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Max puts Perez in his place

Verstappen unstoppable from ninth as Red Bull is streets ahead in Miami



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The true scale of the challenge facing Perez in the title race

That's more like the Max Verstappen we expected in 2023. After Sergio Perez twice managed to hold on out front as Verstappen came through the pack in Jeddah and Baku, the reigning double world champion proved unstoppable in Miami last weekend.

On this occasion it was a minor Verstappen error that put him back on the grid, but he more than made up for that in the race. His pace while making the hard tyre last was particularly impressive.

Jake Boxall-Legge outlines the key events of the race in our in-depth report (page 14), while Alex Kalinauckas argues that the events of Miami show just what Perez is up against this year (p12).

Formula 1 will be heading to Monaco at the end of the month, but Formula E got there first (p30). In another charge from ninth, Nick Cassidy catapulted himself into the points lead. It is now apparent that Porsche will need to respond to the pacesetting Jaguar powertrain.

Also needing to find a big improvement quickly is Peugeot. The French manufacturer has a chequered history at Le Mans and, in the latest of our centenary celebration pieces on the 24 Hours, Gary Watkins points out the similarities and differences between the current 9x8 programme and previous challenges with the 905 and 908 (p46).

It's 60 years today (Thursday) since a revolution in British tin-top racing began. To mark the arrival of American V8 power, we look back to 1963 (p52) and organise a special track test (p54).



Kevin Turner

Kevin Turner
Chief Editor

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NEXT WEEK
18 MAY

What next for McLaren?

The state of play at the iconic team, plus Rally Portugal and free supplement



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GM evaluates F1 entry as engine supplier

FORMULA 1

General Motors is evaluating a Formula 1 entry as a powertrain manufacturer from as early as 2027 in a move that would help it go one up on bitter US automotive rival Ford.

With the existing grand prix teams reluctant to welcome an 11th squad that would dilute their prize fund, prospective entrants have been urged to bring value to the championship. Ex-F1 driver Michael Andretti has attempted this by tempting GM to throw its support behind his 2026 team proposal submitted to the FIA. GM sub-marque Cadillac would partner the operation.

But GM doesn't just want exposure via a commercial relationship. It desires a technical presence in the top flight, and company motorsport executive director Eric Warren reckons this could come in the form of an engine programme that would be ready in time for 2027.

This would seemingly surpass Ford, which will have exposure in the series from 2026 as a major financial backer of the fledgling Red Bull Powertrains operation. Apart from shared data concerning engine hybridisation, its technical input is expected to be minimal. This independence offered to Red Bull is precisely why the Blue Oval was chosen as a partner after previous talks with interventionalist Porsche fell through.

GM's former NASCAR programme chief Warren told Autosport: "GM is motivated to be involved in the car and design, the whole process. It's not white-labelling an engine. The interaction between Cadillac and Andretti will be throughout the vehicle.

"Looking beyond 2026, our view is that we want to get racing and making sure we are competitive and then look in 2026 at what makes the most sense. We can't by rule [enter an engine for 2026] because the power unit manufacturers have been declared, so we would be looking at the earliest in 2027. It is something we are looking at. We are looking at power units. Andretti has a power unit partner with which we can get racing quickly."

Should the "strong application" submitted by Andretti-Cadillac result in an entry, the squad will run a customer engine in its first



season. Following the creation of a long-term partnership between Andretti and Wayne Taylor Racing, the team now has solid ties to Honda, a listed 2026 power unit manufacturer, via the Acura brand. But thereafter, GM could enter the frame. Notably, Cadillac already constructs the 5.5-litre naturally aspirated V8 for its LMDh prototype via the GM Performance and Racing Center in Pontiac, Michigan.

Asked if an F1 engine would also be done in-house, Warren said: "I think it is difficult for a manufacturer to say an engine is 100% in-house. They always have technical partners they work with. But I think we have capabilities that would be substantial to that. I think we could do that. Whether we chose to and what elements, has yet to be determined."

The 2026 engine regulations notably ditch the expensive and complex Motor Generator Unit – Heat. This move paved the way for Audi to enter via a majority investment in Sauber. In addition to Andretti, Panthera Team Asia and Hitech GP are the more credible candidates weighing up applying to the FIA.

MATT KEW & GARY WATKINS





McLAREN/MOTORSPORT IMAGES

De Ferran returns to the F1 fold at McLaren

FORMULA 1

McLaren has rehired its former sporting director, 2003 Indianapolis 500 winner Gil de Ferran, as a consultant.

After an overhaul of the Formula 1 team's technical department that led to the ousting of director James Key, the wider leadership structure has been under review. This has prompted team principal Andrea

Stella to recall double Champ Car title winner de Ferran, who worked with the Italian at Woking between 2018 and 2020. In that time, McLaren climbed from ninth to third in the constructors' championship.

Explaining the appointment to Autosport, Stella said: "Gil is essentially a consultant, so non-operational, non-executive, and that's a role as a consultant to myself and to Piers [Thynne,

the newly appointed McLaren Racing chief operating officer]...

"He will add horsepower from a leadership point of view. Gil is not only very knowledgeable about racing but is definitely strong in identifying and supporting talent. He's a great coach, is a quite brilliant strategic thinker, and you can talk to Gil more as an engineer than as a driver, actually. To be honest, I'm not sure how he developed

so much technical knowledge. He is a brilliant person that we want to have alongside.

"We have already proven in the past that this can be a very successful team having Gil on board, like in 2018... It was actually the lowest point in the history of McLaren and in the space of a few months, we set the direction for then being more successful."

MATT KEW

FIA INTRODUCES NEW PROTOCOLS TO STOP BAKU REPEAT

FORMULA 1

The FIA has introduced new protocols to prevent a repeat of the late scare in the recent Azerbaijan Grand Prix when Alpine's Esteban Ocon had to avoid photographers, local marshals and personnel from the governing body in the pits erecting parc ferme conditions.

To avoid disqualification, Ocon sought to make his sole pitstop to ditch his hard tyres on the final lap in Baku. But people were prematurely released into the pits before the race had ended.

As such, from now on, Formula 1 teams must ensure VIP guests and mechanics stay clear of the pitlane until the final car has taken the chequered flag and when they are certain there will be no more pitstops. Failure to do so will result in guilty



teams losing paddock access passes for subsequent events and being dragged in front of the stewards.

After summoning FIA representatives to explain the fiasco, the stewards noted: "We walked through the relevant procedures and protocol with the FIA representatives in detail and required them to take immediate steps to

reconsider these with the relevant stakeholders (including Formula One Management, the teams and the FIA) to ensure that this situation does not occur again. The FIA representatives expressed their regret at what happened and assured us that they would do so in time for the next event."

ADAM COOPER



SUTTON/MOTORSPORT IMAGES

Red Bull denies 'hostage' swap for Mekies

FORMULA 1

Red Bull team principal Christian Horner is clear that any "hostage exchange" between his team and Ferrari to expedite the release of the Italian squad's racing director Laurent Mekies to AlphaTauri will not involve letting go of senior staff at the Milton Keynes operation.

Mekies has agreed to swap Maranello for Faenza to join AlphaTauri as its new team principal in place of 67-year-old Franz Tost, who is stepping down at the end of the season. But no date has been set for Mekies's arrival because he remains under a long-term contract; his release needs to be agreed.

Sources suggest that Ferrari could be

willing to let Mekies go early if it can gain advanced access to some of the Red Bull personnel it has signed but who are currently on gardening leave. It comes amid rumours that Ferrari has been trying to poach more technical staff from its rival.

But Horner has stated that senior Red Bull staff who had been part of the Ferrari rumours had emphasised their total commitment to his team. One name in the mix was technical director Pierre Wache. There has been speculation in the recent past of friction between the Frenchman and his colleagues regarding the share of credit that is given to chief technical officer Adrian Newey. The pre-eminent F1 car designer has recently signed a contract

extension to remain at Red Bull.

While Horner did not dismiss outright the prospect of an agreement between Red Bull and Ferrari over Mekies, he said it would not revolve around top-level personnel. "Will there be a hostage exchange for Laurent Mekies?" said Horner. "Well, we don't have any hostages. In terms of personnel moving to Ferrari, certainly at a senior or medium level, there's nothing planned. Individuals mentioned in connection with Ferrari came to see me last week and mentioned their disbelief in some of these rumours. But it's Formula 1, and that will inevitably happen. But there's no plans for any senior members of our team to be joining Maranello."

JONATHAN NOBLE

Rossi to race BMW in Le Mans 24 Hours support



SRO/TWENTY-ONE CREATION/JULES BENICHOU

ROAD TO LE MANS

Motorcycle racing legend Valentino Rossi will get his first taste of the Circuit de la Sarthe next month as he looks towards fulfilling his ambition to race in the Le Mans 24 Hours. The BMW factory driver will take part in the Road to Le Mans supports on the bill of the French enduro on the Thursday evening and Friday lunchtime

of race week in June.

The seven-time MotoGP champion will drive a BMW M4 GT3 in the two 55-minute races in which GT3 and LMP3 machinery come together, as they do in the Michelin-sponsored Le Mans Cup on the European Le Mans Series undercard. The car will be run by the Belgian factory WRT squad with which he is again racing in this year's GT World Challenge Europe.

The 44-year-old's team-mate will be 13-time Le Mans 24 Hours starter Jerome Policand, 58, who is boss of the ASP Mercedes team against which Rossi competes in GTWCE.

A second WRT BMW is listed on the Road to Le Mans entry released last week for Max Hesse and Tim Whale. A total of 20 GT3s and 38 LMP3s are scheduled to take part.

GARY WATKINS



BRISTOL/VISION SPORT AGENCY

Audi set to quit sportscars

SPORTSCARS

Audi could be on the way out of sportscar racing. Full stop! The German manufacturer axed its return to the Le Mans 24 Hours and World Endurance Championship with a new LMDh prototype early last year, and now it appears that the writing is on the wall for the R8 GT3 racer. Audi appears set to close its customer racing department as its focus shifts to its Formula 1 entry in 2026.

It is understood that the Audi board has issued instructions for the division that masterminds programmes not only with the R8 LMS GT3, but also the GT2 and GT4 versions of the V10-engined sportscar as well as the RS3 LMS TCR touring car, to be wound down. Audi's frontline participation in the GT3 arena, which includes factory support and the loan of drivers from its 14-strong roster, could come to an end with the conclusion of the current campaign.

The programmes run out of Audi Sport headquarters at Neckarsulm had already been hit with budget cuts for last year,

when a second evolution of the generation two R8 was released to customers, and this. The Dakar programme with the RS Q e-tron is set to continue into a third season in 2024, however, and will likely include a full campaign in the World Rally-Raid Championship.

A continuation of the R8 programme is complicated by the end of production of the road-going car late this year or early next. Its successor, due in 2025, is scheduled to be all-electric.

A spokesman for Audi stated that the "further development of customer racing and the Dakar project are currently under discussion". He reaffirmed the marque's factory support of programmes across the Nurburgring 24 Hours, the GT World Challenge Europe, the DTM and TCR World Tour this season.

Should the axe fall on the R8, it would bring to an end a programme that dates back to 2009 and includes the build of more than 300 cars. The victories on its CV include six in the Nurburgring blue-riband enduro and four at the Spa 24 Hours.

SVEN HAIDINGER

DEBUT DELAYED FOR ISOTTA'S NEW HYPERCAR

WEC

The revived Isotta Fraschini marque has set back its proposed debut in the World Endurance Championship with its new Le Mans Hypercar. Rather than racing the Tipo 6 LMH Competizione for the first time at Monza in July, it is now looking to make the series finale at Bahrain in November.

Isotta and partner team Vector Sport have changed their focus to testing through the summer with the car developed by Michelotto Engineering. They are aiming to compete 10-15,000km with the Tipo 6 LMH prior to its homologation and then a race debut on an invitational basis at the Bahrain 8 Hours.

"We want to develop the car properly on the track, because once we homologate the car for racing we freeze the specification," said Isotta motorsport boss Claudio Berro. "We need to race once this year, which will be in Bahrain, but most important is to develop the car in testing. This decision was made together with the FIA and the Automobile Club de l'Ouest."

The second test outing for the Isotta is set for Monza next week when former Audi LMP1 racer Marco Bonanomi will handle driving duties. Further tests at Vallelunga, scene of the car's shakedown last month, and Motorland Aragon have already been scheduled.

GARY WATKINS



ISOTTA FRASCHINI

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Ex-F1 racer Gutierrez joins Glickenhaus for Le Mans

LE MANS 24 HOURS

Former grand prix driver Esteban Gutierrez will race for Glickenhaus at the Le Mans 24 Hours next month. The Mexican and experienced prototype racer Nathanael Berthon have filled the two remaining seats aboard the US entrant's extra Hypercar class car entered for the double-points round of the World Endurance Championship on 10-11 June.

Gutierrez and Berthon will share the #709 Glickenhaus-Pipo 007 with Franck Mailleux. The team regular moves back to the additional entry in which he has been listed since February after driving the team's full-season WEC car at Spa last month, while Ryan Briscoe will return to take up his seat in #708 alongside Romain Dumas and Olivier Pla.

Gutierrez, who remains an ambassador for the Mercedes squad, moves up to the Hypercar ranks after taking his first steps in sportscar racing last season with the Polish Inter Europol LMP2 squad in the WEC and a one-off with Algarve Pro at the Daytona 24 Hours IMSA SportsCar Championship round this year.

Berthon's experience includes making two of his seven Le Mans starts in LMP1 with Rebellion Racing.

"We were looking for quick and experienced guys and those are the kind of driver we've ended up with," said Luca Ciarretti, technical director of the Podium Advanced Technologies organisation that runs the Glickenhaus team. He explained that Berthon has been picked on the recommendation

of Dumas, with whom he drove at Rebellion. "That left us with one seat to fill and Esteban fitted our expectations," added Ciarretti.

Glickenhaus had been in talks with DTM champion and Mercedes factory driver Maximilian Gotz about filling one of the vacancies, but that deal fell over last month. Had the German raced for Glickenhaus, it was planned for him to join Dumas and Pla, with Briscoe moving over to race the other car with Mailleux.

Gutierrez and Berthon were revealed when the full entry list, with three drivers for all 62 cars scheduled to compete in the centenary running of Le Mans, was published last week.

Sportscar legend Jan Magnussen will return to Le Mans after a year away bidding for a 23rd participation – he non-started in 2015 – with Inter Europol. The Dane, a four-time winner at the French enduro in the GT classes with Corvette Racing, will race the second ORECA-Gibson 07 the team is fielding in LMP2 Pro-Am alongside its regular WEC entry with Anders Fjordbach and Mark Kvamme.

Magnussen, 49, raced with fellow Dane Fjordbach when he contested Le Mans with son Kevin in 2021.

Ex-Champ Car driver Jan Heylen has been named in the #16 Proton Competition Porsche 911 RSR alongside Ryan Hardwick, with whom he finished second in the IMSA GTD class last year, and Zach Robichon. The trio are contesting this year's IMSA enduros in GTD with the Wright Motorsports Porsche team.

GARY WATKINS

Fulton returns to join Meeke

WRC

The late Craig Breen's former co-driver James Fulton is returning to action alongside former World Rally Championship event winner Kris Meeke on Rally Portugal this week.

Irishman Fulton teamed up with Breen at M-Sport for the final WRC round in Japan last year ahead of their partial 2023 campaign with Hyundai. They finished second on Rally Sweden before the crash that claimed the life of Breen in testing ahead of last month's WRC round in Croatia. Fulton was unharmed.

Alongside the WRC campaign, Fulton (below) had committed to partnering Breen in the Portuguese Rally Championship, competing for the Team Hyundai Portugal squad in a Rally2 i20 N. This seat has now been filled by five-time WRC rally winner Meeke, who was a team-mate and close friend of Breen's.

Running in a special livery to honour the late Hyundai factory driver, Meeke claimed an emotional victory last month on Rali Terras d'Aboboreira alongside Ola Floene.

Meeke and Fulton will compete in the WRC2 class on this week's world championship event. "It was a very tough moment, but I feel now ready to return," said Fulton. "It wasn't an easy decision, but I know it's what Craig would have wanted. I started this challenge with him, and I feel the best way to honour him is to finish what we started together."

Hyundai has confirmed that Spanish veteran Dani Sordo, with whom Breen was sharing the marque's third WRC entry this season, will be on board for next month's round in Sardinia. Sordo was already confirmed for Portugal before Breen's fatal accident.

TOM HOWARD





ITALIAN GT Sixteen-year-old Mercedes F1 protege Andrea Kimi Antonelli, of whom we raved couple of weeks ago, scored a victory on his GT debut in the opening Italian GT Sprint round at Misano last Saturday. Driving a Mercedes-AMG GT3 run by father Marco's Antonelli Motorsport team, the reigning Italian F4, German F4 and Formula Regional Middle East champion won by 23 seconds, despite serving a 5s pitstop penalty for being a solo driver. Second were Lamborghini pair Edoardo Gubini and Mattia Michelotto, and third were ex-DTM champion Bruno Spengler and Jens Klingmann in a BMW. An additional 15s penalty for winning the first race proved too much for Antonelli to overcome on Sunday, but he still ambushed Klingmann at the final corner for third. **Photo by ACI Sport Italia**

America closes on world event

WRC

Rally USA's demonstration event has been declared a success, with the FIA encouraged by feedback received as it stepped up its bid to join the 2024 World Rally Championship.

The country is a contender to join the WRC schedule for the first time since the Olympus Rally in 1988, with a brand-new event planned in Chattanooga in south-east Tennessee, using gravel roads located in the Cherokee National Forest and around the Ocoee River region in Polk County.

Last month the organisers held a rally demonstration to showcase the discipline and test a couple of proposed stages, ahead of a full candidate rally expected to take place in September, which will determine whether it will join the WRC calendar.

The demonstration included a traditional ceremonial start before seven crews tackled a pair of stages. World Rally Championship 1982 runner-up and FIA WRC safety



delegate Michele Mouton (above) was in attendance to assess the stages.

"We have had very positive feedback from the local authority," said FIA rally director Andrew Wheatley. "I think they have got some work to do but it's great there is this proactive opportunity. The commitment they've made to date is significant and the next step is another big jump. From what we have seen so far I think it could be a really positive addition to the championship."

TOM HOWARD

IN THE HEADLINES

MIAMI GP EYES NIGHT RACE

Miami Grand Prix organisers say they are in discussions about making their event a night race. "Obviously at this time of year the weather's a little unpredictable," said Miami GP managing partner Tom Garfinkel. "This year is pretty nice so far, and the breezes have helped a lot, but last year was unseasonably hot. But there's a lot of factors that go into [whether it becomes a night race], with F1 and television and everything else. So, we've got to weigh all those things."

MOTOGP INJURY STAND-INS

Ducati's Enea Bastianini will be replaced by the team's former rider Danilo Petrucci for this weekend's MotoGP round at Le Mans while he recovers from a broken shoulder blade sustained in a Portuguese GP crash. RNF Aprilia rider Miguel Oliveira is also sidelined with a fractured shoulder from Jerez, with Lorenzo Savadori standing in.

IMSA DROPS LMP3 CLASS

The LMP3 class will be dropped from the IMSA SportsCar Championship at the end of this year after three seasons. From 2024 the Nissan-powered cars will race exclusively in the IMSA Prototype Challenge on the North American governing body's bill through to the end of the current homologation period in 2026. It cited the "surge and popularity" of other classes – GTP, GTD Pro and GTD – in the main series for the decision.

LINDBLAD'S MISANO DOUBLE

British Red Bull Junior Arvid Lindblad collected another two wins at Misano last weekend to move into a clear lead in the Italian Formula 4 Championship. Both times he defeated Prema team-mates: Ferrari protege James Wharton in race two; McLaren-backed Ugo Ugochukwu in the finale. Lindblad was second in the opener, won by another Prema-run Ferrari junior, Tuukka Taponen.

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Collard: fans robbed by penalty

BTCC

British Touring Car Championship racer Ricky Collard lost his maiden victory in the series at Brands Hatch last Sunday to a track-limits time penalty and has stated that “the worst thing for me is that the fans got robbed”.

The 26-year-old prevailed on track by 0.200 seconds after an enthralling battle with three-time champion Ash Sutton, only for a 10s penalty for “multiple” track-limits breaches to relegate his Speedworks Motorsport Toyota Corolla GR Sport to eighth position in the results.

“I feel like I drove one of the best races of my life to keep Ash behind me in a superior package to what we’ve got at the minute, although we’re working hard to make ours better,” said former BMW Junior Collard. “He actually overtook me on the grass, which is quite ironic. I don’t like that he moaned about it but that’s touring car racing – it was hard but fair.”

From the start of the season the BTCC has introduced controversial new track-limits rules from governing body Motorsport UK, which are due for implementation in June, rather than change the regulations mid-season. But Collard suggested that these will have a negative impact on the spectacle.

“I went off at Paddock and Graham Hill Bend a couple of times at the exit, but I

wasn’t doing it any more than anyone else,” he said. “We all push our cars to the limit – we don’t want it to be like Scalextric. These cars are so hard to drive on the limit.

“We don’t want it to be a procession, we want it to be fun. I’m still going to push as hard as I can and put on a show for people, and bring a bit of energy and excitement to the championship. I was watching some videos on the Saturday night of Matt Neal, Jason Plato and my dad [15-time BTCC race winner Rob Collard], and they were on the grass going past people. We want to see action for God’s sake. It’s not F1. We don’t condone contact but hard, fair racing is what’s in my family’s DNA.”

Sutton, who lost pole position at the Donington Park opener to a track-limits offence, said: “I saw Ricky was driving off the track quite a bit and I thought, ‘Hang on a minute boys, I’ve got a black-and-white [warning flag], he’s got a black-and-white, but he’s still taking the Michael shall we say’, and then obviously the penalty came his way.”

Collard was also puzzled as to how he picked up a 10s penalty, when the new MSUK regulations stipulate 5s for a third offence and an additional 10s for a fourth. “99% of the drivers went off, so why is it only me who gets the penalty?” he said. “You can’t have one rule for one, and one for another.”

MARCUS SIMMONS

BIOFUEL ETHOS CAUSES LATE PAU GP DRAMA

EUROFORMULA OPEN

Formula 3-level cars will not compete for this weekend’s prestigious Pau Grand Prix following an eleventh-hour cancellation. The Euroformula Open series last week called off its races on the French street circuit because its cars could not meet the event organiser’s stipulation that they run on a high percentage mix of biofuel.

Last year the event included the electric eTouring Car World Cup and an electric single-seater demo, and the organiser advertised its vision that for 2023 – the 80th running of the Pau GP – all series on the bill would source power from biofuel or electricity.

EFO is one of few open-engine junior series, with HWA and Spiess its two current suppliers, so a biofuel meeting Pau’s target standard had to be suitable for both. It is understood that the fuel requirement was not in the series’ contract with the event organiser when it was signed, and biofuel trials were not attempted in pre-season testing.

The Pau GP was held for FIA European F3 from 2014-18. EFO took over in 2019, when Billy Monger made history as the first disabled winner of the event. Following a two-year hiatus due to COVID-19, the GP returned in 2022, again run for EFO.

TCR Europe and French Formula 4 are among the other series on the bill, and are confident that their paddock presence is not under threat based on the fuels that they use. Indeed, F4 has been confirmed as inheriting the GP race title.

IDA WOOD





What Perez really faces in F1 2023

The Red Bull driver's defeat by his world champion team-mate in Miami – on a type of track Verstappen claims not to enjoy – highlights the sheer scale of the task ahead

ALEX KALINAUCKAS

Max Verstappen stands on the edge of his own piece of Red Bull history. He's now level with Sebastian Vettel on 38 wins for the squad owned by the energy drinks giant and is the heavy favourite to take the record for himself as soon as the next 2023 Formula 1 race at Imola. Given the size of Red Bull's advantage at the head of the pack, and with Verstappen's current contract running to the end of 2028, at the rate he's going he could put that record well out of sight for any successor.

Only one driver has a chance to stop him, and he's sitting 33 wins back in the Red Bull victory stakes: Sergio Perez, double Baku winner, second in the standings with two victories to Verstappen's three this year, and aiming for his first ever F1 title success.

But the manner of Verstappen's victory in Miami last weekend demonstrated the scale of the task Perez faces. And it increased the gap between the team-mates from six points to 14.

It was the little details that the Dutchman got right. First, his insistence with engineer Gianpiero Lambiase that starting on his only set of hard tyres and going to the mediums late in the race was the best course of action. This was despite Red Bull's wider hierarchy overall feeling that it had a weaker chance of paying off. Then there was Verstappen's relentlessness to hit back after his Baku defeats, a sense that he felt there was a wrong to be righted, which meant his charge from ninth on the grid was irrepressible.

“The self-assurance boost provided by a brilliant car cannot be underestimated”

Most importantly, there was the patience Verstappen again displayed – he had already risen from starting 15th in Jeddah, and was certain that his RB19 had enough advantage over its rivals to mean he didn't have to get stuck in aggressively early on (he even lost a position to Valtteri Bottas's Turn 1 lunge).

The self-assurance boost provided to a driver by a brilliant car cannot be underestimated. Just look at how the reverse appears to be impacting Charles Leclerc so far this season. Now that he knows for sure that Ferrari has definitely failed to match Red Bull as the best package for the start of this new ground effect era, the Monegasque appears to have regressed to the worst moments of 2020, where his chances of success were suddenly minimised by a car deficiency (then the engine) and he overdrove as a result. This led to several big crashes. Verstappen just doesn't need to do that. Even in

a five-race stretch where he hasn't seemed completely at his brilliant best, he's still leading the championship.

Another element that worked against Perez last weekend came, unintentionally, from within Red Bull itself. And this is that it miscalculated that the hard/medium approach would be the weaker race strategy. Given how well the hards held up – almost no degradation was found across the field and they behaved consistently, even on heavy fuel, which the mediums didn't – starting and being on them for most of the race might have even minimised the impact of the race interruption that never came. Red Bull has form in occasionally getting things wrong on tyres, most recently across the 2022 Brazilian GP weekend. But this is mitigated by the fact that Ferrari and Williams also employed the medium/hard tactic as the best, with the rest splitting their strategies or gambling in McLaren's case on something else altogether.

The overnight rain ahead of the race reset conditions on what was a slippery, tricky track surface all weekend. And of course, the lack of an early safety car played into the contra strategy swinging to become the optimum. Had one appeared, it would have guaranteed no first-place battle, not that there was much of one anyway.

Verstappen had arrived in Miami admitting “I personally don't really enjoy street circuits”, which was a rather startling revelation. As there are ever more such track types on the F1 calendar these days (there's an argument to be made that it would be better for the planet to repurpose existing streets rather than building more purpose-built facilities), that will often leave him somewhat exposed.

Eventually, it will go against Verstappen in a consideration of his place among F1's legends. But, critically for both Verstappen and Perez, there are just three more real street tracks left on the 2023 schedule. And F1 is still yet to visit the truly high-speed venues that Verstappen prefers, with car GPS data revealing in Miami that in the sweeping, rapid first sector around the Hard Rock Stadium, he held the advantage over Perez.

Verstappen's Miami race triumph felt like a marker being laid down. It certainly shifts the narrative away from Perez's early season momentum and piles pressure on the Mexican. He still has chances – Verstappen failing to nail the first Q3 runs is becoming a bit of a poor habit – and Perez could yet prove that the RB19 is indeed better suited to helping him elevate his performances away from the understeer precision requirements of street venues, as Red Bull thinks it will. And he could race his team-mate harder. That's certainly something F1 neutrals are crying out for in 2023.

But if Perez can't win when Verstappen starts ninth, and 1-2 finishes are ensured once the Red Bull pair are through early-race chaos, that title aim is just not going to be realised. ❄️

➡️ P14 MIAMI GP REPORT

YOUR SAY

It seems to be a backward step to impinge on tyre safety for the sake of saving a minimal amount of diesel usage

NEIL KIRBY

The folly of removing tyre warmers

Gary Watkins makes excellent points about the folly of removing tyre warmers from the World Endurance Championship and especially at Le Mans (Opinion, 4 May).

Having gone to Le Mans since 1979, although not in recent times, I remember too many fatal accidents at the circuit, often due to deflating tyres. Of course, tyre technology has moved on tremendously since those days and the teams monitor tyre pressures at all times on the circuit, so it seems to be a backward step to impinge on tyre safety for the sake of saving a minimal amount of diesel usage.

Anyone who's visited Le Mans will fully appreciate the huge temperature differences that can occur between day and night driving, especially under cloudless weather. Cars leaving the pits at night on new tyres will have to 'tippy toe' far more than usual when they approach the Dunlop Bridge curves, where much faster cars will be approaching from the pitstraight; accidents are always likely to happen here.

There are other high-speed points on the circuit where one can imagine that 'gentlemen drivers' will also have their skills on cold tyres exposed to the detriment of the faster professional drivers.

I sincerely hope, as Gary does, that we do not see any serious accidents at this year's 100th anniversary of the Le Mans 24 Hours, but unfortunately I think we're going to see an awful lot of unnecessary 'offs', which will cause many stoppages and a disjointed race.

Neil Kirby
Brentwood, Essex

Cue howls of protest...

A number of premier motorsport series like WEC, Supercars etc have either balance of performance or perhaps in-season tweaks to level performance in the field. They are not so hostage to micro aero adjustments best understood by very few in the pitlane and totally invisible to the paying public.

Formula 1 is deemed 'the pinnacle of technology' but what technology? Electric, hydrogen, other? It is stuck between being the fastest formula, although perhaps not on an oval,



the most advanced (really?) and the most exciting – which was what it used to be even up to the early days of aero (when cars could still overtake due to driver skill alone) – but is not now.

So cue the howls, bring BoP into F1. The rights holders, television and many fans would actually like the resulting racing.

Steve Singleton
Yorkshire

Formula 1 is missing a Kiwi driver

Why are there no Kiwi grand prix drivers? With such drivers as multiple Formula E winner Mitch Evans (above), IndyCar winner Scott McLaughlin, Super Formula and Formula E winner Nick Cassidy, and F2, DTM and Super Formula victor Liam Lawson, F1 teams should be spoiled for choice. Any of the above would be worthy and overdue successors to New Zealand's greatest drivers, Bruce McLaren, Denny Hulme and Chris Amon.

David Oliver
Arkley, Herts

Have your say, get in touch


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Lest we forget: the champ points out his obvious status. In truth, it was never in doubt



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FORMULA 1

VERSTAPPEN ROCKS HARD IN MIAMI

This time Sergio Perez wasn't able to stop his team-mate from recovering to the front as Red Bull again proved to be in a different class

JAKE BOXALL-LEGGE

PHOTOGRAPHY RED BULL AND



motorsport
IMAGES



Perez leads fellow Spanish speakers Alonso and Sainz as Verstappen takes care back in the pack

M

athematically speaking, the odds weren't quite on Max Verstappen's side to win the Miami Grand Prix. Of the 1083 world championship races held prior to the Floridian event's second edition, only four had been won from ninth place on the grid — the most recent 39 years ago courtesy of Niki Lauda at the 1984 French Grand Prix. Yet seven have been won from 14th on the starting line-up.

Thankfully for Red Bull, it appears to have a car that defies all mathematical principles. Verstappen has already converted lowly grid positions into big results so far this year. He turned 15th on the grid in Saudi Arabia, following his driveshaft issue in qualifying, into second position as he executed a combative drive towards the front. Taking a win from ninth would hardly be a bridge too far given the colossal advantage held by the RB19 package.

Verstappen was visibly frustrated with himself after qualifying (see panel, p19), but had the bit between his teeth to make a recovery and deny team-mate Sergio Perez the chance to move into the championship lead. "Minimum P2" was Verstappen's aim after qualifying in Miami.

The Miami circuit itself had been a somewhat capricious stretch of road in the lead-up to the race, thanks to its new surface. After the track was built around the Hard Rock Stadium last year, the asphalt was jet-blasted to remove some of the oils rising to the top, but the clean-up operation was considered too aggressive and it resulted in track break-up over the weekend. This year, the organisers elected not to clean the track in the same way — at the expense of grip in the opening sessions.

Although the circuit remained slightly treacherous off line, any errors from low-grip conditions were largely eradicated. Verstappen therefore could not rely on the cars ahead of him to fall off the road, and needed to make up ground himself to work his way up the order. After a

discussion with his engineers after qualifying, he was in favour of trying a different tyre strategy compared to the expected medium-hard progression in what would ostensibly be a one-stop race.

"We were quite strongly opinionated on that already," Verstappen explained with regards to starting on the hard tyre. "Then of course you have to discuss it with the team, with the strategists. They said in terms of race time, it was very close between doing a medium-hard or hard-medium. It didn't really matter. When you start on the hard, the risk is a bit higher because we only had one set, so if you have a puncture or whatever, then of course your race is a bit tougher. But I was happy to take that gamble."

Perez, along with the rest of the top seven starters on the grid, opted for that medium-hard strategy because the risk from the alternative was magnified through his pole position. Verstappen effectively had nothing to lose by trying the contra strategy, but his team-mate did. The Mexican also did not particularly want to suffer a repeat of the start in Saudi Arabia, where Fernando Alonso got past off the line and briefly led. Although it came to nothing and Perez reclaimed the position on that day, it created unwanted peril.

This time, Perez had the better start and covered off Alonso's Aston Martin into the opening corner, hugging the inside line to make good his escape down the road. Rather than dilly-dally in the opening laps and risk Alonso tracking his movements in the first stint, Perez knew that he had to break the one-second barrier swiftly and forge a lead — not to ward off a potential charge from Alonso, but to cover off the charging Verstappen.

The Dutchman's start was comparatively leisurely, and he was leapfrogged off the line by Valtteri Bottas, another driver done dirty by the Charles Leclerc crash in Q3. But Verstappen quickly stabilised, reeling off passes on Bottas and Esteban Ocon in short order to join a



TRINITY



burgeoning scrap between Kevin Magnussen's Haas and the Ferrari of Leclerc. The two Ferrari-powered cars were trading places ahead but, at the start of the fourth lap, Verstappen went three-wide with them heading into the first corner and chalked off another two places as Magnussen retained his real estate ahead of Leclerc.

This placed Verstappen in a smidgen of clear air and ample opportunity to log two fastest laps in succession, placing him behind George Russell's Mercedes. Russell was being pulled along by the Alpine of Pierre Gasly, which marginally delayed Verstappen's progress but, by the eighth lap, Verstappen had use of the Red Bull's powerful drag reduction system and slotted his car down the inside at Turn 17. Fifth place became fourth a lap later, when Gasly was brushed aside in a near carbon copy of the prior move on Russell.

"I COULD SEE THAT MAX WAS CLOSING UP ON THE HARDS. FROM THAT POINT, I KNEW IT WAS LOOKING DIFFICULT"

Perez, after the gap had initially stagnated between himself and Alonso at around 1.6s, was now in the ascendancy after shaking off tyre-management worries. Graining problems on the right-front tyre handed Perez a few concerns that he would not hit his tyre-life target, and so that early stagnation was largely a result of his conservatism during the opening 10 laps.

"Very early on, I saw that the medium was very fragile initially, so I had to protect the tyre quite a lot, just to make lap 15 or so," said Perez. "It was really hard to lean on the tyre; the whole right-hand side was really difficult. I could see that Max was closing up on the hards. From that point on, I knew that the race was looking difficult."

Red Bull team boss Christian Horner didn't quite agree with his charge's assessment, although he admitted it was only through hindsight that he felt Perez had the materials to push a little harder. "The first 10 laps, he was very much managing the pace," Horner explained. "And I think he was nervous about the front-right. As we started to see other teams start to get a bit of graining I think he was driving well within himself and the car to protect that front-right."

"Then he started to push after the first 10 laps and start to build a lead. And I think probably with 20/20 hindsight, if you looked at the race again he'd push harder in that first stint, because the medium tyre actually turned out to be a very good tyre, as we saw with Fernando actually going quite a long way." >>

Side by side into Turn 1, but the Red Bull duo kept it clean during their brief duel for the victory



Perez's lead by the 12th lap was up to 2.4 seconds, and Alonso was now quibbling with Ferrari-driving countryman Carlos Sainz over third. This was music to the ears of Verstappen, who chased after the pair and dispatched the younger Spaniard on the 14th lap with a run into Turn 11, moving up to the podium with 43 tours still left to run. Alonso was next, and was moved aside at the same corner a lap later with apparent ease.

The gap between the two Red Bulls at the front was a fraction below 4s, although Perez was still finding it difficult to keep life in his front-right tyre and reported that it was beginning to "give up". He held on until lap 20, by which time Verstappen had halved the initial gap to his team-mate, before calling in for a switch to the hard tyres to take him to the end. That's not to say that the two-time champion was cruising around in serene seas, reporting that his upshifts were "not smooth", but the lead was his for the time being.

Once Perez had got temperature into his hard tyres, his deficit to Verstappen was pegged at around 18s. Closing that down would require balancing outright pace with tyre management, since he had to cover 37 laps on the white-walled compound. Progress was slow but nonetheless tangible, and Perez had knocked a second out of that advantage by the time Alonso pitted from second for his own set of hard tyres on lap 24.

But Verstappen's pace remained strong, and had broken consistently into the high 1m31s lap times as he simply aimed to preserve the gap. Perez's first flurry of laps on his new tyres were faster and it helped him

"WE HAD GOOD PACE, I COULD LOOK AFTER MY TYRES. IN CLEAN AIR IT WAS ABOUT GETTING TO MY LAP TARGET"

to continue chiselling away at the arrears, but the two drivers' laps began to converge as the race moved beyond half-distance. Verstappen was given permission to lean on the tyres more since wear seemed less prevalent as the race progressed, the track beginning to rubber in more consistently after overnight rain while the fuel burned off.

On the 32nd lap, the gap was at its smallest during the pit offset between the Red Bulls, and Perez had closed in to 14.8s from Verstappen. There was, however, management of Pirelli rubber materialising between both drivers; Verstappen was worried that he would be unable to hit his target pitstop lap and had begun to start conserving around the time of Perez's stop. Once the gap hit its slenderest, Verstappen received his radio call to start pushing once more and started to prise open his advantage once again. Prior to his pitstop at the end of the 45th lap, Verstappen had reclaimed the magnitude of the lead he'd held at the time of Perez's pitstop, plus change.

"We had good pace, I could look after my tyres, and then once I was in clean air, it was just about getting to that lap number we targeted," Verstappen reckoned. "Maybe in the middle of that stint I was not entirely sure if I was going to make it. But then as soon as I was getting close to the number, I said, 'OK, this is good'. So then I started pushing, could extend the gap again, which really made my race today."

The two were split by 18.5s by the time Verstappen called in for the medium tyre and, although Perez hit the lead as a result, the two were separated by a scant 1.6s. This was not going to take Verstappen long, and he was in DRS reach as early as lap 46.

Perez didn't quite take the inevitable lying down. He assumed the inside line when Verstappen got a run into Turn 17, making his team-mate take the long way around the hairpin. Ultimately, it was nothing more than a prorogation, and Verstappen got the run into the first turn of the 48th tour to recapture the lead.

With his tyres now old, Perez had no hope of staging a comeback, although hopefully asked if Verstappen had a problem seven laps from home. When told that the leader was simply managing his pace, having been concerned earlier in the race about the prospect of going onto mediums, Perez accepted his fate and no longer attempted to



TEE



HONE

Perez takes his defeat on the chin as Verstappen emerges from his RB19



GRANT

fight a losing battle. Verstappen's 1m29.708s on the penultimate lap was the killer blow, putting him 5.4s clear of Perez at the chequered flag to claim his 38th Formula 1 win.

"When I went onto the hard, Max had a very strong pace, so we didn't manage to open a gap," Perez rued after the race. "He simply came too close to us. We had a bit of a fight on track, which was quite clean – to the limit, but clean – and obviously putting the team in front of us. It was a great team result, but obviously today Max deserved the victory because he was the strongest car out there.

Following his initial battles, Alonso enjoyed and endured a somewhat lonely race to third – a fourth podium finish of the season for he and the Aston Martin team. He needed to make only one move for position, passing Sainz after their pitstops after the Ferrari driver's earlier stop to ditch the medium tyres yielded an undercut. By the close of the race Alonso was a full 26.3s behind Verstappen and, although admitting to some frustration that he was not able to break into the higher echelons of the podium positions, was happy to reprise his role among the top three.

"It was a little bit of a lonely race," he mused. "Nothing really to do in front of us with the Red Bulls, but behind us, not much pressure. At the end, P3, we'll take this good result for us and fourth podium in five races. We only missed Baku by 0.8s, so I think it's a good moment. >>

QUALIFYING



TEE

After the drivers had taken their first steps up to the oche in Q3, Sergio Perez was sitting pretty. His two major rivals in the hunt for pole, Max Verstappen and Charles Leclerc, had both made minor and innocuous errors on their first laps and were pinning their hopes on the second bite at the cherry.

Verstappen was the odds-on favourite for pole, having headed Q1 and Q2, but a wide moment through Turn 5 cost him his rhythm through the sweepers and forced him to abandon his lap. Leclerc's first run was strong until a lock-up at Turn 17, and yielded a time good enough only for seventh.

Conversely, Perez had nailed the first run, chalking up a 1m26.841s to sit over three tenths clear of Fernando Alonso. The Mexican admitted to a lack of confidence throughout practice, particularly with the peculiar characteristics of the track surface, but a set-up tweak before qualifying suddenly imbued him with the wherewithal to make an impact.

It was up to Leclerc and Verstappen to make the most of their second runs, but they ultimately paid the price for their earlier mistakes; Leclerc took too much kerb through Turn 6 and lost control, careening into the wall to bring the session to a premature end. This caught Verstappen out, the Dutchman having not managed to get a time on the board after his earlier faux pas. Perez's pole was cemented by the red flag.

"When I was looking at the [practice] data and seeing what Max was able to do, I could simply not do that," Perez reflected. "I was struggling a lot and it was not a small difference. We made one good change, and I think through qualifying and playing with the balance, finding that rhythm was much more important than I really thought."

"WE MADE ONE GOOD CHANGE. I WAS FINDING RHYTHM WAS MORE IMPORTANT THAN I REALLY THOUGHT"

Alonso joined Perez on the front row and had been equally impressive on his opening run in Q3, despite Aston Martin's strengths lying more in the realm of race pace. He outqualified compatriot Carlos Sainz, who was partnered on the second row by an impressive Kevin Magnussen; Haas had been in great form heading into one of its three home races, and a new floor had certainly helped its cause in a particularly tight battle against its midfield rivals.

The American team's good form, alongside that of Alpine getting both its cars into the top 10, contrasted directly with the fortunes of Mercedes and McLaren. While George Russell got into Q3 by the skin of his teeth, Lewis Hamilton failed to make the cut and only managed 13th as the Mercedes squad struggled with balance. McLaren, despite its new updates, lost both cars in Q1 amid struggles in Miami.



TRACKSIDE VIEW

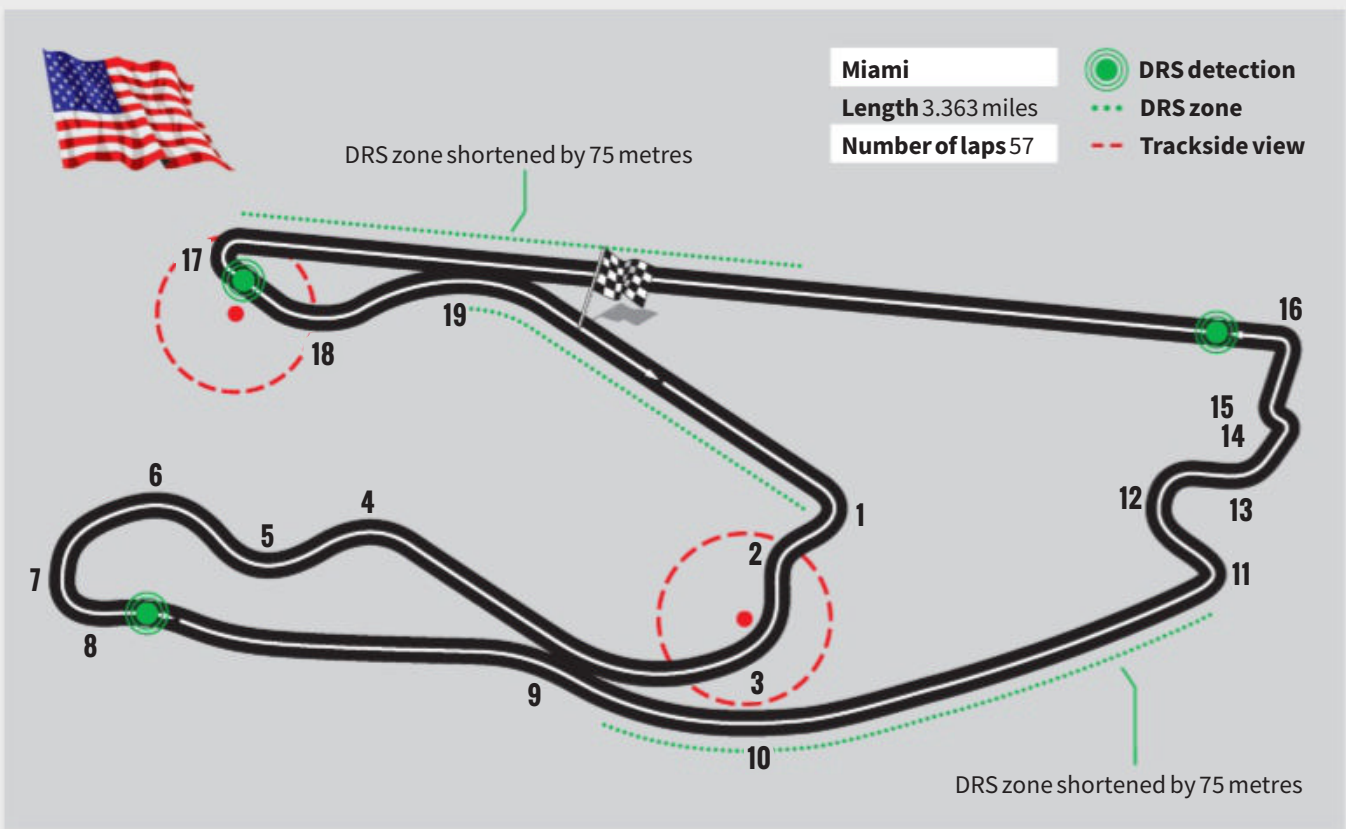
The Miami heat is a touch uncomfortable on the walk to Turn 17. Spare a thought for Autosport, if you must, but the drivers have it worse; buckets of sweat and adrenalin are shed on their exploratory laps of the course around the Hard Rock Stadium.

In the early minutes of the first practice session, the drivers take a conservative approach to dealing with the tight left-hander following the longest straight on the circuit.

Experimentation follows, and a few variations are tested to try to get closer to the exit wall, opening up the fast left-right duo of turns that feed onto the start/finish straight. Sergio Perez is initially the most willing to let the car drift outwards but, as the other drivers gain confidence, they became enfranchised enough to limit the steering lock they'd applied through the hairpin.

Kevin Magnussen then has an understeer-induced wiggle, and jerks at the steering wheel to catch himself from dumping his Haas into the wall. Mistakes become noticeably more prominent as limits start to be tested, and the Williams drivers both suffer wide moments in the hairpin as they run out of grip in the braking zone. Alex Albon leaves a wide berth for Alpine's Pierre Gasly to mount an overtake, while Logan Sargeant is so wide of the apex he could be mistaken for driving home to Fort Lauderdale. Lance Stroll gets even wider, diving into the teal-tinged run-off to kill off his lap.

In the hot conditions, Autosport is pelted by a hailstorm of tiny chunks of tyre rubber and relaid track. After watching Charles



“IN HOT CONDITIONS, AUTOSPORT IS PELTED BY A HAILSTORM OF TINY RUBBER CHUNKS”

Leclerc and Max Verstappen come past in unison, we decamp to Turn 3 to watch the cars barrel through the opening array of turns.

On our arrival, Lewis Hamilton gives us a moment to chew over when his Mercedes slides through Turn 2 as the loading on the car swaps sides and instantaneous grip comes at a premium. But there are more mistakes at Turn 1: Verstappen bowls a wide and compromises his lap, but Carlos Sainz gets even more sideways and sits at full-lock to get the tyres to bite into the track surface,



allowing Perez to trickle past.

A minor moment of interest a week prior in Baku pertained to the Alfa Romeos Haases, which sounded as though they were scraping the floors against the ground on the braking zone to Turn 2. Through Turn 2 at Miami there's a repeat, with a distinctly hoarse grumble emanating from both cars as they

shuffle through the left-hander.

Then the chequered flag appears, offering us a chance to seek respite from the Floridian sun. Parched and peppered by track debris, our minds detach from track activities and gravitate towards the hope of something cold and refreshing to drink.

JAKE BOXALL-LEGGE



ALL PICS: BOXALL-LEGGE



“It is [frustrating not to be higher up]. We want to step one step higher on the podium, and hopefully eventually one day we’ll have an opportunity into winning a race. At the moment, it didn’t happen because Red Bull is better than us.”

Russell atoned for Mercedes’ difficult Saturday with a strong performance in the race, following Verstappen past Gasly a lap later to bring him into a battle with Sainz over fourth. The Madrid-born driver was once again hit with Ferrari’s struggles with tyre management, not entirely helped by the undercut effort on Alonso, and gave the team “zero flexibility” with how much it was able to push.

In the crossover between strategies Russell was allowed past by his team-mate, the alternate strategy-bound Lewis Hamilton, allowing the less experienced Mercedes driver to hasten his efforts to get ahead of Sainz. Five laps after the Merics swapped places, Russell rattled off his move on Sainz and collected fourth place, giving him the momentum to

“WE WANT TO STEP ONE STEP HIGHER AND HOPEFULLY EVENTUALLY WE’LL HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY TO WIN”



clear off into the distance and focus on cementing a strong points haul for Mercedes.

“The battle with Carlos was really quite enjoyable because that was, let’s say, the fairest good move,” Russell reviewed. “I needed quite a lot of commitment because this track’s so dirty off line. I wasn’t too sure how much grip I would have had and if I could make it stick. Thanks to Lewis for letting me by in those situations and allowing me to get on with my race.”

The move may well have been moot anyway, because Sainz had collected a 5s penalty for a pitlane speeding violation. He locked up heavily on his way into the pitlane for his lap 18 stop, tripping the speed alarm to cede race time, but it ultimately cost no further positions – he was nearly 14s up the road from the sixth-placed Hamilton.

After starting 13th and spending much of the first half of the race sitting in Nico Hulkenberg’s mirrors, Hamilton’s strategy of starting on hard tyres yielded something of a slow-burn payoff. He only took ninth once Lance Stroll pitted from a long stint on hards on lap 42, but Hamilton had managed to preserve enough life in his tyres to make a series of passes in the last five laps, snatching seventh away from Gasly before making a move on Leclerc a lap later for sixth place.

While Hamilton enjoyed the bluster of the pre-race festivities at Miami, an arguably gaudy attempt to appeal to the US audience, the race was effectively the same old spectacle of a fight between the Red Bulls. Whether the medium-hard or hard-medium strategy was the right way to go, it’s hard to fathom an outcome where Verstappen did not win either way. It was a tyre-management masterclass, something Verstappen rarely gets enough credit for, and he took a decisive victory against Perez in a hot and sweaty Miami encounter.

Imola, in aesthetic appeal and atmosphere, will be the complete opposite to the boisterous encounter in Miami. For those hoping for an outside contender to join the fray, they’ll be hoping the result ends up a little different too. ✎



NEXT F1 REPORT

EMILIA ROMAGNA GP

25 MAY ISSUE

McLAREN GETS A MIAMI 'REALITY CHECK'

After its new floor had delivered a performance step in Baku, McLaren had a "reality check" in Miami, according to team principal Andrea Stella.

Following both drivers' elimination in Q1 – hampered by the MCL60's ongoing drag problem, the longer corners here not suiting the car, plus "everyone else was pretty quick" according to Lando Norris – McLaren's race never really got going.

Both Norris (who started 16th) and Oscar Piastri (19th) began on the softs, Stella explaining that his squad required "some events in the race, a safety car or so". That never came, and in any case both Norris and Piastri were grappling with early issues.

Norris was losing 0.2-0.3 seconds per lap with floor damage after being rear-ended by Nyck de Vries at Turn 1. He stopped on lap four to shed his soft tyres and then completed a 53-lap stint on hard rubber that was topped only by Logan Sargeant, who was running at the rear of the pack after knocking his left-side endplate off against Lance Stroll on lap one. Norris eventually came home a rather lonely 17th.

Piastri was even more isolated after his car suffered a brake-by-wire failure shortly after his lap-five stop. His brake temperatures spiked as McLaren sought a software fix and he toured around at the back, caught and passed by de Vries in the middle phase, but staying ahead of Sargeant.



TEE/MOTORSPORT IMAGES



Haas featured prominently at the first of its three home 2023 Formula 1 events, with Kevin Magnussen a qualifying star and bagging a point, while Nico Hulkenberg recovered from an FP1 crash to battle Lewis Hamilton early in the race.

Much like in the circumstances that secured his 2022 Brazilian Grand Prix pole, Magnussen benefited from getting on with it early in Q3, then striking gold when Charles Leclerc's crash prevented any subsequent improvements. Magnussen then made a rare poor start, losing three spots, before getting into a lengthy scrap with Leclerc after the Ferrari had failed to stay within DRS range of George Russell's Mercedes when the system was activated.

The pair engaged in a series of skirmishes, including Magnussen battling back past Leclerc as both were overcome in Max Verstappen's thrilling pitstraight double pass, before things settled down with the Dane in control ahead of their stops

for hard tyres. Magnussen then led Leclerc for half of the second stint before the Monegasque finally prevailed with a Turn 1 pass on lap 38, having again failed there shortly before. Lewis Hamilton and Esteban Ocon, who both started on hard tyres, also came through late on, pushing Magnussen to 10th.

From 12th, Hulkenberg jumped Hamilton at the first corner and was clipped by the Mercedes, which was pinched inside the German and Alex Albon's Williams. The trio then ran in Valtteri Bottas's DRS train early on before Hamilton forged ahead as Hulkenberg's hards wore and Albon pitted to shed his mediums.

Hulkenberg registered the fastest lap to that point early in his second stint, but was trapped in the pack and could not replicate the progress of others running medium tyres. Team boss Gunther Steiner felt Haas's upgraded floor "seems to be working" but needs to be "more stable in traffic [so] you're not wearing the tyres out this much".

BIG NUMBER

38

Max Verstappen's victory total for Red Bull, equalling the record first established by Sebastian Vettel between the 2009 Chinese Grand Prix and the 2013 Brazil season finale.



THOMPSON/GETTY IMAGES/RED BULL CONTENT POOL

Tsunoda impresses again while de Vries blunders

The Miami weekend ended up with rather familiar feelings at AlphaTauri, as Yuki Tsunoda raced superbly to climb to 11th for the third time in 2023, while Nyck de Vries wrecked his own chances early.

The rookie AlphaTauri racer had led Tsunoda in qualifying for the first time this season, with de Vries making Q2 impressively given the challenges of getting the soft tyres working well on the slippery new surface. But he locked up

at Turn 1 and clattered into McLaren's Lando Norris, causing flat spots and being among the first to stop for hard tyres. He ran a rather lonely race thereafter to 18th, ahead of Logan Sargeant and only passing the hobbled Oscar Piastri.

Tsunoda, however, got stuck in on the opening lap and again later in the race – he put in two risky Turn 17 dives on Alex Albon – as he rose up the order on the contra strategy.



ALPINE CRITICISM IS ANSWERED ON TRACK

Hours after Alpine CEO Laurent Rossi had hit out at what he considered “amateurishness” from his team during the early 2023 events, things got back on track for the Enstone squad when both cars made Q3.

Pierre Gasly was the best placed of the pair to capitalise upon Charles Leclerc's Q3 crash, as that cemented the fifth place he had secured with his banker first run, with Esteban Ocon back in eighth.

On race day, both drivers ended up with points, albeit with very different strategies, as Alpine nearly doubled its 2023 haul in one stroke to draw level with rival McLaren in the constructors' standings.

Gasly started on the medium tyres with the other frontrunners and showed strong pace, despite being overhauled inevitably by Max Verstappen and decisively by George Russell in the wake of the Red Bull powering past. He was running adrift of Carlos Sainz in the closing stages before being reeled in and passed by Charles Leclerc and Lewis Hamilton – going deep at Turn 1 and letting the Ferrari past – and ended up eighth.

Ocon was ninth after using the contra strategy and climbing the order as he ran long on the hard tyres, then getting passed by a string of medium starters coming back through on fresher rubber. He was able to do this in turn to Kevin Magnussen late on after finally stopping for mediums, and so secured two points.

Q&A

TOTO WOLFF MERCEDES TEAM PRINCIPAL



What is the story of your weekend? From leading FP1 to race recovery?

That's the story – of the car that we have very good sessions, like on Friday. Then we had a very difficult qualifying and on Sunday we had solid pace. But solid pace is not where we want to be. We need to understand why we are lacking that speed for a lap. There is nothing to be relieved about having a more decent Sunday. Because you've just got to start at the front.

How did you view Lewis Hamilton's race?

He's had a mega performance. Because when you start 13th with a car that's really not easy, and then you have to plough through the field, and at the end he had real pace and then overtook the Ferrari [of Charles Leclerc]. Finishing sixth when you start 13th is very good.

What did your drivers make of the pre-race introduction?

I think it wasn't so bad for them. I think we should oblige them to do some dancing when they're coming around and then you get a point for the choreography! I think we've got to try things. Everybody tries to do the best and it's exciting for

the fans seeing the drivers come out one by one. It was not done in a way that it looked like comedy.

Will the coming Imola upgrade set off a crucial part of Mercedes' 2023?

We are chasing downforce and we're trying to do the best possible job in terms of the mechanical platform. And so, what we're doing is we're introducing a new bodywork and we're introducing a new floor and we're doing a new front suspension and that's pretty large. The upgrade that we're bringing is going to help us to set the direction – to understand the various areas that we believe could play a role in why the car is so poisonous to drive.

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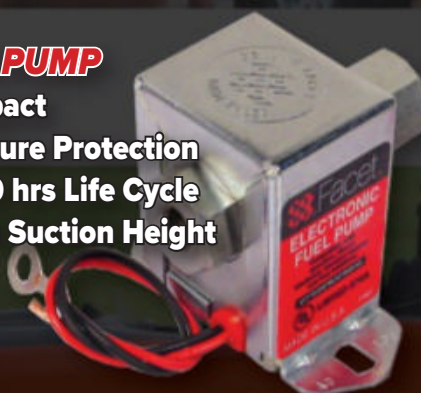


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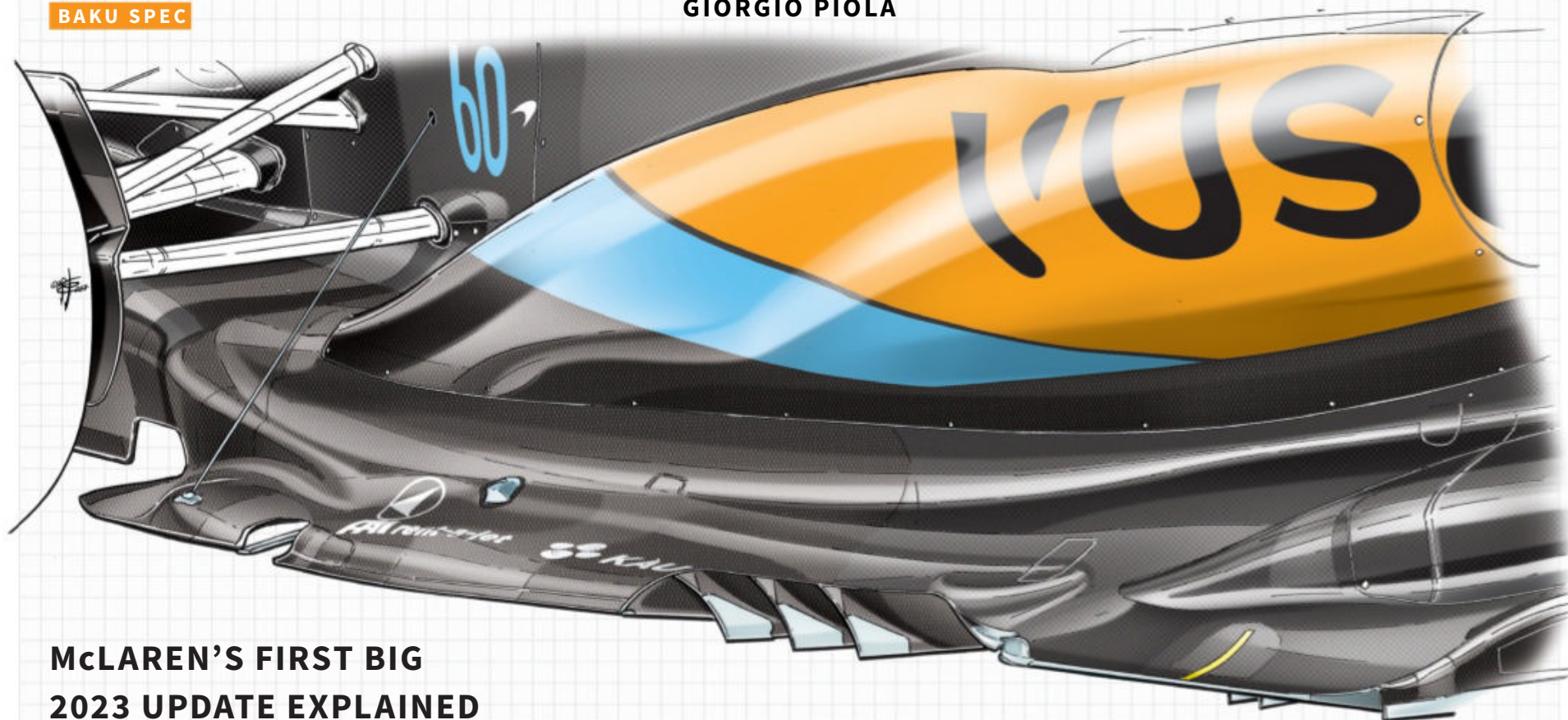
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DRAWING BOARD

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BAKU SPEC



McLAREN'S FIRST BIG 2023 UPDATE EXPLAINED

As early as the launch of the MCL60, new McLaren team principal Andrea Stella did not sugarcoat the suggestion that the new car would struggle in the early season; updates arrived for Baku last month owing to a late change in design direction in September last year, and they remained on the car for Miami.

This came in the form of a new floor, where the most visible changes sit on its edge. The old floor edge featured a slot down almost the entire breadth, which hosted a flick-up leading into an L-shaped piece attached to the main body with a series of separators. McLaren felt early on that this was not the right direction, Stella stating that the old floor "seemed like it was running out of steam in development".

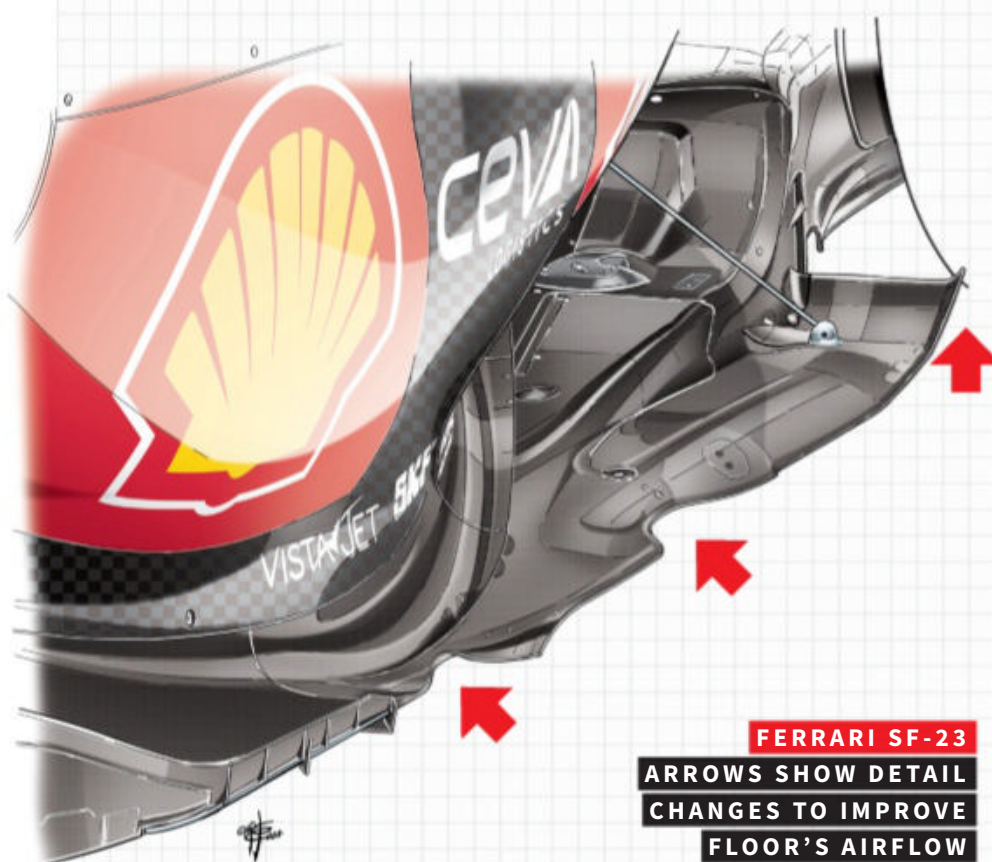


MELBOURNE SPEC

The new design keeps the flick-up, with three fins sitting inside, but there's no longer the floor-length slot along the edge. This has been replaced by a U-shaped cut-out ahead of the floor support, with a small winglet protruding from it. There are also changes to the front fence

on the floor. "These geometries [on the floor edge], they just accommodate vorticity and millimetres here make the difference," Stella explained. "The name of the game now is in terms of getting the flow right."

JAKE BOXALL-LEGGE



FERRARI SF-23
ARROWS SHOW DETAIL
CHANGES TO IMPROVE
FLOOR'S AIRFLOW

NEW FERRARI FLOOR FOR MIAMI

New updates for Miami were rare among the teams, although Ferrari introduced a new floor. It featured updates to the overall diffuser geometry and the front-to-mid section, to minimise any losses in downforce and improve the overall efficiency of the car.

Both drivers characterised the Ferrari as quite a peaky car and difficult to maintain at the limit, something Charles Leclerc found in FP2 and qualifying when he lost control at Turn 7 in both sessions and earned a trip to the wall.

Ferrari's Jock Clear said: "We've seen a couple of evolutions of the floor for this car this year, pretty much focused in that same area – the section just ahead of the rear

wheel, where you're controlling the flow that goes either outside the wheel or inside the wheel and therefore into the diffuser area. The changes are quite subtle; if you're looking for the changes, they're going to be quite difficult to spot. But actually, in aerodynamic terms, they're quite powerful.

"It gives the driver a more consistent balance through medium-speed, high-speed, low-speed, and of course, braking and entry and then exit. All those areas where the floor is moving around a lot, we can try and make the car a bit more benign. And that makes it more predictable for the driver."

JAKE BOXALL-LEGGE

20 Sargeant #2
1m28.577s

19 Piastri #81
1m28.484s

18 Stroll #18
1m28.476s

17 Tsunoda #22
1m28.429s

16 Norris #4
1m28.394s

15 de Vries #21
1m28.395s

14 Zhou #24
1m28.091s

13 Hamilton #44
1m27.975s

12 Hulkenberg #27
1m27.903s

11 Albon #23
1m27.795s

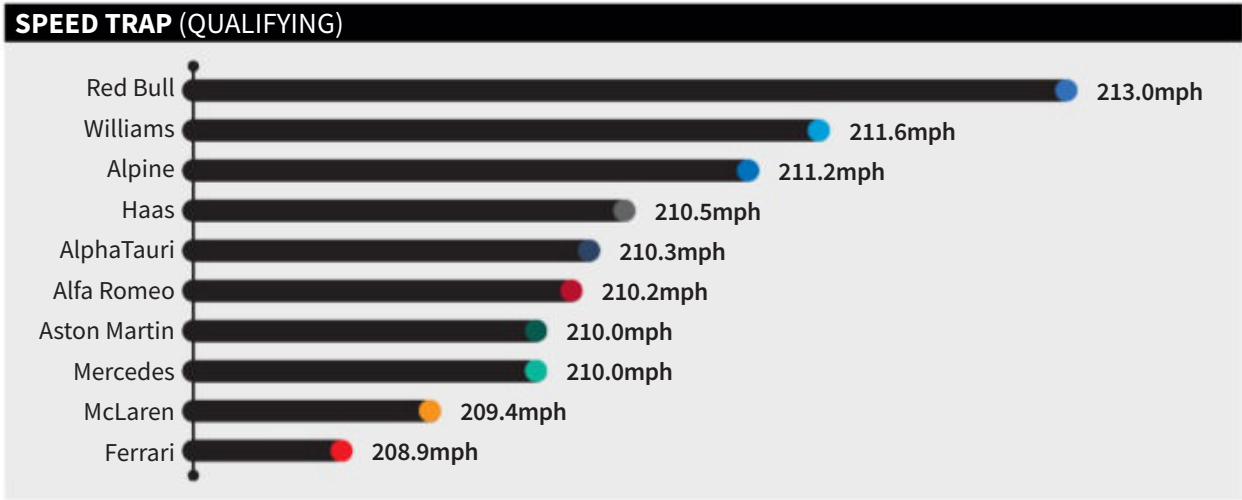
FREE PRACTICE 1			FREE PRACTICE 2			FREE PRACTICE 3		
POS	DRIVER	TIME	POS	DRIVER	TIME	POS	DRIVER	TIME
1	Russell	1m30.125s	1	Verstappen	1m27.930s	1	Verstappen	1m27.535s
2	Hamilton	1m30.337s	2	Sainz	1m28.315s	2	Leclerc	1m27.941s
3	Leclerc	1m30.449s	3	Leclerc	1m28.398s	3	Perez	1m28.050s
4	Verstappen	1m30.549s	4	Perez	1m28.419s	4	Sainz	1m28.125s
5	Sainz	1m30.724s	5	Alonso	1m28.660s	5	Ocon	1m28.407s
6	Gasly	1m31.104s	6	Norris	1m28.741s	6	Gasly	1m28.428s
7	Alonso	1m31.231s	7	Hamilton	1m28.858s	7	Bottas	1m28.456s
8	Stroll	1m31.337s	8	Stroll	1m28.930s	8	Hulkenberg	1m28.497s
9	Hulkenberg	1m31.392s	9	Ocon	1m28.937s	9	Albon	1m28.561s
10	Ocon	1m31.542s	10	Albon	1m29.046s	10	Russell	1m28.606s
11	Perez	1m31.566s	11	Gasly	1m29.098s	11	Magnussen	1m28.607s
12	Piastri	1m31.810s	12	Magnussen	1m29.171s	12	Alonso	1m28.618s
13	Magnussen	1m31.853s	13	Zhou	1m29.181s	13	Hamilton	1m28.718s
14	Bottas	1m31.902s	14	Bottas	1m29.189s	14	Stroll	1m28.723s
15	Albon	1m31.903s	15	Russell	1m29.216s	15	Zhou	1m29.074s
16	Norris	1m31.997s	16	Piastri	1m29.339s	16	Tsunoda	1m29.179s
17	Zhou	1m32.134s	17	Hulkenberg	1m29.393s	17	Sargeant	1m29.264s
18	Tsunoda	1m32.169s	18	Tsunoda	1m29.613s	18	Piastri	1m29.375s
19	Sargeant	1m32.619s	19	de Vries	1m29.928s	19	Norris	1m29.401s
20	de Vries	1m34.637s	20	Sargeant	1m30.038s	20	de Vries	1m29.447s

WEATHER Clear, air 30-35C track 51-55C

WEATHER Clear, air 28-31C track 35-38C

WEATHER Cloudy, air 32-34C track 49-55C

SEASON STATS			
DRIVERS' CHAMPIONSHIP	PTS	BEST FINISH	BEST QUAL
1 Verstappen	119	1	1
2 Perez	105	1	1
3 Alonso	75	3	2
4 Hamilton	56	2	3
5 Sainz	44	4	3
6 Russell	40	4	2
7 Leclerc	34	3	1
8 Stroll	27	4	6
9 Norris	10	6	7
10 Gasly	8	8	5
11 Hulkenberg	6	7	10
12 Ocon	6	8	7
13 Bottas	4	8	10
14 Piastri	4	8	9
15 Zhou	2	9	12
16 Tsunoda	2	10	8
17 Magnussen	2	10	4
18 Albon	1	10	8
19 Sargeant	0	12	15
20 de Vries	0	14	15



QUALIFYING 1			QUALIFYING 2			QUALIFYING 3		
POS	DRIVER	TIME	POS	DRIVER	TIME	POS	DRIVER	TIME
1	Verstappen	1m27.363s	1	Verstappen	1m26.814s	1	Perez	1m26.841s
2	Sainz	1m27.686s	2	Leclerc	1m26.964s	2	Alonso	1m27.202s
3	Perez	1m27.713s	3	Alonso	1m27.097s	3	Sainz	1m27.349s
4	Leclerc	1m27.713s	4	Sainz	1m27.148s	4	Magnussen	1m27.767s
5	Magnussen	1m27.809s	5	Perez	1m27.328s	5	Gasly	1m27.786s
6	Hamilton	1m27.846s	6	Ocon	1m27.444s	6	Russell	1m27.804s
7	Bottas	1m27.864s	7	Bottas	1m27.564s	7	Leclerc	1m27.861s
8	Ocon	1m27.872s	8	Gasly	1m27.612s	8	Ocon	1m27.935s
9	Hulkenberg	1m27.945s	9	Magnussen	1m27.673s	9	Verstappen	no time
10	Gasly	1m28.061s	10	Russell	1m27.743s	10	Bottas	no time
11	Russell	1m28.086s	11	Albon	1m27.795s			
12	Alonso	1m28.179s	12	Hulkenberg	1m27.903s			
13	Zhou	1m28.180s	13	Hamilton	1m27.975s			
14	Albon	1m28.234s	14	Zhou	1m28.091s			
15	de Vries	1m28.325s	15	de Vries	1m28.395s			
16	Norris	1m28.394s						
17	Tsunoda	1m28.429s						
18	Stroll	1m28.476s						
19	Piastri	1m28.484s						
20	Sargeant	1m28.577s						

WEATHER Clear, air 30-33C track 39-47C

NEXT RACE

21 MAY

EMILIA

ROMAGNA GP

Imola

CONSTRUCTORS' CHAMPIONSHIP		PTS
1 Red Bull		224
2 Aston Martin		102
3 Mercedes		96
4 Ferrari		78
5 McLaren		14
6 Alpine		14
7 Haas		8
8 Alfa Romeo		6
9 AlphaTauri		2
10 Williams		1

QUALIFYING BATTLE			
Verstappen	3	1	Perez
Leclerc	3	2	Sainz
Hamilton	1	4	Russell
Gasly	2	3	Ocon
Norris	4	1	Piastri
Zhou	2	3	Bottas
Alonso	5	0	Stroll
Magnussen	1	4	Hulkenberg
de Vries	1	4	Tsunoda
Sargeant	0	5	Albon

Events removed when one driver in a team could not record a representative time for reasons outside their control. Excludes sprint qualifying/shootout

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

FASTEST LAPS		Poles scores taken based on qualifying results, not the result of any sprint races or qualifying
Verstappen	2	
Perez	1	
Russell	1	
Zhou	1	

10 Bottas #77
no Q3 time

8 Ocon #31
1m27.935s

6 Russell #63
1m27.804s

4 Magnussen #20
1m27.767s

2 Alonso #14
1m27.202s

9 Verstappen #1
no Q3 time

7 Leclerc #16
1m27.861s

5 Gasly #10
1m27.786s

3 Sainz #55
1m27.349s

1 Perez #11
1m26.841s

RESULTS ROUND 5/23 (57 LAPS – 191.58 MILES)						FASTEST LAPS			
POS	DRIVER	TEAM	FINISH TIME	LED	TYRES	POS	DRIVER	TIME	GAP
1	Max Verstappen (NLD)	Red Bull-Honda RBPT	1h27m38.241s	36	Hn, Mn	1	Verstappen	1m29.708s	-
2	Sergio Perez (MEX)	Red Bull-Honda RBPT	+5.384s	21	Mn, Hn	2	Alonso	1m30.519s	+0.811s
3	Fernando Alonso (ESP)	Aston Martin-Mercedes	+26.305s		Mu, Hu	3	Perez	1m30.560s	+0.852s
4	George Russell (GBR)	Mercedes	+33.229s		Mn, Hn	4	Hamilton	1m30.669s	+0.961s
5	Carlos Sainz (ESP)	Ferrari	+42.511s		Mn, Hn	5	Stroll	1m30.862s	+1.154s
6	Lewis Hamilton (GBR)	Mercedes	+51.249s		Hu, Mn	6	Hulkenberg	1m30.901s	+1.193s
7	Charles Leclerc (MCO)	Ferrari	+52.988s		Mn, Hn	7	Russell	1m31.015s	+1.307s
8	Pierre Gasly (FRA)	Alpine-Renault	+55.670s		Mn, Hn	8	Tsunoda	1m31.038s	+1.330s
9	Esteban Ocon (FRA)	Alpine-Renault	+58.123s		Hn, Mn	9	Ocon	1m31.143s	+1.435s
10	Kevin Magnussen (DNK)	Haas-Ferrari	+1m02.945s		Mn, Hn	10	Sainz	1m31.362s	+1.654s
11	Yuki Tsunoda (JPN)	AlphaTauri-Honda RBPT	+1m04.309s		Hn, Mn	11	Leclerc	1m31.434s	+1.726s
12	Lance Stroll (CAN)	Aston Martin-Mercedes	+1m04.754s		Hu, Mu	12	de Vries	1m31.562s	+1.854s
13	Valtteri Bottas (FIN)	Alfa Romeo-Ferrari	+1m11.637s		Mn, Hn	13	Magnussen	1m31.691s	+1.983s
14	Alexander Albon (THA)	Williams-Mercedes	+1m12.861s		Mn, Hn	14	Zhou	1m31.736s	+2.028s
15	Nico Hulkenberg (DEU)	Haas-Ferrari	+1m14.950s		Hn, Mn	15	Bottas	1m31.838s	+2.130s
16	Zhou Guanyu (CHN)	Alfa Romeo-Ferrari	+1m18.440s		Hn, Mn	16	Albon	1m31.852s	+2.144s
17	Lando Norris (GBR)	McLaren-Mercedes	+1m27.717s		Sn, Hn	17	Gasly	1m31.971s	+2.263s
18	Nyck de Vries (NLD)	AlphaTauri-Honda RBPT	+1m28.949s		Mn, Hn	18	Piastri	1m32.006s	+2.298s
19	Oscar Piastri (AUS)	McLaren-Mercedes	-1 lap/+20.510s		Sn, Hn	19	Sargeant	1m32.384s	+2.676s
20	Logan Sargeant (USA)	Williams-Mercedes	-1 lap/+34.388s		Mn, Hn	20	Norris	1m32.401s	+2.693s

WEATHER Cloudy, air 28-30C track 36-43C

WINNER'S AVERAGE SPEED 131.166mph FASTEST LAP AVERAGE SPEED 134.952mph

TYRES

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

HARD

MEDIUM

SOFT

C0

C1

C2

C3

C4

C5

INTERMEDIATE

WET

RACE BRIEFING

RACE PENALTIES

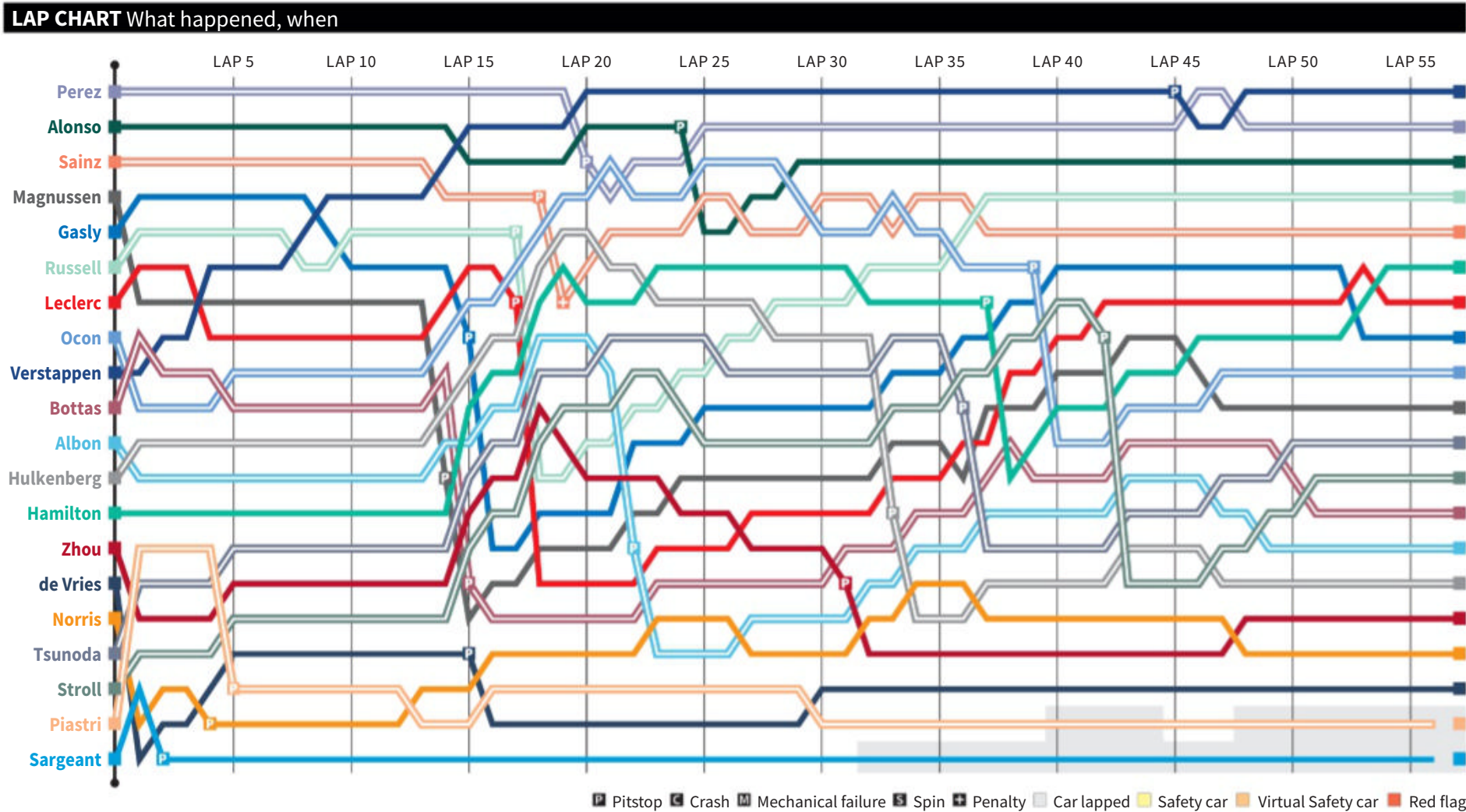
SAINZ Five-second penalty for speeding in the pitlane

STAT 23

Verstappen now has as many fastest laps as Juan Manuel Fangio, Nelson Piquet and Alonso

STAT 15

Alonso has scored 15 points in each of the last five F1 weekends

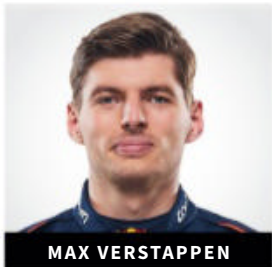


MIAMI GRAND PRIX DRIVER RATINGS

We're giving the emphatic winner top marks, while George Russell and Fernando Alonso score high as well

ALEX KALINAUCKAS

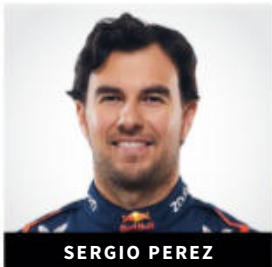
RED BULL



MAX VERSTAPPEN

Started 9th — Result 1st

10 First max score of our 2023 ratings. Lost out to Bottas at Turn 1, but kept out of trouble and nursed his hard tyres so well he was able to keep Perez in range, then pressed on. Gave 'Checo' space during victory pass, great dive on Russell, Leclerc/Magnussen double pass thrilling.



SERGIO PEREZ

Started 1st — Result 2nd

8 Held the lead off the line and negated Alonso's DRS threat, but barely pulled away as he managed graining of the medium tyres with a conservative pace he'd later regret. Lost a second with Turn 7 off just when he needed to be flawless, but was never going to win given team-mate's pace on both tyres.

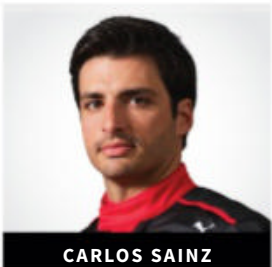
FERRARI



CHARLES LECLERC

Started 7th — Result 7th

6 Couldn't pick up DRS from Russell early on, leaving him vulnerable to Magnussen repassing. Spent most of the race behind the Haas, struggling with erratic balance shifts as car bounced at speed. Eventually got past Magnussen, then caught Gasly late on before failing to hold off Hamilton.



CARLOS SAINZ

Started 3rd — Result 5th

5 Gets a mark back for first-stint pace on medium tyres. But threat to Alonso went wrong from undercut stop, starting with penalty for 1.4mph over pit speed limit. Then damaged his hards and was overcome by Alonso and Russell. Falling off at Turn 7 also meant he had to pass Ocon twice.

MERCEDES



LEWIS HAMILTON

Started 13th — Result 6th

8 Getting pinched between Albon and Hulkenberg cost him. Ran wide at Turns 11-12, lucky Piastri didn't get past. Stuck in DRS train while running long on hard tyres. Let Russell past before late stop, passed Magnussen, then caught Leclerc and got him cleverly at Turn 11 after they'd both passed Gasly.



GEORGE RUSSELL

Started 6th — Result 4th

9 Outbraked Magnussen at Turn 1, then passed Gasly at the same spot – impressive as the Frenchman also had DRS. Warded off Gasly's undercut, then rose on contra strategy. Only just avoided Stroll at the chicane on lap 23. Hamilton waved him by; caught and passed Ocon and Sainz.

ALPINE



PIERRE GASLY

Started 5th — Result 8th

7 The three places the lost were to faster rivals, but he made late errors – sliding wide at Turn 7 and allowing Stroll to threaten as he battled those who'd started on hard tyres, then locking up and letting Leclerc nip past at Turn 1. Still, had good pace on medium tyres and dealt with fuel-saving required.



ESTEBAN OCON

Started 8th — Result 9th

7 Slow, wheelspin-heavy start let Bottas past, then Verstappen blasted ahead. Escaped the Bottas DRS train, then rose as medium-tyre starters pitted. Overcome by many as his hards wore and was undercut by Hamilton. Chased and passed Magnussen around the outside of Turn 11 late on.

McLAREN



LANDO NORRIS

Started 16th — Result 17th

5 Undermined by de Vries hit at the first corner that damaged his floor and cost him 0.3s per lap. Came off the soft-tyre gamble for a second stint on hards, only topped by Sargeant behind. Had the pace to run ahead of Zhou when the Alfa stopped, but not enough to prevent him repassing.



OSCAR PIASTR

Started 19th — Result 19th

6 Gaining five places on lap one earns him a bonus. First launched past Stroll and Tsunoda, then gained with de Vries hitting Norris. Got past Zhou, then Hamilton with Turn 7 slingshot before the Mercedes barrelled back in front. Race wrecked by early brake-by-wire failure and a pitstop.

ALFA ROMEO



ZHOU GUANYU

Started 14th — Result 16th

5 Went backwards on opening lap, during which Tsunoda demoted him. Chased the AlphaTauri in early midfield DRS train, then passed by Stroll and medium starters. Erased a big gap to Norris in stint on mediums before swooping on him at Turn 11. Finished adrift of Hulkenberg.



VALTTERI BOTTAS

Started 10th — Result 13th

6 Got stuck in on Ocon and Verstappen on lap one before falling back. Headed a DRS train, then among first of the unimpeded medium-tyre starters to stop. Lonely middle phase adrift of Leclerc, before facing late pressure from Albon, with Stroll coming through both towards the end.



ASTON MARTIN



Started **2nd** — Result **3rd**

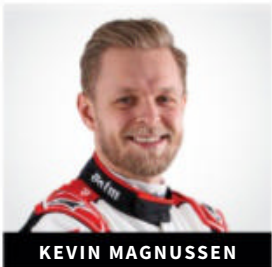
9 No Jeddah repeat at start, but his race was not with the Red Bulls – as evidenced by Verstappen blowing past on lap 15 with DRS. By then pressed by Sainz, whose undercut led to longer medium stint. Easily erased gap when he did pit, passed Sainz smoothly at Turn 11, before “lonely” finish.



Started **18th** – Result **12th**

7 Couldn’t beat Tsunoda’s slower AlphaTauri after race-long pursuit on the same strategy. Initially trailed Zhou’s Alfa before getting past with a bold Turn 1 dive. Cheekily cut Turn 12 as Russell came by, but was squeezed. Roared up the order on short medium-tyre stint, with excellent Turn 1 pass on Albon.

HAAS



Started **4th** — Result **10th**

8 Swamped by Gasly and Russell at Turn 1, then Leclerc at Turn 11. But stayed with the Ferrari and repassed on lap three. Defied Leclerc’s attempts to retaliate until deep into second stint before finally being overcome, while Hamilton and Ocon used fresh mediums to get ahead of him too.



Started **12th** – Result **15th**

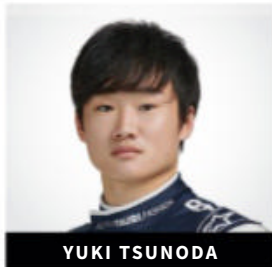
5 Nipped ahead of Hamilton at Turn 1 and ran in front for much of their long opening stints in the Bottas DRS train. The Mercedes did get back through and he’d lost contact before stopping, just after falling off at Turn 7 and letting Tsunoda past. Had early medium-tyre pace but faded, trapped in the pack.

ALPHATAURI



Started **15th** – Result **18th**

3 Undid great qualifying work with a Turn 1 blunder, locking up and punting Norris. Escaped damage beyond flat-spotted medium tyres, but lost contact with the pack and had a lonely race, bar getting ahead of the hobbled Piastri. AlphaTauri at least pleased with his tyre management.



Started **17th** – Result **11th**

8 Gained from the de Vries/Norris clash and battled past Stroll and Zhou (with a DRS-less pass on the Alfa). Managed hard tyres well, a risky first pass on Albon, plus Hulkenberg falling off ahead. Got Albon again with pass from way back in a late charge that demoted Bottas. Held off Stroll.

WILLIAMS



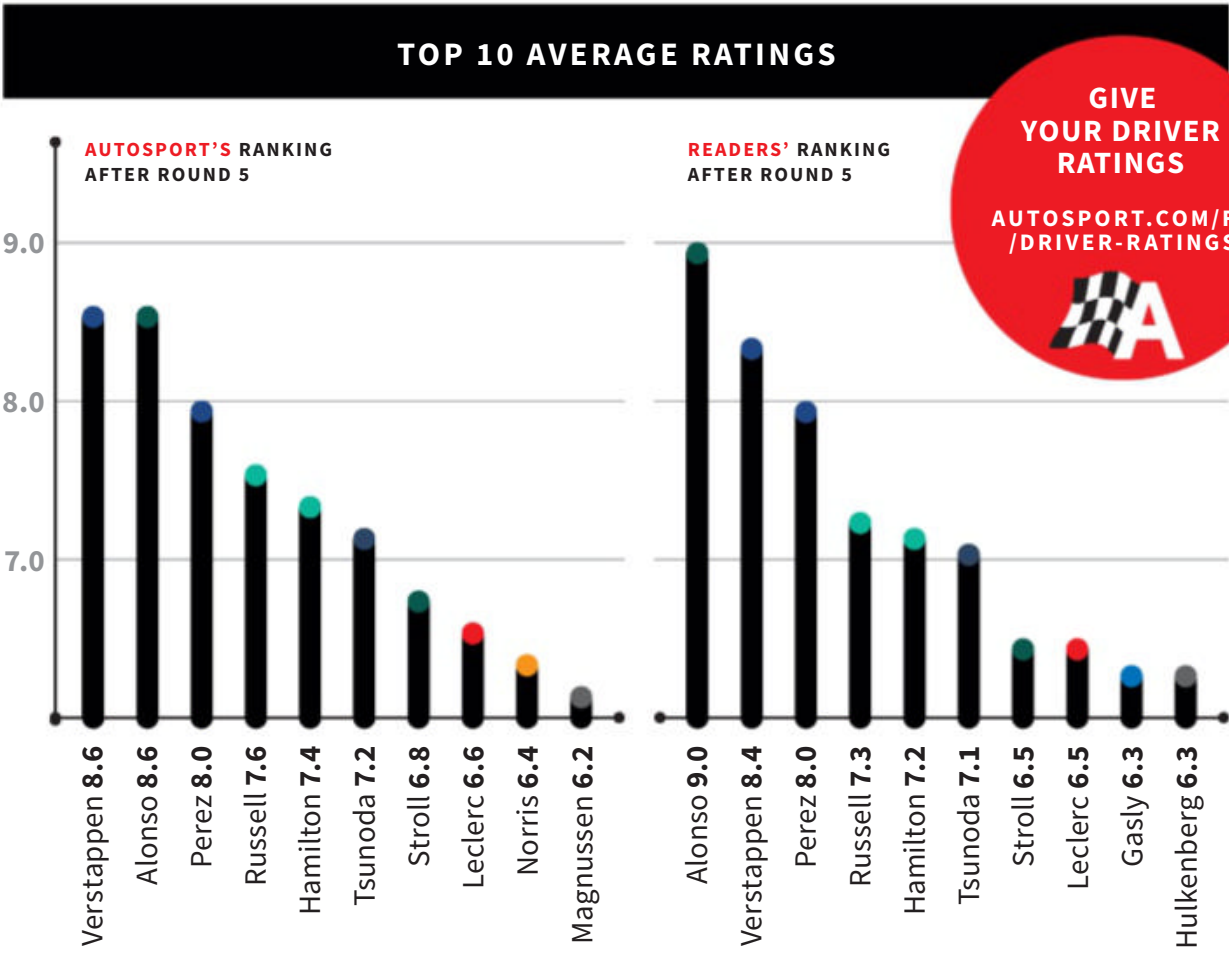
Started **20th** – Result **20th**

3 Gained from de Vries and Norris colliding, but briefly lost contact with the pack. Wrecked his race clipping Stroll’s right-rear exiting the chicane, needed a front-wing change. Ran last to the finish, struggling with floor damage. Did a massive 54 laps on hard tyres! Tough home debut.



Started **11th** – Result **14th**

5 Outmanoeuvred by Hulkenberg at Turn 11 on lap one, then chased the Haas in Bottas DRS train. The hard starters began to come past as he ran long, unhappy with being told to push early in his hards second stint. Couldn’t get Bottas and nearly hit Stroll locking up as the Aston came past at Turn 1.



Anything Verstappen can do...

Nick Cassidy started ninth in Monaco and, like the Red Bull F1 ace in Miami, pulled off a superb victory to take the points lead

STEFAN MACKLEY

PHOTOGRAPHY  motorsport
IMAGES

Formula E began the second half of its 2023 campaign in Monaco, and the event firmly signified the emergence of new title favourites in the championship battle. Nick Cassidy and Envision Racing arrived in the Principality on a high thanks to victory last time out in Berlin, but their success in Monte Carlo was even sweeter and has launched the combination into the lead of the drivers' and teams' championships.

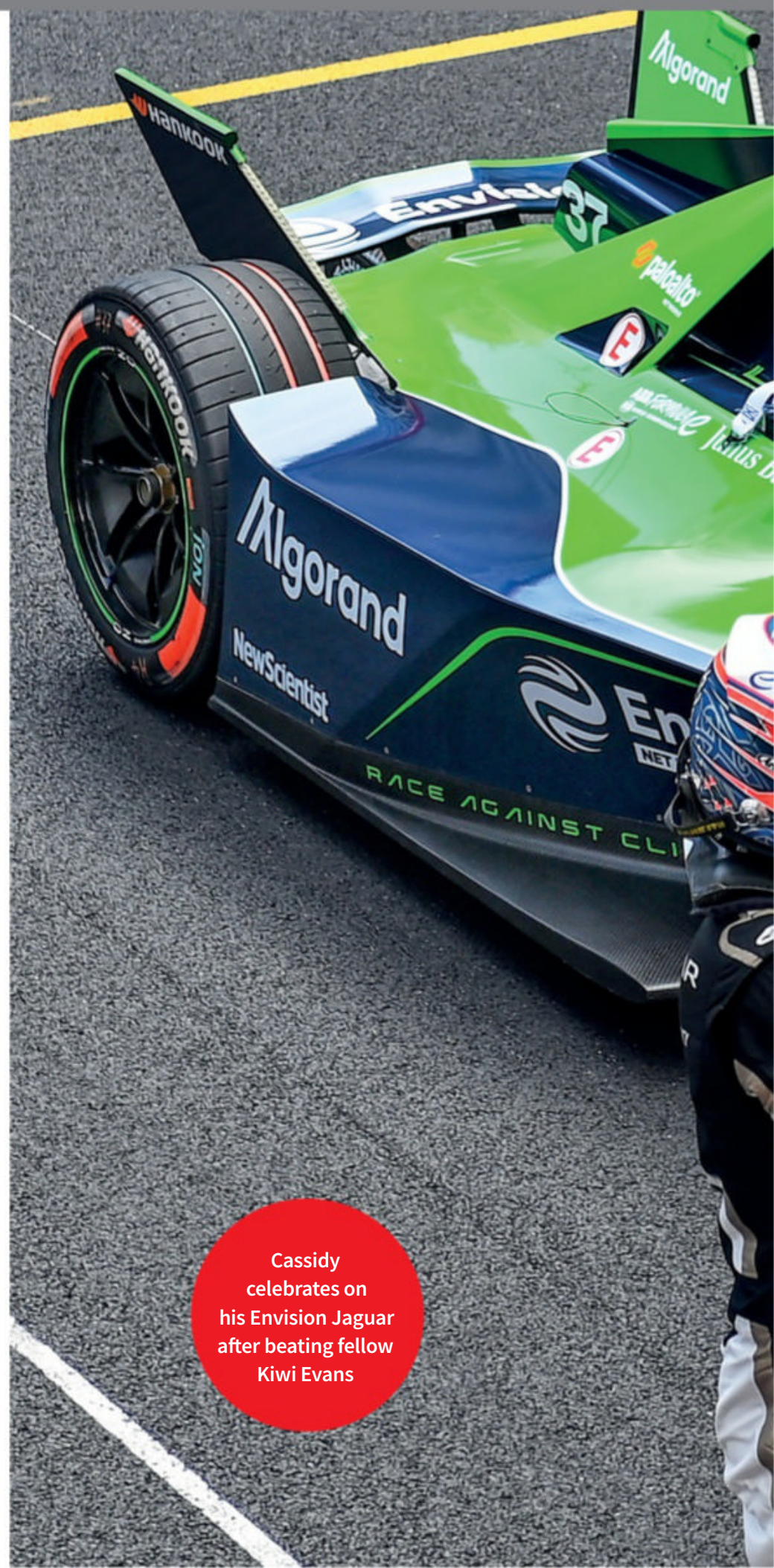
Cassidy's maiden Monaco success was the culmination of a remarkable turnaround over the course of the day. The Kiwi had struggled in both of Saturday morning's practice sessions, finishing as the second-slowest runner in each and complaining of a vibration under braking. Changes were made ahead of qualifying and, while there was a significant improvement in the Jaguar's performance, Cassidy missed out on a duel spot — a poor final sector on his fastest attempt proved pivotal, and he blamed it on being held up by the Maserati MSG of Maximilian Guenther.

It left Cassidy ninth on the grid but, as fellow countryman Mitch Evans had claimed ahead of the event, qualifying would have “zero” impact on the race due to the frenetic pack racing that has come to define the new-for-2023 Gen3 era. While Evans's prediction would ultimately prove to be correct, there was notably less shuffling of positions at the head of the field than in Berlin, and that proved to be the decisive factor in Cassidy's victory.

An aggressive opening lap moved Cassidy into seventh, which became sixth with a pass around the outside of Evans into the Loews Hairpin on lap five — just the first of several place swaps between the race's two protagonists. Moves on Dan Ticktum (around the outside at Rascasse) and Norman Nato (on the inside at Sainte Devote) quickly followed. And when early race leaders Jake Hughes and Sacha Fenestraz took their first Attack Mode activations, Cassidy hit the front as early as lap eight of 29.

It quickly became apparent that track position was of far greater importance than at any other venue so far this season, the narrow confines of the Monte Carlo circuit ensuring that, while there were passing opportunities, these were limited. Even so, there remained an incentive to save energy in the slipstream and, as has been the case at other races this year, most leading drivers activated both Attack Modes in the opening laps to drop back from the lead.

By lap 13, Cassidy had used both his activations and cycled down to second behind Evans, but found himself back at the front when the works Jaguar driver activated his final extra burst of power. Evans, who had started sixth after losing out to Nato's Nissan in his quarter-final qualifying duel, used the three minutes of extra boost to move back into second around the outside of Jake Dennis into the Nouvelle Chicane. Still with extra power, he then immediately attacked Cassidy into Sainte Devote to take the lead just past the halfway point, the Jaguar powertrains in the hands of Evans and Cassidy once again proving to be the class of the field. »



Cassidy celebrates on his Envision Jaguar after beating fellow Kiwi Evans



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Cassidy leads Evans around Monaco's famous hairpin

Two laps later, Cassidy moved back to the front, also into Sainte Devote, with an overtaking move that Evans “wasn’t expecting”. It proved to be the pivotal point of the race. Cassidy had already demonstrated the efficiency of his energy management when he won last time out in Berlin after leading for the final 16 laps. While he had a fraction less power remaining than Evans at this point in the race, it became clear that Cassidy had taken a decisive lead.

Realising the importance of Cassidy’s pass, Evans’s race engineer gave the call to “let’s go” on lap 21, but less than a lap later that charge was brought to an abrupt halt by the first of two safety cars. The race essentially became a five-lap shootout once the caution period ended, since the energy that had been saved behind the safety car, and no extra laps being applied, meant that power saving became irrelevant.

Despite pressuring Cassidy immediately at the restart, Evans — who had been suffering from understeer due to a damaged front wing after contact with Ticktum into Sainte Devote — was unable to find a way through with the pace significantly raised. A second safety car, after Nico Muller’s Abt Mahindra was tipped into the barriers at Sainte Devote on the penultimate lap, meant the race ended under caution and ensured back-to-back wins for Cassidy and Envision.

“It’s a massive moment for me,” said Cassidy, who now holds a 20-point lead in the championship standings. “Mitch and Jake

Dennis continues to impress and a podium keeps him in contention

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“I still can’t believe it yet. My reaction, and nothing against Berlin, is this feels amazing”

[Dennis], these guys were so fast, it was a tough, tough race. I still can’t believe it yet, to be honest. My first reaction was, and nothing against Berlin, but this feels amazing. Pretty damn special.”

For Evans, who also finished runner-up in the Monaco E-Prix 12 months ago, it was once again a case of what might have been. On that occasion a last-lap pass had denied him, whereas Cassidy’s race-winning move, even with 11 laps to run, was “timed perfectly”.

“There were moments in the race where I thought it was for me today, especially when I got into the lead,” said Evans, who sits in fourth in the championship standings, 27 points adrift of Cassidy. “I thought it was maybe slightly early, but I was feeling good and I felt like I had a slight energy advantage on Nick. I wasn’t expecting Nick to attack me when he passed me and if I could do the race again, I would have defended harder and been more aware. I think if I could have kept him behind for a couple of laps after that it would have been a different story, but that’s the way it’s gone.”

Cassidy and Evans have each won two of the past four races, signifying a monumental shift in the title race with Porsche’s early dominance gone. The German manufacturer endured a torrid weekend in Monaco, with Pascal Wehrlein and the team losing the lead in both championships.

The one-lap problems for Porsche were once again on display in Monte Carlo. Both Wehrlein and Antonio Felix da Costa failed to make it through into the qualifying duels, lining up 12th and 19th respectively. While qualifying has generally been a weak point of late for the team, its race pace has allowed both drivers to make progress, but that narrative changed dramatically in Monaco.

Wehrlein, who entered the event four points ahead of Cassidy, failed to make inroads into the top 10 and finished outside the points on the road, before a five-second penalty for Sam Bird elevated him to 10th. It’s now six races in succession that Wehrlein has failed to finish on the podium, his two wins in Diriyah very much a »

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Evans led for four laps but had to settle for second once again

STALEY

distant memory. “I was not really happy with the balance in the race,” said the German after dropping to second in the standings. “I made a bit of progress in the beginning but then taking the Attack Modes we lost a lot of positions again. It was just a difficult race to be honest. The last few rounds haven’t been great, definitely others did a very good job and we need to make a step forward, that’s clear.”

Da Costa fared no better, the 2021 Monaco winner suffering a puncture in the second half of the race, with the necessary pitstop consigning him to 15th at the flag.

Some hope to Porsche is that, in the hands of customer team Andretti Autosport, its powertrain is capable of still matching Jaguar and Envision. This was demonstrated to good effect by Dennis, the Briton completing the podium after remaining within striking distance of both Cassidy and Evans. It’s now two podiums on the bounce for Dennis after a rough patch of form and elevates him to third in the standings, 25 points behind Cassidy.

Behind the leading trio was Fenestraz, the Nissan driver putting in a measured drive after taking pole position earlier in the day before being stripped of his fastest lap (see panel, right). Despite the setback, a front-row start allowed him to lead, and the Franco-Argentinian occupied fourth from the halfway point of the race.

McLaren’s Jake Hughes had benefited from Fenestraz’s misfortune to take his second pole of the season, and the Briton led for the opening six laps before taking the first of his Attack Mode activations. Despite a gap of nearly two seconds developing at one stage between Hughes and the cars ahead, that margin was eventually negated and he stayed out of trouble to finish fifth,

“The last few rounds haven’t been great, others did a very good job. We need a step forward”

matching his best result of the season from Mexico and Saudi Arabia – at Diriyah he had also started on pole.

Ticktum also equalled his best finish of 2023 in sixth, and featured towards the head of the field all afternoon. That included briefly taking over the lead when Cassidy activated Attack Mode. But it wasn’t an incident-free race for the NIO 333 driver. He clipped the back of Fenestraz’s Nissan into Rascasse, damaging his front wing, which then rubbed against a tyre. Guenther attempted to overtake the faltering NIO up Beau Rivage, but whacked the barrier and came to a stop at Massenet, necessitating the first safety car on lap 22.

That ended a promising race for the Maserati MSG driver. Guenther was fastest in FP2 and reached the semi-final stage of qualifying after Sergio Sette Camera’s quarter-final time was deleted for going through a red light at the end of the pitlane. Team-mate Edoardo Mortara also suffered. He lost his front wing at Loews when he ran into the back of Guenther, and finished 11th.

While Maserati MSG suffered a difficult home event, for DS Penske it was a case of what might have been. Both reigning champion Stoffel Vandoorne and Jean-Eric Vergne were stripped of their lap times in the first qualifying group due to incorrect tyre pressures, relegating both to the back of the grid. After going under the radar for most of the race and staying out of trouble, both scored points at the flag, with Vergne seventh and Vandoorne ninth.

Splitting the pair was Envision’s Sebastien Buemi who, while team-mate Cassidy won, failed to feature near the front of the race at any point after starting down in 15th. It was a similar story for Evans’s Jaguar stablemate Bird, who started 16th and struggled on the fringes of the top 10, his charge not helped when he missed his second Attack Mode activation.

Once Bird finally activated it, he was challenging Muller for 10th when he made contact attempting to overtake into Sainte Devote, leaving the Swiss in the wall. Bird’s actions ironically necessitated the second safety car that denied Evans the chance of passing Cassidy for the win because the race finished under caution, and earned him a time penalty that dropped him to 16th.

Formula E next heads to Jakarta for a double-header in a month’s time, giving Cassidy’s and Envision’s rivals some time at least to work out how to better the new championship favourites. 🏆



Wehrlein and Porsche have work to do to stay in the title fight

GALLOWAY

IN THE HEADLINES

ROWLAND'S INJURY

Mahindra's Oliver Rowland suffered bruising and swelling to his left hand after colliding with the back of Edoardo Mortara's Maserati MSG at the Nouvelle Chicane early in the race. The Briton had made strong progress from 13th on the grid and was the first driver to use both Attack Mode activations before colliding with the back of Mortara on lap six. Rowland pitted for a new front wing and continued until lap 18 before retiring. After being checked by the medical team at the track he was taken to hospital for an X-ray, which revealed no fracture.

LOTTERER OUT OF LUCK

Andretti Autosport's Andre Lotterer was an early retirement, after colliding with McLaren driver Rene Rast at Virage Anthony Noghes. Lotterer had qualified 10th, one spot ahead of team-mate Jake Dennis, but was eliminated on the second lap after the contact with Rast, who had swept around the outside of his fellow German into the right turn. The impact with Rast's right-rear tyre speared Lotterer into the barrier on the start/finish straight. Rast eventually finished 17th after pitting for a new front wing and damaging it later in the race.

BIZARRE POLE DRAMA

McLaren Nissan ace Jake Hughes (below) inherited pole position for the Monaco E-Prix, despite not setting a qualifying time in his final duel with Sacha Fenestraz. Hughes cut across the Nouvelle Chicane on his lap, negating his time, while Fenestraz posted a 1m29.131s to take provisional pole. But the works Nissan driver was also stripped of his lap for exceeding the permitted power output during his attempt. With neither driver having registered a time, Hughes was eventually handed pole due to being the first car running on the road in the session – a position determined by the driver who progresses with the fastest semi-final time going second in the final segment.



LOPEZ



GALLOWAY

Cassidy now has a handy points lead as the season enters its second half

RESULTS ROUND 7/11, MONTE CARLO (MCO), 6 MAY (29 LAPS – 60.132 MILES)

POS	DRIVER	TEAM/CAR	TIME
1	Nick Cassidy (NZL)	Envision Racing / Jaguar I-Type6	50m23.842s
2	Mitch Evans (NZL)	Jaguar Racing / Jaguar I-Type 6	+0.390s
3	Jake Dennis (GBR)	Andretti / Porsche 99X Electric Gen3	+1.017s
4	Sacha Fenestraz (FRA)	Nissan / Nissan e-4ORCE 04	+2.148s
5	Jake Hughes (GBR)	McLaren / Nissan e-4ORCE 04	+2.788s
6	Dan Ticktum (GBR)	NIO 333 / NIO 333 ER9	+3.368s
7	Jean-Eric Vergne (FRA)	DS Penske / DS E-Tense FE23	+4.374s
8	Sebastien Buemi (CHE)	Envision Racing / Jaguar I-Type 6	+4.783s
9	Stoffel Vandoorne (BEL)	DS Penske / DS E-Tense FE23	+5.394s
10	Pascal Wehrlein (DEU)	Porsche / Porsche 99X Electric Gen3	+6.705s
11	Edoardo Mortara (CHE)	Maserati / Maserati Tipo Folgore	+7.624s
12	Lucas di Grassi (BRA)	Mahindra Racing / Mahindra M9Electro	+8.576s
13	Robin Frijns (NLD)	Abt / Mahindra M9Electro	+9.620s
14	Sergio Sette Camara (BRA)	NIO 333 / NIO 333 ER9	+10.684s
15	Antonio Felix da Costa (PRT)	Porsche / Porsche 99X Electric Gen3	+11.141s
16	Sam Bird (GBR)	Jaguar Racing / Jaguar I-Type 6	+11.469s
17	Rene Rast (DEU)	McLaren / Nissan e-4ORCE 04	+12.295s
18	Norman Nato (FRA)	Nissan / Nissan e-4ORCE 04	+13.423s
R	Nico Muller (CHE)	Abt / Mahindra M9Electro	27 laps-accident
R	Maximilian Guenther (DEU)	Maserati / Maserati Tipo Folgore	21 laps-accident
R	Oliver Rowland (GBR)	Mahindra Racing / Mahindra M9Electro	18 laps-accident damage/injury
R	Andre Lotterer (DEU)	Andretti / Porsche 99X Electric Gen3	1 lap-accident

Winner's average speed 71.589mph. **Fastest lap** Dennis 1m31.119s, 81.922mph.

QUALIFYING 1 Hughes no time; 2 Fenestraz no time; 3 Nato 1m29.236s; 4 Guenther 1m29.450s; 5 Ticktum 1m29.326s; 6 Evans 1m29.350s; 7 Mortara 1m29.484s; 8 Sette Camara no time; 9 Cassidy 1m30.427s; 10 Lotterer 1m30.332s; 11 Dennis 1m30.548s; 12 Wehrlein 1m30.481s; 13 Rowland 1m30.555s; 14 Rast 1m30.613s; 15 Buemi 1m30.570s; 16 Bird 1m30.645s; 17 Muller 1m30.610s; 18 Frijns 1m30.937s; 19 da Costa 1m30.675s; 20 di Grassi 1m30.821s; 21 Vandoorne no time; 22 Vergne no time.

CHAMPIONSHIP 1 Cassidy 121; 2 Wehrlein 101; 3 Dennis 96; 4 Evans 94; 5 Vergne 87; 6 da Costa 68; 7 Bird 62; 8 Buemi 61; 9 Hughes 45; 10 Rast 40.

NEXT REPORT

JAKARTA E-PRIX
8 JUNE ISSUE



Sutton did enough to keep Ingram at arm's length in the second race...

BTCC BRANDS HATCH

Sutton untied for another cup run

The three-time champion was brilliant for two wins at Brands Hatch, although one of them came thanks to a penalty for Ricky Collard

MARCUS SIMMONS

PHOTOGRAPHY JEP 

Even as he left the opening round at Donington Park in ninth position in the British Touring Car Championship standings, Ash Sutton appeared to be the favourite – perhaps even clear favourite – to claim the 2023 title. Such had been his astonishing pace when all was going well that it was difficult to see anyone getting near his much-developed Motorbase Performance Ford Focus ST over the course of the season. Only a succession of miscues, some self-induced, had wrecked his points tally in the East Midlands.

The setbacks appeared to be continuing at Brands Hatch last weekend on a miserably soggy Saturday, when Sutton laboured to fourth spot in qualifying, despite having more hybrid power usage

available to him than those ahead on the starting grid due to his lowly points position. But as the long-forgotten British sunshine emerged from the Kent clouds on Sunday, so the three-time champion emerged like a turbocharged butterfly from a chrysalis to put in a sensational performance across the three races. A second place in race one was followed by two wins – one of them from 11th on the reversed grid, and with the maximum restriction on hybrid – albeit only after a penalty for on-the-road victor Ricky Collard.

Such is the power of the NAPA-liveried Motorbase ensemble this season that, when Sutton stumbled at Donington, it was team-mate Dan Cammish who stepped up with two wins to top the standings. This continued on Saturday at Brands, with the Yorkshireman firing



...and scored his first win of the 2023 season...



...while his second came despite being beaten across the line by Collard's Toyota

his Focus onto pole by an incredible margin of 0.271 seconds over a 54s lap. And yes, those hybrid paradoxes were in force here too because, as series leader, Cammish had the biggest restriction.

Sutton had cut a relaxed figure, setting a superb early time to seemingly cement his place in the top 10 shootout. He retired to the pits to watch the ITV coverage of Q1, delayed by three red flags, on an iPad. But as the degrees of wetness waxed and waned, he was forced back on track to defend his position. Second place, behind the West Surrey Racing-run BMW 330e M Sport of Jake Hill, was the result, but no matter: he was into the battle for pole. And then Q2 went wrong for the new dad, whose baby son was attending his first race meeting at the age of two and a half weeks. "We bolted another

"We were confident with what we had, but then there was no grip whatsoever"

set of tyres on and had a complete imbalance," bemoaned Sutton, presumably referring to his Focus rather than the family pram. "We were confident with what we had, but then there was no grip whatsoever. Whether it was a tyre thing, a tyre temperature thing, we don't know. The rear tyres just couldn't generate enough grip."

Out the back of the Motorbase garage, Cammish was gratefully accepting the plaudits after an exceptional lap that came after pitting mid-session for a new pair of front tyres. "I was almost subdued," he related of his initial radio exchange with engineer James Mundy. "I thought, 'Has that just happened?' But I'm more confident with the car and the team than I ever have been. It feels like a whole new start. The lap was all the pieces of the jigsaw. I said to the engineers, 'This car, there's a lap time in it, but I keep making mistakes'. And finally I put every piece of the jigsaw together and drove clean and committed."

In between the two Fords sat the WSR BMWs of Colin Turkington and Jake Hill, the four-time champion nabbing the internecine verdict by 0.006s. This was impressive from the rear-wheel-drive machines, which did seem to suffer in the wet on the same track last season, but even so Turkington took a couple of grassy detours at Graham Hill Bend in Q1. "I was at the sharp end throughout but, that said, it was like a test session," he mused. "Every time I came into the pits we were looking to try to find grip, and I'm not sure anything was working other than when we put new tyres on."

Meanwhile, Hill had required an escape from the midfield to even make Q2. "After the last red flag I dropped to 12th and I was thinking, 'Christ', but we boxed for another set of boots and went to the >>

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top,” he recounted. “When the rain came again for Q2 it just took away that edge we [the BMWs] were starting to have.”

While Hill had a steady race to fourth in the opener, Turkington found the winner’s circle. To be fair, he was always a favourite for this one, once his BMW emerged from the garage on the soft Goodyear rubber, the option tyres back for Brands after a one-year hiatus in 2022 while teams got to grips with the heavier hybrid cars (the option tyre rule wasn’t imposed for Donington, which was wet anyway). Cammish too was on the softs, but surely Turkington’s rear-drive traction would get him into Paddock Hill Bend in front.

It did, but then there was a midfield pile-up at Clark Curve that involved the two other BMWs – those of Stephen Jelley and Adam

“It was bonkers. Your next lap could be 1.5s slower, I’ve never known anything like it”

Morgan – plus Dan Rowbottom’s Motorbase Ford and Andrew Watson’s Power Maxed Racing Vauxhall. Jelley’s impacts with the barrier dividing the track from the pitlane, and Morgan, not only caused enough damage to the BMW to sideline him until race three, but also triggered almost an hour’s worth of orange-overalled toil as the barrier was repaired. Turkington then hopped back aboard and did it again, with Cammish this time plummeting to fourth.

Sutton, on the regular medium tyres, and Cammish quickly demoted Hill (also on mediums), but there was no stopping Turkington. That BMW was sweet as a nut on the soft Goodyears. “The soft tyre was really good on my car and at that time of day, when the track was still green from yesterday,” he smiled. “I was able to capitalise, and in conjunction with 10 laps of hybrid use it was a good [tyre] strategy.” Cammish used his soft tyres to get onto the back of Sutton, but had considerably less hybrid use available to him (five laps to 12). “I had performance in terms of tyre but lost quite a lot down the straights,” he explained. “By the time we had equal hybrid available I had the faster car, but what do you do with two laps to go? It was better to bring it home than risk it.”

With all the leading contenders on medium tyres for race two, Turkington’s challenge was blunted. Not only did he have no answer to Sutton, but also he was powerless to prevent Tom Ingram from moving in front of him with a blistering opening lap from fifth on the grid. The reigning champion had enjoyed a decent enough weekend at Donington, but his Excelr8 Motorsport Hyundai i30 N didn’t seem as sharp as it did in 2022, certainly compared to those absolute



weapons of Ford Focuses. “I was a little worried if I’m honest,” offered Ingram. “But we just did a lot of homework after Donington, looked at a lot of what’s worked in the past, what hasn’t worked. We could very easily have got into a state of ‘we’re struggling.’” Ingram went on to claim another podium in the finale, happy that “the Hyundai feels alive again – we’ve got that feeling back”.

The conditions in qualifying masked the progress made, and Ingram took seventh on the grid: “It was bonkers – it was a different amount of wetness by the run. Your next lap could be 1.5s slower, I’ve never known anything like it.” But in the first race he rose to fifth, thanks to a fantastic lunge on Rory Butcher’s Speedworks Motorsport Toyota Corolla at Paddock Hill Bend in the late stages.

Ingram then propelled himself into the mix at the start of race two, but his chase of Sutton was a forlorn one. He had more hybrid available, but could never get within 0.3s. Once he had run this down to be level with Sutton’s boost allowance, the leading Ford accelerated away again. It was close, but more cat-and-mouse than thrilling. “Once I’d done the fastest lap, you think, ‘Chill out and look after the tyre,’” explained Sutton. “Then I drove around at 90% so I had tyre at the end. If a safety car came out five laps from the end, you don’t want to have no hybrid and no tyre. Once he got close it was a case of managing it, but our pace on the mediums was mega.”

Behind the leading trio, Hill passed Cammish at mid-distance for fourth. “In race two we were an awful lot stronger, but we’ve really struggled with the medium, which is bizarre because the car’s been really strong here in testing on them,” puzzled the local man. “This »





time we didn't have any bite." With that in mind, and Sutton's pace, he perhaps shouldn't have beaten the Ford of Cammish, but there was a reason. "There was a slight failure on the rotary dial so I was left on the wrong map," said 'DanCam'. "It doesn't run the engine quite so hard." He was also left pondering his starts: "I had some great ones at Donington, but this time I'm struggling to get it off the line. I've got more wheelspin than Ash but I've got more clutch pressure, so there should be more slip. It's something I've got to understand. Is it me, is it warm-up, or has today just been a bit of a bastard?!"

Maybe it was, but fortune was on Cammish's side – plus Turkington's – in the finale. They were on medium tyres, surrounded by runners on the softs, and on the opening lap dropped from seventh and ninth respectively on the reversed grid to 10th and 11th. They were classified fourth and fifth, Cammish still ahead, despite not overtaking anybody, thanks to a good old-fashioned race of attrition.

First Sam Osborne, who had risen to eighth on the option tyre in race two after a qualifying shunt, ran wide onto the grass at Graham

“The car was flying – I was thrilled to bits with it. It really comes alive on the softs”

Hill Bend. Then George Gamble, getting to grips nicely with front-wheel drive in his Speedworks Toyota, suffered a puncture while running sixth. Shortly after that, Gamble's team-mate Rory Butcher, enjoying another consistent weekend despite never getting the set-up within the window he prefers, had a head-gasket failure before the engine gave up. Josh Cook, who'd been running just behind Butcher in seventh place in his One Motorsport Honda Civic Type R, skated into the gravel at Paddock Hill Bend when he hit the Toyota's oil. And then Hill, who had charged to fourth and was hunting down Bobby Thompson's Team Hard Cupra Leon, had a left-rear puncture at Paddock that sent him into a wild spin.

A decidedly grumpy Hill described how he and team-mate Morgan (who recovered to sixth in this encounter following his involvement in the first-race shunt) had suffered the same problem in testing, and that "it's bitten me in the arse". And the same thing happened in this race to the sister BMW of Jelley, who like Hill went to the pits, and in his case used the soft tyres on his return to the track to circulate just 0.1s off Sutton's fastest lap. Perhaps there's a fragility here, but there's no question that the 3 Series is quick on those softs. "The car was flying – I was thrilled to bits with it," added Hill. "It really comes alive on the softs, there's no two ways about it."

Up front, there was heartbreak for Speedworks to add to the woes of Gamble and Butcher. There's promise in the Cheshire operation, no question. Butcher was quick all day Saturday, but didn't get a quick lap during the early phase of Q1, meaning he had to have his intended Q2 set of wets bolted on to make a last-ditch passage into the shootout. Fifth on the grid on the same tyres was therefore a good result.



Butcher's remarkable run of 34 consecutive points finishes came to a smoky end

Red flag for (l-r)
Jelley, Rowbottom,
Morgan and
Watson shunt...

WHY THOMPSON'S ASCENT IS NO FLUKE

Reigning Jack Sears Trophy champion Bobby Thompson is making a habit of reversed-grid podiums at Brands Indy. His third place in 2022 made him ineligible for JST honours in subsequent seasons, and he was third on the road again last weekend – elevated to second with Ricky Collard's penalty.

But Thompson is much more than an occasional fluky reversed-grid guy. His Team Hard Cupra Leon finished just 0.948 seconds adrift of winner Ash Sutton last Sunday, his car control is superb, and remember that he was battling with the title contenders on pace at last season's Brands GP finale. What's more, he now has former Team Dynamics technical chief Barry Plowman in his corner, with ex-Triple Eight, West Surrey Racing and Team BMR wizard Kevin Berry in overall engineering charge.

"I'm not doing anything different to what I've done the past five years," declared Thompson after qualifying a fine sixth in the wet. "It's a matter of good staff on board and getting good engineers from manufacturer teams to work with us. The BTCC has been about Barry and Kev for 20 years, hasn't it? Kev lets Barry and me go our own route, if you put it that way, and see if it works and then put it on Dan's [Lloyd]. I'm OK to be a guinea pig when you've got someone like Barry! We came into this weekend with a massive change in the car, a completely different set-up, and it seems to work in the wet and dry."

Unfortunately for Thompson, a couple of factors conspired against him last Sunday, potentially denying him a reversed-grid win from pole, although he did put in a strong run to sixth in the opening race. "We've got an issue with the start procedure," he revealed. "We're a bit far off the limit at the moment. But how strong we are from lap 10 to 20, that's where we come into our own."

Thompson, indeed, completed laps 11 to 24 of the finale quicker than Collard and eventual winner Ash Sutton. And that's with a new-build Cupra that's struggling for straightline speed. "Had we not had that issue we could have really put it to Ash," he added. "It's a brand-new car and we're struggling with drag. I know it's not an issue with the M-Sport engine because we're the slowest of the six cars in our garage." Once that's sorted out, don't rule Thompson out of a 'proper' race one or two podium, or perhaps even a win.



But now it was Collard in the limelight for Speedworks. From the front row he'd got the jump on poleman Thompson (see right), and his bid to become the first mulleted BTCC victor since Robb Gravett was on. But then along came Sutton... He'd used two of his five laps of available hybrid to take his third fastest lap of the day and aid his rise from 11th to second within five laps. Then he chipped away at Collard, who had the full 12 laps of hybrid. The pressure was on.

Then came the bombshell – the Track Limits Fun Police were having their say. Notification came that Collard had been hit with a 10s penalty. But hey, penalties can always be rescinded; Sutton wanted to pass anyway. With just over a lap to go, Collard defended into Clearways and Sutton got a run onto Brabham Straight. The Ford was edged towards the grass, but Sutton kept his foot planted and was ahead into Paddock. Then Collard fought back into Druids and moved back in front. He flashed across the line to take the chequered flag, but, as if losing the win wasn't enough, his battle with Sutton had allowed Morgan and Tom Chilton into the 10s window on the final lap, relegating him to eighth in the results.

OK, he was on the soft tyres, but even second place from 11th on the grid with the least hybrid would have been a miracle for Sutton. "This is our dry pace," he emphasised. "We've worked so hard over the winter with it. When we get this thing in the window, she's fast. I've never felt so confident in a touring car..." And that is very ominous for the opposition. 🦋



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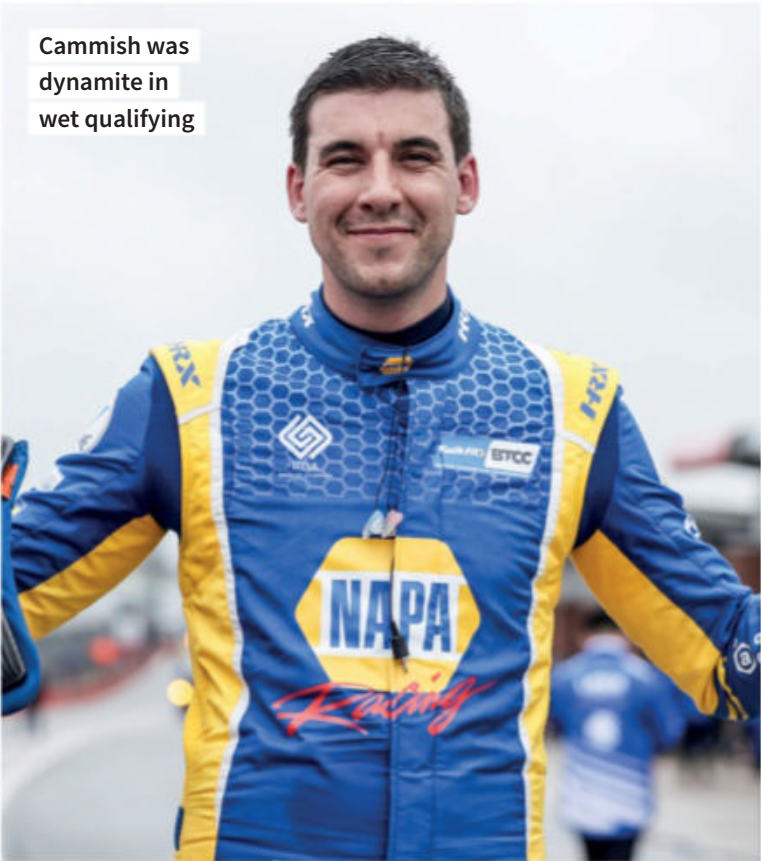
ROUND 2/10, BRANDS HATCH (GBR), 7 MAY RACE 1 (18 LAPS – 21.742 MILES)

POS	DRIVER	TEAM / CAR	TIME
1	Colin Turkington (GBR)	West Surrey Racing / BMW 330e M Sport (S)	14m43.255s
2	Ash Sutton (GBR)	Motorbase Performance / Ford Focus ST	+1.335s
3	Dan Cammish (GBR)	Motorbase Performance / Ford Focus ST (S)	+1.716s
4	Jake Hill (GBR)	West Surrey Racing / BMW 330e M Sport	+5.712s
5	Tom Ingram (GBR)	Excelr8 Motorsport / Hyundai i30 N	+9.592s
6	Bobby Thompson (GBR)	Team Hard / Cupra Leon	+11.010s
7	Rory Butcher (GBR)	Speedworks Motorsport / Toyota Corolla GR Sport (S)	+11.779s
8	Josh Cook (GBR)	One Motorsport / Honda Civic Type R	+14.125s
9	Ricky Collard (GBR)	Speedworks Motorsport / Toyota Corolla GR Sport	+14.634s
10	Dan Lloyd (GBR)	Team Hard / Cupra Leon	+16.652s
11	George Gamble (GBR)	Speedworks Motorsport / Toyota Corolla GR Sport	+21.400s
12	Aron Taylor-Smith (IRL)	Power Maxed Racing / Vauxhall Astra	+23.360s
13	Aiden Moffat (GBR)	One Motorsport / Honda Civic Type R	+24.103s
14	Sam Osborne (GBR)	Motorbase Performance / Ford Focus ST	+24.287s
15	Tom Chilton (GBR)	Excelr8 Motorsport / Hyundai i30 N	+24.629s
16	Ronan Pearson (GBR)	Excelr8 Motorsport / Hyundai i30 N	+24.976s
17	Dexter Patterson (GBR)	Team Hard / Cupra Leon	+25.319s
18	Jack Butel (GBR)	Team Hard / Cupra Leon (S)	+25.576s
19	Mikey Doble (GBR)	Power Maxed Racing / Vauxhall Astra	+26.427s
20	Jade Edwards (GBR)	Team Hard / Cupra Leon	+30.103s
21	Nicolas Hamilton (GBR)	Team Hard / Cupra Leon (S)	+30.838s
22	Will Powell (GBR)	One Motorsport / Honda Civic Type R	+33.150s
23	Nick Halstead (GBR)	Excelr8 Motorsport / Hyundai i30 N (S)	+33.872s
R	Stephen Jelley (GBR)	West Surrey Racing / BMW 330e M Sport	0 laps-accident
R	Dan Rowbottom (GBR)	Motorbase Performance / Ford Focus ST	0 laps-accident
R	Andrew Watson (GBR)	Power Maxed Racing / Vauxhall Astra (S)	0 laps-accident
R	Adam Morgan (GBR)	West Surrey Racing / BMW 330e M Sport	0 laps-accident

Winner's average speed 88.62mph. Fastest lap Sutton 48.375s, 89.89mph. (S) = soft tyre.

QUALIFYING

Q2 1 Cammish 54.297s; 2 Turkington 54.568s; 3 Hill 54.574s; 4 Sutton 54.638s; 5 Butcher 54.709s; 6 Thompson 54.802s; 7 Ingram 54.964s; 8 Cook 54.985s; 9 Lloyd 55.056s; 10 Pearson 55.328s.
Q1 Hill 54.397s; Sutton 54.511s; Turkington 54.530s; Cammish 54.591s; Butcher 54.730s; Ingram 54.813s; Thompson 54.826s; Cook 54.897s; Lloyd 54.942s; Pearson 55.000s; 11 Chilton 55.001s; 12 Taylor-Smith 55.099s; 13 Butel 55.117s; 14 Collard 55.210s; 15 Patterson 55.214s; 16 Gamble 55.356s; 17 Jelley 55.376s; 18 Edwards 55.428s; 19 Rowbottom 55.250s*; 20 Watson 55.440s; 21 Moffat 55.503s; 22 Doble 55.781s; 23 Osborne 56.148s; 24 Morgan 56.814s; 25 Hamilton 57.195s; 26 Powell 57.672s; 27 Halstead 58.118s. *grid penalty.



Cammish was dynamite in wet qualifying

GRID RACE 2 Decided by result of Race 1.

RACE 2 (24 LAPS – 28.990 MILES)

1 Sutton 19m40.610s; 2 Ingram +0.933s; 3 Turkington +3.405s; 4 Hill +6.859s; 5 Cammish +10.598s; 6 Butcher +12.383s; 7 Cook +13.912s; 8 Gamble +14.238s; 9 Collard +14.350s; 10 Osborne (S) +14.668s; 11 Thompson +15.087s; 12 Chilton +16.152s; 13 Pearson (S) +16.659s; 14 Lloyd +22.151s; 15 Rowbottom +22.994s; 16 Morgan +23.277s; 17 Patterson (S) +27.380s; 18 Doble (S) +28.468s; 19 Moffat +30.295s; 20 Watson +34.698s; 21 Powell (S) +35.675s; 22 Edwards (S) +36.648s; 23 Halstead +50.101s; 24 Butel -2 laps; 25 Hamilton -2 laps; R Taylor-Smith (S) 17 laps-engine; NS Jelley damage.
Winner's average speed 88.40mph.
Fastest lap Sutton 48.285s, 90.06mph.

GRID RACE 3 Decided by finishing order of Race 2, with top 11 reversed. Osborne had 0.5s penalty in Race 2 so started fourth, with Collard second and Gamble third.

RACE 3 (24 LAPS – 28.990 MILES)

1 Sutton (S) 19m44.696s; 2 Thompson (S) +0.948s; 3 Ingram (S) +5.901s; 4 Cammish +7.623s; 5 Turkington +8.457s; 6 Morgan (S) +9.507s; 7 Chilton (S) +9.682s; 8 Collard (S) +9.800s; 9 Rowbottom (S) +10.680s; 10 Cook (S) +11.677s; 11 Lloyd (S) +11.953s; 12 Moffat (S) +15.352s; 13 Pearson +20.399s; 14 Osborne +21.909s; 15 Patterson +24.073s; 16 Doble +24.648s; 17 Butel +25.225s; 18 Powell +33.652s; 19 Hamilton +37.944s; 20 Halstead +38.319s; 21 Gamble (S) -1 lap; 22 Hill (S) -2 laps; 23 Watson -2 laps; 24 Jelley (S) -2 laps; R Butcher 14 laps-engine; R Edwards 2 laps-accident damage; NS Taylor-Smith engine.
Winner's average speed 88.09mph.
Fastest lap Sutton 48.281s, 90.06mph.

CHAMPIONSHIP

1 Cammish 88; 2 Ingram 83; 3 Sutton 78; 4 Turkington 70; 5 Hill 58; 6 Thompson 48; 7 Chilton 44; 8 Cook 39; 9 Morgan 36; 10 Collard 35.

NEXT EVENT

SNETTERTON 21 MAY ISSUE

This is traditional BMW territory, so if the Fords are winning here, then it's not looking good for the rest



YASUSHI ISHIHARA

TOM'S pair are Toyota's Golden boys at home

SUPER GT
FUJI (JPN)
4 MAY
ROUND 2/8

TOM'S pair Sho Tsuboi and Ritomo Miyata delivered Toyota's first win of the 2023 Super GT season on the marque's home turf at Fuji. After a wild opening race at Okayama, the 450km Golden Week fixture proved a surprisingly tame affair, with not a single caution period interrupting a dominant display by the #36 TOM'S Toyota GR Supra.

Tsuboi climbed from sixth on the grid to second in the first stint, and by the time of his first pitstop was challenging

the pole-winning Team Kunimitsu Honda of Tadasuke Makino for the lead. A faster pitstop and out-lap put Tsuboi ahead, with Miyata taking over at the second stop for the final stint and beating the Kunimitsu NSX-GT of Makino and Naoki Yamamoto by a comfortable 28.5 seconds.

While the winner was in little doubt from the mid-point of the race, the battle for the final podium spot went down to the wire as two cars hit late trouble. First to stumble was the Kondo Racing Nissan Z, when Kohei Hirate got tangled up with GT300 traffic with five laps to go and sustained front-left damage that proved terminal. That promoted the #8 ARTA Honda to third, but Toshiki Oyu dramatically slowed exiting the

final corner on the penultimate lap and crawled into the pits, out of fuel.

Those misfortunes gave third to the Real Racing Honda of Koudai Tsukakoshi and Nobuharu Matsushita, while the lead Nissan representative was the NDDP Racing entry of Katsumasa Chiyo and Mitsunori Takaboshi in fifth behind the Rookie Racing Toyota.

NISMO Nissan duo Ronnie Quintarelli and Tsugio Matsuda held on to the series lead by finishing seventh with 42kg of success ballast after their Okayama win.

JAMIE KLEIN

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Garcia bounces back to keep in track limits

F1 ACADEMY
VALENCIA (ESP)
6-7 MAY
ROUND 2/7

Marta Garcia retained her position at the top of the all-female F1 Academy thanks to victory in the final race at Valencia, but it had been a tough weekend up until then for the Prema Racing-run local driver.

It was another Spaniard, Nerea Marti, who took pole for the opening race, but the Campos Racing driver could not prevent Hamda Al Qubaisi bursting through at the start to put her MP Motorsport car in front.



Garcia leads Marti
 and Pulling at the
 start of final race

The Emirati held on all the way to win, and her team-mate and big sister Amna finished third behind Marti, only to be hit with two track-limits penalties. That promoted Lena Buhler to third. Garcia, meanwhile, lost her pole position due to her own track-limits offences, but charged from 12th to sixth.

Garcia stayed on the track in qualifying for the finale, and converted her pole into a lights-to-flag win. Marti got ahead of

front-row starter Abbi Pulling (Rodin Carlin), pulled away from the Brit for second, and applied the pressure to Garcia. In turn, Buhler was close behind Pulling.

In the reversed-grid race, it was Prema's Bianca Bustamante who led all the way. Buhler was second after holding off the challenge from Al Qubaisi Jr. Apart from Pulling, the best British result was Chloe Grant's fourth place in race one.

Hamlin wins amid boos and a punch-up

NASCAR CUP
KANSAS SPEEDWAY (USA)
7 MAY
ROUND 12/36

Denny Hamlin and Kyle Larson tangled on the final lap at Kansas Speedway before Hamlin came away with his first NASCAR Cup win of the 2023 season.

In one of the most competitive races of the year – it featured 37 lead changes among 12 different drivers – Larson and Hamlin separated themselves into a one-on-one battle in the final 25 of 267 laps. With five laps to go and Larson’s Hendrick Motorsports Chevrolet holding onto a tenuous lead, the Joe Gibbs Racing Toyota of Hamlin got alongside Larson at one point but couldn’t complete the pass and was forced to back off.

On the final lap, Hamlin again got near Larson off Turn 2 and nudged the Chevy in



the left-rear, which knocked it into the wall. Larson was able to keep going, but Hamlin easily cleared him by 1.307 seconds at the chequered flag to claim the win.

After a celebratory burnout on the frontstretch, Hamlin was roundly booed by the crowd as he exited his Toyota to do his victory interview. “I got position on him and I tried to side-draft him and clipped his left-rear,” he said. “I’m glad he was able to at least finish. It’s the new NASCAR – it’s what everyone cheers about when someone else does it. It was great for us to get back

into position to get close to him and get him loose through [Turns] 1 and 2.”

The win is the 49th of Hamlin’s career and ended a nearly year-long winless drought. While he was celebrating, Noah Gragson grabbed Ross Chastain on pitroad and began pushing him repeatedly until Chastain struck him in the face. The two were quickly separated by NASCAR officials.

William Byron, who fell two laps down at one point, rallied back to finish third ahead of Bubba Wallace and Chastain.

JIM UTTER

Audi trio lead the way at Spa

24H SERIES
SPA 12 HOURS (BEL)
6-7 MAY
ROUND 4/8


Dramas for serial 24H Series race winners Herberth Motorsport led to the stalwart Porsche squad’s defeat in Belgium by the youthful French Sainteloc Junior Team Audi trio.

The Heart of Racing by SPS Mercedes looked in good shape after the first six-hour ‘heat’ on Saturday, with team chief Ian James and Gray Newell keeping it steady amid typical Spa rain to lead, and with ‘gun’ driver Roman De Angelis being held back for Sunday. Just 7.7 seconds behind Newell at the flag was Sainteloc’s Erwan Bastard, sharing with

Antoine Doquin and Paul Evrard. Ralf Bohn crossed the line third in the Herberth car, after stints from Laurin Heinrich and Daniel Allemann.

Twin brothers Robert and Alfred Renauer joined the Herberth line-up on Sunday following the departure of Bohn, but they came unstuck when they had to pit twice for fuel during a Code 60. Young talent Heinrich’s late charge was further scuppered by a puncture.

Sainteloc finished nearly two minutes in front, while the HoR Mercedes was one lap adrift in third. Fourth was the JP Motorsport McLaren of Christian Klien, Norbert Siedler and Patryk Krupinski.

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WEEKEND WINNERS

- SUPER GT**
FUJI (JPN)
Sho Tsuboi/Ritomo Miyata
TOM’S (Toyota GR Supra)
- F1 ACADEMY**
VALENCIA (ESP)
Race 1 Hamda Al Qubaisi
MP Motorsport
Race 2 Bianca Bustamante
Prema Racing
Race 3 Marta Garcia
Prema Racing
- NASCAR CUP**
KANSAS SPEEDWAY (USA)
Denny Hamlin
Joe Gibbs Racing (Toyota Camry)

- 24H SERIES**
SPA (BEL)
Erwan Bastard/Antoine Doquin/Paul Evrard
Sainteloc Junior Team (Audi R8 LMS GT3 Evo II)
- EUROCUP-3**
SPA (BEL)
Race 1 Francesco Braschi
Campos Racing
Race 2 Mari Boya
MP Motorsport

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1991 Original 905
was an aerodynamic
disaster in Group C



PEUGEOT AT LE MANS

MORE STYLE OVER SUBSTANCE?

Like its 905 predecessor, Peugeot's dramatic 9X8 is having early struggles, but the story isn't quite the same this time for the three-time Le Mans-winning marque

GARY WATKINS

PHOTOGRAPHY motorsport
IMAGES

This is the third coming of Peugeot in top-line sportscar racing. The 9X8 Le Mans Hypercar that arrived in the World Endurance Championship in July last year is making its first Le Mans 24 Hours appearance in 2023, and follows the 905 3.5-litre Group C and the 908 turbodiesel LMP1 projects that upheld the honour of France at the big race with a trio of victories between them. Yet neither won at the first attempt. The 2023 WEC formbook would need to be ripped up and then pushed through the shredder for Peugeot to make it number four next month.

There's a parallel between the 905 programme that began nigh on 35 years ago and today's 9X8, though it's not quite what it seems. The company stylists had a big hand in the original version of the V10-powered 905, a porpoising handful that needed a thorough redesign to become a successful double Le Mans winner. The inputs from outside the racing department in the design of today's avant-garde LMH are also clear to see from its aggressive front to the rear devoid of a conventional rear wing.

The LMH rules were framed to allow a Le Mans contender to be imbued with styling cues of the marque – and for them not to be a hindrance in any way. It's what drew Peugeot back into endurance racing for a first campaign in the reborn WEC, a programme signed off nearly eight years on from a board decision that consigned the third, hybrid iteration of the 908 known as the HYBrid4 to the dustbin just a couple of months before the start of the 2012 season.

"The reason was the freedom of design," says Peugeot motorsport boss Jean-Marc Finot of the decision to return to sportscars, made in November 2019. "It was mandatory for us to have a car that incorporated the Peugeot design code, and that is easily recognisable."

The first prototype to emerge from a Peugeot Sport department established by Jean Todt in 1981 was also very much recognisable as a Peugeot: it took its shape from a supercar concept known as the Oxia unveiled at the 1988 Paris motor show. The aerodynamics of the 905 that started racing at the back end of the 1990 World Sports-Prototype Championship were, says Peugeot regular Philippe Alliot, "styled rather than designed".



2023 New 9X8 has issues but tweaked rules are part of that



1991 Heavily revised 905 was setting pace by season's end

British engineer Tim Wright, who joined Peugeot at the behest of star signing Keke Rosberg to help sort the car, reckons “the stylists had had a free hand”. He admits that he was “amazed that this thing that looked so good was so hopeless”.

Just how hopeless became apparent – paradoxically – on the occasion of the first victory of the car. Peugeot drivers Alliot and Mauro Baldi lucked into victory at Suzuka in April 1991 in the opening round of a series renamed the Sportscar World Championship. The 905 was the first pukka 3.5-litre Group C car, which meant there was little by way of a yardstick when it had turned up to the Montreal and Mexico City rounds of the WSPC in 1990. Now it faced another clean-sheet 3.5-litre design, Jaguar’s goalpost-moving XJR-14. The best Peugeot had been a whopping 2.5 seconds behind the pole-winning British car in qualifying.

Minor issues accounted for the Jags that day, but Peugeot knew it was in trouble. There was a sense of shock in the crisis meeting that followed at the old Peugeot Sport headquarters at Velizy on the outskirts of Paris. “We sat there and asked, ‘What can we do?’”

remembers Alliot. “We might have won the race, but we had seen how uncompetitive the car was.”

What Peugeot did was instigate a hurried, yet major development programme focused on aerodynamics that turned a recalcitrant machine into a competitive proposition inside three months. A car delightfully known as the 905 Evo 1 bis didn’t win straight out of the box at the Nurburgring, but it would notch up a 1-2 on home ground at Magny-Cours in September, Rosberg and Yannick Dalmas leading home Alliot and Baldi. It then repeated the trick, with the 905s in the same order, in Mexico City before the season was over.

Jaguar ended its programme in world championship sportscar racing after winning the 1991 SWC, leaving Peugeot to battle it out with Toyota and its new TS010. The 905 won five of the six races in 1992, Le Mans included, after a major endurance test programme was put in place following a disastrous showing at the French classic on the last outing for the original iteration of the 905 in 1991. It was the first of back-to-back triumphs at the Circuit de la Sarthe. It bested Toyota again in 1993, finishing 1-2-3, on the »



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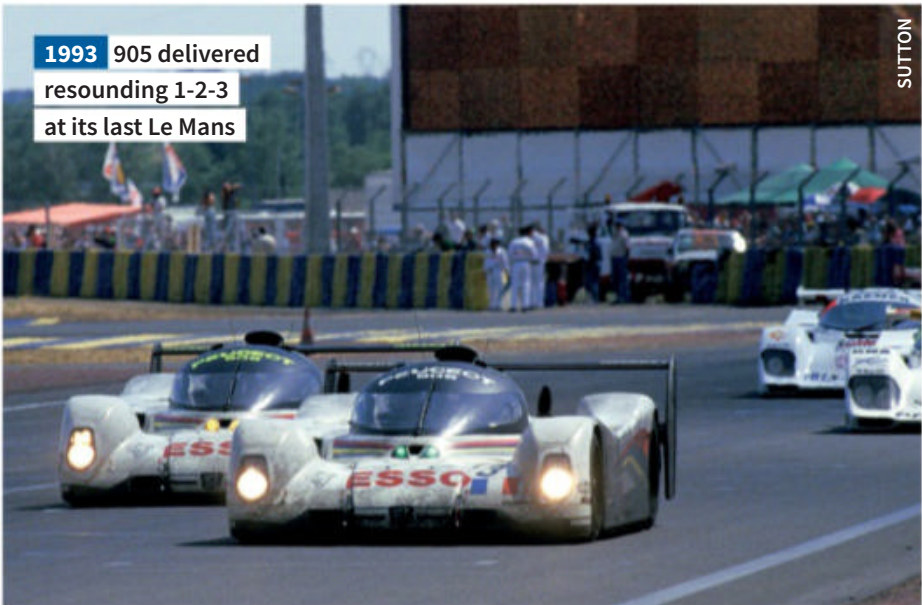
1992 Blundell, Dalmás and Warwick celebrate LM win

only outing for the car after the death of the SWC.

All the drivers involved in the 905 project in its pomp look back at it with fond memories. Dalmás, who took the 1992 Le Mans victory together with Britons Derek Warwick and Mark Blundell, describes the Evo as “a virile racing car”. “You had to be strong to drive that car,” remembers the four-time Le Mans winner. “The g-forces in the corners and under braking were unbelievable.”

Geoff Brabham, who won at Le Mans in 1993 after being brought in to mentor young guns Christophe Bouchut and Eric Helary, has similar memories — and he only drove the car in low-downforce configuration. “I remember thinking that if they had put on all the downforce it would have ripped your head clean off your shoulders,” he recalls. “It was a very physical car to drive.”

The 905 was a triumph of development over design. Fast-forward 30 years, and development in a 1990s sense isn’t a luxury that Peugeot has with the 2.6-litre twin-turbo V6 9X8. The rules in >>



1993 905 delivered resounding 1-2-3 at its last Le Mans

SUTTON

BY THE NUMBERS

PEUGEOT AT LE MANS

3
Victories

2
1-2 finishes

Factory debut
1991

8
Full-factory campaigns

6
Years on the podium

PEUGEOT AT LE MANS



2008 Rapid 908s
lost an epic race
against Audi



2009 The 908 won
Le Mans at the third
time of asking

the Hypercar class strictly limit performance modifications over the lifespan of a car: the technical specification is largely frozen on homologation before an LMH or LMDh can begin racing. The task for the in-house Peugeot Sport team, now based at Satory a few miles down the road from Velizy, is to try to get the most out of an unconventional design that has yet to make much of an impact in six WEC outings so far. The French cars have been at the foot of the manufacturer pecking order in the three pre-Le Mans rounds this year.

It's easy to reach the conclusion that the bosses at Peugeot – those on the design side and those above them – made some incorrect choices when they were conceptualising the 9X8, just like their predecessors. That's too simplistic a view given how the sands shifted as the LMH rules and those for the LMP2-based LMDh category came together.

Olivier Janssonie, technical director on the LMH programme at Satory, insists that the choices were correct when they were made. The door to the wingless concept was pushed invitingly wide open by the size of wheels and tyres a hybrid LMH had to run when the

9X8 was in design. This has since changed, one of a myriad of revisions to the rules since Peugeot announced its return to sportscar racing. A decrease in minimum weight from 1100 to 1040kg for an all-wheel-drive LMH and an increase in the deployment speed for the front-axle hybrid system to mitigate the handling gains are among the others.

The LMH rules, as published, suggested that a manufacturer had two choices on tyre size: 31cm all round or 29cm front and 34cm rear. But that wasn't actually the case, explains Janssonie. Peugeot discussed the possibility of running the 29/34 option with rulemakers the FIA and the Automobile Club de l'Ouest, but was told that a four-wheel-drive hybrid, as the 9X8 was always going to be, had to go with 31/31. The second option was reserved for two-wheel-drive machinery, non-hybrid LMHs and the LMDhs.

That changed during the so-called convergence process. Now all new cars have to run 29/34, unless they were homologated and raced prior to this season. Toyota swapped from 31/31 to 29/34 with its GR010 HYBRID for the 2022 season, citing compromised weight distribution being to the detriment of tyre life.

The same move for Peugeot wasn't possible courtesy of its unusual concept. "The tyre choice made has driven the complete architecture of the car, including the 50-50 weight distribution and no rear wing," says Janssonie. "Why didn't we change? It's not just about putting wider rims at the rear and narrower rims at the front and changing the wishbones. It is much bigger than that. The change in rules came too late for us to be ready for racing in 2022."

Ask Janssonie whether Peugeot would have pushed on with the 9X8 as it is had it known how the rules were going to change, and he replies: "That's a good question. If we'd known what the regulations were going to become, we would probably have done things a bit differently."

The 9X8 design team identified that the 29/34 tyre option had advantages from the get-go, according to Janssonie: "The fact that 29/34 is generating performance was clear to us, but when we made our choices it was not open to us."

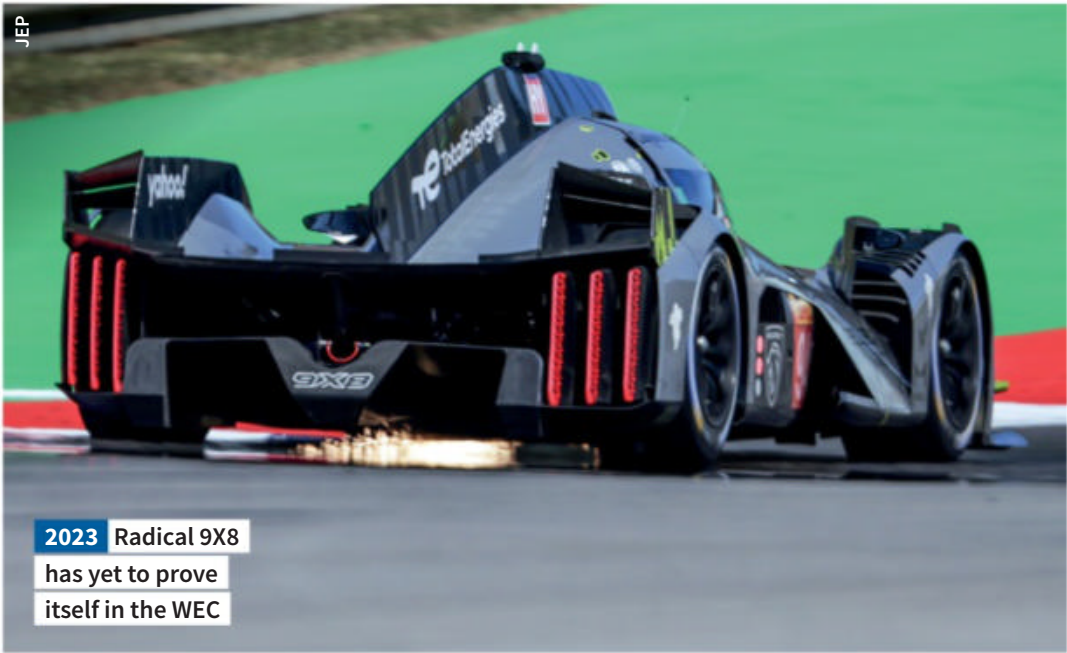
But Janssonie refuses to say that the 9X8 has been belatedly compromised in concept: "It is clearly a car into which we put some effort on the styling. I don't think it is costing us anything on the performance right now, we have no evidence of this."

He does admit, however, that the narrow rears have played a role in the tyre degradation issues experienced so far. "We are struggling on tyres because of our tyre dimensions for sure, on some tracks and in some specific conditions," he says.

The focus for the moment at Peugeot is to create a reliable racing car. It has taken positive steps in that direction over the past two WEC races, the Portimao and Spa 6 Hours events in April, though there remain doubts about the reliability over 24 hours. "You can talk about performance and what effect the tyres will have [in terms of degradation], but the priority is to sort the reliability issues," Janssonie explains. "We have to make sure the car can run long



YOU MAY HAVE FORGOTTEN... Peugeot had a new version of the 905 up its sleeve at the end of 1992. The Evo 2, dubbed the Supercopier after the French name for the US *Airwolf* TV show, was a high-downforce machine aimed at the regular sprints of the SWC. When the series was axed, the Evo 2 was surplus to requirements and remained unraced as Peugeot pushed on with the Evo 1 bis for Le Mans in 1993.



“History doesn’t look back on the 908 programme kindly thanks to its meagre hit rate at Le Mans”

distances without problems, then the performance will come.”

There’s probably some time to go before we know whether Peugeot can turn the 9X8 into a winner, perhaps with the help of the Balance of Performance, or if it has to tear up the concept and start again. A manufacturer is allowed to build an all-new car during the lifecycle of the rules.

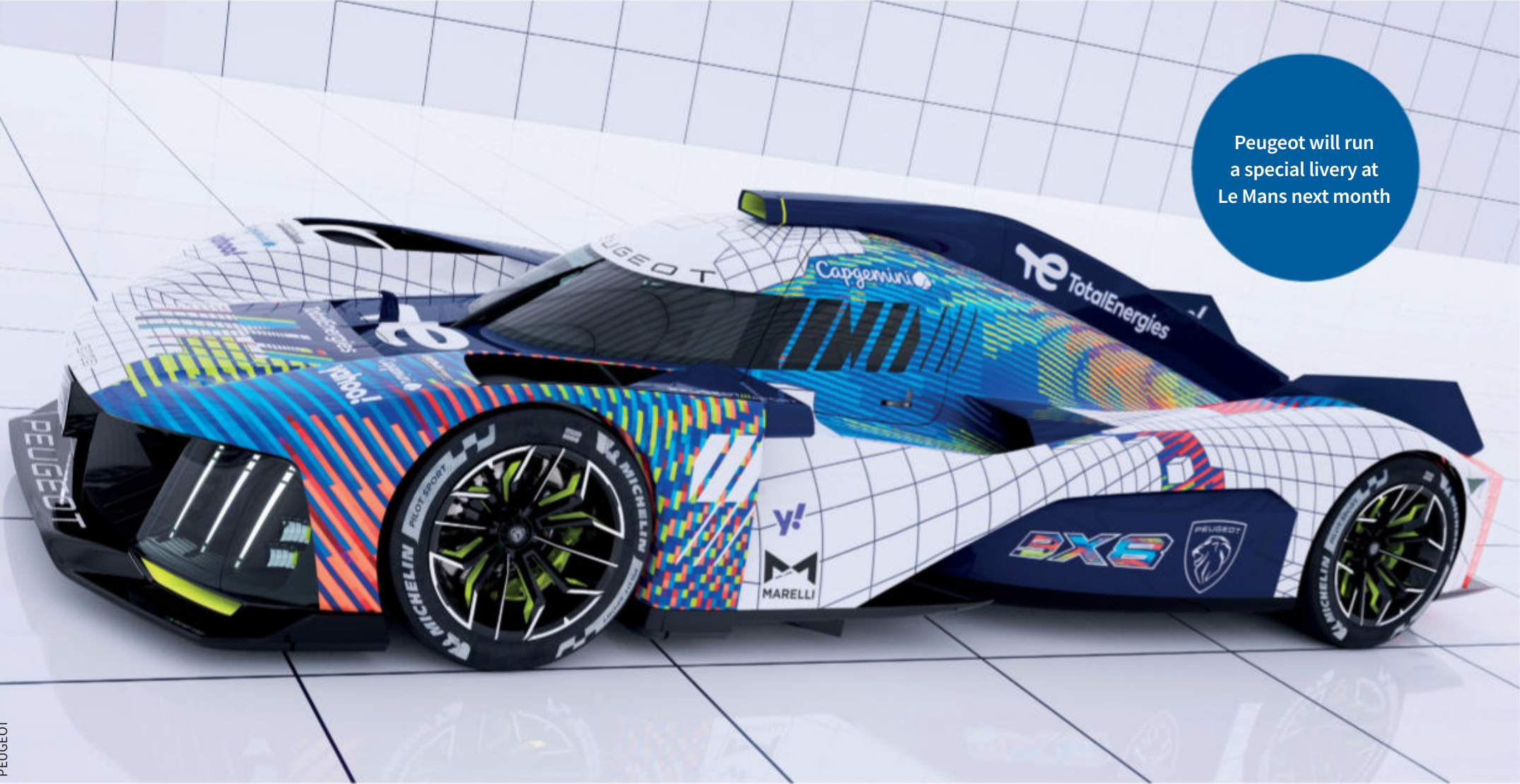
Peugeot will no doubt come in for criticism if the 9X8 falls short again under the glare of the world – or more particularly the French media – at Le Mans. But then it’s used to getting a rough time of it. Two iterations of the 908 turbodiesel – the V12 original and the V8 car known internally as the 90X – contested the 24 Hours five times and managed a single victory. History doesn’t

look back on the programme kindly thanks to its meagre hit rate in the face of opposition from Audi at the race that mattered most.

Yet the arrival of the 908 in 2007 set up one of the great rivalries in sportscar history. The Peugeot and Audi turbodiesels battled for glory all around the world and created two of the greatest ever editions of the 24 Hours at Le Mans in 2008 and 2011. That Peugeot was vanquished both times has undoubtedly influenced the way the 908 programme is now perceived, even though it scored the firm’s third Le Mans victory with a 1-2 in 2009.

A trio of wins in the 24 Hours would have capped what is an amazing CV away from the Circuit de la Sarthe; Peugeot beat Audi more often than not. A tally of 25 wins from 35 starts included victories in the other two classics for which the 908s were eligible: the Sebring 12 Hours and the Petit Le Mans 1000-mile event at Road Atlanta. There were titles racked up along the way, too. Peugeot collected championship silverware in the Le Mans Series and the Intercontinental Le Mans Cup, the forerunner of the WEC.

But the 908 didn’t win Le Mans until the third attempt. The question is whether the 9X8 will get that long. 🍀



FROM A GALAXIE FAR FAR AWAY

Jaguar ruled the roost in the early days of British saloon car racing, but that domination came to an abrupt end 60 years ago thanks to an invasion from the world of NASCAR

KEVIN TURNER

PHOTOGRAPHY  **motorsport**
IMAGES

In April 1963, a Jaguar was the only car to have if you wanted to win races outright in British Saloon Cars. Since the series, now known as the British Touring Car Championship, began in 1958, Big Cats had won 43 races, spread across the legendary Mk1 and Mk2 saloons, plus – bizarrely – a single success for the XK150.

Jaguar's domination stretched back even further, to the very beginning of tin-top racing in the United Kingdom. Stirling Moss had won the production touring car race at the 1952 *Daily Express* International Trophy meeting at Silverstone, the forerunner of the British Saloon Car Championship, in a massive Mk7.

But Jaguar's era ended abruptly on 11 May 1963. When Jack Sears arrived at Silverstone with a John Willment Automobiles-entered Ford Galaxie, a race-winning model from NASCAR, he triggered the start of a period when American V8 power would be *de rigueur* at the front of the field. It would last for more than a decade.

After a troubled practice before the correct Firestone tyres arrived, and a careful start from pole to look after the clutch, Sears blasted past the leading Jaguars on Hangar Straight as he hit 135mph and disappeared down the road in the seven-litre V8. "To my surprise I passed all three Jaguars in the one manoeuvre," said Sears in *Gentleman Jack* by Graham Gauld.

Despite drivers of the calibre of reigning Formula 1 world champion Graham Hill, Roy Salvadori and Mike Salmon, the Jaguars were left behind. Hill suffered tyre failure and Salmon also hit trouble, leaving Salvadori to chase the big Ford. After setting a new lap record, Sears eased off in the closing stages but still won the 12-lap race by more than 20 seconds, despite running most of the

"THE JAGUARS WERE NOW OUTGUNNED BY V8 MUSCLE AND OUTHANDLED BY CHAPMAN'S NEW WONDERSALOON"

distance in fourth gear to protect the clutch. Incredibly, this event also featured the debut of the 1100cc Mini Cooper S, which topped its class and took fifth overall with John Whitmore at the wheel.

The presence of the Galaxie at Aintree at the end of May, a non-championship event, "made the outcome almost a foregone conclusion" according to Autosport. The main challenge for Sears in this 100-mile race was tyre wear. Sears nursed the Galaxie from the start, keeping early leader Salmon's Jaguar at arm's length to win.

Any thoughts that the Galaxie might be beatable at a twisty track were banished at Crystal Palace, the next BSCC round in June. Sears was joined by Gawaine Baillie's Galaxie and, while the second V8 qualified third and finished fourth, Sears comfortably won again.

The Galaxie didn't take over without a fight, but its biggest obstacles were off-track. Perhaps predictably, various technical questions about the American import were raised. The Galaxie's rollage was one of those, resulting in changes that weakened

it so much that "in the event of an accident it would have been quite useless", according to Autosport at season's end. The car was withdrawn from the non-championship, six-hour Brands enduro, but the V8 invasion was here to stay despite the sniping.

On track, the thundering monster continued to blow the 3.8-litre Mk2s away. Sears beat Salmon and set a new lap record in a non-championship bout at Snetterton, and then Sears and Baillie headed to Silverstone for the British GP support race.

There was yet more controversy. The Willment team was forced to convert the cars back to drum brakes overnight after the RAC refused to let them run discs on the front, though the use of discs would become the norm.

It made little difference and Sears reckoned the Galaxie's drums were decent anyway. He powered into the lead from the start and won by more than 5s. Salmon heroically led Baillie for two laps before the second Galaxie rumbled past to complete a 1-2.

Sears's winning streak in the championship finally came to an end at Brands Hatch in August. He suffered a flat tyre while battling for the lead, leaving soon-to-be-crowned F1 world champion Jim Clark to win – in another Galaxie, run by Alan Brown. Autosport was already convinced by the "splendid spectacle" the V8s provided: "It was Clark ahead of Sears, the two Ford Galaxie pilots wrestling at the wheel, working as never before." Hill topped the Jags in second.

Sears switched back to Willment's Ford Cortina GT with which he had started the campaign for the next round at Brands, winning his class in third overall. Galaxie honour was left to Bob Olthoff (Willment) and Salvadori (Brown), with Olthoff victorious. Dan Gurney and Hill then scored a Galaxie 1-2 at Oulton Park, with now double champion Sears third on the debut of the Lotus Cortina.

Sears was quickest in practice for the Snetterton finale driving the Galaxie, then switched to Willment's Lotus Cortina for the race. He followed Clark and Trevor Taylor in a class 1-2-3, while Jack Brabham won in Brown's Galaxie. Salmon was fifth in the leading Jaguar: the hitherto dominant machines were now outgunned by V8 muscle and outhandled by Colin Chapman's new wondersaloon.

Sears and the Galaxie remained the combination to beat in 1964, while Clark in the iconic Lotus Cortina famously took the crown and is now remembered as a giantslayer. But Clark was the only driver to win a BSCC race outright in the 1600cc twin-cam marvel, and a look at the 1964 results shows five Galaxie wins (four to Sears) and three to Clark. The Cortina would have been capable of ending the Jaguar hegemony, but the Galaxie got there first.

The Galaxie, which took its final series win at Goodwood in April 1966 courtesy of Brian Muir, soon gave way to the Mustang, the Falcon and the Chevrolet Camaro in British touring car racing. Smaller-capacity cars often won the title thanks to the idiosyncratic scoring system, but American power would hold sway at the front until they were banned in Britain at the end of 1975. By then, the championship was a very different beast.

The Galaxie truly had changed the game forever. And, six decades later, Jaguar is still waiting for win number 44. 🏆



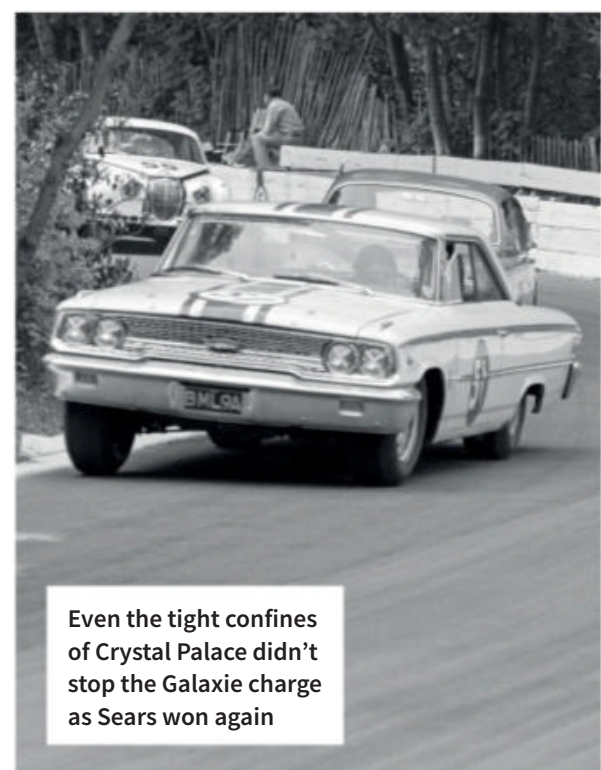
Jack Sears: 1963 champion



Sears and the Galaxie thunder to victory at Silverstone



The Galaxie outran the Mk2s of Salvadori, Salmon and Hill on its UK debut



Even the tight confines of Crystal Palace didn't stop the Galaxie charge as Sears won again



There was a fine entry for the 11 May event



SILVERSTONE
MAY 11th 1963
OFFICIAL PROGRAMME 51s

INTERNATIONAL PRODUCTION TOURING CAR RACE

START 12.45 p.m. 12 LAPS, approx. 36 miles

To the Entrant of the car recording the highest average speed:
A B.R.D.C. TROPHY

In each class: 1st—£20 2nd—£15 3rd—£10

Team Prize: A B.R.D.C. TROPHY

Reserved to the Entrant of the race of five cars of the same make when appropriate placings are the same in the race.

Race Entries

NO.	DRIVER	CAR/ENTRANT	CAPACITY
1	S. E. BURROWS	Anglia (Driver)	1000
2	ELIABETH JIPPER	Anglia (Driver)	1000
3	A. E. RUTY	Anglia (Driver)	1000
4	R. B. BROWN	Anglia (Driver)	1000
5	MICHAEL BURNS GREGG	Anglia (Driver)	1000
6	M. J. LEE	Anglia (Driver)	1000
7	M. J. LEE	Anglia (Driver)	1000
8	M. J. LEE	Anglia (Driver)	1000
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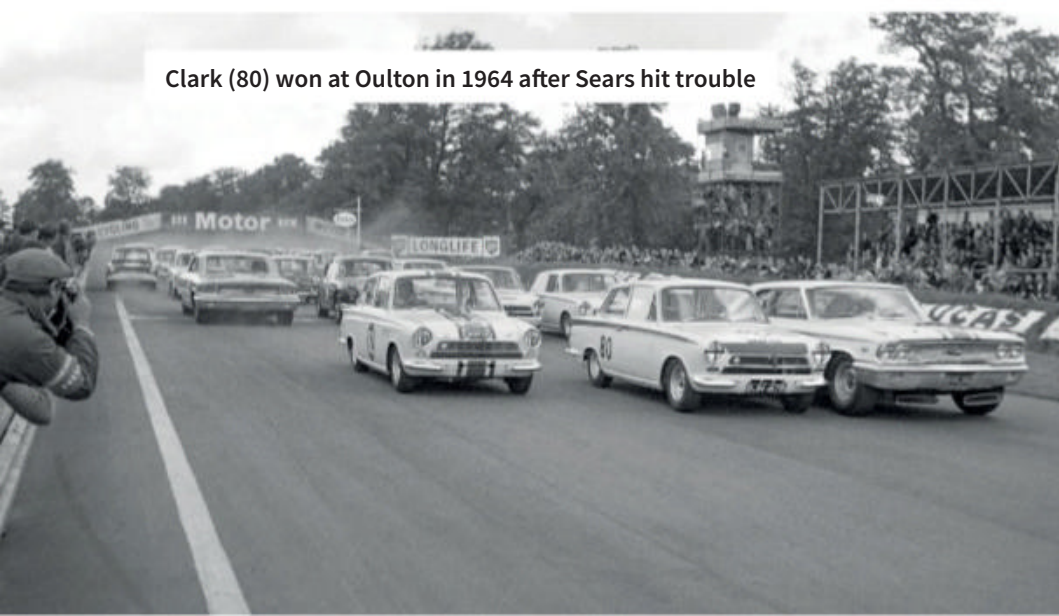
RESERVE DRIVERS

Car No. 10 — J. LINDEN Car No. 21 — R. GREENE

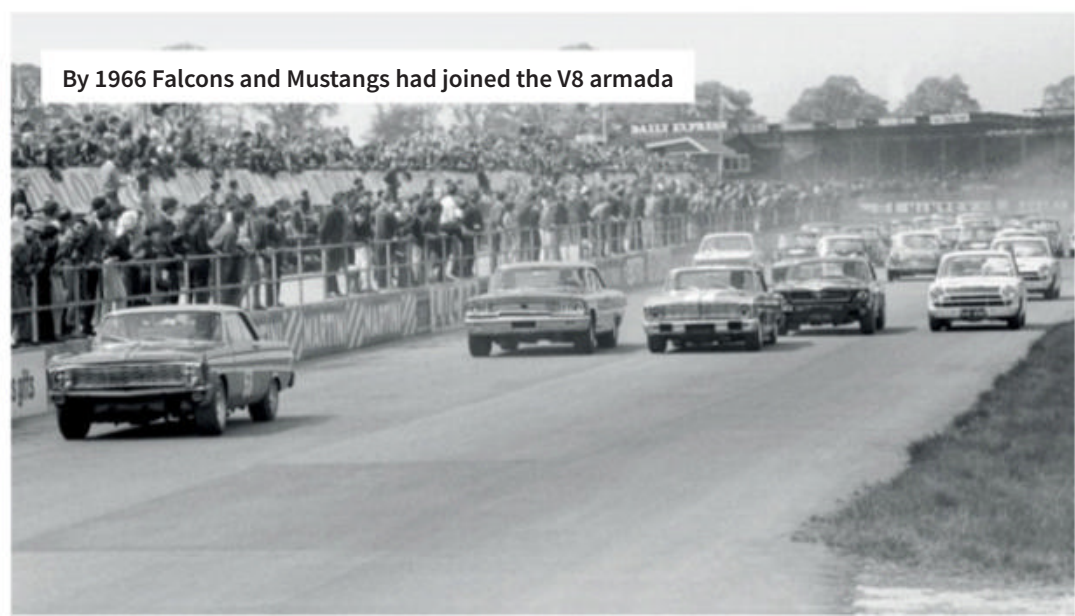
Starting positions on the grid are determined by the speeds actually set up by competitors during practice. Prior to the race, the commentator will announce the positions of the cars on the grid.



Sears leads Clark's Cortina at Goodwood in 1964



Clark (80) won at Oulton in 1964 after Sears hit trouble



By 1966 Falcons and Mustangs had joined the V8 armada

CHANGING OF



KEVIN TURNER

PHOTOGRAPHY JEP

Six decades since Ford ended Jaguar's domination of British saloon car racing – with two very different racers – it was time to put together a track test. With the help of Silverstone and Historic Racing Drivers Club founder Julius Thurgood, Autosport brought three special cars together. Historic ace Grant Williams brought his family's Jaguar Mk2 'JAG 400', Matt Moore provided his recently restored Ford Galaxie, and Mike Jordan was on hand to run the Jordan Racing Team-prepared Ford Lotus Cortina campaigned by Pete Chambers.

And to give the three rear-wheel-drive tin-tops a workout around the Silverstone Grand Prix circuit, we brought in British Touring Car ace Jake Hill. Not only is the 29-year-old one of the best tin-top racers in the country – now plying his trade with a West Surrey Racing-run BMW 330e M Sport – but he also has extensive experience of (and enthusiasm for) a range of historic machinery.

It made sense to start with the car that came into the 1963 season as the benchmark, so let's get on with it...

Introduced in 1960, the racing version of the famous Jaguar Mk2 was unbeatable in the British Saloon Car Championship for three years. It was undefeated in 1961 and 1962, and racked up four wins early in 1963 before Ford's Galaxie arrived.

Our test car has been in the Williams family since the 1970s, though a roll had made the roof collapse and the Mk2 needed some serious work. That was finally completed in time for it to appear at the 2020 Goodwood SpeedWeek and it now races regularly – it had an outing lined up for the weekend after our test.

JAG 400 is one of the original factory-built race cars, complete with triple carbs – "It's basically a D-type engine dropped into a Mk2," says Williams – and lightened. Equipe Endeavour successfully ran the car and its impressive list of drivers includes Jack Sears, the very man who would bring the Big Cat's reign to an end. "They were quite special cars in the day," adds Williams. "It was built to race."

It now competes with a 3.8-litre XK engine prepared by Rob Beere Racing that can be taken to 6500rpm, and tyres that are (legally) a little wider than the 600 Ls run in period.

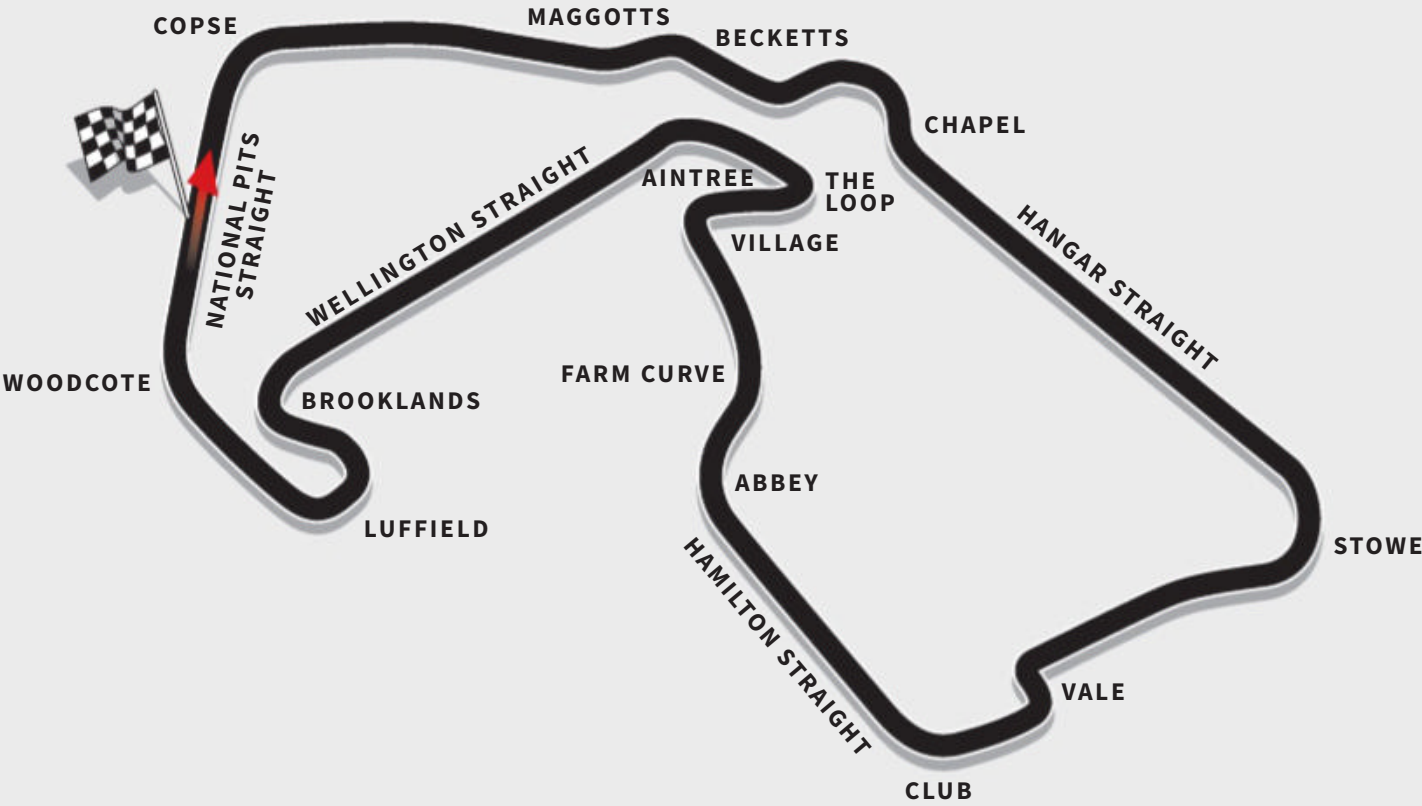
Hill goes out and is quickly up to speed, but the 350bhp Jaguar >>

THE GUARD

Jake Hill got to test three very different tin-tops at a sunny Silverstone last month



SILVERSTONE GP



JAGUAR Mk2

BTCC wins 25

Engine 3.8-litre straight six

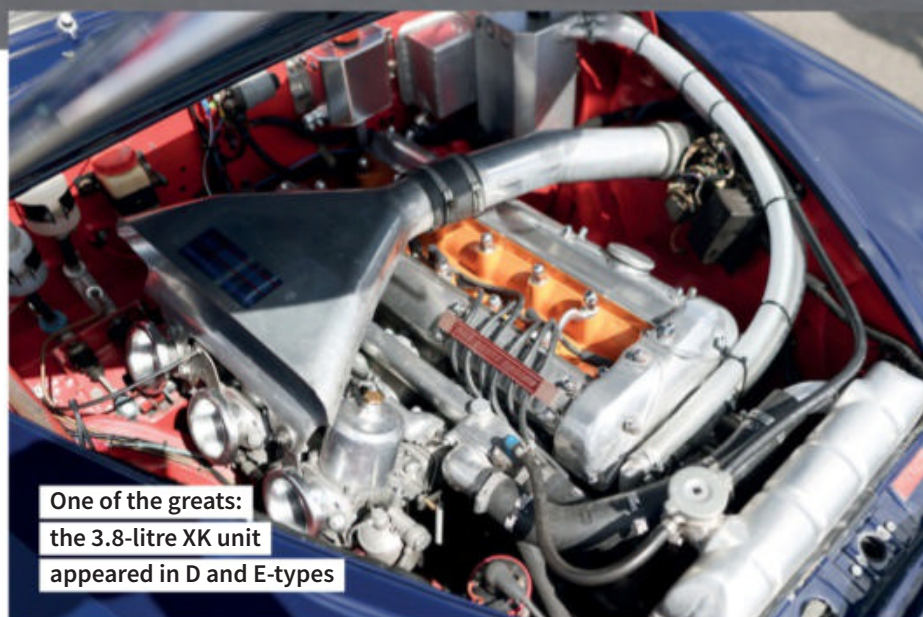
Power 350bhp

Weight 1460kg

Owner Grant Williams



Hill is impressed with how refined the Jaguar feels



One of the greats: the 3.8-litre XK unit appeared in D and E-types



The Mk2 proves stable, apart from in initial braking

is not what he expects. “I’m surprised how stable it is,” says Hill as he returns to the paddock. “I thought it would be heavy and lardy, but it’s not. It’s a nice car to add to the bucket list and it’s the smoothest engine I’ve ever driven.”

Given that Jaguar pioneered the use of disc brakes in the 1950s, it is perhaps surprising that Hill is unimpressed with them. But then, he is used to more modern stopping power – even in historic competition. “The brakes are probably the worst bit,” he says. “When you hit the pedal you’re not sure which way it’s going to dart, but it makes for an interesting experience! The Jaguar is really enjoyable and I’m surprised how easy it is to drive.”

There’s not much time for a further download before Hill jumps into the Galaxie. No matter how many times you’ve seen one, its sheer size is remarkable. “The first thing from sitting in the car is how big a machine you’re sat in, probably the biggest car I’ve driven around a circuit, but what a cool thing,” agrees Hill. “It looks awesome and when you’re tickling the throttle, sat still, it screams power.”

While Hill is getting to grips with the 500bhp monster, Autosport talks to Moore about the Galaxie. Moore saved the car from a scrapyard 13 years ago and restored it himself. It was finished last year, resplendent in the same livery as the Galaxie that Fireball Roberts used during the 1963 NASCAR season. The original Galaxies that appeared in the UK were prepped by famed NASCAR operation Holman & Moody, so that seems appropriate.

Moore had to ship parts in from the US, including the paint.

He has raced such machinery as an Austin-Healey and AC Cobra and “just fancied a Galaxie. You can’t find one for sale so I built one.”

Like the original lightweight cars, it has fibreglass parts – bonnet, boot (or should that be trunk?!), wings and doors – and aluminium bumpers. Moore also had to have extensive work done on the engine, including having a steel crank made.

The Galaxie has only done a Goodwood trackday prior to the test, with its debut set for Donington Park five days after the Silverstone running, so it’s fair to say that it isn’t yet race-proven in the same way as our other two cars are. Nevertheless, it’s clear that it’s made an impression on Hill when he returns – and the Galaxie attracts a lot of attention from the Porsche and British GT teams that are testing.

“It’s extremely heavy and there’s a lot of body roll but an awful lot of torque,” says Hill, who reckons he’s only using a maximum of 5000rpm. “The whole running gear is very smooth, though not quite as smooth as the Jag, but a great engine and gearbox. The running gear is nice and easy to use, but you really feel how big it is compared to the other two. She’s a big old girl!”

“The worst part is the lack of brakes. You have to brake so far in advance for any corner.”

That’s noticeable trackside, with Hill braking earlier for Copse than he did in the Jag, before rolling the car in. It’s a little surprising that Sears reported being able to match the Mk2s under braking in 1963. “Getting it to the apex is extremely hard work,” continues the six-time BTCC race winner. “It’s a life lesson – it teaches



FORD GALAXIE

BTCC wins 13

Engine 7.0-litre V8

Power 500bhp

Weight 1600kg

Owner Matt Moore

Ford V8 monster
has real presence
on and off the track

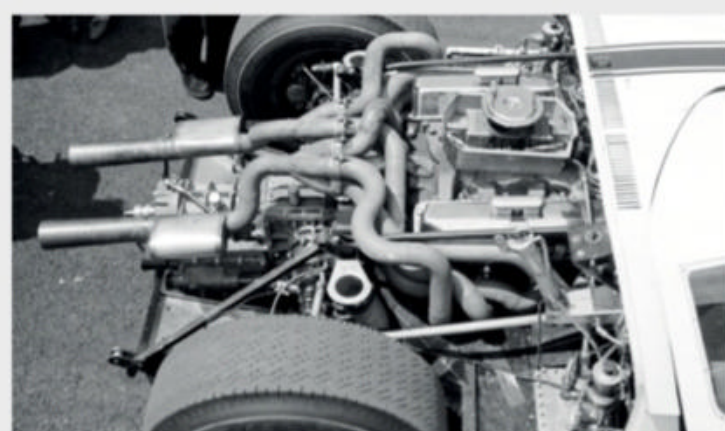
UNDERRATED POWERHOUSE

The Ford FE V8 was much more than the engine that powered the Ford Galaxies that revolutionised touring car racing in the United Kingdom. A strong case can be made for it being one of the great competition engines of all time, not bad for a unit designed to power trucks and big road cars – and even used in boats.

Introduced in 1958, the Y-block FE stayed in production until 1976, but its biggest successes came during Ford's motorsport push during the 1960s. The smallest version(!) was 5.4 litres, but it was the seven-litre variant that grabbed racing success. Competition in NASCAR was fierce, with the Chevrolet, Chrysler, Dodge, Ford, Mercury, Oldsmobile, Plymouth and Pontiac marques all getting in on the act at various points as power outputs got pushed up and up. Ford's Galaxie was one of the best packages across 1963-66 and won the 1963 and 1965 Daytona 500s. The FE proved popular in drag racing, powered the drag-orientated Fairlane Thunderbolt and appeared in Can-Am sports-prototypes.

The constantly developed 427-cubic-inch V8 found its way into Carroll Shelby's Cobra, creating one of the fastest road cars in the world, and – more importantly from a motorsport perspective – Ford's GT project to beat Ferrari at Le Mans. Dissatisfied with the performance of the 4.2 and 4.7-litre GT40s, Ford decided to use the seven-litre powerplant to create the MkII ahead of the 1965 Le Mans 24 Hours (below). A lack of preparation time contributed to that race being a disaster for Ford, but there was no doubt that the cars were fast.

Famously, Ford threw huge resources at the project and took a 1-2-3 at Le Mans the following year, then followed it up with a superb victory for the MkIV of AJ Foyt and Dan Gurney in 1967 at a record speed, running a detuned version of the V8 producing 'only' 500-550bhp.



Contrast the 'modern'
interior with that of the
original Sears car on p59

you an awful lot about patience.

"The strong point is its power. The acceleration it has is unrivalled, so you have to compromise on the way in to play to its strengths on the exit. You're always going to win in a straight line and it's a daunting thing to see in the mirrors I should think!

"It's extremely soft and, like most historic cars, you get understeer on the way in, then you pick up the throttle and immediately get this life of rotation at the apex. Then it's a balancing act with the throttle pedal, more so with the Galaxie simply because of the amount of torque it's got. It makes for a thrilling exit out of every corner, but it's definitely not a handler, it's a straight-line beast."

Hill found the Mk2 easier to get to grips with but can see how the Galaxie proved such a formidable opponent. "If you can be brave with it in the braking phase then you're always going to win in a straight line," he says. "I can see why, when you're on top of it and used to it, you'll succeed against the smaller cars.

"The Jaguar is a more-rounded car to drive, it just doesn't have the power. The Jaguar is incredibly smooth, a great power band – the way it delivers the power is similar to the Galaxie, it's just smoother and there's a bit less."

Hill feels that the wider tyre on the Mk2 compared to back in the 1960s also helps: "The brakes are better, the handling is better. It's very well-balanced, delivers a fast lap time and is easier to drive."

Amazingly, given the Mini Cooper S also arrived at the same >>

TIN-TOP REVOLUTION



FORD LOTUS CORTINA

BTCC wins 7

Engine 1.6-litre inline four

Power 190bhp

Weight 750kg

Owner Pete Chambers

Hill reckons Cortina feels more like a modern racer



Keeping momentum is key to fast lap times in the 1600cc 'buzzbox'



Everything is where you want it in the cockpit

time as the Galaxie, there was another major tin-top milestone before 1963 was done. Sears — already champion thanks to his efforts in the Cortina GT and the Galaxie — and Trevor Taylor gave the Lotus Cortina its debut at the Oulton Park BSCC round in September. To underline the changing of the guard, the Galaxies of Dan Gurney and Graham Hill finished 1-2 and Sears led a 3-4 for the new super saloon. The best Jaguar was fifth.

It seems right, therefore, that Hill also gives the Cortina a try, even though he has raced several examples before. As Hill sets off, Jordan tackles the issue of why the cars are quicker now than they were in the 1960s, when they had no rollcages, used standard seating and the suspension was much softer.

"Now we know three-wheeling isn't the best way to go," says former BTCC and GT racer Jordan, who points to better diff preload settings and suspension as key areas of improvement since the 1960s. "You can't unlearn what you know."

Interestingly, this touches on something Sears noted at the time. "The GT did not lift its front wheels but the A-bracket Lotus Cortina did," said Sears in *Gentleman Jack* by Graham Gauld. "Much later on, in 1964, Colin Chapman eventually had to agree his A-bracket suspension was not really a good idea, so the Lotus Cortina went back to the Cortina GT rear suspension."

Hill is immediately at home in the 190bhp 1600cc screamer. "It's really nice," he enthuses. "The thing that hits you first is how buzzy and nimble it is to drive. It makes you feel like you're in an

old go-kart. It's very light and nimble, especially though Village — the change of direction is so fast. I loved it.

"All the power is in the last 2000rpm — 6000-8000rpm — and there's nothing before that, no torque. It's always singing and feels alive in your hands, it's screaming and ready to go. The chassis is fantastic, incredibly nimble, and so are the brakes. That's where the Cortinas win — braking and handling. If you can keep it buzzing then it's good enough to keep up with the big stuff."

The Cortina is also the easiest in terms of ergonomics and being able to keep an eye on crucial dials. "Everything is where you want it to be," says Hill. "It's a nicely laid out car. It's also the best for visibility, I could see all three mirrors, which in a race environment is going to give you an edge. In the Jaguar one of them you can't even see because it's so low, and the bullet mirror moves too much!"

"In the Jaguar none of the dials are where you want them except the rev gauge. The steering wheel is not quite in the right place, all the pedals are very stiff, but it does make for an exciting experience to keep on top of."

"The Galaxie is the hardest one. When you push the brake pedal you feel like you're pushing all the way to Mars, it just keeps going for an eternity, but the throttle pedal is nice. You've got a really good feel for where you are in the rev range and exactly how much throttle you've got. The gear lever is a massive Yank stick but makes you feel like a proper racing driver going through the gearbox. You can see what's going on in terms of the dials and temperatures."



Hill added three more cars to his impressive CV

Hill concedes that a driver has to be on top of their game in the Cortina to challenge the more powerful machines, and it's perhaps worth noting that only the great Jim Clark won British Saloon Car Championship races outright in one.

"You've got to be driving it well to get the potential out of it, whereas you could be a decent driver in the Jaguar or a big V8 and still produce a pretty good lap time," reckons Hill. "You have to hustle the Cortina harder but it's more rewarding."

Perhaps unsurprisingly, the Cortina is also the car that feels most like a modern BTCC machine. "You have to drive them incredibly hard and to the best of your ability in all the cars – that will never change," says Hill. "The Cortina is most like a modern touring car because it's all about carrying the speed on the way in and keeping the minimum speed, whereas the Jaguar and Galaxie remind you of why you wanted to become a racing driver. You're not driving them, they are an extension of yourself, you're at one with them – with the modern cars there's a disconnect. Old cars talk to you through your hands, seat and pedals."

"The Jaguar and Galaxie are comparable but also show how much development went into the Jag. It's basically an American powertrain with European handling, everything is just more refined. The Cortina is the biggest step away. It's the complete role reversal to the Galaxie – all the power is at the top, it's extremely light and nimble."

So, which would he race given the chance? "I'd like to spend some time with the Jaguar and make it better with Grant, I would enjoy the challenge. You can see how it could beat a Cortina – it's not as twitchy and has more power. But if I had to race one tomorrow I'd pick the Cortina."

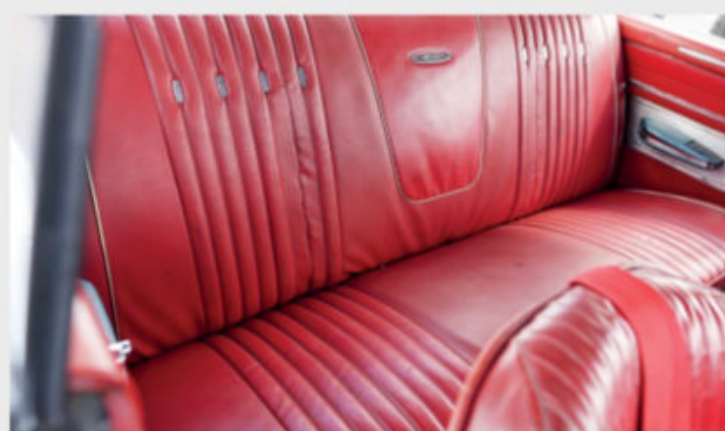
All three of the cars have shown why they are special. The Mk2 has a level of refinement that came from Jaguar's success in endurance and touring car racing in the 1950s. In 1963 the Cortina was a glimpse of the future, of the changing priorities that would eventually arrive in touring car racing. And the Galaxie took one of the Jaguar's key strengths over its previous rivals – power – and turned it up to 11. It was a strength, in one form or another across Ford and Chevrolet monsters, that would dominate British tin-top racing for more than a decade. 🏆

Autosport would like to thank Silverstone, Pete Chambers, Mike Jordan, Matt Moore, Julius Thurgood and Grant Williams

SEE THE ACTION AT SILVERSTONE

Want to see the cars in action? All three models race regularly but one 2023 highlight should be the Transatlantic Trophy race for pre-1966 touring cars at the Silverstone Festival. Ford Galaxies and Cortinas will mix it with Mustangs and Falcons at the 25-27 August event. The original Jack Sears Galaxie (below) that won at Silverstone in 1963 will also be on display.

For more information visit
silverstone.co.uk/events/silverstone-festival/prices



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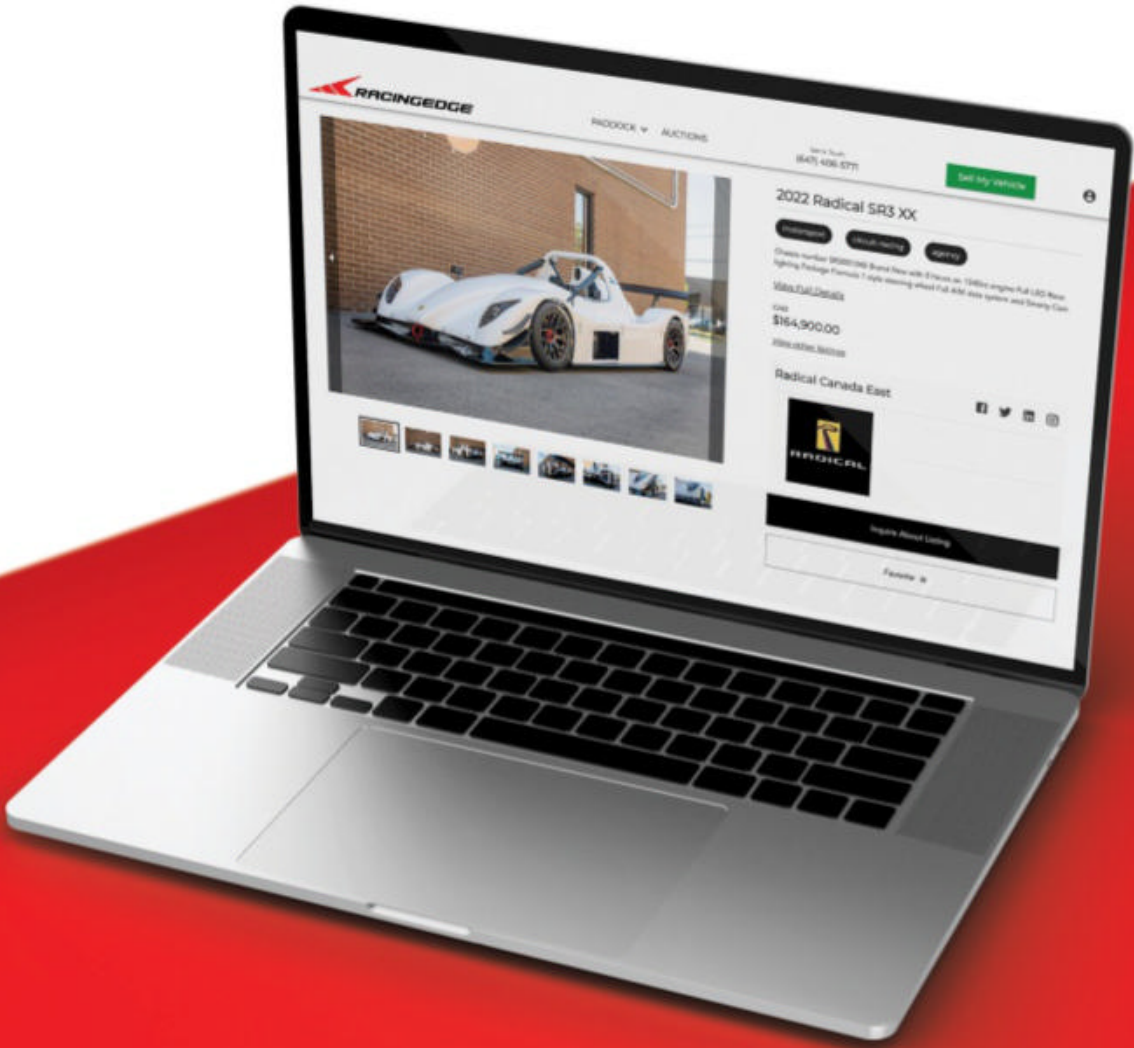


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The Role

- Working in the Surface Design group, you will contribute to creating surfacing schemes to allow aerodynamic concepts to be evaluated.
- Alongside our aerodynamicists, you will be a key part of the process of ensuring that the surfaces tested comply with the Formula One technical regulations.
- You will liaise with other members of the aero department, such as aerodynamicists, CFD engineers and wind tunnel model designers, to ensure that the desired aerodynamic intent is captured, and our development process runs smoothly.
- You will liaise with the design team for the race car to ensure the compatibility of aero surfaces with full-size manufacturing techniques.
- You will proactively use your skills and knowledge to improve the methodology and procedures used to develop the surfaces of our car.

The Person

- The person we are looking for will have many of these skills and capabilities:
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JUNIOR SUB-ASSEMBLY TECHNICIAN
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Job Description:

We are looking for a passionate candidate to join our expanding build team that has attention to detail, keen on developing new skills and good at working in an established team. Our Junior Sub-Assembly Technicians build and rebuild sub engine assemblies which includes assembling, dismantling, measuring and rebuilding all components in accordance with Cosworth standards and practices.

The Role:

- Build of engine sub-assemblies - inspection and measurement of critical components as defined in Cosworth build manuals and processes.
- Strip engine sub-assemblies - inspection and measurement of critical components as defined in Cosworth build manuals and processes.
- Test subcomponents of engine assembly's on rigs and collect data.
- Record and maintain all build data and keep records up to date.
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Candidate Profile:

- Good at working in a team.
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- Highly motivated team player.
- Manual dexterity.
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JUNIOR VEHICLE PERFORMANCE ENGINEER
Haas F1 Team

General Summary:

This position reports to the Head of Vehicle Performance or their designee and is located in Banbury, UK. This position is heavily involved with the application of advanced simulation tools with a strong focus on providing information that will be utilized in the continuous improvement of the performance of the car, a strong coding background is desirable to help develop analysis tools within the group as well.

Key Responsibilities:

- Working with Race Engineering, Vehicle Science and Aero Performance Group, contribute to the pre and post event simulation activities.
- Continuously assess model correlation to both track and subsystem rig test data and work with developers to improve the modelling of all aspects of the car.
- Will be required to participate in factory support of free practice and test sessions.
- Work with developers to automate processes and enhance the usefulness of the toolsets within the Vehicle Performance Group.

Education and Work Experience:

- Minimum BSc in any STEM subject, but with substantial experience in applied mathematics or engineering.
- Experience in motor racing, or in mainstream automotive vehicle dynamics/simulation/control function is desirable.
- Prior industrial placement experience in Formula One would be beneficial.

Specialized Knowledge and Skills:

- Strong communication skills, both written and verbal.
- A can-do positive approach and a willingness to help others is essential.
- A robust technical background in applied mathematics, physics or engineering, ideally automotive/aeronautical/racing.

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POWERTRAIN DESIGN ENGINEER
McLaren Automotive

Purpose of Role

- Reporting to the Principal Engineer, he/she will design & implement solutions for powertrain components or systems presenting failures in service (engine, transmission, electric drive technologies and auxiliary components) for high performance vehicles in Production.
- You will work with the Team of Powertrain Engineers and Technical Experts, who are responsible for designing or overseeing the designs to understand the issue & present a solution.
- You must take ownership of design and delivery of solutions as components or subsystems on McLaren Powertrain Programmes.
- Interfacing with other engineering Teams, takes responsibility for integration of Powertrain designs within all other vehicle systems

Principal Accountabilities

- Detailed knowledge for high performance powertrain components and sub-systems. Knowledge of Electric drive technologies highly desirable.
- Responsibility of components design, from concept to design development to delivery on time for McLaren programmes.
- Knowledge of automotive processes used to identify & define problems, understand them, track progress and fixing the problem.
- Experience with Root Cause Analysis (RCA) and associated tools; IS/IS NOT, Fishbone/Ishikawa etc.

Knowledge, Skills and Experience

- A good level of technical knowledge & experience of high performance Powertrain components is essential.
- Proficient CATIA V5 2D/3D draughting/solid and surface modelling skills essential for role.
- PC literate and at ease with MS Office products is essential
- Knowledge of Electric drive technologies highly desirable.
- Competence in FEM calculation of mechanical components, both under static and dynamic loading condition is desirable.

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Responsibilities Include:

- Service, maintenance and handling of the hybrid system and battery systems of our LMDh Prototype
- Executing and respecting HV system protocols and responsible for the safe installation and maintenance of the hybrid powertrain system
- Designing, building, repairing and maintaining motorsport looms and harnesses
- Aide in car radio setup and communication systems during the testing phase
- Work in conjunction with radio suppliers at test and race events
- Working with System Engineers to have stable and reliable communication to the car

Desired Qualifications:

- Required 2-3 years of experience in top level professional motorsport in an electrical technician role
- F1, IndyCar, IMSA, WEC, Formula E preferred
- At track position experience preferred
- Hybrid powertrain experience required
- eMotorsport hybrid powertrain experience preferred

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SENIOR DESIGN ENGINEER Rodin Cars

What you will be doing

Managing a small team of design engineers, you will assist in the timescale and resource planning of engineering projects. Working with the vehicle and production teams, you will be responsible for leading design of parts and systems to a high standard, taking ownership of design project management and delivery of components.

Key tasks:

- Responsible for components design, from concept, design and development through to delivery, including creating and maintaining technical Specifications, DFMEAs and Design Validation Plans.
- Liaising with suppliers and development partners.
- BoM management and delivery of component and sub-system for the assigned designs.
- Contributing to the technical assessment, integration and application of appropriate technology.
- Ensuring the components interface seamlessly to the wider program.
- Responsible for design check/release to maintain project deliverables/schedules.
- Preparing and presenting material to support external and internal project status reviews/reports.
- Leading robust resolutions to engineering concerns (problem solving).

Knowledge, Skills and Experience

- A high degree of CAD design ability, as well as experience producing and reviewing drawings and specifications for prototyping and series production.
- A good level of technical knowledge and industry experience of high-performance body and system design, test and production is essential.
- Advanced knowledge and understanding of GDT principals and application.

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- Follow car build in a methodical and consistent manner while respecting agreed deadlines.
- Follow engineering technical and operational procedures.
- Report reliability issues, record them and seek solutions with engineering teams.
- Follow and record the mileage of car parts and tyres.
- Assist with freight, travel planning and managing trackside activities.
- Assist in the operation of the garage and its infrastructure.

Education and work experience:

- Leadership and lead mechanic experience in single seater is essential (F1/F2/F3/FRECA/F4).
- Minimum 5 years' experience in a similar role.

Specialized knowledge and skills:

- Strong communication skills, written and verbal.
- Able to prioritize the workload, job lists and manage time efficiently.
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- Language: French & English will be highly beneficial.

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LISTA

Wallis/Hart and Kaye plan more outings after Silverstone effort

BRITISH GT

One-off entries at British GT's Silverstone 500 event will look to make further appearances in the championship later this year after strong performances last weekend.

James Wallis and fellow GT Cup racer Chris Hart made up Drivetac with Track Focused's Mercedes-AMG GT3 line-up after switching from its GT4 car, finishing ninth overall and second in the Silver-Am class. After a trophy-clinching debut, the team intends to run in the GT3 division for the remainder of the 2023 British GT season.

"It's a great challenge," said Wallis. "At the start of the year, I was looking up to [Jules] Gounon and [Raffaele] Marciello. Don't get me wrong, I still am, but to be on the grid with them is just over my head, I can't believe it. I'm very fortunate to be in this position and I'm very grateful for what I've been given."

Hart, a regular GTH class race winner in the GT Cup, replaced Drivetac's Sam Maher-Loughnan due to the latter's Silver driver rating, and enjoyed his return to the championship after a gap of 13 years. He last raced a Chevron with former British Touring Car Championship racer Anthony Reid.

"My background is from Fun Cup, so for me this is just a Fun Cup race on steroids," said Hart. "It's great. I did a test with 2 Seas in their McLaren a few



Second in Silver-Am class to Wallis and Hart's Mercedes



BTCC veteran Kaye made his British GT debut

years ago and I've driven stuff with aero before. I'm driving a Mercedes already [in GT Cup] so it's not a dissimilar step up, just I suppose we haven't had time to get the seat quite right for me."

BTCC veteran James Kaye, meanwhile, made his British GT debut with Simpson Motorsport and intends to run at one or both of the rounds at Donington Park and Portimao.

The 59-year-old has raced in the GT Cup and teamed up with Vasily

Vladykin in the team's BMW M4 GT4 for the three-hour contest, but the Simpson squad failed to finish due to a differential problem.

"I've done FIA GT races here, but never a British GT race," said multiple BTCC Independents' champion Kaye. "Motorsport is my life. It's been good to me and been bad to me, but it's what I love doing."

"It was going swimmingly well, but we just encountered a few gremlins. The car was bought to do the long-distance series as a family team. We did the 24 Hours at Dubai and did well, then had a small failure but finished at Abu Dhabi and Mugello. The experience and BMW have been fantastic, I'm impressed with what I've seen here."

DAN MASON



Burke and George took 11th overall in GT4

Enduro endures engine woes

BRITISH GT

Darren Burke praised the efforts of his Enduro Motorsport squad after they completed an overnight engine and gearbox change on its McLaren Artura following a spectacular failure in the first practice session ahead of last weekend's British GT Silverstone 500 event.

After working through the night to complete the repairs, the team was rewarded for its efforts when Burke – confirmed for the full season in place of Harry Nunn – and Harry George finished 11th in GT4 from the back of the grid.

"The team had the car in the garage and stripped down so quickly, we didn't

even know they'd done it to be honest with you," said Burke. "We've gone to bed on Saturday night and come back to a fresh car."

"It may have been an ongoing issue from Oulton Park [scene of the opening round]. I know they had a little bit of an issue with the engine so hopefully that's behind us now."

JOE HUDSON

Winner Kellett: more Porsche pace to come

PORSCHE CARRERA CUP GB

Dominant Ginetta GT4 Supercup champion James Kellett says he is still getting to grips with his new Porsche machinery in the dry, despite claiming his maiden Carrera Cup GB win at Brands Hatch last weekend.

Kellett stayed with Century Motorsport – the team that guided him to Ginetta GT5 Challenge and GT4 Supercup glory – for his move to Porsches but had a difficult first weekend in the series at Donington Park. He tangled with Charles Rainford at Coppice when fighting for fifth, which forced Kellett into retirement and meant he had to charge from 22nd to finish seventh in race two.

But Kellett enjoyed a stronger event at Brands, starting by claiming pole by just 0.001 seconds in wet conditions. Although he fell back to fourth at the start of the dry opener, this gave him the chance for another launch from pole with the partially reversed grid for race two. And he put this to good use, leading initially and finishing second on the road, before being promoted to the win



when Robert de Haan was penalised for passing Rainford as safety-car boards were being displayed.

Kellett knew the Dutchman was likely to get a penalty, so did not attempt to defend from him, and he says there is much more performance still to come. “It was a great weekend,” said Kellett. “My wet pace is on point – I’m the fastest one in the wet. But I’ve only had two days in the car in the dry and I’ve still got a little bit to find [to match the pace of de Haan]. Coming off the back of Ginetta racing, this is a completely different beast, but I love the new challenge.”

While Kellett was delighted to get pole,

he was less happy with the race-one start when he tangled with team-mate Gus Burton heading into Paddock Hill Bend, which sent Burton into the barriers.

“I dropped back at the start to fourth – I got a bit of wheelspin off the line – and it can be a bit tricky from pole here,” explained Kellett. “I then made a silly little mistake but that’s racing and these things happen – we’re still good mates.”

Kellett is now fourth in the standings, 20 points behind early leader Adam Smalley. But Burton’s miserable event means he has fallen to sixth, two points behind Kellett.

STEPHEN LICKORISH

Zelos thanks Excelr8 after winning in new car



MINI CHALLENGE

Mini Challenge star Dan Zelos has paid tribute to his Excelr8 Motorsport team after it readied a new car in time for him to win at Brands Hatch last weekend, following his hefty crash at Donington Park a fortnight earlier.

Zelos’s original Mini, which he had used for four years, was written off after it was speared into by Sam Smith at Redgate. But he was instantly on the pace in his new steed, claiming pole and a win in the Brands opener, and he was leading race two when he suffered a puncture.

“It’s been really good – I can hardly tell the difference compared to my car,” said Zelos. “The team did a great job getting it ready as it hadn’t raced for six/seven months. They were putting in long shifts, so the race-one win was for them.”

STEPHEN LICKORISH

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IN THE HEADLINES



MOTORSPORT IMAGES

DUBAI F1 CARS REVEALED

Two Williams FW07Cs that Alan Jones and Carlos Reutemann used to take 1981 Formula 1 constructors’ title glory are among some of the first cars to be confirmed for December’s Historic Dubai GP Revival event. Another F1 victor already announced as part of the entry is a Tyrrell 011 (above), the last of Ken Tyrrell’s cars to win, in 1983.

SMITH MOVES TEAM ALREADY

Brands Hatch may have only been the second round of the British Formula 4 season but Sonny Smith has already changed teams. The ex-Ginetta Junior frontrunner struck a late deal with Argenti Motorsport for Donington Park but was with JHR Developments in Kent. His best finish was 14th on an eventful weekend.

WILMOT’S LATE TCR RETURN

Andy Wilmot was a late addition to the TCR UK grid at Croft. Wilmot was tempted to return after watching the livestream of last month’s opener while on holiday. Driving the ex-Chris Wallis Hyundai i30 rather than the car he piloted last year, the former British Touring Car driver was hampered by an oil leak from the gearbox. He qualified 16th of 20 cars before finishing 13th and 11th.



MG Trophy champion took a best result of fourth at Croft

JEP

MG star Kirkpatrick eyes full-time Civic Cup switch after debut

CIVIC CUP

One-time MG Trophy champion Sam Kirkpatrick is weighing up a Civic Cup campaign in 2024 after a strong showing when he sampled the Honda series at Croft last weekend.

The 22-year-old joined Area Motorsport to drive the EP3 that Matt Luff took to last year’s title. He qualified fourth in the 27-car field and had a best finish of fourth in the opening race.

“We’re just doing this as a guest round to see if we want to do it next year, because we’d have to build a car,” he explained.

“It’s more competitive, with a lot of good drivers, and it’s all one class, which I like.”

Kirkpatrick was a dominant force in the MG Trophy, taking his ZR 190 to the title in 2021 and winning both races on his only appearance last season before focusing on university studies.

The Cumbrian had planned to instead race the family MGB more regularly, after occasional outings that included winning the 60th anniversary ‘B’ race at Silverstone last year. “We’ve maybe changed our minds back again on that one,” he admitted. “We’ll still be doing the MGB though.”

MARK PAULSON

TCR UK frontrunner Hart joins Chinese series

TCR CHINA

Former TCR UK frontrunner Max Hart is moving into the equivalent Chinese series this year. He will drive a Hyundai Elantra for Z Speed Motorsport after agreeing a late deal to join the championship, which begins at Shanghai this weekend.

Hart, who led the TCR UK standings for the early part of last season in a Jamsport Hyundai i30 before a run of

retirements dented his charge, has been competing in the TCR class within the British Endurance Championship and in a GT4 McLaren in the GT Cup so far this year. But he does have experience of racing in Asia – the Irishman contested the South-East Asian Formula 4 series prior to his move to tin-tops.

“I’m excited about this one!” said Hart (right). “I have always gone well in TCR cars and I feel

confident that this will stand to me when I race in China. I have been practising the circuits on my sim and training hard too – I can’t wait to get going.”

After trips to Zhuhai and Zhuzhou, the season is due to conclude on the streets of Macau. Hart is not the first successful UK racer to sample the series, with 2012 World Touring Car champion Rob Huff among those to have raced in TCR China in Macau.



JEP



Harrison stars in Brabham

HISTORIC F3

Samuel Harrison gave Speedsport's Brabham BT21B a pair of wins first time out in Cadwell Park's Historic Formula 3 races last weekend.

The car, raced in period by Peter Westbury, has undergone restoration by Mike O'Brien's concern, with which Harrison won last year's Historic Formula Ford 1600 crown. He was also a frontrunner in Historic F3 with a Chevron B15 and topped Autosport's National Driver Rankings.

Gearbox problems prevented Harrison setting a qualifying time in the Brabham, but he still comfortably won the opening Lincolnshire race from the back of the grid in pouring wet conditions.

"We've had a few gremlins with the 'box over the weekend and were

really late to the assembly area for race two because of some more fixes, but a big thank you to everyone who worked on the car," said Harrison.

O'Brien added: "It had been left to rot and we've spent four years restoring it. We're very happy to see it win at Cadwell with Sam. We seem to have a winning combination."

- Jordan Harrison suffered more frustrations in the Historic FF2000 rounds at Cadwell. In race one, rear-end contact from Richard Coleman's Reynard at the start caused suspension damage to Harrison's Lola T580, which led to an off and a retirement. After starting from the back in race two, Harrison rose as high as seventh but was left frustrated as the remainder of the laps were run behind the safety car.

CARL MCKELLAR



MICK WALKER



MICK WALKER

De la Roche spoilt for choice

HISTORICS

Peter de la Roche enjoyed a sequence of top results when he contested four races in the Historic Sports Car Club's Cadwell Park meeting across both single-seater and tin-top categories.

The 25-year-old from Sandbach qualified on pole position on his Historic Formula 3 debut in Ian Phillips's Alexis Mk17 — raced in period by Ken Sedgley — before taking it to two runner-up finishes.

Double Historic Formula Junior champion de la Roche also won in the wet on his debut in Historic Touring Cars in an Austin Mini Cooper (above) that, along with the Alexis F3, has been prepared by his father Richard.

"I've not had a problem hopping in and out of the two cars despite the driving style being different," said de la Roche. "The plan is to race both as much as possible this year — I need more time to get comfortable in the F3 car and see 2023 as a bit of a test season before we get serious in 2024."

CARL MCKELLAR

IN THE HEADLINES

RANDACCIO'S CSCC DEBUT

Second in Sunday's Classic K finale at Thruxton, first time out in a TVR Griffith, was a fine Classic Sports Car Club debut for sometime Group C2 and Britcar GT racer Fabio Randaccio. Post-event he revealed that the 4.7-litre Ford V8-engined beast was built by Derbyshire legend Willie Green in 2007, but had not previously raced. It is now for sale.

STAG MISSING IN ACTION

Missing from the Historic Sports Car Club's Cadwell Park meeting last weekend was '70s Road Sports race winner William Leverett, who was absent due to being on his stag weekend! The 30-year-old will also miss the club's Donington Park June fixture – it clashes with his wedding.

KIVLOCHAN'S COBRA CRASH

Kevin Kivlochan hopes to have his Shelby Cobra repaired in time for the next round of the Historic Road Sports season at Silverstone after pranging it at Cadwell Park last weekend. The car suffered front-end damage when Kivlochan spun out of the lead through Coppice Corner moments after starting from pole. "It was very wet and I just gave it a bit too much throttle," said Kivlochan. "I was sure it would spin right onto the infield without any harm – that's where cars always go – only this gripped up and went left into the barriers."

NEW CLASS FOR STEEL CARS

A new division has been introduced this year by the Historic Sports Car Club to allow pre-'66 cars running with all-steel panels to race in the Historic Touring Car Championship (below). The change has been made to encourage a wider range of cars to compete in the category, with the new classes catering for machines with any appropriate engine size. Cars with fibreglass panels and those running to FIA Appendix K will still be able to compete in the series.



MICK WALKER

MILLS ESCAPES LEGENDS BTCC SUPPORT SMASH UNHARMED

Legends racer Connor Mills was able to escape serious injury in this dramatic crash during last weekend's finale at Brands Hatch. There was a concertina effect heading into Paddock Hill Bend on lap five when Mills clipped Jack Parker's machine ahead, which speared Mills into a frightening series of rolls and his car briefly caught fire. Championship owner Phil Cooper said it was testament to the strength of the Legends cars that Mills was able to avoid injury. The race was red-flagged and, with the circuit curfew approaching, it was not restarted. **Photographs by Andy Mason**



Jones's Thruxton outing in Spirit of RPM Peugeot curtailed

SPECIAL SALOONS

Danny Morris's plan for Welshman Karl Jones to contest the Classic Sports Car Club's Special Saloons and Modsports race at Thruxton last weekend came undone.

Jones was due to race the Spirit of RPM Peugeot-Cosworth 309 turbocar in Sunday's second race, but he was thwarted by engine failure before he could drive it in qualifying.

"I did 49.3s on a Brands Hatch Indy circuit test day four years ago and there's certainly 48s in it," said Jones, the 1983 Formula Ford 1600 Champion of Brands.

Ironically, Jones's best British Saloon Car Championship results were seconds at Thruxton in 1988 and 1989 in the Duckhams Ford Sierra RS500, powered by a similar YB turbo engine.

Meanwhile, synonymous with white and yellow Fords carrying the number 27, Martin Reynolds shocked rivals by appearing in the ex-Piers Grange/Neil Argrave Ford Sierra XR8, looking muscular in an unfamiliar pale blue livery. The Norfolk construction man had a huge spin in qualifying but will test the car to evolve a set-up before its next outing.

MARCUS PYE

Morris (left) and Jones with the Spirit of RPM machine at Thruxton



MAWP+SPORT

Praga teams join combined prototype grid

PROTOTYPES

Several Praga teams have committed to entering events in the next few weeks where the Sports Prototype Cup and Zeo Prototype Series are collaborating to share a grid.

Both Idola Motorsport and the University of Wolverhampton Racing squads have pledged to enter the fixtures at Silverstone (next weekend) and Donington Park (18 June) amid struggles for the Britcar Prototype Cup.

Sports Prototype Cup – which was originally created to offer a place for Revolutions and Radicals to race and now runs a number of European events, as well as an ‘Open’ division – and the UK-focused Zeo Prototype Series are continuing their partnership from last year and are aiming to attract a diverse range of machinery.

“Prototype racing in the UK is a fickle market, but has immense potential,” said Sports Prototype Cup promoter James Bailey. “We believe in collaboration to build bigger grids. The Sports Prototype Cup and BRSCC Zeo Prototype series have already agreed to work together. It means that owners of Pragas and many other prototypes can choose whether to follow a European or UK-based calendar. The racing should be close, as the performance of the Praga R1 and cars such as the Revolution 500SC, Radical RXC and Radical SR10 are very similar.

“Owners can feel reassured there will be a home for these stunning cars for the rest of 2023 and beyond. There’s potential for a sub-LMP3 category across Zeo and Sports Prototype Cup –



Sports Prototype Cup and Zeo Prototype Series are continuing to collaborate

we’re just not allowed to call it LMP4!’

The Britcar Prototype Cup, meanwhile, has suffered a difficult start after being launched for this season to house Pragas and other prototypes. Six cars contested the Silverstone opener, before last month’s Brands Hatch event was cancelled, and now the Oulton Park round at the end of the month has also been dropped.

This was due to feature at a British Automobile Racing Club event running on Saturday 27 May and Bank Holiday Monday 29 May. But, after the club was already assessing the meeting’s timetable, it will now switch to be a Saturday-only fixture.

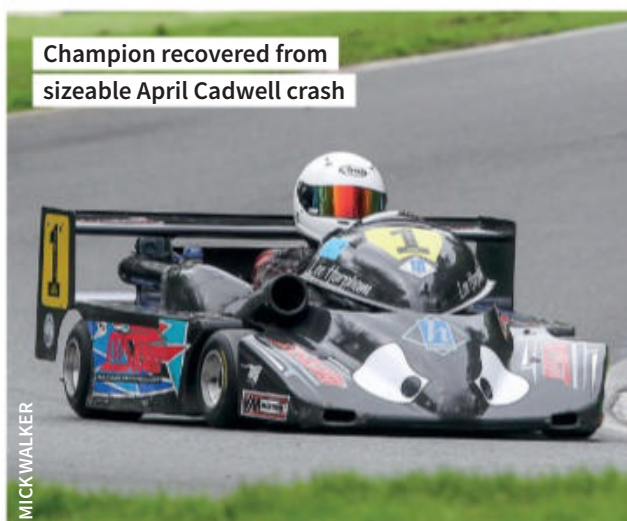
“We ummed and ahed about doing Saturday and Monday as we haven’t done it before and it had its challenges

anyway,” said BARC chief executive Ben Taylor. “The Saturday will be a great day with Britcar Trophy and the British Endurance Championship so that will be rammed and good for spectators and marshals.”

Taylor says the club will continue to support Britcar with the prototype category, and that the planned summer break before the next round at Snetterton gives a chance to boost interest.

“It’s a difficult year to launch a new series but there’s still a strong desire to get this going,” Taylor added. “All the focus is now on Snetterton and Donington Park in September and October. Hopefully the last two rounds can lead into something more positive for 2024.”

STEPHEN LICKORISH



Harpham’s successful return

SUPERKARTS

Reigning champion Lee Harpham made a convincing winning return in Superkarts at Cadwell Park last weekend following a huge accident at the Lincolnshire circuit just three weeks earlier.

The 41-year-old from

Grimsby was thrown from his MS Kart when a tyre valve failed at 130mph entering Coppice Corner in April. But, using his spare chassis, he was able to win all three races at the Historic Sports Car Club’s meeting.

“We’ve seen 3am a few times leading up to this

weekend trying to get it ready,” Harpham explained. “My neck’s been a bit sore and in race two I had a good lead so backed off to nurse it but, on the penultimate lap into Hall Bends, I realised Jack [Tritton] was suddenly right behind so had to step on it again!”

CARL MCKELLAR

Another win and
a third maintain
Menzies' slender
points lead



Menzies and Moran share the Yorkshire gold as Summers fails

HAREWOOD
BRITISH HILLCLIMB
7 MAY

For the second time in three weekends, Wallace Menzies and Scott Moran shared the victories in the British Hillclimb Championship after another day of ferocious competition at Harewood.

But there was a major twist in the plot of the 2023 BHC in Yorkshire and this time it was Alex Summers who lost out. His DJ Firestorm came to a stop on the opening class run with a fuel issue and his day was over.

Instead, it is Menzies who narrowly heads the standings after the opening salvo of six run-offs in three weekends, but only by two points from young Matthew Ryder, who was superb as he made it five second places from six rounds.

Moran, meanwhile, was left to rue what could have been a double win. Instead, with tyres going off, his final shot in the second run-off left him sliding around and down in fourth place.



Moran won first run-off
but was only fourth later

After some shocking weather the day before, Harewood basked in spring sunshine for rounds five and six of the championship and this was the first day for those new to Avon rubber, like Menzies, to manage their tyres in rising ambient temperatures.

But it was Moran who was the master of the opening run-off with a blistering 47.71s to put himself out of reach of everyone else. Ryder led the chase and his 48.02s pushed reigning champion Menzies back to third as Trevor Willis, Dave Uren and Sean Gould wrapped up a typically competitive top six.

From the smaller-engined cars, it was local ace Richard Spedding who forged his 1600cc GWR Raptor into eighth from the GWR Predator of Johnathan Varley and David Warburton's Gould. However, the story of the opening run-off was when the DJ Firestorm of Summers came to a halt on the run up to Country Corner. Summers clambered out and chatted with the marshals while they fixed up a tow and it was the last time the car would run all day.

Later, the second run-off was decided by just three hundredths of a second. Ryder set a superb 48.21s to take the lead but Menzies was next to go and squeezed out a 48.18s to nip ahead.

Last to run, having been fastest qualifier, was Moran, and all eyes were on the Gould. But it was quickly clear that the six-time champion was seriously lacking grip. A big slide at Country Corner and another oversteering moment through the final bend at Quarry showed where the time was slipping away. His 49.18s left him fourth behind Will Hall, who had an encouraging weekend in his new Gould GR59 to take a fighting third. Willis and Gould again packed out the top six, while Warburton

HILLCLIMB RESULTS

ROUND 5

1 Scott Moran (4.0 Gould-Judd GR59J) 47.71s; 2 Matthew Ryder (4.0 Gould-Judd GR59JB) 48.02s; 3 Wallace Menzies (3.3 Gould-Cosworth GR59M) 48.21s; 4 Trevor Willis (3.2 OMS 28-RTE) 48.65s; 5 David Uren (3.5 Gould-NME GR55B) 49.05s; 6 Sean Gould (4.0 Gould-Judd GR59JB) 49.20s; 7 Will Hall (4.0 Gould-Judd GR59) 49.30s; 8 Richard Spedding (1.6 GWR-Hayabusa Raptor 2) 49.32s; 9 Johnathan Varley (2.0 GWR-TKD V8 Predator) 50.07s; 10 David Warburton (1.6 Gould-Suzuki GR59) 50.18s.

ROUND 6

1 Menzies 48.18s; 2 Ryder 48.21s; 3 Hall 49.14s; 4 Moran 49.18s; 5 Willis 49.28s; 6 Gould 49.68s; 7 Uren 50.17s; 8 Warburton 50.19s; 9 Spedding 50.23s; 10 David Tatham (1.1 DJ-Suzuki Firehawk) 52.69s.

POINTS

1 Menzies 54; 2 Ryder (below) 52; 3 Moran 46; 4 Willis 35; 5 Hall and Alex Summers (2.7 DJ-Cosworth Firestorm) 27.



For full results visit: britishhillclimb.co.uk

was the best of the lower-powered cars after Varley spun under braking for Quarry.

Menzies said: "Scott set a pretty big marker down earlier for us to chase and Matt is very much at home here. So to sneak a third and a first, I'm really happy."

Moran admitted that it was all about tyres on the second run. "I was very pleased with the first one but in the second run-off the tyres were going off," he said. "There were two or three places it was very lairy and it was just leaking time all the way up."

PAUL LAWRENCE

Harper/Leung reign supreme after battling to win from 18th

SILVERSTONE
BRITISH GT
6-7 MAY

Century Motorsport's Dan Harper and Darren Leung were crowned British GT winners at the Silverstone 500 after a meteoric recovery drive from 18th.

On the weekend Britain crowned a new king, a 43-car grid was British GT's largest in a decade, although stereotypical British weather left qualifying a deluge. Four incidents and a brace of red flags later, the sessions were abandoned with combined times from second free practice making up Sunday's grid. One of the biggest losers was therefore Century Motorsport as teething troubles in FP2 left its BMW M4 pairing in an unrepresentative position on the grid.

"We had a few issues," said Harper, "but it was bad luck how it went. Even in warm-up we had a misfire and were wondering when we were going to catch a break."

The beneficiaries, meanwhile, were father-and-son duo Richard and Sam Neary, their Abba Racing-run machine leading a Mercedes washout of the front two

rows with RAM Racing and 2 Seas in tow. "I think Peter [Daly, race director] made the right call with four crashes," said Sam Neary. "With big tyres, too much horsepower, I think it was the safer decision."

Under Sunday's bright blue skies, things looked promising for the German machines, but a series of dramas hindered their charge.

The issues started as early as the sighting lap to the grid, when RAM Racing's John Ferguson was released into the fastlane in the pits where he made contact with another car. Tape applied, the Irishman's Mercedes took its front-row start but was shuffled back to sixth in the opening laps, its pace seemingly hobbled.

"The car seems to be difficult to drive," were Ferguson's ominous words after his first stint. "It's damage limitation. I was released out into another car, and there was a collision."

The Abba challenge then wilted over the stints, despite a strong opener by Richard Neary, as 2 Seas' lead entry moved to the front with Jonny Adam, in for James Cottingham, after a quicker first pitstop under safety car conditions. The sister



2 Seas Mercedes suffered a setback on its first visit to the pits, however, as Ian Loggie dropped out of the top 10 when the car was forced out of its correct box position. Haemorrhaging time while stationary, reigning champion Loggie and co-driver Jules Gounon never fully recovered as they eventually salvaged seventh place.

While Mercedes' challengers were falling away, BMW suddenly emerged towards the front thanks to a calculated and determined display by Leung and the flying Harper. Am driver Leung showed no mercy with his initial stint as he clawed back positions with eight overtakes prior to the driver change, handing the keys to Harper — who proved to be in inspired form.

A series of expertly judged moves by the BMW factory driver quickly put him ahead of entries from RAM, 2 Seas and Enduro Motorsport, including three cutbacks exiting Luffield that harked back to his Ginetta Junior days, which he admitted had helped him in "perfecting" the move.



OPTIMUM STRATEGY HANDS BROWN/CLARK VICTORY

Jack Brown and Charles Clark sealed their first GT4 class win in commanding fashion after the pair played the strategy game to perfection and avoided the pitfalls that befell their frontrunning rivals.

Starting the Optimum Motorsport McLaren Artura from the outside of the front row, a better first lap for Clark propelled him into the lead ahead of polesitter Zac Meakin in the Team Parker Racing Porsche.

Electing to pit under the first safety car dropped him to third but in a prime position to inherit the lead when Stuart Middleton and Harry George eventually took their first

stops, having been the only two in class not to take advantage of the early caution.

While George slipped down the order in the Enduro McLaren, which had a new engine and gearbox after a spectacular failure in the opening practice session, the battle came down to Brown/Clark and Raceway team-mates Middleton and Freddie Tomlinson.

The latter pairing maintained a constant challenge in their Ginetta G56, but their alternate strategy unravelled towards the end of the second hour. With the safety car on track, Tomlinson pitted from the class lead and handed over to Middleton, who drove straight through the red

light at pit exit. Confusion reigned as the team was handed a 131-second stop/go penalty, which was then suspended pending post-race investigation, before being reinstated. It ultimately wasn't served, with the #56 black-flagged in the closing minutes to give Clark and Brown a maiden victory.

The disqualification also handed the unlikely of podiums to One Motorsport's Michael Broadhurst and Ed McDermott. The latter was shoved into a spin running through Club on the opening lap, which dropped the Mercedes to back of the field.

With McDermott told to 'keep his head down and focus on catching cars in front' by his



ALL PHOTOGRAPHY: JEP
motorsport
IMAGES

The last two examples would be on Adam and race leader Sandy Mitchell's Barwell Motorsport Lamborghini Huracan, the latter dramatically for the lead with just 11 minutes remaining on the clock.

Harper had sold Mitchell a dummy down the Wellington Straight, diving to the inside into Brooklands before getting the switchback into Luffield. Harper praised his co-driver, saying: "Darren did amazing, he has done since I've been driving with him and, every time, he's developing himself and it's great to be a part of it."

An early final stop had allowed Mitchell and Shaun Balfe to move to the front of the field before losing the win in the final stages. Mitchell said: "Me and Dan have known each other well; we've come through the [BRDC] SuperStars programme together, so I knew it would be a clean fight. They just had a lot more pace than us on the straights today."

The final spot on the podium went to the quiet assassins of the race, Optimum

Motorsport, with Mark Radcliffe and Rob Bell (McLaren 720S) moving onto the rostrum through the final pitstop phase ahead of Beechdean Motorsport's Aston Martin driven by Andrew Howard/Ross Gunn, while Raffaele Marciello salvaged fifth for himself and Ferguson.

Sixth for Barwell's second Huracan gave Will Tregurtha and Mark Sansom Silver-Am honours, while Ben Barnicoat's incredible charge to the front of the field in the second stint would be of little value, the Inception Racing McLaren penalised and dropping to 10th for exceeding driver stint time.

The Cottingham/Adam 2 Seas Mercedes fell back to 11th after a stop/go penalty, earned when the former sideswiped a GT4 Aston at Village. Simon Orange, meanwhile, escaped a huge shunt unharmed after encountering the Team Brit McLaren of Aaron Morgan broadside across the circuit at Becketts, with Morgan disqualified.

DAN MASON

RACE RESULTS

GT3

(78 laps) 1 Darren Leung/Dan Harper (BMW M4); 2 Shaun Balfe/Sandy Mitchell (Lamborghini Huracan GT3 Evo2) +1.289s; 3 Mark Radcliffe/Rob Bell (McLaren 720S); 4 Andrew Howard/Ross Gunn (Aston Martin Vantage); 5 John Ferguson/Raffaele Marciello (Mercedes-AMG GT3); 6 Mark Sansom/Will Tregurtha (Lamborghini). Fastest lap Gunn 1m58.689s (111.02mph). Pole Richard & Sam Neary (Mercedes). Starters 24.

Points 1 Leung/Harper 53.5; 2= Ian Loggie/Jules Gounon (Mercedes) 46; 2= Howard/Gunn 46; 4 Ferguson/Marciello 43; 5 James Cottingham/Jonny Adam (Mercedes) 38.5; 6 Balfe/Mitchell 33.

GT4

(73 laps) 1 Jack Brown/Charles Clark (McLaren Artura, below); 2 Ed McDermott/Michael Broadhurst (Mercedes-AMG GT4) -1 lap; 3 Erik Evans/Matt Cowley (Ford Mustang); 4 David Holloway/Bradley Ellis (Aston Martin Vantage); 5 Josh Rowledge/Aston Millar (McLaren); 6 Carl Cavers/Lewis Plato (BMW M4). FL Plato 2m10.476s (100.99mph). P Zac Meakin/Dan Vaughan (Porsche 718 Cayman). S 19.

Points 1 Brown/Clark 61.5; 2 Cowley/Evans 46.5; 3 Millar/Rowledge 35; 4 McDermott/Broadhurst 30; 5 Cavers/Plato 27; 6= Will Moore/Matt Nicoll-Jones (Mustang) 25; 6= Ian Gough/Tom Wrigley (McLaren) 25.



engineer, the pair gradually climbed the order and benefited massively from the final caution period to finish third – which became second after the flag.

Broadhurst said: "The race seemed to unfold in a really weird way with the safety cars; I thought we would have been a bit screwed over by the last one but somehow we seem to have been gifted a good result off of it."

Academy Motorsport rounded out the podium in an eventful race for Ford Mustang duo Matt Cowley and Erik Evans – the latter escaping a gravel trap on the run to third.

JOE HUDSON



Maiden British GT4 win
went to Brown and Clark

Penalties hand Loake double GB3 success

SILVERSTONE
GB3
6-7 MAY

Joseph Loake extended his GB3 Championship lead during a chaotic weekend at Silverstone dominated by penalties.

The JHR Developments driver picked up two more victories to add to his opening Oulton Park triumph last month, but only after Rodin Carlin's John Bennett had his first two single-seater wins taken away by officials.

Tymek Kucharczyk had looked a likely victory contender at the beginning of the weekend, having taken a double pole in a wet qualifying. But the Polish ace had his times disallowed minutes before the opening contest as he was excluded from qualifying – along with Douglas Motorsport team-mate Lucas Staico – after tape on his car's halo was deemed to not be compliant with the regulations.

Bennett was promoted to pole for both races, and he initially converted the first into victory in treacherous conditions. Loake made a great launch from fourth to lead into Copse, with Bennett wrestling back the advantage on the exit before inching clear and eventually winning by 0.9 seconds. But he was later demoted to second after officials deemed that he had left the track while retaking the lead from Loake at the start. Loake's JHR team-mate Matthew Rees finished third, while Hitech GP's Alex Dunne took fourth.

Bennett was beaten into Copse again in a dry race two but only after Rees jumped the start from fifth as he pulled out an impressive lead in damp conditions. Dunne tried to take second into Brooklands, but was spun into



retirement after Bennett slid into him on the inside line. Rees's quest to overcome a 10s penalty for his jumped start was hampered by the safety car, which was deployed for a separate incident involving David Morales and Souta Arao, who rolled his Hitech machine at Stowe.

Rees pulled clear again at the resumption, but not by enough and was demoted to seventh at the chequered flag. Bennett initially took the win by 0.5s ahead of Loake, who stormed from 10th to second, the highlight of his recovery being a spectacular double overtake around the outside of McKenzie Cresswell and Costa Toparis. Loake again inherited victory, though, after Bennett was handed a three-place penalty for the collision with Dunne. Cresswell was classified second after passing Rodin Carlin's Callum Voisin late on through Maggotts and Becketts, while Kucharczyk gained 14 places to finish ninth.

Noah Ping led an Arden VRD 1-2 in the reversed-grid race. Elite Motorsport's Ayato Iwasaki led initially before being passed by Ping into Brooklands, who controlled the remainder of the 12-lap contest.

Voisin, meanwhile, climbed from 12th to pass Iwasaki's team-mate Oliver Stewart for second late on, but both lost their podium finishes at the chequered

flag due to 5s track-limits penalties, promoting Nico Christodoulou to second and Arthur Rogeon to third.

Dunne and Kucharczyk came through the field into the top 10, while Bennett made up places to finish 11th. Loake lost his front wing during a frenetic opening lap battle on Hangar Straight and finished 20th but leads the standings.

STEVE WHITFIELD

WEEKEND WINNERS

GB3

Race 1 (10 laps) 1 Joseph Loake; 2 John Bennett; 3 Matthew Rees; 4 Alex Dunne; 5 McKenzie Cresswell; 6 Callum Voisin.

Fastest lap Loake 2m10.375s (101.07mph). **Pole** Bennett. **Starters** 25.

Race 2 (9 laps) 1 Loake; 2 Cresswell +2.540s; 3 Voisin; 4 Bennett; 5 Jarrod Waberski; 6 Costa Toparis. **FL** Rees 1m56.475s (113.13mph). **P** Bennett. **S** 25.

Race 3 (12 laps) 1 Noah Ping; 2 Nico Christodoulou +4.191s; 3 Arthur Rogeon; 4 Voisin; 5 Cresswell; 6 Dunne.

FL Kucharczyk 1m54.331s (115.26mph). **P** Ayato Iwasaki. **S** 24.

Points 1 Loake 146; 2 Voisin 115; 3 James Hedley 94; 4 Rees 90; 5 Kucharczyk 84; 6 Dunne 83.

GINETTA JUNIOR

Races 1 & 2 Freddie Slater

Race 3 Leo Robinson

GINETTA GT ACADEMY

Race 1 Nick White

Race 2 Ravi Ramyeed

GINETTA GT CHAMPIONSHIP

Luke Reade (G56)

GB4

Race 1 Tom Mills

Race 2 Harri Reynolds

For full results visit: tsl-timing.com





Ginetta Junior field was once again headed by Slater at Silverstone

Slater denied second hat-trick by track-limits woe

SILVERSTONE
BRSCC
6-7 MAY

Freddie Slater's dominant start to the Ginetta Junior season continued at Silverstone, with only a penalty denying him a second clean sweep of victories. The R Racing driver won from pole in a rain-shortened opener ahead of Elite Motorsport pair Alisha Palmowski and Charlie Hart.

Palmowski edged ahead of Slater at the start of race two, but then lost control at Becketts and dropped down the field. Slater pulled out a four-second lead following an early safety car period until being handed a 5s penalty for exceeding track limits in the closing stages. But a thrilling battle for second in the final two laps enabled Slater to overcome it and take his fifth consecutive triumph

by 0.6s from Elite's Hugo Schwarze and R Racing team-mate Reza Seewooruthun, while Palmowski recovered to fifth.

Schwarze wrestled the lead from Slater at the start of a dramatic final contest, but then lost several positions before the opening lap was completed. R Racing's Leo Robinson took the fight to Slater, who briefly dropped to third behind Hart before reclaiming the lead. Having eventually pulled clear, Slater and Robinson were involved in a feisty exchange in the final two corners of the race, with Robinson diving up the inside into Brooklands before Slater barged his way back ahead at Luffield.

But it was Robinson who took victory at the chequered flag after another 5s track-limits penalty dropped Slater to third. Palmowski, one of only seven finishers not to receive a penalty, inherited second having passed Schwarze and Mikey Porter late on.

Ravi Ramyeed and Nick White scored a win apiece in the Ginetta GT Academy races. Ramyeed passed White in a very wet race one, but then spun at Vale and came home 3.4s behind. Ramyeed beat White into Copse at the start of the sequel and remained ahead until the finish.

Rain caused the cancellation of Saturday's Ginetta GT Championship opener, with Sunday's solitary contest won by Luke Reade, who continued his unbeaten start to the season after edging Ruben Hage by 0.751s. Callum Davies was third.

With Saturday's GB4 encounter also succumbing to the conditions, Tom Mills only had the chance to convert one of two poles, taking a dominant lights-to-flag victory for Kevin Mills Racing in Sunday's opener.

Fortec Motorsport's Colin Queen came home 5.3s behind, having passed Evans GP's Cooper Webster for second into Stowe, while Elite's Harri Reynolds took fourth after a race-long dice with Jeremy Fairbairn and Liam McNeilly.

Fortec duo Ruhaan Alva and Aditya Kulkarni lined up on the front row for the reversed-grid race ahead of Sid Smith, who made the better start but retired immediately with suspension damage after contact with Alva. Reynolds rose from sixth to snatch the lead following an opening lap tussle with Alva. Further back, Fairbairn was passed for third by Mills after a brief caution period and Fairbairn then collided at Luffield with Webster, with Reynolds taking his first victory behind the safety car.

STEVE WHITFIELD



Mills stormed to another win in GB4 after race one didn't take place

TOCA SUPPORTS BRANDS HATCH 6-7 MAY

Zelos and Orton again share the wins

MINI CHALLENGE

There may have only been two rounds of the Mini Challenge season but the battle to be crowned champion is already starting to look like a two-horse race as Dan Zelos and Will Orton continued to share the glory at Brands Hatch.

While Zelos was always likely to be a contender this year, former Ginetta GT5 Challenge frontrunner Orton admits he has “exceeded my expectations” to be leading the championship. “It was a late decision to do this [Minis] – I’d only done four days in the car,” added Orton.

There was certainly no disputing who was the class of the field in the opener, however, as Excelr8 Motorsport’s Zelos powered to a dominant seven-second win from pole on an increasingly wet track. Joe Tanner was running second on the road, although actually had a 10s penalty for creeping at the start but, when he slowed out of Paddock Hill Bend, he was collected by Oliver Meadows and the race was red-flagged. Orton took second after diving back ahead of Bradley Gravett at Paddock.

Zelos looked on course to win the much drier second race as well, enjoying



Former Ginetta racer Orton has impressed with three 2023 Mini wins

ALL PHOTOGRAPHY: JEP
motorsport IMAGES

a gap of around a second over Orton, before he suddenly suffered a puncture on lap 18 of 24 that left Hybrid Tune driver Orton the winner by nearly 12s. “I don’t seem very good at having three good races!” said Zelos. “A few of my team-mates had tyre failures in Friday practice and we were concerned about it all weekend.”

Part of the reason for Orton’s huge winning margin was an intense squabble behind, which a delighted Gravett eventually pulled clear of to claim his maiden podium ahead of Dominic Wheatley.

Starting sixth for the partially reversed-grid finale, Orton said he wanted to “put on a show” and he certainly did that, carving

through to another win. It was initially a NAPA 1-2 with Jamie Osborne heading Lewis Selby before Orton grabbed the lead into Paddock Hill Bend on lap 10 just as it was revealed Osborne had a 10s penalty for an out of position start.

Further back, all eyes were on Zelos as he stormed up from 19th. Aided by an early safety car period, he rapidly picked off his rivals and blasted past Nelson King into Paddock late on to secure an impressive fourth behind Thomas Jack Lee and Meadows. It was another illustration of how committed Zelos is to regaining the Mini crown.

STEPHEN LICKORISH

Parker serves up an impressive Legends weekend

LEGENDS

The Legends drivers produced some frenetic action on the first of their three 2023 appearances alongside British Touring Cars at Brands Hatch last weekend. But, sadly, it was all too brief as several red flags shortened their outings.

From the racing that did take place, Jack

Parker was one of the star performers as he stood in for five-time champion John Mickel, who was unable to compete due to Motorsport UK concussion rules following his Cadwell Park roll last month.

Parker signalled his intent on a damp first lap of the weekend, rising from 23rd to 14th in the opening heat. His rapid progression continued to an eventual third, behind Will

Gibson and Oli Schlup. Gibson grabbed the lead from polesitter Schlup at Paddock Hill Bend, Schlup having *just* controlled a slide to keep the advantage at the start.

Parker went two spots better in heat two as he emerged from Druids ahead and then led throughout to triumph from the squabbling Ben Higgins and Andy Bird. But the final had to be abandoned after an early multi-car crash left oil on the by now very sodden track.

Parker added another win in the first Sunday heat, this time from 19th, and finished runner-up in the shortened fourth race behind Robert Barrable. Yet there was to be no final glory for Parker as he was involved in an unfortunate tangle at Paddock Hill Bend that tipped Connor Mills into a frightening roll (see News) and brought out the red flags once more. After a miserable weekend, reigning champion Miles Rudman was declared the winner.

STEPHEN LICKORISH



Parker (r) bagged two wins standing in for Mickel

Penalty denies de Haan a double

PORSCHE CARRERA CUP GB

Robert de Haan continued his sensational 2023 Porsche performances into Brands Hatch but was denied a double when he was penalised for passing Charles Rainford as safety car boards were being displayed. De Haan quickly banished the disappointment of being pipped to pole by one thousandth of a second by James Kellett as he grabbed an early lead when Kellett



faltered off the line. Things went from bad to worse for Kellett as he then tipped Century team-mate Gus Burton into the Paddock Hill Bend tyres. Upon the safety car restart, de Haan charged to a procession 5s win from Adam Smalley and Rainford. There was no startline trouble for Kellett second time around from the partially reversed-grid pole. But, as SC boards appeared for David Fairbrother's stranded Porsche, de Haan rounded the outside of Smalley at Druids and dived ahead of Rainford at Graham Hill Bend. Shortly after the resumption, he powered past Kellett – who did not fight de Haan, knowing his rival was likely to be penalised – exiting Clearways and won by 7s. “I was busy doing a move on Smalley and got on the grass,” said the Dutchman in his defence. “When I came back on the track, I was already alongside Charles.” But officials were unimpressed and he was demoted to third. **STEPHEN LICKORISH**

New names star in British F4

BRITISH F4

There was no disputing that Louis Sharp was the standout star of British Formula 4 at Donington Park. But plenty of his rivals were vying for that tag at Brands Hatch as the Rodin Carlin driver was on the back foot after struggling in the tricky wet qualifying and being sent crashing out of the opener. There was Fortec's James Higgins, who grabbed an impressive double pole and claimed a maiden win with a lights-to-flag lead of race three. Then there was Kanato Le, the Hitech racer who profited from Higgins' slow start to race one and Daniel Guinchard's Surtees slide to take the opening spoils. Another contender was JHR

Developments' Deagen Fairclough. He rocketed up 15 places on the first lap of race one – even if his progress was aided by him incorrectly taking up his 19th-place grid position after dropping to the back on the green-flag lap. He then stormed to race two glory on the road before being penalised for an aggressive Druids lunge on Aiden Neate. And the final member of the leading quartet was Dion Gowda. Overshadowed by his Rodin Carlin team-mates at Donington, he took his first win in race two having repelled Will Macintyre. But, for all their impressive performances, it was Sharp who extended his points advantage, despite 'only' picking up a pair of fourth places. **STEPHEN LICKORISH**



WEEKEND WINNERS

MINI CHALLENGE

Race 1 (15 laps) 1 Dan Zelos; 2 Will Orton +6.584s; 3 Oliver Meadows; 4 Bradley Gravett; 5 Jamie Osborne; 6 Marlo Cordell. **Fastest lap** Zelos 58.172s (74.75mph). **Pole** Zelos. **Starters** 22. **Race 2 (24 laps) 1 Orton;** 2 Gravett +11.744s; 3 Dominic Wheatley; 4 Osborne; 5 Cordell; 6 Lewis Selby. **FL** Orton 51.365s (84.66mph). **P** Zelos. **S** 22. **Race 3 (23 laps) 1 Orton;** 2 Thomas Jack Lee +7.581s; 3 Meadows; 4 Zelos; 5 Nelson King; 6 Joe Tanner. **FL** Orton 51.361s (84.66mph). **P** Selby. **S** 22. **Points 1 Orton 286;** 2 Zelos 227; 3 Meadows 214; 4 Tanner 186; 5 Wheatley 179; 6 Lee 160.

LEGENDS ELITE CUP

Race 1 (10 laps) 1 Will Gibson; 2 Oli Schlup +1.048s; 3 Jack Parker; 4 Connor Mills; 5 Andy Bird; 6 Chris Needham. **FL** Parker 1m05.303s (66.59mph). **P** Schlup. **S** 32. **Race 2 (10 laps) 1 Parker;** 2 Ben Higgins +2.087s; 3 Bird; 4 Robert Barrable; 5 Mills; 6 Nick Bridgeman. **FL** Parker 1m07.212s (64.69mph). **P** Nathan Anthony. **S** 32. **Race 3 (10 laps) 1 Parker;** 2 Higgins +0.459s; 3 Tyler Read; 4 Marcus Pett; 5 Mills; 6 Gibson. **FL** Higgins 55.433s (78.44mph). **P** Matt Isherwood. **S** 32. **Race 4 (7 laps) 1 Barrable;** 2 Parker +1.301s; 3 Gibson; 4 Charlie Budd; 5 Mills; 6 Bird. **FL** Matt Knight 55.225s (78.74mph). **P** Barrable. **S** 31. **Race 5 (4 laps) 1 Miles Rudman;** 2 Needham +0.060s; 3 Isherwood; 4 Chris Grieve; 5 Mark Beaty; 6 Mike Schlup. **FL** Grieve 55.078s (78.95mph). **P** Rudman. **S** 32.

BRITISH FORMULA 4

Race 1 (6 laps) 1 Kanato Le; 2 Will Macintyre +1.609s; 3 James Higgins; 4 Deagen Fairclough; 5 Daniel Guinchard; 6 Aqil Alibhai. **FL** Fairclough 53.619s (81.10mph). **P** Higgins. **S** 20. **Race 2 (22 laps) 1 Dion Gowda;** 2 Aiden Neate +0.338s; 3 Fairclough; 4 Louis Sharp; 5 Gabriel Stilp; 6 Alibhai. **FL** Fairclough 45.425s (95.73mph). **P** Neate. **S** 20. **Race 3 (23 laps) 1 Higgins;** 2 Macintyre +0.588s; 3 Guinchard; 4 Sharp; 5 Jaden Pariat; 6 Jimmy Piszcyk. **FL** Guinchard 45.402s (95.78mph). **P** Higgins. **S** 20. **Points 1 Sharp 82;** 2 Higgins 69; 3 Gowda 60; 4 Macintyre 57; 5 Guinchard 52; 6 Noah Lisle 51.

PORSCHE CARRERA CUP GB

Race 1 (both 34 laps) 1 Robert de Haan; 2 Adam Smalley +5.203s; 3 Charles Rainford; 4 James Kellett; 5 Matty Graham; 6 Ross Wylie. **FL** de Haan 45.821s (94.90mph). **P** Kellett. **S** 25. **Race 2 1 Kellett;** 2 Rainford +0.805s; 3 de Haan; 4 Smalley; 5 Graham; 6 Micah Stanley. **FL** de Haan 45.950s (94.63mph). **P** Kellett. **S** 25. **Points 1 Smalley 38;** 2 de Haan 32; 3 Graham 20; 4 Kellett 18; 5 Rainford 17; 6 Gus Burton 16.

For full results visit: tsl-timing.com



Second TCR UK race at Croft was won by Brickley from third on the grid

Constable and Brickley make it four from four

CROFT
BRSCC
6-7 MAY

Two closely fought contests at Croft typified the competitiveness of this year's TCR UK championship as Jac Constable and Jenson Brickley became its third and fourth different winners in as many races.

Constable banished any memories of a troubled opening round by placing his Rob Boston Racing Audi RS3 LMS at the head of the field, with six cars covered by just 0.27 seconds in qualifying. But, from the slightly damp side of the grid, Constable was beaten away by Carl Boardley, now running his own Cupra Leon Competicion with the help of Hart GT.

The two broke clear and Boardley rebuffed Constable's challenge through Tower. Then, as Constable fought a grassy moment, Boardley escaped, but it wasn't long before the Audi closed back in, only to lock a brake at Sunny In and consign Constable to

second. The twist came when Boardley was handed a 5s track-limits penalty, giving Constable victory – Audi's first in TCR UK.

Bradley Kent (Hyundai Veloster N) secured third by passing Callum Newsham (Hyundai i30 N) into the hairpin, moments before Chris Smiley relinquished the last podium spot when an exhaust sensor failed on his Honda Civic Type R FL5.

A mistake on his best qualifying lap, then his choice of tyres suited better to a damp track than one that had dried faster than expected, left Brickley's Cupra eighth. But that translated to third on race two's reversed grid. Brickley quickly passed Brad Hutchison and Alex Ley – who struggled to find his i30's sweet spot all weekend – and never looked like being beaten.

Even a caution period that eliminated his lead posed no problem, and the Fiesta champion eased to a comfortable victory over Adam Shepherd, who'd gradually reduced the understeer on his i30. Joe Marshall (RBR Audi) completed the podium

ahead of Bruce Winfield. Combined with seventh in the opener, Winfield maintained his championship lead, with Boardley now his closest challenger.

Experience helped Ryan Bensley win an action-packed Civic Cup opener. Max Edmundson led the majority of the race, fending off Will Redford until the Pro Alloys driver dived past into Clervaux. Edmundson cut back through Hawthorn and Redford had to skip the chicane, before easing off to let the long-time leader alongside. As they ran side by side, their battle brought Bensley, Morgan Bailey and Jack Harding into play and, as the leaders clashed at the hairpin, Bensley avoided the trouble and nipped ahead.

Redford, with damaged steering, then careered off track exiting the chicane, with red flags bringing an early conclusion to events. After initially taking victory on countback, Edmundson was then excluded, while the unclassified Redford received a grid penalty.

After the riot act was read on Sunday morning, the reversed-grid bout proved quieter. Dan Thackeray, struggling for set-up on his first visit to the circuit, drove a defensive race to deny a rapid Harvey Caton his maiden victory. Caton briefly got ahead at Tower, only for Thackeray to fight back through the Esses and hold on to win.

Ben Mulryan took a first Fiesta Junior pole and maiden victory, which he then doubled. Beaten away by Rashan Chigorimbo and Ronnie Smith, Mulryan reclaimed second just before a safety car to retrieve Sam Naser's car from the Hawthorn wall after a clash with Ryan Micallef. Mulryan then dived inside Chigorimbo at Tower, only to lose out



Bensley won opening Civic Cup race after Edmundson and Redford collided

WEEKEND WINNERS

TCR UK

Race 1 Jac Constable (Audi RS3 LMS Gen II, below)

Race 2 Jenson Brickley (Cupra Leon Competicion)

CIVIC CUP

Race 1 Ryan Bensley

Race 2 Dan Thackeray

FIESTA JUNIORS

Races 1 & 2 Ben Mulryan (Zetec S Mk7)

MAZDA MX-5 CHAMPIONSHIP

Races 1 & 2 Steve Foden

Race 3 Adam Sparrow

MAZDA MX-5 CLUBMAN

Race 1 Paul Bateman

Race 2 Matt Fletcher

MAZDA MX-5 SUPERCUP

Race 1 Patrick Fletcher

Races 2 & 3 Aidan Hills

CITYCAR CUP

Races 1, 2 & 3 Elliot Lettis (Peugeot 107)



For full results visit: tsl-timing.com

on the exit. He tried again at Sunny before the pair went side by side into the complex. Slight contact pitched Chigorimbo wide and let Mulryan through for the Mk7 Fiesta Zetec S's first victory in the category, with Smith snatching second.

The sequel's first-corner pile-up, in which two cars rolled, eliminated several drivers including Chigorimbo. Mulryan controlled the shortened re-run, which was further truncated by another red flag after Jasmine Shaw was turned into the wall at Clervaux.

Steve Foden continued his fine form in the Mazda MX-5 Championship for Mk1 machinery. He passed polesitter Adam Sparrow – who got shuffled back to fifth – and repelled Tom Smith to win the opener, then fended off Sparrow in race two. A good start propelled Sparrow ahead in the finale, and he withstood pressure from Foden and Jason Greatrex to deny Foden his hat-trick.

Maiden MX-5 Clubman wins went to Paul Bateman, who recovered from an early mistake, and Matt Fletcher, who jumped Bateman off the line.

MARK PAULSON

UPWARDS CLIMB TO SUCCESS FOR HILLS



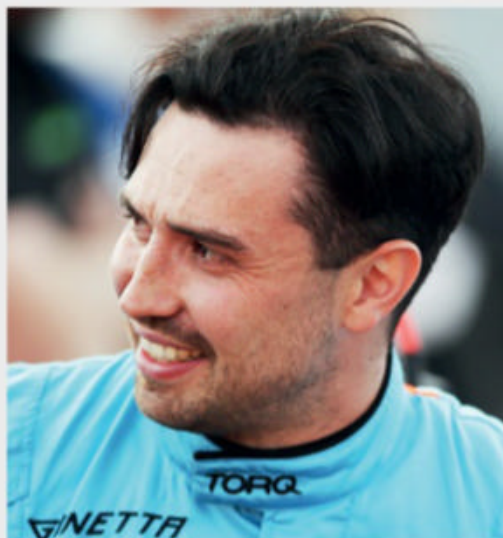
Two wins for Hills in the Mazda MX-5 Supercup

Aidan Hills, riding high in the early-season Autosport National Driver Rankings, scored his eighth and ninth wins of the year in Croft's Mazda MX-5 Supercup races.

The former Ginetta GT5 Challenge driver, who is combining his return to racing in the Supercup with a campaign in MotorSport Vision Racing's new Miata Trophy, has started the season in blistering form, dominating on the Silverstone Grand Prix circuit and both Brands Hatch layouts ahead of last weekend.

It's come while running a fleet of cars alongside dad Daren through their Hills Motorsport operation. His customers might not be getting much chance to win, but Hills's preparation and coaching has inspired multiple podiums for the likes of James Cossins, who was his first customer at the end of 2019. The team is now bidding for its first championship title after Colin Bysouth went agonisingly close last year.

"That was really a coming-of-age for our team," said Hills (below). "Last year was a confidence booster for all of us to say, 'Look, we can compete with your Rob Bostons', who are big names in the sport in general, and Paddock Motorsport, who run GT cars."



While father and son are flat-out on car preparation, Hills Jr believes the on-track success is rooted in practices learned from former British Touring Car engineer and ex-racer Dave Longhurst, a multiple world champion in hot rods who now engineers for the Worthing-based operation.

"I've worked with him since I was about 14, from when I started in rallycross," explained Hills. "He always set my rallycross car up. He set my dad's Legends car up in the 1990s. He lives two miles away from us, so I've always known Dave, and his attention to detail in setting up a race car has rubbed off on me massively. I try to be like a sponge and listen to everything he's told me."

"I was actually telling him yesterday that, when I was younger, I went to Spedweekend at Ipswich to watch him in the Two-Litre Hot Rod World Final and he won it. I had a signed photo of him on my wall when I was five or six years old! To be working closely with him now is great."

Competing against established teams in Ginettas proved tough on a tight budget, but the experience was invaluable. "We were fighting a losing battle a little bit with budget mainly," admitted Hills. "But it was nice to have done the BTCC weekends and to say that I've done it. I think as a driver, it's brought me on massively. I stepped up a gear from doing that."

Hills overhauled Patrick Fletcher to win Saturday's Supercup opener at Croft on the road, but dropped to fourth with a 10-second penalty for movement at the start. Fletcher's missed gear on Sunday helped Hills jump into the lead and hold off his challenger in race two. He then won a thriller from eighth on the reversed grid while Fletcher recovered to fifth after a wild early spin.

MARK PAULSON

Tattersall is no coronation chicken in SEAT

THRUXTON
CSCC
6-7 MAY

Tyres and bravado decided a battle of 340bhp TCR cars as Silverstone-based Warren Tattersall defeated Thruxton neighbour Jamie Sturges by 0.229 seconds in Saturday's scintillating Open Series race, the first and closest on the Classic Sports Car Club's Coronation Meeting bill.

Poleman Tattersall's Uniroyal-shod SEAT made the running on a hideously wet circuit, which came back to Sturges's Yokohama-equipped VW Golf as the 30-minute pitstop contest – started behind a safety car and punctuated when David Harvey's Lotus 340R aquaplaned into the inside wall at Allard – evolved.

Topping 140mph up Woodham Hill for the final time, Sturges probed outside Tattersall into the chicane. Tattersall braved it out and, in catching a vicious tailslide, forced Sturges to lift, compromising his exit. Sturges leapt back on the gas but Tattersall outdragged him. Dave Hutchins (Honda Civic) led the chase while Dylan Popovic wrestled his Ginetta to fourth.

Sturges again set best lap as he pursued Nathan Wells's stunning BMW M3 E46 GTR while lapping the New Millennium field. The M3s of Dominic Malone (ex-Andy Priaulx E90 World Touring Car) and Michael Vitulli (E46) were next.

Taming his 300bhp Abarth, Andrew Marson fulfilled his Snetterton threat, dominating Turbo Tin Tops. He rocketed clear of John Wyatt (Mini Cooper S), alone among immediate rivals in avoiding pitstop



Cupra pilot Tattersall defied
Sturges at the final chicane
to take Open Series win

penalties. James Joannou (Renault Clio) survived several lurid adventures for third.

Driving his wild BMW M4 silhouette – a French Solution F chassis with a six-litre Chevrolet V8 – Sam Allpass repeated last year's Slicks Series win on a drying track. Wells and Sturges (on Avons) were next home in a race bisected by a caution for the tyre wall at Noble to be reinstated after Kevin Bird's Porsche 991 spun into it.

Australian Dave Griffin (E36 M3) chased David Burke's 1974 Porsche Carrera RSR clone throughout the Modern Classics race, and was gifted the win when Burke was penalised 30s for stopping after the window. The Hamilton brothers' Ginetta G20s were third and fourth, Roger leapfrogging Nick having collected fewer impositions.

Danny Cassar overcame his 30s Silverstone Tin Tops winner's penalty, repeating in Nigel Ainge's Honda Integra. In a race interrupted when poleman Chris Warburton shunted his VW Golf GTI on

lap one, Adam Brown pressed Cassar after his Ford Fiesta's stuttering engine cleared. Brown was bumped to third behind Manoj Patel (Civic) for speeding in the pits. Snetterton victor Andrew Windmill (Civic) rotated and stopped fractionally short, but salvaged fourth.

Sunday was beautiful, the south's warmest day this year. With neither Snetterton Morgan winner present, Shane Kelly took the opener in the University of Wolverhampton students-run CX +4. Kelly was heading for a double when he parked after Village, leaving John Emberson to withstand huge pressure from Louis Ruff.

As 42 Swinging Sixties starters stampeded towards Allard, Bill Watt's Lotus Elan slewed broadside and Charles Tippet's BMW and Rob Roodhouse's Mini glanced the outside barrier. Another caution 15 laps in reunited the field, which Anthony and Ollie Hancock (Elan) again escaped. Alex Thistlethwayte (Mustang) was excluded



The Tin Tops field heads for Allard
with winner Cassar on the outside

WEEKEND WINNERS

OPEN SERIES

Warren Tattersall (SEAT Leon Cupra TCR)

NEW MILLENNIUM

Nathan Wells (BMW M3 E46 GTR)

TURBO TIN TOPS

Andrew Marson (Abarth Assetto Corse)

SLICKS SERIES

Sam Allpass (BMW-Chevrolet M4)

MODERN CLASSICS

Dave Griffin (BMW E36 M3)

TIN TOPS/PUMA CUP

Danny Cassar (Honda Integra Type R)

MORGAN CHALLENGE

Race 1 Shane Kelly (CX +4)

Race 2 John Emberson (+4 Babydoll)

SWINGING SIXTIES

Anthony & Ollie Hancock (Lotus Elan)

CLASSIC K

Ollie & Anthony Hancock (Lotus Elan)

FUTURE CLASSICS

Alex Taylor (Mazda RX-7 turbo)

SPECIAL SALOONS & MODSPORTS

Races 1 & 2 Andy Southcott (MG Lenham Midget)

For full results visit: tsl-timing.com

from second for a safety-car infringement, promoting Dean Roberts (Datsun 240Z) and Connor Kay (MG Midget).

The Hancocks switched order in their Tom Ebbs-prepped car for the Classic K hour, Ollie relaying his dad to victory. 'Fabio Randaccio' stalled his TVR Griffith on the grid, but hurtled back to second, having pressured Paul Tooms (Elan) into a spin at the chicane. Tooms kept third, despite erroneously serving a drive-through, while Thistlethwayte and Chris Conoley, finishing Allen Tice's Marcos-Volvo, were abreast over the line for fourth.

Penalties galore decided Future Classics, 60s for speeding in the pits dropping Matt and Martyn Ellis (Talbot Sunbeam Lotus) behind Alex Taylor, who had charged his Mazda RX-7 turbo from the back, but nursed it home with water temperature rising. A lap down, Hugh Gurney (BMW E30 325i) passed Burke's Porsche for third.

Replete as the enthusiasts' favourite Special Saloons and Modsports entry was with ingenious cars, the races quickly fell apart due to attrition. Andy Southcott's quick and reliable 2.7-litre Millington-engined tubeframe Midget's 1m18.408s (108.17mph) best was way beyond the rest.

MARCUS PYE



BAPTISM OF WATER "With a Honda Civic and the Audi in the workshop, this was the least appropriate car we could have brought in the conditions," said Andy Woods-Dean, who with Greg Rose gave Martin Johnston's Chevrolet Corvette Z06 its second UK outing – and CSCC debut – in the New Millennium set. Raced to two Norwegian GT2 championships by Frode Alhaug, the aluminium-framed car was initially built as a Sports Car Club of America racer. The intrepid duo finished ninth.



SLEEPING GIANT AWOKEN The Dave Cook-built Vauxhall Carlton TS6000, in which John Cleland and Vince Woodman won Thundersaloons races in 1987 and the 1988 title, is back on track with new owner Neil Duke. Last raced six years ago by the late Pete Stevens – whose brother 'Nudge' was at Thruxton – the 5.7-litre Chevrolet V8-powered monster was recommissioned by Steve Mole but, needing wheels among a new parts inventory, arrived following only a short Brands Hatch shakedown.



LIGIER JS2-R DEBUTS Graduating from a Ginetta G20 to a bespoke Ligier JS2-R, powered by a 3.7-litre Duratec V6 mated to a six-speed gearbox, gave Steve Griffiths plenty of excitement. Honouring the DFV-engined JS2, in which Jean-Louis Lafosse/Guy Chasseuil finished second at Le Mans in 1975, Ligier has built more than 50 since 2018, for one-make series in Europe. Kentishman Griffiths's came from D&C Racing in Maranello, and he guided it to 11th in the Slicks Series race.

Hogg a double victor during annual Bishops court car event

**BISHOPSCOURT
BARC
6-7 MAY**

First used for racing in the early 1960s when it was still an active RAF base, Bishops court has featured a lot of change over the years. For a while after the RAF departed it was left derelict, but more recently has become predominantly a motorcycle track, with a lap length rather shorter than the original three miles.

Car activity these days is somewhat restricted, partly due to local planning regulations. And the circuit hosts just one two-day car race meeting per year, overseen by the British Automobile Racing Club and featuring a mixture

of classes more normally in action at Mondello Park and Kirkistown.

There was qualifying and just one race for cars on Saturday, with Formula Sheane getting things under way late in the afternoon, but it started with a bang. From the launch, there was a tight battle between Keith Hogg and Richard Kearney that captured everybody's attention but came to a dramatic conclusion almost within sight of the flag when contact ended Kearney's weekend and left the win to Hogg, who also went on to claim the honours in race two.

The first Sunday race, for Formula Vee, ended prematurely too. FVees are social animals, and the eight-car train that developed at the head of the field for the opener was hugely entertaining but almost certain to end badly. And, sure enough, it did with a tangle at the second chicane involving leaders Anthony Cross and Jack Byrne bringing out the red flags with just a couple of minutes left on the clock. The early end was understandable, though, as Byrne was the wrong way up when the dust settled. Ronan Doherty therefore took a deserved win from Lee Newsome and Dan Polley, the trio covered by 0.4 seconds at the flag in true Vee fashion, just ahead of Colm Blackburn. Blackburn then took race



Cullen was among the other double winners

BARRY CREGG



two by a massive 3s margin from Newsome, with Doherty third.

The SEAT Supercup also provided excitement with a squabbling mob of eight eventually led by Harry McGovern in the first encounter, with Shane Murphy and Graham McDonnell in his wake. Murphy got it all right in the second, leapfrogging Barry English and Brian Berry in the closing stages to claim the win.

Elsewhere, there were double winners aplenty. Peter Drennan claimed both the Global GT contests, despite a strong

Child and Fennell win as Formula Junior thrills

**CADWELL PARK
HSCC
6-7 MAY**

Formula Junior stole the show at the Historic Sports Car Club's Wolds Trophy meeting at Cadwell Park, with two thrilling races won by Tim Child and Nick Fennell.

Child (Lotus 22) needed to fend off the relentless Mark Carter (Brabham BT6) to achieve his maiden win in Saturday's wet opening race (for rear-engined cars only).

Sunday's damp points-scoring race went

the way of Fennell (Lotus 27) but only after he first rebutted Michael Hibberd (Lotus 20) and then Child, who threatened to pass him on numerous occasions. This allowed Nic Carlton-Smith (Kieft FJ), up from ninth and with the fastest lap, to close right in before settling for third after winning Saturday's front-engined race with ease. Fennell won again later ahead of early leader Child in an additional non-championship contest.

Samuel Harrison (Brabham BT21B) was twice a winner in Historic F3. Lapping more than three seconds faster than anyone else,

he quickly came through from the back to pass Peter de la Roche (Alexis Mk17) and win easily in soaking conditions. Richard Wise was third in his Tecno F3.

In spite of a leaky gearbox, Harrison was again unstoppable in the dry on Sunday, while de la Roche took another second ahead of Jason Timms, his Brabham BT21's fuel tank repaired after a heavy collision with Andy Jarvis's March 703 on Saturday.

Julian Barter (TVR 3000M) won a sensational first 70s Road Sports race on Saturday, which, at one stage, featured five drivers fighting for the win. Kevin Kivlochan led until lap eight of 12 when his Morgan +8's brakes faded, allowing the persistent Barter to pounce into Coppice. John Williams (Porsche 911SC) followed him through only for Kivlochan, his brakes recovering, to repass him for second. Mark Leverett (Lotus Elan S4) and Nic Strong (Marcos 3000GT) were also in the hunt, the Elan pressuring Kivlochan and Williams before spinning entering Hall Bends. Sunday's affair was underwhelming by comparison, and the polesitting Barter



Barter had to work hard for his first 70s Road Sports triumph

MICK WALKER



Hogg had enjoyed close
Formula Sheane battle
with Kearney in the opener

BARRY CREGG

challenge from Cameron Fenton in race two, while Michael Cullen was dominant among the Strykers, as were Jackie Cochrane in his Sunbeam Tiger in a small field of Historics, and Graham Moore's self-built GMS among the NI Sevens.

For a time, it looked as though David Cousins was on course for a double victory among the Mazda MX-5 brigade, but a race-two spin and contact rendered him a non-finisher, allowing Rob Kennedy to take the honours.

Robert Savage and his Honda Accord was

clear of the Irish Touring Car pack on both occasions, while there were wins for Alan Watkins (SHP Supercar) and Peter Baxter (Leon) in the NI saloons.

Unusually, conditions were dry throughout and sunshine appeared to be on the agenda, but several times during the day a sea mist threatened to disrupt proceedings. It never quite managed to do so, although visibility was marginal sometimes, giving rise to speculation about the availability of fog tyres.

RICHARD YOUNG



Fennell leads Child. Each
took a Formula Junior victory

MICK WALKER

won from Kivlochan and Williams.

John Shaw easily won the two combined Historic Road Sports and Touring Cars thrashes in his +8, his first coming after Kivlochan's Shelby Cobra crunched the barriers at Coppice seconds after starting from pole. The chasing Touring Car winners were de la Roche, who took advantage of his Austin Mini Cooper's nimbleness to star in Saturday's rain, and Neil Wood (Ford Anglia 105E), who prevailed in the dry on Sunday.

Graham Fennymore (Reynard SF81) twice won in Historic Formula Ford 2000. On Saturday he was well clear when the chequered flag was shown before the prescribed race time had elapsed, prompting the result to be taken from the penultimate

lap. This rescued second place for Ben Glasswell, who'd stopped on the final tour when his Reynard SF77 shed a front wheel!

Sunday's race was red-flagged when Ollie Roberts, third on Saturday, crashed his Reynard SF79 heavily on oil at Chris Curve. Four of the restarted race's five laps were then run behind a safety car, with Fennymore ahead of Richard Coleman and Andrew Storer (both Reynard SF79s).

Elsewhere, reigning champion Lee Harpham won all three Superkart races in spite of a sore neck following his horror crash at Cadwell last month (see News). Ami Jerger was a stand-out performer with two wins in the 450 class.

CARL MCKELLAR

WEEKEND WINNERS

BISHOPSCOURT FORMULA SHEANE

Races 1 & 2 Keith Hogg

FORMULA VEE

Race 1 Ronan Doherty (Sheane FV94)
Race 2 Colm Blackburn (Leastone JH002)

SEAT SUPERCUP

Race 1 Harry McGovern
Race 2 Shane Murphy

GLOBAL GT LIGHTS

Races 1 & 2 Peter Drennan

STRYKER SPORTSCARS

Races 1 & 2 Michael Cullen

HRCA HISTORICS & FUTURE CLASSICS

Races 1 & 2 Jackie Cochrane (Sunbeam Tiger)

NI SEVENS & MAZDA MODI5 CUP

Races 1 & 2 Graham Moore (GMS Honda)

IRISH TOURING CARS & NI SALOONS

Races 1 & 2 Robert Savage (Honda Accord)

For full results visit: speedhive.mylaps.com

CADWELL PARK FORMULA JUNIOR (REAR-ENGINE)

Tim Child (Lotus 22)

FORMULA JUNIOR (FRONT & REAR-ENGINE)

Races 1 & 2 Nick Fennell (Lotus 27)

FORMULA JUNIOR (FRONT-ENGINE)

Nic Carlton-Smith (Kieft FJ, below)

HISTORIC F3

Races 1 & 2 Samuel Harrison (Brabham BT21B)

70s ROAD SPORTS

Races 1 & 2 Julian Barter (TVR 3000M)

HISTORIC ROAD SPORTS & TOURING CARS

Races 1 & 2 John Shaw (Morgan +8)

HISTORIC FORMULA FORD 2000

Races 1 & 2 Graham Fennymore (Reynard SF81)

SUPERKARTS

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

BERNIE'S V8s

Races 1 & 2 Stewart Robb (TVR Tuscan)

ALLCOMERS CLOSED WHEEL

Race 1 Jason Wood (Vauxhall Nova GTE)
Race 2 Mark Dwyer (Lenham P69)



MICK WALKER

For full results visit: tsl-timing.com

FINISHING STRAIGHT



Flashback fun across the globe



VIDEO GAME
FORMULA
RETRO RACING:
WORLD TOUR
(available on PC,
PlayStation,
Switch and Xbox)
RRP £15.99

So often the term 'arcade' is misattributed to a video

game. If you believe some sim racing commentators, anything that isn't ultra-realistic should be classified as an arcade title. That's simply not true.

In the purest sense, an 'arcade' title is just that, something designed with a physical cabinet in mind, with gameplay mechanics built around limited-time sessions and being compelling enough for you to insert coin after coin. Think

Sega Rally or *Cruis'n Blast*.

With that in mind, it's hard to find a truer example of a modern arcade racing game than *Formula Retro Racing: World Tour* — and it's all the better for it. A vivid and approachable driving title, *World Tour* is a sequel to the solo-developed *Formula Retro Racing* from 2020. For this follow-up, creator Andrew Jeffreys aka Repixel8 returns, but this time assisted by CGA Studio to create a more expansive 1990s driving experience, only with contemporary features such as online leaderboards and even virtual reality support.

Beating the clock is your primary goal, with time-based checkpoints placed along fictional tracks while racing against a field of brightly coloured rivals. Reaching first place doesn't automatically mean you'll finish a race, as you may still run out of time.

There are 18 brand-new circuits in *World Tour*, although sadly excluding the Monaco facsimile from the first game, and 10 cars

split into two handling types. The quantity of courses isn't the main draw, but the aesthetic, delivering the sensation of globe-trotting, is. Take the rolling green hills of Wales, for example, adorning the surrounding environment of the Snowdonia track — we could almost smell the bara brith.

Or, the steeply banked Indiana Oval, where timing a slipstream, which gives you a noticeable speed boost akin to a Red Bull Racing Drag-Reduction System, is key to a strong result. Not every venue is a home run, however, as we found Tokyo too high-speed, spreading out the field and lacking the close-proximity action.

Each race can be run across three difficulty levels: Beginner, Advanced and Expert. Points are awarded based on your result mixed with the selected difficulty, and in turn, they unlock more circuits. The reward loop is morish, if linear.

As for the two vehicle types, the second introduces a brand-new handling model: drifting. In the 'regular' race cars, mostly single-seaters, you compete in a strait-laced fashion. Sure, you don't need to be on the absolute racing line to be quick, clipping every apex to perfection, but it is a far cry from, let's say, a *Ridge Racer* title where going sideways through a corner is the preeminent driving style.

The second style is ludicrous, over-the-top, drifting action. To initiate tyre evisceration, simply use the left stick to turn. One input, one result, steer the opposite direction to end the slide or transition into the next turn. You can use the touring car-style vehicles on any track, but there are specific drift-labelled circuits designed to maximise this particular handling technique.





One surprising asset to this sequel is the use of VR for PC players. Upon booting the game with an appropriate headset, you will see a reincarnation of an arcade machine, which you play ‘World Tour’ within. Then, once you’ve selected the cockpit viewpoint, it works wonderfully, adding an extra layer of engagement. The varied track designs, which are deeper in detail than in the original game, really come to life in this format.

Despite up-to-the-minute technology, *Formula Retro Racing: World Tour* is unabashed in its yesteryear simplicity. Recently, we’ve been going back and playing some older arcade-style driving games on the original PlayStation, and in many ways, *World Tour* reminds us of these experiences, only with modern-day accoutrement.

Sharper visuals, a cockpit camera, cross-platform online leaderboards, four-player local split-screen and VR capability. They’re all here, but the gameplay is straight out of a leisure-centre coin-operated arcade machine. Simple, honest, driving fun.

THOMAS HARRISON-LORD

For daily racing game news, visit traxion.gg

FINISHING STRAIGHT



[autosport.com/podcast](https://www.autosport.com/podcast)

GRANT/MOTORSPORT IMAGES



F1 Miami Grand Prix review
 Max Verstappen secured victory in Formula 1’s Miami Grand Prix despite starting ninth, overcoming team-mate Sergio Perez in a strategic battle to take his third win of the year. Podcast host Martyn Lee is joined by Motorsport.com’s Charles Bradley, journalist Mandy Curi and Autosport’s Matt Kew to analyse the race.

WHAT’S ON

Rally Portugal
World Rally Championship
 Round 5/13

11-14 May
TV Live BT Sport 4, Fri 1900, BT Sport 2, Sat 0730, BT Sport 3, Sun 0830
TV Highlights BT Sport 3, Sat 0200, Sat 2215, BT Sport 1, Sun 2200, ITV4, Tue 2000

MotoGP
Round 5/20
 Le Mans, France
14 May
TV Live BT Sport 2, Sun 1230
TV Highlights ITV4, Mon 2000

IndyCar Series
Round 5/17
 Indianapolis, USA
13 May
TV Live Sky Sports F1, Sat 2030

Indy NXT
Round 3/12
 Indianapolis, USA
13 May
TV Live Sky Sports F1, Sat 1800

IMSA SportsCar
Round 4/11
 Laguna Seca, USA

14 May
TV Live Viaplay, Sun 2005

NASCAR Cup
Round 13/36
 Darlington, USA
14 May
TV Live Viaplay, Sun TBC

NASCAR Xfinity
Round 11/33
 Darlington, USA
13 May
TV Live Viaplay, Sat 1800

NASCAR Truck Series
Round 9/23
 Darlington, USA
12-13 May
TV Live Viaplay, Sat 0000

Extreme E
Round 2/5
 Scotland, UK
13-14 May

UK MOTORSPORT

Brands Hatch MSVR
13-14 May
 GT World Challenge Europe Sprint, 7 Race Series (1600S, 420R), BMW Car Club, Equipe Classic Racing, Sports 2000
TV Live Sky Sports F1, Sun 1045, Sun 1525

Oulton Park MGCC
13 May
 Cockshoot Cup, Magnificent Sevens, MG Cup, MG Trophy, Midget & Sprite Challenge

Snetterton BARC
13-14 May
 Caterham Graduates (Sigma 135, Sigma 150/Sigmax), Hyundai Coupe Cup, Kumho BMW, MGOC, Mini Challenge Trophy, Mini Se7ens, Snetterton Saloons
Livestream via barc.net

Anglesey 750MC
13-14 May
 5Club MX-5, Bikesports, CALM Porsche, Club Enduro, Locost, Ma7da, Mighty Minis, Roadsports

NATIONAL MEETING OF THE WEEK

Leading GT drivers and teams from across Europe will take to the Brands Hatch Grand Prix circuit for the first round of the GT World Challenge Europe Sprint Cup





FINISHING STRAIGHT

FROM THE ARCHIVE

Michael Schumacher (Ferrari F2005) congratulates 2005 San Marino Grand Prix winner Fernando Alonso (Renault R25) following a scintillating battle between the pair over the final dozen laps. After polesitter and early pacesetter Kimi Raikkonen (McLaren-Mercedes MP4-20) retired with a broken driveshaft, second-place qualifier Alonso settled into the lead. A mistake by Schumacher had consigned him to 13th on the grid, but a typical demonstration of tactical nous meant that by the time he made his first stop he was running second, albeit more than half a minute behind Alonso. Schumacher's pace, described by third-place finisher Jenson Button (BAR-Honda 007) as "just staggering", meant that once the final stops were completed he was only 1.327s adrift, but every effort he made was rebuffed by Alonso in a nailbiting finale, the winning margin a mere 0.215s.



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Richard Westbrook is no stranger to success at Watkins Glen. He won three IMSA SportsCar Championship races on the trot at the circuit between 2014 and 2016, including twice outright. But the Cadillac World Endurance Championship racer's affiliation with the famed sportscar racing venue in upper New York state stretches back to a childhood Panini sticker album. "Like the football teams, you'd collect the drivers and stick them in," he recalls. "It had all the tracks, and one of them was Watkins Glen."

Westbrook was sufficiently inspired by the circuit that hosted 20 consecutive US Grands Prix between 1961 and 1980 that "I always made my Scalextric track into the shape of Watkins Glen", although "didn't know what made it special until I got there for the first time" in 2007. He "instantly fell in love with it" upon sampling its 3.450 miles.

"The track is so special," he enthuses. "It's flowing and the surface they've used there when they repaved it is just phenomenal. When you're double-stinting, every lap is a qualifying lap and you're going bloody fast the whole lap. It's rewarding in every sense. It's a typical American track with some European characteristics. It's got a bit of Spa in it as well, some undulation and a bit of Oulton Park, but just faster!"

A late move on Alex Brundle's Morgan-Nissan LMP2 sealed his first victory at the



Glen in a Coyote Corvette Daytona Prototype in 2014, which he and Michael Valiante repeated in wet conditions the following year. But Westbrook highlights as his favourite moment his pole lap in 2016, when he completed his hat-trick together with Ryan Briscoe, albeit in the GTLM class. Westbrook got the Ford GT set-up attuned precisely to his wants, yielding its first IMSA pole before "we just checked out in the race".

Westbrook hasn't visited victory lane at Watkins Glen since, but says the circuit's history and abundance of "very old-school knowledgeable fans" makes every visit worthwhile.

"Apart from adding the chicane it hasn't changed at all," he reckons. "The barriers are the same colour as back in the 1970s. It's still very daunting."

JAMES NEWBOLD



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Race Meetings

18 June - Cadwell Park

9 July - Donington Park

26 August - Mallory Park

Sprints and Hillclimbs

21 May - Wiscombe Park

5 & 6 August - Vintage Prescott

9 & 10 September - Loton Park

23 September - Prescott Long Course

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