrated racing circuit dates back to the inaugural meeting of 18 September 1948, when the current Duke of Richmond & Gordon's racer and aviator grandfather Freddie March presided. Sunday thus marks the venue's 74th birthday and it is possible that a very small number of people in the sell-out audience were among the estimated 15,000 who witnessed 19-year-old Stirling Moss winning the 500cc race at the birth of a superlative career.

The first race (pictured) was won by Paul de Ferranti Pycroft in his Pycroft Jaguar, a rebodied SS100. A gentleman with a penchant for the unusual, Pycroft had competed in the 1930s, when he was in his 20s, in a Riley and finished eighth in the 1939 Paris-Nice rally in the S100. Having developed the car for racing, he subsequently contested the 1954 Mille Miglia in a Lancia Appia, hillclimbed an Abarth-Simca 2000GT and in the 1970s raced a Costin Amigo and a de Tomaso Pantera from his Anglesey home.

MOTORSPORT IMAGES

10 A DECADE OF SETTRINGTON CUP PEDAL POWER

Debuted at the 2012 Revival Meeting, the Settrington Cup pedal car race has introduced new generations of racing dynasties to glorious Goodwood for a decade now. Roared on from the packed grandstands opposite the pits, and the roof terrace, the pint-sized pedallers urge their Austin J40s from a double-barrelled Le Mans start up the chicaned straight to the chequered flag. More than 60 youngsters come under starters' orders this year.

Built in a government-funded Austin Junior Car Factory at Bargoed, South Wales, the J40s were made by retrained disabled miners using metal offcuts from Austin's Longbridge works. More than 32,000 rolled off the assembly line from 1949-71, and the robust cars have become ever more collectable as racers. Indeed, their preparation has become big business, spawning dedicated preparation shops. Watch the super-competitive parents at trackside. Some apparently take the races more seriously than their offspring, but don't be surprised if many of the frontrunners have been in training since last September!

J BLOXHAM/MOTORSPORT IMAGES

TIMETABLE (Note: no Race 13 as usual, for reasons of superstition)

FRIDAY 16 SEPTEMBER	
0730	Gates open
0925	Official practice
1115	Austin 7 track parade
1140	Official practice
1240	Graham Hill tribute
1310	Official practice
1600	Ferrari tribute
1700	Official practice
1825	**R1: Freddie March Memorial Trophy (1940s/early 1950s sportscars)**
SATURDAY 17 SEPTEMBER	
0730	Gates open
0925	Official practice
1010	**R2: Madgwick Cup (under two-litre sportscars 1948-55)**
1055	Settrington Cup part 1
1120	**R3: Barry Sheene Memorial Trophy part 1**
1235	Graham Hill tribute
1310	**R4: Glover Trophy (1.5-litre GP cars 1961-65)**
1345	Official practice: RAC TT Celebration
1430	Ferrari tribute
1505	**R5: St Mary's Trophy part 1 (1960-66 touring cars)**
1555	**R6: Goodwood Trophy (GP cars and Voiturettes)**
1640	**R7: Whitsun Trophy (1960-66 sports-prototypes)**
1725	**R8: Stirling Moss Memorial Trophy (pre-1963 GTs)**
SUNDAY 18 SEPTEMBER	
0730	Gates open
0900	Austin 7 track parade
0940	**R9: Chichester Cup (rear-engined, drum-braked Formula Junior)**
1030	**R10: Richmond & Gordon Trophies (GP cars 1952-60)**
1120	Settrington Cup part 2
1140	Graham Hill tribute
1215	**R11: Barry Sheene Memorial Trophy part 2**
1335	Ferrari tribute
1430	**R12: RAC TT Celebration (1960-64 GTs)**
1555	**R14: Lavant Cup (MGBs)**
1645	**R15: Sussex Trophy (1955-60 sportscars)**
1735	**R16: St Mary's Trophy part 2 (1960-66 touring cars)**

DTM/ITR/REINHARDT

Klaus Hoffmann's ex-Jo Winkelhock Opel Astra prepares to lead the DTM Classic field at the Norising

THE BEST OF BOTH WORLDS

The DTM pivoted away from its touring car heritage by moving to GT3 cars in 2021, but it's still indulging its history with familiar machines appearing on the support bill

BY JAMES NEWBOLD

Whenever historic Formula 1 machinery takes to the track on a grand prix weekend, there's always the risk of the contemporary machines being upstaged. Think of the attention garnered by Fernando Alonso's demo runs in his 2005 title-winning Renault R25 at the 2020 Abu Dhabi Grand Prix, or Ralf Schumacher lapping his 2003 Williams FW25 at comparable pace in the crowd-pleasing Legends Parade segment at the Austrian Grand Prix. Masters Historic Formula 1 has supported F1 in the past, but it's unlikely to do so on a regular basis.

That's not the case with the DTM, which promotes its own historic championship as a fixture on its support bill. The new-for-2022 DTM Classic Cup permits machines that raced in the DTM between 1984 and 2007 (including its period known as the International Touring Car Championship with Class 1 machines, and the STW Super Touring series that filled the gaps between the ITC's 1996 collapse and the DTM's 2000 rebirth). European Touring Car Championship cars from the same era, as well as Super Touring machines that raced in the British Touring Car Championship, are also eligible.

It's a broad church that underscores the continued significance of touring car racing to series organiser ITR, even after switching its platform to GT3. As DTM Classic director Peter Oberndorfer explains, ITR views its historic offering as an important draw to increase footfall, with 10 races across five rounds, the most recent at Spa last weekend.

"Gerhard Berger [ITR boss] realised that these old cars are really attracting the spectators, a lot of them grew up with

Oberndorfer (right), with ITR boss Berger, heads up DTM Classic

HOCHZWEI/THOMASSUER

them and looked at them as kids from the fence or on TV," says Oberndorfer, who finished fifth in the 1985 DTM. "Even young guys are interested in these cars. Maybe they're more approachable technically, so we decided that this will be a fixed column of the DTM platform."

DTM Classic joins the GT4-based DTM Trophy for young drivers, DTM Esports and the planned DTM Electric series, which is anticipated for 2024, as staples of the line-up. Oberndorfer also organises the Classic DRM Cup for cars from the pre-DTM era after what he terms a "quite successful" one-off for those machines at the Red Bull Ring in 2021. It has a limited schedule this year of three rounds.

Oberndorfer describes Classic DRM as a "market niche" with no other platform specifically for these cars. At its Imola premiere, both races were won by the ex-Klaus Ludwig 1981 DRM title-winning Zakspeed Capri owned and run by Mucke Motorsport, with father and son pair Peter and Stefan taking turns to drive, while overseeing the family team's single-car DTM and two-car DTM Trophy efforts. At the Nurburgring, Stefan campaigned a BMW M1 Procar and prevailed after a race-long dogfight with his father in failing light, a spectacular treat for those who had stayed after the fog delay. Mucke Sr won race two unopposed.

"After different experiences with other series, we decided to do it ourselves," continues Oberndorfer, who took over the rival Tourenwagen Classic series "in a very friendly way" to realise ITR's

Scheer's ex-Gravett Sierra never raced in DTM, but is welcomed into the mix

mission after DTM hosted Tourenwagen Legenden races in 2021: "Who would be better than the platform DTM to promote old DTM cars?"

Fittingly, DTM Classic's first race at the Lausitzring was won by a name instantly familiar to aficionados. After early leader Stefan Mucke's Opel Calibra pulled off, Yannick Trautwein led Kris Nissen in a 1-2 for the newly formed Schnitzer Classic team. Owned by Trautwein's father Stefan, it recently acquired competition cars, spare parts, equipment and naming rights from the fabled Schnitzer BMW team that folded in 2020. Another Mucke-run entry, Ronny Scheer's ex-Robb Gravett 1990 BTCC title-winning Ford Sierra RS500 Cosworth, won race two.

From 16 cars at the Lausitzring, the DTM Classic Cup grid had expanded to 24 entrants at the Norisring, with a host of star names including Hans-Joachim Stuck and Walter Rohrl joining the grid, Stuck taking a podium in the second race in his 1992 Audi.

Bruno Spengler, the 2012 DTM champion with Schnitzer and five times a winner at the Norisring in the DTM, was also among the star names on the grid racing for BMW Classic, fittingly reunited with his chief mechanic from his title-winning year. Driving Johnny Cecotto's 1998 STW title-winning BMW 320i he says was "for me like Christmas".

"These cars were awesome," the BMW works driver gushes. "This DTM Classic is something amazing because there are so many different cars, car variations. You have more recent cars that are a bit quicker than mine is, but to see all these ▶

GRUPPE C GMBH

Stefan Mucke recognises DTM Classic's potential

Mucke practised in Guido Momm's ex-Gerd Ruch Mustang at the Norisring

DTM/ITR/REINHARDT

different cars and this history, it's amazing to be part of."

Spengler joined Stuck and Audi 200 driver Anthon Werner on the race two podium. Gerhard Fuller's ex-Uwe Alzen Opel Vectra STW had won the opener, profiting from a loose bonnet on Klaus Hoffmann's 2000 Norisring-winning

Stefan and father Peter raced the family's Zakspeed Capri in Imola DRM Cup meeting

HOCH ZWEI / JUERGEN TAP

ex-Jo Winkelhock Opel Astra.

Stefan Mucke too was present in an ex-Gerd Ruch Ford Mustang from 1994, but withdrew with rear axle issues. But it was out again in Guido Momm's hands at the Nurburgring Old Timer meeting that also formed part of the championship. There, 1993 DTM runner-up Roland Asch took pole for race one in an example of the Mercedes 190E he raced that year, before mechanical problems promoted Scheer's Sierra. BMW driver Steffen Lykke Gregersen won race two.

Oberndorfer believes that admitting cars that aren't strictly DTM machines is the right call, "because they're real touring cars, they're quite close to some of the DTM cars", and since parts availability "with real DTM cars is not that easy".

It's a point former Aston Martin and Ford GT ace Mucke agrees with, citing the rare opportunity for fans to compare the performance of cars built to different rulesets in the same race. "Spectators can see all periods of motorsport history and I think it's important to have that," he says. "Lots of people remember these cars from when they were young and now they're a little bit older and have kids, they want to show them how the cars were at the time."

"We have very good feedback," reports Oberndorfer. "[Customers] are convinced they can have fun here. And the old pros that never stopped driving, they like to drive these old cars and come to races still the same as 30 years before.

"Also I think the DTM platform is attracting a lot of guys, so you have all the action here from the DTM, you have good tracks like the Norisring, like we had in Imola. We had a great field there [24 cars], so I think it was something of a market gap for the old DRM cars."

Oberndorfer recognises a growing momentum behind DTM Classic Cup and is determined to retain an emphasis on quality in the field – "We're not taking Porsches or sportscars, we're taking touring cars" – while sustaining the wave of interest. He credits the English-language coverage on live streaming portal DTM Grid and broadcast TV agreements as "the best marketing for our series", which benefits from piggybacking onto the DTM's existing TV infrastructure.

"People see the field, they see the racing and of course the people taking part are telling their friends, 'We're happy, it's a nice atmosphere'," he says. "If you have a good product, it speaks for itself. I tried to see it from a perspective of the participants, the drivers and teams, and to do everything [to ensure] that they have a good time here."

Mucke adds: "We can see a big potential there. A lot of customers want to go there because it's a great platform, it's professional motorsport, it's a great

HOCH ZWEI / JUERGEN TAP

THE CHALLENGES OF RUNNING A CLASS 1 TIN-TOP

Technology advances mean that cars competing in 'historic' racing are increasingly complicated. Perhaps the best example of this is the 2011 Peugeot 90X run by Bob Berridge's BBM Sport in Masters Endurance Legends. But for another, consider the four-wheel-drive Class 1 beasts of the International Touring Car Championship. So extreme that manufacturers deemed them too expensive, causing the series' implosion in 1996, they haven't become any less so in the intervening years as they have become eligible for historic competition.

The 1995 ex-Keke Rosberg Opel Calibra currently being restored by Mucke Motorsport Classic was given an outing in the opening DTM Classic race of the year at Lausitzring with Stefan Mucke at the wheel, and led until a head gasket failed. As Mucke puts it, even in period when parts were being frequently serviced and replenished by factory teams, its finishing record wasn't exemplary…

"The Calibra is a very difficult car with all the hydraulics and electronics, there is a lot of development necessary to get it reliable," he says. "There's a big job list!"

The process of rebuilding the engine and gearbox and acquiring spares for components to be lifed properly – in some cases every 500km – is "ongoing, where you can't say from now to next week you can get all these parts".

"It's a lot of parts which has to be made," explains Mucke. "There is some old stock on the market, but you never know what you get."

Until a sufficient pool of spares is built up, the Calibra won't race either in customer hands or again with Mucke behind the wheel. Its complexity makes it inaccessible for gentleman drivers to properly understand and optimise without a professional to set it up.

"We understand it better and most of the systems are running now, but it's still a way [to go]," Mucke says. "I'm sure next year will be the year for the car. We will get there, but it's a complicated car."

But, he says, the response it got at Lausitzring was worth the travails. "The feedback from the spectators was great," adds Mucke. "Many people just came to the track to see that car…"

> "The old pros that never stopped driving like to drive these old cars still the same as 30 years before"

environment, lots of spectators. Of course, when you have a car that's not cheap to run – the Calibra for example, you need a lot of team personnel and mileage of the engine is not much – then you want to spend that money not in a no-name series, you want to show your car in a good environment. The DTM platform will be important for us."

Even if it's unlikely, Mucke believes, that active DTM drivers will pull double duty "because the concentration should be always on DTM", the attraction will always be there for the likes of Spengler at a loose end on weekends. Oberndorfer is keen for car owners to bring a high-profile secondary driver to share with at events.

"I've done a lot of professional racing in the last 20 years but driving these historic cars is sometimes much more challenging than driving a GT3 car where you have a lot of electronics and ABS," Mucke says. "Driving a historic car from the 1990s isn't easy, but it's great fun and that's what drivers want." ■

Main: University of Wolverhampton Racing competes in the Praga Cup. Inset: Ciceley Motorsport has taken on Bolton students

JEP

OLIVER READ

COURSES AND OPPORTUNITIES IN MOTORSPORT

For those looking to get involved in the motorsport industry, there are various routes in

BY MARCUS SIMMONS

1 UNIVERSITY DEGREES

Time was when an education in motorsport consisted of helping your mate load his Formula Ford Dulon MP15 onto a trailer, then got left with the oily toolbox, stopwatch and pitboard while he pulled on his Les Leston overalls, open-face helmet and goggles and took to the track.

As with the whole of the motorsport industry, everything is now optimised to the nth degree and there are a host of courses available up and down the UK offering formal qualifications to those who want to forge a path in the sport.

One of the best-known seats of motorsport learning is Cranfield University, which has been prominent for its research in the sport since the 1970s and is home to the FIA-approved Cranfield Impact Centre and Cranfield Motorsport Simulation. Here, you can earn an MSc in advanced motorsport engineering. Among its alumni is Adrian Reynard, who studied at the university in the 1970s and now holds an honorary doctorate, and is a visiting professor to the campus. The university holds strong links with Motorsport UK, the British Racing Drivers' Club and the Motorsport Industry Association.

Masters degrees in motorsport engineering, in these cases in MEng form, are also available at Oxford Brookes University and the University of Central Lancashire. Both these establishments offer BEng courses too, and this is a qualification you can pick up from several other universities such as Huddersfield, Derby, Staffordshire, Wales Trinity St David and Wolverhampton. The last-named is active in the sport, with University of Wolverhampton Racing competing in the Praga Cup, in which it has proven a race winner in 2022 with Stefano Leaney and Shane Kelly.

Motorsport technology BSc courses are available too, with Bolton and Hertfordshire among the establishments offering these. Bolton's National Centre for Motorsport Engineering has become highly respected under the directorship of Mark Busfield, a former team manager at RML in touring cars and managing director of the CRS Racing/McLaren GT squad. Local BTCC team Ciceley Motorsport has taken on several of the establishment's students to get a foothold in the sport.

So there's a lot out there, and there are several places – such as thecompleteuniversityguide.co.uk – where you can get a more information. Just as well, because your mate's traded in his Dulon for a Ray GR18 with advanced data-logging, and he needs your set-up help for a session on the simulator…

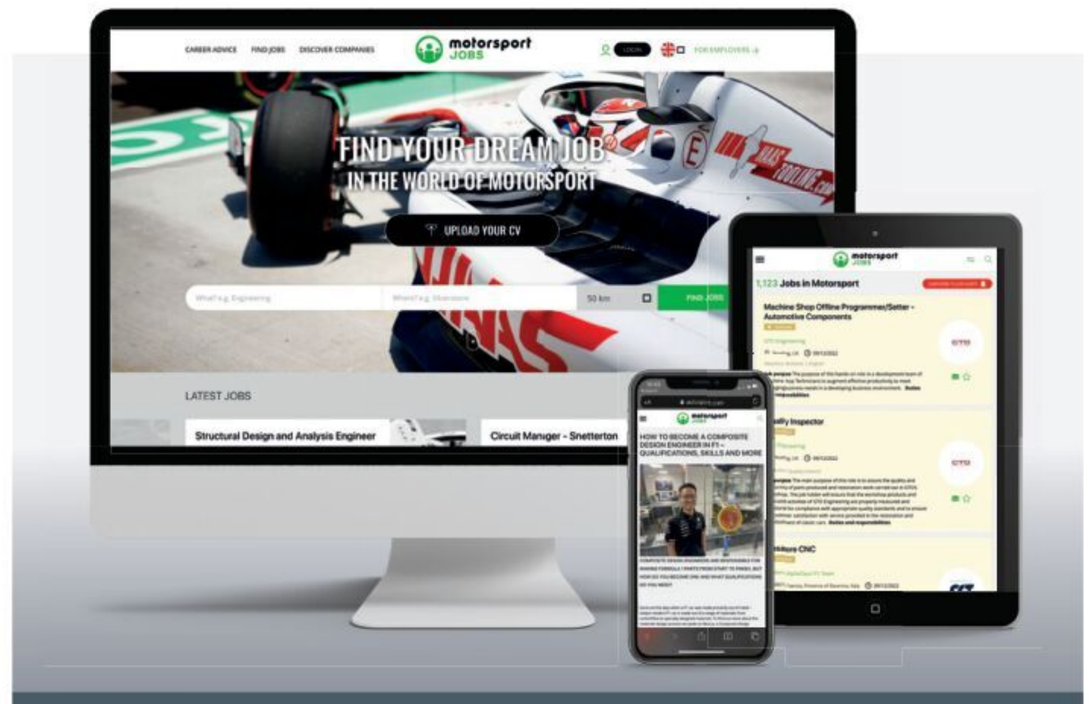
2 COLLEGE COURSES

Want your alma mater to actually be based at Silverstone? Well, you should try checking out the National College for Motorsport (part of the Bedford College Group), which offers motorsport technical training housed in purpose-built facilities at the 'Home of British Motor Racing'.

Among the tutors here are a number of figures who have traversed the breadth of the sport from Indycars to the BTCC to Formula Ford, while respected veteran Formula Renault/F4 engineer Mark Godwin liaises with potential employers to provide a route for students into apprenticeships.

The MIA (Motorsport Industry Association) School of Race Engineering offers four-day courses twice per year, with tutors drawn from the ranks of leading engineers in Formula 1, WEC, BTCC, Formula E, the WRC and IndyCar. It's a pretty impressive rollcall, including Alpine F1 man Ciaron Pilbeam, Aston Martin F1 aerodynamicist Martin Owen, ex-Ferrari/Sauber aero chief Willem Toet, Jaguar FE engineers Phil Ingram and Josep Roca, Audi engine legend Ulrich Baretzky, the FIA's Dominic Harlow and Will Phillips, and Jake Hill's BTCC technician Craig Porley.

Check out also a host of courses available on motorsportengineer.net



3 JOBS LISTINGS

We're biased because it's part of our company, but keeping your eye on motorsportjobs.com/en is a must.

Here, you can set personalised job alerts for specific keywords, such as 'educational courses', 'internships', 'graduate and trainee roles' and 'industrial placements'. You can also set the location and even choose the specific company, and thereby receive notifications as soon as any matching opportunities are added.

Formula 1 teams usually begin to promote their industrial placements through September and October, and every F1 industrial placement in the UK will be featured on Motorsport Jobs. Set alerts on Motorsport Jobs for 'industrial placements', then as soon as any are added you'll get an email notification with the link to apply.

There are also handy hints with career advice to help you on your way to landing your dream role in motorsport.

IMECHE FORMULA STUDENT

4 FORMULA STUDENT

Motorsport is all about competition, right? So Formula Student, first run in 1998, has to float the boat of anyone with a hankering to study to be a motorsport engineer.

The Silverstone-based competition falls under the umbrella of the Institution of Mechanical Engineers and under the patronage of F1 technical giant Ross Brawn, and teams are tasked with building a single-seater prototype for autocross or sprint competition. It must be low-cost, easy to maintain and reliable, with acceleration, braking and handling among the key points. A series of static and dynamic events are carried out to judge the winner.

Among the graduates from Formula Student is Mercedes F1 engineering chief Andrew Shovlin, much-quoted within these pages! "It helped me a great deal – I learned an awful lot," he recalls.

Apart from Brawn, ambassadors of Formula Student include David Brabham, Paddy Lowe, Mike Gascoyne, Willem Toet, Leena Gade and James Allison.

BINGHAM/MOTORSPORT IMAGES

5 MEET THE TRADE AT ASI

Autosport International, the annual extravaganza scheduled to return to the Birmingham NEC in January 2023, offers students the ideal opportunity to explore the engineering sector of not only the sport but the automotive sectors as they prepare for their next steps in education.

As part of ASI, the Autosport Engineering Show provides a chance to meet industry professionals on the trade and public days at the NEC, among hundreds of exhibits.

The University of Wolverhampton Racing Team is one to take advantage of the captive audience at ASI, and has exhibited at the show since 2015.

"Over the course of the four days, our Praga R1 will be on display at the show," says Professor Amar Aggoun, head of the School of Engineering, Computing and Mathematical Sciences. "Guests can visit our stand and see how we engineer the car and chat with current students working towards a motorsport-related degree. Some of our alumni have gone on to work for the likes of Mercedes AMG and Williams F1 teams, Bentley, Aston Martin and many others."

Motorsport Network director of events Ben Whibley adds: "Students can register for a trade ticket for Thursday or Friday and network with people within the motorsport and automotive industry. We're delighted by the wealth of options for young people to get involved in racing, and are proud to be supporting the industry at Autosport International 2023."

Mastering Race Strategy Optimisation

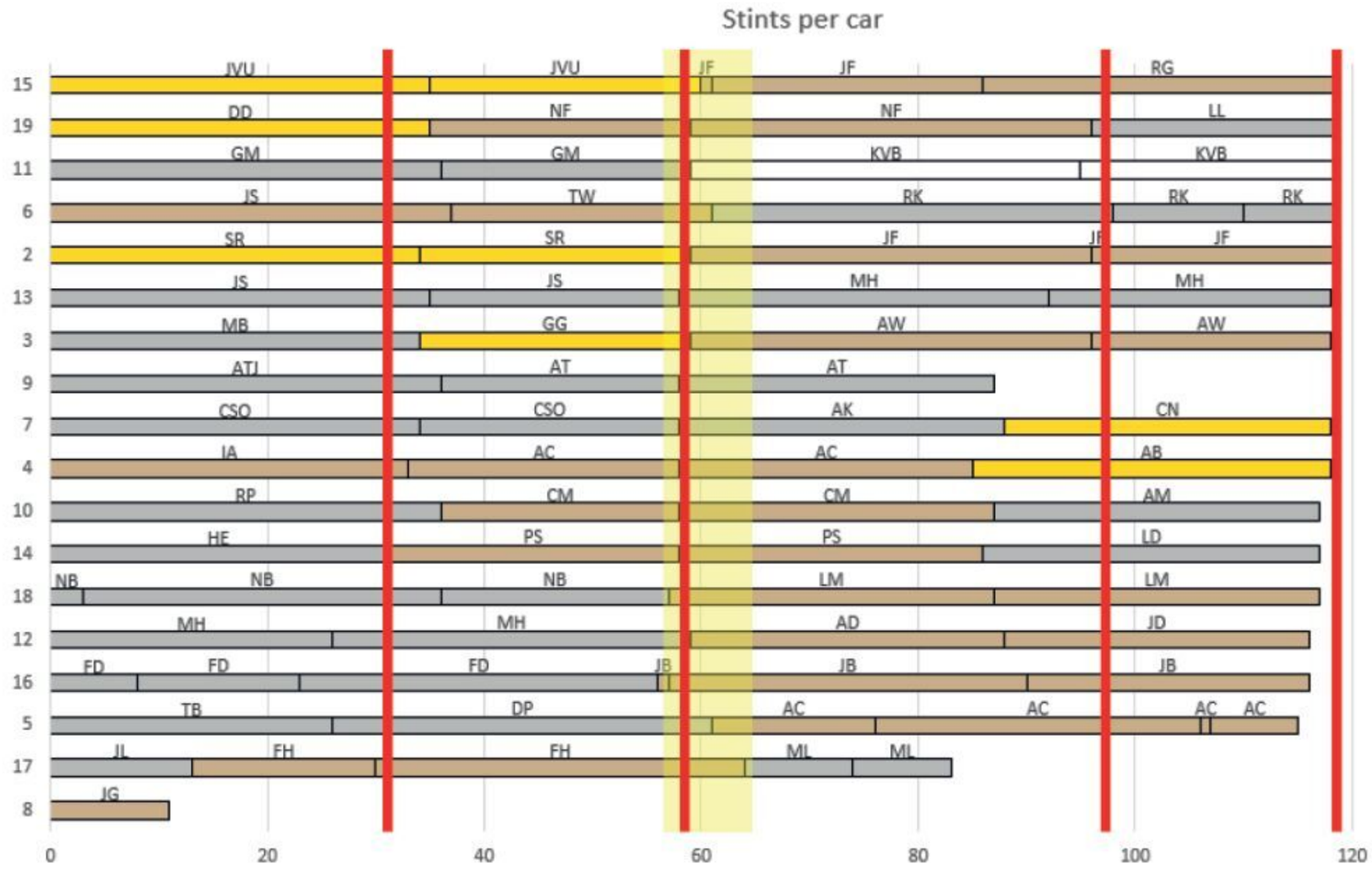
With a long-standing love of motorsport, Hughes Raisin decided to study on the National Motorsport Academy's MSc Advanced Motorsport Engineering degree to help him convert his existing knowledge and skills and make them relevant to motorsport.

With a background in software and diagnostics, Hughes was specifically interested in the data acquisition and analysis side of motorsport. The degree culminates in a final project where students can focus on an area of particular interest and Hughes was even given the opportunity to apply his project to real-world racing by European Le Mans Series LMP3 team RLR MSport.

The aim of Hughes's final project was to develop software that would allow race engineers to create the best strategy for an upcoming race. The strategy would need to be instantly adaptable due to factors occurring in-race, such as changeable weather, a full-course yellow or a safety car. Data was mined from various sources to allow Hughes to then simulate an endurance race based on an equation.

At the end of each lap, the state of the car (driver, fuel, tyres) was updated. Pitstops were decided by a decision-tree based algorithm that took into account tyre wear, fuel consumption and minimum driver time.

"I believe that, to win races, you need three things: good drivers, a good team and a good strategy," Hughes explains. "While working on this tool, I started implementing the main parameters everyone knows: fuel, tyres… But, I realised there was a missing one, and another one, and I missed a link between some of them. So I continue developing my tool, going further into what makes a race strategy. This is also what's fascinating to me: the number of different parameters and the fact the race engineer has to get everything clear in his/her mind to make a split-second decision that could be a winning move. And I think this tool could be a way to support the race engineer achieving this."



Hughes believes one of the advantages of studying the NMA's flexible course is that students have the ability to focus on the topics that are of most interest to them and, given the wide-ranging nature of the modules, it means there is a "huge" choice for the final project. Hughes has used his software to create an optimised strategy for a race already run – the 2018 opener at Paul Ricard. When comparing his strategy to the actual race (see chart above, where the red lines show the strategy predicted by Hughes's tool, compared with cars in the actual race), he found that the software provided highly accurate results. The software was then used by Hughes, working with RLR MSport at both Monza and Barcelona in support of the team's existing race optimisation strategy.

The scope for the software has engineers excited about the prospect of being able to adapt a strategy mid-race. Motorsport is full of unforeseen events and this software would allow engineers to quickly modify tactics if there is a racing incident or change in track conditions.

"Hughes has done a great job with this project – an easy-to-use tool which is of use to a strategy/race engineer for pre-race planning, race decision making and post-race analysis," says Hughes's tutor Tim Mullis. "From the beginning, this was to be a live project, and having Hughes involved in the ELMS races has provided him with the environment to understand first hand the requirements of the race engineer. This is much more than just a 'university project', it is a useful tool which Hughes intends to develop further even though his NMA studies have finished."

The feedback on the software has been very encouraging. And, although there's still some work to do, Hughes is hopeful that it can be used in a real-world scenario as a default method of race strategy optimisation.

Educating the Motorsport Engineers of the Future

The National Motorsport Academy's online motorsport engineering degrees are studied by existing motorsport engineers looking to upskill and by those looking to migrate their engineering or mechanical skills from other industries. The online earn-as-you-learn model means that students can start their course at any time and study where and when they like. This level of flexibility has made the BSc Motorsport Engineering and MSc Advanced Motorsport Engineering degrees highly popular with engineers from Formula 1, World Endurance Championship, World Rally Championship and British GT.

The courses are taught with an emphasis on gaining hands-on experience, whether in a grassroots series, or top-flight championships. It's this experience, combined with industry-leading course content, which encourages students – like Hughes – to come up with ground-breaking solutions to some of the industry's oldest problems.

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HOW TO BE AN ACE ENGINEER

Richard Langford shares his tips from a half-century of servicing and building engines

BY JAMES NEWBOLD

Langford heads up LPE, which specialises in engines for historic competition and road use

After over 50 years of working with racing engines, there are few better qualified than Richard 'Dick' Langford when it comes to the art of extracting horsepower.

Langford began his career at Cosworth as the world-beating DFV was beginning to flex its muscles, and serviced much of the Formula 1 grid during the 1970s, before he and Alan Peck co-founded their own engine-building company Langford & Peck that became a successful DFV tuner in Formula 3000 and supplied several top F1 teams. Today known as Langford Performance Engineering after Peck stepped back in 1993 — "Everybody used to call us L&P, so we kept the initials," he says — it focuses on historic road and race engines, and builds new HB V8 engines alongside restoration work. A Coventry Climax V8 for a Lotus 25 has recently been finished.

Langford leads a staff of seven at LPE's Wellingborough HQ, not far from the Northampton base where he and Peck spent a combined 25 years in Cosworth's engine shop building F1's most famous power unit. Langford, his passion fired by attending the 1955 British Grand Prix at Aintree, had joined in 1967 after finishing an apprenticeship with Ford and became an engine specialist "by chance really". Huge demand for the DFV required working "exceptional" hours, but he was happy to do so "because we were making history". Cosworth founders Keith Duckworth and Mike Costin were "excellent bosses", he adds, who were "quite supportive in us going on our own" in 1980.

Long-standing relationships with DFV customers proved key in L&P's early days as it built and tested engines for F1 squads including Tyrrell. It truly gained a foothold on the international scene when partnering Mike Earle's Onyx F3000 team, its "inside-out" DFV knowledge helping Emanuele Pirro to fight for the inaugural 1985 title before Stefano Modena's 1987 triumph.

The partners made a commitment that "we didn't want to spread ourselves [too thinly]" by increasing the customer base. To that end, L&P kept a deliberately small machine shop, deeming quality akin to Cosworth's machine shop a top priority. "We decided that success was for us more [important] than profit," Langford explains.

Its involvement with Onyx continued when it stepped up to F1 for 1989, with Cosworth DFR customers Ligier, Tyrrell and Coloni also serviced by L&P as it grew to a peak of 28 staffers. Cosworth then gave it responsibility for its HB V8 customer teams from 1991, counting Jordan, Lotus, Minardi and Footwork among them.

Meanwhile its F3000 commitment continued, as Madgwick Motorsport racked up four British titles between 1990 and 1994. F1 required much more prep work, an element Langford says he "most enjoyed". As he puts it: "You couldn't ask for a grand prix to be postponed because you hadn't got an engine ready."

LPE's most recent contemporary F1 involvement was with the 3.0-litre VJ-M V10 used by Minardi in 2001, and even linked up again with Earle for a British Touring Car Championship programme under the Arena Motorsport banner, working on a Honda Civic Type-R that Tom Chilton took to four wins in 2005.

Involvement in the historic field was a natural next step and Langford, who owns the rights to the HB engine, relishes the variety involved, combining his past specialisms with the unique challenge of restoring "derelict" units back to peak working order. "I always knew what I wanted to do was be involved in motorsport," he says. "So I was lucky." ■

Modena won 1987 F3000 title with L&P-tuned DFV

TOP TIPS

FOR ENGINEERS FROM RICHARD LANGFORD

- You need to really *look* at components so that when you come up against problems, you understood what's going on. Then you can form an opinion and do the necessary analysis.
- Really think about your decisions, but do make one. Don't waffle around and waste time being indecisive.
- Forward plan, cater for eventualities that you probably haven't thought of. Then go back and look again!

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