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Who's top of the F1 class, and who must try harder?

We're in the midst of what, admittedly unexpectedly, has developed into a gripper of a Formula 1 season. The early-campaign domination of Max Verstappen and Red Bull seems a long time ago now. Hurrah for being able to sit down and watch a grand prix without knowing who's going to win before it even starts!

While the drivers and teams enjoy their summer break, our F1 chaps have been working on their half-term reports. Jake Boxall-Legge is our class teacher on assessments of the drivers, and you can turn to p20 to see who's going to be put in the top set and who's going to be shoved into special measures to improve performance. On p16, Alex Kalinauckas casts his eye over the developments so far this term, and how these could pan out over the remainder of 2024.

In Rally Finland week, it's appropriate that we've devoted a chunk of our magazine to this discipline of the sport. Tom Howard made the trip over to Jyväskylä to report on what turned out to be a sensational event that resulted in final-day heartbreak for local hero Kalle Rovanpera and victory for Sebastien Ogier, which you can read about on p36. Before he went, Tom also delivered a '50 years on' piece about the Lancia Stratos via an interview with marque prime mover Cesare Fiorio – turn to p30.

Formula E has also enjoyed its fair share of drama this year and, on p24, Stefan Mackley sums up a season that seemed destined to go the way of Jaguar, but ended up falling into the lap of Pascal Wehrlein and Porsche at the London finale.



MS

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PIT + PADDOCK



Top Red Bull man Wheatley departs to be

FORMULA 1

Jonathan Wheatley is the latest senior member of the Red Bull Formula 1 team to be heading for the exit door. Along with the departure of technical wizard Adrian Newey, Wheatley will leave his role as sporting director at the end of 2024 to become team principal of Audi.

Wheatley will serve a period of gardening leave on his departure from Red Bull, and will then assume his new Audi role in time for the marque's official works entry in 2026. Long-time Red Bull pillar Wheatley, who joined the team in 2006 from Renault, was known to harbour ambitions to become a team principal

in F1 at some point, and amid contract negotiations at Red Bull it was understood that the squad would not stand in his way if an opportunity opened up elsewhere.

"It has been a long and successful relationship with Jonathan, over 18 years," said Red Bull team principal Christian Horner. "His contribution to six world constructors' titles and seven world drivers' championships, first as team manager and latterly sporting director, will forever be a marker in our team history."

At Audi the 57-year-old will join forces with incoming CEO Mattia Binotto, who was recently announced as the new figurehead of the F1 programme, replacing both CEO Andreas Seidl and chairman

Oliver Hoffmann. In a statement, Audi clarified that Wheatley and Binotto "jointly take responsibility for the success of the racing team" and "report directly to [Audi CEO] Gernot Dollner in his role as chairman of the board of directors of Sauber Motorsport AG".

Binotto, as team COO and CTO, will be in charge of Audi's Hinwil factory and technical department, where he will oversee the design and build of cars, as well as its engine plant in Neuburg. Wheatley will run the F1 team at events and be its media spokesman. Autosport understands that Binotto did not have a hand in Wheatley's appointment.

"Jonathan has played a major part in many Formula 1 race victories and world championship titles in his Formula 1 career so far, and has extensive experience in the paddock," said Dollner. "He is a very valuable addition to our team. With the appointment of Jonathan and Mattia we have taken a decisive step towards our entry into Formula 1. I am convinced that with the two of them, we have been able to combine an extremely high level of competence for Audi."

In following the departure of chief technical officer Newey, Wheatley's exit has been viewed by some observers as the next domino falling at the world champion squad amid the behind-the-scenes power struggle that remains unresolved.



Future Audi double act of Binotto and Wheatley confer during COVID times



MAUGER

Audi chief

While Horner will remain in control, Red Bull will be forced to reorganise its structure and pitwall. The team insists that Wheatley's departure presents an opportunity to refresh its management structure as it looks to replace its long-time sporting director from within.

That reorganisation could mean the return of the team manager role, rather than the sporting director title held by Wheatley. This would be of considerable benefit as Red Bull looks to trim costs to comply with F1's cost cap. Designer Pierre Wache was offered new terms just days before Newey's departure was confirmed, and it is likely that a new target has already been identified for Wheatley's role.

Wheatley was linked with the team principal job earlier this year when Horner was facing an internal investigation. That created an uneasiness within the team before Wheatley signed a letter pledging his faith to Horner.

Red Bull could now split the position held by Wheatley, possibly by promoting Gianpiero Lambiase, who is already head of race engineering as well as Max Verstappen's engineer. Another senior figure would then be responsible for acting as team manager in negotiations with the FIA. Sources say Red Bull is unlikely to look for external candidates and sees the exits of high-paid staff simply as evolution.

JAKE BOXALL-LEGGE & BEN HUNT

Another American bid joins Andretti in hunt for F1 entry

FORMULA 1

Amid the continuing efforts of Andretti Global to gain an entry to Formula 1, there is another American project evaluating joining the grid, and it involves former Alpine team boss Otmar Szafnauer.

Speaking in the latest James Allen on F1 podcast, Szafnauer revealed an all-new project that has its sights set on a move into grand prix racing. "I've been working with some organisations in North America that have the funding to start an 11th team," said Szafnauer. "It's not Andretti. Now we're just putting some of those building blocks in place to make sure that we have everything that's required in order to be successful to both start a team, but also get an entry."

The possible expansion of the F1 grid to 11 teams has been a controversial topic since the FIA elected to open up the selection process. Despite the governing body's approval of Andretti Global, the team's hopes were dashed when F1 owner Liberty Media rejected its application on the grounds that it did not believe an extra team would add value to the championship.

Andretti is continuing to push on with its project, with work on its 2026 car continuing at its new Silverstone factory, but it is unclear how it will be able to convince F1 to change its mind. The identity of the American investors linked to Szafnauer is unknown, but F1 is undergoing a huge boom of interest in the country.

Szafnauer has been out of a full-time role in F1 since he was dropped by the



SUTTON

Szafnauer working
on latest bid

Alpine squad at last year's Belgian Grand Prix. With huge experience in F1, previously with BAR, Honda and Force India, he is seeking a return once his period of gardening leave ends.

"The one thing that I like more than anything is the competition," he explained. "So, to come back in a role where I can't influence how well the team is competing, I don't think I'd be interested. If it was a role where I could help develop, build, attract the right people to improve a team's competitiveness, I'd be interested."

"But there's only 10 teams. A lot of them have people in those roles already. So, I don't know how many opportunities there are out there, but there's also the 11th and 12th team possibility. So that might be something that would be interesting for me."

JONATHAN NOBLE



Two US teams joining F1 at
the same time? Parnelli and
Penske did that in the mid 1970s

McLaren ties in Stella on multi-year contract...

FORMULA 1

McLaren's popular Formula 1 team principal Andrea Stella has signed a "multi-year" extension to his contract, the team announced last week.

The Italian took over from Andreas Seidl at the end of 2022 and has since guided the Woking-based squad towards the front of the grid. Following a reshuffle of technical personnel, Stella oversaw a series of big upgrade packages over the past 18 months that has culminated in two grand prix wins and 18 podiums, with McLaren challenging Red Bull in the constructors' championship.

Stella has often been praised by McLaren CEO Zak Brown and drivers Lando Norris and Oscar Piastri for his role in the team's upturn in form.

"I am honoured to continue in my role as team principal," said Stella. "We've made great strides forward in the past year and a half and we still have a lot more work to do



Stella is stellar, reckon McLaren folk

to consistently fight at the front of the grid, which poses an exciting challenge. I am enjoying my role, which has allowed me to help unlock individual talent and empower people to work together towards our team's objectives."

Stella joined McLaren in 2015 after a long stint at Ferrari, where he worked

as a performance engineer for Michael Schumacher and then become race engineer for Kimi Raikkonen and Fernando Alonso. Upon joining McLaren, he worked as head of race operations, performance director, and executive director of racing from 2019 to 2022.

FILIP CLEEREN

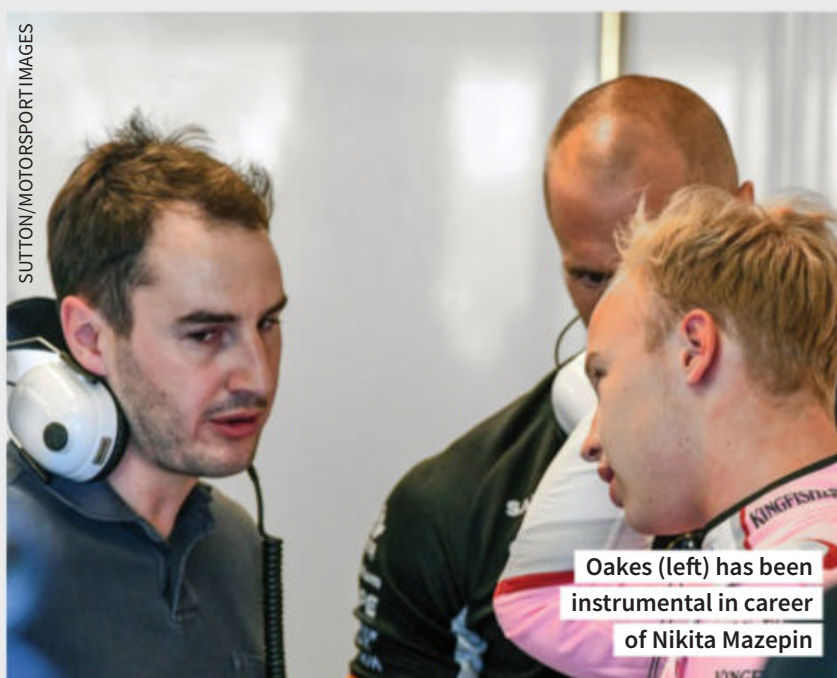
...while Alpine appoints Oakes to replace Famin

FORMULA 1

Hitech Grand Prix boss Oliver Oakes will become the new team principal of Alpine following the Formula 1 summer break.

As revealed by Autosport over the recent Belgian Grand Prix weekend, Oakes emerged as the lead candidate to replace Bruno Famin, who will be returning to work at Renault's Viry-Chatillon base. Oakes arrives at Alpine with a wealth of experience in motorsport – he is a former world karting champion and the Hitech team is currently a force in F2, F3, GB3 and F4.

Speaking about his appointment, which was endorsed by Renault CEO Luca de Meo and F1 advisor Flavio Briatore, the 36-year-old said: "I'm extremely grateful to Luca de Meo and Flavio Briatore for this



Oakes (left) has been instrumental in career of Nikita Mazepin

opportunity to lead Alpine back to competitiveness. The team has talented people and excellent resources at its core, and I'm confident that we can accomplish a great deal together during the remainder of this season and the longer term. I look forward to getting started

after the summer break."

Alpine is also closing in on finding a replacement for Esteban Ocon as Pierre Gasly's team-mate from 2025 onwards. Autosport has learned that the team's reserve Jack Doohan is on the verge of a race deal. With its prime target Carlos Sainz

opting for Williams instead, sources have indicated that Alpine will turn towards Doohan, the son of five-time 500cc motorcycle world champion Mick and a six-time race winner in F2.

Doohan has reportedly shown enough promise driving the team's F1 machinery in private tests and FP1 sessions to leave Alpine confident that the Australian is the right man for the job. His chances have also not been hurt by the arrival of Oakes, who he has raced for at Hitech. Promotion to an F1 seat would also be a string to the bow of Alpine's academy.

Doohan would likely be one of three rookies on the F1 grid next year, with Ollie Bearman confirmed at Haas and Andrea Kimi Antonelli tipped for Mercedes.

JONATHAN NOBLE & ROBERTO CHINCHERO



SPORTSCARS Six-time grand prix winner Ralf Schumacher is to make his return to competition this month, sharing a car in the Prototype Cup Germany with his son David. The duo will drive a Ligier in the LMP3-only series at the Nurburgring round on 17-18 August, and have already tested the car. It will be run by US Racing, the team 49-year-old Schumacher Sr set up with former Mercedes DTM luminary Gerhard Ungar in 2016 and which is one of the most successful in Formula 4. His son is currently third in the ADAC GT Masters series and has competed in the NLS (see below). **Photograph by ADAC Motorsport**

Paddock explosion and pile-up mar Nordschleife six-hour race

NLS

Last Saturday's six-hour NLS round on the Nurburgring Nordschleife went ahead after 22 people were injured during testing on Friday evening when a compressed air cylinder exploded in the paddock.

The air cylinder was being filled when the explosion occurred, and numerous ambulances and several rescue helicopters were dispatched in response to the emergency. A statement from the series read: "A large number of rescue personnel on site immediately initiated appropriate measures and secured the scene of the accident. The session was immediately suspended. There are several injured persons who were transported to nearby

hospitals by rescue helicopter after receiving immediate care at the Nurburgring Medical Centre."

There was chaos in the race when sudden heavy rain caused a 1975 British GP-style pile-up on lap two at Hatztenbach among the leading GT3 cars, among them Bastian Buus (Dinamic Porsche), Frank Stippler (Herberth Porsche), Alex Lynn and Nico Menzel (Falken Porsches) and Jules Gounon (Landgraf Mercedes).

With the track blocked, the race was red-flagged. The restart, which ran for just over four hours with most of the leading contenders now absent from action, was won by the HRT Mercedes-AMG GT3 Evo (pictured) of David Schumacher, Hubert Haupt and Salman Owega.



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Hertz Jota team will
have to hand back
the keys of their 963s

JEP/MOTORSPORT IMAGES

Cadillac and Jota come clean on 2025 Hypercar tie-up

WEC

Cadillac's switch to Jota for its expanded attack on the World Endurance Championship next season has finally been confirmed. The worst-kept secret in sportscar racing became official on Tuesday of this week.

The British team will take over the WEC programme from Chip Ganassi Racing and field a pair of Caddy V-Series.R LMDhs as per new rules demanding manufacturers must run two cars in the Le Mans Hypercar class. They will run under the Cadillac Hertz Team Jota banner, the team maintaining the relationship with the global car-hire giant that allowed it to graduate from LMP2 to Hypercar last

year with Porsche's 963 LMDh.

Jota director and team founder Sam Hignett described linking up with the General Motors marque as "the realisation of the goal to become a manufacturer team". But he revealed that it has come ahead of schedule for an operation that is already an overall race winner after its victory at the Spa WEC round in May.

"When we first started looking at Hypercar we were thinking of ways we could get a manufacturer deal," he said. "We always knew that the next wave of manufacturers wouldn't arrive until 2026 at the earliest and that was one of the things we were targeting. So to get on board with an existing manufacturer for '25 is great.

"You can count on one hand the

manufacturers you'd choose to go sportscar racing with, and Cadillac and GM are on that hand. Along with Porsche and Ferrari, they are one of the names synonymous with endurance racing. We are getting a proven product. That's an advantage, but it also means that there's nowhere to hide."

Drivers most likely will not be announced until after the season finale in Bahrain in November. Asked if a mix of existing Caddy and Jota drivers is likely, Hignett replied: "That would be a fair assessment and that is likely where things will end up, but potentially there could be some newcomers." Jota is not scheduled to begin testing with the V-Series.R until after the conclusion of the current campaign.

GARY WATKINS

Brickley is UK's tin-top pick for Games medal shot



MOTORSPORT GAMES

Motorsport UK's Team UK will be contesting seven disciplines in the 2024 edition of the Motorsport Games, which take place at Valencia on 23-27 October.

The governing body of British motorsport last week released the names of the aspiring medallists who will be competing at the Olympics-style event, under the leadership of

team captain Chris Froggatt, who will be competing in the GT Cup.

Among them is up-and-coming tin-top racer Jenson Brickley, who will represent his country in the Touring Car discipline. After finishing third in TCR UK last season, he is now contesting the TCR Spain series with a Cupra Leon VZ and leads the points after the first two rounds. Brickley has not yet won

any of the four races, but three podium finishes across the opening weekends at Jarama and Estoril (pictured left) have propelled him to the top.

Among the others, John Newell will compete in Truck Racing, Lwi Edwards in Drifting, and Jorge Edgar – younger brother of F1 Academy race winner Jess and cousin of ex-F3 ace and Red Bull Junior Jonny – in Karting Sprint Junior.

Varhaug won inaugural
GP3 race in 2010 for
team of Jenzer (below)



SUTTON/MOTORSPORT IMAGES

Jenzer to end 15-year GP3/F3 run

FORMULA 3

Swiss single-seater stalwart Jenzer Motorsport is calling time on its involvement in the FIA Formula 3 Championship at the end of this season, ending an unbroken run in the series dating back to the inaugural race in its predecessor, GP3, in 2010.

F3 organiser Formula Motorsport Limited is introducing a new Dallara car for 2025, coinciding with the next three-year cycle of commitments from teams to cover 2025-27. The popular Jenzer squad will not be among them, leaving space on the grid for a new entry. Jenzer will continue to operate its teams

in continental Formula 4 competition – it currently competes in the Italian championship, and leads the Central European series with Oscar Wurz, the younger racing son of Alexander.

Team founder Andreas Jenzer said to the *Formulascout* website: “Esther [his wife] and myself are getting towards retirement age. We’ve been in GP3 since day one in 2010 and we really enjoyed F3 also. But one day you have to start to go towards maybe a little bit calmer life. Some of my F3 people will stay with Jenzer Motorsport because some of them are also approaching retirement age. I’m placing quite a few of my people in Formula 1, and some will probably move to Formula 2.”

Norwegian Pal Varhaug won the inaugural GP3 race with Jenzer at Barcelona in 2010, the first of 10 victories for the team in GP3/F3. Jenzer carried Yuki Tsunoda to victory at Monza in 2019, and its other winners include Nico Muller, Patric Niederhauser, Arjun Maini, Alessio Lorandi and Taylor Barnard.

The decision leaves ART Grand Prix as the only original GP3 team to continue an unbroken run in the series.



FORMULAMOTORSPORT LIMITED

DE VRIES SET TO MAKE DEBUT IN SUPER FORMULA

SUPER FORMULA

Ex-Formula 1 driver Nyck de Vries will make a surprise outing in this month’s Motegi Super Formula round with Team Impul.

The Toyota World Endurance Championship and Mahindra Formula E racer will take over the #19 car for the 25 August race. It will be his first outing in a conventionally powered single-seater since he lost his AlphaTauri F1 drive last year.

De Vries becomes the fourth driver this year to pilot the #19 Impul machine that was driven in the Suzuka season opener by Theo Pourchaire before the Frenchman abruptly left the team to pursue a McLaren IndyCar drive. Lexus IMSA star Ben Barnicoat had a one-off in the car in the following race at Autopolis, before Toyota youngster Hibiki Taira took over for Sugo and Fuji.

De Vries faces a tall order to make an impact in his first Super Formula start. Impul is enduring one of its worst-ever competitive slumps, with lead driver Yuji Kunimoto managing a best finish of sixth this year.

The Dutchman will share the grid at Motegi with Kamui Kobayashi, one of his teammates in the Toyota Le Mans Hypercar he races in WEC.

JAMIE KLEIN



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BRITS ON FORM IN AMERICA

Briton Alex Sedgwick continued his strong Carrera Cup North America season last weekend at Road America. Following his maiden win in the previous round at Watkins Glen, the 25-year-old took his JDX Racing car to second place behind Loek Hartog in the opening race. Sedgwick is runner-up behind the Dutchman in the points with three rounds remaining. Another Brit on the podium was Dan Clarke, the ex-Champ Car racer third in race two – won again by Hartog – with MDK Motorsports. Clarke, now 40, lies seventh in the points standings.

NEW ITALIAN WRC BID

Rally di Roma Capitale has its sights set on joining the World Rally Championship. The Italian asphalt event, which has been steadily growing in stature since earning a place on the European Rally Championship calendar in 2017, could be a WRC contender for 2026. “We are working for that and that is not only our mission because we have to talk with the FIA and the WRC Promoter and the Italian federation, but we are working hard for that,” said event creator Max Rendina. “If we do not succeed we will try again.”

MORE RALLY1 FOR PAJARI?

Toyota World Rally Championship team boss Jari-Matti Latvala has admitted that Sami Pajari is in the picture for a Rally1 deal for next season following his eye-opening debut in the top flight on Rally Finland last weekend. Pajari (below) stepped out of the Rally2 ranks and finished fourth, setting a fastest stage time on the way. “At the moment his focus is on WRC2 because we want him to try to fight for the championship,” said Latvala. “But of course, we are talking about what we would do with him for next year.”



GT WORLD CHALLENGE AUSTRALIA What do Aussie Supercar aces do on their weekends off? They fight for the country’s GT title. Current Supercars points leader Will Brown and co-driver Brad Schumacher (no relation) became the 2024 season’s first two-time winners at Queensland Raceway last Sunday in their Audi (above), and are now just a point adrift of Ferrari-mounted series leaders Chaz Mostert (runner-up to Brown in the Supercars standings) and Liam Talbot. The Saturday race in Queensland was a maiden victory for ex-FIA F3 ace Alex Peroni, who is sharing an Audi in the Pro-Am (British GT-style) series with Mark Rosser. **Photo by GT World Challenge Australia**



Di Grassi commits to Lola effort

FORMULA E

Formula E veteran Lucas di Grassi has committed to the Abt team for next season, when it will use the Lola/Yamaha powertrain for the first time. Di Grassi’s FE career has been synonymous with Abt. He has raced for the German team over a seven-year period, which includes winning the 2016-17 title when it ran the Audi works squad. The Brazilian rejoined Abt at the start of the 2023-24 season after two years away, but struggled to match the performances of team-mate Nico Muller. Di Grassi has been involved in the testing of the new Lola/Yamaha powertrain and the new Gen3 Evo machine, both of which will debut in FE next season. “Abt is my family,” said di Grassi.

“I have experienced the best moments of my career there and have full confidence in the people who work hard every day to achieve success – so I am happy that we are also tackling the new challenges together. It’s a very exciting project with people who know what it takes to be successful in Formula E.” The 2024-25 campaign features Lola’s return to world championship single-seater racing after its resurrection by British businessman and IMSA racer Till Bechtolsheimer in 2022. The project has been headed up by FE stalwart Mark Preston, with Lola also committing to the Gen4 ruleset, which will be implemented ahead of the 2026-27 season.

STEFAN MACKLEY
➔ **P24 FORMULA E REVIEW**



Learning from mistakes

McLaren's return to winning form has been accompanied by some costly errors. But the lessons and improvements that result could be the making of the team

ALEX KALINAUCKAS

There were hands on heads all around, cheeks blown out and red, the crushing realisation of a dream denied at the last gasp by the era's dominant power – all because their concentration had collapsed at a late moment. Little did they know what a run of success was to follow.

The Saracens rugby team came within four minutes of winning a first Premiership title at Twickenham in 2010. It was to be denied by Leicester that day, the Tigers clinching their seventh crown because they simply didn't know when they were beaten. In the years since, how their roles have reversed... Saracens, admittedly not without controversy (and remember, the results of the 2023 Formula 1 budget cap assessment should be released soon), have since become six-time champions in the English league.

If you think that's got nothing to do with motor racing, it's worth considering alongside the tale of the McLaren F1 squad to this point in 2024. The Woking team has scored two wins, which already makes this its first multiple-victory season since 2012. And, if McLaren's and Red Bull's current rates of points-scoring continue, it will forge ahead in the constructors' championship around the Singapore GP at the end of next month. Lando Norris sits 78 points behind Max Verstappen in the drivers' standings. Since June's Spanish GP, the Briton has been the reigning world champion's closest challenger. After his narrow defeat at

“The team has done brilliantly to secure the talents of two of F1's best young drivers”

Barcelona, Norris declared “we can” win the 2024 title. It was a long shot, even before Verstappen extended his lead over the following two events... But Spain is still the Dutchman's most recent victory.

Verstappen will start winning again soon. Surely he will want to make a statement in front of his home fans at Zandvoort next time out, even before the Red Bull RB20 gets to its aerodynamic-efficiency happiest hunting ground around Monza's royal park. But Norris didn't help his championship quest – and he still believes he's on one, as revealed in those emotionally charged Hungarian GP radio messages – with his mistakes early in the subsequent Belgian GP. In the other McLaren, Oscar Piastri erred in sliding too deep at his pitbox, losing precious seconds that might have allowed him the chance to attack Lewis Hamilton late on.

We've covered McLaren mistakes before in these pages. And

while I therefore don't need to go through the full list again, it's worth taking the opportunity to retract my assertion that Piastri blew a Monaco GP victory shot by not hooking up his best sectors when it mattered in Q3. After a chat with team boss Andrea Stella, it's clear that at no point did McLaren or Piastri view that as a chance gone begging – the reality was that Ferrari's Charles Leclerc was too good on the day.

But those Spa driver errors mean that the ‘McLaren mistakes’ topic is still in the air as August unfurls. The team has done brilliantly to secure (and since lock down) the talents of two of F1's best young drivers. It can rival Mercedes and Ferrari to the claim of having the best current line-up. McLaren has now vowed to help Norris and Piastri sort out their Spa incidents (Piastri's grabbed attention there, but he also twice slid past his marks at Silverstone).

But, ultimately, it's up to these two superstar drivers to fully reach their long-predicted levels. For McLaren, it's worth recalling how Stella said last month at Silverstone that “we are racing against the teams that have won championships and championships” in the forms of Red Bull and Mercedes.

There are plenty of parallels from recent F1 of teams discovering that art of winning to which Stella alludes. This ultimately makes them as resilient as Leicester at Twickenham. Red Bull provides one example – from the same era. In 2009 and 2010 it encountered plenty of driver errors, initially didn't have the double diffuser, and there was that Turkey 2010 intra-team collision between Sebastian Vettel and Mark Webber. “It's a lot easier on the way up than when you reach the top and then suddenly you become the one under pressure,” Red Bull team boss Christian Horner told me last year. “The team was learning, the drivers were learning...”

That sounds familiar, but there's also a dangerous lesson from just before for McLaren, in how BMW Sauber opted to switch its resources to its 2009 car in anticipation of winning with the KERS systems introduced along with downforce-slashing bodywork changes, just when Robert Kubica had taken the championship lead in mid-2008. That still rankles Kubica, given how disastrously 2009 turned out. This is why it's important not to allow a free pass for missteps such as those made by McLaren in 2024. This time around, F1's next big car design rule changes come a year and a half away in 2026. Given its current trajectory, McLaren should surely be a contender from the off in 2025.

Its post-summer updates plan – multiple are due at a time when Red Bull is struggling to add performance to the RB20 and understand fully what it already has – suggests that McLaren could even get a taste of success in 2024 too, given how that constructors' gap is closing. What it could go on to achieve with the boost of a first such world title since 1998 is tantalising for McLaren fans – or anyone who wants to see a long-term-rebuilding team succeed. 🏆



MotoGP's British disconnect

A home-hero winner in Moto2 was cause for celebration at Silverstone on Sunday. Just don't hold your breath to see a British ace shine in the premier class

BEN HUNT

Jake Dixon's victory in the Moto2 race at Silverstone last Sunday was a moment for the home fans to enjoy. But as he encouraged the crowd to produce an even-louder cheer to accompany only his third victory in the series, it was also a moment to assess Britain's relationship with MotoGP.

Perhaps there was good reason why Dixon was underwhelmed by the crowd's first attempt – he couldn't hear them. Four weeks earlier, 164,000 people watched Lewis Hamilton's incredible Formula 1 victory at Silverstone, smashing the venue's single-day attendance record. But just 42,529 turned up for MotoGP on Sunday, despite the championship enjoying bumper crowds at tracks such as Le Mans and Jerez earlier in the season.

So why the poor attendance? There's a number of factors. As of Saturday night, unsurprisingly given the low attendance, tickets for Sunday were still available with prices starting at £110 for adults for general admission. That gave access to selected open-air grandstands, general viewing areas and the fan zone. It's expensive when you consider that Premier League tickets start at around £40 for a roll-up rate. The argument is, though, that you get access to a full race schedule, plus a concert and off-track entertainment. The price is also half that of an equivalent general admission Sunday ticket for the Formula 1 Grand Prix.

“We have had a good crop of riders but they ended up getting lost because of funding”

Another element is that the date of the MotoGP race fell in the summer holidays, meaning families could be away. MotoGP will avoid this scenario next year by bringing the race forward to 25 May, but this unwisely pitches it against the F1 Monaco Grand Prix and Indy 500, and immediately before the start of the Isle of Man TT.

Another suggestion is that the coverage is behind a paywall. Broadcaster TNT holds the UK rights, meaning those who want to watch it are required to pay for a subscription. While the deal brings money in to MotoGP, it is potentially limiting its audience. That said, Sky F1 has a similar deal in place, and that has not caused a drop in F1 attendances, although Channel 4 does provide a free-to-air highlights show.

Maybe the most significant matter, however, is the lack of British talent in MotoGP – and that doesn't look like changing

any time soon. This is Dixon's seventh season in Moto2 and, at 28, he looks unlikely to add to the two MotoGP starts he made on a Petronas Yamaha in 2021.

So why are there no British riders in the top tier? The problem is that the UK's youth system is geared towards the British Superbike Championship, and the Spanish equivalent points to grand prix racing. Of the 27 riders who have raced in MotoGP this season, 12 of those come from Spain. If you look at the World Superbike series, it boasts six British riders.

Former MotoGP rider Michael Laverty is hoping to redress that balance through his Moto3 team, MLav Racing. “The problem is our youth structure is not built to send riders to the MotoGP path, which is the Talent Cup, Red Bull Rookies, Junior GP and into Moto2,” says the Northern Irishman.

TNT commentator Gavin Emmett agrees. “If you go through the Spanish route, it means you have to have a support network in Spain: a chaperone, schooling, all these things that come into play,” he points out. “There's no denying that series like the British Talent Cup allow young riders to showcase their talent, but the reality is they are already a couple of years behind their European counterparts because of the training and network they have in place. And even if there are one or two British riders who go to Spain, they are up against 100 kids who have been doing it on their doorstep. They are at home and can go to school and don't have to decamp the whole family.”

The final element is money. As Laverty explains, the Spanish system is not only biased towards MotoGP, but the economic mechanics are there to support young racers, whereas the financial support is not there for British riders looking to progress. “We have had a good crop but they ended up getting lost because of funding,” he says. “What we are doing at the moment will create some potential riders, but it's a slow process to get them there.”

“That has been our whole focus for the past three seasons since we started the team. We are trying to create as much as we can. We get a little assistance from Dorna [MotoGP promoter] for what we call the British Talent Team – that supports two riders, but not in its entirety. We have to cover a decent portion of that budget. More widely, the Spanish companies step in and sponsor the riders because this is a national sport in Spain whereas it's a niche sport in the UK. In Spain you drive down the road and see Marc Marquez on a Repsol billboard; they have so many superstars who are household names, whereas that's not the case in the UK.”

Despite Laverty's best efforts to unearth new talent, it looks like it could be some wait before we see more British riders in MotoGP, which is why we should enjoy Dixon's moment. 🏁



P46 MOTOGP REPORT



Japan makes its move

Overseas races planned for Super GT and Super Formula in 2025 suggest Japanese motorsport is finally ready to shake off the country's pandemic hangover

JAMIE KLEIN

For the first time since the COVID-19 pandemic, Super GT is venturing beyond Japanese shores next year. The championship's first-ever night race at Sepang in Malaysia, which should have taken place in 2020 only to be scuppered by the onset of the global health crisis, was part of the series' 2025 calendar released at the start of this month.

You'll struggle to find anyone in the Super GT paddock who isn't excited about heading to Sepang. There were strong hints that the former Malaysian Grand Prix venue, the original 'Tilke-drome' (and still arguably the best), would be added to the calendar after GT500 manufacturer testing was held there back in January for the first time since the pandemic.

Masaaki Bando, head of the GTA organisation that promotes the series, was a notable visitor to the paddock on that occasion. He spoke with Malaysian government representatives about a deal to bring Super GT back to Sepang for the first time since 2013.

Bando-san revealed last year, after Japan fully reopened its borders to the world at last, that talks were ongoing with a number of venues across the Asian region about hosting Super GT, including Buriram in Thailand, where the series raced from 2014 until 2019, and Shanghai. But Sepang was always regarded as the favourite owing to its popularity as a test venue, as well as the eagerness of the Malaysian government to help things along. The final details are still to be worked out ahead of a contract signing ceremony later this month at Suzuka, but the plan is for the race to be held under floodlights on a Saturday night, avoiding the heat of the day. Qualifying would take place on the Friday evening.

"We had the winter tests there, and it's a pity to go to such a nice track just for testing!" Nissan's two-time Sepang winner Ronnie Quintarelli told Autosport. "It's a very nice layout, very demanding on the tyres with the high-speed corners, especially on the fronts, and there are a lot of chances to overtake. It's great to have it back on the calendar."

Super GT views hosting races outside of Japan as essential for living up to its billing as an international series (it has now been 20 years since the series was known as the All-Japan GT Championship), expanding its fanbase and providing an extra incentive to the manufacturers by giving them a platform to market their products to a wider audience. As such, it wouldn't be a surprise if the revived Sepang race proves to be the first step in an expanded presence across the Asian region. Bando-san has repeatedly hinted that this could end up taking the form of a 'winter series', whereby multiple races are positioned together during the regular off-season between November and March, during the Japanese winter.

But that's not all. Japan's other top-level series, Super Formula, also has plans to host an international round next year, although these are still far from certain to come to fruition. When the provisional 2025 Super Formula calendar was released at the start of this month, it featured a date marked simply 'South Korea'. It's understood that the intended venue for this is Inje Speedium, which has held events such as the Asian Le Mans Series in the past and was set to be visited by the World Touring

"When the 2025 calendar was released, it featured a date marked simply 'South Korea'"

Car Cup in 2020 prior to the pandemic. Assuming it is Inje – so far there has been no confirmation from Super Formula – it would be the first race featuring such high-calibre single-seaters for the venue, a two-hour drive away from Seoul in Gangwon Province.

Super Formula organiser JRP has history with Inje. A race was supposed to be held there in 2013, and it would have been the championship's first overseas race since it visited Sepang back in 2004. But it was cancelled at the last minute amid Inje's lack of preparation, including failure to get the required FIA Grade 2 classification in time. At that time, the track had only just opened, with a Super Taikyu race held in early 2013 as a 'pilot' event. Now the track is much more established, hosting Lamborghini Super Trofeo Asia earlier this year as well as domestic events, although there are concerns about the bumpiness of the circuit, as well as the cost implications of visiting Korea.

Like Super GT, JRP bosses have made increasing noises about expanding overseas in recent years. The inclusion of South Korea on the 2025 calendar did however come as a surprise to many, not least because of what happened last time Inje was slated to hold a race. Whether or not the Inje event sees the light of day remains to be seen, but the South Korea plan can be taken as clear evidence that Super Formula is serious about its ambitions to become a more pan-Asian series that can appeal to fans and drivers outside of Japan.

Considering Super GT's return to Sepang, as well as the revival of the Suzuka 1000km next year, this move by Super Formula is another sure signal that Japanese motorsport is ready to turn the page on the difficult pandemic years and start building towards a more international future. 🌸

The ENDLESS SUMMER® feeling: GEDLICH Racing's winter trackdays in southern europe



For those seeking the perfect blend of speed, skill, and sunshine, the ENDLESS SUMMER® trackdays are an irresistible invitation to embrace the thrill of motorsport. Known for their innovative approach and dedication to motorsport enthusiasts, GEDLICH Racing continues to push the boundaries of what a trackday experience can offer.

With over 30 trackdays and 16 events, GEDLICH Racing's ENDLESS SUMMER® trackdays in Portugal and Spain stand out as a testament to their commitment to providing unparalleled driving experiences.

THE ENDLESS SUMMER EXPERIENCE

The concept of ENDLESS SUMMER® is a dream come true for driving aficionados. Held in the picturesque locales of Portugal and Spain, these trackdays are more than just an opportunity to drive on some of the most prestigious circuits; they are an invitation to bask in the Mediterranean sun while indulging in high-octane thrills. The venues chosen for these events are carefully selected to offer the perfect blend of challenging tracks and beautiful scenery, making each trackday a memorable escapade.

Participants can expect to drive on renowned circuits such as the Algarve International Circuit near Portimão in Portugal and the Circuit de Barcelona-Catalunya in Spain. These circuits are known for their demanding layouts, which test the skills of even the most seasoned drivers. The meticulously planned events ensure that every driver, regardless of their experience level, can push their limits in a safe and controlled environment. Enjoy the winter season, sharing the racetrack and paddock with like-minded people, enjoying the two-day trackdays under the southern sun and explore hidden gems like great hotels and taste amazing foods, all from November to March - this is the ENDLESS SUMMER® feeling!

1:1 COACHING® – A PERSONALIZED APPROACH

The Markus Gedlich, founder and CEO of GEDLICH Racing, can look back on a twenty-year racing career. During this time, he has won races in several countries and taken part in 15 international 24-hour races. Gedlich also developed his '1:1 Coaching®'

system and, within a very short time, the coaching system became the market leader which led to the founding of GEDLICH Racing.

The innovative approach of 1:1 Coaching® pairs trackday participants with a professional coach, providing tailored feedback and instructions on the racetrack. The 1:1 Coaching® ensures that drivers receive individualized attention, allowing them to hone their skills and significantly improve their performance on the track.

The coaches, who are seasoned professionals with extensive racing experience, use a variety of techniques to enhance the learning experience and helps drivers improve their lap times but also boosts their confidence and understanding of high-performance driving on the most demanding racetracks in Europe.

ORGANIZING EXCELLENCE

GEDLICH Racing's ENDLESS SUMMER® trackdays are more than just events; they are a celebration of the passion for motorsport. GEDLICH Racing's reputation for organizing flawless trackdays is well-deserved. From the initial registration process to the final checkered flag, every step is designed to ensure a seamless and enjoyable experience for the participants.

The limited number of participants per event ensures that everyone has ample track time, minimizing the risk of congestion and contribute to the ultimate trackday experience.

Off the track, GEDLICH Racing provides a range of amenities to enhance the overall experience. Luxurious accommodations, catering, and opportunities for socializing with fellow enthusiasts

add a touch of sophistication to the adrenaline-fueled days. The blend of thrilling driving sessions and premium hospitality creates an atmosphere that is both exhilarating and relaxing.

Whether you are a seasoned racer looking to shave seconds off your lap times or a novice eager to learn the ropes, GEDLICH Racing's ENDLESS SUMMER® trackdays offer a unique opportunity to immerse yourself in the world of high-performance driving. It's not just about the speed; it's about the journey and the pure, unadulterated joy of the drive during the best time of the year!

24/25 DATES NOVEMBER TO MARCH

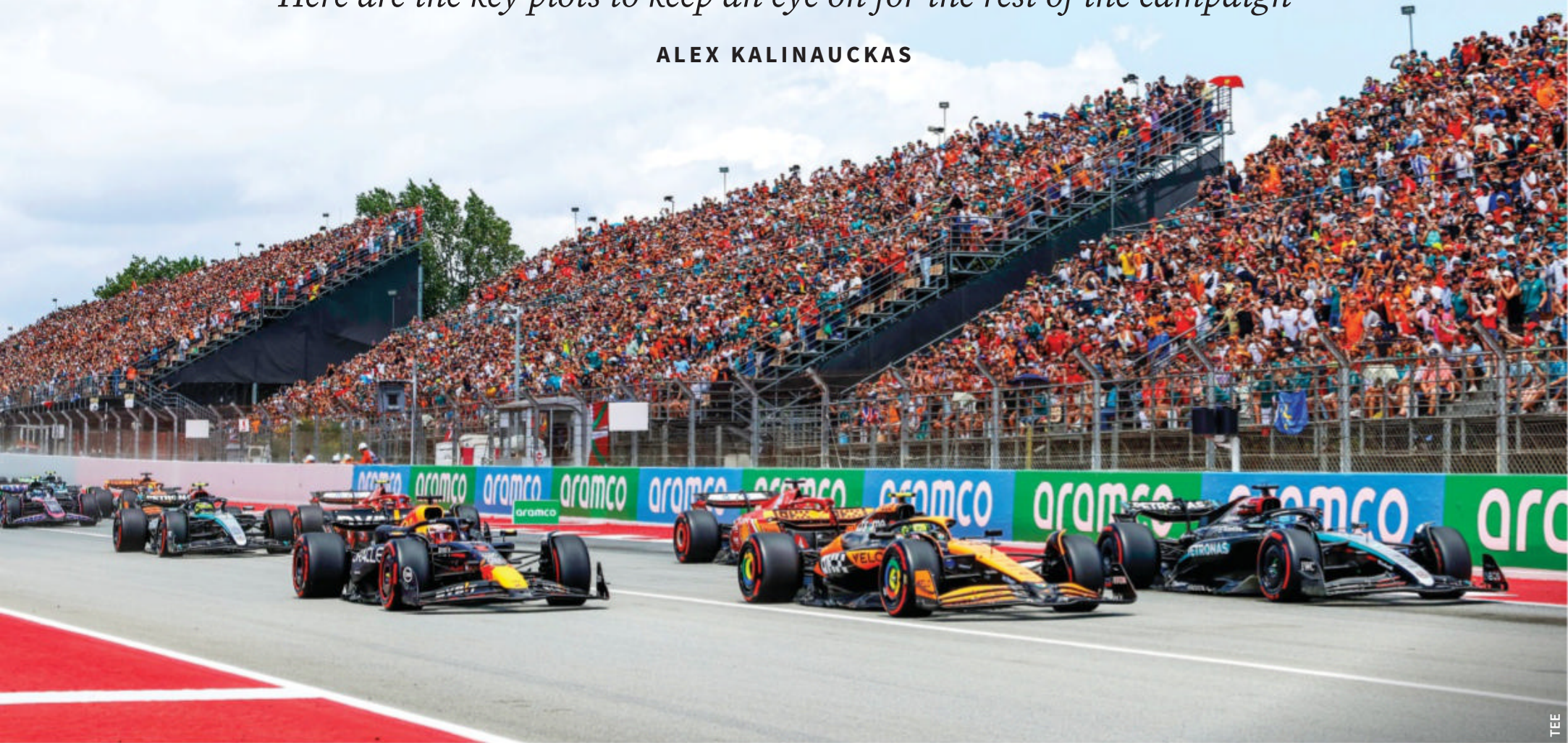
25/26 NOV 2024	Kickoff Barcelona /E
07/08 DEC 2024	Circuito do Sol /P
10/11 DEC 2024	Portimão /P
11/12 JAN 2025	Portimão /P
14/15 JAN 2025	Estoril /P
18/19 JAN 2025	Monteblanco /E
21/22 JAN 2025	Sevilla Circuit /E
01/02 FEB 2025	Estoril /P
03 FEB 2025	Portimão /P (Day & Night)
04/05 FEB 2025	Portimão /P
07/08 FEB 2025	Sevilla Circuit /E
11/12 FEB 2025	Valencia /E
25/26 FEB 2025	Aragón /E
28/01 MAR 2025	Navarra /E
08/09 MAR 2025	Barcelona Castellolí /E
10/11 MAR 2025	Barcelona Castellolí /E



THE THEMES TO WATCH FOR THE REST OF F1 2024

With 14 of the 24 races completed, Formula 1 is now into its summer break. Here are the key plots to keep an eye on for the rest of the campaign

ALEX KALINAUCKAS



CLOSE COMPETITION (HOPEFULLY) CONTINUING

After Max Verstappen won the Japanese Grand Prix in April, 20 seconds ahead of the best non-Red Bull, few could have predicted the current exciting state of Formula 1. Sure, Ferrari and Carlos Sainz had grabbed that feel-good Melbourne victory following the Spaniard's appendicitis, yet Verstappen surely

would have won from pole in Australia without his disastrous brake problem. Seven different winners from the first 14 races – the most since the eight of 2012 – just didn't seem possible.

Except it was. And F1 is now enjoying exactly the sort of close contests, with regular different

winners, that it wanted from the 2022 rule changes.

Plenty has gone into this. Red Bull appears to have hit something of a development ceiling with the RB20, with the rest plunging into the success space it carved out on the first outwash design path two years ago. There was much riding on the major Red Bull update for last month's Hungarian GP. And while this showed that there is indeed more to come from this design path, the improvements are smaller, and so the rest can catch up.

Specific circumstances have also played into this enjoyable mix. One is how Sergio Perez's continued underperformance means others are picking up the pieces when Verstappen is absent from the lead fight. The other is that rare, but still notable, Verstappen errors, team strategy mistakes and that Canada FP2 reliability crack have also allowed chances to fall to rivals.

Red Bull is in a battle, "under pressure" and "doing more mistakes" – as Ferrari team boss Fred Vasseur insisted was possible back at Suzuka. If that continues, an exciting season run-in is on.



The days of Verstappen/Red Bull domination appear long gone

ETHERINGTON

ALL PHOTOGRAPHY: MOTORSPORT IMAGES

WILL VERSTAPPEN WRAP UP THE DRIVERS' TITLE EARLY?

He took his first F1 world title on the last lap in 2021 but, for each of the past two years, Max Verstappen has wrapped up the drivers' championship with 280 and 406 racing laps remaining – or four and five full rounds still to run.

He's now 78 points ahead of McLaren's Lando Norris. That's still a hefty margin, but it's down from the maximum gap Verstappen has enjoyed to this point – 84, leaving Silverstone last month.

This isn't 2022, where Verstappen had to fight back from a major early season deficit to retain his crown, aided by a Ferrari implosion. It's certainly not 2023, where he waltzed to his third title. But, if he matches Alain Prost and Sebastian Vettel as four-time F1 champions, Verstappen will do so having seen off a surging threat from another squad.

Mercedes and Ferrari have had spells at the front – the former of late and the latter at the beginning of the campaign. But since May, McLaren has returned to being Red Bull's closest challenger, as it was for a large swathe of the 2023 mid-season.

The biggest problem for a team still growing and learning how to win is that its driver line-up continues to make critical errors. Granted a chance to eat into Verstappen's lead, Norris failed to do so at Spa, and left Belgium two points further behind. If such mistakes aren't eradicated, that alone can preserve Verstappen's considerable advantage.



Error-avoidance by McLaren key to making Verstappen work for title #4

MAUGER

WILL KEEPING PEREZ COST RED BULL THE CONSTRUCTORS' TITLE?

There was much intrigue in Red Bull's decisions over its driver line-ups heading into the summer break, but the outcome was ultimately underwhelming. Sergio Perez will continue at the main team, with Daniel Ricciardo staying at RB, having appeared set to be either promoted to the Mexican's seat or released altogether.

Red Bull had grown increasingly exasperated with Perez's poor performances since he'd ably backed up Verstappen in Bahrain, Jeddah and Japan. The frustrations of the 'public support' camp at Red Bull – including team boss Christian Horner – were only aired in private. The 'apply pressure' approach favoured by Red Bull motorsport advisor Helmut Marko was spouted to reporters with every Perez misstep.

Red Bull tried one major move to boost Perez – it announced back in early June



Perez crashing out in Q1 at the Hungaroring meant 16th-place start

HONE

that he'd been granted a two-year contract. In reality, the performance clause that became so important ahead of the summer break, and the F1 reality that any contract can be escaped if one side wants it enough, meant this was little more than a very public show of support.

But that didn't matter. His consistent errors and

underperformances – he missed Q3 in six of seven rounds from Miami – meant from that race to Spa the team averaged 21 points per round to McLaren's 30. Should that trend continue after the summer break, then the Woking team will be level or ahead around the Singapore or United States GPs. McLaren also has a series of updates planned.

That Perez didn't improve with his contract update matters, since it suggests that his retention until the end of 2024 will not lead to any notable results uptick. With Verstappen's tougher battle these days, a 'one-car' team will lose the lucrative constructors' championship.



INSET: GALLOWAY

HOW THE FINAL DRIVER MARKET PIECES NOW FALL

Carlos Sainz signing for Williams last week on the eve of the summer break also confirmed one thing: that Logan Sargeant is not going to be replaced mid-season, as had been speculated in Miami and Hungary (regarding Andrea Kimi Antonelli and Esteban Ocon respectively). With Sergio Perez and Daniel Ricciardo also staying put, the line-ups to the end of the season should now be set.

Sainz's deal also uncorked the bottle for most of the remaining seats in the driver market. At the time of writing, it now seems straightforward for Alpine to promote reserve driver Jack Doohan to race alongside Pierre Gasly next year. The thinking is to justify its considerable investment in its Academy set-up, rather than take on another team's junior, such as Antonelli.

Valtteri Bottas goes from Williams's back-up option to surely staying on board at Sauber. The arrival of new team boss Mattia Binotto will "reset" negotiations there, says the Finn. But it seems unlikely that Zhou Guanyu can stay



Bearman (right) has a 2025 berth at Haas, but whither Lawson?

on the grid for 2025. With Ollie Bearman signing for Haas and Mercedes intent on promoting Antonelli to replace Lewis Hamilton – expect more interviews with the young Italian to emerge now that the team's mind is increasingly settled, given it's unlikely to gain Verstappen's services for 2025 – three existing drivers are going to drop out. Expect them to be Kevin Magnussen, Sargeant and Zhou.

Binotto's arrival at Sauber/Audi doesn't guarantee Bottas remaining there because, with Perez and Ricciardo staying put, Red Bull still doesn't have a slot for Liam Lawson. He could be an outsider elsewhere since he's free to join another team for 2025. But Red Bull's leaving it late to make more driver choices may restrict Lawson when other squads will want to have their line-ups settled earlier.



Ferrari's frontrunning challenge has faded as its upgrades have flopped

FERRARI'S QUEST TO RECOVER AHEAD OF HAMILTON'S ARRIVAL

One key element of why 2024 has turned out to be as good as it has done concerns the car upgrades – they need to be hits straight away in this cost-cap era, and have backfired at certain teams. Mercedes was insisting this was the case regarding Red Bull's floor and front wing upgrades at Imola in May. Mercedes, in turn, took its new floor off its W15s at Spa last month due to doubts about its performance and a shock early deficit in straightline speed.

But it's at another high-profile team where flop upgrades have had the biggest impact. Ferrari's floor upgrade for the Spanish GP led to its SF-24s bouncing through high-speed corners, robbing their drivers of confidence and, by extension, ultimate lap time. Ferrari assessed the issue with old and new-spec tests at Silverstone, where the team ultimately went back to its Imola-upgrade arrangement. It has since fast-tracked adjustments to the new floor, but this doesn't change what Sainz highlighted at Silverstone.

"We have lost two or three months of performance gain in the wind tunnel or performance we could have added in these three months," the Spaniard explained.

How Ferrari kicks on with getting its package back to the stage where it can bother or even usurp Red Bull, as McLaren has managed, will be a key storyline over the rest of 2024. Before too long, Lewis Hamilton is going to be arriving at Maranello, and so much is expected of his late-career twist to try to win that eighth title. He's already fielding (very premature) questions about whether this was the right move, given Ferrari hasn't won since Monaco in May, and Mercedes has taken three of the past four victories.

Both Alpine and Sauber need a steady and consistent hand at the tiller

THE IMPACT OF MAJOR MANAGEMENT SHIFTS AT SAUBER AND ALPINE

It's not just a decision on Sauber's other driver for 2025 that will have gone onto Mattia Binotto's 'to do' list when he began work at the Swiss-based team last week. There seem to have been plenty of behind-the-scenes politics to work through given the departures of CEO Andreas Seidl and board chairman Oliver Hoffmann, while Red Bull sporting director Jonathan Wheatley arrives as team principal next summer after finishing his gardening leave.

For now, Binotto must steady the ship and turn Sauber's trajectory around – starting by finally taking points in 2024. A potential year or two (at least) of pain, even with the coming Audi rebrand, was apparently enough to extinguish Carlos Sainz's considerable interest in joining this project, so Binotto needs to make his new squad more competitive in the short term, as well as build up to Audi's F1 debut without things turning into a farce.

The axeing of two team principals, a year apart at the same venue, means 'farce' could also apply to Alpine, which started 2024 by propping up the field in Bahrain qualifying. Hitech team boss Oliver Oakes has now replaced Bruno Famin in charge.

Whoever does take over will, like Binotto, have a driver market call to make soon. But at Alpine the team is also now trying to adjust to operating as a customer engine squad – if it can satisfy French employment laws regarding treatment of staff at its Viry-Chatillon division. The overarching work of Alpine executive advisor Flavio Briatore means the potential for further change (good or bad) at the team is clear.

SUTTON

2026 RULE CHANGE REGRET



FIA

If McLaren can make a real fist of depriving Red Bull of a seventh constructors' championship in its short history, or if Mercedes keeps up its winning run, or Ferrari gets back to such success, expect plenty of chat to follow about the merits of F1 changing its car design rules again for 2026.

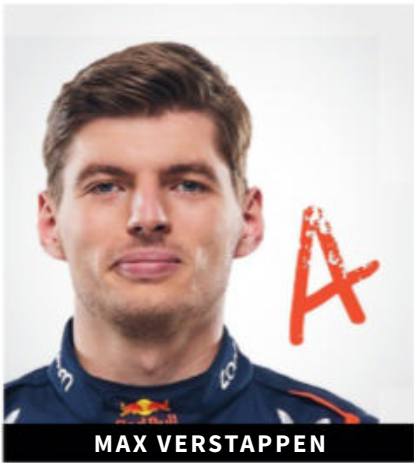
Very different engines as well as an overhaul of the chassis regulations means there's the potential for one team to wipe away the rest. If that team has two good drivers, and a Mercedes 2014-16 Hamilton/Rosberg-style scenario can arise, then F1 is on safer footing. If that team is a

Max Verstappen-led Red Bull with still no intra-team competition (or, ultimately, the same applies to any squad), the question will be why F1 ditched its current rules cycle just when things were getting interesting. If the current constantly changing competitive order continues, calls to abandon the 2026 changes entirely may follow.

But, while it does look like that point is arriving fast, and it seems like a waste of time to have tried to attract more engine builders (Audi) to lose another (Renault), regulation changes are a part of F1's DNA. Such change must happen for

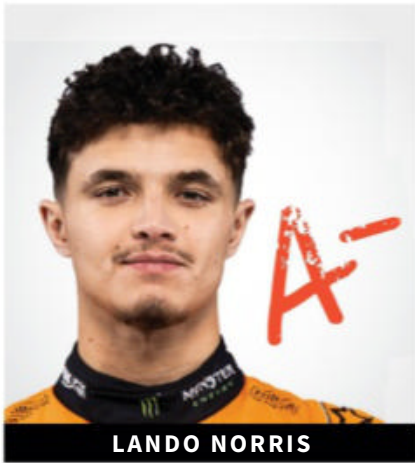
the championship to progress – either on safety grounds, because modern squads are just much better than they were in older periods, or, yes, even for the racing spectacle to evolve.

The change is coming regardless of outside objections – at least according to sources on the FIA's determination to see things through. Plus, the chat about fully sustainable fuels will truly soon kick off – something that has the potential to highlight how motorsport can be a considerable force for good in the unfolding environmental crisis.



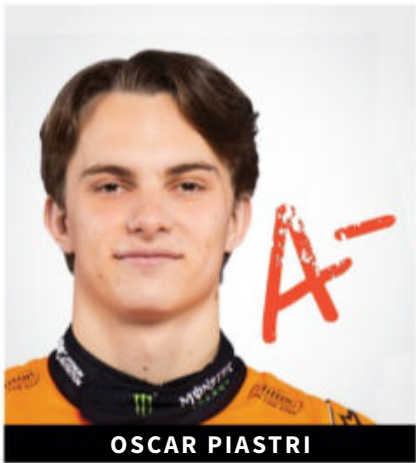
#1 Red Bull
Championship position: **1st**

The Red Bull domination may have subsided, but he's still out in front. Verstappen's title lead stands on a foundation of two things: his early carryover of crushing performance from 2023, and his early European/Canadian season of winning races that he probably shouldn't have. He did enough to keep Lando Norris at bay at Imola, pounced on the McLaren driver's and George Russell's mistakes in Canada, and made the most of Norris's iffy start at Barcelona. Austria and Hungary were blemishes, characterised as 'old Verstappen' displays of petulance as the pressure of competition started to get to him.



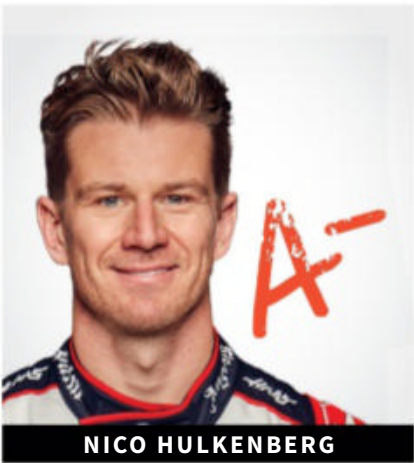
#4 McLaren
Championship position: **2nd**

There have been many highlights in Norris's season, led by his opportunistic Miami win and poles in Spain and Hungary. He has become the master of early tyre saving to time his race-winning threat towards the end, but ran out of time at Imola and Barcelona to fully test Verstappen. His biggest problem this year has come with race starts. The chance of victories in Spain and Hungary faded with either poor getaways or unfortunate choices into Turn 1, but McLaren must shoulder some of the blame (eg Canada) with strategy. Should have won at least two or three more races this term.



#81 McLaren
Championship position: **4th**

F1's newest grand prix winner has come on in leaps and bounds. He entered the year with a tyre-management deficit to Norris, but outclassed his more experienced team-mate in Monaco in contending for victory against Charles Leclerc. Team orders affair took the shine off his Hungary breakthrough victory, yet he had done the hard work with an assured performance in the lead of the race across the opening two stints – minor mistakes notwithstanding. Pitstop overshoot aside, Spa was an excellent display of his progress. The young Australian has been consistent too.



#27 Haas
Championship position: **11th**

Ensnared within a tight midfield battle in which Haas was expected to struggle, Hulkenberg's performances have been a ray of light this year. He's been responsible for all six of Haas's Q3 appearances, and racked up two sixth-placed finishes on the bounce at the Red Bull Ring and Silverstone. That Haas sits within seven points of RB is thanks to him. A poor start in Bahrain led to his Turn 1 scuffle with Lance Stroll, and he endured a similarly iffy first lap in Hungary, but other low moments have been few and far between. When the car is right, Hulkenberg makes the most of it.



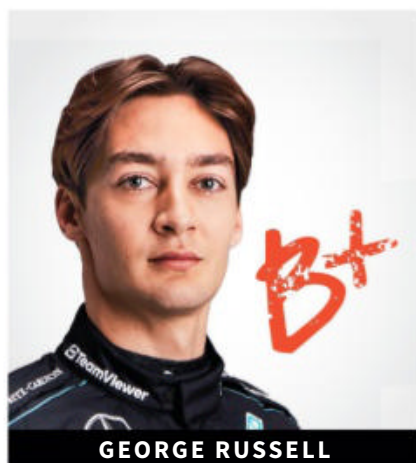
#16 Ferrari
Championship position: **3rd**

His Monaco race was a masterclass, becoming the first Monegasque winner of his home grand prix since Louis Chiron in 1931. He didn't get out of the blocks quite as quickly as Carlos Sainz, finishing behind his team-mate in Bahrain, Australia, and Japan, but results picked up from China onwards as he got to grips with the SF-24. Blew hot and cold after his Monaco win, not helped by wild Canada experimentation, and Silverstone inters switch being terribly timed. Seems to have got over his "worse than a nightmare" form, despite Ferrari losing ground to other top-four teams.



#55 Ferrari
Championship position: **5th**

Even without Verstappen's retirement, Sainz looked on to win in Australia either way. Missed Jeddah race with appendicitis, so had catching up to do, but otherwise has been a lock for consistent top-six results whatever the weather. Silverstone was a great under-the-radar drive too. Canada was the low point, with a Turn 6 spin, and was clumsy in intra-team battle with Leclerc in Spain. His Hungary start also wasn't so hot, costing three positions. Nonetheless, has been a perfect foil to Leclerc: a more consistent, steady operator versus his more mercurial team-mate.

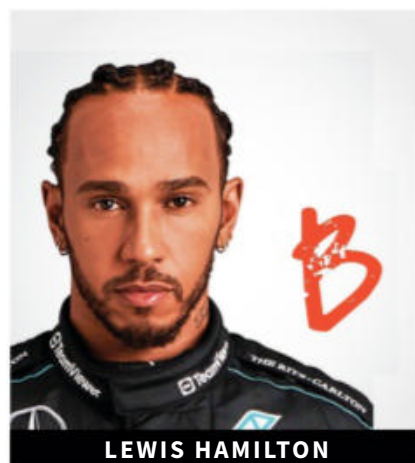


GEORGE RUSSELL

#63 Mercedes

Championship position: 8th

Russell has pushed himself to perform, but sometimes at the expense of results. Assumed victory in Austria, after picking up the pieces from the Norris/Verstappen clash, but his Spa masterclass after lobbying for a one-stop ended in disqualification for being underweight. Mistakes in Canada cost another possible win after starting on pole, and a water system issue after Silverstone pole was very unlucky. In further bad luck, his Australia crash came after an Alonso brake-test at Turn 6. Lowlights: Hungary Q1 elimination was a misstep, and he lost places at the start in both Miami races.

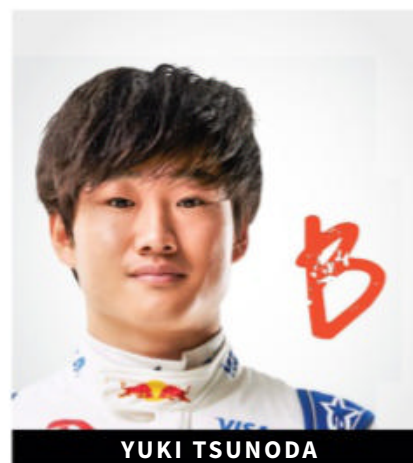


LEWIS HAMILTON

#44 Mercedes

Championship position: 6th

With recency bias, Hamilton should be pushing the A-grades, but let's not forget his poor opening to the season that led to just 10 points in the first four races. Second in China sprint kicked his season into life, although he'd only outqualified Russell once until Spain, a weekend where Hamilton finally meshed with the W15. A win at Silverstone finally broke a two-and-a-half-year drought, and defensive efforts in Hungary were sublime. But a weird mood in Monaco set him against the team, and he decried strategy after losing to Russell's one-stopper at Spa, a move Russell called himself.



YUKI TSUNODA

#22 RB

Championship position: 12th

Frustrated by opening rounds in Bahrain and Jeddah, but had a stellar weekend in Australia to convert eighth on the grid into seventh. Miami was an arguably better weekend, albeit helped by safety car pitstop in the GP, but he genuinely got the better of Russell for seventh. Defensive driving in Monaco was also expertly judged. Should have got points in Canada if he'd been less clumsy, and form tailed off with RB missing the mark on its Barcelona upgrades. Still, was another top performer at Silverstone and in Hungary one-stop heroics. Remains criminally underrated by Red Bull higher-ups.

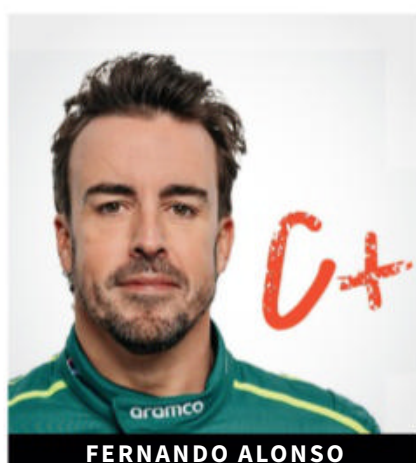


ALEX ALBON

#23 Williams

Championship position: 18th

Has found points harder to come by this year with overweight Williams. Holds a 13-0 qualifying record for grands prix over Sargeant, and was within touching distance of points in Jeddah. Finally broke his duck in Monaco after converting ninth on the grid, and has since done the same at Silverstone to double his – and Williams's – tally for the year. Probably on for a point or two in Canada had he not been wiped out by Sainz. It's not all been rosy; his Australia practice shunt was the nadir. Miami was also lacklustre, albeit with floor damage.

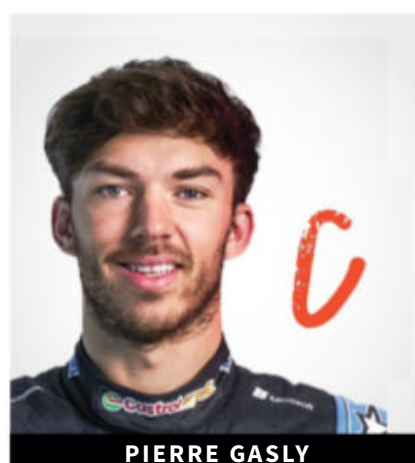


FERNANDO ALONSO

#14 Aston Martin

Championship position: 9th

Racked up the points in the opening rounds, even when it became clear that Aston Martin had fallen back over the winter. A top-six qualifier in four of the opening five races, but the team has endured a slide towards the midfield since Miami in May. Imola was dire, with a pitlane start leading to an extended test session after FP3 crash and Q1 off. Punted Zhou in Austria, and Hungary was sacrificed to help Stroll score. After setting lofty standards in 2023, he's switched off more often this year. Sixth in Canada and fifth in Jeddah remain the highlights so far.

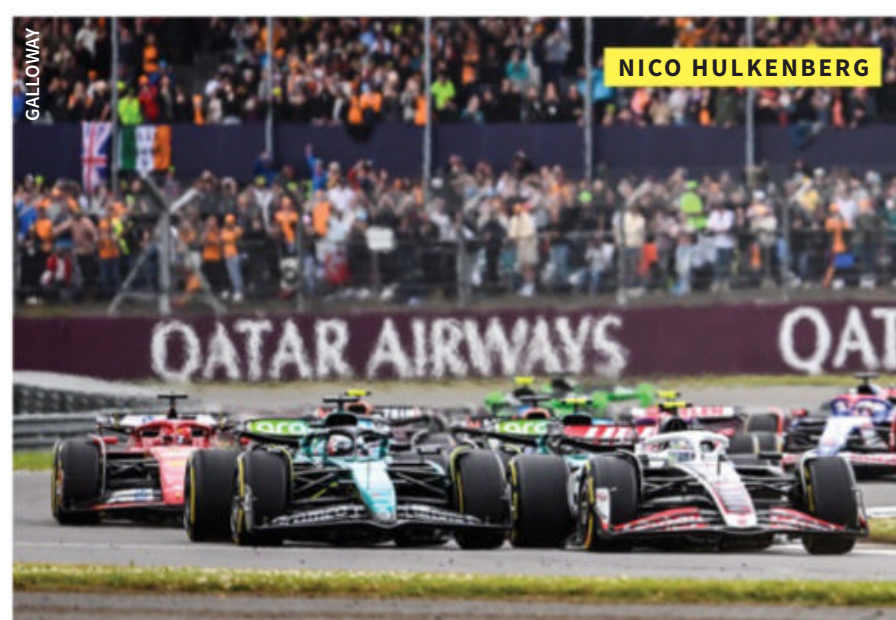


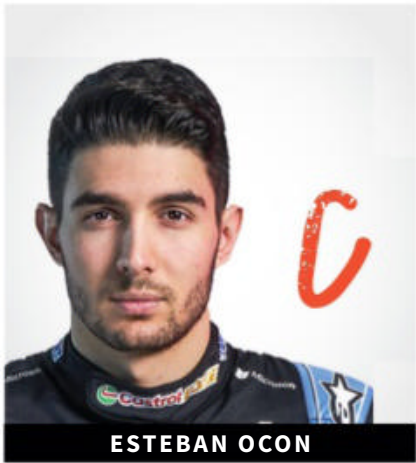
PIERRE GASLY

#10 Alpine

Championship position: 15th

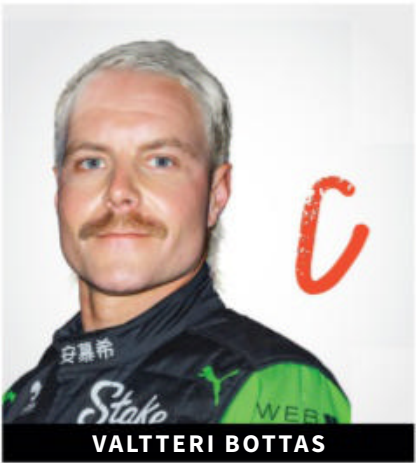
Outperformed in qualifying by Esteban Ocon, but accrued more points than his team-mate during brief purple patch. Of the two, Gasly has had the worse luck with mechanical issues: his race ended after a lap in Jeddah with gearbox pain; he didn't make the start at all at Silverstone for similar reasons; and suffered a hydraulics issue at the Hungaroring. Survived Ocon's Monaco attack to bag a point, starting a points-scoring streak of four races, before the pre-summer run of mechanical issues. He's been a 'steady Eddie' in the races, but qualifying has left a little to be desired versus Ocon.





#31 Alpine
Championship position: **17th**

Marginally ahead of Gasly in qualifying over the year, leading the head-to-head 10-4 (8-4 if corrected for issues), but only by slender margins. Led the line in impressive China race, but was the only Alpine driver equipped with the new floor. Got the team off the mark in Miami, but trailed his long-time adversary in the four-race stretch from Monaco to Austria. That race in Monaco was a significant low point, after his cynical tackle on Gasly ultimately led to crunch talks over his future. Buoyant at Spa after Haas deal was confirmed, with series of passes to break into the top 10.



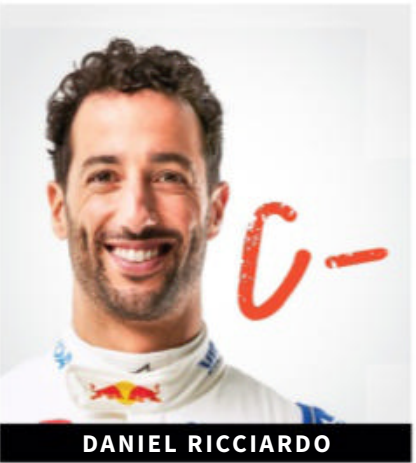
#77 Sauber
Championship position: **21st**

Saddled with a poor car, Bottas has scarcely had the equipment to show what he can do. He's had to put all his chips into qualifying, where he's got a 13-1 advantage over team-mate Zhou, complete with a Q3 outing in China and five Q2 appearances. Early chances of results were undone by Sauber pitstop woes and convoluted strategies that did little to offer a chance of results. Might have scored a point in Australia without 30s pitstop loss, and in Japan without pitlane traffic. Marked down as Miami and Monaco had glaring errors, and Silverstone pace was way off the mark.



#18 Aston Martin
Championship position: **10th**

In recent rounds, performance gap relative to Alonso has shrunk as the AMR24 falls behind in competitiveness. Inconsistent, as ever; an early shunt in Saudi Arabia was followed by a stellar sixth in Australia. Proved steady at Imola against Alonso's erratic weekend, and genuinely beat his team-mate at Silverstone. Qualifying has been closer between them, currently at 9-5 in Alonso's favour. But Stroll has had as many anonymous drives as good ones: Miami and Spain were poor and offered little, and he speared into Ricciardo during the China restart bunch-up.



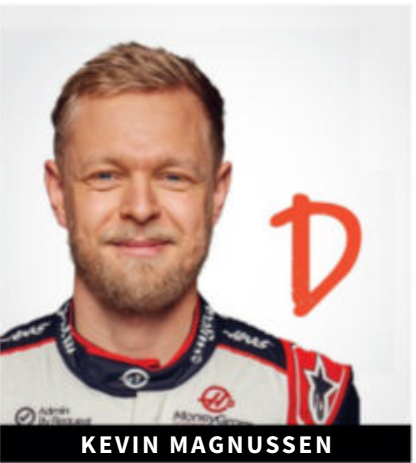
#3 RB
Championship position: **13th**

Nowhere near as bad as he's made out to be, but lacking a tenth or two relative to Tsunoda. Fourth in Miami sprint was a statement result, but it took him until June's Canadian round to score in a full grand prix. Outperformed Tsunoda all weekend in Austria, and was set for a good result in Hungary before strategy cost him hugely. But form has been inconsistent, particularly in the early season; his younger team-mate outqualified him in the first four races. Suzuka shunt with Albon was his biggest blunder, and full Miami GP was also uninspiring. Early season issues seem to have subsided for now.



#2 Williams
Championship position: **20th**

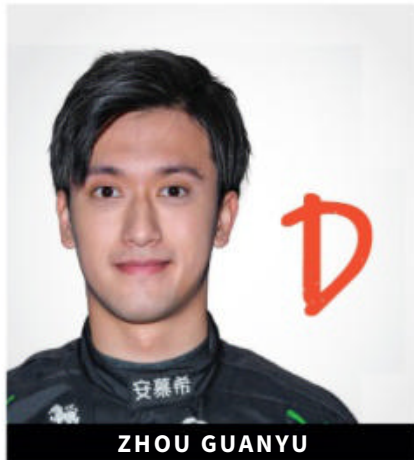
A better sophomore campaign, lacking the car-bending antics of 2023. Is still shy of team-mate Albon's pace across qualifying and races, although older-spec parts haven't necessarily helped. Sacrificed in Australia after Albon's shunt, took himself out in Montreal, but recovered from thorny opening to 2024 to get within a sniff of points at Silverstone, after outqualifying Albon in the Austria sprint. That said, his racing efforts at Spielberg undid that work after breaking his front wing against Stroll. Disillusioned with F1 and appears set for a move Stateside next year.



#20 Haas
Championship position: **16th**

Almost on for a race ban after picking up 10 penalty points earlier this year. Spent the early season acting as Hulkenberg's attack dog; his defensive efforts in Jeddah and Miami helped earn points, but felt his penalties were deserved after clashes with Albon and Sargeant respectively – among other indiscretions. Qualifying efforts have been lacklustre, not once making Q3. Regardless, Australia and Austria were both strong races that justly rewarded the Dane with points, and has cleaned up his act as race ban looms. Looks to be on his way out of F1 at the end of the year.

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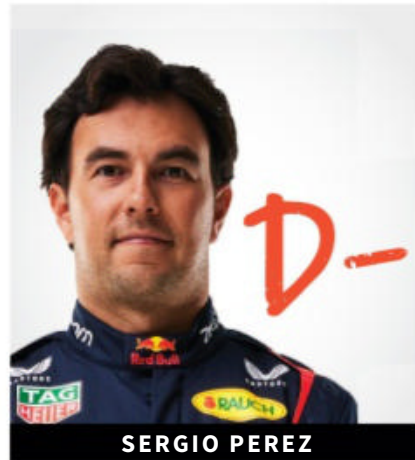


ZHOU GUANYU

#24 Sauber

Championship position: 19th

Statistically the worst qualifier on the grid – he’s made it out of Q1 only twice this year. The Bahrain opener remains the season highlight because he was a contender for the final point, and his alternative Jeddah strategy was nixed by a slow pitstop. SQ3 appearance in China was an emotional moment, but since then his season has been short of quality, albeit he’s struggled since Imola in May with a new chassis. Canada was the culmination of that with a shunt and a spin in practice, succeeding his Monaco FP1 crash.



SERGIO PEREZ

#11 Red Bull

Championship position: 7th

Like 2023, his performance level suffered a precipitous drop after Miami. Unlike 2023, the closer field has punished his under-par efforts. Started the year per expectations, with a trio of second-place finishes in the opening four races, but has dropped off considerably. Failed to clear qualifying’s first hurdle with his Monaco and Silverstone Q1 crashes, and his Canada accident (after another Q1 drop-out) was equally weak. Redemption opportunities ahead of the summer break came with a Belgium front row, but he ended the day eighth on the road... in a Red Bull.



LOGAN SARGEANT



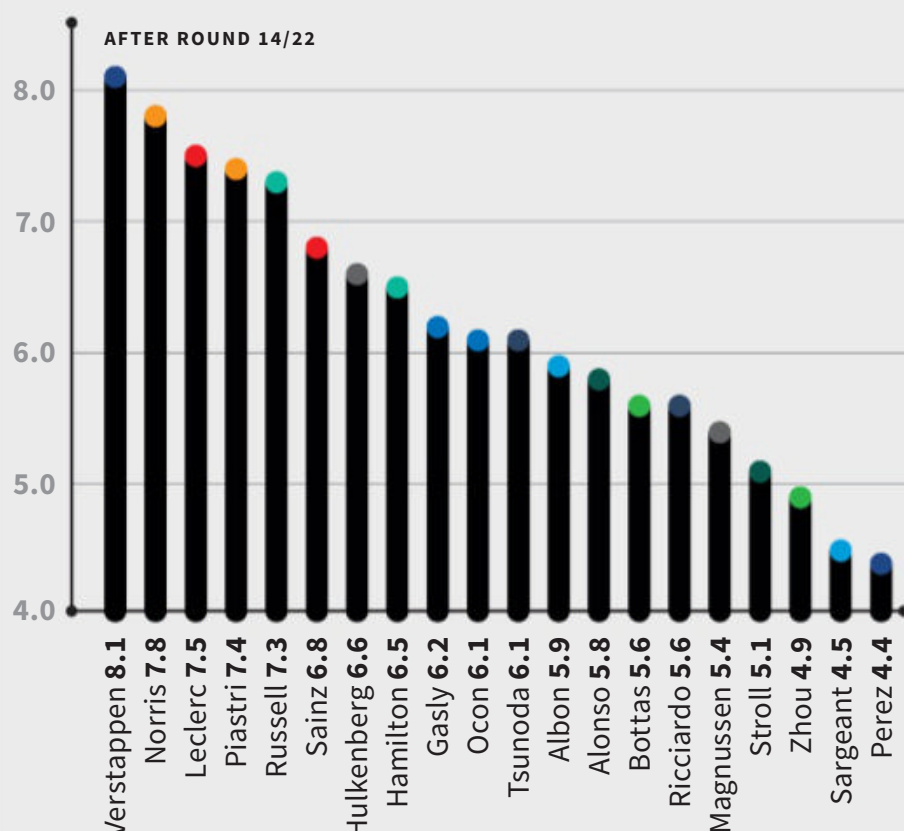
ZHOU GUANYU

AVERAGE DRIVER RATINGS

AUTOSPORT RATINGS

After every grand prix we rate each driver out of 10 for their weekend performance, with an emphasis on the race. Readers on autosport.com are also able to give their scores and these two graphs show how things have gone so far in 2024.

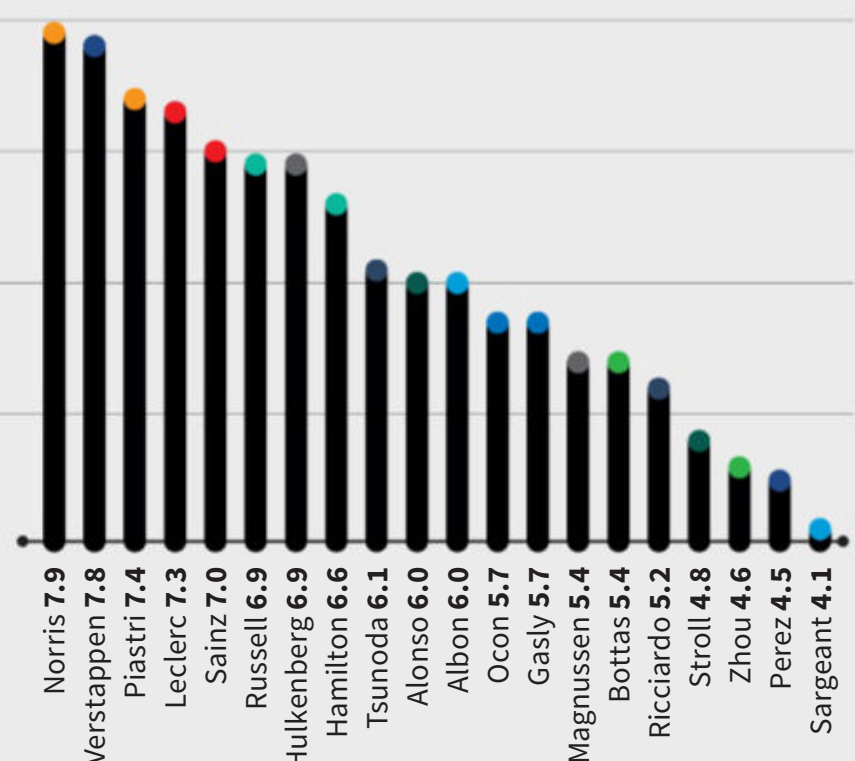
In the event of a tie, the place is awarded to the driver with the higher best score, or more of those best scores if the drivers also share the same top mark. One-time Ferrari driver and 2025 Haas signing Ollie Bearman (10.0 and 9.5 on the Autosport and reader ratings respectively for his Saudi Arabian Grand Prix outing) is excluded.



READER RATINGS

Autosport Plus readers on autosport.com can give their rating on every Formula 1 driver following each grand prix. Although those scores are averaged to the nearest 0.01 marks online, we have rounded them to the nearest 0.1 to bring scores in line with the Autosport graph.

Reader averages are usually well within one point of the Autosport ratings, which are decided before the reader vote is open. The overall lists are similar, though interestingly – given certain fans and teams have accused us of being anti-Max Verstappen – the Dutchman currently tops our rankings while his British rival Lando Norris heads the reader vote.



SEASON REVIEW

WEHRLEIN AND PORSCHE NEUTER THE BIG CATS

Jaguar's Nick Cassidy should have won the Formula E title; team-mate Mitch Evans could have claimed it. But their collapse led to German joy

STEFAN MACKLEY

The 2023-24 Formula E Championship looked destined to be heading the way of Nick Cassidy and Jaguar, before capitulation over the final two events opened the door for Pascal Wehrlein to snatch the drivers' crown. But while the title was decided in a dramatic London winner-takes-all finale, the 15 other races during the season played their part in shaping the outcome of the championship. At points this year, Porsche star Wehrlein was undoubtedly the man to beat.

Pole and a dominant victory in the season-opening Mexico City E-Prix set the tone, and put down a marker that Wehrlein and Porsche were going to be a force to be reckoned with. While it would be another six races until the German won again, at Misano, consistency across the opening half of the season meant he held a seven-point lead leaving Monaco at the halfway point. It was this steadiness – just two non-scores across the 16-race campaign, due to a broken front wing at Misano and puncture at Shanghai – that provided the backbone to his title assault.

Even though Wehrlein went into the final round of the season in London on the back foot and the “odds were not really with us” on a track suited to the Jaguar-powered cars, “we still had it in our hands”, reckoned a man who sat only seven points behind Cassidy.

“We scored [nearly] every race and that’s crucial in Formula E because it’s such a tough competition, everyone is so close together and winning the championship in the end by seven points just shows you how close it was,” Wehrlein continues. “Consistency is key, scoring good points every weekend, every race. Sometimes it feels like a P4 or P5 is the maximum you can do in the race, but it’s still 12 or 10 valuable points. I think this year we improved our consistency quite a lot, we improved our qualifying as well, and that just enabled us to score big points on every occasion, even if it wasn’t a win.”

Somewhat ironically, at various points this year Wehrlein often stated that qualifying may as well have been decided by a lottery, so little was its impact upon many of the races. This was due to the frenetic peloton style of racing, where drivers stayed in the slipstream to save energy, and meant wide, open circuits such as Misano, Shanghai and Portland generally became lotteries, with drivers sometimes going five-wide to cycle up and down the pack.

The two caveats to qualifying were around tight, twisty street circuits where track position was key, such as London’s ExCeL, and that three points were awarded for pole position.

Wehrlein took the joint most poles in the season along with title rival Mitch Evans and Jean-Eric Vergne – three apiece >>

Evans ended up having to follow title rival Wehrlein home in both London races





Unwavering self-belief helped spur Wehrlein to maiden Formula E title

ROUND BY ROUND

Mexico City

1 Wehrlein

2 Buemi

3 Cassidy

Wehrlein takes pole and victory, leading 30 out of 37 laps, but is investigated post-race for technical infraction around 'primary throttle pedal map' before being cleared. Buemi shadows throughout for runner-up, while Cassidy moves up from fourth to claim podium on Jaguar debut.

Diriyah 1

1 Dennis

2 Vergne

3 Cassidy

Dennis dominates after moving to the front through Attack Mode, winning by 13s. Energy-deprived Vergne becomes a roadblock in the closing laps; Evans is unable to find a way through and drops to fifth with a last-lap overtake attempt, team-mate Cassidy and Bird moving ahead.

Diriyah 2

1 Cassidy

2 Frijns

3 Rowland

Cassidy takes championship lead with victory, besting Envision racer Frijns through Attack Mode activations. Poleman Rowland hangs onto third. Wehrlein finishes seventh to leave Saudi Arabia with a double points finish. "Finger problems" with Evans's car in qualifying leave him 10th at the flag.

Sao Paulo

1 Bird

2 Evans

3 Rowland

Thrilling last-lap overtake on Evans hands Bird first win since New York 2021 and McLaren a maiden Formula E triumph. Battling Dennis and Wehrlein compromise exit of final corner, allowing Rowland to snatch third on the run to the line. Cassidy crashes out after front wing lodges under car.

Tokyo

1 Guenther

2 Rowland

3 Dennis

Guenther passes energy-saving Rowland in closing stages to deny Nissan on home soil. Dennis snatches third from da Costa after Porsche driver loses momentum with failed outside move on Rowland. Wehrlein fifth, with Cassidy eighth after losing qualifying times due to a car technicality breach.

Misano 1

1 Rowland

2 Dennis

3 Guenther

On-the-road winner da Costa disqualified after car found to have ineligible throttle damper spring, so Rowland and Nissan handed first win since Berlin 2020. Dennis takes second from Guenther. Poleman Evans drops to fifth. Cassidy and Wehrlein both lose front wings and non-score.



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“One lap away” from title when Cassidy spun out of the lead in Portland

equating to nine points. With his title-winning margin at the end of the season standing at seven over Evans, it puts into context how crucial that upturn in qualifying performance proved to be for Wehrlein and Porsche.

The Porsche 99X powertrain’s one-lap pace was an acknowledged Achilles’ heel in 2023, when Wehrlein took an average qualifying position of 9.8 compared to 5.1 this term, and two vital second-row starts in London for the title showdown were the culmination of that performance increase. “I feel like last season slipped out of our hands because of poor qualifying results,” he acknowledges. “We’d taken a couple of race wins, we’d led the championship on many occasions as well, but just towards the end of the season we didn’t manage to qualify at the front and that meant quite often we didn’t get to score big points. I was a P7, P8 or even a DNF because it’s just a lot more chaotic in the midfield. You cannot always progress from P10 to the podium, and that was a big goal this year – to improve our qualifying pace to also make our life easier in the races.”

Even with better qualifying and greater consistency, the task of beating Cassidy and Jaguar seemed an unlikely one. Wehrlein lost the lead of the championship leaving Berlin, and the deficit grew to as much as 25 points – equal to a race win – before the penultimate round of the season at Portland.

Cassidy had moved across from Jaguar customer team Envision after finishing runner-up in the 2022-23 season, and began life with the factory effort in strong form, registering a third place in both Mexico City and Diriyah, before winning the second race in Saudi Arabia. But then came some blips, Cassidy crashing out in Sao Paulo after his front wing became lodged under his car, and a further

ROUND BY ROUND

Misano 2	Monte Carlo	Berlin 1
1 Wehrlein	1 Evans	1 Cassidy
2 Dennis	2 Cassidy	2 Vergne
3 Cassidy	3 Vandoorne	3 Rowland
Lap-counter malfunction causes leader Rowland to run out of energy on final lap, gifting Wehrlein victory, and the pair leave tied on points at head of standings. Dennis bags another runner-up finish, and Cassidy beats superb Muller on run to line for third. Evans retires with software issue.	Tactical masterclass ensures Jaguar takes 1-2, Cassidy gifting Evans victory. Vergne left a frustrated fourth behind DS Penske team-mate Vandoorne, who is unable to mount serious challenge against Jaguars. Polesitter Wehrlein slumps to fifth after early Attack Mode strategy fails to pay off.	Cassidy at his best, and romps to second win having conserved large amounts of energy after dropping to the very back of the pack at one stage. Vergne’s stoic defence, after leading 18 out of 46 laps, means he keeps second to deny the chasing Rowland, Evans and Wehrlein.



BAGNALL



BAGNALL

retirement followed at Misano after another front wing went missing in a collision with Vergne, who was penalised.

A run of five podium finishes put Cassidy's title aspirations back on course, including a sensational win in the opening Berlin race, where the Kiwi sat deep in the pack saving vast amounts of energy before unleashing his true pace in the final laps to win by 4.6s, demonstrating his ability to look at the bigger picture during a race. This facet had already helped him orchestrate a Jaguar 1-2 in Monaco in favour of team-mate Evans – the older New Zealander's first win of the campaign – but the British manufacturer's reluctance to favour one driver over the other would come back to haunt it.

Cassidy led Evans in the opening Portland race, and was "one >>

Berlin 2

1 da Costa

2 Cassidy

3 Rowland

Da Costa keeps victory once he pulls clear of the squabbling Jaguars midway through race, Evans unintentionally blocking Cassidy after running slightly wide. Second gives Cassidy nine-point lead in standings. Wehrlein is fourth with damaged steering. Poleman Dennis is fifth.

Shanghai 1

1 Evans

2 Wehrlein

3 Cassidy

Evans battles past Wehrlein around the outside into T1 on final lap to win, the pair having gone side by side through the final sequence of corners. Cassidy, who is told to stay behind Evans, also attempts to move ahead of Wehrlein through final turns, but the pair make contact and hold position.

Shanghai 2

1 da Costa

2 Nato

3 Hughes

High temperatures mean staying in the lead for large periods pays off and da Costa wins from Nato, who secures first podium with Andretti. Poleman Hughes takes maiden Formula E podium ahead of Cassidy. Minimal contact from Bird inflicts puncture and non-score on Wehrlein.

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“GOING INTO THE LAST RACE, I HAD THIS MINDSET THAT I CAN DO IT. YOU SHOULD NEVER LOSE FAITH”

CONSTRUCTORS' CHAMPIONSHIP		
POS	TEAM	PTS
1	Jaguar	455
2	Porsche	451
3	Nissan	273
4	Stellantis	263
5	Mahindra	95
6	ERT	23

SBLOXHAM

TEAMS' CHAMPIONSHIP		
POS	TEAM	PTS
1	Jaguar	368
2	Porsche	332
3	DSPenske	200
4	Nissan	182
5	Andretti	169
6	Envision	121
7	McLaren	101
8	Maserati (pictured left)	81
9	Abt	56
10	Mahindra	47
11	ERT	23

lap away” from the title when he spun from the lead. Jaguar had told its drivers that they were free to race, despite Evans being handed a five-second penalty for an earlier collision. Cassidy non-scored in race two after contact in the middle of the pack, and somehow salvaged seventh in the opening London race after a disastrous qualifying left him 17th.

With the pressure at its highest, and now trailing Wehrlein in the points, Cassidy took his first pole of the season for the crucial final race. He was lying third and had already taken both Attack Modes, unlike Evans and Wehrlein ahead. But then he was the blameless victim in a collision with the second Porsche of Antonio Felix da Costa that finally ended his title aspirations.

For the fourth year in a row, Evans also went into the final round with a shot at a maiden Formula E title after playing catch-up following a sluggish start. A second win came at Shanghai after a last-lap pass on Wehrlein, but he was denied another win at Portland with his penalty. Heading to London he was tied on points with Wehrlein, and had to follow his rival home in both races when Jaguar failed to implement a good enough strategy. That Jaguar claimed a maiden teams’ title and the new-for-2024 manufacturers’ trophy by relatively healthy margins offered little consolation for Cassidy and Evans, and it was Wehrlein who kept his cool to snatch a worthy maiden Formula E title from under their noses.

“I was always believing in it and even when we had more than a 20-point disadvantage to our competitors, I always thought that we can still turn things around,” smiles Wehrlein. “Going into the last race, I had this mindset that I can do it. I told myself so many times that we can do it. I definitely think this helps in a championship campaign – you should never lose faith or lose hope.”

ROUND BY ROUND

Portland 1

1 da Costa
2 Frijns
3 Vergne
Jaguar capitulation as Cassidy spins from the lead under pressure from Evans, who crosses the line first but with five-second penalty for earlier collision, handing da Costa victory. Frijns secures first podium since Diriyah; Vergne climbs up from 14th. Wehrlein salvages 10th after debris damage.

Portland 2

1 da Costa
2 Frijns
3 Evans
Four victories from five races for da Costa who wins on the road this time, Frijns bagging back-to-back podiums after losing lead on safety car restart. Alternate Attack Mode strategy for Evans restricts him to third ahead of front-wingless Wehrlein. Cassidy non-scores after front wing damaged in mid-pack.

London 1

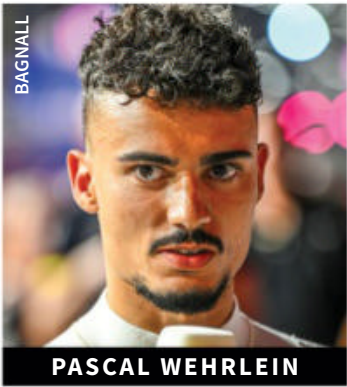
1 Wehrlein
2 Evans
3 Buemi
Brilliant Wehrlein beats Evans in a straight fight after moving ahead of the polesitter during the Attack Mode phase, while Buemi takes first podium of season. Cassidy salvages seventh via two heavy bits of contact after starting 17th. Wehrlein leads Evans by three points with one race left.

London 2

1 Rowland
2 Wehrlein
3 Evans
Cassidy takes pole to trim gap to Wehrlein to four points in winner-takes-all scenario. Mid-race, Evans heads Wehrlein and Cassidy, who takes both Attack Modes early but is out after collision with da Costa. Late Attack Mode activations, missing one, drops Evans to third behind Wehrlein.



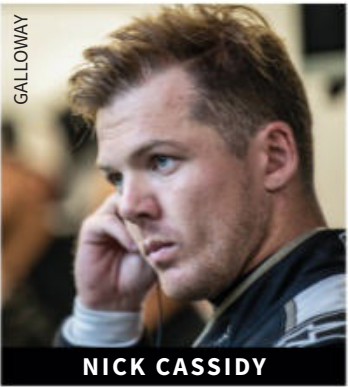
AUTOSPORT'S TOP 10 DRIVERS



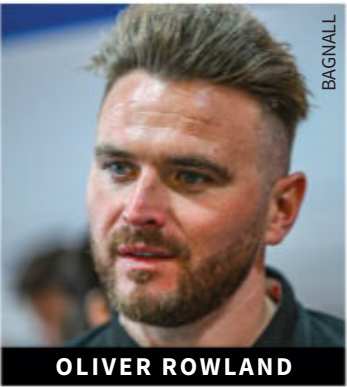
1 Heads list after not cracking in title-deciding finale when pressure was at its highest and on a track favouring his Jaguar rivals. Only non-scored twice after collisions not his fault, with three wins, three poles and most laps led (87).



2 Only one of leading title protagonists to suffer a race-ending mechanical issue (at Misano). Jaguar driver seemed to suffer worst of the luck that included car problems in opening rounds. Was at his best at Shanghai to beat Wehrlein to victory.



3 Would and should have been number one on this list with a world title to his name but for catastrophic Portland error. Two wins and six more podiums the backbone to his title tilt, but three non-scores in final four races a dismal end to a strong campaign.



4 Dark horse of the season rejuvenated his Formula E career with two wins and three further podiums. Could have been in greater title contention had illness not forced him out of both Portland races, but ended season on a high with win on home soil in London.



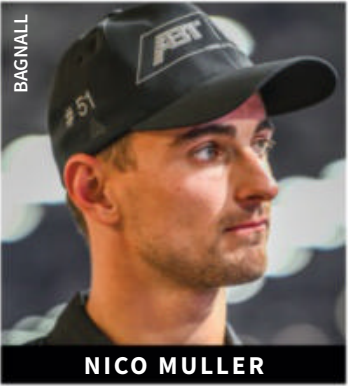
5 Awful start and end to the season sandwiched an incredible run of four wins inside five races, best of the bunch being Berlin. Harshly denied his win at Misano for a technical infringement, without which he would have been firmly in the title mix.



6 Three pole positions helped to set a new outright Formula E record (17), but incredibly he never won a race in 2024. Title aspirations were based around consistency – he only non-scored twice, with a best result of second in Diriyah and Berlin.



7 Began title defence well with victory in Diriyah and a run of three podiums in Tokyo and Misano. But thereafter he never stood on the rostrum again, and ended the season in rotten fashion with six penalty points on his licence in London.



8 Took six points-scoring results over the 14 races he competed in, including a quartet to end the season in Portland and London, despite using the energy inefficient Mahindra powertrain. Put 2016-17 champion Lucas di Grassi firmly in the shade.



9 Disqualified from fifth in Tokyo after running out of energy on run to the line, but bounced back with pole for Berlin 1 before finishing eighth in one of the grid's weakest packages. Fourth and fifth in Portland and London races ended Mahindra's season on a high.



10 Six points finishes on the bounce to start the season, capped by winning Tokyo E-Prix and a Misano podium. Went missing in the middle of the campaign, a double crash in Berlin a low point before denied a rostrum in London by mechanical issue.

DRIVERS' CHAMPIONSHIP

POS	DRIVER	TEAM	CAR	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	PTS
1	Pascal Wehrlein (DEU)	Porsche	Porsche 99X Electric Gen3	1	8	7	4	5	16	1	5	5	4	2	20	10	4	1	2	198
2	Mitch Evans (NZL)	Jaguar Racing	Jaguar I-Type 6	5	5	10	2	15	5	NC	1	4	6	1	5	8	3	2	3	192
3	Nick Cassidy (NZL)	Jaguar Racing	Jaguar I-Type 6	3	3	1	R	8	R	3	2	1	2	3	4	19	13	7	R	176
4	Oliver Rowland (GBR)	Nissan	Nissan e-4ORCE 04	11	13	3	3	2	1	R	6	3	3	4	10	-	-	15	1	156
5	Jean-Eric Vergne (FRA)	DS Penske	DSE-TENSE FE23	6	2	8	7	12	6	7	4	2	10	6	7	3	5	17	5	139
6	Antonio Felix da Costa (PRT)	Porsche	Porsche 99X Electric Gen3	R	16	14	6	4	EX	17	7	6	1	18	1	1	1	R	13	134
7	Jake Dennis (GBR)	Andretti	Porsche 99X Electric Gen3	9	1	12	5	3	2	2	19	R	5	5	11	6	10	16	R	122
8	Maximilian Gunther (DEU)	Maserati	Maserati Tipo Folgore	4	7	9	9	1	3	12	9	R	R	21	8	R	8	R	R	73
9	Robin Frijns (NLD)	Envision Racing	Jaguar I-Type 6	R	10	2	18	9	17	R	17	-	-	12	9	2	2	R	7	66
10	Stoffel Vandoorne (BEL)	DS Penske	DSE-TENSE FE23	8	14	5	8	16	8	R	3	7	20	9	6	9	11	9	8	61

11 **Sebastien Buemi** (Envision Racing Jaguar I-Type 6) 53; 12 **Nico Muller** (Abt Mahindra M10Electro) 52; 13 **Sam Bird** (McLaren Nissan e-4ORCE 04) 48; 14 **Jake Hughes** (McLaren Nissan e-4ORCE 04) 48; 15 **Norman Nato** (Andretti Porsche 99X Electric Gen3) 47; 16 **Edoardo Mortara** (Mahindra M10Electro) 29; 17 **Sacha Fenestraz** (Nissan e-4ORCE 04) 26; 18 **Nyck de Vries** (Mahindra M10Electro) 18; 19 **Dan Ticktum** (ERTX24) 12; 20 **Sergio Sette Camara** (ERTX24) 11; 21 **Jehan Daruvala** (Maserati Tipo Folgore) 8; 22 **Taylor Barnard** (McLaren Nissan e-4ORCE 04) 5; 23 **Lucas di Grassi** (Abt Mahindra M10Electro) 4; 24 **Joel Eriksson** (Envision Racing Jaguar I-Type 6) 2; 25 **Kelvin van der Linde** (Abt Mahindra M10Electro) 0; 26 **Jordan King** (Mahindra M10Electro) 0; 27 **Paul Aron** (Envision Racing Jaguar I-Type 6) 0; 28 **Caio Collet** (Nissan e-4ORCE 04) 0.

SHOOTING FOR THE STRATOSPHERE

Lancia's bid to win the World Rally crown resulted in a mid-engined, Ferrari-powered weapon that changed the sport. Half a century on, the Italian marque's chief Cesare Fiorio looks back

TOM HOWARD

PHOTOGRAPHY MCKLEIN



Its striking silhouette and evocative V6 engine note are unmistakable. There hasn't been a car in the rally world quite like the Lancia Stratos. This Italian short-wheelbase, wedge-shaped weapon ripped up previous conventions, changed the game in rally car design, and left stunned rivals in its wake. It won 18 WRC rallies, scored 29 podiums, racked up 480 stage wins and collected three world titles (1974-76) to put Lancia firmly on the motorsport map.

Half a century on from its World Rally Championship debut in 1974, the Stratos has earned cult status. It was one of those cars that seemed destined for success and to frighten its rivals, according to Cesare Fiorio, who as Lancia boss was among the instrumental figures behind its birth. "If you look at the Stratos

today it looks like a modern car except for some details, but it is a car that is more than 50 years old," he says. "When we arrived with this type of car, we really stopped all the others competing because we were so much quicker on asphalt or on gravel and even on the snow. We were fast everywhere. It would win rallies and it was within the regulations.

"When I managed to put together all of the ideas and all of the requests from all of the people involved in this project, I understood that we would have something that was ages ahead of everybody. It was exactly what happened."

The Stratos's beginnings can be traced back to 1970, when renowned Italian designer Bertone – led by Marcello Gandini, who penned the Lamborghini Miura – showcased the Stratos



STATS

Wins 18

Podiums 29

Stage wins 480

**World titles 3
(1974-76)**

Zero concept car at the Turin Motor Show. It was aimed as a replacement for the Fulvia, which had dominated the Italian Rally Championship scene from 1965 and won the 1972 FIA International Championship for Manufacturers – the precursor to the World Rally Championship. Creating a car to eclipse the Fulvia was not the work of a moment, and ex-Formula 1 driver-turned-engineer Mike Parkes became the lead development engineer for the Stratos.

“Before starting the project, I went to all the people involved in my team – the drivers, the mechanics and the engineers, the electricians, the people who look after the car in service – and they gave me some ideas as to what was necessary to be competitive,” explains Fiorio. “I wrote this down in a book and then gave it to Bertone and Gandini. We also gave him the dimension of the car >>



Stratos HF was unveiled at
1971 Turin Motor Show



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PIRELLI

eventim⁺

fever

FKP SCORPIO
ENTERTAINMENT

THE
LUNA
ENTERTAINMENT GROUP

ROUND ROOM

PATH
FINDER

Silverstone
MUSEUM

– I didn't want it longer than three metres and 70 centimetres.”

A year later, a more refined Stratos HF, weighing in at approximately 950kg, was unveiled at the Turin Motor Show, fitted with a mid-mounted Ferrari Dino V6, an engine that had been earmarked for the car since the start of the project. To push forward with this engine, which would become a key component, it required a visit to Maranello to convince Enzo Ferrari to allow the Fiat-owned Lancia to use the Dino V6.

“When I went around the Fiat Group and they had in mind this very special car, I couldn't find any type of engine which would fit and be sufficient to make the car competitive,” recalls Fiorio. “I went to Ferrari and I thought he would not even know who I am and what I'm asking for. But he said he knew everything about our competition plans and said that we were very good because we win, and we spend little money. He said, ‘OK, I will give you the block, the crank, the cylinder heads, and you will take care of the rest.’”

“I went to Enzo Ferrari and he said that we were very good because we win, and we spend little money”

Armed with an agreement to take 500 Dino V6 engines from Ferrari, the Stratos project encountered its next chapter. There were teething issues mounting the Dino V6, but by 1973 the car had chalked up a milestone first win, when Sandro Munari and Mario Mannucci took a Marlboro-liveried Stratos to victory at the Firestone Rally in Spain on 8 April. A triumph at the Tour de France Automobile followed in September to signal the car's credentials, as production of the 500 models required to secure Group 4 homologation continued at pace.

It wasn't until October the following year that the Stratos made its WRC debut in the middle of a season that had been decimated by a global fuel crisis. Rising oil prices, a result of the Organisation of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries (OAPEC) implementing an embargo against the countries who had supported Israel during the 1973 Yom Kippur War, reduced a 13-round season to eight events, beginning in Portugal in March. The Monte Carlo, Sweden, Acropolis, Austria, Poland and Morocco events were all cancelled.

Lancia would find itself going up against its owner Fiat, which fielded its 124 Abarth, and Ford with its Escort RS1600. The season actually began with Lancia fielding its ageing Fulvia,



In a 40-year motorsport career, Fiorio says Stratos stands out as “very special”

which scored a third place in Munari's hands on the Safari Rally, before the Stratos received Group 4 homologation a day before the Sanremo Rally. With only five events of the season remaining, thoughts of a title push had never crossed Fiorio's mind.

“Everybody had many points and were fighting each other and I said, ‘OK, we will start in October but we don't go after the championship’, and there were still five events to go,” reflects Fiorio. “One was Sanremo, then there was Canada [Rally of the Rideau Lakes], the USA [Press on Regardless Rally], Great Britain [RAC] and Corsica [Tour de Corse].”

The Stratos's WRC debut could hardly have gone better. Munari defeated a fleet of seven Fiats, four of which crashed out on the first stage, to take a maiden WRC win for the car on home soil. It had sent a message to the rallying world, which it emphatically backed up when Munari took victory in the next event in Canada later that month. A measured run to third on the RAC under the orders of Fiorio set up a chance for Lancia to seal the world championship on Corsica's ribbons of asphalt, where the Stratos was honed and at the peak of its power. Jean-Claude Andruet beat a pair of Alpine A110s – the car the Frenchman drove in 1973 to help Alpine claim that year's championship – to seal a remarkable unlikely maiden >>



Ferrari signed up to supply 500 Dino V6 engines

Calling card for Stratos was Munari's 1973 Firestone Rally win



Raffaele Pinto/
Arnaldo Bernacchini
were third in 1976
Sanremo Stratos
1-2-3-4

world title for Lancia (with 94 points to the 69 of Fiat). It was the only world title that season, since the drivers' championship wasn't introduced until 1979.

"We were able to change the situation of the championship within three months," says Fiorio of the first of Lancia's record 10 WRC world titles. "I remember at the RAC I had only one car that was competitive with Sandro Munari. He could have won that event, but all the time I was saying, 'You must go slowly, because if you finish within the first three, we shall be in a position to win the championship.' He finished third because I slowed him down all the time."

"I think my favourite event was when we won the Corsica rally because there we put in maximum effort as I knew that if we won there, we should be world champions. I knew that the car was adapted to that kind of event, and I would say it was one of our best efforts and best results. I was more interested in world championship motorsport than what happens on the commercial side, so I was fighting for motorsport, and I knew with that car that motorsport would be an easy task for us to win."

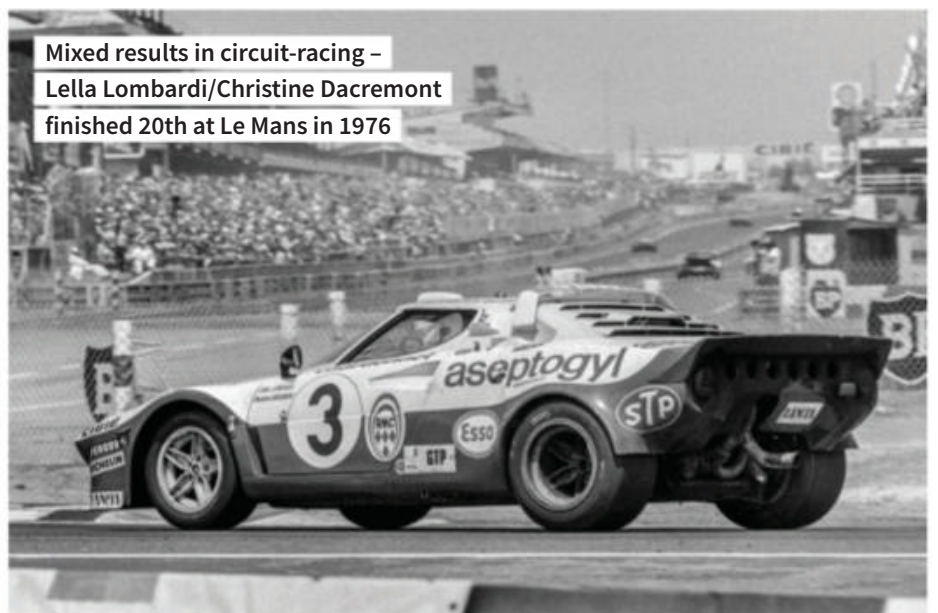
This was just the start of the Stratos domination. Over the next two seasons, Lancia upgraded its engine to a 24-valve version that

could generate 320bhp, only enhancing its power-to-weight-ratio advantage. These were banned by the sport's governing body before the start of the 1978 season. In 1975, Lancia successfully defended its title with the Stratos, now resplendent in Alitalia colours, by winning four rallies. Munari eclipsed the Fiats of Hannu Mikkola and Markku Alen to win the Monte Carlo season opener; Bjorn Waldegard beat Stig Blomqvist on the Swedish snow and took the spoils in Sanremo; and Frenchman Bernard Darniche mastered Corsica's famed rally of 10,000 corners. Once again Lancia had beaten Fiat, this time by 96 points to 61.

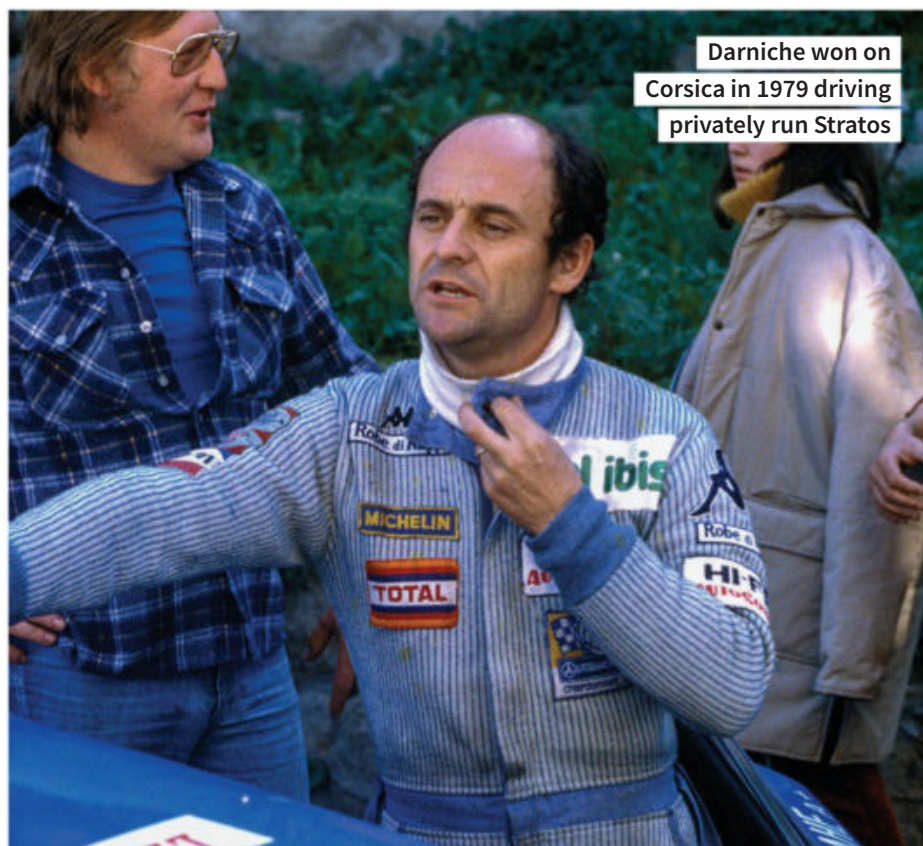
The championship hat-trick arrived in 1976 when the Stratos racked up four more wins, Munari taking three to Waldegard's one. The first was a podium lockout in Monte Carlo as Lancia dominated the tricky Alpine roads, with Munari adding wins in Portugal and Corsica. Waldegard's solitary triumph came after controversial team orders from Fiorio on the Sanremo (see sidebar) as Lancia wrapped up a second 1-2-3. But this was the start of the end of the factory-backed Stratos programme. Lancia's owner, the Fiat Group, shifted its focus to the 131 Abarth to head up its works WRC programme from 1977. It ended a period of Stratos domination that appeared to have much more left in the tank.



Michele Mouton's Stratos in 1978
Monte traffic jam behind parent
company Fiat's 131 Abarths



Mixed results in circuit-racing –
Lella Lombardi/Christine Dacremont
finished 20th at Le Mans in 1976



“I think if Fiat didn’t own Lancia the Stratos would have won five consecutive championships”

“I think if Fiat didn’t own Lancia at that time the Stratos would have won five consecutive championships instead of three,” reckons Fiorio. “In the first championship we had such an advantage on everybody, but the idea from Fiat was to run with a proper car [the Fiat 131], so they stopped the Stratos which still won some world championship rallies as a privately run car after 1976.

“With the Stratos for sure we could have won the following two or three titles, but then I don’t know what the evolution of the other cars would have been. I didn’t know what we could add to the Stratos to make it quicker and what the others would do in order to compete against us. I don’t know how long we could have won the championship, but for sure those two years after 1976 we could have won easily.”

The Stratos remained on the WRC scene through privately run entries, and would continue to win rallies, with Darniche recording its 18th and last triumph on Corsica in 1981, eight years after its WRC debut. Lancia did redevelop the Stratos into a sportscar competing in Group 5 circuit racing events, but it enjoyed limited success.

On the stages is where the Stratos is most fondly remembered. It kicked off Lancia’s WRC success story that led to the development of its 037, which became the last two-wheel-drive car to win the world title in 1983, before it was superseded by the fire-breathing Delta S4, and then the Group A Delta Integrale that won six consecutive championships from 1987-92. And the Stratos can still be seen tackling the world’s toughest roads. Last year Seb Perez helped create new fans of the machine when he took on the Roger Albert Clark Rally driving his ear-splitting 24-valve version.

For Fiorio, who went on to become sporting director at the Ferrari, Ligier and Minardi Formula 1 teams, the Stratos will forever hold a special place in his memory. “During my career that lasted about 40 years in motorsport I worked on so many cars, but this one is very special,” he sighs. “It was the first car after the Fulvia and after the Stratos we made the 037, which was a modern interpretation of this Stratos idea of being mid-engined and very light with good visibility for the drivers and good accessibility to all of the mechanical parts. I would say if you look at the car now, it looks like a car from the 2000s and not the 1970s.”

LANCIA STRATOS TOP WRC MOMENTS



A NEW WINNER ARRIVES 1974 SANREMO

Total confirmation that Lancia had indeed built a real rally weapon arrived when the Stratos took its first World Rally Championship win on its series debut on home soil at the Sanremo Rally. It only received its FIA Group 4 homologation a day before the rally started. Sandro Munari claimed the dream result to ignite Lancia’s title surge.

SLIDING TO VICTORY ON THE SNOW SWEDEN 1975

Bjorn Waldegard took his first WRC win on the snow in Sweden to further underline the Stratos’s credentials.

Waldegard was narrowly trailing compatriot Stig Blomqvist until his Saab 96 suffered an engine failure. Blomqvist was handed a penalty after team-mate Per Eklund gave him an illegal push, which helped Waldegard to victory.



UTTER DOMINATION MONTE CARLO 1976

Sandro Munari recorded the Stratos’s first Monte Carlo Rally win in 1975, but the following season saw the Italian brand utterly dominate the event. Munari once

again took the spoils, heading home team-mates Bjorn Waldegard and Bernard Darniche to lock out the podium. It marked the perfect start to the Stratos’s third and final WRC title.

CONTROVERSIAL STRATOS 1-2 SANREMO 1976

Team orders added spice to the 1976 Sanremo Rally as Sandro Munari and Bjorn Waldegard were locked in an intense battle. Waldegard led by four seconds heading into the final stage before team boss Cesare Fiorio held Waldegard back by 4s to give both drivers an equal fight for the win. Waldegard triumphed by 4s in a Stratos 1-2-3-4.



THE FINAL HURRAH CORSICA 1981

As the WRC hurtled into a new era led by Audi’s revolutionary four-wheel-drive Quattro, the Renault 5 Turbo and Opel Ascona, the Stratos claimed its

18th and final WRC win. Bernard Darniche guided a privately run Stratos to his record sixth win on Corsica’s twisty asphalt roads, just the kind of event for which the car was tailor-made.

RACE CENTRE

WRC

The day a Finnish dream died

Kalle Rovanpera was nailed-on to break his duck on his home event. Then a big crash for the two-time champion gave victory to Sebastien Ogier

TOM HOWARD

PHOTOGRAPHY MCKLEIN



Flying Finnish
finish: Ogier took
little pleasure from
inherited victory



At last it seemed that Finnish rally fans would finally receive what they had craved so much. Not since 2015 has there been a home winner of Rally Finland, and still the wait goes on. Kalle Rovanpera had dominated the stages and tamed changeable weather on what was one of the most demanding editions of the event on record. But once again he was cruelly denied. This time, penultimate stage heartbreak allowed fellow Toyota part-timer Sebastien Ogier to steal the spoils to mount an unlikely World Rally Championship title push.

Rovanpera has now had four attempts to win the fabled 'Gravel Grand Prix'. In 2021 he suffered a crash, the following year he finished second behind an inspired Ott Tanak, and now the past two years he's rolled out of the lead. The 23-year-old two-time world champion has proven himself to be a once-in-a-generation talent who has rewritten the record books, but it appears that he is following in the unfortunate footsteps of another Finnish great. "It's the same case as Juha Kankkunen [four-time world champion] as it took him more than 10 years to win the home event, and it seems to be a bit the same thing on his [Rovanpera's] shoulder,"

summed up Toyota team principal Jari-Matti Latvala – the last local to win Rally Finland.

The collective sigh around the nation as Rovanpera clipped a rock that put him into the trees could almost be felt. Ogier's reaction to clinching an unlikely 61st career victory, and his second in Finland, summed up the mood perfectly. "It [the rally] was a little bit too brutal," sighed the eight-time WRC champion. "I would honestly prefer being second right now, but motorsport is like this sometimes, sometimes it's unfair. I lost the win in Sardinia [this year] with bad luck; today I got it with luck."

Rewind to the start of the week, and the mood was very different. The eve of Rally Finland has an almost Christmas Eve vibe, such is the excitement for one of the jewels of the WRC crown. This year the anticipation levels were higher thanks to the reintroduction of what is arguably rallying's greatest stage – the full length 32.98km roller-coaster ride that is Ouninpohja, its return aided by the introduction of a virtual chicane to slow the 500bhp Rally1 beasts. The GPS in-car warning system alerting crews to slow down to 60km/h for the chicane was, however, widely derided by drivers. While Ouninpohja is known for



producing drama, there was plenty of that before the crews engaged/disengaged their brains to tackle a road that requires the utmost respect and commitment.

Championship leader Thierry Neuville maintained his title of Super Special stage king by winning Thursday's night's mixed surface Harju stage in host city Jyväskylä – where Rovaniemi grew up. It was a short-lived lead for the Hyundai star, with overnight rain and further showers producing incredibly slippery conditions, capable of catching out the best.

WRC2 title contender and rising star Sami Pajari made his Rally1 debut in a fifth Toyota-run GR Yaris, which the Finn labelled as a “moment of truth” for his burgeoning rally career. He was the first to overstep the limits of adhesion. Pajari suffered a half-spin before running wide into a ditch on stage two, Laukaa, damaging his Toyota's rear wing. This made the car challenging to drive for the remaining stages of the loop. “It's really tricky, I don't know where I am,” confessed the bewildered Pajari.

Tanak was next to run off the road, but the 2019 world champion wasn't able to recover it. The rear of his Hyundai stepped out on a left-hander on stage three (Saarikas) before pitching into a roll and

“While Tanak was OK, Jarveoja was airlifted to hospital for precautionary checks”

colliding with a tree. The stage was red-flagged to allow medical crews to attend to Tanak and co-driver Martin Jarveoja. The pair clambered out of their overturned car and, while Tanak was OK, Jarveoja was airlifted to a nearby hospital for precautionary checks, although he was discharged the following day. Hyundai retired the car from the remainder of the rally, meaning Tanak would leave Finland without any championship points. “Martin will take some time to recover, but the plan is for us to be in the car for Greece [next month],” reckoned Tanak.

Tanak's roll occurred moments after team-mate and overnight leader Neuville was outfoxed by the conditions but, luckily for the Belgian, it cost him only 13 seconds when he overshot a junction. At the front, the lead changed hands four times across the »



Classic stage returned.
Rovanpera was chasing
family honour...

morning loop as Toyota trio Ogier, Rovanpera and Elfyn Evans took turns at the top, before Rovanpera won stage five (Ruuhimäki) to head to midday service with a 0.2s advantage over Evans.

Toyota had been on course for a 1-2-3-4, but this symmetry was altered on stage five when Takamoto Katsuta ran slightly wide and clipped a tree, which left his right-rear wheel dragging behind his GR Yaris. It eventually fell off on a road section as he valiantly tried to return to service, which spelled an unfortunate retirement. "The stages were very tricky and the conditions were changing a lot," recounted Katsuta, who rejoined the rally on Saturday. "It was very difficult to judge which corner is slippery and which is not. I decided to push at the beginning of this rally and the target was to get a good result, so I was trying."

Katsuta's exit promoted the Hyundai of Esapekka Lappi to fourth, but the wet weather meant that the afternoon passes of the stages had become incredibly rutted. One such area on Laukaa (stage six) caught the Finn by surprise, sending him into the trees. "The ruts were really deep and I knew that, but I was not expecting that I would bounce off. They were so deep I thought it wasn't possible," explained Lappi. "I couldn't do anything. It's a shame as I think it was possible to fight – beat them, I'm not sure, but fight, yes. It has been the most challenging Rally Finland I have done."

With Rovanpera nosing ahead in the slippery conditions he usually relishes, there was a growing feeling that maybe it would be his time to win. Two-time world champion Marcus Grönholm was convinced. "He has to win this rally," he smiled. "He is young, he has won a lot but not Rally Finland – he will take it."

Two more stage wins added to his pair of fastest times in the



morning helped Rovanpera into an eight-second lead over Evans, with Ogier a further 0.6s back in third. Neuville, unhappy with the handling of his Hyundai, was fourth, 25.5s adrift.

But the story of the day belonged to another young Finn. Since his stage two excursion, the 22-year-old Pajari had steadily begun to show his speed across the afternoon, culminating in a maiden stage victory at only his ninth attempt, when he beat Ogier by 0.5s. To put Pajari's feat into context, it took Rovanpera 25 attempts to claim a maiden WRC stage win. "I thought before the rally that it would be nice but I thought it would be too much, so I was not expecting anything like this – it means quite a lot," grinned Pajari,



Fourmaux flew to
another fine podium
in his M-Sport Puma



Neuville threaded his way to what became second place – and a widening points lead

“I thought before the rally a stage win would be nice, but would be too much. It means quite a lot”

who ended Friday in sixth overall behind the M-Sport Ford Puma of Adrien Fourmaux.

“I would say that he [Pajari] showed that he’s mature enough to handle this kind of situation,” said Toyota sporting director Kaj Lindstrom, who was standing in for Latvala while the Finn competed in the WRC2 class. “It was a difficult start, but he was able to reset and was calm enough to bring the car home like we asked him to. He went out in the afternoon and drove really well. I think the stage win was like the cherry on the cake.”

The challenging conditions and inconsistent grip continued into Saturday. Gregoire Munster had avoided the drama to sit seventh before becoming the latest to visit the scenery when he lost the rear of his M-Sport Puma in stage 11 (Vastila). It resulted in a sizeable accident that required a big fix for a Sunday return.

More drama followed in the next stage, but this time for Rovannerpa’s nearest rival Evans. The Welshman has suffered more than his fair share of misfortune this season, including punctures in Kenya, Portugal and Sardinia. This time his GR Yaris’s driveshaft suddenly failed. Evans was forced to limp through this test and the famous Ouninpohja, losing more than six minutes and dropping to eighth. To rub salt into the wounds, an issue Toyota described as “unusual” had caused further damage to his GR Yaris, resulting in a lengthy repair and a 2m40s penalty for being late out of service, meaning he would miss out on Saturday points. “There’s nothing you can do,” said Evans. “There’s no point in crying about it, you just have to get on with it.”



Sami Pajari won a stage on his Rally1 debut

This allowed Rovannerpa to increase his lead, with Ogier, championship leader Neuville and Fourmaux next up. In truth Saturday was another exhibition from Rovannerpa. Despite seemingly being followed by rain showers, he swept to five wins from six stages to open up a 44.2s lead over Ogier. This dominant run included victories on both passes through the fast, sweeping curves, blind crests and huge jumps of Ouninpohja, the first time he had ever driven this version of the stage. The second run smashed Kris Meeke’s 2016 stage record by 23.9s and was achieved at an eye-watering 84mph average speed. But building the lead was not the only motivation for this push.

Talking about his dad Harri Rovannerpa, he said: “I remember him always saying that he made some really good times there, so of course I needed to be also a bit fast so he is not the only fast one on Ouninpohja in the family. My engineer has already calculated that – of course they didn’t have any chicanes, and I think it was two kilometres longer – if you take two kilometres out, the cars >>



at that time were like 30 or 40 seconds slower than us now.”

Prior to tackling the stage, Neuville described Ouninpohja as “a piece of art, and it’s a proper roller-coaster. When everything goes well, it’s one of the most beautiful moments you can live in a rally car; if it doesn’t work as you want, it is the worst.” It was definitely the latter for the Hyundai man with his ill-handling i20 N: “To be honest, I was afraid all run long. I was happy to be at the finish.” Hyundai ‘turned the car upside down’ throughout the rally to try to find fixes, but little progress was made. Returning team-mate Lappi was also unable to enjoy the stage, suffering a right-front puncture on each pass.

Now only the four Sunday stages stood between Roanpera and a highly anticipated home win. Two more fastest times to start the day took him to 11 stage wins for the event as his lead grew again. And then the party was put on hold for another year as shock engulfed the service park, after a rock on the final corner of stage 19 pitched a helpless Roanpera into a high-speed roll. “It is a quite unbelievable feeling when you do the whole weekend perfectly, the team and everybody has done a great job, and we were so fast and had no moments or issues, all the time we were in control,”



“For the rest of the year it’s still all open and we’ll continue to give our best until the end”

mused a crestfallen Roanpera. “Then something like this happens and you cannot avoid it.”

This was the second incident on the stage to deal a body-blow to Toyota. Minutes earlier Evans, desperate to salvage Super Sunday points, had found the trees on the first corner and his championship bid took another damaging hit. Evans has dropped to fourth in the standings, now 36 points behind. “For the championship, it is looking difficult now and we’ve definitely done a lot of damage this weekend,” reflected Evans. “In the end we had to give it a shot, let’s say, but for the rest of the year it’s still all open and we’ll continue to give our best until the end.”

It left Ogier to inherit the lead and the victory to give Toyota a somewhat subdued win on home soil, with the team still in shock at what had occurred so close to the finish, and now 20 points behind rival Hyundai in the manufacturers’ standings. Visibly saddened by what had happened to Roanpera, Ogier struggled to smile, despite being firmly in the hunt for a record-equalling ninth world title – he’s just 27 points behind Neuville – should he wish to extend his partial campaign by four events. In two weeks’ time, Toyota expects an answer from Ogier about driving more rallies.

The late drama promoted Neuville to second and Fourmaux, who drove smartly throughout given a lack of pre-event testing, to third. Meanwhile, Pajari’s remarkable debut ended with a fourth place. The top six was completed by leading WRC2 duo Oliver Solberg and Latvala.

For Neuville, Finland could be a decisive point in his pursuit of a maiden world title thanks to his 23-point boost over scoreless rivals Tanak and Evans. Given the events that unfolded, his summary was perfect in saying that “this weekend has been a roller-coaster of emotions for everybody”. ❄

SOLBERG SEES OFF
QUESTING LATVALA



Oliver Solberg clinched his third WRC2 victory of the season in what he described as his trickiest Rally Finland to date to open up a 28-point lead in the title race. The Skoda of Solberg and co-driver Elliott Edmondson was never headed across the ‘Gravel Grand Prix’s’ 20 stages, which were largely plagued by challenging and changeable weather conditions.

Solberg’s nearest rival throughout the rally was Toyota WRC team principal Jari-Matti Latvala, who joined the class in a one-off outing driving a GR Yaris Rally2. Solberg led the Finn by 24.1s at the end of Friday, before a spin for Latvala on Ouninpohja allowed Solberg to cruise to victory by 39s, with Lauri Joona in third, 1m13.9s adrift.

“It was probably one of the most tricky rallies of the year because it is so fast and you need to have such high concentration,” enthused Solberg. “You are thinking about the championship, and you need to win and not crash, and the weather was shit, so very tricky. There is still one race to go but what is nice is everyone has to finish every rally now. Nobody can afford another bad rally.”

Latvala enjoyed his rare outing and the ability to challenge one of the WRC’s rising stars. “It was nice,” offered the 39-year-old veteran. “I really enjoyed it. It’s a very good competition, but I was positively surprised about the level I was able to push, because I wasn’t sure how much I can. I have not been driving these cars, but the Rally2 car and especially this Yaris is so easy to get into and get the feeling for it. I knew that Oliver is very strong, and he showed that, but at least we could have a bit of a challenge with him.”

Australian FIA Rally Star pairing Taylor Gill and Daniel Brkic claimed victory in the Junior WRC to close to 12 points adrift of championship leader and fellow FIA Rally Star driver Romet Jurgenson.

RESULTS ROUND 9/13, RALLY FINLAND, 1-4 AUGUST

POS	DRIVER / CO-DRIVER	TEAM / CAR	TIME
1	Sebastien Ogier (FRA) Vincent Landais (FRA)	Toyota Gazoo Racing WRT / Toyota GR Yaris Rally1	2h25m41.9s
2	Thierry Neuville (BEL) Martijn Wydaeghe (BEL)	Hyundai Shell Mobis WRT / Hyundai i20 N Rally1	+40.1s
3	Adrien Fourmaux (FRA) Alexandre Coria (FRA)	M-Sport Ford World Rally Team / Ford Puma Rally1	+1m14.1s
4	Sami Pajari (FIN) Enni Malkonen (FIN)	Toyota Gazoo Racing WRT / Toyota GR Yaris Rally1	+1m54.5s
5	Oliver Solberg (SWE) Elliott Edmondson (GBR)	Toksport WRT / Skoda Fabia RS Rally2	+8m15.5s
6	Jari-Matti Latvala (FIN) Juho Hanninen (FIN)	Toyota Gazoo Racing WRT / Toyota GR Yaris	+8m54.5s
7	Lauri Joona (FIN) Janni Hussi (FIN)	TGS Worldwide Skoda Fabia RS Rally2	+9m29.4s
8	Mikko Heikkila (FIN) Kristian Temonen (FIN)	Step-Five Motorsport Toyota GR Yaris	+9m32.0s
9	Nikolay Gryazin (RUS) Konstantin Aleksandrov (RUS)	DG Sport Competition / Citroen C3 Rally2	+9m51.2s
10	Georg Linnamae (EST) James Morgan (GBR)	RedGrey Toyota GR Yaris	+10m07.0s

OTHERS

41	Takamoto Katsuta (JPN) Aaron Johnston (GBR)	Toyota Gazoo Racing WRT / Toyota GR Yaris Rally1	+51m44.8s
43	Esapekka Lappi (FIN) Janne Ferm (FIN)	Hyundai Shell Mobis WRT / Hyundai i20 N Rally1	+54m57.9s
49	Gregoire Munster (LUX) Louis Louka (BEL)	M-Sport Ford World Rally Team / Ford Puma Rally1	+1h01m52.1s
R	Elfyn Evans (GBR) Scott Martin (GBR)	Toyota Gazoo Racing WRT / Toyota GR Yaris Rally1	SS19-accident
R	Kalle Rovannerpa (FIN) Jonne Halttunen (FIN)	Toyota Gazoo Racing WRT / Toyota GR Yaris Rally1	SS19-accident
R	Ott Tanak (EST) Martin Jarveoja (EST)	Hyundai Shell Mobis WRT / Hyundai i20 N Rally1	SS3-accident

STAGE TIMES

STAGE	FASTEST	LEADER	SECOND
SS1 Harju 1 (2.16 miles)	Neuville 2m46.1s	Neuville	Katsuta +1.1s
SS2 Laukaa 1 (11.16 miles)	Evans 8m35.4s	Ogier	Rovanpera +1.0s
SS3 Saarikas 1 (9.90 miles)	Rovanpera 7m36.4s	Rovanpera	Evans +0.8s
SS4 Myhinpaa 1 (9.64 miles)	Evans 6m54.4s	Evans	Rovanpera +1.2s
SS5 Ruuhimaki 1 (4.82 miles)	Rovanpera 3m52.8s	Rovanpera	Evans +0.2s
SS6 Laukaa 2 (11.16 miles)	Rovanpera 8m26.9s	Rovanpera	Evans +4.7s
SS7 Saarikas 2 (9.90 miles)	Rovanpera 7m39.3s	Rovanpera	Evans +7.8s
SS8 Myhinpaa 2 (9.64 miles)	Neuville 7m00.0s	Rovanpera	Evans +6.5s
SS9 Ruuhimaki 2 (4.82 miles)	Pajari 3m46.7s	Rovanpera	Evans +8.3s
SS10 Harju 2 (1.25 miles)	Ogier 1m36.7s	Rovanpera	Evans +8.0s
SS11 Vastila 1 (11.77 miles)	Rovanpera 8m20.3s	Rovanpera	Evans +10.2s
SS12 Paijala 1 (12.55 miles)	Rovanpera 9m37.5s	Rovanpera	Ogier +21.8s
SS13 Ouninpohja 1 (20.49 miles)	Rovanpera 14m52.6s	Rovanpera	Ogier +21.9s
SS14 Vastila 2 (11.77 miles)	Rovanpera 8m18.9s	Rovanpera	Ogier +28.6s
SS15 Paijala 2 (12.55 miles)	Lappi 9m46.7s	Rovanpera	Ogier +39.4s
SS16 Ouninpohja 2 (20.49 miles)	Rovanpera 14m32.6s	Rovanpera	Ogier +44.2s
SS17 Sahlainen-Moksi 1 (8.87 miles)	Rovanpera 6m33.6s	Rovanpera	Ogier +45.6s
SS18 Laajavuori 1 (2.70 miles)	Rovanpera 2m40.4s	Rovanpera	Ogier +45.8s
SS19 Sahlainen-Moksi 2 (8.87 miles)	Katsuta 6m31.6s	Ogier	Neuville +42.5s
SS20 Laajavuori 2 (5.45 miles)	Katsuta 5m12.5s	Ogier	Neuville +40.1s

NEXT REPORT
Acropolis Rally
12 September issue



DRIVERS' CHAMPIONSHIP

1 Neuville 168; **2** Ogier 141;
3 Tanak 137; **4** Evans 132;
5 Fourmaux 119; **6** Rovannerpa 86;
7 Katsuta 76; **8** Lappi 33; **9** Andreas Mikkelsen 29; **10** Dani Sordo 27.
WRC2 **1** Solberg 111; **2** Pajari 83;
3 Yohan Rossel 71.

MANUFACTURERS' CHAMPIONSHIP

1 Hyundai Shell Mobis WRT 395;
2 Toyota Gazoo Racing WRT 375;
3 M-Sport Ford World Rally Team 207.

Tandy and Jaminet head a Porsche 1-2

**IMSA SPORTSCAR
ROAD AMERICA (USA)
4 AUGUST
ROUND 8/11**

Exactly one year since scoring a breakthrough maiden IMSA SportsCar Championship victory at Road America, Porsche Penske Motorsport went one better this time around as Nick Tandy and Mathieu Jaminet headed the sister Porsche 963 of team-mates Dane Cameron and Felipe Nasr to a resounding 1-2 triumph.

Curiously, the factory cars were outpaced all weekend long by the privateer Proton Competition 963, especially in the hands of Gimmi Bruni, but a combination of consistency, excellent strategy, fortunate timing of the full-course cautions and Jaminet's impressive fuel conservation won through in the end.

The class of the field in terms of pace on the fast and challenging Wisconsin road course, however, were the pair of Wayne Taylor Racing with Andretti Acura ARX-06s. Filipe Albuquerque uncorked a special lap in qualifying to snare pole position by a couple of tenths over team-mate Jordan Taylor, and both cars were equally fast on raceday. Albuquerque and the older Taylor brother, Ricky, dominated much of the two-hour-and-40-minute race, only to be stymied by inopportune timing of a couple of full-course cautions. Taylor posted a brilliant charge from ninth to third in the final 20 minutes, but was unable to find a way past either of the Penske Porsches, so had to settle for a frustrating third.

Younger brother Jordan, meanwhile, fell to the back after an early penalty following contact with Richard Westbrook's JDC-Miller MotorSports Porsche, while co-driver Louis Deletraz slipped off the

road following a late restart and could salvage only eighth.

The Cadillacs were barely in the hunt all weekend. The Action Express team made several bold calls, including replacing Pipo Derani with Jack Aitken after less than a handful of green-flag laps, but Aitken was literally powerless as both Cameron and Ricky Taylor breezed past on the front straight in the closing stages. BMW once again was out of luck, too, although Connor De Phillippi ran well before team-mate Nick Yelloly crashed heavily soon after taking over at the controls.

The winning car overcame a penalty after Tandy inadvertently nerfed Derani into the gravel at Turn 5 on the opening lap, and took the lead for good after 50 laps when the leading Acura pitted for fuel. One or other of the Penske Porsches has finished on the podium in all but one event since the corresponding fixture in 2023, and Nasr and Cameron consequently hold a solid championship lead heading into

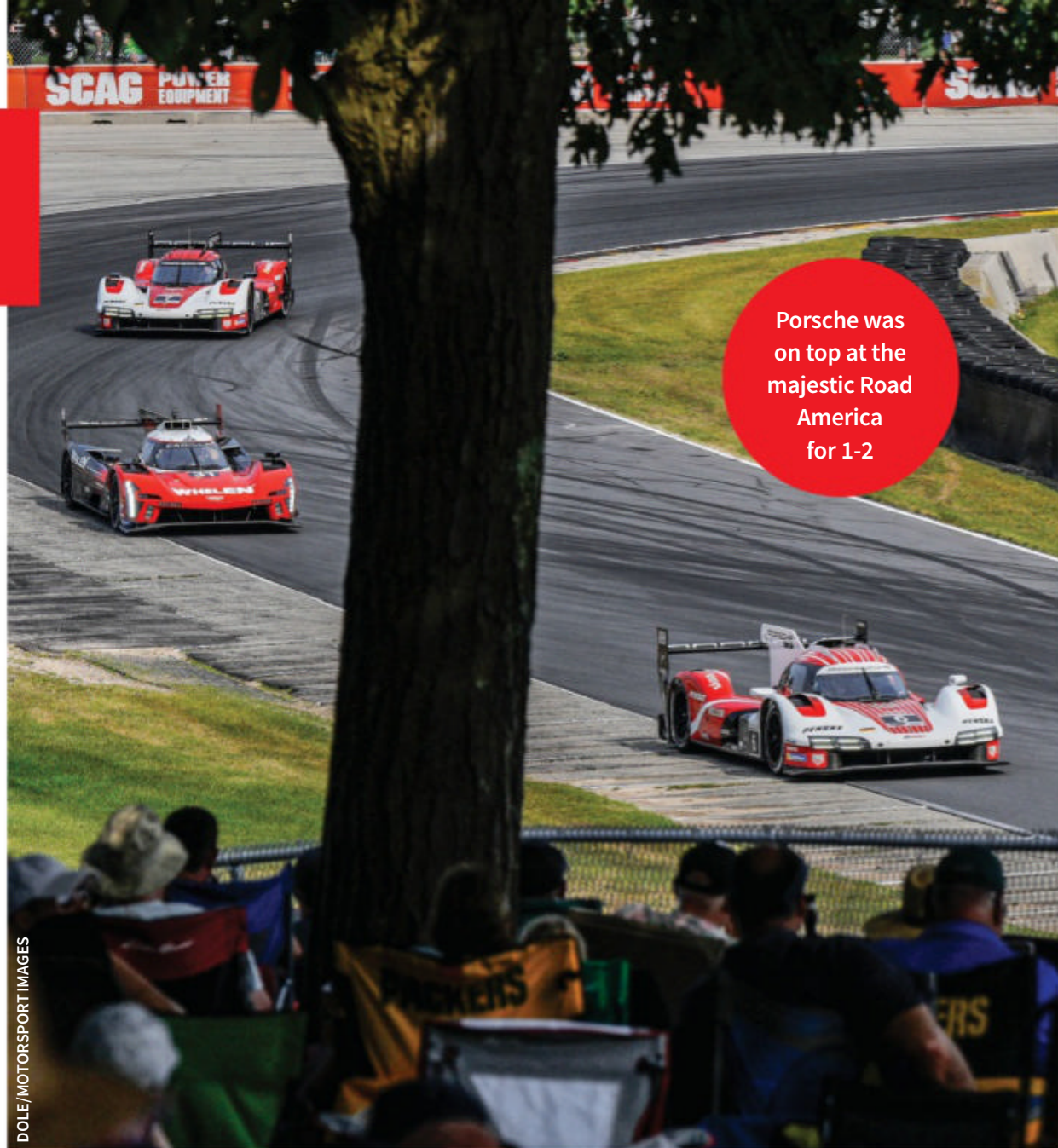
the final two long-distance races at Indianapolis and Road Atlanta.

After not scoring an LMP2 victory since the corresponding event in 2023, Ben Keating put that to rights in resounding fashion. The Texan quickly overtook the similar ORECA of polesitter PJ Hyett (AO Racing) in the opening stint, while Ben Hanley later benefited from a well-timed caution and went on to secure United Autosports USA's first win of the season.

Chevrolet's Corvette Z06 GT3.R clearly held the upper hand in GT qualifying, but it was a different story on Sunday. The Ferrari 296 GT3 of Giacomo Altoe and Daniel Serra blitzed to an emphatic first GTD Pro win for Conquest Racing ahead of the Paul Miller Racing BMW. Ferrari also looked set to claim GTD spoils until a late pitstop for Triarse Competizione left the door open for Patrick Gallagher and Robby Foley to score their first win of the year aboard Turner Motorsport's BMW M4 GT3.

JEREMY SHAW

Porsche was on top at the majestic Road America for 1-2



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GALSTADT/MOTORSPORT IMAGES



LEVITT/MOTORSPORT IMAGES

Lynk & Co pair on top, but Michelisz extends lead

TCR WORLD TOUR
EL PINAR (URY)
4 AUGUST
ROUND 5/7

Lynk & Co Cyan Racing duo Yann Ehrlacher and Thed Bjork each took a win in the TCR World Tour's Uruguayan round at El Pinar, but a pair of fourth places for Hyundai star Norbert Michelisz helped the Hungarian to build his points lead.

Ehrlacher romped to pole ahead of the Hyundais of Mikel Azcona and Michelisz and controlled the first race, which was disrupted by two safety cars. The first was after the two Hondas of Marco Butti and Norberto Fontana collided in a four-wide squabble into Turn 1, and the second when Fontana and Galid Osman collided on lap 11, leaving Osman's Cupra stranded.

After the first restart, Bjork jumped ahead of Michelisz for third at the final hairpin. Soon after the second, the Lynk & Co of Santiago Urrutia dived past Michelisz with contact for fourth at the hairpin, for which Urrutia was given a five-second penalty, dropping him to seventh. Up front, Ehrlacher beat Azcona and Bjork.

The second race featured drama before



Ehrlacher beat Azcona in the opening race

TCR SOUTH AMERICA/CAPA

the start when Ma Qing Hua's Lynk & Co failed to get away on the formation lap, and then a signalling error caused a false start with half the reversed-grid field heading off while the lights were yellow. A restart was convened behind the safety car, with the Peugeot of Pedro Cardoso leading ahead of John Filippi.

Esteban Guerrieri started his Honda third but was forced wide by Urrutia at Turn 1, before the local hero then let team-mate Bjork through. Ehrlacher's race was over early on with damage following contact with Azcona.

Bjork quickly passed Filippi for second and chased down Cardoso at a rapid rate to take the lead. Filippi held on to third for as long as he could before Urrutia and Guerrieri got ahead with seven laps remaining, but the pair didn't have enough time to catch Cardoso, who took an impressive second place.

Post-race, Urrutia was first punished for the contact with Guerrieri, putting his licence points tally up to nine within three events, then later disqualified for activating his anti-lag system during the race.

NEIL HUDSON

ARTA duo do their Civic duty

SUPER GT
FUJI (JPN)
4 AUGUST
ROUND 4/8

Honda scored a breakthrough first victory with its all-new Civic Type R-based GT500 challenger in the fourth round of the Super GT season at Fuji.

ARTA pair Tomoki Nojiri and Nobuharu Matsushita claimed the honour of delivering the first win for the Civic, taking advantage of their relatively light success handicap of 6kg to convert pole position into a straightforward win. They led a 1-2 for Honda, with Naoki

Yamamoto and Tadasuke Makino bringing the Team Kunimitsu Civic home in second. Only three seconds split the two Hondas at the end of the 77-lap contest, despite the Kunimitsu car carrying a 40kg handicap.

The battle for third was fought between two Toyota GR Supra crews, and in the end it was Cerumo pair Hiroaki Ishiura and Toshiki Oyu that came out on top against Rookie Racing duo Nirei Fukuzumi and Kazuya Oshima.

The best finisher on a weekend to forget for Nissan was the Team Impul car of Bertrand Baguette and Kazuki Hiramine in fifth place, while the two works NISMO Zs finished out of the points in 12th and 13th.

The championship-leading #36 TOM'S Toyota once again demonstrated its unrivalled race pace to recover to seventh from 14th on the grid, despite being the only GT500 car carrying a stage two fuel flow restrictor. Sho Tsuboi and Kenta Yamashita now have a four-point lead over Yamamoto and Makino.

JAMIE KLEIN



Relive this race at Motorsport.tv



Nojiri and Matsushita beat fellow Honda men

ISHIHARA/MOTORSPORT IMAGES

WEEKEND WINNERS

IMSA SPORTSCAR

ROAD AMERICA (USA)

- GTP** Nick Tandy/Mathieu Jaminet
Porsche Penske Motorsport (Porsche 963)
- LMP2** Ben Hanley/Ben Keating
United Autosports (ORECA 07)
- GTD Pro** Daniel Serra/Giacomo Altoe
Conquest Racing (Ferrari 296 GT3)
- GTD** Robby Foley/Patrick Gallagher
Turner Motorsport (BMW M4 GT3)

TCR WORLD TOUR

EL PINAR (URY)

- Race 1** Yann Ehrlacher (below)
Cyan Racing (Lynk & Co 03 FL TCR)
- Race 2** Thed Bjork
Cyan Racing (Lynk & Co 03 FL TCR)

SUPER GT

FUJI (JPN)

Tomoki Nojiri/Nobuharu Matsushita
ARTA (Honda Civic Type R-GT)



TCR SOUTH AMERICA/CAPA



For full results visit motorsportstats.com



Bastianini is a bastion of supremacy

MOTOGP
SILVERSTONE (GBR)
4 AUGUST
ROUND 10/20

The MotoGP title fight took another twist as the series reconvened at Silverstone after a three-week summer break. While all eyes were on championship protagonists Francesco Bagnaia and Jorge Martin after the Spaniard's crash at the previous round in Germany, it was Enea Bastianini on the second of the factory Ducatis who stole the show to establish himself as an outside contender for the ultimate prize in motorcycle racing.

At the start of Saturday's sprint, Bastianini settled into second place behind the Pramac Ducati of Martin, who surged into the lead after making a rapid getaway

from fourth on the grid. Bagnaia ran in third position, while polesitter Aleix Espargaro dropped to fourth on the Aprilia.

Bastianini spent the first five laps bidding his time behind Martin, aware that the race would come to him when he picked up his pace. Finally, with half of the 10-lap sprint over, he made his first pass on Martin into Copse, but ran wide and allowed the Pramac bike back through. On lap six, however, he didn't give last year's runner-up a second chance, sliding his way past at Stowe to hit the front. Bastianini went on to win the race by over a second from Martin, and Espargaro joined them on the podium. Bagnaia was running in fourth place at the halfway point of the race and had only just set his fastest lap when he tucked the front end of his Ducati into The Loop, retiring from the race and handing almost all of

his points advantage to Martin.

The grand prix on Sunday in many ways was a carbon copy of the sprint, with Bastianini again taking victory by overtaking a Ducati rider at the end of the race. This time it was Bagnaia who led during the early stages, having had no trouble dispatching the slow-starting Espargaro. Martin slotted into second, while Bastianini dropped to as low as fourth before repassing Espargaro on lap 11 of 20.

On lap 13, Martin made the decisive pass on Bagnaia into Village, with Bastianini also clearing the reigning champion on the following tour. At this stage, the Pramac rider held an advantage of six tenths, but the Italian set a series of rapid laps to close right onto his tail.

With only two laps to go, Martin ran wide into Village and Bastianini pounced on the opportunity to take the lead, before sprinting clear to take the chequered flag by almost two seconds. It was his first victory of the year, and sixth of his career, and makes him a potential threat in the 2024 title fight.

Martin had to be content with second but, with Bagnaia finishing almost four seconds adrift in third, the result catapulted him back to the top of the championship by three points. Marc Marquez salvaged fourth place on his Gresini Ducati at the end of a weekend where he had felt 'lost', while VR46 rider Fabio Di Giannantonio also recovered from a poor qualifying, which left him 10th on

'Lost' Marquez recovered
to take fourth in the GP



ALL PHOTOGRAPHY: GOLD AND GOOSE/MOTORSPORT IMAGES



Martin was second to take over points lead



Another red Ducati!
Bagnaia was third

the grid, to complete an all-Ducati top five. Espargaro slipped from first to sixth at the end of a difficult race, a year on from his remarkable victory here at the British Grand Prix, although he was still the highest-placed non-Ducati rider in the classification. Alex Marquez (Gresini) and Marco Bezzecchi (VR46) ended up seventh and eighth respectively, while GasGas's rookie sensation Pedro Acosta was the top rider from the KTM contingent in ninth. Franco Morbidelli (Pramac) overcame two long-lap penalties for causing a collision in the sprint to take 10th, ensuring all eight Ducati riders finished inside the top 10 for only the second time in MotoGP history. Yamaha's Fabio Quartararo was once again the top finisher on a Japanese bike in 11th, ahead of Jack Miller (KTM) and Maverick Vinales (Aprilia). LCR duo Johann Zarco and Takaki Nakagami scored three points between them for Honda, the Japanese moving up to 15th place after factory HRC rider Luca Marini was penalised for a tyre pressure infringement. A total of four riders failed to make it to the finish. A clutch issue on Brad Binder's KTM brought an early end to the South African's race, while Trackhouse duo Raul Fernandez and Miguel Oliveira retired on the opening lap after Fernandez crashed at Brooklands and took his team-mate down with him. Joan Mir joined the list of retirements on lap 12 when he peeled his Honda into the pits with technical issues.

RACHIT THUKRAL

RESULTS **ROUND 10/20, SILVERSTONE (GBR), 4 AUGUST (20 LAPS – 73.322 MILES)**

POS	RIDER	TEAM	TIME
1	Enea Bastianini (ITA)	Ducati	39m51.879s
2	Jorge Martin (ESP)	Pramac Ducati	+1.931s
3	Francesco Bagnaia (ITA)	Ducati	+5.866s
4	Marc Marquez (ESP)	Gresini Ducati	+6.906s
5	Fabio Di Giannantonio (ITA)	VR46 Ducati	+7.736s
6	Aleix Espargaro (ESP)	Aprilia	+9.514s
7	Alex Marquez (ESP)	Gresini Ducati	+9.741s
8	Marco Bezzecchi (ITA)	VR46 Ducati	+14.016s
9	Pedro Acosta (ESP)	Tech3 KTM	+16.386s
10	Franco Morbidelli (ITA)	Pramac Ducati	+23.609s
11	Fabio Quartararo (FRA)	Yamaha	+24.202s
12	Jack Miller (AUS)	KTM	+25.767s
13	Maverick Vinales (ESP)	Aprilia	+26.751s
14	Johann Zarco (FRA)	LCR Honda	+26.953s
15	Takaaki Nakagami (JPN)	LCR Honda	+37.278s
16	Augusto Fernandez (ESP)	Tech3 KTM	+37.605s
17	Luca Marini (ITA)	Honda	+47.507s
18	Remy Gardner (AUS)	Yamaha	+59.137s
R	Joan Mir (ESP)	Honda	11 laps-mechanical
R	Brad Binder (ZAF)	KTM	0 laps-clutch
R	Raul Fernandez (ESP)	Trackhouse	0 laps-accident
R	Miguel Oliveira (PRT)	Trackhouse	0 laps-accident
NS	Alex Rins (ESP)	Yamaha	-injury

WEEKEND WINNERS

MOTO2
Jake Dixon (below)
Aspar Team (Kalex)

MOTO3
Ivan Ortola
MSI (KTM)



Winner's average speed 110.356mph. Fastest lap Espargaro 1m58.895s, 111.004mph.

QUALIFYING 2 1 Espargaro 1m57.309s; 2 Bagnaia 1m57.517s; 3 Bastianini 1m57.693s; 4 Martin 1m57.734s; 5 A Marquez 1m57.817s; 6 Binder 1m57.950s; 7 M Marquez 1m58.098s; 8 Vinales 1m58.137s; 9 Acosta 1m58.312s; 10 Di Giannantonio 1m58.371s; 11 Miller 1m58.736s; 12 Bezzecchi 1m59.671s.

QUALIFYING 1 A Marquez 1m58.373s; Acosta 1m58.408s; 13 Morbidelli 1m58.599s; 14 R Fernandez 1m58.608s; 15 Oliveira 1m58.655s; 16 Zarco 1m58.730s; 17 A Fernandez 1m59.012s; 18 Quartararo 1m59.092s; 19 Marini 1m59.097s; 20 Mir 1m59.468s; 21 Nakagami 1m59.822s; 22 Gardner 1m59.887s.

SPRINT RACE (10 LAPS – 36.661 MILES)
1 Bastianini 19m49.929s; 2 Martin +1.094s; 3 Espargaro +2.023s; 4 Binder +8.644s; 5 Acosta +8.777s; 6 A Marquez +9.043s; 7 Miller +11.504s; 8 Vinales +11.689s; 9 Di Giannantonio +11.828s; 10 Oliveira +13.328s; 11 Quartararo +15.373s; 12 R Fernandez +18.234s; 13 A Fernandez +18.326s; 14 Zarco +18.492s; 15 Marini +19.050s; 16 Mir +19.674s; 17 Nakagami +29.302s; 18 Gardner +31.070s; R M Marquez 9 laps-accident; R Bagnaia 4 laps-accident; R Bezzecchi 0 laps-accident; R Morbidelli 0 laps-accident.
Winner's average speed 110.913mph. Fastest lap Bagnaia 1m58.260s, 111.600mph.

RIDERS' CHAMPIONSHIP 1 Martin 241; 2 Bagnaia 238; 3 Bastianini 192; 4 M Marquez 179; 5 Vinales 130; 6 Acosta 122; 7 Binder 114; 8 Di Giannantonio 104; 9 Espargaro 99; 10 A Marquez 92.

CONSTRUCTORS' CHAMPIONSHIP 1 Ducati 352; 2 Aprilia 192; 3 KTM 178; 4 Yamaha 53; 5 Honda 26.



Ducati joy for Bastianini's British GP success

NEXT REPORT
Austrian GP
22 August issue

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- Flexible approach to work, able to meet targets in a fast-paced environment.
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Jimmy McRae to make **BRC** return to mark 50 years in rallying

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Ferrari 296 GT3 would
be raced by FF Corse
in British GT for 2025

FF CORSE



FF Corse plans Ferrari British GT return

BRITISH GT

FF Corse is planning to end its five-year absence from the British GT Championship with a return in 2025, Autosport can reveal.

The successful Ferrari Challenge team, which is a Prancing Horse stalwart, will submit an application when the entry window opens and intends to compete with the Ferrari 296 GT3. FF Corse last contested the series at Silverstone in 2020, which was six years after its previous full-time British GT campaign, during which the Ferrari customer squad won at Rockingham.

The Ferrari marque has rarely featured in British GT in recent years, and the 2024

Silverstone 500 was the Italian marque's first appearance since 2020, but the Tempesta team withdrew its entry before qualifying due to a crash in practice.

"It will be great to have a Ferrari back," FF Corse boss Anthony Cheshire, who founded the organisation in 2009, told Autosport. "It's one of the key marques of GT, so it is really important to have a Ferrari in a British series and we want to be the people to bring Ferrari into British GT."

"We want to become a regular competitor and you just need to look at the standard to see it's a great championship, so it would be good to get involved."

The team has won in Ferrari Challenge,

GT Cup and the Britcar Endurance Championship since its Rockingham glory. FF Corse is yet to announce any drivers, but Cheshire is confident that his squad can compete well against British GT regulars.

"We think we can adapt quickly," he said. "We've got some good technical staff, we're very professional and have been running for 15 years, so we don't see being competitive as a problem."

"You've got to work and develop, so we're not expecting to come in straight away and go full tilt at it, we've got to build it up a little, but we see no reason why we can't be competitive once we're out there and been testing."

ED HARDY

First-time Combe GT drivers to get free entry

CASTLE COMBE GT

An initiative offering a free double-header entry to Castle Combe GT Championship newcomers is being put forward in the hope of attracting a bumper grid.

Through the generosity of a GT enthusiast benefactor, up to 10 first-timers will receive a 50% discount on their entry fee for the 26 August meeting, which will be matched by

Castle Combe Racing Club in its endeavour to build the championship for 2025.

"Normally, we would like to spend money rewarding our loyal competitors, but I hope you will understand our decision to accept this one-off offer is intended to bring benefit to everybody," said CCRC chairman Ken Davies.

Grids at the four double-headers to date this season have ranged from a very



STEVE JONES

promising 22 for Easter Monday's opener to nine in June, when some regulars were away. Davies added: "The spectacle of Ferrari, Lamborghini, Porsche, Ginetta and Mosler marques

battling with a TCR Cupra, Caterhams, KTM Evo GT4 and Silhouette Saloons has enthused fans. The ingredients are right, we just need more of them."

MARCUS PYE

TOMLINSONS UNITE AS GINETTA LMP1 RETURNS TO RACING

MASTERS HISTORIC

Fifteen years after he drove the Ginetta-Zytek 09S at the Le Mans 24 Hours, Lawrence Tomlinson returned to racing the car alongside his son Freddie at Donington Park last weekend and they took a double win in Masters Endurance Legends.

Tomlinson Sr and Richard Dean raced the LMP1 machine (below) at Le Mans in 2009 but retired mid-race after a fire. "It's either been in reception at Ginetta or in my shed ever since," said Tomlinson of the car, which spent a long time without an engine. "It's taken a couple of years to get it together. It's such a fantastic car and my eyes are on stalks after driving it."

With a fresh engine built by Bill Gibson and a full restoration carried out by Trevor Foster at Pegasus Classic Engineering, the Tomlinsons used Donington as a shakedown ahead of running the car at the Silverstone Festival at the end of this month.

"I just love driving with Freddie," added Tomlinson Sr of sharing with his son. "He tells me what I'm doing wrong!"

PAUL LAWRENCE



RICHARD STYLES

Cockshoot Cup to join the BRSCC for 2025, retains northern focus

MG COCKSHOOT CUP

The MG Car Club's long-running Cockshoot Cup will be taken on by the British Racing & Sports Car Club from 2025.

The multi-class, northern-based championship, run by the MG club's north-western centre for circuit racing since 1984, was left without a home when the MGCC ceased organising race meetings last year.

Coordinator Paul Goodman managed to arrange a four-weekend calendar of double-headers at various other clubs' events this year, including the Scottish Motor Racing Club's trip to Anglesey last weekend. But the BRSCC move secures the championship's longer-term future, with a five-weekend northern-focused 2025 calendar set to be unveiled soon.

"There were two things that I wanted to secure," said Goodman. "One was that we didn't want to become a national championship, and the other one was

the continued link with the MG Car Club. The permit will go over to BRSCC, they will take the entries and they will take the financial risk. But everybody who competes will have to be a member of the MG Car Club. And the traditional trophies, the Cockshoot Cup itself, remain our property.

"All the Cockshoot drivers are very happy and we've already had enquiries from people who would like to race with us next season. We've also got people who have been on the sidelines because they couldn't commit to the somewhat odd calendar that we ended up with [this year]."

The series will welcome back many former competitors to celebrate its 40th anniversary at Oulton Park next month, where a large on-track entry is also expected. Goodman added: "I think it will be the biggest gathering of MGF Cup cars since the [factory-backed] championship was discontinued."

MARK PAULSON

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NISSAN BACK ON TRACK A Nissan R90CP YHP Group C machine returned to the track for the first time in 33 years at the end of last month. The Le Mans veteran had been in the Nissan Heritage Collection until being acquired by the Ascott Collection and rebuilt by Scott Sport. Aaron Scott gave it a faultless shakedown at Turweston Aerodrome before Ascott owner Xavier Micheron got behind the wheel at Donington Park. The car is now due to race at Paul Ricard later this month in the Peter Auto event. **Photograph by Steve Glendinning**

Harpham continues his fine form to claim Assen Superkart glory

SUPERKARTS

Lee Harpham was on top form at the Dutch Grand Prix for Superkarts last weekend, the Briton scoring three wins at Assen to add to victories at the French and British GP events earlier in the year.

The Harvey Motorsport driver swept into an early lead from pole in the opener but, following a safety-car period, Harpham was hounded by Yannick de Brabander and then Wout Kurstjens. It was Kurstjens who posed

the biggest threat as the gap shrunk when they encountered traffic. Matt Robinson picked up a good third place when de Brabander dropped back.

Race two was another tense affair between Harpham and Kurstjens. The Dutchman took the lead just before half-distance, but a braking issue and then no clutch later dropped him out. Harpham therefore secured victory, with de Brabander getting the better of Robinson.

The finale was red-flagged after a serious crash on the opening lap involving three of the British drivers. Harpham scampered away upon the restart, leaving de Brabander and Andreas Jost to fight over second. But de Brabander lost his brakes and dropped back, while Robinson fought up to third spot before a spin two laps from the flag relegated him to 10th.

John Faulkner took two wins in the 250 National class, but a seized engine in race three lost him the overall victory to Andy Powell. Mike Parr was unbeaten in the 250 Mono division.

GARY JAMES



GINETTA SCHOLARSHIP OPEN

Entries have opened for the 2025 Ginetta Junior scholarship, with one teenager again receiving a fully funded drive in next season's championship. A series of assessments will be held at Blyton Park over 11-13 October to determine the latest winner of the prize. The scholarship is open to anyone who has not competed in car circuit racing and was born between 1 January 2009 and 15 March 2011.

NO MSVT MX-5 SUPERPOLE?

Organisers of the Miata Trophy are considering dropping its superpole qualifying session for next season to switch to a more regular format for the MotorSport Vision Trackdays-run Mazda MX-5 category. "This will allow us to streamline the events, and give teams a little more time to prepare for the start of their first race," explained championship manager Stuart Garland. Currently a short five or 10-minute superpole session is held for the top five drivers from each class from qualifying.

CADILLAC'S SHAKEDOWN

Chris Ward gave David Hart's Cadillac Northstar LMP car a shakedown at Donington Park last week. The Riley & Scott chassis has recently been put back to the 2001 spec in which it competed in the American Le Mans Series with Max Angelelli and Wayne Taylor. It is due to contest Peter Auto events in the future.

CERBERA ON THE PROWL

The TVR Cerbera GT2 that Martin Short and Rob Barff drove in British GT in 2000 returned to racing at Donington Park last weekend in the hands of Ian Stinton. The one-off Cerbera (below) has more recently been used for trackdays in Australia. After Stinton bought it, Luke Kendall, who worked on the car in period, spent two years rebuilding it to its full original specification. The Cerbera is thought to have not raced for 20 years, and Stinton now hopes to also compete with it at the Silverstone Festival later this month.



Jimmy McRae back to the BRC

RALLYING

Five-time British Rally champion Jimmy McRae will celebrate his 50th anniversary in the sport with a return to competition in the Grampian Forest Rally this weekend.

McRae, the father of World Rally champion Colin and 1995 BRC conqueror Alister, will take to the stages in the Ford Escort Mk1 used by fellow Scot Mike Stuart in the 2023 Roger Albert Clark Rally. He will be co-driven by M-Sport's Gail Whyte on his first BRC event in over three decades.

The 80-year-old is the most successful driver in BRC history, claiming the title in 1981, 1982, 1984, 1987 and 1988,

and he will go toe to toe with grandson Max in Scotland.

"I'd thought for a while that it would be nice to do a Scottish event on my 50th year, and it wasn't long before everyone had come together and helped to make it happen for the Grampian," said McRae Sr. "It seemed like the perfect event with the BRC heading there and, with Max doing it as well, it would be extra special."

Max, son of Alister, will

continue his BRC campaign aboard an M-Sport Ford Fiesta Rally2 and is looking forward to competing against his grandfather. "It will be very special to have him compete alongside me, obviously in very different machinery," said Max, whose cousin Hollie (Colin's daughter) presents the TV highlights of the series.

"He always tries to be at as many events [that Max competes in] as he can, and

even manages to make some overseas events. He has been a huge help in the development of my driving. From an early age he was getting me into different cars and learning the basics and so it will be very special to see him back competing in a rally."

McRae Sr won one of his early events, the Arbroath Stages, in 1975, driving some of the stages that are now used in the Grampian.



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Ma7da ace tackles Sports 1000

MA7DA

Two-time Ma7da champion Jonathan Lisseter hopes for more Sports 1000 action after impressing on his series debut during last weekend's 750 Motor Club meeting at Snetterton.

Lisseter, driving a Mittell MC-53, bounced back from an engine failure in testing to take pole during damp qualifying for the opening contest, although a stall on the grid denied him a chance to challenge for victory.

"It was a bit of a surprise," he revealed of his debut pole. "I was

about maybe a second off [his teammates in testing] but I knew there was still time in me. I quite like those mixed conditions from racing the Mazdas and from karts years ago.

"We had an engine change overnight. The best repayment for these boys slogging their guts off was to give them a pole position."

Lisseter climbed from eighth on the grid to third in a rain-affected race two before being hampered by a spin in the finale.

"I managed to get it off the line," he said of his race-two podium. "These



things are so tricky, I had a lot of coaching from these guys. I was trying my hardest, but had rain on the visor. I was a bit tense because I didn't want to throw away the result."

STEVE WHITFIELD

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Brabham followed in the footsteps of friend Turner and raced the BMW

RICHARD STYLES



Ex-F1 driver Brabham makes 116 Trophy debut at Snetterton

116 TROPHY

Ex-Formula 1 driver and 2009 Le Mans 24 Hours winner David Brabham made a surprise appearance in last weekend's 750 Motor Club meeting at Snetterton in the 116 Trophy.

Brabham shared a DTO Motorsport BMW with Ben Willshire, with whom he has worked on a circuit design project.

"We went to India again for a project together when he was with Apex Circuit Design," said Brabham, who has been racing in the GT Cup this year. "He rang me up about six months ago and said, 'Do you fancy doing a race with me?' When I heard Darren Turner had done it, I thought, 'Yeah, a bit of fun.'"

After retiring from Saturday's second sprint race with ABS failure, Brabham took over from Willshire for the final hour of the Trophy enduro. They were one of several crews to drop a lap down during an ill-timed safety car period, and Brabham eventually brought the car home in 12th.

"It's been really good fun – it took a while to get my head around it," he said. "Very different. The main thing is the discipline of not rushing into the corners but getting the car rotated and getting on the power earlier than your brain tells you to. That's the bit that took me a while to get used to. I got better and better as I went on."

STEVE WHITFIELD

Nichols aims for Castle Combe return

HISTORIC F3

Ex-Formula 1 designer Steve Nichols expects to have repaired the Chevron B17 Formula 3 car he upended in the Oulton Park Gold Cup meeting in time to return to action next month.

Nichols, who was chief designer on the dominant 1988 McLaren-Honda MP4/4, has revealed that the ex-Peter Hanson car sustained only

light damage in the startline shunt in the first of the two Historic F3 races at Oulton at the end of last month. Repairs are already in hand, and he is confident of being out for the next round at Castle Combe on 21-22 September.

"The accident was less dramatic than it looked and I got away without any aches and pains," said the 77-year-old, whose F1 design career also included stints at Ferrari,

Sauber and Jaguar. "The chassis was undamaged and there's only a little bit of work to do on the rear suspension and the exhaust manifold."

Longtime racer Nichols, best known for his successes in Classic Formula Ford 2000 aboard a Van Diemen RF82, stables his car with Iain Rowley's Delta Motorsport team, but undertakes the majority of the work himself.

GARY WATKINS

NEW SUBARU HITS THE HILL

Two 800bhp Subarus will contest this weekend's Tin Top Challenge at Shelsley Walsh as Steven Darley runs his new Impreza alongside the existing Legacy of Damien Bradley. Bradley and Darley have shared the Legacy in the past, but Darley will use his new car in the British Hillclimb Championship at select rounds. "I bought the shell in 2009 and I've chipped away at it since then," said Darley of his Impreza. "They are very similar underneath, but the Impreza is about 100kg lighter than Damien's Legacy."

DROUGHT TO DRIVE NASCAR

Ireland's top female racer, Nicole Drought, will taste NASCAR power on Sunday at the Mondello Park Historic Festival. She will drive the 1984 Team Ireland Chevrolet Lumina, which normally resides in the Mondello Park Museum of Motorsport. "I can't wait to get behind the wheel of such an iconic car," said Drought, who is leading the Trackday Championship at the wheel of a Honda Civic alongside Justin Roberts and is due to be racing at Snetterton on Saturday. "I have seen and heard the car before – it sounds awesome."

HERO SCHOLARSHIP OPEN

Entries for the Bob Rutherford Historic Rally Young Navigator scholarship have now opened for the second year. Following in the footsteps of Danielle Pool, this year's winner will be awarded four free entries as a navigator into the Novice Trial and three HERO Challenges. The scheme is open to those aged 14-24 and applications close at the end of August.

MINI FESTIVAL FOR HUNT

Freddie Hunt, son of 1976 Formula 1 champion James, made his first Mini Festival appearance at Brands Hatch last weekend at the wheel of a newly built Alex Brundle-prepared Mini (below), following in the wheeltracks of his father, who began his career racing Minis in the 1960s. Hunt recorded a best result of 10th in the Pre-'66 Mini opener on Sunday before a Paddock Hill Bend gravel excursion dropped him to 14th in race two.



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Recreating a national favourite

It's been a tricky start for the new Clio Cup GB series, but there have already been glimpses of the elements that made its predecessor so popular

STEPHEN LICKORISH

You're not really supposed to have favourites in this job. But, between 2015 and 2019, the Renault UK Clio Cup was regularly my favourite British Touring Car support series to report on. After all, there was always something happening. The racing was invariably close and exciting, the grid was usually packed with rising stars (including the likes of Ash Sutton), and there was always at least a hint of controversy. On top of that came a variety of off-track shenanigans.

I was therefore intrigued when a new Clio Cup GB series for the latest fifth-generation racer was announced last year. Now, we'd been here before. After Renault UK revealed it was ending its support of the old championship for 2020, French-based Renault Sport Racing said that it would step in and ensure a UK Clio Cup would continue. But this proposed series was facing challenging times even before the coronavirus pandemic struck and it was scrapped amid the global turmoil, leaving no Clio Cup in Britain.

That meant that the latest Gen 5 Clio had still yet to race in the UK prior to this year. But MotorSport Vision Trackdays – organiser of popular series such as the Trackday Championship and EnduroKa – wanted to change that and bring the latest French hatchback to these shores, sitting as the top level of its portfolio of categories. Rumours of such a development circulated for months last year, but a 2024 championship was

“It was always going to be tough this year because they had the late start with the cars”

only officially confirmed in November. That relatively late announcement meant the series already faced an uphill struggle to attract drivers, who had more established alternatives on offer.

Further trouble was in store, with demands on the French factories meaning the first car ordered from the UK was not delivered until March. Amid such substantial delays, organisers faced a tricky decision about when the rescheduled opening round should be held.

“Delaying the start of the championship until 2025 was a consideration and, rightly or wrongly, we decided against that approach,” admits championship manager Stuart Garland. “Everything has to start somewhere, and the decision to start the championship and grow it, in favour of delaying and potentially eroding the belief or support, was not an easy one to make.”

At this point in time, it's impossible to say whether that was the correct decision. Essentially, it boils down to which is the lesser of two evils: is having a tiny grid for the opening rounds worse PR than waiting a year and handling the inevitable questions about whether it would then happen at all?

The sight of just three Gen 5 Clios, bolstered by a trio of older models, when the series finally got going in June was a little depressing. Yet those core, traditional aspects of the Clio Cup were still able to shine through. The racing was incredibly close, as it was again at Anglesey last month, when five Gen 5s took part.

The car is clearly a hit with those running it. “The cars are fantastic and a pleasure to run – we've not had any failures,” says Richard Colburn, boss of Westbourne Motorsport, which was a stalwart of the old manufacturer-backed championship. “Even if there's only three cars, it's never easy to win a Clio Cup race! We just need some more cars.”

LDR Performance Tuning chief Lawrence Davey concurs: “I've done a couple of laps in one to try it and see what it's like. They're really nice to drive. It was always going to be tough this year because they had the late start with the cars – every new series is going to be a bit tight.”

Both Colburn and Davey highlight Alpine's assistance as a positive and are optimistic for the future. “Alpine sent their technical manager to Anglesey for the whole weekend; he was advising people on set-up changes,” says Colburn. “It shows the level of support from them. We're excited about next year.”

For MSVT, the task now is to grow numbers. But that is not going to be easy, particularly with a car in a club-level championship that represents a substantial £40,000 investment. “We remain motivated to put the Clio in front of as many people as possible,” Garland says. “Part of this will include working with our current teams, as well as on a scholarship ahead of 2025. This year has been a difficult season for a lot of high-end club championships and, while we were aware of the huge time and effort that bringing Clio Cup back into the UK would require, the task of making it successful is not yet complete.”

He's absolutely right about other series. Numbers in the Mini Challenge JCW series that replaced the Clio Cup on the BTCC bill have noticeably dipped in the past two years. TCR UK has also been in the doldrums, barely scraping into double figures at some events. The BTCC itself has suffered a downturn too.

For Clio Cup GB to succeed, it needs to stand out from the crowd. Its factory-built cars and close racing must be celebrated, while links with successful series in Europe should be established. If that can be done, more fascinating chapters could be added to the UK's Clio Cup story. And that would be a treat for us all: drivers, teams, enthusiasts – and journalists! 🍷

Padmore and Owens are the Mini masters

**BRANDS HATCH
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Not for the first time in recent Mini Festival history, Nick Padmore and Endaf Owens tasted success at Brands Hatch as the Mini Miglia championship served up three typically thrilling races for last weekend's large crowd to enjoy.

Padmore, a double winner at this event last season and in 2018, took victory in the first encounter after indulging in a tight lead battle with 2011 series champion Owens for much of the 21-lap race. Former British Touring Car driver Jeff Smith closed in on the duo as the race concluded, but he was forced to settle for third.

There was a dramatic start to race two when poleman Rupert Deeth and front-row partner Owens tangled as they sprinted away from the line, the contact causing Deeth to spear off into the Paddock barriers. The incident, followed by a separate three-car shunt at Druids, contributed to a race stoppage.

With Owens unable to take his original grid position before the restart, Padmore effectively inherited pole but, on the run up to Druids, he lost out to both Smith and Ian Curley. The Historic Formula 1 ace moved back up to second by lap five before eradicating Smith's three-second lead and then relieving him of first place at Surtees just after half-distance. Owens came close to claiming third after a heroic charge from the back, but Curley snatched the position away at Surtees on the last tour and Kane Astin came within 0.003s of demoting Owens further on the drag to the line.

Owens was handed a grid penalty for his part in the second race startline shunt, and had to fight his way through the field again in the finale. After making numerous passes around the outside of Paddock, a similar



move on race leader Smith on lap nine of 22 took him to the front. Smith briefly took back the advantage, but a wide moment at Druids demoted him to fourth as a magnificent nine-car lead battle developed. Astin and Smith relegated Padmore to fourth at Paddock with two laps remaining, but Owens proved uncatchable, adding to the double he achieved at this event in 2021.

Joe Thompson claimed the spoils in the opening Mini Se7en contest after he overhauled early race pacesetter Ross Billison at Surtees. Poleman Mike Jordan, who had dropped to seventh on the first tour, recovered to second after surviving a brush with Damien Harrington at Paddock. Thompson repeated his success in race two, while Billison was forced to defend his second place from the battling Harrington and Jordan. A treble success looked on for Thompson, after he grabbed the lead away from Harrington early on, but Jordan emerged victorious thanks to sweeping past Thompson on the outside heading down towards Graham Hill Bend just

after the midway point.

For the fourth time in the past five events, Harvey Death claimed the title of being the driver of the 'Fastest Mini in the World' when he steered his 360bhp Cooper S V8 to two wins, although Matthew 'Ollie' Howell, driving Pete Crudgington's Honda K20-powered Austin Mini Seven, provided a strong challenge in race one. Howell fended off Death's challenge until tyre concerns forced him to give best to the Radical-powered car. Death then took a lights-to-flag success in race two.

Jason Smyth took victory in his Van Diemen RF00/JL12 in the first United Formula Ford/Champion of Brands race after coming out on top in a thrilling battle with Andrew Rackstraw's Spectrum KMR, the pair trading the lead on multiple occasions. Series leader Morgan Quinn caught the duo in the closing laps in his RF99 but had to be content with third.

Smyth looked all set to claim a dominant win from pole in race two, only for his engine to cut out "without warning" exiting Clearways on the penultimate lap, helping Porsche Carrera Cup GB star Rackstraw claim victory and the Peter Rogers Trophy. Quinn, who had hounded Rackstraw throughout, took second while GB4 contender Brandon McCaughan emerged from a fraught battle for third in his Van Diemen JL13.

Reigning champion Simon Hill took full advantage of Henry Riley's absence from the pair of Production GTI races to record a "much-needed" double success in his bid to repeat his title. Max Walsh recovered from two slow getaways to claim second in both, each time defeating James Colbourne.

MARK LIBBETER



ALL PHOTOGRAPHY: GARY HAWKINS



Owens (12) had an eventful weekend and shared Miglia spoils with Padmore (56)

WEEKEND WINNERS

MINI MIGLIA

Races 1 & 2 Nick Padmore
Race 3 Endaf Owens

MINI SE7EN

Races 1 & 2 Joe Thompson
Race 3 Mike Jordan

FASTEST MINI IN THE WORLD

Races 1 & 2 Harvey Death (Mini Cooper S V8)

UNITED FORMULA FORD/CHAMPION OF BRANDS

Race 1 Jason Smyth
(Van Diemen RF00/JL12, below)
Race 2 Andrew Rackstraw (Spectrum KMR)

PRODUCTION GTIS

Races 1 & 2 Simon Hill

SANWA TROPHY FOR PRE-'66 MINIS

Race 1 Nathan Heathcote (Cooper S)
Race 2 Joe Ferguson (Cooper S)

MSVR ALL-COMERS

Races 1 & 2 Tim Bishop (Caterham Seven)



For full results visit: tsl-timing.com

PRE-'66 MINIS ENTERTAIN AS SANWA TROPHY RETURNS

Strong grids and household names helped the Sanwa Trophy make a successful return to the Mini Festival programme after an eight-year absence as the 65th anniversary of the Mini was commemorated at Brands Hatch.

Open to pre-'66 Minis and Mini derivatives, the Trophy event attracted more than 30 entrants and, unlike in its previous guise when the race was held as an endurance contest, two short sprint races were run this time instead.

Among the star-studded entry was current British Touring Car racer Adam Morgan, driving the Mini his father Russell debuted in the BTCC-supporting Pre-'66 Touring Car race at Croft the weekend beforehand; former BTCC contenders Jeff Smith and Mike Jordan (the latter in a Swiftune Cooper S), Historic Formula 1 ace Nick Padmore (sharing a Cooper S with Giles Page), and Freddie Hunt, following in the wheeltracks of his father, 1976 F1 champion James, by racing a striking Alex Brundle-prepared car.

In terms of the cars, variation of the classic Mini brand was provided by Neil McArthur, who piloted a Wolseley Hornet that had previously been raced by Nick Swift's father Glyn, and the Austin Mini Van that was having its first race outing, with Nick Paddy and double Mini Miglia champion Bill Sollis sharing driving duties.

Pole position for the first race of the weekend was taken by 2017 British Rallycross champion Nathan Heathcote, a driver used to success at the wheel of his Austin Mini Cooper S in recent seasons, while Tom Bell lined up second in his similar car ahead of Morgan.

Heathcote led away, but the battle for second between Bell and Morgan came to an early end after an attempt by the 11-time BTCC race winner to take the



Ferguson and Bell were spectacular to watch

position at Graham Hill Bend resulted in heavy door-to-door contact that forced both out. The incident helped Heathcote build an unassailable lead over Smith, who came out on top in an exciting four-way battle for the runner-up spot that also involved Jordan, Endaf Owens and Phil Bullen-Brown. Further back, McArthur's race ended when his left-front wheel fell off at Clearways in the closing laps.

Bell handed his car over to regular co-driver Joe Ferguson for the second encounter, while Padmore lined up second alongside Heathcote, after taking over from Page. Padmore leapt into the lead at the start from Ferguson, while Heathcote fell back to fourth. Sollis was demonstrating the Mini Van's potential by battling with Owens over sixth.

Heathcote soon worked his way back to the front and looked set to complete a double victory but, on the penultimate lap, Ferguson made a decisive move at Graham Hill Bend after getting alongside Heathcote on the outside on the climb up Hailwood Hill and into Druids. Third was secured by Morgan, ahead of Smith, who had to take to the Surtees grass on the last tour to avoid a backmarker.

MARK LIBBETER



Heathcote nearly twice topped huge pre-'66 field

Clowes chases Newman (42) and Miles (24) as the trio battled in exciting contests

Sports 1000 thrillers produce three winners

SNETTERTON 750MC 3-4 AUGUST

There were plenty of thrills, spills and first-time winners during last weekend's 750 Motor Club meeting at Snetterton. The highlight was the Sports 1000 contests, which produced three different winners.

After qualifying on pole for his debut (see News), two-time Ma7da champion Jonathan Lisseter stalled his Mittell MC-53 at the start of race one. A squabble between championship leader Ryan Yarrow and fellow Spire GT-3 runner Clint Newman then ended with Yarrow having a 360-degree spin at Riches. Newman therefore went on to claim his first win, while a track-limits penalty demoted Yarrow two places to fourth behind Dan Clowes (Mittell) and Paul Rogers (Spire).

Rich Miles bounced back from a clutch failure on his Spire in qualifying to climb to sixth, and he then gave chase to Newman in race two before inheriting victory at the finish due to Newman being awarded a 10s penalty for jumping the start. Clowes ran third until sliding off the road in slippery conditions, allowing Lisseter to complete the podium, while Yarrow retired early on with gearbox gremlins.

Newman and Miles renewed their battle at the front in race three but they eventually came to blows at Murrays,

with Miles spinning and retiring. Clowes profited to move ahead and he held off Newman to grab his first win of the season, while Yarrow stormed from the back of the grid to third.

Martin West took victory in the first of two Ma7da bouts as his title rivals faltered. Points leader David Hitchin finished a lowly ninth, while closest challenger Ben Powney tumbled down the order after suffering bodywork damage early on. West

prevailed in a three-way battle with Lucas Batt and Eddie Mawer, with Mawer denied the chance to add to his previous Snetterton double when his car spluttered with an air filter issue and retired. Craig Land kept his own title hopes alive by snatching third on the final lap from Martin Shelton, while Batt's driver coach Tom Collier climbed from the back of the grid following gearbox issues in testing to snatch seventh on the last tour.



THREE-WAY HONDA BATTLE UP UNTIL THE FLAG Championship leader Matt Wilkins (86) took two wins in the Type R Trophy, his first proving the most memorable after capitalising on a race-long dice between Don De Graaff (15) and Joe Jessup (28) to catch up and pick off the pair, while his chief title rival Jessup slipped to third after running wide.



Victory for McHugh in
CALM All Porsche Trophy



Rivett came out on top in
Armed Forces Challenge

ALL PHOTOGRAPHY: RICHARD STYLES



Hitchin beat Mawer for
first Ma7da win in race
two and leads the points

A first-lap incident in the sequel resulted in just three racing laps following a safety car restart. Hitchin scored a maiden win by only 0.034s after a drag race to the line with Mawer. West was third, and Collier broke his own lap record during another recovery drive to eighth.

Points leader Matt Wilkins looked on course to win the Type R Trophy opener before an off at Nelson left him scrapping for second with chief rival, Joe Jessup, while Trafford King edged clear to score a maiden triumph. Jessup exchanged first place with Don De Graaff in race two, but ran wide on the penultimate lap and slipped to third. Wilkins then snatched the lead moments later to secure his fifth win of the season.

Wilkins won again in the finale ahead of Jessup and King in what was effectively a non-event. An opening-lap tangle into Riches between De Graaff and Jessup and a further melee behind brought out the safety car. Then another incident at the restart on a greasy track brought the race to an end without a single green-flag lap being completed.

Ex-Formula Ford 1600 racer Alex Rivett scored a maiden victory in the Armed Forces Race Challenge opener at the wheel of a Lotus Elise. Rivett built a 5s lead before a crash for Mike Nash brought out the red flags. Rivett was able to build the advantage once more following the restart to win by

5.9s ahead of Mark White (Honda Civic) and David Russell (BMW E36). White pressured Rivett for most of race two before cruising to a win when the Lotus stopped with a late issue.

Matthew Highcock took over the points lead by edging William Abraham to victory in both 116 Sprint contests. Sharing the track in both races were the 120 Coupe pair of Alan Corfield and Rob Carvell, with Corfield winning on his debut in the opener before losing out to Carvell into Brundle for the final time in the sequel.

There was little to separate Highcock and Mack Priestwood at the front in the early stages of Sunday's 90-minute Trophy enduro, but both were hampered by an untimely safety car period after making their two mandatory stops early in the pit window, and Priestwood was further delayed by a late collision. James Wareing passed Toby O'Reilly once the race resumed in the final half hour before cruising to his first win by 14s, with O'Reilly slipping to third behind Antonio Souza.

Christian Walker built an 8s lead in the Campaign Against Living Miserably All Porsche Trophy opener in his Cayman S but a late ABS issue shuffled him back to third. Instead, Jamie McHugh sailed through to win in his 944 Turbo ahead of Robert Hollyman's 964. McHugh was denied a chance to start from pole in race two after a battery issue caused his car to cut out.

WEEKEND WINNERS

SPORTS 1000/CUP 200

Race 1 Clint Newman (Spire GT-3S)

Race 2 Rich Miles (Spire GT-3)

Race 3 Dan Clowes (Mittell MC-53)

MA7DA

Race 1 Martin West

Race 2 David Hitchin

TYPE R TROPHY

Race 1 Trafford King

Races 2 & 3 Matt Wilkins

ARMED FORCES RACE CHALLENGE

Race 1 Alex Rivett (Lotus Elise)

Race 2 Mark White (Honda Civic Type R)

116 SPRINT TROPHY & 120 COUPE CUP

Race 1 Alan Corfield (120i)

Race 2 Rob Carvell (120i)

116 TROPHY

James Wareing

CALM ALL PORSCHE TROPHY

Race 1 Jamie McHugh (944 Turbo)

Races 2 & 3 Christian Walker (Cayman S)

CLIO SPORT

Races 1 & 2 Justin Griffiths (197)

Race 3 Peter O'Connor (182, below)

BMW CAR CLUB RACING

Race 1 Stuart Pywell (M3)

Race 2 Jason Rees (M3)



For full results visit: tsl-timing.com

Peter Dilnot climbed from fourth to first before spinning during an opening lap squabble with Walker, who avoided a repeat of his ABS issues to win by 8s, with Hollyman again finishing second.

Hollyman made an early pass on Walker to grab the lead of the pitstop race, but Walker later profited from "one of the scariest spins I've ever had" from Hollyman at Hamilton during a late rain shower to take a commanding victory by 15s. Meanwhile, McHugh thoroughly enjoyed a charge from the back of the grid to third.

Justin Griffiths won the first two Clio Sport encounters, but he missed out on a clean sweep by 0.476s to championship rival Peter O'Connor in the finale.

Despite incurring a 5s track-limits penalty, Stuart Pywell won the first BMW Car Club race after Jason Rees slowed from the lead on the final lap. The pair tussled over victory in race two, with Rees surviving an off at Oggies to prevail by 0.7s.

STEVE WHITFIELD



Despite extra time in the pitstops, Wilkins still came out on top in both races

Wilkins takes the double in Masters GT Trophy bouts

DONINGTON PARK
MSVR MASTERS HISTORIC
3-4 AUGUST

The opening Masters GT Trophy race at Donington Park last weekend delivered an absorbing 45-minute contest from an encouraging grid as Craig Wilkins proved the class of the field in his Lamborghini Huracan Super Trofeo.

Wilkins built enough of an early advantage to rejoin from his pitstop still ahead, despite the extra 25-second time stationary applied to the Lamborghinis. But it was never easy for Wilkins, and for most of the second half he had Adam Sharpe on his tail in the Mosler MT900, which had been started well by George Haynes. Initially they ran nose to tail before Wilkins eked out a couple of seconds, only to lose it to traffic in the closing stages. But he kept his cool for a deserved win.

Aaron Scott charged up to third in the Lamborghini started by Neil Glover. They had a 100s pitstop – 25s extra for running a Lamborghini, and a further 15s due to Scott's driver status. He tore up the order from 10th and would have been right with the race winner without the 15s driver penalty.

On Sunday, Wilkins did it all over again and this time had it a little easier. Sharpe and Haynes suffered a self-inflicted setback when they pitted too early and picked up a 25s penalty as a result, allowing Jason McNulty up to second in his Lamborghini.

After 15 years either in storage or on display in the Ginetta factory, the 2009 Le Mans-contesting Ginetta-Zytek 09S made a triumphant return to racing in the hands of Ginetta boss Lawrence Tomlinson and his son Freddie. The Tomlinsons dominated the two Masters Endurance Legends races in the LMP1 car, with young

Freddie showing remarkable pace on his first experience of the famous machine.

Derbyshire drivers topped the Historic Formula 1 contests with David Shaw and Matt Wrigley taking a win apiece from a modest grid. Wrigley should have won both, and was on target in the opener until a driveshaft failed on his Tyrrell 011.

When Steve Hartley retired his McLaren MP4/1 with a fuel issue, Shaw swept ahead in his ex-Alan Jones Williams FW06. Later, with a driveshaft borrowed from Hartley, Wrigley started from the back of the grid and made short work of charging through to take the lead.

The Historic Racing Drivers Club Allstars delivered a mighty field of almost 40 cars and victory for John Davison in his TVR Griffith, before he then starred in the 90-minute Gentlemen Drivers' race that wrapped up the programme.

Davison led for much of the latter race but, in the last 15 minutes, the similar Griffith of John Spiers and Nigel Greensall got ever bigger in his mirrors, and Greensall stormed ahead with a handful of laps left. Davison's cause was not helped by the loss of second gear, which took away engine braking into the chicane.

"It's such a delight driving this car," said Greensall after a typically attacking performance. "John did an amazing job in his opening stint in our car and then I had to balance how much to use the brakes and how long I wanted to go fast!"

No-one had any answer to Sam Tordoff and his very well prepared Ford Falcon in the Pre-'66 Touring Car contest and he won by nearly a minute, despite an additional 30s pitstop penalty due to his driver status. The extra time stationary allowed the



Wrigley was on course for a Racing Legends double but for driveshaft woe

WEEKEND WINNERS

**MASTERS GT TROPHY**

Races 1 & 2 Craig Wilkins
(Lamborghini Huracan Super Trofeo)

MASTERS ENDURANCE LEGENDS

Races 1 & 2 Lawrence Tomlinson/Freddie Tomlinson (Ginetta-Zytek 09S, above)

MASTERS RACING LEGENDS

Race 1 David Shaw (Williams FW06)
Race 2 Matt Wrigley (Tyrrell 011)

HRDC ALLSTARS

John Davison (TVR Griffith, below)

MASTERS GENTLEMEN DRIVERS

John Spiers/Nigel Greensall (TVR Griffith)

MASTERS PRE-'66 TOURING CARS

Sam Tordoff (Ford Falcon)

MASTERS SPORTS CAR LEGENDS

Diogo Ferrao/Martin Stretton (Lola T292)



For full results visit: tsl-timing.com

Jordan team to work on cooling the Falcon's brakes, and Tordoff was able to manage them for the second half of the race, while Greensall tigered up to second in Spiers's Ford Mustang.

Gary Pearson knew that running his Lola T70 Mk3B for an hour at Donington in the Sports Car Legends would be very marginal on fuel, and it actually fell two laps short of the chequered flag. By the time it started to splutter, Pearson had already dropped to second behind the Lola T292 of Diogo Ferrao and Martin Stretton.

Ferrao drove a great opening stint to keep the pressure on Pearson once early leader Dan Eagling ran out of usable gears in his Royale RP17. A slick driver change from Ferrao to Stretton put the open cockpit Lola out ahead of Pearson, and that was how it stayed until the V8 ran dry.

PAUL LAWRENCE



GREENSALL'S BUSY SCHEDULE Nigel Greensall raced four cars at Donington Park over the weekend after a week that started at Sebring in Florida and included testing/coaching at Snetterton, Thruxton and Donington Park. Greensall shared the Toyota Supra GT4 of Harry Barton and then three cars with John Spiers: a Ford Mustang, a McLaren M1B and a TVR Griffith (above). This weekend he will share a Ford Falcon and a McLaren M1B with Richard McAlpine at the Nurburgring Oldtimer event in Germany.



NEW PURCHASE Grahame Tilley made his debut outing in a Ligier JSP3 prototype in the Masters Endurance races at Donington Park, sharing the five-litre car with Sennan Fielding. Tilley, who started racing Formula Fords in the 1970s, has sold the Mercedes GT3 he had been driving and replaced it with the Ligier. "I'm still getting used to it," said Tilley. "We'll probably just do this and the Silverstone Festival this year." The car, run by experienced engineer Alan Mugglestone, took a best result of fifth.



IN MEMORY OF BROWN Fortec boss Richard Dutton ran his Lotus Cortina in memory of Neil Brown in the Pre-'66 Touring Car race at Donington Park. Renowned engine builder Brown died a year ago on 4 August, and Dutton wanted to pay tribute to his great friend and racing partner. With the support of the Brown family, Dutton raced the Cortina he used to share with Brown. "I miss him massively," said Dutton. "It's hard to get motivated to go racing without him. We're just keeping the car out there."

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Smith's Caterham and Butcher's Lambo were among the rivals Watson defeated

Watson withstands GT threats for double delight in his Ferrari

**CASTLE COMBE
CCRC
3 AUGUST**

Doug Watson took both wins in his Ferrari 488 Challenge in the Castle Combe GT Championship last weekend, coping with immense pressure in each race.

Watson lined up on pole next to Josh Smith in his Caterham RLM 260 Edition for race one. Smith attempted to outdrag Watson off the line, but the faster Ferrari was able to defend the position. Smith stuck with Watson throughout the race but lacked the outright pace to make an overtaking move. "He felt like he was right on the back of me and I had to really push the car hard," reckoned Watson. "Then the tyres went off because I pushed it so hard in the first few laps. It was tricky and really hot."

After a clutch slave cylinder was not attached to the engine, Smith was forced to sit out race two, which gave Keith Butcher the chance to challenge for the win in his

Lamborghini Huracan Evo GT3. After early threats of an overtaking move on Watson, the Lamborghini pitted to retire.

Watson then had to fight Dylan Popovic in a Ginetta G50, but smoke out of the rear of the car meant Popovic was also forced out after an impressive passing move on the Ferrari at the Esses, leaving Watson triumphant again.

William Di Claudio in a Peugeot 106 made an astonishing rise from 16th on the grid in the Hot Hatch opener to take the win. Di Claudio took the lead from Sam Stride's Honda Civic on lap seven of 11, and Stride continued to pressure di Claudio hoping to retake the place. A late mistake into Tower, however, meant Stride was robbed of any finishing position and brought out a red flag.

"Unfortunately, we got caught up with a backmarker," said di Claudio of the incident. "I went one way, he went the other, and I managed to get past him and then he locked his brakes and just swapped ends and went off into the tyres."

Stride didn't return to the track in race two and, while di Claudio looked good to repeat his race-one heroics after starting 27th, he was forced to retire the car. Instead, it was Shaun Goverd and his Citroen AX that prevailed.

Nigel Davers (Jedi Mk6) won both Allcomers single-seater races, helped by one too many mistakes by the quicker Nigel Howard in a Dallara F310. Howard was unable to get away from pole in race one after he stalled the car, while in race two Howard was all too keen to get off the line, spinning his wheels and therefore giving the lead to Davers both times.

While Howard managed to retake Davers

WEEKEND WINNERS

CASTLE COMBE GT
Races 1 & 2 Doug Watson
(Ferrari 488 Challenge)


CASTLE COMBE HOT HATCH
Race 1 William di Claudio (Peugeot 106)
Race 2 Shaun Goverd (Citroen AX)

ALLCOMERS SINGLE-SEATERS
Races 1 & 2 Nigel Davers (Jedi Mk6, below)

CASTLE COMBE FF1600
Race 1 Luke Cooper (Swift SC20)
Race 2 Felix Fisher (Ray GR05)

CASTLE COMBE SALOONS
Races 1 & 2 Adam Prebble (Vauxhall Astra)

**NORMAN LACKFORD TROPHY
FOR SPORTS PROTOTYPES**
Races 1 & 2 Andy Fido (Radical SR3 RS)



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

ALL PHOTOGRAPHY: STEVE JONES



Di Claudio stormed from 16th to win in Hot Hatch

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Over the decades, the Goodwood Circuit has become synonymous with racing from a bygone era through its Revival and Members' Meeting events, which showcase the very best of historic machinery.

But nothing in life stands still. And for those events to remain relevant they must embrace the modern age to some extent. For example, all cars in next month's Revival are set to run on sustainable fuels for the first time. It's the same principle off the track too. Goodwood has moved into the sim racing world with its own simulator experience, located quite literally a stone's throw away from the famous 2.4-mile circuit.

Inside the renovated shed sit four state-of-the-art Exsim VR5 Simulators. Featuring direct drive force feedback wheels and motion technology, each one would set you back close to £50,000. In other words, this isn't just a bucket seat with a generic wheel and pedals attached to a bracket. It's a proper bit of kit that aims to replicate the sensation of driving around the real track.

The software used is Assetto Corsa. Although this 2013 release is at the older end of the spectrum compared to some other sims, it does have modding capabilities that make it a popular choice in the sim racing world.

After getting the chance to spend a day driving at the Goodwood Circuit some years ago, we can confirm that the

laser-scanned version in-game is incredibly accurate – as you would expect. The motion rig adds an extra element of realism to the experience.

How the car, on this occasion a McLaren 570S GT4, reacts is also true to the real thing. It only takes a lap or so in my case to get used to the movement, steering and braking. But while getting used to it is one thing, mastering it is quite another. After an initial 10-minute run, I'm left to look through the data of my best lap with Fin

Crawford, simulator operations assistant.

Through the many lines tracing throttle, braking and steering input, it's immediately clear that not only am I braking too early, but that I'm only applying about 60% pressure – a clear area for improvement on my next run.

The in-game data is a crucial aid in improving lap times, and is especially important when a competitive element is factored in and major prizes are on offer. The fastest driver each month – in July's case Ewan Dominick on a 1m19.138s, just over half a second faster than my best – is awarded a BMW M4 on-track experience around the real-life Goodwood Circuit, which would normally cost £450.

Come the end of the year, the 12 fastest drivers are put into a shootout, with the winner earning a passenger ride up the famous Goodwood Hillclimb at the Festival of Speed. It's an incredible incentive and it's easy to see why approximately 1000 people have given it a shot since the scheme started. A new car is also selected every month to add some variety, with August's set to be the Lamborghini Miura.

For those not so interested in outright lap time, the experience still has something to offer. All four rigs are linked together, meaning families or groups of friends can





This is a high-end sim experience that almost fools you into thinking you're on the real Goodwood circuit

MAXCARTER

directly compete against each other on track at the same time. A central screen shows TV-style footage of the live race.

If there was any criticism from the day, it would be that the monitor position was slightly too high for my preference. But given this is a facility that has to cater for people of all shapes and sizes, finding that perfect set-up was always going to be an impossible task.

The adjustable carbon-fibre seat is a snug, comfortable fit that helps to add to the immersion, although it's probably restrictive for people with wider waists.

The whole experience costs £50, which for close to an hour of running puts it in the same bracket as going karting. But unlike karting, there are other considerations that make the Goodwood experience an appealing one.

This includes one-to-one coaching by one of Goodwood's many instructors to help those of any ability get the most from the day, whether they're completely new to sim racing or aiming to top the month's lap time leaderboard. In an age where simulator experiences are on the rise in a growing market, Goodwood has ticked all the right boxes in giving a worthwhile experience to customers at a fair price.

STEFAN MACKLEY



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

GALLOWAY/MOTORSPORTIMAGES

Paul Aron talks motorsport career prospects

Hitech Grand Prix's Paul Aron discusses his chances of winning the 2024 Formula 2 Championship in his rookie season during the latest Autosport Podcast. The Estonian also talks about his motorsport aspirations, his difficulties during the recent British Grand Prix weekend, his split from the Mercedes Driver Academy and how this has affected his push for a Formula 1 seat.



WHAT'S ON

INTERNATIONAL MOTORSPORT

NASCAR Cup Series

Round 23/36

Richmond, USA

11 August

TV Live Premier Sports 2, Sun 2230

NASCAR Truck Series

Round 16/23

Richmond, USA

11 August

TV Live Premier Sports (streaming only), Sun 0000



MILLER/MOTORSPORTIMAGES

UK MOTORSPORT

Silverstone BDC

10 August

AMOC, Bentley Open/Allcomers, FISCAR, John Duff Trophy/Clement Cup, Morgan Challenge, Pre-war, Sportscar Challenge/Morgan Trophy

Knockhill BARC

10-11 August

BTCC, British F4, Legends, Mini Challenge, Porsche Carrera Cup

TV Live ITV4, Sun 1110

Croft HSCC

10-11 August

'70s Roadsports, Classic

FF1600, Guards Trophy, Historic FF1600, Historic FF2000, Historic Roadsports/Historic Touring Cars, Modsports

Donington Park BARC

10-11 August

BEC, Britcar Trophy, British Trucks, International Truck Prix, MG Owners' Club, Mini Challenge Clubsport, Pickups

Livestream via [barc.net](https://www.barc.net)

Snetterton MSVR

10-11 August

Clio Cup GB, EnduroKa, Miata Trophy, MSVT Trackday Championship, MSVT Trackday Trophy

Cadwell Park BRSCC

10-11 August

BMW Compact Cup, CityCar Cup, CNC Heads Sports/Saloons, Evolution Trophy, Fiesta ST150s, Mazda MX-5s (Championship, Clubman,

Supercup), MG Metro Cup

Mondello Park MPSC

10-11 August

FF1600, Future Classics, HRCA (Dublin Grand Prix, Historics, Pre-'55)

Brands Hatch MSVR

11 August

Alfa Romeos, Bell Sport Challenge, Ferrari Club Classic, HRDC Jack Sears Trophy

Grampian Forest Rally

British Rally Championship Round 4/6

Banchory

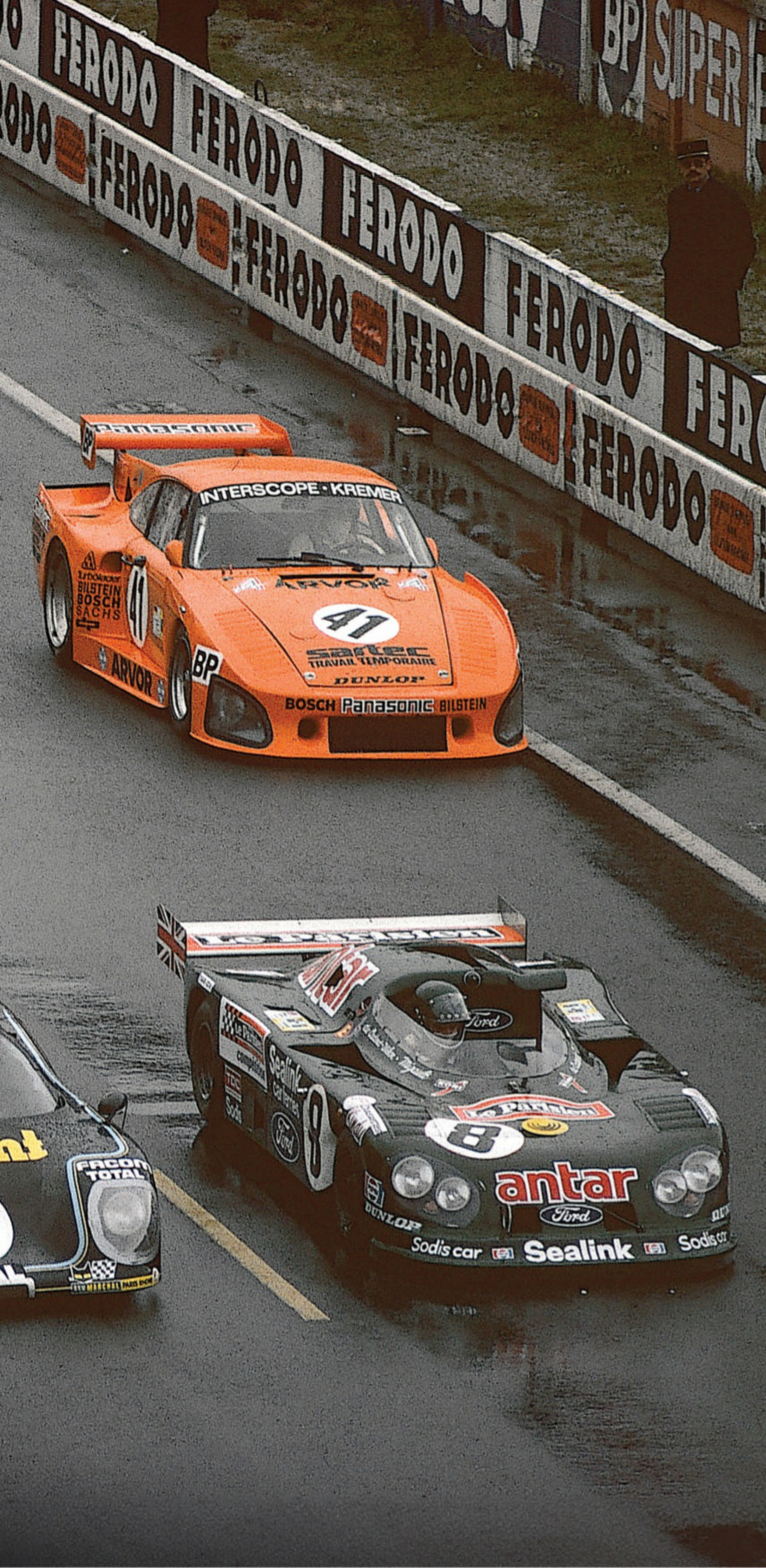
9-10 August

British Hillclimb Championship

Round 10/14

Shelsley Walsh 10-11 August





Final checks and procedures take place in the moments before the start of the 1980 Le Mans 24 Hours. The #16 Jean Rondeau/Jean-Pierre Jaussaud Rondeau M379B sits alongside the #8 De Cadenet Lola LM of Alain de Cadenet/Francois Migault. Behind is the #41 Kremer Racing Porsche 935 of Ted Field/Danny Ongais/Jean-Louis Lafosse, and #12 Dome RL80 shared by Chris Craft and Bob Evans *[there can be few things more quintessentially '80s than sponsorship from a synthesiser manufacturer – ed]*. Next up is the #45 Bob Wollek/Helmut Kelleners Gelo Racing Porsche 935, and the #5 and #7 WM P79/80s of Guy Frequelin/Roger Dorchy and Serge Saulnier/Jean-Louis Bousquet/Denis Morin. This rain-soaked edition of the French enduro is remembered for the unique feat of Jean Rondeau's victory as driver and constructor.

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



IndyCar race winner Charlie Kimball has spent more than two decades in motorsport and traded experiences with numerous team-mates in various series around the globe. Now 39, the British-born American last raced an IndyCar in 2021, but has remained in the paddock as a consultant to various teams and through his work as a broadcaster.

When it comes to selecting a favourite team-mate, an honourable mention goes to six-time champion Scott Dixon. During their seven years together at Chip Ganassi Racing from 2011-17, he learned important lessons from the Kiwi both on and off track, including how to handle the deaths of Dan Wheldon and Justin Wilson.

But Kimball's first pick is the late Christian Bakkerud, with whom he spent the 2005 British Formula 3 season at Carlin Motorsport. Both were series newcomers; Kimball a graduate of Formula Ford, and Dane Bakkerud, three months his elder, remaining with Carlin from Formula BMW. Kimball finished runner-up to fellow Carlin racer Alvaro Parente, while Bakkerud was seventh.

"He was such a great guy," says Kimball, who peaked with third from his 10 Indianapolis 500 starts in 2015. "Really great family, great guy. We ended up going on vacation together a couple of



times. He was fast. Just really enjoyed working with him, learning from him, being team-mates, all the stuff that goes with that when you're, at that point, a 20-year-old kid. It was good times."

The two went their separate ways for 2006, Kimball switching to the F3 Euro Series while Bakkerud remained in the British championship and became a winner at Mugello. He reached GP2 for 2007, but was plagued by back problems and moved away from single-seater racing after 2008 and into a full-time switch to the DTM the following year.

Bakkerud made two starts in the Le Mans 24 Hours with Kolles-run Audi R10s, peaking with ninth in 2009, before opting to retire from racing after the 2010 edition. He was killed in a road car crash in Putney on 10 September 2011, aged 26.

JOEY BARNES



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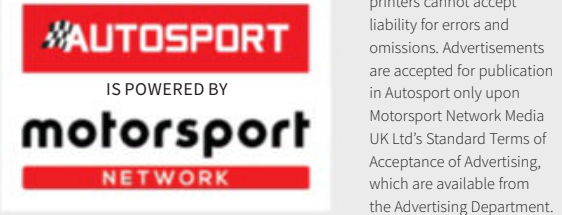
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13/16 FEB 2025	Valencia /E	GTWS	G4	FWS	
27/02 MAR 2025	Aragón /E	GTWS	G4	FWS	PTWS
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21/22 JAN 2025	Portimão /P	RACE [®] TEST
12/13 MAR 2025	Barcelona-Catalunya /E	RACE [®] TEST

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