

AUTOSPORT

CHARLES LECLERC

Why my Ferrari title dream is still on

Star opens up on recent setbacks, the future and his rivals

'For 2024 the target is to be back on top and fighting Red Bull'

PLUS

Sims wins **IMSA** title in Cadillac

DS Penske pair aim to bounce back

Button plots **Hypercar** campaign



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Why Leclerc has kept the faith in Ferrari title dream

Charles Leclerc has unquestionably been the man most likely to restore Ferrari to title-winning glory ever since he rocked up at the Maranello squad in 2019 at the age of 21 and, within two years, finished off Sebastian Vettel's career as a Formula 1 top-liner.

But things haven't been entirely plain sailing since then. As rapid as Leclerc is, he finds himself behind team-mate Carlos Sainz in the points. From time to time, Ferrari has technically and operationally fallen behind the other leading teams, but there have been a few mistakes from the cockpit too. Super-quick, exciting, perhaps enigmatic. Not for the first time in history does this apply to a native French speaker not from France representing the Prancing Horse!

Alex Kalinauckas, who got to know Leclerc in his days on the F2 beat in 2017, uses the help of the Monegasque himself to investigate how things are going and the hopes that an upward Ferrari trajectory can be the prelude to a genuine challenge to Max Verstappen and Red Bull. You can read that on p18, before Leclerc enjoys describing some of his best races for Ferrari (including as a junior), on p24.

Elsewhere in this issue, Stefan Mackley finds that DS Penske's two Formula E champions Jean-Eric Vergne and Stoffel Vandoorne are regaining optimism (p28), and Joey Barnes chats to IndyCar breakthrough star Kyle Kirkwood (p32). Joey was also at Road Atlanta for the Petit Le Mans IMSA finale. Congrats to our own Alexander Sims on his GTP title with Pipo Derani and the AXR Cadillac team, and to Tom Blomqvist on his race win with the Meyer Shank Acura.



MS

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**NEVER MISS
AN ISSUE**

Special deals for
Autosport p52



Cover image
Ferrari

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Date has lapsed for
Andretti (inset)
to join Alpine as
a Renault team

ALL PHOTOGRAPHY
motorsport
IMAGES



Andretti doubts over where engine wheel of fortune stops

FORMULA 1

In the unlikely event that Formula 1 gives Andretti Global the nod to form an 11th team, the American operation should still be assured of an engine supply deal despite its pre-contract agreement to run Renault power units now having lapsed. Although the bid has been formed with General Motors marque Cadillac, any plans for a transatlantic engine programme would almost certainly not come to fruition in time



Famin says there is
no Andretti contract

for a 2025 arrival, as approved by the FIA earlier this month. As such, Andretti would initially need to establish a customer deal.

Originally, Renault – which has been sounding out paddock support for performance breaks to help it close an estimated 30bhp power deficit – had been tapped up. “We had a pre-contract with Andretti, which has expired because they were supposed to be granted an F1 entry before a given date,” Alpine interim team principal Bruno Famin explained to Autosport. “It means, right now, if we want to do something with Andretti, we need to negotiate a full contract, a formal contract. So right now, we have absolutely no contract with Andretti.”

While F1’s sporting regulations are designed to ensure that no team is left without a power unit supply, there is some debate about whether a new entry is afforded the same privilege as current competitors of guaranteed engines. But FIA president Mohammed Ben Sulayem says he is clear that Andretti would indeed qualify for a supply so long as it’s a precursor to an engine programme from GM. He told select media, including Autosport: “We are demanding [a GM programme] and we will see that. But engines are not built in four or

five years. At the beginning, Andretti will have to agree on one of two engines.”

Ben Sulayem believes that Appendix 6 of F1’s Sporting Regulations will apply to Andretti in giving it the option of requesting a supply from one of the manufacturers that is supplying the fewest customer teams. This is expected to be Honda (Aston Martin) and Renault (Alpine) for 2026, both of which are currently only committed to one team apiece. While Audi will also be constructing an engine for its own works team, clauses in the rules mean new manufacturers are initially exempt from having to supply customers.

Ben Sulayem added that there was no doubt in his mind that the rules were explicit in ensuring a supply for Andretti. “It works that, with the rules, nobody can say no to them,” he said. “If all the teams say no, then the FIA has the power to go on and say, the least two [engine manufacturers] being used, then we put them in a draw, and we take one. It’s not a secret, and I’m sure it is either Alpine or Honda, and one of them would win because that is the rules.”

For Andretti to secure a customer supply from Alpine or Honda, it would need to put in a request before 1 June of the year prior to its entry. But despite Ben Sulayem’s view,



GRANT



TRIENTZ

there are some within F1 who are not so convinced that the regulations are framed in such a way to guarantee supply to new teams. Famin said that the situation was complicated, but his company would fully comply with any ruling.

All of this will be rendered moot if FOM does not approve Andretti's bid to join the grid. This is how many expect the scenario to play out, with the commercial rights holder facing extreme resistance from the 10 incumbent teams, who fear the destabilising effect that a new entity might have and how their slice of the pie would be reduced. Should Andretti be told no, a legal case could very well result given it has satisfied the criteria outlined to form a new team. But Ben Sulayem dismissed this possible outcome, saying: "Maybe it sounds very exciting and thrilling to the media, but it will not go to court. I'm sure of that."

JONATHAN NOBLE & MATT KEW

Hamilton breach revisited because he's a 'role model'

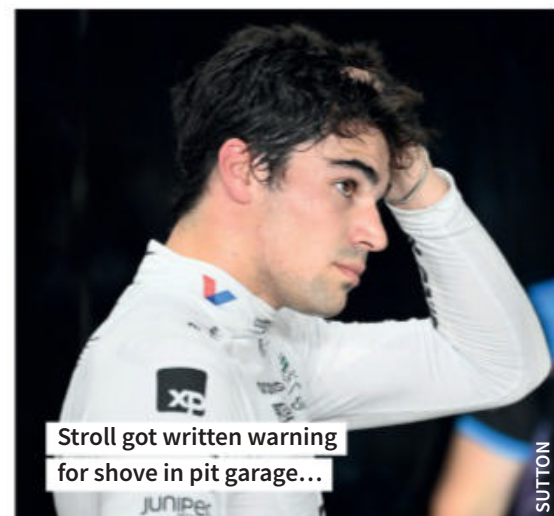
FORMULA 1

The FIA has launched a review into Lewis Hamilton's crossing of a live track during this month's Qatar Grand Prix as he walked away from the scene of his first-corner collision with Mercedes team-mate George Russell.

The seven-time world champion was initially investigated for his hasty return to the pits since he only just made it across the circuit before the lead pack came past. The stewards noted at the time that he was very apologetic before slapping him with a €50,000 fine, half of which was suspended for the remainder of the season pending no further breach of a similar nature.

But the governing body now notes that "in view of [Hamilton's] role model status, the FIA is concerned about the impression his actions may have created on younger drivers". That clumsy wording has been called out since it might imply that other, less well-decorated Formula 1 drivers could receive more lenient treatment for a similar incident.

Semantics aside, the reopening of the case is more about establishing a stricter precedent for future track-crossing antics rather than actually tagging Hamilton with a bigger sanction. The FIA's decision to review follows a recent incident in the FIA World Karting Championship finals at Franciacorta in Italy. British racer Joe Turney was pitched off the track while battling for the lead and had pushed his kart back on the track in an attempt to get going again. He was struck by another competitor and sustained leg injuries.



SUTTON

Stroll got written warning for shove in pit garage...

Meanwhile, the FIA has issued a written warning to Aston Martin driver Lance Stroll regarding his garage stop at the Losail circuit. After the Canadian was eliminated in Q1 on Friday night, he threw his steering wheel out of the car and shoved trainer Henry Howe on his way out of the back of the garage.

Originally, no further action was considered. But Stroll was prompted to issue an apology to the FIA Compliance Officer, who subsequently reminded "Lance of his responsibilities as a competitor bound by the FIA Code of Ethics and other FIA ethical and conduct guidelines set forth by the sporting regulations. The FIA maintains a zero-tolerance stance against misconduct and condemns any actions that may lead to physical harassment."

The FIA International Sporting Code reads that a competitor has committed an offence if they are found guilty of "any fraudulent conduct or any act prejudicial to the interests of any competition or to the interests of motorsport generally".

JONATHAN NOBLE & MATT KEW



SUTTON

...while Hamilton was slapped with suspended \$50k fine – and more may follow



Manufacturers wary on move to reduce scope of BoP

WEC

Moves are afoot to reduce the scope of the Balance of Performance in the Hypercar class of the World Endurance Championship. But for the moment at least they appear to have been rejected by the manufacturers.

A meeting was called by WEC rulemakers the FIA and the Automobile Club de l'Ouest in Paris late last month at which changes to the current system for 2024 were discussed. It is understood that the majority of manufacturers favoured maintaining the status quo and want to retain the current system introduced for this season, although it is far from clear whether any final decisions were made.

Exact details of what was discussed have not been revealed: manufacturers are forbidden in the series' sporting regulations from discussing the BoP, and the FIA has so far yet to comment.

What was proposed appears to be to leave the building blocks of the current BoP, such as mitigation of the advantages of the four-wheel drive of the front-axle Le Mans Hypercar hybrids, while abandoning what is regarded in some circles as an impossible attempt to exactly match the performance of the different cars. It follows dissatisfaction with the system of BoP as it stands.

Toyota president Akio Toyoda said after the GR010 HYBRID LMH was beaten into second place by the Ferrari 499P LMH at this year's

Le Mans 24 Hours that the Japanese manufacturer had "lost to politics". His comments referred to changes made to the BoP outside of the system introduced for 2023 in the run-up to the race.

The new-for-2023 BoP allows for minimal changes through the season: only the balance between LMH and LMDh machinery, the so-called platform BoP, could be changed ahead of Le Mans. One-off wholesale changes to all cars, known as the manufacturer BoP, were possible after Le Mans and ahead of the Monza round in July.

Ferrari offered veiled criticism of the changes after it finished second to Toyota on home ground: it said it raced at "a disadvantage" compared to its rivals courtesy of an "imposed limitation" without mentioning BoP.

Ferrari is believed to be one of the manufacturers in favour of changes, with Toyota known to be another.

Toyota Gazoo Racing Europe boss Pascal Vasselon described the current system at last month's Fuji WEC round as "unsustainable because it is not meritocracy".

"Reliability is getting better and better, team strategy is getting better and better, so we are going to end up in a situation where winning or losing a race will be the result of the inaccuracies of the BoP," said Vasselon. "And a BoP that promises zero performance gap between the cars is not realistic. I think some others share our view and there is momentum for change."

GARY WATKINS

Bernie avoids prison for fraud

FORMULA 1

Bernie Ecclestone has been given a 17-month prison sentence suspended for two years and must pay HM Revenue & Customs more than £650million to cover 18 tax years after pleading guilty to fraud for failing to declare over £400m of assets held in Singapore.

The ex-Formula 1 tsar, worth £2.5billion, established overseas accounts to support his three daughters but had declared that he had no trusts outside the UK. Following a "complex and worldwide" investigation by the government tax authority, Ecclestone was charged by the Crown Prosecution Service in July 2022 after a single count of fraud was made on 7 July 2015. Last Thursday, he appeared in Southwark Crown Court to confirm his personal details and spoke only to tell the judge "I plead guilty". He had originally been due to stand trial in November after pleading not guilty.

The court was told that Ecclestone was "seeking to draw a line under investigations into his tax affairs" because he "was fed up of paying huge bills for advice". His legal team argued that 92-year-old Ecclestone should avoid a prison term given his age, medical issues and low level of risk to the public.

Prosecutor Richard Wright KC said: "Mr Ecclestone was not entirely clear on how ownership of the accounts in question were structured. He therefore did not know whether it was liable for tax, interest or penalties in relation to amounts passing through the accounts. Mr Ecclestone recognises it was wrong to answer the questions he did because it ran the risk that HMRC would not continue to investigate his affairs. He now accepts that some tax is due in relation to these matters."

MATT KEW



MAUGER/MOTORSPORT IMAGES



FORMULA 1 Ferrari handed FIA Formula 2 race winner Ollie Bearman his first outing in an F1 car at its Fiorano test track last Wednesday. The Ferrari protege and two-time Aston Martin Autosport BRDC Award finalist completed 250 miles aboard the two-year-old SF21 as he prepares to pilot the current Haas VF-23 in FP1 at the Mexican and Abu Dhabi GPs. Around 200 miles of running enables the Brit to meet the criteria to drive at a world championship event. Bearman, 18, said: “I don’t think I’ll ever forget this day... I’m told my mother got quite excited when I drove out of the garage in the Ferrari.” **Photographs by Ferrari**



GRANT/MOTORSPORT IMAGES

Stewart to be honoured at Awards with Autosport Gold Medal

AUTOSPORT AWARDS

Sir Jackie Stewart will become the third recipient of the Autosport Gold Medal when he is honoured at this year’s Autosport Awards.

Fifty years after taking his third Formula 1 world title in 1973, the motorsport safety pioneer will be recognised at the Awards, at London’s Grosvenor House Hotel on 3 December, as an individual who has given a lifetime of service to motorsport and leaves a lasting legacy. The Autosport Gold Medal was first awarded to former FIA president Jean Todt, and subsequently to American motorsport giant Roger Penske.

“I am extraordinarily proud to receive this prestigious award in the company of

the two previous recipients, who have both certainly done so much for the world of motorsport,” said Stewart. “I am therefore extremely touched to have also been given this wonderful recognition.

“Motorsport continues to be in my life in so many different ways and I have been a follower of it since my very early years when my brother, Jimmy, was racing for Ecurie Ecosse. I am incredibly honoured.”

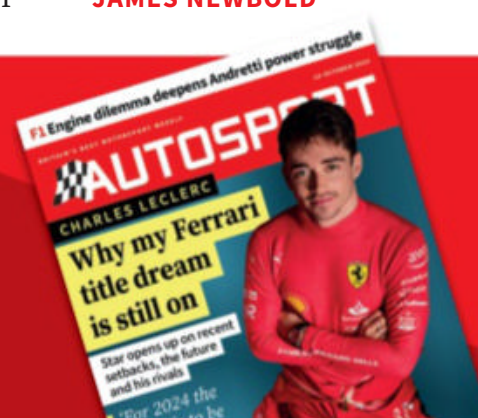
After finishing his driving career, Stewart and his son Paul founded their Paul Stewart Racing team, which became Stewart Grand Prix and subsequently Jaguar and Red Bull. The former British Racing Drivers Club president has also established the Race Against Dementia charity.

JAMES NEWBOLD

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Button weighs up options for Hypercar programme

WEC/IMSA

Jenson Button is looking increasingly certain to run a full race programme next year for the first time since his final season of Super GT in 2019. The 2009 Formula 1 world champion has revealed that he has opportunities for the new season in the World Endurance Championship and the IMSA SportsCar Championship.

Button made the revelation on his return to the prototype ranks for the first time since 2018 at the Petit Le Mans IMSA finale at Road Atlanta last weekend in the JDC-Miller Motorsports Porsche 963 LMDh (above). “I have a couple of options in IMSA to do a full season and to do enduros; I also

have a couple of options to do WEC,” he said ahead of the race. “First of all, I need to see if I enjoy this weekend, and I think I will, and that I’ve got a pass from the wife, so that’s another important thing!

“I will be racing something next year, it just depends where and how much I do,” Button explained, adding that he was also keen to do more NASCAR Cup races after his three appearances this year with the Rick Ware Racing Ford squad.

He stressed that he would only contemplate a programme across the five IMSA long-distance race that make up the Michelin Endurance Cup if he could be guaranteed proper testing beforehand.

“I can jump in the car and be relatively

competitive on lap time, but my strength is more setting up the car,” said Button, who shared the JDC-Miller Porsche at Petit with Mike Rockenfeller and Tijmen van der Helm. “I can’t do that here because I don’t have the time. There’s no point in me doing it unless I can actually put the time in and have the testing needed.”

Button admitted that he is in talks with the British Jota team to race its second 963 in the WEC. That raises the prospect of some kind of superteam if the squad’s negotiations with Sebastian Vettel go anywhere. Robert Kubica is also in talks with Jota. Button also said that he remains in dialogue with JDC-Miller.

GARY WATKINS

Glickenhaus reaches the end of the road in WEC



EHRHARDT/MOTORSPORT IMAGES

WEC

Glickenhaus has drawn the veil on its World Endurance Championship participation with its Le Mans Hypercar. Team boss Jim Glickenhaus has confirmed that he has no plans to file an entry for what would have been his squad’s fourth season in the WEC in 2024.

The American manufacturer had

previously stated that another campaign for the Pipo-engineered 007 LMH was dependent on sponsorship. That has not been forthcoming and the team will gracefully retire with what Glickenhaus labelled an enviable record for a privateer squad.

“We won’t be entering – it doesn’t make sense for us,” said Glickenhaus. “To be competitive we’d need to do an evo version of the car

and to run two of them. That’s not viable for a privateer. The days of teams like us competing in the WEC are probably over.

“We were an important part of the WEC when the series needed us and we did just great. We got on the podium in 2022 and this year we beat the likes of Porsche and Peugeot. It really doesn’t get any better than that.”

GARY WATKINS



MICHELIN PILOT CHALLENGE Five years after the IndyCar crash at Pocono in which he sustained spinal cord injuries that led to paralysis, Robert Wickens and co-driver Harry Gottsacker claimed the TCR class title in the Michelin Pilot Challenge at Road Atlanta last weekend. The duo needed eighth place to become champions, and drove their Bryan Herta Autosport Hyundai Elantra N TCR to fourth in a race won by team-mates Mark Wilkins and Mason Filippi. Wickens and Gottsacker failed to win a round, but took six second places from the 10 events. “I’d much rather have this feeling right now than the short-term ecstasy of winning a race,” said Wickens. **Photograph by IMSA/Levitt**

‘Rocky’ joins Mustang fight

IMSA

Le Mans 24 Hours winner Mike Rockenfeller will drive the new Ford Mustang GT3 in the IMSA SportsCar Championship next season. The German, who stepped away from long-time employer Audi at the end of 2021, has joined a raft of Ford regulars in the GT Daytona Pro line-up announced last week.

Rockenfeller was named alongside Joey Hand, Harry Tincknell and Dirk Muller, all veterans of campaigns with the Ford GT in either IMSA or the World Endurance Championship, in the two-car squad run by Multimatic Motorsport. Hand was revealed as the team’s lead test driver on the announcement of the programme at the start of last year, while Tincknell and Muller had existing Multimatic contracts.

Hand and Muller will renew the partnership that yielded four GT Le Mans



HARRELSON / NKP/MOTORSPORT IMAGES

class wins with the Chip Ganassi Racing Ford team in 2016-19. Rockenfeller has been paired with Tincknell. Extra drivers for the enduros have not been named.

“To have the opportunity to join Ford at this point in my career is fantastic and I’m excited to be part of a new programme,” said 39-year-old Rockenfeller, who contested six IMSA rounds with the JDC-Miller Motorsports Porsche squad this year. “I drove the Mustang GT3 at Sebring a couple of months ago and I have raced against the Ford GT many times, so I know I am joining a very strong organisation.”

GARY WATKINS

POLE DEFEATS F1 JUNIORS

Polish talent Kacper Sztuka snatched the Italian Formula 4 title from under the noses of Prema Racing’s raft of F1 juniors at Vallelunga last weekend. US Racing driver Sztuka arrived off the back of six straight wins, and was third in an opening race won by McLaren protegee Ugo Ugochukwu. Victory in race two wrapped it up for Sztuka, who won again in the finale. Ugochukwu finished runner-up in points ahead of British Red Bull Junior Arvid Lindblad and Ferrari’s pair of Australian James Wharton and Finn Tuukka Taponen.

GOETHE TOPS F3 TEST

Post-season FIA Formula 3 testing continued last week with two days at Barcelona. Oliver Goethe set the quickest time with Campos Racing, ahead of Alpine F1 protegee Gabriele Mini with Prema. Britons Luke Browning (Hitech) and Taylor Barnard (PHM Racing) were 1-2 on the first day and ended up third and fourth respectively in overall times.

INTER EUROPOL TO IMSA

Le Mans 24 Hours LMP2 class winner Inter Europol Competition will race full-time in the IMSA SportsCar Championship next year. The Polish team has forged a partnership with PR1/Mathiasen for a one-car attack.

NEW ASTON GT3 ON TRACK

The new-for-2024 evolution version of the Aston Martin Vantage GT3 broke cover last week in general testing at Silverstone. The revised car, which Aston announced on the launch of its Valkyrie Le Mans Hypercar programme this month, was tested by Jonny Adam and Tomonobu Fujii among others and is in the final phase of development.



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Ph. Mario Puledda

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Ph. Mario Puledda



INDYCAR NASCAR star Kyle Larson was among those to complete their Indianapolis Motor Speedway Rookie Orientation Programme last week. The 2021 Cup champion plans to run in the 500 next May with Arrow McLaren, and joined Tom Blomqvist (Meyer Shank Racing) plus Linus Lundqvist and Marcus Armstrong (both Chip Ganassi Racing) in turning their first laps of the 2.5-mile superspeedway. “Just to feel what an IndyCar feels like, be low to the ground, feel the acceleration through the gears was pretty crazy,” said Larson. **Photo by Black/PEC**

More power for new hydrogen car



LE MANS 24 HOURS

A third-generation of hydrogen fuel cell racer has been announced by the MissionH24 group involving Le Mans 24 Hours organiser and World Endurance Championship promoter the Automobile Club de l'Ouest. The new car set to hit the track in 2025 will be lighter and more powerful than its predecessor.

A machine that will be named after polling fans on social media is being built around a chassis developed by German constructor ADESS, like its LMPH2G and H24 forebears. The reduced weight and increased power are among a raft of developments over the H24 that raced in the Michelin Le Mans Cup in 2022.

The weight has been reduced by 150kg to 1300kg, while maximum power has been increased to 650kW (872bhp) from the 350kW of the H24 and drives through a

single rear-axle motor. The zero emissions hydrogen fuel has a power density that will be 50% greater than that used on the previous car. The tanks that store the liquid hydrogen at 700bar are now mounted in a conventional position behind the driver rather than in the sidepods, in line with the latest FIA safety rules.

A target of GT3 lap times has been set for a machine that is billed as a mobile laboratory for the new hydrogen class at the Le Mans 24 Hours, currently scheduled for introduction in 2026.

“After introducing hydrogen to the race track, MissionH24 is now entering a new phase: bringing hydrogen to competitive racing,” said ACO president Pierre Fillon. “This new prototype clearly intends to rival the other forms of energy in the field. Hydrogen technology is safe, reliable and can perform.”

GARY WATKINS

GROSJEAN JOINS IN AS LAMBORGHINI RESUMES TESTING

WEC/IMSA

Lamborghini has resumed full testing with its 2024 World Endurance Championship and IMSA SportsCar challenger after a break of more than a month. The SC63 LMDh prototype returned to the track at Almeria in southern Spain last week in the wake of a major shunt at the end of August.

Romain Grosjean got his first taste of the SC63 run by Iron Lynx as he and Andrea Caldarelli completed approximately 2000km over the course of three days. The car, built up around a new chassis, ran in carbon black rather than the green livery in which it was testing at Paul Ricard before Mirko Bortolotti crashed heavily.

The test, which followed a shakedown in Italy, was a productive one according to Iron Lynx team principal Andrea Piccini, who played down the significance of Bortolotti's accident and the one-month hold on the testing programme.

“These things happen in motor racing; you deal with it and move on,” said Piccini. “We have had to reshuffle our programme a little bit between what we plan between the USA and Europe. Obviously it would have been better not to have lost time, but I still think we can keep to our schedule.”

That schedule will include an expansion of the test programme to the US. The SC63 is set to be running in North America imminently, according to Lamborghini and Iron Lynx.

GARY WATKINS





DUBAI 3 HOUR

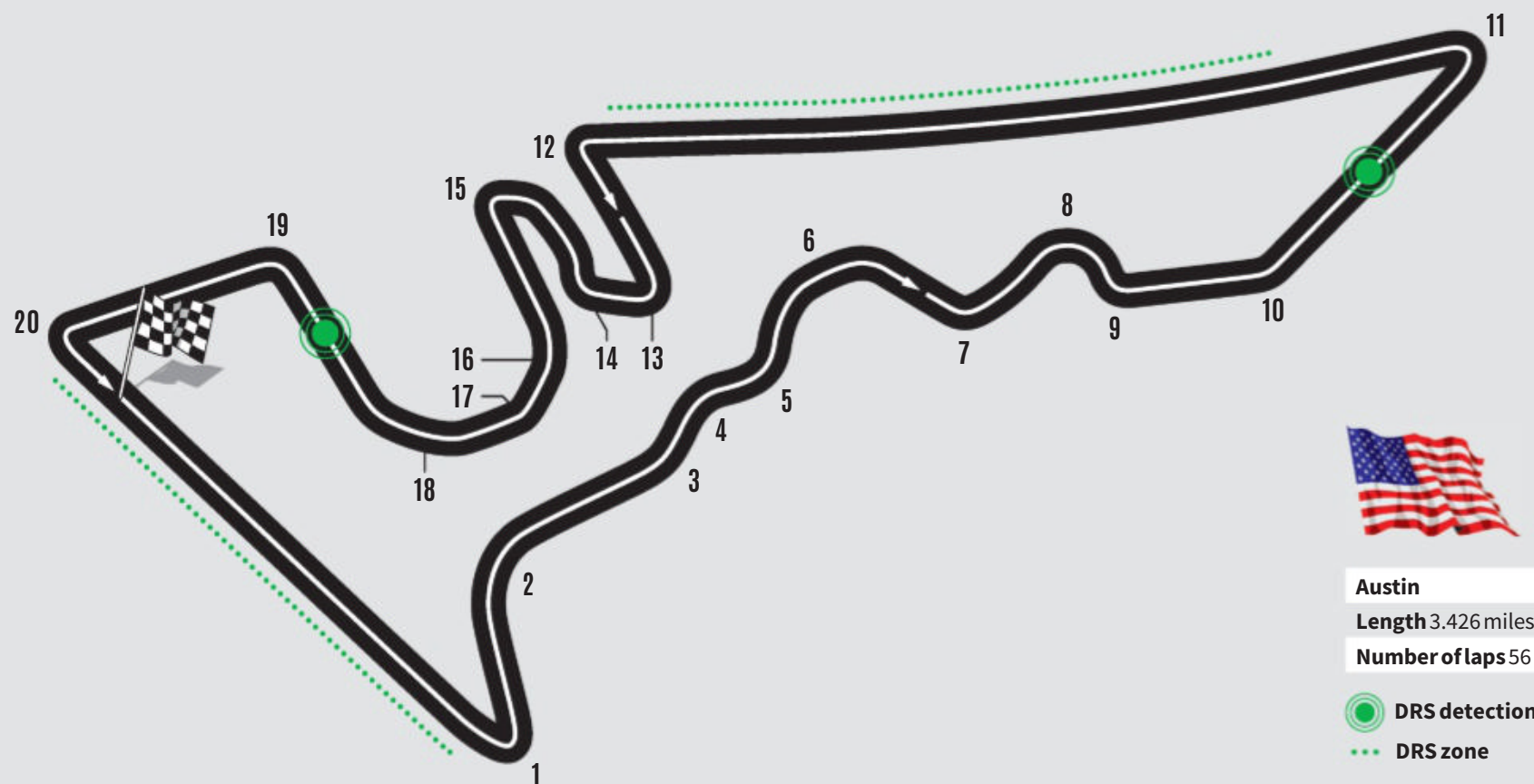
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UK START TIMES

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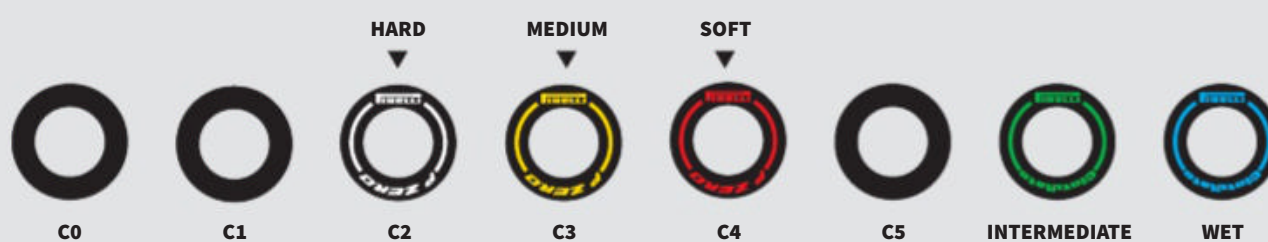
Saturday 21 October
 SPRINT **QUALIFYING** 1830
 SPRINT **RACE** 2300

Sunday 22 October
RACE 2000

CATCH THE RACE LIVE
SKY SPORTS F1
BBC RADIO 5 LIVE

TV Highlights
CHANNEL 4 0030 (Monday)

TYRE ALLOCATION



CHAMPIONSHIP POSITIONS

Drivers

1	Verstappen	433
2	Perez	224
3	Hamilton	194
4	Alonso	183
5	Sainz	153

Constructors

1	Red Bull	657
2	Mercedes	326
3	Ferrari	298
4	Aston Martin	230
5	McLaren	219



HONEY

AUSTIN STATS

Previous winners

2022	Max Verstappen	Red Bull
2021	Max Verstappen	Red Bull
2019	Valtteri Bottas	Mercedes
2018	Kimi Raikkonen	Ferrari
2017	Lewis Hamilton	Mercedes
2016	Lewis Hamilton	Mercedes
2015	Lewis Hamilton	Mercedes
2014	Lewis Hamilton	Mercedes
2013	Sebastian Vettel	Red Bull
2012	Lewis Hamilton	McLaren

2022 POLE POSITION

Carlos Sainz
 1m34.356s

POLE LAP RECORD

Valtteri Bottas
 1m32.029s (2019)

RACE LAP RECORD

Charles Leclerc
 1m36.169s (2019)



Laps led

Lewis Hamilton	249
Sebastian Vettel	105
Max Verstappen	77
Nico Rosberg	44
Kimi Raikkonen	40
Valtteri Bottas	31
Daniel Ricciardo	7
Sergio Perez	4
Romain Grosjean	2
Charles Leclerc	1



TM



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F1 stars' 100-race milestone

As Lando Norris, George Russell and Charles Leclerc hit a significant career landmark at this weekend's US GP, it's a perfect time to assess where they stand

ALEX KALINAUCKAS

The stories are still essentially the same as they were in Melbourne for the 2019 Formula 1 season opener. Lando Norris is hoping to become McLaren's next world champion. George Russell is determined to prove that he is Mercedes' long-term star bet. And Charles Leclerc is trying to end Ferrari's lengthy title drought. At this weekend's United States Grand Prix, all three will hit the same milestone: it's 100 races since that weekend in Australia. For Norris and Russell, it will be a century of race starts.

Norris is the only non-F1 race winner of the trio. But even as he edges towards Nick Heidfeld's unenviable record of most podiums without a victory, Norris retains a surrounding sense of inevitability – that his time atop the podium will surely come soon. He is simply at the level of an F1 winner, but his machinery has too often been lacking. When you look into Norris's approach to racing, you see a driver keeping their car ever at the rapid edge. It's fast, it's exciting – to some it's Lewis Hamilton-esque. That is quite the comparison, and it's worth remembering that Hamilton is McLaren's most recent world champion. But it stacks up. Watching them work a wheel is a very similar, ever-moving process.

Where Norris and Hamilton differ is that Norris's edgy handling can mean he slips into the kinds of mistakes that he felt

“Norris is the only non-F1 race winner of the trio. But his time will surely come soon”

cost the chance to fight for “two pole positions” and “potentially two victories” last time out in Qatar. The tantalising prospect for Norris is how a first F1 win might help him progress to greater heights – something his friend Max Verstappen achieved after prevailing in the 2021 world title battle. That confidence breeds calmness, while at the same time remembering that Norris still dislikes the rather recalcitrant nature of McLaren's current chassis package. As his fifth F1 season heads towards its conclusion, we can reflect on how Norris is a changed driver out of the cockpit from when he started, aged 19. Speaking to him in the paddock, you sense that he's now more guarded, but still irrepressibly eager beneath a harder shell.

Russell, now 25, is in many ways like the 21-year-old who made his debut for Williams. Insiders from the junior teams Russell

raced for before getting his F1 chance, after consecutive GP3 and Formula 2 title victories, noted his determination to drive himself and those around him even at a much younger age. Now F1 can see that forthright confidence play out in other ways. Firstly, Russell remains the championship's only currently racing director of the Grand Prix Drivers' Association. High-profile issues – such as the Jeddah missile attack of 2022, Suzuka tractors-on-track incidents or the porpoising saga – were notable for Russell being vocal on each one throughout.

That self-confidence breathes through his driving style too. Watching a Russell onboard is to see a driver who makes a steering decision early and decisively, with very impressive results against the stopwatch. His current 9-8 GP qualifying head-to-head with Hamilton attests to this.

As occasionally with Norris, and more famously with Leclerc, Russell is still making rather big errors – such as his Canada and Singapore crashes – quite deep into his F1 career. At Marina Bay, a potential win had also gone begging because he still has a tendency to push the Pirelli tyres too hard, too early in a stint. That's a sphere where Hamilton still has a clear advantage. But conversations with Mercedes insiders suggest that Russell impressed so much so early after his full-time promotion from Williams for 2022 that his fresh two-year contract extension, announced in September, was long considered a formality.

Such a step with Ferrari still eludes Leclerc. Although, as explained on page 18, he is expecting contract talks over an extension to his five-year stint in red to properly commence over the coming off-season. What Leclerc hinted with that stunning, car-chucking effort for Sauber to make Q3 as rain fell at the 2018 Brazilian GP has become reality. Now just turned 26, he has progressed into F1's fastest qualifier. That he has a victory conversion percentage of just 25% of those poles comes down to two things. First, Ferrari's machinery has, for the majority of Leclerc's time at the team, been sub-par compared to that of Mercedes and Red Bull. But he has also too often been the master of his own downfall. There is, however, his endearing habit of publicly owning his errors, and he shares much with Norris and Russell in this, to the credit of each.

If Leclerc can seal a third Ferrari contract, even a two-year deal would take him past the total starts notched up in the team's long history by Rubens Barrichello, Sebastian Vettel, Felipe Massa and Kimi Raikkonen. And now that an F1 season features so many races, a new three-year deal would put him towards a Ferrari appearances record that only the great Michael Schumacher can match. That would teach F1 much about Leclerc's place in the sport, as Norris and Russell at the same time etch theirs further into history. 🏁



The big prize awaits

Last year's Aston Martin Autosport BRDC Award winner talks about his debut F3 season, and how he's looking forward to his F1 test next week

LUKE BROWNING

My deal to compete in the FIA Formula 3 Championship with Hitech this year came together very late on and, to be honest, I didn't expect to be doing it. It finally happened just a couple of weeks before the first race in Bahrain.

We were the last driver signed coming into the year, so I was a bit on the back foot, not doing any testing, and not knowing any of the circuits bar Silverstone, Red Bull Ring and of course Spa. Winning the 2022 Aston Martin Autosport BRDC Young Driver Award after claiming the GB3 title with Hitech really, really helped me get that F3 seat. It shows you the opportunity you have as a British racing driver to show what you can do in equal machinery to the other three best drivers in the UK.

It was definitely difficult jumping in to F3 as late as we did, but we showed really good pace. I think we were one of the quickest full stop throughout the season, especially in the races, but for whatever reason we had a lot of bad luck go our way and the results certainly didn't show how quick we are.

“I've got a wealth of knowledge at my fingertips and for sure, I'll be using it to my advantage”



Browning's speed hasn't been reflected in results

GALLOWAY/MOTORSPORT IMAGES

I've won a few championships in the past and it's all about putting it all together, being consistent and bagging the points every time. And that's the focus going into next year.

We've been super-quick in practice quite a lot. We've topped a lot of practice sheets and we've just come back from Barcelona testing where we were P1 on the first day. So testing is going well, it's just about taking this into qualifying. I think the racing performances have been pretty good, especially when we managed to stay on track. I look back to the first race weekend in Bahrain and we came from 17th to fifth in the feature race. In Monaco we finished just off the podium in fourth, which was a little bit gutting, but something we're going to be definitely aiming to correct for next year.

I've been a member of the BRDC SuperStars programme for the past two years now and it's really awesome. The training days have been brilliant and it's always great to have the opportunity to spend time with drivers on a similar level or pushing for a similar goal. It really helps to increase the rate of development if you're able to push alongside the other young drivers. Also, getting the opportunity to speak to Andy Meyrick, who runs the programme for the BRDC, and get some advice on what we should do as we climb the ladder is very valuable.

It was awesome to join the Williams Racing Driver Academy this year. It's been a massive help. Being introduced to the team and having the opportunity to learn from them, having the opportunity to go on a Formula 1 simulator, it's big. It was a dream to join the junior programme and to have the once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to shoot for the stars and go for F1. Now it's in my hands to deliver and to put it all together.

I'll take a step closer to that dream next week when I get to claim my prize for winning last year's Award. I'm very, very excited to be testing the Aston Martin F1 car. The first time jumping in an F1 car is going to be special. I'll have a lot of support with family, friends and the people who have helped me along the way. It will probably be one of the highlights of my career so far. Jumping into an F1 car is something that not many people get to do and it's an absolutely amazing prize.

The team at Williams have given me some tips ahead of the test. I've got a wealth of knowledge at my fingertips and for sure, I'll be using it to my advantage to go into the test. I won't be going in underprepared. I think I've done as much as I can, I'm getting my neck in order, and it should be a good test.

I'm looking forward to seeing what the four finalists [Taylor Barnard, Arvid Lindblad, Joseph Loake and Callum Voisin] go through for this year's Award. It's a high-pressure environment and you really have to deliver, so it's going to be super-interesting to watch from an outside perspective. 🌟

YOUR SAY

The existing teams seem to believe they are solely responsible for the current popularity of F1. They are wrong

ANDREW NIMMO

Best way forward for F1 is to open up

The myopic attitude of the current grandee team managers to the potential arrival of Andretti as a new fellow competitor is very disappointing. It is a good job the then existing teams were more welcoming in 1996 when Stewart Grand Prix joined their ranks, otherwise where would Red Bull be now? Likewise, when Eddie Jordan started his own team in 1991, he was welcomed in the paddock and his original determination now lives on, after a number of different labels, as the Aston Martin F1 team. Similarly, Ken Tyrrell entered Formula 1 in 1968 before becoming a constructor in 1970 and the spirit of the Tyrrell Racing Organisation now lives on, via BAT, Honda and Brawn, as the Mercedes team. Further down the pecking order, Alpine owes its place in the sport to Toleman, via Benetton.

The existing teams seem to believe they are solely responsible for the current popularity of F1 and want any new entrants to compensate them for the potential dilution of their share of the spoils. They are wrong – the sport owes a great deal more to its history than to its current participants. The success of the film *Rush*, which reached an audience way beyond fans of the sport, exemplifies the importance of F1 folklore but was really a tale of the disparate personalities of two of the sport's greatest exponents, Hunt and Lauda. Whether a similarly successful

film could be made in the future is in doubt as *Rush* is set in an era before racing drivers were routinely lobotomised early in their careers by one-size-fits-all media training.

Predictability inevitably results in waning interest and the sport has never been more predictable. The FIA's response to any one team's dominance is to make the rulebook ever more prescriptive so the potential for ingenuity to threaten the status quo is greatly reduced. We need more standout feelgood moments, like James Hunt winning the Dutch GP for Hesketh or Roberto Moreno qualifying the Andrea Moda at Monaco (pictured). F1 as it is today is too formulaic. The sport needs to improve its act and the best way to do that is to open it up, not restrict it further.

Andrew Nimmo
Teddington

Sportscar racing gives fans what they want

Another announcement of a new team entering the top class of sportscar racing – this time Aston Martin has decided (finally) to race the stunning Valkyrie for overall honours, both in the WEC and IMSA championships (Autosport, 5 October).

Contrast this to F1, and the closed-shop mentality towards new teams being allowed to enter; how many manufacturers, and up and coming drivers, will decide to turn their backs on trying to get to F1, and go the sportscar route in future?

Could F1's desire to make entry almost impossible be its undoing? Fans want more cars on the grid. Sportscar racing is giving what the fans want, will F1 do the same?

Michael Skeet
Lordswood, Southampton

Time for Lance Stroll to take a walk?

I fear Lawrence Stroll has a difficult decision to make – is Aston Martin destined for the very pinnacle of F1 or is it a vanity project for his son? I say this with some sadness but, given Lance's performances this season, I suspect the two are becoming mutually exclusive.

Simon Yates
By email



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Leclerc: My Ferrari F1 title dream is still on

This season hasn't gone to plan for the 2022 runner-up, but Charles Leclerc is still convinced Ferrari is the right place to be as he approaches 100 appearances with the squad

ALEX KALINAUCKAS

PHOTOGRAPHY  **motorsport
IMAGES**

The 2023 Formula 1 season feels very familiar to Charles Leclerc. The Ferrari driver started the year expecting huge, glittering things after taking major steps towards his world championship ambition the year before – a season where the team's frailties and his own errors proved costly. But, despite a pre-season of positive speculation about his and Ferrari's chances, testing revealed them to be rather dashed. For 2023, read 2020.

That year, Ferrari's challenger was designed to make up for its predecessor's low-speed-corner weaknesses. But the controversial FIA engine settlement meant Ferrari's power unit was unexpectedly down on top-end punch. It would be two years before the team's engine grunt was challenging Honda and Mercedes again, by which time F1's chassis rules had moved on to something else entirely and the team was suddenly back in play for victory.

"The motivation was extremely high," Leclerc says of his 2023 pre-season expectations. "And obviously, there was the momentum of last season where we finished second in the drivers' championship, second in the constructors' championship – you've got one target from that moment onwards. Do a step forward. Become a world champion this year – both drivers' and constructors'."

"Then you get to the first race and you understand that it might be a lot more difficult than that."

It was clear in pre-season testing in Bahrain that Ferrari suspected it was in trouble for 2023. The team had worked to improve aero efficiency in the SF-23 after the Red Bull drivers had regularly come past with ease on the straights last year, but the suggestion was that this had come at a cost to corner speed. Leclerc and team-mate Carlos Sainz moved to downplay expectations. Come the first race weekend, Leclerc challenged Max Verstappen for pole – his one-lap strengths on full display once again – but ended up only third on the grid.

The race revealed the sheer scale of the task facing Ferrari and the rest against Red Bull, as Verstappen waltzed off into the distance, while inferior tyre-degradation levels cost Leclerc against the slow-starting Sergio Perez. Then came the engine electrics failure in Jeddah that also led to a grid penalty.

The campaign's story was already established: Ferrari was once again building back, just as it had been after Leclerc's breakthrough season in red in 2019.

Leclerc himself makes the 2020 comparison. And that was another year when he appeared to react to the challenge of a poor car in his own thrillingly wild style – but overdoing it at times and ending up in more than one shunt. In 2023, this started with his Melbourne clash with Lance Stroll and early retirement, followed by his Baku (sprint)

and Miami qualifying crashes. In Baku, he at least brilliantly nailed a pair of poles at a track where he has always gone very well.

"You need to accept it," explained Leclerc, speaking to Motorsport.com F1 editor Jonathan Noble back in the summer, of how a top F1 team works onwards from the disappointment of discovering it isn't racing where it had hoped to be. "We all went through it with the whole team in 2020, where the results weren't as good as what we were expecting at the beginning of the season. And it's difficult."

"It very often doesn't come from only one thing, it's multiple things that made a small difference in the wrong direction. And you need to pinpoint those things and work on them only and not put everything in question."

"But I believe we have done a good job this time. In 2020, I felt like it was a bit more difficult to find this path again. But straight away this year, I felt like we were on it and working in the right direction. Then [the other teams are] really close and [have] done steps forward. So, it's not easy."

Indeed, Ferrari's 2023 campaign has been complicated by, at times, Aston Martin, Mercedes and now McLaren supplanting it as Red Bull's closest challenger. The turbulent change behind the leading team means those squads have ended up taking points off each other, with Mercedes currently leading the battle for the distant second place in the constructors' championship by 28 points over Ferrari. Aston Martin is just 68 points further back with five rounds remaining. >>



Leclerc at Ferrari

Starts **98**

Wins **5**

Poles **20**

Fastest laps **7**

Points **974**



HONE

After some strong Sainz races, Leclerc was back on top at superb Suzuka



Ferrari realised the scale of the challenge ahead in Bahrain as RB19 dominated

DUNBAR



New boss Vasseur has created "bubble" to avoid distractions

TRIENITZ



Leclerc's pure speed was on display again on streets of Baku

SUTTON

But several of Ferrari's weaknesses in 2023 are similar to those that ended up being so costly for Leclerc in 2022. He notes the "strange" imbalance of the SF-23 being "really quick [in qualifying, then] we arrive in a race and we struggle a lot". Red Bull's RB19 has a similar imbalance, but its strengths on long-stint tyre life are rewarded at the important time: when points are on offer. The issue that has really hurt Leclerc this time is that the reworked Ferrari package, initially set up to run on the edge of control in terms of the oversteer he prefers, has contributed to his many wild moments.

In the cost cap era, Ferrari and co cannot just try to spend their way out of trouble with aggressive car development. Ferrari initially suggested it would not change the car concept that the early races of 2023 had revealed was still inferior to Red Bull's own class-leading approach and was indeed harder to drive, before it finally switched to the much-vaunted downwash sidepod development path at June's Spanish Grand Prix. But, like with Mercedes' similar story, there remains more development potential in the critical floor and suspension areas that will theoretically take a winter reset to put right in Ferrari's 2024 machine.

Leclerc explains that this season has therefore mainly been about identifying the "two/three things that we had to work on in order to improve – mostly race pace". "Now it's very clear what is the direction we need to take," he adds. "It's taking time because in F1 it's not from one day to the other that you can improve. But we've done some steps forward. We need to do some others because the road is still long to catch Red Bull back."

Ferrari knows its car works well enough in qualifying – even if Verstappen so far leads Leclerc, Sainz and Perez by 10 poles to their respective doubles. But all through the season's early rounds, it was clear that, like 2022's F1-75, the SF-23 was chewing through its rubber to a far greater extent than its rivals. But things got better from Spain in early June, with Ferrari insiders suggesting that the efforts the team made on setting up its reworked design for the main event at F1's laboratory track and a subsequent Pirelli tyre test there were key to its subsequent upturn in form.

Further floor and front-wing changes followed in Austria, where Leclerc was back to bothering Verstappen in GP qualifying and scored his second podium of the season after his third place in Baku. He even led the main event at Red Bull's track – albeit thanks to the handy timing of a virtual safety car period. Strategy and pitstop challenges at Silverstone and the Hungaroring came next, but then Ferrari headed into the summer break on something of a surprise high, again delivered by Leclerc.

This was his race pace in the Belgian GP. There he'd been artificially boosted to his 20th F1 career pole by Verstappen's gearbox-change grid penalty and was never expected to keep

“For 2024, there are no doubts in everybody's mind, the target is to be back on top and fighting Red Bull”

Perez or the recovering Dutchman behind for long. Mercedes was also confident that Lewis Hamilton would be passing the polesitter, but Leclerc not only saw off the seven-time world champion's early attentions, but he then pulled away.

As it has worked on its car weaknesses, Leclerc says Ferrari has been boosted this year by team boss Fred Vasseur's policy of creating "a bubble" to avoid "being too much influenced on what's happening outside" since he joined from Alfa Romeo/Sauber in January.

For Vasseur, this has meant fronting up to Ferrari's issues more directly than did his predecessor Mattia Binotto, creating more of a shield for Leclerc and Sainz while at the same time opening up in the media. This hasn't meant a massive communication revolution, but the feeling inside Ferrari is that it has faced less criticism than it did when its 2022 championship challenge imploded.



Leclerc needs to be one step ahead of Sainz in team battle

But there is no better way to change a narrative than by improving results, and Ferrari felt that its progress in that critical race tyre management sphere continued at Zandvoort after the summer break. There, Sainz felt he delivered "one of [his] best drives of the season". Then on home turf at the Italian GP, Ferrari produced a Monza-specific car package, with slender rear wings combining with fresh engine grunt. The result was a sensational Sainz pole and early battle with Verstappen at the head of the pack before the Spaniard and Leclerc engaged in a thrilling scrap for the final podium spot behind the recovering Perez. And, of course, Sainz went even better at Singapore, winning from pole on the one off-colour weekend Red Bull has produced so far in 2023.

But, even though the SF-23 will now go down as an F1 winner, Leclerc reckons that the work Ferrari will put into it until the close of this season won't be enough to topple Red Bull for good. As Verstappen's Suzuka domination rather proved...

"For 2024, there are no doubts in everybody's mind, the target is to be back on top and fighting Red Bull," Leclerc states. "I believe realistically, and this is only my opinion, that before the end of the year, we won't be able to catch Red Bull. But the target will be at least to be in front of McLaren, Mercedes and Aston Martin."

It's not just the overall Ferrari story that needs addressing. Leclerc is currently not only behind Sainz in many observers' considerations of 2023, but also sits one place and eight points behind him in the drivers' standings. Sainz also shone brightest on Ferrari's biggest chances so far at Monza and in Singapore. In addition to Leclerc's early season crashes – and his contact-filled Zandvoort weekend – he surprisingly struggled in the mixed conditions that hit many of the mid-season rounds, while his team-mate did not. On this, Leclerc felt that he was being too aggressive for what the tyres require in such circumstances. This was behind his poor qualifying results for the Austria sprint and in Montreal.

Leclerc has also recently opened up about how those post-Spain tweaks on set-up choices to improve tyre management and make >>



MAUGER

Third in Baku one of only three GP podiums so far this campaign



COATES

There were too many incidents in Leclerc's frustrating 2020 season...



TEE

...but he feels things are better this time despite further crashes



Developments arrived for Spanish GP as Ferrari pushes to catch Red Bull

GRANT

the SF-23 more predictable at flying-lap speed have added understeer he doesn't like and struggles to drive around.

With all that in mind, working back to regularly being Ferrari's leading driver should now be a top target, as well as having a smooth end to the campaign to build momentum for 2024 as he nears 100 GP appearances for the team. He took a big step on both these fronts last month in Japan, leading Sainz in qualifying and the race at Suzuka. That remains one of F1's top tests of driver skills, since its demanding layout exposes cornering commitment, and its abrasive surface means careful tyre management is required in the race. Although Sainz was very good in these areas, Leclerc was better.

It's also worth recalling Leclerc's role in Sainz's Singapore win, where he pushed to start on soft tyres in a successful bid to jump Mercedes driver George Russell, even though Leclerc knew that would force him into a rear-gunner role. He subsequently followed Ferrari's instructions early in the action-packed Marina Bay race, but was then undone having to wait for other cars to pass in the critical safety car pitstop period. Climbing engine temperatures then dropped him from the lead fight that Sainz would coolly and cleverly go on to win.

But that loyal approach should, in theory, also serve Leclerc well in what is now set to be a critical time for his Ferrari and overall F1 future. With the 2024 campaign now essentially in sight, the just-turned-26-year-old will then be entering the final year of the five-season contract extension he sealed at the end of his first campaign in red back in 2019. In the early summer, Leclerc revealed that he and Ferrari were "starting slowly to speak about" a new deal to

"It is clear that we are not happy with the situation we are in. But I love Ferrari. It feels like home to me"

keep him in place beyond 2024, but in reality this amounted to little more than jokes within the Maranello camp. Rumours through the summer break that he'd signed a new five-year contract worth £150million turned out to be false, leading Leclerc to joke: "I wish I did this deal because it looks like a good deal!"

Instead, the Monegasque is set to sit down with Vasseur come the season's end and try to find a new arrangement at the same time as Sainz, who is also out of contract from the end of 2024.

Leclerc acknowledges that "every driver has considered their different options, once they get the option", regarding a potential shock move to another squad. This follows complimentary talk of his abilities from Mercedes boss Toto Wolff early in 2023, while Hamilton's (now concluded) contract extension discussion continued, and an apparent sounding out on his availability from Aston Martin Group CEO Martin Whitmarsh.

The reality is, however, that the driver market is currently a closed shop at F1's other top squads. So, unless Leclerc is willing to risk letting his Ferrari contract run down and the team potentially going elsewhere for 2025 while he hopes for a surprise gap to appear elsewhere, doing a shorter new deal makes logical sense. So too, from a career security perspective if nothing else, would inking another long-term Ferrari contract.

After all, Leclerc is adamant that if he and the team can get things together, then winning a first world title with the squad that carried him through the single-seater ranks is still his ultimate aim. "I always loved Ferrari," he says. "It's always been my dream being here. And it's my dream still now. It is clear, I think for everybody within the team, that we are not happy with the situation we are in today – in that we want to win. But I love Ferrari. It feels like home to me.

"My first target and my first dream is to become a world champion with Ferrari – more than anything else. So, if there's a slight opportunity for it to happen, I will have no doubt about pushing to stay here." ❁

LECLERC ON VERSTAPPEN



The list of Max Verstappen's Formula 1 title rivals is very short: Lewis Hamilton, Charles Leclerc. The former famously missed out in the controversial 2021 contest, while the latter led Ferrari's faltering charge a year ago. But Leclerc's history with Verstappen goes back over a decade to their rise through the karting world as, at times, bitter rivals, while Hamilton was already an F1 world champion.

Verstappen versus Hamilton is blockbuster viewing – even if their 2023 skirmishes have had none of the colourful excitement of 2021 nor even shades of their coming-together in Brazil last year. But when it comes to racing drivers he's competed against earlier in his career, Verstappen has a much cleaner track record. He thinks it's because they know each other better – that things are more predictable. It could be suggested he really thinks he's a cut above Leclerc and co, but when it comes to squaring off against another true F1 great, Verstappen isn't quite so sure about Hamilton...

That's not to say Verstappen versus Leclerc battles haven't got spicy over the years in F1. Recall here the 2019 Austrian Grand Prix, where Leclerc, still chasing his first F1 victory, had long led from pole, only to be defeated late on by Verstappen's bolshy racecraft. Leclerc would go on to replicate such uncompromising tactics later that year in beating Hamilton at Monza. But the wheel-to-wheel battles in early 2022 – particularly in Bahrain and Austria – when Verstappen and Leclerc were the leading contenders for the crown that would ultimately go to the Dutchman were thrilling and fair.

So, what does Leclerc make of Verstappen overall?

"I think Max is a great driver," he says. "And I don't think many people doubt that. The difference between him and Checo [Perez] is big. For me outside the team it is very difficult to tell you the situation. I don't know how they are working through that.

"It is true that it looks sometimes a bit bigger than what I would expect, but on the other hand Max is an incredible driver and it's probably very difficult to be the driver alongside him."

"MAX IS A GREAT DRIVER. IT'S PROBABLY VERY DIFFICULT TO BE THE DRIVER ALONGSIDE HIM"



Leclerc's Ferrari career in pictures

CHARLES LECLERC is approaching 100 Formula 1 appearances with Ferrari, the team that brought him through the junior ranks to consecutive GP3 and Formula 2 titles, as well as assisting his grand prix debut with Sauber in 2018.

Back in the summer, Autosport sat down with Leclerc to take a trip through the best memories of his career so far at Ferrari. The 26-year-old can be considered the team's first junior driver success story, since he's the only racer to rise to represent Ferrari in F1 since its Driver Academy was founded back in 2009.

Here's what Leclerc makes of some of the standout moments along the way...



2017 MONZA FORMULA 2 ROUND

Results:

17th (feature race)

9th (sprint)

I remember it was one of my best friends actually, Antonio Fuoco [now a Ferrari World Endurance Championship driver after racing alongside Leclerc in F2 with Prema Racing], that won the race on the Sunday, so I was really happy for him. Disappointed for myself because the weekend didn't go the way I wanted. It's always exciting for us to go to Monza – even being a Ferrari Academy driver. I remember I had a lot of support there and as an F2 driver, you don't really expect it. So, it was a really nice experience overall. Unfortunately, just the

weekend didn't go as planned.

I knew at that point I was doing a good job in F2. I mean, it was difficult to do much better! I was winning races, I was leading the championship, so that's what I had to do. But then to get into F1, you also need to arrive at the right time – there needs to be a place in F1. And I didn't know whether there was going to be a place for me. At the end, there was at the end of that year [with Sauber].

At the time I remember I was doing a lot of simulator work for the [Ferrari] F1 team. I remember also that year that Seb [Vettel] had written me a letter to thank me for all the hard work I had done in the simulator, which was a really nice surprise. I definitely did not even imagine to be his team-mate two years after that at Ferrari.





2019 ITALIAN GP MONZA

Started: **1st**

Result: **1st**

Monza. That was really special. I think it remains the best memory of my career. The win there, with the amount of people there, was absolutely incredible. But actually [the view] of the fans goes all the way on the [start/finish] straight. It was right after my first victory

in F1 [at Spa 2019] that obviously was in difficult circumstances, having lost Anthoine [Hubert, in the fatal F2 crash] on the Saturday.

But then we came to Monza under a lot of pressure. The whole week you have a lot of pressure around the team because you can feel that it's not a normal race and that the whole country is behind you. Everybody expected us to do a great result there and we managed to do it anyway, which was amazing. The images of the podium in Monza

will remain in my mind forever.

The racing itself was really difficult because I had Lewis [Hamilton] extremely close to me most of the time, also Valtteri [Bottas] towards the end of the race. [At Spa] Hamilton came back towards the end of the race, but it wasn't enough for us to have a proper fight on track. At Monza, we had a fight basically the whole race. It was tricky. I was really on the limit. Everything went well and we managed to bring the trophy home,

which was most important.

You change your overall race approach with experience, I think, but I don't leave any more room to anybody on track! Then it depends also what you are fighting for because sometimes we are in very different positions. Sometimes [Hamilton] has a much stronger race car and that doesn't make sense to have a big fight. But I'm pretty sure that whenever we find ourselves fighting for wins again, I will fight him just as hard.

»
2022 AUSTRALIAN GP
MELBOURNE

Started: 1st
Result: 1st

There's something with my eyes when I'm happy – you can see straight away! Australia. That was also a very special moment because that was the third race of the season and we were obviously leading the championship [with] a completely new car and after two very difficult years. So, it was very nice. We had just done a really good race showing really good pace. Good memories.

I was definitely thinking about having the fastest lap [this race is Leclerc's only career grand slam of leading every lap from pole, with the fastest lap]. I think the team was not a big fan of doing it. But anyway I went for it when I knew what the lap time was. It's such a good position to be in. We had a great car. I was at ease with the car and there's just something different whenever you have a car that is capable of winning. I think you always also have something extra as a driver. Or at least this is the way I feel whenever I know that the win is on the table, you always have something extra within you. And it was a very special weekend. It went really straightforward.

It was so good, especially again after two very difficult years with the team in 2020 and 2021, to see that all the hard work we had put in to prepare the season was paying off and that we were finally back out with a car that was capable of winning.



DUNBAR/MOTORSPORT IMAGES

«
2023 BAHRAIN GP

Started: 3rd
Result: Retired

This is Valeria [Loret, Shell's delivery manager motorsport], a person that we see very often at the track in the Shell Track lab. She is one of the engineers that helps us to analyse the fuel and oil samples. It's a very important part for our performance. Shell and Scuderia Ferrari have been partners for a very long time. It's a partnership that is really well recognised in the paddock because it's been so long – more than 70 years.

You can really feel that within the team. That there's this constant work and talks with Valeria because

every little detail counts and they obviously analyse every single detail of the fuel and oil, and adapt it to the slight changes of conditions in order to always be the best in optimising our package, which eventually makes a difference in F1. And it's amazing to have such an incredible team helping us with all of that and to be trusting them 100%.

I don't know all of the people working in Ferrari, but we are always trying to regroup [with] each other after races and we speak to the whole team, which is amazing. At the track I try to speak to most of the guys there because they are all very important parts of the team. And if everybody tries to make a small difference, then it makes a huge difference at the end. And teamwork is everything.



FERRARI

Autosport would like to thank Shell for facilitating this interview.



2023 AUSTRIAN GP RED BULL RING

Started: **2nd**

Result: **2nd**

That was nice, because we had a difficult first part of the season – apart from Baku, where we had a good performance [and Leclerc

finished third]. Then in Barcelona, we brought some upgrades and then in Canada that went in the right direction in the race and we came back and we made up quite a few places. Then in Austria, back on the podium and closer to where we want to be in terms of pace compared to the Red Bull. So, that was positive.

It's also one of my favourite tracks. It felt good for the whole team, I think, to be back on the podium and to at least show positive signs that we were working in the right direction. Together with Silverstone, they are my two favourite tracks – non-city tracks. Mostly because of the high-speed corners.



YouTube

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Watch the full interview on YouTube



Vandoorne and Vergne have both prioritised Formula E in schedule clashes with WEC



FORMULA E

THE PENSKE TEAM THAT NEEDS TO DO BETTER

DS Penske pair Jean-Eric Vergne and Stoffel Vandoorne ended the 2023 Formula E season amid low morale. But positivity is back as they look ahead to the next campaign

STEFAN MACKLEY

 PHOTOGRAPHY  **motorsport**
IMAGES

Two months is a long time in motorsport, especially when that's between seasons, with the results of the previous campaign consigned to the past as new optimism builds for the year ahead. There was certainly plenty of optimism, smiles and even laughs among DS Penske drivers Jean-Eric Vergne and Stoffel Vandoorne during the team's recent press round table. It was here where both drivers were confirmed as staying with the Formula E team for a second season.

The Penske name is synonymous with success in motorsport and Jay Penske, son of IndyCar tycoon Roger, headed the team when it joined the championship as Dragon from the outset back in 2014. Under its old guise, the team struggled for success, recording only two wins during eight seasons – both of which came in the first two years – as it went up against the might of the manufacturer-backed operations.

Enter DS, a brand that joined Formula E ahead of the 2015-16 season before its powertrain partnership with Techeetah helped guide it to back-to-back drivers' and teams' titles between 2018 and 2020. With that team not currently racing, a large number of its staff have moved over to DS Penske, including Penske's race-winning engineer Nigel Beresford who, after a stint in the US, became integral to Dragon's early success and subsequently at Techeetah.

Vergne, whose second FE title came with DS Techeetah, says the collaboration between DS and Penske has come together well over the past 12 months. "I think the integration of DS with Penske has been quite easy in a way," reflects the Frenchman. "From the first race, everything was working fine within the engineering department, marketing and communication. That gave us the chance already to start working as soon as possible on the things that mattered the most, which is the performance of the car. It's

fair to say that the performance was not at the level we expected."

That last point struck a home truth between the generally positive answers and good vibes during the interview, and hinted at a far different tone emerging from the DS Penske camp just two months earlier. When the 2023 championship came to a close in London, both Vergne and Vandoorne were blunt in their assessments of how the most recent campaign had gone.

"We can't hide – we've simply been lacking pure performance compared to our competitors," said Vandoorne when asked in London about DS Penske's performance. "There's been weekends where we've been stronger than others. Jean-Eric had a good run at the start of the year where things were kind of coming together, and he managed to execute on that. But then the second part of the year has just been very difficult. We've been qualifying quite far back, we've not really been racing at the front let's say, and just generally been quite far behind the competition."

Things had started promisingly, the maiden season of the partnership between DS and Penske yielding a win in the fourth race after Vergne had put in an incredible defensive drive in Hyderabad to hold off Nick Cassidy's more energy-efficient Envision Jaguar for victory. The ex-F1 racer almost made it back-to-back wins next time out in Cape Town, only losing the lead to Antonio Felix da Costa's Porsche on the penultimate lap with arguably the overtaking move of the season.

The result left Vergne third in the standings, just 30 points behind early championship leader Pascal Wehrlein and riding a wave of momentum. Five more points finishes, including another podium in Berlin, followed, but even by that stage Vergne had called on his team "to wake up" given its comparative lack of performance against Jaguar and Porsche. Arguably it was the rallying call of a driver who knew that any hope of the championship was slipping away, and so it proved, with only >>



Team's early incarnation
Dragon struggled for
success from the off



Scope to develop Gen3 car is
strictly limited for now, so team's
focus will be on software



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one further points finish in the final six races leaving him fifth in the drivers' standings. It was even worse for team-mate Vandoorne, the reigning champion failing to reach the podium across all 16 races and finishing outside the top 10 in the standings.

The nadir came in Portland, where both DS Penskes were required to start from the pits after the team was found to have used RFID scanning equipment in the pitlane during practice. The insinuation of spying on other teams prompted Vergne to angrily speak out, for which he was handed a suspended fine as morale within the team hit its lowest point. "Confidence is not something I've seen for a long time lately," said Vergne in London. "It's time to make some changes because we cannot continue as a team to perform like this. It's good that we're going to have a few months' break and regroup and work for next year. I cannot accept to be in the position and neither can the team, so we have to do something about it and we're definitely not going to stay where we are."

"We worked very hard this year, and nothing seemed to have worked so we need to change direction or try different things. It's not good enough. We're not going to stay where we are because it's not in our DNA and it's especially not in my DNA."

Such strong words in public would not have gone unsaid behind closed doors, and no doubt critical talks between the drivers and team management will have taken place over the past two months.





Vergne's early 2023 spike in form included victory in Hyderabad

STALEY

“We’re not going to stay where we are because it’s not in our DNA and it’s especially not in my DNA”

Although morale may be higher than it once was, the team's performance on track could well languish behind that of pacesetters Jaguar and Porsche, with various aspects of the Gen3 car homologated until at least the 2024-25 season. “As we know, the regulations stay the same so there is not much we can change on the car, but on the software side there is quite a lot of unlimited options at our disposal,” argues Vergne. “It’s a question of putting the finger on the right thing to improve on the car, but on that I have full confidence together with DS and Penske. We are here to work in the long term together.”

Talk of long-term ambitions is certainly one reason why both Vergne and Vandoorne have remained with the team for next season. Both could have looked to move away if they felt DS Penske was not capable of giving them a machine to fight at the front, in a similar vein to fellow former champion Lucas di Grassi's departure from Mahindra. Vergne and Vandoorne have proven capable of reaching the very top of Formula E with their respective titles, so options elsewhere on the grid would have been likely...

Arguably the strongest sign of their support for the DS Penske project is where their priorities lie for the upcoming campaign. As things stand there are three clashes between the FE schedule and their Peugeot commitments in the World Endurance Championship. And Vergne and Vandoorne – the Belgian has earned a full-time drive in the 9X8 Hypercar for the first time in 2024 – have stated that they will prioritise FE over any sportscar commitments.

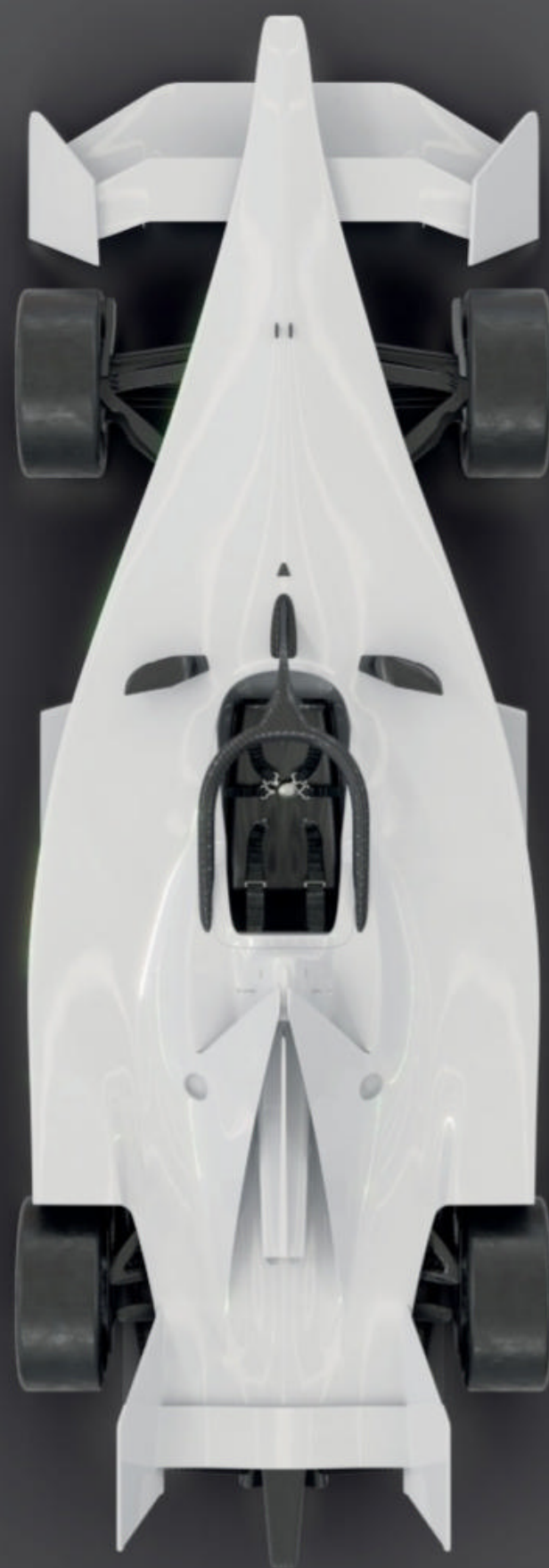
Optimism remains within the squad heading into the season, which gets under way with pre-season testing at Valencia later this month, and there are positives to take, especially since the team was the nearest challenger to Jaguar and Porsche last season. DS, Penske, Vergne and Vandoorne have all proven to be winners and, in theory at least, there's no reason why that can't be repeated – but it's an uphill struggle that won't get any easier.

“We have to first of all understand all the progress that we've made with the car,” says Vergne. “We also have to understand the progress the other teams have made because they haven't been on holiday all that time without working. So we can expect the strong teams to be even stronger. We want to win the championship but so does everybody else. We need to take it step by step, race after race. This year we're clearly the underdogs.” ❄

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INDYCAR

ANDRETTI'S NEW STAR IS IN THE PINK

Kyle Kirkwood won twice during a breakout IndyCar season with Andretti Autosport. Now he needs to add consistency – and not get distracted by F1...

JOEY BARNES

PHOTOGRAPHY  motorsport
IMAGES



There's no doubt that Kyle Kirkwood was one of the breakout stars of the IndyCar Series in 2023.

After a rookie campaign with AJ Foyt Racing in 2022, he joined Andretti Autosport and immediately made his presence known this past season by scoring a pair of victories – the only driver to find the podium's top step from a team that included Colton Herta and Romain Grosjean.

But Kirkwood's showing was the epitome of feast or famine. Those wins – at Long Beach and Nashville – stood as his only top five results from 17 rounds en route to 11th in the championship standings. "I bounced back and forth from [what could be considered] a good year, almost between like an A-, to a D-, if you look at the season as a whole," admits the 24-year-old. "It's hard to separate and think about it; somewhere in the B- range. The only reason why it's [that high] is because of the two wins that we got. Otherwise, it'd be pretty deep in the barely-get-a-degree mindset."

While scoring victories in North America's premier open-wheel championship provided a sense of relief, there were far too many occasions when he ended up being involved in "some stupid incident". "We had too many of those this year," Kirkwood continues with characteristic honesty. "I'm thankful for those two wins. That kept our season alive. Everyone from an outside standpoint looking in and seeing that we got those two wins would say, 'Oh, well, congrats on the season. It was a great year for you, blah, blah, blah.' I mean, two of the races were great, but there was a lot of other races that weren't so great, and we should have been able to capitalise a lot more on them."

Andretti has long been considered part of the 'Big Three' teams alongside Chip Ganassi Racing and Team Penske. But the wins and titles haven't come as frequently as for the two rival squads. The last IndyCar Series championship for Andretti came in 2012 courtesy of Ryan Hunter-Reay. Since then, Ganassi has amassed



Kirkwood celebrated his second IndyCar win of the season on the streets of Nashville

BAKER

GALSTAD

“Two of the races were great, but a lot of others weren’t, and we should have capitalised a lot more on them”

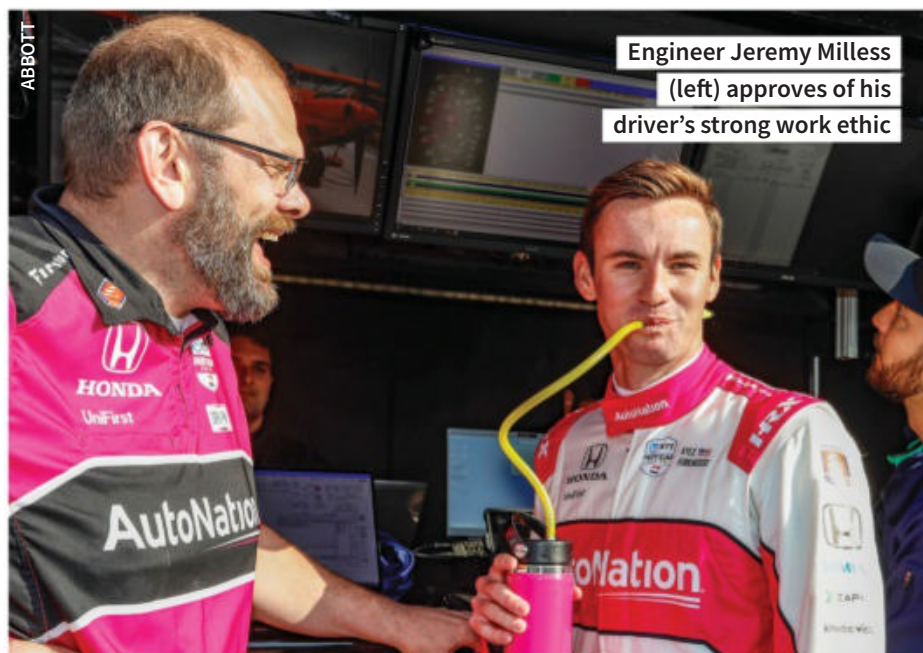
six titles while Penske drivers have claimed five.

Although 2023 remained part of that theme as Ganassi stormed to the championship with Alex Palou, there were hints of a resurgence out of Andretti that also came with growing pains. “I think earlier in the season it was tyre degradation, but I feel like by the end of the year we had a great handle on that, which seemed to be a weakness of Andretti the past few years before I was even with the team,” Kirkwood explains. “That it’s ever-changing is the frustrating thing. It’s not just one thing when

we show up to one of these events. The one thing that we thought we might have had a weakness in, which was tyre degradation, we got a handle on and then we show up again and it’s like, ‘OK, now it’s a different issue’ and then it’s a different issue from there. It’s tough to put a finger on.

“I think Andretti as a whole has as much if not more resources than Penske or Ganassi and they put probably a bigger effort in than either one of those teams with personnel, how much they do and how much the engineers care about the programme. That’s something that I’d never seen before when I joined the team this year. I’m sure because of that we will have a handle on it. We’re not far away.”

The Indianapolis 500 showcased the improvements, with both Kirkwood and team-mate Herta in the mix for victory. It ended in tears for both; Herta suffered woes at a pitstop, while Kirkwood’s car went upside-down in a violent crash after contact with Felix »



Engineer Jeremy Milless (left) approves of his driver's strong work ethic

“F1 has been the pinnacle of motorsports forever, so it would be hard to say no to that”

Rosenqvist with 17 laps remaining. “We’re constantly evolving and we’re figuring it out,” points out Kirkwood. “It’s just we’re still taking small steps at it.”

Over the course of this season, Kirkwood’s race engineer Jeremy Milless shared that his driver’s focus and study habits were relentless. For his part, the Floridian simply wants to leave no excuses and maximise every opportunity: “I always make sure that there’s nothing left on the table. If you don’t do everything you possibly can and you come up short, you’re always going to have something that’s eating at you, and you could have learned a situation that maybe caught you out or something like that because you didn’t put in the time. I always make sure I’m there when the engineers or any of the crew get there when the gates open, and I’m usually there until everyone leaves. A lot of times I just order dinner to the hotel so I can look at data and video to see what other people are doing and learn different things, watch old races and stuff like that to just indulge myself into the situation.”

Even with that determined work ethic, Kirkwood is quick to point out his weakness; being on the back foot with situations like fuel saving while trying to minimise losses of position, or even losing a spot and getting pushed into the marbles where there’s no grip. A big part of that reason comes down to a lack of experience.



During his time in the developmental ranks previously known as the Road to Indy – a three-step ladder programme consisting of USF2000, Indy Pro 2000 and Indy Lights – he was normally already set at the front of the field with more straightforward head-to-head battles, with none of those series running under the same guidelines with pitstops or strategy.

“That’s something that I’m still grasping,” reckons Kirkwood, who became the first driver ever to win the championship in all three junior formula categories. “It’s like I understand what to do, it’s just how do you do it? I feel like that’s similar to a lot of people, but that I struggle maybe more than some of the other guys that understand it a little bit better and know how to manage the risk in those situations.”

Meanwhile, Kirkwood’s progress comes while Andretti is in the midst of pursuing becoming the 11th team on the grid in



Callum Ilott rides over the top in Toronto. Kirkwood must iron out such trouble



Kirkwood leads
Marcus Ericsson (8)
and the rest at Long
Beach, where he
scored his first
IndyCar win

Formula 1. Should that happen, there is anticipation that he would be on the shortlist of considerations for a seat. “Yeah, I would hope that they would consider me,” muses Kirkwood. “But I think for me right now, I’m extremely happy in the situation that I’m in. I love being US-based. I love being able to go to Florida and the time off that you get in IndyCar versus F1. I like the minimal amount of travelling that you have here in IndyCar. There’s a lot of things in F1 that take away from... It’s an extreme change from IndyCar to F1, I think.

“That being said, I think growing up as a young kid in karting, that was always the number one thing that you wanted to do. You always looked up to F1, especially being in Florida where it’s very South American and European-based, in the karting scene.”

Kirkwood is close friends with current Williams driver Logan Sargeant, so he’s had a glimpse of the lifestyle and the commitment it takes to compete in F1. “Yeah, it would be hard for me to say no to anything over there,” he admits. “That just stems from being a young kid in karting and looking up to all the F1 guys. I remember thinking when I was really young that if I just drove an F1 car, that would make my life complete. Then I remember that changing and being like, ‘Oh, well if I drive an IndyCar and whatnot, then my life would be complete because this is the direction that I change towards.’”

The thought of IndyCar became apparent around the age of 12, and was attractive due to the style of racing, being more attainable and that it “looks more like a karting race than a manufacturing race”. It also kept him in school and near places he enjoys in the US. But the thought of F1 is tantalising... “If I had an opportunity in F1, I’d be probably obligated to go for it as I think most drivers in our series would say that. That’s not taking away from what IndyCar is, because I think IndyCar is the best series in the world for how the series treats its drivers, how the racing is, what the camaraderie is between drivers, the enjoyable places we go to, the quality of life – I think all of it is top notch in IndyCar. At the same time, F1 has been the pinnacle of motorsports forever, so it’d be hard to say no to that being a competitor.” ❧



DAVID MALUKAS THE NEW BOY AT McLAREN

David Malukas has endured a whirlwind transition to Arrow McLaren. The 22-year-old Chicago-born American-Lithuanian has landed one of the most coveted seats in the IndyCar Series after spending the past two seasons with Dale Coyne Racing, and the adjustment has kept him busy since the chequered flag fell on the 2023 season last month at Laguna Seca.

“Yes, there’s many new people that I feel like we’ve been doing a pretty good job getting to know, making connections,” says Malukas. “The way we’ve been doing the structures, it’s been different engineers and performance engineers going to each test. Kind of getting a feel for everybody and making relationships, building chemistry.

“The main thing is just trying to get used to all the new tools and resources that I have at hand. Arrow McLaren gives a lot, and I’m just trying to make sure I can use all of it to help on my side of things. It’s been very good.”

The frantic off-season for Malukas has already been well under way with testing the new hybrid engine set for 2024.

He enjoyed “a very good test” at Sebring International Raceway before the recent trial run at Indianapolis Motor Speedway. “It has more tools for the driver,” he recounts. “I feel like it can kind of separate the drivers from the best to the worst when it comes to hybrids. It’s another tool: time to regen, deploy and set up passes. I think it’s going to have a bit of a play at the Indy 500.”

All of the changes, including moving from Chicago to near the team’s shop in Indianapolis, are part of a surreal past month. “It’s been a rollercoaster,” Malukas sighs. “I’m still pinching myself that this is all happening, and it just makes me so happy. I walk around feeling like I’ve achieved another dream of mine that I’ve had since I was a kid.”

**“HYBRID IS
ANOTHER TOOL:
TIME TO REGEN,
DEPLOY AND
SET UP PASSES”**

RACE CENTRE



IMSA

Braun shows his brawn as Derani muscles out title rival

A late, great pass delivered victory for Meyer Shank Racing, while a nudge into Turn 1 allowed Pipo Derani and Alexander Sims to become champions

JOEY BARNES

PHOTOGRAPHY  motorsport
IMAGES

Meyer Shank Racing made a late surge for its Acura to strike for victory with Tom Blomqvist, Helio Castroneves and Colin Braun in a drama-filled Petit Le Mans, while Action Express Racing Cadillac duo Alexander Sims and Pipo Derani captured the first title of the IMSA SportsCar Championship's new GTP era.

The turning point of the 10-hour season finale at Road Atlanta came with an hour to go when Filipe Albuquerque, driving the Wayne Taylor Racing with Andretti Autosport Acura ARX-06, attacked Derani in the AXR Cadillac V-Series.R for second place in the pivotal championship-deciding battle. Albuquerque followed Derani through traffic as they exited Turn 12 and was able to get a run going down the front straight. As they approached Turn 1, Albuquerque attempted an outside pass and managed to get a bumper's length ahead, but Derani maintained the preferred

racing line. The two made slight contact, which was enough to send the Acura off course and head-on into the tyre barrier.

The crash sent Albuquerque to the hospital, where he was evaluated and later released. From there, the title was effectively decided in favour of Derani and co-driver Sims who, as usual for the endurance rounds, were joined by Jack Aitken.

"Unfortunate for Filipe, I think he made a desperate move," Derani said. "He's been trying to win this championship for a few years, and he truly deserves to, he's an amazing driver. He had enough time to be patient and wait a little bit and maybe use traffic or there was still another pitstop to go. He just tried a move on the outside of Turn 1, which we've seen in the past never works."

The incident triggered one of 13 cautions during the race, and this eradicated the healthy lead Renger van der Zande had established in the Chip Ganassi Racing-run Cadillac. The order

Meyer Shank
Acura ended IMSA
season as it started
with a major race
victory



GALSTAD



From left: Blomqvist,
Braun and Castroneves

was shaken up as half the frontrunners pitted for energy, but Ganassi opted to stay out, as did Meyer Shank Racing, whose Acura had been two laps down at one point after early race incidents and was now second in the hands of Braun. Harry Tincknell in the Proton Competition Porsche 963 and Mike Rockenfeller in the JDC-Miller Motorsports 963 also didn't pit and restarted third and fourth respectively. Derani was among those who pitted and restarted eighth in class, last of the remaining GTP cars.

The ensuing restart set up the final pass for the lead when Braun swept around the outside of van der Zande, who was trying to conserve energy, entering Turn 1. Braun was able to build a gap before a caution in the final minutes sealed the fate of the race and handed victory to Braun, Blomqvist and Castroneves. It was the third win of 2023 for MSR, after the Daytona 24 Hours and Mosport.

"I knew it was going to be kind of all to play for and I thought if



Brits Sims and Aitken
enjoy the moment

we could get clean air, we were going to be in good shape," related Braun. "So I just put it all on the line. We didn't have a whole lot to lose, and I knew it was going to be a big commitment. And yeah, it was awesome. It was nice to make it happen. Then I just kind of put my head down and tried to hold on."

The CGR Cadillac of van der Zande, Sebastien Bourdais and Scott Dixon finished second, while Tincknell, Gianmaria Bruni and Neel Jani delivered the first podium for a privateer Porsche team in third.

For the majority of the event, the Ganassi Cadillac was the class of the field. When looking back on the final restart, van der Zande had the appearance of someone who had just been punched in the gut. "It's a hard one to digest, really," rued the Dutchman. "I took it

"Filipe made a desperate move. He had enough time to be patient, wait a little bit, maybe use traffic"

real easy on that last restart, took a long time just to save as much fuel as I can. That's why we were so slow going down to the restart. I don't know where Colin got that grip from, but he had massive grip and sent it on the inside and he made the corner. I didn't expect that, but hats off for that move."

Despite not finishing the race, Albuquerque and Ricky Taylor (with Louis Deletraz alongside for the endurance events) still managed to claim second in the title race. Meanwhile, AXR was also able to secure the Endurance Cup title after finishing sixth at Road Atlanta. "It's been a crazy season, as always in IMSA," grinned Sims. "It's been so many highs, a few lows – as with every team – but it's a really, really emotional moment to tie up the championship... These two guys [Derani and Aitken] next to me have carried me most of the year. It's been mega."

Porsche Penske Motorsport's hopes of claiming the IMSA title in its first season racing the new 963 Hypercar came to a sad end, when Nick Tandy found himself caught up in other people's trouble. The domino-effect incident occurred on the downhill approach to Turn 10 in the second hour when an LMP2 car made contact with a Ferrari 296 GT3, which then spun into Brendan Iribe, whose Inception Racing McLaren struck Tandy's Porsche. The 2015 Le Mans winner was simply in the wrong place at the wrong time. Tandy was frustrated when his calls to be pulled out of a gravel trap initially fell on deaf ears, but he did eventually manage to coax his 963 back to the pits. The car returned to the race many laps down, only for Laurens Vanthoor to incur new damage in a crash at the Esses in the seventh hour. The sister car, in which two-time IndyCar champion Josef Newgarden joined Matt Campbell and Felipe Nasr, at least finished fourth.

Behind the #7 Porsche, 2009 Formula 1 world champion >>



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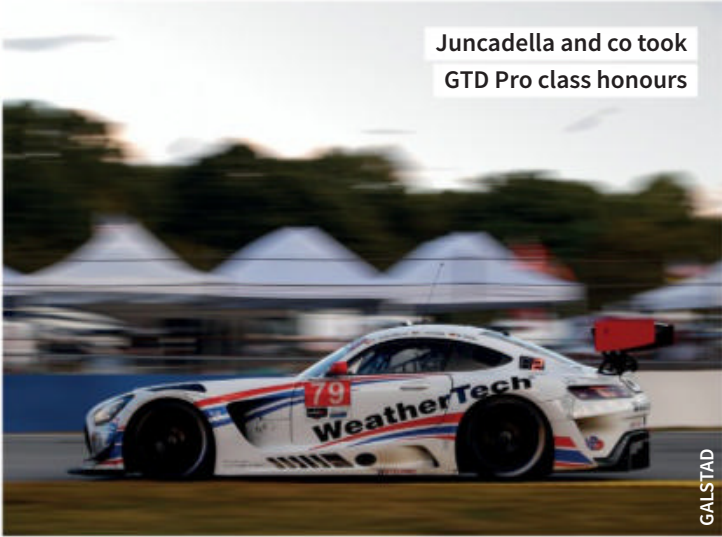
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“It’s the most chaotic race I’ve ever been in. Have I got the bug? Hell yeah!”

Jenson Button logged a solid fifth place on his IMSA debut. The 43-year-old shared the JDC/Miller Porsche with Rockenfeller and Tijmen van der Helm, as he considers his options for more sportscar racing action in 2024. “I really enjoyed the experience, the most chaotic race I’ve ever been in with four different classes of car,” grinned Button. “Have I got the Hypercar bug? Hell yeah!”

The other title contender, the BMW of Connor De Phillippi, Nick Yelloly and Sheldon van der Linde, was seventh. Derani had survived a light touch late on with the M Hybrid V8, and the two cars had also clashed earlier in the race when van der Linde hit Sims as they both ran a red light in the pitlane.

The PR1 Mathiasen Motorsports cast of Ben Keating and Paul-Loup Chatin (joined by Alex Quinn) managed to claim the LMP2 crown after overcoming multiple issues. Keating spun while leading late in the opening hour and put the squad in catch-up mode. Then, with roughly two hours to go, Cornishman Quinn appeared stranded in the gravel at Turn 10 but desperately pounded the gas and spun the tyres enough to grab traction.

Chatin took over for the run to the finish and was able to secure third place, which meant they bested Algarve Pro Racing’s race winners Ben Hanley and George Kurtz (joined by Nolan Siegel) for the title.

The GTD Pro title was wrapped up at the drop of the green flag by Vasser Sullivan Lexus RC F GT3 pairing Jack Hawksworth and Ben Barnicoat, who had Kyle Kirkwood co-driving for the endurance events. The Lexus crashed out of the race, which turned into a battle between the Proton-run WeatherTech Mercedes-AMG GT3 of Daniel Juncadella and Kevin Estre in the Pfaff Motorsports Porsche 911 GT3-R. Juncadella held on to claim victory for himself, Jules Gounon and Maro Engel ahead of Estre, who joined Pfaff’s regular pairing of Patrick Pilet and Klaus Bachler.

The regular GTD class went to the US RaceTronics Lamborghini in the hands of Loris Spinelli, Misha Goikhberg and Patrick Liddy. Honours in LMP3 went to Jr III Racing Ligier trio Dakota Dickerson, Garrett Grist and Bijoy Garg, with champion Gar Robinson sharing his Riley Motorsports Ligier to third with Felipe Fraga and Josh Burdon. 🏆



RESULTS PETIT LE MANS, ROAD ATLANTA (USA), 397 LAPS – 1008.38 MILES			
OVERALL			
POS	DRIVERS	CAR	TIME
1	Tom Blomqvist/Colin Braun/Helio Castroneves	Acura ARX-06	10h01m40.400s
2	Sebastien Bourdais/Renger van der Zande/Scott Dixon	Cadillac V-LMDh	+0.452s
3	Harry Tincknell/Gianmaria Bruni/Neel Jani	Porsche 963	+1.077s
4	Matt Campbell/Felipe Nasr/Josel Newgarden	Porsche 963	+1.825s
5	Tijmen van der Helm/Mike Rockenfeller/Jenson Button	Porsche 963	+2.165s
6	Pipo Derani/Alexander Sims/Jack Aitken	Cadillac V-LMDh	+2.927s
7	Connor De Phillippi/Nick Yelloly/Sheldon van der Linde	BMW M Hybrid V8	+4.275s
8	Philipp Eng/Augusto Farfus/Marco Wittmann	BMW M Hybrid V8	+4.839s
9	Ben Hanley/Nolan Siegel/George Kurtz	ORECA-Gibson 07	-6 laps
10	Giedo van der Garde/Josh Pierson/John Falb	ORECA-Gibson 07	-6 laps
LMP2 (391 LAPS)			
POS	DRIVERS	CAR	TIME
1	Ben Hanley/Nolan Siegel/George Kurtz	ORECA-Gibson 07	10h01m47.333s
2	Giedo van der Garde/Josh Pierson/John Falb	ORECA-Gibson 07	+0.996s
3	Paul-Loup Chatin/Alex Quinn/Ben Keating	ORECA-Gibson 07	+7.582s
LMP3 (379 LAPS)			
POS	DRIVERS	CAR	TIME
1	Dakota Dickerson/Garett Grist/Bijoy Garg	Ligier-Nissan JSP320	10h01m46.367s
2	Matt Bell/Lars Kern/Orey Fidani	Duqueine-Nissan M30-D08	+1.419s
3	Felipe Fraga/Josh Burdon/Gar Robinson	Ligier-Nissan JSP320	+9.343s
GTD PRO (370 LAPS)			
POS	DRIVERS	CAR	TIME
1	Daniel Juncadella/Jules Gounon/Maro Engel	Mercedes-AMG GT3 Evo	10h01m59.134s
2	Klaus Bachler/Patrick Pilet/Kevin Estre	Porsche 911 GT3-R	+0.980s
3	Alessandro Pier Guidi/Daniel Serra/Davide Rigon	Ferrari 296 GT3	+9.946s
GTD (370 LAPS)			
POS	DRIVERS	CAR	TIME
1	Loris Spinelli/Misha Goikhberg/Patrick Liddy	Lamborghini Huracan GT3	10h02m02.093s
2	Robby Foley/Michael Dinan/Patrick Gallagher	BMW M4 GT3	+5.873s
3	Trent Hindman/Maxwell Root/Alan Brynjolfsson	Porsche 911 GT3-R	+6.399s

Rain in race two didn't distract Feller and Drudi from their mission as they scooped the title

Audi duo storm to double and the crown as drama hits Mercedes pair

**GT WORLD CHALLENGE EUROPE
SPRINT CUP
ZANDVOORT (NLD)
14-15 OCTOBER
ROUND 5/5**

Attempto Racing Audi pairing Ricardo Feller and Mattia Drudi clinched the GT World Challenge Europe Sprint Cup title thanks to a dominant display in the season finale at Zandvoort, and disaster for their main rivals: ASP Mercedes duo Raffaele Marciello and Timur Boguslavskiy.

While Drudi and Feller won both races, a rare error from Marciello gave the Italo-Swiss pair the edge in Saturday's opener, while Boguslavskiy was forced out by a collision on the first lap on Sunday. The Attempto crew charged through from ninth on the grid to claim another win and ensure that Audi's grip on the Sprint Cup remains as firm as ever. "We showed everyone what we can do," said Feller. "Super-happy with the team, with Mattia

who did a super job, made no mistakes and was always fast. I am happy to share the car with someone like this."

Aside from an off-form weekend at Misano, Attempto had regularly gone toe to toe with the ASP Mercedes of Marciello and Boguslavskiy, and the opening lap of race one encapsulated their year-long battle. From pole, Feller led off the rolling start and resisted a fast-starting Marciello, who had leapfrogged Laurin Heinrich's Porsche, at Hugenholtzbocht. Marciello kept up the assault of the leading Audi, but a rare mistake on a slippery track sent the Mercedes trundling through the gravel at Turn 10 and down the order. Marciello put in a spirited recovery, and Boguslavskiy was able to finish fourth to keep them well in the title hunt going into race two.

Following a brief safety car intervention, Feller continued to lead but only just from the Emil Frey Racing Ferrari of Albert Costa. The places at the top swapped after the pitstops, but Drudi managed to get the better of Costa's team-mate, Thierry Vermeulen, with a sensational move around the outside of Tarzan to secure the win with five minutes to go. In third place, Valentino Rossi continued the work done by Maxime Martin to finish third in their WRT BMW.

Boguslavskiy qualified one place ahead of Drudi for Sunday's title decider, which began on a dry track before the heavens opened mid-race. While poleman Martin led, Boguslavskiy ran side by side with Drudi before he was speared into at the Hans Ernst Bocht chicane by the Silver Cup Attempto Audi – the sister car to the

Mercedes' title rivals – of Lorenzo Patrese. Boguslavskiy then copped a whack from another car, ripping off the rear bumper, but it was the damage to the front-left corner from the initial contact that forced him out and handed Feller/Drudi the title.

With Patrese stuck in the gravel, that caused an early safety car. Action resumed, but the predicted heavy rain shower flipped the race on its head when first Martin and then Frank Bird (Haupt Mercedes) coughed up the lead with off-track excursions.

Drudi then gave way to Feller, who was up to third now following another safety car. That became second after Feller prevailed in a side-by-side battle with Rossi. After rounding Niklas Krutten's WRT BMW (started by Calan Williams) for the lead, he raced clear towards a fourth win of the season to wrap up the title in style. Another WRT BMW, in the hands of Dries Vanthoor and Charles Weerts, rose to second ahead of Krutten and the VSR Lamborghini of Andrea Caldarelli and Marco Mapelli.

STEPHEN BRUNSDON



Boguslavskiy (right) was out of luck

TOM'S drivers put in Supra effort for title

SUPER GT
AUTOPOLIS (JPN)
15 OCTOBER
ROUND 7/8

TOM'S Toyota drivers Sho Tsuboi and Ritomo Miyata seized control of the Super GT title fight with a spectacular victory in the penultimate round of the season at Autopolis.

Tsuboi and Miyata fought their way through from 12th on the grid to score their second win of 2023 in their Toyota GR Supra, one that puts them seven points clear in the title race ahead of next month's season finale at Motegi.

After taking over from Tsuboi at the first round of pitstops in the 450km race, Miyata charged up the order in the final stint, quickly making his way up from fifth to second before challenging the leading ARTA Honda of Hiroki Otsu.

The ARTA NSX-GT started on pole position courtesy of Nirei Fukuzumi, who led in both of his stints before handing over to Otsu for the run to the flag. But on softer-than-optimal Bridgestone rubber, Otsu was powerless to prevent a five-second advantage over Miyata evaporate



Tsuboi and Miyata came from 12th to take the win

before being passed with 10 laps to go.

At one stage it looked like the points-leading NDDP Racing Nissan Z of Katsumasa Chiyo and Mitsunori Takaboshi could win the race despite being the heaviest-ballasted car in the field. Takaboshi was Otsu's nearest challenger before he was passed for second with 20 laps remaining by a charging Miyata, and kept pace with the TOM'S car to make it a three-way fight for the lead until Miyata made the decisive pass.

Third place for Chiyo and Takaboshi

means they slip to second in the title chase, while Fukuzumi and Otsu head to the Motegi finale as rank outsiders, 16 points down with 21 on offer.

The podium finishers are the only three crews still in title contention. NISMO Nissan pair Ronnie Quintarelli and Tsugio Matsuda, who were third heading to Autopolis, are now out of the running after finishing 10th using an unconventional three-stop strategy.

Bertrand Baguette and Kazuki Hiramane's title defence came to an end with fifth place in the Impul Nissan, with Hiramane conceding fourth to the Cerumo Toyota of Yuji Tachikawa and Hiroaki Ishiura in the closing stages.

ARTA's Sugo-winning car of Tomoki Nojiri and Toshiki Oyu suffered a nightmare weekend, with Oyu suffering a costly crash in practice and Nojiri ending up in the barriers in the race, having earlier made contact with a GT300 entry.

JAMIE KLEIN

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TOM'S Toyota Supra leads Matsuda/Quintarelli Nissan

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- 2/3 Mar Aragón /E - Race days
- 7/8 Mar Barcelona /E - Test days (tbc)
- 9/10 Mar Barcelona /E - Race days (tbc)

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- 1/2/3 Mar Aragón /E - Race days
- 7 Mar Barcelona /E - Test days (tbc)
- 8/9/10 Mar Barcelona /E - Race days (tbc)

Additional race test days are bookable!

Antonelli takes title with wet supremacy

**FORMULA REGIONAL EUROPEAN
ZANDVOORT (NLD)
14-15 OCTOBER
ROUND 9/10**

Andrea Kimi Antonelli wrapped up the 2023 Formula Regional European Championship by Alpine crown early with a battling and then majestic drive to victory in the wet last Sunday.

The Italian Mercedes F1 protege lined up eighth after a rain-and-red-flag-infested qualifying, but was third within two laps, then passed Laurens van Hoepen for second into Tarzanbocht and, two corners later, dived down the inside of Marcus Amand for the lead at the banked Hugenholtzbocht. Antonelli's Prema Racing car was running away with it when team-mate Rafael Camara put himself in the gravel trap at Turn 13 when he drove into Nikita Bedrin in their fight for fifth, causing a safety car.

This then became a red flag when Emerson Fittipaldi Jr embarrassingly lost it at Scheivlak behind the safety car, and was smashed into by Maya Weug.

From the restart, Antonelli was 2.4 seconds up after just one lap, and after eight took the chequered flag 12.3s to the good. Van Hoepen ducked out of the slipstream of ART Grand Prix team-mate Amand on the run to the line, but the Frenchman held on. Tim Tramnitz



Antonelli leads Amand, van Hoepen and Tramnitz

VANDER LAAN/DUTCH PHOTO AGENCY

(R-ace GP) was close at hand in fourth, while his team-mate Martinius Stenshorne conceded the title to Antonelli with sixth.

Stenshorne should have started from pole on Saturday, but the Norwegian had a three-place grid penalty carried over from the previous round at Monza, so it was Kas Haverkort who started at the front of a dry race. The Dutchman made it a home win for himself and Van Amersfoort Racing by leading all the way from Antonelli, with compatriot van Hoepen in third.

Stenshorne came home fourth but only just – a wriggle to break the tow to Trident's Anglo-Pole Roman Bilinski on the final lap showed he was under pressure – while Tramnitz beat Camara to sixth.

Haverkort started from the front row on Sunday, but lost bags of time with a trip into the gravel at Tarzan on the first lap.

WEEKEND WINNERS

**FORMULA REGIONAL EUROPEAN
ZANDVOORT (NLD)**
Race 1 Kas Haverkort
Van Amersfoort Racing
Race 2 Andrea Kimi Antonelli
Prema Racing

**NASCAR CUP SERIES
LAS VEGAS (USA)**
Kyle Larson
Hendrick Motorsports (Chevrolet Camaro)

**EUROCUP-3
VALENCIA (ESP)**
Race 1 Esteban Masson
Campos Racing
Race 2 Mari Boya
MP Motorsport



For full results visit motorsportstats.com



Larson got to the line in front

HARRELSON/NKP/MOTORSPORT IMAGES

Larson peels off a win from Bell

**NASCAR CUP SERIES
LAS VEGAS (USA)
15 OCTOBER
ROUND 33/36**

Kyle Larson became the first driver to qualify for the final four to compete for the NASCAR Cup title with a dominating yet at times uncertain victory at Las Vegas.

Larson won both stages and led a race-high 133 of 267 laps in his Hendrick Motorsports Chevrolet, but his win turned out to be anything but easy. While running second, Larson hit the wall pretty hard off Turn 2 late in Stage 2 and fell back in the running order to regroup. He reclaimed the lead on pitroad on the next-to-last caution and, after a brief battle with Brad Keselowski, appeared set to cruise to victory.

But Christopher Bell closed dramatically

on Larson over the final five laps. He got a big run off Turn 4 on the final tour, but Larson edged him by 0.082 seconds to secure his fourth win of the 2023 season.

"Thankfully, Christopher always races extremely clean," enthused 2021 champion Larson. "Could have got crazier than it did coming to the start/finish line. Thank you to him for racing with respect there. What a job done by my team, too. Just a great race car. I almost gave it away there in [Turns] 1 and 2, getting sideways, hitting into the wall. Had to fight back there with our balance."

Kyle Busch finished third ahead of Keselowski and Ross Chastain.

Bell is one of those in the 'drop zone' with two races remaining in the semi-final playoff round, along with Chris Buescher, Ryan Blaney and Tyler Reddick.

JIM UTTER

Bagnaia leads the way from Vinales



Bagnaia loses lead, then grabs it back

MOTOGP
MANDALIKA (IDN)
15 OCTOBER
ROUND 15/20

The MotoGP title battle literally changed from day to day in Indonesia, with the balance shifting dramatically between Jorge Martin and Francesco Bagnaia from the Saturday sprint to the Sunday Grand Prix.

MotoGP's second visit to the optimistically named Mandalika International Street Circuit provided Pramac Ducati rider Martin with the championship lead for the first time in his premier-class career, only for the Spaniard to then lose it in gallingly unnecessary circumstances just 24 hours later.

Martin has been MotoGP's form man of late, pounding his title rivals with double victories at Misano and Motegi, as well as

with a sprint win in India. This coincided with a dip in form for Bagnaia instigated by his horrifying accident at last month's Catalan GP, a race the factory Ducati star went into 66 points in front of Martin.

At the chequered flag in last Saturday's sprint contest, which also wrapped up the constructors' championship for Ducati, Martin was seven points clear of Bagnaia, who could do no better than eighth after qualifying a lowly 13th. The Italian's struggles to get pace out of the softer rubber threw him off on Saturday, but fundamentally Martin has been the best Ducati rider of the past month or so. That looked like something that was unlikely to change seconds into the 27-lap GP.

Armed with Ducati's latest start device, Martin rocketed from sixth to first on the short run to Turn 1. His lead over the Aprilia of Maverick Vinales was almost a second by

the end of lap four, and next time round he hammered home his advantage to move 1.5s out of range of his fellow Spaniard.

Bagnaia's progress had been good. The reigning champion was sixth by the end of lap one, and moved past Fabio Quartararo's Yamaha for third on lap three. Bagnaia, much happier on Michelin's medium tyre, was in stronger shape than in the sprint. But reeling in Martin was already looking like a tall order. Damage limitation was key.

The Aprilia's tendency to shred tyres eventually dropped Vinales into Bagnaia's clutches, but it didn't come quickly. While Martin pulled three seconds clear to start lap 13, Bagnaia was only just within a second of Vinales.

Then Martin threw it all away at Turn 11. The Pramac rider was one of only a handful to run the soft front tyre, but says this wasn't a contributing factor. His run slightly off-line at Turn 10 put dirt on his tyres and led to him tucking the front on braking for the next corner. A fairly mistake-free campaign led Martin to reason that an error like this "would happen sooner or later". But it has come at potentially the worst time. With five rounds in six weeks to finish the season, momentum is everything. Bagnaia more than most is all too aware of this. He was able "to breathe" and control his pace more upon seeing his title rival picking gravel out of his crash helmet, and finally overhauled Vinales on lap 20.

Bagnaia would not pull away, with Vinales and Quartararo keeping him in

Quartararo took a podium on the 'streets' of Indonesia



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Reigning champion is
back at top of points



Vinales thought he
was in Cape town

check to the chequered flag for the closest top-three finish of 2023 at 0.433s. The points swing for Bagnaia has now put him 18 clear of Martin.

A week on from surgery on a broken collarbone after a training crash, Marco Bezzecchi was a last-minute arrival to Mandalika. He finished third in the sprint and was fifth in the GP to keep his title hopes just about alive at 63 points adrift. VR46 Ducati team-mate Luca Marini's first round back from a similar collarbone injury yielded a first pole and second in the sprint. His Sunday ended when KTM's Brad Binder suffered brake pad knockback and clattered into him on lap two.

Marini was just one of many to hit the deck in a grand prix of high attrition. Both Pramac riders slid out, as did both Tech3 GasGas runners and the factory Honda pair of Joan Mir and Marc Marquez.

Marquez was fairly adamant that his podium form from India and Japan wouldn't continue. A double DNF in Indonesia was the harsh reality of this as the Honda's reluctance to do what he wants ensured he wouldn't see a chequered flag. But with Marquez's decision on his future made, it now hardly matters. He just needs to ensure he can get to the end of the season uninjured, because if the outgoing Fabio Di Giannantonio can finish a career-best fourth on the Gresini Ducati, Marquez will surely be able to effortlessly get it onto the podium.

LEWIS DUNCAN

RESULTS ROUND 15/20, MANDALIKA (IDN), 15 OCTOBER (27 LAPS – 72.158 MILES)

POS	RIDER	TEAM	TIME
1	Francesco Bagnaia (ITA)	Ducati	41m20.293s
2	Maverick Vinales (ESP)	Aprilia	+0.306s
3	Fabio Quartararo (FRA)	Yamaha	+0.433s
4	Fabio Di Giannantonio (ITA)	Gresini Ducati	+6.962s
5	Marco Bezzecchi (ITA)	VR46 Ducati	+11.111s
6	Brad Binder (ZAF)	KTM	+11.228s
7	Jack Miller (AUS)	KTM	+12.474s
8	Enea Bastianini (ITA)	Ducati	+12.684s
9	Alex Rins (ESP)	LCR Honda	+22.540s
10	Aleix Espargaro (ESP)	Aprilia	+30.468s
11	Takaaki Nakagami (JPN)	LCR Honda	+30.823s
12	Miguel Oliveira (PRT)	RNF Aprilia	+36.639s
13	Raul Fernandez (ESP)	RNF Aprilia	+42.864s
14	Franco Morbidelli (ITA)	Yamaha	-4 laps
R	Johann Zarco (FRA)	Pramac Ducati	14 laps-accident
R	Jorge Martin (ESP)	Pramac Ducati	12 laps-accident
R	Joan Mir (ESP)	Honda	11 laps-accident
R	Augusto Fernandez (ESP)	Tech3 KTM	11 laps-accident
R	Marc Marquez (ESP)	Honda	7 laps-accident
R	Luca Marini (ITA)	VR46 Ducati	4 laps-accident damage
R	Pol Espargaro (ESP)	Tech3 KTM	1 lap-accident
NS	Alex Marquez (ESP)	Gresini Ducati	

Winner's average speed 104.733mph. Fastest lap Bastianini 1m30.906s, 105.835mph.

QUALIFYING 2 1 Marini 1m29.978s; 2 Vinales 1m30.009s; 3 A Espargaro 1m30.132s; 4 Quartararo 1m30.516s; 5 Binder 1m30.698s; 6 Martin 1m30.742s; 7 Di Giannantonio 1m30.766s; 8 M Marquez 1m30.864s; 9 Bezzecchi 1m30.908s; 10 Miller 1m30.970s; 11 Bastianini 1m31.061s; 12 Oliveira 1m31.193s.

QUALIFYING 1 Marini 1m30.383s; Bastianini 1m30.527s; 13 Bagnaia 1m30.626s; 14 Zarco 1m30.713s; 15 Morbidelli 1m30.729s; 16 P Espargaro 1m31.006s; 17 R Fernandez 1m31.031s; 18 A Fernandez 1m31.034s; 19 Mir 1m31.143s; 20 Nakagami 1m31.192s; 21 Rins 1m31.458s.

SPRINT RACE (13 LAPS – 34.743 MILES) 1 Martin 19m49.711s; 2 Marini +1.131s; 3 Bezzecchi +2.081s; 4 Vinales +2.720s; 5 Quartararo +3.121s; 6 Di Giannantonio +4.203s; 7 Bastianini +4.981s; 8 Bagnaia +5.465s; 9 Miller +7.852s; 10 Oliveira +8.942s; 11 Nakagami +12.034s; 12 Zarco +14.015s; 13 A Fernandez +14.823s; 14 R Fernandez +15.699s; 15 Morbidelli +23.331s; 16 Mir +24.894s; 17 P Espargaro +27.169s; 18 Rins +28.980s; 19 Binder +43.090s; R A Espargaro 7 laps-collision; R M Marquez 0 laps-accident.

Winner's average speed 105.129mph. Fastest lap Bezzecchi 1m30.724s, 106.047mph.

RIDERS' CHAMPIONSHIP 1 Bagnaia 346; 2 Martin 328; 3 Bezzecchi 283; 4 Binder 211; 5 A Espargaro 177; 6 Vinales 165; 7 Zarco 162; 8 Marini 144; 9 Miller 135; 10 Quartararo 132.

CONSTRUCTORS' CHAMPIONSHIP 1 Ducati 527; 2 KTM 283; 3 Aprilia 266; 4 Yamaha 152; 5 Honda 149.



Three-time winner
Jorge Martin couldn't
produce a fab fourth

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ELECTRONICS TRACK SUPPORT ASSISTANT EM Motorsport

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- The Electronics Track Support Assistant may also be called upon to undertake other tasks and duties from time to time.
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- Setup of equipment setup at the event
- Record the allocation of units, manage mileage and usage
- Organise spare units stock at the track and factory
- Analyzing collated data at events
- Maintain and update daily event report and issues list

Responsibilities

- The Electronics Track Support Assistant is expected to perform all the tasks and duties given with care and diligence, however they will be responsible for ensuring the following is performed or completed correctly (i.e. without supervision or checking):
- Ensure that all equipment is operational and correctly configured at events (in cooperation with Senior staff)
- Publication of a concise, complete and timely daily and end of event report (in cooperation with Senior staff)
- Organizing and reviewing downloaded data
- Raising any and all faults/issues and returning all faulty equipment for investigation
- Organizing unit allocation, stock and maintenance (e.g. winter refurbs, mileage and spares stock)

Personal qualities and attributes

- Ability to read and write detailed and concise technical reports
- Knowledge on electronic technologies (HW and SW)
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Job Function

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Responsibilities

- Manage the maintenance of team race trucks and race truck event equipment.
- Management of trailer stock and consumables.
- Deliver cars and equipment around the UK and Europe, within strict timescales.
- Assist in build-up and break-down of equipment and structures while on event.
- Support the team with fuel and tyre duties at track and race events.
- Responsible for managing the cleaning of all fleet vehicles.

Requirements

- Class 1 HGV licence (minimum of 3 years experience)
- Current CPC licence
- Motorsport Experience is a prerequisite
- Regular European trips and weekend work availability is a must as many trips to Europe are at least 7 days in duration
- A positive attitude with a good work ethic is vital to the role.
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F1 ACADEMY PROGRAMME MANAGER- DISCOVER YOUR DRIVE Formula One

Responsibilities:

- Oversee the strategic ideation and delivery of Discover Your Drive activities, to include but not limited to: karting partnerships, educational platform development, in-market events, fan engagement programs etc.
- Oversee 7-10 race specific programs built to support the development of young female talent in the communities in which we race.
- Support the delivery of Fan Zone activations to ensure brand standards are adhered to, our message is being delivered and all commercial partner elements are executed.
- Manage internal company communications between supporting Formula 1 departments to ensure all elements of the DYD programs are being executed.
- Oversee the partnership activation with Motorsport UK, Team Sport, Champions of the Future and any other new partners added to the DYD program.
- Develop mentorship, internship and off-track business opportunities to facilitate entry into motorsports for all.
- Build and manage project implementation plans for all DYD activities, ensuring all timelines are adhered to, sold partner elements are delivered and goals/objectives for the programs are met.

Qualifications:

- Bachelors or Associates degree
- Experience working in events, community program development and/or motorsports
- Experience in operations and event delivery
- Thrives in managing multiple fast-paced projects simultaneously
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills

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- Accountability for the condition and appearance of the car which should be maintained to the highest levels at all times.
- You will be expected to be an integral part of the team, take part in pit stops and assist other team members in various tasks as required.

Education and Work Experience:

- GCSE, High School diploma or equivalent required. Further education including Trade School, Apprenticeship or University Degree may benefit your application. Previous experience as a No 2 Mechanic gained within the field of Formula 1 will be preferred however consideration will be given to a candidate who can demonstrate a sound record of service within the industry.

Specialized Knowledge and Skills:

- An ability to read and interpret technical drawings and information pertaining to assembly, periodic updates and modifications.
- A comprehensive mechanical understanding gained in a high level motorsport environment.
- The ability to consistently work to the highest standards with an exceptional attitude towards attention to detail.
- You should be comfortable discussing engineering solutions and requirements and demonstrate basic computer skills.
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- Oversee and handle all content creation for M-Sport UK's various motorsport programmes from a written concept through to development, execution, edit and delivery.
- Understand the differences in content requirements for Facebook, Instagram, Youtube, Twitter and TikTok.
- Create and continuously develop a content delivery strategy unique to each of M-Sport UK's Social Media platforms.
- Coordinate and plan major milestone activations such as livery reveals and product launches.
- Proactively communicate with partners and key championships to stay aware of collaboration opportunities and leverage key posts to support channel growth.
- Pitch one-off content plans that can serve to enhance partnerships and announcements.

Who We're Looking For

- We're looking to appoint a creative mind with a passion for social media and content creation.
- You should be a well-organised individual with exceptional attention to detail and a keen interest in motorsport, a particular interest in WRC and Rally-Raid would be advantageous.
- You should be experienced and proficient in using the Adobe creative cloud, specifically: Premiere Pro, Photoshop, Lightroom, and Aftereffects; and have strong conceptual and technical skills in photography, videography and storytelling.
- You should be able to work proactively and be capable of balancing busy and varied workloads in a time-sensitive environment – confidently reacting to changing priorities and deadlines.

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SIMULATION & STRATEGY ENGINEER Maserati FE Team

Main Responsibilities

- Develop the energy management and thermal tools to continuously improve the overall performance of the car
- Run all relevant simulations related to energy management and thermal topics
- Liaise with Head of Strategy to translate simulation into track applications
- Be involved in the Driver in the Loop simulator (DiL) and software development
- Write post-event strategy reports
- Work during race week-end in Operations Room to support the trackside team on Energy Management subjects

Profile

- Practical approach by using rigorous logic and methods to solve problems with effective solutions
- Works methodically with attention to detail
- Provide ideas and suggestion to improve productivity, precision and work efficiency.

Experience

- 2 years experience in a high-level racing series (Formula 2, Formula E, WEC). Junior profile accepted
- Excellent communication skills.
- Experience in laptime simulation softwares (Canopy) is a huge benefit
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- Fluent in English
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TALENT PROGRAMME PARTNER McLaren Racing

Role Dimensions:

- Reports to Associate Director, McLaren Accelerator.
- Focus on leading, developing and delivering on talent and DEI programmes for our commercial partners, with overall responsibility for their strategic direction, commercial success, and day-to-day fulfilment of contractual rights against agreed KPIs.
- Close partnership with McLaren Racing's Sustainability team to ensure all programmes and activations are designed and delivered in line with the team's sustainability strategy.

Principal Accountabilities:

- Own and deliver talent and DEI programmes that are born out of commercial agreements with partners.
- Lead the successful delivery of the programmes and campaigns to ensure that the partner's rights are maximised to achieve their objectives and KPIs.
- Learn and develop a deep understanding of partner's talent/DEI strategies, objectives, and KPI's / metrics.
- Working with partners and consulting with internal experts to design and deliver programmes against partner objectives.
- Working with the wider McLaren Racing DEI and Sustainability team to ensure all programmes align to McLaren Racing's Sustainability Strategy and DEI objectives and utilising the SMEs within the team to ensure best practice sits at the heart of all programmes and activations.
- Lead in the organisation and coordination of key assets of the partnership such as supporting on the delivery of collateral, merchandise, internal events, show car bookings, social media and digital assets. Ensure all these assets are delivered on brief and with the required branding.

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CLASSIC MOTORSPORT MECHANIC Pegasus Classic Engineering

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- The individual must be able to operate with a high level of detail and accuracy and have a full driving licence.
- Race-team experience would be beneficial but not essential.
- Pegasus Classic Engineering restores and operates racing cars from the 1960s to present day, including a Lola T70, Chevron B16, Lotus Elan 26R and a 2010 LMP1 car.
- A general knowledge of light fabrication and welding would be a benefit, but not essential.
- Weekend work and travel to races will be required, including a limited number of overseas trips.

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HSCC launches new 1970s/80s tin-top series

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We speak to leading figures about the keys to Formula Ford fortune



Historic single-seaters thrill at Silverstone



Double Dutch delight for Dunne in GB3



Old MGCC categories join Equipe ranks



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Aiken will drive for Oldfield while team regular Romanek (pictured) misses out



US champion takes on Festival winners

FF1600

US F1600 champion Porter Aiken is among the drivers heading to the UK this week to compete in the Formula Ford Festival at Brands Hatch.

Aiken is due to be driving one of Oldfield Motorsport's Van Diemen JL13s and arrives fresh off defeating Team USA scholars Ayrton Houk and Jack Sullivan to the F1600 title.

Other notable names on the entry list for the end-of-season showpiece include previous winners Niall Murray (Team Dolan Van Diemen RF99), Rory Smith and Jamie Sharp (both Medinas). Regular frontrunners Chris Middlehurst (Van Diemen LA10) and Jordan Dempsey (Van Diemen RF00), along with National champion Jordan Kelly (Van

Diemen RF06) are also among the entries, which stood at 53 cars as Autosport closed for press on Tuesday, but with further late additions possible.

Also due to take part is Historic F3 champion Samuel Harrison. More used to winning in historic single-seaters, he is set to pilot a 'modern' Peninsula Motorsport Firman in the event.

But one driver not taking part will be National FF1600 frontrunner Lucas Romanek. He received an automatic 30-day ban after an "off-track incident" in the Silverstone title decider at the end of last month and therefore misses out.

After last year's farcical scenes, when heavy rain arrived – as expected – shortly after the final began and there was

insufficient daylight for the race to be restarted, the organising British Racing & Sports Car Club has opted not to run this year's final as the last race of the event. Instead, it is due to be held earlier at 1545 on Sunday to give more flexibility.

Three heats are scheduled for Saturday, along with a progression race at the end of the day. The two semi-finals then follow on Sunday morning with the historic final set for 1300 and the last chance race preceding the grand final itself.

Alongside the Formula Ford action, the meeting also features the TCR UK championship showdown, while the Civic Cup, Fiesta Juniors and the Mini 7 Racing Club will also take to the track.

STEPHEN LICKORISH

Special Elden gathering planned for Brands

FF1600

A special celebration of the Elden marque will be held at this weekend's Formula Ford Festival, with several period racers expected to be in attendance at Brands Hatch.

The reunion has been organised by Super Classic Pre-'99 FF1600 coordinator Alan Bowles, and former works Elden drivers Chris Smith and Ted Wentz are

due to travel over from the US. Sunday also coincides with the 51st anniversary of Johnny Gerber winning the 1972 World Final at Brands in an Elden, and he is set to join the celebrations of the constructor, which was founded in the late 1960s.

Other figures due to be attending include Mike Catlow, Denny Shattock, Frank Bradley – a former owner of Elden – and



Catlow is due to attend the Elden celebration

ex-gofer Graham Fuller.

Bowles explained that the event was the idea of Elden co-founder Peter Hampshire's son and said it was "massively important" to remember the history of Formula Ford.

"Having lost Brian [Peter's brother and co-founder, who died in 2019], if we don't do it now, we're never going to do it," said Bowles. "The response has been superb."

STEPHEN LICKORISH

STEED TARGETS GT FUTURE AS HE RETURNS TO ACTION

BRITISH ENDURANCE

One-time Ginetta GT5 Challenge champion Josh Steed is targeting a future in Pro-Am GT racing after making his return from two years on the sidelines at Donington Park last weekend.

Steed won the Ginetta GT5 title with Xentek Motorsport in 2021, beating future British Touring Car polesitter Mikey Doble, GB3 podium finisher John Bennett and Porsche Carrera Cup GB driver Will Aspin to the crown. He has since performed driver coaching roles for Xentek while racing opportunities were limited by budget constraints.

The 21-year-old teamed up with Ginetta GT regular Bal Sidhu for last weekend's British Endurance Championship round in Sidhu's G55 Supercup car. The pair qualified fastest in class and seventh overall but retired from the race with gearbox failure before Steed took the wheel.

"I've been given a great opportunity to race alongside Bal," said Steed. "We've had a really good build-up to this race meeting but just such a shame with the gearbox unfortunately. I'm hoping that's an opportunity again for the future but, for my first weekend doing endurance racing, it's been fun."

MARK PAULSON



New Touring Car Legends series to cater for 1970s/80s tin-tops

HSCC

The Historic Sports Car Club has become the latest organiser to reveal a new series for 1970s and 1980s tin-tops.

Unlike other recent creations that have focused on Group 1 cars, the new Touring Car Legends category from the HSCC is for the more powerful Group 2 machines as well as the subsequent Group A era. BMW M3s and CSLs, Ford Sierra Cosworths and 'Cologne' Capris, Nissan Skylines and Chevrolet Camaros are among the cars expected to feature.

Touring Car Legends will complement the club's existing pre-'66 Historic Touring Car division. The HSCC has attempted to run similar series in the past, including the shortlived Dunlop Saloon Car Cup, but CEO Andy Dee-Crowne says this latest contest has been sparked by

competitor interest.

"We are absolutely thrilled to launch HSCC Touring Car Legends for 2024," said Dee-Crowne. "This exciting new series has been driven by competitor demand. We plan to run the series as one of our flagship categories and we have a high-profile calendar already in place."

"The HSCC is proud to deliver excellent race organisation, tremendous value for money, diligent scrutineering and a fine sporting camaraderie in the paddock. All of these core attributes will be central to Touring Car Legends for 2024 and beyond."

A five-event calendar is planned for the inaugural season, comprising Brands Hatch, Silverstone, Donington Park, Oulton Park and Zandvoort. Race durations will be mixed with a 20-minute sprint contest on a Saturday followed by a 40-minute mini-enduro on a Sunday.

F4 title winner Sharp receives prize Mercedes sim session

BRITISH F4

British Formula 4 champion Louis Sharp has already experienced one of his prizes for winning the title after getting the chance to sample the Mercedes Formula 1 simulator last week.

Sharp spent half a day at the team's Brackley base and received feedback and coaching from Mercedes engineers before, during and after a spell on the simulator, in which he completed a similar programme to those carried out by Lewis

Hamilton and George Russell.

"It was a super-cool experience," said the Rodin Carlin driver, who admitted he was not aware he would get the chance to try the simulator just five days after claiming the F4 title. "The prizes you get for winning the championship are fantastic and it's something I'm going to remember for a long time. It was fascinating the level of preparation and detail that we ran through, and the F1 simulator was just another level!"

Sharp is now turning his attention to the next step on the ladder as he bids to climb



Sharp spent half a day at Mercedes' Brackley base

towards more regular F1 appearances. He said nothing is decided yet and that he has "a few test days planned and a few things we're considering" for the 2024 season.

STEPHEN LICKORISH



LAP RECORD OBLITERATED Sylvie Mullins arrived at the final Irish Championship Circuit Racing meeting of 2023 at Mondello Park last weekend with just one aim: to break Cian Carey’s outright lap record. For many years, the mark was stuck at 50.22s courtesy of Nigel Greensall. But Carey, in his Formula 3 Dallara F317, slashed this to 49.275s last year. A determined Mullins, in his four-litre Gould GR55B hillclimb car, obliterated it to 48.129s in the first race while, in race two – after a few adjustments – he incredibly lowered the mark to 47.380s, almost two seconds under Carey’s old record. **Photograph by Michael Chester**

TURKINGTON THWARTED

Four-time British Touring Car champion Colin Turkington was denied a debut in modern GT machinery when gremlins struck the McLaren 570S GT4 he was due to share with fellow ex-MG driver Jason Hughes at Donington Park last weekend. Hughes has recently acquired the McLaren and intended using the British Endurance Championship finale as an extended test session, but the problems prevented any meaningful running in Friday testing.

NARAN’S SURPRISE STEP UP

British Endurance driver Ameerh Naran’s GT3 progression alongside 2022 champion Tom Jackson was unexpectedly accelerated last weekend at Donington. Friday testing damage ruled out their Mercedes-AMG GT4 so they hired the 7TSix McLaren 720S GT3, fresh from its GT Cup success at Snetterton a week earlier. On a drying track, Naran qualified fourth and ran second in the race before handing over to Jackson. Taking their second pitstop during a caution vaulted Jackson into the lead, but they were later given a drive-through for a safety-car infringement.

CONNEW’S CLOSE CROWN

The Jaguar Challenge title race went down to the wire at Donington Park. Guy Connew (XJS) and Jack Robinson (XK) ended the season level on points after each won their class in both races but only Robinson scored a fastest lap bonus point. Connew, who was put under severe pressure by Andrew Harper (S-Type R) in the closing stages of Sunday’s second race, provisionally takes the title by virtue of scoring more class wins (14) than Robinson (10).

MYERS CELEBRATES 50TH

Graham Myers celebrated the 50th anniversary of his racing debut at Donington Park last weekend. The former Pre-’93 Touring Car and MG Midget champion first competed in October 1973 at Thruxton in a Ginetta G12. After a layoff, he returned aboard a Ford Sierra in 2007, and took his BMW M3 E36 (below) to the Pre-’93 title in 2019.



STEVE JONES

Scottish Minis champion Weddell opts for Legends switch for 2024

SCOTTISH LEGENDS

Double Scottish Mini Cooper Cup champion Michael Weddell will jump ship to race in the Legends Championship next season with Beaty Motorsport. Weddell, who won the Mini title in 2021 and 2022, enjoyed a one-off Legends outing last month and this convinced him that the time was right for a new challenge. “I’ve done six years in Minis and I just decided that I wanted to do something different,” said Weddell. “Legends was the only thing that really enticed me,

with the budget I’ve got. “At the September round, I was meant to race the Legends on the Saturday and the Mini on Sunday, and Mark Beaty [Beaty Motorsport owner] told me to do two laps and come in. And after two laps, I decided I wasn’t going to race the Mini on Sunday and entered the Legends again!” Weddell, whose title-winning Mini is up for sale, chose not to race in the Knockhill season finale this month, instead assisting the Minimax team in the Mini Cooper and Citroen C1 Cup races. **STEPHEN BRUNSDON**



Weddell was left impressed when he sampled Legends car

JIM MOIR

MG Cup and BCV8 series join Equipe ranks

EQUIPE CLASSIC RACING

The long-running MG BCV8 and MG Cup categories will join the Equipe Classic Racing portfolio and run as non-championship series next year following the MG Car Club's withdrawal from organising race events.

The BCV8 championship, which caters for standard MGBs and MGCs, plus modified models and V8-powered versions, dates back to 1977. It has regularly appeared at Equipe meetings in recent years.

"This is great news for MG BCV8 drivers, the BCV8 racing family and BCV8 fans," said coordinator James Wheeler. "Equipe Classic Racing has kindly offered to set up a series for BCV8s to retain our race format and class structure, together with the invitation of MGA [non-FIA] cars, so we can all have somewhere to keep racing our cars and keep the BCV8 racing family together."

Meanwhile, the MG Cup this year celebrated the 35th anniversary of its



Former MGCC championships to run as Equipe series in 2024



MICKWALKER

GARY HAWKINS

beginnings as the Phoenix Challenge in 1988. It allows all MG models, together with the Rover 220 Turbo and 216 GTI, to race in three classes according to their level of modification, with an additional class for slick-shod cars set to be added. The series will also include a round at Zandvoort next year.

"We are delighted to secure a future for the MG Cup with Equipe Classic Racing," said series coordinator Peter Burchill, who explained that drivers had voted for

the move. "We see a bright future for the MG Cup in its 36th year. We have new drivers wanting to register for next season so clearly we are not wrong."

Equipe partner Rob Cull added: "It's fantastic to have these two successful grids join us. Of all the MG content we felt these two would fit our ethos and we welcome their drivers. They both have a strong following with great cars and some stellar racing."

MARK PAULSON

CityCar Cup champion Lettis plans MX-5 move



Lettis will swap Peugeot for MX-5

MICKWALKER

MAZDA MX-5

New CityCar Cup champion Elliot Lettis will graduate to the Mazda MX-5 Supercup next year.

Lettis has been a frontrunner in the CityCar Cup since it was inaugurated as a championship in 2021. The Sussex racer clinched

the 2023 title in his Peugeot 107 with two third-place finishes in the final round at Silverstone this month. Lettis won 11 of the 19 races this season, including eight of the first nine.

"I think it's time to move on to something different," said Lettis, who will test his ex-Jake Swann-Dixon MX-5

Mk3 for the first time at Snetterton next month. Lettis will continue to run his car independently for his first taste of racing rear-wheel-drive machinery.

"It's going to be a new challenge," he added. "We take pride in running cars ourselves, trying to beat the teams – that's the goal."

MARK PAULSON

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Paterson wins as CNC Heads Sports/Saloons celebrates its 40th

BARC

Roddie Paterson won both of the CNC Heads Sports/Saloon races in his Caterham at Oulton Park last weekend as the championship celebrated its 40th anniversary with a 40-car entry.

Paterson dominated race one after expected rival Andrew Southcott spun his MG Midget Lenham off at Cascades on the opening lap. Jon Woolfitt (Spire GTR) just held onto second from Garry Wardle (SEAT Cupra TCR) as the race was red-flagged.

Paterson had to battle his way past the Subaru Impreza of Oliver Thomas in race two. He made it by on lap two, just before a safety-car intervention and, from the green flag, there were only two more laps before it was red again. Paterson, Thomas and Thom Evans (Caterham) completed the podium, while Ian Bamber

clinched the title in his Ginetta G20.

Rrutuj Patki and Ben Wheatley shared the Caterham Graduate Sigma 135 spoils. Wheatley and Ben Winrow had the initial duel in race one, before Patki jumped them both on the fifth lap. As Patki took charge, Wheatley slid off, leaving Winrow and Tom Power to complete the top three when the red flags flew.

Wheatley was back with a vengeance in race two, taking the win after the battle for second between Winrow and Alex Vincent ended in the Old Hall tyre wall and another red flag. Vincent restarted to take second, and Steven Lancaster defied Patki for third.

It was a win apiece for Philip Bianchi and Will Stilwell in the Sigma 150 and Sigmax contests, while both Kumho BMW races were red-flagged, with Bryan Bransom's and Jason West's E46 M3s emerging victorious.

PETER SCHERER

O'Donovan heads BRX runners at Dreux

BRITISH RALLYCROSS

Reigning British Rallycross champion Patrick O'Donovan scored another victory as the series' top-tier Supercar class teamed up with its French equivalent at Dreux last weekend.

O'Donovan guided his Hansen Motorsport-built Peugeot 208 to an overall

podium, and he was best of the British runners to boost his chances of retaining his title, despite missing some of this year's events due to his European commitments.

O'Donovan's fifth win of 2023 has lifted him to second in the standings, but fellow Peugeot driver Jack Thorne maintained his championship lead after finishing runner-up in France.

O'Donovan's father Ollie took the points for third in his Proton Iriz, while Citroen DS 3 racers Tristan Ovenden and Michael Sellar were fourth and fifth.

The deciding rounds of the championship are now due to take place at Lydden Hill on 4-5 November, with the opening final set to be held as a night race on the Saturday.

TRITTON'S TIGHT TITLE WIN

Liam Morley was unbeaten at Oulton Park last weekend in the Division 1 Superkart class, but it was Jack Tritton who secured the Super Series title in a dramatic finale. Going into the last race, Tritton knew that he only needed to finish in the top seven if Morley won. On a greasy track, Morley sped away, while Tritton was down in eighth at half-distance, but made it to sixth by the flag to take the title by just three points.

LABEY WINS HOME RALLY

Young Jerseyman James Labey won his home rally in one of his first events in a Ford Fiesta Rally2. Labey, 21, and co-driver Robbie Hannah took victory on the 40th anniversary Jersey Rally, which ran over closed-road special stages on the island during Friday and Saturday. He was peerless from the start and built a three-minute lead during Friday, which he was able to manage through Saturday's stages.

HARRISON IN GB4 SWITCH

Ginetta Junior podium finisher Finn Harrison is the latest driver joining the GB4 field for this weekend's Donington Park finale. He switched to Elite Motorsport from Aspetto partway through the Ginetta season and will now make the move into single-seaters with the team.

HAWKINS BACK IN PRAGA

Jess Hawkins returned to race duties last weekend following her recent Aston Martin Formula 1 test at the Hungaroring. She shared the University of Wolverhampton's Praga R1T with Shane Kelly in the Zeo Prototype Series at Snetterton and, despite only three qualifying laps on cold tyres, Hawkins earned a front-row start for the season's final race.

BICKNELL BOWS OUT

Marcus Bicknell ended his racing career at Snetterton with a spirited drive in his Joey Logano-tribute, Taurus-styled V8 ASCAR (below). The 75-year-old former Clubmans racer retired from the first Classic and Modern Motorsport Club race with his car stuck in third gear, but fought from 28th to finish 15th in race two.





Holden drivers enjoy thunderous fight as Wilson wins

**DONINGTON PARK
BARC
14-15 OCTOBER**

Holden fought Holden in the battle of the Aussie V8s at Donington Park last weekend before Andy Wilson's Monaro twice beat the Commodore VH of Abbie Eaton in Classic Thunder.

Wilson was making his first appearance of 2023 in the seven-litre ex-British GT Monaro, now equipped with more robust differential and beefed-up aerodynamics. But he was beaten to pole position by former British GT driver Eaton in her dad Paul's earlier car, which also sported a heavily revised aerodynamic package. Wilson made the better start in Saturday's race, but Eaton dived inside at Redgate a lap later, only for Wilson to power back ahead through the Craner Curves.

Eaton kept up the pressure but couldn't find a way through. She leapt ahead at the start of Sunday's sequel and withstood

Wilson's challenges for three laps until he got inside at the Melbourne hairpin. Eaton dived back in front two corners later, at Redgate, but Wilson cut back and powered ahead for a decisive lead. Behind them, the unrelated Sam Wilson twice took third in Rikki Cann's Aston Martin V8 Vantage, but couldn't prevent Nick Vaughan (Audi A3 Turbo) securing the title.

Pre-'66 Touring Car wins were split between James Everard and Barry Sime. Everard took his father John's former rally car, an Alfa Romeo Sprint GT, to a maiden win in commanding fashion ahead of the Minis of Sime and Philip House. Sime then hunted Everard down in race two and dived ahead into the Melbourne hairpin on the final lap. Everard fought back at Goddards but ran wide, and Sime swept past for victory. House was third again, ahead of Piers Grange's Ford Mustang, which had charged from the back, and new champion Billy Kenneally (Ford Anglia).

Peter Erceg and Marcus Clutton stormed

to a fifth consecutive win in the British Endurance Championship. But this time their Audi R8 faced GT3 opposition in the shape of the McLaren 720S of Ameerh Naran and Tom Jackson. Taking their second pitstop under a safety car gave Jackson a 35-second lead and, although Clutton could lap significantly faster in his more familiar steed, he may not have had time to overcome the deficit without the McLaren receiving a drive-through penalty for a safety-car infringement. Team Hard's Class C Porsche 991 Cup, run by Ben Sharpe Racing, secured the title, piloted by Brad Thurston and Daryl DeLeon. An off for SG Racing's Porsche 997 meant DeLeon could cruise to class victory and the title.

Safety cars coinciding with the pit window impacted both Britcar Trophy races. In the first, a broken radio delayed Bryan Bransom relaying to Jasver Sapra, losing them nearly a lap. Maurizio Sciglio's stop/go penalty then handed victory to his Datum Ginetta team-mate Marco Anastasi. Fortunes reversed in race two when Anastasi continued circulating as Sapra took over from Bransom, then squeezed past Simon Clark's Porsche 997 for victory. Two Renault Clio class wins sealed the title for Jack Meakin/Rhys Lloyd.

Three-time Blue Oval Saloons champion Piers Grange took his first 2023 wins in the series after two entertaining tussles with the mechanically similar Ford Escort Mk2 of Malcolm Harding, before Harding hit trouble in both races. Ian Bower (BMW M3 E36) twice headed the Pre-'93 section, while Pre-'03 honours were split between the Honda Civics of Chris Southcott and Gary Prebble, who regained the crown.

In Pre-'83 Touring Cars, Stephen Primett



WEEKEND WINNERS

CLASSIC THUNDER

Races 1 & 2 Andy Wilson (Holden Monaro)

PRE-'66 TOURING CARS

Race 1 James Everard (Alfa Romeo Sprint GT, below)

Race 2 Barry Sime (Morris Mini Cooper S)

BRITISH ENDURANCE CHAMPIONSHIP

Peter Erceg/Marcus Clutton (Audi R8 GT3)

BRITCAR TROPHY

Race 1 Marco Anastasi (Ginetta G56 GTA)

Race 2 Jasver Sapra/Bryan Bransom (BMW M3 E46)

PRE-'93 & PRE-'03 TOURING CARS/BOSS

Races 1 & 2 Piers Grange (Ford Escort Mk2)

PRE-'83 TOURING CARS

Race 1 Howard Spooner (BMW 635i)

Race 2 Stephen Primett (Ford Escort Mk1)

JUNIOR SALOONS

Races 1 & 2 Oskar Dix

MINI CHALLENGE CLUBSPORT

Races 1, 2 & 3 Stephen Berry

JAGUAR CHALLENGE

Races 1 & 2 Guy Connew (XJS)



For full results visit: [tsl-timing.com](https://www.tsl-timing.com)

secured an 11th title by finishing third after Will Davison's BMW E30 expired on Saturday. On a wet track, Howard Spooner won in Geoff Steel's glorious Gerhard Berger-tribute BMW 635i ahead of Don Hughes's Volkswagen Golf GTI. Primett celebrated with victory on Sunday ahead of Simon Jeffs (Golf) and Mark Osborne (Triumph Dolomite Sprint).

Oskar Dix twice triumphed in hard-fought Junior Saloons contests. Dix pipped Daire Flock in the opener after pouncing when Flock's car jumped out of gear. Cameron Pratt-Thompson also contended and led the rematch until he spun at Melbourne. Dix again resisted Flock, who dropped to third behind Jonathan Moore after getting shown the grass exiting Goddards.

Open class driver Stephen Berry scored a Mini Challenge Clubsport hat-trick, including Sunday's inaugural mini-enduro. Closest challenger Charlie Newton-Darby overshot in the wet on Saturday and suffered engine failure in the 40-minuter.

MARK PAULSON

THE TWR JAG AND KADETT GT/E ON SHOW AT DONINGTON



Howard's V12-powered XJS was hampered by head-gasket woe

Jaguar specialist and Classic Touring Car Racing Club stalwart David Howard tracked his newly acquired XJS TWR recreation for the first time in the Jaguar Challenge at Donington last weekend.

"It's a faithful reproduction," explained Howard of the factory-original manual V12 first prepared for racing by Justin Rockett in the 1980s. "It's not just some green paint with a white stripe down it. It's a very well-prepared car. It's been looked after; it's been made to run properly. You look underneath it, you think, 'Wow, this car is really good.'"

Powered by a six-litre V12 with a five-speed Getrag gearbox, the car spent more than a decade based in Northern Ireland with Robin Patterson. It was then brought back to England and raced by Mark Russell, who gave it a clean new shell modelled on the 1984 European championship-winning example of Tom Walkinshaw himself.

Since passing into Howard's hands, the car was beset by problems in an abortive run at Castle Combe in June, and has been fully recommissioned by Tom Barclay, who also got behind the wheel last weekend in Pre-'93 Touring Cars before being sidelined by head-gasket failure.

Another head-turning newcomer of similar vintage, but racing in Pre-'83



Hickton was impressed with the Opel's pace

Touring Cars, was David Hickton's immaculate 1979 Opel Kadett GT/E. Hickton had previously raced an Opel Ascona before acquiring the Kadett in 2016. Converting it from 1.2-litre road car to two-litre GT/E racer was a labour of love, delayed by the pandemic and prioritising the burgeoning career of his teenaged son. Harry Hickton was runner-up in the Junior Saloon Car Championship last year and a podium finisher in this season's Mini Challenge Trophy. He made his Britcar Trophy debut last weekend, qualifying the Sim Dynamics Renault Clio fourth of eight in class.

"We did it properly," reflected Hickton Sr. "We bought a good strong shell, did all the fabrication work, then it went for an acid dip. If it took me five years, it didn't matter because I knew the way I wanted to do it." There was a false start on track at Donington 30 months earlier when the Kadett's engine blew after only a few race laps. That prompted him to engage German expert Gerent. "I was fed up with silly things failing, and other people's components letting me down," explained Hickton. I thought, 'Do you know what? The car warrants the right engine.' So I begged, stole and borrowed for it."

Hickton flew to fourth fastest in qualifying at Donington this time around. With unsuitable tyres for treacherous conditions in the first race, he opted for a cautious approach and parked up in the closing stages. Then in the dry on Sunday he climbed from the back of the grid to 10th overall despite only four laps of green-flag running. "I came here and thought, 'If I can do a couple of sessions and finish, see the chequered flag, I'll be happy,'" said Hickton. "But to be fourth on the grid, I was over the moon."

MARK PAULSON

Frenetic FF1600s top feisty finals at Silverstone

SILVERSTONE
HSCC
14-15 OCTOBER

Formula Ford in its Historic and Classic flavours shone like a beacon across a bracingly cold and sunny Historic Sports Car Club championship finals weekend at Silverstone, over which seven races were decided by less than seven tenths of a second. With four corners, plus the Maggotts and Woodcote kinks – flat-out for the brave – and two big braking zones to compress packs, the National circuit's reputation for superlative racing continues.

Triple Historic FF1600 champions Callum Grant (Merlyn) and Benn Simms (Jomo) engaged in two breathtaking duels, the lead chopping and changing throughout. Double winner Grant prevailed by 0.084s in the opener, but that was not the closest finish. Pipped in Saturday's Classic race by Joe Ahrens (Royale), Jake Shortland (Lola) towed out of a five-car train to deny champion Ben Tinkler (Van Diemen) by 0.019s on Sunday, with Grant third, debuting Simon Langman's RF80.

Professional GT racer Michael O'Brien claimed four races. Piloting father Mike's Brabham BT21B – in which Historic F3 champion Samuel Harrison won 10 out of 10 rounds – Michael maintained its unbeaten record, securing the inaugural Julia O'Brien trophy, presented in his late mother's memory. Jon Milicevic (BT21B) led O'Brien both days and left his mark with fastest lap. Gear linkage failure stopped pursuer Peter de la Roche's Alexis on Saturday, but he bagged third on Sunday



Grant (left) and Simms were inseparable in Historic FF1600

in the fine eight-marque field.

Five thousandths split Cam Jackson (debuting the ex-Mario Casoni/Westie Mitchell De Tomaso FJ63), Lurani Trophy champion Horatio Fitz-Simon (Lotus 22) and O'Brien in Nick Fennell's Ford France 27 in Formula Junior qualifying. Yellow-flag infringements sent Jackson and fourth qualifier Sam Wilson (Cooper T59) to the back, impositions that stood for both races. Fired up, they scythed through to second and third, Jackson 0.051s ahead, behind O'Brien after challenger HF-S spun on old tyres. He salvaged fourth. Wilson then beat Jackson to second on Sunday.

Ray Mallock (U2) and Andrew Hibberd (Lola Mk2) were only separated in the 'pullers' races when clutch issues hindered the Lola on Saturday. Hibberd returned to harangue Mallock to Sunday's chequer. "Crikey, it was a battle," said Ray. Third both days, Alex Morton (Condor) earned the front-engined title and was four points behind triple champion Nic Carlton-Smith

(Kieft/Elvas) in the overall table, Hibberd having blunted late-season scoring.

With Aurora poleman Dan Eagling non-starting, Mark Dwyer kept Neil Glover honest on Saturday before Glover thundered his ex-Bruce Allison F5000 Chevron to the first of two wins, pulling 157mph on the Wellington Straight. Dwyer's F2 March 742 broke on Sunday, as did Brian Morris's ex-Piercarlo Ghinzani 782, third on Saturday. Thus Matthew Wurr – in Martin Longmore's F5000 McLaren M10B – staved off Mike Bletsoe-Brown's F2 Chevron for second. In Classic F3, David Thorburn beat returnee Gary Ward in Ralt RT3s. Ben Stiles, who humbled many in his FF2000 Van Diemen RF82, claimed series gold.

Closed-wheel groups arrived on Sunday, enhancing the programme. Historic Road Sports ruled on a big grid shared with their 1970s cousins. Kevin Kivlochan's venomous Cobra took a while to stun the Morgan +8s of John Shaw and Oliver Pratt, but couldn't shake them off. John Williams's Porsche



Shortland worked his way to the head of Classic FF1600 pack

WEEKEND WINNERS

HISTORIC FF1600**Races 1 & 2** Callum Grant (Merlyn Mk20A)**CLASSIC FF1600****Race 1** Joe Ahrens (Royale RP26)**Race 2** Jake Shortland (Lola T440)**HISTORIC F3****Races 1 & 2** Michael O'Brien (Brabham BT21B)**REAR-ENGINE HISTORIC FORMULA JUNIOR****Races 1 & 2** Michael O'Brien (Lotus 27)**FRONT-ENGINE HISTORIC FORMULA JUNIOR****Races 1 & 2** Ray Mallock (U2 Mk2)**AURORA TROPHY/CLASSIC F3****Races 1 & 2** Neil Glover (Chevron-Chevrolet B37)**70s & HISTORIC ROAD SPORTS**

Kevin Kivlochan (Shelby Cobra)

GUARDS TROPHY

Rob & Ben Tusting (Lenham-t/c P69)

**MODSPORTS & SPECIAL SALOONS/
HISTORIC TOURING CARS****Race 1** Ollie Reuben (TVR Griffith)**Race 2** Nigel Reuben (TVR Griffith)**HISTORIC FF2000****Race 1** Samuel Harrison (Reynard SF79)**Race 2** Graham Fennymore (Reynard SF81)**For full results visit:** [tsl-timing.com](https://www.tsl-timing.com)

ROWAN DEBUTS DELTA STILETTO Enthused by racing Paul Knapton's Maguire Stiletto at Croft last month, Ray Rowan bought the long-dormant Delta-based Sunbeam Stiletto that Revolution Wheels boss Pat Mannion commissioned in the late 1970s and was last raced regularly by Peter Thurston. Rowan qualified the 1600cc Ford twin-cam-engined car sixth in Modsports and Special Saloons, and the 1989 British Hillclimb champion was second by Becketts, where a broken stub axle ended his day.



HARRISON WINS IN FF2000 Historic F3 champion Samuel Harrison was loaned Adrian Reynard's spare Reynard SF79 (left) – restored by Andrew Honey of Peninsula Historic Motorsport – for Historic FF2000 and won first time out. "I was very lucky not to get taken out [when Ollie Roberts collided with champion Graham Fennymore entering the Wellington Straight and spun across his bows] but it was fun," said Harrison. He duelled with Fennymore throughout Sunday's race, but finished 0.699s behind.



LOXTON BACK ON TRACK Four decades after he first raced in Britain, South African Glenn Loxton – who has competed in a Peter Gough tribute Ford Capri Perana V8 on home soil in the interim – made his Historic F3 debut in an ex-Tony Lanfranchi Merlyn Mk14 discovered hibernating in a Norfolk barn. Following a post-rebuild shakedown, engine maladies struck in qualifying and Loxton switched off when the MAE's oil pressure fell in Saturday's race. "We'll be back next year," he enthused.

911SC was first 'modernist' in fourth.

Lenham-mounted Rob and Ben Tusting added another Guards Trophy victory to their quiver in dramatic style. Senior's spin at Brooklands left junior to hound down David Forsbrey's 2008-built Chevron B8, Ben gaining 15 seconds in as many laps to overhaul him, with Dan Balfour (B8) third. Mark Colman (ex-David Good B8) led initially, before installing father Hugh.

Four closely matched Lotus 23Bs started, but two fell at Becketts on lap one, when Benn Tilley dived into the gravel avoiding spinner Michael Hibberd's. Samuel Harrison brought Geoff Underwood's Brabham BT5 past the surviving 23B of Sam Wilson/Nic Carlton-Smith for a class-winning sixth. Harry Barton, 21, and Horatio Fitz-Simon, 23, topped the GTs in TVR Griffith and Lotus Elan respectively.

The spectacle of Joe Ward's Vauxhall Firenza V8 'Baby Bertha' leading Nigel Reuben's TVR Griffith, with headlights ablaze as daylight faded on the Modsports and Special Saloons finale, was magical, reminding onlookers of Gerry Marshall's Super Saloon pomp. Reuben shot past to complete a family double, son Ollie having lapped the field. Third in race one, Steve Watton's splendid Turner-Ford overheated, promoting Andy Willis's Austin 'A302' to the podium. Neil Wood (Ford Anglia 105E) won the concurrent Historic Touring Car races.

MARCUS PYE



Double Dunne in the dunes as title battle hots up

ZANDVOORT
GB3
14-15 OCTOBER

Alex Dunne claimed a double victory as GB3's maiden visit to Zandvoort blew this year's title battle wide open.

The reigning British Formula 4 champion had won two races already this season, both at Spa in June, but a retirement last time out at Brands Hatch had left him 42 points adrift at the top of the standings.

But any thoughts of a two-horse race between long-time championship leader Callum Voisin and main challenger Joseph Loake were wiped out in a dramatic qualifying session that produced Dunne's first pole position of the year. Loake was fourth quickest but Voisin hit trouble – his Rodin Carlin car was left with floor damage after Michael Shin collided with him at Tarzan, a move that led to the South Korean's disqualification from the session.

Voisin was left with a starting position of 10th for the first race, which was dominated by Dunne. The Hitech driver was barely challenged in the 20-minute affair, and he blasted to a six-second win ahead of Elite Motorsport's McKenzie Cresswell. A last-lap move on Nico Christodoulou propelled JHR Developments ace Loake onto the podium, piling more pressure on Voisin, who battled to seventh.

Cresswell started from pole in race two, with the grid based on each driver's second quickest qualifying times. But Dunne took the lead on the run to Tarzan on the first lap and again – after another early safety car – extended a margin of almost 5s.

Christodoulou cemented the final spot on

the podium this time, ahead of Arden VRD team-mate James Hedley. Behind them, the championship fight was again the main focal point as Loake and Voisin from fifth and ninth on the grid engaged in battle. Loake held off a stern challenge until the British-Swiss went for a move at the banked Hugenholtzbocht on lap 10 of 12. He went in deep, taking Loake with him, but completed the move with all four wheels off the track, and the positions were switched by officials post-race, leaving the championship top three separated by just four points heading into Sunday's reversed-grid contest.

Voisin's qualifying disadvantage proved a benefit on the grid for race three, placing him 15th in the order with Loake 21st and Dunne 24th. Weather proved the main obstacle, thanks to a soaked track surface following a hefty downpour. The race started with Elite Motorsport rookie Patrick Heuzenroeder on pole ahead of Hillspeed's Daniel Mavlyutov, but the safety car was almost immediately deployed with Hedley and Gerrard Xie in the wall at Hugenholtz.

The race resumed on lap six and Mavlyutov pounced at the restart to pass Heuzenroeder, only for the Aussie to crash out moments later, as did fellow newcomer Jack Sherwood. The race finished behind the safety car, with Mavlyutov, Noah Ping and Arthur Rogeon the podium finishers.

Voisin fought his way up to fifth, not only finishing well within the points-paying positions, but also receiving an additional 10 for places gained, while Loake and Dunne managed 13th and 16th respectively.

That leaves the title battle finely poised heading into this weekend's Donington Park decider, with Voisin 13 points clear of

RACE RESULTS

GB3

Race 1 (13 laps) 1 Alex Dunne; 2 McKenzie Cresswell +6.081s; 3 Joseph Loake; 4 Nico Christodoulou; 5 Souta Arao; 6 Matthew Rees.

Fastest lap Dunne 1m30.392s (105.40mph).

Pole Dunne. **Starters** 24.

Race 2 (12 laps) 1 Dunne; 2 Cresswell +4.884s; 3 Christodoulou; 4 James Hedley; 5 Loake; 6 Callum Voisin (below). **FL** Dunne 1m30.023s (105.83mph). **P** Cresswell. **S** 25.

Race 3 (9 laps) 1 Daniel Mavlyutov; 2 Noah Ping +0.878s; 3 Arthur Rogeon; 4 David Morales; 5 Voisin; 6 Shawn Rashid. **FL** Tymek Kucharczyk 2m24.470s (65.94mph). **P** Patrick Heuzenroeder. **S** 25.

Points 1 Voisin 406; 2 Loake 393; 3 Dunne 389; 4 Cresswell 351; 5 Rees 309; 6 Hedley 297.



Loake, and Dunne four points further back. With 105 points still up for grabs, Cresswell and Matthew Rees remain in mathematical contention too, although Voisin left the Dutch venue with a sigh of relief after somehow ending the weekend with a championship advantage almost identical to the one he entered it with.

RICHARD RANDLE

Polley's great defence as CSCC makes 20 years

**CROFT
CSCC
14 OCTOBER**

Sam Polley displayed incredible driving skills in his Mini Marcos to fend off James Hughes in a thrilling race at the Classic Sports Car Club's 20th anniversary meeting at Croft last weekend to win a red flag-halted contest.

Polley started fourth in the Swinging Sixties Group 1 and Classic K race and initially slipped to sixth but, in an outstanding first stint, he climbed to second behind leader Hughes's Austin-Healey Frogeye Sprite. Hughes, who pitted after Polley, had to serve a 20-second 'success' penalty due to a win earlier in the season, which gave Polley the lead.

As they battled fiercely in the closing stages, Hughes made a critical mistake after overtaking Polley – he went wide into the chicane, and this allowed Polley to regain the lead seconds before the race was ended under a red flag due to an incident between Mark Russell (Jaguar E-type) and Will Linley (Austin-Healey 3000). After initial confusion, Polley was able to keep the win on countback. "It's a brilliant way to end the season," he beamed. "The car came home in one piece and now we can spend the winter making improvements and hopefully come back next season."

In contrast, Shane Kelly's day took a bitter turn after winning the first Morgan Challenge race, when he ran out of fuel on the final lap of the sequel. Clearly the quickest Morgan



Marcos driver just kept
Hughes's Healey at bay

JONATHAN MILLS

in both races, The University of Wolverhampton's team would have felt short-changed watching Andrew Thompson win the final race of the day.

"We couldn't have asked for a better start, taking the championship in class two by winning the first race," summed up Kelly. "The second race was also heading for a win, but I think we just got too cocky on the fuel strategies, which is very frustrating. We're not sure if we're going to come back next season right now. We've got a few options, and we're always striving to do what's best for the students."

In the Tin Tops race, on-the-road victor Garry Barlow was given a 40s penalty for failing to meet the required pitstop time of 1m30s. This paved the way for Steve Papworth in his Honda Civic Type R to win while polesitter and initial leader Adam Brown retired his Ford Fiesta mid-race.

Brown wasn't the only leader to fall by the wayside. Father-son duo Aston and Tony Blake had to withdraw from the Future Classics encounter

WEEKEND WINNERS

SWINGING SIXTIES GROUP 1

Sam Polley (Mini Marcos)

MORGAN CHALLENGE

Race 1 Shane Kelly (CX +4)

Race 2 Andrew Thompson (+8)

TIN TOPS

Steve Papworth (Honda Civic Type R)

FUTURE CLASSICS/MODERN CLASSICS/ SWINGING SIXTIES GROUP 2

Richard Harman (Porsche 944 Turbo)

OPEN SERIES/NEW MILLENNIUM/ TURBO TIN TOPS

James Collins (BMW M3 E46)

For full results visit: tsl-timing.com



Kelly (left) missed out on Morgan double
with fuel woe helping Thompson (right)

JONATHAN MILLS

in their TVR Tuscan Challenge after easily heading the field. Richard Harman inherited the lead in his Porsche 944 Turbo and drove comfortably to take the win.

In a meeting full of exhilarating track action, CSCC director Hugo Holder beamed with pride, not only due to the success of the event, but also because of how far the club has come in its 20-year history.

"In 20 years, we've grown from a small group of drivers to having over 1100 members," nodded Holder. "We've had people who were with us in the first event racing today, so we're lucky to have a lot of loyal people who have stuck with us. Thank you to everyone who has helped."

HAMISH BAILEY

McFall rises above Mini rivals for title

MONDELLO PARK
MPSC
14-15 OCTOBER

Mondello Park's 2023 Junior Scholarship winner Bobby-Joe McFall wrapped up the Junior Mini title in the best possible fashion by taking a win and a new lap record from last weekend's opener.

McFall led again in race two, but an inspired Logan Hoey forged his way past for his maiden win. Holly Dunnion was right with the pair for the duration and also got past McFall to grab second.

Jamie Moylan scythed his way through from the back to win the first Irish Legends race with apparent ease, crossing the line over 12 seconds ahead of his closest challengers, Willie Lawrence and Declan Burke. Moylan repeated the feat in the second race and also topped the final, although this time it was a much closer affair with Seamus Ryan keeping him honest throughout.

European GT4 frontrunner Alex Denning returned to his Irish Fiesta roots and borrowed a Zetec for the weekend, with which he managed to



Class lap record and title went the way of McFall

grab pole position ahead of a capacity grid of series regulars. Denning made no mistakes to lead the pack down into the first corner and wasn't headed on the way to an impressive win. Champion-elect Michael Barrable was just a second behind at the flag, bagging a healthy dose of points, with son Rob completing the podium.

Rob Barrable led away second time around and looked set for victory. Denning, though, had charged through from sixth and sliced past at Turn 3 to grab the win and make it a double.

Max Turley won the Fiesta ST opener as he pleased, crossing the line well ahead of Darragh McMullen with Michael Cullen in third. After starting back sixth in race two, Turley battled his way through to take the lead again and eased away to do the double. Kian O'Brien was second after McMullen's exclusion for reckless driving (he made contact with both O'Brien and Victor Cullen), and the impressive John Elliffe took his first podium in third.

Eddie Peterson held off Harry McGovern to take SEAT Supercup honours while, in race two, Graham McDonnell charged up

Claydon claims Compact Cup crown with podiums

SNETTERTON
BRSCC
14-15 OCTOBER

We're becoming ever more used to track-limit infringements affecting results in racing and, on occasions at Snetterton last weekend, not even TSL Timing could keep pace with the number of penalties being handed out.

One series that largely avoided the penalties was the BMW Compact Cup,

and a brace of podiums for Gareth Claydon was enough for him to seal the title. He arrived with a healthy lead on dropped scores, and only needed to score well in the first two outings to secure the crown.

A dominant pole position – by a second – on Saturday morning made the task look easier, but then a rocket fourth-row start from Guy Davis set up an incredible battle between the two; Davis brave and deep on the brakes, but Claydon holding his nerve and gaining the better exits. Corner after corner, Davis pressed for all his worth, launching through Williams on the final lap, neither wanting to brake first as they went under the bridge and both going wide and taking to the grass before firing back in front of the pack in the scramble for the lead. Davis somehow got ahead, with Claydon following to finish second.

Davis and Claydon eased away from the pack in race two, then Davis pushed on to take his eighth win from 12 starts while Claydon wrapped up the title with a race in hand. It was an all-family affair in the

finale, Rudi Macmillan scoring his maiden win, with his father Gordon second.

Both three-hour C1 enduros produced their best moments in the final 20 minutes. Saturday's encounter had been drama-free until a sudden downpour grabbed everyone's attention. The Emax Motorsport #346 car and Trojon #508 had been inseparable for much of the latter stages.

With rain falling, the general pace eased, but the leaders pressed on, lights ablaze. Austin Munday for Trojon sensed that James Little in the Emax car was vulnerable in the slower traffic and pulled alongside, goading his rival to counter. The gap opened for Munday, and he made his move. But it wasn't over yet. There was more traffic ahead and Munday succumbed to the urge to barge past, but he carried too much speed through Agostini and headed first to the grass and then the barrier, gifting Emax the win.

Race two featured the Emax crew performing a stunning, well-practised third stop to give themselves a near-10s



Emax overcame late shower to win C1 enduro



Peterson heads the SEAT Supercup crowd

MICHAEL CHESTER

to just beat well-known drifter Dylan Garvey for the win by 0.282s. McDonnell's victory gave him the title, with Garvey receiving equal praise for his stunning race debut. Rally convert Stephen Wright drove well to take third in what was only his second race meeting.

Michael Cullen was unstoppable in Strykers, clinching the title and breaking his own lap record in the process of taking two wins. He enjoyed a good tussle early on in race two with class stalwart Roger Welaratne, while Cullen's son Victor completed the podium.

Former British Formula 3 regular Hywel Lloyd took both BOSS Ireland races, but only after Sylvie Mullins pulled in early in both, having shattered the outright lap record in his Gould not once, but twice! Race one was red-flagged when Michael Roche had a big off at Southside Corner in his F3 Dallara, but a result was declared. Lloyd, driving champion Tony Greenan's F317, was well ahead of the rest, with Noel Robinson's F307 taking second in both and Paul O'Connell and Shane Rabbitt getting a third apiece.

LEO NULTY



Claydon was beaten in close fight with Davis but took the title

RICHARD STYLES

advantage, until a safety car brought everyone back together. Then, stuck behind a backmarker lapping far too slowly, in frustration Emax and several others passed the novice, earning each a two-lap post-race penalty, gifting the win to the other Trojon car of Chris Freeman and Jonathan Munday.

A delaminated tyre sent Carl Swift out of contention in the opening Audi TT Cup race, leaving Adam Blair to record his first win of the year. It should have been followed by a second, but Blair persistently ran wide and was demoted down the order – which he continued to do in race three,

leaving Richard Forber with one inherited win and the second unchallenged.

Mike Jenvey was another to continually flout the boundary line, the Zeo Prototypes racer racking up three successive penalties in one race, yet still winning handsomely in his Jenvey Gunn because others were guilty of doing the same.

Simon Tomlinson and Adam Marshall took a win apiece with their VWs in the Evolution Trophy series. Tomlinson lacked prowess in the early stages before later gathering pace.

STEVE HINDLE

WEEKEND WINNERS



MICHAEL CHESTER

MONDELLO PARK JUNIOR MINI CHALLENGE

Race 1 Bobby-Joe McFall

Race 2 Logan Hoey

IRISH LEGENDS

Races 1, 2 & 3 Jamie Moylan

FIESTA ZETECs

Races 1 & 2 Alex Denning

FIESTA STs

Races 1 & 2 Max Turley

SEAT SUPERCUP IRELAND

Race 1 Eddie Peterson

Race 2 Graham McDonnell

IRISH STRYKERS

Races 1 & 2 Michael Cullen

BOSS IRELAND

Races 1 & 2 Hywel Lloyd
(Dallara-Mercedes F317, above)

For full results visit: timing.ie

SNETTERTON

BMW COMPACT CUP

Races 1 & 2 Guy Davis

Race 3 Rudi Macmillan

C1 ENDURANCE RACING SERIES

Race 1 Emax Motorsport

(Stuart Ratcliff/Jake Little/James Little)

Race 2 Trojon Motorsport

(Chris Freeman/Jonathan Munday)

AUDI TT CUP RACING

Race 1 Adam Blair

Races 2 & 3 Richard Forber (below)

ZEO PROTOTYPE SERIES

Races 1 & 2 Mike Jenvey (Jenvey Gunn)

EVOLUTION TROPHY

Race 1 Simon Tomlinson (VW Golf)

Race 2 Adam Marshall (VW Golf)

CMMC INTERMARQUE SILHOUETTES/ SUPER SALOONS & TIN TOPS

Races 1 & 2 Lewis Smith
(Mercedes SLK Silhouette)



RICHARD STYLES

For full results visit: tsl-timing.com

HOW TO WIN THE FORMULA FORD FESTIVAL

The much-loved Brands Hatch event is back this weekend with another mix of young and seasoned drivers battling to write the latest chapter of its long history. We spoke to former winners, and the people who supported them, to learn the secrets of success

STEVE HINDLE

THE DRIVERS

GERRIT VAN KOUWEN (1984)

“People say that my final was boring. They’re wrong – it was the best ever! I’d enjoyed winning across Europe in 1983, but nothing prepares you for your first time at Brands Hatch. I made the final that year, but that was it, so for 1984, we set

about doing things right. I had fantastic backing from Lola and, weekend after weekend, we transformed the T644E, carefully building up a very different car to what we’d started with.

“I worked closely with Minister too. Dave

[Minister] and Graham [Fuller] were developing a way to pre-heat oil, as this showed an instant benefit of 2-3bhp on leaving the line. We fitted an industrial kettle element into the bell housing and ran it off a portable generator. You don’t win by standing still.

“Approaching Festival week, Graham told me not to join the early tests but to let others risk damage and set the times. The benchmark was 49.5s. We arrived on Thursday, I did just five laps, recording 49.2s. We knew we were quickest; now everyone else knew it too.

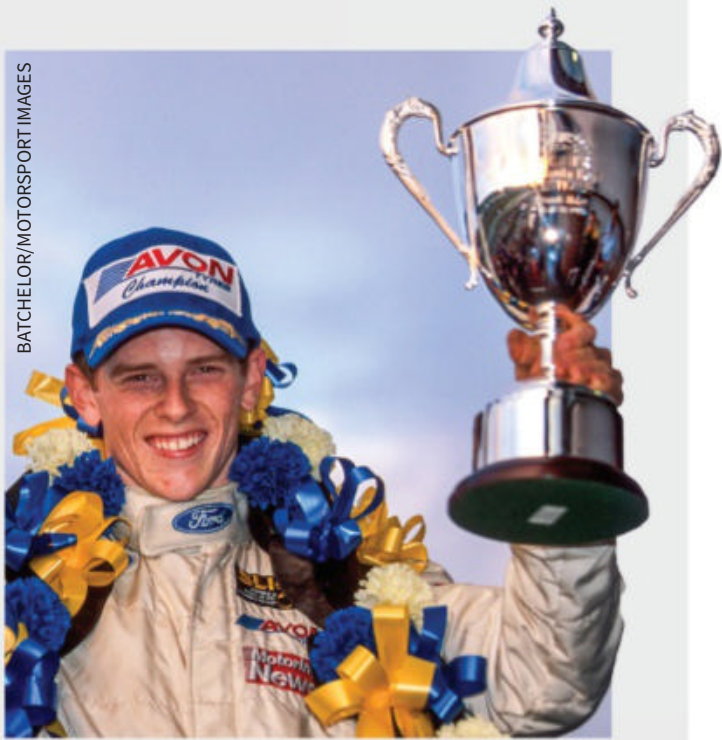
“On pole for the final, I maintained the three-tenths margin we held in testing, enabling me to control the pace, which involved a hugely satisfying 48.8s best.

“I’ve been to every final since, apart from 2020 [due to COVID-19], so can confidently say to win it, you need to start at the front because, if you’re chasing, anything can – and will – happen.”



SUTTON/MOTORSPORT IMAGES

BATCHLOR/MOTORSPORT IMAGES



ANTHONY DAVIDSON (2000)

"I was a late starter in Formula Ford and was immediately aware that Jenson Button – who I'd raced in karts – had just finished as top rookie in British F3 and was already rumoured to have a freshly inked Formula 1 contract.

"Three wins in the championship in 2000 was a solid start but I knew it wouldn't be enough. Didier [Stoessel, manager] had suggested me to Rick Gorne at BAR, who was looking to establish a junior driver programme, but it was made clear nothing could happen without a call to say that, just like Jenson in 1998, we were Festival winners.

"Going into that weekend, I knew it was all or nothing. The opposition would be mighty, but I had their measure. My Mygale wasn't as quick, but it was planted and predictable. Plus, I knew that around the Indy circuit, it's almost impossible to overtake a fast and perfectly positioned car on a damp or wet track.

"Against the odds, I beat the favoured Van Diemens to pole for the final and, from the start, their intentions were clear. The line had dried and first Robert Dahlgren's and then James Courtney's noses were smashing into me, but it was my lead and that's how it had to stay. Then the red flag came out as marshals recovered two stranded cars.

"Back on the grid, my team used the delay, brute strength and a crowbar to bend my battered suspension back into shape. The restart was much as before but, whereas I could trust James to be fair, Dahlgren was a different proposition. I sensed his frustration and quickly decided that, before he took me out, he should take himself out. With just a few laps remaining, charging past the line, I dummied him by lifting off slightly. This was his chance to pass, and he switched to the outside but, by the time he drew level, I was already back to full throttle – which left him with nowhere to go, other than straight onto the damp, then the marbles, then into the gravel.

"I knew I could win. The team gave me a brilliant car, and I was able to make everyone else do the hard work and make their own costly mistakes... and we made that call to BAR."

JOEY FOSTER (2003, 2017)

"Confidence and command – that's mostly it. Believe in yourself, trust your car.

"You need to respect the occasion too, and always be at the top of your game. We made a mistake in 2018 when I switched to the Firman. I'd been winning in the Ray that year and naively thought we could carry right on. But the car was completely different and I didn't have the track time to find the confidence to push it to where I needed it to be. This is where teamwork counts. Don [Hardman] and

Keith [Bodicoat] know how to get the best out of both me and the car. A good team will work tirelessly for you, but then you need to prove to them that the long nights were worth it.

"Testing is important, but nothing beats time pitched against those you have to beat. You also need to know Brands Hatch better than you know anywhere else. Make a mistake here and it punishes you first, then kicks you while you're down."

Foster led the way in the 2003 Festival



HAWKINS/MOTORSPORT IMAGES

MAX ESTERSON (2022)

"For me, it was all about correcting mistakes from 2021. I'd led the [National] championship on points but lost the title on dropped scores. Then, at the Festival, I chose to save my new tyres in the semi, which left me paceless and starting the final from the midfield.

"Having to come through the pack is a very different race to controlling it from the front. The new rubber allowed me to pull a few special moves but I soon found myself blocked by Jamie Sharp and Neil MacLennan, who were fighting over P1. My speed was there, but I couldn't get by.

"So last year, I had to make amends.

The conditions suited my style and I won my heat, then got past Joey [Foster] to win the semi too. Lining up on pole for the final, all I had to do was hold my line.

"Joey was straight on my tail, but I could see that he wanted us to break free and settle it later. However, later never came. A deluge of rain scattered cars in every direction. I was able to keep Joey behind until the safety car came out, then the race ended.

"You can't win the Festival without time spent in the car, and won't win without understanding how the track responds to the weather."



GARY HAWKINS

THE SUPPORTING CREW



MICHAEL VERGERS (Driver coach)

Michael Vergers is remembered for one of the Festival’s great drives in the 1989 final; pitched into the Druids gravel at the start, then stunningly driving beyond everyone else’s limit (including David Coulthard’s) to finish second.

“Confidence is key, but you have to find the right switch to turn it on,” says Vergers. “Every driver’s personality is different. To produce the best, you first have to understand what triggers belief. “Yes, you need a good season behind

you. You need to know who you’re racing and how to beat them, but you also need to be tuned into your car and trust in its response. The process of driving is quite simple, but the art of racing demands skill and perfection, lap after lap.”

MOTORSPORT IMAGES

BERNARD DOLAN (Team manager)

Like Vergers, Bernard Dolan was an accomplished racer, winning the 1989 British Formula Ford Championship. Now he runs Team Dolan Racing, where he’s guided drivers to victory at both the Festival and the Walter Hayes Trophy.

“As a team, we produce a strong car but, to win, you’ve got to be able to get the best from it,” says Dolan. “If we change a set-up to suit a driver, what you gain from them, you risk losing more from the machine.

“One of the biggest problems at Brands Hatch is changeable conditions. Confidence should overcome this, but knowing the circuit and finding a rhythm are also key. You won’t win from way back, so you must aim to lead, inch-perfect all the way, because the moment you go off line, the quick guys will feed off you, and anyone else who gets in their way.”



JEP

GAVIN RAY (Constructor)

Ray Race Cars is one of the most recognisable names in Formula Ford history and still builds new chassis today.

“Thirty years ago, chassis design was all about lightness, which could make cars susceptible to change over the course of a race,” Gavin Ray explains. “If you’re not being driven into at the Festival, you’re not fighting for the lead, so new cars are much stiffer, giving drivers a more responsive, consistent feel. Older machinery might leave an awning with the geometry straight, but mere minutes of wheelbanging will often see it knocked out of shape.

“From a constructor’s point of view, the chassis and set-up need to work in harmony. Peak performance comes in quite a small window, so teams need to stick to what they know and let the driver make the difference.

“Can you win the Festival today with an older chassis? No. You’ll only achieve the consistency needed from a car that’s as true at the end of a race as it is at the start.”



Nick Tandy took first Festival win for a Ray in 2007

PATCHING/MOTORSPORT IMAGES

GRAHAM FULLER (Engine builder)

Names like Ayrton Senna (below) and Nigel Mansell are easily woven into history, but to Dave Minister and Graham Fuller, they're just two of many who raced and won with the finest Formula Ford engines of the day.

"Let's be straight, winning in Formula Ford requires much more than just a good engine," states Fuller. "But, when the talent is evenly matched, that's where engineering and development can make a difference – knowing how to deliver power

consistently throughout the race. Operating temperatures are key, as are oil types and levels. So too are individual components. You'll only get the most by using the best; in terms of machined quality and fit, and in packaging too. Designers build cars for aero efficiency, but this can easily be at the expense of restricted engine performance.

"The best advice I can give to any driver and team is to listen to their engine builder and work as a collective."



MOTORSPORT IMAGES

ALAN CORNOCK (Constructor)

The name Royale Cars may nowadays be consigned to the past, but former owner Alan Cornock is a man who has seen his share of both winners and losers.

"Winning today is a very different thing to when we won back in 1975," he says. "Then, Formula Ford cars were constantly evolving, and our team [which included designer Rory Byrne] led a never-ending search for speed through innovation on the drawing board. Today, top teams know their cars intimately so, whereas we had to take risks, I will confidently say 'stick to what you know'.

"At a place like Brands Hatch, with its climbs, drops, cambers and surface changes, you won't win without precision, and that only comes through experience. Luck, of course, often plays a part, but winners tend to make their own."

CHRIS DAVISON (Tyre tester)

As an accomplished racer and professional tyre tester (formerly with Avon), few people understand the importance of the relationship between the car and its tyre as well as Chris Davison does.

"The ACB10 is a great tyre to race on, but you have to know it well, and how small changes in temperature and conditions affect optimum pressures and levels of brake bias," he says.

"A damp or wet track requires a lot of work to find and maintain grip but, the more you practise, the more it becomes second nature. Luck will always play a part but, if you're confident in your car, and can predict the response from your tyres, you can explore the limits the track will allow."



JEP

CONCLUSION

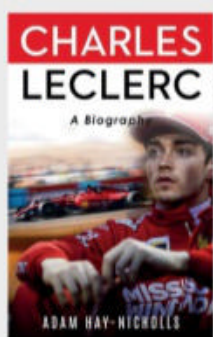
So there we are. Ten of the most knowledgeable people in the paddock, all pointing to pretty much the same: that winning the Festival doesn't just rely on *confidence* and *speed*; it needs *trust* (in your team); *faith* (in your car's responses); *experience* (of racing closely with those you must beat); *reactions* (to changing conditions); and, most probably, just a *little bit of luck*.

FINISHING STRAIGHT

Little-known gems are woven into the narrative, adding insight into Leclerc's character

GALLOWAY/SUTTON
motorsport
IMAGES

A career forged in heartbreak



BOOK
**CHARLES LECLERC:
A BIOGRAPHY**
Adam Hay-Nicholls
RRP: £14.99
Icon Books

Charles Leclerc is a driver whose career has been forged in heartbreak and loss. While this may have been common for drivers of a certain vintage, the Monegasque stands out in this respect in the modern world of Formula 1.

This aspect of Leclerc's character is tackled head on by Adam Hay-Nicholls in *Charles Leclerc: A biography*, with the opening chapters explaining his upbringing and the closeness of the ties he had built, before describing the losses of his godfather, Jules Bianchi, and his father, Herve Leclerc. Further tragedy would follow with the death of close friend Anthoine Hubert.

In all these instances, the focus is on answering the question of how the losses affected Leclerc rather than simply recounting the well-trodden ground of the moments themselves. And through this,

the reader feels the sense of loss too, with the set-up and background building the relationships, even if the outcome is already known. Were this a simple blow-by-blow storytelling exercise, the impact would be far less.

This narrative method continues following Leclerc's time with Sauber, a period that is glossed over in a matter of moments, while a whole chapter is devoted to the emotive and soulful history of Ferrari. In particular, there is no shortage of words dedicated to Sebastian Vettel, explaining in detail the German's history in Formula 1, from day one to the moment the four-time champion became the foil that Leclerc would ultimately best.

It is this thinking that sets *Charles Leclerc: A biography* apart from other titles, with the clear philosophy from the word go of painting the entire picture, rather than providing a frame and assuming the reader is aware of the details that complete the scene. Individual races and incidents within them are told with detail, with the key question of 'why is this being said?' always answered.

Since the advent of social media and with wall-to-wall coverage of Formula 1 in the modern world, it's reasonable to suggest that fans have never known drivers better than they do at present, with many on the grid electing to share snapshots of their lives that were previously kept private.

Despite this, and while some familiar tales are recounted, Hay-Nicholls manages to weave in some little-known gems that add further colour. Although most of these nuggets are in the early phases of the biography – Leclerc's formative years, obviously, less in the public eye than



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his Formula 1 career – they set the scene for what is to come.

Given that the current season is ongoing, the biography runs to the end of the 2022 campaign, with the final two chapters focusing on Leclerc's failed title bid in that season.

The final chapter, perfectly titled *Should've been a contender*, picks up following Leclerc's retirement from the French Grand Prix – the one that featured his harrowing scream of frustration – and rattles off all the various errors of both the team and driver from that point to the close of the season. Overall, *Charles Leclerc: A biography* is an engaging read that certainly will hold your attention and shine a light on not only Leclerc the driver, but also on Leclerc the person.

There are moments when Leclerc is held so high that you would imagine he has already won multiple world championships, but these are usually followed by comments from rival drivers or the media that justify why he was viewed in such esteem at the time.

Engaging, entertaining and, at times, gut-wrenching, this biography is certainly one to be recommended.

SAM HALL



SUTTON/MOTORSPORT IMAGES

WHAT'S ON

INTERNATIONAL MOTORSPORT

United States Grand Prix

F1 World Championship
Round 18/22

Austin, USA

22 October

TV Live Sky Sports F1,
 Sat 2230, Sun 1955

TV Highlights

Sky Sports F1, Sun 2330,
 Channel 4, Mon 0030,
 0825

DTM

Round 8/8

Hockenheim, Germany

21-22 October

TV Live ViaplayXtra,
 Sat 1215, Sun 1215

Formula Regional European by Alpine

Round 10/10

Hockenheim, Germany

21-22 October

TV Livestream

Viaplay, Sat 1405,
 Sun 0930

European Le Mans Series

Rounds 5 & 6/6

Algarve Circuit, Portugal

20/22 October

F1 Academy

Round 7/7

Austin, USA

22 October

TV Live Sky Sports F1, Sat
 1530, 2115, Sun 1530

Euroformula Open

Round 8/8

Barcelona, Spain

21-22 October

TV Livestream

Motorsport.tv, Sat 1540, Sun
 0905, 1615

International GT Open

Round 7/7

Barcelona, Spain

21-22 October

TV Livestream

Motorsport.tv, Sat 1345,
 Sun 1210

NASCAR Cup Series

Round 34/36

Homestead, USA

22 October

TV Live ViaplayXtra,
 Sun 1900

NASCAR Xfinity Series

Round 31/33

Homestead, USA

21 October

TV Livestream

Viaplay, Sat 1630

MotoGP

Round 16/20

Phillip Island, Australia

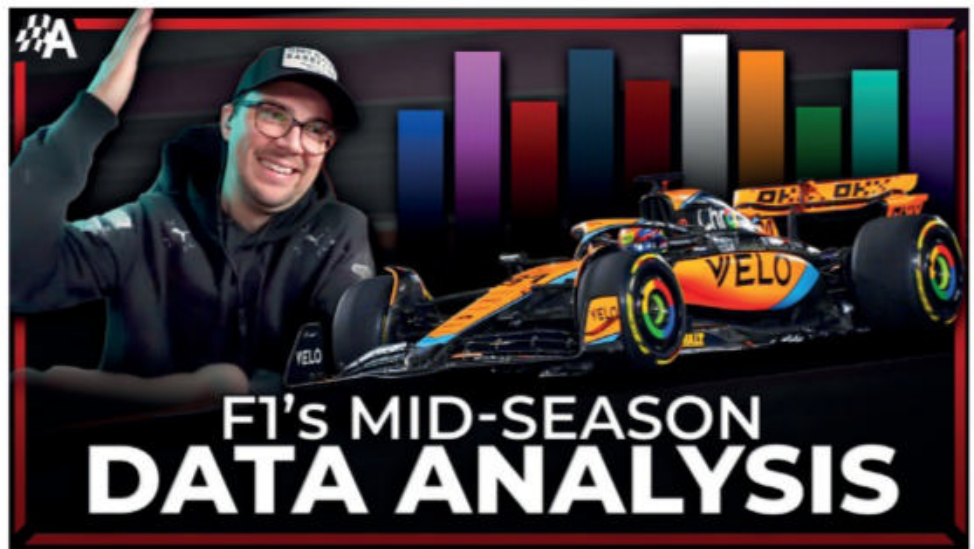
22 October

TV Live TNT Sports 2,
 Sun 0330

TV Highlights ITV4,
 Mon 2000



youtube.com/AUTOSPORTdotcom



Analysing F1's mid-season data – a race engineer explains Part 2

F1 2023 is far from over, with the midfield battle (so, most of the grid) still raging on to see who will take second in 2023. But which teams have made the biggest improvement throughout the year? And how has the gap to Red Bull changed?

Martyn Lee chats with ex-F1 race engineer Blake Hinsey, @brrake, and our own Jon Noble to discuss the data behind these points, as well as what it proved about the Qatar Grand Prix's tyre problems and whether McLaren could have caught Max Verstappen at the Losail International Circuit.



UK MOTORSPORT

Brands Hatch BRSCC

21-22 October

Formula Ford Festival,
 TCR UK, Fiesta Juniors,
 Civic Cup, Mini Winter Series

TV Livestream

brscc.co.uk

Silverstone MSVR

21-22 October

GT4 Challenge, Historic
 Touring Car Challenge,
 HRDC (Allstars, Gerry



Formula Ford Festival

Marshall Trophy, Jack
 Sears Trophy), Jaguar
 Classic Challenge, Pall Mall

Cup, Woodcote Trophy &
 Stirling Moss Trophy

Donington Park BRSCC

21-22 October

British GT, GB3, GB4,
 Ginetta GT Academy,
 Ginetta GT
 Championship,
 Ginetta Junior

TV Livestream

[Britishgt.com](https://britishgt.com)

Kirkistown 500MRCI

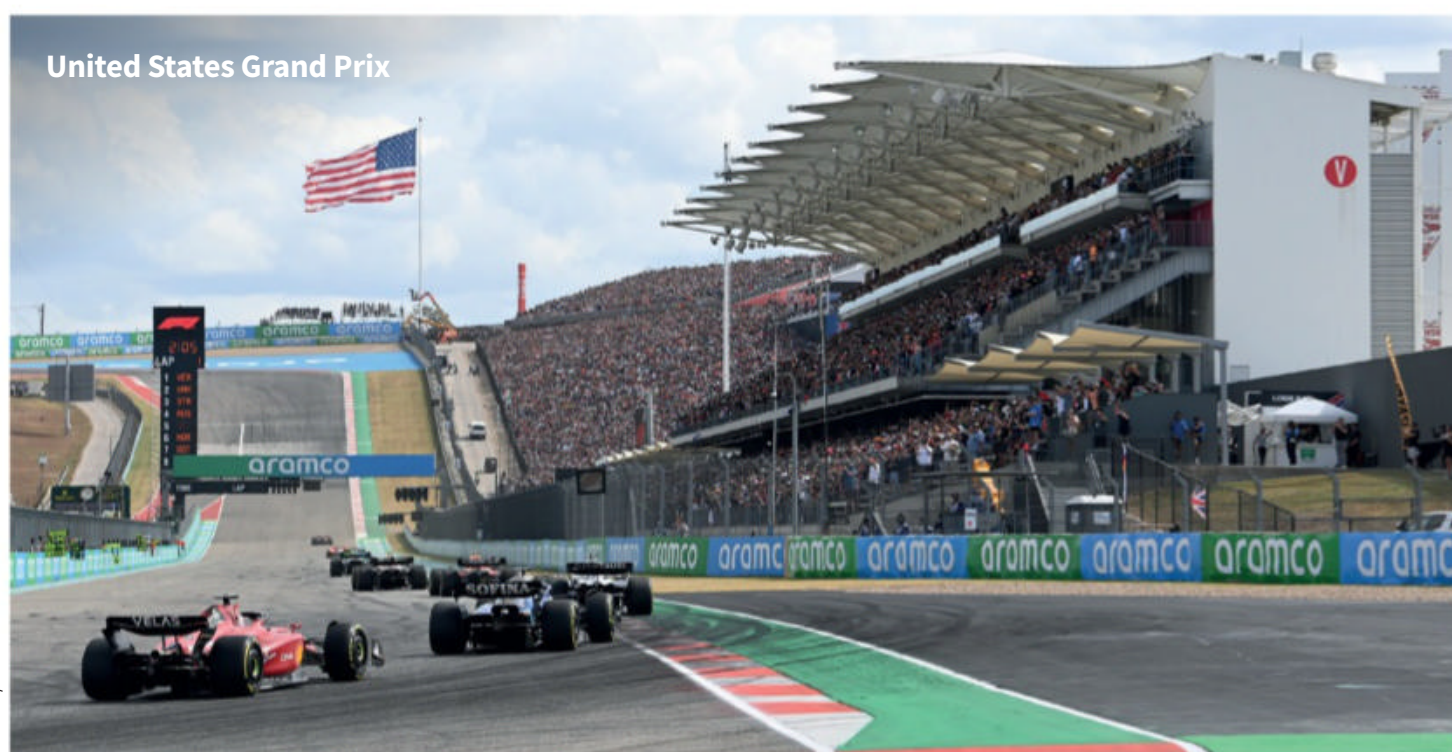
21 October

Fiestas/Minis, FF1600,
 NI Sevens, Roadsports/
 Globals, Saloons/GTs/
 Mazdas

Snetterton CTA

22 October

Racing Hondas



United States Grand Prix



FROM THE ARCHIVE

Jean-Pierre Jabouille and Ligier designer/team linchpin Gerard Ducarouge confer beside the former's Matra V12-powered JS17 in the Imola pit garage at the 1981 San

Marino Grand Prix. Jabouille, who was still suffering the effects of his leg-breaking accident in the previous year's Canadian GP, qualified 18th and was not classified in the race (round four of 15), and after three

more fruitless outings called time on his F1 driving career. Ducarouge also failed to see out the year in his role, although his mid-season exit was involuntary: he was sacked by volatile team owner Guy Ligier.



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Toyota TF109

You might imagine that one-time grand prix winner Jarno Trulli would pick the mount that took him to his only Formula 1 success as his all-time favourite car – even more so since the backdrop for that success was Monaco. But the Italian instead plumps for the final truly competitive car of his F1 tenure, the Toyota TF109 of 2009.

The Renault R24 in which he scored his Monte Carlo win in 2004 was, in Trulli's words, "extremely good only at Monaco, which is a particular circuit". On the other hand, the double diffuser-equipped TF109 was "the best-handling car I ever had – the kind of car that gives you the feeling you can push, with a good front end and good traction on corner exit".

Trulli scored three podium finishes on his way to eighth in the standings with the TF109, his best placing since 2005, and Toyota was fifth in the constructors'. But that success was front-loaded – after the Bahrain Grand Prix in April, Trulli was fourth in the drivers' table and Toyota third in the constructors', only a point behind Red Bull.

"The TF109 was very competitive at the beginning of the season, but we missed a bit of constant evolution in terms of upgrades," explains Trulli. "After the first four races, in Europe everyone was bringing big upgrades, and that's where we missed out."



Trulli agrees with the notion that Toyota might have reconsidered its withdrawal from F1 had it scored a victory in 2009. While Bahrain is often cited as the race that got away, he instead feels that the rain-soaked Malaysian GP was the real missed chance.

"I honestly deserved to win the race," claims Trulli. "I was fighting with Jenson Button [who won] and when the rain came I made a clear call to go on intermediate tyres. The team, without telling me, put me on heavy wets and Timo Glock on intermediates. He was ninth, but he finished the race second. I was second and I ended up fourth. They really screwed up – it would have been an easy win. After that, we were close again, like in Japan, but we were never quite good enough."

JAMIE KLEIN



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