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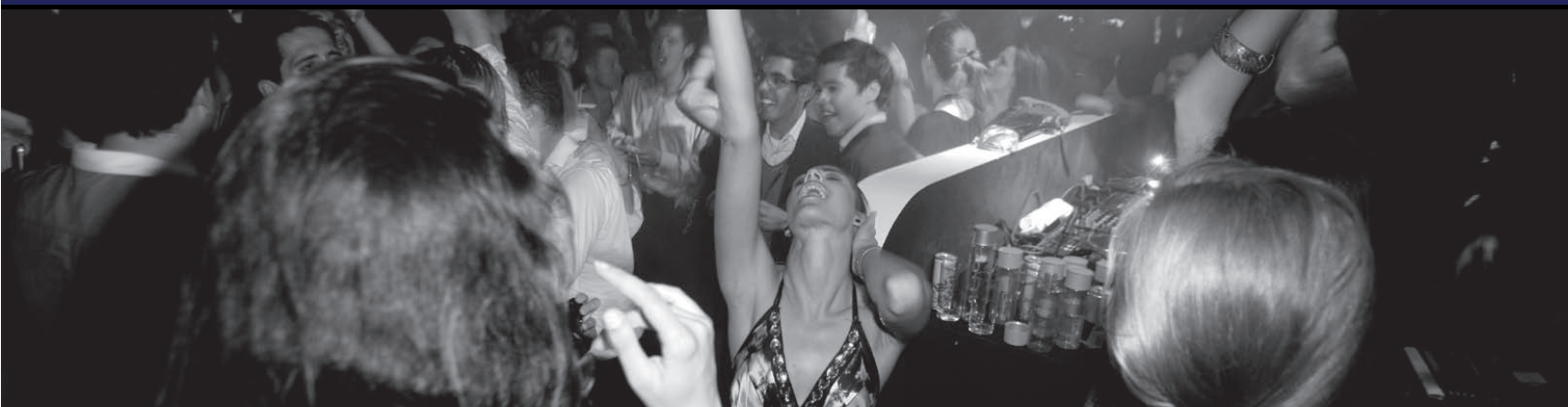
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## POLE POSITION

# How 'Lotus' is a Lotus without Chapman?



**WHEN IS** a Lotus not a Lotus? Is it all in the name, or is it in the DNA? Or, to put it another way, should the starts, points and (maybe one day) wins of Lotus Racing be added to those established by Team Lotus, or be filed under a new entry?

Those at the team think they should be added, and you can't blame them. As far as emotive brands go, there isn't much that can trump Lotus. And team owner

Tony Fernandes has gone about it in the right way, seeking the blessing of the Chapman family for his new endeavour.

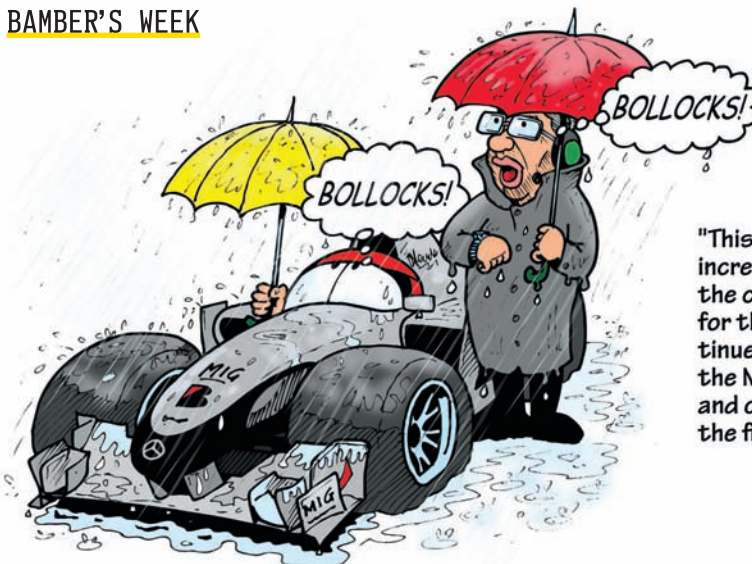
Fernandes seems a genuinely good sort. The whole of the team's 160-strong workforce was invited to last week's launch, and he even name-checked the cleaner during his (over-long) speech.

Is this version of Lotus any further removed from Colin Chapman's legacy than the team of the early 1990s, which crumbled under a pile of debts and poor performance (as Gary Watkins recalls, starting page 34)? Probably not.

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Andrew van de Burgt, editor

## BAMBER'S WEEK



AND YET MORE....

"This week has enabled us to increase our understanding of both the car and the tyres and our focus for the final two tests will be to continue to develop the performance of the MGP WO1 and ensure the team and our drivers are fully prepared for the first race."

ROSS BRAWN





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F1

## That's more like it: Lewis flies for McLaren in testing

Remember this time last year? When Lewis Hamilton was tugging around in testing 3.5 seconds off the pace thanks to a single-diffused McLaren that was in a lower league to its rivals? This year it's turning out to be a totally different story, as Lewis comfortably topped the testing times at Jerez last week.

Photography: Dunbar/LAT



**P10** HOW MCLAREN IS  
STREETS AHEAD OF MERC





# Merc hopes pinned on aero upgrade

Michael Schumacher-led team struggles to match the leading pace at Jerez, but a revamp is due for first race in Bahrain. EDD STRAW reports



Schumacher: will he have to wait for wins?

**M**ercedes' chances of defending the world titles it won last year as Brawn could depend on the effectiveness of upgrades to be introduced for the season-opening Bahrain Grand Prix.

Based on an analysis of lap times from long stints during last week's

Jerez test, the British-based team is believed to be behind pre-season pacesetters Ferrari and McLaren.

Although the car's lap times were similar to those of McLaren and Ferrari, sources indicate that, allowing for different fuel levels, the team is several tenths of a

second off the true pace.

But the team hopes that the major upgrade package planned for the Bahrain GP, which will include modified front wings and diffuser, will allow it to challenge for victories from the start of the season.

Star signing Michael Schumacher has said that he expects Mercedes to be in championship contention, pointing to Ferrari, McLaren and Red Bull as the team's main rivals. But he has hinted that it will be several races into the season before the full potential of Mercedes is unleashed.

## DRIVERS NOT WORRIED

Schumacher's team-mate Nico Rosberg is confident that the team will be strong in the long-term.

Rosberg believes that the major area of required improvement lies in the aerodynamics, but added that the

Bahrain upgrade would provide a significant improvement.

"It's aerodynamic," said Rosberg, "and that's just because we don't have the proper race spec here that we'll have in Bahrain. That will be another big step. That's the main thing now and also through the season."

Although the team is adamant that the fight for the 2009 drivers' and constructors' championships didn't have a knock-on effect on this year's car, it seems that Mercedes is several weeks behind its rivals. Even so, the car's pace at Jerez was good enough to suggest that it will be a top-six contender in Bahrain.

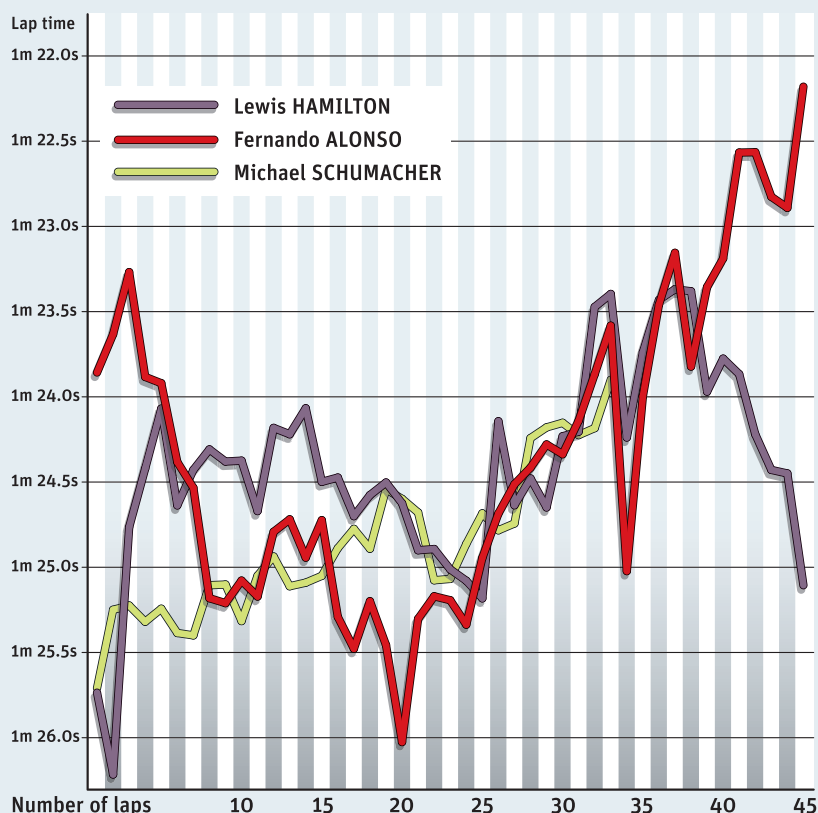
A clear picture of the competitive order has yet to appear. At Jerez the fastest times were around 1.5 seconds off what is expected from a low-fuel run with a 2010 car.



Alonso completed several long runs at Jerez



## MARK HUGHES LONG-RUN ANALYSIS



Taking just the data from these runs, the McLaren and Ferrari appear to have a performance edge over the Mercedes - if we assume they each had fuel enough only to do the number of laps they did. But if the Merc - which did a run 15 laps shorter than its two rivals - was fuelled similarly, then it is right in their ballpark.

Given that Alonso's run was on day

two and Hamilton's on day four, it may be that McLaren tried to simulate the Ferrari run to see how they compared. Hamilton even backs off, presumably to bring the tyres back, on exactly the same lap - 34 - that Alonso had.

Looking at the patterns, the Ferrari is significantly faster than the McLaren for the first six laps, but for the next 18 the McLaren more

than overcomes the initial deficit and pulls away. Between laps 25-33 the pace quickens and they are much the same, but this seems to take it out of the McLaren's tyres more than the Ferrari's and Hamilton is slow for the last eight laps, enabling Alonso to get back ahead, finishing the distance four seconds earlier than Hamilton.

## AUTOSPORT SAYS...

EDD STRAW  
F1 EDITORedd.straw  
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**W**e dubbed the Red Bull RB6 "the car F1 fears" on last week's cover, but a glance at the headline times from Jerez suggests that Ferrari and McLaren have nothing to be scared of. On paper, a fastest time 1.620s off Lewis Hamilton's fastest is way off the pace. The key to that sentence is the phrase 'on paper'. Don't doubt that Red Bull is a contender.

Bafflingly, many expected Adrian Newey to have reinvented the wheel and the laws of aerodynamics with the RB6, and were disappointed with what is largely a refinement of the 2009 RB5. Fact is, Red Bull had the best car of last season and, with aerodynamic regulations unchanged, this car is all about Adrian Newey pushing the concept to an extra degree.

On the surface the car isn't so different, but it's a different story under the skin. The rear has been redesigned, with the notorious double-diffuser concept incorporated from the off, along with a gearbox that has set the bar for compactness to a new high. Newey's mastery of aerodynamics, combined with his obsession for ultra-tight packaging, makes him perfectly qualified to get it working at its best.

The evolutionary RB6 left some nonplussed. But Newey was so far ahead of the game last year that his evolution is another man's revolution. And it has been that way for the past 20 years.



Newey: always ahead of the game

## BEST OF THE REST

Evaluating the outright speed of the new Red Bull at Jerez proved even more difficult than assessing the cars from the other leading teams.

Following the late launch of the RB6, the Milton Keynes-based team is effectively running one test behind the other established squads.

Neither Sebastian Vettel nor Mark Webber completed a representative long run in the dry. The RB6 had several mechanical problems, but by the end of the test Red Bull was happy that its teething problems had been resolved.

Meanwhile, Williams showed vastly improved pace at Jerez compared to its showing at Valencia a week earlier, when a rev-limited Cosworth had held it back.

With the reliability of the powerplant proven, the team

was able to spend more time on set-up work on the final day of the test. The times set by veteran Rubens Barrichello suggest that the car is competitive.

Force India also had an encouraging test with its VJM03, which appeared to be running at a similar pace to the Williams. The team's drivers reported improved low-speed downforce, while the car was regularly fastest in speed traps.

With Renault looking to be just behind those two in the order, and Toro Rosso also completing some promising long runs, it appears that the established teams are again very evenly matched as the beginning of the 2010 season looms.

P17 MARK HUGHES ON  
TESTING FORM SO FAR

## REMEMBER WHEN...



...Newey evolved to the title? Adrian Newey's Williams FW14 was quick but fragile and missed the 1991 title. The '92 evolution, the FW14B, was dominant. That's a pattern he hopes to repeat with the Red Bull RB6



# Virgin bullish despite wing failure

Technical boss proclaims his squad as 'best of the new teams' in F1 after four-day Jerez test outing



**V**irgin is the strongest of Formula 1's new teams, even though it lost a day of testing at Jerez last week after the VR-01's front wing fell off.

That's the view of technical director Nick Wirth, who remained unfazed despite the car's failure on its first public run.

The car completed a combined total of just 24 laps over the first three days of the test. Timo Glock lost the wing at Turn 1 early on the second day, and the team was forced to park the car for 24 hours while modifying and manufacturing a strengthened front-wing mounting.

But on the final day, Lucas di Grassi completed 63 laps and the team reported no major problems.

Wirth told AUTOSPORT: "Even at the times when it looked like we

were less competitive than you saw on the last day, and even with our issues, it looks like we're the best of the new teams because we are the only ones here."

Virgin was due to be joined on track by Lotus, which launched its T127 in London last Friday, at this week's Jerez test, which kicked off yesterday (Wednesday).

## TESTING IN PUBLIC

Virgin's troubles made it the butt of paddock jokes during last week's test, but the team at least won the race between F1's four new teams to get its car on track.

With both Campos Meta 1 and US F1 struggling to make the grid for the start of the season (see p14), the Manor Grand Prix-run team has only missed one pre-season test and is confident

of making significant progress at Jerez this week now that early problems have been resolved.

"To expect that you're going to put something on track that is completely bug-free is unrealistic," said Wirth. "We have experience of debugging sportscars and then going on to great things, and what has happened is no surprise to me."

"What we are not used to is the great public scrutiny. We used to go and test at Sebring on our own, things would go wrong and then it would come right at the first race. We're disappointed with the biggest issue of the test, which was the front-wing mounting, and we reacted to that very hard. We've sorted it out and we understand why it went wrong. It's just a matter of debugging."

## READY FOR BAHRAIN

Virgin plans to introduce a major upgrade package for the season-opening Bahrain Grand Prix, and is

currently working on building up its second car and spares stores.

The team now has a spare gearbox after opting for its own in-house design rather than taking the Xtrac option that is available with its Cosworth engine supply. This will help ensure that Virgin maximises its track time at Jerez this week.

"The car is the launch-spec car and there will be new bits coming," said Wirth. "We have a package planned for Bahrain and will try to bring some of that to testing. We will run some before Bahrain, and some will go straight to the race."

The team is hoping to work on performance at Jerez this week. F1 rookie di Grassi's fastest time at the Spanish venue last week was just under 3.4 seconds off pacesetter Lewis Hamilton's McLaren-Mercedes.

Di Grassi was scheduled to drive on Wednesday, with Glock to take over this afternoon (Thursday).



## THIS WEEK IN F1



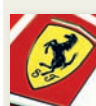
**MERCEDES** Reserve driver Nick Heidfeld will not have the chance to test the Mercedes MGP W01 before the start of the season. Regulations allow him one day of testing if he is needed to race.



**RED BULL** Design chief Adrian Newey has admitted that the aborted switch to Mercedes engines delayed the new RB6. "There was a bit of a delay as we looked at that," said Newey.



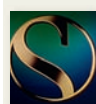
**McLAREN** McLaren has formed a partnership with Canadian company Processia Solutions. The product lifecycle management company will "improve the software associated with the design, build and integration of its F1 cars".



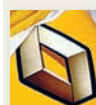
**FERRARI** Fernando Alonso is confident that the new Ferrari F10 will be reliable after testing many parts beyond their usage cycle. "We've pushed some parts to the limit," he said.



**WILLIAMS** Nico Hulkenberg has revealed that the Cosworth engine "feels stronger" than the Toyota powerplants Williams used last year. He is also happy with the unit's reliability.



**SAUBER** Driver Pedro de la Rosa says he is "completely at a loss as to where we are compared to our competitors", even though the team has set headline-grabbing test times.



**RENAULT** Robert Kubica believes that the Renault R30 has a wider performance window than last year's BMW Sauber: "Last year it was no secret that we had a very sensitive car and it was difficult to set up. The Renault is a lot easier."



**FORCE INDIA** Reserve driver Paul di Resta was due to have his first taste of the 2010 Force India at Jerez yesterday (Wednesday). The Scot will also test at Barcelona before the start of the season, during which he will drive in the first free practice session on Fridays.



**TORO ROSSO** Lead driver Sebastien Buemi is impressed with the team's progress in its first season as a full-blown constructor. "There is a bit more stress in the briefings, but it's going smoothly at the moment," said Buemi.



**LOTUS** Italian Gianluca Pisanello has joined the Norfolk-based team as Jarno Trulli's race engineer. Pisanello worked with Trulli in the same role at Toyota from 2006-09.



**CAMPOS** A1GP champion Adam Carroll's hopes of an F1 graduation with the team have faded. The Northern Irishman was a contender for the seat had ex-A1GP series boss Tony Teixeira bought it.



**US F1** Jose Maria Lopez has completed an intensive training course in Austria to prepare for his maiden season in F1. "Now I'm ready physically to face the season," he said.



**VIRGIN** GP2 race winner Alvaro Parente is no longer one of the team's reserve drivers after losing backing from the Portuguese tourist board. Luiz Razia is now the sole reserve driver.

## Q&A

### LUCAS DI GRASSI VIRGIN DRIVER

**You were within four seconds of the pace at Jerez. Does it feel like the car's speed is okay?**

The car has been born with a good base level of performance, although I'm sure that many teams are in front of us at the moment! There are a lot of things that we need to improve yet, but the car has started off well. We need more laps in the dry now.

**How hard will it be for the new teams that start later than Virgin?**

They face everything that we face, but with less time. An F1 car is so complex that every component must be running perfectly. The more you run the more you can fine-tune, so the early start point gives us a good chance of starting in front of those who are missing.

**How well is the team working trackside?**

There are a lot of people with F1 experience in the team. We just need more time and days of practice so that we can work together as a team. We are not far away from this achievement and the team is calm and organised.



### F1 TESTING: JEREZ, FEBRUARY 10-13

POS	DRIVER	CAR	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1	Lewis Hamilton (GB)	McLaren-Mercedes MP4-25	-	-	1m23.985s	1m19.583s
2	Jaime Alguersuari (E)	Toro Rosso-Ferrari STR5	-	-	1m19.919s	1m24.072s
3	Kamui Kobayashi (J)	Sauber-Ferrari C29	1m23.287s	1m19.950s	-	-
4	Sebastien Buemi (CH)	Toro Rosso-Ferrari STR5	1m21.031s	1m20.026s	-	-
5	Adrian Sutil (D)	Force India-Mercedes VJM03	-	-	1m21.428s	1m20.180s
6	Rubens Barrichello (BR)	Williams-Cosworth FW32	-	-	1m23.217s	1m20.341s
7	Robert Kubica (PL)	Renault R30	-	1m22.003s	-	1m20.358s
8	Michael Schumacher (D)	Mercedes MGP W01	-	1m21.083s	-	1m20.613s
9	Jenson Button (GB)	McLaren-Mercedes MP4-25	1m24.947s	1m20.618s	-	-
10	Nico Hulkenberg (D)	Williams-Cosworth FW32	1m22.243s	1m20.629s	-	-
11	Pedro de la Rosa (E)	Sauber-Ferrari C29	-	-	1m20.736s	1m22.134s
12	Vitantonio Liuzzi (I)	Force India-Mercedes VJM03	1m24.968s	1m20.754s	-	-
13	Nico Rosberg (D)	Mercedes MGP W01	1m20.927s	-	1m22.820s	-
14	Sebastian Vettel (D)	Red Bull-Renault RB6	-	-	1m21.783s	1m21.203s
15	Fernando Alonso (E)	Ferrari F10	1m22.895s	1m21.424s	-	-
16	Felipe Massa (BR)	Ferrari F10	-	-	1m21.603s	1m21.486s
17	Vitaly Petrov (RUS)	Renault R30	1m25.440s	-	1m22.000s	-
18	Mark Webber (AUS)	Red Bull-Renault RB6	1m26.502s	1m22.043s	-	-
19	Lucas di Grassi (BR)	Virgin-Cosworth VR-01	-	-	1m37.107s	1m22.912s
20	Timo Glock (D)	Virgin-Cosworth VR-01	1m38.734s	1m29.964s	-	-





## LOTUS IS LAUNCHED

The Lotus T127 – the first new Lotus Formula 1 car since 1994 – was launched in London last Friday.



**P26 IN DEPTH: LOTUS  
F1 LAUNCH ANALYSIS**

# Takeover set to save Campos

GP2 racer Chandhok moves close to F1 graduation as Adrian Campos gets shifted towards the sidelines

**T**he Campos Meta 1 team is set to make it to the grid this season, with Indian Karun Chandhok likely to partner fellow GP2 race winner Bruno Senna.

Majority owner Jose Ramon Carabante is on the verge of taking full control of the team from founder Adrian Campos. The team has battled financial problems in recent months, but Spanish businessman Carabante is working on getting the team's Dallara-Cosworths onto the grid.

Chandhok, who faces competition for the seat from Bertrand Baguette, told AUTOSPORT: "I'm just waiting to see what happens at the moment."

Carabante has engaged ex-Force India team principal Colin Kolles and ex-Red Bull technical director Geoff Willis on a short-term basis.

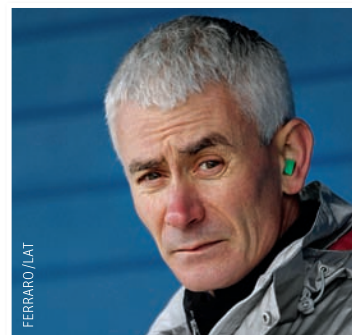
A debut at the Bahrain Grand Prix on March 14 is believed to be a realistic aim, although missing the early races is possible.

The team is unlikely to be ready in time for the final pre-season test

at Barcelona on February 25-28, meaning that the cars will have time only for a brief shakedown before making their race debuts.

Willis attended last week's Jerez test, where he carried a notebook that was seen to feature a job list under the heading 'Dallara Preparations'. It is not clear whether either Kolles or Willis will have a long-term involvement in the team.

Campos, who could retain an involvement in the team, was unavailable for comment.



Spotted at Jerez last week: Geoff Willis

## Tyre U-turn on the cards

**BRIDGESTONE COULD** make a U-turn on its decision to quit Formula 1 at the end of this year.

Team sources believe that Bridgestone may be the only realistic tyre supplier for 2011, despite interest from both Michelin and Hankook.

To keep Bridgestone in

the sport, teams and the FIA would have to offer favourable commercial terms to allow the Japanese manufacturer to continue at a fraction of its current spend – believed to be over \$70 million per year.

Should such a deal be offered, Bridgestone

would consider it at board level, even though it is not actively seeking a return.

Many senior paddock figures believe it is inevitable that Bridgestone will remain in F1, but teams will be wary of reduced investment from the sport's control-tyre supplier.





# Lotus Malaysia move on hold

**LOTUS F1** Racing is in no hurry to relocate its team to Malaysia, team owner Tony Fernandes has stated.

Although the new Formula 1 team is owned and funded by Malaysian companies, Fernandes believes that a move to base the team at the Sepang grand prix circuit would harm its chances of establishing itself as a serious force in the sport. This represents a change of tune for the team, which had hoped to establish a state-of-the-art facility at the home of the Malaysian Grand Prix as an operational hub.

"What the team needs now is stability," said Fernandes. "Of course it would be nice to move to Malaysia as we have a world-class track there, but the important thing

Fairuz Fauzy shook the Lotus down at Silverstone



now is to give the team the best platform from which to perform."

Lotus is currently based at Hingham in Norfolk, in the ex-TOM'S and RTN facility. The design work for the new T127 was conducted in Cologne, Germany, while the aero work was carried out by FondTech, which is based near Bologna in Italy.

The Lotus T127 was scheduled to make its public test debut at Jerez on Wednesday of this week in the hands of test driver Fairuz Fauzy, who shook the car down at Silverstone on February 9. Heikki Kovalainen will then take over today (Thursday) and tomorrow, with Jarno Trulli scheduled to drive on Saturday.

## 60 SECONDS WITH

**MARK SMITH**

Force India design director

The Force India-Mercedes VJM03 hit the track at Jerez last week. After last year's breakthrough season, the team's testing performance suggests it can improve in 2010...



**Did the car perform as you expected on track?**

Yes, the car is pretty much where we hoped it would be. Weight distribution and aero balance is where it should be. It's just the narrower front tyres that have thrown an unknown in, but that has worked out quite well.

**Last year the car's weakness was downforce in slower corners, but your speed-trap figures suggest your aero efficiency is still just as strong as it was in 2009...**

That has been a very topical question for this team because of what we did last year. We haven't drastically changed direction in that respect, and we can see that we still have good straight-line speed. And we're not seeing a big deficit in any other area. So with what we've done so far we're happy with what we're seeing. But until we go to the opening race in Bahrain we won't really know where we are compared to other people.

**How much carryover is there from last year's VJM02?**

The front suspension outboard is different and inboard it's similar. The chassis is different because of the refuelling regulations and the fuel cell and fuel systems are quite different.

**Is the engine installation different?**

The Mercedes engine is the same, although our packaging – the cooling system – is different. Because you're not putting in fresh fuel two or three times a race, the fuel temperature gets higher so you have to consider that. Heat shielding around the engine and gearbox is more advanced and the rear suspension is different.

Mark Smith was talking to AUTOSPORT F1 editor Edd Straw



The French GP could return to Magny-Cours

## Ligier wants to bring back French GP

EX-FORMULA 1 team boss Guy Ligier has thrown his weight behind a bid to revive the French Grand Prix at Magny-Cours.

Ligier, whose eponymous F1 team won nine grands prix, has purchased a 34 per cent stake in the operating company that runs the local authority-owned track. His intention is to restore Magny-Cours to profitability and then explore the possibilities of

bringing back the French GP for the first time since 2008.

Incoming track chairman Serge Saulnier, who is leaving Peugeot Sport to take up his position at Magny-Cours next month, said: "Guy is blue to his heart and believes it is important to bring back the French GP. We do not think that the F1 story is finished for Magny-Cours."

Magny-Cours is the only

viable option for the French GP, according to Saulnier. He suggested that it is "politically and financially almost impossible" for a new circuit to be built near Paris.

Saulnier stressed that the plan "would need backers to make it happen". He said that a 2012 return for the race is possible, although it is not clear whether a slot could be found for the race in the F1 calendar.



Liuzzi tests promising new Force India VJM03



# Stilo: New Snell helmets range

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# MPH Mark Hughes

AUTOSPORT grand prix editor

Want to know who did the business in F1 testing at Jerez last week? Well, there's no point basing it on the times, though they are a useful starting point

**A**ll the evidence suggests that, during testing at Jerez last week, the big teams were brimming their fuel tanks before their long runs and keeping a decent amount on board even for short stints. The fast cars simply weren't fast enough for that not to be the case. Last year's best time around there was a 1m 17.4s, set by both Red Bull and Williams. But last week no one bettered 1m 19.5s. Okay, the 2010 cars, with their bulkier tanks, probably won't be as aerodynamically efficient as their '09 predecessors, and those narrower front tyres won't have as much grip, but you can be fairly

certain they're not going to be 2s per lap slower.

Fernando Alonso and Lewis Hamilton each did runs that would have required around 120kg of fuel. If you made allowance for that, they were in the high 19s-early 20s. But let's assume Ferrari and McLaren had each

brimmed their tanks before those runs, squeezed in around 170kg (the widely expected total capacity of the 2010 cars). In other words, they would still have had 50kg in their tanks when they stopped – around 1.5s-worth. Then the times would make much more sense. Having the

fastest 2010 cars on low fuel capable of lapping in the high 1m17s/low 18s would tally much better, not only with the '09 times but also with the Toro Rosso's speed last week. Sebastien Buemi did the weight-adjusted equivalent of a 1m 19.4s (actually a 1m20.0s, but at the beginning of an eight-lap run) – which would have put the little team's car just a couple of tenths adrift of McLaren and faster than everyone else! Doesn't quite tally, does it? But it does if you have him on genuinely low fuel and Ferrari/McLaren always with at least a spare 50kg.

It all highlights how with the no-refuelling regs, trying to read anything very detailed into the testing times is now next to impossible. And what if Ferrari was carrying an extra 50kg, but McLaren only an extra 40?

But it does figure that the big teams are so intent on getting as much heavy running as possible. Keeping the tyres in shape during the heavy-fuel first stint is going to be their key endeavour this year. They can more or less assume they're going to be fast enough to graduate to Q3, whereas the smaller teams may already have been honing qualifying set-ups in order to enhance their chances of getting out of Q1. So it's likely the big hitters have been experimenting with different weight distributions, suspension set-ups and ride heights to work out what they can get away with. Remember that they

will be qualifying a low-fuel car, but racing a full-tanked one with exactly the same set-up – because no changes are allowed post-qualifying. That imposes tricky compromises. You could optimise your car for qualifying, grab pole, but be in big handling difficulties in the race. At tracks where overtaking is particularly difficult, you might see this as a deliberate choice.

Another reason to maximise high-fuel running will be to work out how far you can trim back your front brake ducts. These extract a high aerodynamic penalty, and the smaller you make them the faster you'll be – but the greater the chances of frying your discs, especially when weighed down by 170kg of fuel. CFD teams will have been looking at ways in which the airflow to the ducts can be accelerated more, to give greater cooling for a given duct size.

Vehicle dynamicists will have been tasked with conjuring suspension geometries that allow as low a ride height as feasible in qualifying – to enhance aero performance – without it grounding out when the car's tanks are filled for the race. Building in a lot of rising rate on the rocker assembly would do that – at the front. But not at the back. Could there be a way of using that variation to good aerodynamic effect?

Here's F1 in its lab-rat phase, trying out little speed secrets for the latest set of demands, then scurrying back to modify and try again. ☒



Williams: how much fuel; how are the brake ducts?

STALEY/LAT

**“Toro Rosso faster than nearly everyone? That doesn't tally”**



NASCAR

# Daytona boss apologises

Track chiefs pledge to investigate potholes that caused over two hours of stoppages during Daytona 500

**D**aytona International Speedway boss Robin Braig has apologised to NASCAR fans, drivers and teams after a pothole in the track delayed Sunday's Daytona 500 for more than two hours, and has promised a full investigation.

The first red flag flew on lap 122 of 200, after John Andretti's car hit the pothole and blew a tyre, sending him into the wall at Turn 2. During the following caution period, after hearing complaints from drivers, track inspectors found a two-inch-deep gouge in the track between Turns 1 and 2, 15 inches long and nine inches wide.

Andretti said: "Evidently, the track came up. I was behind the 48 [Jimmie Johnson], who went through it, and it not only cut my tyre but the inner liner too. At that point I was just a passenger."

Unseasonably cold weather,



coupled with a rain storm that washed out Friday's activities, were blamed for causing the pothole, which had formed in the seam between two layers of asphalt.

The first attempt at sealing the pothole failed and was ripped out. The second proved effective, but the process took one hour and 40 minutes. The cars raced for

a further 35 laps before the race had to be halted again, as the repair had broken up.

The track engineers' final solution, which held until the end of the race, was to use a putty mixture usually used for body filler. The stoppage was shorter, but still took well over half an hour.

"We take full responsibility and

apologise for the lengthy delay," said Braig, who waved away calls for the track to be resurfaced for the first time since 1978. "We don't want to repave [straight away] — paint the whole house when all it needs is a touch-up. We were thinking of repaving in 2012-14. We listen to our sanctioning body and Goodyear, and take on the drivers' and crew chiefs' concerns. We've got engineers all over this."

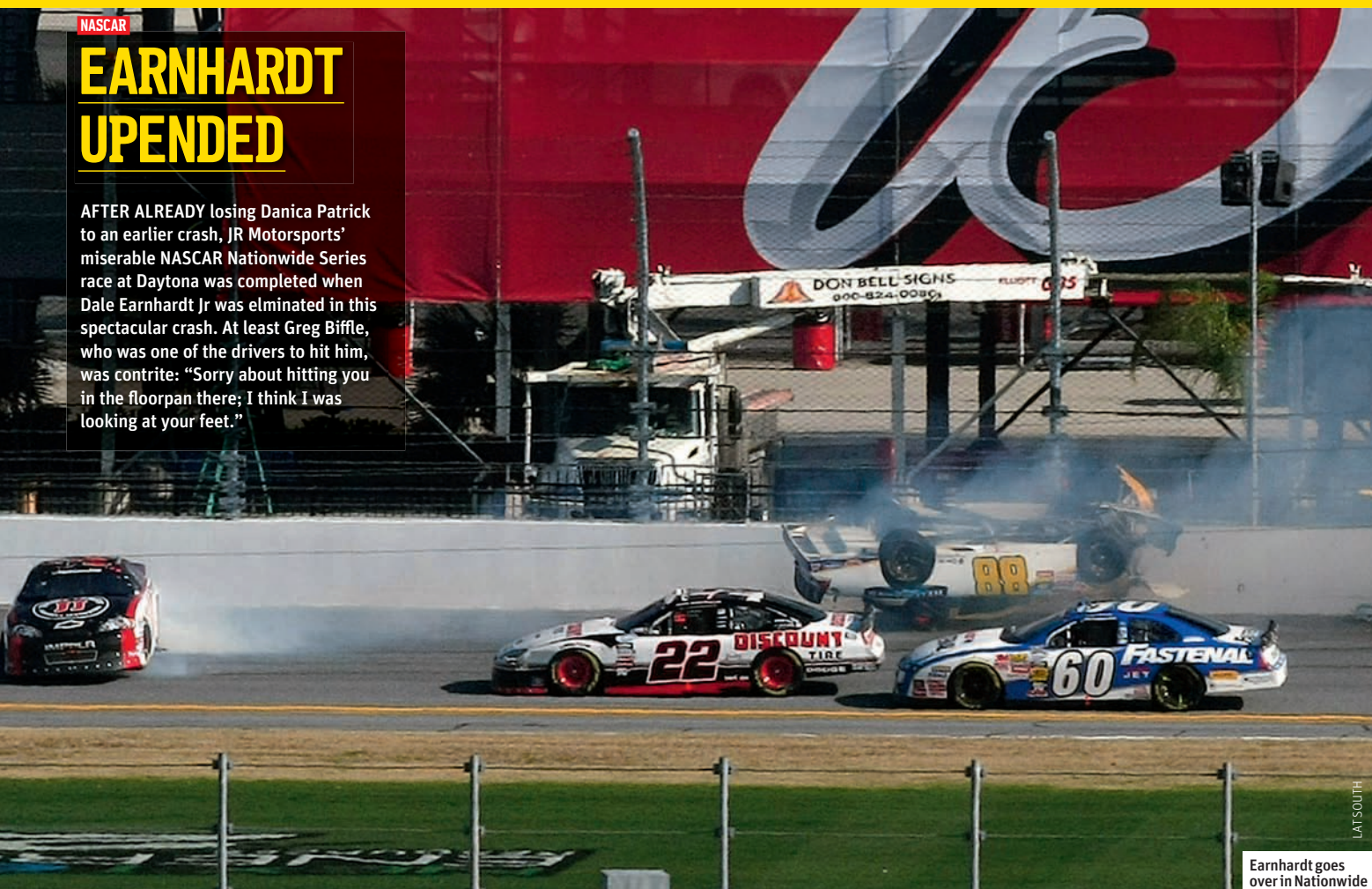
NASCAR star Dale Earnhardt Jr, who has been one of Daytona's fiercest critics over its notoriously bumpy track surface, said: "The hole wasn't an issue that decided the race, but you had to be careful as you'd hear it banging the [chassis] pipes and the trailing arms when you drove over it, which is probably what caused it in the first place."

"This place hasn't been repaved in over 30 years. It's due."

NASCAR

## EARNHARDT UPENDED

AFTER ALREADY losing Danica Patrick to an earlier crash, JR Motorsports' miserable NASCAR Nationwide Series race at Daytona was completed when Dale Earnhardt Jr was eliminated in this spectacular crash. At least Greg Biffle, who was one of the drivers to hit him, was contrite: "Sorry about hitting you in the floorpan there; I think I was looking at your feet."



Earnhardt goes over in Nationwide

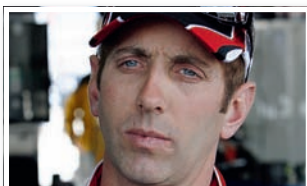


NASCAR

## Biffle denied by rule change

**FORD STAR** Greg Biffle has claimed that NASCAR's new green-white-chequered policy, aimed at ensuring that races do not finish under caution, cost him last Sunday's Daytona 500.

Biffle was leading the race



Biffle questioned rule changes

when a crash at Turn 3 on lap 198 of 200 brought out a yellow instead of the white flag.

NASCAR has this year extended the green-white-chequered rule from one attempt to a maximum of three. Under last year's ruling, had Biffle made it to the start-finish line before the caution was called he would have won the race.

"In a regular green-white-chequered I would have won," he said. "I was thinking, 'Why do I have to be the first candidate after the rule change not to get a win?' I think

maybe two attempts at a green-white-chequered would be better; maybe three is excessive."

NASCAR's other new changes to the 500, including a bigger restrictor plate and modified rear-wing endplate, were praised by Dale Earnhardt Jr, but he too was unsure about the new finishing policy.

"The plate was awesome, I like going faster," said Earnhardt. "But getting used to three green-white-chequers will take time. It's like a basketball game in the last two minutes, where timeouts take over."

NASCAR

## Rough debuts for Patrick and Piquet

**NASCAR CONVERTS** Danica Patrick and Nelson Piquet Jr both had incident-packed debuts in support races to the Daytona 500.

The pair, who clashed in the lower-level ARCA race the previous week, had their first tastes of national-level stock car racing in the Nationwide (Patrick) and Truck series (Piquet).

IndyCar star Patrick retired from Saturday's race after she could not avoid a crash while running near the back of the field, but she has



Patrick (7) got mixed up in Nationwide crash

vowed not to dwell on her struggles.

"I wish I would have run up there at the beginning and felt more comfortable, but I just didn't," she said. "And

that just proves how hard it is out here, and how much there is to learn."

Piquet took a creditable sixth place in the Truck Series race on Friday, and admitted that

he also has a lot to learn after spinning Max Papis out of the race.

"I tried to push him and I don't know if I did it wrong, but I feel really bad," said the Brazilian.

## AUTOSPORT SAYS...

**CHARLES BRADLEY**  
DEPUTY EDITOR

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**W**hat is it with American tracks and surface problems? The pothole at Daytona was reminiscent of Martinsville 2004, when a huge chunk of concrete broke away from the track and wrecked Jeff Gordon's car. Of course, Indianapolis has also had its disasters in this department, with the US Grand Prix debacle of 2005 and a tyre-wear issue in the Brickyard 400 in 2008, which led to the race being run in 10-lap segments.

Daytona's potential pothole disaster at Turn 2 was eventually averted by two things: firstly, it has floodlights, so the race could restart after sunset; secondly, they had body filler, and literally plugged the gap like you would a rotten old Alfa Sud.

As I left the track on Sunday night, I took a good look at the pesky hole, and saw for myself that yet another gouge had been worn into it in the closing stages.

A delicate balance must be achieved now between Daytona retaining its bumpy surface, which makes it so challenging, and such instances being avoided in the future. What it did highlight was the hardy nature of the NASCAR fans, who stuck it out through over two hours of delay, and were rewarded with a great finish to a classic event.

Track repair. "Bear with us, folks"



BTCC

## Neal samples Dynamics Civic



Bad weather scuppered Neal Civic assessment

**MATT NEAL** tested Team Dynamics' heavily-revised Honda Civic at Rockingham last week.

The two-time British Touring Car champion, who is yet to commit to a race seat with the team for 2010, completed around 50 laps in the car.

The Civic features a significantly modified front splitter, more-sculpted wheelarches and new front and rear subframes.

"Unfortunately, because of the bad weather, it's very difficult to actually

feel what's better and what's not," said Neal.

"But I'll drive the car again in a Dunlop tyre test at Thruxton this Friday, so hopefully it will all become a bit clearer then."

● Team principal Steve Neal said that the squad will not switch engine tuners from Neil Brown to Mugen in Japan this year, despite a marketing tie-up being announced between Honda and Dynamics regarding its new Civic Mugen 200 road car.

## MILESTONES

STEWART: 15 DAYTONA WINS



Tony Stewart's victory in last weekend's NASCAR Nationwide race at Daytona was his 15th at the track, bringing him up to third alongside Cale Yarborough on the all-time list. Only Dale Earnhardt and Bobby Allison have more stock-car wins at the track



DTM

# Coulthard keen on another DTM run

Spanish outing in Mercedes C-Class leaves Scot wanting another run in the German tin-top



Ex-F1 star says he's now got the taste for DTM

**T**hirteen-time grand prix winner David Coulthard is hoping for further opportunities to sample DTM machinery after testing a Mercedes C-Class at Montebelco in Spain last week.

The Scot has strong ties with Mercedes. He raced for McLaren in Formula 1 for 10 years, and since leaving the team he has been an ambassador for the marque. He tested for two days alongside regular drivers Paul di Resta, Gary Paffett and Bruno Spengler.

"The reason for the test was curiosity and fun," Coulthard told AUTOSPORT. "My relationship with [Mercedes Motorsport boss] Norbert Haug allowed it to happen. I've definitely got the taste for having another go, but it's too early to say.

"The cars are very impressive in terms of their performance when you compare them with other categories outside of F1."

AUTOSPORT understands that Mercedes is considering offering Coulthard a drive in the series, although it is unlikely that he would

be offered one of the marque's four latest cars. Paffett, Di Resta and Spengler have all been confirmed, while Ralf Schumacher, who missed the Montebelco test after having an operation on a shoulder injury sustained while skiing, is expected to remain in an up-to-date car. This means that Mercedes would have to place Coulthard in an 'old-spec' car for his first season, as it did with Schumacher in 2008.

Mercedes currently runs four old-spec cars, with Susie Stoddart, Jamie Green and Maro Engel all set to return. But Mathias Lauda could make way for Coulthard.

The Scot admitted that he was "curious to see what other opportunities" there might be for a second test, although at the moment one is not planned.

"It's good to be back on track and nice to be working closely with an engineer again. After all, that was my life for 20 years," said Coulthard, who last raced a roofed car at Le Mans in 1993. "It was a good opportunity and I was impressed."



DC (r) and Mika Hakkinen visited DTM races in '09

## Q&A

### DAVID COULTHARD EX-GRAND PRIX DRIVER

#### What was your impression of the car?

The car has good medium and high-speed balance and is very impressive. I probably hadn't driven a car in anger for a year – although I have done F1 demo runs – and that probably helped me not to expect too much in

the braking zones. You probably have half of the braking pressure that you do in F1.

#### Did you enjoy it?

I felt really talented! You can slide it through high-speed corners whereas in F1 you can never get crossed up like that. With the DTM



COATES/LAT

car you can powerslide it through the high-speed turns. You don't see that in F1 unless you are heading for a crash.



## IN BRIEF



### FULL-TIME RIDE FOR MOREAU

Former Le Mans Series GT1 champion Guillaume Moreau is stepping up to the prototype ranks full-time in 2010 with the OAK LMP2 squad. The 26-year-old, who raced for the French team in the Le Mans 24 Hours last year, will partner Matthieu Lahaye in the team's lead Pescarolo-Judd 01 in the Le Mans Series this year.

### FIA VETERAN QUILTS

Long-time FIA rules and homologation expert Gabriele Cadringer has left the governing body after nearly 30 years. The Frenchman was Formula 1 technical delegate for 10 years and had been president of the Manufacturers' Commission since 1993.

### MORE CARS FOR LMP CHALLENGE

Six entries are expected in the LMP Challenge class at the American Le Mans Series opener at Sebring next month. Grand-Am team Level 5 Motorsports will field a car for Christophe Bouchut and team mate Scott Tucker.

### BREEN GETS PORSCHE RIDE

Irish driver Niall Breen will move into the Porsche Supercup this year after being signed to the German manufacturer's junior development programme. The 23-year-old contested most of the 2008 F3 Euro Series before being sidelined by budgetary problems.

### TREE INTERRUPTS BATHURST 12

Last weekend's Bathurst 12 Hours was halted for over an hour after a tree was blown over by strong winds and blocked the track at Forrests Elbow.

### LARINI'S LMS CHANCE

Nicola Larini, who has parted company with the Chevrolet World Touring Car Championship squad, could find a berth with the CRS Racing Ferrari team in the Le Mans Series. The Italian will test the British squad's number one Ferrari 430 GT at the official LMS test at Paul Ricard next month.



## SPORTSCARS

# Porsche to use Williams-built KERS

PORSCHE'S HYBRID Nurburgring 24 Hours contender uses advanced racing technology developed by the Williams Formula 1 team.

The new Porsche 911 GT3-R Hybrid, which will be launched at next month's Geneva Motor Show, uses the flywheel

energy storage system developed by Williams Hybrid Power. This was part of the Williams KERS (kinetic energy recovery system) that ultimately never raced in F1.

Porsche describes the new car, which will take part in a number of VLN



Porsche's new car will tackle the 'Ring

long-distance races on the Nurburgring-Nordschleife as well as the 24 Hours, as a "racing laboratory" to develop hybrid systems for future road-going sportscars. The 911 GT3-R could be a precursor to a Porsche LMP1 hybrid: draft rules for the 2011 Le Mans 24 Hours allow flywheel storage systems, unlike the existing rules for hybrids.

Ian Foley, managing director of Williams Hybrid Power, said: "We are delighted that our technology has been adopted by one of the world's most prestigious manufacturers."

The GT3-R Hybrid, which is based on a GT2-spec 911 GT3-RSR, has a 60 watt motor/generator unit on each front axle. These charge the Williams-developed electromechanical flywheel, which replaces a battery found on other hybrids, every time the brakes are applied. This can then be discharged in bursts of between six and eight seconds.

## LE MANS

# Wallace comeback with RML

**SPORTSCAR LEGEND** Andy Wallace is set to return to the Le Mans 24 Hours after a year away.

The veteran, who won Le Mans in 1988 with Jaguar, looks certain to race for the RML prototype squad. Wallace is due to sign today (Thursday, February 18) to share the team's Lola LMP2 coupe with Tommy Erdos and Mike Newton, his partners at Le Mans in 2006-08.

Phil Barker, who runs the RML sportscar programme, said: "It is our intention to have him in the car at Paul Ricard [LMS opener] and Le

Mans, and he could end up being on hand for all the races if we decide we need a third driver."

Wallace, who is on course to contest the 24 Hours for the 21st time, said: "It will be fantastic to get back to Le Mans with a great team."

RML is swapping from AER/Mazda turbo engines in 2009 to HPD V8s.



Wallace (r) will once again team up with Erdos (l)

## LE MANS

# Rebellion LMP1 for Smith



Smith is targeting best of the rest at Le Mans

**FORMER LE MANS 24 Hours** winner Guy Smith will get his first shot at outright victory at the French endurance since 2004 with the Anglo-Swiss Rebellion squad.

The 35-year-old, who won Le Mans in 2003 with Bentley, will share his Rebellion Lola-Judd B10/O6 coupe with Andrea Belicchi and Jean-Christophe Boullion. It will be Smith's first drive at Le Mans in the top prototype class since finishing second in a Veloqx-run Audi R8 in the 2004 race.

Smith, who is also continuing with Dyson Racing in the American Le Mans Series in 2010, said: "The team did a good job last year [as Speedy/Sebah], so it's a good drive. It will be difficult to beat the diesels [from Peugeot and Audi], but our aim is to be best of the petrol-powered cars."

## LE MANS SERIES

# JMW Aston switch for Westbrook

**FORMER PORSCHE** factory driver Richard Westbrook will race against the German marque in 2010 after signing for the JMW Aston Martin squad.

The 34-year-old, who had a factory Porsche deal in 2008, has agreed to race the works-backed JMW Aston Vantage GT2 in the five-round Le Mans Series and the Le Mans 24 Hours. He will share the car with JMW regular Rob Bell.

Westbrook, who won the GT2 section of last year's FIA GT Championship, said: "JMW has an excellent history in the LMS and the full support of Aston Martin Racing and Dunlop. This drive ticks all the boxes, and I'll finally get to go to Le Mans."

Tim Sugden, who will also drive the car at Le Mans and the Paul Ricard LMS opener, said: "We were looking for the best driver available and I don't think we could have got anyone much better."



Bell and Sugden tested the Aston this week

ROBBELL





BRITISH F3

# Mugen power leaves British F3

Two decades of Mugen-Honda engines in the main class of the British Formula 3 championship has come to an end

The Mugen-Honda engine will disappear from the main class of the British F3 championship this season after 20 years.

Engine builder Neil Brown Engineering, which has maintained supply of the Japanese engines to British F3 teams for the past two decades, secured a contract to supply engines for Volkswagen-powered teams in 2009 and has extended that deal on an exclusive basis into this season. Carlin and T-Sport used VW power last year, and former Mercedes squad Hitech Racing has joined them for 2010.

Only two championship class drivers used Mugen-Honda power last season and both will abandon

the Japanese power plant for this year. Jay Bridger will race an ex-ART Euro Series Dallara with Volkswagen power, while Welsh privateer Hywel Lloyd's CF Racing squad will switch to Mercedes engines.

The other championship class entries – Double R, Fortec, Sino Vision and Teamcraft – will all use Mercedes power in 2010, meaning for the first time in more than 20 years there will be no Mugen-Honda presence at the top of the championship.

Mugen-Honda claimed an unbroken sequence of 16 British F3 titles between 1990 and 2005, but hasn't taken a championship since.

T-Sport team boss Russell Eacott, whose squad used Mugen-Honda



Mugen's last title came in 2005

engines to propel Mexican Sergio Perez to four wins and fourth in the 2008 championship, said: "It does seem to be all about VW and Merc these days.

"Nobody is running the Mugen-Honda, so unfortunately it seems as though it's

had its day in the current market."

NBE will still supply Mugen-Honda units for the National class, as per an existing championship agreement.

## INDYCAR 2012

INDYCAR

## LOLA PLANS BREAK COVER

A week on from the release of radical designs from DeltaWing, Swift and Dallara, Lola has revealed its own visions of a 2012-spec Indycar. Lola says that its proposed B12/00 and B12/01 would be performance-matched to ensure parity, and that both styles have been designed to accommodate different engines.





BRITISH F3

# No fears over reversed grids

BRITISH FORMULA 3 has released details of the biggest changes to its race format since organisers introduced two races per weekend in the early nineties.

The series will feature three races per meeting for the first time this year, meaning drivers will contest 30 races across the spread of the season. Each round will also include reversed grid events and varying race lengths.

The second event of each weekend will be a 20-minute sprint race, which will count for half points and feature a semi-reversed grid. This race will take place before a new 40-minute feature event, scheduled for the second day of each meeting.

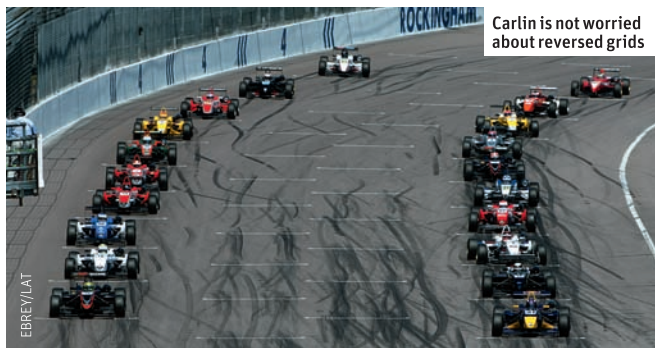
The F3 Euro Series introduced reversed grid races back in 2006, which meant on-track clashes became more frequent. This has

raised concerns that British F3 teams may be faced with a race against time to repair cars before the main event at 2010 meetings, but leading team boss Trevor Carlin moved to allay those fears.

"There's always that possibility, but most of the teams are professional and should be able to deal with it," he told AUTOSPORT.

"It's not perfect. Normally you have your demolition derby at the end of the weekend, but it's the same for everyone.

"If anything, it might make drivers more cautious, because it's a half-points race and they'll want to look after their cars for the main event. But the good drivers don't crash anyway."



Carlin is not worried about reversed grids

EBREY/LAT

## IN BRIEF

### COLETTI'S COMTEC RIDE

F3 Euro Series race-winner Stefano Coletti will race for Comtec in Formula Renault 3.5 this season. The Lotus Junior team, formerly known as Mofaz Racing, has signed Coletti's former Durango GP2 team-mate Nelson Panciatici and Daniil Move.

### CAMPOS GOES STATESIDE

F3 European Open frontrunner Adrian Campos Jr, 21, will race in Indy Lights this year after signing to partner 23-year-old Dutchman Junior Strous at Team Moore Racing.

### SANCHEZ JOINS GP3 RANKS

Pablo Sanchez will step up from Italian F3 to GP3 this year after joining the Addax squad. The Mexican tested for Ferrari's F3 squad at Jerez late last year.

### BTCC SEAT FOR BOARDMAN

Tom Boardman will race in the British Touring Car Championship this season in a SEAT Leon TFSI run by Special Tuning UK. The former UK and Spanish SEAT Cupra Cup

champion competed in the World Touring Car Championship in 2009.

### FROM F1 TO SUPERSTARS

Former grand prix drivers Emanuele Naspetti and Domenico Schiattarella will race in the Superstars Series this year. Naspetti will drive a Rangoni Motorsport Mercedes C63 AMG along with Luca Rangoni while Schiattarella has joined the RGA BMW squad.

### EXTRA TESTS IN WTCC

Pre-event tests will be held ahead of eight WTCC rounds this year. They will take place at Curitiba, Puebla, Marrakech, Monza, Zolder, Algarve, Okayama and Macau.

### RACING FOR HAITI

Racing stars from Le Mans and the BTCC will be in action on Sunday February 28 to raise money for the Haiti Earthquake Children Appeal. They will be competing alongside members of the public in a simulated endurance event at The Race Centre in Chandlers Ford. To enter a team, or to make a donation, please call 023 8026 9927.

### V8S DROP BARBAGALLO

Barbagallo, left, has been dropped from the V8 Supercar calendar. Series bosses blamed the decision on the high costs of visiting the Western Australian circuit, as well as criticising the facilities.



INDYCAR

# Sato set for race return in IndyCar

Sato in action at Sebring for KV



EX-FORMULA 1 driver Takuma Sato looks certain to switch to IndyCar this season after sampling one of KV Racing's Dallara-Hondas at Sebring on Monday.

It is believed that a deal is imminent for the Japanese driver, who has been on the sidelines since the collapse of Super Aguri just four races into the 2008 season.

Sato drove alongside Ernesto Viso, who is also looking for a new team after parting with HVM at the end of last season.

Sato's manager Matthew Winter played down the significance of the outing, but admitted that a move to American open-wheelers was a serious consideration for the 33-year-old driver.

"Taku's doing an evaluation because it might represent a useful step forward in his career," he told AUTOSPORT.

Sato is scheduled for a second run in the car at Barber Motorsports Park next week.

GP2

# Sponsor woes sideline Parente



Portuguese misses out on F1 test role

ALMOST 2000 Portuguese fans have signed a petition protesting the decision by the Tourism Institute of Portugal to back out of a sponsorship deal with GP2 racer Alvaro Parente, a move that cost the driver a test role with Virgin F1.

The 2005 British F3 champion was announced as one of Virgin's two test/reserve drivers at the end of last year, but says that the deal – reportedly worth €2 million – fell apart and left him without a budget to race in 2010.

"After agreeing to everything they fell off and didn't commit," he told AUTOSPORT. "It was already very late, so I am a bit in the shit. I'm just trying to get something sorted for this year but I have no budget now, so it's crazy."

With a lack of funding putting another season of GP2 beyond reach, Parente said that he was exploring possibilities elsewhere. "I have some propositions to do some GT Open races, and we've had some contact with Superleague," he said. "Nothing is confirmed. But it wasn't what I wanted. Formula 1 was always the main objective, so we'll see what happens."

## REMEMBER WHEN...

MAY 1, 1989



...a Mugen-powered car first won in British F3? As team-mate to Allan McNish at West Surrey Racing, Derek Higgins had a job on his hands during the 1989 British F3 season, but he got a win on the board for Mugen at Silverstone



WRC

# Mini deal close after Sweden visit

David Richards meets Mini execs in Karlstad as the Prodrive boss plots the manufacturer's return to the top flight

**M**ini is on the verge of confirming its World Rally Championship programme, following the firm's visit to last week's Rally Sweden.

Marketing officials from Mini

were flown out to Karlstad by Prodrive chairman David Richards, the man masterminding the manufacturer's return to the top flight of world rallying. Richards was joined in Sweden by Prodrive's

leading rally experts, including technical director David Lapworth and former managing director of the Subaru World Rally Team – Prodrive's last WRC project – Richard Taylor. The three hosted the

executives from Mini, who arrived on Thursday afternoon and returned to Munich the following evening. Mini execs were shown the superspecial stage in Karlstad and the service park in Hagfors.

There were also meetings with other high profile commercial figures in the championship. Prodrive declined to comment on the precise nature of the visit to Sweden, but AUTOSPORT's sources have confirmed the deal is now ready to be rubber-stamped.

The source said: "It's 90 per cent there, maybe even a little bit more."

Work at Prodrive's Banbury base is underway on the car which will feature BMW's first four-cylinder, turbocharged 1.6-litre engine. The car is expected to be testing in the third quarter of the year in time for

the start of the 2011 WRC.

The Crossover, the car on which Mini is basing its first rally programme of the modern World Rally Championship era, was also present in Sweden. The road car was completing its cold-weather testing in the Karlstad area – a process that began in the latter part of last year.

And Mini wasn't the only manufacturer at the centre of WRC speculation in Sweden last week. There was also talk of a possible Volkswagen WRC entry being run through the SEAT brand following the Spanish firm's withdrawal from the World Touring Car Championship. A WRC entry from the Volkswagen Group, if it comes, will not be until 2012, with the manufacturer maintaining focus on cross-country rallying next year.

Mini will use this car if it enters WRC



WRC

## Citroen ready to be patient with Kimi

**CITROEN TEAM** principal Olivier Quesnel doesn't expect a significant hike in Kimi Raikkonen's performance in the first half of the season after the Finn finished 29th on Rally Sweden.

The Citroen C4 WRC driver managed five top-10 times on his first ever WRC round in a World Rally Car. Among the highlights was a sixth-fastest time on the second run through at Fredriksberg.

Unfortunately for the 2007 Formula 1 world champion he went off

the road on SS6 and spent 27 minutes stuck on a snowbank. He then dropped another two minutes when he went off on the final morning.

Quesnel, who has already admitted that Raikkonen could form part of the works team next season, said: "He is only making his sixth rally ever. The World Rally Car is going very fast. I don't think that, before the second half of the season, we can ask him for anything. He just needs to take his time and enjoy himself."



Raikkonen's weekend was troubled in Sweden



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WRC

## Sunderland favourite for Rally GB

SUNDERLAND HAS emerged as the most likely base for Rally GB if the event moves to the north-east of England next season.

The future location for Britain's round of the World Rally Championship is still under discussion, but government agencies in the north-east are believed to be keen to take the event to Sunderland rather than Newcastle. The resolution of the event's long-running contractual battle with the Welsh Assembly Government means the rally will stay in Cardiff this year – with the likelihood of significant route changes for November.

Rally GB chief executive Andrew Coe said: "There is a will to take Rally GB to the north-east of England and,

certainly, this is sustained interest. These discussions have been going on for the past nine months or so, but there's nothing really to say at the moment. We are fortunate in that we have support from Wales and we could stay there."

Coe also admitted that there is potential to extend the 2010

event's mileage on the Epynt military ranges – and that there's the possibility to mix the asphalt and gravel stages due to a change in the regulations.

In addition to this, organisers are also looking at returning to the classic Rally GB terrain of Dyfi forest, continuing the rally's move north in Wales.



Marcus Gronholm fell foul of Epynt in 2002

## AUTOSPORT SAYS...

DAVID EVANS  
RALLIES EDITOR

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On the eve of last week's Rally Sweden, Marcus Gronholm joked that, if things didn't go to plan, he could at least don the white anorak his sponsor had given him and hide in the snow. In the end, Gronholm must have considered such tactics – albeit through no fault of his own.

A power cut on the first day cost him 13 minutes and any hope of a result on one of his favourite rallies. It also robbed us of the chance to see Gronholm get into the groove.

With nothing to fight for, 'Bosse' admitted the sauna was an alternative on Friday night. By Sunday he was finding the feeling again and level-pegging with Mikko Hirvonen through the early splits. The difference came when the studs in his tyres started to move; the instability this brings to the car is utterly alarming when you're fighting in fifth gear with the trees less than a girl's snowball throw away. That was the moment when we realised the real Marcus magic had, sadly, gone.

The 42-year-old has been out of the sport and at home with his family for two years. He's lost the killer instinct which armed him ably to capture two world titles. In his day, Gronholm was the fastest man in the world. Those days are gone, but here's hoping he comes back for more WRC again this year. A win might be a bit too much to ask, but a podium is within his reach – and he's the kind of character our sport is crying out for.

Has the Gronholm magic gone for good?



WRC

## Gronholm unsure on returning



Two-time champ misses out on WRC comeback

**MARCUS GRONHOLM** says he will not start another round of the WRC without a full test before the event.

Gronholm finished 21st on Rally Sweden, where he was driving a Ford Focus RS WRC 08, but the double world champion admitted he was frustrated at his lack of preparation. His rally was spoiled by an electrical fault on Friday and a puncture on Saturday, but despite those troubles he still posted one fastest time.

He said: "When everything was good, I was on the pace and I was happy with that. It would be nice to have a clean rally, but there are no plans at the moment. If I do it, I need the proper preparation. I know that the speed is there and it would be easier with a gravel rally than trying to make a return on snow. There are no plans to come back again at the moment."

## IN BRIEF



### HIRVONEN IN WORLD FIRST

For the first time in the history of world rallying, one driver leads both the World Rally Championship and the Intercontinental Rally Challenge after Ford's Mikko Hirvonen (above) won last month's Monte Carlo Rally and last week's Rally Sweden.

### MIKKELSEN BEST IN CLASS

Andreas Mikkelsen was the fastest of the four Ford Fiesta S2000s which started Rally Sweden. The Norwegian, who wasn't running in S-WRC, ended the event 25s behind S-WRC category winner P-G Andersson (Skoda). Mikkelsen is hoping to finance an S-WRC programme starting later in the season, in addition to the IRC campaign he has already confirmed.

### SNOW THWARTS BLOCK TEST

Heavy snow spoiled Ken Block's pre-Rally Mexico test in his Ford Focus RS WRC last week. The American driver is now likely to embark on his seven-round WRC programme in Leon next month without the benefit of a gravel test after prolonged

wintry weather in Cumbria. It was a similar story for reigning IRC champion Kris Meeke, as Peugeot's running in the south of France was also curtailed by the rough weather. Meeke did manage two full days of 207 testing before the snow arrived.

### FLODIN HUNTING BUDGET

Despite winning the opening round of the P-WRC, Patrik Flodin's season remains in doubt as the Swede chases further finance to continue in his Subaru Impreza. "It's very frustrating," he said. "I have shown that I can win and probably win the championship, but now I need to find more budget."

### PROKOP MAKES HISTORY

Reigning Junior World Rally Champion Martin Prokop (below) scored the first-ever fastest time on a WRC round by a Super 2000 car on last week's Rally Sweden. The Czech driver made the most of improving weather conditions to win Saturday afternoon's Hagfors Sprint test in his Fiesta S2000.



## QUOTE OF THE WEEK

“

You're not going to make me say I'm coming back. But I'm not ruling it out...”



Marcus Gronholm neatly sidesteps AUTOSPORT'S questions. Sort of



LAUNCH DATE:  
FEBRUARY 12  
LAUNCH VENUE:  
LONDON

# LOTUS T127

BY ANDREW  
VAN DE BURGT

CHASSIS LOTUS T127  
ENGINE COSWORTH CA2010

## DRIVERS



18

Jarno  
Trulli

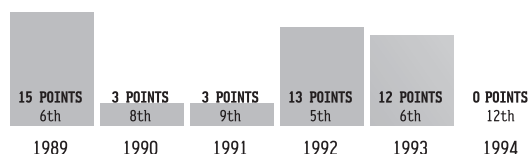


19

Heikki  
Kovalainen

RESERVE DRIVER Fairuz Fauzy  
TEAM PRINCIPAL Tony Fernandes  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER Riad Asmat  
CHIEF TECHNICAL OFFICER Mike Gascoyne  
CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER Keith Saunt  
DEPUTY TECHNICAL DIRECTOR Dieter Gass  
HEAD OF VEHICLE DYNAMICS  
Elliot Dason-Barber  
CHIEF ENGINEER Jody Egginton  
RACE ENGINEERS Gianluca Pisanello  
(Trulli), Juan Pablo Ramirez (Kovalainen)  
TEAM MANAGER Graham Watson  
CHIEF MECHANIC Phil Spencer

## CONSTRUCTORS' POINTS 1989-1994 (LAST SIX YEARS IN F1)



## MISSION STATEMENT

**"I would just love to finish every race. If we can beat the new teams that would be a fantastic start. If we can beat some of the established teams that would be great"**

TONY FERNANDES



Lotus back for the first time in 16 seasons

Against the backdrop of the Royal Horticultural Society's Lawrence Hall, the Lotus F1 flower blossomed again. 'The British Ferrari' is undoubtedly one of the most powerful brands in motor racing, as the long, snaking queue of media types that gathered outside attested.

The glory days of Team Lotus were on display as a prominent reminder of exactly what F1's newest team has to live up to: the dominant ground-effect Lotus 79 that took Mario Andretti to the 1978 title; the Gold Leaf-clad 49 that heralded a new, commercial era of grand prix racing; the turbocharged 97T that was the launch pad for Ayrton Senna's unforgettable career.

Also present as the covers came off the T127 were Sir Stirling Moss, the first man to claim an F1 win in a Lotus, along with fellow Lotus alumni Nigel Mansell, Jackie Oliver and Julian Bailey.

## RACE AGAINST TIME

As the last new entrant to be granted a slot on the 2010 grid, Lotus Racing has had just five months to create its car. Overseen by Mike Gascoyne, designed in Cologne, Germany by Phill Hall and Mark Tatham, and wind-tunnel-developed by Jean-Claude Migeot's FondTech group, the T127 appears simpler than some of the other 2010 cars, with the front end bearing a passing resemblance to last year's Force India.

"The first target was to get to the launch with a car," said Gascoyne. "There will be updates coming out for the Jerez test, then hopefully some smaller ones, followed by a very big update for Barcelona [the Spanish GP in May]."

"The biggest problem was time. Lack of time means you have to make compromises: you can't make things as light as you'd want to; the design, production and drawing offices just





Proton logo gives away real identity



don't have the time they'd like. But I can honestly say we couldn't have done one single thing better than we have.

"It's not about where we are in race one, it's about where we are at Barcelona, where we are at race 10, where we are at race 18. We're not a team that's going to be a position to score points in the first race, but it's all about progression after that. A podium by the end of the year is probably too much to ask for, but we've got to be racing for points by that stage."

#### EXPERIENCE COUNTS

Lotus is one of only four teams this year to have two race-winning drivers in its line-up. Jarno Trulli and Heikki Kovalainen have a whopping 268 starts between them. They've both raced for big manufacturer teams, and completed tens of thousands of race and test miles.

Trulli is nearing the end of his career,

but is inspired by the thought of rebuilding the Lotus legend. "I had to take a hell of a gamble, but it's a gamble that is representing a brand that's second only to Ferrari in motorsport," he said. "The atmosphere at Silverstone

**"You have to alter your mind and say, 'Okay, I have a different target'"**

#### JARNO TRULLI

was incredible [last week], when for the first time in 16 years a green-and-yellow Lotus F1 car hit the track. It was something very special."

But after years of fighting for poles and podiums, how will he cope with the prospect of being at the tail of the field?

"You have to alter your mind and say, 'Okay, I have a different target.' Bringing back this name is a big responsibility. The first point we score will be enough to make everybody motivated to challenge for the next."

His 2008 Hungarian GP win aside, Kovalainen's stint at McLaren was an underwhelming one. Lotus is his chance to rebuild his reputation.

Malaysian Formula Renault 3.5 racer Fairuz Fauzy is the team's test driver, and put the first shakedown miles on the car at Silverstone. He's hoping for the opportunity to get some running during Friday free practice sessions, and will drive the car at both of the remaining pre-season tests. The team has also established a driver development programme, which is being overseen by Nino Judge, whose original Litespeed F1 entry provided the catalyst for the new Lotus team. ►



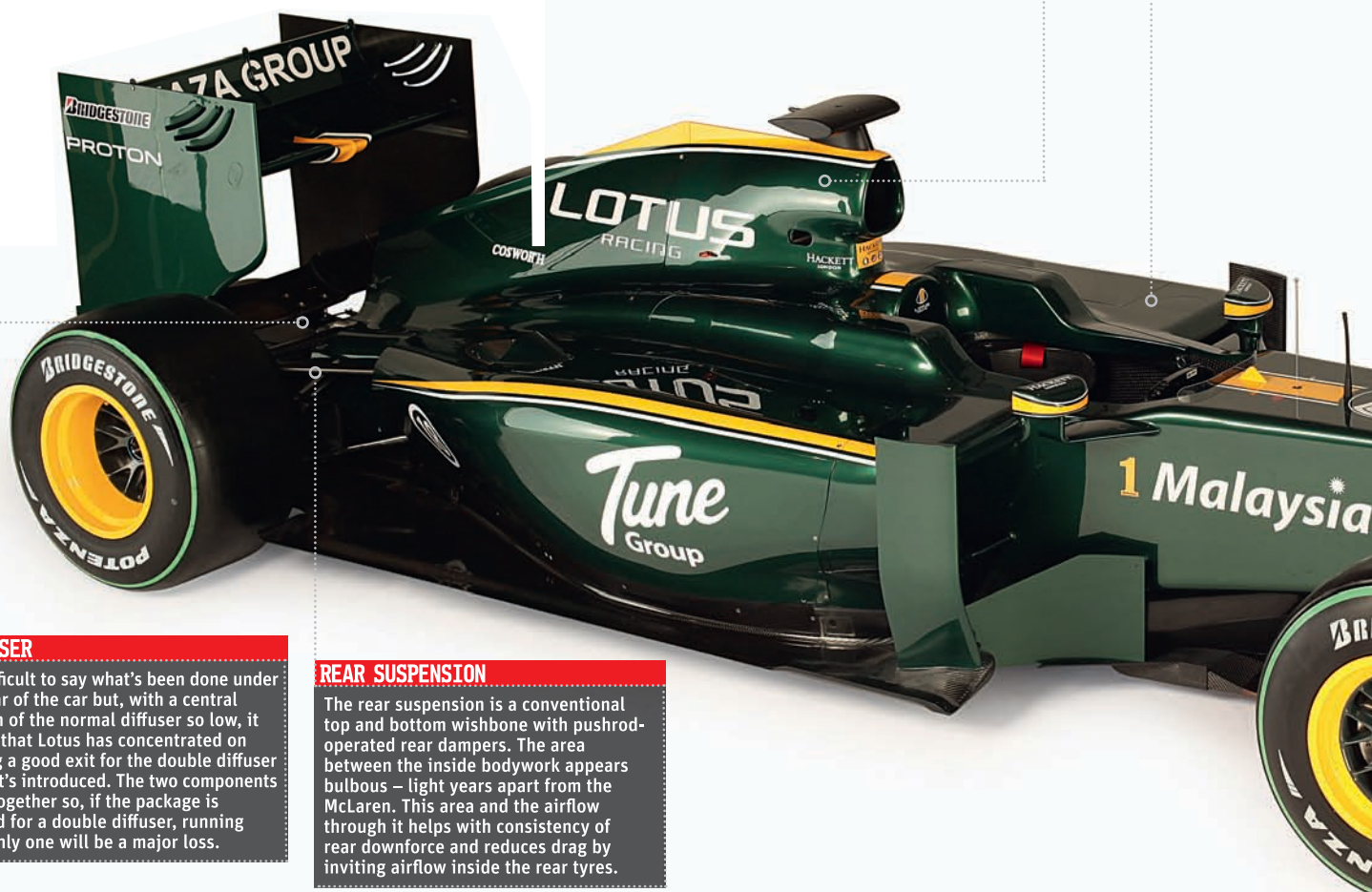
# GARY ANDERSON'S TECH FOCUS



The Lotus name returns to F1 – and it is just a name and nothing else, for the days of Colin Chapman tossing his cap in the air to celebrate another win are gone forever. Setting up a new team is no easy task, but if anyone can do it Mike Gascoyne can. He has current F1 experience and has a point to prove.

## ENGINE COVER AND INTAKE

The engine cover is very neat and the rollover bar/air intake is very 'standard'. It's nothing like the Mercedes, or indeed most of the other cars, which have this area dramatically sculpted to manage the airflow coming off the driver's helmet and whatever spills from the airbox. This is very important for the performance of the rear wing.



## DIFFUSER

It's difficult to say what's been done under the rear of the car but, with a central section of the normal diffuser so low, it seems that Lotus has concentrated on getting a good exit for the double diffuser when it's introduced. The two components work together so, if the package is defined for a double diffuser, running with only one will be a major loss.

## REAR SUSPENSION

The rear suspension is a conventional top and bottom wishbone with pushrod-operated rear dampers. The area between the inside bodywork appears bulbous – light years apart from the McLaren. This area and the airflow through it helps with consistency of rear downforce and reduces drag by inviting airflow inside the rear tyres.

◀ “The Young Driver Development Program will have a combination of South-East Asian drivers and European drivers,” said Judge. Alex Yoong [the Malaysian ex-F1 driver] will be in charge of the Asian leg and I will be in charge of the European leg. The aim is to have three to five drivers from each for this year. After that, we'll be aiming to trim the numbers so we have about six drivers on the ladder at any one time. There is a huge will at Lotus to get a young lad and ready them to become an F1 reserve and then race driver.”

MOFAZ Lotus FR3.5 drivers Daniil Move and Nelson Panciatici are on the scheme, as is Litespeed's British Formula 3 driver Jay Bridger.

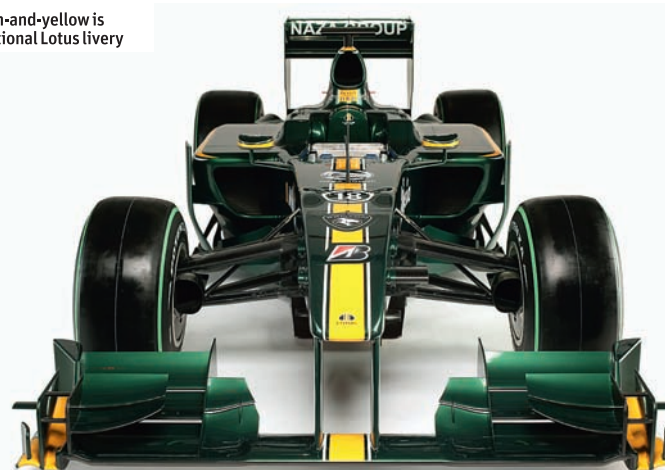
## MONEY TALKS

Judge's entry failed as there were doubts over its financial security. Tony Fernandes and his partners Kamarudin Meranun and SM Nasarudin pledged £165 million up front (three years' budget) to former FIA boss Max Mosley to secure Lotus's place on the grid.

Fernandes, who has built Air Asia into one of the world's biggest airlines in under a decade, has to make the project work as a business.

“The traditional sponsorship model is not going to be there forever, so our business model – as you will see in the next few months – is not just based on having stickers on cars,” he said. “The power of the Lotus brand is very strong

Green-and-yellow is traditional Lotus livery





### SIDEPODS

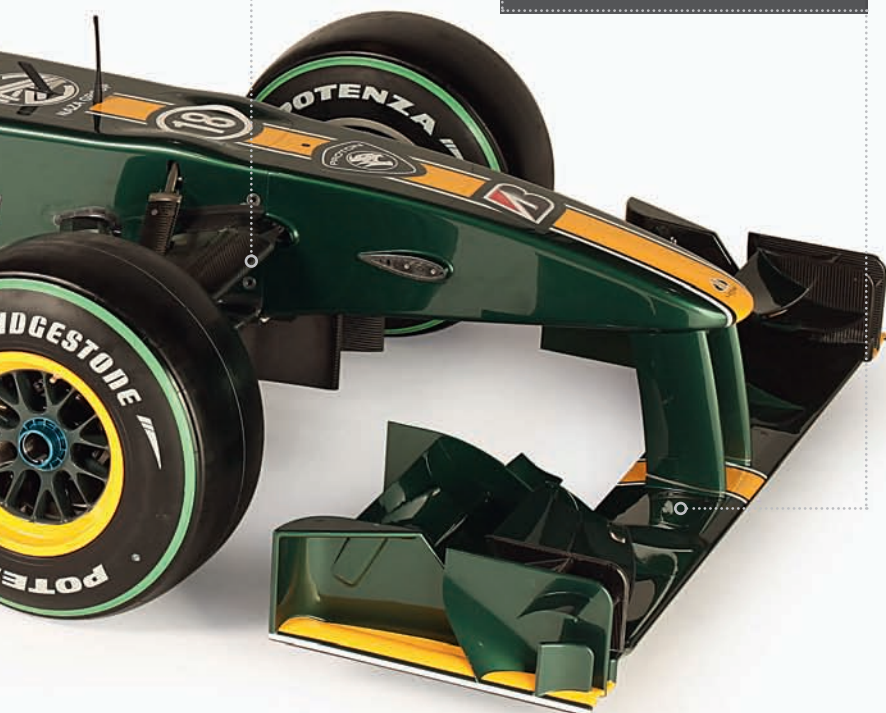
They're flat-topped and bulbous compared to some other cars – the top surface can be critical to overall aero performance as it's very easy to induce lift. The undercut on the sidepod is less exaggerated than some other cars. This area is very important to allow the bargeboard to work and, in turn, help the Coke-bottle area of the sidepods get better airflow to the top of the diffuser and the underside of the rear wing.

### CHASSIS AND FRONT SUSPENSION

The chassis area between the front wheels is the minimum rectangular cross-section allowed. There are two vertical turning vanes under the chassis, just behind the interface with the nose. These vanes help turn the airflow outward and allow the more-rearward bargeboard to be more aggressive. Together, they help scavenge the airflow coming off the trailing edge of the front wing and introduce it to the underfloor as better-quality flow. The steering trackrod and upper-front wishbone are aligned with each other, giving less aero blockage between the front tyre and the chassis.

### FRONT WING AND ENDPLATES

The front-wing assembly follows normal trends and features a three-element main assembly and a twin-element forward upper assembly. The three-element section ends with a large splitter and inside this the main wing becomes a two-element component. The endplates have multiple vertical turning vanes to aid airflow around the front tyre. Using multi-element wing sections, this assembly will give the consistency in performance that a driver requires.



and it's up to us to monetise that, and we're very confident in our ability to raise the right sponsorship level."

Despite the strong Malaysian flavour of the team, it missed out on Petronas funding when the oil giant pledged its backing to Mercedes. "One mustn't count your chickens before they hatch and clearly Mercedes offered them a very sexy deal," adds Fernandes. "But there are plenty of other people: when one option closes another opens, and I'm an eternal optimist."

The Lotus Group is owned by Malaysia's other industrial giant, Proton. Its logos are on the car, but Fernandes admits the tie-up is more technical than financial.

"There is money behind it as well," he said, "but the main drive will be to improve Lotus [cars]."

### IT'S ALL IN A NAME

Proton, though, does not own Team Lotus, the banner under which the team raced in F1 from 1958 to '94. Fernandes sought the blessing of the Chapman family for his new entry, and he's adamant that if – or when – Lotus Racing wins it will be the 80th victory in total for Lotus, not just the first for Lotus Racing. It may send the blood pressure of some traditionalists soaring, but this is a team that has ambitions as big as the legacy it's riding on the back of. **X**



## STRENGTHS

Mike Gascoyne is now into his third decade in Formula 1, so brings a wealth of experience and a reputation for clear, single-minded technical direction. The Lotus badge gives unprecedented commercial cachet for a start-up team, and Gascoyne has recruited personnel that will fit in well with his style of leadership.



## WEAKNESSES

Straight-talking Gascoyne has a reputation for being tricky to work with, and if the team struggles the Lotus name could become an irritating millstone for a team looking to establish itself. Late entry means that the team is playing catch-up.

## MARK HUGHES' FINAL WORD



Of all the new teams, this is the one you'd reckon would be leading the way, despite the late start. Mike Gascoyne has seen and done it all before, could walk through the process with his eyes shut, and he will have brought with him a good bunch of people, just like he always does. The Gascoyne-Aerolab association goes back a long way, and he and Jean-Claude Migeot understand each other well. It all suggests a car that will have been well born, with the right basics. The Lotus name will surely help

with associations and partnerships too, and basing the team in the middle of Norfolk will ensure a good supply of racing-savvy skills on tap. For a start-up team to enjoy the services of one of F1's very fastest qualifiers in Jarno Trulli is a rare bonus, and he and a motivated Heikki Kovalainen will make for a very harmonious garage. You'd reckon this outfit could be in a position to make a proper nuisance of itself by the second half of the season. Expect a good haul of lower-place points.

Fairuz Fauzy gives the Lotus its shakedown





# JARNO'S LOTUS POSITION

The excited Italian tells us how the revival of Lotus has been underpinned by ex-Toyota staff. *By ADAM COOPER*

**I**t's the day of the launch of Lotus Racing in London, and Jarno Trulli has had a busy programme. Plans for AUTOSPORT to catch up with him at lunchtime were postponed thanks to his late arrival from Norfolk and subsequent rehearsals for the stage unveiling. So now we're going to talk to him at the end of the event, which means cadging a lift from the venue to the Ritz Hotel with Jarno and his new team-mate, Heikki Kovalainen.

The show over, the process of packing up is well underway. As we drive off we pass Graham Hill's 49B, Mario Andretti's 79 and Ayrton Senna's 97T all parked at the kerbside on a dark side street, awaiting their transporter. It's a surreal sight, and one that provides a reminder of the heritage of the name we've been celebrating today.

Jarno is bubbling with excitement about the prospects of Lotus, and how much he enjoyed his test the previous day in an Evora Cup car. As we head past Buckingham Palace the talk is of the other new F1 teams, and specifically Stefan GP. He has spoken to some former Toyota colleagues in Cologne, and while the cars exist, he is a little sceptical about the team's chances of making the grid.

When we get to the hotel, Toyota seems as good a place as any to start our conversation. The last lengthy chat we had with him was at the penultimate race of 2009 in Brazil. At that stage he had seemed a little stressed as we recounted the ups and downs of his season with the team, and talked about its future.

"No, not stressed," he insists. "I was just hoping that Toyota stayed in F1 for many reasons. I was pretty sure to stay there myself, but apart from that, I think it's a shame to see Toyota leaving. It was my project, it was my team. I built a team around me, and things were getting better. Missing a victory with them ►







◀ is something which makes me feel really sad.

"I knew what was happening, I was aware, but I was still hoping for them to stay. No matter if I had been on board or not, because I was part of the family. It's a shame because a lot of people lost their jobs."

So did he already know that Tokyo was going to pull the plug a couple of weeks later?

"There were some people talking bullshit, but I knew what was going on. I had a very good relationship with the Japanese, the top management, and they told me privately about what would happen. So we were aware, but we were still hoping for something to change at the last minute."

Jarno had no ongoing contract with Toyota, so he was free to talk with others. It wasn't long after the Lotus Racing entry was confirmed in September that he had contact with guiding light Mike Gascoyne, with whom he had worked at his last three teams (see sidebar).

However, even after the withdrawal announcement Jarno refused to get into contractual details. He still had one commitment to Toyota – a fan event at Fuji on November 22 – and wanted to get that out of the way first.

"There were some early talks from the very beginning, but I held them up. I told everyone, 'Until my last day I will be a Toyota employee, a Toyota

Don't forget that motorsport has been hit very hard in the last years, so before you could really see something shaping up, you had to wait. Finally, today I can say I made the right choice."

Even allowing for the wait, the decision to sign represented a huge commitment. It all rested on Trulli's faith in Gascoyne and the team of ex-Toyota people he had put together.

"I visited Lotus and I said, 'Mike, are you sure it's going to happen? Because I can't see anyone here!' I knew that things were happening in Cologne [at Gascoyne's design office], and I contacted a lot of people. Things were happening, but were they serious about it, or not? Fundamentally you need to have money, so I made my investigation and met Tony Fernandes. I realised this guy is really serious about it. So we agreed very quickly.

"All I was asking was for it to be a solid, serious team. I do understand there is no money around, I do understand it's hard, but at least give me something I can work on, so that we don't fail after five races.

"We went to Malaysia, we visited all the people who are supporting him, and then eventually I could see, day-by-day, the team was shaping up. A lot of people from Toyota were joining. More and more I was trusting in it.

"But one thing was still in doubt: they were going to make the car run at Silverstone on February 9. I thought,



Jarno remained devoted to the 'Toyota family'

## **"What Lotus achieved in history was something special. The problem is that we know where we are, more or less, and we're not going to be competitive"**

member, and I will be a Toyota driver.' Once I flew back from Japan, that was my last day as a Toyota person, and then I visited the team."

In effect he had also bought himself some time, and was able to get a better feel for where Lotus was going.

"There was the American option, and I was talking with Sauber. I was waiting to see what was the best choice, what was really shaping up.

'It's too early, it's impossible!' And they did it! So honestly, hats off. It's something only Mike could push and make happen in such a short time."

The presence of so many familiar Toyota faces is clearly reassuring. Jarno has retained his race engineer and his data engineer from last year, while Timo Glock's guys will be working with Heikki.

"I think it's important for one reason – most of the people working on this team are current F1 people, who have been working at the track last year. As soon as they arrive they make a full list of all you need in order to be decent, reliable and ready for the first race. This is going to have a big impact for us, compared to other young teams. All the experience from one day to another was taken from Toyota to Lotus. We're on it, we're making lists, we're pushing the people, and things are happening."

Which is not to say that Trulli is expecting a smooth ride. "We are running out of time, that's the biggest



2009 Bahrain podium was final high for Toyota





**MIKE GASCOYNE**

## THE MAN WHO MADE LOTUS FLOWER

**JARNO TRULLI** would not have taken the gamble to join Lotus Racing had it not been for the presence of Mike Gascoyne. The pair have worked together at Jordan, Renault and Toyota, and while they might not have a winning record to match the Brawn/Schumacher combination, they clearly work well together.

"We don't have a relationship where we say we are friends or we go out," Jarno concedes. "Mike is like a bulldog. Either you like it or not, but you can be sure he will always tell you the truth, and he's straightforward with you. He shouts at me when he's not happy, but I can take it. You can understand the kind of person he is."

"At least he's really sincere, he's realistic, and he does what he can to deliver. For some people, in some environments, it's not the best. But I think Lotus really needs this kind of person. When it's time, he makes a decision."

Gascoyne has no doubts about what Jarno brings to the party. "His speed over one lap and his feeling for the car is fantastic," says the technical boss. "I think the one thing he gives any team is that at 3pm on Saturday afternoon, that's how quick [the car] is. If you're two seconds off pole, you need to give him a car that's two seconds quicker. For a new team to have that baseline is fantastic."

"I think it's very, very important to have two drivers with experience, because you can't be teaching young drivers as a new team. Two race winners, two guys from top teams – you couldn't ask for better than that. Both of them will flourish in a friendly environment, but one which is still very competitive, and very challenging."



Trulli and 'the bulldog' in their Renault days

problem we are facing. But what happened today and the other day at Silverstone – this was already a big achievement for these people. Honestly, they have all done something great."

Last year Jarno had a car with which he could occasionally challenge for poles and podiums – scoring third-place finishes in Australia and Bahrain – and he's under no illusions about how tough life is going to be in 2010.

"The key problem is people tend to expect a bit too much, and I do understand, because Lotus was a big name. What Lotus has achieved in history was something special, and is probably only second to Ferrari in terms of brand achievement and everything. The problem is that we know where we are, more or less. We're not going to be competitive."

"It would be nice to dream and say, 'okay, we're going to be in the top 10,' as I've always done in the past. But I don't think I can make [that work] at the moment. We have to be more realistic. It's about starting with a low profile – building up the team in general – and it's about experience."

"And then I think it's important from mid-season onwards to show signals of progress, because these are going to go directly onto next year's car. All

the work we are going to make, every little bit we're going to prove this year, is going to be experience for next year's car."

We talk further about the new rules, and how age – Jarno turns 36 in July – is really just a state of mind. He smiles as he recalls a recent tour of the original Lotus base with Clive Chapman, son of founder Colin.

"It's really amazing. When you walk in that old factory you can breathe the air of racing, and it's just like feeling the history going through you."

Eventually his phone buzzes as a text arrives. It's time to head off to the party at a nearby nightclub, where the entire team is gathering for what amounts to an informal bonding session. A nice touch from Fernandes and Gascoyne, and indicative of the spirit that this start-up operation has already developed.

"It's like a child," says Jarno. "You first have to make it, it's born, and then it has to learn how to drink and walk. We're going through all of this. Don't forget, the team started from scratch... zero... nothing!"

"It can only go up, and whatever we do, it will be down to us," he concludes. "The first point, whether it's me or Heikki scoring, will be very emotional for everyone." ❧

Gascoyne thinks Lotus pairing will flourish



Fernandes impressed Italian with his charisma



# TEAM LOTUS *EMBERS OF A LEGEND*

After the death of founder Colin Chapman, Team Lotus struggled on for another 12 years. GARY WATKINS talks to some of the key players

December 16 1982 would have had a place in grand prix history books anyway. That Thursday at Snetterton, one of the technological advances that would eventually dominate the pinnacle of our sport went live on a Formula 1 car. On a Lotus, of course. Yet the maiden test run of active suspension will forever be overshadowed by what happened early that morning: the death of Team Lotus founder Colin Chapman.

Chapman, who succumbed to a massive heart attack in the small hours, was Team Lotus. He started it (back in 1954), he ran it (with an iron fist) and he owned it (together with his family). But most importantly, Chapman, the innovator, imbued it with its essential spirit.

Every winter, remembers long-time Lotus designer Martin Ogilvie, Chapman would make the same demand: "Where's our unfair advantage?" US racing legend Mark Donohue may have coined the phrase in the 1970s, but Team Lotus had encompassed the idea many years before. How could a team that had enjoyed a few of those 'unfair advantages' – the first monocoque chassis in F1 and ground-effect to name but two – survive the death of its guiding light? ►







Canada 1986: Senna's  
Lotus leads Prost



◀ Survive? We all know that it did, for another 12 seasons to be exact. But did it prosper? That's another question entirely. Team Lotus did return to a position where it could again challenge for the world title, but was it ever a truly top team again? In the years since it had hoovered up the drivers' and constructors' titles with the ground-effect type 79 in 1978, it had been outstripped by fellow British *garagistes* Williams and McLaren in terms of budget, technical resources and, perhaps, attitude.

Peter Warr, who returned to Lotus as team manager in 1981 after a five-year absence, recalls "finding a very different team to the one I left in 1976".

## **"Colin wasn't having any smooth curves. What he wanted were large, flat panels on which to paint sponsorship" *Peter Warr***

The reason for the change? Colin Chapman, of course.

Some have suggested the Old Man's love affair with F1 and its technical challenge was on the wane. Ogilvie reckons the banning of his twin-chassis Lotus 88 resulted in him "losing some of his interest". That may have been by necessity: Group Lotus, which included the car-making division, had been hit by recession and its line of credit from American Express was about to end. Then there was his involvement in the DeLorean sportscar, a controversial project that was making headlines long before *Back to the Future* hit the big screen.

Frank Dernie, who would later join Lotus, got to spend a lot of time with Chapman in the early 1980s. Dernie's team Williams had one of the three spots allocated to the Formula 1 Constructors' Association on FISA's F1 Commission, and the young engineer got to go in joint team boss Patrick Head's place.

"Colin, myself and Bernie Ecclestone [the boss of FOCA] travelled to all those meetings together in the Lotus plane," remembers Dernie. "I used to sit there in awe listening to those two. But it was all business: I can't remember Chapman talking technical all the time I knew him."

Warr reckons that Chapman had changed, his head turned by John DeLorean and David Thieme, whose Essex Petroleum company sponsored Lotus in 1980-81.

"The two of them showed him the high life," explains Warr. "In the previous period he wouldn't have thought anything of eating sandwiches out of the back of the truck if we faced a budget cut. When I came back, Colin had to have his private aircraft, a

helicopter to take him to the airport and someone waiting to pick him up in a suitably-liveried Lotus road car."

For whatever reason, Chapman's focus wasn't on F1. Warr: "The one thing that gave Team Lotus real spark — the personal and undivided attention, dare I say interference, of Colin in every aspect of everything we did — was now missing."

That would have a dramatic effect on the team's future as it strove to reach its former heights through the 1980s.

"Chapman died just at the time when teams such as Williams started making serious investment in engineering, windtunnels and the like," says Peter Wright, another long-serving Lotus

man who would also have two spells at the team. "I can't say whether Colin would have eventually started making that investment, but Team Lotus was owned by the family and they effectively decided not to invest in those things after his death."

Chapman not only left a legacy of underinvestment, but he also bequeathed Lotus at least one, if not two, disastrous decisions that would affect its 1983 campaign.

"One of Colin's last edicts was that we should switch to radial tyres," says Warr. "I couldn't get Michelins, so the only alternative was Pirellis. They were magic one day and rubbish the next."

Warr describes the cars with which Lotus started '83 as the "worst we ever produced, bar none". He claims that the shape of the slab-sided monstrosity, referred to as "big black, fat mamma" by driver Elio de Angelis, was dictated by Chapman.

"He overrode Martin Ogilvie's design department," says Warr. "Colin wasn't having any smooth curves. What he wanted were large, flat panels on which to paint sponsorship."

Ogilvie isn't so sure. He remembers the Renault-engined 93T and its Cosworth-engined doppelganger being conceived as stopgaps.

That's what they turned out to be. By mid-season, Warr had recruited former Matra, Ligier and Alfa Romeo man Gerard Ducarouge to head up the engineering staff and, under the Frenchman's guidance, Team Lotus came up with a new car in double-

### **Lotus-Renault 94T**

### **DUCAROUGE'S SIX-WEEK MIRACLE**



De Angelis put 94T on second row on debut

**"THE MOST** amazing effort I ever saw in my career in motor racing." That's how Gerard Ducarouge describes the six-week thrash that resulted in two Lotus-Renault 94Ts taking to the grid for the 1983 British Grand Prix at Silverstone.

Ducarouge had been courted by Colin Chapman the previous year, but had decided against joining the team. "I had a contract with Alfa Romeo," he says, "and I couldn't imagine working with a man who I can only describe as a monument." But with Chapman dead and his Alfa deal terminated, joining Lotus

now was a no-brainer.

Replacing the ungainly and uncompetitive 93T was the task with which he was charged on signing as engineering director. But Ducarouge, who conceived the car rather than designed it, plays down his part in the Herculean effort.

"The big help is that we used the tub from the previous car [the type 91]," he says. "That made it all possible, but it was still a big effort by everyone."

Chief designer Martin Ogilvie recalls Ducarouge pulling every trick he knew to ensure that the car was ready in time.

"Gerard got his pattern makers to come over to speed up the bodywork," he remembers. "He used plaster rather than the wood and P38 [filler] our guys would have used. It was crude, and I remember there being plaster all over the place, but it was much quicker."

"The 94T was a good, conventional car. It wasn't anything extraordinary."

That's probably an understatement too. Elio de Angelis put the car on the second row on its debut and would notch up a first Lotus pole, at Brands Hatch, since 1978.





Warr (l) found 'different' Chapman on return



Spot the bargeboard by Senna's left front tyre



De Angelis in terrible early-'83 Lotus 93T



Rare shot of de Angelis leading Senna, 1985





Monaco '87: first F1 win for active suspension

◀ quick time (see panel, p36).

The recruitment of Ducarouge wasn't the first building block of the Lotus resurgence that Warr had heaved into place: that had been the coup of a supply of Renault turbo engines for '83, though only enough for one car until the middle of the year. There was more to be done if he was rescue the team

**“I could have got Senna for £50,000. The following year I signed him for 10 times that”**  
*Peter Warr*

from its malaise.

“The team was going to die unless we did something about it,” he says. “I thought I did do something about it during the spring by getting Ducarouge on board. By July, we had produced a car [the 94T] capable of challenging for grand prix victories. That

transformed the team. The next step was getting rid of Pirelli tyres [for 1984], so now we had Renault engines in a proper car. That gave us what we needed to sign Ayrton Senna.”

Everything was now in place for the Team Lotus revival of the mid-1980s. That jigsaw could have been completed one year earlier, however.

Senna's talents had first caught Warr's eye during his domination of the 1982 Formula Ford 2000 season. A year later, having clinched the British Formula 3 Championship, he was in Warr's office

ready to sign for '84.

The events of the Grand Prix of Europe at Brands Hatch, a race backed by Lotus sponsor John Player Special, that October scuppered Warr's plan.

“Peter Dyke at Players came in on race morning and said, ‘Look at this,’” remembers Warr. “All the papers

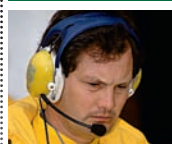
were talking about [Nigel] Mansell being third on the grid when de Angelis was on pole. John Player & Sons of Bristol and Nottingham only sold cigarettes in the UK.”

JPS needed a Briton in the team and that Brit would be Mansell, despite Warr's well-known antipathy towards the future world champion. The postscript to this story is a massive increase in the price on Senna's head.

“Believe it or not, I could have got him for a £50,000 retainer,” says Warr. “The following year, I signed him for nearly 10 times that figure.”

The combination of Senna, a Ducarouge-inspired chassis, Goodyear tyres and Renault V6 turbo engines went on to win four grands prix and claim an amazing 15 poles over the next two seasons, team-mate de Angelis adding one to each total. The team's mercurial Brazilian driver was a contender for the world championship in '86, but the form that enabled him

#### FIT OF PIQUE(T)



Nelson Piquet wasn't pleased when he heard the man who had engineered him to the '87 title wasn't leaving Williams. “He told me he would ring me every morning at eight o'clock until I agreed to go to Lotus,” says Frank Dernie. “The phone would go and this little voice would say, ‘It's me again!’”





Senna signs: 'just put a zero on the end please'



Lamborghini engine in '90 was not a success



Ducarouge central to turning around team

Piquet was not motivated in 100T



## Active suspension PLAN B PUT INTO ACTION

**HAD THE** twin-chassis type 88 been declared legal at Silverstone in 1981 – and resulted in the unfair advantage Colin Chapman craved – then Team Lotus would probably not have pioneered active suspension. The idea of controlling suspension movement through hydraulics and computers was “definitely Plan B”, according to Peter Wright, R&D boss at the time.

“When the Lotus 78 started running, I knew we needed to gather data to help us understand what was going on,” says Wright. “I contacted David

Williams at Cranfield University, because I knew he’d developed a nice little package for an aerobatic aircraft.”

The new data system was used to analyse the porpoising problem of the Lotus 80, the disastrous successor to the 79.

“Post Lotus 80, David suggested the idea of active suspension,” explains Wright, “but I told him we were going to build a twin-chassis car. When Plan A was killed off, Plan B came into action.”

A system that Wright now describes as “crude and heavy” was briefly raced on Nigel Mansell’s

Mansell gave active its race debut at Rio



Cosworth-engined Lotus 92 early in 1983. The system was then fine-tuned at Lotus Engineering for automotive applications before returning to F1 in '87.

Ayrton Senna was an immediate convert. “After his first test at Rio de Janeiro, he told me he never wanted to drive a passive car again,” says Peter Warr. “He realised it was the future.”

It didn’t turn out to be Lotus’s future, even though Senna won twice in the active 99T. General Motors, which owned Group Lotus, effectively paid for the 1987 active programme, but Lotus Engineering wanted the deal to turn into a commercial tie-up for the following season. No funds were available, so the 100T would be a passive car.

to take pole for half the races that season more often than not didn’t translate into race pace.

The Renault V6, now with a pneumatic-valve system, wasn’t a match for the Honda and Porsche-built TAG engines in the rival Williams and McLarens. That was evident just a handful of laps into the opening grand prix in Brazil. Senna might have been on pole, but Nelson Piquet in the Williams waltzed past the Lotus just five minutes into the race.

That explains why Senna wanted a Honda V6 for 1987. So determined was he to have the best engine that he was prepared to leave Lotus to get it.

“We knew we’d signed the best driver in the world, but it then became a constant battle to keep him,” says Warr. “We went to extraordinary lengths to achieve that, including breaking our agreement with Renault. Ayrton was so good, we had to do it.”

The active-suspended Lotus 99T ▶



◀ of 1987, now bedecked in the blue-and-yellow of the Camel cigarette brand, took Senna to two more grand prix victories, but the lack of investment was taking its toll.

"The car we ran in '87 was not significantly different to the one we had in '84," explains Warr. "It was a continuous, nibbling development of the same concept. The '87 car, except for its active suspension and Honda engine, was a bit of a dinosaur."

Warr suggests that Ducarouge was, by nature, conservative in his approach. But put it to him that there was no new

car because the resources weren't available, and he agrees: "Absolutely, we just weren't able to do it."

Team Lotus might have been able to challenge for the title, but it didn't have the budget of its rivals.

"One of life's kicks in the goolies was talking to Ron Dennis [McLaren boss] at a FOCA meeting," says Warr. "Some numbers were being bandied backwards and forwards, and I gave him some indication of the figure we were getting from Players."

Warr remembers Dennis's response when it came out how much JPS contributed to the Lotus pot: "Is that all?" It came out that we were getting about a quarter of what Marlboro gave him.

"We were a low-budget team, but we made every penny count. We were punching above our weight. There was always an overdose of enthusiasm and spark at Team Lotus, which had been instilled by Chapman when the team was firing on all eight cylinders, and I tried to keep that alive after he died. I think we did it quite successfully."

There may have been no in-house windtunnel, but the spirit of innovation that had been Chapman's

calling card could be seen on the cars. There was the return of active (see panel, p39), but also other much simpler developments.

"Look at the well-known picture of me greeting Ayrton as he's coming into parc ferme after winning in the wet at Estoril in 1985," he says. "You can clearly see we had bargeboards, and we had them miles before anyone else."

A young Tim Densham, now chief designer at Renault, had the idea. The very first bargeboards were recycled from another Lotus development a couple of years before.

"Do you remember the four-plane 'chip-cutter' rear wing we had in 1983?" asks Warr. "The very first pair of bargeboards was one of those planes cut in half."

Innovative the team might have been, but any unfair advantage it enjoyed in the mid '80s wasn't a technical development: it was the man in the yellow helmet sitting in the cockpit.

Ducarouge has no doubt about that. "Ayrton made the difference in qualifying in '87," he says. "He would always do it right at the last moment. People said we were cheating [pointing the finger at the ride height of the

Senna was pole master of 1986, here in France



**"People said we were cheating. But I said if you want to disqualify us, disqualify us for having Ayrton Senna. He was magic" Gerard Ducarouge**



98T], but I said if you want to disqualify us, disqualify us for having Ayrton Senna. He was magic."

Warr's inability to prevent his magician from defecting to McLaren for 1988 sent Team Lotus into a tailspin from which it could not pull out. A demotivated Nelson Piquet, whose retainer was reputed to have sucked up more than half of Camel's sponsorship, and another reworking of the long-serving Lotus chassis in the ungainly shape of the 100T, could not trouble the McLarens.

Ducarouge left before the end of 1988, and Ogilvie went too. Warr was sacked – a dismissal that he had engineered, he claims – halfway through '89. The dream team that had briefly resurrected Team Lotus had been disbanded.

There were no more podiums, let alone wins, but the shadow of Chapman still hung over Team Lotus. Frank Dernie, who filled Ducarouge's shoes in late 1988 at old mate Piquet's behest, couldn't believe his ears sometimes.

"My suggestions were met with some weird comments," he remembers. "More than once, I was told, 'The Old Man wouldn't like it'"

## Lotus saved THE LAST FALSE DAWN

TEAM LOTUS was dead on its feet at the end of 1990. The decision to switch to Lamborghini V12 engines, inspired by the return of team old-timer Tony Rudd on Peter Warr's departure, had proved disastrous. It had only three championship points to its name from that season, Camel was gone as title sponsor and debts were mounting.

"Tony rung me and said, 'It's going to close'," remembers Peter Wright, the pioneer of ground-effect who'd left the team to move over to Lotus Engineering in 1983. "I said, 'Well it can't, can it? His reply was, 'Well, do you want to run it?'"

"I was happy to look after the technical side, and the only person I could think who could run it was Peter Collins [Benetton team manager]. Neither of us could let it close."

The revived team lasted four seasons under



Peter Collins, Horst Schubel, Peter Wright

the control of Collins, who'd got his F1 break with the team in the late '70s. "We staggered through '91," says Wright, "but in '92 we were pretty competent for what we had."

The combination of the Chris Murphy-designed Lotus 107, the Cosworth HB V8 and the talents of Mika Hakkinen and Johnny Herbert took the team to fifth place in the constructors' table.

"The 107 was a great car in its day," reckons

Herbert. "It was lovely to drive and had a brilliant balance. Our biggest problem was reliability. I started to think that it was the beginning of a Team Lotus revival."

That was as good as it got. The 107 never worked on the narrower tyres brought in for the next season. "Our centre of gravity was too high," explains Wright.

That problem was exacerbated in 1994 with the arrival of Mugen

Honda V10 engines. That switch brought another problem that ultimately precipitated the death of Team Lotus. With Cosworth threatening to call in a £2 million debt dating back to '92, Team Lotus was put into administration before the end of season.

There was no way back from there. The team was wound up with debts of £12m before the start of the 1995 season. Forty years of history had come to an end.





# BIMMER GLIMMER

What's it like to hustle a BTCC BMW at Brands?  
*BEN COLLINS* tries a Motorbase-run 320si

**R**ecently I've heard people saying that racing is dead in the UK, that touring cars were a 1990s fad, and that motorsport fans should tune in to repeats of *Big Brother* or take up fishing. What a load of rubbish.

Admittedly, my NASCAR-skewed view had always been that touring cars were a bit slow and gnat-like. I recalled that, back in my Vauxhall Junior days, our lap times were nearly a second per lap quicker; hardly enough to blow the froth off your beer in the grandstands.

Last month I drove a rear-wheel-drive BMW Super 2000 car for the first time, and you could forgive me for not expecting too much.

After all, the only S2000 machine I'd driven previously was a front-wheel-drive Alfa Romeo 156 in sub-zero, wet conditions at Snetterton. It felt like the suspension settings had been booby-trapped. Every time I touched the brake the Alfa began to rotate, with a one in three chance of making the corner. With four main corners on the circuit, that made the odds of completing a good lap one in 12, which I assumed was the reason for doing 12-lap runs.

But this BMW, run by race-winning BTCC team Motorbase Performance, is a totally different animal, even though the wintry conditions at Brands Hatch are no less treacherous. As the day progresses we wear a dark patch in the frost, but it's impossible to register a proper tyre temperature.

## FEELS FAST, HAPPENS FAST

I feel the lack of power as soon as I pull away and chunter along in first gear, but after that it's plain sailing. The engine note is pure and fresh; the gearchange on the sequential 'box is beautifully precise. It feels fast, it happens fast.

It's startling to compare the power-to-tyre ratio with the Australian V8 Supercar that I raced in last year's Bathurst 1000. The 280bhp-plus BTCC racers run on similar size and spec Dunlop tyres to the V8 Supercars, which boast more than double the grunt.

I'm expecting the BMW to be as sensitive under braking as the V8 Supercar, but it's kinder on its rubber. The skinny, low-profile



How about bringing some JD backing to BTCC?







Motorbase BMW has been race winner in 2009



Car has relative lack of power in straight line



Kingston (centre) is Motorbase engineer

◀ Dunlop makes it exceptionally hard to feel what's going on when you brake in the V8. Quite often, the only suggestion that you've locked a wheel comes in the form of a BBQ in the cockpit as the blue smoke belches in.

The BMW has more feel. In the haul up to the braking zone for the fast drop into Paddock Hill Bend, I can brake so deep that I end up turning in simultaneously.

Engine braking is critical in slowing the rear of the car to prevent overloading the front tyres, and I wind the bias way back to the rear. She then carries a healthy amount of speed into the apex. Once there, the tiniest dribble of acceleration balances the car and shifts the poise of the chassis, allowing the rear tyres to take a set. Then 'pow', the BMW is in a four-wheel drift.

It takes a while to adjust to the reduced power compared to a V8. In the bigger car, you apply the throttle so slowly you could measure the time with a sundial. In the BMW, I'm practically using a digital input with my right foot, hooning the car in and

banging the gas as hard as I can.

It's a case of carrying just the right amount of speed into the corner, not a hair too much, but enough to steal a few tenths of a second, then blasting off again on the exit.

The real fun is the fast left at Surtees, which is nearly flat-out in fifth gear. It shows me why the high-speed Thruxton circuit is so popular with the BTCC drivers: the car is on a real knife-edge of the tyres' lateral grip; every input of the wheel and the throttle is critical. It feels like my balls are being measured with every pass as the car squirms. If it breaks free it'll be almost impossible to stop and turn right for Clearways, and the track off-line is still frozen...

Exiting Clearways, you need to carry the critical momentum through the apex, delicately squeezing, then mashing, the throttle before flowing out to the very last millimetre of available asphalt. I hardly dare move in the seat in case it pushes a wheel over the edge.

The lack of downforce keeps engineers such as Motorbase's

**"The real fun is the fast left at Surtees, which is nearly flat-out in fifth gear. The car is on a real knife-edge of the tyres' lateral grip; every input is critical"**

Geoff Kingston awake at night.

They ride a delicate balance to run a quick car without degrading the tyres. To stoke the tension, the duel between front and rear-wheel-driven racers is intensely strategic.

"The most challenging aspect for BTCC is to equalise the performance between the different-spec cars, front-wheel drives and rear-wheel drives, H-pattern or sequential gearboxes, and now there's a turbo engine coming in," says Kingston.

"Setting the cars up is relatively straightforward once you have a baseline setting. With just two 40-minute test sessions at a race weekend, it's a case of react and respond to track conditions and ambient, then making a quick turnaround for qualifying. The only other major consideration is adjusting to the range of circuit grip levels, from say the lows of somewhere like Rockingham to the



extreme highs of Thruxton.”

The rear-drive boys get off the startline well, but begin to struggle as oversteer sets in and munches their beer-coaster tyres. The front-wheelers set their cars up with a satanic degree of oversteer from the outset, in order to save their front tyres. It balances during the race, and then the hunt truly begins.

The only potential spanner in the front-wheel-drive plan is if the safety car comes out. This provides a fillip for the BMWs, which can rest their sore rears and sprint to the end.

The other advantage for the front-wheel drivers is that if they get punted sideways by one of the other dodgems, they have a better chance of recovery: they just floor it.

Still, a BMW won the championship last year in the hands of Colin Turkington and the WSR-run Team RAC, so Motorbase chief Dave Bartrum and his crew have twinkles in their eyes as they look ahead to 2010. The team won two races last year with Rob Collard, so can the title follow?

“We know we can do it this year,” says Bartrum. “We started out small and built up our operation slowly, underneath the radar. Now we’re ready to go big time. Let’s just say we learned a lot last year.”

Bartrum is just as enthusiastic about the current state of the BTCC.

“It’s still by far the best series in Britain and one of the best in the world, with the intensity of the three-races-per-weekend format,” he says. “We’d love to see a broader spectrum of drivers in the series, which is obviously going through a transitional period right now.”

Motorbase has the warmth of a family operation, coupled with the slick drills of a hardened race team. The Kent company’s Carrera Cup squad has swollen from three to six cars for 2010, the premises have expanded by 2000 square feet and the team is hungry for a BTCC title.

I would love to race this BMW and hustle for position with the Good, the Bad and the Ugly that is the field of drivers in the BTCC. But I’m not the only one. And the problem is, we’re all chasing the few sponsors around and we’re all too ugly to marry Donald Trump.

Why do the Australians have a packed grid of nearly 40 V8 Supercars – which are more expensive to run than Super 2000 cars – that are covered in big corporate sponsors, when the country has only a fifth of the UK population? The simple answer is that the Aussies turn up

to watch it.

Everyone should go to the next BTCC race. The attendance figures at some venues are pretty impressive, but we need to strengthen this across the board, and then hopefully new sponsors might be attracted. Then, if they get paid as professionals, more top-calibre drivers may be attracted.

Come on – you know it makes sense. *Big Brother*, fishing or BTCC? Is there really a choice to make here? ☹

Narrow Dunlops are similar to Oz V8 rubber



Brake bias (right) plays critical role in laptime



An in-car heater button would be useful here...



## TOURING CAR COMPARISON HOW DO THEY COMPARE?



**DTM**  
MAKE **AUDI**  
MODEL **A4 DTM**  
ENGINE **AUDI 4000CC V8**  
POWER **460BHP**  
WEIGHT **1050KG**



**V8 SUPERCAR**  
MAKE **FORD**  
MODEL **FALCON FG**  
ENGINE **FORD 5000CC V8**  
POWER **620BHP**  
WEIGHT **1350KG**



**BTCC (\$2000)**  
MAKE **BMW**  
MODEL **320Si**  
ENGINE **BMW 1996CC FOUR-CYLINDER**  
POWER **280BHP**  
WEIGHT **1180KG**





## SWEDISH RALLY

Karlstad

ROUND 1/13

## WINNER

Mikko Hirvonen  
3h09m30.4s

## RALLY RATING

★★★★★

Hirvonen on inch-perfect form to dominate in Sweden

## DRIVER STANDINGS

Hirvonen	25pts
Loeb	18pts
Latvala	15pts

## MILESTONES

- \* First rally run to the new points-scoring system
- \* Ford's victory means they match Lancia's record of manufacturer wins in the WRC, with 74



David Evans reports



# HIRVONEN HITS THE GROUND RUNNING

After missing 2009's title by a sole point, the Finn set out to prove he can go one better this year by taking a dominant win

**M**ikko Hirvonen had waited 109 days for last week's Rally Sweden to start. In those 109 days, the Finn had thought of little else than plotting his revenge for missing out on last year's title by a single point. Three days after he started, Hirvonen was victorious. He'd promised a brave approach to this year and those standing by the side of the deep-frozen roads north of Karlstad witnessed courage by the bucket load. Hirvonen's 12th career win was both

audacious and inspired. He took Loeb on headfirst and didn't flinch, blink or put a wheel out of place to leave his rival well beaten. Both literally and metaphorically, Loeb failed to get to grips with the rutted, gravel-strewn roads on Saturday afternoon. And on Sunday he paid the price.

**DAY ONE** 8 stages, 78.50 miles **WEATHER:** SUNNY, -22 TO -10 C  
The Likenas stage that woke the drivers from their road section slumber on Friday morning was always going to be a good one. The organisers had watered the

stage before leaving it to overnight temperatures bottoming out at -24 degrees. Torvill and Dean would have been delighted with the result and Loeb was pretty chuffed too.

The Frenchman revelled in the consistent conditions to post fastest time. He wasn't, he admitted, looking forward to the next two stages, which had shown gravel peeping through the surface on the recce just days earlier. Mindful of Loeb's request for consistency, the organisers had worked on the roads and delivered

Loeb a hard-packed snow base. Demonstrating what he was capable of given the right working conditions, the Frenchman was fastest again.

What had happened to Hirvonen's promised flat-out start? The Ford man wasn't happy. "I didn't expect him [Loeb] to be so quick," he grumbled. "I can't find the consistency from the car. I'm getting understeer when I turn in, it's not working so well."

Hirvonen closed the door and fixed a stare on the computer screen on his Focus. He flicked a couple

of buttons, ran through some options and dialled himself a new ride for SS4. It worked a treat. Fastest by four tenths might not have been much, but it was enough to stem the time loss to Citroen and offer him a boost. Hirvonen's big thing right now is making brave decisions and switching his car to an older differential map was just such a choice. He made it and didn't look back.

On top of the car, Hirvonen pushed again in the rerun Likenas test and was rewarded with the lead of the rally as he turned





Finn dominated from SS5 to open '10 account

a four-second deficit to Loeb into a six-second lead over Sordo.

"I think I could have had more time in there," said Hirvonen, not content with stopping the clocks 10s faster than Loeb. "I saw the split times and saw he was down; I thought he was looking after his tyres. I thought, 'Shit, now maybe I have finished mine...' But they look okay."

Running first on the road, Loeb had struggled to find the right line after 54 cars had been through after him, digging holes in the ice and scattering stones across

what had been his ideal route first time around.

"The ruts were bad," said Loeb. "I don't like it when it's like this. I lost a lot of time, but I don't have confidence when the road is like this. It's not nice."

Loeb recovered some of that time in Viggen, where the road held up much better, but Hirvonen was fastest again in Torntorp to build the lead to 8.4s. Loeb took a quarter of that back on the second and final run through Karlstad's superspecial, which closed day one. "It's been a good afternoon," smiled

Hirvonen. "But I know he's definitely going to push in the morning."

And it wasn't just the one Citroen he had to be ready and wary of as last month's Arctic Rally winner Dani Sordo continued to ride the white wave he'd embarked on in Rovaniemi and ended the day third, just 10s off the lead. Sordo couldn't help himself, his smile was wider than ever, offering an increasingly trademark, "Good, no?" when he emerged from the C4.

It was good, indeed. Good enough to beat the most recent Rally Sweden winner,

Jari Matti Latvala. And Sordo reckoned there could be more to come tomorrow: "I have the better road position than Sebastien." It's not often he says that...

The second Ford was struggling for consistency in the morning, but when Latvala followed Hirvonen's lead on the diff map front, the times tumbled. Fastest time in Viggen 2 was the highlight of Latvala's day, but being 20s down on Sordo wasn't in the plan.

The Citroen Junior Team was well represented by Sebastien Ogier in fifth, the Frenchman turning in an immaculate drive on his first Swedish outing. His team-mate Kimi Raikkonen mirrored his first ever day's competition in a C4 WRC, on the Arctic, by plunging the Red Bull car into a snowbank for half an hour.

The former Ferrari star wasn't the only big name absent from the leaderboard. Marcus Gronholm's much talked about return to the WRC wasn't about to net him a record-breaking sixth Rally Sweden win. His Stobart Ford suffered an electrical glitch in SS6, leaving him stranded for 13 minutes.

"We came over a crest and 'brrrrrr', the lights went out and everything went quiet," he said.

Petter Solberg's day was even worse. After spinning at the superspecial, he went off in SS5 for five minutes and then slid into the back of Matthew Wilson after the Brit's Ford stalled under braking for a particularly treacherous downhill hairpin right. Solberg's brother Henning was sixth, with Mads Ostoberg seventh and Wilson eighth.

#### END OF DAY ONE

- 1 HIRVONEN/LEHTINEN 1h08m04.8s
- 2 LOEB/ELENA +6.2s
- 3 SORDO/MARTI +10.6s
- 4 LATVALA/ANTTILA +31.7s
- 5 OGIER/INGRASSIA +1m10.9s
- 6 H. SOLBERG/MINOR +2m16.2s

#### DAY TWO 8 stages, 73.17

miles WEATHER: SUNNY, -24 TO -5 C Saturday mornings, for an overnight-leading Hirvonen, have been fairly miserable affairs in the past, usually tailored to a script dictating an untouchable

charge from Loeb relinquishing him of the lead. Not this time.

Both drivers had identified Vargasen as a crucial stage after the recce, with the 15-miler just west of Hagfors showing more gravel than any of the other stages. Hirvonen plundered the depths of his bravery bank and went for it. First on the road, the Finn had marginally the better of the conditions, but that didn't stop him looking anxious at the end of the stage.

"He's going to be pushing like hell," said the rally leader, recalling that all too familiar Saturday story. But Loeb hadn't matched him. In fact, he'd dropped 4.6s.

With the deficit now the wrong side of 10 seconds, Loeb was increasingly concerned. With more snow than stones in Sagen, he gave it everything to take back all he'd lost to the leader in the day's opener. "We need to do it again in the next one, if we are to have any chance of winning," he said at the end of Sagen. And do it again he did, but his push through SS11 netted him just two tenths of a second.

Hirvonen couldn't help but smile after the morning's final long stage. "The speed's been a bit mental," he said.

Unfortunately for the leader, his speed off the line through what should have been a largely inconsequential dash through the Hagfors town sprint test, was anything but mental: it was non-existent. He stalled and shipped 2.5s to Loeb.

"It's been hard to decide whether to use the launch control at the start," said Hirvonen. "It's giving too much wheelspin off the line. I didn't use it in the last one and we stalled. It's not so good, but this fight is incredible. Nobody has the advantage."

Loeb agreed with his rival. Talking moments before he switched his attack to lunch, the Citroen man said: "It's only the drivers making the difference here. It's me and him in this fight and it's so close."

Loeb's appraisal of who ▶



◀ and what was making a difference switched as the afternoon began. Vargasen, already among the rockier of roads, was reckoned to be a full-on gravel stage in places. The 1536 studs that were keeping his C4 WRC on the road were being pummelled by the stones and soon started to move in the tread blocks, offering less and less resistance to slow the charging Citroen down. Loeb lost 2.7s in part one of what would be an afternoon of tyre management.

The big decision for the top two was when to bolt on the two new tyres they were carrying in the car. With Sagen having been largely free of gravel, Hirvonen went for it, bolted new covers to the front of his Ford and went almost a second per mile faster than his rival. But now it was Loeb's turn and with 14.8s between himself and the front of the field, the Frenchman knew he was going to have to attack.

The split times in the stage didn't make sense; Loeb was losing and losing badly. Hirvonen could scarcely believe it when he found himself 23s to the good on the way back to the Hagfors sprint.

Loeb was fuming: "We made a stupid mistake with the tyre. I put the new tyre on the front and we had good grip from the front,



Loeb was slowed by tyre troubles

but the back of the car was everywhere — it wasn't following the front at all. In the end I was trying to wear the front tyres out more to make the car more neutral. It was not good."

Two stages down and Hirvonen's shot tyres struggled in the short sprint stage. He dropped six seconds, but returned to a hero's welcome in the Ford camp. Team principal Malcolm Wilson was rapturous in his approbation of his driver. "It's been his

best ever day in the WRC," said the beaming Cumbrian.

There was no beaming going on next door. Loeb was mad at his troubled afternoon and Olivier Quesnel was equally incensed by a mistake that meant Sordo started SS15 with the air intake blocked on his C4. This is done on road sections to maintain heat in the engine, but the plastic shields are removed at the stage start. Sordo's co-driver Marc Marti forgot to do it this time.

"How can this happen to a professional co-driver?" said Sordo, keen to pass on the dressing down he'd received from Quesnel.

Latvala made the most of Sordo's troubles to collect third. The second Ford and its driver had performed faultlessly through the second day and he was rewarded with a near one-minute buffer from Sordo going into the final day.

Ogier remained in fifth place with Henning Solberg sixth and Wilson edging

Ostberg out of seventh.

## END OF DAY TWO

1 HIRVONEN/LEHTINEN 2h14m48.3s  
2 LOEB/ELENA +16.6s  
3 LATVALA/ANTTILA +51.4s  
4 SORDO/MARTI +1m46.2s  
5 OGIER/INGRASSIA +2m42.1s  
6 H. SOLBERG/MINOR +4m17.9s

## DAY THREE 5 stages, 62.79 miles WEATHER: SUNNY, -18 TO -1 C

As much as Hirvonen was happy to talk about how much fever he had for the Rammen stage, first thing on Sunday he wasn't quite so keen to talk about the longer and twistier Varmullsasen test that followed. He didn't really like it — but he didn't want Loeb to know.

As much as Loeb talked of the 16-second gap being too big, he wasn't about to ease the pressure. He knew that as long as he kept pushing, he would force the Ford man to match his pace. With that in mind, Loeb collected two tenths in Sagen and half a second in the first sector of SS18. Unfortunately for Loeb, that was as close as he would get. He nerfed a snowbank mid-way through the stage and called it quits.

"He's too strong here," said Loeb at the end of the stage. "I tried and I pushed, but even when I'm on the maximum,

## STAGE TIMES

### SS1 KARLSTAD SUPERSPECIAL (1.18 MILES)

Fastest: Sordo 1m31.4s  
Leader: Sordo

### SS2 LIKENAS 1 (12.91 MILES)

Fastest: Loeb 11m33.7s  
Leader: Loeb

### SS3 VIGGEN 1 (13.22 MILES)

Fastest: Loeb 10m50.7s  
Leader: Loeb

### SS4 TORNTORP 1 (11.93 MILES)

Fastest: Hirvonen 9m54.7s  
Leader: Loeb

### SS5 LIKENAS 2 (12.91 MILES)

Fastest: Hirvonen 11m37.7s  
Leader: Hirvonen

### SS6 VIGGEN 2 (13.22 MILES)

Fastest: Latvala 10m49.5s  
Leader: Hirvonen

### SS7 TORNTORP 2 (11.93 MILES)

Fastest: Hirvonen 9m57.0s  
Leader: Hirvonen

### SS8 KARLSTAD SUPERSPECIAL (1.18 MILES)

Fastest: Loeb 1m34.8s  
Leader: Hirvonen

### SS9 VARGASSEN 1 (15.31 MILES)

Fastest: Hirvonen 13m18.4s  
Leader: Hirvonen

### SS10 SAGEN 1 (8.84 MILES)

Fastest: Loeb 7m13.1s  
Leader: Hirvonen

### SS11 FREDRIKSBERG 1 (11.27 MILES)

Fastest: Loeb 10m27.4s  
Leader: Hirvonen

### SS12 HAGFORS SPRINT 1 (1.16 MILES)

Fastest: Loeb 2m05.1s  
Leader: Hirvonen

### SS13 VARGASSEN 2 (15.31 MILES)

Fastest: Latvala 13m06.4s  
Leader: Hirvonen

### SS14 SAGEN 2 (8.84 MILES)

Fastest: Gronholm 7m14.5s  
Leader: Hirvonen

### SS15 FREDRIKSBERG 2 (11.27 MILES)

Fastest: Latvala 10m44.2s  
Leader: Hirvonen

### SS16 HAGFORS SPRINT 2 (1.16 MILES)

Fastest: Prokop 2m14.9s  
Leader: Hirvonen

### SS17 RAMMEN 1 (13.59 MILES)

Fastest: Loeb 11m11.3s  
Leader: Hirvonen

### SS18 VARMULLSASEN 1 (14.54 MILES)

Fastest: Hirvonen 13m13.2s  
Leader: Hirvonen

### SS19 LESJOFORS (6.51 MILES)

Fastest: Hirvonen 5m52.9s  
Leader: Hirvonen

### SS20 RAMMEN 2 (13.59 MILES)

Fastest: Latvala 10m59.6s  
Leader: Hirvonen

### SS21 VARMULLSASEN 2 (14.54 MILES)

Fastest: Latvala 13m19.1s  
Leader: Hirvonen





Latvala's podium sent Ford to the top



Wilson took six points for seventh

he's able to match me."

Loeb's steady stage times were beamed to Hirvonen, but they only served to add to his angst as he counted the tests down. But, finally, the end of the final stage arrived. No sooner were his belts undone than he was dancing on the Focus's roof.

"I'm so relieved," he said. "It's been an incredible fight. I can't tell you how nervous I was through those final stages. But it's there, we won. Fantastic."

Loeb pointed to his mistake with tyres yesterday as one of the reasons Hirvonen was sporting the smile, but then his magnanimous streak

kicked in and he applauded his rival's "perfect rally".

Latvala ended his event on a high with a brace of fastest times through the last loop, while a subdued Sordo was fourth, still reeling from the emotional rollercoaster of the last three days. Fifth-placed Ogier was basking in his team principal's credit. The darkness which descended over Quesnel when he talked about Sordo was immediately lifted when conversation turned to the Junior team driver, for whom he couldn't find enough superlatives.

Stobart men Solberg and Wilson were sixth and

seventh, with Ostberg eighth and the recovering Petter Solberg ninth. The first ever S-WRC winner P-G Andersson collected 10th overall and the final WRC point.

And that's it. The WRC is up and running after a fascinating first round. Attention now turns to the other side of the Atlantic and Mexico, where the world is 50 degrees warmer and Loeb hasn't been beaten since 2005. The champion will be more determined than ever to dampen Ford's parade. And Hirvonen? Well, having won Monte and Sweden, he's on for a hat-trick... ☑

## RESULTS

Rally Sweden, February 11-14, round 1 of 13

### 21 SPECIAL STAGES, 214.47 MILES

POS	NO	DRIVER/NAVIGATOR	CAR	TIME
1	3	Mikko Hirvonen/Jarmo Lehtinen	Ford Focus RS WRC09	3h09m30.4s
2	1	Sebastien Loeb/Daniel Elena	Citroen C4 WRC	+42.3s
3	4	Jari-Matti Latvala/Mikka Anttila	Ford Focus RS WRC09	+1m15.4s
4	2	Dani Sordo/Marc Marti	Citroen C4 WRC	+2m41.6s
5	7	Sebastien Ogier/Julien Ingrassia	Citroen C4 WRC	+4m15.3s
6	6	Henning Solberg/Ilka Minor	Ford Focus RS WRC08	+5m53.4s
7	12	Matthew Wilson/Scott Martin	Ford Focus RS WRC08	+7m53.9s
8	15	Mads Ostberg/Jonas Andersson	Subaru Impreza WRC08	+9m22.2s
9	11	Petter Solberg/Phil Mills	Citroen C4 WRC	+10m17.5s
10	49	P-G Andersson/Anders Fredriksson	Skoda Fabia S2000	+12m18.9s
OTHERS				
21	5	Marcus Gronholm/Timo Rautiainen	Ford Focus RS WRC08	+23m30.8s
29	8	Kimi Raikkonen/Kaj Lindstrom	Citroen C4 WRC	+38m37.2s

**CLASS WINNERS** N4 Andersson. Starters/finishers 58/43; Leaders: SS1 Sordo; SS2-4 Loeb; SS5-21 Hirvonen.

### CHAMPIONSHIP TABLE

POS	DRIVER	PTS
1	Hirvonen	25
2	Loeb	18
3	Latvala	15
4	Sordo	12
5	Ogier	10
6	H Solberg	8
7	Wilson	6
8	Ostberg	4
9	P Solberg	2
10	Andersson	1
MANUFACTURERS' POINTS		
1	BP Ford WRT	40
2	Citroen Total WRT	30
3	Citroen Junior Team	14

**RALLY SUMMARY** A different event from the last time Sweden featured on the WRC calendar, in 2008. This year's event centred on Hagfors, north of the HQ town of Karlstad. Stages further north in the country were reintroduced in an effort to guarantee snow cover. It worked.

## S-WRC

# Wildcard wins it in style

That P-G Andersson had never driven a Skoda Fabia S2000 in anger before the start of Rally Sweden didn't show. Unbeaten for the first 10 stages, the former Suzuki driver went on to collect an utterly dominant win on this opening round of the all-new Super 2000 World Rally Championship.

Most of the field were in new cars, with the exception of Andersson's fellow Skoda driver Patrik Sandell – who had assumed the mantle of pre-event favourite. In the end, Andersson blew the rest of the field away to win by just under a minute.

The Swede's only problem came on Saturday afternoon when he went to put his two new tyres on the front of the Fabia – only to discover they were devoid of air. He drove Sagen and Fredriksberg on increasingly stud-less tyres, but contained the time loss.

"I'm not surprised at the speed I drove at here," he said, "but I am surprised at

### Prokop: outright stage winner



the competition. I thought it would be tougher than this."

Given Andersson's wildcard status for his sole S-WRC outing, you could understand the antipathy from those with a season-long programme – but none could cope with his pace.

WRC returning Finn, Janne Tuohino, was second in a Ford Fiesta S2000, with Martin Prokop's similar car a couple of minutes down. Tuohino's major gripe was the lack of visibility on the opening day. Once that problem was traced to an errant blower pipe, he enjoyed a trouble-free run.

Beyond the rear screen falling out of his Fiesta on SS3, Prokop's event was equally free from drama – the Czech driver making history by becoming the first S-WRC driver to score an outright fastest time on SS16.

### S-WRC – Round 1 of 10

POS	DRIVER/NAVIGATOR	CAR	TIME
1	P-G Andersson/Anders Fredriksson	Skoda Fabia S2000	3h21m49.3s
2	Janne Tuohino/Markku Tuohino	Ford Fiesta S2000	+22.0s
3	Martin Prokop/Jan Tomanek	Ford Fiesta S2000	+2m56.4s

## P-WRC

# Flodin takes upper hand

Patrik Flodin collected a hard-earned Production Car WRC win. The Subaru driver led from the start, but traded times on the opening day with Anders Grondal – the difference between them as low as 1.7s mid-way through Friday afternoon.

Spurred on by his Norwegian rival's efforts, Flodin turned in an exceptional time on the second run through Torntorp to take 20s out of Grondal. From then on, the Swede was

able to control proceedings. His only problem was a suspension scare when the dampers on his Subaru went soft on Saturday. In the end it mattered little – he won by more than a minute.

Defending P-WRC champion Arminio Araujo took to the bottom step of the podium after a tricky rally trying to acclimatise himself to the Mitsubishi Lancer Evo X. He might have won the final round of last season in the car, but he found it a different beast in the Swedish snow.

### P-WRC – Round 1 of 9

POS	DRIVER/NAVIGATOR	CAR	TIME
1	Patrik Flodin/Goran Bergsten	Mitsubishi Lancer E9	3h28m04.7s
2	Anders Grondal/Veronica Engan	Subaru Impreza STi	+1m13.1s
3	Arminio Araujo/Miguel Ramalho	Mitsubishi Lancer E10	+5m04.9s



# FINNS CAN ONLY GET BETTER

Kimi Raikkonen loved every moment of his WRC debut in Sweden – even if he did finish in 29th place. *By DAVID EVANS*



F1 champion didn't quite kick up a (snow)storm

It's just gone five o'clock on Saturday afternoon in Hagfors, central Sweden. The sun, for all it is worth in temperature terms, is sliding behind the trees. It's minus 18 and dropping. There's still an hour to go until the 2007 Formula 1 World Champion arrives and fans are starting to gather. Sixty minutes of foot stamping later and Kimi Raikkonen comes. And goes. Interaction with his public has been limited. They don't care. They've seen him. Now they need to feel their feet again.

The level of interest in Raikkonen's first World Rally Championship assault has been astonishing. But this is getting silly. The service park for last week's opening round of the WRC is on a runway. Runways are not habitually known as places of shelter and this one's in central Sweden in the middle of one of its colder winters. Yet still they come, they stand and they shout. More than 300 have been ceaselessly chanting: "Keeemeeeee

Raaaaaiiikkkkkkoooooonen, Kimi Raikkonen!" for what seems like hours.

The noise peaks when he emerges from the motorhome to return to the C4. He fires the car up, but the engine note is inaudible to those standing more than a couple of feet away. Pulling his earphones over the top of his woolly hat, he pauses, smiles and waves. The place erupts. Momentarily, the brutal cold is forgotten.

The cold's not lost on Raikkonen. How could it be when he spent the thick end of half an hour digging his Citroen out of the snow on Viggen 2? But he loves it. He can't get enough of it. He's dreamed of the World Rally Championship since he was a boy. And now he's living his dream. And, for a man with such limited experience of motorsport's muddier side, he's doing exceptionally well. Except for that business with the snowbank.

His engineer, Cedric Mazenq, has got past the 'It's Kimi Raikkonen!' phase which many of us are still trapped in.

Mazenq has a job to do. This might be Raikkonen's dream, but it's also his reality. And, if all goes well, it could be his future. That's where his engineer comes in: he must help make it happen.

## ROUGH WITH THE SMOOTH

Mazenq has already worked out where the team can help Raikkonen. Predictably for a racing driver, the 30-year-old Finn's entry to corners is about being smooth rather than upsetting the balance of the car and pitching it into a slide. But here in Sweden, that's what is needed.

"Kimi's style is a little bit different from the other rally drivers at the moment," says Mazenq, "particularly in the way he enters the corner. Kimi enters more gently; he's more smooth with the steering wheel. Seb [Loeb] engages the car into the corner more violently. It's better to be more aggressive on the entry to the corner, as this gives less understeer on the end of the corner. He has to try to engage



Engineers advise Finn to be a bit more violent





Kimi gets the shovel out thanks to pesky snow

## **“Eighty per cent is to come from me, only 20 per cent from the car. I’ll do what the engineer says”** Kimi Raikkonen

the rear of the car and then keep the front wheels in a straight line to make the best traction.”

Raikkonen himself is unflinchingly frank in his own appraisal of his efforts. “Eighty per cent is to come from me, only 20 from the car,” he says. “I’m not changing the car so much at the moment, there’s no point – I’m still learning it. I’m listening to the engineer – he knows the car and I’ll do what he says.”

This is only Raikkonen’s sixth ever rally – and he’s already been a regular inside the top-10 stage times, and posted sixth quickest on one Swedish stage. And the good news for him is that this is as tough as it will get.

Mazenq continues: “The snow rally is not so easy. Here we have deep ruts and no consistency. It’s hard to find feedback from the car because the surface is changing so much between the first and second pass of stages.”

One of the chief areas Raikkonen is working on in the car is listening. Having spent his sporting life in a single-seater, taking advice on which way to go is something completely new. And it’s not coming easy to him.

Raikkonen’s personal trainer Mark Arnall knows him well. “In an F1 car, when the engineer came on the radio to

talk while Kimi was driving, unless it was vital information, he would say, ‘Hey, stop talking and let me drive.’ Here the co-driver is always talking. This is a big adaptation for him.”

Luckily the bloke doing the talking is Kaj Lindstrom, one of Finland’s finest who spent two years guiding rally God Tommi Makinen through the woods. But Lindstrom will have his work cut out to stop Raikkonen drifting off the notes and driving on sight, an entirely common problem for racers who turn to rally. Conversely, rally drivers suffer the reverse; Colin McRae famously got on the radio not long into his first stint driving a Ferrari 550 at Le Mans to ask if there was anybody out there.

Another element of the WRC which Raikkonen could be forgiven for taking his time to appreciate is his revised schedule. Gone are the days of taking a nap between practice and qualifying or warm-up and race. In Sweden Raikkonen was up well before dawn and not back to bed for 17 or 18 hours.

“Kimi’s not the best in the morning,” says Arnall. “In F1 getting up was not something he particularly enjoyed. ‘Now he’s up at 0530, takes the car from parc ferme, into service, out to the stages, back to service for 30 minutes to eat and get a massage, before being back out for four or five hours. He’s now having to concentrate for much longer periods. Every rally is like driving the Monaco Grand Prix: you’re so close to the trees all of the time. At other circuits in F1, if you go off the road, you can run wide, go back to the garage, brush it off, polish it up and off you go again. Not here.”

With the event drawing to a close, we’re back in Citroën’s service park. Lindstrom is looking out at the five-deep throng just feet away. Raikkonen slides alongside and immediately the camera flashes start.

“Welcome to the goldfish bowl,” says Lindstrom with a smile.

This is what happens when Kimi’s world collides with the World Rally Championship. ☼



Snowbanks proved too much of a draw on debut

ALL PICS: MCKLEIN.DE



**DAYTONA**

USA

February 14

NASCAR Sprint Cup

Round 1/36

**AT A GLANCE: OVERALL**

→ Winner **Jamie McMurray**

→ Pole position **Mark Martin**

→ Most laps led **Kevin Harvick**

Sprint

McMurray pretty  
chuffed with 500 win

# McMurray's hole in one



**Jamie McMurray scored an unexpected, and dramatic, win in a Daytona 500 that was twice stopped due to a pothole on the circuit**

**T**he 52nd running of the Daytona 500 was memorable for lasting for 520 miles and taking over six hours to complete, thanks to a pothole that caused two red flags. But it should also be remembered for some great racing and a brilliant finish. It crowned a first-time winner in Jamie McMurray, and left many reflecting on a race they felt they could have won.

At 200 laps, the scheduled distance, Greg Biffle's Roush Ford led the field after rocketing past long-time leader Clint Bowyer into Turn 3 with two laps to

go. Biffle was within a couple of hundred yards of victory when Bill Elliott (54 years old) slid into young gun Joey Logano (still just 19!) and into the Turn 3 wall on the 199th lap. That brought out the yellows and froze the race order. It also meant a green-white-chequered finish, NASCAR's answer to 'overtime'.

When the green flew it was 2007 winner Kevin Harvick who put one hand on regaining the trophy. Harvick believed he had the fastest car in the field, but just needed clear air — and the bottom racing line — to ram home his advantage. From the outside of row two

at the double-file restart, Harvick pushed Martin Truex Jr past Biffle, and then decisively switched to the inside, bullying Truex up the racetrack into Turn 1 and claiming the inside line

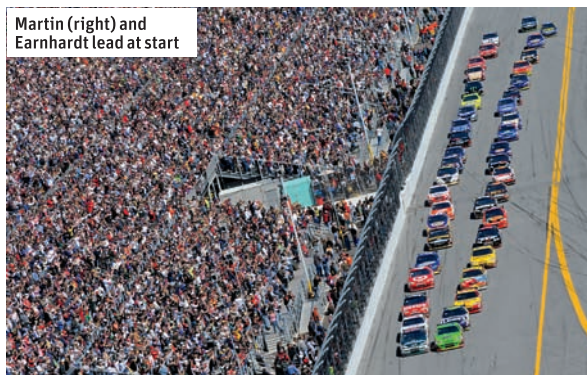
he craved. But if Harvick thought he was going to win, he was wrong.

Biffle got sideways at Turn 1 and caused cars behind him to slow down as he caught the slide. In the

chain reaction, Kasey Kahne clipped Tony Stewart and rebounded into the path of Jeff Gordon, who was already mad with Kahne for stitching him up in the draft earlier on. He barged into the rear of Kahne's car a couple of times before properly sending him spinning, and Kahne was quickly collected by Robert Richardson Jr.

Under old NASCAR rules, the resulting yellow flag would have signalled the end of the race. But a new mandate to allow multiple attempts at a green-flag finish (three green-white-chequers) meant the overtime would run and

Martin (right) and Earnhardt lead at start





## OVERALL RACE RATING

★★★★★

Apart from pothole tedium, the racing was pulsating



They need to call a caution. There are rocks everywhere. There's going to be a big wreck"

Robby Gordon gets nervous over the radio about the Daytona potholes

## REPORT DAYTONA 500



Charles Bradley reports



McMurray (1) won. Biffle (16) felt he should've

run. Just as Biffle had been, new leader Harvick was now the sitting duck at the head of the queue.

As the green flew again to give two more laps of racing, Carl Edwards was pushing Harvick on the inside line down to Turn 1. On the backstretch, the scene of so many bump-draft manoeuvres in Daytona's restrictor-plate era, the crucial move of the race occurred. Biffle gave his old Roush Ford team-mate McMurray (who had made a poor getaway at the restart after spinning his rear wheels) a massive push on the outside line. Harvick clung to his favoured inside, allowing McMurray to sail into the lead into Turn 3.

Under the white flag, McMurray led from Biffle and Truex, with a gap back to Bowyer and a charging



Harvick (right) and McMurray battle it out

Dale Earnhardt Jr. 'Junior' had taken four fresh tyres during a caution with seven laps to go, and his Hendrick Chevy was the big mover entering the last lap.

Earnhardt and Bowyer worked together off Turn 2 and built up huge momentum, Earnhardt surging up to second place and weaving between Truex and Biffle as he did so. Now there was only one car to

pass, and the leader was worried: "I saw the 88 behind me and thought, 'Oh no, it's an Earnhardt — they always win around here.'"

McMurray needn't have worried, as Earnhardt failed to catch him by 0.119s in the closing yards.

"It was all a blur," said Earnhardt. "I was just goin' where they weren't. If there was room to put fit my front radiator, I put it in there and

### KEY MOMENTS

**LAP 117 John Andretti hits pothole and then the Turn 2 wall due to blown tyre. Race is red-flagged to repair track**

**LAP 161 Race is red-flagged again as pothole repair has not only come apart, but more track has worn away**

nailed the throttle. We all wiggled, and somehow I got through. Not bad to finish second from 22nd at the first green-white-chequer — it's awesome and it sucks at the same time."

Third-place finisher Biffle added: "I was half a corner away from winning the Daytona 500 [when the lap-199 yellow came out]. Then, at the final restart, I feel I made my move too soon. I'd pushed Jamie through Turns 1 and 2 and down the backstretch, pushed us both by the rest, but then I tried to pass him on the frontstretch. I should've pushed him again for a while and waited until the backstretch to make a move, which is where Dale Jr got that huge run on me."

Thankfully, I got the car where it needed to be when it counted and I had a great run down to the finish line." His Michael Waltrip Racing Toyota team-mate, Truex, finished sixth.

Harvick, who tumbled to seventh, was bitter about how he fell down the order, and fingered the driver who he felt had robbed him of a chance to win: "We had the car to beat, and just zipped when we shoulda zagged. The 99 [Edwards] doesn't really know where he's going. He went to the middle and kind of jammed it all up. I just wish we had someone behind us who knew how to draft."

Matt Kenseth finished eighth, last year's winner struggling against a "baseball-sized" hole in the front of his car that probably answered the question of where the pothole's missing asphalt had gone. Edwards finished ninth, ahead of Juan Pablo Montoya, who had a quick car but picked the wrong lane at the wrong time and was never able to work his way back to the front.

While the racing was of the highest order in restrictor-plate terms, the hole that appeared in the track prompted a shabby old affair. The issue came right out of the blue, and caused the first red flag on lap 122, after John Andretti had clattered the wall in Turn 2 due to a blow-out.

The first attempt at a fix failed to bond to the track, so this was ripped out and tried again, which seemed to work after a delay of an hour and 40 minutes. But, after ▶



# 21

## NUMBER OF LEADERS

Almost half the field led the race, topped by Harvick (41 laps) from Bowyer (37) and Kurt Busch (33). McMurray led two...



AJ Allmendinger charged, then spun



Pothole work. All we need is a contraflow

◀ another 35 laps of racing, the reds flew again as the repair had not only failed, but the hole had got even bigger. The next solution? Believe it or not: body filler. And this time it worked!

The lengthy delays meant the race ended, quite unintentionally, under the lights. This meant that the handling requirements of the cars were vastly different than teams had planned

for, as track temperature dropped by more than 30 degrees F, from the heat of a sunny Florida afternoon into a chilly winter's evening. Some struggled massively, including Saturday's Nationwide winner Tony Stewart, whose 15 race wins at Daytona still fail to include a 500 success. He trailed home a frustrated 22nd.

Four-time champion

Jimmie Johnson didn't make the finish, as the rear axle of his Hendrick Chevy failed. He had struggled with tyre wear throughout, and suffered a right-rear puncture just before the first red flag. He had run near the front, and appeared to be strong on long runs, but didn't take the opportunity to blame his retirement on the pothole. "I don't think so," he said.

"We'd been hitting it with the right-side tyres, and it was something in the left side that broke."

Besides Earnhardt's strong late run, it wasn't a great day for Rick Hendrick's team. Poleman Mark Martin was never a contender, and came home a disappointing 12th. Jeff Gordon wrecked on the very last lap of the race, and trundled across the line in 26th.

The mighty Joe Gibbs Racing Toyota team also disappointed, with Kyle Busch 14th and Denny Hamlin 17th. Hamlin blamed Montoya's team for "lying to us" about how many tyres they would take in the last round of pitstops, which jammed his car in the box behind the Colombian: "They said he was going to do two, so we did two and he did four, so I got stuck in my pits and rejoined with two old tyres. We got screwed, really."

Another frontrunner to bemoan pit strategy was Kurt Busch, who led strongly in the first half of the race, but fell away badly as the track conditions cooled. The Penske Dodge star, who finished 23rd, said: "We were running third but pitted with six laps to go for four new tyres. Then it was yellow after yellow, and you just can't leapfrog the cars from that far back." Still, that was better than team-mates Brad Keselowski and Sam Hornish, who both shunted early on and trailed home in the lower reaches of the top 30 in their battered cars.

One of the stars of the day was AJ Allmendinger, who started from the back after his engine blew in practice, but the former Champ Car star zoomed

## GATORADE 150 DUELS

### Johnson and Kahne have the edge when it counts

Two fantastically close finishes showcased the 150-mile qualifying races last Thursday, with Jimmie Johnson and Kasey Kahne taking the victories – albeit in entirely different circumstances.

Johnson's crew chief Chad Knaus took a huge gamble at the final caution period of race one by not calling his man in for fresh tyres. That left Johnson prone to attack in a four-lap shootout to the finish. "It was a go-for-broke move to win a race we've never won before," admitted Knaus.

With a mountain to climb to hold off the fresh-tyred opposition, led by Richard Childress team-mates Clint

Bowyer and Kevin Harvick, Johnson stoically clung to the bottom groove and hung on by 0.005s in a wild sprint to the line. "Man, I thought I was going to end up in the fence at the finish," said Johnson. "But when they pushed me, I had to turn sharp right to save it."

Harvick finished second, ahead of Kyle Busch, Bowyer and Regan Smith. Two-time 500 winner Michael Waltrip crashed heavily at Turn 4, and had to sweat out the second race, hoping that the right drivers would fill the transfer spots in the unnecessarily complex qualification process.

Kahne won the second Duel by 0.014s in a side-by-side finish with Tony Stewart, who was being pushed

along by Juan Pablo Montoya. "Kurt Busch gave me a really good push so I could pass Tony in Turn 2," said Kahne. "I couldn't tell if I'd won or not, it was that close between us."

Brian Vickers led with six laps remaining, but Stewart intimidated him, Earnhardt-style, into brushing the Turn 4 wall. Montoya finished

third, just ahead of Kurt Busch – who led a substantial amount of the race, as did Penske team-mate Brad Keselowski, before he went onto the grass while entering the pits.

Waltrip squeaked into the 500, along with Max Papis, Michael McDowell and Mike Bliss, while Casey Mears was a big name to miss out.



Johnson goes wheel to wheel with Biffle



52

## NUMBER OF LEAD CHANGES

And that's just over the start-finish 'stripe', not including other changes out on the circuit

40

## NUMBER OF LAPS UNDER CAUTION

Plenty of time to get beer and hotdogs - unless you're a pothole filler-inner

REPORT  
DAYTONA 500

from last to first in 45 laps in his Richard Petty-run Ford. A spin while battling with Jeff Gordon cost him 10 laps in the garage to get his car going again.

Another former single-seater man to impress was ex-F1 racer Scott Speed, who led for nine laps on well-worn tyres after his Red Bull Toyota squad opted to pit him out of sequence. He eventually finished 19th.

The man of the hour, undoubtedly, was McMurray. He had won at Daytona before, in the July night race for Jack Roush's team, but the emotion of winning NASCAR's biggest race on his return to Ganassi Racing hit him in

Victory Lane. In between blubbing fits, he said: "This is truly awesome. Four or five months ago Chip and Felix Sabates [team co-owners] took a chance on me, and what a way to pay them back. I don't know that I've ever cried like that before, but this is so unreal, so unbelievable, that I can't explain it."

What's also difficult to reconcile is McMurray's knack at winning with Ganassi in unexpected circumstances. He won on his second-ever Cup start with the team as a rookie at Charlotte in 2002, and scooped the 500 on his first start after four years away at Roush. Looks like he's here to stay this time. ☑



Champion Johnson had an unhappy 500

## RESULTS

NASCAR Sprint Cup, Daytona 500 (USA), February 14, round 1 of 36

GRID	
1 MARTIN	47.074
2 EARNHARDT	47.142
3 JOHNSON	
4 KAHNE	
5 HARVICK	
6 STEWART	
7 KYLE BUSCH	
8 MONTROYA	
9 BOWYER	
10 KURT BUSCH	
11 SMITH	
12 SADLER	
13 McMURRAY	
14 TRUEX	
15 ALL'DINGER	
16 LOGANO	
17 NEWMAN	
18 AMBROSE	
19 RAGAN	
20 REUTIMANN	
21 J GORDON	
22 VICKERS	
23 BIFFLE	
24 KENSETH	
25 HAMLIN	
26 KESELOWSKI	
27 EDWARDS	
28 BLISS	
29 McDOWELL	
30 SPEED	
31 PAPIS	
32 MENARD	
33 ANDRETTI	
34 R GORDON	
35 KVAPIL	
36 HORNISH	
37 RICHARDSON	
38 SAID	
39 BURTON	
40 ELLIOTT	
41 NEMECHK	
42 LABONTE	
43 WALTRIP	

208 LAPS, 520 MILES					
POS	DRIVER	TEAM	CAR	RESULT	GRID
1	Jamie McMurray (USA)	Earnhardt Ganassi Racing	Chevrolet Impala	3h47m16s	13
2	Dale Earnhardt Jr (USA)	Hendrick Motorsports	Chevrolet Impala	+0.119s	2
3	Greg Biffle (USA)	Roush Fenway Racing	Ford Fusion		23
4	Clint Bowyer (USA)	Richard Childress Racing	Chevrolet Impala		9
5	David Reutimann (USA)	Michael Waltrip Racing	Toyota Camry		20
6	Martin Truex Jr (USA)	Michael Waltrip Racing	Toyota Camry		14
7	Kevin Harvick (USA)	Richard Childress Racing	Chevrolet Impala		5
8	Matt Kenseth (USA)	Roush Fenway Racing	Ford Fusion		24
9	Carl Edwards (USA)	Roush Fenway Racing	Ford Fusion		27
10	Juan Pablo Montoya (CO)	Earnhardt Ganassi Racing	Chevrolet Impala		8
11	Jeff Burton (USA)	Richard Childress Racing	Chevrolet Impala		39
12	Mark Martin (USA)	Hendrick Motorsports	Chevrolet Impala		1
13	Paul Menard (USA)	Richard Petty Motorsports	Ford Fusion		32
14	Kyle Busch (USA)	Joe Gibbs Racing	Toyota Camry		7
15	Brian Vickers (USA)	Red Bull Racing	Toyota Camry		22
16	David Ragan (USA)	Roush Fenway Racing	Ford Fusion		19
17	Denny Hamlin (USA)	Joe Gibbs Racing	Toyota Camry		25
18	Michael Waltrip (USA)	Michael Waltrip Racing	Toyota Camry		43
19	Scott Speed (USA)	Red Bull Racing	Toyota Camry		30
20	Joey Logano (USA)	Joe Gibbs Racing	Toyota Camry		16
21	Bobby Labonte (USA)	TRG Motorsports	Chevrolet Impala		42
22	Tony Stewart (USA)	Stewart-Haas Racing	Chevrolet Impala		6
23	Kurt Busch (USA)	Penske Racing	Dodge Charger		10
24	Elliott Sadler (USA)	Richard Petty Motorsports	Ford Fusion		12
25	Boris Said (USA)	Latitude 43 Motorsports	Ford Fusion		38
26	Jeff Gordon (USA)	Hendrick Motorsports	Chevrolet Impala		21
27	Bill Elliott (USA)	Wood Brothers Racing	Ford Fusion		40
28	Robby Gordon (USA)	Robby Gordon Motorsports	Toyota Camry	-1 lap	34
29	Travis Kvapil (USA)	Front Row M'sports/Yates	Ford Fusion	-3 laps	35
30	Kasey Kahne (USA)	Richard Petty Motorsports	Ford Fusion	202 laps-accident	4
31	Robert Richardson Jr (USA)	Front Row M'sports/Yates	Ford Fusion	202 laps-accident	37
32	AJ Allmendinger (USA)	Richard Petty Motorsports	Ford Fusion	-10 laps	15
33	Michael McDowell (USA)	Prism Motorsports	Toyota Camry	195 laps-driveshaft	29
34	Ryan Newman (USA)	Stewart-Haas Racing	Chevrolet Impala	193 laps-accident	17
35	Jimmie Johnson (USA)	Hendrick Motorsports	Chevrolet Impala	185 laps-rear axle	3
36	Brad Keselowski (USA)	Penske Racing	Dodge Charger	-34 laps	26
37	Sam Hornish Jr (USA)	Penske Racing	Dodge Charger	-48 laps	36
38	John Andretti (USA)	Front Row M'sports/Yates	Ford Fusion	117 laps-accident	33
39	Regan Smith (USA)	Furniture Row Racing	Chevrolet Impala	-118 laps	11
40	Max Papis (I)	Germain Racing	Toyota Camry	89 laps-engine	31
41	Marcos Ambrose (AUS)	JTG Daugherty Racing	Toyota Camry	79 laps-engine	18
42	Mike Bliss (USA)	Tommy Baldwin Racing	Chevrolet Impala	76 laps-accident	28
43	Joe Nemechek (USA)	NEMCO Motorsports	Toyota Camry	64 laps-accident	41

CHAMPIONSHIP TABLE		
POS	DRIVER	PTS
1	McMurray	190
2	Earnhardt	175
3	Biffle	170
4	Bowyer	165
5	Harvick	156
6	Reutimann	155
7	Truex	155
8	Kenseth	142
9	Montoya	139
10	Edwards	138
11	Martin	132
12	Burton	130

Winner's average speed: 137.283mph.



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**QUICK RESULTS**

→ Winner **Tony Stewart**  
→ Pole **Kyle Busch**  
→ Most laps led **Stewart**

**RACE RATING**

★★★★★

Action aplenty, the usual 'big ones' and a grandstand finish. Great stuff

NASCAR NATIONWIDE SERIES DAYTONA (USA), FEBRUARY 13, RD 1/35

# Stewart emerges from the smoke

**T**ony Stewart won a wild NASCAR Nationwide Series race at Daytona that was punctuated by two massive pile-ups – including Dale Earnhardt Jr flipping over on the backstretch and Danica Patrick crashing out on her maiden NASCAR start.

With qualifying rained out, Stewart started from the 16th row, but he surged his way towards the front in the early stages. His biggest scare came in the opening laps, when Trevor Bayne and Mike Bliss crashed in front him at Turn 2, but he was already in the lead by half-distance.

A fumbled pitstop then cost Stewart places, but with 30 laps to go he was back in front, taking the lead from Earnhardt with a smart move into Turn 3. That proved to be good timing, as two laps later Earnhardt's car was flipped

onto its roof at over 180mph. The crash started when Carl Edwards and Brad Keselowski touched, causing Keselowski to tag Junior on the left-rear corner, sending him skywards. As Earnhardt flew he collected Greg Biffle and Kyle Busch after briefly nudging the catch fencing, and 10 cars became involved. Amazingly, Earnhardt walked away from his car with barely a scratch, despite its roof being crushed down.

At the restart, Stewart kept the opposition at bay with some staunch defensive driving in his Kevin Harvick Inc Chevrolet. "I'll bet you I was driving 60 to 70 percent of the time looking in the mirror," he said. "That's the most dominant car I've had here."

Penske Dodge youngster Justin Allgaier lost his long-held second place in the final yards, as he was mugged by Cup regulars



Stewart (4) won after Earnhardt crashed

Edwards (Roush Fenway Ford) and Kevin Harvick (Harvick Inc Chevy) coming off the final corner, but fourth was still a strong result after he'd sustained damage in an earlier brush with the wall.

The other 'big one' was triggered when rookies Josh Wise and Colin Braun touched exiting Turn 4. This caused a chain reaction further down the field, which wiped out another 10 cars, including Patrick. She had only just avoided getting involved in an earlier wreck that caused the second caution, but her approach of aiming for the

spinners didn't work the second time, and she clipped Ricky Stenhouse Jr and damaged her JR Chevy beyond repair.

● Charles Bradley

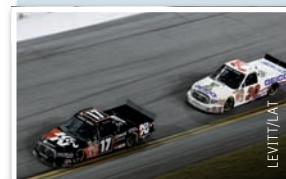
**RESULTS**

**1 Tony Stewart (Chevrolet Impala)**, 120 laps in 2h25m32s; 2 Carl Edwards (Ford Fusion), +0.309s; 3 Kevin Harvick (Chevy); 4 Justin Allgaier (Dodge Charger); 5 Brian Vickers (Toyota Camry); 6 Paul Menard (Ford); 7 Joey Logano (Toyota); 8 James Buescher (Chevy); 9 Kasey Kahne (Toyota); 10 Steve Wallace (Toyota). **Points** 1 Stewart, 195; 2 Edwards, 175; 3 Harvick, 170; 4 Allgaier, 160; 5 Vickers, 155; 6 Menard, 150.

## IN BRIEF

### NASCAR TRUCKS

Timothy Peters (leading, below) was the shock winner of a rain-delayed Daytona season opener. The Red Horse Toyota driver passed long-time leader Todd Bodine's Germain Racing Toyota on the last lap to take his second career victory. Bodine was second ahead of Dennis Setzer (Dodge) and Jason White (Ford). Peters's team-mate Nelson Piquet Jr was sixth on his series debut.



### BATHURST 12 HOURS

Ex-V8 Supercar racers John Bowe and Paul Morris won at Bathurst in a BMW 335i they shared with Gary Holt, completing 202 laps in the process. The race finished under caution, meaning the victory margin over the David Wall/Des Wall/Trevor Symonds Mitsubishi Lancer was an artificially small four seconds.

### TOYOTA RACING SERIES

Earl Bamber won the New Zealand Grand Prix at Manfeild. The former A1GP racer passed Mitch Evans late in the race when the 15-year-old wonderkid missed a gear. Richie Stanaway and Andrew Waite won the other races, with Stanaway taking the round win. Evans leads Bamber by 34 points with a round to go.

### NEW ZEALAND PORSCHES

Former A1GP race winner Jonny Reid (below) took his first Porsche GT3 victory in the second of three races at Manfeild. Second places in the other two races ensured that he also claimed round honours. David Reynolds won a wet first race, while Daniel Gaunt claimed the reversed-grid encounter. Craig Baird still holds a commanding points lead, as well as heading the V8s (left).



NEW ZEALAND V8s MANFEILD (NZ), FEBRUARY 13-14, RD 5/6

# Baird extends lead while Edgell takes maiden win

**C**raig Baird set himself up for double New Zealand championship titles by winning the penultimate round of the NZ V8 series at Manfeild.

Baird already had a big lead in the Porsche GT3s, and now in the V8s the Ford driver is 131 points ahead of former champion John McIntyre with a round to go at Taupo next month.

Duels between the two were hugely entertaining for drivers and fans alike. In

each of the three races, Baird and McIntyre spent several laps fighting for position and repeatedly went side-by-side through multiple corners. The rivals gave each other just enough racing room, though Baird lost four wing mirrors during the day.

Baird scored third, first and fifth places to take the round victory. That degree of success had looked unlikely early on, as Tim Edgell qualified his Ford

fastest and ran away with race one to take his first series victory.

Defending champion Kayne Scott (Ford) was second, while Baird got past McIntyre to claim third.

Edgell also broke clear in race two, but a late safety car period bunched the field up. Baird passed McIntyre and then Edgell – slowed by a flat spot – to take victory. The final race started with a fully-reversed grid, meaning Baird had to fight his way through from the back. It seemed that he would make it to third until his rear tyres went off late in the race. McIntyre got by and Baird settled for fifth.

Angus Fogg won that race in his Ford, while Edgell had to grapple with gearbox problems on his way to eighth place.

McIntyre finished third

for the meeting, behind Baird and Edgell, and lies second in the championship just ahead of Edgell. Eddie Bell (Ford) dropped from second to fourth after a difficult meeting, although he finished second in the reversed-grid race.

● Bernard Carpinter

**RESULTS**

**Race 1 1 Tim Edgell (Ford Falcon)**, 12 laps in 14m43.145s; 2 Kayne Scott (Ford), +2.901s; 3 Craig Baird (Ford); 4 John McIntyre (Ford); 5 Andy Knight (Ford); 6 Andy Booth (Holden Commodore). **Race 2 1 Baird**, 12 laps in 16m27.956s; 2 Edgell, +0.726s; 3 McIntyre; 4 Scott; 5 Knight; 6 Booth. **Race 3 1 Angus Fogg (Ford)**, 22 laps in 27m13.722s; 2 Eddie Bell (Ford), +6.335s; 3 Matt Lockwood (Ford); 4 McIntyre; 5 Baird; 6 Booth. **Points** 1 Baird, 852; 2 McIntyre, 721; 3 Edgell, 705; 4 Scott, 676; 5 Bell, 661; 6 Booth, 616.

Edgell smoked his way to first V8 win







# Great tracks **INTERLAGOS**





# Brazil's hard nut to crack

Interlagos celebrates its 70th anniversary as a racing circuit this year. JAMIE O'LEARY traces its history – and its changing layout

From the famous Ligier one-two taken by Jacques Laffite and Patrick Depailler in the 1979 Brazilian Grand Prix, to Ayrton Senna collapsing after using all his energy reserves to win in '91, to the joy on the faces of the Massa family turning to despair as Lewis Hamilton's last-corner pass on Timo Glock wrenched the 2008 world title away from their boy Felipe, Brazil's Interlagos circuit has always produced drama, action and atmosphere.

The Autodromo Jose Carlos Pace, to give the circuit its full name (in deference to the 1975 Brazilian GP winner), celebrates its 70th anniversary this year. The surface wrinkles brought on by age are clear for all to see, but it retains all the character that has made it a racer's heaven over the years.

Racing has been in the blood of the Sao Paulo natives since 1936, when the city's first grand prix was held on a four-mile street circuit close to the centre of the city. Alfa Romeo saw fit to send a pair of Enzo Ferrari-run grand prix cars, with Carlo Pintacuda and Attilio Marinoni as drivers. The Italian onslaught was overshadowed, however, by a fatal accident. At close to 100mph, Parisienne cabaret dancer-turned-racer Helle Nice hit a straw bale thrown onto the road by fans. She rolled into the crowd, killing four spectators and seriously injuring herself.

Even so, the desire for racing burned brighter than ever, leading to calls for a permanent venue to be found. Help was provided by British-born engineer Luiz Romero Sanson, who had made his name by installing Sao Paulo's first

concrete highway.

Sanson had already identified an area to the south of the city – between two artificial lakes and the huge Billings Reservoir – as valuable real estate. But, when he realised that a large amount of this land was totally unsuitable for residential development, the idea of building a racetrack was hatched. Andre Agache, the French architect brought in to turn concept into reality, handed naming duties to Sanson's young daughter. Upon seeing the track for the first time, she decided that Interlagos ('between the lakes') sounded better than the alternative of Intralagos.

The circuit's inaugural race – the first event to carry the title of the Brazilian Grand Prix – was held in 1940 and was dominated by

locals. Arthur Nascimento Jr won in a 3.5-litre Alfa Romeo, beating the Maserati of Chico Landi, who would go on to become the first Brazilian to score points in the World

**"That first race in 1940 was amazing. There was an enormous crowd and they were all applauding. Noise was everywhere"**  
Wilson Fittipaldi Sr

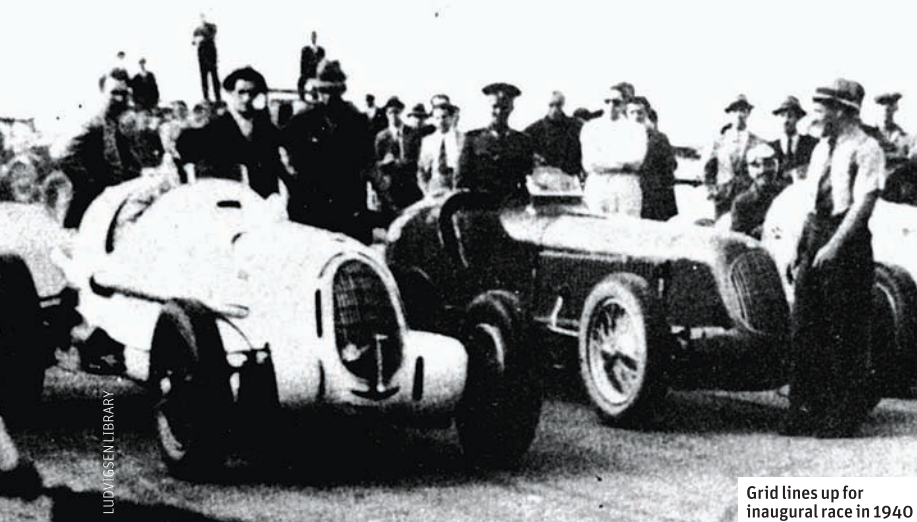
Drivers' Championship and would later take on the role of Interlagos track manager during the 1970s.

Competing in a supporting motorcycle race that day was Wilson Fittipaldi, a spectator at the street race four years earlier and a man who would have a huge influence on Brazilian motorsport over the next 40 years, both as an accomplished radio and television broadcaster and, even more significantly, through his sons Wilson Jr and Emerson.

"That first race was amazing," remembers Fittipaldi, now 89. "There was an enormous crowd there and they were all applauding. Because you were ▶

Senna drove brilliant race in 1993 for McLaren





Grid lines up for inaugural race in 1940



Curva do Sol was treacherous in 2003

◀ in a bowl, the noise was everywhere from the sides. The people were on the grass banks and on the side of the circuit. It was an incredible sound. The biggest crowd was on the inside of Curva 1, where the pit exit is now.”

The track was an instant hit with both drivers and fans. The switchback nature of the circuit — loosely based on that of New York’s Roosevelt Field — meant that two thirds of the layout was visible from almost any vantage point. Meanwhile, the explosion of the automotive industry in Sao Paulo following the end of World War II — Ford, Volkswagen and Auto Union had all set up major manufacturing plants in the city — meant that there was a proliferation of stock vehicles ready to race.

Fittipaldi hitched upon the idea of a Le Mans-style endurance race, to be run over 1000 miles. And so the Mil Milhas, an event that would run annually for over half a century, was inaugurated in 1956.

“There have been some wonderful Mil Milhas races over the years,”

Fittipaldi says. “I remember one when 44 cars started and 20 crashed at the old Turn 3. Amazingly, after the race was stopped, most could be repaired within half an hour, and restarted.”

International status was bestowed upon the Brazilian Grand Prix in 1947. In March of 1972, the year in which Emerson Fittipaldi would become the first Brazilian Formula 1 world champion, the grand prix crews rolled in for a non-championship race. Fittipaldi qualified on pole position by two seconds but spun out of the lead. Worse still for the partisan crowd was that it was an Argentinian, Carlos Reutemann, who claimed victory.

Fittipaldi put things right a year later, when the event appeared on the world championship calendar for the first time. He doubled up in 1974 before Pace, the man whose bust now stands at the circuit entrance, made it another home winner the following season.

“They were all terrific races,” remembers Fittipaldi Sr, who commented on both of his youngest racing son’s wins at home for Brazilian

## GREAT RACE



**Senna took advantage of a shower to come from behind and win the 1993 Brazilian GP with a masterly display on slicks in the wet. Long-time leader Alain Prost had already retired, hitting a stalled car — ironically at the Senna ‘S’.**

television. “I remember one year it was very hot and the crowd in the grandstands were shouting, ‘We want water!’ The firemen brought the big hose out and sprayed them. They were applauding in a frenzy. Such an amazing atmosphere. Interlagos was a very special place, and it still is.”

Political pressure took the grand prix to Rio de Janeiro’s Jacarepagua circuit in 1978 and then from 1981–89. Sao Paulo’s mayor, however, wanted the race back at Brazilian motorsport’s spiritual home, and personally requested that Chico Rosa, the track’s technical chief from 1975–79, reprise his role after a decade away.

“He sent me to Europe to meet with Bernie Ecclestone,” remembers Rosa, who remains active in the same role today. “We had been friends since 1970 when we both were involved with Lotus works drivers [Emerson Fittipaldi and Jochen Rindt, who Ecclestone managed]. Bernie said the guys in Rio were difficult to deal with and that we should bring the race back to Interlagos.

“We did a complete rebuild of the pits and the paddock facilities, and we had to shorten the track, because at five miles it was far too long for F1, especially with the way the TV coverage had increased and demanded shorter, more accessible circuits.

Ayrton Senna came along — he designed the Senna ‘S’ — and Gerhard Berger helped too.

“We did the whole thing in six months and finished just in time for the grand prix in 1990. Amazing. And it was all worth it. The atmosphere when Senna was on the track was incredible, and when he won... well, you just had to be there. It was a very special feeling. I don’t know anywhere else in the world that you could find that.”

Interlagos may have fallen below the typical standard expected of a grand prix venue a long time ago. But Ecclestone’s insistence that F1 must retain a presence in South America means its position on the calendar should remain unthreatened for the time being. If you haven’t been, go. You won’t regret it. ❖  
*Special thanks to Lito Cavalcanti and Susy Fittipaldi*

## FACT OR FOLKLORE?

**We asked long-time Interlagos technical chief Chico Rosa about some of the circuit’s taller tales**

**Ickx brave in Ferrari**



**Was Jean-Pierre Jarier really the first man to take the old Turn 2 flat-out?**

No. Most people think it was him in the Shadow in 1975, but Jacky Ickx did it two years earlier in a Ferrari F1 car. Now that was brave. By the late ‘70s, with the advances in aerodynamics and tyres, it was not so unusual.

**Watch out! Or don’t**



**Were there really poisonous snakes down at the far side of the circuit?**

Could be... But I’ve been watching races at Interlagos since 1957 and I’ve never seen one. I’ve never heard of a driver coming back to the pits complaining of being bitten either. I think it’s just something the team bosses told the drivers to make sure they didn’t crash.

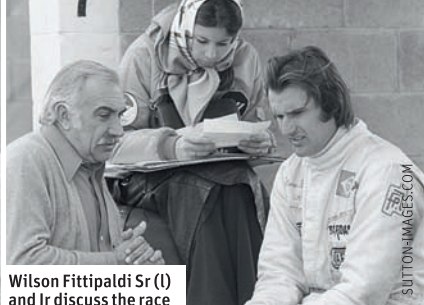


**Rubens started early**

**Did Rubens Barrichello’s old house back onto Subida do Lago?**

Not Subida do Lago. The old Barrichello building was by the main entrance to the circuit. The family business was selling building materials like bricks and wood. Rubens had his first race at the kart circuit on the far side of the track. He and Christian Fittipaldi had some fantastic races.





Wilson Fittipaldi Sr (l) and Jr discuss the race



Local hero Pace won for Brabham in 1975

## INTERLAGOS (2.678 MILES)

### SUBIDA DO BOXES

Flat, but only just. Webber crashed hard here in '03 and was collected by Alonso as race was stopped

### ESSE

Emerson Fittipaldi grabbed the lead from Peterson in '73 while lapping a backmarker and went on to win home race

### JUNCAO

'Junction'. Senna's final home race ended in a spin in '94 as he tried to keep up with Schumacher's Benetton

### BICO DO PATO

'Duck's Bill', owing to its shape. Follow-my-leader through here, except in wet weather

### MERGULHO

'The dive'. Where Hamilton passed slick-shod Glock on the last lap to steal '08 world title on wet track

### PINHEIRINHO

Situated downhill from the pine tree that gives the corner its name. Treacherous kerbs in the wet

### SUBIDA DO LAGO

'Lakeside turn'. Irvine banned for three races for causing pile-up in '94 with Bernard, Verstappen and Brundle

### FERRADURA

'Horseshoe' in deference to shape on old layout. Now a quick right that caught out Trulli and Sutil in '09

### SENNAS 'S'

Designed by Ayrton Senna, and the scene of many a first-lap pile-up, like that of Berger and Andretti in '93

### CURVA DO SOL

'Sun Curve' was ironically the scene of seven cars crashing in '03 as a drain flooded and created a lake in wet weather

## OLD CIRCUIT (4.941 MILES)



'Emmo' won first world championship event



Between the lakes; damn right it is. This is 1980





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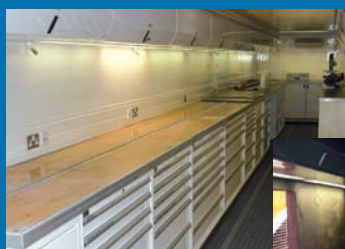
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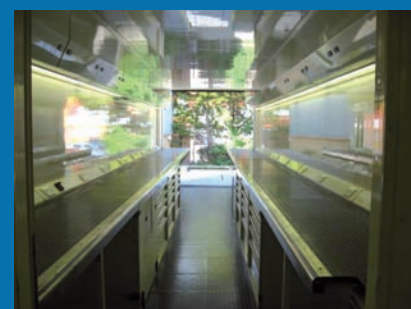
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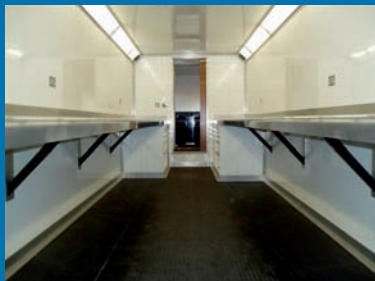
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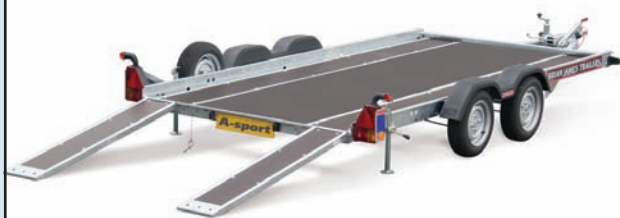
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## Head of Gearbox Design

The successful applicant will head up our Gearbox design group and report directly to the Chief Designer. They must be able to demonstrate the ability to lead a team of Gearbox designers through the design process from concept through to on car support. The scheduling and allocation of work within the group is an important aspect of this role, as is checking and signing off designs for manufacture.

## Essential Requirements-

- Educated to degree level in a relevant engineering discipline.
- Significant knowledge of current F1 Gearbox design.
- A sound knowledge of current F1 hydraulic systems would be an advantage.
- Excellent communication, co-ordination and leadership skills.
- Ability to deliver under pressure and compressed time lines.
- Experience of solid modelling and surfacing with 3D CAD (preferably Catia V5).
- Ability to solve problems under pressure.

## Hydraulics Design Engineer

The successful applicant will be solely responsible for the design of the complete hydraulics systems on the car and will report to the Head of Mechanical Design. They will be required to have a significant input into the Power Assisted Steering system so the successful applicant should be able to demonstrate the ability to guide others in this area. They will also need to liaise closely with suppliers to ensure state of art components are specified.

## Essential Requirements-

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- Excellent communication skills.
- Ability to deliver under pressure and compressed time lines.
- Experience of 3D cad (preferably Catia V5)
- Team player
- Educated to degree level in a relevant engineering discipline.
- Ability to solve problems under pressure.

For all positions please apply in writing enclosing a current CV to  
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or by email to **hr@lotusf1racing.my**

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## HR775 - TRANSMISSION DESIGNER

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The successful applicant should ideally have:

- An Engineering Degree of similar
- Relevant experience of transmission design in an F1 or motorsport environment.
- Relevant knowledge of current production techniques and processes
- Excellent 3D CAD skills
- Knowledge of BS8888 geometric tolerancing techniques.

Experience of Unigraphics NX is an advantage though not a prerequisite. Applicants will be self-motivated and proactive with excellent communications skills and the ability to work to deadlines within a team environment often with minimum supervision.

Closing Date for applications – 5<sup>th</sup> March 2010

## HR773 - R&D TEST ENGINEER – DATA ACQUISITION & ELECTRONICS

We have a vacancy for a Data Acquisition and Electronics Engineer within the R&D Test Group. The role of the Test Group is to advance our understanding of the car through development and application of laboratory tests and to ensure the car conforms to specification through verification and production testing.

The prime responsibilities of this role will be to:

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- To design and adapt car system electronics hardware for use within the R&D Test group and its associated dynos
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- To maintain all R&D Test group electronic test equipment, sensors and looms to the highest standard, ensuring they are fully functional, tested and calibrated
- Produce clear, concise and accurate reports

Applicants will preferably be Degree qualified in an Electronics discipline and have demonstrable experience of technology, data acquisition and analysis techniques. This role requires a combination of hands-on and written work to see tests completed from conception through to results analysis. Good written and verbal communication skills and the ability to work within tight timescales are essential. Knowledge of Labview, Matlab or other programming languages would be a significant advantage.

Closing Date for applications – 28<sup>th</sup> February 2010

To apply please send or Email your C.V. and covering letter quoting the correct reference number (HR773, HR774, HR775, HR776) and job title to: [human.resources@redbulltechnology.com](mailto:human.resources@redbulltechnology.com)

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## HR776 - COMPOSITE DESIGNER

Working in our Composite Design Group you will be required to take ownership for design projects; from patterns and tooling, detailed component design, assemblies and associated jigs through to involvement in structural sign off and resolution of operational issues. You will be closely involved in the design of the monocoque, impact structures, wings and bodywork as well as potential involvement in a range of R&D activities.

- The successful applicant should ideally have:
- An Engineering Degree of similar
- Relevant experience of composite design in an F1, motorsport, aerospace or marine environment.
- Relevant knowledge of current composite material technologies, their associated tooling, production techniques and processes
- Excellent 3D CAD skills

Experience of Unigraphics NX is an advantage though not a prerequisite, as is experience in the use of BS8888 geometric tolerancing techniques. Applicants will be self-motivated and proactive with excellent communications skills and the ability to work to deadlines within a team environment often with minimum supervision.

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While the position will be primarily focused on total vehicle performance development, extensive experience in vehicle dynamics is less important than strong mathematical and analytical skills; the successful candidate will have a strong academic background, with a good capability in Applied Mathematics and Mechanics. You will interact with various groups within the organisation and will therefore need good communication and teamwork skills.

Closing Date for applications – 28<sup>th</sup> February 2010





# SportsExtra

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**Snetterton endurance race ready to go for 2010, p76**



Mike (left) and Andrew Jordan will provide the prize BTCC test

## BTCC test prize for Ginetta Junior champion in 2010

A drive in Andrew Jordan's Vauxhall Vectra will be the prize for first G40 champ

**THIS YEAR'S** Ginetta Junior champion will win a test in a British Touring Car Championship Vauxhall Vectra.

Ginetta has done a deal with Eurotech Racing and Pirtek to give the top runner in the category a drive in Andrew Jordan's 2010 BTCC racer. The 20-year-old will also give the winner one-to-one tuition.

The move coincides with the introduction of Ginetta's new G40 model

in the series for 14 to 17-year-olds.

Ginetta chairman Lawrence Tomlinson hopes this will strengthen Ginetta Junior's links to higher levels of the sport – 2007 champ Nigel Moore has already gone on to race at Le Mans.

"The chance to test a BTCC car is a phenomenal prize and we're proud to be able to offer this in association with Andrew and Pirtek Racing," said Tomlinson. "The combination of the Jordans' racing experience coupled with Pirtek's new Vectra means that this is a huge incentive for all Ginetta Junior competitors."

Eurotech team principal Mike Jordan, father of Andrew, said: "I have been a long-time supporter of Ginetta's championships – Andrew had a G20 when he was 15, before the days of Ginetta Junior.

"I'm confident that, with the right

ingredients, we can help another young driver start achieving their motor racing ambitions. Andrew is incredibly excited about mentoring the new champion in the Vectra and I'm delighted to be cementing our strong relationship with Lawrence and the Ginetta team."

Andrew believes the step up from the 100bhp baby GT to a front-wheel-drive touring car with 300bhp will not be too great for the winner.

"The jump in power is quite big, but we have a trackday-spec Honda Integra that's halfway between the two. We will take them out for a day in that and give them some tuition so it comes as less of a shock," he said.

"If you can win Ginetta Juniors then you must be able to drive, so a BTCC car shouldn't be so difficult to control.

"It's not been worked out exactly how the test will work, but it certainly won't be a token handful of laps. It will be a proper test for the drivers.

"We have been running a G50 in Britcar, and Lawrence and Dad had a chat and decided to do this. We decided not to make it the obvious G50 test because Lawrence wanted the Ginetta Junior champion to be able to drive a car from the top series in Britain."



Top G40 ace will get a BTCC prize

### HOW THE TWO CARS COMPARE

#### GINETTA G40 JUNIOR

**ENGINE** 1800cc Ford Zetec

**POWER** 100bhp

**LAYOUT** Front-engined, rear-wheel-drive

**WEIGHT** 850kg

**TYRES** 195/50/15 Michelin Pilot Exalto

#### VAUXHALL VECTRA BTCC

**ENGINE** two-litre turbocharged TOCA

**POWER** 290bhp

**LAYOUT** Front-engined, front-wheel-drive

**WEIGHT** 1200kg

**TYRES** 235/61/17 Dunlop

### AUTOSPORT SAYS...

**KEVIN TURNER**  
NATIONAL  
EDITOR

kevin.turner  
@haymarket.com



**ENDURANCE RACING** looks pretty healthy in Britain at the moment.

The Silverstone 24 Hours returns in 2010 after a year away, topping Britcar's successful enduro championships. Then there's the SPEED series for sports-racers, the new Caterham-based Britsports and the ever-present Fun Cup.

The miles-per-pound value of longer races, where costs can be shared, is also proving appealing to historic racers, despite the extra strain on the machinery. The Historic Sports Car Club revived the AUTOSPORT Three Hours back in 2007, thus providing a compelling centrepiece for its Guards Trophy.

And now the new 360 Motor Racing Club has come up with a six-hour Snetterton event for later 1968-1986 machines (see page 76).

Rather than diluting national racing further by setting up yet another new series to meet its aims, the club has targeted one event to attract a variety of entries from different championships. The fact that the August race will be the longest event for historic cars in the UK will only add to its appeal.

It's true that longer races aren't always easy to digest for the average racegoer, but they do have their own following and offer a different sort of experience as the race gradually unfolds. And, of course, it provides something a little bit special for the competitors: they take on the race as well as the opposition.

Throw in the fact that the project is not being run by people wanting to make a profit and the new venture seems to have all the ingredients it needs to succeed.

### Extra contact details

**Ben Anderson**, editorial assistant  
ben.anderson@haymarket.com

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HAMPTON DOWNS





Classic Enduro

# Classic tin-tops get Snett enduro

New club launches six-hour event for GTs and tourers of the 1960s, '70s and '80s

RICHARD STYLES



**HISTORIC RACERS** will get a new annual six-hour endurance event in Britain if an inaugural Snetterton race this year is successful.

The as-yet unnamed meeting, on Sunday August 15, will be open to saloons and GTs built between 1968 and 1986. Each car will be permitted to have between two and four drivers.

The entry will be split into four classes based on engine capacity, with divisions at 1300cc, 1600cc and 2500cc, with a

maximum of 3.5 litres. No turbos will be allowed, but there will be an Invitation Class for cars that fail scrutineering.

Among the prime movers behind the project are John Smith (who gained experience of obtaining Motor Sports Association permits to run meetings while working for Masters Historic Racing) and Claire Smith, who is the chair of the newly founded 360 Motor Racing Club that will run the race.

The technical regulations allow for a

mix of machinery and level of modification, but John Smith pointed out that heavily developed cars will not be encouraged. "We're not restricting it to Appendix K cars, but we don't want hot rods," he said.

He confirmed that the successful Spa Six Hours event was a catalyst for the idea. "Spa is wonderful, but it's for wealthier racers and there's nothing like it in the UK," said Smith. "We know how to get a meeting and new club off the ground

— the race is going to happen.

"It has two unique points. The first is that it's a six-hour race in the UK for historic — it fills a space in the market we know is there.

"The other is that we're not doing it for profit. We'll establish an entry fee to cover all eventualities, and entrants will get money back from any profit."

All entries will have to become members of the club. Its website is [www.360motor-racing-club.com](http://www.360motor-racing-club.com).

Formula Renault UK

## Millroy joins Fortec squad

**FORMULA BMW** racer Ollie Millroy has joined Fortec Motorsport for his graduation to the Formula Renault UK Championship this season.

Millroy, 19, joins fellow Briton Alex Lynn and Swede Tom Blomqvist in the team's four-car line-up.

Fortec, the reigning FR UK teams' champion, gave Millroy his first taste of the category's new car at Brands Hatch last week.

"I can't wait for the first round at Thruxton," said Millroy, who has not raced on any UK circuit except Silverstone. "I'm over the moon. Fortec's

track record speaks for itself."

Team manager Dave Moore added: "Ollie had a very good test at Valencia [in the old-spec Tatuus] and integrated with the team well.

"He's got the drive and maturity to be a championship winner."

On the subject of Blomqvist, winner of two Winter Cup races with Fortec, Moore added: "We've had confirmation from the family that we can put a registration form in for the championship."

Fortec has yet to fill its fourth seat, but is believed to be keen to recruit David McDonald,

who ran well with Manor Competition last year in his rookie FR UK season.

The team has also secured the first driver for its new FRenault BARC team in the form of 16-year-old Mitchell Hale, who steps up from Ginetta Juniors.



Millroy has already tested for Fortec

Italian Historic Car Cup

## Italian series for Silverstone

**THE NEW** Italian Historic Car Cup will appear at this year's Silverstone Classic with a 75-minute race.

The initiative, for Italian GTs and sports racers built between 1947-73, will get a two-driver race at the July event — a change from its usual format of 30-minute double-headers.

The cancellation of the Ferrari-Maserati Historic Challenge events for 2010 could help IHCC numbers, and consideration is being given to allow Italian chassis powered by non-Italian engines and vice versa.

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## Trofeo Abarth 500 GB

## Simonsen Jr, Mardi Gras to Abarth

**BENNY SIMONSEN**, younger brother of British GT ace Allan, will make his car racing debut this season in the new Trofeo Abarth 500 GB series.

The former Scandinavian karting champion will race for new team Pulce Racing, which has devolved from Le Mans Series GT2 squad JWA Racing and will enter a car provided by South-West England Abarth dealer Vospers.

Simonsen said: "I can't wait for that first race, and I'm really pleased to have signed with such a professional team.

"I'm sure we're going to be fighting for the race wins and the title."

Race winning Renault Clio Cup squad Mardi Gras Motorsport will also enter the series this season.

The team, which helped triple World Touring Car champion Andy Priaux to the 1999 Renault Spider title, will run a single car for Paul Smith.

Team manager Paul Hetherington said: "Mardi Gras have a long and successful history in one-make series and we're always excited to get involved in something new.

"The car looks well engineered and the series is supporting some very exciting meetings."

Mardi Gras ran Priaux to Spider title in 1999



## European Rallycross

## European Ford effort for American flyer

## TANNER FOUST

will become the first American to take part in the European Rallycross Championship when he starts a short programme of events in the season opener at Montalegre, in Portugal, in May.

A competitor in drift, time attack and rallies, Foust will drive with OlsbergsMSE, the official Ford team in the ERC. The American drove one of the team's Ford Fiesta VIs in last year's X Games event, in which

he finished third. Foust has also represented his country twice at the Race of Champions and is a Top Gear USA presenter.

The ERC outings are preparatory to the rallycross events that will

take place in America this autumn (see AUTOSPORT, October 29). "The European rounds are a great opportunity for me to get a handle on this sport before it comes to America," said Foust.

"When rallycross debuts in the US, I'll be ready to go. The fans here are going to love it."



X Games man Foust will be first American in ERC

## Ginetta Scholarship

## Scheme gains champion tutors

**THREE FORMER** UK champions have joined the new Racing Perfection Ginetta Scholarship as instructors.

Ex-Club F3 champion Shane Kelly, 2008 Formula Renault BARC title winner Ollie Hancock and former VW Racing Cup king Phil House have all joined the scheme to provide tuition.

Ginetta and motorsport database

Racing Perfection set up the scholarship at the end of last season, offering a full season in the 2010 Ginetta Challenge to the winner.

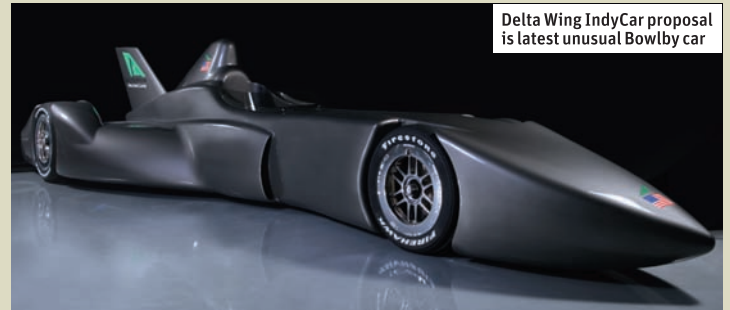
Entries to the scholarship closed on Monday (February 15). The scheme is open to any driver with a valid racing licence and includes track, media and fitness tests to determine the winner.

## MARCUS PYE

## HUMBLE PYE

The voice of club motor racing

Delta Wing IndyCar proposal is latest unusual Bowlby car



Part-Land Speed Record contender, part-fighter aircraft and part-Batmobile evo, the futuristic Delta Wing IndyCar concept, which broke cover last week, reminded me that the fertile imagination of British designer Ben Bowlby was first evidenced in an early brainchild - the eponymous Clubmans car still raced by long-time 'Special Estate' innovator Ginger Marshall.

Former Lola chief designer Bowlby's no-holds-barred initiative to haul racing car architecture from the extraordinary - which the blase world now regards as normal of course - into the realms of *Boy's Own* fantasia is as laudable as it is unconventional. One question though: with the narrow front track and wide rear, how will it cope with corners in road and street events?

The Delta Wing car inevitably set me thinking about radical-looking racers down the years - not all of which reached the tracks. Perhaps the most bizarre never to make it was the full-bodied and windowed Prowess Formula Ford 1600 contender (its name an anagram of its inventor, Hugo Spowers), which appeared to have borrowed some key styling cues from an experimental Caracal FVee I'd seen competing with distinction in the SCCA Runoffs at Road Atlanta.

Another intriguing concoction, on a grander scale, was the Allard J2X-C Group C racer which, if it had anything like the enormous potential its proponents suggested, was thwarted by the huge finances

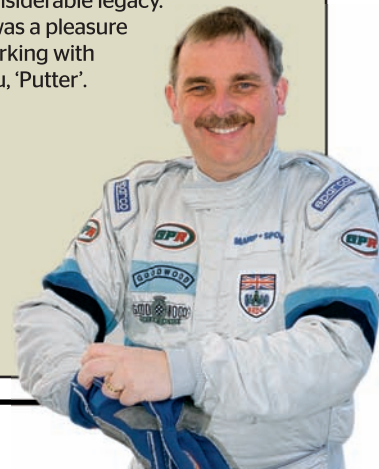
needed to exploit this ambition. In a small niche marketplace, alas, it was always unlikely to succeed. If major independent Spice Engineering hit the skids, having won everything in sight with its fabulous cars, what chance for the minnows?

Heroic failures are one thing but, for each of them, many others fizzled out on the drawing boards. Among those canned before reaching fruition were Vision Clubmans and (briefly) Formula 3 manufacturer Paul Gibson's proposed sports racer, the artist's impression of which looked like a motorised ladybird - with apologies to Derek Walker, the Historic FJunior Terrier ace, whose series of cars of the same name was successful.

Variety has always been an important element of racing to me; increasingly so against the landscape of today's obsession with one-make formulae. So long live boffins like Ben Bowlby, who continually stretch the parameters of convention in pursuit of performance in defining the next generations of vehicle.

● I cannot let this opportunity pass to pay tribute to Alan Putt, a great friend of club and historic racing, and scholar of the sport, who succumbed to cancer last week. His contributions to the Monoposto Club and HSCC, and long service with the MSA and FIA historic departments, leave a considerable legacy. It was a pleasure working with you, 'Putter'.

“Variety has always been an important element, more so in today's one-make obsession”





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## IN BRIEF

### LEGENDS LEGEND

John Mickel will return to the series as the boss of his new Mickel Motorsport team this season. The former

Legends and ASCAR champion (above) will run three cars, and hopes to announce drivers soon.

**GINETTA JUNIOR** frontrunner Jake Hill will return to the series this season. Hill, who was a race winner in a part-season in 2009, will remain with Tollbar Racing.

**MANOR COMPETITION** has completed its four-car Formula Renault UK line-up for 2010. Northern Irishman Josh Mulholland, a race winner in the FRenault BARC series last year, joins Lewis Williamson, Will Stevens and Thomas Hylkema in the squad.

**FORMULA RENAULT** UK team CRS Racing has canned plans to compete in the BARC series in 2010 and will retain two Tatuus chassis for testing. Team boss Andrew Kirkaldy said: "With our other commitments we just don't have time."

**WILL STEVENS** posted a 51.0-second lap testing the new Formula Renault at Pembrey last week - roughly 1.5s faster than the best time Manor recorded with the old-spec car. At Brands Hatch, CRS Racing's Harry Tinncknell lapped in 43.2s, 0.5s under the Tatuus best.

**ALAN PUTT**, whose motorsport CV spanned The Monoposto Racing Club, the HSCC and historic duties with the MSA, FIA and FIVA, succumbed to cancer last Friday night. The Mono veteran was instrumental in the promulgation of Historic Formula Junior and one-litre F3.

**DAVID DALTON**, the popular face of the Darlington & District Motor Club and father of its Croft-centred Northern Saloon & Sports Car series, collapsed and died last Thursday from a long-running viral heart disease. He was 61.

**AMATEUR PORSCHE** racer Andrew Shelley will return to the Porsche Carrera Cup for the first time in six years this season, driving for Red Line Racing.

**FORMER RACING** circuit Aintree will host a '55/55' Speed Sprint event on May 16. It will celebrate the 55th anniversary of Stirling Moss's first GP win and the return of Mercedes-Benz to Formula 1.

**CHRIS DINNAGE** gave his ex-Emerson Fittipaldi Lotus 72 (below) a run at Snetterton last week as part of a Lotus Cars/Lotus F1 gathering.

### Trulli gets his first taste of Lotus machinery

One-time Monaco Grand Prix winner and Lotus F1 racer Jarno Trulli gave the new Evora Cup car its maiden run at Snetterton last week. The Italian is helping with development



### Mini Challenge

# Reigning Mini champion looks to new racer for 2010

Luke Caudle among the drivers planning to race latest model in Mini Challenge



**REIGNING MINI** Challenge champion Luke Caudle is among the first batch of drivers to sign up to race in the series with the new R56 model for this year.

Caudle took the title in a Club Class R53 car last season, ahead of Oliver Mortimer, who topped the S Class for the faster, bewinged R53. Now Caudle is one of 10 drivers planning to race the new R56 car in 2010.

Championship co-ordinator Paul Harvey, who confirmed the latest model

has already started testing in the hands of Mini racers Shaun King and Bill Sollis, said: "It's great Luke is coming back - it's obvious he is a handy driver. There are eight to 10 new cars currently in build."

The R56 will run alongside the two established classes and the future direction of the series will depend on the relative strength of the three divisions over the next year.

Harvey confirmed that the new car will be faster. "It's 100kg lighter, has bigger slicks and has a more developed aero

package," he said. "It has been developed as a proper race car, whereas the old one was evolved more from a road car."



New R56 has already commenced testing

### Donington Park

## Parade planned to save circuit

**AN EVENT** to support the return of motorsport to Donington Park will be held at the circuit on March 7.

Enthusiast Lee Coombs started the Save Donington campaign after recent turmoil concerning the circuit's bid to host the British Grand Prix. Donington currently needs work to make it fit for racing again and owner Wheatcroft & Sons is trying to sell the lease.

Coombs has planned a parade at

Donington which aims to "encourage circuit owners and future lease-holders to continue motor racing there".

The circuit owners will support the event, allocating parking for car and bike clubs and allowing the Newark-on-Tour Autojumble to use the Exhibition centre. Supporters will have the chance to view the damaged track and Kevin Wheatcroft has offered discounted entry into the Donington Museum.

Campaigners are hoping to see races return to Donington



### Porsche Carrera Cup

## Caine sticks to Motorbase

**PORSCHE CARRERA** Cup squad Motorbase has completed its six-car line-up for the 2010 season.

Perennial frontrunner Michael Caine, who marked the squad's return to the series last year with three wins and fourth in the points, returns for another shot at the title.

Former Team Parker driver Charles Bateman, who sat out most of last season, completes Motorbase's line-up, alongside pro-am1 racers Ollie Jackson and Liam Griffin, and pro-am2 racers Steve Parish and George Richardson.

Team boss Dave Bartrum said: "Michael works very hard for the team behind the scenes and we believe he has the potential to win the title."

"We want to get Charles his first Carrera Cup win and we want to do that as soon as possible."



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M0210P





# Racer's diary Ben Anderson

The trials and tribulations of AUTOSPORT's resident racer

**In the first of a new series, our man considers his hopes and fears for 2010**

**E**very pre-season is full of hope and expectation, hype and trepidation. Starting from scratch gives every driver the feeling that 'this could be my year', as David Coulthard used to say...

But this hope must be based on more than just simple self belief. Perhaps a key result from the

confident of running at the front.

They say two heads are better than one, and my sister Jenny's decision to reduce her driving duties (money is tight) to help run my car, means for once we'll be focusing on beating our rivals, rather than each other!

The inevitable pre-season

tried and tested Sheane 'Jenvee', which will be gunning for its fifth title in seven years; Farmer in the trusty GAC that carried him to three wins last season.

Triple Locost champion Declan McDonnell will be back for a second season in another GAC and will be hungry for a maiden win, while Alan Harding's Dominators (in the hands of proven race winner Paul Smith and 2009's top rookie Dave Hodkin) cannot be discounted either.

Last year's runner-up John Hughes and regular race winner Jake Oliveira both plan to take sabbaticals this season, but should be immediate contenders should they appear at any of the 14 races.

Former British karting champion Ashley Sutton has the potential to be the biggest surprise or biggest disappointment, depending on how he takes to cars in his first season. And while I must be wary of my own hype, I will be aiming to beat them all this year.

The flipside of this pre-season coin is the fear of failure. It's what no sportsman wants to acknowledge, but all must face if they wish to succeed. Whatever your expectations, a fear of failing to meet them will lurk at the back



Anderson needs to cut out on-track incidents

previous year has bolstered confidence, or a new training regime has started to pay off.

Maybe you've got an early deal sorted, which means plenty of pre-season testing, or you have some car upgrades in the pipeline that you reckon will thrust you to the front of the grid. Or, possibly, you've simply sorted out some financial or personal problems over the winter, helping you enter the season with a new-found peace of mind. Any one or all of these things can feed the expectation that this season will be better than the last – the best one yet.

I made enormous strides with my driving last year, took a wet pole position for last October's Formula Vee Festival (my first in the category) and a fifth in the final. That, plus a few tweaks to my venerable GAC chassis over the winter, means I head into 2010



Strong showing in '09 Vee Festival boosted confidence



Formula Vee nearly always gets full grids

#### 750 Motor Club Formula Vee calendar 2010

March 13-14	Snetterton
April 4	Mallory Park
April 24-25	Brands Hatch
May 31	Castle Combe
June 20	Brands Hatch
July 10-11	Cadwell Park
July 31-August 1	Pembrey
August 29	Silverstone
October 2	Oulton Park
October 23/24	Brands Hatch Vee Festival

speculation creates hype that swells around every championship until the first race begins and the talking has to stop: who will have the best car? Who will hit the ground running? Who will surprise everybody? Who will be the biggest disappointment?

In Formula Vee, double champion Sam Oliveira and perennial nearly man Martin Farmer should start the season as favourites. Oliveira in the

of the mind – waiting to pounce in moments of weakness. This brings an added pressure that top athletes thrive on.

Those who can master their fear, and really dig deep in times of adversity, will be the ones most likely to triumph at season's end. That is the challenge for all of us, and you can follow my progress throughout 2010 on these pages.

Gentlemen, start your engines and get ready to face your fears... 🏁





# Downs is on the up

It's not yet fully finished, but New Zealand's Hampton Downs Motorsport Park is already impressive, reckons **MARCUS PYE**

Formula 5000 christened Hampton Downs in style

ALEX MITCHELL

**O**pening a racing circuit with a high-profile international meeting, to which competitors from Australia, Belgium, Canada, the UK and USA are committed, could be viewed as a risky strategy. Having nurtured Hampton Downs, New Zealand's newest motorsport facility, from pipedream to reality over a gruelling six years, however, Tony Roberts and Chris Watson had to press the green light. Fortunately, they have a resounding winner on their hands.

It's not yet a showstopper. The requisite infrastructure of working buildings is not yet in place, and the paddock unmetalled, but the fabric

of the multi-faceted complex, hewn into the burned umber hills beside State Highway 1, equidistant from the population centres of Auckland and Hamilton, is deeply promising. And the short circuit – which will be extended to 3.8km (a Thruxton-like 2.36 miles) when funds permit – is absolutely stunning.

Having acquired the majority of the current 450-acre site, formerly a farm and wasteland, at the end of 2003, the business partners started the exhausting process of gaining planning permission to realise their dream of transforming it into the Hampton Downs Motorsport Park. That there are few residential dwellings nearby helped, and the adjoining Mere Mere drag strip offered some precedent of usage.

"We had to continually jump through hoops, and it might have been easier to get consent to build a pig farm if we'd had 2000 acres around it, but we pressed on," says Roberts. Having employed engineers and consultants to work through the resource issues with Waikato District Council, and personally addressed neighbours within five kilometres, the requisite Land-use Resource Consent was granted in late 2006, after a two-

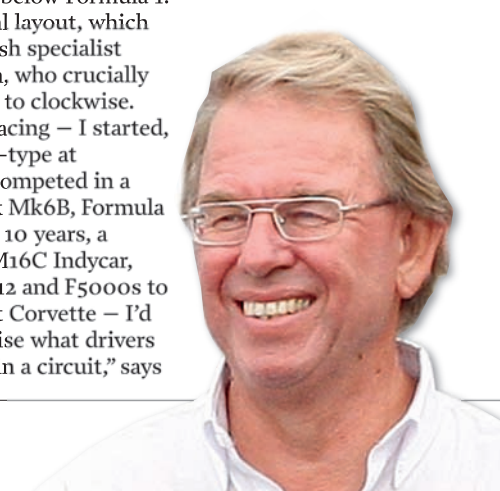
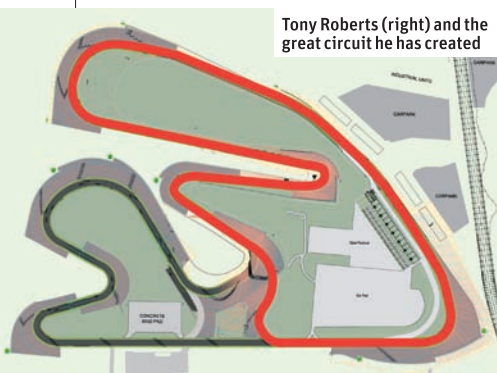
and-a-half-year battle.

Finance was then put in place for the massive programme of earthworks and construction of 80 apartments – in blocks named Amon, Ganley, Hulme and McLaren for New Zealand's racing heroes – which commenced in '07. These sold out within six weeks, as have 12 industrial units. Only two of 15 lifestyle blocks remain available, and a large industrial park including 32 business apartments is due for completion next year.

While the full circuit has been pegged out, reality and the global financial markets prioritised construction of a 2.8km (1.73-mile) FIA Grade 2 track suitable for international classes below Formula 1. Roberts did the initial layout, which was titivated by British specialist designer Clive Bowen, who crucially changed its direction to clockwise.

"After 37 years of racing – I started, aged 22, in a Jaguar E-type at Pukekohe, and have competed in a Lotus Elan, a Mallock Mk6B, Formula Vee, Alfa Romeos for 10 years, a converted McLaren M16C Indycar, Can-Am McLaren M12 and F5000s to my current Chevrolet Corvette – I'd like to think I recognise what drivers and spectators want in a circuit," says

Tony Roberts (right) and the great circuit he has created







Crowd-pleasing 'Custaxie' won a '60s saloon race



George Cooper (Cooper T59) leads Formula Junior action

Roberts. "Challenging corners, cambers and gradients are important, as is a good flow. And overtaking opportunities are vital."

In a country as hilly as New Zealand, it surprises many that all its race circuits – even extended Taupo – have been flat, although like many in Britain several of the early ones (such as Ardmore, outside Auckland) were on active airfields. Hampton Downs has changed that, for the track features 12 metres of elevation change from its lowest to highest points.

Wide swooping corners – Turn 1 is reminiscent of Brands Hatch's Paddock Hill Bend – technical sections and a fast sweeper keep drivers busy and focused, making each lap a supreme challenge in any car, and very satisfying to master. Reaction from early club events confirmed it's already a favourite.

Certainly Ken Smith, who won all four of the MSC Formula 5000 Tasman Cup Revival feature races at the New Zealand Festival of Motor Racing – during which the Waikato Mayor Peter Harris cut the tape to open it officially in front of a capacity grid of F5000 cars – enjoyed getting to grips with it in a 180mph Lola T430. "It's a great circuit and a wonderful achievement. I feel at home here already," he said.

While Smith used his vast experience to stretch away from rivals, the layout made for very close racing in many of the showpiece's classes. The finish of one '60s race, in which Robbie Francevic's thuggish seven-litre Ford Customline/Galaxie hybrid – a tribute to the original 'Custaxie' he raced in period – beat Neil Tolich's Ferrari 275 GTB/C and a pair of Mustangs, all blanketed by a few lengths, had onlookers roaring their approval.

If the vibrant historic racing scene, with its distinct flavours on the North and South Islands, is enamoured with Hampton Downs, it is equally well suited to contemporary cars. The frontline Toyota Racing Series visited a fortnight ago, and while start numbers were comparatively low, the modern carbonfibre bolides only rewrote Smith's 1m02.279s (100.56mph) outright lap record by a few tenths.

They too missed proper working pits this time – 300 international class cars were housed in a massive marquee at the NZ Festival – but 32 garages and a spectacular race control tower are in the next phase of development. This also includes the Gasoline Alley convention centre, complete with 300-seat restaurant, huge skid pan with watering facility, and a 4x4 course.

Plans include a kart track and an ambitious proposal for a national motorsport museum to honour the extraordinary Kiwi heritage that runs through two- and four-wheeled racing. And, of course, the long circuit that Roberts and Watson would like to see completed by the end of next season. Will it be ready for the

2011 historic festival, themed to celebrate Chris Amon's career, at the end of January? "It's just about possible, but we're concentrating on a lot of things to enhance the facility, and help pay for it, before we get there," says Roberts.

More than 400 competitors, 107 from overseas, and 24,000 spectators (12,000 on the Sunday alone) agreed that the first 'biggie' was worth the gamble. The sharp paddock will be rolled for next year, and compromised fuel supply issues addressed, so the drivers will be back. I'll drink to that, an extraordinary endeavour in getting this far, and race fans returning with their friends to use Hampton Downs in the interim. 🍷

## UPS AND DOWNS FOR F5000 INVITEE

Outing in ex-Unser Lola T400 was a privilege



**JOINING THE** Formula 5000 field at Hampton Downs, courtesy of Frank and Judy Lyons, will always be a treasured memory. Having marshalled in the class's European heyday, I've been spoiled with historic seat time. Having raced Lola's hallowed T330 and T332s, and driven David Abbott's T430 at Pukekohe in 2006, the ex-Al Unser T400 filled the model gap.

Entering the first race with seven laps of a demanding circuit under my belt, it was with trepidation that I trundled out

amid 29 other F5000s, with the F1 McLarens of Frank Lyons (M26-1) and Phil Mauer (M23-1) starting from the back.

From 28th in the 15,000-horsepower stampede, I wouldn't see the red lights go out, so when I crested the rise and saw waved green flags I went. Only after I'd passed about eight cars round the outside in Turn 1 did I realise the leaders weren't racing. I dutifully slowed and slotted back behind Lindsay O'Donnell's ex-Alan McCully Begg FM5 and beside

the ex-Richard Scott Durex T400 of Shayne Windleburn.

Endeavouring to stay with Frank after he wailed by, I climbed to 11th in six laps. Alas it got no better, for after the nose popped off in R2, I found myself 29th for R3. Peeved that this retiree's much-improved best lap had been ignored – you climb the grid according to this, not results in NZ – I came back to 13th, lapping quicker again. That put us 19th for the final, where rear wheel bearing failure, flat in fourth, spelled a hairy exit!



## YOUR SAY

What you think of the motorsport news of the past week



Bowlby's DeltaWing: a long way from Clubmans

### Sticking to your guns

Twenty years ago, the BBC made a programme about a young man so convinced about the engineering principles of ground-effect cars that he attempted to design and build a wingless car for Clubmans racing. It's refreshing to read that a career with Lola working on cars with conventional aerodynamics has not deterred Ben Bowlby from his convictions. We hope to see his radical DeltaWing approach to the IndyCar problem adopted.

**David & Nina Baker** by email

EDITORIAL CONTACT [mail@autosport.com](mailto:mail@autosport.com)

**After seeing** DeltaWing's suggestion for the next-generation IndyCar, I reckon Reliant should join Dallara and Lola in submitting its own designs.

After all, who has more experience with this shape of car?

**Jonathan Moorhouse**  
York

**Motors TV's** first attempt at covering the World Rally Championship in Sweden was not good. The programme had no flow and only split-second shots of cars from the outside, before what seemed like hour upon hour of in-car shots with barely any commentary – not that it was much to shout about either. As many of my school reports stated: 'Can do better'.

I know Monte Carlo was a very different rally, but coverage like Eurosport's is the way to go.

**Eifion Jones**  
By email

**Once again** an automatic entry has been given to the JLOC Lamborghini Murcielago for this year's Le Mans 24 Hours. This, remember, is the team that barely completed one lap there last year.

It begs the question, what is the ACO doing in letting this third-rate bunch of losers compete, when the AF Corse Ferrari of Giancarlo Fisichella/Jean Alesi is just a reserve?

**Mike Rushton**  
Cheshire

**What a** great win for Jamie McMurray at the Daytona 500. After a disappointing 2009 with Roush, things looked bleak for McMurray, but the move to EGR has come up trumps. The battle for second was just as exciting, with Earnhardt and Biffle's amazing runs.

Sadly, after serving us well with non-stop coverage, Sky TV will not be showing live NASCAR anymore. Seems the powers that be are not interested in exciting motorsport anymore. A great shame indeed.

**Barry Ambrose**  
By email

**AUTOSPORT.COM**

### TOP FIVE ON OUR WEBSITE

1. **EXCLUSIVE: FIRST IMAGE OF LOTUS F1 CAR**
2. **DELTAWING UNVEILS INDYCAR CONCEPT**
3. **LOTUS DELIGHTED AFTER EARLY FIRE-UP**
4. **SCHUMACHER: FOUR TEAMS ARE OUT FRONT**
5. **KOBAYASHI FASTEST IN SECOND JEREZ TEST**

### WIN!



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#### CORRECTIONS AND CLARIFICATIONS

Production problems meant that the LMP1 Highcroft Racing Acura was pictured on p23 last week instead of the LMP2 machine.

It was Patrick Depailler who finished second to Ligier team-mate Jacques Laffite in the 1979 Brazilian GP, not Didier Pironi, who was fourth in a Tyrrell (p93 last week).

It is the policy of AUTOSPORT to correct significant errors as soon as possible. Please note the issue date and page number when contacting us on [autosport.editorial@haynet.com](mailto:autosport.editorial@haynet.com)



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## F1 2009 REVIEW ANNUAL

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Apart from a brief respite for a potted news review of 2009, the first 130 pages of this annual are given over solely to F1 regular Mirco Lazzari's pictures – with not a single caption in sight.

Only after the random selection of images do you get race reports and results. It's bizarrely laid out but it is cheap. *Autocourse* it ain't!



## EURO LATE MODEL '09 DVD

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Two-disc set featuring a review of all 13 rounds of the inaugural European Late Model Series, whose main players cavort their thunderous way around ovals in the UK and Belgium in V8-powered NASCAR-style stock cars.

As the creators say: get in, sit down, shut up and hang on!



## BIRMINGHAM SUPERPRIX

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The latest in the 'Those were the days...' series looks back on the Superprix that ran for five years in the heart of Birmingham.

Packed with action shots of the headline Formula 3000 racers and plenty of support acts, there are also shots of how the streets look now. Like the racing never took place, sadly.

## HOT ON THE WEB THIS WEEK

**YOUTUBE: NIELSEN WINS CARIBBEAN F3000 RACE**



### SEARCH Curacao Grand Prix 1985 – F3000 (4:47)

Remember the one-off, end-of-season Formula 3000 street race in 1985 on the Caribbean island of Curacao? John Nielsen certainly does – he's chosen the event he won for his *Race of my Life* on page 90.



# WHAT'S ON...

Your guide to the best events taking place around the world this week – plus TV and online

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## NASCAR SPRINT CUP

Rd 2/36  
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LATSOUTH

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[www.v8supercars.com.au](http://www.v8supercars.com.au)



HORSBURGH/LAT



## FULL THROTTLE

What's grinding our gears this week

IF OSAMA BIN LADEN had parachuted naked into the Daytona media centre last weekend, I'm quite sure that the first question he'd have been asked would have been, 'What do you think of Danica Patrick?' The frenzy that surrounded America's first lady of racing's NASCAR debut was unreal – but I just don't get it. Has anyone who's only ever won one race in their professional career been so feted?

Of course, the real reason for her star billing is that she's no stranger to the celebrity circuit – and not shy to don a swimsuit for a photoshoot.

'Danicamania' obviously got on the nerves of the established stock car stars. "What is she doing now, d'ya think?" Michael Waltrip asked in a press conference, tongue firmly in

cheek. "It's been at least an hour since anybody said anything about her."

He wasn't alone in jabbing the media. Kyle Busch, who's never backward in coming forward, said: "The TV's been doing a horrible job because they've been covering her way too much. You've got all these people tuning in to watch Danica – well, take advantage of that, and why not give some of the underprivileged teams some exposure?"

The blameless one in all this was Patrick. I'm sure she'd want to carry out her stock-car learning process out of the spotlight, and her approach on-track was actually very sensible. She dropped to the rear of the field on the first stint, having narrowly missed one early wreck, and had picked up



Patrick: little person in an enormous crowd

six spots in her second run on new tyres when she was eliminated in a massive pile-up on the front stretch.

Surprise, surprise – this sent the media into overdrive once more, and was a much better story than if she'd finished 22nd, down with the likes of Danny Efland and Morgan Shepherd. When she walked away from her battered JR Motorsports Chevrolet,

with the press pack in tow, I'm surprised nobody announced, 'Danica has left the building.'

Right now, the media sees Patrick as a gift that keeps on giving. But what happens when the novelty value has gone? Once the veneer rubs off, is there any substance? She's only ever won one race, after all.

Charles Bradley



## Television

### THURSDAY FEBRUARY 18

1200-1300, 1905-2010 **Motors TV**  
Racing 4 Charity Karting  
1300-1500 **Motors TV**  
British Historic Rally Review  
1900-2000 **Sky Sports 4 & 2300-0000 Sky Sports 2**  
Race World  
2010-2115 **Motors TV**  
V8 Supercars Preview

### FRIDAY FEBRUARY 19

0400-0430 **ESPN America**  
NASCAR Now  
1000-1100 **Sky Sports 4**  
Race World  
1500-1600 **Motors TV**  
Racing 4 Charity Karting  
1600-1700 **Motors TV**  
V8 Supercars Preview

### SATURDAY FEBRUARY 20

0335-0530 **Motors TV**  
British Historic Rally Review

### 0400-0425 Five

Motorsport Mundial  
0430-0500 **ESPN America**  
NASCAR Now  
0900-1000, 1400-1500 **Dave**  
World Rally  
Catch up with all the action from last weekend's WRC opener – Rally Sweden.

### 1300-1400 Motors TV

V8 Supercars Preview  
1500-1800 **Motors TV**  
Scottish Motor Racing Review  
2115-2220 **Motors TV**  
East African Safari Rally

### SUNDAY FEBRUARY 21

0210-0305 **Motors TV**  
East African Safari Rally  
0405-0700, 2115-0030 **Motors TV**  
Scottish Motor Racing Review

### MONDAY FEBRUARY 22

1830-1930 **Sky Sports 3**  
NASCAR highlights



Historic rallying on Motors TV

## Online

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## REVVED UP OVER WHAT'S ON THE BOX

We cast a critical eye over the best and worst of this week's TV coverage

Daytona: last live NASCAR of 2010. Sniff, wail...



IT'S FUNNY how your tastes change as you get older. When I was young I couldn't stand the smell of fresh coffee, the spice of curry or the thought of watching stock cars running round and round in circles. These days I'm an espresso-swilling, Madras-munching NASCAR convert. I didn't see that one coming, but then again I'm none too partial to Tizer, Findus Crispy Pancakes or British Bulldog these days either.

So it was with great excitement, and a tinge of sadness, that I tuned into Sky's live coverage of the Daytona 500 on Sunday. This, it seems, was our one and only 'as-it-

happens' race this year.

Keith Huewen was our enthusiastic host; John Mickel, and his ongoing battle with the English language, offered cockpit insight; while David Tuckman provided some genuine Americana – and helped explain to Keith the difference between race leaders and lead changes in the most layman terms possible.

But while the UK studio filled in manfully during the breaks in coverage, it's the US side of the show that really excelled.

There really is no one like Darrell Waltrip, and his ramblings about the state of one of the pit boxes were hilarious: 'I'd get the

Tide out and powerwash that baby – that's a slick!' he reckoned.

The flashback to classic Daytona action – the early beach races, the first 500 in '59, and the punch-up of '79 – filled the gaps nicely, although there was no disguising the fact that everyone was running short of things to say during the almost two hours it took to plug the hole in the track.

Back in Isleworth, Sky's coverage was unwavering. Okay, there probably wasn't much else on at

midnight, but there was no hint of dropping the feed, even as night descended and the clock ran on.

What a pity that this is it. I'm sure the Monday-night highlights package will be professionally done, but there's something about watching a race when you know the result – especially an oval race, where it's the final laps that tend to decide everything – that takes all away the fun.

Right! Anyone got a link to an illegal live feed? *Revved Up*

"There's no one like Darrell Waltrip, and his ramblings about the state of one of the pit boxes were hilarious"



# THE WEEK IN PICTURES

The lensmen pounding the beat, from Karlstad to Kent



## WRC FANS GET FIRED UP

Temperatures dipped well below -10C on Rally Sweden, but this fan found a way of keeping himself and his friends a bit warmer

## WHISTLER'S SLOPES HAVE NOTHING ON BRANDS HATCH

The Winter Olympics might be short of snow, but in Blighty a test session was halted in 10min by this sudden deluge



## FROM NOT-SO-SUPER HOLE TO VIRTUAL SUPER BOWL

AJ Allmendinger's mechanics hit the Xbox to pass time during the Daytona 500's pothole-induced 90-minute stoppage

## Engineering debrief – diffusers



### GARY ANDERSON

#### BIO

Gary has designed grand prix race-winning cars during his long F1 career and worked for Brabham, McLaren, Jordan, Stewart and Jaguar.



**DIFFUSERS**, either single or double, are simply downforce-producing devices. A single diffuser works on the complete underside of the car and is fairly critical to any ride height change that happens as a car goes faster or changes attitude under braking.

A double diffuser partly works on the side section of the underfloor (step planes), which, by

regulation, is 50mm higher than the central section reference plane. Therefore it is less critical to ride height variations and hence produces more consistent downforce – especially under braking. This is crucial, as an F1 car produces around 1250kg of downforce at 150mph. An extra 12kg will reduce lap times by around 0.1s.

Got an engineering question you'd like answered? Send it to [mark.glendenning@haymarket.com](mailto:mark.glendenning@haymarket.com)



# FROM THE ARCHIVE

1992 Formula Renault UK, Pembrey



Horner scored first car win with Manor

"I had the biggest moment of my life and thought I was going to end up in the pitwall, but I didn't - and got the win"

**CHRISTIAN HORNER** and John Booth found themselves running on parallel paths last week at Valencia, as both the new Red Bull and Virgin Formula 1 cars suffered teething problems during their maiden official runs.

However, the rival team chiefs were on the same side 18 years ago. The scene was Formula Renault and Horner was making a name for himself with Booth's Manor Motorsport squad.

"I'd won a Renault scholarship in karting, so that's the championship I went into, and I took over the seat from Jason Plato," Horner recalls. "It was a tough year because I was in my first year of car racing and had everything to learn, but driving for John was enjoyable."

"He was a straight-talking, no-nonsense kind of guy - he still is - and if you shook hands on a deal, it was done. You never had a contract with him, and you never needed one. It's nice to see him in the big league now, although I didn't think it would be me against him as team bosses."

Horner's day of days came at Pembrey

on August 16. The teenager had qualified his Van Diemen RF92 on the front row, alongside the Alpa of championship leader Ivan Arias, and was soon leading as a slow puncture spelled disaster for the Spaniard.

"I don't remember too much about the race after I got into the lead," continues Horner, "except that somebody went off at the last corner with 10 laps to go and left a load of crap on the circuit. I came through and had the biggest moment of my life. I was sure I was going to end up in the pitwall. But I didn't and got the win - my first in car racing."

Horner scored a pole position at Thruxton and added three more podium finishes on his way to fourth in the points standings, behind Pedro de la Rosa, Arias, and his Manor teammate Harry Nuttall. The highlight of the year was undoubtedly his summer trip to Wales.

"I still have the picture at home somewhere of me on the podium with de la Rosa, who finished second and won the championship that year. Amazing to think that he's still racing in F1. Sebastian Vettel was only five!"

## THIS WEEK IN...



**FEBRUARY 15 1996**

**MIKA HAKKINEN** made an emotional return to the cockpit of a Formula 1 car at Estoril for the first time since the horrific accident at Adelaide that almost cost him his life the previous November. The Finn declared his new McLaren MP4-11 Mercedes (above), which was also driven by Alain Prost, to be F1's best looking car.

Ganassi driver Jimmy Vasser emerged as a surprise pre-season favourite for the CART title by lapping at 195.9mph during a test at the new Homestead oval. Penske's Paul Tracy and Forsythe's Indy Lights graduate Greg Moore were 1mph slower.

Tommi Makinen kicked off the World Rally Championship with victory aboard his works Mitsubishi Lancer Evo III. The star of the rally was Carlos Sainz though, who took a fine second.



**Makinen's revenge**

**NEXT WEEK**



Will Fernando Alonso's replacement at Renault shine?

**ROBERT KUBICA**

F1's only Pole has found a happy home *On sale Feb 25*

**PLUS**

Latest analysis from F1 testing; Chevy top dog Rob Huff talks WTCC



# JOHN NIELSEN

■ Curacao GP, Willemstad ■ October 13 1985 ■ Ralt RB20-Cosworth ■ Strange place, wild party



Nielsen focused on getting to the party

**I**JUST couldn't believe we were going to race. Huge potholes, oil everywhere that had you sliding around, even in a road car, and concrete blocks and fences that only arrived from Long Beach the day before practice. That was Willemstad, though!

The crowd was excitable. This was an island north of Venezuela and they just weren't used to seeing modern racing cars. They all got onto the track before practice, so we had to postpone the session. Four hours later, the organisers decided the only way to calm them down was for us to do slow laps in our race cars, helmets off, on wet tyres. They were hanging from the trees, perched on advertising boards... just crazy.

There was no grip in practice – and we had our softest slicks on. So we decided to go onto wets in 45-degree heat! Amazingly I managed to lap five seconds quicker, so everyone followed suit in qualifying and I ended up third on the grid behind Mike Thackwell and Ivan Capelli. Unfortunately Bridgestone and Avon refused to let anyone have wets for the race.

**"I came through and spun 360 degrees, somehow missed everything and kept going still in fifth gear!"**

On slicks, you could barely touch the throttle, so we softened up the engine by using the smallest exhaust we had. It probably cost me 80bhp, but it stopped the engine peaking and enabled me to get some grip.

Mike's car didn't start and I got the lead quite early on before going on to win. There was a crazy moment though. Part of the circuit

was a dual carriageway. You drove down one side and flicked over to the other side through a gap in the barrier. They called it a chicane, but it was just a gap – and in fifth gear! I came through and spun 360 degrees, somehow missed everything, and kept going – having never got out of fifth gear! I still don't know it happened! I wish someone had taken a picture.

For winning I was given the key to the island by the mayor, a two-week holiday and a diamond-encrusted gold medallion shaped like the track, made by a local goldsmith. I still have that.

We had a crazy party that night in the hotel all the teams were staying in. There was a courtyard with a pool eight floors up, and people started jumping in from their balconies, getting higher and higher. When someone broke their leg jumping from the fourth floor, the ambulance came... and then the police. They wanted to take away the guys in the pool, so 150 of us jumped in and said they'd have to take all of us. They went away. Then the party got really wild! **John Nielsen was talking to Morten Alstrup**

## IN PROFILE



**AFTER WINNING** a domestic Formula Ford title and three European Super Vee crowns, Denmark's John Nielsen claimed the 1982 German F3 title, and added a Macau Grand Prix win two years later. The F3000 race-winner switched to sportscars and won the Daytona 24 Hours in '88 and the Le Mans 24 Hours in '90. He was a Japanese, European and Global Endurance GT champion in the mid '90s and during the past decade has won races in the World and FIA Sportscar series, the Le Mans Series and Danish touring cars.

**NEXT WEEK**  
**Chico SERRA**





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<b>Rnd 4</b>	- May 16th	<b>Lydd</b>
<b>Rnd 5</b>	- June 20th	<b>Hooton Park</b>
<b>Rnd 6</b>	- July 18th (Sun)	<b>Milton Keynes</b>
<b>Rnd 7</b>	- Aug 15th (Sun)	<b>Whilton Mill</b>
<b>Rnd 8</b>	- Sept 12th (Sun)	<b>Milton Keynes</b>
<b>Rnd 9</b>	- Oct 3rd (Sun)	<b>Lydd</b>
<b>Rnd 10</b>	- Nov 7th (Sun)	<b>Milton Keynes</b>

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