

F1 Brits Russell, Norris and Albon special

AUTOSPORT

BRITAIN'S BEST MOTORSPORT WEEKLY

29 JUNE 2023

Who will take Hamilton's British F1 throne?

Albon, Russell and Norris on their big challenge – and each other

'I don't think you have to hate people just because you race against them'

LANDO NORRIS

'When the helmet is on, you're this competitive warrior'

GEORGE RUSSELL

'We've come through the ranks and experienced the lows and the highs'

ALEX ALBON

PLUS

Ogier wins gruelling Safari Rally

Super Touring Power preview


F1 BRITS
SPECIAL

EUROPE'S BEST WINTER RACE SERIES

PORTUGAL + SPAIN

'23
'24

*Racing from
December to March*

GTWS

GT WINTER SERIES

For GT3, GT2, Porsche Cup, Ferrari Challenge
and Lamborghini Super Trofeo cars



WINTER SERIES

14/15 Dec 2023 Portimão /P - Test days

16/17 Dec 2023 Portimão /P - Race days

11/12 Jan 2024 Estoril /P - Test days

13/14 Jan 2024 Estoril /P - Race days

8/9 Feb 2024 Jerez /E - Test days

10/11 Feb 2024 Jerez /E - Race days

15/16 Feb 2024 Valencia /E - Test days

17/18 Feb 2024 Valencia /E - Race days

29/1 Mar 2024 Aragón /E - Test days

2/3 Mar 2024 Aragón /E - Race days

7/8 Mar 2024 Barcelona /E - Test days (tbc)

9/10 Mar 2024 Barcelona /E - Race days (tbc)

MORE THAN 15 ADDITIONAL
RACE TEST DAYS ARE BOOKABLE

RACE TEST DAYS

1/2 Jul 2023 Estoril /P

9 Jul 2023 Nürburgring GP /D

18 Jul 2023 Nürburgring Sprint /D

8/9 Aug 2023 Lausitzring /D

9 Okt 2023 Hockenheimring /D

16/17 Jan 2024 Portimão /P

18/19 Jan 2024 Portimão /P

24/25 Jan 2024 Jerez /E

2/3 Feb 2024 Portimão /P

4/5 Feb 2024 Portimão /P



GT4

WINTER SERIES
SRO LICENSED SERIES

For GT4 cars only. Seperate class
for Cayman GT4 Clubsport



FWS

For Formula 4 cars with
Tatuus chassis and Abarth engine

FORMULA WINTER SERIES





The British band of brothers aiming to succeed Hamilton

Three British stars of Formula 1 look out at you from this week's front cover, and none of them are the country's most famous or successful exponent at the sport's top level. But Lewis Hamilton can't go on forever, and it's time – especially with British Grand Prix week at Silverstone fast looming – to look at who out of George Russell, Lando Norris and Alex Albon will step into his shoes.

Alex Kalinauckas speaks to each of them, starting on p16, and what is interesting is how each of the trio has changed very little since their early days in the sport. Back when they started getting significant coverage as teenagers in Autosport, Russell was serious, Norris was cheeky and Albon (yes, we know he races under the Thai flag, but he holds a British passport!) was thoughtful but self-deprecating. Then, as now, Albon sometimes didn't have the material to do justice to his talents, but there is a steel to him that could perhaps allow him to gazump his contemporaries. Yes, they all live in Monaco now but remain good mates, and it's a happy band of talented brothers.

Talking of good blokes, our race coverage includes Nick Cassidy's Formula E victory at Portland, as documented by Jamie Klein (p30). And then there are complete and utter legends, so let's again hail Sebastien Ogier for his win in the Safari Rally, brought to you by Tom Howard (p24). We also look ahead to this weekend's Super Touring Power at Brands Hatch (p46). Can't wait for that one!



MS

Marcus Simmons
Deputy Editor

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**NEXT WEEK
6 JULY**

Austrian GP action
If there's the ideal place to
end Red Bull's clean
sweep of 2023...



Cover images

Williams Racing; Mercedes-Benz Grand Prix Ltd;
Ben Stone

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Hollywood duo buy stake in Alpine

FORMULA 1

Hollywood actors and Wrexham Football Club owners Ryan Reynolds and Rob McElhenney are involved in a consortium that has shelled out £172million in return for a 24% stake in the Alpine Formula 1 team.

The Renault Group, which presides over the Enstone-based operation, has agreed the transaction with the Investor Group. This formal entity combines Otro Capital, RedBird Capital Partners, plus Reynolds's own Maximum Effort Investments. Alpine Racing SAS, the entity manufacturing power units at the Viry-Chatillon site in France, is not part of the deal.

As well as helping to accelerate

Alpine CEO Laurent Rossi's extremely optimistic 100-race plan to win the world championship, as he stated in October 2021, this cash injection also provides a clear measure of the current commercial boom that F1 is enjoying. For the attention of prospective 2026 season team buyers such as Michael Andretti, the Alpine investment now places the value of an upwardly mobile squad that finished fourth in the 2022 constructors' standings at close to £717m.

Renault Group CEO Luca de Meo said: "Formula 1 and Alpine are strategic assets for Renault Group. Over the past two years, we have reignited Alpine, capitalising on its iconic A110 sports coupe [which won the inaugural manufacturers' World Rally

Championship in 1973 and was reimaged for 2017], boosting it by entering Formula 1, where it aims to become a championship contender. This partnership will accelerate Alpine F1 development by diversifying revenue drivers and increasing brand value."

Of those parties writing the big cheques, private equity firm Otro Capital has gained recognition through association with the Dallas Cowboys American football and New York Yankees baseball teams. Company co-founder and partner Alec Scheiner will join Alpine Racing Ltd's board of directors. RedBird Capital Partners, meanwhile, is an investor in Fenway Sports Group that owns Premier League side Liverpool and the Boston Red Sox baseball team. It also bought Italian top-flight legacy football club AC Milan in 2022 for £1billion. Meanwhile, *Deadpool* actor Reynolds's Maximum Effort set-up has also confirmed that McElhenney and *Black Panther* star Michael B Jordan are listed as co-investors in the Alpine deal.

Scheiner said: "We are thrilled to have the opportunity to invest in Alpine F1. We believe in the management of the company, the value of the brand as well as the long-term trajectory of the sport. We believe that, along with our partners RedBird and Maximum Effort Investments, we can add value to Alpine's business operations and brand building, especially in North America."

According to a statement, Alpine hopes that this multi-party configuration can



CEO Rossi set optimistic target of world title success

BINGHAM
motorsport
IMAGES

Alpine's sole
F1 victory to date
came with Esteban
Ocon in 2021
Hungarian GP

F1 squad

boost its foothold in “media, sponsorship, ticketing, hospitality, commercial rights management, licensing, and merchandising strategies to unlock incremental value creation and new growth levers...”

Notably, Wrexham FC has gained worldwide recognition following the 2022 release of the fly-on-the-wall TV series *Welcome To Wrexham*. This charted Reynolds's and McElhenney's takeover and campaign to return it to the English Football League, which it achieved in April following a 3-1 victory over Boreham Wood. Wrexham's famous owners paved the way for it to lure out-of-contract Premier League players to the fifth tier and agree a sponsorship deal with social media platform TikTok.

Maximum Effort co-founder James Toney said his company “focuses on unlocking value through the power of storytelling, and we believe there is tremendous untapped potential in Alpine Racing. We are eager to help shine a light on this incredible team.”

Rossi, who notably sought out French TV channel Canal Plus to blast his team's poor start to the 2023 season, added: “This association is an important step to enhance our performance at all levels. The incremental revenue generated will in turn be reinvested in the team, in order to further accelerate our ‘Mountain Climber’ plan, aimed at catching up with top teams in terms of state-of-the-art facilities and equipment.”

MATT KEW

FIA acts to close ‘sister firm’ cost cap loophole

FORMULA 1

The FIA has closed a perceived loophole in the Formula 1 cost cap regulations by clamping down on the ways in which teams might deploy staff on special projects that fall beyond the remit of the spending restrictions. Since the 2021 introduction of the budget, grand prix teams have employed senior technical staff in separate divisions to avoid redundancies and ensure their salaries don't risk non-compliance. But these extracurricular activities have potentially allowed teams to find performance on track.

Via models such as Red Bull Advanced Technology, McLaren Applied Technologies, Mercedes Applied Science and so on, teams have ventured into high-performance road car design plus the America's Cup yacht and cycling competitions. But there has been suspicion that some were perhaps gaming the system and using these divisions to further their F1 knowledge, albeit outside of the cost cap.

Alpine team principal Otmar Szafnauer said of the situation: “[Teams were] looking at: ‘I got rid of 100 people, but now I want to hire them back.’ They can find spots for them where they either don't count as a whole person or they do some marketing stuff or whatever it is, or they work on a boat for some of the time.”

The governing body has subsequently stepped in by enforcing a revised version of a technical directive drafted earlier this year. The FIA has made it clear that teams will not be allowed to transfer any Intellectual Property from projects running outside of their F1 operations back into the squad without



Szafnauer: “They work on a boat some of the time”

that work falling under the cost cap.

Several teams insist to Autosport that they have been fully compliant. They welcome the clarification known as TD45. But one leading source says it has already triggered changes from other squads. The insider said: “It's had an impact. Some have been forced to act because they realised what they were doing is no longer allowed. But the difficult part is they will have been doing it since January 1 [when the TD declared a cut-off point], so they will have had a spend up until this point that they now need to address and somehow claw back.”

The arrival of TD45 comes against the backdrop of what several sources reckon is a much more thorough effort by the FIA to investigate team spending this year as part of its cost cap analysis. It is understood that the governing body has been visiting factories in recent weeks, with one source suggesting that the latest forms regarding compliance now total more than 100 questions.

JONATHAN NOBLE



This bike is one product of Red Bull Advanced Technology division

HEELY/REDBULL RACING/REDBULL CONTENT POOL

Hitech in F1 bid with Kazakh billionaire

FORMULA 1

Hitech Grand Prix – which competes in FIA F2, F3 and F4 plus GB3 – has officially confirmed its application to participate in Formula 1 from the 2026 season after landing major new investment from a Kazakh billionaire.

The Silverstone squad has subsequently joined Andretti-Cadillac and Formula Equal – a bid fronted by former BAR boss Craig Pollock that will look to employ a 50:50 male-female workforce – in publicly revealing that entries have been lodged with the FIA.

Hitech says this F1 ambition is a “move that would complete its single-seater ladder and demonstrate that Hitech has all the right people, experience and resources to compete

alongside the best teams in the world.”

Acknowledgement of the formal submission came as part of an announcement that parent company Hitech Global Holding Limited has agreed a 25% sale to Vladimir Kim. His main business pursuits are in mining, banking and aviation. His Kazakhmys and KAZ Minerals Group’s work in extraction and processing ore make it one of the top 10 copper producers in the world.

Speaking about the deal, Kim said: “Motorsport has been a long-standing personal interest for me and I am delighted to be entering into a partnership with an organisation that has enjoyed success in so many categories and has such ambitions for its future. We have an established involvement



SUTTON/MOTORSPORT IMAGES

with sport. However, this is our first global investment in motorsport. Its dynamic appeal, growing exposure, business-to-business marketing opportunities and burgeoning fan base are aligned with my ambitions personally and commercially.”

Kim’s companies have previously sponsored Kazakh athletes, including boxing champions Gennadiy

Golovkin and Serik Sapiyev, as well as top-ranked tennis players. Hitech CEO Oliver Oakes added: “I am delighted to welcome Vladimir Kim to the Hitech group. I know that his support will be invaluable as we seek to build on Hitech’s success and work towards achieving its broader ambitions over the years to come.”

JONATHAN NOBLE

Jani back with Sauber boss Seidl for Audi work

FORMULA 1

Audi has recruited 2016 Le Mans 24 Hours winner and ex-Toro Rosso reserve Neel Jani as a simulator driver for the development of its 2026 Formula 1 power unit.

The 39-year-old Swiss has already been ultra-reliable for Andreas Seidl, CEO of Audi chassis partner Sauber. He was tasked with a similar role for the creation of the Porsche 919 Hybrid LMP1 racer on Seidl’s

watch, and was involved in the simulator work for the current 963 LMDh machine.

In terms of getting other Volkswagen Group motorsport programmes up and running, Jani drove alongside Andre Lotterer when Porsche made its 2019-20 Formula E bow. Jani, who tested for Sauber and Red Bull, said: “I am delighted to accompany Audi on their way into Formula 1. It is both an honour and a great responsibility to be involved in a project of this magnitude

at an early stage. I am sure that with my experience from Formula 1 and LMP projects I can forge good links between theory and practice.”

Audi also reports that since the end of last year, it has tested a one-cylinder mule engine for the 2026 regulations, which notably ditch the expensive and complex Motor Generator Unit-Heat. In time for 2024, it expects a complete 1.6-litre turbo hybrid powertrain will be ready to run on a dyno.

As for the full-time Audi driver line-up, current Sauber incumbent Valtteri Bottas has long declared his interest. Meanwhile, Carlos Sainz has denied any talks having taken place, and instead wants to prioritise securing his immediate future by extending a contract with Ferrari that is due to expire at the end of 2024.

“I don’t like going into my last year of a contract without really knowing where I’m racing the next year,” said Sainz. “I went through that process both with Red Bull and Renault. That’s why I have put this winter as a reference to try and figure out my future. My priority, and my main goal, is to win one day with Ferrari.”

MATT KEW & JONATHAN NOBLE



Seidl (left) and Jani (right) on 2016 Le Mans podium

FIA launches electric class

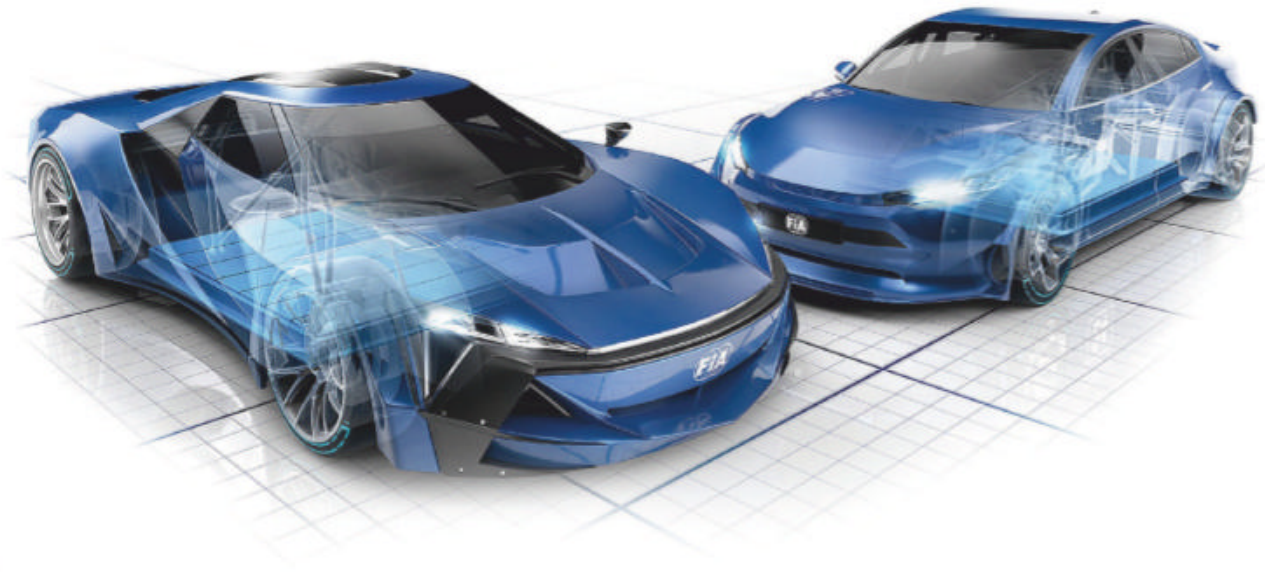
ELECTRIC SPORT VEHICLE

A new entry-level class for electric vehicles closely based on production machinery has been launched by the FIA. The category, to be known as Electric Sport Vehicle, will be open to GT machinery and what the governing body is describing as “coupe-shaped sports sedans” with a minimum power output of 300kW (402bhp) in standard form.

ESV has been conceived in the spirit of the long-standing Group N production category to allow electric vehicles to be incorporated into existing series, including racing and against-the-clock hillclimb and sprint events at national and regional level. It is also envisaged that the new ruleset could encourage manufacturers to launch one-make championships for their EVs.

The FIA wants to use its competence in high-voltage safety in order “to grow sustainable motorsport for the future”, it said in its launch statement last week after the rules were signed off by the World Motor Sport Council.

Limited scope for modifications will be allowed under the ESV rules, as per Group



N, for cars that the FIA envisages will be available ready to race from manufacturers. Only models that have achieved a minimum production run of 300 units in their first two years on sale will be allowed.

Both two and four-wheel drive will be allowed in ESV, while a maximum height of 1460mm will mean SUV and cross-over vehicles will not be eligible. Cars such as the Audi RS e-tron GT, the Porsche Taycan, the

BMW i4 and the Maserati Granturismo Folgore will be eligible for the new class.

The original silhouette of the car must be retained, although bigger wheel arches to accommodate wider wheels and tyres and extra cooling ducts will be allowed. It will also be possible to make selected bodywork panels such as the rear hatch and doors from lightweight materials.

GARY WATKINS

Alesi dropped for Sasahara

SUPER FORMULA

Giuliano Alesi has been benched by the TOM'S Super Formula team for the remaining four races of the 2023 season, with Ukyo Sasahara taking his place.

Alesi, the son of Formula 1 hero Jean, had been under big pressure from the start of the season after the Toyota squad elected to keep him in place at the expense of Sasahara (left), who drove for TOM'S in post-season testing at Suzuka last year following his split from Honda.

But the second-generation racer's results failed to improve, peaking with an eighth-place finish at Suzuka before

a first-lap retirement last time out at Sugo sealed his fate. Alesi's lacklustre performances have been put into even sharper focus by team-mate Ritomo Miyata, who leads the standings following his second win of the year at Sugo.

Sasahara was back in action for TOM'S in last week's in-season test at Fuji, setting the fifth-fastest time, and will make his race debut for the team at the same track next month.

Alesi will continue to race for TOM'S in Super GT, where he shares one of the operation's two Toyota GR Supra GT500s with Sasahara.

JAMIE KLEIN



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Aston team TF leaves the fold for Corvette switch

WEC

The British TF Sport squad will be Chevrolet's representative in the World Endurance Championship next season. The team, winner of the 2022 GTE Am title, will field a pair of the General Motors brand's new Corvette Z06 GT3.Rs in place of the Aston Martins it has run since its formation in 2014.

TF will be the only team equipped with the new Z06 racer developed by Pratt & Miller in the WEC's new LMGT3 class in 2024. Each manufacturer represented will be allowed to run a maximum of two cars.

Team boss Tom Ferrier, whose operation joined the WEC in 2018-19 with the

second-generation Aston Martin Vantage GTE, said: "I'm thrilled to have the opportunity to represent such an iconic brand on the world stage. Corvette Racing has an immense history at the Le Mans 24 Hours and we will be looking to continue that run of success."

No drivers have been announced by TF for next year. It took the GTE Am title last year with a programme funded by Ben Keating, who swapped to Corvette Racing's GTE Am car for 2023.

Chevrolet, meanwhile, has confirmed that the Pratt & Miller-run Corvette Racing squad will continue in the GT Daytona Pro class of the IMSA SportsCar Championship with the Z06 GT3.R for what will be a 25th

full season of North American competition. It will field two cars again after downscaling to one-car assaults in GTD Pro with the grandfathered 'Vette C8.R in 2022 and 2023.

The cars will run under the Corvette Racing by Pratt Miller Motorsports banner, which is being billed as a factory-supported squad rather than an overt works operation. It reflects the customer-orientated nature of the GT3.R programme: Chevrolet is required to sell 20 cars in the first two seasons of the car. A second team, most likely running in the GTD pro-am class, will be announced at a later date.

No drivers have been revealed for the IMSA campaign.

GARY WATKINS

Porsche ace Martin breaks American duck



CARRERA CUP

British racer Will Martin scored his maiden Carrera Cup North America victory at Watkins Glen last weekend.

The 20-year-old former Ginetta Junior and Carrera Cup GB ace (left), who moved to the US this year to race with JDX Racing, claimed pole for both races but lost the lead of the first when contact with a lapped car caused

a puncture. He then led the second throughout to take the win ahead of series leader Riley Dickinson and first-race winner Jason Hart.

"We were sort of robbed yesterday and today we've got redemption, so I'm really pleased with everything that the team's done," said Martin. "All weekend we've had great performance, and hopefully we'll carry this forward into Road

America [the next round] and the rest of the season.

Over at Zandvoort, there was a podium apiece for 2020 Carrera Cup GB champion Harry King and current star Robert de Haan, who beat each other to third spot across the two Carrera Cup Germany races. Larry ten Voorde claimed both victories.

De Haan also hopped into his regular Richardson Racing car and scored a Carrera Cup Benelux win.

GALLOWAY/MOTORSPORT IMAGES



Tokyo joins Formula E schedule

FORMULA E

Formula E revealed its 2023-24 calendar in the run-up to last weekend's Portland race, headlined by a long-awaited trip to Tokyo.

The all-electric series finally has the go-ahead to stage a race in the Ariake area of Koto Ward, near the Tokyo Big Sight exhibition centre, on 30 March. That will make it the sixth stop on what is set to be a 13-event series with 17 races.

Formula E has long wanted to host a race in Japan. Yokohama has also been a candidate to hold a race, but a lengthy campaign to amend the country's strict policing laws was required before a memorandum of understanding was finally signed between the series and the Tokyo Metropolitan Government late last year.

It will be Japan's first street race on any significant scale, although there was a short-lived bid to hold a Champ Car race on the streets of Otaru, Hokkaido in the mid-2000s.

Series co-founder Alberto Longo said he was "thrilled" to finally get a race in Japan over the line. "It took nine years to get a marathon in Tokyo approved," he added. "I am super-happy that for Formula E, which is a much bigger logistical challenge, it only took a year longer!"

Three TBC slots remain on the 2023-24

calendar, with the first two of these expected to go to incumbent cities Cape Town and Hyderabad subject to financial discussions. The remaining slot in May remains more open — a return to Seoul or a new fixture in Malaga have been mooted, although Formula E is not ruling out a second race in the United States alongside Portland, which remains on the schedule after a successful debut.

JAMIE KLEIN

FORMULA E CALENDAR

ROUND	VENUE	DATE
1	Mexico City (MEX)	13 January
2	Diriyah (SAU)	26-27 January
3	TBA	10 February
4	TBA	24 February
5	Sao Paulo (BRA)	16 March
6	Tokyo (JPN)	30 March
7	Rome (ITA)	13-14 April
8	Monte Carlo (MCO)	27 April
9	Berlin (DEU)	11-12 May
10	TBA	25 May
11	Jakarta (IDN)	8 June
12	Portland (USA)	29 June
13	London (GBR)	20-21 July

IN THE HEADLINES

WRT'S FIRST BMW LMDh TEST

WRT has started testing with the BMW M Hybrid V8 LMDh ahead of its entry into the World Endurance Championship next year as the German manufacturer's factory representative. The Belgian squad, which will compete in the WEC as BMW M Team WRT, completed its first circuit test with the car at Motorland Aragon last week with Jesse Krohn, Maxime Martin, Sheldon van der Linde and Dries Vanthoor.

TOYOTA GT3 FOR WEC 2026

Toyota has revealed that its new GR GT3 Concept is scheduled for a European racing debut in 2026. The car, which could be badged as a Lexus, is targeted for the new-for-2024 LMGT3 class of the World Endurance Championship, and has already been spotted in action during a private test at Fuji.

LINDBLAD'S MONZA TREBLE

British Red Bull Junior Arvid Lindblad has pulled out a handy lead in the Italian Formula 4 Championship after winning all three races at Monza last weekend. Lindblad finished second behind Prema team-mate Ugo Ugochukwu in the opener, only for the American McLaren protege to cop three penalties, one for a dangerous passing move for the lead. Lindblad won a battle with Polish talent Kacper Sztuka in race two, and in the finale he came out on top of a thrilling slipstreamer against Sztuka and Ugochukwu, who spun out of contention in contact with Lindblad.

BERRY PICKED FOR SHR

Josh Berry is to get his full-time NASCAR Cup Series break next season after being named at Stewart-Haas Racing as the driver of its #4 Ford to replace the retiring Kevin Harvick. The 32-year-old Xfinity Series racer has shone as a stand-in at Cup level, including a second place at Richmond this April while subbing for Chase Elliott at Hendrick Motorsports.

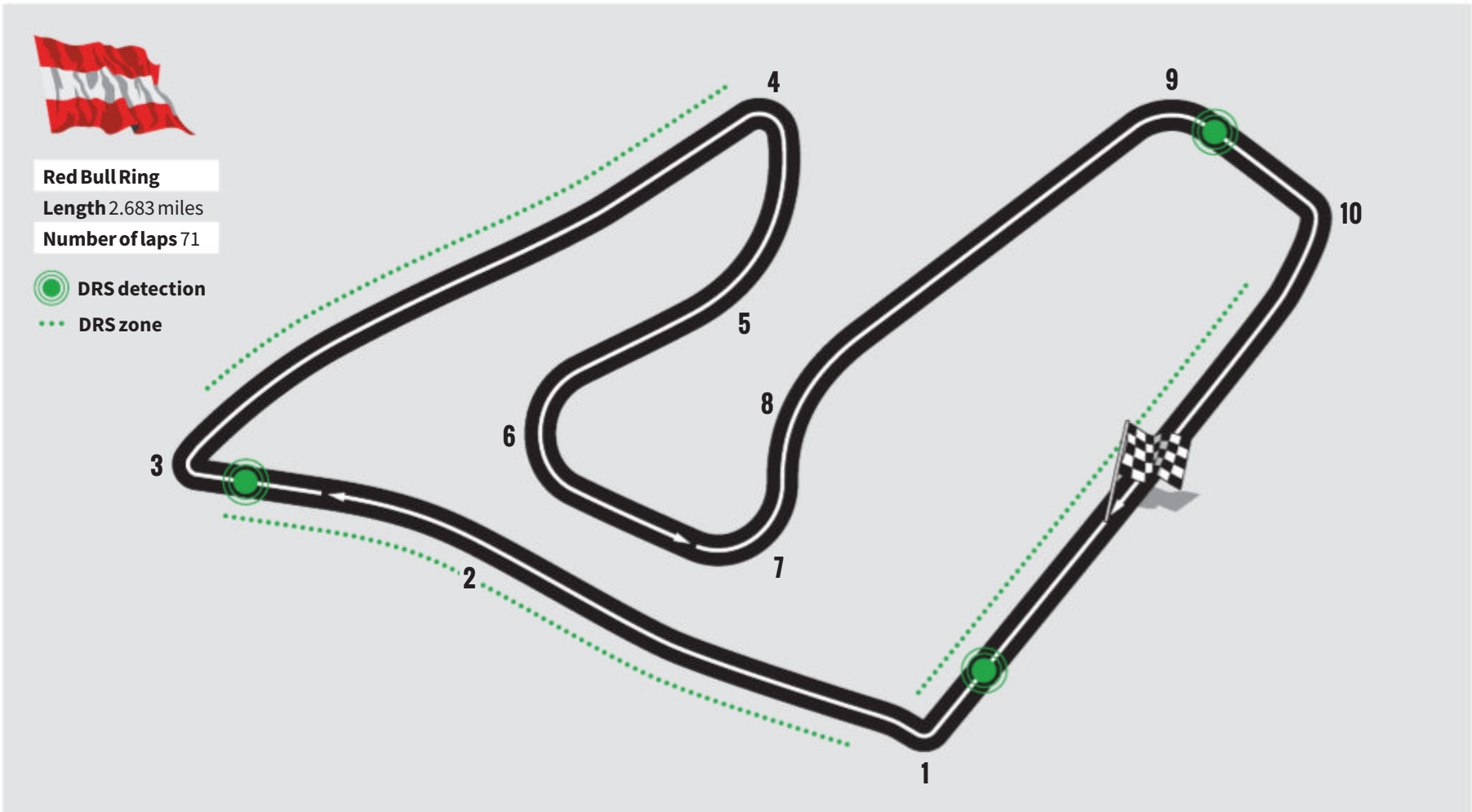
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F1 AUSTRIAN GRAND PRIX PREVIEW



UK START TIMES

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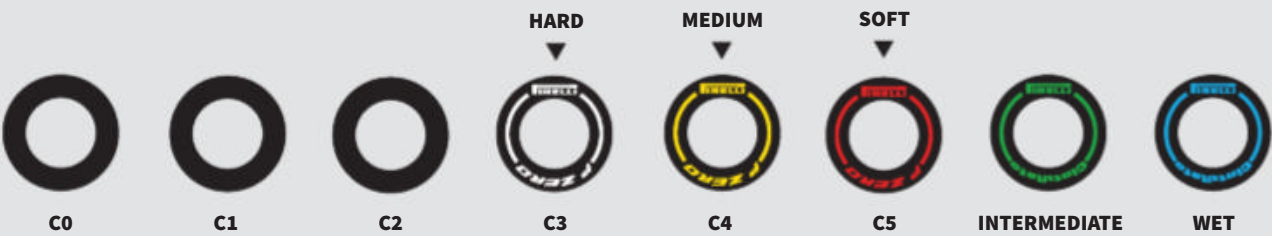
Saturday 1 July
SPRINT QUALIFYING 1100
SPRINT 1530

Sunday 2 July
RACE 1400

CATCH THE RACE LIVE
SKY SPORTS F1
BBC RADIO 5 LIVE

TV Highlights
CHANNEL 4 1830

TYRE ALLOCATION



CHAMPIONSHIP POSITIONS

Drivers			Constructors		
1	Verstappen	195	1	Red Bull	321
2	Perez	126	2	Mercedes	167
3	Alonso	117	3	Aston Martin	154
4	Hamilton	102	4	Ferrari	122
5	Sainz	68	5	Alpine	44



RED BULL RING STATS

Previous winners		
2022	Charles Leclerc	Ferrari
2021	Max Verstappen	Red Bull
2021	Max Verstappen	Red Bull
2020	Lewis Hamilton	Mercedes
2020	Valtteri Bottas	Mercedes
2019	Max Verstappen	Red Bull
2018	Max Verstappen	Red Bull
2017	Valtteri Bottas	Mercedes
2016	Lewis Hamilton	Mercedes
2015	Nico Rosberg	Mercedes

2022 POLE POSITION	
Max Verstappen	1m04.984s
POLE LAP RECORD	
Valtteri Bottas	1m02.939s (2020)
RACE LAP RECORD	
Carlos Sainz	1m05.619s (2020)



Laps led	
Max Verstappen	215
Valtteri Bottas	150
Nico Rosberg	144
Mika Hakkinen	136
Lewis Hamilton	122
Alain Prost	114
Charles Leclerc	110
Rubens Barrichello	101
Ronnie Peterson	74
David Coulthard	71



Vettel's key Red Bull legacy

The squad's previous world champion played a role in creating Formula 1's currently most clip-worthy, and super-successful, driver-engineer combination

ALEX KALINAUCKAS

Red Bull is everywhere in Formula 1. It's dominating the current season with Max Verstappen, and the series is now heading to the next race at its home track — the Red Bull Ring.

It's even arranging a motorsport celebration event at the Nurburgring 12 Hours in September, where AlphaTauri's Yuki Tsunoda will lap the Nordschleife in a Honda NSX GT3 Evo, while Red Bull reserve — and possible future AlphaTauri returnee — Daniel Ricciardo will do so too in an RB8 2012 F1 car. Verstappen wanted to join in the demonstration fun but was overruled by Red Bull motorsport advisor Helmut Marko. Headlining the whole thing, however, is a former Red Bull star. Its first, really. Sebastian Vettel is set to be reunited with his 2011 championship-winning RB7, albeit adapted to run on carbon-neutral fuel.

Vettel kicked off the cascade of Red Bull F1 success with its first victory in China in 2009, having already broken Toro Rosso's duck by rather upstaging the main team with his famous wet win at Monza the previous season. Around Vettel, Red Bull learned how to go about *really* winning, as it grew from upstart newcomer at F1's top table to the superteam pack leader of the early 2010s and again today. Back in 2010 and onwards through to his departure from Red Bull, the team learned ever more about Vettel, who team boss Christian Horner says had an "infectious" personality and "we saw him grow up here".

That last point is even more the case for Verstappen. Red Bull's

"The success of the Verstappen/Lambiasi partnership is one of the conundrums facing F1"

current star joined F1 in 2015 aged just 17 (Vettel was 19 when he did likewise in 2007), and was just a year older when he was handed his shock promotion to the senior team at Barcelona in 2016 as Daniil Kvyat's replacement. Verstappen ended up as Vettel's successor in the Red Bull story — not Ricciardo, who had joined when Mark Webber left after 2013, or Kvyat following Vettel's own surprise departure to Ferrari in the second year of the turbo hybrid era.

When asked to compare them, Horner says Vettel and Verstappen are "two entirely different characters"; with the Dutchman "the most straightforward driver that I've ever had". But there is a link between the two Red Bull world champions — beyond their youthful starts, clashes with team-mates and wilder moments of on-track excess. Horner says this can be seen in how his squad maintains the most vital link to Verstappen during races: via his race engineer Gianpiero

Lambiasi. Lambiasi, better known as 'GP', is following in the famed footsteps of Lewis Hamilton's in-race garage lieutenant — Mercedes' Peter Bonnington. As the voice in the ear of the driver of the era, played out to a massive audience at every race where Verstappen is a central component (all of them, in other words), Lambiasi's own recognition is building. Perhaps one day he too will sign autographs for fans, as Bonnington was seen doing in Singapore last year — if he doesn't already.

Lambiasi's burgeoning reputation is enhanced by the brilliant and brutally sarcastic way he interacts with Verstappen when required, which is perfect for social media clipping as a key part of sports promotion in the current age. The dynamic is clearly working very well for Verstappen. And Horner has now revealed that, inadvertently, Vettel played a role in forming F1's latest driver-engineer power couple.

"GP has grown a huge amount," Horner says of Lambiasi. "GP originally came as a replacement [for 2015] to 'Rocky' [Guillaume Rocquelin], who was stepping up into the role as head of race engineering — the role that GP effectively has now [Rocquelin has been overseeing Red Bull's junior driver programme since 2022]. And GP went through a gruelling process that included being interviewed at length by Sebastian to become Rocky's successor [as Vettel's race engineer]. And he committed to join the team and, shortly afterwards, Sebastian buggered off to Ferrari!"

But the success of the Verstappen/Lambiasi partnership is one of the conundrums facing F1 overall. It can be clearly seen in certain demographic data that interest in the championship has dipped compared to the fervent following that accompanied that wild 2021 season and the Red Bull-versus-Ferrari of early last year. And Red Bull's 2021 cost cap breach was a clear reputation hit, which must be weighed in any assessment of the team's current purple patch.

But a report on Sky Sports in *The Daily Telegraph* this week claimed that "audience numbers for the Premier League, the Carabao Cup final, Formula 1 and the much admired Ashes cricket coverage have each set all-time records over recent months". And F1's current box office appeal can be seen this week in Ryan Reynolds, Rob McElhenney and Michael B Jordan among those buying into Alpine. Autosport understands that Silverstone is set to welcome 450,000 fans to the British Grand Prix next week, breaking its record weekend attendance from last year by 50,000. Most of those tickets were of course sold in 2022, so the impact on interest levels of one team and driver dominating won't be seen just yet.

The overall consequences — because the common sports knowledge that domination ends up as a turn-off still holds true — will only be felt later as the current ripple spreads. But that's a challenge for F1 itself. For Red Bull, it's just about maintaining and maximising its position. 🌪



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Can the end justify the means?

Changes to the new Balance of Performance rules ahead of the Le Mans 24 Hours helped create a brilliant spectacle. But it's worrying that this may have set a precedent

GARY WATKINS

Ferrari wins on its factory prototype comeback. And narrowly so at the end of an intriguing and sometimes thrilling battle with Toyota. All five major manufacturers involved in Hypercar lead at some point. The centenary edition of the Le Mans 24 Hours definitely got a race befitting of such a significant moment in history. There can be no question of that.

There is, however, another question that needs to be asked. Was it contrived, a result of the Balance of Performance changes made outside of the rules and regulations in the lead-up to the blue riband round of the World Endurance Championship?

That undoubtedly changed the dynamic of the race. Of course it did, because that was what the BoP revision was designed to do. With the eyes of the world focused on Le Mans, race organiser the Automobile Club de l'Ouest couldn't afford another Toyota walkover, a damp squib in which the result was never truly in doubt.

That's why together with the co-organiser of the WEC, the FIA, the ACO overrode the new BoP system introduced for this season, one that didn't allow for wholesale changes ahead of Le Mans. It was a unilateral decision imposed upon the manufacturers from the very top of the ACO. Club president Pierre Fillon, I believe, was the architect of the move, along with his opposite number on the FIA Endurance Commission, Richard Mille.

You might argue that the BoP is there to do exactly as its name

“A more reactive system, like the one previously in force, might have served the WEC better”

implies: to balance performance. But it's much more complex than that. There have to be guidelines, an operational framework. Otherwise it becomes a free-for-all of politicking, sabre-rattling and, of course, sandbagging. The change made ahead of this year's edition of the French enduro came outside of new rules conceived to rid the BoP of all that.

I'm not arguing that the *grandes fromages* at the ACO and the FIA felt pressured by external inputs, though they were definitely there. Nor am I saying that the BoP changes, billed as a “correction”, were conceived in any way to hand Ferrari an advantage and smooth the path to victory for the manufacturer that could give Le Mans the biggest and best headlines.

My belief is that the ultimate arbiters of the WEC, who at the end of the day can pull rank and do more or less what they want,

simply decided to ride roughshod over the rules as they stood to ensure that Toyota didn't have things all its own way. And the technical departments of the ACO and the FIA got it pretty much spot on given how close it was between Ferrari and Toyota, with Cadillac not far behind.

So yes, a monster crowd of 325,000 and millions watching around the world got a fantastic race in which all five of the grandees involved in Hypercar were competitive to a greater or lesser extent. But what happened in the build-up to Le Mans sets a dangerous precedent.

Toyota Gazoo Racing Europe technical director Pascal Vasselon has suggested that it could lead to a return of sandbagging. I'll widen that out to the gamesmanship that has so often been part of BoP categories. I'm talking about the aforementioned political manoeuvring and some route-one screaming and shouting.

The beauty of the new BoP system this year is that it does away with all that, or is at least meant to. It's based on simulation rather than lap-time analysis and track data from the races, and sets the BoP according to the potential of each car. That's why it could be more or less set in stone from the beginning of the season until after Le Mans.

But the philosophy of this new framework was always going to work in Toyota's favour. Its GR010 HYBRID Le Mans Hypercar is the proven car, one that has been racing since 2021. Of course it was going to be nearer to its potential than the Ferrari 499P, the Cadillac V-Series.R or whatever.

Perhaps it was the wrong time to introduce such a system. Maybe it would have been wise to have waited until Toyota's rivals are more advanced in their programmes, have more mature racing cars if you like. A more reactive system, like the one previously in force, might have served the WEC better in the first year of what we are all describing as a golden age.

That said, the new BoP is the right system for the WEC and Hypercar moving forward. But it's no good if the series organisers drive a bulldozer over the rules every time they don't like the results they produce, or come under pressure from a disgruntled manufacturer. My point is that if they can do it once, the organisers can do it again.

If what happened late last month leads to the kind of political skulduggery and chopping and changing that has so often tainted BoP racing, then I have a problem. The WEC needs to be devoid of all that as more and more manufacturers arrive. A stable system of BoP is paramount to the success of the series.

So I guess the question I'm really asking is whether the end justified the means, if going above the rules as written was somehow validated by a thrilling motor race? If a precedent has been set, I know the answer to that one. It's a resounding no. 🚩

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Adapting to a new mindset

The reigning Carrera Cup GB champion and BRDC SuperStar is enjoying his rookie season in Europe, and now heads to the Spa 24 Hours

KIERN JEWISS

Last year I had a great second season in the Porsche Carrera Cup GB. It was nice to get that championship wrapped up and, staying on with Team Parker Racing from 2021, it was important to hit the ground running. It was nice, a weight off my shoulders and a box ticked.

This season I was really expecting to be a gold-rated driver, but coming in as I did with a silver grading meant there were plenty more opportunities. To stay with Team Parker again but this time going to the GT World Challenge Europe Endurance Cup with the Porsche 911 GT3-R was a good opportunity to help build my career and see where we end up.

It has been tough because it's a big challenge with a new car, not only to myself, but to the team as well. It's the first year for the 992 GT3, so it takes a lot of work and there will be a lot of development to do as well. There are also lots of new tracks for me to get used to, and the racing is very different to what I've done before. It's a big eye-opener because, every time you do something, you then think, 'Right, I'm ready,' and then something else comes along that you have to deal with, so there's a lot more to it. But it's about rounding yourself out as a proper racing driver.

One big change for me compared to what I've been used to before is racing with team-mates in the same car. It's going to throw up some challenges and it's a very different mindset, but it's something that, if you want a professional career in motorsport, you're going to have to get used to it and it will be good to see how we get on. So far, we haven't had to make any big changes. Derek Pierce is a great bronze to drive with. He just wants the best car, so whatever you set up for him, he drives. But, as it's a new car, everyone's new to it and it's going to take a lot of work to get

where we want to be. Driving with Andy Meyrick is also interesting. He's been looking after me with the BRDC SuperStars programme, so it's great to be alongside him and it's unique to have a SuperStar and the director in the same car together.

It's been a privilege to return as a BRDC SuperStar because not many people go off the programme and come back. I can certainly take a lot more experience away from Andy and other people, whereas before, when you get to a certain level of single-seaters, it becomes about what car you drive and what information you require, whereas in this I'm a little fish in a big

“Driving at night presents all these different little challenges I’ve never had before”

pond. There's going to be lots to learn and hopefully I can get as much information and experience as I can out of everybody else. This season we're just taking it as it comes. It's a series where we have Balance of Performance, which is something new to me, but I just have to try to better myself as a driver.

The opening round of the season at Monza was good experience. It gave us a base to work from, so hopefully we can keep progressing. We then had the Spa tests, where we understood more about the car, and it gave us further directions to head with things. Heading on to Paul Ricard for the 1000km, in terms of Porsche pace we were the third fastest, which is pretty good. It would have been nice to be up there with the fastest Porsche but that's part of GT World Challenge – having to deal with things like traffic.

As far as the race at Paul Ricard went, I was pretty happy with the daytime stint, and I've never driven during the night before, so I'm happy with how that went too. It was great to get the car's fastest lap on the last lap of the six-hour race in my first proper endurance race with double stints.

At Paul Ricard you're supported at night with some floodlights, but I think it will be a different story for the Spa 24 Hours this weekend – it's going to be completely pitch black. Driving at night presents all these different little challenges I've never had before. But it's all about gaining experience and, to be honest, that's a nice position to be in, with less pressure and a good amount of time to continue developing myself as a driver. Spa will be my first 24-hour race and I'm really looking forward to the challenge. Hopefully we can come away with a good result. 🍀



Fastest lap at Paul Ricard was a satisfying way to finish “first proper endurance race”

SRO/HECQ

Who will replace Hamilton on the British F1 throne?

When the seven-time champion chooses to hang up his helmet, British fans will be spoiled for choice cheering on a home hero: Norris, Albon or Russell

ALEX KALINAUCKAS







The three Brits graduated to F1 in 2019 – this is after Albon's switch to Red Bull

“HE’S GOT A VERY LONG CAREER AHEAD OF HIM, SO absolutely Max Verstappen can eclipse my records,” said Lewis Hamilton at the recent Canadian Grand Prix. “Ultimately, records are there to be broken. And he’s got an amazing team.”

“But as I’ve said, we’ve got to work harder to try and continue to extend [those records]. I hope we get to have, at least within the last period of time in my career, some more close racing.”

Things move on fast. Not even two years ago, Hamilton became the first driver to reach 100 Formula 1 race wins. Since that day in Sochi, the Briton has added just three more, lost the 2021 world title in devastating, incorrect and controversial circumstances, and seen his Mercedes squad slip behind Red Bull in the pecking order through the championship’s latest rules reset.

Now, Verstappen’s Red Bull squad has just hit 100 victories. And it can be firmly stated now: the Dutchman’s success not only ended Hamilton’s title run, but it finished the Hamilton era. Perhaps there will be one glorious final chapter for the seven-time world champion – leading Mercedes back to the front, a new deal between the two sides said to be down to the final sticking points and set to be announced soon. Such a happy twist would land Hamilton yet another record: the ultimate one, eight world championships, ahead of Michael Schumacher. Maybe there will be room and time for more...

But in following up that nailbiting 2021 title triumph with domination in 2022 and early in the current campaign, it’s clear that Verstappen has taken Hamilton’s mantle as F1’s leading star. He, ultimately, was the heir to that esteemed position. Just as Fernando Alonso and Sebastian Vettel once were to Schumacher and then both were eclipsed by Hamilton.

Autosport has already pondered who would ultimately reach that point – most recently in our 7 January 2021 edition, where Verstappen (plus Charles Leclerc) was actually excluded in our consideration given it was clear how much potential he already had in F1 machinery.

But, with the British Grand Prix just around the corner after this weekend’s Austrian round, it’s worth taking another look at the coming years from the perspective of British F1 fans. They will turn out in their legions once again at Silverstone to cheer Hamilton next week as he seeks a record-extending ninth triumph on home soil. But increasingly, thanks to the popularity of Netflix hit *Drive to Survive*, there are other Britons with their own hefty groups of supporters, in addition to those who

“It’s difficult. Sometimes it’s just out of your control. You can be the best driver in the world and you can still not win a race because the car is not good enough”

Russell, Albon and Norris’s friendship yet to be tested by full-on frontline rivalry



SUTTON/MOTORSPORT IMAGES



Hamilton’s most recent grand prix victory was in 2021 in Saudi Arabia

followed them through the junior formulas and onto the grand prix grid.

The question of who’ll become the main attraction at Silverstone in the years to come isn’t just a good pub debate. It’s big business for the track itself and its owner, the British Racing Drivers’ Club. Silverstone boss Stuart Pringle has long been frank about the benefits of Hamilton’s success on ticket sales, which mirrors that of British drivers from previous eras. It’s one of the key reasons why the BRDC teams up with Aston Martin and Autosport every year to host the Young Driver of the Year Award. Each year, the winner might be the next big F1 hit on these shores.

There are two Award winners on the grid in 2023. They are Mercedes star George Russell (2014 winner) and McLaren ace Lando Norris (2016). And they’re joined by another finalist who actually pushed Russell hard on his way to success in the Silverstone-based assessments nine years ago: Williams’s Alex Albon.

Autosport recently sat down with all three, seeking updates on their 2023 campaigns. Norris cops the ultimate question we’re reflecting on today: can he be Hamilton’s heir as the best British driver, perhaps with the biggest following in this country during the coming years?

“I mean I would love to say, yes!” he replies. “But it’s difficult. Sometimes it’s just out of your control. Yeah, I want to be. I’m sure George wants to be at the same time. He’s in a Mercedes, he’s probably closer to that position than I am.

“I’m sure we both want to be, but there’s only so much you can do. You can be the best driver in the world and you can still not win a race because the car is not good enough. We both want to be, but there’s also room for two.”

Let’s expand that to three. After all, London-born Albon holds dual Thai-British citizenship and a British passport. Plus, he races for Williams – arguably the most British F1 team of them all, even with its recent ownership change to an American private investment firm.

In 2023, as Norris acknowledges, Russell currently leads the way thanks to his position alongside Hamilton at Mercedes. He made a very strong start to his second season with the manufacturer that has backed him since 2017, equalling his illustrious team-mate 4-4 in their qualifying head-to-head and leading the Australian GP until Albon’s crash brought out a red flag. After that Russell retired with an engine failure, which was the biggest hit to his points haul until his Canada gaffe chasing Fernando Alonso that indirectly led to his retirement with excessively worn brakes. His beautifully battling rise from 12th to third in Spain, however, was the highlight so far.

Norris is five places behind Russell’s sixth position in the drivers’ standings, and his current 11th spot would equal his worst end-of-season championship result for McLaren of his burgeoning career. This has much to do with the shortcomings at the orange team.

It got its off-season development targets wrong, especially regarding aerodynamic efficiency, and it was the floor and rear >>

wing updates at Baku in late April that finally got the MCL60 to where McLaren had wanted to start the season. Norris has since scored the lion's share of his squad's 17 points, with his sixth place in Melbourne (boosted by the late crash chaos) the highlight. A penalty for going too slowly behind the safety car last time out in Canada – an attempt to avoid losing time in a double-stack stop behind team-mate Oscar Piastri that Norris bizarrely didn't acknowledge – cost him two more points. But even had Norris secured them, he'd have remained 11th in the standings and just one spot above Albon heading to Austria.

Although he scored a point with a strong drive holding off quicker rivals in the season-opener back in Bahrain, the most recent race was the high point of Albon's year so far. Given the tricky, but effective, one-stop strategy to enact in the only Williams running the extensive floor and upper aero surface updates in Canada, he used its inherently slippery characteristics to brilliantly hold off the pursuing mid-pack two-stoppers on their fresher rubber, once Russell had retired from his wake approaching the closing stages.

This followed poor moments earlier in the campaign. Albon's Australia crash was triggered by going too wide at Albert Park's fifth corner, spiking his left-rear tyre temperature and triggering a big accident at the next turn. Then he needlessly damaged his nose and potential finishing position in Baku.

Those races were followed by a tricky period for Williams where "everyone was starting to bring upgrades and as that happened we were just slightly falling down a little bit", according to Albon. He and the rest of the Williams squad now head to Austria, where they will evaluate the first big development package of the team's season. McLaren is also set to bring a substantial upgrade package this weekend.

"We're still in the fight," says Albon, who identifies his qualifying prowess – he leads team-mate Logan Sargeant 8-0 in their head-to-head, has made Q3 twice, plus brilliantly topped Q2 in Montreal after leading the brief switch to slicks – as one of the best aspects of his 2023 campaign to date. "We qualified into Q2 [in Monaco] on a tricky track. I'm happy with that aspect – I feel like there's a lot of motivation that comes with knowing that you're in the hunt for Q2 and Q3 every weekend. But you always want more."

All three are actually having a harder time of things in 2023 thanks to the significant year-on-year progress of one squad: Aston Martin. The green team has catapulted clear of the crowded midfield this term thanks to its freshly deep resources and early decision to head down the Red Bull ground effect design path last year. And Albon reckons the retirement rate is lower in 2023 too, which is backed by the average classification total from the opening eight events last year sitting at 17 versus 18.4 for 2023.

"I feel like everyone has got their act together this year," Albon explains. "You're not getting people with DNFs, really. Whereas last year, we could pick up the pieces a little bit."

"This year, a really good example was Monaco. Raining late, expecting chaos, and yet I think almost all 20 cars finished the race. Kevin [Magnussen] stopped at the end to save mileage or whatever. It's hard to break into the points. And especially with the Astons doing so

well. There are only two positions up for grabs every weekend.

"It makes the Sundays hard. I'm happy with the season so far, but at the same time, naturally it's purely just a tough season. It's hard to get into the points."

Albon's qualifying success with a tricky, limited Williams package – an area where he also shone last year – is reminiscent of Russell's three-year stint with the same squad. The team is now helmed by James Vowles, who until the start of 2023 was Mercedes' motorsport strategy director (he was previously and



Williams boss Vowles sings praises of Albon, who's a "real team leader"



Aero updates assisted Albon in exceptional performance last time out in Canada

VINET/SUTTON

motorsport IMAGES

"I feel like there's a lot of motivation that comes with knowing that you're in the hunt for Q2 and Q3 every weekend. But you always want more"

most famously its race tactics chief as opposed to a more overarching team strategy manager). Vowles is therefore uniquely placed on comparing Albon and Russell, with added insight from their days working as Mercedes simulator drivers in the two years leading up to 2018. Albon pushed Russell close enough in the 2014 Young Driver tests that the now 25-year-old (Albon is two years older, Norris two younger) couldn't dominate the assessment outings in various machinery, as Norris would do two years later.

"George and Alex came up through the ranks very close to one another and were very close in terms of performance the whole way through," Vowles explains. "I know Alex from back in the Mercedes sim days – when I had both George and Alex at the same time. And they have a lot of similarities. Huge amount of similarities. The thought process is different, the driving style is similar in many regards."

"Alex is great here [at Williams]. He's a real leader of the team, he does a great job, he brings every millisecond out of it in qualifying – he really does. He's deserving to be in Formula 1 and I'm incredibly proud that he's here in this organisation. And the same, by the way, I would've said about George."

"It's hard to compare them directly – they've never raced in the same car, particularly. But what I can say is that in the sim they would challenge one another for who was fastest, which is what I'd want to see. Certainly, drivers are not what is holding us back today [at Williams]."

Norris, Russell and Albon are all different characters. The first is perhaps the most irreverent, although in an overwhelming positive way, Norris's media and in-cockpit comments typically a breath of maverick fresh air. Russell is the most serious of the trio, handy for a Grand Prix Drivers' Association director and the only one competing >>



McLaren started 2023 on the back foot – sixth place in Oz is Norris's highlight

GRANT/MOTORSPORT IMAGES



Maiden F1 podium
for Albon in 2020
Tuscan GP at Mugello

HONE/MOTORSPORT IMAGES



Norris took first and so
far sole pole position
at Sochi in 2021

ANDRE

on the current grid. Albon is so relaxed it's often a shock to hear him let rip on his team radio, which is something Williams encourages.

They are famously very good friends. This is not unique to F1 drivers throughout history – think Mike Hawthorn and Peter Collins in the championship's infancy – but in today's social media age, such companionship is more easily witnessed and, of course, commented upon.

Since late last year, all three have lived in Monaco, golf and paddle tennis often featuring on their combined schedules “if we've got no one else to hang out with!” jokes Albon.

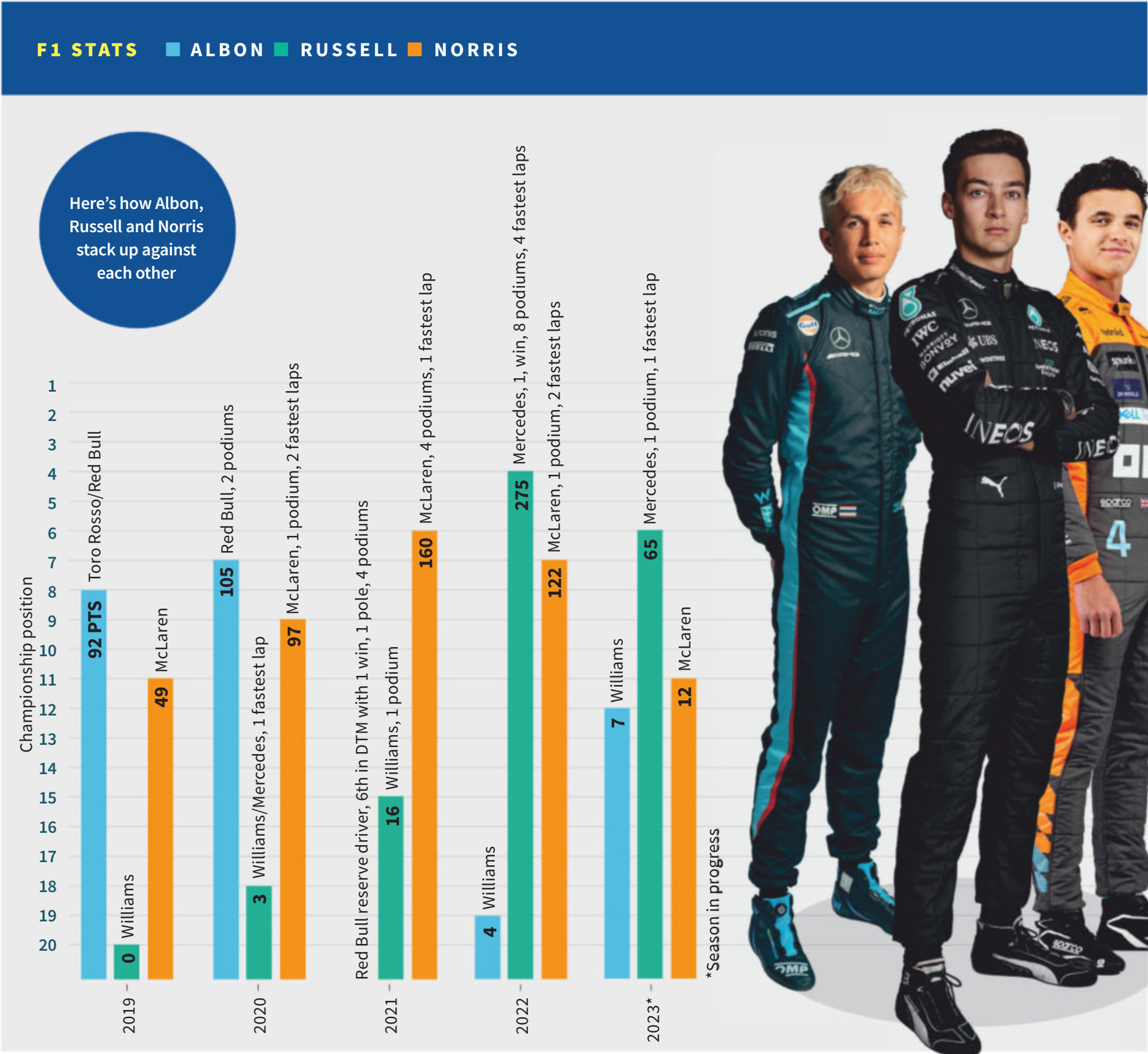
“You can still be normal people and get along with each other, I think,” points out Norris. “I don't think you have to hate people and treat people badly just because you race against them. We just have respect – simple as that.”

This trio is also part of a larger generation of F1 drivers to break through to the top level in the past decade. Carlos Sainz and Verstappen arrived first, soon joined by Esteban Ocon, then Lance Stroll, Pierre Gasly and Leclerc. Nyck de Vries, their karting contemporary, joined the F1 grid full time this year.

Based on their paddock interactions, it seems Norris is the one to get on best with Verstappen – the same not likely to be said about Russell of late following their ugly clash in the Baku pitlane. “Again,



“It’s nice to be able to share the experience. We were talking and looking back at our days and acting like we’re 40 years old, when we’ve only been in F1 for a little bit!”





Russell's breakthrough win
(or wins if you include the
sprint) in Brazil last year

just a lot of respect I think between one another," Norris says of this relationship. "Respect for what Max has done and achieved at such an age — what he still does now. And I feel like it goes the other way."

The 2023 campaign is a neat milestone in the respective careers of Russell, Norris and Albon, for it's five years since that famous Formula 2 campaign in which the trio battled for the title that ultimately went to Russell (a 2018 F2 rookie along with Norris, while Albon was making his second run at the feeder series crown despite lacking backing, at that stage, of an F1 benefactor).

Even before that season had finished, all three were set to graduate to F1 for 2019. When they arrived, their respective positions in the pecking order were rather different to where they are now.

Russell was at the back, with Williams, while Albon and Norris drove for, respectively, Toro Rosso (soon to be AlphaTauri) and McLaren squads on the rise. Albon then spent a difficult period as Verstappen's Red Bull team-mate before briefly leaving F1 altogether in 2021, while Norris challenged for race victories following 2020 podium progress and McLaren's best season since 2012.

When Albon returned, he did so with Russell having jumped up to Mercedes and with Norris's McLaren squad paying the price of its massive infrastructure investment being undermined by the timing of the pandemic, which meant it's yet to be felt in the new ground-effect machinery produced at Woking.

"We've got a good understanding for one another, with whatever we're going through," Russell says of a group bond that includes sharing travel to F1 races, as well as advice on non-racing activities, interests and life logistics. "And I think the friendship has remained because we're fortunately, or unfortunately, not actually racing one another on-track."

"This season Alex and Lando are probably the closest we've ever really battled other than that 2018 year. I think it's good, it's healthy, but ultimately when the helmet is on you're this competitive warrior. Equally, I'm sure if there were to be an on-track incident, we'd sweep it under the carpet on the first occasion and move on."

"I was speaking to George about it the other day, you kind of have to appreciate when you realise how far we've got," adds Albon. "And it's very nice to be able to do it together."

"It's quite — it's weird to say it in first person — but it's quite sweet that we've been able to come through the ranks and we've experienced the lows and the highs. Gone through, for example, George staying at my place, my mum cooking us dinner and stuff like that. And then now we're at a point where we're travelling around the world together, sharing flights together — it's just an extraordinary change!"

"I think it makes us almost feel more privileged. It feels very nice to be able to share the growth and experience together. We were talking and looking back at our days and acting like we're 40 years old, when we've only been in F1 for a little bit! But it's nice to be able to share that experience with some of your close friends."

There is one thing all three are firmly united on. "Even if you're best mates in the world, you throw that all out the window as soon as you get on the circuit," explains Norris. "Again, just class and respect."

And then there's the elephant in the room — that to truly succeed at the top level, such a level of ruthlessness can often destroy relationships. Just look at Hamilton and Nico Rosberg. From delighted Melbourne 2008 pre-podium hugs representing McLaren and Williams evoking memories of their karting days, to barely being able to utter each other's names after their bitter years as title rivals at Mercedes.

Even without the pressure of a title fight, a big crash could also lead to tough questions for this current crop, as Albon concludes: "Here is one thing which I haven't discovered yet — we've never had a big crash. Or like an absolute rivalry. Which, maybe, it does change. But I haven't been in the position to be able to tell you. Maybe, then... we'll stop sharing flights at that point!"

In a championship nicknamed the 'Piranha Club', the friendship and all-round decency displayed by this trio is a delightful subplot. If they all end up in race-winning machinery making the main act together one day, it won't just be British F1 supporters in for a treat. 🐼



The next generation of Kenyans is already embracing the Safari legend

WRC SAFARI RALLY KENYA

Ogier and Toyota earn fruits of superiority

The Toyotas dominated in Africa once again, but Sebastien Ogier and Kalle Rovanpera delivered a thrilling battle among themselves

TOM HOWARD

PHOTOGRAPHY MCKLEIN

I rarely have had to fight like this. Sometimes you have to fight hard against the clock and against your competitors, but this time it was more fighting against all the issues I had to face.”

Such a frank admission from a World Rally Championship legend of the renown of Sebastien Ogier is a perfect summary of last weekend’s 70th Safari Rally Kenya. While the event is no longer the brutal 5000km marathon that started the nation’s cultural obsession with rallying back in 1953, the trip to the African wilderness remains one of motorsport’s most gruelling events, where reaching the finish is an achievement in itself.

This was once again proven by the fact that all the Rally1 crews dropped time across the 355km journey through the Kenyan terrain. For the 58th win of his WRC career, Ogier had to overcome a myriad of scenarios to see off reigning champion and Toyota

team-mate Kalle Rovanpera and claim one of his hardest-fought victories. The winning margin of 6.7 seconds was fittingly the closest in the event’s history.

While luck plays a huge part in determining success or failure, it appears that one thing you can rely on is Toyota’s resilience in tackling Kenya’s unique challenges. For the second year in a row the marque recorded an impressive 1-2-3-4, as Ogier led home Rovanpera, Elfyn Evans and Takamoto Katsuta. This was something of a turnaround for a team that headed to Africa licking its wounds following the watersplash woes that cost it so dearly in Sardinia earlier this month. This remained a major topic of discussion heading into the Safari Rally, with weather forecasters predicting a week punctuated by rain. But it was one that became a footnote after crews had completed an eye-opening recce.

“It’s proper Safari spec. More than we have seen in the last couple



of years,” claimed M-Sport Ford star Ott Tanak. “In some places it’s like driving on the moon. It’s going to be quite a lottery. There are stones, rocks and things in places that are difficult to understand where they have come from. If it’s raining we’ll have some deep mud holes as well. It’s not going to be about the fastest driver winning. It will be the first driver to finish. You need to be lucky.”

And Rovannerpa noted many changes from 2022: “Some parts of the stages are really different. We’ve been changing the pacenotes completely. Some corners are not there and some corners are new.”

“Fans lined the roads all the way from the ceremonial start to the stage, cheering their heroes”

Tanak’s pre-rally words would ring true, with the Estonian experiencing good and bad luck over the next 24 hours. The 2019 world champion claimed Thursday’s opening stage, a head-to-head battle around the Kasarani superspecial in the centre of a rally-mad Nairobi. It’s here where the locals’ passion for rallying is most evident. Fans lined the roads all the way from the ceremonial start to the stage, cheering their heroes before a wheel had been turned.

After seeing off Evans in his duel, Tanak’s effort pipped Ogier by 0.1s to grab an early lead. It was also the first chance for Hyundai’s Esapekka Lappi to properly experience Kenya’s stages after the event debutant suffered a double propshaft failure that prevented him from completing any shakedown runs. He set the sixth-fastest time ahead of Katsuta, who was fortunate to be there after mechanics were forced to repair his GR Yaris following a roll in shakedown. Some of the debris from the incident emerged in the



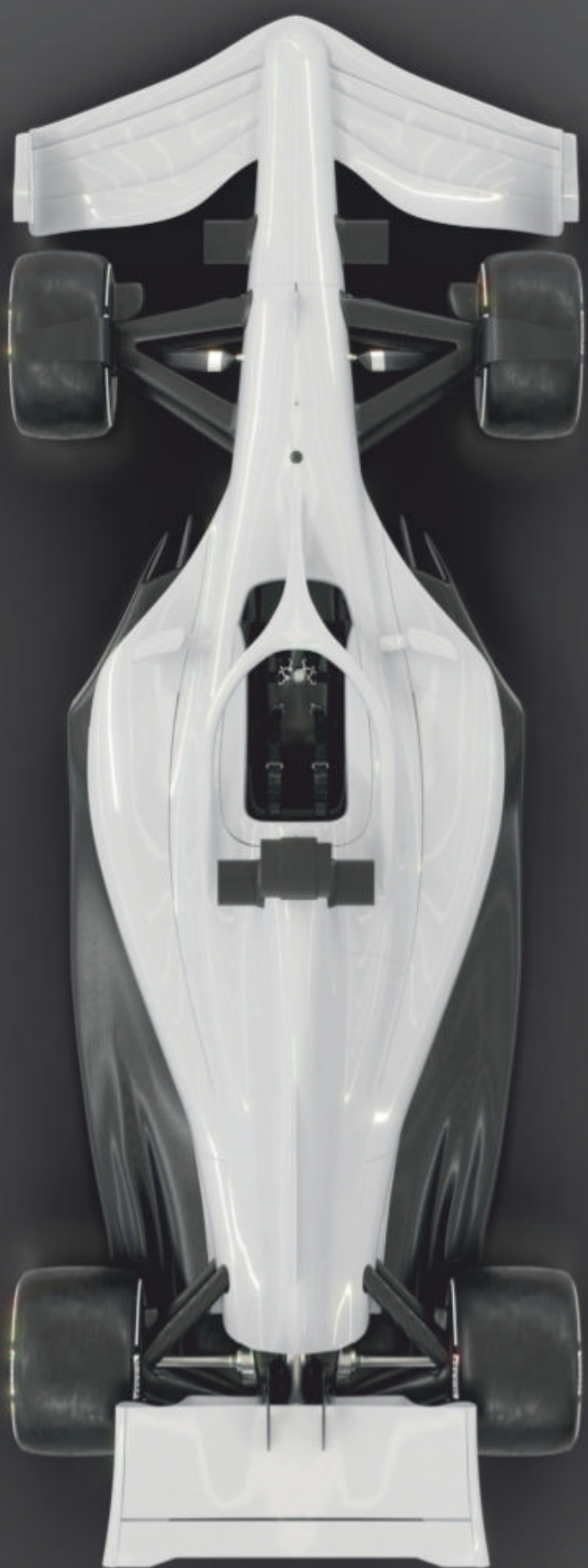
hands of the local fans, who repurposed it as a makeshift table.

Friday’s return to host city Naivasha, north-west of Nairobi, was the start of the true Safari Rally. The day’s six stages were dominated by Ogier. He won four of them to open up a commanding 22.8s lead over Rovannerpa, who impressed while opening the roads. It wasn’t plain sailing for Ogier, who lost hybrid power on stage four, but it was his risky call to take one spare tyre instead of two that paid off. He took advantage of perfectly judging when to push with his lighter GR Yaris.

“At first people thought it was a risky choice, but in the end it was a calculated one after seeing the condition of the first two stages of the loop this morning were not that rough in terms of tyre risk,” explained Ogier, who was lucky not to lose time to a wandering zebra on a high-speed section: “The zebra had a good idea to turn at the last minute, it could have been bad.” >>



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“It’s like driving in a zoo. We had a group of zebras who didn’t give a f*** that we were coming”

Evans ended the day in third, 43.5s back, but was lucky after driving through a bush before picking up a puncture. Lappi led Hyundai’s charge in fourth after an eventful day that included suffering a right-rear-tyre delamination. The Finn inherited fourth from team-mate Thierry Neuville, who became the event’s first Rally1 retirement.

Neuville had already endured an eventful morning due to a right-front puncture and a bizarre situation when a large insect provided an unwelcome distraction in stage two. “It was strange – it looked like a bee but it was two times bigger,” related the Belgian. “After two corners it came into the car and then into my crash helmet and I was distracted. I didn’t know if it was dangerous or not, but after a while it went into the back of the car.”

The insect distraction was soon replaced by the heartache of a front-left suspension failure that put the Hyundai out of the victory battle on stage five (Loldia). “There was no warning at all,” said Neuville. “The damper came out of its position, the driveshaft went immediately and it was all over. It’s frustrating. And it has hit us very hard.”

Amazingly, Katsuta completed Friday in fifth, despite having to repair a lower suspension arm, a run-in with a zebra, and a tree that left his GR Yaris looking second-hand. The Japanese wasn’t the only driver delayed by Kenya’s wildlife: overnight leader Tanak had



Tanak survived wildlife encounters to achieve a Safari finish



Rovanpera pushed
Ogier all the way

to slow on the first run through Loldia. “It has been like driving in a zoo,” exclaimed the M-Sport man. “First, we met a pig in the road and then we had a group of zebras who didn’t give a f*** that we were coming.”

Tanak’s hopes were dealt a significant blow two stages later in the 30.62km Kedong test when a tyre came off the rim, costing him over two minutes and dropping him to sixth overall behind Hyundai’s Dani Sordo. M-Sport team-mate Pierre-Louis Loubet enjoyed an unusual start to the event when he faced the pressure of taking Kenya’s president William Ruto for a ride in his Puma. But his Friday didn’t provide such glamour as an engine issue followed by two wheel changes left him more than seven minutes adrift.

Overnight rain provided a new challenge on Saturday, with slippery, muddy sections more prevalent. It didn’t halt Ogier’s charge, although a puncture four kilometres from the end of the day’s opening test provided a scare. The Toyota driver still won stage eight by 7.6s from Rovanpera, who seemed content to hold station in second given title rivals Neuville and Tanak were down the order. “In our case, we need to think about the championship, because the guys in the championship are a long way behind and the good points are coming,” pointed out Rovanpera.

That stage did produce a change in the leaderboard. Evans suffered a déjà vu moment from Sardinia when his GR Yaris stalled in a watersplash. It cost the Welshman 45s, handing Lappi third overall. Lappi’s time in third was short-lived, however, as his shakedown gremlins returned. A third propshaft failure triggered a retirement and plenty of head-scratching at Hyundai, which had deployed containment measures after communication with its Alzenau base. A thorough internal review will be carried out in the coming weeks (see sidebar, page 29).

“I was on the throttle, accelerating and there was a big bang,” said a frustrated Lappi as his exit handed Toyota a 1-2-3-4. “I don’t know what’s going on but clearly something is wrong if it happens three times on the rally. The guys need to investigate very carefully.”

At the front, Ogier began to stamp his authority on the event. He headed into Saturday’s final test with a 32.0s lead over Rovanpera, who admitted that “if nothing happens it’s impossible to catch Seb by driving. I don’t want to take huge risks anymore.”

But something *did* happen. The much-anticipated rain finally arrived, drenching the already incredibly tough Sleeping Warrior stage. Slippery conditions are where Rovanpera shines brightest, and he lived up to his reputation. A stunning effort in some of the worst conditions in recent Safari Rally memory resulted in the Finn scything into Ogier’s lead, reducing it to 16.7s heading into the final day. Ogier’s 15.3s time loss to Rovanpera was partly thanks to a double front puncture on the stage. “Last year was slippery but nothing like this,” reported Rovanpera. “Even on the straights, »

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second gear was quite high-speed. We are here in one piece.”

Ogier added: “I cannot say that I’ve had so much luck with these tyres, but that’s the way it is.”

Rovanpera’s heroics set up an intriguing final day. Toyota boss Jari-Matti Latvala confirmed that there would be no team orders, but firmly reminded his drivers what was at stake. To Ogier’s surprise, Rovanpera pushed on Sunday morning in the roughest stage of the rally (Malewa, 8.33km). The result created tension as Rovanpera halved the deficit to 8.6s with five stages remaining after an effort he nonchalantly described as “nothing special”.

“For someone playing the championship, it was a nice talk,” sniffed Ogier. “There are huge rocks everywhere on the road and

“The drama was far from over. Kenya had one more ordeal to throw at its competitors”

I had to nearly stop. I was surprised about the place that he attacked because that was completely insane.”

A grandstand finish seemed to be on the cards when Ogier made a small error in the next stage that ripped the entire tailgate from the GR Yaris following a small touch with a tree. But if anything, Toyota’s new wingless wonder got faster, and Ogier pumped in his seventh stage win to restore the time lost in the perilous test.

The tension mounted heading into the final three stages, with the pair split by 13.0s after a midpoint service, where Ogier’s Toyota returned to its factory specification. The drama was far from over, and Kenya had one more ordeal to throw at its competitors in the form of fesh-fesh sand. This threatened to derail all four Toyotas as Ogier, Rovanpera, Evans and Katsuta all reported overheating issues on the penultimate stage after their cars ingested sand. Ogier fared the worst. It looked as though Rovanpera, who had a tyre come off the rim, would inherit the lead, before a mid-stage recovery ensured Ogier would take a 9.2s lead into the final powerstage.

The sand had taken its toll on the Toyotas and they tackled the powerstage finale down on power, but that wasn’t the final twist in the tale that panicked Ogier. His car scooped up a rock that smashed his windscreen, but luckily, from a visibility point of view, it struck the co-driver’s side – and avoided puncturing the radiator. Panic over, a relieved Ogier was able to put aside all of the hurdles thrown at him to clinch a victory that will live long in his memory.

“I think the whole weekend was a hell of a rally for us and a hell of a fight,” sighed Ogier. “We have had some difficult weekends and still won, but the amount of things thrown at me was probably the



highest of any event. Honestly, up to the last finish line I was still not sure it would be enough. Even the stone in the last kilometres almost damaged my radiator. At the same time Kalle had great speed, wasn’t far behind and I was thinking, ‘When will I be able to drive smoothly without something slowing me down?’”

Evans clinched third, albeit almost three minutes adrift, while fourth-placed Katsuta’s eventful week ended with a leaking radiator. Toyota’s claiming of the top four positions for the second consecutive year highlighted that Hyundai and M-Sport have work to do before next year’s visit to Kenya. Sordo emerged as the best of the rest, five minutes behind after dropping time lost in his own dust and with a power-steering issue.

There was a small ray of light for M-Sport, which finished sixth and seventh with Tanak and Loubet, who both suffered two wheel failures each. Tanak’s points tally was boosted by being declared the powerstage winner at midnight on Sunday after Neuville, who had rejoined following his retirement, was disqualified from eighth for breaching recce regulations – a crew had been checking stages for rocks without authorisation.

While the weekend severely dented Neuville’s title hopes, the season appears to be swinging towards Rovanpera. Although disappointed to lose to Ogier, he is 41 points ahead of Evans with six events remaining. “When you miss out on the win by a small margin like this then it’s not always the best feeling for a driver,” he said. “But in the end we still scored good points for the championship.”

Who would bet against a second title? ❄️



HYUNDAI KEEPS WINDOWS SHUT IN SUMMER



Neuville's i20 N held together, but he was DQ'd

Hyundai will realistically have to wait until October to properly address its World Rally Championship reliability issues, according to new technical director Francois-Xavier Demaison. The marque's weaknesses with its i20 N Rally1 were thrust into the spotlight in Kenya following four mechanical failures, three of which were propshaft dramas on Esapekka Lappi's car.

Under the sporting regulations, teams can only make significant changes in designated homologation joker windows. The next deadline would be 1 July, but former Williams F1 and Volkswagen WRC technical director Demaison says the team won't be ready with a full fix to present for that date.

Demaison believes that the following submission date on 1 October is the most realistic time for the squad to use a homologation joker to address its reliability. "We have some jokers for this year and next year, but the main focus is clearly to make the car more reliable as quickly as possible," he said. "I think it will be difficult to make a bulletproof car with three jokers this year.

"We can do an emergency joker, which could be an option, but you have to homologate the solution you have tested, because rushing to homologate a solution you haven't really tested and proven is an improvement doesn't make sense."

Team principal Cyril Abiteboul added: "We will be working on new containment measures with a bit more time before the next rally, but I suspect that in the future we will need to work on a new specification [propshaft]. But it's very difficult to be in a sport like this one, making the financial commitment we do, and yet have to trade between a fix for an issue due to some designs that probably weren't right and some performance [gains].

"We want to have a championship that is a competitive championship and, given our commitment, I think we should be given the opportunity to match the other cars. Which we can't do right now."

RESULTS ROUND 7/13, SAFARI RALLY, 22-25 JUNE

POS	DRIVER / CO-DRIVER	TEAM / CAR	TIME
1	Sebastien Ogier (FRA) Vincent Landais (FRA)	Toyota Gazoo Racing WRT / Toyota GR Yaris Rally1	3h30m42.5s
2	Kalle Rovanperä (FIN) Jonne Halttunen (FIN)	Toyota Gazoo Racing WRT / Toyota GR Yaris Rally1	+6.7s
3	Elfyn Evans (GBR) Scott Martin (GBR)	Toyota Gazoo Racing WRT / Toyota GR Yaris Rally1	+2m58.6s
4	Takamoto Katsuta (JPN) Aaron Johnston (GBR)	Toyota Gazoo Racing WRT / Toyota GR Yaris Rally1	+3m23.8s
5	Dani Sordo (ESP) Candido Carrera (ESP)	Hyundai Shell Mobis WRT / Hyundai i20 N Rally1	+5m05.5s
6	Ott Tanak (EST) Martin Jarveoja (EST)	M-Sport Ford WRT / Ford Puma Rally1	+9m14.5s
7	Pierre-Louis Loubet (FRA) Nicolas Gilsoul (BEL)	M-Sport Ford WRT / Ford Puma Rally1	+16m15.8s
8	Kajetan Kajetanowicz (POL) Maciek Szczepaniak (POL)	Skoda Fabia RS Rally2	+26m33.5s
9	Oliver Solberg (SWE) Elliott Edmondson (GBR)	Skoda Fabia RS Rally2	+27m04.0s
10	Martin Prokop (CZE) Zdenek Jurka (CZE)	Skoda Fabia RS Rally2	+38m01.1s
OTHERS			
12	Esapekka Lappi (FIN) Janne Ferm (FIN)	Hyundai Shell Mobis WRT / Hyundai i20 N Rally1	+42m14.9s
EX	Thierry Neuville (BEL) Martijn Wydaeghe (BEL)	Hyundai Shell Mobis WRT / Hyundai i20 N Rally1	+24m47.0s
R	Jourdan Serderidis (GRC) Andy Malfoy (FRA)	M-Sport Ford WRT / Ford Puma Rally1	SS12-mechanical

STAGE TIMES

STAGE	FASTEST	LEADER	SECOND
SS1 Super Special Kasarani (3.01 miles)	Tanak 3m14.3s	Tanak	Ogier +0.1s
SS2 Loldia 1 (11.91 miles)	Ogier 13m50.3s	Ogier	Rovanperä +9.8s
SS3 Geothermal 1 (8.15 miles)	Lappi 6m49.7s	Ogier	Rovanperä +11.9s
SS4 Kedong 1 (18.94 miles)	Rovanperä 14m52.4s	Ogier	Rovanperä +2.5s
SS5 Loldia 2 (11.91 miles)	Ogier 13m50.2s	Ogier	Rovanperä +17.8s
SS6 Geothermal 2 (8.15 miles)	Ogier 6m46.5s	Ogier	Rovanperä +20.4s
SS7 Kedong 2 (18.94 miles)	Ogier 15m04.6s	Ogier	Rovanperä +22.8s
SS8 Soysambu 1 (18.22 miles)	Ogier 17m30.0s	Ogier	Rovanperä +30.4s
SS9 Elmenteita 1 (9.37 miles)	Rovanperä 8m25.2s	Ogier	Rovanperä +29.8s
SS10 Sleeping Warrior 1 (19.29 miles)	Rovanperä 17m57.7s	Ogier	Rovanperä +22.1s
SS11 Soysambu 2 (18.22 miles)	Ogier 17m23.4s	Ogier	Rovanperä +28.5s
SS12 Elmenteita 2 (9.37 miles)	Katsuta 8m20.6s	Ogier	Rovanperä +32.0s
SS13 Sleeping Warrior 2 (19.29 miles)	Rovanperä 19m07.7s	Ogier	Rovanperä +16.7s
SS14 Malewa 1 (5.59 miles)	Rovanperä 6m05.1s	Ogier	Rovanperä +8.6s
SS15 Oserian 1 (11.39 miles)	Ogier 11m15.9s	Ogier	Rovanperä +17.2s
SS16 Hell's Gate 1 (6.54 miles)	Tanak 5m29.7s	Ogier	Rovanperä +13.6s
SS17 Malewa 2 (5.59 miles)	Rovanperä 6m02.6s	Ogier	Rovanperä +13.0s
SS18 Oserian 2 (11.39 miles)	Katsuta 11m53.6s	Ogier	Rovanperä +9.2s
SS19 Hell's Gate 2 (6.54 miles) [Power stage]	Tanak 5m35.1s	Ogier	Rovanperä +6.8s



DRIVERS' CHAMPIONSHIP

1 Rovanperä 140; 2 Evans 99; 3 Ogier 98; 4 Tanak 98; 5 Neuville 93; 6 Lappi 69; 7 Sordo 46; 8 Katsuta 35; 9 Loubet 20; 10 Breen 19.

MANUFACTURERS' CHAMPIONSHIP

1 Toyota Gazoo Racing WRT 285; 2 Hyundai Shell Mobis WRT 237; 3 M-Sport Ford WRT 175.

NEXT REPORT

RALLY ESTONIA
27 JULY ISSUE

Cassidy wins Portland test of patience

Envision's Nick Cassidy emerged victorious on a day of extreme energy-saving antics in Oregon

JAMIE KLEIN

PHOTOGRAPHY  motorsport
IMAGES

There was a familiar face on top of the podium on Formula E's first visit to Portland after Nick Cassidy became the second three-time winner of the season in an event that left opinion divided regarding the on-track action, but was otherwise an undoubted hit.

The fast, flowing Oregon venue, better known for hosting IndyCar and NASCAR, lived up to its promise of providing a unique spectacle, as the lack of braking zones meant few chances to recoup energy. It was always clear that this would be an energy-saving race in the Berlin mould, but this example was even more extreme, with drivers dawdling around as much as 13 seconds per lap slower than their cars were really capable of early in the encounter.

While Formula E was able to boast of a race featuring 403 overtakes, it's certainly debatable whether this type of contest is ultimately a good thing for the series. After about 22 laps of pussyfooting, something resembling a motor race finally broke out for the final third or so of the distance, with the Envision Racing Jaguar of Cassidy beating Jake Dennis and Antonio Felix da Costa in what became a three-way battle at the head of the field.

Cassidy had qualified 10th, but it soon became clear that this was a race that could potentially be won from anywhere on the grid, such was the excruciatingly slow pace in the early stages. On the opening lap alone, Cassidy vaulted into the top five and, by the fourth lap of an eventual 32, he was leading before taking his first attack-mode activation.

What had been scheduled as a 28-lap race was extended by four due to two quick-fire safety car periods. The first was for Roberto Merhi's Mahindra coming to a halt, the second for a scary 27g crash involving the Mahindra-powered Abt car of Nico Muller on the back straight. Cassidy was credited with leading half of the 32 laps, although that was partly because he just happened to be at the head of the pack when the music stopped following Muller's crash.


Crucially, Cassidy had managed to clear his second attack-mode activation prior to that, with the power boost proving impossible to utilise because of the additional demands it placed on energy consumption. Porsche man da Costa had done likewise, but Andretti Porsche racer Dennis was one of a number of drivers who had to serve his second activation (situated on the outside of the Turn 7 hairpin before the back straight) after the caution ended.

It was actually da Costa who 'went' first of all, dramatically upping the pace from a 1m18s – 10 seconds slower than the pole time – to a 1m12s on lap 22. The Portuguese explained that he had calculated that he had enough energy left at this stage to make it to the finish as he surged into the lead. But he couldn't shake off Cassidy, and by lap 26 it was the lime green machine that was back ahead.

Da Costa had one more crack at the victory, passing Cassidy with



Cassidy hollers his joy and shows off the trophy



Cassidy leads the field in Portland, on his way to becoming season's second three-time winner

“It was a negative to start on pole. We need to refine everything: when to lead, when not to lead”

three laps to go, but again his spell out front proved brief as the Envision driver got him back next time by. After that, da Costa had to focus his attention on protecting second place from a resurgent Dennis, who slumped as low as sixth after entering attack mode for a second time but had a small energy advantage for the closing stages. After a couple of laps of entertaining side-by-side battling, Dennis was finally able to wrest second away from da Costa on the final lap, and even looked to be in a position to threaten Cassidy in the last sector. But in the end he fell short by 0.294s, registering his third consecutive runner-up finish and his fifth straight podium.

Earlier in the day, Dennis had been the star of qualifying, setting the fastest-ever lap in a Formula E car by average speed (103.5mph) in his semi-final before besting Nissan driver Sacha Fenestraz to grab pole position in the final. The three bonus points put Dennis into the championship lead by a single point from Pascal Wehrlein, but leading the opening few laps inevitably had a deleterious impact on his energy consumption.

“It was a negative to start on pole,” reflected Dennis. “We led the first four laps, and I was already 1% down [on energy] on Antonio. I was like, ‘We’ve got a long day ahead.’ We pulled it back in the middle

of the race, we did some risky towing, we were back in the pack and it was just mental back there. We got a bit unlucky with the second safety car with the attack [mode]; we had a lot of work to do and I got Antonio at the end. We need to refine everything: when to lead, when not to lead. That’s something Envision has a good grasp on, better than us. We had the car to win, but we need to find some things.”

Cassidy, meanwhile, spoke of struggling with his car’s balance against a “next-level” Dennis, whom he now trails by a single point in the standings with four races to go – two each in Rome and London. The New Zealander came into Portland playing down his chances, expecting the final two tracks on the schedule to be better suited to his Jaguar-powered car, but it’s clear that he’s mastered the art of these energy-saving races, having previously come out on top in somewhat similar (albeit not as extreme) contests in Berlin and Monaco.

Da Costa was pleased to be back on the podium for the first time since his February win in Cape Town, but admitted that he misjudged how soon he could push. “I’m a bit disappointed because I executed the race how we planned, and ultimately it wasn’t the right strategy,” said the Porsche driver. “It’s something we have to go back and review. These two guys [Cassidy and Dennis] planned it better than us and I struggled a bit with energy at the end.”

It was a chastening weekend for da Costa’s team-mate Wehrlein, who was an anonymous ninth on the road (promoted to eighth by a post-race penalty for Sam Bird). The German now sits 16 points behind Dennis heading into the final two double-headers, having “struggled the whole weekend in terms of pace”. He added: >>

“Everything is still open. We didn’t have a great weekend, but there are still four races to go, so we’ll give it our best.”

The top five was rounded out by two more Jaguar-powered cars. Completing an impressive comeback from 20th on the grid to fourth was works driver Mitch Evans, who began his 29th birthday in inauspicious style when a problem in second practice prompted Jaguar to change his battery and powertrain. As a result, he didn’t set a lap in qualifying, but surged through the field, and even ran as high as second at one stage before slipping back.

Behind Evans, Sebastien Buemi ensured both Envision cars finished in the top five. That was a strong achievement considering he started 16th, but this was yet another race in which the Swiss stalwart was no match whatsoever for in-form team-mate Cassidy.

Outside of Jaguar and Porsche, there was little to celebrate for the remaining powertrain manufacturers in Portland. Nissan in particular endured a disappointing race despite both Fenestraz and Norman Nato starting in the top three, not helped by Fenestraz damaging his front wing by making contact with his team-mate early on. When Fenestraz came in for a replacement nose (further braking issues condemned him to 15th at the finish), it left Nato alone in the lead battle, but the Frenchman trailed home behind Wehrlein in ninth.

But, without a doubt, the manufacturer that endured the worst weekend was DS, whose works Penske-operated squad suffered the embarrassment of having both of its cars relegated to the pitlane for the start. That was after the team was found to be using illegal RFID scanning equipment in the pitlane during practice, but the cheating allegations flew when a revised stewards’ bulletin suggested that the team was able to “collect live data from all cars”.

Stoffel Vandoorne was adamant that DS Penske was not “stealing data from other teams” by using the scanner. “We were just trying to check what set of tyres others were using, which you can do with a normal camera. We found a clever way, or an easy way, and we paid a big price for that,” added the Belgian, who finished 12th behind team-mate Jean-Eric Vergne.

Reigning champion Vandoorne, now on the cusp of being mathematically eliminated from title contention, made it clear that he was no big fan of the style of racing seen at Portland. “It’s hard to call it racing at some points when you are four wide on every big straight,” he said.

But, perhaps unsurprisingly, those who did well in Portland had a more positive view. Cassidy commented: “I don’t know how people found the race, but for me it was pretty exciting. It was hard, you had to be on it in every straight, every braking zone.” Dennis gave a slightly more measured view, saying: “It’s great to watch, it’s exciting racing, but it’s extremely challenging. At the front it’s better, but outside the top five it’s mayhem.”



Jake Dennis celebrates hard-fought second place

SBLOXHAM

“It’s hard to call it racing at some points when you are four wide on every big straight”

While the racing itself split opinion, the consensus was that Formula E’s first visit to Portland, the 30th different city it has visited in its almost decade-long history and the fourth in the United States (after New York, Miami and Long Beach), was a success. The series predicted a sell-out crowd of 14,000 on Saturday and, judging from the long line of fans queueing up to enter the venue prior to morning practice, it was easy to believe that figure.

Qualifying was a great spectacle, with the long straights and fast corners providing a very different challenge to the street tracks that make up the bulk of the schedule. A new all-time top speed record was set, with Evans setting a new benchmark of 171.8mph in practice. And if it hadn’t been for the two safety cars, the second of which went on for some time, the record for the shortest race would have almost certainly been surpassed.

Cassidy summed it up well when he said: “As an event, everything seemed like it added something. There was a real positive energy. I quite liked it, it was a good turnout, the track in qualifying was quite exciting to drive. It’s quick and on the limit and a big challenge. I think it’s nice that not all the tracks are like this, but one or two like this is OK.”



Dennis leads Nissans at a cagey start in Portland

SBLOXHAM

IN THE HEADLINES

NO JOY FOR LOTTERER

After missing the previous round in Jakarta because of his Porsche Le Mans commitments, Andre Lotterer was back in Formula E action for his Andretti team's home event. But he almost might as well have not bothered – the German veteran was the last finisher home in 19th.

BAD BOY BIRD

Jaguar driver Sam Bird's horrible recent streak of luck continued with a fifth consecutive failure to score points. The Briton did well to battle back from 15th on the grid to seventh at the finish, but was handed a five-second penalty for pushing Maserati man Maximilian Gunther off the road at Turn 7, which dropped him to 17th in the results.

WHAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN

Gunther recovered from that setback to finish sixth, but team-mate Edoardo Mortara was less fortunate when he picked up a puncture after making slight contact with his fellow Maserati driver at Turn 10 late in the race. "At this point I was sixth, and I know there could have been more," lamented the Swiss.

MCLAREN PEAKS EARLY

Like the works Nissans, both McLarens were strong over a single lap, with Rene Rast making the semi-finals in qualifying and Jake Hughes making the quarters. But the race proved a different story and the pair struggled to 14th and 18th respectively.

MAHINDRA'S MIXED FORTUNES

There was some cheer for Mahindra as Lucas di Grassi (below) scored his first points since the Mexico season opener with a solid run to seventh. New boy Roberto Merhi, back for his second outing after making his debut for the team in Jakarta, was left to rue a suspected battery issue that took him out of the race after just three laps.



Da Costa leads fellow
Porsche driver Wehrlein

BAGNALL

RESULTS ROUND 9/11, PORTLAND (USA), 24 JUNE (32 LAPS – 63.430 MILES)

POS	DRIVER	TEAM/CAR	TIME
1	Nick Cassidy (NZL)	Envision Racing / Jaguar I-Type 6	50m40.629s
2	Jake Dennis (GBR)	Andretti / Porsche 99X Electric Gen3	+0.294s
3	Antonio Felix da Costa (PRT)	Porsche / Porsche 99X Electric Gen3	+1.140s
4	Mitch Evans (NZL)	Jaguar Racing / Jaguar I-Type 6	+1.758s
5	Sebastien Buemi (CHE)	Envision Racing / Jaguar I-Type 6	+2.220s
6	Maximilian Gunther (DEU)	Maserati / Maserati Tipo Folgore	+2.307s
7	Lucas di Grassi (BRA)	Mahindra Racing / Mahindra M9Electro	+2.982s
8	Pascal Wehrlein (DEU)	Porsche / Porsche 99X Electric Gen3	+3.684s
9	Norman Nato (FRA)	Nissan / Nissan e-4orce 04	+3.961s
10	Robin Frijns (NLD)	Abt / Mahindra M9Electro	+4.300s
11	Jean-Eric Vergne (FRA)	DS Penske / DS E-Tense FE23	+4.718s
12	Stoffel Vandoorne (BEL)	DS Penske / DS E-Tense FE23	+4.982s
13	Dan Ticktum (GBR)	NIO 333 / NIO 333 ER9	+5.470s
14	Rene Rast (DEU)	McLaren / Nissan e-4orce 04	+6.115s
15	Sacha Fenestraz (FRA)	Nissan / Nissan e-4orce 04	+6.699s
16	Sergio Sette Camara (BRA)	NIO 333 / NIO 333 ER9	+7.167s
17	Sam Bird (GBR)	Jaguar Racing / Jaguar I-Type 6	+7.638s
18	Jake Hughes (GBR)	McLaren / Nissan e-4orce 04	+12.977s
19	Andre Lotterer (DEU)	Andretti / Porsche 99X Electric Gen3	+16.051s
R	Edoardo Mortara (CHE)	Maserati / Maserati Tipo Folgore	29 laps-acc dam/puncture
R	Nico Muller (CHE)	Abt / Mahindra M9Electro	9 laps-accident
R	Roberto Merhi (ESP)	Mahindra Racing / Mahindra M9Electro	3 laps-battery

Winner's average speed 75.098mph. **Fastest lap** Evans 1m11.216s, 100.199mph.

QUALIFYING 1 **Dennis** 1m08.931s; 2 **Fenestraz** 1m09.010s; 3 **Nato** 1m09.264s; 4 **Rast** 1m09.374s; 5 **Gunther** 1m09.160s; 6 **Hughes** 1m09.385s; 7 **da Costa** 1m09.453s; 8 **Lotterer** 1m09.997s; 9 **Frijns** 1m10.043s; 10 **Cassidy** 1m10.282s; 11 **Mortara** 1m10.050s; 12 **Muller** 1m10.282s; 13 **di Grassi** 1m10.307s; 14 **Ticktum** 1m10.378s; 15 **Bird** 1m10.395s; 16 **Buemi** 1m10.440s; 17 **Merhi** 1m10.482s; 18 **Wehrlein** 1m10.499s; 19 **Sette Camara** 1m10.536s; 20 **Evans** no time; 21 **Vergne** 1m09.240s*; 22 **Vandoorne** 1m10.227s*.

*forced to start from pitlane.

CHAMPIONSHIP 1 **Dennis** 154; 2 **Cassidy** 153; 3 **Wehrlein** 138; 4 **Evans** 122; 5 **Vergne** 97; 6 **da Costa** 93; 7 **Gunther** 78; 8 **Buemi** 72; 9 **Bird** 62; 10 **Hughes** 46.

NEXT REPORT

FORMULA E ROME
20 JULY ISSUE

Yelloly and De Phillippi lost out in traffic, but not in scrutineering



GALSTAD
motorsport
IMAGES

BMW inherits Porsche's last-gasp win

IMSA SPORTSCAR
WATKINS GLEN (USA)
25 JUNE
ROUND 5/11

Porsche Penske Motorsport duo Nick Tandy and Mathieu Jaminet seemed to have sealed a dramatic victory in the waning moments of the Watkins Glen 6 Hours last Sunday. But several hours after the Anglo-French pair had shared a joyous celebration came news that the underfloor skid block on their Porsche 963 did not meet the minimum requirements, and they were banished to the back of the field. Instead, a memorable maiden GTP triumph was inherited by the BMW M Hybrid V8 of Connor De Phillippi and Nick Yelloly.

All four GTP manufacturers took a turn in the lead on the classic 3.4-mile road course in Upstate New York and, unsurprisingly, with a record-equalling field of 57 starters,

traffic played a pivotal role in the result.

A productive recent test at the track enabled BMW M Team RLL to make substantial gains in the competitiveness of its pair of Hybrid V8s. The #24 car of Augusto Farfus/Philipp Eng crashed out at the first corner due to a mistake by the Brazilian, but De Phillippi/Yelloly fought through from fifth on the grid to lead by more than seven seconds following the final round of pitstops. Jaminet replaced Tandy in the pursuing Penske Porsche and, while the gap fluctuated only a little for the majority of the crucial final stint, the pendulum swung wildly in the Frenchman's favour with just under 15 minutes remaining.

De Phillippi's advantage dwindled from five seconds to one within the space of two laps and, just when it seemed like the American might be able to hold onto his slender advantage, he faced a road block at Turn 7 with three cars from differing

classes running virtually abreast. As the BMW driver hesitated momentarily, looking for a gap, Jaminet pounced and was through into the lead. Merely one lap later, a frightening single-car accident in Turn 10 for BMW veteran Bill Auberlen necessitated a full-course caution and Jaminet's victory was seemingly secured. But not for long.

The Action Express Cadillac of Pipo Derani/Alexander Sims/Jack Aitken ran strongly but didn't have the pace at the end and ultimately had to settle for third on the road ahead of the Meyer Shank Racing Acura of Colin Braun/Tom Blomqvist, which also faded in the closing stages.

Ben Hanley/Nolan Siegel/George Kurtz (Algarve Pro Racing) scored a narrow LMP2 victory over the Era Motorsport entry of Ryan Dalziel/Christian Rasmussen/Dwight Merriman following a race-long duel, while the Riley Motorsports Ligier of Gar Robinson/Felipe Fraga/Josh Burdon once again took LMP3 honours.

The two GTD classes provided the usual excitement, with the majority of the race featuring a tight battle between Lexus and Lamborghini until the lead Iron Lynx Huracan of Andrea Caldarelli/Jordan Pepper was taken out by an errant LMP3 car. Jack Hawksworth jeopardised his hopes of a second win of the season for himself, fellow Brit Ben Barnicoat and Lexus by picking up a pitlane speeding penalty, before atoning with a spectacular pass on Antonio Garcia's Corvette to clinch the spoils. Vasser Sullivan team-mates Aaron Telitz/Parker Thompson/Frankie Montecalvo emphatically won the non-pro division.

JEREMY SHAW



Hanley and co took honours in LMP2 thriller

GALSTAD/MOTORSPORT IMAGES

Engel and Feller in the dunes in June

DTM
ZANDVOORT (NLD)
24-25 JUNE
ROUND 2/8

Mercedes star Maro Engel and Audi racer Ricardo Feller scored a win apiece in front of a packed crowd on the DTM's first visit to Zandvoort since 2018.

Engel's Team Landgraf AMG GT3 set the early pace during the weekend, topping both practice sessions on Friday before claiming pole position for race one by 0.03 seconds over the Schubert Motorsport BMW M4 of reigning champion Sheldon van der Linde.

The German was untouchable over the course of the race, quickly putting himself 1s clear of van der Linde before extending that advantage to well over 5s by the time the pitlane opened after 20 minutes of racing. Although the South African pitted a lap earlier than him, Engel was in no risk of being undercut and he eventually took the chequered flag with exactly 6s in hand.

Van der Linde crossed the finishing line in second to rebound from a disastrous opening weekend at Oschersleben, while Franck Perera was third in his SSR Performance Lamborghini after he and team-mate Mirko Bortolotti jumped the Project 1 BMW of Marco Wittmann in the pits.

The second race of the weekend was almost a carbon copy of the first, with Abt driver Feller leading from pole position to add a second win to his tally. Aided by an overnight 20kg weight reduction for the Audis, Feller took pole by over 0.3s in a qualifying session that was red-flagged due to two Lamborghinis almost simultaneously



crashing at different parts of the track.

Once the race got under way, Feller employed the same strategy as Engel, building a 1s gap immediately before gradually stretching out that lead until his pitstop. Although he lost over a second to those who had got their mandatory stops out of the way early, Feller was never threatened in the second half of the race and he took the chequered flag with a margin of 2.7s.

Second place went to Manthey EMA Porsche driver Thomas Preining, who undercut the Mercedes of Engel after losing a spot to him at the start, and with it took the championship lead, four points clear of Perera and Feller. Engel, carrying 20kg of success ballast following his win on Saturday, lost two more places on his out-lap, promoting HRT Mercedes driver Luca Stolz to third.

Two drivers made their DTM debuts at Zandvoort, with Le Mans 24 Hours LMP2 winner Albert Costa filling in

for Jack Aitken while the Emil Frey Racing Ferrari driver competed in a clashing IMSA race, and Dries Vanthoor substituting for Formula E-committed Rene Rast at Schubert BMW. Both drivers finished in the points in the opening race, with Costa leading Vanthoor in eighth position.

It was a mixed weekend for last year's runner-up Lucas Auer, who – after an inspired drive from 12th to sixth in the opening race – had to retire his Winward Mercedes from Sunday's contest due to a startline incident.

RACHIT THUKRAL



WEEKEND WINNERS

IMSA SPORTSCAR
WATKINS GLEN (USA)

- GTP** Connor De Phillippi/Nick Yelloly
BMW M Team RLL (BMW M Hybrid V8)
- LMP2** Ben Hanley/Nolan Siegel/George Kurtz
Algarve Pro Racing (ORECA 07)
- LMP3** Felipe Fraga/Josh Burdon/Gar Robinson
Riley Motorsports (Ligier JSP320)
- GTD Pro** Jack Hawksworth/Ben Barnicoat
Vasser Sullivan (Lexus RC F GT3)
- GTD** Aaron Telitz/Parker Thompson/
Frankie Montecalvo
Vasser Sullivan (Lexus RC F GT3)

DTM
ZANDVOORT (NLD)

- Race 1** Maro Engel
Landgraf (Mercedes-AMG GT3 Evo)
- Race 2** Ricardo Feller
Abt (Audi R8 LMS GT3 Evo II)



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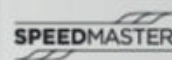
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Chastain's pedal steel in Nashville

NASCAR CUP SERIES
NASHVILLE (USA)
25 JUNE
ROUND 17/36

If controversy is following Ross Chastain this season, then it will also need a seat in Victory Lane. This after Chastain provided his Trackhouse Racing team with a first win at its home track Nashville Superspeedway.

Chastain, who had just lamented in an interview on Friday that he needed to “wreck less and win more”, won the pole for Sunday’s race and ended a more than year-long winless streak with his first victory of the 2023 season.

Martin Truex Jr (Joe Gibbs Racing Toyota) closed to the rear bumper of Chastain’s Chevrolet multiple times in the last 50 laps as the two navigated lapped traffic, but Chastain beat him to the chequered flag by 0.789 seconds. The victory is the third of Chastain’s career and comes during a season in which he



has performed well on the track but been caught up in run-ins that have at times contributed to his missing out on success.

“I’ve got to tell you, this is incredible,” an emotional Chastain said after the race. “For every little kid out there anywhere in the world, when you get criticised – and you’re going to if you’re competitive – they will try to tear you down. You will start believing you can’t do it.

“You have to go to your people, trust in the process, read your books, trust the big man’s plan upstairs, just keep getting up

and going to work. [There’s been] a lot of self-reflection throughout all this.”

The win all but locks Chastain into the playoffs for the second consecutive season. Behind Truex, Denny Hamlin ended up third ahead of Chase Elliott and Kyle Larson.

Ryan Blaney was involved in a vicious accident on lap 147 of 300, in which his Ford got hit on a restart, slid across the frontstretch grass and then head on into a concrete wall. He was unhurt.

JIM UTTER

Al Qubaisi closes gap with brace

F1 ACADEMY
ZANDVOORT (NLD)
24-25 JUNE
ROUND 4/7

MP Motorsport driver Hamda Al Qubaisi enjoyed her most successful F1 Academy weekend yet, with a brace of victories at the Dutch Grand Prix venue – MP’s home track – moving her to just five points shy of championship leader Marta Garcia.

Al Qubaisi was the driver to beat from the word go, securing pole position for races one and three. On both occasions, the Emirati was able to convert these into perfect scores, registering the fastest lap

as well as taking the silverware.

Prema Racing driver Garcia endured a rare off weekend, with a reliability issue forcing the Spaniard to retire from race one while battling for a podium. Garcia made use of the reversed grid in race two to regain ground with a second-place finish, before crossing the line in fourth in the closing outing.

Sandwiched between Al Qubaisi’s wins was a maiden success for Carrie Schreiner. The German ART pilot took the lead when polesitter Amna Al Qubaisi – the big sister of the double winner – crashed out on lap two, causing a safety car intervention.

After the restart, Schreiner was forced to defend from Garcia and ART team-mate Lena Buhler, who finished third. Swiss racer Buhler had a hat-trick of podiums, with a second in race one and third behind local girl Emely de Heus in the finale.

It was another weekend to forget for Briton Abbi Pulling, with a seventh, 10th and DNF yielding just seven points. Her Rodin Carlin team-mate Jessica Edgar enjoyed better fortune. She was fourth in race one behind Nerea Marti, and repeated that result in the second encounter.

SAM HALL



WEEKEND WINNERS

NASCAR CUP SERIES
NASHVILLE (USA)
Ross Chastain (below)
Trackhouse Racing (Chevrolet Camaro)

F1 ACADEMY
ZANDVOORT (NLD)
Races 1 & 3 Hamda Al Qubaisi
MP Motorsport
Race 2 Carrie Schreiner
ART Grand Prix



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Bezzecchi flies but it's Bagnaia who bags it

MOTOGP
ASSEN (NLD)
25 JUNE
ROUND 8/20

You only need to think back to 2020 to find a time when Ducati Corse and its lead rider were barely talking, when you wondered how well the team might do if it could only get along with its star.

Three summers on from Andrea Dovizioso pulling the plug on his increasingly acrimonious time with the Italian manufacturer, we have the answer. Francesco Bagnaia's Dutch TT victory took him past Dovizioso's tally of 14 wins for Ducati. Only Casey Stoner, with 23, still has more to his name.

While Bagnaia certainly has an advantage in terms of a harmonious environment and a bike that is the best everywhere, he also has a lot more Ducatis to defeat than Dovizioso or Stoner ever did. This time, it was the turn of the VR46 squad's Marco Bezzecchi to give him the most trouble.

Bezzecchi was the fastest man over the weekend, topping all the practice sessions, snatching pole position and holding off Bagnaia to win the sprint race on Saturday. But, when it came to the long, hot main event, when a harder rear tyre was called for, Bagnaia and the factory squad had the best combination over 26 laps of Assen.

KTM's Brad Binder shot into the lead of the race at the start, ahead of Bagnaia and Bezzecchi. World champion 'Pecco' then brushed the South African aside at Stekkenwal on lap three. Binder had been adventurous with his tyre choice, picking a soft rear, and proved a tough nut for Bezzecchi to overtake. The curly-haired 'Bez' took until lap 17 to get by.



ALL PICS: GOLD AND GOOSE
 motorsport
 IMAGES

The championship leader was only a second up the road at that point but, by now, Bezzecchi was facing a vibration on the rear that made him "scared to lose a podium". He therefore settled for second, with Binder, Aleix Espargaro (Aprilia) and Jorge Martin (Pramac Ducati) all keeping him honest to the finish.

Binder did well to keep it together on that soft rear, with a bike Espargaro observed to be "sliding everywhere in the last laps". A couple of inches too much, in fact: Binder touched the green paint at Stekkenwal on the final tour and was demoted a place after the flag for the track-limits transgression.

This completed a curious double for Binder, after he had also lost third place for the same crime in the sprint. While the KTM man lamented being "f***ing brain-dead", Espargaro gratefully accepted his first podium of the season and Aprilia's first since the opening round. Having run

the entire distance with a broken front wing following a first-lap brush with Luca Marini (VR46), Espargaro was smiling to have finished what he described as "a stressful race" so well.

If anywhere was going to deliver some joy for Yamaha this year, then it was Assen. But given the team's season so far, it could hardly have dared dream that Fabio Quartararo would even qualify fourth. Or that, helped along by Binder's three-second penalty after the flag in the sprint, Quartararo would pick up a third place.

While most neutrals were surely pleased to see the 2021 world champion back in the thick of the action, the pleasure was only fleeting. Quartararo had a disastrous start on Sunday, then ended up landing in the gravel alongside fellow Frenchman Johann Zarco (Pramac Ducati) on lap three.

MotoGP's other troubled Japanese manufacturer, Honda, enjoyed no such relief



Binder leads
 Espargaro and Martin

Bagnaia has stretched his championship advantage to 35 points

A Basil Fawlty episode for Jack Miller



from its ongoing misery. Marc Marquez slammed into the back of Ducati's Enea Bastianini in a moment of inattention during qualifying, leaving him 17th on the grid. After finishing the sprint in the same spot, the injuries he'd picked up at the previous round in Germany led to a painful night and he elected to withdraw from Sunday.

Martin, who had won both races in Germany, saw his hold on second in the championship trimmed to just one point by Bezzecchi in the Netherlands. The Spaniard lined up 10th on the grid after a low-speed fall interrupted his qualifying, then struggled to sixth in the sprint despite running with the leaders early. He came within 0.009s of sneaking past Espargaro at the finish on Sunday, but Binder was wedged between them in the revised classification and Martin stayed fifth.

Will it be Martin or Bezzecchi who leads the chase of Bagnaia in the second half of the season? With Bagnaia 35 points ahead, it won't be an easy task for either of them to prevent 'Pecco' taking an unprecedented double world title for Ducati.

RICHARD ASHER

NEXT REPORT

BRITISH GP 10 AUGUST ISSUE

RESULTS ROUND 8/20, ASSEN (NLD), 25 JUNE (26 LAPS – 73.379 MILES)

POS	RIDER	TEAM	TIME
1	Francesco Bagnaia (ITA)	Ducati	40m37.640s
2	Marco Bezzecchi (ITA)	VR46 Ducati	+1.223s
3	Aleix Espargaro (ESP)	Aprilia	+1.925s
4	Brad Binder (ZAF)	KTM	+1.528s
5	Jorge Martin (ESP)	Pramac Ducati	+1.934s
6	Alex Marquez (ESP)	Gresini Ducati	+12.437s
7	Luca Marini (ITA)	VR46 Ducati	+14.174s
8	Takaaki Nakagami (JPN)	LCR Honda	+14.616s
9	Franco Morbidelli (ITA)	Yamaha	+29.335s
10	Augusto Fernandez (ESP)	GasGas Tech 3 KTM	+33.736s
11	Lorenzo Savadori (ITA)	Aprilia	+35.084s
12	Raul Fernandez (ESP)	Aprilia RNF	+39.622s
13	Stefan Bradl (DEU)	LCR Honda	+42.504s
14	Jonas Folger (DEU)	GasGas Tech 3 KTM	+45.609s
R	Fabio Di Giannantonio (ITA)	Gresini Ducati	18 laps-accident
R	Iker Lecuona (ESP)	Honda	14 laps-technical
R	Miguel Oliveira (PRT)	Aprilia RNF	12 laps-injury pain
R	Enea Bastianini (ITA)	Ducati	6 laps-accident
R	Maverick Vinales (ESP)	Aprilia	3 laps-accident
R	Fabio Quartararo (FRA)	Yamaha	2 laps-accident
R	Johann Zarco (FRA)	Pramac Ducati	2 laps-accident
R	Jack Miller (AUS)	KTM	1 lap-accident
NS	Marc Marquez (ESP)	Honda	injury

Winner's average speed 108.368mph. Fastest lap Martin 1m33.065s, 109.172mph.

QUALIFYING 2 1 Bezzecchi 1m31.472s; 2 Bagnaia 1m31.533s; 3 Marini 1m31.630s; 4 Quartararo 1m31.671s; 5 Binder 1m31.704s; 6 Espargaro 1m31.812s; 7 Vinales 1m31.837s; 8 Zarco 1m31.881s; 9 A Marquez 1m31.898s; 10 Martin 1m32.170s; 11 Oliveira 1m32.174s; 12 Miller 1m32.715s.

QUALIFYING 1 Zarco 1m31.993s; Oliveira 1m32.087s; 13 Di Giannantonio 1m32.185s; 14 Nakagami 1m32.497s; 15 Morbidelli 1m32.530s; 16 R Fernandez 1m32.671s; 17 M Marquez 1m32.672s; 18 Bastianini 1m32.844s; 19 Savadori 1m33.008s; 20 Bradl 1m33.040s; 21 A Fernandez 1m33.082s; 22 Lecuona 1m33.088s; 23 Folger 1m33.300s.

SPRINT RACE (13 LAPS – 36.689 MILES)

1 Bezzecchi 20m09.174s; 2 Bagnaia +1.294s; 3 Quartararo +1.872s; 4 Espargaro +2.245s; 5 Binder +4.582s; 6 Martin +5.036s; 7 Vinales +5.876s; 8 Bastianini +10.102s; 9 A Marquez +10.525s; 10 Marini +10.556s; 11 Miller +11.191s; 12 Nakagami +11.473s; 13 Zarco +15.439s; 14 A Fernandez +17.754s; 15 Morbidelli +19.508s; 16 Savadori +19.664s; 17 M Marquez +19.916s; 18 R Fernandez +20.583s; 19 Oliveira +24.269s; 20 Lecuona +24.727s; 21 Folger +32.056s; 22 Bradl +35.372s; R Di Giannantonio 3 laps-accident.

Winner's average speed 109.233mph. Fastest lap Bezzecchi 1m32.353s, 110.014mph.

RIDERS' CHAMPIONSHIP 1 Bagnaia 194; 2 Martin 159; 3 Bezzecchi 158; 4 Binder 114; 5 Zarco 109; 6 Marini 98; 7 Miller 79; 8 Espargaro 77; 9 Quartararo 64; 10 A Marquez 63.

CONSTRUCTORS' CHAMPIONSHIP 1 Ducati 285; 2 KTM 153; 3 Aprilia 121; 4 Honda 89; 5 Yamaha 82.



WEEKEND WINNERS

MOTO2

ASSEN (NLD)

Jake Dixon (below)
GASGAS Aspar Team
(Kalex)

MOTO 3

ASSEN (NLD)

Jaume Masia
Leopard Racing
(Honda)



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Who We're Looking For
We're looking to bring a group of self-motivated team players together with an enthusiastic and positive attitude – all sharing our determination to deliver the very best results.

- You should be educated to degree level in motorsport or automotive engineering, and have a minimum of three years' experience within the industry.
- Knowledge of the latest manufacturing techniques and materials is essential, with a thorough understanding of motor vehicles and their systems.
- You should have experience of data logging and analysis software, and be confident in delivering a consistently high level of performance and quality in a time-sensitive environment.
- You should be well organised and delivery focused, with a strong analytical approach and meticulous attention to detail.

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SENIOR MARKETING MANAGER - EVENTS

Motorsport Network

Purpose of the Role:

- A driven Senior Marketing Manager's primary responsibility is delivering event ticket sales and planning and implementing all communication through our channels, such as CRM and social media activity.
- Your role will involve managing client relationships, liaising with the operations and sales team, and directly with the Director of Events.
- A proven track record of marketing events with a clear communications plan to enhance the event's revenues, along with deep understanding of the event cycle and developing repeat business. Additional roles include Crisis PR, media buying, partnerships, web development, and creative and executing content marketing plans and strategy.

Principal Accountabilities:

- Develop and implement a content strategy to increase brand awareness.
- Develop a strategic relationship with media partners, celebrities, visitors and Exhibitors (both internal and external) to promote the positive output of our events.
- Write short articles and press releases for various announcements and milestones achievements.
- Create onsite schedules and briefings for PR, NEC, Ticket Factory and Trade Registrations
- Develop brand messaging and marketing material as and when required.
- Execute the weekly newsletters.
- Execute multiple Exprom and Visprom monthly external event newsletter.
- Engage and respond to our community on social media and manage internal mailboxes.

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ATHLETIC COACH

Porsche Penske Motorsport

Job Responsibilities:

- Responsible for pre-travel and travel day organization of pit crews.
- Direct supervision responsibility to oversee all pit crew activities on race day.
- Travel to all domestic and international races.
- Train pit crew members in Sports Car Racing.
- Recruit new talent as needed.
- Run video review sessions with all athletes.
- Facilitate film review sessions as scheduled.
- Design and implement all team practices.
- Coordinate all PT sessions for Sports Car Pit Crews.
- Coordinate all equipment and maintenance issues.
- Help organize team and practice schedules for the entire season (12 Month Schedule).
- Be available for all pit crew member needs.
- Supervisory duties from plane departure to plane arrival and return flights.
- Supervisory role with pit equipment – checking with all pit crew members to make sure everything is in working order and set up properly (when at track).

Requirements:

- At least a High School Diploma
- Previous experience coaching/training Pit Crews preferred
- Knowledge of Pit Crew physical requirements
- Must possess excellent management skills and organization
- Must be able to lift at least 50lb

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Prodrive

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Key Responsibilities:

- Deliver a first-class composite finishing and repair service on and off event
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- Ensure Lead Composite Trimmer Repair Technician is aware of any quality or process issues during build and/or repair
- Adopt safe working practices always in compliance with Health and Safety regulations and company policy
- Work with Lead Technician and Chief Mechanic to set and achieve daily targets
- Maintain site standards in accordance with company expectations
- Carry other adhoc duties requested by the Race Team management as the needs of the business may from time to time dictate

Who are we looking for?

- Our ideal candidate will have previous experience within a composites or panel build role for race or rally cars within Motorsport, Sportscar or similar. You will have experience using carbon fibre, with the ability to work with minimum supervision.

What can we offer you?

- An attractive salary which will grow in line with your ongoing development and impact
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- Keeping meticulous records of maintenance and repairs, ensuring proper documentation.

Requirements:

- **Enthusiasm:** A deep passion for motorsports and an eagerness to learn and grow in a fast-paced racing environment.
- **Team Player:** A strong ability to work effectively in a team, communicating and collaborating with colleagues to achieve shared goals.
- **Attention to Detail:** A meticulous approach to your work, ensuring every task is performed with precision and accuracy.
- **Adaptability:** The capacity to thrive in high-pressure situations and adapt quickly to changing circumstances.
- **Technical Aptitude:** While prior experience is not mandatory, a basic understanding of automotive mechanics would be beneficial.

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JOBS



CFD ENGINEER
RFK Racing

About this role:

- As a CFD Engineer, you will use computational fluid dynamics (CFD) to perform simulations investigating race car performance. The results from these experiments will be used to identify potential performance gains, guide wind tunnel testing, and develop body surface specifications. The CFD engineer will help make improvements to strengthen the aerodynamic performance of the race car.
- If you have a great attitude and exhibit passion, ownership, and excellence in all you do then we would love to meet you!

Responsibilities:

- Apply computational fluid dynamics tools to understand airflow characteristics and improve performance
- Work in a group to develop all CFD models and perform all simulations
- Post-process the results to understand the impact of model changes
- Correlation of CFD results to wind tunnel and track test data
- Compile technical reports, present simulation results, and provide effective suggestions on design modifications.
- Summarizing and reporting activity to related departments
- Identify technology trends in the CFD field

Qualifications:

- Bachelor's degree in aerospace or mechanical engineering
- Thorough understanding of CFD concepts
- Minimum 3+ years of experience working with CFD solvers, pre and post processors
- Experienced user of CAD software (NX, CATIA, SolidWorks)
- Willingness and ability to work overtime as required to meet project schedules and complete required tasks

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JOBS



SYSTEMS ENGINEER - FORMULA E
WAE

Job role:

- Support the development of our embedded systems and procedures to ensure our vehicles remain on the leading edge of performance while operating in a safe and efficient manner across a range of test and track facilities.
- Preparation of test harnesses to support test requirements.
- Monitoring and correction of sensor measurements to maintain a high level of data quality.
- Responsible for the configuration and calibration of the vehicle software and infrastructure at Race, Test and Rig events. Including for example - ECUs, Steering Wheel, telemetry system, and associated software.

You'll have:

- (It is not necessary to have experience in all these areas)
- Experienced in working around and on high voltage electric vehicles systems.
- Proficient in the configuration and debugging of CAN based vehicle networks.
- Experienced in the programming, configuration and operation of Vehicle Control Modules and Sensors.
- Knowledge of MATLAB Simulink and Stateflow for the purpose of debugging and testing embedded systems.
- Ability to follow test procedures and report the results in an accurate and timely manner.

Experience & Qualifications:

- Proficiency in all core Microsoft Office applications.
- Self-motivation and the ability to complete tasks with minimal guidance, and to work under pressure to meet critical deadlines.
- A creative and proactive approach to problem-solving, along with good attention to detail.

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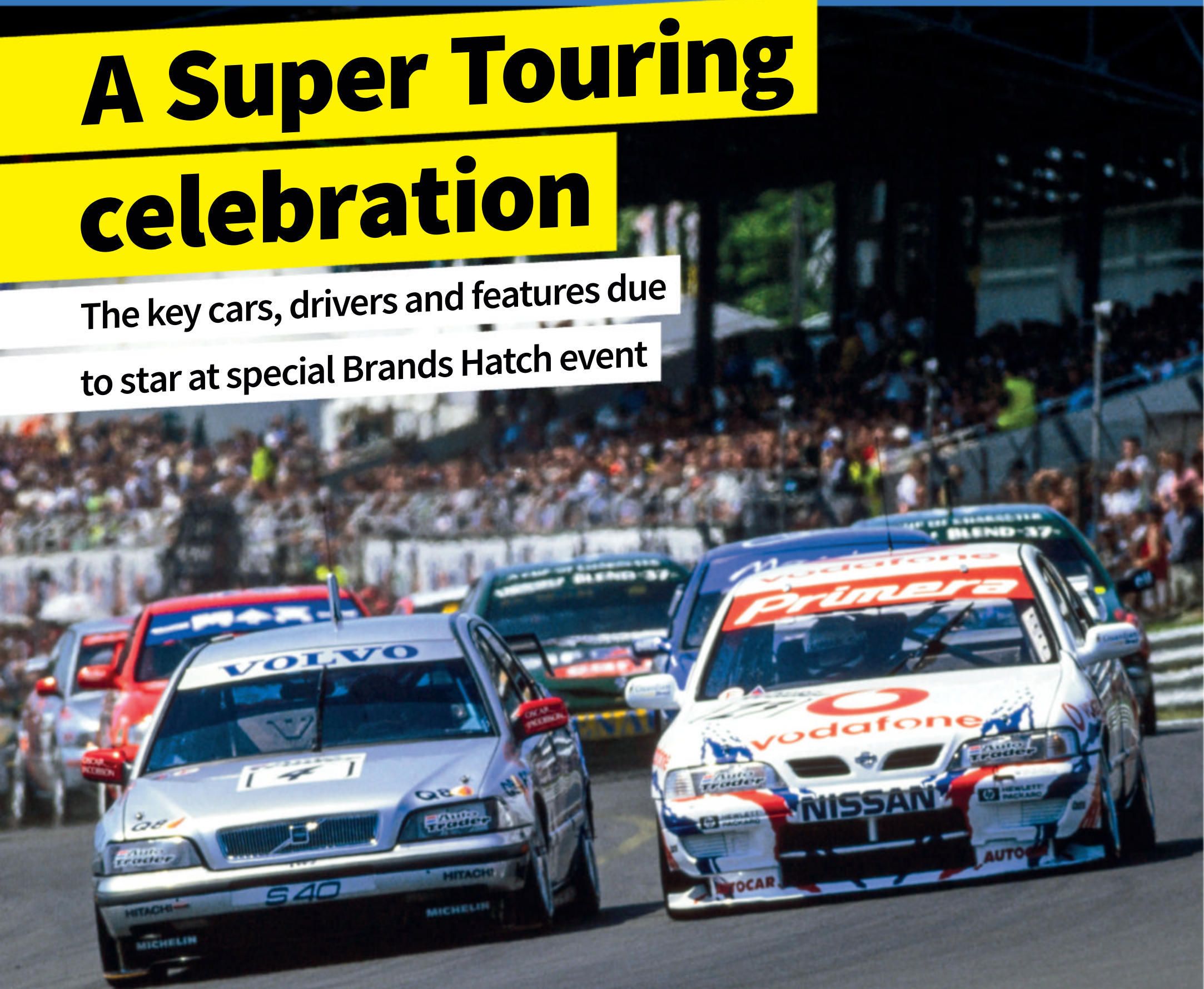
British F4 Macintyre the new leader after Silverstone podiums

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FOURMAUX IN **BRC**



TURNER MAKES **FORMULA
FORD** RACE COMEBACK

10 THINGS TO WATCH OUT FOR AT

SUPER TOURING POWER

The 1990s Super Touring era is heralded as a golden period for tin-top racing, and a special event at Brands Hatch this weekend is set to celebrate those years in style

TOM HOWARD, STEPHEN LICKORISH
& MARCUS SIMMONS



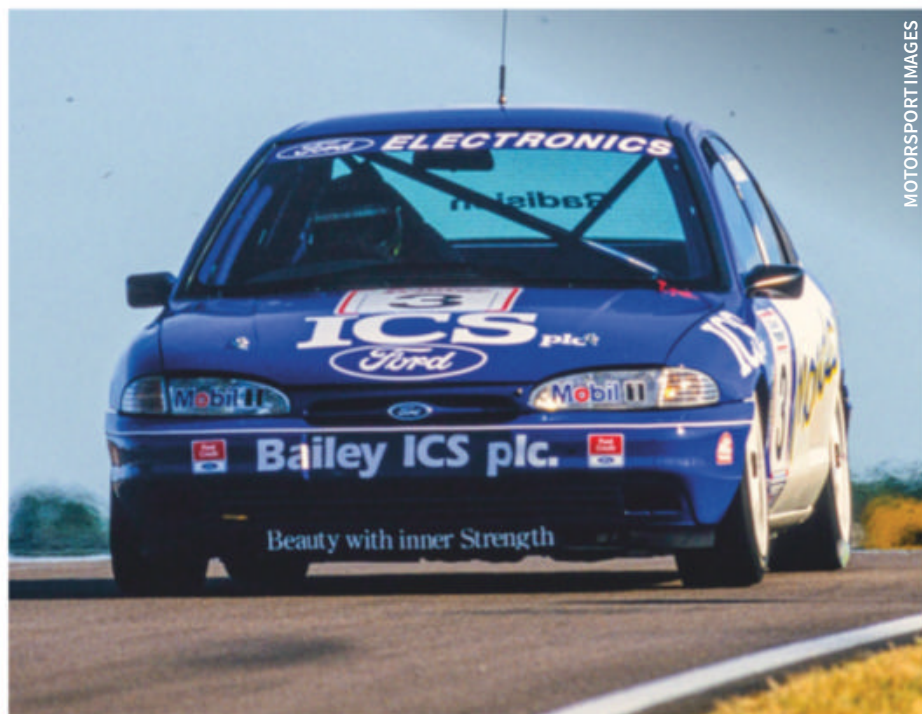
Reid to reunite with old rivals

Anthony Reid's passion for Super Touring machinery is plain to see. He describes the 1990s as the British Touring Car Championship's "zenith" and says this period "really made my name in motor racing".

Reid has been a regular in the Classic Touring Car Racing Club's Super Tourers series over the past two years, and is grateful to Richard Wheeler for giving him the chance to get back behind the wheel of his 1998 Nissan Primera. But this weekend is set to be extra-significant for Reid. With Alain Menu spectating and fellow former Ford driver Paul Radisich making a rare UK appearance to race his 1994 Mondeo (right), Reid is relishing the chance to reunite with old rivals.

"It's going to be a special weekend – I really do hope we have a big turnout of Super Tourers as that should encourage a good crowd to turn up," enthuses 1998 and 2000 BTCC runner-up Reid, who recalls a social media post about him testing the Primera prior to the 2022 campaign resulting in scores of people turning up to a midweek test session that afternoon.

In addition to racing the Primera, Reid is due to get behind the wheel of one of Alvin Powell's Mondeos during the demo sessions as he celebrates two of the most successful Super Tourers.



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Super Touring icon Menu in attendance

Two-time BTCC champion Alain Menu is one of the most fondly remembered icons of the series' Super Touring era.

The Swiss star will be a special guest at Brands Hatch across the weekend, reliving a glory period of his illustrious tin-top career. Menu made his BTCC debut at the beginning of the Super Touring era in 1992, driving for BMW, before piloting Renault and Ford machinery in a nine-season spell. Menu famously won BTCC titles in 1997 for Renault, where he partnered Jason Plato, and in 2000, when he

drove for the works Ford squad that included Rickard Rydell and Anthony Reid.

While Menu won't be driving, he will be on hand to meet the public, sign autographs and tell tales from his Super Touring days. Two of his former cars will be attending the event too, including the Williams-built 1997 Renault Laguna that Menu drove to 12 race victories on his way to that year's championship. The car that started his stint at the French manufacturer, the Renault 19 he piloted during the 1993 season (above), will also be on display.



JEP

A Kiwi invasion

Paul Radisich won't be the only famous touring car driver from New Zealand competing this weekend. The former Ford and Peugeot BTCC star will be joined by a contingent of Kiwis who have made the trip especially for the event, with V8 Supercars stars Greg Murphy and Steven Richards, who share nine Bathurst 1000 wins between them, making their Brands Hatch race debuts.

Murphy is set to race a Peter Sturgeon-owned Nissan Primera, which is among a group of cars making the trip from New Zealand. While Murphy made his name in Supercars, he raced Audis in the Australian Super Touring Championship in 1995 and 1996, before driving a Holden Vectra in the 1998 Bathurst 1000.

Richards will drive a Volvo S40 (above) owned by New Zealander Lindsay O'Donnell, a machine raced in period by Richards's father Jim. Steven, who also competed in the Australian Super Touring category from 1995-97, raced against the S40 at the 1998 Bathurst 1000, when he shared a Nissan Primera with Matt Neal.

Current BTCC stars also set to join the fun

It's not just key players from the Super Touring period who will be at the wheel this weekend, but the current generation of British Touring Car greats will also be represented, with BMW driver Jake Hill racing an ex-Laurent Aiello 1999 Nissan Primera.

Hill has already raced a huge range of historic machinery, but his only previous Super Touring experience came with a Spanish test in a Honda Accord. That was until he had the chance to sample the Primera for the first time at Donington Park last week and was blown away by its performance.

"This was on another level," says Hill (pictured). "I totally fell in love with this Primera, I really did. It's such a special bit of kit. It's how light it feels,



PETERSCHERER

how nimble compared to a modern-day touring car. They're 400 kilos lighter – 950 to 1375! But the best thing about it is how it revs to 8500rpm. Pulling gears all the time to keep it singing – that's such a special feeling."

Another current BTCC frontrunner due to attend is three-time champion Ash Sutton, who is set to pilot his 2023 Ford Focus during the Sunday demonstration slot.

Dynamic demos and a varied display of tin-tops

In addition to the cars racing this weekend, a whole plethora of machinery will be taking to the track for demonstration runs.

At 1205 on Saturday and 1230 on Sunday an eclectic mix of tin-tops will be in action. Extra Super Tourers will be joined by other classic machines, such as touring car legend Steve Soper driving a Bastos-liveried Ford Sierra RS500, while an ex-Barry Sheene Toyota Supra, a Bill McGovern Hillman Imp and even

an old Jason Plato Subaru are all due to take part.

Even more classic BTCC cars will be on static display throughout the event, including several cars from Super Touring's earlier days in 1994. The unforgettable Volvo 850R estate (below), as well as an example of the title-winning Alfa Romeo 155 and Jo Winkelhock's BMW 318i from that year, will also be in attendance. It may not have graced the BTCC, but a 1996 Dodge Stratus is set to add further variety.



MOTORSPORTIMAGES

Relive the 1990s virtually

To provide the full nostalgia trip back to the 1990s, spectators will have the opportunity to relive the highly acclaimed *TOCA Touring Car* computer games that were a huge hit during the decade.

Developed by Codemasters for PC and PlayStation, *TOCA Touring Car Championship*, released in 1997 and swiftly followed by *TOCA 2 Touring Cars* the following year, depicted the 1997 and 1998 BTCC seasons.

The games were an instant success, providing fans a chance to play as their favourite driver from

the period and jump behind the wheel of a BTCC Super Touring car on the UK's best circuits, albeit virtually. The titles generated a cult following, with more than 600,000 copies of the original *TOCA Touring Car Championship* game sold in Europe in the first six months of its release.

Super Touring Power event organisers will set up simulators running the vintage TOCA titles throughout the weekend for spectators to rekindle memories of the era. These are due to be located near the Autosport stage on Colin Chapman Way.



Stars take to the Autosport stage

As soon as plans for the Super Touring Power event were first revealed, Autosport's interest was piqued. Like so many motorsport fans, many of our staff are fascinated by the golden era.

Autosport is therefore pleased to be linking up with Brands Hatch operator MotorSport Vision to have an Autosport-branded stage at this weekend's event. Various interviews and live podcasts are due to be recorded at the stage, which will be located on Colin Chapman Way between the Paddock Hill Bend grandstand and the Brabham Stewart suites.

The exact line-up of stars and guests talking all things Super Touring is yet to be finalised, but expect regular reminiscing over the two days.



Not just Super Tourers on show

While Super Touring cars will provide the headline act, there will be tin-tops of all shapes and sizes doing battle this weekend.

Classic and modern touring cars will feature as part of displays located around the circuit, including vehicles ranging from the 1972 BMW CSL Batmobile to a BTC Touring-specification 2002 BTCC MG ZS.

The Classic Touring Car Racing Club will also assemble impressive grids of

touring cars from the 1960s to the early 2000s, spread across several classes including Pre-'66, Pre-'83, Pre-'93, Pre-'03, Thunder Saloons and Jaguars.

The Pre-'83 category is due to feature David Bartrum, former boss of the Motorbase Performance BTCC team, racing a Ford Sierra RS500 (above) carrying the livery used by Australian touring car legends Dick Johnson and John Bowe at the 1988 Silverstone Tourist Trophy.

Bathurst 1000 legend back behind the wheel of Holden V8 Supercar

In addition to the plethora of Super Tourers, the weekend will include a first for Brands Hatch as a period driver will pilot an Australian V8 Supercar around the circuit.

The driver in question is four-time Bathurst 1000 winner Greg Murphy, who will be reunited with an ex-Tasman Motorsport Holden VE Commodore (right) that he raced in the V8 Supercars Championship in 2008 and 2009. The car is now owned by UK-based Holden collector Alex Sidwell.

Murphy achieved a best result of fourth at the 2009 Bathurst 1000 behind the wheel of the car, which he shared for that race with fellow his Supercars legend, six-time Bathurst winner and five-time Supercars champion Mark Skaife.

Murphy is expected to complete demonstration laps in the Holden on both days. The New Zealander, who retired from full-time racing in 2014, made a Bathurst 1000 return last year in a wildcard entry.



Grand Prix circuit action

Race meetings on Brands Hatch's Grand Prix circuit are few and far between. If you put aside the higher-level GT World Challenge Europe, British Touring Car and British GT events, just six others are due to use the longer 2.4-mile version of the Kent track during 2023. And Super Touring Power is one of those.

In fact, there are set to be contests on both the GP and Indy layouts this weekend. Saturday's 11 races will take place on the GP configuration before proceedings move over to the Indy track on Sunday.

The event therefore provides a rare opportunity to see machines blasting down Pilgrims Drop towards Hawthorns before progressing through the Westfield and Sheene right-handers and then the left at Stirling's. In contrast, the compact Indy circuit allows numerous chances to see the star cars and drivers in action from any vantage point. Two Super Tourers races are scheduled on each day, giving the headline act a plentiful spell in the spotlight.



TIMETABLE

SATURDAY 1 JULY (GP CIRCUIT)

0900	CTCRC qualifying
0950	Super Tourers qualifying
1015	CTCRC, Trackday Championship & MX-5 Cup qualifying
1145	RACE 1 CTCRC Thunder Saloons & Jaguars
1205	Touring car demonstration
1230	RACE 2 CTCRC Pre-'03 & Pre-'93 Touring Cars & Blue Oval Saloons
1300	RACE 3 CTCRC Pre-'66 & Pre-'83 Touring Cars
1335	Lunch break and spectator grid walk
1420	RACE 4 Super Tourers
1450	RACE 5 MX-5 Cup
1510	RACE 6 CTCRC Thunder Saloons & Jaguars
1540	RACE 7 CTCRC Pre-'03 & Pre-'93 Touring Cars & Blue Oval Saloons
1610	RACE 8 Trackday Championship
1710	RACE 9 Super Tourers
1740	RACE 10 CTCRC Pre-'66 & Pre-'83 Touring Cars
1810	RACE 11 MX-5 Cup

SUNDAY 2 JULY (INDY CIRCUIT)

0905	Pitlane walkabout
1000	CTCRC qualifying
1115	Super Tourers qualifying
1140	United Formula Ford & CTCRC qualifying
1230	Touring car demonstration
1250	RACE 12 CTCRC Thunder Saloons & Jaguars
1320	RACE 13 CTCRC Pre-'03 & Pre-'93 Touring Cars & Blue Oval Saloons
1340	Lunch break and spectator grid walk
1405	RACE 14 Super Tourers
1435	RACE 15 CTCRC Pre-'83 Touring Cars
1505	RACE 16 CTCRC Pre-'66 Touring Cars
1535	RACE 17 CTCRC Thunder Saloons & Jaguars
1605	RACE 18 CTCRC Pre-'03 & Pre-'93 Touring Cars & Blue Oval Saloons
1635	RACE 19 Super Tourers
1705	RACE 20 United Formula Ford
1740	RACE 21 CTCRC Pre-'83 Touring Cars
1810	RACE 22 CTCRC Pre-'66 Touring Cars
1830	Display car parade



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Schumacher to drive his father's Mercedes F1 car at Goodwood

FESTIVAL OF SPEED

Mick Schumacher is set to drive the Mercedes W02 raced by his father Michael during the 2011 Formula 1 season up the hill at next month's Goodwood Festival of Speed.

Schumacher Jr joined Mercedes as reserve driver this season after being dropped after two years in a Haas race seat. The 2020 F2 champion's appearance at the 13-16 July Festival will be his first at Goodwood, and he is scheduled to pilot the car his seven-time champion father took to a best result of fourth in the 2011 Canadian Grand Prix.

"It's going to be spectacular to run in my dad's 2011 car, even if it is only a short run," said Schumacher. "Just experiencing this generation of cars will be mega! Knowing that he raced this car makes it extra special, and there will be many emotions coming with it."

"I have been lucky enough to drive one of his Benetton cars and some of the Ferraris he raced, but this will be the first time behind the wheel of a Mercedes he drove. I am sure I will get out of it with a big smile."

A much newer Mercedes F1 machine, the 2021 constructors' title-winning W12, will also be in action and is set to be driven by Esteban Gutierrez. Other F1 teams due to have a presence at Goodwood this year include Ferrari, McLaren (with Mika Hakkinen and Emerson Fittipaldi both scheduled to be driving) and Williams (current racers Alex Albon and Logan Sargeant are



set to drive a 1982 FW08C), while four-time champion Sebastian Vettel is down to drive various cars from his own collection.

Away from F1, another driver set to tackle the hill is Team Brit racer Aaron Morgan. The McLaren Trophy competitor, who is paralysed from the waist down after a motocross

accident as a teenager, is due to drive Grahame Tilley's Mercedes-AMG GT3. The car will be specially adapted with hand controls, and Morgan believes it is a great opportunity to highlight the team's work to allow disabled drivers to compete at the sport's highest levels.

"It's incredibly exciting," said Morgan. "So many motorsport legends have been on the hillclimb and to have the opportunity in the 30th anniversary year just makes it even more special. As drivers, we take a lot of the credit but motorsport is a team sport and, without the effort of everyone involved in Team Brit, none of this would be possible."

STEPHEN LICKORISH



Hoy to make BRX Lydden return

BRITISH RALLYCROSS

Olympic cycling hero Sir Chris Hoy plans to return to British Rallycross action at Lydden Hill next month when the series supports the UK round of the world championship.

Hoy has contested a variety of motorsport series since retiring from cycling and has been racing

a Revolution in the Sports Prototype Cup this year. His return to BRX is his first since he tackled the 2020 opener, when he finished fifth at the wheel of the same Pat Doran-owned Citroen C4 he will drive at the Kent track under the Team Duo banner.

"I'm absolutely buzzing to be getting back in a rallycross car, it's been

a couple of years but I can't wait," said Hoy. "I'm also really excited to see the new jump at Lydden; it sounds like what was already an amazing track is now even better."

BRX organisers have hinted that further extra entries for the 22-23 July Lydden event, which is due to feature a bumper field, are possible.

Hale banned for 'unacceptable' Croft conduct

MOTORSPORT UK

Ex-Formula Renault frontrunner Mitchell Hale has had his licence suspended for six months following what has been deemed as "wholly unacceptable" conduct at Croft earlier this year.

Hale, who finished runner-up to Alice Powell in the 2010 Formula Renault BARC standings before competing in the Ginetta GT4 Supercup, made a racing comeback at Croft in April in the 750 Motor Club's Type R Trophy opener.

He was found to be at fault for a collision in the opening race and was handed three points on his licence, the matter investigated in Hale's absence after he had reportedly left the circuit for lunch. But following his angry response upon learning of the penalty, Hale was later excluded from the meeting, had his licence suspended and the matter was referred to Motorsport UK.

At a recent National Court hearing, chairman of the court panel David Munro said statements were provided detailing Hale's "abusive" behaviour towards those in race control.

"The court has considered a number of witness statements which make it clear Mr Hale was aggressive and highly disrespectful towards the clerk of the course, accusing her of knowing nothing about motorsport and being an embarrassment to the sport," said Munro. "He accused her of bringing the



sport into disrepute and then stormed out. He continued to be aggressive and insulting as he left the office. Others who were present were left feeling unsettled by his attitude and behaviour.

"It is clear that throughout his presence at the circuit during the afternoon of 15 April, Mr Hale was persistently abusive and aggressive towards officials of the meeting. He had been absent from the circuit without

consent at lunchtime and, on his return, showed considerable disrespect to all those present in race services."

Hale did not attend the hearing but the court was "satisfied that he was made aware of today's hearing and has chosen not to attend", with the case going ahead in his absence. As well as suspending Hale's licence, the court fined him £500 and ordered him to pay £250 in costs.

Enduro race planned for Mini Clubsport

MINI CHALLENGE

A non-championship endurance race has been added to the Mini Challenge Clubsport season finale at Donington Park in October and is open to one or two-driver entries.

The category was launched this year, featuring sprint races for three classes – Cooper S, Cooper Open and Cooper Am. The 40-minute mini-enduro, which has been dubbed 'Mini Le Dons', will take place on the day after the regular season concludes. Extra invitational entries for Minis outside of

those three classes will also be considered depending on the levels of interest in the race.

"One thing that was always in our mind was to explore the possibility of running a longer endurance event, and we're delighted to be in a position to now announce our plans for a race at Donington Park at the end of the season," said series co-founder Rob Austin.

"The current plan is for a 40-minute race – almost three times longer than our usual 15-minute races – with drivers able to share a car, which will open up the opportunity for



more people to get involved.

"We're expecting interest to be high, and there is even the possibility of some 'celebrity' drivers being involved, so we encourage anyone who wants to take part to register their interest."

In other Mini news, Cooper

team Mannpower Motorsport has revealed plans to step up to the top-tier JCW division next year. The squad is run by James Manning and has fielded a single car for his father Paul but, following investment in a new transporter, is now planning to progress in 2024.



Special tin-top race to honour Combe Saloons driver Sutton

CCRC

The Castle Combe Racing Club plans to run a special tin-tops race at next month's Carnival meeting that will honour ex-Saloons driver Mark Sutton, who died earlier this year.

After dropping plans for the 15 July event to hold Citroën C1 races, which were aimed at getting new drivers into the sport, the club has now decided to run a 30-minute Mark Sutton Memorial Trophy contest catering for a variety

of saloons and GTs. Tyre choice is open and there will be four different classes based on a car's lap times previously achieved at the Wiltshire circuit. Entry fees have been set at £150 for members and £235 for non-members.

This is the second special race at the event, with the Norman Lackford Trophy being run for sports-prototypes.

"We spoke to Mark's family and they were fully supportive and honoured," said CCRC chairman Ken Davies. "It's

a run-what-you-brung race for Saloons, Hot Hatches and GTs. We've put the word out to the people who do the Dave Allan Trophy race, which is very similar, and we've kept the entry fees very attractive."

Davies added that the half-hour duration was chosen to enable as many cars to compete as possible: "Some of the Hot Hatches and Saloons don't have big fuel tanks, so 40 minutes is a bridge too far, but 30 minutes they can do."

STEPHEN LICKORISH

Steve Magill 1973-2023

OBITUARY

"Probably the finest race engineer that few have ever heard of." Those words from a leading driver coach describe Steve Magill, who has sadly lost his battle with cancer.

Magill started his motorsport career in his early teens, and joined his father Colin in the Oulton Park workshops of Olympic Motorsport, helping to prepare school and race cars whenever the opportunity arose. On graduating to full-time employment, he quickly became a recognised talent in the Formula Ford paddock and was soon in demand by constructors and teams alike.

Periods at Aintree, with Andy Welch, then at Aztec International (running Gary

Catt) brought a combination of success, but also personal challenges. At Hyperion he helped to establish the team's Formula BMW programme, while spending late nights in the workshop preparing the squad's fleet of 16 Formula Woman Caterhams, from which there was not one mechanical DNF all season.

Eventually, relationships built over the years resulted in him migrating to Monoposto, where his skills and passion helped to drive the careers of talented young professionals. Ultimately, he will be most fondly remembered as being that bloke who was simply happy to give advice or get stuck in by lending a hand.

STEVE HINDLE

IN THE HEADLINES

NEATE'S UNCERTAINTY

British Formula 4 frontrunner Aiden Neate has called time on his campaign after a sizeable crash in the second race at Oulton Park earlier this month, when an incident with Jaden Pariat forced him off the track out of Old Hall, causing "a lot of damage". The Fortec Motorsport driver, who finished sixth in the standings last year, was absent from last weekend's Silverstone contest and will now assess his options.

MEDAL FOR WILTSHIRE

Mildred Wiltshire, a stalwart of national racing, has been awarded the British Empire Medal for her services to motorsport. Wiltshire, whose passion for motorsport began in the 1960s as a spectator, took on roles within race administration at events across the UK, including at the British Grand Prix, primarily dealing with marshals.

EDWARDS UNHURT IN FIRE

Bailey Edwards was fortunate to escape unharmed when his Lotus Exige burst into flames during Supersport Endurance qualifying at Donington Park earlier this month. Edwards stopped exiting the Melbourne Hairpin when he sensed all was not right, and thanked marshals for their swift actions. The ES Motorsport team intends to have the car fixed for July's Lotus Cup Europe round at Spa.

TIN-TOPS AT HAREWOOD

The inaugural event in the new Tin Top Challenge run by the British Hillclimb Championship organising team will take place at Harewood on Sunday. The fastest 10 eligible competitors in closed-cockpit cars will take part in two top-10 run-offs during the day. Among the leading contenders are due to be Damien Bradley in his Subaru Legacy, Roger Moran in his Skoda Fabia R5 rally car, Stephen Moore (Mitsubishi Lancer E6), Steven Darley (Subaru Impreza) and Simon Bainbridge in his monster SBR Chrono V8 special (below).



Turner makes race comeback at Anglesey

FF1600

Colin Turner made his competitive return at Anglesey last weekend, his first race outing since his serious accident at the 2020 Walter Hayes Trophy at Silverstone.

The Scot had both his legs amputated following the horrendous accident three years ago, when his Ray GR07 was involved in a crash on the start/finish straight during the Last Chance race in wet conditions. Turner was undaunted by his injuries and made an emotional return to the cockpit last year at the end-of-season Formula Ford event when he performed demo laps at the wheel of Callum Grant's Merlyn Mk20A. He was out racing the same model of car at Anglesey in the Super Classic Pre-'99 FF1600 series.



JAMES ROBERTS

"It's my first race back – I have been getting used to the prosthetics and, although I had never done a race at Anglesey before, I did come and do a trackday," said Turner, who finished 17th in both contests.

"I'm doing this for fun and I am having fun again. I have never won a race or any trophy, but I just love racing. I had tried to do a race at Silverstone earlier this year, but had a problem with my trailer and had to return home."

Also making their Anglesey debuts were four-time Castle Combe FF1600 champion Bob Higgins and his son Richard. "Until we went to Oulton a few weeks ago I hadn't been there for 30 years and, although I now live in North Yorkshire, I haven't been to Croft either, but the championship visits there later in the season," said Higgins Sr, who took a second and third in class, while Higgins Jr took two third places overall.

PETER SCHERER

Late Classic FF2000 purchase gets Berg out

HISTORICS

Kore Berg made his single-seater debut at the Historic Sports Car Club's Donington Park meeting last weekend, albeit not in the way he had anticipated.

The Dane had entered his newly completed March-BMW 742 Formula 2 car for the Aurora Trophy races before it suffered problems.

"The engine was misfiring in testing on Thursday, so we went back and changed the

injectors and throttle slide mechanism," said restorer Tom Smith, who originally received the car with a damaged monocoque in a number of cardboard boxes. "After two hours' sleep we returned to Donington but it wouldn't pull cleanly over 7000rpm in qualifying.

"We think it's a fuel metering unit problem so we'll be back on the rolling road next week. It's a big investment for [saloon car graduate] Kore, so we will get the car right for him to

learn and enjoy it."

Determined not to waste his trip, Berg bought Classic FF2000 veteran Rodney Tofts' Van Diemen RF82 in the paddock on Saturday afternoon. He proceeded to contest five races – two Aurora outings and three in Monoposto – as tests.

"It's easy to get to the UK and flights are not expensive, so it makes sense to race here where you have many great circuits suited to F2 cars," said Berg.

MARCUS PYE



MICK WALKER

ANGELO R. DRIVE

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Gardner (left) launches
Morris into the air during
Classic FF1600 outing

MICK WALKER

Morris left winded after heavy landing at Donington Park

CLASSIC FF1600

Formula Ford veteran Rick Morris escaped serious injury when his Royale RP29 was involved in a spectacular collision during the second Classic FF1600 race at Donington Park last weekend.

The 76-year-old was battling with Mike Gardner's Crossle 32F during the Historic Sports Car Club's meeting when the pair collided at Redgate, launching Morris into the air before he made contact with the barrier, which brought out

the red flags.

"The landing winded me and jarred my back, but I'm OK," said Morris, who had narrowly lost the opening race to Jake Shortland (Lola T440).

"The car is not too bad and hopefully we'll be back at Brands Hatch next month. The only person smiling about it was my friend [Royale/FCS boss] Alan Cornock, who had his notepad out listing spares!"

The incident was investigated by officials, but no action was taken. "I think you'll find it was a racing

incident," said Gardner, who finished the earlier race fourth, minus his nosecone. "Rick is an amazing driver and a great friend, it's also a privilege to race with him."

Morris added: "Mike said to me that he couldn't get to the apex because Ben [Tinkler] was there. The last time I protested a driver was Quique Mansilla in 1981 and, while I was minded to, I'm not going to go down that route again. It's club racing and supposed to be fun."

MARCUS PYE

Engine problems thwart Kapadia

AURORA TROPHY

Alex Kapadia was denied his historic single-seater debut at Donington Park last weekend when the engine of Keith Bisp's Formula 2 March 762 failed in qualifying.

Kapadia has stepped back from sports-prototype racing after a decade due to having a young family and is keen to do some racing at a more relaxed level. "It's a one-off at the moment, but I'm hoping to

do some more," said Kapadia, who put the March on pole for the Aurora Trophy race. "This [historic racing] is a great way to have some fun."

The 43-year-old had a one-off race in a Formula Ford 10 years ago but had not raced single-seaters regularly since competing in Formula Renault in Germany in 2002. "I would love to do more of this," he said of historic racing.

PAUL LAWRENCE

IN THE HEADLINES

CULLEN JR MAKES DEBUT

Victor Cullen, son of Irish tin-top legend Michael, made his historic racing debut at Lydden Hill last Sunday at the wheel of a Lotus Ford Cortina Mk1. Cullen Jr was pinged for track limits in the opening Historic Racing Drivers Club Allstars & Classic Alfa Challenge race, but claimed two third places in the pair of Jack Sears Trophy contests.

NO LUCK FOR AHRENS

Joe Ahrens has struggled for luck since winning both legs of the Classic Formula Ford opener at Snetterton in April. Quickest in qualifying for Saturday's races at Donington, his Royale RP26 retired from the first with a blocked carburettor jet, and crawled home 10th in the second after a plug lead detached having run on half-throttle due to a cable issue.

SHEDDEN OFF TO LE MANS

Three-time British Touring Car champion Gordon Shedden will make his Le Mans Classic debut this weekend at the wheel of an ex-Masten Gregory Lister Jaguar and AC Cobra. "I have raced a Cobra at Goodwood, but I sat in the Lister for the first time in testing at Donington," he said. He will be sharing both cars with Saif Assam and GT4 racer Campbell Fischer.

BUTCHER SAMPLES C65

British Touring Car race winner Rory Butcher drove the ex-works Courage-AER C65 LMP2 car (below) at Donington Park last week. "It was just awesome, a lovely car," he said. The car, chassis 9, was raced by Sam Hancock to the 2004 Le Mans Endurance Series title and was on class pole at the Le Mans 24 Hours the same year. It took third in class two years later with John Macaluso, Andy Lally and Ian James. Hancock, who also drove it at Donington, said: "It was my first time driving it since 2004, but it felt familiar."



PETERSCHERER



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Quattlebaum vows to return following crash

HISTORICS

Alex Quattlebaum has set his sights on a racing return at the Castle Combe Autumn Classic following his horrendous accident at Silverstone earlier this month.

The 82-year-old American was competing in the Equipe 50s race during the MG & Triumph 100 meeting when an oil warning light started flashing on his 1954 LECO Sport. After pulling off to the side of the circuit at Becketts, Quattlebaum was in the process of getting out of his car when Richard Hywel-Evans lost control of his Porsche 911 Carrera RSR on oil dropped by Quattlebaum's LECO. The two cars collided, launching Quattlebaum, who had already removed his helmet, out of his machine.

Quattlebaum broke several ribs as well as both collarbones. After being flown from the circuit to hospital by the air ambulance, he was later released and flew back to the US, where he is recovering.

"I'm alright, believe it or not – it could have been a hell of a lot worse," said Quattlebaum, who has been racing for 45 years. "I'm in pretty damn good shape actually – the only thing which hurts is I've broken both collarbones and one of them has caused my shoulder to shift in about a half inch. For someone that has been



The American suffered injuries after he stopped his LECO trackside

MICK WALKER

doing it a long time, this is really the first proper accident I've ever had. Between me and my car, we're probably the oldest participants out there.

"I pulled off in what I felt was a safe area and I was going to get out of the car and move far away from the circuit as I could. Evidently, I was standing up in the car getting out and was hit from behind and tossed up in the air. Had I stayed in the car I would probably have been a lot better

off because I was strapped in so tight."

Quattlebaum hopes to return to racing later this season once he has recovered and the car repaired, and is eyeing the Castle Combe Autumn Classic in September as an option. "I'm ready to come back and I've got a big race at Castle Combe which I won a few years ago so I'm going down there, hopefully at the end of the season if I'm able," he said. "If not, I'll be back next year."

STEFAN MACKLEY

Davis Corvette set for rebuild after smash

HISTORICS

Tim Davis is targeting an August return for his 1969 Chevrolet Corvette C3 after its fiery exit from American SpeedFest at Brands Hatch this month.

Davis qualified the 7.2-litre aluminium smallblock-powered machine on pole by 1.2 seconds for its debut, then streaked into a seven-second lead in the opening race before an ignition issue caused the car to cut out.

Davis was climbing through the field in the second race when Patrick

Doyle's C3 spun across the path of Amanda Hennessy's feted 1968 model as they exited Graham Hill Bend. Hennessy braked hard, and the unsighted Davis was unable to avoid Hennessy's one-time Le Mans starter.

"It was horrifying," said Davis, who has withdrawn his Caterham from the Classic Sports Car Club's 24-hour event at Anglesey this weekend due to a suspected broken wrist. "It could have been a lot worse than it was. I didn't even see the car in front of her because, being



The C3 suffered big front end damage after crash and fire at Brands Hatch

GARY HAWKINS

left-hand drive, I was on the far side, and all I could see was her back bumper. When she anchored up, you can see in the video my brake lights come on a millisecond after hers, but I just ploughed straight into her.

"Amanda saved my car. She got out and got her hand-held extinguisher. Mine had

already run out, my flames were still going, and she put my car out."

Davis hopes the car, which suffered no chassis damage, will return for the Corvette Anniversary races at Oulton Park's US AutoShow in August once a new front end has been fitted.

MARK PAULSON



Championship lead for Macintyre after podiums

SILVERSTONE
BARC
24-25 JUNE

Will Macintyre claimed the championship lead during British Formula 4's inaugural meeting on the full Silverstone Grand Prix layout last weekend, despite not claiming victory in any of the three races.

A difficult qualifying left erstwhile points leader Louis Sharp on the back foot, and it was his Rodin Carlin team-mates Josh Irfan and Noah Lisle who took a win each in the first two contests. Irfan's maiden single-seater victory came after making a good start from third in the opener, sweeping around the outside of front-row pair Macintyre and James Higgins, who dropped to fifth at Copse.

Macintyre led a five-car train in second early on while Irfan built a 1.5-second gap ahead and, although the deficit reduced in

the final two laps, Macintyre finished 0.4s behind, with his Hitech GP team-mate Jimmy Piszcyk completing the podium. A 5s track-limits penalty demoted Deagen Fairclough to sixth behind Higgins and Daniel Guinchard.

Kai Daryanani briefly led the reversed-grid race after polesitter Isaac Barashi stalled, but he was soon passed by Jack Sherwood and Sonny Smith. Sherwood controlled proceedings until a sensor issue caused his Chris Dittmann Racing machine to grind to a halt, and Smith was soon reeled in by Lisle, who had climbed from seventh.

Lisle eventually snatched the lead into Maggotts, and the Australian then pulled clear for his third win while Smith spun down the order on the final lap. Fairclough finished second, with Sharp taking third from 10th on the grid.

There was another Australian triumph in race three with Piszcyk, the fastest driver in

qualifying, recording a lights-to-flag win from pole. Macintyre took his second runner-up spot of the weekend ahead of team-mate Gabriel Stilp. A clean sweep of the top four positions for Hitech was denied when Kanato Le was demoted two places to sixth post-race for leaving the track when passing Dion Gowda.

Peter Erceg scored a third-straight triumph in the two-hour British Endurance Championship encounter alongside Pro driver Marcus Clutton and, ominously, the pair felt their PB Racing Audi R8 GT3 could have been even quicker. Glebs Stepanovs and Stephen Tomkins kept within touching distance in the first hour in their distinctive Aston Martin Vulcan but eventually retired with power-steering failure, leaving the Audi as the sole Class A runner. "It's mega," Erceg said of the R8. "We're still not happy with the set-up, it's still not right at the rear end, and I think we've got more to come from it."

Class B runners Mikkel Mac and Keith Frieser came home as runners-up, two laps down aboard a Lamborghini Super Trofeo Evo, while Team Hard pair Brad Thurston and Daryl DeLeon maintained their points lead with Class C honours and third overall in a Porsche 991.

Some of the best action came in three Caterham championships, all of which provided thrilling slipstream battles. Dominique Mannsperger kept the chasing pack at bay to win the first of the 310R races with his closest pursuer, Lars Alexander Hoffmann, tapped out of second late on. Hugo Bush recovered from an early mistake to finish just 0.02s behind Mannsperger, with the top 11 cars separated by 2.6s.

The sequel featured a 12-car lead pack,



WEEKEND WINNERS

BRITISH FORMULA 4

Race 1 Josh Irfan

Race 2 Noah Lisle

Race 3 Jimmy Piszcyk

BRITISH ENDURANCE CHAMPIONSHIP

Peter Erceg/Marcus Clutton (Audi R8 GT3, below)

CATERHAM 310R

Race 1 Dominique Mannsperger

Race 2 Harry Cook

Race 3 Lars Alexander Hoffmann

CATERHAM 270R

Races 1, 2 & 3 Freddie Chiddicks

CATERHAM ROADSPORT

Race 1 Edward Cozzi

Race 2 Ben Timmons

BRITCAR TROPHY

Axel van Narderveen (Ginetta G56 GTA)

For full results visit: tsl-timing.com

and it was Harry Cook who prevailed after climbing from eighth in the final five minutes to beat Mannsperger and David Yates on the last lap. Hoffmann became the third different winner in the final encounter by passing Jack Sales late on and then building a gap.

Freddie Chiddicks scored a hat-trick of wins among the 270Rs. He pulled clear following an early battle to finish almost 4s ahead of David Rooke and Mark Kendle in the opener, and then overtook title rival Charlie Lower at Luffield on the final tour in both races two and three.

Edward Cozzi rose from 12th on the grid to take his first win of the season in Roadsport, and didn't lead until the final corner. He beat points leader Ben Timmons, who was suffering from food poisoning, in a drag race by 0.011s. Timmons prevailed in a frenetic second bout, which involved several four and five-wide battles along the Hangar Straight, his decisive overtaking manoeuvre coming on Toby Ballard at Brooklands on the final lap.

STEVE WHITFIELD

SPIN AND WIN FOR VAN NEDERVEEN

Edwards led Britcar
Trophy field at start

Axel van Narderveen survived a late spin to record his fourth Britcar Trophy win of the season as his rivals hit trouble.

The top seven places on the grid were filled by Ginetta G56s for the two-hour enduro, with British Touring Car racer Jade Edwards taking her first pole position alongside Mike West. Edwards pulled clear at the start and controlled the race for the opening 40 minutes before handing over to West but, on the out-lap, the car slowed with gearbox trouble before retiring.

"It was just about managing the gap," said Edwards of her lead stint. "Every time I came round [past the pits] I was on the radio asking them to tell me what the gap was. I don't think it dropped under four and a half seconds, so I was more than happy with that. Mike got in and, within half a lap, he was unable to change up or down gear. Gutted."

That handed the lead to van Narderveen, who had moved into second on the opening lap when Julian Wantling – sharing with Edwards's father Jim – spun on cold tyres.

After making the third of his mandatory pitstops inside the final 30 minutes, van Narderveen held a 1m50s lead. But with five minutes remaining he inexplicably

spun as he came up to lap his Datum Motorsport team-mate Sebastien Dubois, who was running fourth. Even though he lost 20s, he got going again to take a comfortable triumph.

Despite driving solo for the duration, van Narderveen was able to cope with the hot conditions. "Once I got a rhythm, I actually found it quite easy," he said. "There's enough air flow through the car that, as long as you are going straight, it's fine."

Maurizio Sciglio ran second until hearing "a bang", which brought his G56 to a halt late on. That promoted Neil Wallace and Ian Astley to a remarkable runner-up spot, the SVG Motorsport pair having started from the back of the grid after a gearbox failure with their G56 in qualifying. With the help of a motorway trip to collect a new gearbox from Leeds, the car was repaired with time to spare, and Astley scythed through the field in the opening stint before handing over to Wallace, who was awarded driver of the day.

"We didn't think we were going to be out, so great thanks to the team for managing to get a gearbox sourced," said Astley. "We were ringing round everybody this morning trying to find someone who could go to Ginetta and pick one up. Thirty minutes to spare in the end, so it wasn't quite last-minute, but we were a bit on edge. We didn't expect to be on the podium today after that, but from the back – really pleased with that."

Marco Anastasi edged a charging Dubois to third by 2.5s to complete a double podium finish for Datum, while Wantling and Edwards Sr were the last of the lead-lap finishers in fifth.

STEVE WHITFIELD

Even a late spin did not
stop van Narderveen

Shortland wins Classic FF1600 cracker in Lola

**DONINGTON PARK
HSCC
24-25 JUNE**

Jake Shortland's maiden victory in Classic Formula Ford at Donington Park last weekend was momentous aboard the only Lola T440 in the UK. Shortland, 29, with around 10 car races on his CV over several seasons, qualified fifth, 0.607 seconds from poleman Joseph Ahrens, with Ben Tinkler, Rick Morris and Mike Gardner separating them. Come the race, in which Gardner and Tinkler lost nosecones (with Tinkler retiring), Shortland remained calm and brilliantly beat Morris – Ayrton Senna's conqueror at Silverstone in 1981. Not since Mike Blanchet's Townsend Thoresen success at Oulton Park in May 1977 had a T440 won on home soil.

After jostling to the front on lap 11 of 16, drawing early leader Morris back past Gardner, Shortland retaliated swiftly after Morris overtook him two laps running at Redgate. He made his advantage stick by 0.174s with an audacious pass at the Old Hairpin on the final tour, although Morris was handed a 5s track-limits penalty. "I wasn't expecting that," said Shortland. "Rick's a good fair racer who's been doing this a long time. For him to shake my hand afterwards was amazing. The Lola's not quick in a straight line – I don't think the [flip-tailed] engine cover I have helps – but, even in the tow, it was hard work."

Morris, Shortland and Gardner traded the lead second time out, as Tinkler progressed from the back, grabbing fourth from Andy



Rare Lola T440 of Shortland
defies FF1600 master Morris

Gosling on lap 10. While the others duked it out for third, they saw Gardner – previously overtaken round the outside of Redgate by Morris – resist a repeat attempt by going in deep. Contact launched the 76-year-old into the gravel (see News). "It was a racing incident," said Gardner, who kept the win from Tinkler and Shortland as red flags flew.

Race of the weekend was Sunday's Formula Junior bout in which Horatio Fitz-Simon, Sam Wilson and Clive Richards slipstreamed for 12 laps, changing order constantly. All led, but a touch between Fitz-Simon and Wilson exiting McLeans put Wilson out. Richards pounced as HFS recovered, the two ex-Tommy Reid Lotus 22s finishing 0.187s apart. Fitz-Simon's 10s penalty for "excessive weaving on the green-flag lap" made no odds, still well clear of returnee Mark Woodhouse.

Stuart Roach's rain dance – "the only

way I'll get near Andrew Hibberd's Lola" – yielded a heavy shower as the front-engined Juniors departed, but the favourite, on pole by 2.854s, was too strong. Roach ultimately finished 24s behind in his Alexis.

Double Historic FF1600 champion Callum Grant extended his points lead with a third straight win, pursued by Linton Stutely, Benn Simms and Matt Wrigley as Saturday's round was stopped with Spencer Shinner parked on the inside of the Old Hairpin. Stutely and Grant disputed Sunday's sequel until Grant fluffed the chicane and Wrigley seized second.

The F3-rich Monoposto triple-header was topped by Tony Bishop each time, although Karl O'Brien spun away race one and lost Sunday's through penalties for exceeding track limits and green-flag-lap weaving. A joy of the finale was the top seven Dallaras being powered by HWA



Richards (left) and Fitz-Simon had
fantastic Formula Junior battle

WEEKEND WINNERS

CLASSIC FORMULA FORD

Race 1 Jake Shortland (Lola T440)

Race 2 Mike Gardner (Crossle 32F)

HISTORIC FORMULA JUNIOR

Rear-engine Clive Richards (Lotus-Ford 22)

Front-engine Andrew Hibberd (Lola-Ford Mk2)

HISTORIC FORMULA FORD

Race 1 Callum Grant (Merlyn Mk20A)

Race 2 Linton Stutely (Royale RP3)

MONOPOSTO F3/1800/1400

Races 1, 2 & 3 Tony Bishop
(Dallara-Mercedes-Benz F307)

AURORA TROPHY/CLASSIC F3

Races 1 & 2 Rory Smith (Ralt-BDA RT4)

HISTORIC MODSPORTS & SALOONS/
HISTORIC TOURING CARS

Race 1 Tony Davies (Vauxhall Firenza)

Race 2 Ollie Reuben (TVR Griffith)

HISTORIC ROAD SPORTS

Kevin Kivlochan (Shelby Cobra)

70s ROAD SPORTS

Julian Barter (TVR 3000M)

GUARDS TROPHY/THUNDERSPORTS

Steve Nuttall (Chevron-BMW B8)

MONOPOSTO 2000/1600/CLASSIC/M1000

Races 1 & 3 Nigel Davers (Jedi-BMW Mk6)

Race 2 Matty Haughton (Jedi-Suzuki Mk6)

For full results visit: tsl-timing.com

Mercedes-Benz (Bishop), Mugen-Honda (O'Brien), Volkswagen (Dean Warren), Suzuki Hayabusa (Jason Timms), Renault (Lee Cunningham), Toyota (Ashley Dibden) and Vauxhall (Malcolm Scott) engines!

The attritious Aurora/Geoff Lees Trophy races were 'Ro[a]ry The Racing Car' demos, Smith's FAtlantic Ralt RT4 uncatchable. The Historic Modsports and Saloons races also featured high drop-out rates. Tony Davies was a surprised winner of Saturday's in his Transpeed Firenza. Steve Watton's rapid Turner topped the Modsports bunch.

Repaired after its Cadwell Park prang, Kevin Kivlochan's Shelby Cobra overpowered Morgan +8 trio John Shaw, Peter Garland and Simon King in Historic Road Sports. Julian Barter's TVR 3000M won the '70s race, restarted after a gull took flight in the Craner Curves, smashing the screen of leader John Williams's Porsche 911.

Guards Trophy/Thundersports pacesetter Gwyn Pollard's decision not to make his mandatory stop in a long caution period — with Horatio Fitz-Simon's Lotus Elan stranded by MSD ignition box failure — gifted Steve Nuttall's Chevron another win.

MARCUS PYE



STUART ROACH

KIEFT FJ REUNION Three of the five surviving Formula Junior Kiefts made by Lionel Mayman, John Turvey and Ron Timmins for 1961 brought an unprecedented Historic representation. Reigning double champion Nic Carlton-Smith (left) remains unbeaten this term in his ex-Mayman chassis FJ-3. The combo was joined by 70s Road Sports graduate Gary Thomas, debuting the #38 car previously raced by Mike Treganowan and Gil Duffy, and former FJ Lotus pilot Robert Goodwin in the grey #36.



CHEVRON'S WARPAIN'T CHANGE Familiar in original red Team VDS livery — as raced by Peter Gethin and Teddy Pilette for Belgian brewing baron Count Rudi van der Straten in the USA and Australia in 1976-77 — since restorer Simon Hadfield returned it to UK circuits in 2004, the F5000 Chevron B37 turned heads anew. Owner Neil Glover has refinished it in Bill Patterson's livery, which Bruce Allison carried to third in the 1978 Rothmans International Series. Ivan Tighe later raced it down under.



BMW POWER PREVAILS Moto 1000 featherweights ruled Monoposto Group 1. Nigel Davers won Saturday's opener in his 220bhp BMW S1000RR-powered Jedi (above), poleman Matty Haughton non-starting his Jedi-Suzuki with rear hub failure. Haughton zapped from the back to head a Jedi 1-2-3 on Sunday morning, then disputed the finale with Davers, who repassed him and punched the air in jubilation at the chequer. Dan Levy (Jedi) and Tom Wheatley (Van Diemen RF99) chased him home.



Reigning champion Welham
bagged another two triumphs

The F1000 Fast Show stars at Croft with wins for Welham

**CROFT
750MC
24-25 JUNE**

The deeper into the financial doldrums this country falls, the more that racers and their sponsors (be they family or corporate) are going to have to make some serious future budget decisions. So it's fitting that the 750 Motor Club's visit to Croft last weekend perfectly illustrated the speed-per-pound value that can be found across many of its championships.

F1000 has gone through a number of

incarnations to bring it to where it is today, which in numerical terms is currently less than four seconds off the circuit's outright lap record, held by Sergio Perez, racing a Dallara Formula 3 car in 2008. Or, put another way, in spending less than 10% of a British F4 budget, polesitter Matt Higginson could have qualified seventh against his F1-bound compatriots on last year's grid. Having said that, to get to Formula 1, you need to show that you can lead from the front and resist pressure from behind, which Higginson immediately failed to do by having a moment going

through the first corner, leaving him down the order as he recovered. This meant that reigning champion Robert Welham was perfectly placed to lead the pack and head for home.

Further back, Simon Walker-Hansell, himself once seemingly heading towards a promising career (after taking the first-ever Formula BMW UK win at Thruxton), was making his championship debut. Frustrated in qualifying, he immediately began to make amends with a scything start, making three places off the line, only for his brake pedal to offer nothing a couple of laps later as he headed into Tower. The safety car was called, requiring Welham to manage the restart perfectly and hold off the challenge of Tom Gadd to win by just under a second.

Race two's reversed grid resulted in Higginson starting from sixth. He immediately set about making amends for his earlier showing and, with moves out of the chicane, into Tower, through the Sunnys, and the complex, he was soon up to second. Polesitter Craig Pollard defended resolutely until he, Higginson and Murfie Aldridge were finally three-abreast. Higginson seized his chance and headed Aldridge home. Welham was made to work from seventh in race three, before once again leading the field to keep his title defence on track.



Hyde defied points leader Bell
to claim maiden Vee victories



There was more single-seater action on offer in the shape of Formula Vee. Chassis can be self-developed for the venerable category, as exemplified by the shark fin addition to championship leader Craig Bell's AHS Dominator.

Poleman Matt Harbot was slow off the line in the opener, then spun as he tried to recover. This allowed Tim Probert (the oldest driver on the grid) to forge ahead, but hard on his tail was Matt Hyde, aged just 17, who immediately took control with a measured pass for the lead. Bell followed closely behind in third, harrowing Probert, but a lunge at the hairpin caused him to drop back to fourth.

Hyde, meanwhile, set about building his lead with a series of fastest laps, but Bell wasn't done yet. A fantastic exit from the chicane enabled him to catch Ben Cressey in third and brave the outside at Tower to make the pass. One lap later, he dummied Probert at the same place then passed on the inside for second. By now, Hyde was well up the road and, though Bell pushed hard to find the slipstream, Hyde took the flag for his maiden win.

Bell took an early lead in race two ahead of Probert's smoking Storm Bowles, with Hyde moving quickly into third. The battle between old and young produced a side-by-side duel through the Esses, into Sunny, then onto the complex before Hyde showed

his worth on the brakes into Clervaux. With only Bell now ahead, a series of fastest laps quickly brought the teenager onto his tail. Hyde lined up his move into Sunny and, by the time they reached the complex, he just held the lead. The pair were sliding their way towards the hairpin as Bell desperately fought back, but Hyde kept his nerve and stayed ahead until a red flag ended the race early.

Saturday was Armed Forces Day, and the paddock was awash with the colours and emblems of each main branch of the services, awnings perfectly aligned while, underneath, the ranks of serving and former personnel prepped cars to be ready for the day's action. Armed Forces Race Challenge pole went to Matty Taylor, a former Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers man whose modified BMW Compact arrived straight off the dyno after years under the dust cover. Shod with pre-pandemic tyres, Taylor slid his car through the opening laps, building a healthy advantage, only to be left driveless when his throttle cable snapped. Behind, Mark White's Honda Civic Type R needed no invitation, comfortably taking up the lead while matching the BMW's earlier pace. With Taylor absent for race two, White held off an early challenge from Alex Smith's Integra Type R for his second win.

Tim Bentley continued his outstanding form with the older 182 car to win twice in

WEEKEND WINNERS

F1000

Races 1 & 3 Rob Welham

Race 2 Matthew Higginson

FORMULA VEE

Races 1 & 2 Matt Hyde (AHS Dominator)

ARMED FORCES RACE CHALLENGE

Races 1 & 2 Mark White (Honda Civic Type R)

RENAULT CLIO SPORT CHAMPIONSHIP

Races 1 & 2 Tim Bentley (182)

Race 3 Jack Dwane (197)

LOCOST

Races 1, 2 & 3 Todd Boucher

116 TROPHY

Matthew Highcock (below)

CLASSIC STOCK HATCH

Races 1 & 2 Stewart Place (Peugeot 205 GTI)

BIKESPORTS

Race 1 Leon Morrell (Radical SR3)

Race 2 Charles Hall (Mittell MC-41R)



For full results visit: 750mc.co.uk

the Clio Sport Championship. It could have been a hat-trick but, pressed by Jacks Dwane and Kingsbury in race three, his engine let go as he arrived at the hairpin. Dwane then proceeded to take control, with Kingsbury and Charles Shelbourn making it an all-197 top three.

Locost is another formula where cars and entry fees are well within the reach of many. The weekend's triple-header turned into a two-car race between Todd Boucher and Craig Land. Boucher's title ambitions were boosted with three wins from three, while Land was unlucky to miss out on each occasion.

The 116 Trophy continues to attract a sizeable entry for its 90-minute enduros. Matt Highcock led the rolling start with Louis Woodward fixed to his tail. It wasn't long before Woodward found the gap, and the lead but, with each car required to make two mandatory stops, Highcock timed his perfectly. He returned to the front with just over an hour gone, then stretched his advantage for his second win of the year.

STEVE HINDLE



Northern Irishman Irvine (l)
won two of the Scottish Mini
Cooper races at Kirkistown

GARY CRAIG

Home joy for Irvine as Kirkistown celebrates 70th

KIRKISTOWN
500MRCI
23-24 JUNE

Kirkistown celebrated its 70th birthday in some style last week, with a packed programme of (mostly) local races keeping a sizeable crowd entertained.

All the usual classes were involved, with the welcome addition of the Scottish Mini Cooper championship, making its first Northern Ireland appearance since 2019. And the Scots kicked off the action with a post-qualifying Friday evening race, which ended with the only 'home' driver present, Jack Irvine, taking victory from Ian Munro and Oly Mortimer, who were separated by just 0.01 seconds at the flag.

Race two started with a bang – quite literally – for Munro, who was assisted off-piste in the run down to Colonial, arriving at the marshal post sideways at

unabated speed. Nobody was hurt, but the car resembled an unmade bed when extracted from the tyre barrier. At the restart, Irvine repeated his previous night's victory while, behind him, Chad Little just edged out Michael Weddell for second spot.

On their final appearance of the day, a Scot reached the chequered flag first, championship leader Mortimer heading a six-car train over the line from Irvine, Weddell, Little and the doughty Munro in his now-straightened car.

Jamie Blake and Richard Flett won the two concurrent Cooper S races, taking the overall spoils in the opening contests.

There was more Mini action when the Irish Coopers came out to play. Newcomer Peter Bennett took a maiden win in the first bout from Jack Conachy and Kian O'Brien. Irvine – now in his dad's 'Irish spec' car – might have been on the podium had it not been for the dreaded track-limits penalties,

which were a feature of the day. But Irvine remained on the black stuff in race two to take his third victory of the weekend from O'Brien and Conachy.

Away from the Mini action, Ronan Doherty continued an impressive debut Formula Vee season to win the 'B' and 'C' race from Robert Fleming and Sean Hynes. Doherty was in the leading bunch for the 'A' race too, before a slight wobble dropped him from second to fifth position in the blink of an eye. Still, he was just 0.8s behind winner Lee Newsome, who also had Gavin Buckley, Colm Blackburn and Anthony Cross for company.

By contrast, the SEAT Supercup Ireland encounters featured more comfortable wins for Graham McDonnell and Eddie Peterson, while the two Northern Ireland Saloon bouts also went to SEATs in the hands of Peter Baxter and Gareth Blaine, who took a win apiece. GT honours went the way of SHP Wildcat pilot Paul McAlinden.

Roadsports proved to be a family affair, with Jim Larkham taking race one and nephew Steven turning the tables on him in race two, both of them Radical-mounted. Graham Moore, once again, was best of the one-litre NI Sevens in his self-built GMS Honda.

Among an encouragingly large entry of Mazda MX-5s, Francis Allen reigned supreme, while Grahams *pere et fils* topped the Fiesta group, series leader Michael winning the first race and father Derek the second after a chaotic reversed-grid start resulted in the obliteration of much of the field at the first corner. Unseemly post-race discussions followed.

And then there was Formula Ford 1600. Numbers may have been few – and even



Newsome headed a close
Formula Vee contest

GARY CRAIG

WEEKEND WINNERS

KIRKISTOWN

SCOTTISH MINI COOPERS

Race 1 Jamie Blake (Cooper S)

Race 2 Richard Flett (Cooper S)

Race 3 Oly Mortimer (Cooper)

IRISH MINI COOPERS

Race 1 Peter Bennett

Race 2 Jack Irvine

FORMULA VEE

Race B & C Ronan Doherty (Sheane FV94)

Race A Lee Newsome (Sheane FV94)

SEAT SUPERCUP IRELAND

Race 1 Graham McDonnell

Race 2 Eddie Peterson

ROADSPORTS & NI SEVENS

Race 1 Jim Larkham (Radical PR6)

Race 2 Steven Larkham (Radical PR6)

LIBRE SALOONS/GT

Race 1 Peter Baxter (SEAT Leon)

Race 2 Gareth Blaine (SEAT Leon)

MAZDA MODI-5-CUP & FIESTA ZETECs

Races 1 & 2 Francis Allen (MX-5)

FORMULA FORD 1600

Race 1 Morgan Quinn (Van Diemen RF99)

Race 2 David McCullough (Van Diemen RF00)

For full results visit: speedhive.mylaps.com

YPRES RALLY (BRC)

1 Adrien Fourmaux/Alexandre Coria

(Ford Fiesta Rally2); 2 Davy Vanneste/Kris

D'alleine (VW Polo GTI R5) +1m34.3s; 3 Garry

Pearson/Daniel Barritt (VW Polo GTI R5);

4 James Williams/Dai Roberts (Ford Fiesta

Rally2); 5 Casey Jay Coleman/Lorcan Moore

(Ford Fiesta Rally4); 6 Kyle McBride/Liam McIntyre

(Ford Fiesta Rally4). **JBRC** Coleman/Moore.For full results visit:
britishrallychampionship.co.uk

fewer after a first-race tangle with Jordan Kelly at the Hairpin removed championship leader David McCullough from proceedings and brought out the red flags. At the restart, Morgan Quinn took the honours from Kelly in a Team Dolan Van Diemen 1-2 with Alan Davidson third, Quinn's winning margin just 0.27s. Chris Middlehurst should have been in the mix, but another bit of contact dropped him to the tail of the field.

McCullough was back in action for race two and, despite heroic efforts from Quinn to demote him, McCullough got in front and stayed there all the way, his winning advantage just 0.134s. Once again, Davidson claimed third place in his Pre-'90 Mondiale ahead of Middlehurst, who again found himself playing catch-up after a lap-two encounter with Kelly.

RICHARD YOUNG

Fourmaux overcomes Ypres Lefebvre battle to win again

M-Sport driver maintained
his unbeaten BRC run in Ypres



YPRES RALLY BRC 23-24 JUNE

The British Rally Championship had travelled across the English Channel to the coveted Ypres Rally three times before last weekend's edition, but its drivers had never managed to take victory away from the rapid European aces who traditionally head for the event. Last weekend the series could finally lay claim to bragging rights, although it had to rely on its imported Frenchman to do it.

After back-to-back BRC wins already this season, it was M-Sport factory pilot Adrien Fourmaux and co-driver Alex Coria who usurped the Belgians in their backyard, taking their Ford Fiesta Rally2 to a convincing overall victory and a hat-trick of BRC top scores.

A last-minute BRC registration for former Citroen works driver Stephane Lefebvre resulted in the two Frenchmen locked in a battle for the lead over the opening morning loop of the gruelling two-day event. It was advantage Lefebvre heading into the repeat run of stages, but

It was a first JBRC win
for Coleman in his Fiesta



Fourmaux kept the pressure on the C3 Rally2 driver. And it wouldn't be long before Fourmaux inherited the lead when the Citroen driver paid a heavy price for being off line on the unforgiving ditch-lined roads, rolling over 12 times in a spectacular off. That left the Ford comfortably in front of non-championship contender Chris Ingram in his VW Polo, and even a last-minute ECU issue on the final day couldn't derail Fourmaux's dominance.

"Everybody knows that Ypres is a really prestigious rally, so of course it feels very good to be in first position and put last year here [when he crashed out early on] fully behind me," said Fourmaux. "It has been a long and tough rally and we have not been able to relax all weekend, but I am very happy with my performance and my pace. A BRC win is good for the championship – it's nice to win three rallies in a row."

Such was Fourmaux's pace that the next BRC contender was down in sixth overall. That runner-up spot went to the new registration of Davy Vanneste in his VW Polo. A largely trouble-free run for the Belgian resulted in him comfortably beating fellow Polo pilot Garry Pearson, who inherited third after James Williams spent several minutes in a ditch with power-steering failure on his Fiesta.

The brutal roads also caused a high rate of attrition in the Juniors, and it was Casey Jay Coleman who secured his first-ever victory with a mature drive in his Fiesta Rally4.

MATT COTTON

Lydden's Historics on the Hill event thrills as Minis shine

**LYDDEN HILL
HRDC
25 JUNE**

Pete Chambers came out on top in a thrilling battle with Nathan Heathcote and Michael Cullen to seal victory in the first Jack Sears Trophy race at Lydden Hill's annual Historics on the Hill meeting.

Chambers snatched the lead at the start in his Lotus Ford Cortina Mk1 after poleman Heathcote got too much wheelspin in his Mini Cooper S and dropped to fourth. Heathcote soon worked his way back into third behind Irish tin-top star Cullen (Austin Mini Cooper S), and both set off in pursuit of



GARY HAWKINS

Heathcote took a
Mini double at Lydden

Chambers. After a missed gear dropped Chambers to third, Heathcote briefly took the lead via minor contact at North Bend, before Cullen grabbed the initiative back again through Pilgrims.

As Heathcote's challenge faded, Chambers climbed back into second and began to trouble Cullen once more. After enduring a wild moment attempting to grab the lead at Devil's Elbow on lap 16 of 24, which also dented Cullen's left-hand door, Chambers made a more successful attempt five laps later that proved decisive.

Despite several lock-ups, Chambers looked set for a double in race two after fending off Cullen's relentless pressure, only for a penalty to reverse the result. Cullen's son, Victor, claimed third in his Cortina after almost tripping over backmarker Alex Williams on the final lap.

Even with his lack of success in the Jack Sears Trophy races, the weekend was far from a failure for Heathcote. In the first Pre-'66 Mini encounter, the 2017 British Rallycross champion controlled the race from pole before Nick Swift and Ollie Streek collided. Streek struck the tyre wall, which led to the race being stopped. Heathcote carried on where he left off when racing resumed, dominating before sealing victory.

Behind him, Mini Miglia frontrunner Phil Bullen-Brown looked set to hold off



Cullen Sr for second until a bouncy trip through the Paddock gravel on the penultimate tour handed the position to Cullen. A 10-second penalty, awarded for an out of position start, relegated Bullen-Brown further and promoted Swift, his car bearing scars of his earlier clash, to third.

Eager to make up for his earlier frustration, Bullen-Brown made rapid progress at the start of the second contest, moving from sixth into third behind Cullen and leader Heathcote by Chesson's Drift on lap one before another race stoppage was

Foden scores the perfect Mazda MX-5 hat-trick

**ANGLESEY
BRSCC
23-25 JUNE**

Steve Foden made it nine wins this season after claiming a treble in the Mazda MX-5 Championship at Anglesey last weekend.

His first success was a lights-to-flag victory, with Jason Greatrex a race-long second and Ted Bradbury third. Adam Sparrow was then almost pushing poleman Foden into Target at the start of race two,

and got ahead through Church, with Greatrex second into Rocket. But a terrific fightback from Foden netted him second at the Hairpin on lap three, and it remained nose-to-tail for the leading trio until Foden took a fractional lead through School four laps from home. Sparrow had a final-corner lunge at Foden, but it failed and Greatrex instead snatched second.

Bradbury had the lead initially in race three and headed a huge scrap for second, before Foden demoted him. As the second-

place fight continued the jostling pack caught Foden and, on the last lap, Sparrow led out of Banking. But Foden wasn't to be denied and sealed his third win of the weekend with a move into Peel for the final time, followed by Sparrow and Bradbury.

Former Fun Cup champions UVio/Hofmann's returned to winning ways with a double victory. In race one, Scott Fitzgerald and Fabio Randaccio led for 113 of the 122 laps, after GT Radial's Aaron Cooke had led the first nine tours. MJ Tec pair Scott Jeffs/Greg Evans and AxiaMetrics trio Chris Weatherill/Neil Burroughs/Simon Rudd completed the podium, after Team Olympian had a driveshaft break during their final stop.

It was another dominant win for UVio/Hofmann's again in race two, again leading all but nine laps of the three-hour race. Chris Dovell/Kristian Rose/Riley Phillips bounced back for Team Olympian with second, and Team Viking & Ursus Capital's Mark Holme/Colin Kingsnorth took third.



MX-5 Championship wins
went to Foden (77)

JAMES ROBERTS



GARY HAWKINS

required to retrieve Richard Locke's beached car. Bullen-Brown and Swift took advantage of a sluggish launch from Cullen at the restart to take second and third respectively as Heathcote completed a double success.

The opening Historic Racing Drivers Club Allstars & Classic Alfa Challenge race was ended prematurely after Chris Blewett spun his Ginetta G12 into the Devil's Elbow gravel. James Colburn steered his Alfa Romeo Giulia Sprint GT to victory ahead of the Cortina of Chambers and the Alfa Romeo GTV6 of David Margalies.

Colburn put himself in the ideal position to replicate the double triumph he had achieved in the standalone Alfa races at the same event two years ago by passing early race-two leader Chambers, before the contest suddenly changed after half-distance. As Margalies was lining up a move on Chambers at Devil's Elbow, Colburn's car ground to a halt at the same point, leaving Margalies to claim the win from Chambers and Sam Ashby's Austin-Healey Speedwell Sprite.

MARK LIBBETER

WEEKEND WINNERS

LYDDEN HILL

HRDC JACK SEARS TROPHY

Race 1 Pete Chambers

(Lotus Ford Cortina Mk1)

Race 2 Michael Cullen (Austin Mini Cooper S)

HRDC PRE-'66 HISTORIC MINIS

Races 1 & 2 Nathan Heathcote (Cooper S)

HRDC ALLSTARS & CLASSIC

ALFA CHALLENGE

Race 1 James Colburn

(Alfa Romeo Giulia Sprint GT)

Race 2 David Margalies (Alfa Romeo GTV6)

ANGLESEY

MAZDA MX-5 CHAMPIONSHIP

Races 1, 2 & 3 Steve Foden

FUN CUP ENDURANCE

Races 1 & 2 UVio/Hofmann's

(Scott Fitzgerald/Fabio Randaccio)

CITYCAR CUP

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

MAZDA MX-5 SUPERCUP

Races 1 & 2 Patrick Fletcher

Race 3 Ali Bray

SUPER CLASSIC PRE-99 FF1600

Races 1 & 2 James Tucker (Swift SC92)

MODIFIED FORDS

Races 1, 2 & 3 Piers Grange (Escort Mk2)

MAZDA MX-5 CLUBMAN

Races 1, 2 & 3 Matthew Fletcher

For full results visit: tsl-timing.com



JAMES ROBERTS

Elliot Lettis (Peugeot 107) claimed another hat-trick of wins in the CityCar Cup. He built a substantial lead in race one as Stuart and Richard Bliss duelled for second and, when the latter pulled off after four laps, Richard Jepp finished third.

After another lights-to-flag win over Stuart Bliss and Richard Snuggs in race two, Lettis had to work a bit harder in his final outing. He trailed Adam Reynolds for three laps before making his decisive move, and the ex-leader then came under pressure

from Stuart Bliss, with his defence finally pierced a lap from home.

It was two wins out of three for Patrick Fletcher in the Mazda MX-5 Supercup. He led the first race from start to finish, with Aidan Hills second into Peel on lap three as Sam Heading slowed. James Cossins and Will Blackwell-Chambers piled the pressure on Hills but all three held station. After just holding off Ali Bray for a second win, Fletcher had to settle for third in the finale. Bray and Leigh Britten had battled until

Britten retired; Heading inherited second.

Despite running wide exiting the Banking on the first lap, James Tucker's Swift SC92 was still a comfortable winner in the Super Classic Pre-'99 Formula Fords. The Van Diemens of Garath Buckingham and Richard Higgins completed the top three. Tucker headed home John Murphy's Van Diemen and Paul Mason (Swift) in race two, but Murphy picked up a penalty for causing a collision, promoting Higgins to third.

PETER SCHERER

FINISHING STRAIGHT



Significant progress with what matters most



VIDEO GAME **MOTOGP 23**

(available on PC, Switch, PlayStation and Xbox)
RRP £59.99

The MotoGP games have seen little in the way of innovation over the past few

yearly releases. Last season there was an intriguing 'NINE' historic mode, but a lack of updates in key areas — namely the career and online multiplayer.

So, for *MotoGP 23*, the latest title does away with distractions and focuses on what matters more. New for this season are two additional tracks in the form of India's Buddh International Circuit and Kazakhstan's Sokol International Racetrack. Sadly, for the latter, the real-world race has been cancelled, but it remains in the game.

Perhaps even more importantly, for the first time dynamic weather with the flag-to-flag rule is present. The system works well and spices up career events, especially if you have a longer race distance set, although it's a shame that the pitlane process is entirely automated. Also accurately representing the series, you can now take part in sprint races.

While these are pleasant additions, some things remain constant. Chiefly, the riding experience, which is only lightly modified. The aggressive tendency to stoppie under

braking remains. Mercifully, you can tune this out through bike set-up work, but if you didn't know that it can be frustrating. In *Moto3* it's also possible to accidentally wheelie out of corners too easily for such a low-powered, momentum-based formula.

For this year there's a propensity for the bike to sit up a lot earlier upon applying power. Get on the throttle a little too early and the rear tyre isn't breaking away, but rather the front pushes wide as the frame rises. But once you've attuned and refined your bike's settings, we believe that the riding experience has marginally advanced over the previous instalment.

In combination with the learning curve, your AI rivals can sometimes look like they're bobbing up and down like a rubber

duck at sea, especially during the first lap. They can be erratic, sometimes weaving on a straight during a qualifying session or continuing to push you from behind. Despite reservations about some on-track behaviours, the new modes pull the game around.

For the first time in several releases, there's a refreshed single-player career. The user interface has been given a lick of paint, the social media 'wall' does at least impact contract negotiations, and we found the rivals system to be compelling.

This time you must beat your team-mate to become the squad leader, and from there face off against riders in other operations to potentially earn a new seat. This culminates in a 'turning point' where beating a rival one





PICS: MOTOGP23

final time completes your goal. You're also constantly earning XP and rewards, levelling up as you go. Becoming the lead rider also unlocks the ability to influence upgrades come mid-season and pre-season testing.

While hiring riders for your own team is not possible, at least now rival teams' performance evolves over time. But the option of managing team members and resource points has been removed, and there isn't a bike upgrade skill tree, instead just packs of performance-enhancing parts earned through races.

It's not the only mode to receive a significant makeover, as something that we've been requesting for a number of years has finally arrived – ranked online racing. A new game mode, LiveGP, is a playlist of online events. Do well and you rise through up to 13 levels, and each time you compete you're placed against those within similar ranks.

We're still a little uncertain whether the MotoGP games will deliver the ultimate riding experience on pure physics. But then you pull off a clean lap at Mugello and everything's OK again. Despite this reservation, there's a refreshing depth to MotoGP 23 thanks to the changeable conditions, new content, revised career and, potentially, long-term online system. Just don't expect to be the next Pecco Bagnaia immediately.

THOMAS HARRISON-LORD

For daily racing game news, visit traxion.gg



TREMBLAY/MOTORSPORT IMAGES

Red Bull 100 What Christian Horner told us

Autosport Grand Prix editor Alex Kalinauckas sat down with Christian Horner last week for an interview to mark Red Bull's 100 wins. In our follow-up podcast, host Martyn Lee discusses the topics covered such as Red Bull's early success, managing world champions Sebastian Vettel and Max Verstappen, and fighting to get a seat at the top table of F1's power brokers.

autosport.com/podcast

WHAT'S ON

INTERNATIONAL MOTORSPORT

Austrian Grand Prix F1 World Championship Round 9/22

Red Bull Ring, Austria

2 July

TV Live Sky Sports F1, Sat 1430, Sun 1355

TV Highlights

Channel 4, Sun 1830, Sky Sports F1, Sun 1730

Formula 2 Round 7/13

Red Bull Ring, Austria

1-2 July

TV Live Sky Sports F1, Sat 1240, Sun 0850

Formula 3 Round 5/9

Red Bull Ring, Austria

1-2 July

TV Live Sky Sports F1, Sat 0855, Sun 0720

Porsche Supercup Round 2/7

Red Bull Ring, Austria

2 July

TV Live Sky Sports F1, Sun 1035

IndyCar Series Round 9/16

Mid-Ohio, USA

2 July

TV Live Sky Sports F1, Sun 1830

Indy NXT

Round 6/12

Mid-Ohio, USA

2 July

TV Live Sky Sports Mix, Sun 1625

24 Hours of Spa GT World Challenge Endurance Cup

Round 3/5

Intercontinental

GT Challenge

Round 3/5

Spa, Belgium

1-2 July

TV Livestream on motorsport.tv, Sat 1545

Formula Regional European

Round 4/10

Spa, Belgium

30 June–1 July

TV Live Viaplay, Fri 1340, Sat 0820

NASCAR Cup Series

Round 18/36

Chicago, USA

2 July

TV Live Viaplay, Sun 2230

World Rallycross

Round 3/8

Holjes, Sweden

2 July

UK MOTORSPORT

Oulton Park MSVR

1 July

Focus Cup, GT Cup, Porsche Boxster Cup, Porsche Club, Porsche Open Cup

Brands Hatch MSVR

1-2 July

5Club MX-5 Cup, CTCRC (Pre-'03, Pre-'93/BOSS, Pre-'83/Pre-'66, Super Tourers, Thunder/Jaguar), MSVT Trackday Championship, United FF1600

Anglesey CSCC

1-2 July

Classic K, Future Classics, Magnificent Sevens, Modern Classics, New Millennium, Open Series, Slicks Series, Swinging 60s, Tin Tops, Turbo Tin Tops

British Hillclimb Championship

Round 7/14

Harewood

1-2 July

British Drag Racing Championship

Santa Pod

1-2 July



THE RACER

Pit talk from the HRDC



HRDC FEATURE RACES OULTON PARK GOLD CUP MEETING

29-30 July 2023

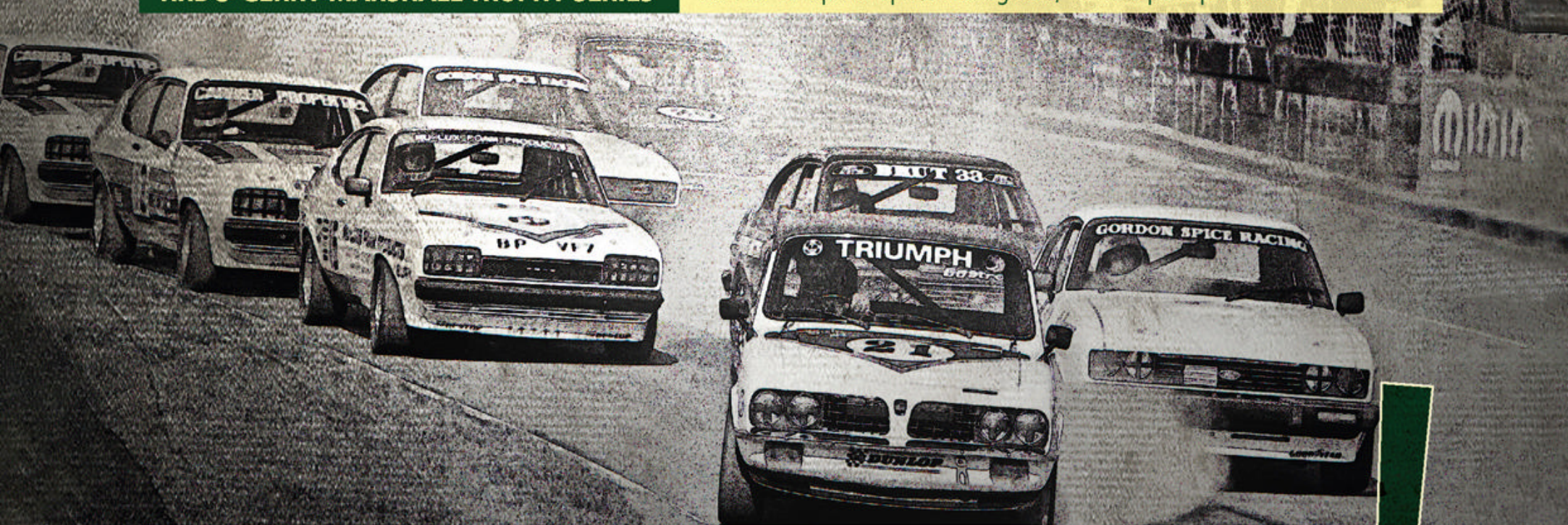


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GABRIEL BORTOLETO

Alonso's Brazilian protege has been quick out of the blocks in F3

MEGAN WHITE

Gabriel Bortoleto was yet to turn one year old when Fernando Alonso won his first world championship with Renault. But now the Spanish superstar acts as mentor to the 18-year-old Brazilian, who became part of Alonso's A14 Management stable last September and now holds a handy lead in the FIA Formula 3 Championship.

Bortoleto moved to Europe aged 11 to compete in karting, and graduated to car racing in 2020 when he finished fifth – with one race win – in the Italian Formula 4 Championship with Prema Powerteam. For 2021 he stepped up to the Formula Regional European Championship by Alpine with Alonso's eponymous team FA Racing (run by MP Motorsport) before moving to R-ace GP in 2022 and claiming sixth in the standings with two wins.

But, since his graduation to F3 with Trident, Bortoleto has rather turned the tables on former FRegional title rivals and F1 juniors such as Dino Beganovic and Gabriele Mini. He was quickest on two of the three days of post-season testing at Jerez last year, and has quickly made an impact in competition too. Victories in

the first two feature races of the season – in Bahrain and Melbourne – propelled him into the series lead, and he has built upon that with consistent results elsewhere.

"I knew that we had the potential because I trust myself, and I know how much effort I put in," explains Bortoleto. "Trident showed the potential last year as well from winning the last three rounds of the championship and being runner-up in the drivers' standings [with Zane Maloney]. I would not say that I expected two wins in a row, but for sure I expected good results."

Bortoleto credits some of his success to good friend and compatriot Felipe Drugovich, the 2022 F2 champion and now Aston Martin development driver, who he says has given him advice, including during a difficult Monaco weekend.

Given his nationality, Bortoleto naturally cites Ayrton Senna as an inspiration, but the biggest impact has come from Alonso himself. "Before I worked with him, I knew that he was a legend of Formula 1, because he was always very good," enthuses Bortoleto. "But I didn't know how much effort he puts into that. At the end of the day, he's already 41. It's not easy to keep in this sport this long, and with this physical shape, and also in this performance that he is keeping on track. These F1 cars are amazingly fast so you need also to have the reflexes, and to have all this you need to keep practising. Fernando I think is one of the most dedicated drivers I've ever seen in my life, and that's what also keeps me motivated and pushing every day."

"I'm in bed and not sure if I should go to

CV

Age	18
2023	Currently 1st in FIA F3 (2 wins)
2022	6th in FRegional European (2 wins)
2021	15th in FRegional European
2020	5th in Italian F4 (1 win)



**"I KNEW HE WAS A
LEGEND OF FORMULA 1,
BUT I DIDN'T KNOW HOW
MUCH EFFORT HE PUTS IN"**

the gym today, and then you remember that this guy doesn't need to prove anything to anyone, and he's still going every day to do that. So you say, 'Look, I need to one day become one per cent of what this guy is, so I need to push, I need to do my best.'"

With five rounds remaining, Bortoleto leads the championship by 24 points from fellow Alonso protege Pepe Marti, but he is already looking to the future, and hopes that success this season will bring an F2 promotion for 2024. Beyond that, does he believe he will be the next Brazilian F1 driver? "I hope so. That's my plan." 🏆



FROM THE ARCHIVE

Kimi Raikkonen's McLaren-Mercedes MP4-17 stands out against the distinctive Interlagos backdrop during the 2002 Brazilian Grand Prix. After qualifying fifth, the Finn was running

one place higher when a wheel-hub failure three laps from the finish sent him spinning spectacularly into retirement. Raikkonen's team-mate David Coulthard took the final podium place, but was the first of the leaders

to actually see the chequered flag being waved after the special invitee tasked with the job, football icon Pele, seemed not to notice winner Michael Schumacher and his runner-up brother Ralf crossing the line.



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Shingo Tachi

His death in an Okayama testing accident in 1999 meant Shingo Tachi's true potential was never fully realised. British Formula 3 observers in 1996 were afforded brief glimpses of his talent when, aged 19, the Japanese finished second in the Class B standings. In his obituary, Autosport remarked that "the ever-smiling Tachi made a big impression on everyone he met in Britain".

But it was in his homeland where Tachi truly shone. He earned a top GT500 seat with Team Le Mans in the All-Japan GT Championship by winning the 1998 GT300 crown for Team Taisan aboard a Toyota MR2. He had spent that year racing in Japanese F3 too, and it was at the TOM'S squad owned by his father Nobuhide where Tachi encountered Peter Dumbreck.

The Scot was a wide-eyed newcomer to Japan in 1998, and found Tachi's willingness to "smooth the way for me" in adapting to Japanese culture an important factor in his prowess that year in winning the F3 title and prestigious Macau Grand Prix. Despite their brief time together, Tachi was an immediate pick for his favourite team-mate.

"I got on especially well with Shingo," says Dumbreck. "He made it very easy for me to get used to everything, find my feet and be confident. Then likewise I had the experience in F3 that I would help him



with my data and we'd talk things through and try and move the team forward."

The pair spent plenty of time away from the track too, exchanging stories of their time on the British racing scene, playing pool and travelling to events together. That meant Dumbreck also got to see his sense of humour, with pranks regularly on the agenda. Tachi's favourite trick, Dumbreck recalls, was coating the rims of water glasses with tabasco when his unwitting victim went to the toilet.

His death at the age of 21 was "a big loss" for Dumbreck, who retired from racing in 2020 and is now a regular FIA driver steward. "He was still young and still learning," says Dumbreck. "But in GTs he really was very good, so maybe his career would have taken him solely into GT. But he might have continued in [single-seaters with] Formula Nippon as well."

JAMES NEWBOLD



IN NEXT WEEK'S ISSUE

Austrian GP action

VERSTAPPEN AIMS TO WIN RED BULL'S HOME RACE

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