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F1 delivers at Montreal as future regulations revealed

There's nothing like a bit of rain to spice things up, and last weekend's Canadian Grand Prix was probably one of the best races of the ground-effect era so far, even if we were denied a fifth different race winner of the season thanks to Max Verstappen.

As Jake Boxall-Legge shows in our report from page 16, McLaren narrowly missed a couple of chances to beat Red Bull after a stellar performance from Lando Norris. George Russell also had a chance in a rejuvenated Mercedes, but got involved in a little too much drama.

While we wait to see if a genuine 2024 championship fight is *really* about to ignite, the F1 regulations for 2026 were revealed last week. There have been mixed reviews, so we dive into the ideas on p44.

There was plenty of excitement at Thruxton, where British Touring Car title contenders Jake Hill, Ash Sutton and Tom Ingram all crossed the line first – except one of them controversially lost their victory following a penalty. Marcus Simmons was there to make sense of it all and see some great racing as the top three pulled clear (p32).

This weekend will be all about the Le Mans 24 Hours. Following our 52-page guide last week, in this issue Gary Watkins brings you the views from last Sunday's Test Day as Porsche emerged as the favourite (p4). He also takes a look back at the unusual path to Le Mans success taken by BMW a quarter of a century ago (p50).

Qualifying for the 92nd edition of the 24 Hours has already kicked off, so head to [autosport.com](https://www.autosport.com) for the latest news and look out for our in-depth coverage of all the classes in next week's issue (20 June).



Kevin Turner
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Autosport p60



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PIT + PADDOCK

Porsche is hot favourite for Le Mans, says Toyota

LE MANS 24 HOURS

Victory in the Le Mans 24 Hours is Porsche's to lose. That was the verdict of Toyota after the German manufacturer blocked out the top two times at last Sunday's official Test Day that led into race week.

Toyota Gazoo Racing Europe technical director David Flourey made the suggestion ahead of this weekend's double-points round of the World Endurance Championship after the factory Porsche Penske Motorsport entries finished 1-2-4 on the Test Day, the best of them with a 0.708-second margin over the third-placed Toyota, as the 963 LMDh continued its vein of strong form from both the WEC and the IMSA SportsCar Championship.

"I think it's clear: I would think if Porsche doesn't win they have done a pretty bad job," said Flourey after the conclusion of six hours of testing on Sunday. "They have the edge in every aspect from what we can see today. We will see more during the week [when practice and qualifying began on Wednesday], but clearly Porsche is looking strong."

Asked whether Porsche's performance during the Test Day was a turn-up given its form so far in the WEC this year and the Balance of Performance for the Le Mans event published last week, Flourey replied: "No surprise."

Flourey questioned whether Ferrari and Cadillac showed their true pace over the course of the test, in which their best cars

ended up fifth and 14th respectively, but added that he expected BMW to be in the fight after it made it into the top six in both the morning and afternoon sessions. "Behind Porsche, it should be a good fight," he said with more than a hint of sarcasm.

Kevin Estre ended up quickest in the #6 Porsche 963 LMDh over the full 8.47-mile



Circuit de la Sarthe on a 3m26.907s set early in the afternoon session, while the additional entry from the North American arm of the PPM squad competing in the IMSA SportsCar Championship took second spot. Nick Tandy put that car into second place with 3m27.356s before Felipe Nasr improved to 3m27.142s in the closing stages of the afternoon. The #8 Toyota GR010 HYBRID Le Mans Hypercar, in which Brendon Hartley posted a 3m27.615s, was third ahead of Michael Christensen's 3m27.773s in the remaining factory Porsche.

Porsche played down any status as the pre-race favourite heading into Le Mans week. Urs Kuratle, who leads the LMDh programme at Porsche, said: "We will be in the mix, we will be there, but whether we are favourites or not, I am not sure. We are in the mix with a lot of other cars, which is a nice thing for the whole sport – I am really looking forward to this race."

Kuratle stressed that Porsche could not be sure whether the other manufacturers exploited their full potential during the Test Day. "All we know is that we made our programme and that was the result of it, but we are not dreaming to be so much ahead [in the race]," he said.



LE MANS 2024

ALL PHOTOGRAPHY: JEP



Responding specifically to Floury's comments, he replied: "There are still reasons why you can do a good job and still fail to win. We have everything to win the race and if we don't win then we have to analyse why."

The two Jota customer 963s were also there or thereabouts on Sunday, ending up 10th and 11th in the hands of Callum Ilott and Oliver Rasmussen. The Proton car was 11th in the morning session but didn't improve when the track was quicker.

Top Ferrari driver was Miguel Molina with 3m28.014s aboard the #50 499P LMH, which just shaded Robin Frijns's 3m28.072s in the best of the WRT BMW M Hybrid V8 LMDhs.

The rhetoric from the manufacturers not at the sharp end was similar across the board. They pointed out that this was a test and that they had their programmes to work through. They were only looking at what they were doing and not concerned about their rivals.

"We just worked for the race," said Cadillac driver Sebastien Bourdais. "I was surprised by the pace at the front, but it is always tough to read who is running what. We were just focused on ourselves."

GARY WATKINS

POWER GAIN RULES WELCOMED BY MANUFACTURERS


The new 'power gain' component of the Hypercar World Endurance Championship Balance of Performance introduced for the Le Mans 24 Hours has been broadly welcomed by the manufacturers.

Power gain adjusts the maximum power allowed to the drivetrain in each car above a pre-determined speed, with the aim of balancing their acceleration and top speed profiles in the name of further levelling the playing field. An introduction at round two of the WEC at Imola in April had looked on the cards after power gain was trialled during the pre-season Prologue test in Qatar, but its introduction was delayed for reasons that have not been divulged publicly or privately to the manufacturers.

"It is definitely positive," said BMW M Motorsport boss Andreas Roos. "It helps balance the cars even more. Here at Le Mans with the long straights there is the topic of overtaking."

Toyota Gazoo Racing Europe technical director David Floury offered a similar opinion. "Yes, we are happy about it," said the Frenchman. "It would have been logical to have had it earlier, but there was a recognition after Spa [last month's WEC round] that it was needed, so it was a good thing." He added that he had no concerns about the implementation of the new tool available to rulemakers the FIA and the Automobile Club de l'Ouest. "It's not rocket science," said Floury.

Peugeot Sport boss Jean-Marc Finot was sceptical of the impact that power gain can have. "I don't think it will change a lot," he explained. "If you change the




BMW positive
about new rule

power by 1%, it will change the top speed by one third of 1%."

The threshold at which power gain kicks in has been tweaked upwards to 250km/h (155mph) from the original 210km/h, though this figure had an asterisk against it suggesting it could be changed. Floury admitted that this came as a surprise to him, though Roos conceded that it made sense to raise the figure at a track with a series of high-speed sections.

The manufacturers for the most part reckoned it was difficult to assess the impact of the introduction of power gain after the Test Day. Ferrari had an advantage on top speed with its 499P Le Mans Hypercar this time last year, but it was down the rankings through the speed trap at the end of the first segment of the Mulsanne Straight on Sunday. Quickest was the Isotta Fraschini Tipo 6 LMH Competizione at 345.6km/h, followed by the BMW M Hybrid V8 on 343.4km/h, while the top Ferrari was recorded at 338.1km/h.

GARY WATKINS



Peugeot sounded a
note of scepticism

Tsunoda crucial for RB in Perez logjam

FORMULA 1

Sergio Perez's contract renewal at Red Bull means that Yuki Tsunoda has been snubbed for a promotion to the main team, with the Japanese instead staying put at RB for a fifth consecutive season in 2025.

Tsunoda has been one of the standout performers in the 2024 F1 season, growing into a reliable points scorer alongside the more inconsistent Daniel Ricciardo. Amid uncertainty over the Australian's long-term future, Tsunoda's performances made it an easy decision for Red Bull to take up an existing option for another season.

"It's key for the project," RB team principal Laurent Mekies told Autosport. "He has been doing a phenomenal step this year and you have to give him credit for that. It went well

beyond our expectations. Yes, we're expecting a step but in a fourth year doing such a step change is very impressive, both in terms of pace and in terms of what's happening outside of the car. So it's been mega. As a result, it becomes crucial for the project and natural to continue with him."

Tsunoda said he wanted a long-term commitment from Red Bull after seeing Perez extend his deal until the end of 2026, and Mekies admitted that if the 24-year-old continues developing the way he has, he will become "difficult to ignore" for any team.

"Look, he's a Red Bull driver," added Mekies. "He needs to have the ambition to go to Red Bull Racing. He has it, and he's doing everything he can to prove that. He's ambitious, we are ambitious. We are pushing each other."



S BLOXHAM/MOTORSPORT IMAGES

Tsunoda has to bide time after Perez renewal

Ricciardo boosted his chances of staying at RB with a strong performance at last weekend's Canadian Grand Prix, where he finished eighth after qualifying fifth. Red Bull also has reserve Liam Lawson – who subbed effectively for Ricciardo in

2023 – to consider, with the New Zealander impressing the team with his speed and attitude. If Lawson doesn't get promoted into a 2025 race seat, it is understood that he is free to cut his ties with Red Bull.

FILIP CLEEREN

Doohan's Canada FP1 run 'not punishment' for Ocon

FORMULA 1

Jack Doohan saw an early chance to help stake his claim for an Alpine Formula 1 seat in 2025 scuppered by the weather conditions during his free practice run at last weekend's Canadian Grand Prix.

The six-time Formula 2 race winner is on the radar at the Enstone-based team to replace Esteban Ocon, who is leaving

at the end of his contract amid a tense relationship with the squad. But the adverse weather in Montreal, which led to FP1 lasting 39 minutes in which Doohan was only able to log three exploration laps, meant the Australian will have to wait for his second FP1 session this year for further running in the team's 2024 car.

The timing of Doohan's FP1 run was curious, just days after Ocon's departure

was announced and his falling out with management over a collision with teammate Pierre Gasly in Monaco. But rather than being a straightforward audition for the seat, or a punishment for Ocon, it was explained that the team had competitive reasons for slotting Doohan in for Montreal.

"I've seen that [punishment suggestion] a lot from the media, and it's not the case at all," Ocon said. "It's a track that's going to be green to start with, so things need to be cleaned up. I've got a five-place grid penalty as well, so my qualifying is a lot less important than usual. From a team point of view, we think we are going to have probably a more competitive car later in the year. So, to do it early is a good thing, instead of doing it in Mexico or Abu Dhabi."

Team boss Bruno Famin added that Doohan "is an option for sure", with the 21-year-old also completing private testing for the squad at the Red Bull Ring. "We are preparing him," Famin said. "He has quite a heavy testing programme."

FILIP CLEEREN



TREMBLAY/SUTTON/MOTORSPORT IMAGES

A rare shot of Doohan on track in Montreal

Lopez up to speed as sub for injured Conway

LE MANS 24 HOURS

Jose Maria Lopez transitioned seamlessly back into Toyota's Hypercar squad after Mike Conway was ruled out of this week's Le Mans 24 Hours through injury. The Argentinian was straight on the pace at Sunday's Test Day when recalled to the Japanese manufacturer's #7 GR010 HYBRID.

Lopez's performance on his return to the line-up after being replaced by Nyck de Vries for 2024 was praised by Toyota Gazoo Racing Europe technical director David Floury. "By the look of the lap times it was like he drove the car yesterday," said Floury. "He was up to speed immediately. He worked hard to get on top of all the systems. We are confident there will be no issues in the race."

Lopez posted a best lap at the Test Day of 3m28.827s, compared with the fastest Toyota time set by Brendon Hartley in #8 of 3m27.615s. He did the majority of the running aboard #7 in the quicker afternoon session and ended up ahead of team-mates



de Vries and Kamui Kobayashi.

Lopez was recalled from the Auto Sport Promotion Lexus LMGT3 team with which he is racing in the full World Endurance Championship after Conway broke his collarbone and two ribs in a cycling accident in the south of France last Thursday. He was out training with friend Lopez when they both slid off their bikes in treacherous conditions.

Lopez was uninjured and was chosen by Toyota for Conway's seat ahead of its official WEC reserve Ritomo Miyata. TGRE director Rob Leupen explained that it was an easy decision given Miyata's lack of Le Mans

experience – he is debuting in the event this week with LMP2 team Cool Racing.

"Ritomo has never driven here at Le Mans, and the other option was Jose," said Leupen. "We discussed it within the team, and with Kamui [who is also team principal of the WEC squad] and Akio Toyoda [Toyota chairman] back in Japan, and it was decided it was best for everyone, including Ritomo, for Jose to jump in #7."

Jack Hawksworth was called in by ASP to replace Lopez for his Le Mans debut. Lexus's 2023 IMSA champion had to dash from the US to arrive in Le Mans on Saturday.

GARY WATKINS



TOM BANKS/MCKLEIN

Toyota gives Pajari Rally1 debut

WRC

Rising World Rally Championship star Sami Pajari will make his Rally1 debut with Toyota when the series heads to Latvia next month.

The 22-year-old Finn and co-driver Enni Malkonen will step up from driving a Toyota GR Yaris Rally2 car in WRC2 to pilot a fourth GR Yaris Rally1 at the gravel rally, which will make its WRC debut from 18-21 July.

Pajari has emerged as one of the WRC's bright young talents, becoming the youngest ever Junior WRC champion in 2021 before progressing to the

second-tier WRC2 class. Malkonen first navigated for Pajari in 2021 and secured the WRC3 co-drivers' title in 2022.

"This is something that I have been working towards for many years, but it is not so often that there is a seat available in a Rally1 car," said Pajari. "It will be a huge challenge because there are so many new things to learn, and the pace at the top level is also really high."

"I hope that if we can do well, then maybe there can be a chance for the future, but that's something I can only think about much later. For now, I'll just focus on this one rally and enjoy it."

TOM HOWARD

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Ingram ‘stands by’ move after penalty costs win

BTCC

British Touring Car Championship star Tom Ingram has said that he did the right thing in passing Dan Cammish off-track in last weekend’s second race at Thruxton, even though it resulted in the 2022 title winner being stripped of his race victory.

Ingram passed Cammish for third place on the opening lap at the chicane, but his Excelr8 Motorsport Hyundai i30 N went the wrong side of the tyre stack at the second apex to complete the manoeuvre. He was held to have “shortcut the chicane and gained an advantage”, and given a two-place penalty to drop him behind Cammish. Jake Hill inherited the race win.

“I stand by it,” said Ingram. “It was a case

of Dan had rolled out of the brakes to roll more speed in, and if I’d stuck with him I’d have fired him off on the exit. The idea is I either jump the chicane and we both go through safe, or we both try and style it out and we both end up with cars with damage, both end up with cars that are off the track. To me it seemed the safest thing to do to avoid an accident.”

While it is relatively common for drivers to bail out of a manoeuvre at the Thruxton chicane by corner-cutting, it is not unusual for them to give the position back. Some observers were of the opinion that with Ingram’s move coming on lap one of 16, the onus was on him to take this action.

Cammish said: “From my side we went in side by side. I braked late and he

braked as late. I think they’ve probably come to the right conclusion. It is a can of worms if you don’t redress it and he has the opportunity to do it.”

The judgment extends Ingram’s post-weekend deficit to points leader Ash Sutton from nine points to 14, and means he is nine points adrift of second-placed Hill rather than one. It came after a poor start from pole position in the opening race, from which he could only recover to fourth.

“We’ve probably given a few points away which we probably didn’t deserve or should have done better with,” he concluded. “A mixed weekend of emotions I think.”

MARCUS SIMMONS

➔ P32 BTCC THRUXTON

WSR pushing for Thompson BMW return at Oulton



BTCC

After starring on his debut with the West Surrey Racing BMW team in the previous British Touring Car Championship round at Snetterton, Bobby Thompson was forced back onto the sidelines last weekend at Thruxton.

While the Sunbury team’s additional 330e M Sport sat forlornly under wraps at the back of the awning, a

statement explained that the absence was “due to financial complexities outside of WSR’s and Bobby Thompson’s control”.

Thompson impressed in a Brands Hatch test with WSR in April, and the team worked hard on pulling together a commercial deal for the highly rated Essex racer. While neither party is able to comment on the record, it is understood that the backing for Thompson’s

drive at Snetterton, in which he finished the weekend as second highest points scorer, was sourced by the team.

WSR chief Dick Bennetts was able to say at Thruxton that the squad is still working on getting Thompson back in the car, and it could even be as early as next week’s round at Oulton Park, should the hitch be resolved.

MARCUS SIMMONS



BENELUX CARRERA CUP Two-time World Rally champion Kalle Rovanperä made a splash on his racing debut at Zandvoort last weekend, just missing out on a podium and taking fastest lap in the Benelux Carrera Cup's DTM support round. The Finn qualified just 0.165 seconds off pole, before finishing the two races in fourth and sixth with Red Ant Racing. He is also contesting the next round at Imola. **Photograph by Porsche Carrera Cup Benelux**

Malukas takes Blomqvist's seat

INDYCAR

IndyCar driver David Malukas will return from injury to replace Tom Blomqvist at Meyer Shank Racing for the remainder of the season, starting with next week's round at Laguna Seca.

Malukas has been declared fit to return to the cockpit after surgery to his left wrist, which was injured in a mountain bike accident in February that thwarted the 22-year-old's dream deal with Arrow McLaren for 2024. Arrow McLaren subsequently called upon Callum Ilott and Theo Pourchaire to race in his absence, then terminated his contract.

MSR started the season with its sportscar star Blomqvist alongside Felix Rosenqvist, but the 30-year-old Briton was benched after the Indianapolis 500, where he crashed at the first corner. Team co-owner Helio Castroneves drove the #66



BAKER/MOTORSPORT IMAGES

car at Detroit and Road America, with Malukas (above) set to take the wheel in a test at Milwaukee's oval this Tuesday.

According to a team statement, Blomqvist "remains a part of the MSR family", and the two-time Daytona 24 Hours winner is expected to return to sportscar competition with the team in future. MSR pulled out of IMSA this season after running an LMDh Acura in the headline GTP class in 2023, but has always held an intention to return.

CHARLES BRADLEY

CHADWICK KEEPS REALISTIC ON INDY AFTER NXT WIN

INDYCAR

Jamie Chadwick has played down her chances of moving into the IndyCar Series next season after claiming her maiden Indy NXT victory at Road America last weekend.

Chadwick's win (below) made it three in a row for the Andretti Global squad following fellow Brit Louis Foster's successes at Indianapolis and Detroit, and has lifted her to ninth in the points, seven positions behind Foster.

"One race win isn't going to guarantee anything, so I need to keep performing and keep focusing on that," she said. "I'd love to be able to go to IndyCar next year. It's tough though. You look at the grid and there are not that many drivers leaving and there's such a high level there now, and there are a lot of drivers knocking on the door, particularly in Indy NXT."

Asked whether, rightly or wrongly, her gender could work in her favour for a promotion, Chadwick reflected: "Potentially but maybe more so three or four years ago. I don't know. I don't want to go to a smaller team and be on the back foot on a one-year deal or anything like that. I want the best opportunity I can source."

SAM HALL



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Miami Formula E round to run on Homestead ‘roval’

FORMULA E

Formula E has unveiled its calendar for the 2024-25 season, which includes a new venue in Miami, a Monaco E-Prix double-header and the opening round being held in December this year.

The proposed 17-race schedule was approved at a meeting of the FIA’s World Motor Sport Council on Tuesday, with 11 destinations set to be visited by the championship.

The Homestead-Miami Speedway, which has hosted IndyCar, NASCAR and IMSA races, will become the fifth different venue used for a Formula E race in the US. It replaces the Portland IndyCar track, used in 2023 and again later this month. The event on 12 April will take place on the majority of Homestead’s infield road course section as well as potentially part of the oval. “We think it’s a really good circuit, well-suited to our style of racing,” Formula E CEO Jeff Dodds told Autosport. “The Miami name that comes with it, from a global television audience, is a big draw, perhaps a bigger draw than cities such as Portland.”

Another new venue is set to come a month earlier on 8 March, although it currently remains a TBD. It has not been officially confirmed by Formula E, but Autosport understands this to be an inaugural race in Thailand.

The season is due to get under way in Sao Paulo on 7 December, meaning it will be the first time since the 2019-20 campaign that the series is spread across two calendar years.

Meanwhile, the location of the Saudi Arabian races is yet to be finalised. Both Monaco and Tokyo, the Japanese capital a new location on the calendar this season, are set to host double-header events for the first time, each of them in May, followed by a return to Shanghai’s Chinese Grand Prix circuit, used for the first time by FE last month.

The season finishes in July with races in Berlin and London, although the German event is again expected to clash with a round of the World Endurance Championship. “Sticking to our DNA point of view, three-quarters of our races will be on built circuits or street circuits,” added Dodds. “It’s a real mixture of old favourites. Lots of the feedback we get from teams, manufacturers, from fans, is this kind of desire for hardcore calendar continuity.”

STEFAN MACKLEY

FORMULA E CALENDAR		
ROUND	VENUE	DATE
1	Sao Paulo (BRA)	7 December
2	Mexico City (MEX)	11 January
3	TBD (SAU)	14-15 February
4	Thailand (TBC)	8 March
5	Homestead (USA)	12 April
6	Monte Carlo (MCO)	3-4 May
7	Tokyo (JPN)	17-18 May
8	Shanghai (CHN)	31 May-1 June
9	Jakarta (IDN)	21 June
10	Berlin (DEU)	12-13 July
11	London (GBR)	26-27 July

Ban call for post-race ram

TCR WORLD TOUR

The boss of Honda’s FIA TCR World Tour team has called for Lynk & Co star Santiago Urrutia to be banned after the Uruguayan deliberately rammed one of his Civic Type Rs on the cooldown lap at Mid-Ohio last weekend – and it turned out to be the wrong one...

Urrutia was excluded from the entire event for crashing into Esteban Guerrieri’s GOAT Racing Honda in frustration after the second race had finished, the Uruguayan incensed after multiple in-race contacts with Guerrieri’s team-mate Marco Butti had cost both drivers a potential finish on the podium.

One of these clashes allowed Guerrieri to pass on his way to claiming third position, and Urrutia then crashed his Lynk & Co into the Argentinian after the chequered flag in frustration, believing it was the car of Butti.

Apart from the exclusion, Urrutia was also given six points on his racing licence.

GOAT team manager Pepe Oriola, a former race winner in global tin-top racing, fumed: “He is lucky to get away with just that. You don’t do those kinds of things after the race. He should have been banned.”

“I have nothing to say,” said Urrutia, before going on to say: “The race director will make the decisions. I’m just mad as I had the car to finish at the front today and had the pace.”

“I thought he was beside me to wave, so I put up my hand to wave and that’s when I got the hit,” said Guerrieri. “He was upset because when he had the hit with Butti, he went a little bit wide and when he came back on I was already there, but he thought I went into his door. After the race he came to apologise, I said what he did was totally unnecessary and totally stupid, as my pass was totally clean – and also this cannot happen.”





Parnelli Jones

1933-2024

OBITUARY

Rufus Parnell Jones carved a new groove at Indianapolis. Sifting advice from wise old 'yardbirds, he smoothed his approach – without entirely shunning his brakes. Still carrying more speed, more deeply, into turns, he harnessed energy stored in a right-rear Firestone deformed by increased load to slingshot down straights as the tyre 'popped' back into shape. A risk worth a half-second was his calculation.

Though he would win one 500 – a 1963 performance of nine-tenths' domination, one part controversy – with better luck Jones, who died last week aged 90, might have won four, or five.

He was leading as a rookie in 1961 when debris gashed his forehead. Emptying blood from his goggles, he slipped to 12th when the Offenhauser in his front-engined roadster – nicknamed 'Ol' Calhoun' – lapsed onto three cylinders. In 1962, he broke the 150mph barrier for the first of consecutive poles, and was running away with the race when the exhaust chafed/burned through a brake pipe. In 1964, having seen off the lightweight, rear-engined Lotus 'funny cars', and established an edge over (eventual winner) AJ Foyt, he was forced to eject when Ol' Calhoun's tank exploded at its first refuelling.

Born in Texarkana, Texas, on 12 August 1933, Jones grew up in Torrance, a no-frills LA suburb, where his father worked in the shipyards during WWII and as a crane driver in peacetime. Tough and cocky, though fundamentally shy, he was a rebellious kid. By 17, having lied about his age and entered under the nickname awarded him by a school friend, Parnelli was jalopy racing at local dirt tracks. His wreck-and-roll style raised eyebrows, but gradually his bolting gumption to guts caught

the eye of increasingly wealthy, influential car owners. He won in Modifieds, stockers and Midgets before using a Chevrolet V8 sprinter to end the Offy hegemony: three consecutive USAC titles from 1960, including his first two national championships.

Despite obvious proficiency, this 'King of the High Banks' thereafter tapered his outings on the loose, pronouncing himself happier on pavement. In 1964, he beat Foyt and Rodger Ward to the USAC Stock Car Central title; he won Riverside's star-studded LA Times Grand Prix on his sportscar debut; and he also drove Jim Clark's vacated Indy Lotus to a two-lap victory at Milwaukee. Relegated to the returning Scot's spare at Trenton, he outqualified the world champion and won by a lap.

Colin Chapman, though peeved at Jones's being allowed to trail oil at Indy in 1963, knew a special talent when he saw it. Jones, however, declined his offer of an F1 seat alongside Clark: second fiddle for less money was hardly selling it.

The street-smart Jones was looking much further into his future. Indy, as it always had, continued to draw him, but some fiery escapes, a complicated home life, plus a burgeoning business empire meant he slashed his schedule. He finished second to the newer Lotus of Clark at Indy 1965; won the second heat of Laguna Seca's 1966 Can-Am encounter from the back; and, in January 1967, ended Dan Gurney's run

“JONES DECLINED CHAPMAN’S OFFER OF AN F1 SEAT: SECOND FIDDLE FOR LESS MONEY WAS HARDLY SELLING IT”

Jones won the Indy 500 in 1963, but famously another Brickyard victory would elude him



PHIPPS/SUTTON

Mario Andretti in Parnelli F1 car, 1975



SUTTON

Leading on Daytona banking in Mercury Cougar Trans-Am



of four at Riverside's NASCAR 500-miler.

Indy, though, provided another kick in the teeth. After qualifying in race trim in Ken Wallis's turbine-powered, 4WD design for Andy Granatelli, Jones whooshed around Joe Leonard, Foyt, Gordon Johncock, Gurney and Mario Andretti to lead the first lap. Race halted due to rain after 18 laps, the next day he picked up where he had left off, and was within three laps of a second win when 'Silent Sam' was rendered moot (sic) by a collapsed \$6 transmission bearing.

Jones had never qualified lower than the second row, and had led 43.5% of his 1130 laps of the Brickyard. Accused of being win-or-bust – a fault he would admit to before listing extenuating circumstances – he would have more tangible success there as a team boss, in partnership with long-time friend, entrant and backer Vel Miletich. Al Unser scored back-to-back wins in 1970-71 in their Lola-based Colt. He would have made it three from three had not Parnelli loaned Mark Donohue a spare engine. Vel's Parnelli Jones Racing, however, would score a hat-trick of USAC National titles, thanks to Unser and two-time champ Leonard, whose 1972 success was the first for a single-seater carrying Parnelli's name.

Jones, having reacquainted with and married soulmate Judy, was also enjoying an Indian summer behind the wheel. In 1970, he beat the AMC of Donohue to win the wildly popular Trans-Am series for Ford. Then, with Bill Stroppe, another long-term supporter – the preparer of the Mercury that Jones gunned to a Stock Car record at Pikes Peak in 1963 – strapped in alongside, he rewrote the Colorado mountain's off-road rulebook in a purpose-built Bronco 'silhouette' called 'Big Oly'. A fatal collision with a vacationing motorcyclist seeking to exit the

course brought this episode to an end in July 1974.

His impending F1 adventure would cause Jones a different heartache. Designer Maurice Philippe's VPJ4 was much admired, not least by Chapman: Andretti qualified third for its second race – but was disqualified from that 1974 United States Grand Prix for a push-start. The programme was then hampered severely by main backer Firestone's withdrawal before 1975, leaving Andretti to struggle manfully – fourth in Sweden, fifth in France – on unsuited Goodyears, before its ignominious end at Long Beach in 1976.

Firestone's departure had wider ramifications: VPJ was on a downward curve. Though competitive in Formula 5000, it could not prevent champion Brian Redman's hat-trick from 1974 in Jim Hall's sister Lola. Bold in the development of a turbocharged DFV V8 – Unser scored its maiden win at Pocono in 1976 – advantage was lost when a piqued Cosworth stepped in, to the benefit of others. A partnership with media mogul Ted Field brought success – his man Danny Ongais was USAC's fastest of 1978 yet finished eighth overall – but became rancorous. So, too, did the Foyt deal that resulted in VPJ closing its doors after 1978, and 'Super Tex' then driving a VPJ6 to the last of his USAC titles.

These granite-jawed gladiators – respectful friends deep down – had been at it for almost 30 years. Many of AJ's numbers put Parnelli's in the shade. But who shone the more brightly? Legendary crew chief George Bignotti worked with both, albeit for the younger AJ and a Parnelli by now turned to management. His first choices were: Foyt on dirt; Jones on asphalt.

That's how good Parnelli was: possibly the best, probably the fastest, never to start a World Championship GP.

PAUL FEARNLEY



Were we too pessimistic?

Downbeat predictions at the start of the 2024 F1 season have rather been dispelled by a campaign that's so far proved to be much more interesting than the last

ALEX KALINAUCKAS

The ominousness was intense when Red Bull opened the 2024 Formula 1 campaign with double 1-2s. Looking back, we know how gloomy predictions of another repetitive season were arrested at the next race, in Carlos Sainz's Melbourne win. And yet, as good as the Spaniard was that day, deeper digging showed Max Verstappen still would have won had his brake problem not struck.

But what has occurred since demonstrates the statistical noteworthiness of 2024 compared to last year's banality. After nine races, there have been three non-Red Bull wins, compared to last year's sole aberration. Had just a few things gone differently at Imola and in Montreal, it might have been five.

Stacked against that is how Red Bull has still racked up the other six wins – all via Verstappen. He's now hit 60 F1 career victories, and has bagged 75% of all GP races since the start of 2022.

Intriguingly, if we use the supertimes calculation – where the fastest single lap by each car at each race weekend is expressed as a percentage of the fastest single lap overall (100.000%) and averaged over the season – Red Bull can actually be said to be further ahead of the opposition this time. It was 0.235% quicker than Ferrari on average across 2023, and is currently 0.324% in front of McLaren in 2024. But this data is skewed in the current era given Red Bull's previous qualifying-sacrificing premium has finally been adopted by Ferrari. The Italian team was inherently

“This campaign is demonstrating that Formula 1 has the essence of what it needs to shine”

faster in 2023 than it is now with its tyre-chewing design, but more tangibly successful this time with the more predictable SF-24. And taking a look at Red Bull's victory margins at the tracks visited so far in 2024 compared to their 2023 F1 events, in three-quarters of these repeats (Bahrain, Jeddah, Canada) the team's winning margin is reduced.

Overall, though, in less palpable stuff, the 2024 narratives are just more compelling. The Christian Horner behaviour scandal cast an important spotlight on how women are treated throughout the F1 sphere. Thankfully more heartwarming, Ollie Bearman's debut and Sainz's recovery from appendicitis both provided new talking points. Then there were the swashbuckling celebrations around Lando Norris finally breaking his F1 duck and Charles Leclerc's emotion at finally succeeding on his home streets in

Monaco. Those came around China's calendar return and the return to the Emilia Romagna GP after the tragic flood of 2023.

And, as it has so often done, Canada provided a dose of wet-weather chaos. Undoubtedly last weekend's action was the race of the season so far. The theory that Red Bull has introduced a “downgrade” to its car in its Imola update package including a new floor and front wing was also posed in Montreal. Yes, it was by rival technical director James Allison of Mercedes. And yes, Red Bull still “even with our downgrade, we managed to beat their upgrade”, as Horner quipped back.

But that's not an element F1 has encountered since Red Bull lightened its 2022 car and emerged as this era's dominant force. Again, none of this is a criticism of the team's impressive efforts. It's just that, overall, people like change. The intense driver-market interest following Lewis Hamilton's 2025 Ferrari deal not only shows this, but again highlights an element 2023 utterly lacked.

Some very knowledgeable people pointed out the potential for this season to be more interesting quite early on. There was Ferrari team boss Fred Vasseur's “we compensated 50% of the gap with Red Bull” in the Bahrain opener. Then Adrian Newey, whose upcoming exit from Red Bull has provided another 2024 twist, saying “it's definitely closing up” a month later.

At this stage, perhaps F1's collective desire for theory gratification pushed Verstappen's early wins ahead in its hive-mind. And so, the early ominousness pervaded. The media, inevitably, played a part in all that.

Many of the stats show how Red Bull's rivals still have to be perfect to beat it – even occasionally. McLaren and Mercedes rather let Red Bull off in Canada with their respective poor strategy choices and driver errors. Ferrari imploded in the tyre preparation challenge. And, with F1 now heading back to ground where aero prowess and efficiency will make the critical difference, rather than the mechanics of kerb riding that have been so pivotal of late, it's likely Verstappen will register a crushingly dominant Barcelona win next time out. At the only comparable higher-downforce, faster track visited so far in 2024 – Suzuka – Red Bull's winning margin was actually up versus the 2023 event.

Therefore, perhaps this is as good as F1 2024 is going to get. But it's already better than 2023, and this campaign is demonstrating that F1 has the essence of what it needs to shine. Good stories flowing through a changing season, not necessarily great races every time. Even then, the best will win out – as Red Bull is still doing. Suddenly, the spectre of the 2026 rules reset – this will inevitably lead to one team dominating, because this is just what F1 consistently does – is looming rather than tantalising. 🏁

➔ P16 CANADIAN GP REPORT



The anti-social side of media

Argentinian IndyCar racer Agustin Canapino was benched for mental health reasons, after a bizarre spiral of events that included death threats on social media

CHARLES BRADLEY

The good thing about social media is that it gives a voice to many who have gone previously unheard; the bad thing about social media is it gives a voice to many who have gone unheard for good reason...

Following one of many collisions at the shambles known as IndyCar's recent Detroit Grand Prix, Arrow McLaren's Theo Pourchaire revealed that he'd received online abuse, including death threats, for his clash with Agustin Canapino. "I'm sad I received so much hate and death threats in the last 24 hours for such a small incident in the Detroit GP," wrote the Frenchman, who was penalised for avoidable contact, on his social channels. "I hope people can understand that we are all humans and we can make mistakes. But it's not normal to abuse people online."

This followed a pattern of incidents in 2023 towards Canapino's then team-mate at Juncos Hollinger Racing, Callum Ilott, after they made contact at Long Beach and Laguna Seca. But what happened next was a counterclaim that kicked off a cluster-loop of epic proportions. It led to Canapino being pulled from his IndyCar ride just 30 minutes before opening practice at Road America last Friday, with rookie Nolan Siegel parachuted into his seat – having been radioed in to bail from his Indy NXT session!

The cluster-loop evolved thus. Both JHR and Arrow McLaren, which had a strategic alliance to help bolster their fortunes against powerhouses Penske, Ganassi and Andretti, put out a statement about the "stark reminder about the necessity for respect and civility in our online interactions". But this fire-dampening action was negated by Canapino's social media account 'liking' a post on X by Martin Ponte, an Argentinian racing driver and commentator on IndyCar races in Latin America, which reposted the words "Callum Pourchaire" to Pourchaire's statement.

Then Canapino poured a metaphorical can of petrol on it by releasing his own statement, which rejected the claims made against his fanbase. It read: "Of course, I am against abuse and hate. Those who engage in such behaviour are certainly not part of our community and are not welcome here. Also, we Argentines are passionate and euphoric, but that doesn't mean we should be accused of something we are not. Therefore, I strongly reject being generalised and placed in a category we don't deserve. I have not seen a single death threat directed at those who claim to have received them. From last year to today, no one in their right mind would do such a thing. It's outrageous to be accused of this so lightly, and I won't allow it anymore."

He later added: "I constantly receive abuse and hate, and I have learned to live with it as many people do, choosing to ignore it. There's nothing sadder and more miserable than hiding behind social media to insult others."

I'm aware that English isn't Canapino's first language, but it's

flawed logic to say something couldn't have happened if he didn't see it. And to then double down by saying Pourchaire should swallow it because he 'constantly receives abuse too' is nonsensical.

The spiral led to Arrow McLaren terminating its agreement with JHR ahead of last weekend's race, before Canapino was sensibly benched. It is my understanding that JHR is open to Canapino returning to his ride, but only if he can get over this mentally – hence his 'leave of absence' for Road America, which was taken

"I get that his followers are passionate, but there's no excuse for a lunatic fringe"

on the basis that he was obsessing over the reaction.

My advice to him is to delete the social apps, put his phone down and concentrate on what he's best at, which is driving an IndyCar. He's generated a ton of respect in the paddock, and his hard-nosed, physical racing style is really suited to this series – just as Scott McLaughlin proved with his similar switch from touring cars.

I get that his followers are passionate, but there's no excuse for a lunatic fringe to your support – they need to be identified and barred from the discourse if they can't behave. I feel most sorry for team owner Ricardo Juncos, who is genuinely living his American dream with this team; running Canapino is the peak of a plan that started with just \$400 in his pocket 20 years ago. It should be a symbol of Argentinian pride, not shame due to a few online idiots.

Something that put this starkly in perspective at Road America was winner Will Power's post-race comments about his wife Liz's battle with serious illness, after they celebrated in tears together with their son Beau. Power revealed that he seriously considered stepping down from his driving duties after she underwent emergency spinal surgery following a serious infection: "In the off-season, when my wife is sitting in hospital, we're just wondering what's going to happen here. She almost died. You start thinking, 'Yeah, I'm going to have to stop now, take care of my son.'"

"The doctor said this can come back at any time. Should I be racing? That was the thing that was planted in my mind last year. You certainly don't perform at your highest level because you don't want your son to have no parents. Ultimately, if she wasn't getting better, I'd stop. I would have to stop for my son. Simple as that."

More love, less hate. As Will says, it's as simple as that. 🍷

➔ P38 ROAD AMERICA INDYCAR REPORT

RACE CENTRE

Norris rejoins on fresh mediums, but Verstappen's rubber is already nicely warmed

FORMULA 1

NORRIS MISSES HIS CHANCE AS VERSTAPPEN HOLDS FIRM

The British driver was left to rue his and the McLaren team's lost opportunity while the world champion took his sixth win of 2024

JAKE BOXALL-LEGGE

PHOTOGRAPHY



motorsport
IMAGES





Polesitter
Russell holds his
nerve to stay in
control and build an
initial advantage

“We should have won the race today and we didn’t,” Lando Norris opined when he eventually turned up to the Canadian Grand Prix post-race press conference, perhaps having lost track of time in the TV pen. Before the Briton’s arrival, race winner Max Verstappen had suggested that he was now “1-1” with Norris in terms of safety car misfortune, referencing the Miami race he’d lost to the McLaren driver through the timing of the caution.

It seemed, at the time at least, that karmic retribution apportioned by the cosmos had rewarded Verstappen and punished Norris. Logan Sargeant’s Turn 5 crash on the 25th lap had proved to be terminal for the under-pressure American and, once it was clear that he couldn’t get going again, the safety car had poked its bumper out of the pitlane for the first of two outings. Norris, who had picked up the lead following his quickfire overtaking moves on Verstappen and polesitter George Russell, came through the start/finish straight. The Red Bull and the Mercedes over which he had built a near-10-second gap did not; they pitted for fresh intermediate tyres immediately.

Norris had to wait an extra lap before picking up his next set of inters. This shuffled him behind Verstappen and Russell; seemingly, the safety car timing had cost Norris. Instead, Norris contended that it was a race that he and McLaren had lost by their own hand. “I don’t think it was luck,” Norris rued afterwards. “It’s not the timing of the first safety car. I had enough time to box, and we didn’t box. So, this was a mistake on us as a team.”

Red Bull, in the meantime, got its big calls right around the pitstops and Verstappen made them work on track. Is it as clear cut as Norris

and McLaren losing victory in Canada, or did Red Bull and Verstappen earn it and punish the Woking squad’s mistake? The answer is probably somewhere in between...

SCENE ONE, ACT ONE

Russell converts pole to early lead from Verstappen

You don’t often see standing starts in the wet these days in F1. Russell certainly hadn’t partaken in one from pole, but he held his nerve and resisted fellow front-row starter Verstappen – even if it looked like it was in slow motion as the drivers attempted to stymie any hint of wheelspin.

Russell was the faster of the two in the opening laps. In truth, the circuit was perhaps a little too wet for the intermediate tyres over the first five or six tours, evinced by Kevin Magnussen’s thrilling surge through the order on the full wet, and it was simply a case of clinging on and waiting for the racing line to start drying out.

Mercedes had probably favoured a dry race, such was the improvement in pace that the W15 enjoyed in Montreal thanks to its cadence of updates across the previous few races. Its new front wing, far more conventional in design versus its early-season model, had set off floor upgrades to fix the mid-corner stability. Nonetheless, it was doing the job in the wet across the first four laps, and Russell had accumulated an almost three-second lead over Verstappen by that stage. But the Dutchman started to hit back, slashing the arrears by a second across the next four laps and continuing to loom larger in Russell’s droplet-covered mirrors.

By the end of lap 12, Verstappen sat within a second of the leading Mercedes. With much of the circuit still wet, DRS was not active and Russell did not have to ward off too much in the way of overtaking efforts. Both drivers were actively hunting for wet patches to keep their intermediate rubber in the desired temperature window.

There were a couple of instances where Verstappen’s progress was

QUALIFYING

A tie for pole was something that had only happened once in Formula 1 since lap times were measured to three decimal places, back when Jerez's 1997 finale produced a three-way draw at the front of the grid. This time 27 years on, the tie was 'only' contested between two drivers, but the lap time in question was a much more pleasing on-the-second number. And, this time, the championship leader missed out by dint of setting their identical time second.

It was unclear whether rain was about to fall in Q3, having just about held off throughout the two previous stages, but Mercedes took a bit of a punt by sending its cars out last among the opening runs. And it did so on used tyres, which Russell pressed back into service with aplomb; the Briton had been energised by Mercedes' new upgrades all weekend, and reeled off a 1m12.000s on his first tilt.

After the first sector on his second tour, Max Verstappen looked set to derail that having gone two-tenths up on Russell's opening split, but then failed to retain that momentum through the second sector. Through the corners, Verstappen was tracking significantly up on the pole time, but under traction the Red Bull fell away significantly versus Russell's benchmark. On crossing the line, he gathered the same 1m12.000s to pick up second on the grid. Russell, in the meantime, could not improve on his own effort despite the benefit of new soft tyres for his final run.

The top seven fell within a 0.3-second bracket in a closely contested session, and Lando Norris's third-placed time was just 0.021s shy of pole. His effort and Oscar Piastri's fourth-fastest time ensured that McLaren had block-booked the second row, ahead of Daniel Ricciardo, who responded to heavy criticism from 1997 world champion Jacques Villeneuve to clinch a time good enough for fifth.

Sixth-placed Fernando Alonso reckoned an error cost him two tenths, while Lewis Hamilton was left to rue his own qualifying efforts from seventh on the grid as he, like Russell, could not improve on his second run. Yuki Tsunoda, Lance Stroll and Alex Albon completed the top 10.

Albon had twice taken big scalps late on as he progressed to Q3. First, he consigned Sergio Perez to Q1 elimination as the Mexican struggled to contain his Red Bull's rear under traction. In Q2, he served Ferrari a slice of misery by shoving Charles Leclerc into the drop zone to join Carlos Sainz. Leclerc did not improve on his final second-phase run, while Sainz didn't find quite enough on his final lap of the session as Ferrari had used the same tyres throughout Q2. It cost the team progression, although it had struggled to live up to its Monaco pace anyway.

“Under traction the Red Bull fell away significantly versus Russell's benchmark”



Norris conceded that luck had nothing to do with missing out on the win

HONEY

“WE STARTED TO SAVE THE TYRES VERY EARLY, TRYING TO FIND THE COLD PATCHES OR WET PATCHES”

slowed marginally by minor slips here and there, as he attempted to pressure Russell into his own mistakes. But every time Verstappen got close, his Red Bull would step out, and a lap 17 excursion into the Turn 2 run-off set him back by almost two seconds when he misjudged his braking point on the wettest complex of a drying circuit. This brought a fast-approaching Norris into play.

SCENE ONE, ACT TWO

Norris on the charge

Norris's early gambit in Montreal echoed that of Miami, where he spent the early laps sitting back and making sure to bring his tyres in steadily. It didn't matter that he'd dropped a second per lap to sit over 10s away from Russell by the end of the 10th tour, because it meant that he could start to push a little bit more as the circuit dried.

“Because we had no pressure, we started to save the tyres very early, even when it kind of wasn't necessary,” McLaren team principal Andrea Stella explained, “trying to find the cold patches or wet patches to make sure that the tyres stayed in good condition for when the track would have been more challenging. I think there's no magic, it's just the position we were in the first stint meant that we could apply this strategy with no loss.”

Norris's race appeared to turn with the flick of a switch, and he began to reel off fastest laps to quell the growing gap and start homing in on the two drivers ahead. He'd reduced the deficit to just over three seconds when Verstappen had his Turn 1 off, and that then meant he »



Russell set the same time as Verstappen, but crucially did it first



was in range when DRS was switched on for the first time.

It took a couple more laps for Norris to mount an assault, discretion being the better part of valour as he continued to seek out damp track to cool his intermediate tyres, but he timed his lap 20 attack at the right time as Verstappen started to close down Russell once more. Had Norris waited a lap longer, Verstappen would have collected a DRS-assisted tow on Russell down the back straight, so the move had to be made right then. Norris avoided the wetter line this time around, soaked up Verstappen's slipstream, and took the Turn 14 chicane ahead to slot into second.

Russell's lead fell in the next lap as Norris had a surplus of pace over his compatriot. Again, Turn 14 provided the venue, and Russell could do little to fight it. He tried, at least, but to his detriment; he took to the Turn 14 run-off and passed through the escape route, which sapped his pace sufficiently for Verstappen to pick up second place.

With tremendous speed, Norris was about two seconds per lap to the good over Verstappen. His lead grew quickly and seemingly unstoppable over the next few circuits of the Notre Dame Island and, as of the start of the 25th lap, looked set to expand to about 10s. Then the record skipped, and the needle slipped on Norris's album of greatest hits.

SCENE TWO, ACT ONE

Sargeant shunts, Norris misses safety car window

The beleaguered Sargeant had already faced the wall once at this year's Canadian GP, after going deep into Turn 6 on the sixth lap and narrowly evading tacking on a few hundred thousand dollars onto Williams's already-extortionate repair bill. He'd managed to reverse out of that one but, on taking too much kerb out of Turn 4 on his 24th lap, he lost his footing and spun. He tagged the wall slightly and largely saved his FW46 from sustaining more damage, but came to a stop this time around to prompt the emergence of the safety car.

This was the sliding doors moment for Norris, as a passage of events transpired to ensure that the safety car largely worked

“THAT INTER WAS ALMOST SLICK. I SAID, ‘GUYS, IF RAIN IS COMING, WE HAVE TO BOX’”

against him. Although he suggested that the decision to not pit immediately was relatively binary, or through failing to react quickly enough, Stella revealed that there was a lot more in McLaren's considerations. After all, the word across the team radio traffic was that another rain cell was due to pass over Montreal and bestow the circuit with a new coat of standing water.

“It looked like he was one and a half seconds from the pit,” Stella explained, noting the tiny timeframe needed to make a snap call. “In hindsight, we could have told the driver, ‘In case of safety car pit’, so he would have just reacted instinctively to just pit. But we were monitoring the intensity of the rain. And this intensity in the last few minutes was kind of reducing. We didn't want to pit unnecessarily for a new set of inters when this set could have been good enough in case of very light rain. I think it was much easier for the car behind to kind of do the opposite.”

Verstappen had been on the blower to his team asking for a new set of intermediates at the next convenient time, when it became apparent that more rain was inbound. “That inter was almost slick,” he explained of his 25-lap-old green-walled tyres. “I said, ‘Guys, if rain is coming, we have to box.’ Luckily, we did that because as soon as we restarted, it started to rain.”

Russell had followed Verstappen in, the two departing from the pitlane line astern. Norris had to wait one more lap, by which time he had caught the safety car. That nearly-10s lead was wiped out, and the pace of the Aston Martin Vantage ensured that he returned from whence he came: third, and behind Verstappen and Russell.



SCENE TWO, ACT TWO

Return of the rain, but Max holds the line

The rain arrived a little after the lap 30 restart, at around 2.48pm. Verstappen, no stranger to leading away a restart, gunned the throttle out of Turn 14 when the safety car peeled back into the pits. Stella's hope of very light rain did not entirely pan out – the track was almost as wet as it had been at the start of the race thanks to the downpour.

Although Verstappen saw Russell off, he was not breaking away; the gap remained between 1-1.5s across the opening laps of the second intermediate phase. Perhaps the tentative nature hinted at uncertainty over further rain, although the weather radars had suggested that the dark grey cloud looming overhead was due to scarper towards the east.

Russell tried to remain in touching distance but, as the dry line started to reform while the race went deep into its second phase, Verstappen was building a healthier gap. Once the arrears stood at around two seconds, the championship leader started to exert a stronger grasp over the race. The action stagnated between the front two, the gap rising to above three seconds and almost bordering on four, and it became clear that the circuit was almost ripe for slick tyres.

SCENE THREE, ACT ONE

The transition, as Norris tries overcut in slick switch

Pierre Gasly's lap-40 switch from the intermediate to the hard tyre acted as a bellwether for the teams at the front to judge their own shift to slicks. When the Frenchman started to lap faster than the leaders, most decided to make their stops on lap 44, although Verstappen and Russell waited an extra lap before conducting their own stops.

Verstappen opted for the medium compound, and Russell the hard; although there were still 25 laps left on the counter, the medium was a legitimate option. Pirelli had expected before the race that wear would be minimal owing to the smoothness of the new track surface, and little lateral movement in the traction zones would not create too much abrasion either. Instead, Pirelli was most concerned about



graining, but this could be overcome with a sensible warm-up phase at the beginning of the stint.

On the other hand, Norris and McLaren wanted to atone for their earlier mistake/misfortune. The inters were still delivering good performance, and Norris wanted to burn through his set for two more laps in an effort to overcut the two drivers he'd passed earlier on in the race. "I probably pushed too late on that inter tyre in the middle stint," Norris contended. "It's why we stayed out, because I was so quick at the end of that stint, but I probably just didn't push early enough."

It therefore came down to his eventual stop for medium tyres on lap 47. And the overcut worked, albeit fleetingly. Norris had built the gap needed to get out ahead of Verstappen, but the still-wet pit exit on cold tyres offered a treacherous few metres of road. Verstappen, on two-lap-old mediums with considerably more warmth, stole past a sidwinding Norris to resume his lead of the race.

"I felt we timed that about right, going onto the medium tyre," said »

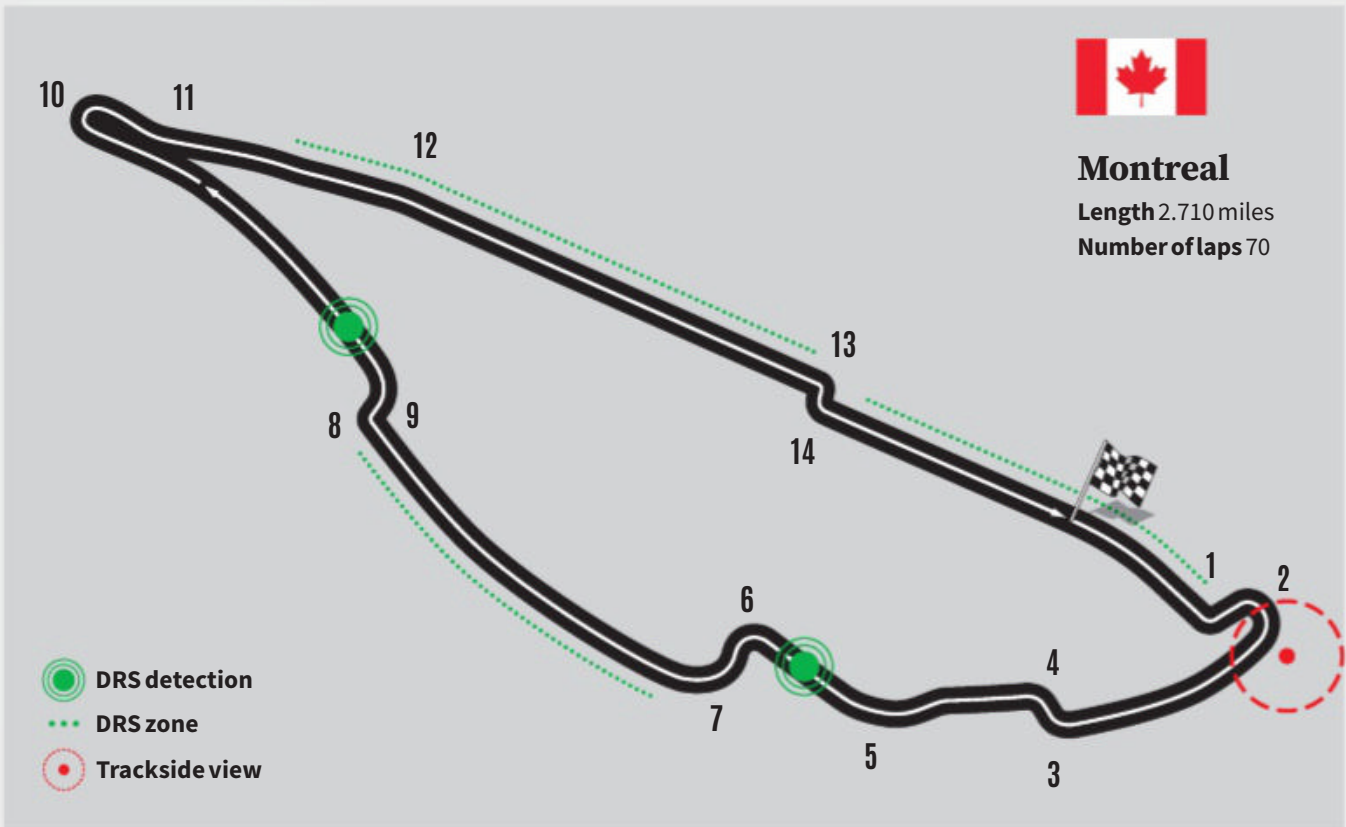
TRACKSIDE VIEW

Going trackside for the opening free practice session at Montreal had looked ever so slightly in doubt about 45 minutes earlier. A hailstorm had bombarded the paddock in the lead-up to F1's opening hour of running, leaving icy crystals the size of marbles around the Ile Notre-Dame. Most had thankfully melted when the rain came, although it made for a sodden circuit and a quagmire of gravelly muck in the trackside access pathways. White trainers clearly weren't considered sensible footwear...

FP1 wasn't delayed as such, although the pitlane remained shut when the clock started to allow the circuit to dry out a little more. Two Aston Martins had vacated the pitlane, albeit not the 'right' ones; the safety and medical cars emerged to break up the puddles and prepare the circuit for running.

We're down at Turn 2, coat on, and standing with Motorsport.com's Ronald Vording. Our Dutch colleague has a natural magnetism for driver errors, last year getting highly coveted snaps of a Red Bull underbody when Sergio Perez crashed in FP1, so we're hoping to see the uncovering of some floors at the tight right-hander.

Lewis Hamilton is first on the road when the session finally begins properly, and on his next tour of the circuit scares a flock



“He’s got enough rally experience to get the rear end to bite in time”

of blackbirds perched on the Turn 1 apex. He snaps the lock on for the next corner, but his front-right wheel decides not to rotate at all. Wall-bound? Not quite. Suddenly, his intermediate tyre grips up and offers the turn-in he needs to progress.

Two Haases appear from the pitlane on wet-weather tyres, with Valtteri Bottas in close pursuit. The

Finn is rather tail-happy on the exit of Turn 2 and his Sauber wags out of line, but he’s got enough rally experience to get the rear end to bite in time for the acceleration zone towards the next corner.

There are a few more vignettes of early F1 practice activity, before Zhou Guanyu brings out a red flag: Nico Hulkenberg’s revs top out with a dose of wheelspin, George Russell splashes a marshal on his exit from the pits, and we follow Ronald through a huge puddle to head towards the run down to Turn 3 in the stoppage and get muddy shoes.

It’s becoming patently clear that, as the sun emerges, the track is drying quickly. A veil of steam slithers along the circuit, tousled by the drivers returning to the circuit after the pause. A dry line forms rapidly, prompting a few to try out slick tyres in the final five minutes of the session. The track surface is low on grip, prompting a few rear-end slides on the exit of Turn 2 across the field. Perez, running past Ronald, almost smacks the barrier with a dab of oversteer. But he keeps it out of the wall.

JAKE BOXALL-LEGGE

Rapidly drying surface means it's time for slicks, though grip isn't abundant



BOXALL-LEGGE

Norris has to collect his sliding slick-shod McLaren as Verstappen motors onward

“TO WIN IN F1, IT’S ABOUT TAKING OPPORTUNITIES RATHER THAN SIMPLY DEMONSTRATING RAW PACE”

MAUGER

Red Bull team boss Christian Horner. “While Lando was able to capitalise enough to hit the 20s mark, and it hovered around that, with each lap we did, the tyres were getting warmer, and I was surprised they didn’t cover after one lap. They left him for two, which gave Max another lap to generate temperature. When Lando did pit, Max’s tyres were in the window and he was able to pull out a 3s gap by sector one.”

This put Norris into Russell’s clutches, and the Mercedes driver collected DRS two laps later to slot past for second after the McLaren locked up at the hairpin. But Russell made his own mistake to enact a switch for position, taking too much kerb at Turn 9 to give Norris the impetus to snatch the runner-up spot once more.

SCENE THREE, ACT TWO

Norris gets one more chance, Merics battle for podium

A second safety car offered one more opportunity for Norris to get back ahead of Verstappen. Carlos Sainz’s Turn 6 spin on lap 53 sent the Ferrari driver across the track and into the path of Alex Albon, who was rather minding his own business. Another Williams stranded at the side of the track was responsible for the reprisal of the Aston Martin safety car. Unsurprisingly, Verstappen did what he so often does on a restart and held position. Norris had not enjoyed the same fire-up of his own medium tyres, granting Verstappen a lead



Verstappen celebrates another win, but he had to earn it

MAUGER



VINET/SUTTON

Russell bested Mercedes team-mate Hamilton to take squad’s first podium of 2024

that shattered hopes of a provisional DRS activation in the early stages. Norris never really had the measure of the slick tyres, ceding further fragments of time to Verstappen over the final 10 laps to ensure that the three-time champion’s victory was beyond all doubt.

Did Norris lose the win, or did Verstappen earn it? Both. Norris’s and McLaren’s immediate pitstop window had been tiny, but Verstappen and Red Bull were extremely measured and opportunistic. And, to win in F1, it’s about taking opportunities rather than simply demonstrating raw, uncontrollable pace.

Mercedes made a late play for the final podium spot despite giving up track position to Oscar Piastri during the safety car. Russell ditched his hard tyres for mediums, and Lewis Hamilton vice versa, although both were not entirely convinced by the decision – Hamilton stating that he would have stayed out on the mediums had he known Russell was switching compounds. Russell had another off when attempting to pass Piastri at Turn 14 in an incident that was later investigated (with no further action deemed suitable), handing fourth and a potential podium to Hamilton. The older Briton soon dispatched the Australian to look set for third, with Russell following through a lap later.

It culminated in an ante-penultimate-lap showdown between the Mercedes team-mates. Russell hoovered up the gap with DRS into Turn 14, bravely lobbing his car down a rapidly disappearing inside line to come up for air with third, and earning the Silver Arrows’ first podium of 2024.

After a clutch of dull races, 2024 was sweetened by unadulterated Canadian maple syrup, a much-needed palate cleanser to whet people’s appetites. More of the same at Barcelona? It’s unlikely, but a crema Catalana wouldn’t go amiss... ❄️

**NEXT
F1 REPORT**

Spanish Grand Prix
27 June issue

PEREZ WOES REACH NEW LOW AFTER FRESH DEAL

Sergio Perez will carry a three-place grid drop to the upcoming Spanish Grand Prix after his Montreal race ended in disaster and a penalty for driving a damaged car to retire in the pits.

Perez, who signed a new Red Bull deal just before the weekend, failed to make it out of Q1 for the second event in a row. He blamed “a car issue in qualifying” leaving him gripless. But Red Bull did not further disclose the issue, bar team boss Christian Horner saying Perez had “an issue in qualifying that contributed a little to [his Q1 exit]”.

In the race, Perez collided with Pierre Gasly on the exit of Turn 2, where the Alpine was sandwiched with Logan Sargeant on its outside. That left Perez with front wing damage he carried until his first pitstop, while before the race’s first safety car he was outmuscled by Gasly at Turn 8 and took to the grass. On the slick tyres, he spun off solo heading into the closing stages and smashed his rear wing against the Turn 6 barriers.

Perez chose to drive back to the pits – which Red Bull confirmed it wanted him to do and so was later slapped with a €25,000 fine – dropping debris on the circuit. The stewards called this “[failing] to leave the track with serious mechanical difficulties” and “trying to avoid a safety car situation” that might have impacted leader Max Verstappen in the other RB20.



Ferrari falls back to earth in wake of Monaco high

Ferrari was left to rue what team boss Fred Vasseur described as a Montreal event where “everything went wrong”, after both Charles Leclerc and Carlos Sainz retired in the pits.

Both missed the Q3 cut after Ferrari sent them out on new soft tyres at the start of Q2 believing rain would soon fall. When it didn’t, the pair had to complete the segment on used softs and so missed out on the track evolution exploited by their rivals. That left Leclerc starting 11th and Sainz 12th.

Both struggled on the outside line at the opening corners of the soaking start, and Leclerc’s race was soon compromised by an engine problem robbing him of 80bhp and up to 1.5 seconds per lap.

Alex Albon and Yuki Tsunoda passed Leclerc before the first safety car period, leaving the Monaco GP

winner running just ahead of Sainz. Leclerc pitted for a second time during the safety car, and Ferrari got him to switch off his engine for a reset of the power cycle settings after it had fitted his car with hard tyres. This fixed his engine issue, but the slicks never fired up on a track that was still too wet. Leclerc shipped so much time he was lapped before he was switched back to intermediates, and shortly afterwards retired from 19th to save mileage.

After the first safety car, Sainz ran in the gaggle behind the yet-to-stop Esteban Ocon. He then knocked his left-front wing endplate off when he tagged Valtteri Bottas’s Sauber at the hairpin. Once he got onto slick tyres, he spun solo at Turn 6 and was collected by Alex Albon. Sainz crawled back to the pits to retire with floor and rear wing damage.



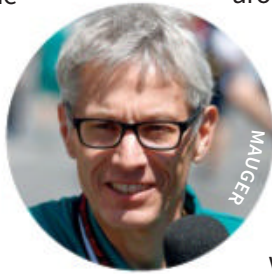
“THAT LITTLE BIT OF ENERGY, PROBABLY A LITTLE BIT OF A CHIP ON MY SHOULDER I BROUGHT INTO THE WEEKEND - I’VE GOT TO MAKE SURE THAT STAYS THERE”

Daniel Ricciardo, after qualifying fifth and finishing eighth, batting off Jacques Villeneuve’s savage TV punditry

Q&A

MIKE KRACK
ASTON MARTIN
TEAM PRINCIPAL**Was sixth and seventh the best you could achieve in the race?**

Yeah, when you look at the final result, I think there was not more we could do. The cars ahead started ahead, I think except Lewis Hamilton, but he was going to pass us anyway because he was much faster. But considering the pace, this is basically the maximum. It was difficult in terms of conditions, it was difficult in terms of [watching the weather] radar. But that's the same for everybody.



All in all, I think a good result for the team.

Did you make a breakthrough on the car here?

I think that would be too easy to say. Monaco is very special. So, you have to always be very careful with conclusions around there. If you start how we started today [sixth and ninth on the grid], it's also much easier. So, I think it would be premature to say we have understood everything. We have a lot of work to do still. But obviously, it was a step in the right direction this weekend.

Are you disappointed with progress on car development?

No. We have just done one third of the season. You cannot judge your season after one third. We need to look at ourselves, try to identify the issues that we are having, and try to understand.

How good for F1 is three teams fighting for this win?

Yeah, we saw a very tight, tough battle today for the win. Unfortunately, we could not challenge any of them. And that is also a lesson that we have to take away here. I think we had a good result. Yeah, we have 14 points. But we were never in a position to challenge the guys ahead. And I think that is very important – that we keep that focus and not get carried away by a couple of points or by our highest point scoring of the season.

HONEY

**ALPINE SCORES**
AMID YET MORE
TEAM DRAMA

Alpine left Canada with its first double points finish of 2024, with Pierre Gasly leading Esteban Ocon home in ninth and 10th. But there was also a team orders saga.

Alpine's race started badly when Gasly was half spun – pinched between Logan Sargeant and Sergio Perez exiting Turn 2 – and he dropped from his 15th-place starting spot. Ocon got ahead and stayed clear of Perez to the first safety car period, shortly before which Gasly dived by the Red Bull at the Turns 8/9 chicane.

Ocon stayed out while Gasly got fresh intermediates, with the pair largely holding station until the switch to slicks – bar Ocon twice swapping places with Alex Albon.

In the closing stages, Ocon took advantage of Yuki Tsunoda's hairpin slip and rose to eighth, while Gasly continued to climb the order from near the back after his second pitstop. But an energy deployment issue on the lead Alpine meant Ocon lost pace and was passed by Daniel Ricciardo. He resisted, then obeyed, a team order to let Gasly through to challenge the RB, and was unimpressed with the positions not being reversed on the final lap.

"I've done what I had to do, which is the most important thing, but you guys didn't do what you had to do – that's it," said Ocon after the chequered flag.

**Haas shines in extreme-wets**
gamble but misses out on points

Haas pair Kevin Magnussen and Nico Hulkenberg starred in the race's soaking wet early stages, after they were the only drivers to start on Pirelli's extreme wet tyres.

Magnussen gained 10 positions in three laps from his 14th-place grid spot. Behind, Hulkenberg rose from 17th to run seventh.

Magnussen was called in to change to the intermediates on lap seven, when Haas didn't have the new tyres ready in time. He rejoined 14th, his gamble of

starting on wets completely negated.

Haas left Hulkenberg out for five more laps, with a huge train building behind as he slowed on the drying track. Daniel Ricciardo, Lance Stroll, Charles Leclerc, Yuki Tsunoda and Alex Albon all got ahead within a lap of the German pitting.

Hulkenberg rejoined 19th but battled back to 11th. Magnussen ended up just behind with a similar tale – his featuring a place lost to Carlos Sainz at the first safety car service while waiting for Sergio Perez to pass by the Haas pits.

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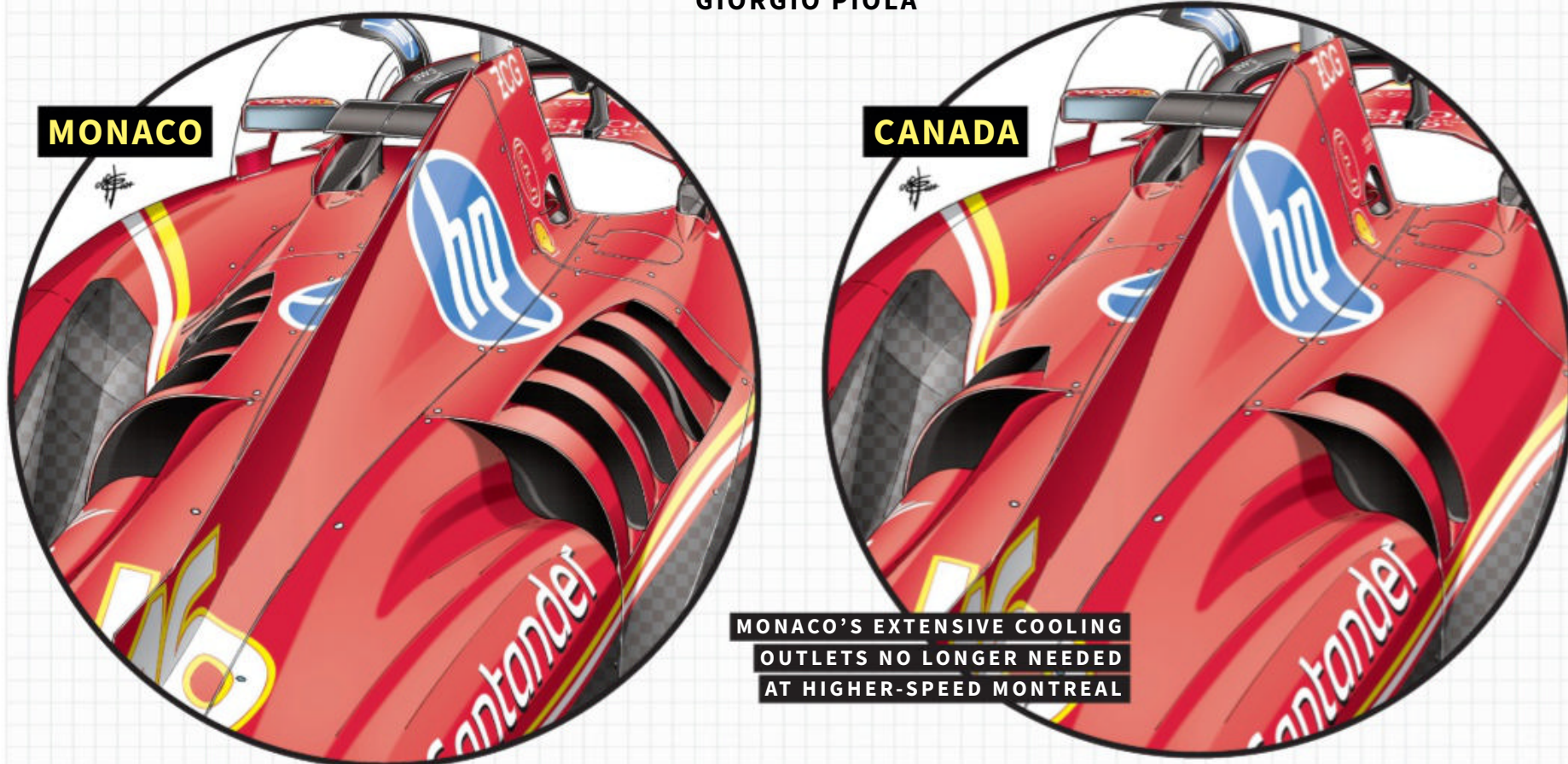
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MONACO'S EXTENSIVE COOLING
OUTLETS NO LONGER NEEDED
AT HIGHER-SPEED MONTREAL

FERRARI MAKES TWEAKS BUT SPAIN A BIGGER TARGET

Ferrari had a dismal weekend in Montreal, although this was mainly down to its inability to find the right window for its qualifying tyre preparation. The team had no updates to speak of, but had put together a smaller cooling outlet around the engine cover in

anticipation of the higher speeds present at the Canadian circuit.

The added outlets in Monaco resulted from the need to expel the same mass flow rate of air to keep cooling consistent, but at slower speeds. These extra outlets were not necessary in Montreal,

particularly on the back straight, where the relative airspeed is far greater and therefore feeds air through the inlets and out again much more adeptly.

There were only minor updates introduced by the top teams, and the larger next steps will likely

emerge at the Spanish Grand Prix later this month. Mercedes added a few minor changes to its front suspension to blend in with its new front wing, while Red Bull added a larger brake duct and revised rear wing for the demands of Montreal.

JAKE BOXALL-LEGG

SAUBER KEEPS ON PUSHING AS IT STRIVES TO SCORE

In an effort to turn its season around, Sauber introduced a lower-downforce version of the single-pylon rear wing that it took to Monaco. The Montreal version had a much flatter mainplane, and an upper flap positioned at a much lower angle of attack to slash the overall drag produced, culminating in a quicker car down the back straight.

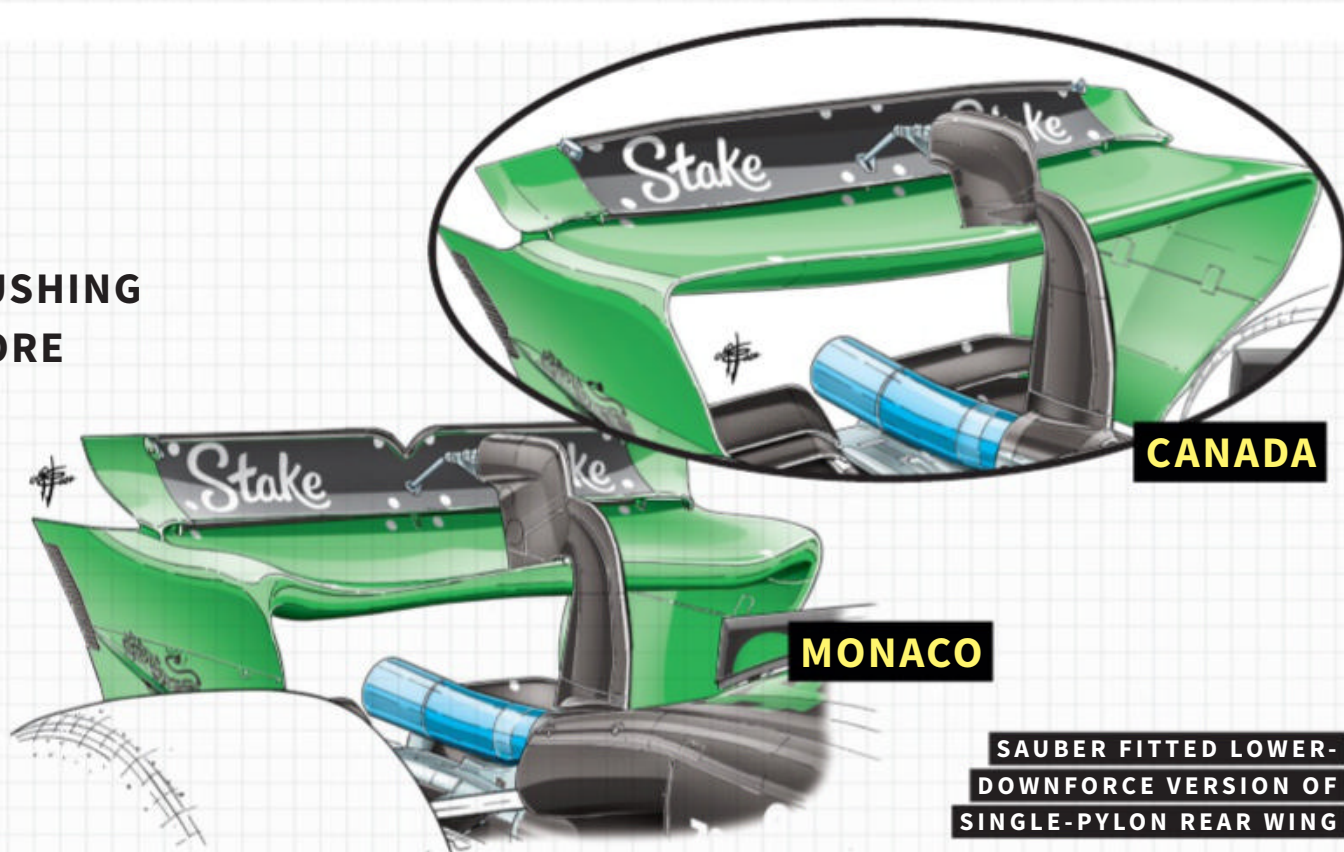
The single pylon blends into the DRS housing, and wraps around the exhaust at the bottom to attach to the gearbox mounting point. Although Sauber is still yet to score a point, head of trackside engineering Xevi Pujolar believes that this is a result of the team

failing to make the most of opportunities given to it, and that it had improved its processes at its Hinwil base to maintain a similar cadence of upgrades compared to the larger

teams on the grid. "I think there was a bit of a limitation in the past, but now I would say we are comparable, equivalent to other teams," he said. "But still, even if we make improvements, you

always want to be one step ahead. Even with what we have got now, we can produce much faster, but you always want to go one step more."

JAKE BOXALL-LEGG



SAUBER FITTED LOWER-DOWNFORCE VERSION OF
SINGLE-PYLON REAR WING

20 Zhou #24
1m14.292s

18 Ocon #31
1m13.435s

16 Perez #11
1m13.326s

14 Magnussen #20
1m12.916s

12 Sainz #55
1m12.728s

19 Bottas #77
1m13.366s

17 Hulkenberg #27
1m13.978s

15 Gasly #10
1m12.940s

13 Sargeant #2
1m12.736s

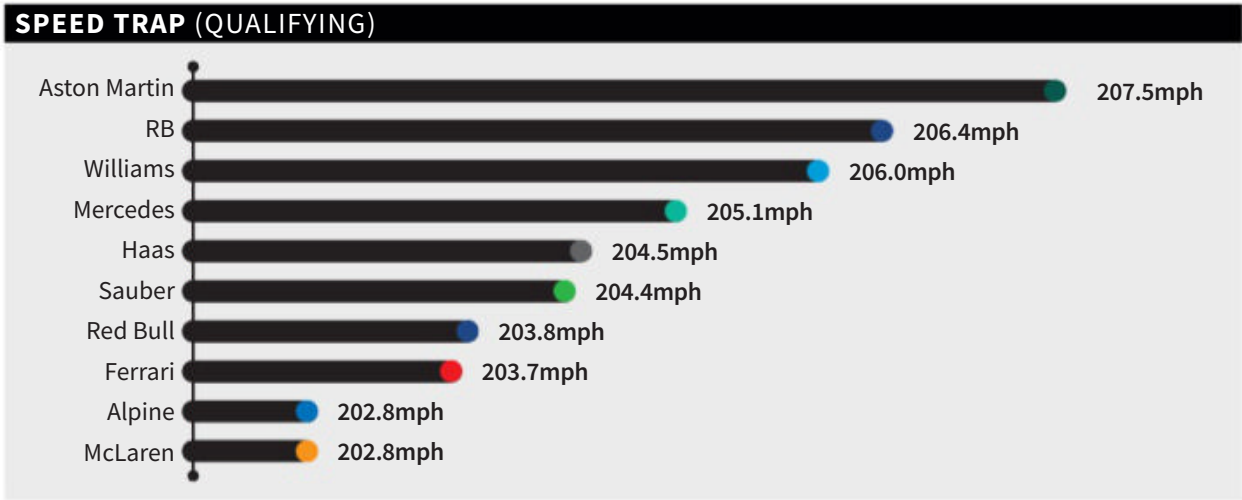
11 Leclerc #16
1m12.691s

FREE PRACTICE 1			FREE PRACTICE 2			FREE PRACTICE 3		
POS	DRIVER	TIME	POS	DRIVER	TIME	POS	DRIVER	TIME
1	Norris	1m24.435s	1	Alonso	1m15.810s	1	Hamilton	1m12.549s
2	Sainz	1m24.763s	2	Russell	1m16.273s	2	Verstappen	1m12.923s
3	Leclerc	1m25.306s	3	Stroll	1m16.464s	3	Russell	1m12.957s
4	Hamilton	1m25.970s	4	Leclerc	1m16.556s	4	Stroll	1m13.026s
5	Verstappen	1m26.502s	5	Ricciardo	1m16.731s	5	Piastri	1m13.266s
6	Piastri	1m26.754s	6	Magnussen	1m16.773s	6	Ricciardo	1m13.279s
7	Gasly	1m27.584s	7	Hamilton	1m16.908s	7	Norris	1m13.293s
8	Bottas	1m27.670s	8	Tsunoda	1m16.951s	8	Alonso	1m13.340s
9	Perez	1m28.058s	9	Albon	1m16.977s	9	Perez	1m13.342s
10	Russell	1m28.541s	10	Perez	1m17.041s	10	Leclerc	1m13.349s
11	Ricciardo	1m28.582s	11	Ocon	1m17.417s	11	Magnussen	1m13.439s
12	Tsunoda	1m28.723s	12	Sargeant	1m17.496s	12	Sainz	1m13.570s
13	Magnussen	1m29.052s	13	Sainz	1m17.722s	13	Bottas	1m13.642s
14	Hulkenberg	1m32.826s	14	Bottas	1m17.817s	14	Sargeant	1m13.663s
15	Alonso	1m33.411s	15	Hulkenberg	1m17.903s	15	Tsunoda	1m13.716s
16	Sargeant	1m36.586s	16	Piastri	1m19.008s	16	Gasly	1m13.737s
17	Stroll	1m40.530s	17	Zhou	1m19.087s	17	Hulkenberg	1m13.777s
18	Zhou	notime	18	Verstappen	1m19.311s	18	Albon	1m13.880s
19	Doohan	notime	19	Gasly	1m20.789s	19	Ocon	1m14.075s
20	Albon	notime	20	Norris	1m20.843s	20	Zhou	1m18.656s

WEATHER Variable, air 20-22C track 27-30C

WEATHER Variable, air 18-21C track 22-27C

WEATHER Cloudy, air 23-25C track 34-36C



QUALIFYING 1			QUALIFYING 2			QUALIFYING 3		
POS	DRIVER	TIME	POS	DRIVER	TIME	POS	DRIVER	TIME
1	Verstappen	1m12.360s	1	Russell	1m11.742s	1	Russell	1m12.000s
2	Tsunoda	1m12.748s	2	Hamilton	1m11.979s	2	Verstappen	1m12.000s
3	Hamilton	1m12.851s	3	Norris	1m12.201s	3	Norris	1m12.021s
4	Albon	1m12.896s	4	Tsunoda	1m12.303s	4	Piastri	1m12.103s
5	Piastri	1m12.907s	5	Piastri	1m12.462s	5	Ricciardo	1m12.178s
6	Norris	1m12.959s	6	Albon	1m12.485s	6	Alonso	1m12.228s
7	Russell	1m13.013s	7	Verstappen	1m12.549s	7	Hamilton	1m12.280s
8	Sainz	1m13.038s	8	Ricciardo	1m12.572s	8	Tsunoda	1m12.414s
9	Sargeant	1m13.063s	9	Alonso	1m12.635s	9	Stroll	1m12.701s
10	Stroll	1m13.088s	10	Stroll	1m12.659s	10	Albon	1m12.796s
11	Leclerc	1m13.107s	11	Leclerc	1m12.691s			
12	Alonso	1m13.117s	12	Sainz	1m12.728s			
13	Magnussen	1m13.217s	13	Sargeant	1m12.736s			
14	Ricciardo	1m13.240s	14	Magnussen	1m12.916s			
15	Gasly	1m13.289s	15	Gasly	1m12.940s			
16	Perez	1m13.326s						
17	Bottas	1m13.366s						
18	Ocon	1m13.435s						
19	Hulkenberg	1m13.978s						
20	Zhou	1m14.292s						

WEATHER Cloudy, air 21-22C track 29-31C

NEXT RACE

23 June

Spanish GP

Barcelona

SEASON STATS			
DRIVERS' CHAMPIONSHIP	PTS	BEST FINISH	BEST QUAL
1 Verstappen	194	1	1
2 Leclerc	138	1	1
3 Norris	131	1	3
4 Sainz	108	1	2
5 Perez	107	2	2
6 Piastri	81	2	2
7 Russell	69	3	1
8 Hamilton	55	4	7
9 Alonso	41	5	3
10 Tsunoda	19	7	7
11 Stroll	17	6	9
12 Ricciardo	9	8	5
13 Bearman	6	7	11
14 Hulkenberg	6	9	9
15 Gasly	3	9	10
16 Albon	2	9	9
17 Ocon	2	10	11
18 Magnussen	1	10	13
19 Zhou	0	11	16
20 Bottas	0	13	10
21 Sargeant	0	14	13

CONSTRUCTORS' CHAMPIONSHIP		PTS
1 Red Bull		301
2 Ferrari		252
3 McLaren		212
4 Mercedes		124
5 Aston Martin		58
6 RB		28
7 Haas		7
8 Alpine		5
9 Williams		2
10 Sauber		0

QUALIFYING BATTLE			
Verstappen	9	0	Perez
Hamilton	1	8	Russell
Leclerc	6	2	Sainz
Leclerc	1	0	Bearman
Norris	6	3	Piastri
Alonso	5	4	Stroll
Gasly	3	6	Ocon
Sargeant	0	8	Albon
Ricciardo	2	7	Tsunoda
Zhou	0	9	Bottas
Magnussen	2	6	Hulkenberg

Events removed when one driver in a team could not record a representative time for reasons outside their control

WINS		FASTEST LAPS	
Verstappen	6	Hamilton	2
Leclerc	1	Leclerc	2
Norris	1	Verstappen	2
Sainz	1	Alonso	1
		Piastri	1

POLE POSITIONS		
Verstappen	7	
Leclerc	1	
Russell	1	

STARTING GRID

10 Albon #23 1m12.796s	8 Tsunoda #22 1m12.414s	6 Alonso #14 1m12.228s	4 Piastri #81 1m12.103s	2 Verstappen #1 1m12.000s
9 Stroll #18 1m12.701s	7 Hamilton #44 1m12.280s	5 Ricciardo #3 1m12.178s	3 Norris #4 1m12.021s	1 Russell #63 1m12.000s

RESULTS ROUND 9/24 (70 LAPS - 189.69 MILES)

POS	DRIVER	TEAM	FINISH TIME	LED	TYRES
1	Max Verstappen (NLD)	Red Bull-Honda RBPT	1h45m47.927s	42	In, In, Mn
2	Lando Norris (GBR)	McLaren-Mercedes	+3.879s	8	In, In, Mn
3	George Russell (GBR)	Mercedes	+4.317s	20	In, In, Hn, Mn
4	Lewis Hamilton (GBR)	Mercedes	+4.915s		In, In, Mn, Hn
5	Oscar Piastri (AUS)	McLaren-Mercedes	+10.199s		In, In, Mn
6	Fernando Alonso (ESP)	Aston Martin-Mercedes	+17.510s		In, In, Hn
7	Lance Stroll (CAN)	Aston Martin-Mercedes	+23.625s		In, In, Hu
8	Daniel Ricciardo (AUS)	RB-Honda RBPT	+28.672s		In, In, Mu
9	Pierre Gasly (FRA)	Alpine-Renault	+30.021s		In, In, Hn
10	Esteban Ocon (FRA)	Alpine-Renault	+30.313s		In, Mn
11	Nico Hulkenberg (DEU)	Haas-Ferrari	+30.824s		Wn, In, In, Mn
12	Kevin Magnussen (DNK)	Haas-Ferrari	+31.253s		Wn, In, In, Mn, Mn
13	Valtteri Bottas (FIN)	Sauber-Ferrari	+40.487s		In, Mn
14	Yuki Tsunoda (JPN)	RB-Honda RBPT	+52.694s		In, Mn
15	Zhou Guanyu (CHN)	Sauber-Ferrari	-1 lap/+53.528s		In, In, Mn, Mn
R	Carlos Sainz (ESP)	Ferrari	52 laps-accident damage		In, In, Mn
R	Alexander Albon (THA)	Williams-Mercedes	52 laps-accident		In, In, Mn
R	Sergio Perez (MEX)	Red Bull-Honda RBPT	51 laps-accident damage		In, In, Mn
R	Charles Leclerc (MCO)	Ferrari	40 laps-engine/mileage		In, In, Hn, In
R	Logan Sargeant (USA)	Williams-Mercedes	23 laps-accident		In

WEATHER Variable, air 16-20C track 21-27C

WINNER'S AVERAGE SPEED 107.573mph FASTEST LAP AVERAGE SPEED 130.320mph

FASTEST LAPS

POS	DRIVER	TIME	GAP	LAP
1	Hamilton	1m14.856s	-	70
2	Russell	1m14.895s	+0.039s	70
3	Norris	1m15.558s	+0.702s	67
4	Verstappen	1m15.569s	+0.713s	70
5	Piastri	1m16.247s	+1.391s	65
6	Alonso	1m16.303s	+1.447s	70
7	Magnussen	1m16.499s	+1.643s	68
8	Hulkenberg	1m16.683s	+1.827s	67
9	Stroll	1m16.762s	+1.906s	70
10	Ocon	1m17.012s	+2.156s	70
11	Gasly	1m17.013s	+2.157s	70
12	Ricciardo	1m17.076s	+2.220s	68
13	Bottas	1m17.250s	+2.394s	65
14	Tsunoda	1m17.309s	+2.453s	70
15	Zhou	1m17.325s	+2.469s	68
16	Perez	1m18.819s	+3.963s	51
17	Sainz	1m18.957s	+4.101s	51
18	Albon	1m19.359s	+4.503s	51
19	Leclerc	1m26.012s	+11.156s	39
20	Sargeant	1m26.484s	+11.628s	19

RACE BRIEFING

GRID PENALTIES

OCON five-place penalty for causing a collision at the Monaco GP
BOTTAS and **ZHOU** required to start from the pitlane – cars modified while under parc ferme conditions

RACE PENALTIES

RICCIARDO five-second penalty for false start
PEREZ three-place grid drop at driver's next race and team fined €25,000 for failing to leave the track with serious mechanical difficulties

8

Verstappen now has eight rain-affected world championship GP wins, putting him fourth on the all-time list

TYRES

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



LAP CHART

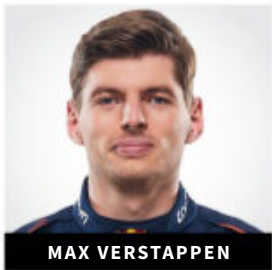
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
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CANADIAN GP DRIVER RATINGS

Verstappen and Norris share highest-score honours, although neither earns full marks, while Perez very much brings up the rear

ALEX KALINAUCKAS

RED BULL



MAX VERSTAPPEN

Started **2nd** — Result **1st**

9 Shadowed Russell early on before Turn 2 off let Norris into DRS range just when Verstappen had been pressuring the Merc. Fell back badly from Norris before first safety car, but dropped pursuers well after restart. Even better second restart and string of fastest laps netted fine victory.



SERGIO PEREZ

Started **16th** — Result **R**

1 Out in Q1, lacking rear grip. Solo off after switch to slick tyres with new wing was awful. Rather cynically returned to pits – albeit under team’s instruction – dropping debris in (ultimately pointless) bid to avoid safety car that would have hurt Verstappen. Gets grid penalty for Barcelona.

MERCEDES



LEWIS HAMILTON

Started **7th** — Result **4th**

6 Unable to match Russell in qualifying. Chased Alonso early in race, backing out of pass after Aston cut chicane. Falling off solo at Turn 6 on lap 49 cost four seconds. Made well-judged Piastris pass before Russell overcame his robust late defence at same spot. Last-tour fastest lap.



GEORGE RUSSELL

Started **1st** — Result **3rd**

8 Earning pole preserves high score. Led well early on, gaining from Verstappen’s Turn 2 off. Series of errors – cutting chicane when Norris passed, messing up Turns 8/9 after switch to slick tyres, and turning in with Piastris well alongside. Squeezing past Hamilton to regain podium was superb.

FERRARI



CHARLES LECLERC

Started **11th** — Result **R**

6 Essentially a default score due to race issues, but at least ended up as lead Ferrari driver in qualifying. Race engine issue cost 80bhp and, at times, up to 1.5s per lap before safety car pitstop (including failed slicks gamble) allowed settings reset. Retired to save mileage when back on inters.

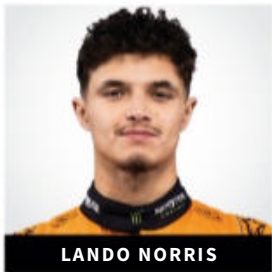


CARLOS SAINZ

Started **12th** — Result **R**

4 Had same struggles as Leclerc in Q2, but should have made Q3 but for last corner wobble. Tough start to race, then ran in pack to safety car pitstop. Hit Bottas at hairpin and broke front wing, before Turn 6 spin meant contact with Albon and retirement as a result of the damage.

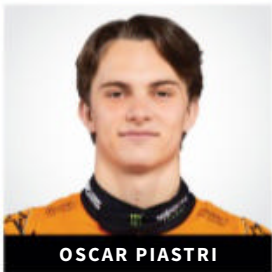
McLAREN



LANDO NORRIS

Started **3rd** — Result **2nd**

9 Dropped by Russell and Verstappen while managing tyres early on, then erased gap and passed both brilliantly. McLaren had just seconds to make pitstop call at first safety car; extra lap cost well-built lead. Sloppy off while chasing Russell, then overcut ahead at switch to slick tyres.



OSCAR PIASTRIS

Started **4th** — Result **5th**

7 Qualified fourth but might have beaten Norris had he nailed best sectors on his first Q3 flier, then he couldn’t beat that on his second try. Lost touch with Norris early in race, but like his team-mate was flying before first safety car. Battled Mercs nicely after last restart.

ASTON MARTIN



FERNANDO ALONSO

Started **6th** — Result **6th**

6 Felt oversteer moment on second Q3 run cost possible pole shot, but that Ricciardo squeaked an RB ahead is more significant. Led Hamilton in the race’s wet early third – his chicane off on lap six unpunished by the Merc driver. Slower first pitstop meant a lonely run from there.

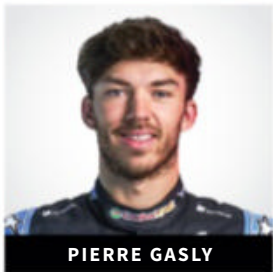


LANCE STROLL

Started **9th** — Result **7th**

5 Felt Q1 wall contact at last corner damaged his car, which he then took to ninth in Q3 behind both RBs. Only jumped Ricciardo when the Australian didn’t stop immediately under first safety car. Got past Tsunoda when RB driver fell off the road at Turn 6 to rise to seventh.

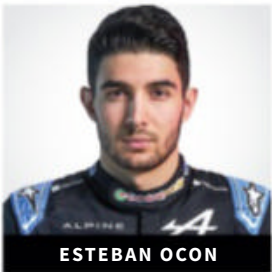
ALPINE



PIERRE GASLY

Started **15th** — Result **9th**

7 Felt Q2 laps were good so was mystified to qualify 15th. Sandwiched by Sargeant and Perez at start, losing places. Repassed Perez with forceful move that had Perez on the grass, after which he was first real switcher to slick tyres. Felt that was too early but battled well on his way to points.



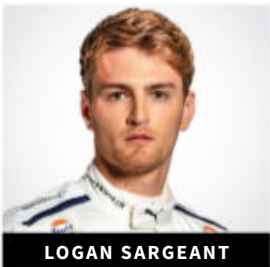
ESTEBAN OCON

Started **18th** — Result **10th**

6 Put Q1 exit down to traffic and tyre prep struggles. Staying out at first safety car netted ninth, which he lost to Albon mega pass, then gained back with DRS run. Energy deployment issue after late pass on Tsunoda allowed Ricciardo to get ahead of the Alpine.



WILLIAMS



Started 13th — Result R

3 Just 0.08s from making Q3. Another to lose places in lap one exchanges, then fell to last with Turn 6 solo slide to nerf barriers, having already been off at the chicane/ opening corners and twice nearly collected Sainz. Spinning solo at exit of Turn 4 broke rear wing and caused first safety car.



Started 10th — Result R

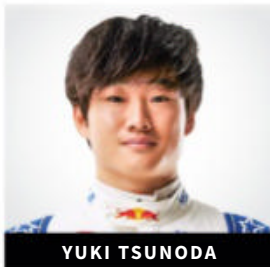
8 Magic double pass on Ricciardo and Ocon after first restart earns bonus point – it was just so well-judged. Made Q3 but couldn't get tyres working there. Lost places at start, then chased Tsunoda, with Ocon later getting back ahead when Albon struggled on second set of inters.

RB



Started 5th — Result 8th

8 Clutch dragged car forward slightly at final start lights, so penalty doesn't hurt score. Brilliant qualifying, where pushing hard on final out-lap in Q3 was key. Made great pass to escape Hulkenberg's early train, then late first safety car pitstop and serving penalty cost places.



Started 8th — Result 14th

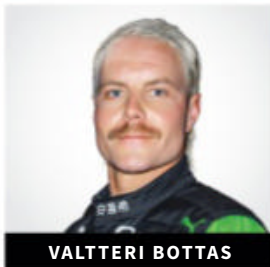
4 Beat Stroll in Q3. Bugged down badly off line and ran adrift of points early on. Gained by not stopping under first safety car to leap into points, which he threw away first with off ahead of Stroll, hairpin lock-up letting Ocon alongside, then really poor Turns 8/9 off.

SAUBER



Started 20th — Result 15th

4 Qualified last, lacking practice laps due to FP1 shunt and FP3 spin. This meant he failed to find the required rhythm against the clock. Trailed Bottas in the first stint, then ran last after first safety car before he battled Hulkenberg. Had a lonely second half; only lapped finisher.



Started 19th — Result 13th

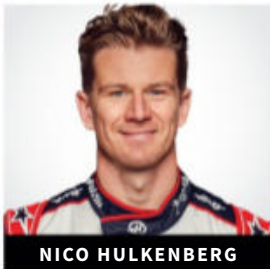
6 Felt best Q1 lap was first clean tour of weekend but couldn't do any more considering car's performance potential. Only made progress from others' issues plus not stopping under first safety car. Held off Sainz before switch to slicks, with which he couldn't get tyre temperature.

HAAS



Started 14th — Result 12th

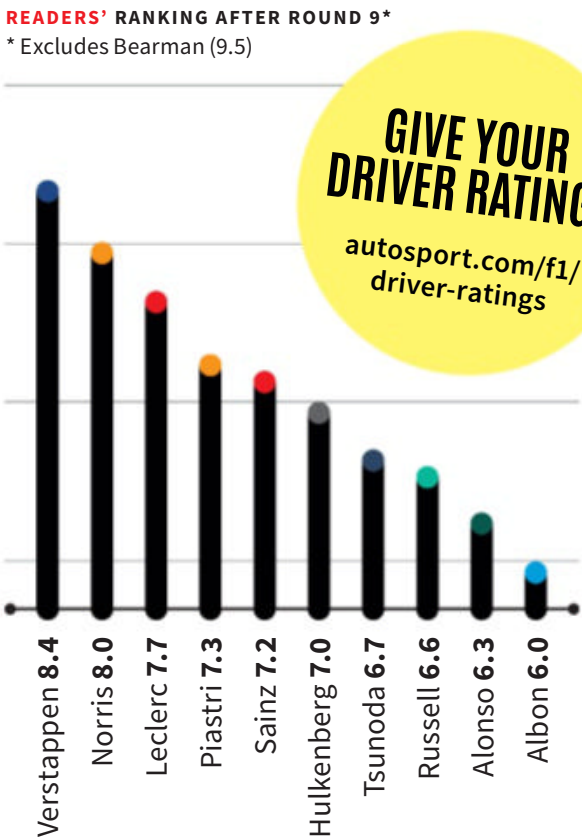
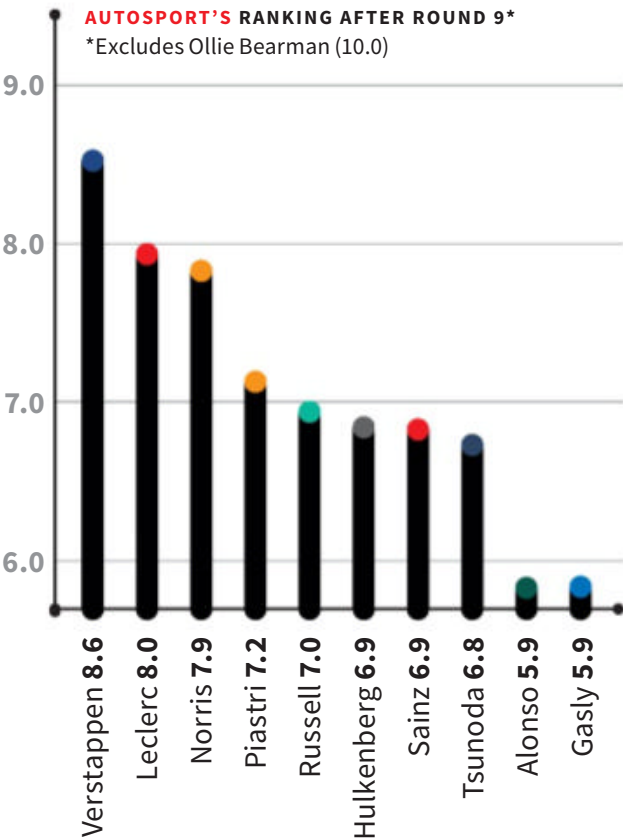
7 Made Q2, but running new soft tyres early meant missing track evolution later. Full-wets start key to brilliant 10-place rise. Slow switch to inters proved costly, after which he had another slow service for more inters and shipped further places. Early slicks stopper, but only made gains late on.



Started 17th — Result 11th

6 Felt change to higher downforce rear wing put him out in costly Q1 traffic. Gained four places with full-wets start, then grabbed six more with fine passes. Train formed behind as track dried, and switch back to inters dropped him to 19th. Battled his way back to 11th.

TOP 10 AVERAGE RATINGS



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BTCC

Sutton breaks through to end Hill's streak

The BMW man took another double, and Ingram was stripped of a win. But it was the four-time champ's first BTCC victory of 2024 that looked ominous

MARCUS SIMMONS

 PHOTOGRAPHY JEP  motorsport
IMAGES

The British Touring Car Championship charged around the country's fastest circuit last weekend, and provided far more entertainment and talking points than we're used to at Thruxton. Series organiser TOCA moved the goalposts on sporting regulations substantially over the winter, partially in order to bring a halt to the recent trend of the same driver winning the first two races each Sunday. In this, it has a 100% failure rate so far, but few would have predicted that, this time, it would be because of a lead change that happened *after* the second race.

To sum up, Jake Hill was victorious in a race that he never thought would be possible to win at the wheel of his West Surrey Racing-run BMW 330e M Sport. He then won another race, which he thought he had lost, because Tom Ingram – whose Excelr8 Motorsport Hyundai i30 N Fastback should have won the opener – was given a penalty for a nefarious manoeuvre at the chicane. And then reigning champion Ash Sutton, who felt that his Alliance

Racing Ford Focus ST was the fastest car out there, took the chequered flag in a finale he might well not have started due to damage picked up a couple of hours earlier.

It was that kind of a day. Peaks and troughs, swings and roundabouts, snakes and ladders. Our 'winning' trio (including Ingram) cruised down the A303 to arrive at Thruxton separated by 11 points; they headed home blanketed by 14. Very little difference. And had it not been for that Ingram penalty, the deficit from leader Sutton to the 2022 title winner would be just nine points.

The chalking-off of Ingram's race two victory centred around his opening-lap pass of Dan Cammish for third position, while the Yorkshireman's NAPA team-mate Sutton was busy up ahead preparing to break the front of his Ford against Hill's BMW. Ingram swept around the outside of Cammish as they turned into the chicane, but the Focus had to be steered in for the left-handed segment. Cammish appeared to be leaving at least some room, but arguably not enough for an entire Hyundai to fill. Ingram made a

Sutton took his first win of the season, while Ingram was denied his third



Ingram gives Sutton the podium treatment

snap judgement call to steer the wrong side of the tyre stack and skip the turn, and made up the position. Cammish, his wider line compromising his exit, found himself jumped for fourth by Josh Cook's Toyota, before firmly jumping back ahead into the Complex.

It surprised some that, with Cammish back in front of Cook, Ingram didn't see fit to concede the position back. Up to this point of the weekend, he and his Hyundai appeared to be the fastest combination, we were only one lap into the race, and he had more hybrid use available than Cammish, Sutton or Hill. Was there any discussion with engineer Spencer Aldridge? "Yeah, but at the end of the lap the gap was the same as it was when I went into the chicane," responded Ingram. "There was enough time lined back – it wasn't like an advantage was gained from me being 15mph quicker through and Dan being 25mph slower because he was off the circuit on the exit. I don't know, live and learn."

Interestingly, Ingram's own team-mate Tom Chilton was passed at the same spot in this race by Rob Huff, who couldn't

quite get his Toyota stopped and also skipped the middle part of the chicane. But Huff immediately ceded the position back, and tried again – ultimately successfully.

In race three, Ingram was involved in another chicane fracas with one lap to go when his Hyundai and Adam Morgan's WSR BMW made contact as they fought for third place. This time, the impact forced Ingram to steer left and circumvent the entire chicane, while Morgan gave up on the middle part. But in this case, the car Ingram had passed had also been guilty of corner-cutting. No action was taken.

It's all down to the motorsport equivalent of a fine-lines VAR call in football with numerous interpretations. What is a shame is that the thousands of paying spectators were left in the dark during the Ingram-and-Cammish investigation while the darkened windows of the TOCA bus emulated the Stockley Park VAR hub. Although it's perhaps a stretch to compare their very amiable respective team managers Marvin Humphries and Oly Collins to arguably more fiery characters such as Mikel Arteta or Jurgen Klopp...

"I braked late and he braked late," pondered Cammish. "I left him a load of room on the left because I thought he was going to spear me in the door, and that compromised me so much I lost a place to Josh. I said to the team on the radio, 'Surely he's got to give that place back?'" The decision will have been a very marginal one, based as much on Cammish not leaving the track himself and Ingram not conceding the position back at such an early stage of the race as on the offence itself. But let's not dwell too much on this, because there were also some fabulous overtaking moves pulled off over the course of Sunday, some of the best by Ingram.

Not that he necessarily should have been having to carry out >>

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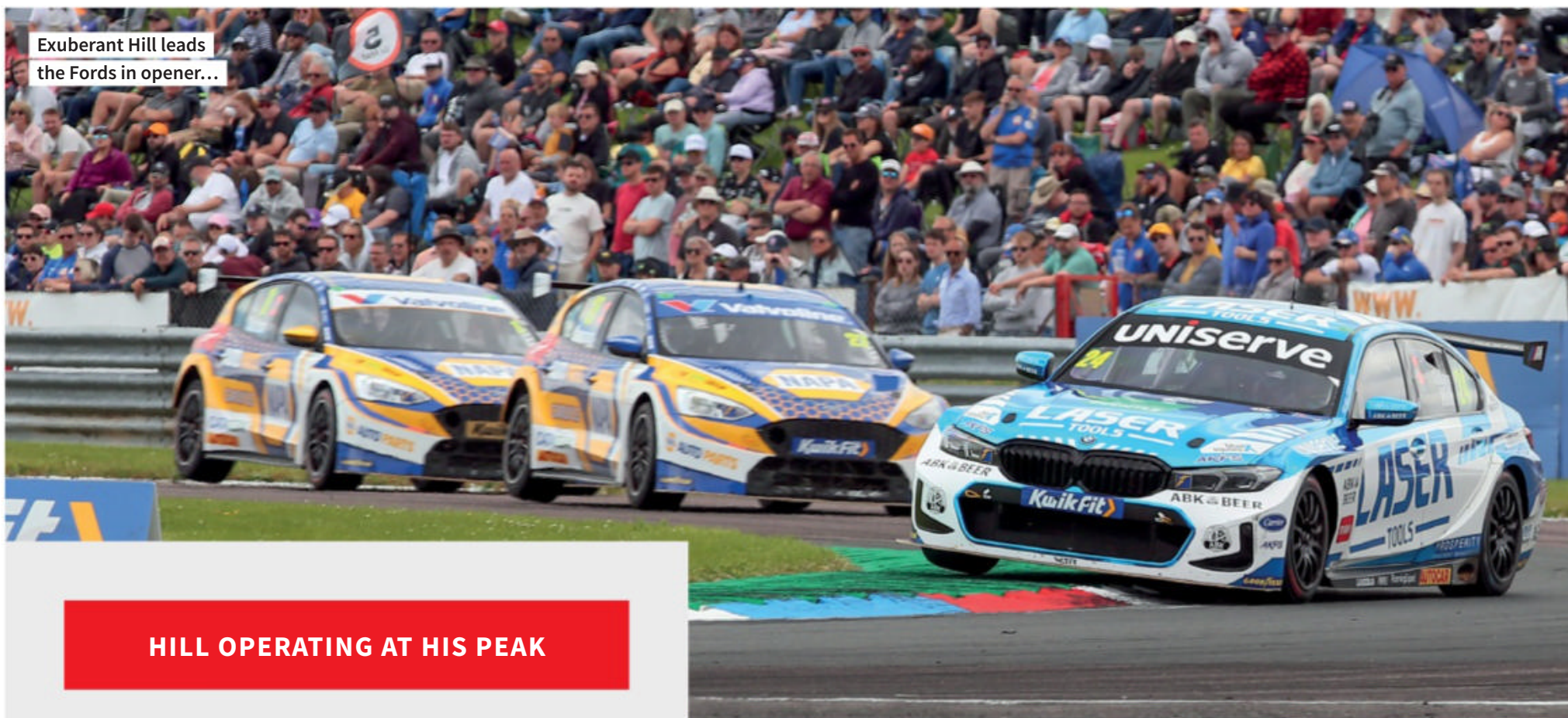
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Exuberant Hill leads
the Fords in opener...



HILL OPERATING AT HIS PEAK

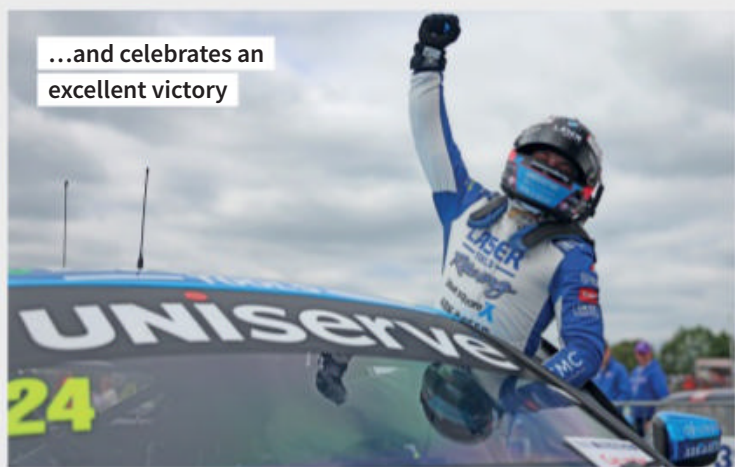
After his successful double-winning weekend at Snetterton, Jake Hill was up to third equal in the points and on the appropriate punitive levels of hybrid use at Thruxton. So the last thing he expected was to guide his West Surrey Racing BMW to a convincing win in race one, an inherited victory in race two, and even a brief points lead before the finale.

Even in free practice one, the 'Laser Beamer' was planted at Noble, Hill revelling in the rear-wheel-drive 3 Series' front end as he took the front-drive line, skimming close to the grass on the exit and barely bothering to steer the car left in order to prepare for the arc right into the hops and squirms of Goodwood, the engine hammering against its rev limiter. Conditions for qualifying fell away from him slightly, but he still went third on the grid. "We don't have the outright pace this time but I think we're pretty close," he grinned.

Even by rear-wheel-drive standards, Hill's start to race one was rocket-like, and he never appeared under serious threat. In race two, he couldn't resist Tom Ingram, who forced him to defend into Church Corner and then got the cutback on the exit, the Hyundai surging past on its hybrid. Unlike his team-mates, Hill worked forward from the reversed grid, starting seventh and finishing fifth. "We're right there – we kept coming back and back," he summed up. "We had an even better weekend than Snetterton in terms of points, which I didn't think I'd be saying."

There was one scare: mindful of his race two penalty, one lap after passing Hill's team-mate Adam Morgan off-track, Ingram slowed at the chicane on the final tour: "He almost brake-checked Adam, so I hit Adam, and he hit Tom. He had it all pre-planned. He's a smart cookie, is Tom..."

...and celebrates an
excellent victory



such passing. The Hyundai looked invincible on Saturday, Ingram claiming pole position by 0.265 seconds despite having access to just five seconds of hybrid per lap. "I've felt connected with it from the get-go," he smiled. "This place is so much about linking everything together, making sure it's working, that you're on song, not making any mistakes. This is probably our best opportunity because the hybrid has a smaller effect here than anywhere else, primarily because it works better from slow-speed." Of the fastback bodywork, he added: "We've got a good-shaped car. We're a long way from the car being perfect, but there's more to chuck at it so I'm excited, and we're a long way forward from last year."

His front-row partner was Cammish, with 11s of hybrid but distinctly unwell. The Berkshire-domiciled Yorkshireman had been setting purple sector times en route to the toilet since midweek, when he and Sutton had been on sponsor duty with NAPA in the Birmingham NEC. Counterintuitively, as the sun came out for qualifying and changed the balance for nearly everyone from

"This place is so much about linking everything together, making sure you're on song"

free practice, Cammish was impervious. "Unlike a lot of people it came back to me," he said, clutching a packet of Lemsip. "A lot of people said they felt less grip – I had the same as I'd had all day."

One such was Sutton, who was so confused at his lap time delta from FP1 to Q1 that he pitted for new front tyres, and only just scraped through to the next phase at the last gasp. "I think I've hacked five years off everyone's lifetime," he quipped after edging Morgan out of Q3 by a mere 0.009s and going on to take fifth on the grid, on just one second of hybrid.

He was pretty quickly ahead of Ingram in the first race, as were Hill out front and Cammish in second. "I had to loosen my belts off so I could see the start lights," explained Ingram. "So you're crouching down in the car to look underneath the screen and look up at the lights, and it was just a bit rubbish generally all round. It just bogged, and then didn't pull through the gears once I got going. I pulled fourth and then everyone just came past me. A bit of a cluster." >>

This was a hybrid cat-and-mouse game, Cammish occasionally deploying to get close to Hill, the BMW then pulling away again, with Sutton and Ingram just in arrears. “When I got to Dan, if I put a move on and it doesn’t pay off, I fall into the lap of Tom,” said Sutton. “So I tried to play it safe there and was thinking of the points. Did we have the pace? Yes. Was it the right call? Yes, probably to sit tight.”

In race two, Sutton got a cracking start and got onto the back of Hill. The BMW man said the Ford hit him “pretty hard” at the Complex early on. Sutton’s take was that it was “the tiniest bit of

“I tried to play it safe there and was thinking of the points. Was it the right call? Yes, to sit tight”

contact – I must have caught his wheel, which snapped the splitter, which then pulled all the hybrid ducts out of it, hybrid rad. We had no hybrid or anything in the car, we caused a hell of a lot of damage and it was actually digging in the tyre as well. I don’t think that tyre would have done many more laps. If you saw the car before race three it was a close one. It was a dogfight and there were 17 people on the car, and that’s not even a joke. We were worrying that the Mini race that got red-flagged [before the BTCC finale] was going to get cancelled, and we’d have missed that race. We literally only just rolled out in time. Huge credit to the team on that one. It’s nice to reward them with a win in the end.”

Sutton had dropped to fifth by the end of race two, with Hill and Cammish moving up to fill first and second in the results ahead of the penalised Ingram, and Dan Rowbottom’s Alliance Ford in fourth. But it did put him on the second row for the reversed-grid finale – if the NAPA boys could get the car ready in time.

They did, but Sutton messed up the start: “I dropped back to seventh or eighth off the line. I was a bit greedy on the clutch and I just had loads of wheelspin. We rattled our way back. We clawed a few of those back on the opening lap and then set after them.” By the time a mid-race safety car was called, Sutton and Cammish were into the top two positions after the four-time champion divebombed Morgan at Segrave, and Cammish swept around the outside of the BMW into Noble.

Reversed-grid poleman Morgan initially had team-mate Colin Turkington for company, but the Northern Irishman faded on what was a tricky weekend for him. Turkington was second in the points coming into Thruxton, but 9-7-7 finishes have dropped him to the head of a battle for fourth with Cammish, who is finally



feeling that work to adapt his Ford to his own driving is paying off and was happy with three runner-up finishes: “Whatever I’ve had [with his virus], I’ll be hoping I get it again for Oulton [the next round]! I’m starting to feel more like the old me. The processes, communication detail – it’s all starting to bear fruit.”

Turkington’s weekend got off to a bad start in FP1 when a sheared bonnet pin restricted his laps, and he couldn’t get comfortable with the BMW’s balance through Saturday. “Race two [when he pressured Cook for sixth] was really good but the window is so small,” he sighed. “In race three I just lost the rear axle before the safety car. I was a wounded soldier. Thruxton can quite often be like this.”

That safety car also left Morgan and Turkington vulnerable to Ingram, Hill and Cook. “It pulled the two Bee-Ems back in line,” agreed Ingram. “I had to be mindful that Colin had a little bit of hybrid left, so I kind of had to force him into using it. Once he’d got rid of it I could attack Colin, and then try and get Adam to deploy and, once he’d done that, try and take advantage of it.”

And while Ingram grumbled about another likely trip to the TOCA bus, Sutton beamed: “If we carry anything we’ve pulled out of the car today over the rest of the year, then I’m going to be... slightly happy. Don’t get me wrong, the car’s been good this year, but has it been outright the quickest car? No. Whereas today I’ve felt like we have been, we *have* had the pace. We had a little bit of bad luck in race two, and then race three we showed what we were capable of doing. We were able to drive away at the front.”

Remarkably, that was Sutton’s first BTCC win of 2024. It will be even more remarkable if it’s his last. 🌟

[P68 BTCC SUPPORTS REPORT](#)



RESULTS ROUND 4/10, THRUXTON (GBR), 9 JUNE RACE 1 (18 LAPS – 42.408 MILES)

POS	DRIVER	TEAM / CAR	TIME
1	Jake Hill (GBR)	West Surrey Racing / BMW 330e M Sport	25m25.141s
2	Dan Cammish (GBR)	Alliance Racing / Ford Focus ST	+1.216s
3	Ash Sutton (GBR)	Alliance Racing / Ford Focus ST	+1.955s
4	Tom Ingram (GBR)	Excelr8 Motorsport / Hyundai i30 N	+2.518s
5	Josh Cook (GBR)	Speedworks Motorsport / Toyota Corolla GR Sport	+13.147s
6	Tom Chilton (GBR)	Excelr8 Motorsport / Hyundai i30 N	+16.739s
7	Dan Rowbottom (GBR)	Alliance Racing / Ford Focus ST	+7.918s
8	Adam Morgan (GBR)	West Surrey Racing / BMW 330e M Sport	+18.765s
9	Colin Turkington (GBR)	West Surrey Racing / BMW 330e M Sport	+19.151s
10	Aron Taylor-Smith (IRL)	Power Maxed Racing / Vauxhall Astra	+19.752s
11	Mikey Doble (GBR)	Power Maxed Racing / Vauxhall Astra	+19.978s
12	Rob Huff (GBR)	Speedworks Motorsport / Toyota Corolla GR Sport	+20.879s
13	Andrew Watson (GBR)	Speedworks Motorsport / Toyota Corolla GR Sport	+24.617s
14	Aiden Moffat (GBR)	Speedworks Motorsport / Toyota Corolla GR Sport	+26.964s
15	Ronan Pearson (GBR)	Excelr8 Motorsport / Hyundai i30 N	+27.400s
16	Sam Osborne (GBR)	Alliance Racing / Ford Focus ST	+28.401s
17	Chris Smiley (GBR)	Restart Racing / Cupra Leon	+34.709s
18	Daryl DeLeon (PHL)	Unlimited Motorsport / Cupra Leon	+36.994s
19	Nick Halstead (GBR)	Excelr8 Motorsport / Hyundai i30 N	+48.924s
R	Scott Sumpton (GBR)	Restart Racing / Cupra Leon	13 laps-black/orange flag/damage

Winner's average speed 100.10mph. Fastest lap Hill 1m16.246s, 111.24mph.

Q3 1 Ingram 1m15.379s; 2 Cammish 1m15.644s; 3 Hill 1m15.668s; 4 Rowbottom 1m15.678s; 5 Sutton 1m15.822s; 6 Chilton 1m16.139s.

Q2 Rowbottom 1m15.388s; Ingram 1m15.614s; Hill 1m15.799s; Chilton 1m15.910s; Cammish 1m16.012s; Sutton 1m16.158s; 7 Morgan 1m16.167s; 8 Cook 1m16.172s; 9 Watson 1m16.396s; 10 Turkington 1m16.476s; 11 Doble 1m16.513s; 12 Taylor-Smith 1m16.629s.

Q1 – GROUP 1 Cammish 1m16.216s; Ingram 1m16.384s; Cook 1m16.684s; Morgan 1m16.827s; Sutton 1m16.885s; Watson 1m16.896s; 13 Huff 1m16.979s; 17 Smiley 1m18.017s; 18 Sumpton 1m18.997s.

Q1 – GROUP 2 Rowbottom 1m15.908s; Chilton 1m16.285s; Hill 1m16.303s; Taylor-Smith 1m16.411s; Doble 1m16.745s; Turkington 1m16.833s; 14 Moffat 1m17.278s; 15 Osborne 1m17.470s; 16 DeLeon 1m17.733s; 19 Halstead 1m19.129s.



GRID RACE 2 Decided by result of Race 1.

RACE 2 (16 LAPS – 37.696 MILES)

1 Hill 20m47.290s; 2 Cammish +1.262s; 3 Ingram +2.628s; 4 Rowbottom +2.745s; 5 Sutton +5.582s; 6 Cook +7.002s; 7 Turkington +7.402s; 8 Morgan +9.809s; 9 Taylor-Smith +12.512s; 10 Huff +15.073s; 11 Chilton +15.840s; 12 Moffat +18.950s; 13 Pearson +18.262s; 14 Doble +19.199s; 15 Osborne +22.648s; 16 Smiley +24.543s; 17 DeLeon +27.398s; 18 Sumpton +32.021s; 19 Halstead +44.720s; R Watson 1 lap-accident.

Winner's average speed 108.80mph

Fastest lap Cammish 1m16.467s, 110.91mph.

GRID RACE 3 Decided by result of Race 2, with top eight reversed from finishing order, so Ingram started eighth.

RACE 3 (19 LAPS – 44.764 MILES)

1 Sutton 27m20.097s; 2 Cammish +4.449s; 3 Ingram +7.962s; 4 Morgan +8.039s; 5 Hill +8.198s; 6 Cook +8.376s; 7 Turkington +9.646s; 8 Taylor-Smith +10.002s; 9 Huff +10.275s; 10 Pearson +10.990s; 11 Doble +11.315s; 12 Watson +12.862s; 13 Osborne +13.843s; 14 Smiley +14.727s; 15 Moffat +15.186s; 16 Sumpton +33.156s; 17 Rowbottom -1 lap; R Halstead 18 laps-accident; NC DeLeon 12 laps; R Chilton 7 laps-electrical.

Winner's average speed 98.25mph.

Fastest lap Sutton 1m15.753s, 111.96mph.

CHAMPIONSHIP

1 Sutton 169; 2 Hill 164; 3 Ingram 155; 4 Turkington 136; 5 Cammish 129; 6 Cook 115; 7 Morgan 85; 8 Chilton 84; 9 Moffat 83; 10 Huff 77.





TONS



Power goes long to pip Penske pals and end victory drought

INDYCAR
ROAD AMERICA (USA)
9 JUNE
ROUND 7/15

At the age of 43, Will Power snapped a 34-race win drought at Road America, coming out on top of a Team Penske sweep of the podium positions that owed much to his strategy to beat his whippersnapper stablemates.

A week on from the chaos of Detroit, there was more of the same in the opening laps around America's National Park of Speed, a majestic four-mile road course set among the rolling hills of Wisconsin.

After taking a shock pole position, Chip Ganassi Racing's rookie Linus Lundqvist went from hero to zero barely 10 seconds into the race, when his team-mate Marcus Armstrong pushed him into a spin at the opening corner. Behind them, Penske's Josef Newgarden – in a spare car after a horrendous 95g crash in qualifying – tagged the luckless Colton Herta (Andretti Global) around too. Somehow, the entire field missed the three spinners in what could have been a frightful multi-car pile-up.

Armstrong was penalised for the incident, but Newgarden wasn't – it was deemed 'unavoidable' because the cars in front had spun. Herta, who led the points going into the month of May but is now seventh, said: "I don't understand why it's a penalty for Armstrong when [Newgarden] does the same thing. Josef just dumped

me." Newgarden shrugged: "Everyone checked up on the exit of the corner. I sort of centre-punched Colton. I hate that it most likely affected his race."

Power escaped the chaos in sixth, after getting put on the grass by Scott Dixon on the run to Turn 2 in an Antipodean veterans' turf war. Kyle Kirkwood (Andretti) led for a handful of yards, before Scott McLaughlin (Penske) blew past him at the restart on lap four.

Another yellow was for debris from the diffuser of Herta, who became even more infuriated when Lundqvist knocked him into a spin at Turn 2 – "I'm just getting abused!" he cried over the radio. A third caution was required when Christian Rasmussen fired Kyffin Simpson into a high-speed trip into the Turn 14 wall.

Thankfully, that would be the last of six laps under yellow, and a race finally broke out. Power got his own back on Dixon with a firm move for fifth and set about catching his team-mates. McLaughlin ran until the end of lap 16, one lap earlier than Newgarden (who started on softer alternate tyres, unlike his team-mates) and Power in what would become an intra-Penske three-way strategic battle for the win. McLaughlin surged past the rejoining Newgarden to retake the lead at Turn 1, but the two-time champ had demonstrated that the overcut was powerful. Power leapt up to third, running about a second behind them and biding his time...

Kirkwood had already fallen off the



GALSTAD



MILLER

Penske pace, after a slow first stop that mired him in traffic. Reigning champion Alex Palou ran longest, to lap 18, and took up the 'best of the rest' mantle for Ganassi.

In the second round of stops, McLaughlin again pitted a lap earlier than his team-mates, this time opting for the alternate tyres that had already ruined Dixon's race when his left-rear blistered horribly. Newgarden and Power rejoined ahead of McLaughlin, who sailed past them both as they warmed up their fresh rubber. Was this the winning move?

No. Newgarden waited until McLaughlin's alternates faded and



After a “big” final in-lap, Power had no problems making his alternate rubber last

GALSTAD



Surprise Lundqvist pole position did not last long

blasted past him into the lead, giving him a cheeky ‘hang loose’ hand gesture on the run to Turn 1. “I was pretty careful with [the alternates], that’s half the reason why I didn’t fight Josef,” explained McLaughlin.

So, was *that* the winning move? No again. This race was decided in the final round of stops. McLaughlin pitted on lap 42, one lap ahead of Newgarden, but Power, who was also on alternates on this stint, made it to lap 44 and overcut them all – aided when Newgarden ran wide at Turn 8 on his in-lap.

“I haven’t had a car like that for a long time in a race,” purred Power, who said he had no problems with making his alternates last. “That was a big in-lap, super-quick. Gave me enough of a gap on Josef to be able to get up to speed on the cold tyres.”

Newgarden had rejoined well clear of McLaughlin but had to settle for second, 3.3s behind Power. “I felt like we gave it away,” he rued. “I think we all had similar pace, with that capability for any of us to win.” McLaughlin added: “We knew the overcut was going to be strong, but it was *really* strong today.”

Palou finished fourth, 17s behind the Penske steamroller on a bad day for Ganassi and ahead of Kirkwood, while Herta made a stunning recovery to finish sixth in a damaged car after his two spins.

CHARLES BRADLEY

RESULTS INDYCAR ROUND 7/15, ROAD AMERICA (USA), 9 JUNE (55 LAPS – 220.770 MILES)

POS	DRIVER	TEAM/CAR	TIME
1	Will Power (AUS)	Team Penske / Dallara-Chevrolet	1h45m00.0267s
2	Josef Newgarden (USA)	Team Penske / Dallara-Chevrolet	+3.2609s
3	Scott McLaughlin (NZL)	Team Penske / Dallara-Chevrolet	+8.0148s
4	Alex Palou (ESP)	Chip Ganassi Racing / Dallara-Honda	+16.7118s
5	Kyle Kirkwood (USA)	Andretti Global / Dallara-Honda	+24.8662s
6	Colton Herta (USA)	Andretti Global with Curb-Agajanian / Dallara-Honda	+28.3782s
7	Romain Grosjean (FRA)	Juncos Hollinger Racing / Dallara-Chevrolet	+29.2710s
8	Pato O’Ward (MEX)	Arrow McLaren / Dallara-Chevrolet	+30.3109s
9	Marcus Ericsson (SWE)	Andretti Global / Dallara-Honda	+35.6260s
10	Graham Rahal (USA)	Rahal Letterman Lanigan Racing / Dallara-Honda	+42.8394s
11	Christian Lundgaard (DNK)	Rahal Letterman Lanigan Racing / Dallara-Honda	+46.4444s
12	Linus Lundqvist (SWE)	Chip Ganassi Racing / Dallara-Honda	+46.8107s
13	Theo Pourchaire (FRA)	Arrow McLaren / Dallara-Chevrolet	+54.5282s
14	Felix Rosenqvist (SWE)	Meyer Shank Racing / Dallara-Honda	+59.2412s
15	Santino Ferrucci (USA)	AJ Foyt Enterprises / Dallara-Chevrolet	+1m03.7336s
16	Pietro Fittipaldi (BRA)	Rahal Letterman Lanigan Racing / Dallara-Honda	+1m04.7161s
17	Sting Ray Robb (USA)	AJ Foyt Enterprises / Dallara-Chevrolet	+1m08.4389s
18	Alexander Rossi (USA)	Arrow McLaren / Dallara-Chevrolet	+1m15.0426s
19	Helio Castroneves (BRA)	Meyer Shank Racing / Dallara-Honda	+1m15.6918s
20	Christian Rasmussen (DNK)	Ed Carpenter Racing / Dallara-Chevrolet	+1m19.0701s
21	Scott Dixon (NZL)	Chip Ganassi Racing / Dallara-Honda	+1m24.4754s
22	Luca Ghiotto (ITA)	Dale Coyne Racing / Dallara-Honda	+1m40.1612s
23	Nolan Siegel (USA)	Juncos Hollinger Racing / Dallara-Chevrolet	-1 lap
24	Rinus VeeKay (NLD)	Ed Carpenter Racing / Dallara-Chevrolet	-2 laps
25	Jack Harvey (GBR)	Dale Coyne Racing / Dallara-Honda	-4 laps
26	Marcus Armstrong (NZL)	Chip Ganassi Racing / Dallara-Honda	35 laps-mechanical
27	Kyffin Simpson (CYM)	Chip Ganassi Racing / Dallara-Honda	5 laps-accident

Winner’s average speed 126.154mph. **Fastest lap** Dixon 1m43.1076s, 140.149mph.

Q3 1 **Lundqvist** 1m45.1519s; 2 **Herta** 1m45.2913s; 3 **Armstrong** 1m45.6592s; 4 **Kirkwood** 1m46.4498s; 5 **Power** no time; 6 **Newgarden** no time.

Q2 **Herta** 1m59.2088s; **Kirkwood** 1m59.5373s; **Armstrong** 1m59.5949s; **Power** 1m59.8475s; **Lundqvist** 1m59.9421s; **Newgarden** 2m00.5384s; 7 **Palou** 2m00.8290s; 8 **McLaughlin** 2m00.8840s; 9 **Rossi** 2m00.9035s; 10 **Dixon** 2m01.2671s; 11 **O’Ward** 2m01.5141s; 12 **Simpson** 2m01.6266s.

Q1 – GROUP 2 **Rossi** 2m00.9811s; **O’Ward** 2m01.2712s; **Armstrong** 2m01.3910s; **Newgarden** 2m01.8329s; **Power** 2m01.8602s; **Simpson** 2m01.9470s; 13 **Lundgaard** 2m02.3826s; 15 **Ericsson** 2m02.6460s; 17 **VeeKay** 2m02.7088s; 19 **Ferrucci** 2m03.8144s;

21 **Siegel** 2m05.0248s; 23 **Ghiotto** 2m05.1341s; 25 **Fittipaldi** 2m05.6079s.

Q1 – GROUP 1 **Herta** 2m00.3275s; **Palou** 2m00.5789s; **McLaughlin** 2m01.0198s; **Kirkwood** 2m01.0846s; **Dixon** 2m01.3999s; **Lundqvist** 2m01.4129s; 14 **Grosjean** 2m01.7626s; 16 **Rasmussen** 2m02.0944s; 18 **Pourchaire** 2m02.1745s; 20 **Harvey** 2m02.9443s; 22 **Rosenqvist** 2m03.3098s; 24 **Rahal** 2m04.8213s; 26 **Robb** 2m04.8553s; 27 **Castroneves** 2m09.6837s.

CHAMPIONSHIP

1 Power 236; **2 Palou** 231; **3 Dixon** 225; **4 O’Ward** 184; **5 McLaughlin** 179; **6 Kirkwood** 179; **7 Herta** 176; **8 Newgarden** 169; **9 Rossi** 162; **10 Rosenqvist** 157.



Herta put in fine recovery to sixth after two spins

NEXT REPORT
Laguna Seca
27 June issue

MILLER



Aitken and Ferrari score at the seaside

Aitken leads the throng into the Hugenholtzbocht on his way to victory on Saturday

DTM
ZANDVOORT (NLD)
8-9 JUNE
ROUND 3/8

Jack Aitken took his Emil Frey Racing Ferrari to victory at Zandvoort last Saturday to become the first two-time winner of the DTM season, before BMW star Marco Wittmann claimed a shock win on Sunday. The two-time DTM champion started 14th, but Wittmann's pitstop strategy enabled him to take the lead and claim his first success since the 2022 season finale.

Aitken's win was more plain-sailing. The Briton converted pole into the lead in the first one-hour race, and gained 2.1 seconds over the Dorr Motorsport McLaren of second-placed Clemens Schmid in the early stages. The Austrian attempted the undercut by pitting after 21 minutes, but this proved costly; Aitken extended his gap over Schmid to 9s after switching tyres the following lap. The McLaren then dropped another position when Rene Rast pitted

his BMW the tour after Aitken, while Arjun Maini, who started his HRT Mercedes third, completed another lap before diving in for his stop.

That appeared to be a masterstroke when Maini left the pitlane ahead of Aitken, but the Ferrari driver regained his lead at the earliest opportunity around the outside of the banked Hugenholtzbocht. Rast then overtook Maini for second down the inside of Tarzanbocht 10 minutes later, before focusing on Aitken, who was 2s clear with 23 minutes remaining.

The Schubert Motorsport BMW failed to make any significant gains, and Aitken crossed the line 2.9s ahead to add to his victory from the Oschersleben season opener. Maini was third for his first podium of the season, while Schmid and Lucas Auer (Winward Mercedes) were next.

Race two was more frantic. Maximilian Paul was on pole in his Paul Motorsport Lamborghini and led off the line, but was overtaken by Mirko Bortolotti's SSR Performance Lambo around the outside

of Tarzan. Moments later, Schmid hit the barrier while, in a separate incident, Auer stopped with smoke coming from the rear of his Mercedes, causing a 10-minute red flag.

Bortolotti kept his lead when racing resumed, before a safety car period was called 12 minutes later when Ayhan Guven spun his Porsche at the exit of Hugenholtz. The safety car lasted for six minutes and drivers kept position at the restart until the pitstop window arrived.

Kelvin van der Linde, 13th in race one in his Abt Audi, was first of the frontrunners to pit from fourth, while Aitken's third-placed team-mate Thierry Vermeulen switched tyres the following lap and Bortolotti went one tour further. Van der Linde's undercut was successful, and the South African overtook Vermeulen with a daring move around the outside of the fast, downhill Scheivlak right-hander.

Paul pitted late in the window. Wittmann, whose Schubert BMW was running eighth before the stops, proved that this was the right strategy, but Paul's stop was slow and he was passed by Bortolotti, van der Linde and Vermeulen on his out-lap. Wittmann left the pitlane 2s ahead of Bortolotti. The Lambo quickly caught up, and a collision at the chicane caused damage to Wittmann's rear-left bodywork, but he was able to continue and, despite smoke coming from the BMW, he gained time on Bortolotti to win by 7.2s.

Van der Linde finished third and now takes an eight-point lead in the standings over Bortolotti. Vermeulen was fourth from Mercedes pair Luca Stolz and Maini. Aitken qualified fourth and ran fifth early on, but stopped at the wrong pit and then had to serve a penalty, before finishing 16th.

ED HARDY



Taponen on top before Camara clicks again

**FORMULA REGIONAL EUROPEAN
ZANDVOORT (NLD)
8-9 JUNE
ROUND 3/10**

Rafael Camara continued his domination of the Formula Regional European Championship by Alpine by taking a victory and runner-up finish at Zandvoort last weekend. The Brazilian was second behind fellow Ferrari protege Tuukka Taponen in the Saturday half-hour race, before taking a comfortable win on Sunday. It leaves the Prema Racing driver 73 points clear of R-ace GP's Finnish ace Taponen, with four wins and two seconds from six races.

A sudden downpour caused a safety car start for race one. After 12 minutes the green flags flew, and Prema-run polesitter James Wharton built a two-second gap on Taponen during the first racing lap, before the Australian suddenly lost his lead by spinning at Hugenholtzbocht. Moments later, a collision between Valerio Rinicella and Matteo de Palo at Turn 10 brought the safety car out again, and there was time



Camara leads Badoer and Giusti into Tarzan during Sunday race

DUTCHPROTO.AGENCY

for just three more laps of racing. Taponen thwarted late attacks from Camara to claim his maiden FRECA win by 0.3s, with Alessandro Giusti (ART Grand Prix) third from Pedro Clerot and Evan Giltair.

Conditions were dry the following day and Camara made a perfect start from pole before gaining half a second on Brando Badoer during the opening lap. There was a brief early safety car to recover the machine of GB3 ace John Bennett, making his FRECA debut, before racing resumed.

Camara kept his lead at the restart, with Van Amersfoort Racing-run Italian Badoer

and Giusti in pursuit throughout.

The battle for fourth was more intense, with Taponen twice trying to pass the Race Performance Motorsport car of Noah Stromsted around the outside of Tarzanbocht, but pushed wide at the exit on both occasions. Taponen eventually lost his position instead, when VAR racer Clerot moved down the inside of Turn 9 to claim fifth with two and a half laps remaining.

Up front, Camara crossed the line 2.1s clear of Badoer, with Giusti close behind.

ED HARDY

Chadwick breaks through in NXT

**INDY NXT
ROAD AMERICA (USA)
9 JUNE
ROUND 5/12**

Jamie Chadwick delivered a breakthrough performance en route to capturing her maiden Indy NXT victory at Road America.

After starting on pole, the Briton was thrust into defending a trio of restarts, including a final one with three laps to go. Despite the pressure from Andretti Global



Chadwick beat the boys at Road America

team-mate Louis Foster, she remained poised and won by 0.8203 seconds on the 4.014-mile, 14-turn road course.

"Oh, my word," said Chadwick, who led all 20 laps. "Honestly, a bit emotional. We've had an unbelievable car this year and just haven't been able to really do anything about it, so I'm just so happy. Louis had a look, and I just knew I had to be aggressive. I know they have a championship to worry about, and I just had to get my head down. I'm so thankful for the Andretti guys."

While Chadwick emulated Ana Beatriz and Pippa Mann in becoming a female winner in the series, Foster made it a banner day for Andretti Global-run Brits by pipping the Abel Motorsports car of Jacob Abel to second place by 0.0236s, meaning he has cut his deficit to the Kentucky driver to 18 points in the title chase. The HMD Motorsports battalion locked out the next four positions, with Reece Gold fourth and Brazilian FIA F3 race winner Caio Collet claiming fifth.

JOEY BARNES

WEEKEND WINNERS

DTM

ZANDVOORT (NLD)

- Race 1** Jack Aitken
Emil Frey Racing (Ferrari 296 GT3)
Race 2 Marco Wittmann
Schubert Motorsport
(BMW M4 GT3)

FORMULA REGIONAL EUROPEAN ZANDVOORT (NLD)

- Race 1** Tuukka Taponen
R-ace GP
Race 2 Rafael Camara
Prema Racing

INDY NXT

ROAD AMERICA (USA)

- Jamie Chadwick
Andretti Global

EUROCUP-3

ALGARVE CIRCUIT (PRT)

- Races 1 & 2** Christian Ho
Campos Racing
Race 3 Alexander Abkhazava
Sainteloc Racing



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Larson grabs the honours at home

NASCAR CUP
SONOMA (USA)
9 JUNE
ROUND 16/36

Kyle Larson had to be patient and fast in a chaotic race to come away with the NASCAR Cup victory at Sonoma. The expected pit strategies all got turned upside-down when Sunday's 110-lap race on the California road course was marred by seven cautions in the first 41 laps. That prompted Larson's crew chief on his Hendrick Motorsports Chevrolet, Cliff

Daniels, to run Larson as long as possible in the final stage before making his final pitstop. With the race ending on a 51-lap green-flag run, Larson was among the last to pit but had the newest tyres when he cycled back into the line-up in eighth. With eight laps to go, Larson powered around Martin Truex Jr, who had just passed Chris Buescher for the lead, and then held off Michael McDowell's Front Row Motorsports Ford by 4.258 seconds for the win when Truex's Joe Gibbs Racing Toyota ran out of fuel on the last lap. "I didn't know what we were doing on strategy," Larson said. "I was just out there banging laps away. I don't know, we study all the strategy, but it's like doing homework. I don't really know what I'm looking at." It's the third win of the 2024 season for Larson, 26th of his career and second for the California native at his home track. Buescher ended up third, ahead of Chase Elliott and Ross Chastain. Aussie Supercars series stars Cam Waters and Will Brown had difficult debuts, with Brown 31st and Waters retiring with suspension damage.

JIM UTTER



Larson won on his home track

HANSEN/MOTORSPORT IMAGES

WEEKEND WINNERS

NASCAR CUP
SONOMA (USA)
Kyle Larson (below)
Hendrick Motorsports (Chevrolet Camaro)

TCR WORLD TOUR
MID-OHIO (USA)
Race 1 Thed Bjork
Cyan Racing (Lynk & Co 03 FL)
Race 2 Yann Ehrlacher
Cyan Racing (Lynk & Co 03 FL)



JONES/MOTORSPORT IMAGES

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It's oh so riot after Bjork's opening win

TCR WORLD TOUR
MID-OHIO (USA)
8 JUNE
ROUND 3/7

Lynk & Co Cyan Racing pair Thed Bjork and Yann Ehrlacher won the FIA TCR World Tour races at Mid-Ohio last Saturday, but the results were overshadowed by a post-race incident that led to the exclusion of the team's Santiago Urrutia. Mikel Azcona dominated qualifying in his Hyundai, outqualifying team-mate Norbert Michelisz by half a second as the majority of the field struggled with challenging grip levels at the resurfaced circuit. Bjork stole second off the start from Michelisz, and Azcona led before his pace dropped off significantly at the end after suffering a broken front anti-roll bar. Bjork dived down the inside at Turn 9 with three laps to go, and the Swedish veteran went on to win. Azcona fell to third on the last lap behind Michelisz, Hyundai ordering



Bjork takes the flag after relatively sedate opening race

WSC/MOTORSPORT MEDIA/HALSTON PITMAN

the switcharound, with team manager Gabriele Tarquini concerned that they could slow each other or get involved in their own incident. The second race proved to be one of the series' most chaotic. Marco Butti led from the reversed grid in his Honda, but by mid-race he found all four Lynk & Cos had moved into position behind him. Ehrlacher dropped behind Bjork, who had more pace, to allow him to challenge Butti. Bjork took the lead with a dive at Turn 9 on lap 13 via contact, with Ehrlacher also going straight through. Butti then fought back before he found himself under attack and colliding with Urrutia. The two traded

blows throughout the final four laps, haemorrhaging positions, with the field carefully skirting around them as they continued to make contact. After the chequered flag Urrutia then fired through the pack and crashed into Butti's team-mate Esteban Guerrieri, believing he was responsible (see Pit & Paddock). Meanwhile, Bjork backed off to allow Ehrlacher back in front and Lynk & Co stablemate Ma Qing Hua into second. Bjork was then penalised down to sixth for the Butti collision, promoting Guerrieri to third in the results ahead of Azcona and Michelisz.

NEIL HUDSON



FIA

ON A WING AND A PRAYER

*Active aero is key to the FIA's new concept for F1 from 2026.
But will it be successful in solving the biggest problems?*

JAKE BOXALL-LEGGE

There was a frisson of excitement among fans when Formula 1 and the FIA revealed plans for the drastic 2026 rules overhaul. It came in a palpably understated fashion when compared to the 2022 revolution, which was marked by a return to ground-effect aerodynamics and visually different cars; the extravagant launch of F1's now-ubiquitous showcar daubed in a holographic livery was not repeated this time.

Instead, renders were shuffled out on social media displaying a blue car heavy in FIA logos, giving a very different impression – that F1 had been responsible for much of 2022's layout, and the 2026 changes were very much an FIA-led project. And there was a step into the familiar with the reveal, particularly with the design of the front and rear wings; the smooth transition of wing elements into the endplates has been rolled back on, and the designs simplified overall. Hints of a 2008-adjacent design emerged, without the clutter of gratuitous wing elements appearing around the car in

every conceivable space. But there's a twist: the introduction of active aerodynamics, a concept that F1 has flirted with for years, had taken centre stage.

In truth, nothing's entirely new in F1, and the drag reduction system was a proto-form of active aerodynamics – as was the adjustable front wing flap used in the 2009 and 2010 seasons. As ancillary components, the aero package did not hinge around them; this time, however, the aerodynamicists will have a lot more to get their teeth into with the full complement of active aero parts. Thus, the days of DRS over-reliance will be numbered. For the purist, it'll be a cause of great celebration. The device opening the rear wing could be considered as the commodification of on-track overtakes, but this will now be gone once the new rules cycle is pressed into service in 2026.

The active aero rules are not considered as a replacement for overtaking, but instead set each car up for two aerodynamic states depending on the part of the track. A higher-downforce mode will be used to increase cornering speeds and to maintain the stopping

The new regulations attempt to answer critics by keeping the cars' size and mass in check



SUTTON/MOTORSPORT IMAGES

DRS is no more - but there's a push-to-pass-style mode planned



SUTTON/MOTORSPORT IMAGES

Verstappen's initial scepticism has been tempered

power of the cars under braking, but the low-downforce mode can be activated on the defined straights around the track.

In practice, it'll work in a similar fashion to how DRS is activated: once the low-downforce mode is available, the drivers will be able to switch it on and enjoy improved top speeds thanks to the effect of reduced drag. Once under braking, the aero switches back to its higher-downforce mode to set the car up for the corners. This will be available to every driver in the field, not just those sitting in a one-second window to the car in front. The plan was, initially, to have just an active rear wing, but it became clear that the balance between the front and rear wings shifted far too much in the initial lower-drag mode.

"One of the main changes for 2026 aerodynamically hinges on reducing the drag from the rear wing. In order to reduce the overall drag, we have an active portion of the rear wing, akin to the DRS system that we currently have, although with more moving elements, which move to a greater degree," explained FIA head of aerodynamics Jason Somerville. "From our simulation work with the teams and their

drivers, as soon as you have a rear wing that moves to reach the target drag level, it was clear that you needed to have an active front wing to match the balance characteristics. There were certain conditions where the drivers didn't feel comfortable with a large forward aero balance, meaning lots of downforce on the front and not much downforce on the rear. So, that led us towards the need for an active front wing and an active rear wing."

Introducing a low-downforce state (which the FIA has defined as the 'X-mode', versus the high-downforce 'Z-mode') will help drivers maintain high speeds without consuming too much energy, owing to the increased reliance on the hybrid components. A reduction in the power output of the internal combustion engine, and the increase in the MGU-K's output and regeneration capacity contributes to a near 50/50 split between ICE and hybrid elements. This was a powertrain formula that had long been forecast, since it was developed first as a means to entice new manufacturers into F1, but the added reliance on hybrid components has had consequences on the development >>

of the chassis regulations.

The plunge into the world of active aerodynamics seemed to be a legitimate view to address road relevance, given the concept has long been explored in multiple performance cars. It seemed cynical to suggest that it was a sticking plaster to cover off the deficiencies of the cars at top speed; previous fears were circulated by certain F1 paddock members (most vocally, Max Verstappen) that the drivers would have to downshift and back off into corners to fill the battery enough for the full race. Having a low-drag mode alleviates this somewhat, given the power to overcome drag is reduced.

In lieu of DRS, a 'manual override' mode has been included to give drivers a better shot at overtaking. The rules have defined a point at 290km/h (180mph) at which the electrical power deployment starts to reduce, dropping to zero at 355km/h (221mph) – but the override keeps the 350kW maximum output from the MGU-K up until 337km/h (209mph). In effect, it's not dissimilar to IndyCar's push-to-pass in concept, but aligns more with the old KERS rules pre-hybrid, when cars had a set amount of time to deploy energy per lap. The limitations of when it can be used have yet to be fully clarified, but an extra 0.5MJ of energy will be unlocked with an override activation.

Active aero and powertrain tinkering aren't the sole changes, as the FIA and F1 working groups have attempted to stave off multiple criticisms with the current cars; hindsight was very much 2022 when it came to the new rules' formulation. Those rules retained the two-metre-wide cars reintroduced back in 2017 and, in the meantime, the minimum weight limit began to creep up to a peak of 798kg. It was suggested that these made the cars less enjoyable to throw around a circuit and put overtaking opportunities around tighter circuits at a premium. Those in charge of defining the 2026 rules have thus attempted to keep the size and the mass of the cars in check – 30kg will be hacked out of the minimum weight limit, the cars will be 100mm narrower, and the maximum wheelbase has shrunk by 200mm to 3400mm to ensure the cars are marginally more compact.

Much of the weight-saving efforts will come as a natural byproduct of having smaller cars, and through the change in tyre dimensions. The 18in wheels remain after the FIA briefly considered dropping to a 16in formula, but the tyre widths have been cut by 8%. This, the FIA says, does not have a particularly noticeable effect on grip levels.



Tombazis

"A significant part of these regulations has involved thinking about the fans," reckoned FIA single-seater director Nikolas Tombazis. "We believe we made a step towards closer racing in 2022, but there were also things we got wrong and we're trying to get it completely right now. We believe the racing will be much more exciting and much closer between cars."

"We expect cars to be still very challenging to drive, there will be a bit less downforce on the cars, there will be a few more things to look after for the drivers. And hopefully that, together with the closer racing, will always keep it a drivers' championship and a big challenge for them."

The main focus in 2022, the return of ground-effect aerodynamics, has been partly reduced in scope to reduce the reliance on overly stiff suspension set-ups. It's not a complete reversal to a flat-floor ruleset, but the venturi tunnels will be shallower and feed into a depowered



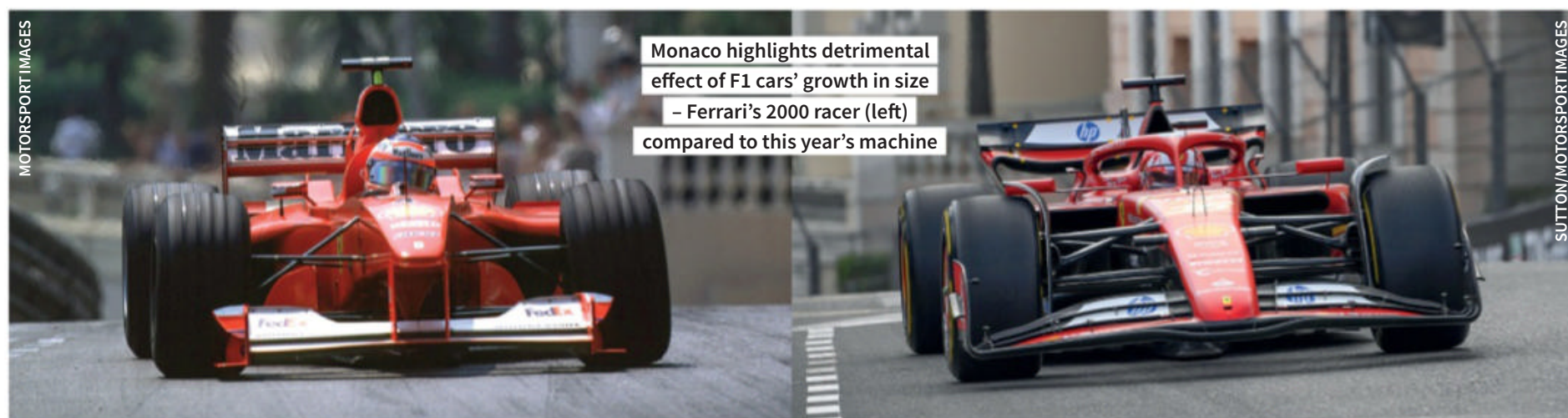
diffuser to cut some of the suction from the floor. This should give the teams more latitude with how they approach things like spring rates and rebound, and ensure the drivers don't endure quite so much coccyx-crushing impacts from bouncing around on-track.

Although the floor has become narrower in accordance with the reduced width of the cars, a further 50mm has been taken out to restrict the efficacy of floor-edge furniture along the flanks. There's also a different form of front wheel wake management here, as the deflectors that currently sit above the tyres have been scrapped for an inwashing bargeboard-like fin aft of the front wheels.

When you consider those changes to elements introduced in 2022, along with the simplified front and rear wings, it suggests that perhaps confidence has wavered in the ability of the current rules to produce the quality of racing desired. It's fair to say that many of those aspects were developed to minimise the downforce losses from following other cars, and some of them had to be prescriptive to maintain the effect without compromises. As development continued, however, it started to become clear that the effect of those prescriptively designed parts began to dilute.

What remains to be seen is how tightly the bounding boxes are defined for the rest of the aero components, as the FIA has attempted to close off loopholes to keep things competitive. In any case, the teams will not be able to explore the new rules until they're a) fully defined, with a view to doing so at the end of June, and b) until 1 January 2025.

However, it became apparent that the teams still see the proposal as being a long way away from a fully defined product. There is a disconnect between the FIA and the 10 teams on the grid in some



Ground-effect aero
will be dialled back
to reduce reliance on
super-stiff suspension
set-ups



**“IF THE RACING SUDDENLY
BECOMES A LOT BETTER, THEN
I GUESS EVERYONE IS HAPPY”**

of the details, which has taken the shine away from the anticipation of something new. There was always going to be resistance; after all, every team has their own vested interests in developing a vision that benefits them and certain aspects should be taken with a few sachets of salt. But a unified front? That's a very different story.

The teams' opposition can be boiled down to two points of contention: the current balance between the aerodynamics and the powertrain regulations, and the projected 30kg weight drop – the latter as a result of the powertrains becoming heavier overall.

McLaren team principal Andrea Stella delivered his assessment, eloquently laying out the crockery before pulling out the tablecloth. “We are in agreement and we support the intent of the objectives at eye level that were stated in the press release,” he began. “However, if we look at the regulations in the draft form that has been circulated, they are still far from being able to achieve those agreeable objectives and intent. So it is the time for the FIA, F1, and the teams to work together, listen to one another, and contribute to form a solution that will allow the sport to meet those objectives.”

“I think if we meet those objectives, we're going to have Formula 1 in a good shape. But we need to make sure that when it's the time of implementation, we actually deliver a product that meets those targets and objectives.”

Williams team principal James Vowles elaborated more on the grievances with the regulations, noting that the aero concerns involved “design freedom or physically how fast the cars will be”, and echoed his doubts previously that he “[doesn't] think anyone will hit that weight target, and I think that needs reviewing”.

There's an argument to make that the teams should get what they're given and like it. And, actually, they're pretty happy with the idea of including active aerodynamics and the general concept behind the 50/50 powertrain split. But their simulation concerns are generally shared: Stella's assessment that the current models were “not fast enough in the corners and too fast on the straights” have been echoed by drivers and personnel from other teams. Even though the power deployment from the MGU-K tapers off at higher speeds, the considerable slash in drag is giving the cars far more top speed than they've ever had before. At the same time, the cut in downforce is affecting the cars' cornering capabilities.

Overall, this leads to a further concern that F1 will become a lot slower as a result – although suggestions that it would be comparable to the current F2 speeds seemed to be wide of the mark, many see

the performance difference at this stage as too small.

“It's imperative that we are still the leading series in motorsport,” Vowles said. “That's how I see us, we're the pinnacle of this, and therefore as a result of that we need to make sure we're maintaining the performance and speed that we have.”

“I think Andrea summarised it well, that there's a mismatch there, fundamentally, the performance difference to an F2 car could be starting to get a little bit tight, especially when you compare it to other series around the world. But also, as Andrea mentioned, these are draft regulations and just this week, in fact, there were two changes which took quite a bit of downforce away. I'm confident we'll get to a better solution in that regard. It's not that we're so far away. Just a little bit more work required though.”

However, tentative support came from an unlikely source: championship leader Verstappen prefaced his comments after the 2026 rules reveal that he was “in the middle” with the projected new regulations, having been distinctly unimpressed by the early versions he'd experienced in the simulator.

“I have to say from the first time that I saw it to the latest updates I've seen, I think they made really good progress in how the engine is working with the chassis, in relationship on the straights and stuff,” he said. “With some tracks I think it will look better than others, naturally, when you are more energy limited. But it's something we have to deal with. It's still a bit of a question mark for a lot of people, how everything is going to turn out. So it definitely needs a few more simulations to be run. But this is work in progress, right? We're in 2024, 2026 is still a while, we'll see if it's the right way to go with things. If the racing suddenly becomes a lot better, then I guess everyone is happy.”

Assuming the FIA and F1's teams work together, the rules will continue to evolve between now and the end-of-June ratification of the new regulations. But, even after that, they'll be subject to change. Drivers – and teams – will retain their concerns, but it's likely that most of them will be ironed out before the new age of F1 opens. 'Twas ever thus: those in F1 are often resistant to change but, when the time comes to adapt, they manage to do so. And they usually manage to innovate when doing so... ❄



SUTTON/MOTORSPORTIMAGES

F1 2026 TECH

Active aero is the headline-grabber, but a smaller, lighter chassis allied to a 30% drop in downforce promises to help create the ‘nimble’ race car that F1 – and fans – are hoping for

JAKE BOXALL-LEGGE

REAR WING

The looping transition between wing elements and endplates has been ditched for a more conventional design, now featuring a three-element rear wing aimed at reducing drag. The beam wing reintroduced in the 2022 regulations has also been disposed of. The remainder of the changes all feed into the active aerodynamics rules, since DRS has been removed from the overall formula. The aero changes have contributed to a 30% cut in downforce.

ENGINE

The tried-and-tested 1.6-litre turbocharged V6 engine remains in place, underpinning the turbocharger and MGU-K once more. As was forecast long ago, the MGU-H is now gone, but the electrical power of the hybrid has been increased almost threefold, while the internal combustion engine has been reduced in potency. The ICE is now rated at around 400kW (536bhp), and the MGU-K will contribute an added 350kW (469bhp). A manual override mode has been included to boost power in lieu of DRS. Drop-in, 100% sustainable fuels will be used.

ALL PICS: FIA

CHASSIS

The 2026 cars will have a minimum weight of 768kg – 30kg lighter than the current formula – in a bid to create more ‘nimble’ handling characteristics. Therefore the car has been made smaller: the wheelbase has been reduced to 3400mm from 3600mm, and the width shrinks by 100mm to 1900mm. Tyres have also been reduced in width slightly, losing 25mm from the fronts and 30mm from the rears, but retain their 18in wheel diameter. This comes with a negligible change in overall grip.

ACTIVE AERO

Each car has two aero modes: low-downforce and high-downforce. Both front and rear wings will be able to transition between each mode, depending on the circumstance: on the straights, the drivers will be able to switch to the low-downforce mode to gather more top speed; for the braking zones and corners, this will revert to the high-downforce setting. This also assists with the energy management in the new powertrains – the low-downforce setting reduces the power required by the hybrid components.



Front wing down from four elements to three; front and side impact protection improved

BODYWORK

The front wheel wake devices have changed, with the hub-mounted wheel deflectors removed from the overall package. In their place, a bargeboard-like wake control board will pick up the turbulence from the front wheels. The floor width has been reduced by 150mm, and the venturi tunnels are shallower to create a partially flatter floor with smaller diffuser. Side intrusion and front impact structures have been improved, without adding much in the way of extra weight.

FRONT WING

As part of the car-width reduction, the front wing has lost 100mm. The endplates on the FIA's model have been enlarged to shrink the span of the wing elements, sweeping into a waved horizontal footplate with an outer endplate mounted on top. Although not explicitly stated in the FIA's documentation, the model shows a three-element front wing (down from four), and the upper pair will form part of the active aero package, much like in 2009 with the driver-adjustable front wing.



V12 LMR had gone from drawing board to shakedown in a remarkable five months



SUTTON

LE MANS 24 HOURS

BMW'S SECRET PATH TO LE MANS SUCCESS

A quarter of a century ago, BMW took its first outright success in the 24 Hours with Williams, but the story could have been very different

GARY WATKINS

PHOTOGRAPHY  **motorsport**
IMAGES

Tom Kristensen was hot property as the 1997 season drew to a close. And for good reason, after his starring performance on the way to victory at the Le Mans 24 Hours aboard the Joest Porsche WSC95 that year. He had offers galore on the table, Nissan and Mercedes included, but he chose BMW. There were equally good reasons for that, too. The German manufacturer was headed back to Formula 1, and tied up with that programme was a firm commitment to win the French enduro.

That was just as important as the F1 angle to a driver just setting out on the sportscar career that would make him one of the all-time greats: "They told me they were going to Le Mans to win and would keep going until they did." On the face of it, the marque stuck to its word, though a turn of ill fortune meant it wouldn't be Kristensen who took the victory laurels. But the story of BMW's only outright victory at the Le Mans 24 Hours a quarter of a century ago in 1999

with the V12 LMR is far more complex than it looks.

BMW had an undeniable aspiration to win Le Mans. Paul Rosche, its grizzled engine guru and a powerhouse at the BMW Motorsport headquarters at Garching to the north of Munich, was a fan of sportscar racing. But behind the aspiration to take the biggest prize in endurance lay higher ambitions at the top table of motorsport: an F1 return to try to reprise its 1983 world championship success with Brabham and Nelson Piquet.

BMW had won Le Mans already, of sorts, in 1995 when its S70/2 V12 powered the winning McLaren. It saw the victory as an opportunity, one to both promote the brand and to get in bed with an established F1 player. In the wake of the 1995 Le Mans success for the Kokusai Kaihatsu-entered F1 GTR – a thinly veiled works entry by McLaren, said some – BMW started taking press ads trumpeting its role in the success. McLaren wasn't impressed.

"McLaren said, 'Hang on, you don't have the right to do that,'"



Run to the flag was a nailbiter until Toyota challenge faded

SUTTON



BMW-powered McLaren F1 GTR came close to victory in 1997



Kristensen spurned offers from Nissan and Mercedes to join BMW

SCHLEGELMILCH

recalls Jeff Hazell, who headed up the GTR programme at the McLaren Cars division of the company that built both road and race F1s. The S70/2 was bespoke for the F1: linking up with old friend Rosche was an obvious route for McLaren's former Brabham designer Gordon Murray when it came to commissioning an engine, though only after the F1 team's engine supplier, Honda, had turned him down. "The only reason we put BMW on the can covers was to stop people asking about the engine," Hazell goes on.

BMW subsequently got on board with the F1 GTR programme,

"They told me they were going to Le Mans to win and would keep going until they did"

and then some. Hazell remembers talking to Rosche as he was starting to nail down the details of the deal when he was asked if McLaren would take over development of the BMW E36 3 Series Super Touring contender, which as the 320i was racing all over the world, including in the British Touring Car Championship with Schnitzer Motorsport. "They kind of strong-armed us a bit when they asked if we could do it, but we ended up saying yes," he recalls.

The tin-top programme became part of a wider plan. BMW Motorsport, it was announced, would eventually move to the UK in a link-up with McLaren, or at least the chassis side would. Engine development was to stay in Europe under a road map that never reached its final destination. Part of the deal involved an early end for the F1. At the end of 1995 a new production target of 100 cars was announced – the final figures were 78 for the road and 28 for the track. Sales had never taken off as envisaged, and McLaren needed to get out of its commitment for 300 BMW V12s.

The involvement with the F1 GTR apart, the tie-up never »



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stretched much beyond some Super Tourer development focused on the front aerodynamics and suspension, and a trio of BTCC outings for Peter Kox at the back end of the 1996 season. Had it run its course, Murray would have moved over to BMW after two years.

The true story of what BMW was planning may never come out. Rosche and Karl-Heinz Kalbfell, who had returned to run BMW Motorsport after a previous spell in the 1980s, now as part of a wider marketing role, died in 2016 and 2013 respectively. But long-time BMW factory driver Steve Soper, whose stint with the marque would stretch from 1989 to 2000, has no doubt that it was all part of a wider plan.

Rosche had always had some kind of F1 engine on the drawing board or even the test bench since it officially called time on the M12/13 four-cylinder turbo F1 powerplant at the end of 1987. “Every year after 1987 some kind of proposal about F1 was put to the board, but every year they said no,” says Soper. “Around 1994 or 1995, that turned onto a ‘maybe.’” But the requirement now was a link-up with an established team at the front of the grid: there had been an earlier attempt to return with a car designed by Nick Wirth, a car that ended up becoming an Andrea Moda! Soper’s belief is that the BMW Motorsport hierarchy reckoned it could persuade McLaren to jump ship from Mercedes, whose F1 V10 the F1 team had started using in 1995.

Kalbfell offered some insight into BMW’s thinking in an



Kristensen
reckoned 1998
V12 LM wasn't that
bad, but Soper is a
lot less flattering



“Every year after 1987 some kind of proposal about F1 was put to the board, but every year they said no”

interview with this author in the summer of 1998, nearly a year after it was announced that the marque would be heading back to F1, not with McLaren but with Williams. “It was always clear that when we started again [in F1], it would be with a top team,” he said, also confirming that Rosche never took his eye off the F1 ball. “There wasn’t any time when we were completely away. We developed engines, not to the full extent, but so that we knew what was going on.”

BMW’s link-up with McLaren resulted in two factory campaigns at Le Mans. In 1996 there were a pair of F1 GTR short-tail cars on the grid run by the Bigazzi BMW factory team, Piquet, Soper, Jacques Laffite and Johnny Cecotto among the drivers. A year later BMW stepped up to mount a more serious sportscar campaign. Now with the F1 GTR in long-tail form, it would take on the new FIA GT Championship as well as Le Mans with the crack Schnitzer team. BMW and McLaren came close to winning both Le Mans and the FIA GT title. The new version of the F1 GTR, conceived to meet the challenge of ever more extreme rivals in GT1, ended up second and third at the Circuit de la Sarthe in 1997, a customer entry run by the GTC Competition squad heading home one of the Schnitzer entries.

Within three months, motor racing’s worst kept secret of the era was out. BMW would be returning to F1 with Williams in 2000, it was announced in September 1997. Its route back to F1 was paved not by its efforts to get in bed with McLaren, but Renault’s decision to quit the pinnacle of the sport and end its long-running and successful engine supply deal with Williams. By the time of the announcement of the BMW-Williams partnership at the Frankfurt motor show, it had become clear that the unfulfilled Le Mans ambition would move from Woking to Didcot, too.

The decision for Williams to develop an all-new LMP was made late. Very late. So much so that when the programme was launched in January of 1998, there was no car, no model. Instead, actor Desmond Llewelyn, Q from the *James Bond* franchise to which BMW was in the middle of a three-film deal >>

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to supply 007's modified machinery, was brought in to stand in front of a flip pad bearing a simple line drawing and talk about it in the broadest of terms. The real thing wouldn't run for the first time until the weeks leading up to the Le Mans pre-qualifying weekend – the precursor of today's Test Day – at the end of April.

Kristensen reckons the car, known as the V12 LM after the engine that had been carried over from the F1 GTR, wasn't that bad. He points out that it ran as high as third before both the two entries run by Rafanelli – the renamed Bigazzi team – went out with identical wheel-bearing problems. Soper is less kind: "It was a shitbox."

"The people who did it had never done a sportscar before and it was rushed," Soper continues in his blunt assessment of the Mk1 BMW LMP. "And the wheelbase was very short: it wasn't nice to drive."

Williams and BMW knew they had to think again as they strove for that elusive outright Le Mans victory. Graham Humphrys, who'd engineered the GT2 class-winning Chrysler Viper GTS-R for ORECA at Le Mans in 1998, had run into old friend Patrick Head over the course of the event. The Williams technical boss invited him to take a closer look at the V12 LM in the wake of the race.

"While everyone was away recovering, I had a couple of weeks looking at the existing car by myself," recalls Humphrys, who'd been responsible for a line of designs at Spice Engineering that had taken multiple class victories at Le Mans. "I did a report on what I thought the problems were and what was needed. When Patrick had a look at it, he said, 'Well you best get on with it, then!'"

Soper describes the new car that gained the R suffix to distinguish it from its predecessor as "a revolution not an evolution". Humphrys points out that all the people on the project were the same, including John Russell, who remained the programme boss; it was just that it had now been subtly turned by an incomer to push and pull in the right direction.

The first car suffered from what Humphrys calls "formulaoneitis". A complex design had been further complicated by the involvement of BMW's styling department. "It was F1 meets the corporate world, he says. "Common sense didn't prevail."

Just 68 of the V12 LMR's 3222 components were carried over from its predecessor, BMW declared at the time. It was a brand-new car right down to its Xtrac gearbox, yet remarkably it went from drawing board to the race track with a shakedown in early January in little more than five months. It sounds unthinkable today, but Humphrys insists that all he did was "to keep it simple".

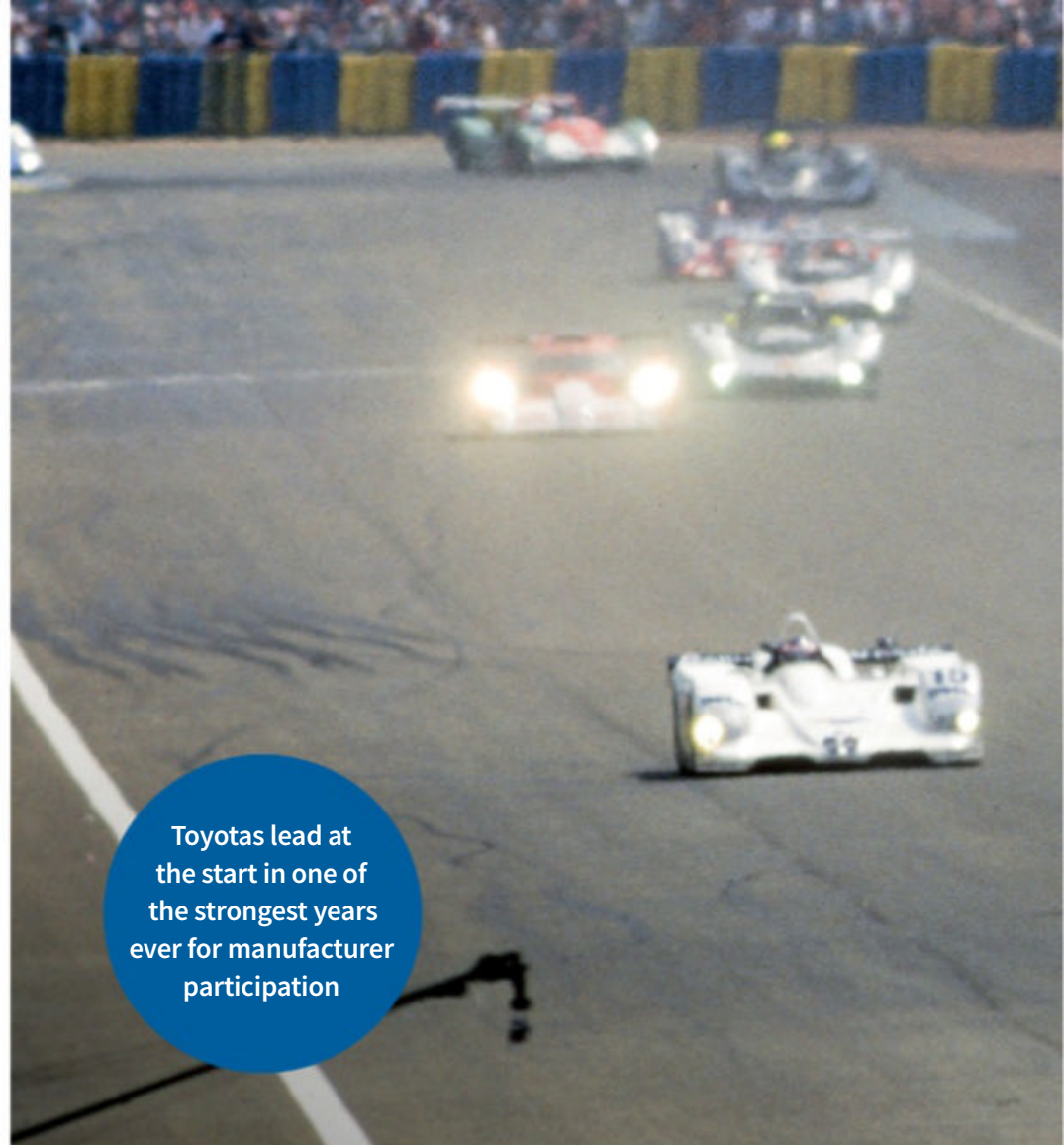
"There were a lot of good people at Williams, it was just that they had no experience of sportscars," says Humphrys. "They needed pointing in the right direction. I put all my knowledge

"There were a lot of good people at Williams, it was just that they had no experience of sportscars"

about sportscar racing down on a sheet of paper and distributed it around the office and did the original layout. After that my job was just to keep the plates spinning."

Corporate involvement from BMW was limited this time. Instead, Peter Stevens, stylist of McLaren's F1 road car, was brought in as a consultant. He was charged with ensuring the car looked like a BMW, but at the same time wasn't compromised by its styling.

The V12 LMR would win Le Mans in one of the strongest years ever in terms of manufacturer participation at the sharp end of the grid, until today that is. It was ranged against Toyota, Mercedes, Audi, Nissan and Panoz, but ultimately it turned into a two-horse race between BMW and a reworked version of the Toyota GT-One that had come close to victory the previous year. It was a kind of double battle: a car from each manufacturer went at it hammer and tongs into the early hours, and then the confrontation



Toyotas lead at the start in one of the strongest years ever for manufacturer participation

resumed in the final stages when it was the turn of the slower of the two BMWs and the remaining Japanese-crewed GT-One. Kristensen was long since changed into civvies as the fight for Le Mans glory that year entered its final stages.

The Dane and team-mates JJ Lehto and Jorg Muller took a clear lead when the Thierry Boutsen Toyota was punted into the wall – and retirement from racing courtesy of the serious back injuries he sustained – under braking for the Dunlop Chicane in the small hours. The disappearance of the Japanese car co-driven by Allan McNish and Ralf Kelleners gave the BMW crew dubbed the 'The Giants' a three-lap lead that had become four when Lehto went off in the Porsche Curves in hour 21. The top of a damper had freakishly wound itself off and, as the car sat down on its belly, a section of the front anti-roll bar fell down into the throttle pedal assembly. With the throttle jammed open, Lehto had no chance of keeping it out of the wall.

"Tom and I still argue about that one," says McNish, who would go on to win Le Mans twice with Kristensen. "We both reckon we would have won."

BMW's hopes now swung to 'The Jockeys': Yannick Dalmas, Pierluigi Martini and Jo Winkelhock. They had opted for a conservative pace at Dalmas's insistence. The Japanese Toyota line-up of Ukyo Katayama, Toshio Suzuki and Keiichi Tsuchiya were also tortoises to the hares of the other two cars from the Cologne-based organisation. But the pace was stepped up by both crews as the clock ticked down, Katayama setting fastest lap of the race as he chased down the BMW.

Whether Toyota could have taken a first victory 19 years before it finally put its Le Mans hoodoo to bed remains a matter of conjecture. Katayama sustained a puncture when he was forced over the kerbs at the first Mulsanne chicane with 50 minutes to go. The aggressor was amateur Thomas Bscher, who happened to be driving a BMW – one of the old V12 LMs.

Schnitzer estimated that the Toyota would have emerged from its final stop 15s in arrears. Then it would have been up to Katayama. "I was so nervous that I could hardly hold my pencil," says Hans Reiter, who engineered the winning car. "I think I had come to the realisation that they were going to catch us."

BMW finally got its Le Mans victory in 1999, and a good job it did. Despite the promise to keep going back until it won, the core of the team behind the V12 LMR at Williams had been laid off in the run-up to the race. The focus was now firmly on F1. There would be no return in pursuit of outright glory until this year with the M Hybrid V8 LMDh. 🏆



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- Perform light mechanical duties when needed.
- Ensure outstanding customer service and guest interactions.
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- Collaborate with the team to maintain high standards.
- Embrace flexibility in working hours and days.

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- Provide technical support in developing HV batteries, BMS and motor controller parameterisation in various EV projects
- Provide technical support to develop EV driveline control/integration solution for various projects;
- Testing, tuning and commissioning of the developed EV supervisory control systems in-vehicle or clients sites (as required)
- Provide technical assistance in any reverse engineering work that is required to be done on OEM systems, such as CAN messaging (as required)

The ideal candidate will have some or all of the following skills/experiences

- A degree in electrical/electronic/mechatronics engineering, computer science or equivalent
- Up to 3 years work experience in electrical/control engineering (Candidates with higher work experience are also encouraged to apply)
- Direct experience in EV design and development applications (Experience in EV Race applications such as FSAE Electric Race cars is an advantage)
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- Communicate project status, updates, and key milestones to company top management and other relevant parties

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- Manage the support of all the performance and performance control systems related track and simulator activities of the race and test team
- Guide the development of performance relevant tools and methods inside the vehicle science group
- Project management of all vehicle science related work inside the Formula E project (budget, resources, deadlines)

Requirements

- Successfully completed STEM studies
- Working experience (≥ 5 years) in high-end Motorsport (Formula E, Endurance Racing, Formula 1)
- Deep and large vehicle dynamics and full vehicle performance understanding and its contributions on a component and system level (performance control systems, suspension, tyre, setup, aero, differential and others)
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GB3 unveils new car for 2025 season

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New GB3 car unveiled for 2025 arrival

GB3

The GB3 Championship has unveiled a new car that will compete in the 2025 season, featuring greater performance than its predecessor as well as the Drag Reduction System (DRS) for the first time.

The Tatuus MSV GB3-025 features a completely revised chassis, improved aerodynamics offering an estimated 35% more downforce and a new Mountune engine that produces 30bhp more at 280.

The Pirelli tyres are also bigger, with the front rubber moving from eight to 10 inches wide and the rear tyres sizing up from 10 inches to 12, while the weight of the new car is expected to be approximately 560kg minus fuel and driver.

It means that lap times compared with

the current Tatuus MSV-022 car, introduced by championship organiser MotorSport Vision for the 2022 season, are expected to be several seconds quicker and further bridge the gap between GB3 and FIA Formula 3.

MSV chief executive Jonathan Palmer said: "MSV, Tatuus and Mountune have used all of our collective expertise, in collaboration with our existing teams, to make another big step forward in our determination for GB3 to be the series that has all the bases covered better than any other at this level – high performance, great equality, the highest safety standards and outstanding value.

"Critically, that means that FIA F3, F2 and then F1 teams will look to GB3's frontrunners as potential F1 talent to try and sign."

Teams have been supportive of the new machine as they believe it will help establish

GB3 as a definitive feeder series into F3.

"It's a massive step forward," said Fortec boss Richard Dutton. "I think there's room for it – it will be so much closer to FIA F3. We're already starting to see people from Formula Regional doing Silverstone [GB3] tests. You will get good racing with DRS."

Dutton said his only slight concern was about how much budgets may have to increase to cater for the new car, with "just the tyres alone being more expensive".

JHR's Steve Hunter added: "It's going to be a bloody quick car! It's going to fill a gap in the market – I feel that the jump to FIA F3 from FRECA or Eurocup-3 or GB3, as it stands, is too big at the moment. I think it's a great thing to see and I'm loving the DRS idea – it will make some interesting racing!"

STEFAN MACKLEY & STEPHEN LICKORISH

Hospital to podium for charging Sherwood

BRITISH F4

British Formula 4 driver Jack Sherwood went from hospital to the podium at Thruxton last Sunday as he bounced back from a heavy crash in the second contest.

The Rodin racer was caught up in a multiple-car incident on the first lap of race two at the Complex, and was sent hard into the barriers. He felt

pain in his leg after the crash and was taken to hospital for precautionary checks but was given the all-clear and dashed back to Thruxton to take part in race three.

Sherwood's cause was helped by multiple incidents leaving the F4 race pushed back from its scheduled 1630 start time to be the final race of the day. He was therefore able to take up his front row



grid slot and finished third in the shortened contest.

"There was a bit of contact and nothing I could do," said Sherwood, who was the innocent victim of the race-two tangle. "At the time I was

in a bit of pain and I had a quick trip to the hospital. Thanks to the amazing medical staff, I got turned around quickly and jumped back in just before race three."

STEPHEN LICKORISH

Higgins tests prototype engine

LEGENDS

Three-time British Rally champion Mark Higgins has had his first taste of racing a new prototype engine in Legends that championship organisers hope will be used next season.

Higgins sampled the three-cylinder water-cooled engine at Brands Hatch last weekend, running the new unit through its paces after starting from the pits in all six races, although not as a classified competitor.

“The old engines are getting old and are not overly reliable,” said Higgins. “It’s a six-speed rather than a five-speed and it’s not got quite as much torque

as the older engine, but it has a bit more top speed.

“The whole package feels very similar but the new engine is quite a bit lighter, maybe 10kg, and it’s going to have better fuel economy.”

The test car was run by Miles Rudman at Donington Park earlier this year, as well as a handful of laps when Legends supported the British Touring Car Championship at Brands Hatch last month.

Despite the car suffering a spectacular retirement in the final race amid a cloud of smoke after an oil seal burst, organisers plan to continue testing the new power unit so that it is ready to be used from the 2025 season.

The plan is to allow drivers to run either the old or new engine. The latter is expected to cost around £10,000, which will be cheaper in the long run due to fewer rebuilds.

Legends championship organiser Phil Cooper said: “The engine that we currently use is over 30 years old and they no longer make it, so we had to look for something else. We’re using these races as a test environment and we’re doing this to make them reliable and competitive, but we want to make sure that everything is as even as possible [between the old and new engines].”

STEFAN MACKLEY



GARY HAWKINS

Simpson explains lap count error

PICKUPS

Ex-British Touring Car Championship driver Matt Simpson has explained the mix-up that cost him a chance of victory in the opening Pickup race at Brands Hatch last weekend.

The 42-year-old was battling Dale Gent in the first race and managed to move ahead of his rival heading onto the final lap at the Kent venue. But Simpson slowed immediately after the start-finish line and cruised back to the pits, meaning he was not classified since one lap remained.

“Sonny [Howard, championship organiser] called over the radio and said it was the last lap coming out of Clearways,” said Simpson, who won race two. “I beat Dale to the line and backed off but Sonny called it wrong. He did the same in the second race, saying there was one more lap to go but it was the last lap.”

Howard explained that a marginal call of less than three seconds in the opening contest was the difference between it running one lap longer because the race was decided by time, before reverting to a lap count in



GARY HAWKINS

the remaining two races.

Howard said: “His [Simpson’s] responsibility as a driver and someone with his experience is you race to the chequered flag.”

STEFAN MACKLEY



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Organiser Chodosh was delighted with how first event went at Brands

GARY HAWKINS

Successful Ford vs Chevy debut as category plans SpeedFest return

FORD VS CHEVY

American SpeedFest organisers are looking to host Ford vs Chevy races again next year as a support category at Brands Hatch following the praise it received across the weekend on its debut.

Series organiser and driver Simeone Chodosh confirmed that there had been discussions with MotorSport Vision Racing about hosting the category again next year, but added that “he didn’t want to overdo it” by expanding the series and racing at more than one circuit.

“I want to keep it at a level where everyone will want to see it; if you do it

all the time it can become too much,” said Chodosh, who at the wheel of his Corvette captained the Chevrolet team to victory overall, with the marque locking out the podium in both races.

Defeat didn’t dampen Ford captain Chad Donner’s views on the weekend. He claimed it was “amazing” to see 25 cars supporting such an event.

When asked where it ranked in terms of his racing career, Donner claimed it was “up there with some of the best and most intense racing” he’d ever had, and that he “really hoped it returned next year and for the foreseeable future”.

JACOB AWCOCK

Huff to drive WTCC title-winning car

SUPER TOURING POWER

Rob Huff, the 2012 World Touring Car champion, will attend the second running of Super Touring Power at Brands Hatch later this month behind the wheel of his title-winning car.

The 44-year-old Briton will join the RML Group 40th anniversary celebrations with a guest demo drive in a Chevrolet Cruze on 29-30 June.

Huff was part of RML’s superstar Chevrolet line-up

from 2005 to 2012, where he raced alongside Alain Menu and Yvan Muller in what developed into an all-conquering squad. Prior to that, Huff made his top-flight tin-top debut as part of the RML-run SEAT squad in the 2004 British Touring Car Championship.

“I am incredibly excited to be reunited with my 2012 world championship-winning car, a car that changed my racing career forever,” said Huff, who now races in the

BTCC with Toyota and took a win last month at Snetterton.

“For RML to have kept that chassis and now fully rebuilt it is something very special, and I feel honoured to be invited back to drive it on such a special weekend.”

Also attending the event will be 1999 BTCC champion Laurent Aiello, who will take part in interviews on the Autosport Stage. There will be opportunities for fans to meet the Frenchman, who is also a Le Mans 24 Hours winner.

NEW FERRARI HITS TRACK

The new Ferrari 296 Challenge made its UK debut at Snetterton during the third round of the Ferrari Challenge UK last weekend, with current series drivers able to test the latest model. The machine, which has a more powerful V6 engine and greater downforce, has been built specifically for the one-make series and will make its competitive debut in the UK next season. Drivers will also be able to sample it at the remaining two rounds this season.

PORSCHE 924 RACING AGAIN

Rebuilt following Pip Hammond’s spectacular accident in a CALM All Porsche race at Thruxton in July 2022, finished on Thursday and driven to Donington Park, the 924 of ’70s Road Sports returnee Gavin Johnson qualified on class pole by 0.005s from Chris Baines in a sister car, but a broken fan belt in race one finished his weekend. Peter Hore, within half a second in qualifying, won the class in both stanzas.

PODIUM ON COMEBACK

Two-time Legends champion Lawrence Davey returned to the championship for the first time in more than a decade last weekend at Brands Hatch. Davey, champion in 2010 and 2012, took over James Newbery’s car for the event after the pair made contact on social media. Davey took third place in the final race of the weekend after showing good pace across all six races. The former Mini Challenge JCW driver said: “It’s nice to be back in something that’s competitive.”

MARZORATI’S CRASH

Max Marzorati’s hopes of making a further NASCAR Euro Series outing later this year at Zolder took a hit after he crashed out of the second race during the American SpeedFest event at Brands Hatch. The ex-GB3 and GB4 driver was competing in only his second weekend of the category and claimed 11th in the opening race before he was pitched into the barriers approaching Druids in the sequel, which heavily damaged his Ford Mustang (below).



GARY HAWKINS

Ryder targets Doune after hefty crash

BRITISH HILLCLIMB

Matthew Ryder aims to return to the British Hillclimb Championship at Doune this weekend, despite his recent high-speed accident at Shelsley Walsh. Ryder, who topped the BHC standings heading to Shelsley, was fortunate to escape injury when his Gould GR59 went off at speed on the run up to Bottom Ess. Now his family team, working with car builder Sean Gould, hopes to have the car ready for this weekend's double-header at the famous Scottish hill.

"It's testament to the strength of the Gould that I was able to walk away from the accident," said Ryder. "There was quite a bit of damage to fix, but the plan is to get to Doune this weekend –



it will be touch and go." The car, which he shares with Sean Gould, was stripped on the Monday after the Shelsley accident and the team has been working flat-out to get the car ready for the trip north. "We all love Doune, and I just need a couple of runs there to play myself back in – I was over the moon to see Alex Summers get

some great results," added Ryder of the driver who took over at the head of the BHC points with a double victory last time out. Despite a sore neck, Ryder was back at work on Monday morning after the Shelsley accident, and will continue his bid for a first BHC title over the remainder of the season. **PAUL LAWRENCE**



TRIP BACK IN TIME
The 1924 Le Mans winning Bentley 3 Litre Sport travelled from Brooklands Museum last week to Le Mans to take part in pre-race activities and displays. Michael Littlejohns, the grandson of John Duff, who drove the Bentley to victory 100 years ago in the French enduro, was at the wheel. Duff, alongside co-driver Frank Clement, claimed the first win for a Bentley at Le Mans. **Photograph by Mike Stokes**

ANGELO R. DRIVE

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Second in class and sixth overall after a strong drive from Metcalfe in Lotus 20



STEVE JONES

Metcalfe impresses in Formula Junior aboard ex-Bandini Lotus

FORMULA JUNIOR

Nathan Metcalfe marked himself out as a young driver of potential by finishing a brilliant second in class in a fiercely competitive Historic Formula Junior race at Donington Park last Saturday.

Driving the 1961 Lotus 20 raced by F1-bound Lorenzo Bandini for Scuderia Centro-Sud, Metcalfe finished on the tail of triple champion Nic Carlton-Smith's similar car with a best lap just 0.004s slower in sixth overall.

Metcalfe – FJHRA's Driver of the Day – completed his first full race, having been sidelined by a broken gear linkage on lap two at Snetterton's UK championship-opener in April and thwarted by gearbox

failure in qualifying at Cadwell Park.

"I spend too much time on a simulator at home, but my previous circuit driving experience was 12 laps of Snetterton's 300 circuit in my father's [Tim] ex-Briggs Cunningham team Cooper T56, amid GB3 and GB4 cars last October," he said.

"I fell in love with the late Simon Diffey's Lotus 20 when I sat in it, aged four, so to be racing a 20 with significant history is surreal. It had been dormant at Complete Motorsport Solutions since 2017, so I kept badgering dad to get it, so we could compete together."

The Bristol University graduate is keen to race regularly, but is aiming for a career on the commercial side of motorsport.

MARCUS PYE

Double delight for Manning on return

TOURING CAR LEGENDS

Two podiums in the inaugural Historic Sports Car Club Touring Car Legends races at Donington Park last weekend were beyond Mike Manning's wildest dreams, after badly damaging his Ford Sierra RS500 in a shunt at Castle Combe last month.

"I thought I was going over," said Manning, while showing photos of the Texaco tribute

car becoming airborne and heading backwards above the Recticel barriers lining Folly in the Modified Ford encounter.

All four corners and both sides were damaged, but garagiste Manning and his crew immediately set about repairing it over five weeks.

"We took it to Llandow on Thursday, to make sure it worked, then brought it here," he added. "In qualifying it turned one way but not the

other, which put us at the back, but after adjustments it was better. I was fortunate to finish the sprint race with the right rear wheel loose but had a proper go in the [40-minute Sunday] enduro."

After third in the opener, Manning took a second place. "I can't believe the result," he said. "I'll do as many races as I can before rebuilding the car at the end of the season."

MARCUS PYE

CIVIC DUTIES PAY OFF

Civic Cup driver Spencer Stevenson rewarded the hard work of his Ben Sharpe Racing team with a fourth-place finish at Oulton Park last Saturday. Stevenson's car sustained damage to the rear subframe at Snetterton last month, meaning it needed a new shell. After SW Motorsports fitted a roll cage and the shell was painted, the BSR crew spent 30 hours across two days completing the rebuild.

NEW REGS FOR FN2 MODEL

The Civic Cup introduced a second technical regulation change governing the FN2 model at Oulton Park last weekend, aimed at better balancing its performance with the older EP3 model. FN2s had received a 20kg weight break, as permitted in the regulations, at the previous round. A further change to its gearing, setting the final drive ratio equal to that of the EP3, received the approval of all registered competitors, as required.

CLIVE WOOSTER 1954-2024

Long-time competitor Clive Wooster died recently at the age of 69. Famous throughout the toy industry, in which he forged his management career, Wooster sprang to prominence in speed events, hillclimbing Deltas, before circuit racing a BMW. In recent years he sprinted a Radical SR4 successfully in the BARC championship. Wooster was also a popular ARDS instructor at Thruxton. He leaves wife Heather and daughters Louise and Katie.

MNDA CHARITY KARTING

Team GB3 & GB4 took victory at last week's Racing4Charity karting event at Thruxton, beating drivers from the British Touring Car and British GT paddocks. The winning team consisted of James Hedley, Jarrod Waberski, Will Macintyre and Branden Templeton (below, l-r). From the event and subsequent motorsport auction, a total of £6656 was raised for the Motor Neurone Disease Association.



JEP



Jordan storms from 13th to win

MINI MIGLIA

The combination of the Mini 7 Racing Club and Thruxton is magical. Add in a talented pair of Jordans to the mix and there really is a spectacle to behold. But, while the Jordans repeated their quadruple win of last year (see right), they did not have things all their own way.

One of the most memorable moments of the weekend had to be Andrew Jordan's opening lap of the second Miglia contest. Having won the opener after leading throughout, he never had the benefit of the tow and therefore started the sequel down in 13th place because the grid was determined by fastest laps. Yet he had charged into the lead by the end of the opening tour! Jordan was up to fifth out of the Complex, and then passed three Minis around the outside of the Club chicane to edge ahead in a breathtaking move.

"I just wanted to get stuck in and go for it," enthused Jordan. "I thought during the red flag, whatever happens on the restart that [first lap] was the

highlight for me!"

Aaron Smith was not prepared to let the 2013 British Touring Car champion go without a fight, however, and squeezed up the inside of Jordan at Club on the next lap. Jordan had then just edged back ahead through Village when the race was red-flagged due to a heavy crash for Nick Paddy approaching Allard. With proceedings already well behind schedule, there was only time for a three-lap restart, and Jordan just resisted Smith throughout to prevail.

Behind, there was a terrific scrap for third with Rupert Deeth taking to the grass up Woodham Hill to defeat Jeff Smith, Martin Wager and Kane Astin.

The earlier encounter was also red-flagged when Lee Roberts rolled at the chicane after striking the tyre stack. It prevented a grandstand finish as the swarming pack had just closed down Jordan. "I knew they would get back to me," said the victor. "It was going to get quite spicy on the last lap, but I was confident."

STEPHEN LICKORISH

More Jordan family success in the Se7ens

MINI SE7ENS

Not to be outdone by their more powerful cousins, the Mini Se7ens also put on a dramatic display at Thruxton, and it was reigning champion Mike Jordan who was once again the driver to beat.

He led throughout the opener but faced an ever-growing threat from Joe Thompson, who came very close to grabbing the lead at Club on the final tour. "He kept me on my toes!" said Jordan. "My car was super-quick at the back of the circuit. As soon as I'm out of Church, I'm on the white line all the way up there [defending the inside]. Joe is going for the championship, and we get on really well, so I was pretty confident he wasn't going to go for a lunge."

The pair also had a close scrap in the sequel after Jordan gave an early indication of how to storm up from a lowly grid position, when he went around the outside of a whole bunch of cars at Club on the first lap to grab the lead from seventh. But things got a bit too close for comfort between the leaders on lap 10 of 12 when a failed move from Thompson ended with him bumping into the back of Jordan, damaging his radiator and forcing him out.

Some of the best action came among the huge S-Class entry, with the constantly sideways Frazer Hack spending the entire second race swapping the lead with Matthew Ayres and winning by just 0.032 seconds to complete a double triumph.

STEPHEN LICKORISH

Hurd heads the herd for double

MINI CHALLENGE TROPHY

The Mini Challenge Trophy contenders are notorious for disgracing themselves at Thruxton, so the Hampshire faithful were shocked to see fine victories taken by Rhys Hurd and Alex Solley in two safety-car-free Saturday races. On Sunday came the climax: a head-to-head between Hurd and Solley – only for a lengthy caution to ensue when Mick Fitzgerald was fired off by contact and into the Church barriers.

Once green flags flew, Hurd soaked up pressure from Solley, with James Black and

Alex Keens also firmly in the mix, and it was Chandler Motorsport's bearded Surrey youngster who completed a superb double.

Hurd's win in the opener came despite a grid penalty carried over from last time out at Pembrey relegating him to sixth. Within three laps he was in front, but it wasn't until chicane shenanigans delayed Black and Harry Hickton with two laps remaining that he was able to escape. Sam Gornall emerged to beat Black to second.

Solley faded from the lead to sixth in race one, but made no mistake next time out. He wriggled away from a battle with



Keens and Gabe Fairbrother, and it was Gornall who braked latest at the chicane last time round to snatch the runner-up spot. Hurd fell to seventh when contact with a backmarker damaged his radiator.

MARCUS SIMMONS

Fairclough frustrated by car woe

BRITISH F4

It was all looking so good for Deagen Fairclough. The British Formula 4 dominator was nearly seven seconds clear in the Thruxton finale and appeared on course to add a fifth win of the season, after leading throughout the opener.

But motorsport has a habit of producing unexpected twists and Fairclough was on the receiving end of one of those in



Success and strife for Hitech's points leader

Hampshire when his Hitech machine suddenly ground to a halt with four laps to go. "The car just died," said the devastated points leader, who added that he had no warning of the mystery problem.

It was Fairclough's team-mate Reza Seewooruthun who profited from the woe to take his maiden win, after squeezing ahead of Rodin pair Alex Ninovic and Jack Sherwood. His win was assured by the race finishing behind the safety car.

There had been another first-time victor in the reversed-grid contest when Alex Berg led throughout for Fortec. He twice stormed into early leads, the race red-flagged initially after a clash involving Sherwood (see News) at the Complex. "I never dreamed I would be here racing in Britain and getting a win," said the Canadian.

The opener also featured a red flag, this time caused by Xcel pair Zack Scoular and August Raber colliding at Club, which sent Raber rolling onto the barriers.

STEPHEN LICKORISH

Easy Race Drive for Martin

PORSCHE CARRERA CUP GB

For a series boasting so many potential frontrunners, Will Martin enjoyed a remarkably easy triumph in the Porsche Carrera Cup GB opener at Thruxton.

The Race Drive pilot prevailed by eight seconds, and arguably his greatest moment of jeopardy came on the final lap when he lit up the rear wheels in celebration out of the Club chicane and got a little more sideways than he would have liked!

Martin's mighty winning margin was aided by a squabble behind as his title rival George Gamble's Century Motorsport machine came under ever-increasing pressure from Harry

Foster, the local driver enjoying his strongest outing of the season to date.

There was then a new winner in race two when Andrew Rackstraw delivered on the promise displayed with a sensational podium at last year's Walter Hayes Trophy to score his maiden Porsche victory from pole on the partially reversed grid. A couple of Club lock-ups and some unhelpful backmarkers did allow Gamble to close right in, but the South African JTR driver dealt with the threat expertly to prevail.

Foster also faced a stern test from team-mate Martin but was able to hold on for another podium, meaning Martin only extended his points lead by four.

STEPHEN LICKORISH



This was as close as Gamble got to Martin in the opener

RACE RESULTS

MINI MIGLIA

Race 1 (11 laps) 1 Andrew Jordan; 2 Jeff Smith +0.263s; 3 Rupert Deeth; 4 Aaron Smith; 5 Scott Kendall; 6 Kane Astin. **Fastest lap** Deeth 1m28.431s (95.91mph). **Pole** Jordan. **Starters** 32.

Race 2 (4 laps) 1 Jordan; 2 A Smith +0.330s; 3 Deeth; 4 J Smith; 5 Martin Wager; 6 Astin. **FL** Deeth 1m27.914s (96.47mph). **P** Deeth. **S** 30.

MINI SE7ENS

Race 1 (12 laps) 1 Mike Jordan; 2 Joe Thompson +0.242s; 3 Ross Billison; 4 Damien Harrington; 5 Aaron Smith; 6 Spencer Wanstall. **FL** Thompson 1m35.731s (88.59mph). **P** Jordan. **S** 33.

Race 2 (13 laps) 1 Jordan; 2 Billison +7.288s; 3 Wanstall; 4 Smith; 5 Darren Thomas; 6 Jamie Payne. **FL** Thompson 1m35.471s (88.83mph). **P** Thompson. **S** 33.

MINI CHALLENGE TROPHY

Race 1 (13 laps) 1 Rhys Hurd; 2 Sam Gornall +2.688s; 3 James Black; 4 Alex Keens; 5 Gabe Fairbrother; 6 Alex Solley. **FL** Harry Hickton 1m30.890s (93.31mph). **P** Solley. **S** 27.

Race 2 (13 laps) 1 Solley; 2 Gornall +3.101s; 3 Keens; 4 Fairbrother; 5 Black; 6 Luca Marinoni Osborne. **FL** Gornall 1m31.135s (93.06mph). **P** Solley. **S** 27.

Race 3 (11 laps) 1 Hurd; 2 Solley +0.339s; 3 Black; 4 Keens; 5 Nathan Edwards; 6 Fairbrother. **FL** Gornall 1m30.772s (93.43mph). **P** Solley. **S** 27.

Points 1 Hickton 371; 2 Solley 356; 3 Gornall 348; 4 Black 316; 5 Fairbrother 291; 6 Keens 268.

BRITISH FORMULA 4

Race 1 (7 laps) 1 Deagen Fairclough; 2 Abbi Pulling +3.678s; 3 Alex Ninovic; 4 Jack Sherwood; 5 Alex Berg; 6 Mika Abrahams. **FL** Fairclough 1m11.244s (119.05mph). **P** Fairclough. **S** 20.

Race 2 (16 laps) 1 Berg; 2 Abrahams +1.321s; 3 Ninovic; 4 Leo Robinson; 5 Fairclough; 6 James Higgins. **FL** Reza Seewooruthun 1m11.610s (118.44mph). **P** Berg. **S** 19.

Race 3 (11 laps) 1 Seewooruthun; 2 Ninovic +0.357s; 3 Sherwood; 4 Pulling; 5 Higgins; 6 Zack Scoular. **FL** Fairclough 1m11.245s (119.04mph). **P** Fairclough. **S** 19.

Points 1 Fairclough 181; 2 Ninovic 151; 3 Higgins 111.5; 4 Sherwood 108; 5 Pulling 86; 6 Seewooruthun 82.

PORSCHE CARRERA CUP GB

Race 1 (both 22 laps) 1 Will Martin; 2 George Gamble +8.129s; 3 Harry Foster; 4 Andrew Rackstraw; 5 Dan Lloyd; 6 Charles Rainford. **FL** Martin 1m12.923s (116.30mph). **P** Martin. **S** 23.

Race 2 1 Rackstraw (below); 2 Gamble +0.527s; 3 Foster; 4 Martin; 5 Rainford; 6 Lloyd. **FL** Rackstraw 1m13.084s (116.05mph). **P** Rackstraw. **S** 23.

Points 1 Martin 54; 2 Gamble 44; 3 Rainford 35; 4 Rackstraw 27; 5 Hugo Ellis 25; 6 Foster 21.



For full results visit: tsl-timing.com

Davidson wins in front of home crowd

BRANDS HATCH
MSVR AMERICAN SPEEDFEST
8-9 JUNE

Jack Davidson became the first British winner of a NASCAR Euro Series race as the Chevrolet Camaro driver benefited from a multi-car tangle ahead to take victory in front of a home crowd at Brands Hatch's annual American SpeedFest event.

Davidson, the 2017 Junior Saloon Car champion and a race winner in the JCW Mini Challenge, started fourth for the second of the weekend's Euro Series 2 races but found himself leading as early as lap two. This was after Martin Doubek, who had taken victory in Saturday's prequel, made contact with polesitter and leader Thomas Krasonis into Druids, with the latter sent into a spin. As Doubek tried to regain the racing line, he was hit by the chasing Claudio Remigio Cappelli, with both ending up on the grass on the exit of Druids before Doubek hit the wall.

His stranded Ford Mustang brought out the first of two safety cars, with Davidson now heading the field and, after dealing with another side-by-side restart later, the Briton crossed the line nearly three seconds clear of Gil Linster for his first series win.

"It was hard from start to finish," he said. "Obviously, a bit of contact at the start gifted me the lead but I had to hang on."

Spoils in the NASCAR Euro Series blue riband races were split between Vittorio Ghirelli and Liam Hezemans, with the former retaining his championship lead.



Davidson became the first Brit to win in NASCAR Euro Series

Ghirelli entered the double-header event having taken three wins from the opening four races and duly added another to his tally with a lights-to-flag performance from pole in Kent.

But the Chevrolet Camaro had to contend with a light rain shower mid-race on Saturday, as Paul Jouffreau behind briefly threatened before a safety car was called due to the inclement weather. As the shower passed, Ghirelli was never seriously challenged over the remainder of the 40-lap contest and he won by 0.813s from Jouffreau and Lucas Lasserre.

On the outside of the front row for Sunday's sequel, Ghirelli was shuffled back into fourth at the start and lost further places on subsequent safety car restarts, which meant he finished only eighth. Hezemans was never headed from pole, finishing seven tenths clear

of Lasserre and Doubek.

A mix-up in how many laps were left of the opening Pickup race cost championship leader Matt Simpson, who was non-classified after pipping Dale Gent to the line with one tour remaining before backing off (see News). He made amends in the sequel, denying Gent a brace after some side-by-side contact through Clearways for the final time, before Simpson again finished ahead of the him in race three as both chased home Eric Boulton.

Brake failure pitched race leader Darren Burke's Chevrolet Corvette into the barriers at Druids on lap five of the Bernie's V8s & Historic Outlaws opener, bringing out the red flag. Stewart Robb's TVR Tuscan won from the similar machine of Stephen Wiggins after jumping him at the rolling restart, but Robb was denied in the sequel



Crash for Read and Barrable let Gibson (1) in for Legends win

ALL PHOTOGRAPHY: GARY HAWKINS

WEEKEND WINNERS

NASCAR EURO SERIES 2

Race 1 Martin Doubek (Ford Mustang)
Race 2 Jack Davidson (Chevrolet Camaro)

NASCAR EURO SERIES PRO

Race 1 Vittorio Ghirelli (Chevrolet Camaro)
Race 2 Liam Hezemans (Toyota Camry)

PICKUP TRUCK

Race 1 Dale Gent
Race 2 Matt Simpson
Race 3 Eric Boulton

BERNIE'S V8s & HISTORIC OUTLAWS

Race 1 Stewart Robb (TVR Tuscan)
Race 2 Jack Tetley (Chevrolet Monte Carlo)

LEGENDS

Races 1 & 4 Jack Parker
Race 2 Robert Barrable
Race 3 Oli Schlup
Race 5 Will Gibson
Race 6 Tyler Read

SPEEDFEST SILHOUETTES

Race 1 Paul Knight (Vauxhall Tigra)
Race 2 Ray Harris (Ginetta G40)

FORD VS CHEVY

Race 1 Nik Baatz (Chevrolet Corvette)
Race 2 Tim Davis (Chevrolet Corvette)

For full results visit: tsl-timing.com

as Jack Tetley's 1998 Chevrolet Monte Carlo NASCAR moved ahead into Paddock Hill Bend at a safety car restart.

The closest action over the weekend came from the Legends as five different drivers won across six races, with Jack Parker the only one to double up, winning the first race each day. His opening success came after receiving a push from reigning champion Will Gibson on the run to the line, as both bested Andy Bird. Parker's margin of victory was even less on Sunday morning – just 0.059s covered himself, Robert Barrable and Gibson.

Barrable had taken victory on Saturday in the second heat and looked on course for another win in the equivalent heat on Sunday before he and Tyler Read ended up in the Paddock Hill gravel fighting for the lead on the last lap, gifting Gibson victory. The pair battled again later that afternoon in the final, but this time made it to the flag, with Read ahead by just over a tenth. Oli Schlup won Saturday's final having bested Read and Bird.

Malcolm Blackman lost victory in the opening SpeedFest Silhouettes contest after being disqualified for failing to slow sufficiently under yellow flags, promoting Paul Knight to the top spot. Both were involved in an incident at Clearways in race two, which brought out the red flag, with Knight disqualified for his part in the collision. At the restart, Ray Harris (Ginetta G40) took victory from Colin Smith.

STEFAN MACKLEY

REDEMPTION FOR DAVIS IN FORD VS CHEVY



It was redemption day for Tim Davis in the inaugural Ford vs Chevy races as he returned to Brands Hatch one year after suffering a fiery crash in his Chevrolet Corvette C3, claiming a dominant victory aboard the same repaired machine.

Having had a "senior moment with the gears" at the start, which ultimately cost him a shot at victory in an opener that featured 23 cars, Davis dominated race two, claiming the lead on the 10th lap and never looking in doubt thereafter.

He was lucky to avoid being collected by early leader Nik Baatz, though, when the Corvette driver spun heading up the hill into Druids under a yellow flag. Dropping to fourth, Baatz managed to recover up to second, capitalising on the retirement of Simeon Chodosh and a mistake from Gary Lapidus in the closing stages.

That meant it was a Chevy lockout on the podium, with Lapidus managing to finish third despite a spin also at Druids. Behind, the highest placed 'Ford' was Matt Snowball's Plymouth 'Cuda down in seventh, highlighting the dominance shown by the Chevy cars across both races. Ford captain Chad Donner (the highest-placed Ford in race one after finishing sixth) retired early on with an electrical issue while running in fifth, claiming he was "gutted" to miss out

on what could have been a brilliant result against faster machinery.

Chevy captain Chodosh also retired due to an accelerator issue while running in second but, despite this, the organiser of the inaugural Ford vs Chevy event was delighted with the reaction from the drivers and crowd at Brands Hatch, the one-off contest supporting American SpeedFest on its first outing.

Davis claimed that the series was his "favourite event" and one he would "definitely" enter again, with the races looking likely to return to support SpeedFest again next year (see News).

Davis had inherited pole for Saturday's opener after Darren Burke's Corvette developed a technical problem that meant he failed to start, and Davis could have possibly won had he not missed a gear on the exit of Paddock Hill Bend. This handed the lead to Baatz, who led for the rest of the contest as he was left untroubled by the battling behind.

All eyes though were on Davis, though, who at nearly a second a lap quicker was making up for his poor start, having dropped as low as eighth. He bombed up the inside of the fast left-hander of Surtees to pass Donner early on for sixth place and continued his charge to fight his way up to second place.

Despite being quicker in clean air, he couldn't displace Baatz, who crossed the line three tenths ahead of Davis. "It was harder than I thought it would be, I'm just very relieved after last year," said Davis.

As well as victory on track, Chevrolet also came out on top of the event overall, with points awarded for finishing positions and qualifying, as well as other awards, including best car, loudest machine and kids' choice.

JACOB AWCOCK



Dash to the line:
Shinner wins from
Goller and Wrigley in
Historic FF1600



Historic Formula Ford thriller headlines HSCC event

DONINGTON PARK
HSCC
8-9 JUNE

Spencer Shinner's mature victory in Saturday's thrilling Historic Formula Ford opener proved the weekend's highlight as Donington Park's spectacular contours showed the Historic Sports Car Club's series off at their best.

Scot Neil Hose snared pole, but veered off into a wishbone-buckling impact with the McLeans barrier on lap one. Shinner, in his distinctive Merlyn, Chris Porritt, Matt Wrigley and Christian Goller all subsequently led, with Ross Drybrough buzzing between them.

Wrigley pulled two outside passes on Shinner at Redgate, but his Merlyn ran wide exiting the final chicane on the last lap, whereupon Shinner and Goller's Lola outdragged him to the chequered with just 0.099 seconds splitting them. Hose triggered a short caution when he skated

into the Redgate gravel on Sunday, before Wrigley beat determined Irishman Cormac Flanagan and Drybrough.

Benn Simms extended his Classic FF1600 points lead in his Jomo, Sunday's double making it five wins from six. Both races featured lead-swapping duels with Callum Grant, who spun into the chicane in race one, then recovered to third behind poleman Andy Gosling. Simms and Grant were ahead in the sequel when Wrigley tagged the rear wheel of Rick Morris's Royale at Redgate and Gosling joined them in the gravel.

Christian Pittard thundered to Saturday's Derek Bell Trophy victory over Mark Charteris, debuting his ex-Brian Henton March-Hart 782, and who took six laps to usurp Neil Glover's Chevron B37 into the Old Hairpin. With Pittard away on business, Charteris was overjoyed to win Sunday's twice-stopped race, while Glover staved off Paul Campfield's Chevron.

With 35 Formula Juniors, three too

many for a combined grid, the Formula Junior Historic Racing Association split its runners. Alex Morton and his trusty Condor were too quick for front-engined rivals, led by Chris Astley, Charlie Besley – among seven Elva 100s – and Charles Cook, breaking a decade's layoff in the Nike Mk1.

Sam Wilson had to work hard to repel Clive Richards by 0.478s in the rear-engined race. Reigning triple champion Nic Carlton-Smith was shadowed in class D by outstanding debutant Nathan Metcalfe, with Martin Aubert third. James Denty beat Gary Thomas and Crispian Besley in a tight C battle.

Historic and '70s Road Sports and Historic Touring Cars provided a 35-car grid. From opposite sides of the RS equation, Johns Shaw (Morgan +8) and Williams (Porsche 911SC) each beat the other. Lotuses led the chase, Frazer Gibney and Rupert Ashdown (Elan S1s) in the opener, Jonathan Stringer's Seven later. In the '70s classes, an ever-evolving tussle for David Tomkinson (TVR Vixen) and Will Leverett (Elan S4) ended with a gold apiece.

Lenham duo Rob and Ben Tusting trumped the Chevrons for another Guards Trophy win. Charlie Allison's first-lap spin through the Craner Curves challenging Chris Lillingston-Price sent James Hadfield (Lotus 47) rotating in avoidance. Early leader Steve Nuttall and David Forsbrey chased Ben Tusting home, with Nick Fennell/Michael O'Brien fourth (Lotus 23B). Red flags flew when the BMW engine in Dan Pickett's Chevron B16 – in which Dan Eagling had run second – popped an oil line into the chicane and left a trail of woe to Schwantz Curve.

The hiatus while marshals addressed



Shaw leads a packed
Road Sports/Historic
Touring Cars grid

ALL PHOTOGRAPHY: STEVE JONES

WEEKEND WINNERS

HISTORIC FORMULA FORD**Race 1** Spencer Shinner (Merlyn Mk20)**Race 2** Matt Wrigley (Merlyn Mk11A/20)**CLASSIC FORMULA FORD****Races 1 & 2** Benn Simms (Jomo JMR7)**DEREK BELL TROPHY****Race 1** Christian Pittard (Chevron-Chevrolet B28)**Race 2** Mark Charteris (March-Hart 782)**FORMULA JUNIOR FRONT-ENGINE**

Alex Morton (Condor-Ford S2)

FORMULA JUNIOR REAR-ENGINE

Sam Wilson (Cooper-Ford T59)

ROAD SPORTS/HISTORIC TOURING CARS**Race 1** John Shaw (Morgan +8)**Race 2** John Williams (Porsche 911SC)**GUARDS TROPHY**

Rob & Ben Tusting (Lenham-Ford P69)

HISTORIC FORMULA FORD 2000**Race 1** Graham Fennymore (Reynard SF81)**Race 2** Samuel Harrison (Reynard SF79)**TOURING CAR LEGENDS****Races 1 & 2** Ric Wood (Nissan Skyline R32)**GRIFFITHS HAIG TROPHY****Race 1** Chris Keen (Kurtis 500S)**Race 2** Gareth Evans (Allard J2X Le Mans)**For full results visit:** tsl-timing.com

the spillage enabled Historic FF2000 points leader Samuel Harrison's crew to install Benn Simms's 2022 title-winning engine, following a blow-up two laps into qualifying. Harrison finished first on the road, but a brush with reigning champion Graham Fennymore into Redgate caused friction. Harrison kept the win overnight, but Fennymore's protest overturned it. From 16th on Sunday's grid – set by second best qualifying times – Harrison caught Fennymore in eight laps, then passed him imperiously through the Craner Curves last time round.

Ric Wood dominated the inaugural Touring Car Legends races in his Nissan Skyline, outgunning Daniel Brown (Ford Sierra RS500) in Saturday's sprint. Relayed by father Sean, Brown (RS500) reeled in Ian Goff in Sunday's enduro before his engine cut out. Mike Manning (RS500) then overhauled Goff Sr, who also retired, for a memorable second, clear of Australian Ash Muldoon's BMW M3. Steve Soper qualified Toby Partridge's M3 second, but overheating left him as a spectator.

Small Griffiths Haig Trophy fields harboured entertaining lead tussles. Having shaken off Malcolm Harrison's Cooper-Bristol first time out, Chris Keen (Kurtis-Chevrolet) slugged it out later with Gareth Evans (Allard-Cadillac), with Evans prevailing.

MARCUS PYE

SOPER'S BMW 1 August 1992 was a special day for Steve Soper when, having flown home from the Spa 24 Hours for the birth of daughter Cassia, he returned for the final stint in a works Bigazzi BMW E30 M3. "I drove every lap like it was a qualifying lap and we won by 0.48s, from [local hero] Eric van de Poele's Schnitzer M3!" he said. Soper's ex-business partner Toby Partridge commissioned a replica tribute car and Soper agreed to share the machine, but overheating issues postponed any racing.



FIRST TASTE OF FF1600 "I should have done this before," grinned Ben Powney, who finished sixth on his Classic Formula Ford debut in Shaws Motorsport's Royale RP24. "It's down to [1984 Champion of Brands] Rick Shortle, who was my grandad's next door neighbour. He's been telling me to try FF1600 for ages." The Ma7da and F1000 racer is hungry for more: "I want to do the Brands Hatch Superprix rounds. My only time on the GP circuit was in the Ma7da. Formula Fords must be mega round there."



THIRD GENERATION DRIVES LOTUS Victor Walker raced his Lotus 47 internationally in 1967 and 1968, including the Nurburgring 1000Km and Kyalami 9 Hours. Simon Hadfield and his late father, George, bought the car in 1981, with Simon racing it from 1982 and George in the late 1980s. On Saturday, Simon's son James made it a third-generation car after an 11-year hibernation. Along with Will Schryver, they shared ninth in the Guards Trophy.

Dodds dazzle for GTSCC glory at Silverstone

SILVERSTONE
EQUIPE
8-9 JUNE

Father-son duo Graeme and James Dodd came home victorious in the two-hour GT & Sports Car Cup race at the first Equipe Summer Classic at Silverstone last weekend after starting sixth in their Jaguar E-type. Although polesitters and fellow E-type drivers Richard Kent and Gary Pearson tried to keep pace, a 10-second penalty for a false start and consistently slower pace than the Dodds slammed the door on their hopes of a win.

“The race was amazing,” smiled Dodd Jr. “Obviously a lot can happen in two hours, and to try and pace the car at the start was very difficult. We were staying with the front of the pack quite happily and I stayed with him [Kent] and he made a few mistakes locking up and, once we got past him, we just seemed to creep away.”

Alistair Dyson and James Dorlin, who also lined up on the front row in another E-type, had to work hard to recover after dropping to 11th on lap one. Incredible pace was needed to get back to the front of the pack, and Dyson and Dorlin recovered to a strong fourth before retiring due to a broken driveshaft. “On the first lap I had a wobble, which I couldn’t correct, so I dropped a few places,” explained Dyson.

“The car felt excellent. James did all the hard work in the middle stint and went really well with it, and then 10 minutes from the end we had to retire. It’s just racing unfortunately. I thought it was a tyre at first. It’s the first time we’ve done the two-hour race and it was a good format so I enjoyed it.”



Jake Fraser-Burns won both MG Cup contests in his ZR 190 but had contrasting races, fighting Ian Boulton in his similar machine tooth-and-nail in race one. Boulton eventually slipped back behind Stuart Emmett, also in a ZR 190, relegating him to third.

Despite having the pace to challenge Fraser-Burns for race two, Emmett stepped out of the car for Dan Ludlow to take his seat, which meant he started from the back of the grid. With no time to waste, Ludlow made up an astonishing 13 places on lap one to rise to sixth before chipping away at the cars in front and eventually taking second from Boulton.

Although Fraser-Burns had a 10s penalty for a false start, he had made enough of a gap from the pack to secure his win. But Ludlow believed that the race

could have been a different story. “If we were on the front row, I think we’d have had a pretty good race,” he said. “We decided that we would give it some stiffer springs and we sort of set the damper up really hard and just went for it. I’m really pleased with the result and it made a fun race.”

George Line in his Dallara F308 took both Monoposto wins despite the best efforts of Tony Bishop, also in an F308. The opener was immediately put under caution after Dean Warren spun his Dallara F305 at The Loop, but Line used this to his advantage and navigated a strong restart.

Bishop continued to fight Line in the sequel and kept his rival honest throughout the race, often within a second of the leader, but Line held firm to make it four wins in a row. Meanwhile, Lee Cunningham became the driver to watch after carving his Dallara F301 from 16th to sixth on lap one. Cunningham chipped away at the cars in front to finish fourth overall and win his class, although he was unlucky to be caught by Karl O’Brien, who was third in the opener, but went off track at Copse on the first lap of race two and had to recover from 14th to third.

“We had a few technical difficulties with the car yesterday, which meant a poor qualifying and poor race one,” recounted Cunningham. “We worked on the car overnight, the team did a really good job and I was back up to my normal pace. It’s still very difficult to navigate and overtake because of the speed differential with a lot of cars on a 40-car grid, but the safety car helped and I was really determined to win the class.”

HAMISH BAILEY



Line plotted the perfect route to defy Bishop (right)



WEEKEND WINNERS

GT & SPORTS CAR CUP

Graeme Dodd/James Dodd (Jaguar E-type)

MG CUP

Races 1 & 2 Jake Fraser-Burns (ZR 190, below)

MONOPOSTO

Races 1 & 2 George Line (Dallara F308)

EQUIPE ELAN 60

David Pittard

EQUIPE LIBRE

Races 1 & 2 Mike Whitaker (TVR Griffith)

EQUIPE GTS

Race 1 Chris Ryan (TVR Grantura MkIII)

Race 2 David Wenman (Morgan +4)

EQUIPE 70s WITH EQUIPE BCV8

Race 1 Neil Fowler (MGB GT)

Race 2 Ian Guest (Ford Escort Mk2)

EQUIPE PRE '63 WITH 50s

Races 1 & 2 Joseph Willmott (Austin-Healey 3000)



For full results visit: tsl-timing.com

SPECIAL RACE CELEBRATING THE 'EPITOME OF A LOTUS'

Equipe Classic Racing celebrated the Lotus Elan 26R's 60th birthday at Silverstone on Saturday with 33 of the revered cars taking to the track for a 60-minute race, and it was David Pittard who took the spoils.

Pittard, last year's Nurburgring 24 Hours conqueror, took provisional pole early in a qualifying session that was quickly halted by a red flag after the scarlet 26R of Andrew Tate and Rob Griffiths ended up on its roof out of Club. It restarted with under 10 minutes to go, and several tried to challenge Pittard's early lap time of 2m22.611s, but all fell short. Ex-British Touring Car competitor Rory Butcher and his co-driver, Ben Tinkler, joined Pittard on the front row, while Miles Griffiths took third.

Asked what makes the 26R so special, Pittard said: "For me, the 26R is almost the epitome of a Lotus in terms of how the car handles. I've been lucky to drive this car for a number of years and it's almost just an extension of your body.

"You ask it to do something and it's always capable of answering your request effectively. Just the balance of the Lotus twin-cam engine, the chassis, the lightness, the nimbleness all comes together, which makes it a hugely pleasurable driving experience."

Prepared by Andy Wolfe, Pittard's 26R is owned by Graham Wilson, who had a small collection of Elans participating in the race. Among the other cars on the grid were a 26R Shapecraft, which is one of a few of this specification in the world still running.

Driven by Julian Thomas and Robin Ellis, the Shapecraft was one of two 26Rs to race at Le Mans in period and,



despite its age, Thomas couldn't shake the grin off his face after qualifying. "She's a bit heavy and a little bit tired, but we got a cracking engine prepared and she's a beautiful car," Thomas enthused. "She qualified fifth and she's an old girl against these brand-new little sprightly things, so I'm chuffed to bits. It's one of the best cars I've ever driven."

Pittard was unsurprisingly a key figure in the fight for the lead in a tense battle from lights-out with Butcher, and outsmarted the Kirkcaldy driver after a yellow flag was waved at Copse. With no second driver, Pittard remained in the car for the entire race while Tinkler replaced Butcher at the pitstop and struggled to keep pace, dropping back and giving Pittard a glorious near 20-second win under the Silverstone sun.

"I felt like the win was probably on the table," said Butcher. "It would have been really hard to have beaten David over the hour, but I probably could have led into the pits. I held a little bit in the back pocket and just decided I was only going to take so much risk. It's great racing someone like David who you can trust going door to door, so I had a right laugh."

HAMISH BAILEY



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Both Shepherd and Boardley (left) took a TCR UK win over the weekend

Accidents mar Oulton meeting as Boardley gets title bid on track

OULTON PARK
BRSCC
8 JUNE

On an incident-filled day at Oulton Park, Carl Boardley ignited his bid for a second successive TCR UK title with a win and second behind chief rival Adam Shepherd.

With the gremlins that hampered his Cupra Leon's pace over the previous two weekends banished, Boardley secured pole position in wet early-morning conditions. Third behind Callum Newsham (Hyundai i30 N), Shepherd's Cupra was just 0.074s back after encountering red flags as he approached Lodge on a quicker lap.

Shepherd jumped Newsham at lights-out on a dry track and tried rounding Boardley at Cascades, but Boardley held on as a mid-corner twitch on cold tyres caused contact. A better exit from Druids brought Shepherd alongside again and they banged doorhandles through Lodge and Deer Leap, before Boardley escaped. A broken left-rear hub left Shepherd as easy prey for Joe Marshall (Audi RS3) – who received a grid penalty for nerfing Newsham off – and Brad Hutchison (Cupra) by the flag.

Cold tyres at Cascades also caught out

returnee Stewart Lines in the reversed-grid race, the chain reaction leading to Marshall's elimination after collecting Will Beech head-on. Shepherd had already been tipped into the Old Hall gravel and did well to extract himself, allowing him to take the restart. Making light of running a hastily fitted rear tyre on the front-right, Shepherd led within four laps and held firm for victory despite a safety car wiping out his 7s margin to Boardley. Darron Lewis held off JH Racing team-mate Newsham for a maiden podium.

Jacob Hodgkiss rebounded from a disastrous Snetterton blighted by gearbox woe to take an overdue first points-scoring Fiesta Junior victory of 2024. He edged Race Car Consultants team-mate Tommy Harfield and Jenson O'Neill-Going in a close-fought opener, less than 1s blanketing the top five. Harfield's bold lunge at Lodge demoted Hodgkiss on the opening lap of race two, but O'Neill-Going cut back inside both for a decisive lead. Finn Leslie also usurped Hodgkiss at the Island hairpin, where Harfield later exited.

The Civic Cup lead battle between Max Edmundson and Josh Files was electrifying. Files pounced on his Area Motorsport team-mate's mistake to lead but faced relentless pressure. Edmundson dived past at Lodge on lap three of eight, only for Files to successfully cut back. But the multiple TCR champion's brakes were waning and he screeched wide at Island, allowing Edmundson to streak to victory. Another big moment for Files dropped him to seventh but he fortuitously regained second – from Lewis Kent and Spencer Stevenson – on countback following a late red flag. The second race was cancelled after a team member was taken ill.



Files (left) and Edmundson had a titanic Civic battle

WEEKEND WINNERS

TCR UK

Race 1 Carl Boardley (Cupra Leon Competition)

Race 2 Adam Shepherd (Cupra Leon Competition)

FIESTA JUNIORS

Race 1 Jacob Hodgkiss (Zetec S Mk7)

Race 2 Jenson O'Neill-Going (ST Mk6)

CIVIC CUP

Max Edmundson (EP3)

AUDI TT CUP RACING

Races 1 & 2 Matt Luff (below)

FIESTA ST240s

Race 1 Simon Horrobin

Race 2 Alastair Kellett



For full results visit: tsl-timing.com

One-time Civic Cup champion Matt Luff scored an Audi TT Cup brace but both races were overshadowed by multi-car accidents. The first left championship leader Carl Swift inverted after being squeezed as the field departed the grid. Luff was twice beaten away by Andrew Dyer before executing decisive passes. Dyer and Will Stacey repeated podiums, while an opening-race fourth was Charlie Budd's best yet. Bradley Burns later beat Budd, the culmination of two charging recoveries after multiple track-limits infringements in qualifying, then crashing out in the opener.

After gifting Simon Horrobin a Fiesta ST240 victory with a missed gear, Alastair Kellett bounced back to win the sequel and extend his championship lead after a spin and electrical gremlins blunted Zach Lucas's challenge.

MARK PAULSON

FINISHING STRAIGHT

Speed
Champions
McLaren somewhat
dwarfed by Technic
Mercedes



Budget building – Lego has F1 covered

LEGO REVIEW

**Lego Speed Champions
2023 McLaren Formula 1 Car**
RRP £20.99

**Lego Technic
Mercedes-AMG F1 W14 Pull-Back**
RRP £20.99

Father's Day is almost here, and what better gift could there be to mark the occasion than some Lego?

There can be no escaping it, collecting Lego is a far more expensive hobby than you will likely have noticed – or cared about – when you were a child, with some choice kits costing well in excess of £300. Fortunately, the most expensive F1 offering at present stands *only* at £189.99 but, even though we love our dads, this price point is beyond a significant number of people.

With this in mind, we're casting our eyes across two kits that could be described as budget options, with both coming in at £20.99 each. When you consider that a Lego Star Wars Microfighter costs, on average, £10, these offer surprisingly good value.

Imagine that you have a loose £20 note and have found a £1 coin down the back of the sofa – is the *Speed Champions 2023 McLaren Formula 1 Car* or the *Technic Mercedes-AMG F1 W14 Pull-Back* the best investment?

We start by looking at the McLaren,



which is what could be described as a traditional Lego kit, with bricks that will be familiar to most and a relaxed build time that clocks in at around an hour for the 245-piece model. When complete, the resemblance to the real-world MCL35 is as close as you could possibly get using mostly regular Lego bricks.

A positive surprise is how solid the finished product is, especially compared to the similarly sized Mercedes W12, which features front and rear wings that constantly feel like they're on the verge of falling off.

One complaint is that the minifigure comes wearing very generic overalls and the helmet is papaya. This point is slightly tempered by the fact that adding interchangeable numbers and detailed

helmets of Lando Norris and Oscar Piastri would likely have driven up the price, so maybe this is simply a case of being greedy and wanting too much.

Next up, we have the Mercedes W14, and on behalf of my thumbs, I'd like to say, 'ouch!'. As a point of context, this writer's personal Lego collection includes the 2004 Ferrari F1 Racer kit (ID number 8386, for those interested), a prized possession even if the stickers have long dried out, cracked and fallen off. Even so, it's clearly been too long between Technic builds, as the snap-together pieces caught me on more than one occasion.

Although the build time is similar to that of the McLaren, something that should not have been a surprise considering the model has just five fewer pieces, this felt



SAM HALL

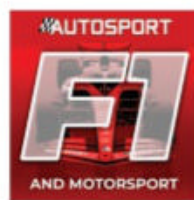
considerably more difficult, with the rigid pieces putting up a fight rather than slipping smoothly into the sockets. It should be acknowledged that while this makes the building experience more of a chore, it does mean that you can send the W14 careening down the stairs and, in this experience at least – we do not recommend that you try this! – no damage will be sustained.

But it's the pull-back motor that causes this writer to be left in two minds on the W14. Yes, it adds a quirk and enables stair-related hijinks, but the need to house this motor means that the engine cover is an ugly horizontal line, rather than an angled swoop to the rear axle. This problem extends to the sidepods, leaving the 'Coke bottle' rear looking – ironically – brick-like. That said, the front half of the car looks exquisite, with a special mention going to the multi-layered front wing.

But which should you buy? Having built the two kits one after the other and considered this matter deeply, it has to be the McLaren. It's a sleeker and all-round more accurate representation of the real-world car, and the building experience – thinking once more of my thumbs – was definitely more enjoyable.

For those wanting larger projects, there are some bigger kits including the 1642-piece version of the W14 and, appropriately given the recent 30th anniversary of Ayrton Senna's death, a 693-piece replica of the Brazilian's 1988 world championship-winning McLaren MP4/4. Maybe we'll take a look at those in the future!

SAM HALL



[autosport.com/podcast](https://www.autosport.com/podcast)



MARCFLEURY

2024 Le Mans 24 Hours preview

Steph Wentworth is joined by Gary Watkins and three-time Le Mans winner Allan McNish to preview the action. Can Ferrari double up on its 2023 success, is it time for Porsche or Toyota to return to the top, or will the overall winner wear a different badge?



WHAT'S ON

INTERNATIONAL MOTORSPORT

Le Mans 24 Hours World Endurance Championship Round 4/8

Le Mans, France

15-16 June

TV Live Eurosport 1,
Sat 1400

NASCAR Cup Series Round 17/36

Iowa Speedway, USA

16 June

TV Live Premier 2,
Sun 2330

NASCAR Xfinity Series Round 15/33

Iowa Speedway, USA

15 June

Live Premier 2,
Sat 2000

Supercars

Round 5/12

Hidden Valley, Australia

15-16 June

TV Live TNT Sports 2,
0615, TNT Sports 3,
Sun 0615

UK MOTORSPORT

Cadwell Park VSCC

15 June

Allcomers Scratch,
Austin 7s/Spero & Voiturette,
Frazer Nash/GN, Handicap,
Pre-'66 Racing Cars, Pre-war
Sportscars, Triple M,
VSCC Specials

Lydden Hill MSVR

15 June

CMMC Super Saloons/
Tin Tops, MSVT Trackday
Championship, MSVT
Trackday Trophy,
United FF1600

Castle Combe CCRC

15-16 June

Caterham Graduates
(Sigma 135, Sigma 150),
CCRC (FF1600, GT, Hot Hatch,

Saloons), JSCC, MGOC,
Mini Challenge Clubsport

Anglesey BRSCC

15-16 June

BMW Compact Cup,
Fiesta ST150s, Fun
Cup, Mazda MX-5
(Championship,
Clubman, Supercup)

Silverstone BARC

15-16 June

BEC, Britcar Trophy,
British F4, Caterhams
(270R, 310R, Academy,
Roadsport), Snetterton
Saloons

Live [barc.net](https://www.barc.net)

Brands Hatch CTA

16 June

Racing Hondas

British Hillclimb Championship

Round 5/14

Doune

15-16 June



VSCC Pre-'66 Racing Cars

MICK WALKER

FINISHING STRAIGHT





COLOMBO



Rene Arnoux (Martini-Renault) turns into the Poeymirau right-hander en route to victory in the 36th Pau Grand Prix, round five of the 1976 European Formula 2 Championship. Arnoux and polesitting team-mate Patrick Tambay weren't challenged for their front-row lock-out – the former described in Autosport's report as "Elf's young lion", "tramping on and off the accelerator as he willed the car around each corner in a series of do-or-die slides". Tambay led the race from the start but after he was held up by a backmarker, the looming presence of Arnoux precipitated a loss of composure that resulted in a rear-wing-bending impact with the barrier and retirement. Arnoux was chased home by Jacques Laffite (Chevron-BMW), whose tenacious challenge in the closing stages was twice curtailed by right-foot cramp.

For more great photographs, visit [motorsportimages.com](https://www.motorsportimages.com)



Ronnie Peterson

Two-time Formula 1 champion and double Indianapolis 500 winner Emerson Fittipaldi was no stranger to racing against the very best during a motorsport career spanning more than three decades. This included competing in the same team as Jochen Rindt and Denny Hulme, as well as Indy 500 winners Rick Mears and Danny Sullivan. But the Brazilian picks ‘SuperSwede’ Ronnie Peterson as his favourite team-mate due to their close friendship.

“The best team-mate I had was Ronnie because we started racing together in Europe, F3, F2 and F1 – he was a dear friend,” says the 77-year-old. “I stayed at his home in England, he stayed at my house in Switzerland and then we raced together, it was so much fun. We were team-mates but very good friends. At that time in F1, he was my best personal friend and it was devastating when we lost him at Monza [in 1978].”

Peterson joined Lotus for the 1973 season alongside Fittipaldi, who had claimed his first F1 title with Colin Chapman’s team the previous year. The team took seven wins – three for Fittipaldi and four for Peterson – with the Swede securing his first F1 victory in France after both Lotus 72 drivers battled Jody Scheckter’s McLaren.

“When he won France I was dicing



with Jody, tried to overtake Jody, and it was funny, he tried to overtake Jody and then raced me,” recalls Fittipaldi, who ended up three points ahead of Peterson in the standings, both beaten by Tyrrell’s Jackie Stewart. “I was third and then Ronnie gave a sign, and then I gave a sign saying, ‘I’m going to pass Jody’ and we [Scheckter and Fittipaldi] crash.”

Fittipaldi’s chances of retaining his title ended at Monza, when he finished second behind Peterson after they battled for the win, the reigning champion unhappy with Chapman’s decision to not implement pre-race team orders. As a result Fittipaldi left for McLaren in 1974. “Monza was an agreement that Colin didn’t fulfil, that was very upsetting,” adds Fittipaldi. “I understand why he wanted to do it, but after the race I was disappointed and I said, ‘Time to move.’”

STEFAN MACKLEY



IN NEXT WEEK’S ISSUE

LE MANS
2024

LE MANS 24 HOURS SPECIAL

OUR BUMPER REPORT ON THE WORLD’S GREATEST ENDURO



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