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**“I thought, ‘I’m actually going to hit the jet and it’s not going to be fun.’ It burned my helmet and everything!”**

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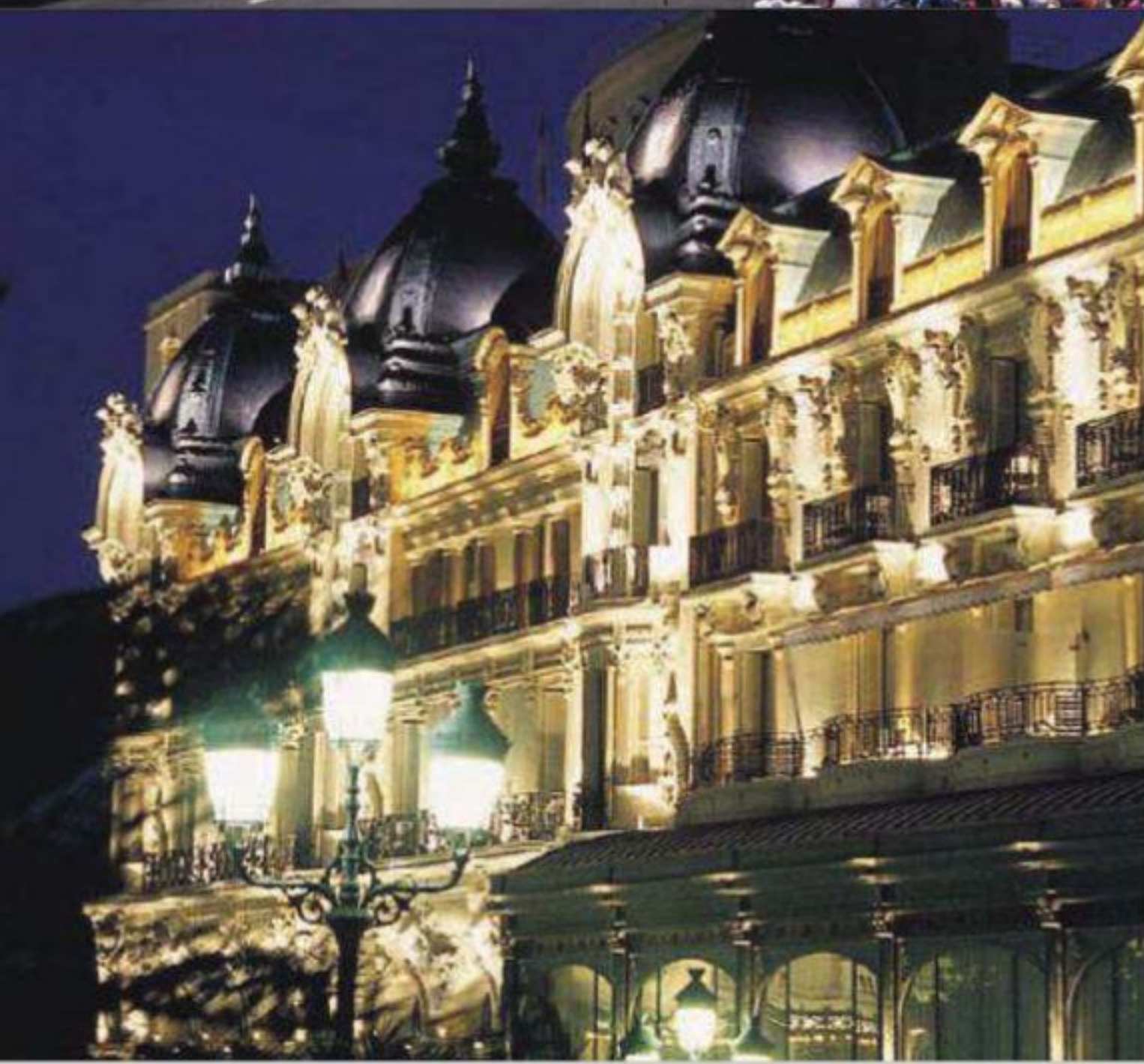




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## POLE POSITION

# This week is the litmus test before the F1 season



**THE FINAL PRE-SEASON FORMULA 1 TEST** gets underway today (Thursday) at Barcelona, with four days of running that will give teams ultimate validation of their car/engine/driver combination before they're packed off (with some last-minute extras to follow as hand luggage) to Melbourne.

While we won't get a true reflection of pace until Australian GP qualifying, it will be another key indicator of whether McLaren is getting closer to Red Bull (see this week's Cover Story), if Ferrari has managed to get its head around its full-of-potential chassis, and whether Mercedes has made the jump to making the 'Big Three' a 'Big Four'.

As usual, you can follow the action minute-by-minute on [autosport.com](http://autosport.com) and we'll wrap everything up in next week's issue — our 2012 F1 season guide special. Our team is committed to delivering the best motorsport content in print and on the web, but it comes at the cost of a 10p price rise from this week.

To sweeten the pill, I hope you'll find the 2012 diary stickers useful — I know Sir Stirling Moss does!

*Charles Bradley*

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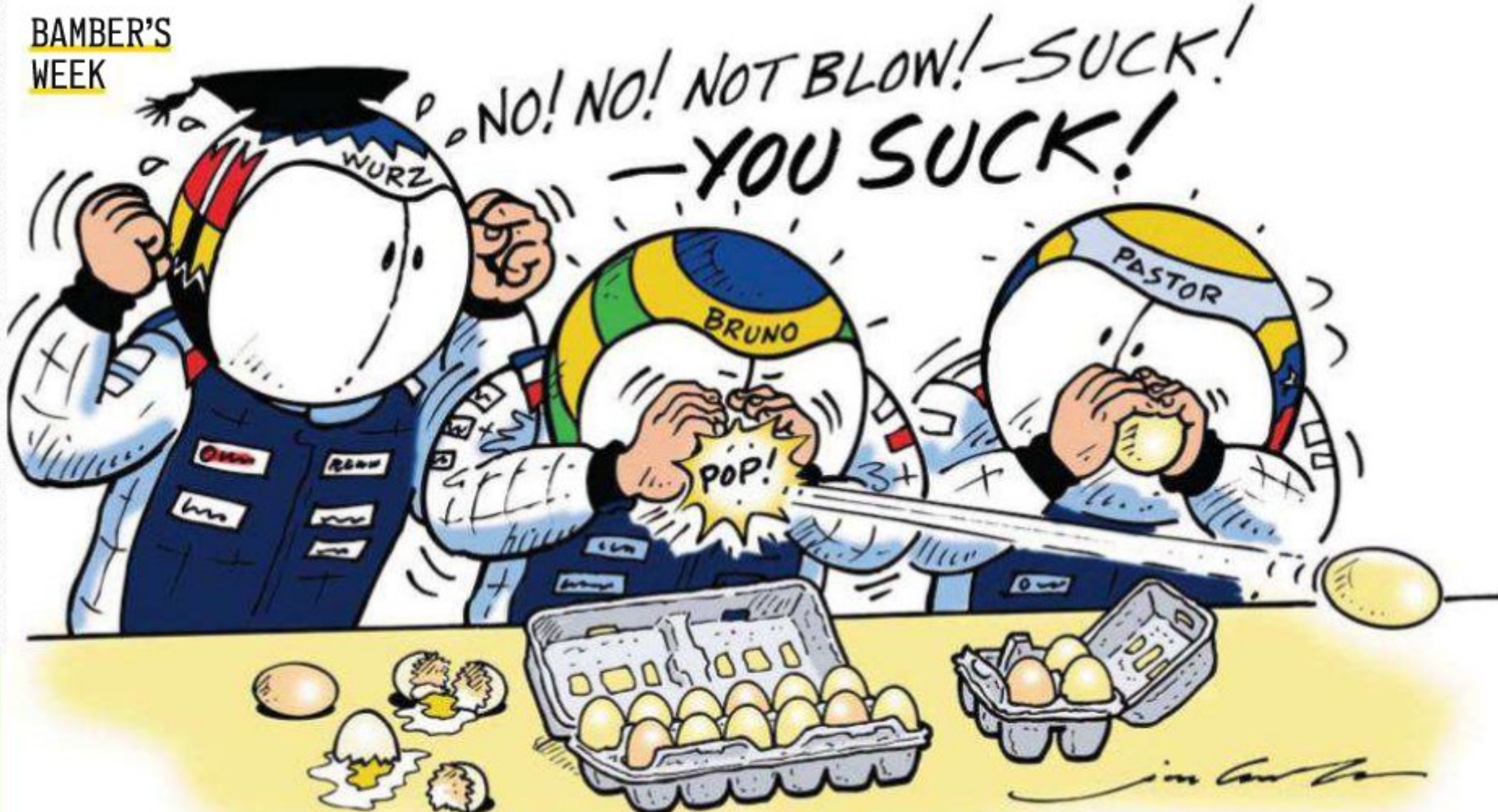
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## BAMBER'S WEEK



Alex Wurz, Williams driver mentor... p19



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F1

## Up close and personal, Hamilton-style

This week, Mark Hughes unearths the secrets of the differing styles of the Formula 1 stars on [page 30](#). Lewis Hamilton's instinctive driving skills will play a big part in F1 2012 – will that be enough to claim a second world championship with McLaren?

Pic: Hoch-Zwei/McLaren



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# McLaren on Red Bull's tail

Testing picture at Barcelona suggests much closer start to the season in the battle between the top teams. By EDD STRAW



Webber leads Button in Barcelona test

**M**cLaren has established itself as Red Bull's nearest challenger ahead of the final pre-season Formula 1 test, where it will start to phase in a major upgrade package.

The McLaren MP4-27 showed well during last week's Barcelona test (see [pages 14-15](#)) and appears to have comparable peak downforce levels to the Red Bull RB8.

McLaren seems to be in a far

stronger position than this time last year. If the expected developments perform as planned, it should allow drivers Jenson Button and Lewis Hamilton to be in the mix for race wins early in the campaign.

The upgrade is expected to include an improved DRS, designed to stall the wing when it is deployed and therefore increase the drag-reduction effect. Some sources have suggested

that this could be achieved using the f-duct concept, albeit activated in a passive way. They also expect aero tweaks aimed at making the car more stable, and therefore allowing it to be set up to run a little softer than before. It is also set to feature a definitive exhaust configuration.

It is not clear how much of the upgrade will appear during the final Barcelona test, which kicks off today (Thursday). Some parts will definitely not appear until the season-opening Australian Grand Prix weekend of March 16-18.

Button said: "We have an update on the car for the first race. It's not a completely straightforward update as it's not about bolting downforce on the car. It's slightly more than that. I'm looking to the update next week and then we can start balancing the car and finding a direction."

Red Bull will also take upgrades to this week's test, including a final version of its exhaust set-up, as part of a package that team principal Christian Horner described a "subtle evolution" of the current car. He reckons that McLaren is currently Red Bull's strongest challenger,

but refused to discount either Mercedes or Ferrari.

"McLaren has looked strong so far," Horner told AUTOSPORT. "The Mercedes looked like it ran reasonably well on its debut and Ferrari hasn't shown its hand yet. We are expecting the usual suspects to be competitive. We're satisfied with our programme so far. We've managed to cover a few bases so far in the first couple of tests but it's not long to Melbourne. I would say that we're content with how things have gone so far."

"We'll have a couple of little bits at the next test, as I suspect most of the teams will have."

The new Mercedes, which ran for the first time at Barcelona, is also expected to feature minor tweaks, with some reports suggesting that it could also feature a DRS-stall system harnessing the f-duct concept. At Barcelona, the car featured an extra section of diffuser fed by air directed to it from the airbox (see above right).

Team chief Ross Brawn revealed that he does not expect to unleash the car's full performance until this week's final test.

He remained cautious as to

Mercedes has made a good start with W03







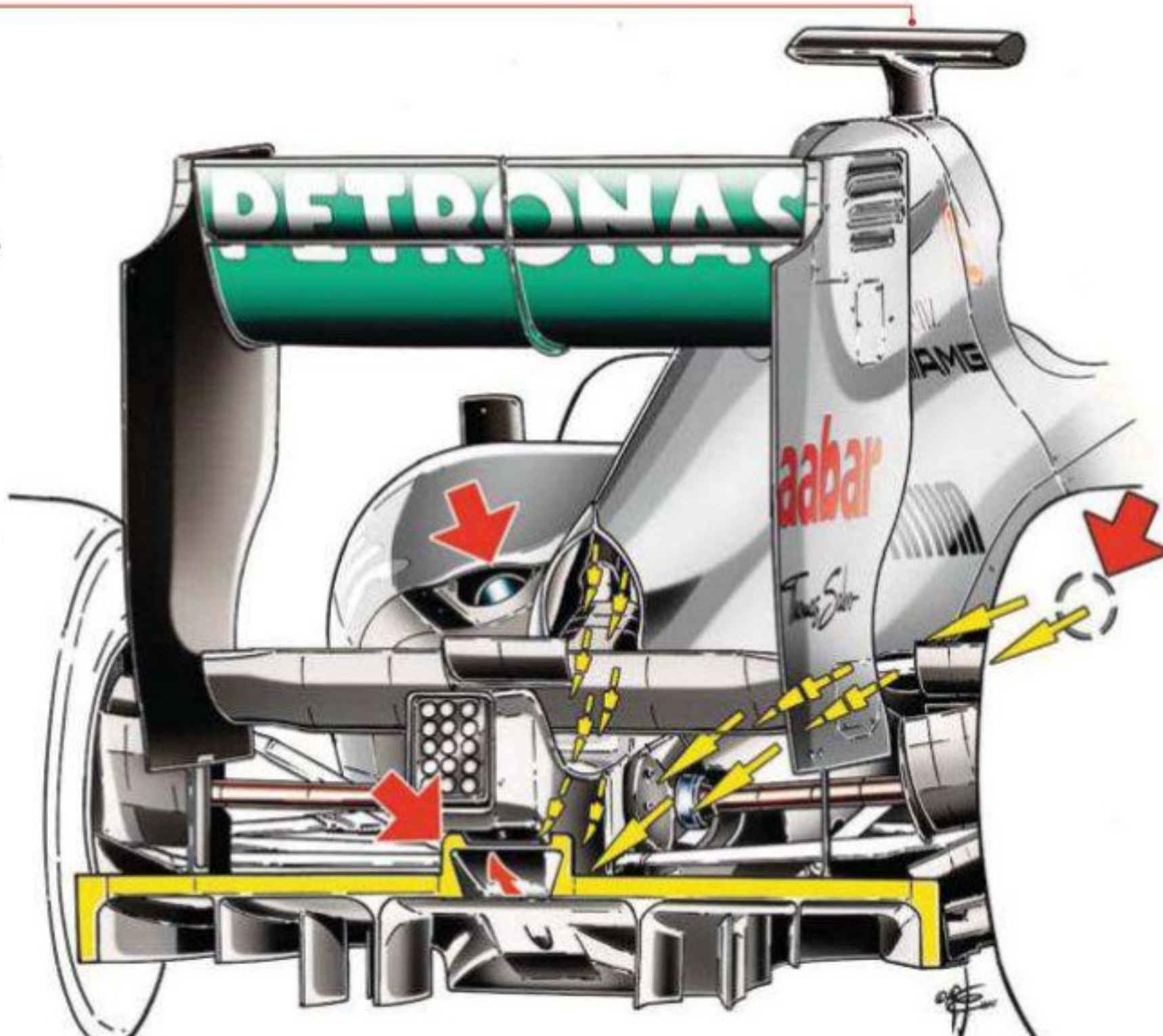
"We have an update on the car for the first race. It's not about downforce - it's more than that"

Jenson Button



## TECHNICAL CONSULTANT GARY ANDERSON ON EXHAUST TRICKERY

The Mercedes F1 W03 appears to use the hot air from the exhausts and the cooling outlet at the base of the engine cover, directing it towards the upper surface of a central section of the diffuser. This section is partly formed from the underside of the rear crash structure in a similar way to what we saw during the double-diffuser area. But instead of being fed airflow through the now-banned slots in the floor, it takes it from the flow energised by the differing pressures of the hot air flowing over it and the cool air through it. Enhancing the effect are the curved splitters within the diffuser, which appear to be for turning the airflow coming through it towards that raised central section.



## RED BULL APPROACH

Red Bull is directing the exhaust flow to the inner surface of the Coke bottle. When you have an aggressive Coke bottle, that's the surface that is the hardest to keep the airflow attached to, so this is the best thing you can do to ensure it works well. Red Bull has put a shroud on the wishbones to create an aero section, so that creates a bit more downforce, and the exhaust flow is also working the beam wing. This appears to be the most elegant solution to maximise the downforce from the exhaust.

whether the team will break into the top three: "We are in a reasonable spot but I wouldn't for a moment think that we'd achieved our objectives by a long way. At the next test, we haven't got anything major to fix on the car and we can concentrate on getting the performance."

Ferrari also showed improved form at the Barcelona test. The F2012 had proved troublesome, but on the final afternoon set-up tweaks allowed Felipe Massa to show improved pace. While this was short of the frontrunners, it suggested that the team is getting the best out of the car after days conducting low-speed aerodynamic runs.

"This car has enormous potential," said Massa on Friday. "There is a lot of work to do, perhaps more than we expected, but they've been positive days because we have explored many different avenues and ideas."

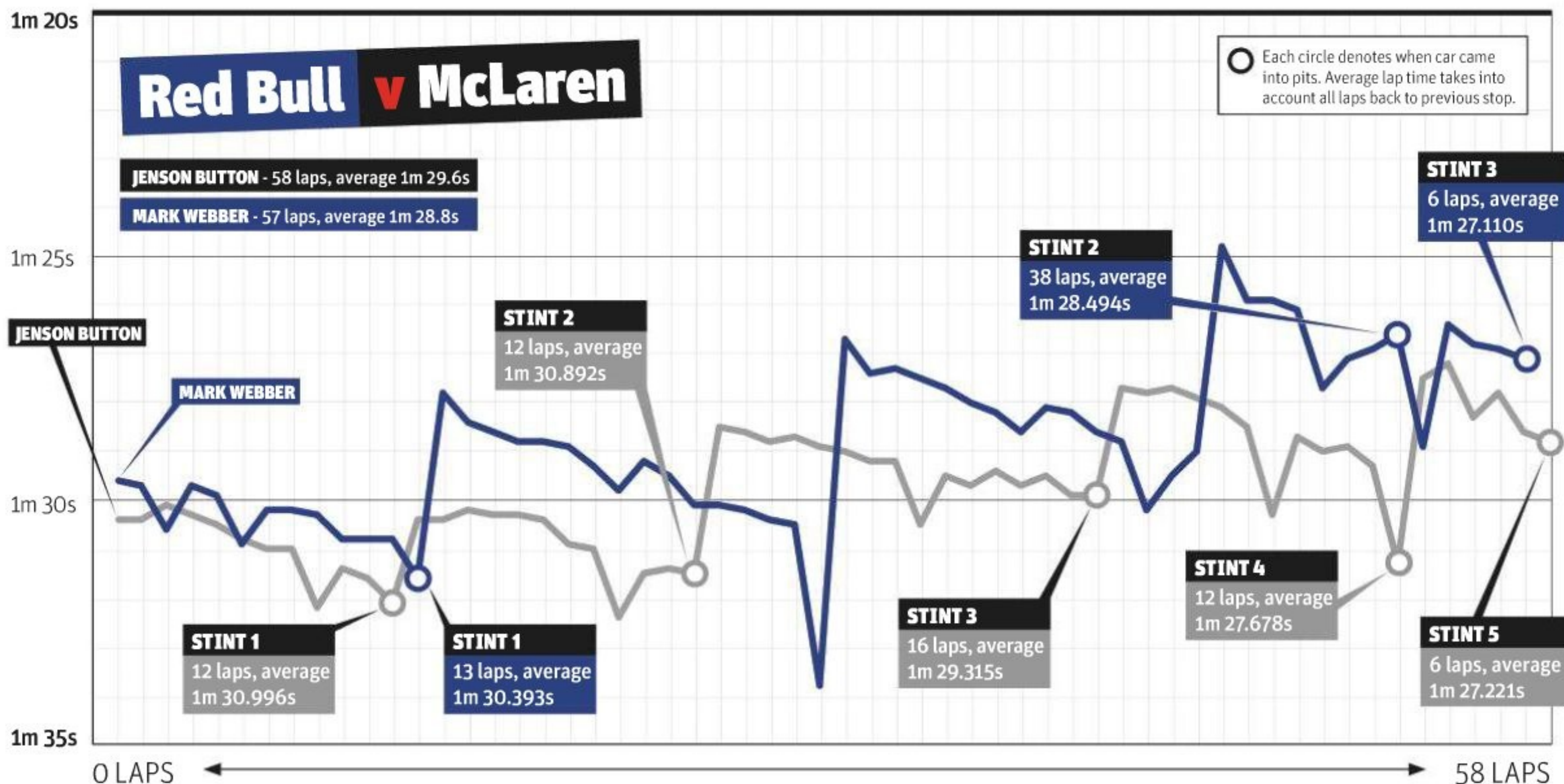
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BARCELONA F1 TEST, FEBRUARY 21-24						*2011 CAR
POS	DRIVER	CAR	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
1	Kamui Kobayashi (J)	Sauber-Ferrari C31	-	-	1m23.582s	1m22.312s
2	Pastor Maldonado (YV)	Williams-Renault FW34	-	-	1m22.391s	1m22.561s
3	Nico Hulkenberg (D)	Force India-Mercedes VJM05	1m23.440s	1m22.608s	-	-
4	Sergio Perez (MEX)	Sauber-Ferrari C31	1m24.219s	1m22.648s	-	-
5	Sebastian Vettel (D)	Red Bull-Renault RB8	1m23.265s	1m22.891s	-	-
6	Paul di Resta (GB)	Force India-Mercedes VJM05	-	-	1m25.646s	1m23.119s
7	Fernando Alonso (E)	Ferrari F2012	1m24.100s	1m23.180s	-	-
8	Jenson Button (GB)	McLaren-Mercedes MP4-27	-	-	1m23.918s	1m23.200s
9	Michael Schumacher (D)	Mercedes F1 W03	1m24.150s	-	1m23.384s	-
10	Felipe Massa (BR)	Ferrari F2012	-	-	1m24.771s	1m23.563s
11	Lewis Hamilton (GB)	McLaren-Mercedes MP4-27	1m23.590s	1m23.806s	-	-
12	Daniel Ricciardo (AUS)	Toro Rosso-Ferrari STR7	1m23.618s	1m23.639s	-	-
13	Mark Webber (AUS)	Red Bull-Renault RB8	-	-	1m24.771s	1m23.774s
14	Jean-Eric Vergne (F)	Toro Rosso-Ferrari STR7	-	-	1m24.433s	1m23.792s
15	Nico Rosberg (D)	Mercedes F1 W03	-	1m24.555s	-	1m23.843s
16	Bruno Senna (BR)	Williams-Renault FW34	1m25.711s	-	-	-
17	Valtteri Bottas (FIN)	Williams-Renault FW34	-	1m25.738s	-	-
18	Heikki Kovalainen (FIN)	Caterham-Renault CT01	1m26.035s	-	-	1m26.968s
19	Timo Glock (D)	Virgin-Cosworth MVR-02*	-	-	1m26.173s	-
20	Vitaly Petrov (RUS)	Caterham-Renault CT01	-	1m26.605s	1m26.448s	-
21	Romain Grosjean (F)	Lotus-Renault E20	1m26.809s	-	-	-
22	Charles Pic (F)	Virgin-Cosworth MVR-02*	1m28.026s	1m27.343s	-	-





# Behind the F1 test times

Trying to read between the lines from last week's Barcelona test is tough, especially with none of the top teams attempting qualifying-style runs. MARK HUGHES attempts to separate fact from fiction



**R**ed Bull may appear to have an edge over McLaren on race runs in pre-season testing, but under the surface the picture is cloudy.

At Barcelona, Red Bull covered race distances in uneven stint lengths: Mark Webber's Thursday race run (see graph above) was covered in three stints of 13, 38 and six laps (that final run curtailed by a gearbox problem).

By contrast, McLaren covered race distances on each day, but divided it up more evenly, typically over five stints. This has a

huge impact on total race times by favouring the short stints that would not necessarily be advantageous in the race, where track positioning and pitstop time losses come into play.

Further, it suggests that although race distances were covered each day they were not full race simulations and that McLaren was frequently refuelling the car. This is borne out by the team's tendency to roll the car into the garage between stints.

On Thursday Red Bull and

**"Although McLaren covered race distances each day of testing, they were not full race simulations"**

McLaren completed race-distance runs with Webber and Jenson Button respectively. Although the total time over that distance much favours Red Bull, the contrasting patterns of the runs suggest that a straight comparison is not possible. Webber's run appears to be a

genuine race simulation, complete with race pitstops, whereas Button's looks more like a series of comparison tests.

In Button's first two 12-lap, medium-tyre runs, McLaren appeared to be conducting a direct comparison of something. The two stints were completed in similar times and with a near-identical profile of performance (the times slow suddenly on the ninth lap during both runs, for example, then gradually recover).

A 12-lap fuel load typically carries



# Split strategies for Mercedes long runs

Mercedes conducted race runs with Nico Rosberg and Michael Schumacher during the week, with wildly varying results suggesting very different programmes.

On day two, Rosberg completed a 51-lap sequence broken up into five stints that equated to an impressive average lap time of 1m26.6s, significantly faster than anything Red Bull did all week but with a couple of provisos. Firstly, it was still 15 laps short of a full race distance and secondly, Red Bull's skewed stint durations were not the optimum for minimising race times.

In contrast to Rosberg's speedy run of short stints, Schumacher the following day did runs of 24 and 35 laps respectively, during which his average was 1m29.3s. Like Red Bull, this run was for the purposes of assessing tyre durability rather than minimising the race time.

The 2.7s difference in average lap times for the same car between the two extremes of strategy can be used in making an educated guess on how much faster the Red Bull is.

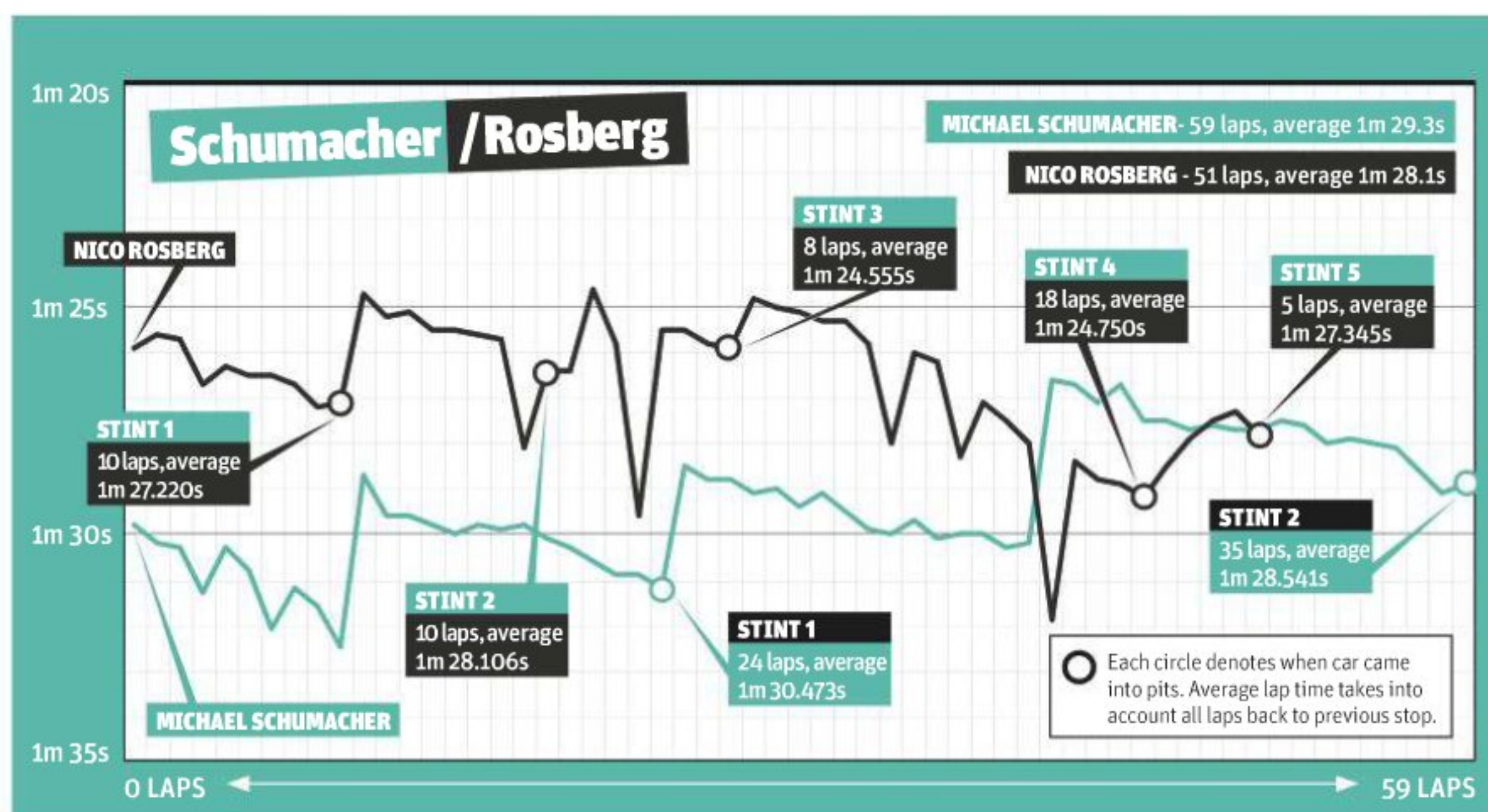
Using a stint pattern more like Schumacher's, the best Red Bull

**"The 2.7s difference in average lap times for the Merc can be used in making an educated guess on how much faster Red Bull is"**

average time over a race duration was 1m27.9s (Sebastian Vettel on day two). Allowing 2s per lap improvement to make the stint pattern like-for-like with Rosberg's suggests the Red Bull's on-track average (not including pitstops) could be 1m26.0s over a full race.



Different test plans for Merc



a laptime penalty of just over one second around Barcelona (2.5kg/lap, with each 10kg costing around 0.35s). Yet the closeness of the times in each of Button's 12-lap runs suggests the car was given new tyres and refuelled at the stop.

By contrast, Webber's Thursday run was a genuine race-simulation exercise, beginning with a 13-lap stint on the softs, followed by a big 38-lap middle stint on the hards and a final six-lap stint on the hards.

But there is an interesting overlap in their runs. Button's 16-lap third stint on hards equates to the first 16 laps of Webber's second stint, also on hards. What we do not know is the respective life of the

tyre sets on the cars of Button and Webber, but within that proviso Button completes those 16 laps in an average of 1m29.315s, compared to 1m29.637s for Webber. The first half of that stint favours the Red Bull, which then appears to suffer greater tyre wear.

But even if the tyres on each car were of comparable age, this would only be valid if the two teams had chosen similar fuel loads. A full race distance of Barcelona would typically require around 160kg, leaving only a 10kg margin (around 0.35s around Barcelona) for anyone wishing to disguise their true pace through fuel weight using a 170kg tank.

Webber ran a race simulation



## MIDFIELDERS WAGE THEIR OWN WAR



Di Resta runs turned some heads

While Red Bull appears to be in the best shape, McLaren and Mercedes seem quite close behind. But those teams' programmes were different to each other and to Red Bull's, making direct comparison impossible. Ferrari was impossible to read and clearly still in the early stages of the car's development.

Among the smaller teams, the Force India and Sauber appeared to be closely matched on one-lap pace – with Williams and Toro Rosso not far behind. On the final day, however, Pastor Maldonado and Kamui Kobayashi did what

appeared to be race-simulation runs for Williams and Sauber respectively during which the FW34 averaged around 1s per lap faster than the C31 and within 0.5s of Rosberg's Mercedes on the same day. And this was on a stint strategy that would probably flatter the Merc compared to the Williams.

Similarly, Paul di Resta completed a promising sequence of 12/13-lap runs in the Force India on the final day that look ostensibly in McLaren territory.

But, as ever, incomplete knowledge of fuel loads was muddying the waters.





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# TRACKSIDE VIEW: How the cars compare

ALEX WURZ runs the rule over the 2012 challengers – except that of new employer Williams – at the Barcelona test. Based on Wurz's analysis and the impressions of F1 editor EDD STRAW, AUTOSPORT rates each car



## RED BULL RB8

**WURZ:** Generally, the Red Bull has been running heavier than everyone else, I think. But it is definitely the quickest car. You can see that in what the drivers can do with the RB8, especially in the slow-speed stuff where you take downforce out of the equation. What impresses me the most is in the afternoon when it gets windy and they lose less downforce than anyone else. That always points to a very strong aerodynamic package that is stable. For me, it's clear that this is the car to beat and the one that everyone else is measuring themselves against.



**AUTOSPORT RATING 10/10**



**AUTOSPORT RATING 6/10**

## FERRARI F2012

**WURZ:** If you are a Ferrari fan, you have to hope that the F2012 is running very heavy. It looks like an edgy car to drive and it looks critical when the driver leans on it. Everybody's car is looking better so you don't see the big slides that we saw at the start of testing, but you can still see the Ferrari being very nervous. It's twitchy. The pace isn't too bad – it appears to be at a similar level to Mercedes. The potential is there, and you can never underestimate Maranello. But if I was working for Ferrari, I would be very worried.

## McLAREN MP4-27

**WURZ:** You can see the McLaren's aero is good, but it seems to lose out a bit to Red Bull when there is a lot of pitch in the car. In the high-speed corners, it's more stable and compares well with the Red Bull, but in the medium-speed corners you can see that it has less traction. When you look at where McLaren started last season and its rate of development, it's promising that it has started at a higher level. With development, it can challenge Red Bull.



**AUTOSPORT RATING 9/10**



**AUTOSPORT RATING 8/10**

## MERCEDES F1 W03

**WURZ:** First of all, I have to say that watching Nico Rosberg, he is driving beautifully. If there was a bible telling you how to treat the car, you would ask for Nico or Sebastian Vettel to demonstrate because the steering input is perfectly optimised for Pirelli tyres. The car also allows Nico to do it, which is a positive thing. It's definitely a step forward from last year. I don't think that it's on the same level as the Red Bull, or the McLaren, but the car seems to be very stable in crosswinds and under yaw so it's nicely balanced. It's a stable platform to develop from and appears to be well clear of the midfield already.





## FORCE INDIA VJM05

**WURZ:** The car looks good when it looks agile, and you can assume when it looks like that it's on lower fuel than others. As you get into the midfield, it gets harder to analyse performance because they vary on fuel loads more than those at the front. But when it was windy, the car lost only overall performance, not more at the front or rear, so it's clearly quite a good aerodynamic platform. I would put Force India somewhere in the midfield, but it's hard to say where because it is so close.

**AUTOSPORT** RATING 7/10

## TORO ROSSO STR7

**WURZ:** Both Daniel Ricciardo and Jean-Eric Vergne were suffering from a lot of oversteer. They have to drive under the limit of maximum snappiness because it's necessary to drive in a protective way. The Toro Rosso, like the Sauber, has a snappy rear which is down to a lack of rear downforce.

**AUTOSPORT** RATING 5/10



## SAUBER C31

**WURZ:** The Sauber looks like it is behind the Force India and the other midfield contenders. Both of the drivers are on the aggressive side and whenever they really try, the rear steps out and when they are not pushing the car looks a bit off. It seems that they're running with rear instability and an overall downforce deficit. And if they run on a very green track it will be even worse. So, Sauber has some work to do.



**AUTOSPORT** RATING 4/10

**AUTOSPORT** RATING 5/10



## WILLIAMS FW34

**STRAW:** The Williams looked terrible in the slow corners at the Jerez test, but the car improved a lot at Barcelona. In the chicane, the drivers could put the power down and the rear would stick far more than previously, while over the long runs it appeared pretty consistent even if the peak laptime wasn't so eye-catching. On race pace, it seems that Williams could have jumped ahead of Toro Rosso and Sauber into the thick of the midfield.

## CATERHAM CT01

**WURZ:** The Caterham looks like it is at the back of the pack of cars that we have seen so far. The drivers can't commit completely on the brakes and then when they get into the corner they run out of overall downforce. On a track that is very demanding on the rear stability, they are going to struggle because the aero balance looks unstable. Maybe Caterham will be closer to the rear of the midfield, but not in the midfield.



**AUTOSPORT** RATING 3/10





# Marussia suffers another blow

Another season at the bottom of the pile looms as 2012 car won't run before season-opening Australian GP

**M**arussia's aspirations to lift itself off the foot of the world championship standings for the first time have been dealt a major blow by failing to make its car ready for pre-season testing.

The former Virgin team made the embarrassing revelation on Monday that it had not yet passed one of the mandatory FIA crash tests. This means that its much-delayed MR01 will not run in anger until the season-opening Australian Grand Prix, and that Marussia faces a battle to pass the remaining crash test in time for the first race.

The team refused to make any further comment on its situation, but *de facto* technical director Pat Symonds, who holds a consultancy role with the team, admitted to AUTOSPORT in January that the schedule was tight.

Referring to the team's relocation to the ex-Wirth Research facility in Banbury, Symonds said: "It's quite a hard schedule this year for many reasons, one of which is we've had the reset."

"On top of all that there's the requirement for 2012 that we have to pass all our crash tests before we go testing, and that compresses what is already a tight programme even further."

Even though the team has relocated and is operating on a very tight budget, its failure to make pre-season testing has made a bad impression of F1 observers.

Work on Marussia's 2011 car was abandoned after the British Grand Prix, giving it plenty of time to get its new car ready while creating its new technical structure. The team also has

## MARUSSIA/VIRGIN IN F1

Starts:	<b>38</b>
Best finish:	<b>14th</b>
Best qualifying:	<b>16th</b>
Points:	<b>0</b>
Best championship position:	<b>12th</b>



Marussia has run 2011 car in testing

McLaren knowhow to fall back on in a deal announced last July, which team CEO Andy Webb claimed would allow the team "to make some dramatic strides forward with immediate effect".

The failure of the crash test suggests the team has failed to do this. Even though the racing side of the operation, built around ex-Formula 3 team Manor Motorsport, appears to be working well and is augmented by the vast experience of Symonds, the team is struggling to establish credibility in F1.

Since Marussia bought into the team in late 2010, the stated aim has always been to have a competitive car in time for the inaugural Russian Grand Prix in 2014. The team will need to sharply improve progress and budget to achieve that objective.

## VIRGIN/MARUSSIA DISASTERS SO FAR

The Marussia team has had its fair share of setbacks since coming into F1 as Virgin for 2010:



### MARCH 2010

Team discovers that its fuel tank is not big enough to complete a full race distance flat-out. This necessitates the modification of its monocoques to make them 135mm longer than the initial design to allow for a larger fuel capacity.



### NOVEMBER 2010

Virgin finishes last in the constructors' championship with a best race finish of 14th.

### JUNE 2011

Technical director Nick Wirth leaves the team after the Virgin MVR-02 proves to be again uncompetitive. Virgin goes on to create its own technical base after buying Wirth's WRT set-up.



# Lotus solves front suspension problem

Lotus has fitted new aluminium front suspension mountings to solve the problem that forced it to abandon last week's Barcelona test.

AUTOSPORT understands that the team had taken an aggressive approach to minimising the weight of its chassis, but that a miscalculation led to the lightweight carbonfibre mount embedded in the chassis not being strong enough.

The problem first manifested itself on chassis two, which made its on-track debut on day one of the Barcelona test, when the car was under peak load near the end of the start/finish straight. The resulting movement led to the suspension arm damaging the chassis.

When chassis one, which ran at the

Jerez test two weeks earlier, was put on a rig back at the factory to replicate the forces, the problem was repeated, forcing Lotus to abandon running in Barcelona.

Team sources are confident that the issue has now been fixed and are hopeful that the E20 chassis will not have to undergo any additional crash tests. But as AUTOSPORT closed for press the situation on crash tests had not been completely resolved.

The team evaluated the possibility of an additional test day. Running before this week's Barcelona test was ruled out for manufacturing reasons, and plans to test next Monday were scotched by the FIA's clarification on not testing during the last complete week before the first race.

## AUTOSPORT SAYS...

**EDD STRAW**  
F1 EDITOR

edd.straw  
@haymarket.com



**L**otus and Marussia are at opposite ends of the spectrum when it comes to team size, yet both have hit problems that could leave them on the back foot come the start of the season.

The situation is recoverable for Lotus. It has apparently identified its problem and the solution, and today (Thursday) should resume testing at Barcelona. So while the chassis problem wasted one-third of its pre-season testing, Lotus can realistically hope to pick up where it left off after the first test at Jerez. It's an understandable glitch and a similar one afflicted one team – which will remain nameless – last season. That team went on to have an impressive campaign.

Things are a little more difficult for Marussia. To fail to have the car ready even for the final test after throwing all of its eggs in the 2012 basket relatively early last year is a huge embarrassment. Against a backdrop of question marks surrounding its overall budget, it will be a good deal harder for the Russian-owned operation to regain the huge amount of ground it has lost.

For while Lotus's problem was unforeseen, Marussia has known these crash tests were coming for long enough. If HRT can pass them in time, so too should its back-of-the-grid rival. The biggest concern is that this might be symptomatic of a wider malaise in the team.



Marussia troops have work cut out

## TOTAL MILEAGE IN OFFICIAL PRE-SEASON TESTS



FW34 leads the mileage chart

### 2012 CARS

1 Williams 2334 miles
2 McLaren 2146 miles
3 Force India 1984 miles
4 Sauber 1957 miles
5 Red Bull 1865 miles
6 Ferrari 1752 miles
7 Toro Rosso 1691 miles
8 Caterham 1679 miles
9 Mercedes 1154 miles
10 Lotus 1132 miles
11 HRT 0 miles
12 Marussia 0 miles

## DRIVERS (LAPS IN 2012 CARS)

1 Kamui Kobayashi 424
2 Lewis Hamilton 401
3 Jenson Button 376
4 Pastor Maldonado 362
5 Paul di Resta 354
6 Felipe Massa 351
7 Bruno Senna 346
8 Mark Webber 331
9 Jean-Eric Vergne 329
10 Sebastian Vettel 328
11 Nico Hulkenberg 299
12 Daniel Ricciardo 282
13= Fernando Alonso 268
13= Heikki Kovalainen 268
15 Sergio Perez 267
16 Nico Rosberg 221
17 Romain Grosjean 219
18 Kimi Raikkonen 192
19 Michael Schumacher 178
20 Vitaly Petrov 139
21 Jarno Trulli 117
22 Valtteri Bottas 117
23 Giedo van der Garde 74
24 Jules Bianchi 48
Pedro de la Rosa 0
Narain Karthikeyan 0
Timo Glock 0
Charles Pic 0

### NOVEMBER 2011

For the second successive year, Virgin brings up the rear in the standings.



### JANUARY 2012

Debut of the Marussia MRO1 is put back firstly by one week to the third test. A month later, the car's debut is put back to the Australian Grand Prix.



## CUTTING IT FINE

**CRASH-TEST WORRIES NOT ALWAYS FOR BACKMARKERS**

Red Bull passed its final crash test a matter of hours before the start of free practice for the 2008 Australian Grand Prix. The car was later crash-tested in the race by David Coulthard when he was hit by Felipe Massa.





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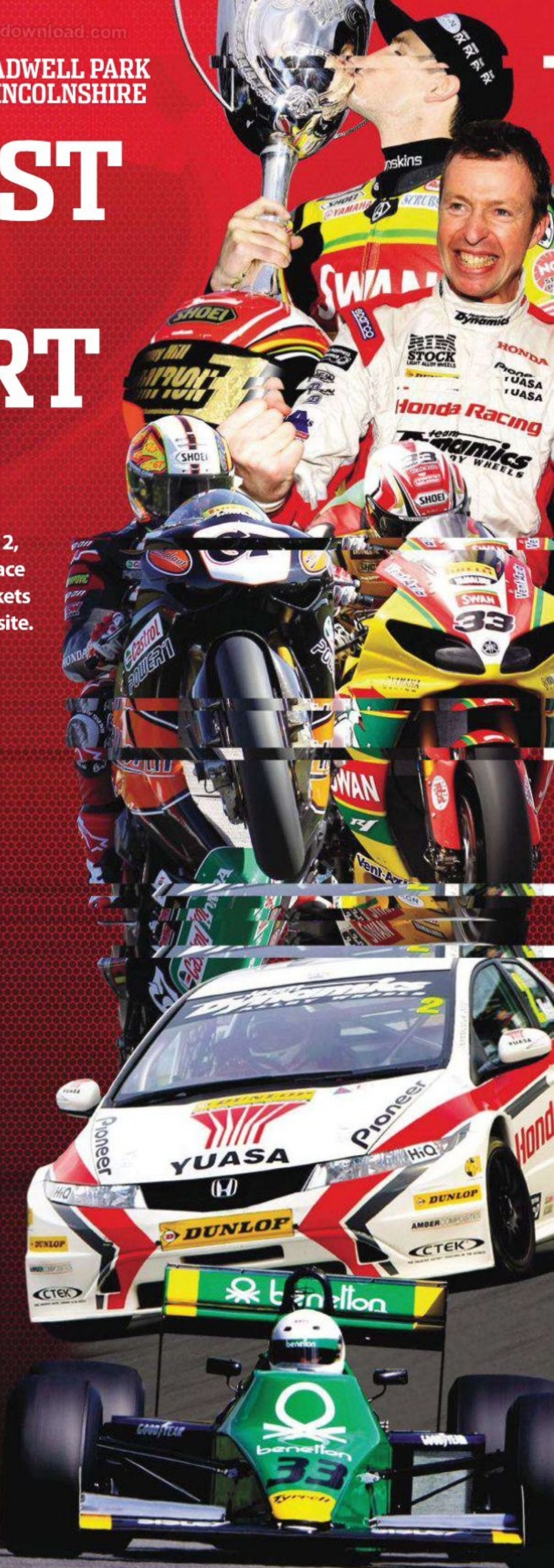
17 March	Oulton Park	Masters Historic Festival
31 March/1 April	Brands Hatch	British Touring Car Championship
6/7/8/9 April	Brands Hatch	MCE Insurance British Superbikes
6/7/9 April	Oulton Park	British F3 and GT Championships
21/22 April	Brands Hatch	British Truck Racing Championship
21/22 April	Cadwell Park	Historic Wolds Trophy
5/6/7 May	Oulton Park	MCE Insurance British Superbikes
18/19/20 May	Brands Hatch	DTM (German Touring Cars)
25/26/27 May	Snetterton 300	MCE Insurance British Superbikes
26/27 May	Brands Hatch GP	Masters Historic Festival
9 June	Cadwell Park	Vintage Sports Car Championships
9/10 June	Oulton Park	British Touring Car Championship
16/17 June	Brands Hatch	Mini Festival
23/24 June	Brands Hatch GP	British F3 and GT Championships
30 June/1 July	Brands Hatch GP	FIA Historic Formula One
6/7/8 July	Oulton Park	MCE Insurance British Superbikes
13/14/15 July	Brands Hatch GP	FIA Formula Two/International GTs
20/21/22 July	Brands Hatch GP	MCE Insurance British Superbikes
4/5 August	Snetterton 300	British F3 and GT Championships
11/12 August	Snetterton 300	British Touring Car Championship
18/19 August	Brands Hatch	Lotus Festival
25/26/27 August	Cadwell Park	MCE Insurance British Superbikes
26/27 August	Oulton Park	Oulton Park Gold Cup
26/27 August	Snetterton	British Truck Racing Championship
5/6/7/8 September	Brands Hatch	Paralympic Games Road Cycling
12/13/14 October	Brands Hatch GP	MCE Insurance British Superbikes
20/21 October	Brands Hatch GP	British Touring Car Championship
3/4 November	Brands Hatch	British Truck Racing Championship



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# THIS WEEK IN F1



## PETROV'S CATERHAM DEBUT

Caterham newcomer Vitaly Petrov had his first test with the team at Barcelona last week. The Russian completed 139 laps over two days following his deal to replace Jarno Trulli. An uncomfortable seat will be corrected for this week's test.



## Rule loophole closed by FIA

The FIA has closed a loophole in the Formula 1 rules that could have allowed teams to create an off-throttle exhaust-blowing effect by inducing a misfire. AUTOSPORT understands that Mercedes alerted the FIA, and technical delegate Charlie Whiting issued a directive sealing off the loophole in regulations designed to prevent trick engine maps.

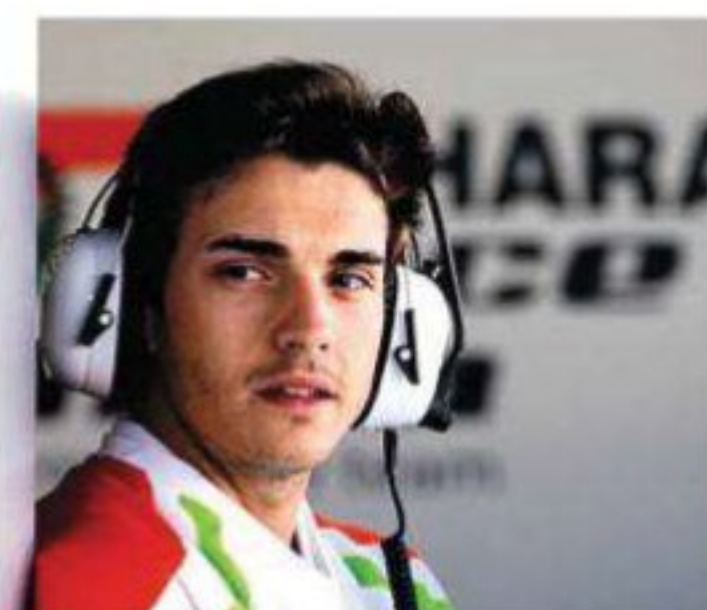


## Wurz joins Williams

Ex-Formula 1 racer Alex Wurz has joined Williams as driver mentor. The Austrian attended last week's Barcelona test. "When I was talking to Williams about this, I said I hope to become the easiest and cheapest win in terms of laptime," said Wurz (left).

## Bianchi backed

Deputy Force India chief Bob Fernley has backed reserve driver Jules Bianchi to bounce back from his shunt during the Jerez test that cost the team a day of running. "Nico [Hulkenberg] was very helpful on that - he said it could have [happened to] anybody," he said. "We were doing aero passes and the temperature just dropped out of the tyres." Bianchi (right) is scheduled to have his first Friday outing in April's Chinese Grand Prix.



## Bottas due for Malaysia FP1 debut

Williams reserve driver Valtteri Bottas will make his race-weekend debut for Williams at the Malaysian Grand Prix. The Finn, who will drive in 15 sessions this year, had his only pre-season taste of the Williams FW34 at last week's Barcelona test (below).



**Ferrari, if they wanted, could have an Italian as the second driver in the team. They could take a small risk to take a young Italian driver, but this hasn't happened since the time of Michele Alboreto"**



Riccardo Patrese calls on Ferrari to solve Italy's problem of no F1 drivers



Prost wins the 1983 French GP in Renault

## PROST BECOMES RENAULT AMBASSADOR

Four-time world champion Alain Prost has rejoined Renault as an ambassador. The Frenchman raced for Renault from 1981-83 and won his final title in a Renault-powered Williams in '93.

### PROST AND RENAULT

STARTS	62
WINS	16
POLES	23
FASTEST LAPS	14
WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS	1 (1993)



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Hockenheim - 22 July

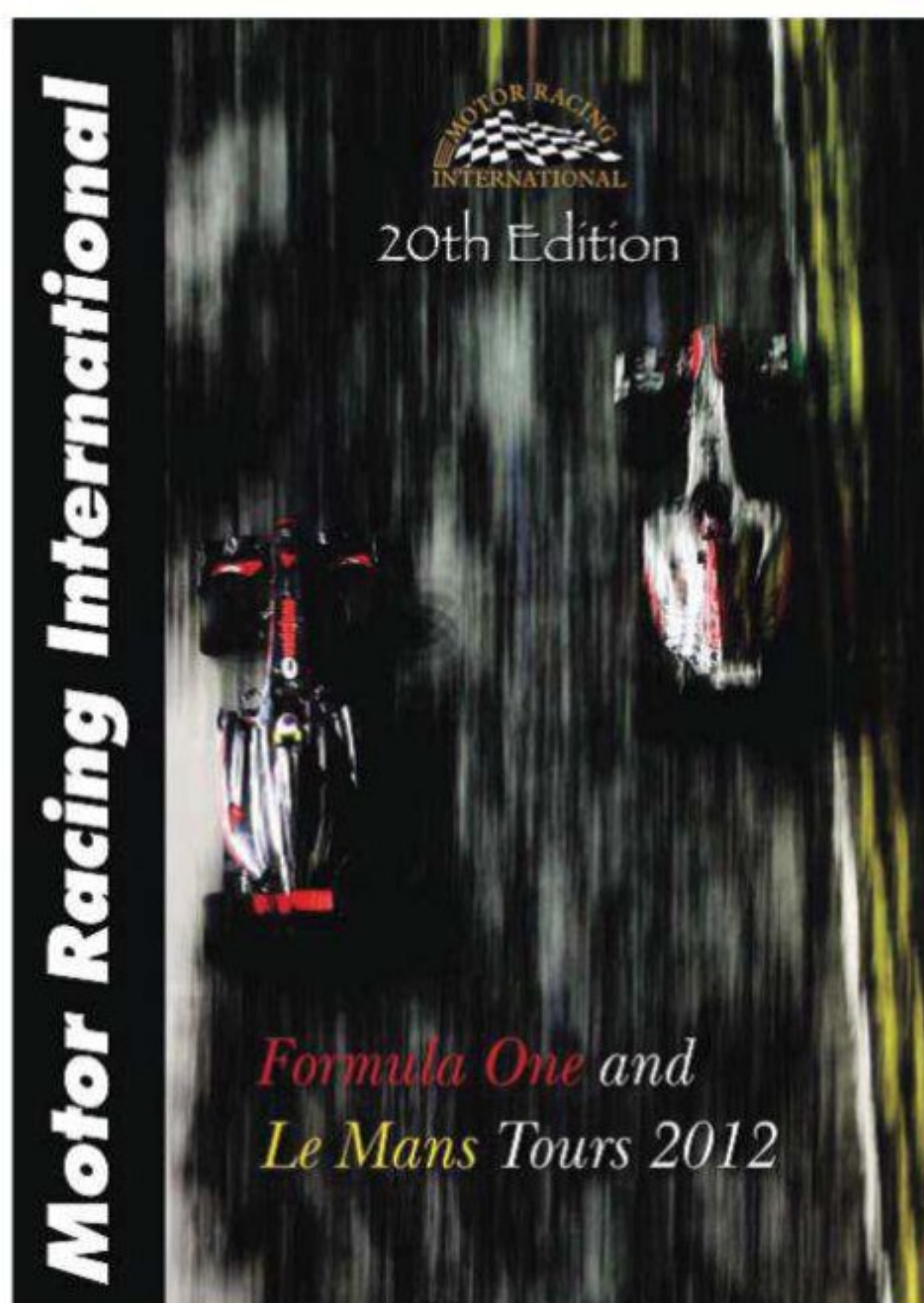
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## MARK HUGHES GRAND PRIX EDITOR

It doesn't matter how proscriptive Formula 1's rulebook becomes, some bright spark will always conjure up a fiendishly ingenious way to gain an advantage – however tiny

**M**any weeks ago, when the 2011 season had not long finished, we speculated here what the new must-have technical feature might be now that exhaust blowing had gone the way of f-ducts and double diffusers – to that great ideas graveyard, assassinated by FIA snipers.

Some are suggesting that there simply isn't scope for 'the next big thing' within the rules as they are currently configured. But that's to dangerously underestimate the intensity of effort, the brilliance of the minds and the depth of the supporting resources of F1 teams.

restrictions that supposedly prevented exhaust flow from being suddenly accelerated, like it had been with the hot-blowing mapping used last year. The 2012 regulations, as well as specifically restricting a huge number of parameters in the mapping, also say quite clearly that no fluids can be admitted into the exhausts. That – combined with the placement of the exhausts so that they cannot be routed into the diffuser channels – would surely be enough for that area of ideas to be switched off. Surely? Nope. What if you were to configure the software so that it misfired on the over-run, but within the cylinders? You aren't allowing any unburned fuel into the exhaust, but the misfire would still give a sudden pulse increase in the exhaust's flow. Which would potentially boost off-throttle downforce as the exhausts played over the aero-profiled brake ducts and the beam wing. OK, that avenue has now been cut off too, but only because someone handed in their weapons.

Now take a look at the back of the Mercedes. See the way the crash structure underside is merged with the trailing edge of the diffuser? It looks suspiciously like an extra exit ramp – just like they used to look when double diffusers were all the rage. But what would be the point of having the extra ramp when you are no longer allowed the slots in the floor to feed it with airflow? Ah well, what if you trained the flow from the hot exhaust and from the cooling exit at the bottom of the engine cover to a place that created a pressure differential that energised the flow coming through the diffuser. Especially if you used the splitters within the diffuser to turn

the air as much as possible towards that upper chamber...

How this might work in conjunction with the car's rumoured 'w-duct' is an intriguing prospect too. The speculation is that the air entering the small inlet in the car's nose is trained through hollows in the nose pillars to exits on the underside of the front wing, and that these are used somehow to boost the car's downforce on the more heavily loaded side when cornering. As a car turns across the oncoming air there will typically be a momentary reduction in downforce as the airflow realigns. This could compensate for that. A similar phenomenon can be felt in your road car if you have the side ventilation ducts angled towards the door window. As you turn you can notice that the flow is momentarily blowing in your face instead. The ducts on the Merc's wing underside could be used to blow in a neutral direction when the car is travelling straight but momentarily over an aero-producing surface in that transient part of the turn.

It's difficult to know how this would amount to a significant boost given the tiny size of the inlet on the car's nose – but then that's just an impression from the outside. Without the benefit of the brilliant minds and the simulation tools on which to find a way of making it work.

However small the gain might be is almost beside the point. If it's the next biggest gain to be found after the other avenues have been closed off, that idea will still be the one that has the same massive technical and brain power unleashed upon it. That's an intrinsic part of the fascination of F1. ❧



What does Mercedes know that the other teams don't?

PIC: THOMPSON/GETTY

Earlier this week we heard how an engine manufacturer had tipped off the FIA's Charlie Whiting that there actually was potentially a way around the engine mapping

**“Has the Mercedes team found F1's next significant aero boost?”**



Audi's hybrid (r) and regular R18 liveries were unveiled this week



WORLD ENDURANCE

# Hybrid Audi to mirror sister car

German marque launches hybrid LMP1 and keeps it similar to conventional spec. By GARY WATKINS

**T**he different versions of the R18 coupe that Audi will field in this year's Le Mans 24 Hours will be identical, apart from the hybrid technology being used on two of the four cars.

The German manufacturer confirmed that it would split its strategy at Le Mans and in the FIA World Endurance Championship between the conventional turbodiesel R18 and a hybrid version of the car last month. It announced at the launch of its 2012 LMP1 programme this week that

the specification of the two pairs of cars is identical, apart from the energy retrieval system working off the front wheels.

The hybrid Audi, called the R18 e-tron quattro, and the conventional car, to be named the R18 ultra, are distinguished only by different liveries and a mandatory warning light on the hybrid model.

Audi explained that the strategy had been designed for logistical reasons and to evaluate the relative merits of the two technologies.

Audi Sport head of vehicle

development Wolfgang Appel said: "The greatest challenge was to find the ideal compromise. It was a question of weight, performance, hybrid concept, regulation constraints and packaging, which means perfectly balancing the distribution of all the components in such away that no appreciable disadvantages arise in the conventional car."

Audi has revived the quattro moniker of its line of successful rally and race cars for the hybrid R18 because it effectively makes it a four-wheel-drive car. The rules allow 500kJ (about 70bhp) of stored energy to be transferred to the wheels between two braking 'events' at speeds above 75mph.

Improved traction is the major advantage offered by choosing the front over the rear axle for energy-retrieval. It is also more efficient because of the higher braking loads.

Audi has confirmed that it will use a flywheel for energy storage rather than batteries, as favoured by former rival Peugeot, or super-capacitors used by Toyota.

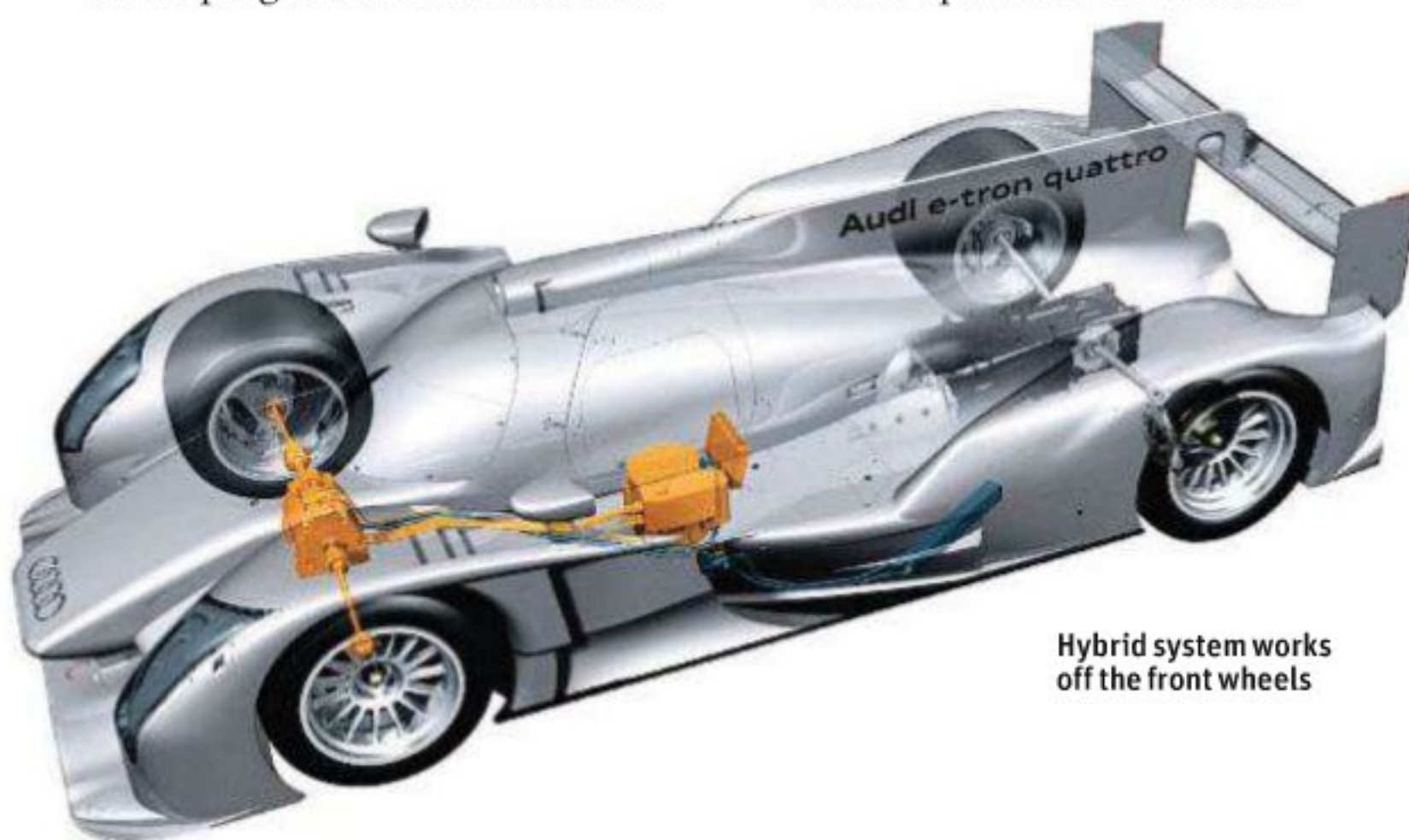
It has forged an alliance with Williams Hybrid Power, which worked with Porsche on its 911 GT3-R Hybrid.

The e-tron quattro and the ultra will not debut until the Spa WEC round in May, leaving Audi to rely on three revised 2011-spec R18 TDIs for the series opener at Sebring this month.

Loic Duval has joined Audi after impressing at the ORECA Peugeot squad in 2010-11. Duval, 29, will drive a non-hybrid R18 with Porsche-contracted Timo Bernhard and Romain Dumas at Sebring, Spa and Le Mans.

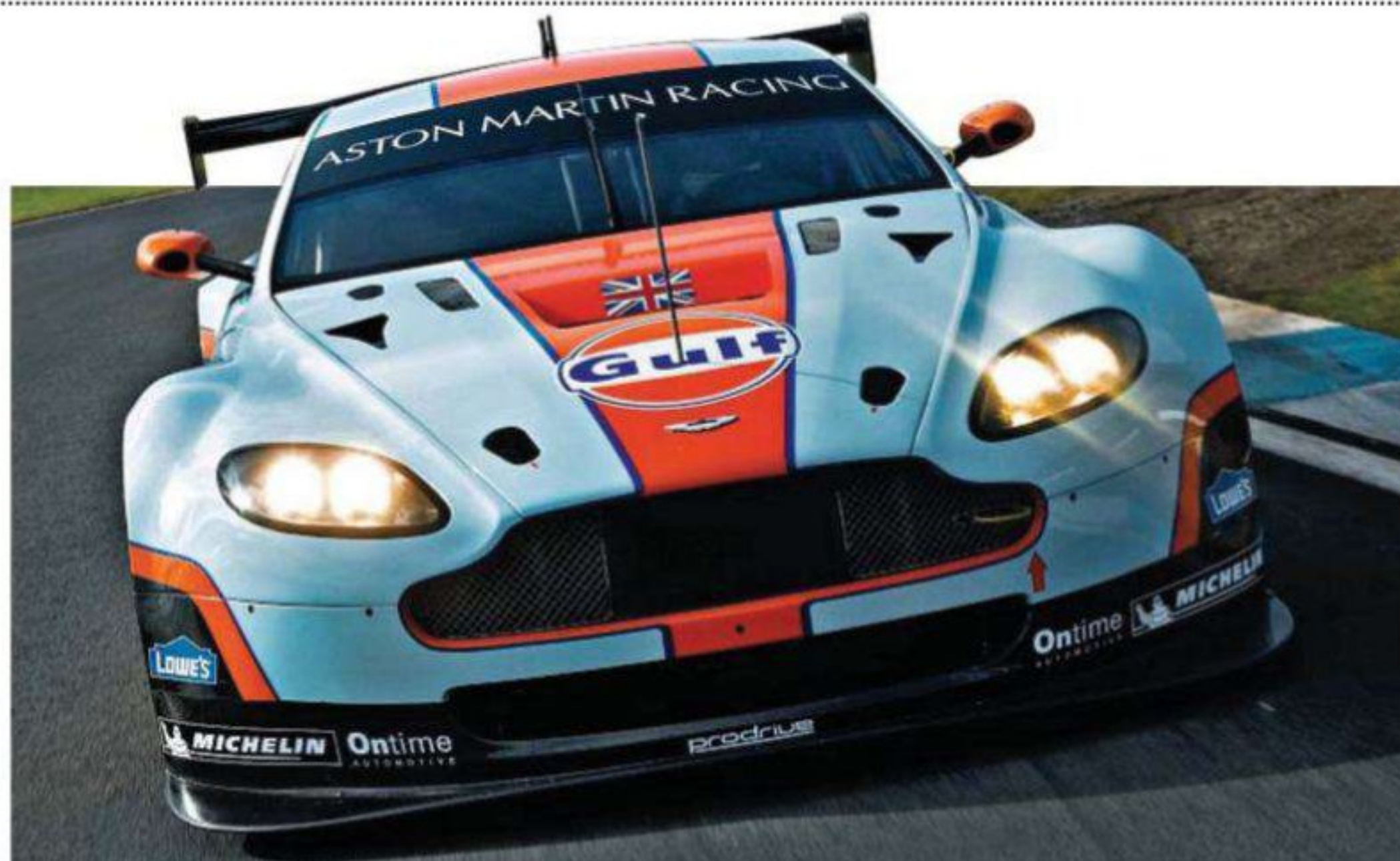
Italian Marco Bonanomi, Audi's test and reserve driver last year, gets a race call-up and will share a conventional car with Mike Rockenfeller and Oliver Jarvis at Spa and Le Mans.

Andre Lotterer's full-time spot has been confirmed. It is expected that his team-mate in the hybrid WEC entry will be Benoit Treluyer. Scot Allan McNish is the only confirmed entry in Audi's R18 ultra for the full WEC.



Hybrid system works off the front wheels





**WORLD ENDURANCE**

## AMR wants GTE glory by 2014

**ASTON MARTIN RACING HAS LAID OUT** a three-year plan to start winning in the ultra-competitive GTE category.

AMR said at the launch of its new Aston Martin Vantage GTE last week that it has realistic ambitions for its return to the GT ranks as a race team in this year's FIA World Endurance Championship. It will field one GTE Pro car in the full series for Aston factory drivers Darren Turner, Stefan Mücke and Adrian Fernandez, and will have at least one additional GTE Am entry at the Le Mans 24 Hours round in June.

AMR managing director John Gaw said: "We are aiming to be competitive

when we get to Sebring [for the opening WEC round], which we have rarely been when our customers have been racing the Vantage. We know we are not going out there and on pole straight away, because GTE is so competitive. Our focus this year is on reliability.

"This car was designed and built in five months, but we already have three people working on the 2013 version. The aim is to score podiums next year and in year three to start winning."

The 2012 Vantage features at least 25 improvements over its predecessor. These are aimed at improving reliability and serviceability of the car.

**ALMS**

## Jaguar pulls plug on RSR GT programme

**JAGUAR HAS CALLED AN EARLY END** to its factory-backed American Le Mans Series programme with Paul Gentilozzi's RSR squad.

The British manufacturer has announced that it is ending its assault on the ALMS GT class, which began at the final race of 2009, to focus on the launch of new models. The move follows two seasons of

underachievement for the RSR-developed XKR model in the ALMS and a disastrous appearance at the 2010 Le Mans 24 Hours.

Jaguar always remained guarded about talking about the details of its contract with RSR, but it is known that it had a five-year deal. The arrangement started in 2008, which means the tie-up has been cut short by at least one year.



RSR Jags won't run in ALMS

### IN BRIEF

**Dome is in windtunnel**



#### **HOME LMP1 PROGRESSING**

Preparations for Dome's Le Mans 24 Hours return with Pescarolo are progressing. Windtunnel testing is continuing and the first shakedown of

the S101.5 is imminent. Seiji Ara will be the car's third driver.

#### **FULL DYSON SEAT FOR KANE**

Brit Steven Kane will race the solo Dyson Racing Lola-Mazda B12/60 alongside Guy Smith and Chris Dyson in the ALMS, having won at Baltimore under the Oryx banner in 2011.

#### **ROUSH ENGINE FOR ALMS**

The Roush-Yates twin-turbo Ford V6

LMP2 powerplant will race for the first time in 2012. The Project Libra squad is planning a full ALMS programme with the engine in a Radical SR9.

**Roush Ford set to power Radical**



### AUTOSPORT SAYS...

**GARY WATKINS**  
INTERNATIONAL  
EDITOR-AT-LARGE

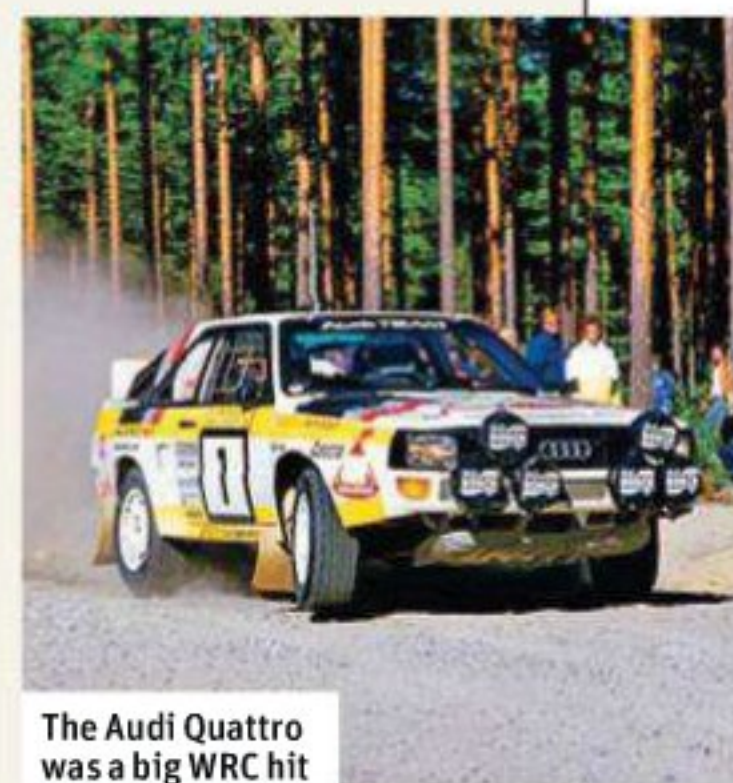


**W**ho would have thought it? A four-wheel-drive prototype at the Le Mans 24 Hours. I guess it was always likely once the way was cleared for hybrid technology, but it still seems strange. I'm far too young to have seen any of the four-wheel-drive experiments of the late 1960s race in Formula 1, so to my mind proper racing cars only drive through the rear axle.

Perhaps it should be no surprise that Audi, with such a rich heritage with the 'quattro' format in rallying in the 1980s and touring-car racing after that, should be the first to announce that it will use hybrid technology to create an all-wheel-drive LMP1 car of sorts. Audi's love of four driven wheels even resulted in a short-lived provision for all-wheel-drive in the Le Mans rulebook in the late 1990s.

Audi probably knows better than any other manufacturer the benefits that such a system can bring in terms of traction as well.

Should Toyota opt for energy retrieval at the rear axle (as seems likely) and should it rain at Le Mans when June comes around (as is always very likely), I might just have to change my mind about four-wheel-drive racing cars.



The Audi Quattro was a big WRC hit

If the British F3 championship merges with the Euro Series to form an official European Championship, it will be the first since 1984, when Ivan Capelli (white car leading) took the title in a Coloni-run Martini-Alfa Romeo.



**DID YOU KNOW?**



BRITISH F3

## CHANDHOK BACK IN F3

Indian F1 driver Karun Chandhok returned to his roots at Silverstone last Friday by shaking down a British F3 National Class Dallara for T-Sport. He raced for the team from 2002-04.



FORMULA 3

# FIA set to debate F3 merger

World Motor Sport Council to discuss whether separate Euro Series and British F3 can be maintained

**T**he FIA is to debate proposals that would aim to bring the British Formula 3 International Series and the F3 Euro Series together, AUTOSPORT has learned.

But leading lights from both series have played down any suggestions that the World Motor Sport Council meeting in Milan on March 9 will force an arranged marriage for the coming season.

Ex-Formula 1 star Gerhard Berger, who was recently installed as president of the FIA's Single-Seater Commission, is said to support the idea of a unified series. Sources indicate that, while the Austrian is a fan of F3, he believes grids in the mid-teens, as projected for both championships in 2012, are not big enough.

The situation has arisen not only due to the economic climate, but because this year is an interim season; although new-generation chassis will be used, the new engine rules do not come into force until 2013. F3 insiders remain confident that after this holding season, the category can begin to recover.

It is arguable as to what power



Last year's Spa BF3 round had Euro runners too

the FIA could have to force a merger, even for 2013, as the two championships are administered and organised by a combination of national ASNs and their appointed promoters. But F3 insiders have hinted that a new FIA European F3 Championship could be floated, with teams from the Euro and British series invited to compete.

The Euro Series, for which just

eight drivers have been announced so far, is understood to be the more receptive of the two to the idea. A European championship could attract drivers by adding more international circuits — six of this year's nine Euro Series rounds are at German venues.

But Euro Series manager Christoph Hewer said: "We are focusing on having as strong a

Euro Series as possible and aim to continue as planned."

British F3 teams have confirmed a total of 10 drivers, but Peter Briggs, boss of the series' teams association FOTA, said: "We're on target for 15 cars at the first race, and more people are talking of buying new cars after the season has started."

Lisa Crampton, the British series' general manager, added: "F3 in both territories is not extraordinarily strong. There will not so much be a shotgun decision to merge, but discussion to see how we can work together to create a stable F3 platform across the region."

"There may be a couple of tweaks for this year but nothing radical, and maybe bigger changes next year."

"The key thing is that we're now heading into March. To do something this late, the negatives would outweigh the positives."

Leading British F3 team Fortec Motorsports is against any change. Team principal Richard Dutton said: "I'd much rather leave things as they are. If the Europeans want to join us, that's great — we'd love to have them here."

## Toda works on new-spec powerplant

### JAPANESE FORMULA 3 SPECIALIST

Toda Racing has tested a development engine for the category's new-for-2013 rules and "would love to see it used in Britain and Europe".

The powerplant is a brand-new design

as F3 will allow bespoke racing engines alongside production-based two-litre units.

FIA Sportscar racewinner Hiroki Katoh and single-seater racer Shinosuke Yamada have tested the unit in a Dallara F304 at the team's local Okayama track.



Toda is testing already



F3 EURO SERIES/GP3

# Blomqvist targets step up as McLaren junior

**EX-FORMULA RENAULT UK CHAMPION** Tom Blomqvist is targeting a move into the Formula 3 Euro Series or GP3 in 2012 after joining McLaren's driver-development programme.

Blomqvist's new manager Mark Blundell said that the two-time McLaren AUTOSPORT BRDC Award finalist needs to be racing in one of the categories this season. The son of former World Rally champion Stig Blomqvist raced in German F3 and finished sixth overall, his season being derailed by a back-breaking accident at Lausitz in September.

Blundell, who started working with Blomqvist late last year, said: "We need to be aiming at the F3 Euro Series or GP3 Series. That's the level Tom's ability is suited to."

Talks are continuing with GP3 team

Status Grand Prix, with which Blomqvist has tested twice, according to Blundell. He added that he was also in dialogue with a title-winning Euro Series team.

Ex-McLaren Formula 1 racer Blundell stressed that the finances are not yet in place to take Blomqvist, 18, into either formula and that the deal with the F1 team does not include any financial backing.

"McLaren will monitor his progress and the arrangement will help us when we walk through the door to see teams and potential sponsors," he said.



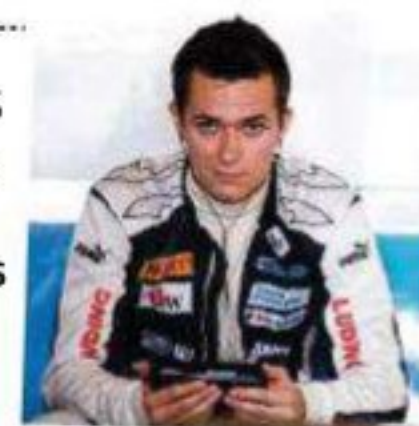
Blomqvist is now with McLaren

## 60 SECONDS WITH

**MIKHAIL ALESHIN**

FR3.5 returnee

2010 Formula Renault 3.5 champion Mikhail Aleshin explains his decision to race full-time in the series again this season.



**Why return to a series you've won before?**

In 2012 there is a new car and new drivers in FR3.5, so it's a new series. I am with a Russian team [RFR], so I can say that all these facts played a part in the decision. If they were running the old car I would probably not come back. But the new car will be faster than the old one. It's definitely not a step backwards; it's a step forwards.

**Did the addition of a race in Moscow make it easier to find the backing?**

The race in Moscow helps; there have been lot of spectators in Russia who support me. I was happy when we sorted everything and put things in place for the race in Moscow. It was not easy but we should be racing in Russia this summer. I will be happy to race in my country because the track is just unbelievable.

**You won the championship with a top team (Carlin). Will the new car level the field?**

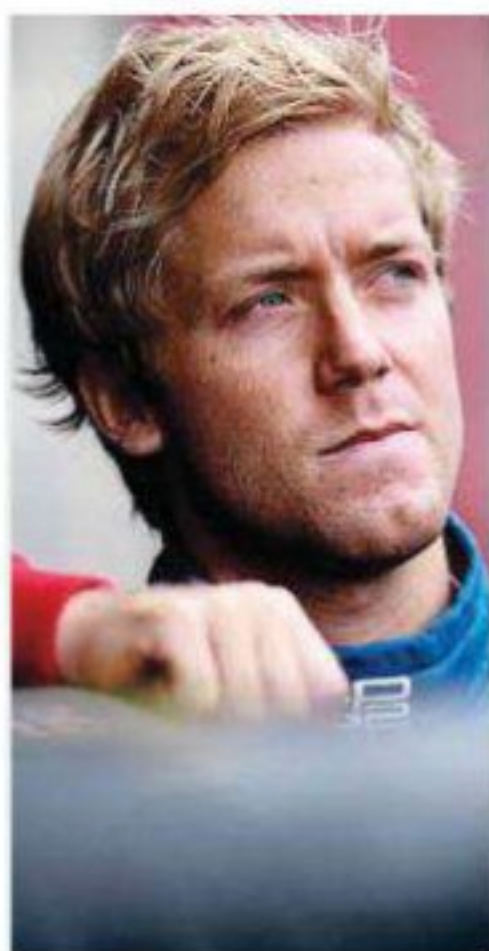
My team is based on KMP Racing, but with completely new engineers on both cars. I can say that they've made a step forward. I think one of the reasons that I'm there is that they wanted someone with a lot of experience. It didn't have to be in World Series, because the car is new, but I have a lot of experience in different cars. The knowledge that I have from the last few years should help RFR get a proper set-up from the start of the season.

**Will you race anything else this season?**

It's quite possible that I could do some endurance racing or GTs. It all depends on the schedule of course. I would like to do something more, because I think I have ability to do that. We're working on it now. The number one priority is with World Series.



Mikhail Aleshin was talking to AUTOSPORT's Peter Mills



Bird switches to ISR in FR3.5

FORMULA RENAULT 3.5

## Bird: FR3.5 on par with GP2

**SAM BIRD DOES NOT SEE HIS MOVE**

from GP2 to Formula Renault 3.5 as a step down, due to the quality of the field in the World Series category this year.

The Mercedes F1-contracted driver moves to the Renault-backed series with frontrunning team ISR after two years in GP2, and starts as a title favourite.

"I think it's at the same level as GP2," Bird told AUTOSPORT. "People see both as a feeder series to F1. Winning any series is a boost; winning it when the field is as

strong as will be the case this year would be a massive boost to a driver."

While Bird and his former GP2 teammate Jules Bianchi are expected to be in the thick of the title fight, the Briton believes there will be plenty of drivers in the mix, including 2010 champion Mikhail Aleshin (see right).

"Me and Jules will be battling as per usual," he added. "But there's an awful lot of capable drivers that will be up there. It's going to be a fun year."

## IN BRIEF

LMP2 ORECA ran at Paul Ricard



### NEW ORECA LMP2 TESTS

The 2012 ORECA 03 LMP2 contender, which incorporates a 'shark fin' for the first time, was shaken down at Paul Ricard last week. Cars from ADR-Delta, Pecora/AF Corse and TDS ran at the test, as did a development car.

### AF CORSE TO WORLD GT1

AF Corse has been confirmed as the Ferrari entry in the FIA GT1 World Championship. The Italian team has announced European GT3 champion

Francesco Castellacci and Belgian Enzo Ide as the first two drivers for its pair of Ferrari 458 Italia GT3s.

### RISI TO MISS SEBRING

Top Ferrari team Risi Competizione will miss the Sebring 12 Hours for the first time since 2002. The US squad has not ruled out returning to the American Le Mans Series with its 458 Italia and is looking at further outings with the Grand-Am-spec car after its appearance at the Daytona 24 Hours.

### FARNBACHER FOR LUXURY

German GT ace Dominik Farnbacher has switched to Luxury Racing for this year's World Endurance Championship following the end of his family team's entry. He will share a Ferrari 458 with Pierre Ehret and Francois Jakubowski.

### HUGHES/FIRTH REUNITED

Britons Warren Hughes and Jody Firth will pair up in the European Le Mans Series in a Murphy Prototypes-badged ORECA-Nissan, run by RLR MSport.

### BARRICHELLO TESTS AGAIN

F1 veteran Rubens Barrichello tested Tony Kanaan's KV Racing Dallara at Sears Point last weekend as he closes in on an IndyCar race seat. EJ Viso has confirmed he will stay with the team, which is likely to run three cars.

Rubens in Kanaan's car



Aleshin won 2010 FR3.5 title with Carlin





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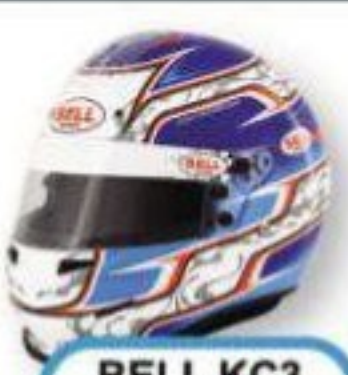
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Champ gets down to business in new Civic

BTCC

# Neal rates new Civic

Honda teamsters expect to be 'right in the hunt' in 2012. By KEVIN TURNER

**H**onda Racing's Matt Neal and Gordon Shedden believe they can fight for the British Touring Car Championship this season after overcoming early issues with the new NGTC-rules Civic in testing.

After a shakedown at MIRA, reigning champion Neal drove the

car — powered by a Neil Brown-built turbo engine — at Brands Hatch. Last year's runner-up Shedden then joined the reigning champion for a Donington Park test.

"It feels good and balanced," Neal told AUTOSPORT. "We've still got some issues with the [spec] TOCA

parts, but I'm sure we can get on top of things quite quickly.

"We struggled at Brands, but we had a really good test at Donington and we'll be right in the hunt.

"The car feels awesome and it's working well with the wider tyre [allowed for NGTC cars]."

Shedden drove the car for around half an hour at Donington and believes things are going well.

"It's got all the ingredients," said the Scot. "It's different from last year's car — it's more sure-footed and you sit further back, which takes some getting used to.

"This is about the earliest we've got a car out, and because it's so new we need to understand it and learn how to make it go quickly.

"We'll be utterly disappointed if we aren't somewhere thereabouts."

Neal and Shedden were both scheduled to drive the car at Oulton Park and Rockingham this week.



Neal (l) and Shedden reckon on more of this for 2012

## IN BRIEF

Artist's impression of MacDowall's Cruze



### MACDOWALL CRUZES TO WTCC

British Touring Car Championship podium finisher Alex MacDowall will graduate to World Touring Cars this year with a Bamboo Engineering Chevrolet Cruze. The ex-works Chevy BTCC racer will partner Auto GP convert Pasquale di Sabatino.

### TWO INSIGNIAS FOR THORNEY

BTCC newcomer Thorney Motorsport will run two NGTC-spec Vauxhall Insignias this year. Team owner/driver John Thorne will be partnered by former Britcar racer Rob Hedley from round four at Oulton Park.

### AUDI SHUFFLES DTM PACK

Swiss girl Rahel Frey has made a surprise move from Phoenix Racing to Audi's top DTM team Abt Sportsline for this year. Miguel Molina and Mike Rockenfeller move the other way from Abt to Phoenix, while Edoardo Mortara and Filipe Albuquerque stay with Team Rosberg.

### FILIPPI UNLIKELY FOR OPENER

GP2 runner-up Luca Filippi has admitted his hopes of making it onto the grid for the IndyCar season opener are slim, due to the lack of available engines. The Italian has been linked to a Rahal Letterman seat.

### VAINIO TOPS GP3 AT ESTORIL

Finn Aaro Vainio topped the timesheets in last week's GP3 test for the Lotus GP (nee ART) squad. He was 0.107s quicker than Cypriot rookie Tio Ellinas (Manor) and Antonio Felix da Costa (Carlin). Nico Muller was fastest on day one for Trident.

Vainio drove in Lotus livery



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RALLY AMERICA

## QUICK OUT THE BLOCK

Ken Block won last weekend's 100 Acre Wood Rally, round two of Rally America. The Monster World Rally Team driver beat Subaru USA's David Higgins by 29.3 seconds in Missouri. Block took 15 from 17 stage wins on his way to a sixth victory on the event based in Salem, Virginia.

WRC

# Ford aces on VW's shopping list

Latvala and Solberg top of German marque's wanted list ahead of WRC debut next season. By DAVID EVANS

**J**ari-Matti Latvala and Petter Solberg have emerged as the favourites to join Sebastien Ogier at Volkswagen for the 2013 World Rally Championship. VW consultant and former

double world champion Carlos Sainz confirmed the German firm was not searching for a junior team-mate to Sebastien Ogier, but an equal – opening the door to both Ford drivers.

Sainz said: "Kris [Nissen, VW Motorsport team principal] and myself will always try to find the best drivers for the team. We work well together and we have the same opinion. We are not looking for a second driver to go with Ogier, we are looking for another driver. It has always been like this in the top teams – if you want the best then you have more than one top driver."

Both Solberg and Latvala are out of their Ford contracts at the end of the season and some sources say the Finn has already agreed terms with VW – his manager Timo Jouhki has certainly met with the Hannover-based outfit.

Asked what he thought about a possible race between himself and Solberg, Latvala said: "It's much too early to be talking about next year, but Petter coming into the factory car again [with Ford] means he has the chance to show what he can do in the same machinery. It's a good chance for him. But as for me, I am only thinking about this year."

Solberg is known to have had extensive meetings with Volkswagen, as has the Norwegian's former Subaru team-mate Chris Atkinson.

One of the issues VW had with Atkinson is believed to have been his lack of recent action at WRC level. The Australian's return to the series on the next round in Mexico will offer VW chiefs the chance to look at the Queenslander's speed – although it will be his first appearance in the WRC since 2009.

Having just emerged from a troubled season fighting for seniority in the Citroen team with Sebastien Loeb, Ogier refused to be drawn on what he wanted from a team-mate in 2013.

"I'm not getting into that again," the Frenchman said. "We want the best for Volkswagen."

VW will include junior drivers in its 2013 line-up, but these will come from Andreas Mikkelsen, Kevin Abbring, Sepp Wiegand and possibly Juho Hanninen.

Hanninen's hopes of securing a Polo R WRC look to be fading, however. The defending Super 2000 WRC champion is unlikely to be seen on WRC rounds beyond his home event in Finland this year and he was beaten by Mikkelsen on last weekend's IRC opener in the Azores.

"I want to be back in the WRC," admitted Hanninen. "I have never made a secret of the fact that I want to go back."



Sainz, Nissen and Solberg in conversation



BRC

# Circuit of Ireland on BRC radar

**BRITISH RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP** manager Mark Taylor has admitted he is keen to discuss a deal with the Intercontinental Rally Challenge to bring the Circuit of Ireland Rally into the BRC for next season.

Having lost the International Rally Isle of Man last year, the BRC is an asphalt round short for this season and Taylor admitted the Circuit of Ireland could fill that gap in 2013. Taylor added that, for the first time, the BRC could also include a scoring round in mainland Europe.

"We need another asphalt rally," he said. "We've spoken to the Manx organisers and we understand the position they're in and we're hopeful that they could be back next year. But



Renault is behind the new-look BRC

we've got to be looking elsewhere as well and the Circuit is an obvious possibility. It would be great to bring an event of that calibre back into the BRC and there would be obvious benefits of an alliance with the IRC.

"We're going to be looking abroad. There are some classic events in Belgium and places like that. The BRC is about having the best rallies and that's what we're looking for."

This year's BRC got underway with last week's Rallye Sunseeker

International and Taylor said the new two-wheel-drive regulations look like the right move.

"We've got three manufacturers signed up now," he said. "Ford and Citroen have joined Renault, so we want to get them together to talk about the future of the BRC. This has been a very, very positive start."

## P53 BRC REPORT



Latvala gave Fiesta a gravel thrash

WRC

# Ford gets tough in first gravel tests

**FORD UNDERTOOK ITS ROUGHEST** ever gravel test last week to work on development of the Fiesta RS WRC.

The factory team was in the South of France for its first gravel running of the season – a research and development session for rough roads.

Team leader Jari-Matti Latvala said: "Those were probably the roughest roads I've ever driven a rally car down. But it was exactly what we needed – it gave us the perfect opportunity to test the strength of the Fiesta RS WRC. I was hugely impressed with the way it performed – the car had never seen anything like those roads! We already knew the car was strong, but last week's test emphasised that."

The test site is usually used by off-road racing teams and as preparation for the Dakar. Latvala and team-mate Petter Solberg completed close to 200 miles in two days. Both drivers will be testing in southern Spain this week in preparation for round three of the WRC in Mexico.

## IN BRIEF

### PRODRIVE FOR PORTUGAL

Prodrive has confirmed that the team's next event will be Rally of Portugal at the end of this month, with Dani Sordo and Patrik Sandell driving its two Mini WRCs.

### ROOKIE CUP FOR ACADEMY

This year's WRC Academy will include a rookie award for the first time. The winner (the highest-placed driver who didn't register for the 2011 WRC Academy) will get to test a Ford Fiesta S2000 with one of Ford's WRC drivers showing them the way.

### LAPPI LAPS IT UP

Esapekka Lappi, 21, continued his domination of the Finnish Rally Championship with his third straight win in a Ford Fiesta S2000 last weekend. Lappi was almost a minute clear of Juha Salo's Mitsubishi on the Vaakuna Rally. The Finnish series now takes a break until June's POP Pankki Rally.

### BIG NIGHT FOR BULLDOG

The Bulldog International Rally of North Wales will include two dark

stages in Dyfnant on the Friday (March 23) evening. Saturday provides classic mileage in Dyfi and Gartheiniog followed by a loop up towards Bala and a third run in Dyfnant. Based in Welshpool, the event runs for 98 competitive miles.

### FISHER FLIES THE FLAG

WRC Academy driver Alastair Fisher is hoping to contest three other events in a Ford Fiesta S2000 car. The rapid Northern Irishman will use the S2000 car on the Circuit of Ireland, Ypres and Rally GB.

### EVANS PLANS MORE BRC

Rallye Sunseeker R2-class winner Elfyn Evans hopes to tackle more BRC rounds in his Fiesta, including his home event, the Bulldog Rally, which he won last year. His main focus is the WRC Academy, which starts in Portugal later this month.

### TWINGO DEBUT FOR DALE

Justin Dale gave Renault's Twingo R2 Evo its debut on Saturday's Rallye Sunseeker. The two-time British Super 1600 champion ran as course car in the machine, which is likely to be homologated next week.

Dale ran new Twingo



## AUTOSPORT SAYS...

**DAVID EVANS  
RALLIES EDITOR**

david.evans  
@haymarket.com



**S**o, the revolution is upon us. Three times last Saturday I deliberately chose pretty dull spots to spectate on Rallye Sunseeker. The theory being: if two-wheel drive's going to be bad for the BRC, let's see how bad.

An uphill (in as much as this part of Dorset does hills...) 90-left was as good a place as anywhere to start. And I was cheered mightily.

Mark Donnelly, Jarkko Nikara, Elfyn Evans, Alastair Fisher, Tom Cave and a couple of Finns were well on the money. Braking as late as possible and slashing at tape, straw bales and arrows in the ditch on the right before launching their respective noses at the apex.

Granted, they might have been a bit slower on the run up the hill (gentle slope) before the junction, but there was little to choose between them and the national-event World Rally Cars, which followed later, in the middle of the corner.

This was very encouraging. I'll report back on commitment levels where ball-size really counts – stage-side in Dyfi on the Bulldog, BRC round two, later this month.

While the BRC might have undergone significant change, one thing that hasn't changed is the quality of Rallye Sunseeker. Once again, Rick Smith and his band of deeply diligent followers laid on an exceptional event.

So, some of you may say, he should with a solid and affluent population base to play with. But, don't forget, that population base is largely uneducated in rallying. It's a once-a-year thing for them. But they keep coming back...



Two-wheel-drive cars were still on it

## REMEMBER WHEN...

JANUARY 25 1992



...Richard Burns drove his Group N Subaru to second place on the Winter Rally? The future world champion trailed home Trevor Smith's Ford Sierra Cosworth, before going on to win that year's Mintex National title.



# INSIDE THE F1 CO

Formula 1 drivers are timed to the thousandth of a second, so why do some finish 20 or 30 seconds ahead of their team-mates in a grand prix? *MARK HUGHES* investigates the techniques that mark the superstars from the also-rans





# COCKPIT



**T**he similarities in ability of Formula 1's top drivers are way more notable than the differences. But that only enhances the distinctions between them, those variations in style, technique and preference that form the flourishes of their performances as clearly as handwriting. How these differences play out is often significant in deciding which drivers shine or struggle in specific circumstances.

Former Lotus team principal Peter Collins

is someone who has been involved in pretty much every category of racing, from karting to F1 and back to karting again, and it's his experience that driver traits are pretty much set in stone: "They don't change. You can watch them as a 10-year-old kid and see them progress all the way to F1 and you see the same underlying characteristics. They gain experience and knowledge and sometimes wisdom, but the way they drive stays as constant as their personalities." ►

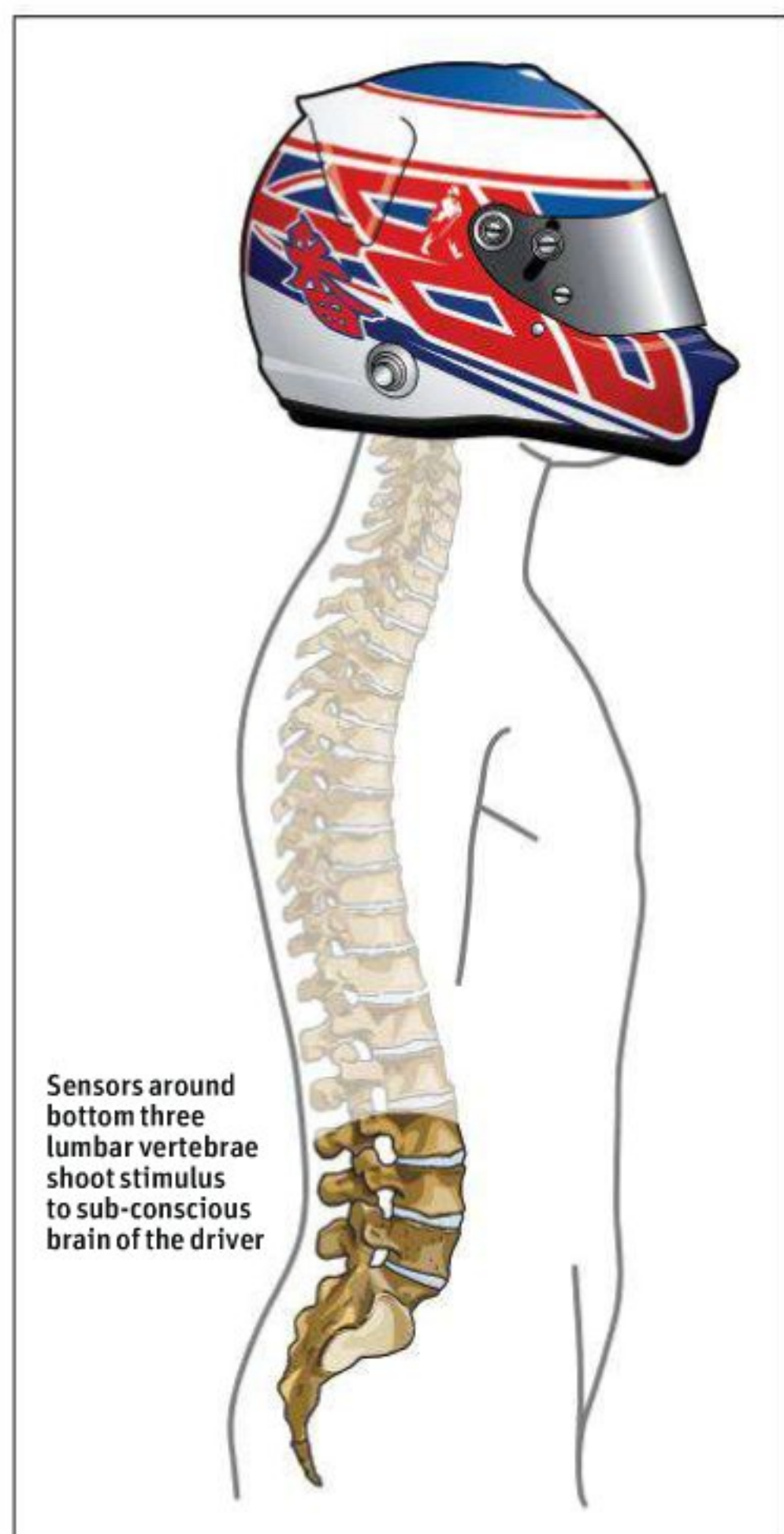




Vettel experiences yaw in Toro Rosso in '08

## ◀ THE HUMAN BIOLOGY

Collins's opinion figures if, at the root of it all, it's all about the physical sensations the driver feels in the car – how they sense *g*-force (grip), rotation (the turning motion) and yaw (the sliding). These are the three fundamentals but are almost certainly experienced slightly differently for each person according to their physiology. In F1 every aspect of car performance is put under the microscope, researched and



Sensors around bottom three lumbar vertebrae shoot stimulus to sub-conscious brain of the driver

developed, continually refined in permanent optimisation loops. But from the category's engineering-led perspective the performance of the driver is just an assumed number, with no real knowledge of what's behind it.

It's something that infuriates Dr Riccardo Ceccarelli, the sport's pre-eminent researcher into driver physiology and performance. He has spent over 20 years researching and analysing this subject. In his quest to maximise the performances of drivers on his Formula Medicine course, he has found the key to be 'brain economy', or how little of the brain's energy can be devoted to successfully completing tasks. The more spare brain capacity left while actually racing the car, the closer the driver can be to his own theoretical personal best performance, because driving to your absolute maximum is a mentally exhausting task that typically requires some mental 'breathing time'.

Just a slackening of pace by a couple of tenths reduces the brain load enormously. The less of that breathing time the brain needs, the more consistently close the driver can be to his own limits and it's about training the brain to be more energy-efficient in its tasks.

"I would say that even in F1, comparing theoretical optimums for any given driver to actual performance, there will typically be a difference over a grand prix distance of 20 seconds, maybe even 30 in some cases," says Ceccarelli.

This is said with the experience of having



Spare brainpower needed here

Rear-end instability causes moments like this

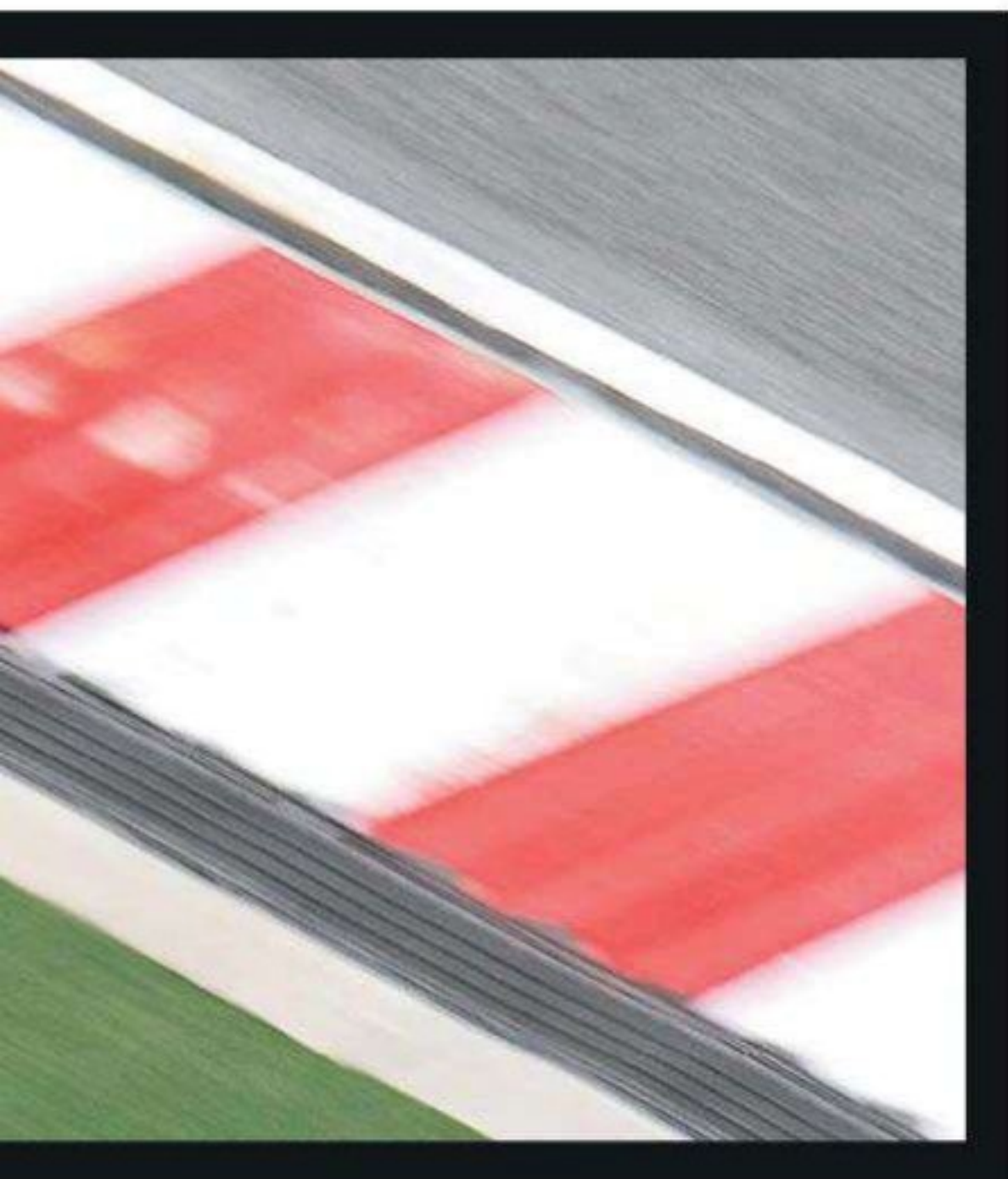


had at least half of the current F1 grid through his course at some stage. But ask Ceccarelli what research has been done about why different drivers drive in different ways and he snorts: "What you are asking is like asking a third-world country if it has a programme to go to the moon! To do such research properly would require the involvement of a team, a university, a serious budget and perhaps three or four years, and in F1 the driver is thought of as just a component. There is no thought for how to maximise his potential."

But if such research ever were to be undertaken, it might well take as its starting point some preliminary studies undertaken by QinetiQ, the defence agency and former Williams partner. It shared with Williams part of its research into military pilot selection that it thought might transfer to racing, namely human sensitivity to *g*-force, rotation and yaw...

It found that these sensations were picked up by sensors located between the coccyx and the third vertebra and that they were relayed to the brain sub-consciously – and therefore without any of the reaction-time delay of conscious stimulus. These sensors clearly form a profoundly important part in the workings of our inner gyroscopes. What's not yet fully understood is how they link up to the inner ear that forms such a crucial part of our balance. Those mysterious neuron pathways will define not only the quality of a driver's feel – the fundamental core of what makes one guy fast and another not – but





Hamilton displays incredible feel in low-grip conditions



Alonso 'massages' Ferrari on turn-in

also his preference for how the car should behave, its understeer or oversteer and the transitions to those states.

### THE TECHNIQUE

It is those preferences that form the essential differences in technique between the drivers – on the slow-to-medium speed corners at least, where the cars still need to be 'massaged' into a corner, where they are moving around sufficiently that variation in technique is possible. Any differences in technique tend to evaporate away in high-speed corners, where the speed-squaring force of the aerodynamics will dictate much more adamantly one 'correct' approach. On these corners the car will not be moving around anything like so much and the opportunity of variation is therefore very small. Take the two extremes of techniques from the current grid, put them each in a fast corner and there'd be virtually nothing to distinguish them.

But on slower corners – which on today's tracks are actually more prevalent than high-speed bends – a driver such as Sebastian Vettel or Lewis Hamilton is very comfortable with the rear of the car being loose. They carry commitment into the turn, secure in the knowledge that if the rear end becomes a little lively between turn-in and apex they can comfortably correct it while still maintaining a lot of momentum. The advantages they gain from the positive front end – faster direction change – they will reckon to be greater than the time losses incurred by any momentary

and quickly-corrected instability at the rear.

In certain situations – slow-speed turns with preferably only a short straight following – they can even deliberately use some initial oversteer to hurry up the direction change and get the car pointed at the apex earlier, enabling them to get earlier on the power. It's a technique Vettel often used to great effect in qualifying last year and it's a key reason why Hamilton is so quick around Monaco.

The hazard of such an approach is that the sliding rear may have some momentum – and keep sliding. The margin between a momentary direction-change-enhancing twitch of oversteer early in the corner and a slide that goes on too long (and costs more time than is gained by the quicker direction change) is grass-blade thin. But those who can feel that margin and sit themselves upon it can be very quick in almost all conditions.

The slower the corner, the better the chances of that momentum not building, and the better therefore the chances of the time bought in direction change not then being lost by sliding for too long. Furthermore, if there is only a short straight following the slow corner – like in Monaco for much of the lap – even if you do exit the corner more slowly, you may still have bought more time on entry than you've lost on exit.

The opposite approach would be that of someone like Jenson Button or, as we used to see, Robert Kubica. "I hate rear instability on corner entry," said Button during his Brawn title-winning season of 2009. "It's not

something I can deal with well. If I look at the telemetry and compare what Rubens [Barrichello, his team-mate that season] does in those situations, I can't do that. If he has rear instability he just throws on a lot of steering lock very suddenly, making the car understeer, and balancing it just right so that by the time the understeer's reducing you're into the corner and the transient instability is gone, or has been sort of damped out. I've seen it time and time again on the telemetry. When I try to do that, I just lose all feeling for the car; I cannot judge how much to do it by, it just feels so alien."

**"I hate rear instability on entry. Rubens can do things I can't in those situations"**  
**Button in his Brawn days**

Kubica was similarly disadvantaged by rear instability. "I need the rear of the car to be stable," he explained, "So preferably with a little bit of understeer so I can take a lot of speed into the corner. So long as it's grippy understeer, so that I can still ask more on the steering and it will respond, then it's good. If I get oversteer on entry, I'm dead. My style of taking the speed in just doesn't work if the back is loose. Obviously you can adapt as you feel the car, but some drivers are better ▶



Sudden rear-end breakaway  
is what F1 heroes fear most



"It's part of the driver's skill to filter out the irrelevant stuff and just act upon that vital 10 per cent." A driver quite relaxed about sudden rear instability will probably be using a coarser filter for such messages than one who cannot tolerate such a trait. That greater sensitivity can bring benefits in other situations.

Hamilton and Button – being at opposite ends of the style spectrum, yet driving the same car – make for particularly intriguing comparisons. Button's sensitivity to the car's microbehaviour has probably played its part in how the team looks to him more than Hamilton for set-up/development direction through a race weekend. Whenever there is a divergence of opinion on Friday over which direction to follow, the team invariably follows Button's preference, probably secure in the knowledge that Hamilton will be able to drive well regardless of the car's traits, whereas Button loses more of his performance if the car is not exactly as he needs it. We see also just how such sensitivity allows Button to shine in wet – or even better, variably wet – conditions.



Fantastic Hamilton: Silverstone '08



Senna's genius: Donington Park '93

## THE STROKES OF GENIUS

The gung-ho driver perfectly at ease with whatever the car throws at him can conjure supreme wet-weather performances – Vettel Monza '08, Hamilton Silverstone '08, Ayrton Senna Donington '93. But so too can the super-sensitive, silky-smooth driver and, when conditions are changeable rather than full wet, so that style comes into its own. Button's drive in China '10 comes to mind, as does his 8s faster in-lap over Nico Rosberg as they each made their way to the pits during a sudden downpour in Malaysia in '09. Think of these traits in terms of those neural pathways and inner ears, the body's sensors and inner gyroscopes, and it paints a fascinating, albeit incomplete, picture.

It can be appreciated how the different physiological make-up of even drivers of very similar outright ability can change their effectiveness according to variables such as handling traits and circuit conditions. Another powerful variable in this is ongoing regulation change, which can shuffle the pack not just of car performance, but also that of the drivers. In this, tyre specification seems the most powerful variant of all. Some drivers rely more on overlapping braking with cornering than others, and some tyres are way less tolerant of this than others. Last year's stiff-sidewalled Pirellis hated it, for example.

In the days of high-grip tyre-war Bridgestones, Michael Schumacher used to love to overlap the braking and cornering phases into slow-to-medium-speed turns. Alain Prost used a similar technique. They would begin the turn slightly earlier than the geometric ideal, turning only gently at first and maintaining a lot of momentum. As they loaded the outer front tyre under combined braking and cornering, so they would then begin to release some of the braking force, allowing the tyre to build up more cornering load, and the rear would begin to pivot itself gently around that outer front. The braking kept the fronts from building up lateral grip too quickly and transferring the cornering

**"Ninety per cent of the feedback you get in a racing car is irrelevant. It's part of the driver's skill to filter that out"**

**Martin Brundle**

◀ suited to one thing, some to another."

The cornering forces of a car are obviously generated by the front tyres first, and only as they have built that up and begun to turn the car do the rear tyres begin assuming their share of the load. With an understeering car this transfer to the rear is slower, more progressive. In certain circumstances this can give an advantage – by keeping the maximum load onto the rear from peaking beyond its grip limits (because of the more-progressive build-up) in those corners maybe too fast to prevent the Hamilton/Vettel approach from giving the rear slide too much momentum.

There would seem to be a strong correlation between the sensitivity of a driver's feel and how much they dislike rear instability – which sort of figures. If the driver has spent his whole career avoiding the onset of sudden breakaway at the rear, he is going to be more attuned to messages informing him of that than someone who doesn't really mind if the rear does break away.

## THE TELL-TALE GIVEAWAYS

There was a small moment during qualifying in Bahrain in 2010 that was very illuminating to McLaren's Paddy Lowe. In the final runs the wind had suddenly changed direction and it meant that as the cars arrived at Turns 5-6 – into the extended loop – they traversed a crosswind. Button turned into the corner, instantly sensed there was momentarily less grip than before and was spooked, thinking something was wrong with the car. He proceeded very carefully through the next few turns and the lap was gone. Hamilton arrived at the turn, felt nothing different to before and blasted through there, full-attack.

"We saw from the loadings on the cars and the various data that both cars had been affected in exactly the same way," said Lowe. "Yet Lewis didn't feel it and Jenson did. As it happened, that worked in Lewis's favour." But on another occasion – a genuine reduction in surface grip through the corner from spilt oil, say – it might have worked in Button's.

"Ninety per cent of the feedback you get in a racing car is irrelevant," says Martin Brundle.



Rosberg couldn't hold a candle to Prost...



...as '86 McLaren suited champ's understeer style



load too suddenly to the rear, keeping that rear end tamed while still benefiting from the direction change it was introducing to the car.

It required great sensitivity to make it work, but it potentially allowed you to have your cake and eat it; the high entry speed of the understeer-type driver, but with the early direction-change completion of the oversteer-type driver. But it required the tyres to cooperate, needed a nice flexible sidewall to blend the braking with the cornering.

### THE OUTSIDE FACTORS

In the days when Felipe Massa was regularly winning grands prix, he was extremely good at taking a lot of braking a long way into the corner, sometimes right up to the apex if the corner was slow enough. This forces you to have a lower minimum corner speed than the guy who has released the brakes earlier – because the tyre is overloaded. But if the corner apex is very slow anyway, that doesn't cost much lap time, probably less than Massa had gained on the way in by braking so late. He was also very adept at maintaining momentum with an understeer balance. Either some of his sensitivity has been lost, or the stiffer control-tyre Bridgestones and Pirellis used since his comeback from injury do not allow that style to work.

If the circuit's layout is slow enough, there are often set-up tweaks – rear ride-height increases or rear suspension geometries giving higher roll axis, diff settings – that can be used to aid the 'rotation' of the car upon corner entry, hurrying up the direction change without it actually sliding. But if there are too many fast turns, such tweaks would be counter-productive over the lap.

Generally, an F1 car will tend to understeer in slow corners and oversteer in fast ones,

partly because the front tyres, the faster they are going, build cornering force more quickly – and thereby sooner transfer the loads to the rear. So the more you 'improve' its slow-corner balance, the worse you make it in the high-speed turns and vice versa. In a perfect world therefore, the driver more comfortable with oversteer can have a set-up that works better over a lap, as Paddy Lowe explains: "A lot of the performance limit of a car is set by stability in the high-speed zones; if you can't hang onto it, you will have to introduce understeer in that zone. But if you have a driver better able to deal with oversteer in those zones that induce it, then you will have a less-understeery car elsewhere and therefore more total grip over the lap. The great drivers over the years – Senna, Schumacher, Mansell – have all had that ability. Like for like compared to other drivers, they want more front end."

But, as ever, there are disclaimers. If the understeer-type driver is able to use that trait to maintain higher minimum corner speeds in the slow turns than the oversteer-type driver, then he benefits from the better stability in the high-speed turns.

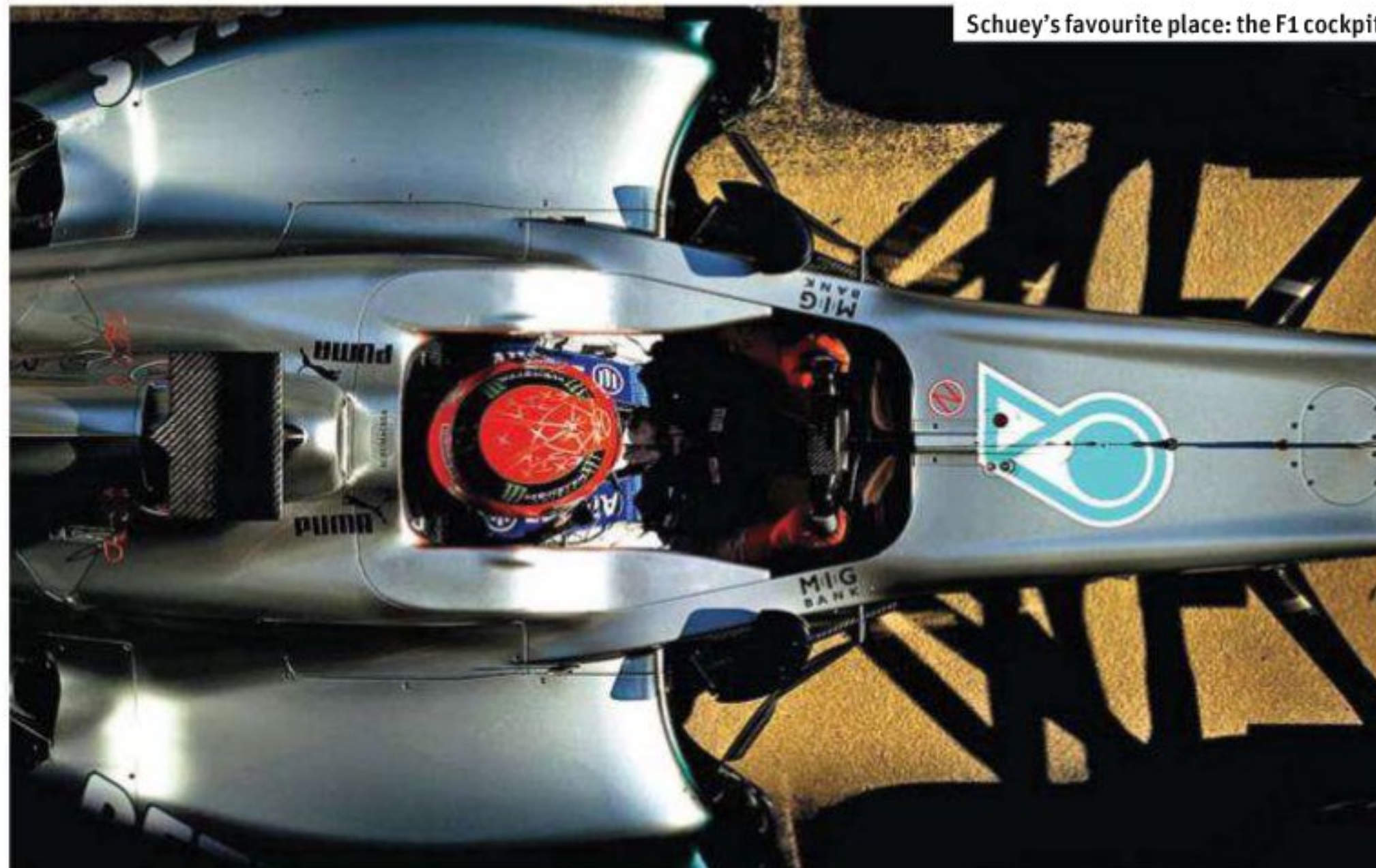
As ever, it all depends upon circumstance and conditions. Back in the turbo days, the

oversteering Keke Rosberg could not hold a candle at McLaren to the understeering Alain Prost – and for John Barnard, the team's technical director of the time, the reason was very simple: "Alain would set the car up in a way that to any other driver would feel like it had massive understeer, but he had a way of getting the car into the corner early [with his overlapping of braking and cornering], which for a turbo was fantastic, because it meant he could get early on the power and we could give him some traction. Keke, by contrast, was last of the late brakers and really liked to turn the car very quickly. To do that you need a set-up that's a bit light on rear grip – and that just wasn't the way with these cars because it meant you didn't have the traction to use all that huge power."

### THE CONCLUSION

There are no right and wrong answers here – and against the stopwatch the differing styles of the drivers are nowhere near as significant as their overall level. But given that in F1 the drivers are all at a very high level, then those differences in preferences/techniques – and specifically how they dovetail with the car/tyres/conditions/track – very often become the decisive factors in success. ☼

Schuey's favourite place: the F1 cockpit



Do Pirellis work against Massa's technique?



# MASSA:

## BACK IN A CRITICAL SITUATION

Fully recovered from his Hungaroring 2009 head-injury nightmare, Felipe Massa is facing a different challenge in 2012 – keeping his F1 seat with Ferrari. *TONY DODGINS* investigates

**F**elipe Massa faces a critical first half of the 2012 season – at least as far as his Ferrari future is concerned.

Just three years after he so nearly won the world championship, his 2011 campaign produced a best finish of fifth and a points total just 45 per cent of that of team-mate Fernando Alonso.

What's gone wrong? Is it the difficulties caused by his accident in qualifying at the Hungaroring in 2009, when a rogue spring from Rubens Barrichello's Brawn fractured his skull, damaged his left eye socket and could have ended his career for good?

Or was it the arrival, in 2010, of Alonso at Ferrari and the Spaniard's elevation to *de facto* team leader? In truth, it's probably a combination of the two.

Undoubtedly, the accident in Hungary, followed by a seven-and-a-half-month wait before he raced again, posed physical and mental challenges for Massa.

Head injuries are all highly individual. The first problem, assuming that the healing process is achieved without

complication and the cognitive tests completed satisfactorily, is to plan a sensible timeframe for a comeback.

In Massa's case, this was overseen by Brazilian physicians in consultation with Steve Olvey, former Champ Car director of medical services. A professor in the department of neurological surgery at the University of Miami, Olvey has recently taken on the position of medical director at the Circuit of the Americas – the circuit that is set to host this year's United States Grand Prix.

"Felipe's injury was pretty unique," Olvey says, "and one of the reasons he was sent to Miami was to get a second opinion as to whether he was recovered sufficiently to go back into competition."

"One of the key questions was his vision – he had several fractures of the orbit of his eye and some eye damage. We have the Bascom Palmer Eye Institute in Miami, pretty much acknowledged as the best in the world, in the top three certainly, and they did a complete examination. We also did a full neurological exam and were confident he was on his way to a complete recovery. ▶

**Flashback** AUTOSPORT, July 30, 2009



### Massa enters recovery phase

Doubts remain over whether Ferrari star will race in Formula 1 again, although doctors' hopes are positive

Doctors treating Felipe Massa will be able to make an accurate prognosis on when, and if, he is able to race again in the next week. It is possible, if Massa's vision has been harmed, it could prevent him from returning even if his sight is good enough to allow him to will make a good recovery, there are legitimate concerns that he may not be able to race in F1 again. he was extracted from the car and taken to the medical centre before





PICS: BARON/GETTY, GRADY/JAT

“A key question was his vision - he had fractures of the orbit of his eye”  
**Dr Steve Olvey**







Massa's Hungary accident put him out for many months



Alonso's presence stalks him at the Prancing Horse

◀ “There was agreement in France, where the FIA did many other tests. The only thing that might have happened with something like that, and I’m not saying it has, is that it may make a driver a little more conservative. But watching Felipe drive last season, I don’t think that’s an issue.”

Formula 1’s most experienced medic these past three decades and more is prominent neurosurgeon Professor Sid Watkins, who has only recently retired from his role as president of the FIA Institute.

“Stirling Moss, the greatest driver of his generation in my book, came back too early,” states Watkins. “In my experience if you’ve got a significant head injury it takes you up to two years to really recover. But you do recover, so long as you haven’t lost too much.”

“Stirling tried to come back only a few months after his nasty accident at Goodwood and it was far too early. And his standards were so high. He was just a few hundredths from the correct numbers but decided to quit.”

“I always said to him, ‘You shouldn’t have given up, you should have waited a bit longer.’ Felipe’s accident was in July 2009. I should think he’ll be in top form in 2012!”

“I always thought he’d be a world champion actually. He’s a lovely boy. When he was on the way up, before he became well known and got into F1, he used to offer to be a driver for one of the medical rescue crews in Brazil.”

“It’s not a very pleasant day in the countryside, that. You go on station about 7am, you come off at 6pm and in the meantime

you’re out in the bush, hopefully doing effort all! And every year he’d come to me and say, ‘Professor, can I be one of your medical car drivers?’ He was an absolute sweetheart.

“I always said, ‘OK Felipe, we’ll put you on the medical team.’ Then after he’d come to F1 I was staying in the same hotel in Belgium and I said, ‘One day I think you’re going to be world champion.’ He said he hoped so. And he only just missed it.

“It’s all about being in the right place at the right time. Even Ayrton Senna took a while to get himself into the right car. It’s funny actually. When he got into Lotus, Peter Warr rang me up and said we’re not sure we ought to sign him because, you know, he’s got this facial paralysis and he can’t shut his right eye.

“I said I wouldn’t worry about giving him a contract on that basis. I’d only worry if he couldn’t open it!”

Watkins has seen just about every serious accident and recovery in recent and not-so-recent F1 history, and cites the case of 1970s hero Vittorio Brambilla.

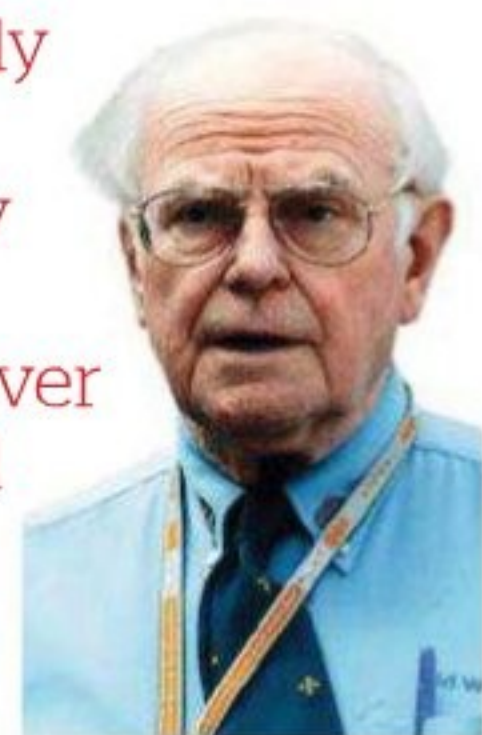
Brambilla was hit on the head by a flying wheel in the startline shunt that claimed the life of Ronnie Peterson in the ’78 Italian Grand Prix, and returned exactly a year later.

“He was unconscious and half-paralysed but recovered very well,” Watkins says. “Actually when I went to Monza subsequently they told me that Vittorio was going to drive me [in the medical car]. I said well, I want to do a few laps first while I make some observations!”

“He used to thump me on the back of the

“Felipe’s a lovely boy. When he was on the way up, he used to offer to be a driver for the medical rescue crews”

**Professor Sid Watkins**



neck and say, ‘I’m the gorilla of Monza!’ Going through the Ascari he never looked at the track, only at me, saying, ‘OK Prof?’ with the Alfa flat-out and vibrating like hell. He was a wonderful driver actually, Vittorio, but a bit reckless... He spun me more times in the wet than anyone else. But a lovely chap and he recovered well.”

In Massa’s case, does Watkins believe that Alonso’s arrival at Ferrari has done more damage to his head than Barrichello’s spring?

“Oh yes, absolutely,” he chuckles. “Driving for Ferrari could be enough to scramble your frontal lobes!”

Joking apart, there is something in this. It’s one thing being a Ferrari driver, quite another to be the team’s main man. Massa was never going to be that when he shared the Scuderia with Michael Schumacher. But by the time he had his accident, it’s a status he had achieved,



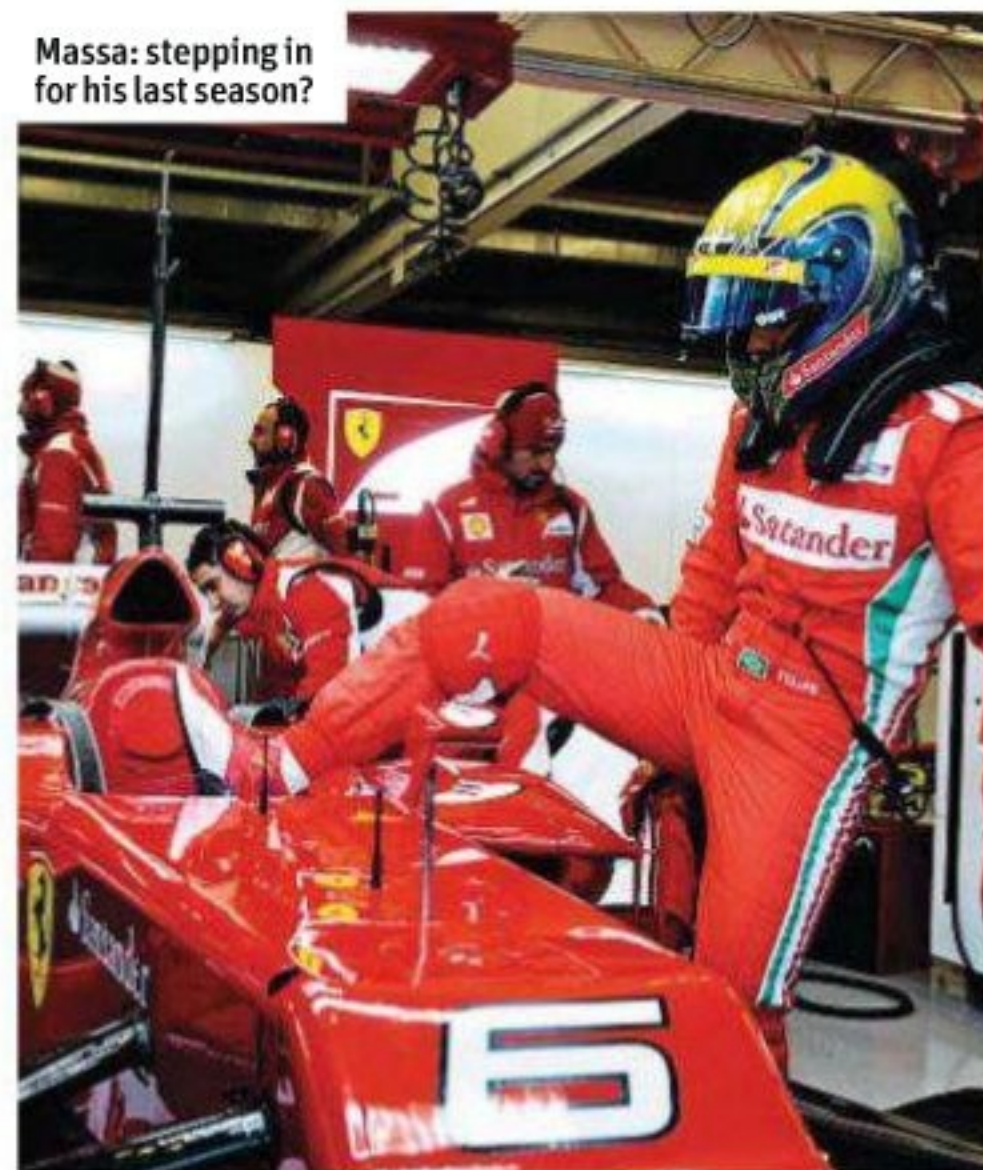


Travails continued at Indian GP last year

Interlagos '08: his finest hour



Massa: stepping in for his last season?



against what many viewed as long odds.

Kimi Raikkonen was supposed to be the new Schumacher but Massa handled him. Raikkonen did win the world title in 2007, but it was nip and tuck between the pair of them for speed, which surprised many.

There was little in it during that first season: at races where a direct comparison was possible, Massa outqualified Raikkonen eight-seven and was, on average, just under a tenth quicker. In 2008 the margin doubled, and Massa led their personal qualifying duel eight-five as well as taking the title fight with McLaren's Lewis Hamilton down to the last corner of the last lap of the last race.

It was this that started Ferrari wondering about Raikkonen, who they were paying a fortune. The decision to dispense with the Finn early was cemented by Massa getting the better of him again up until the accident in 2009, which was a poor season for Ferrari.

Massa displays the characteristics of a competitor who performs better in an environment in which he is loved and encouraged. Nowhere does that manifest itself better than in his relationship with Rob Smedley, his race engineer since 2006.

Probably nothing typifies it better than when Massa arrived, laughing, at the 2008 Monaco pole position press conference, having pipped Raikkonen by three hundredths.

Asked what was funny, he explained that Smedley had told him he could brake way later for Ste Devote without a trip down the escape road. Massa hadn't been convinced but tried it

all the same. Pole, and a fair bit of 'I-told-you-so' ribbing was the result!

"I like him because we're similar," Smedley says. "He's dead easy to work with."

The close ending to that 2008 season had not, in fact, been a bodyblow, but rather a positive, because they'd gone to the Interlagos finale expecting not to win.

"We'd done the perfect weekend, in wet and dry," Smedley says. "Felipe put McLaren under so much pressure that they made mistakes and it nearly came off for us. Was it sad? No, not really, it was brilliant."

The magnanimity with which Massa accepted the near miss, and his grace towards Hamilton, won him many friends. His stature grew. At the time of the accident in Hungary, Ferrari, collectively and emotionally, was Felipe's team.

When he returned, perhaps a little insecure about his physical condition, he found that Ferrari had fallen in love anew. Alonso had arrived, had his feet well under the table and would prove a formidable adversary.

If there's a parallel, it's Niki Lauda returning from his Nurburgring injuries in 1976 to find that Enzo Ferrari had lost faith and the team was pinning its hopes on Carlos Reutemann. The difference was that Lauda had a far stronger, bloody-minded force of personality than Massa – and Reutemann was doubtless far easier to subdue than Alonso!

In the midst of struggling with all of that came Hockenheim 2010 and the 'move over' message: "Fernando is faster than you. Can

you confirm that you understand..."

While nobody can realistically argue with Ferrari prioritising Alonso's championship challenge in those circumstances, it was a knife in the heart for Massa.

He'd led the faster Alonso in Australia earlier in the year but had not been told to cede. Alonso had been unhappy about that and spelled out exactly what was needed if he was to mount a championship challenge. The problem was, nobody told Massa before the problem arose.

Psychologically, it was a big blow and, evidently, one from which he has not really recovered. It was compounded by the fact that Massa, more than Alonso, struggled with warm-up of the Pirelli tyres with last year's chassis. With a change of philosophy on the F2012 that problem, at least, should go away. But Alonso won't.

The stats versus Alonso look very different from the comparison with Raikkonen. In 2010, in 15 direct comparisons Alonso outqualified Massa 12-3 and was an average 0.27s quicker. Last year those figures were 15-2 and 0.42s. That's a chasm.

"If we have a good car then I know I can fight for the title, as I have already done in the past," Massa says. "Since 2008, nothing has changed: after my accident, I am still the same."

But he knows that if he is to turn his Ferrari fortunes around and prolong his tenure of one of the red cars, the first half of the new season is crucial. After that, it may be too late. ❧



# PUSHING ALL THE RIGHT THE BUTTONS



Renault Sport needed a guinea pig to test its new DRS-equipped FR3.5 machine. Who better than 2011 McLaren AUTOSPORT BRDC Award winner Oliver Rowland? *PETER MILLS* was there to watch him



PICS: ALVARO VILLA EMPERADOR



**R**enault's third-generation Formula Renault 3.5 car is big news for 2012. The Dallara-built T12 chassis features a Formula 1-style Drag Reduction System – a first at this level.

And the first 'outsider' to give the new machine a thorough workout? Oliver Rowland, runner-up in last year's Formula Renault UK title fight and the recipient of the 2011 McLaren AUTOSPORT BRDC Award. Although accustomed to machinery 17-seconds per lap slower, Rowland got his chance at a sub-zero Motorland Aragon last month. His assignment: to heat up some Michelins and become the first non-Renault Sport driver to activate

the car's much-vaunted DRS.

Renault Sport development driver and former F2 champion Andy Soucek is on hand to guide him, having already put the car through its paces with GP2 champion Romain Grosjean and former FR3.5 race winner Ben Hanley. The early verdict was that, although the T12's increased speed moves it closer to GP2 lap times, it won't fundamentally alter the FR3.5 series' position on the single-seater ladder.

Competing in this year's Formula Renault 2.0 Eurocup, Rowland is well-placed to evaluate whether the dramatic increase in performance offered by the T12 could pose problems for drivers graduating directly from two-litre Formula Renaults. Those

choosing to make the ambitious leap will have to master 530bhp provided by Zytek Motorsport's V8, an increase of 50bhp over the outgoing Nissan-derived V6 – and in a car 15kg lighter than its predecessor. Will the jump from the 210bhp world of FR2.0 continue to be feasible?

The temperature greeting us in Aragon for our February test is -3C. Soucek notes that it's the coldest it's been all week, and raises concern over tyre temperatures. The strength of the wind is also savage, blowing a giant wave along the fabric that covers the base of the pitstraight grandstand.

Renault Sport's chief engineer Benoit Dupont gives Rowland a quick briefing before the first of his two short runs. Dupont's preliminary task is to explain the multi-function steering wheel. Three throttle-map settings are available. Pedal setting one is a rain mode, used by Ben Hanley when developing wet tyres. On advice from Renault Sport, it will be Rowland's starting point. Setting two is favoured by new Lotus F1 recruit Grosjean, and allows for progressive power over the first 30 per cent of throttle travel. Soucek's choice, setting three, is aggressive and offers instant engine

**“It's unbelievable compared with the 2.0, and the aero balance in fast corners was good”**

**Oliver Rowland**

torque. Drivers can also choose from a six-position launch limiter dial, to control rpm at standing starts. The function is not a full launch control but can be used to moderate traction.

Central to our test is the DRS, activated by a black button on the left of the steering wheel. The drivers are under strict guidelines to only use it in a straight line. Soucek talks Rowland through the DRS process: “Once you are flat out the colour dash display will be green. When you press the DRS button it will go blue, and once you release the button the gurney will come back to ▶



Dallara T12: faster and louder than old car



Rowland listens to the Renault Sport briefing



CV

**OLIVER ROWLAND****Born** August 10, 1992**2012** Formula Renault 2.0 Eurocup with Fortec Motorsport**2011** 2nd, Formula Renault 2.0 UK with 4 wins; 1st, Formula Renault UK Finals Series, with 4 wins**2010** 7th, Michelin Formula Renault Winter Cup with 1 win**2000-2010** Karting (1st, 2010 CIK-FIA World Cup – Super KF & KF1; 1st, 2008 CIK-FIA World Cup KF2)

◀ normal. If you forget to release the DRS button when you brake, don't worry, it will automatically go back to normal, so it has a safe mode."

Rowland listens intently and is inquisitive on how hard to apply the carbon brakes, prompting Soucek to expand on his driving approach.

"I hit hard in the beginning, but I am not the most aggressive driver under braking," Soucek reveals. "In this car you have to use the aerodynamics and grip and let the car roll in the corners. So it's not like a GP2 car, where you have to attack the corners so much. It is more a mix between a GP2 and a Formula 3. It doesn't really oversteer too much when you're braking and turning. It's going to be really interesting to hear your feedback."

Standing on the pitwall with Dupont and Soucek, Rowland howls past us to begin his first flying lap. "If a journo did that I'd be scared," jokes Dupont, before extolling the timbre of the exhaust.

"The last car's exhaust noise was never nice, but we couldn't do much to change it because it affected the performance of the V6. Here, with the Zytek, we can do whatever we want. We tried to reduce the noise, especially for the public as we don't want them getting annoyed."

Although the monocoque is an update of the 2008-2011 car, 70 per cent of the T12 is new. DRS isn't the only intriguing feature of the T12. The groundbreaking electronic control unit called Supercaps leaves the conventional battery and starter redundant, thereby reducing weight.

"The Supercaps system was the most innovative thing to develop," explains Dupont. "In the beginning it was not working, but from the second test we managed to correct it and since then it

has worked perfectly." One of the outgoing car's more demanding areas of reliability for teams to manage was its hydraulic gearbox control. The issue has been addressed by the introduction of a pneumatic system.

On Rowland's flying lap, Soucek alerts us to a change in the pitch of the engine on the 1.1km back straight. "Well, he is using DRS and sixth gear," announces Soucek. "The top speed on that straight is now 288km/h," adds Dupont, "whereas we got around 268 with the old car. But we didn't gain a lot in top speed; it was more in the corners because we have increased downforce by 34 per cent."

Rowland presses on during his in-lap, before wheeling the car safely back to the pits. Stepping out of the wind into the garage, the 19-year-old struggles to conceal his delight. Renault Sport sporting manager Emmanuel Esnault is also an interested party in ascertaining Rowland's views.

"Power-wise compared with Renault 2.0 it's unbelievable, and the aero balance in fast corners was good," beams Rowland. "It was amazing how late you could brake. It doesn't move a lot and if anything it's 'understeery'. I was going to do Turn 3 flat and then I just went, 'Er, hmmm' and had a confidence lift. At the back in Turn 10, though, I was flat on the last lap."

Soucek is impressed. "Ah, you were flat there? That's good."

The strong wind at Aragon serves to enhance the effect of the DRS.

"When you come out of Turn 10 and

you're going up the hill I could feel the DRS's effect was more defined," continues Rowland. "You could tell the throttle map was for the wet, because sometimes when I pushed the throttle I had to wait a little bit and then it would go. Finding the last little bit of lap-time would be difficult, but I am sure if I had 10 laps I think I could be thereabouts."

Rowland recorded a time of 1m48s on one flying lap compared with Soucek's warm-up lap of 1m43s, and was 2.1s faster on his in-lap. The T12 is around 2.5 seconds faster than the outgoing car, approximately 0.5s of that margin coming from improved Michelin tyres. Renault Sport spent a day with Sachs working on damping to achieve a

"Finding the last little bit of laptime would be difficult, but I am sure if I had 10 laps I think I could be thereabouts"

**Oliver Rowland**

Renault 2.0 graduate Rowland loved the T12



Andy Soucek has helped set up the '12 racer





consistent set-up, but did not focus on performance. More is expected once teams begin real development work.

While waiting for a second run, conversation turns to the DRS. Although under exacting instructions to deploy it only on the straights, it soon emerges that Soucek and Grosjean have been using the DRS in fast corners during testing. This practice sounds unnerving given the theory that DRS unbalances the aero suddenly towards the front, increasing the risk of spinning. Indeed, Soucek confesses that the first time he tried DRS in a fast corner he waited until the end of a test.

"You have to play a gamble," says Soucek. "That is what is going to be funny during the year. The first time that I used DRS in a fast corner was at this test. I thought, 'let's give it a try. If I spin, it's another test done.'"

The exact rules regarding DRS activation will be finalised at the Paul Ricard group test in March. It's likely

to be allowed for a restricted amount of time over a race's duration, depending on the length of the straights at a given circuit. Soucek, however, expresses circumspection over its prolonged use.

"If you use DRS in the fast corners, you're using it for 80 or 85 per cent of the lap instead of 70 per cent," offers Soucek. "The problem is the hand gets really tired from using it in fast corners, because you don't engage it from the normal steering position. So you sometimes turn the wheel with only the strength of your right hand. It could also be a bit scary when you are running with used tyres in fast corners. You will have to be careful."

Grid positions are likely to influence the timing of when drivers choose to deploy the DRS. Soucek deliberates on whether the DRS's key purpose is to aid overtaking or bring performance.

"I don't think it's an overtaking button because everybody has it," he says. "On the other hand, it will make the drivers make a few more mistakes and this is what will allow the other drivers to overtake. One of the aims of Renault was to make this car faster than the previous one. They have more aero grip, up 34 per cent, but I believe they have a lot more drag as well. So if they have the DRS it is a way to balance that extra grip with less drag. In summary, there are definitely things that drivers can learn from the use of DRS and, for sure, it will prepare them for F1."

Rowland is now primed for his second run of four laps. He knows that some drivers *do* use DRS in corners, so Esnault and Dupont offer low-key reminders to be circumspect. They need not worry as, despite a bolder display, the car is returned intact.

"I used the DRS almost everywhere," confirms Rowland. "In the last corner and in between two and three, but I didn't dare use it for the next turn..."

"That was wise!" interjects a slightly relieved Dupont. "When you have your own car then you can do that!"

Esnault again probes Rowland: "Does it feel raceable for a guy coming from 2.0?" Is it too much? It is important to know because in 2008 and '09 it was a question mark with the Tatuus FR2.0."

"Definitely," is the immediate response. "If anything, for me, when you brake and turn in it's easier than the FR2.0. You have to correct the FR2.0 a lot. However, I didn't push this to the limit."

So, having gained a taster of the new Renault 3.5 machine, does Rowland envisage the T12 being on his career path?

"Well, I sent Derek Walters from [backers] Racing Steps a message after my first run to say thank you, and I attached a picture of the car with '2013?' on it. Having driven this car, it's where I want to be." ☼

## FRENAULT 3.5 CAR TIMELINE



### DALLARA FORMULA RENAULT 3.5 2005-2007

Engine:	VQ35 type V6 24-valve 3498cc
Max power:	425bhp at 8250rpm
Max torque:	400Nm at 7000rpm
Gearbox:	Six-speed dog 'box, semi-automatic, steering wheel-mounted
Differential:	Self-locking, limited-slip
Front suspension:	Pushrod actuated, compression and rebound adjustable mono shock absorber
Rear suspension:	Pushrod actuated compression- and rebound-adjustable twin-shock absorbers
Brakes:	Four-piston callipers with 270x28mm carbon ventilated discs
Wheelbase:	3025mm
Front and rear track:	1630mm and 1529mm
Weight:	600kg



### DALLARA FORMULA RENAULT 3.5 T08 2008-2011

Engine:	VQ35 type V6 24-valve 3498cc
Max power:	480bhp at 8500rpm
Max torque:	441Nm at 7000rpm
Gearbox:	Six-speed sequential, semi-automatic, steering wheel-mounted
Differential:	Limited-slip, automatic locking
Front suspension:	Pushrod, single vertically-mounted adjustable four-tube shock absorber
Rear suspension:	Pushrod, double adjustable four-tube absorber
Brakes:	Four-piston callipers with 270x28mm carbon ventilated discs
Wheelbase:	3125mm
Front and rear track:	1630mm and 1529mm
Weight:	628kg



### DALLARA FORMULA RENAULT 3.5 T12 2012

Engine:	Zytek Motorsport V8 ZRS03 3396cc
Max power:	530bhp at 9250rpm
Max torque:	445Nm at 7250rpm
Electric power management:	XAP Electronique Supercaps
Gearbox:	Ricardo six-speed sequential with Shifttec pneumatic control
Differential:	Self-locking, limited-slip
Front suspension:	Pushrod, Sachs single-adjustable, two-way spring/damper
Rear suspension:	Pushrod, Sachs twin-adjustable, two-way spring/damper
Brakes:	Brembo six-piston 270x28mm ventilated discs
Wheelbase:	3125mm
Front and rear track:	1630mm and 1529mm
Weight:	610kg



T12 is now powered by Zytek's V8 motor





V8  
preview  
2012

# What's French for *strewth*?

Brought up on European single-seaters, sportscars and tin-tops, Frenchman Alex Premat has upped sticks to Australia to contest the popular V8 Supercar series. He tells *GLENN FREEMAN* why it makes sense



Premat gets up to speed  
in Garry Rogers' Holden...





**A**lexandre Premat's switch to V8 Supercars for 2012 surprised everybody. Australians wondered who on earth he was, while Europeans wondered how on earth he'd landed a full-time drive. This was without even finding his way into one of the seats reserved for international drivers at Surfers Paradise in recent years.

But the Frenchman's deal to race for Garry Rogers Motorsport, which he describes as "a crazy move" does have its roots in the Gold Coast event. At last year's Intercontinental Le Mans Cup finale in China, Premat got talking to his countryman Simon Pagenaud, who was one of the international stars at Surfers last year. Pagenaud had taken a podium finish for GRM, sharing with Lee Holdsworth, and he reckoned that his friend would be well suited to one of the Aussie V8s.

Never a man to let his ego get in the way, Premat contacted GRM through its website expressing an interest in any opportunities that were going. Before the 29-year-old takes up the story, he acknowledges that the move has been met with plenty of surprise.

"It's amazing," he laughs. "I can tell because all the people here keep saying, 'What the fuck? Who is this guy? Why are they taking a French driver?' But I'm really happy to be here."

"After I contacted the team's website, they called me back and we had an appointment on the phone. It went quite well, and they said they would keep in touch. For three or four weeks I was waiting and they were not calling, so I thought it was over."

Just as Premat headed off for a skiing holiday with friends on January 14, the phone rang. Rogers was on the other end, and he wanted the F3, GP2, A1GP and LMP1 race winner to pay him a visit down under. Premat asked if the visit could include a few laps in a car, and a run in a two-seater car designed for passenger rides was arranged. Rogers even drove his visitor back to the airport, and decided he had seen enough.

"We had a really long talk in the car, and he asked me if I was ready to come to Australia with my family," says Premat. "I said we wanted to move over here, and then we went through the processes to make it happen."

It was this commitment to moving over to Australia full-time with his family – he doesn't plan to return to Europe at all until December – that played a key role in proving that he was worth a punt.

"I remember Garry asked me if I really wanted to move here and why," he adds. "I said I wanted to come here with my family,

... and will want to shine in blue-riband Bathurst



## COMPARISONS WITH DTM

There is a common misconception from overseas observers that a V8 Supercar is an ageing piece of kit, which wallows and growls its way around Australia. Given Alexandre Premat's background in the hi-tech world of the DTM and sportscar racing, he could have been forgiven for feeling his Holden Commodore was little more than an overweight grunter. But he's having none of it.

"The car is really good to drive," he says. "It's a very nice racing car. It's a bit different to what I'm used to, because there's no differential so it is more like a big kart with lots of power."

"Compared with the DTM car, it's a little bit softer but not much. There is not much pitch. At slow speed it feels better than a DTM car because it is more agile, so you can be more aggressive on turn-in. At mid-speed the cars are very similar, and then the DTM is faster in high-speed corners because we don't have as much downforce in V8s."

"The brakes, even though they are steel, are very good because they are really big. I was quite impressed by this. And the car is very powerful compared with the , so you need to be very gentle and modulate the throttle."

not just for one year but for many years. And my wife had lived here before because she spent a year studying here when she was 20. So they really believed in me. It was something professional, not something to do for one year then leave again. If I was alone without my two daughters and my wife, I don't know if I would have made the move."

Premat suspects that moving so far from home is what discourages more Europeans from chasing a career in V8s. The difficulty of adapting to the equipment probably plays its part too, as even a tin-top genius like Yvan Muller, now a three-time world champion, made a very slow start before finding the form that took him to a shared victory with Craig Lowndes in the 2005 Sandown 500.

The new boy has only had a brief taste of his new ride for 2012 and, after ending his first official pre-season test at the bottom of the timesheets, he knows that even with four years of experience in DTM he has a lot to learn. But even if the move to Australia is part of a long-term plan, he doesn't want to spend all season learning the ropes.

"I have a long contract, but I don't want to say it will take long to get to the front," he says. "I have a lot of experience so I should get used to the car. When it was wet at Sandown I was quick, but it is more complicated in the dry because all of the ▶



◀ drivers here know everything about the tracks and the cars. It's all the small details, the sorts of things I knew about DTM cars after two or three years.

"My target has to be to learn as quickly as possible. This year: get on the podium, score points, and finish the year in the top 10."

Premat's occasional over-exuberance wins him fans and dissenters in equal measure. And he can't help but let it get the better of him when his expectations transform from low (sensible) to high (borderline outrageous). After setting the sensible objectives above, he points to the fact that in every category he

"My target has to be to learn as quickly as possible. This year: finish in the top 10"

has raced, he's won a race in his first season. While that is not quite true, anyone who saw him obey Audi team orders to hand Martin Tomczyk a DTM victory at Zandvoort in '07 can't dispute that he should have a 100 per cent record. Even so, maintaining that record in V8s is going to be a huge challenge.

Given the explosive nature of Premat's Audi departure at the end of 2010 – he was fired one race before the end of the DTM season for running the New York Marathon against Audi's wishes shortly after a massive accident – it's impossible not to mention the four-ringed marque. With a new career mapped out, how does he reflect on his failure to fit the 'Vorsprung durch Technik' mould?

"It's a hard question," he begins, having earlier expressed that one of his favourite things about Australian racing is "no politics!"

"With Audi, we were in conflict about things. I don't want to say I'm happy with how it ended, DTM is unfinished business for me and I wanted to get back there with BMW. But I am happy with where I am now and maybe that would not have happened if I was still with Audi. My life would be completely different."

The over-the-top side of Premat that so often landed him in hot water should be better suited to V8 Supercars than it was the heavily controlled environment of the Audi set-up. He can't help but speak his mind, something that did not go down well with the Germans but should endear him to Australian fans, who are gradually starting to learn a bit more about him. ☺

V8s support Aussie GP weekend in Melbourne



## THE ONES TO WATCH

### 1 Jamie Whincup (Triple 8 Holden)

2008/'09/'11 champion – poles: 30; wins: 53



### 2 Garth Tander (HRT Holden)

2007 champion – poles: 21; wins: 42



### 4 Lee Holdsworth (Stone Bros Ford)

Poles: 4; wins: 2



### 5 Mark Winterbottom (FPR Ford)

Poles: 23; wins: 19



### 6 Will Davison (FPR Ford)

Poles: 7; wins: 7



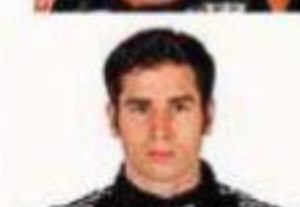
### 9 Shane van Gisbergen (SBR Ford)

Poles: 0; wins: 3



### 15 Rick Kelly (Kelly Racing Holden)

2006 champion – poles: 6; wins: 9



### 22 James Courtney (HRT Holden)

2010 champion – poles: 3; wins: 9



### 47 Tim Slade (Stone Bros Ford\*)

Poles: 0; wins: 0



### 888 Craig Lowndes (Triple 8 Holden)

Poles: 7; wins: 25



\*SATELLITE TEAM

## PAST FIVE CHAMPIONS

2011	Jamie Whincup (Holden)
2010	James Courtney (Ford)
2009	Jamie Whincup (Ford)
2008	Jamie Whincup (Ford)
2007	Garth Tander (Holden)

## WHERE TO WATCH ON TV

Motors TV has been covering V8s for over a decade now, and that will continue in 2012. The highlight of the season, on track and TV, is live coverage of the epic Bathurst 1000 in October. Expect decent highlights packages from the rest of the events.

## V8 2012 CALENDAR

March 4	Adelaide
March 18	Melbourne*
April 1	Symmons Plains
April 22	Hamilton
May 6	Barbagallo
May 20	Phillip Island
June 17	Hidden Valley
July 8	Townsville
August 5	Queensland
August 26	Winton
September 16	Sandown 500
October 7	Bathurst 1000
October 21	Surfers Paradise
November 4	Abu Dhabi
November 11	TBA
December 2	Homebush

\*Non-championship





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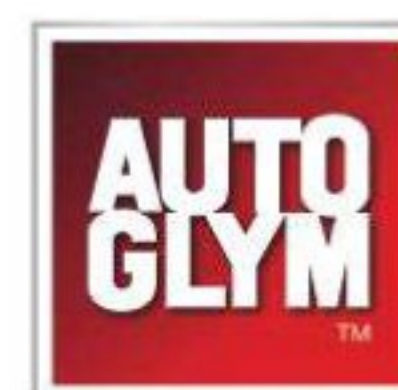
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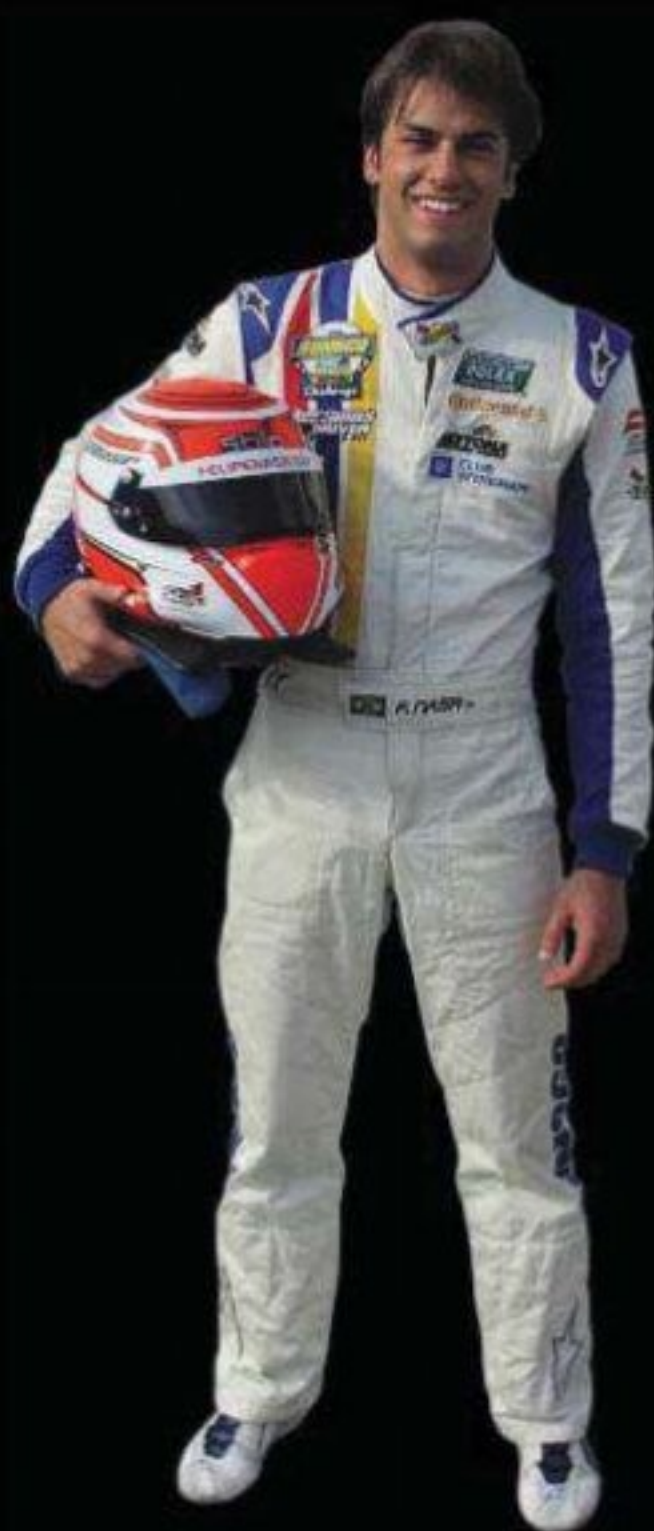
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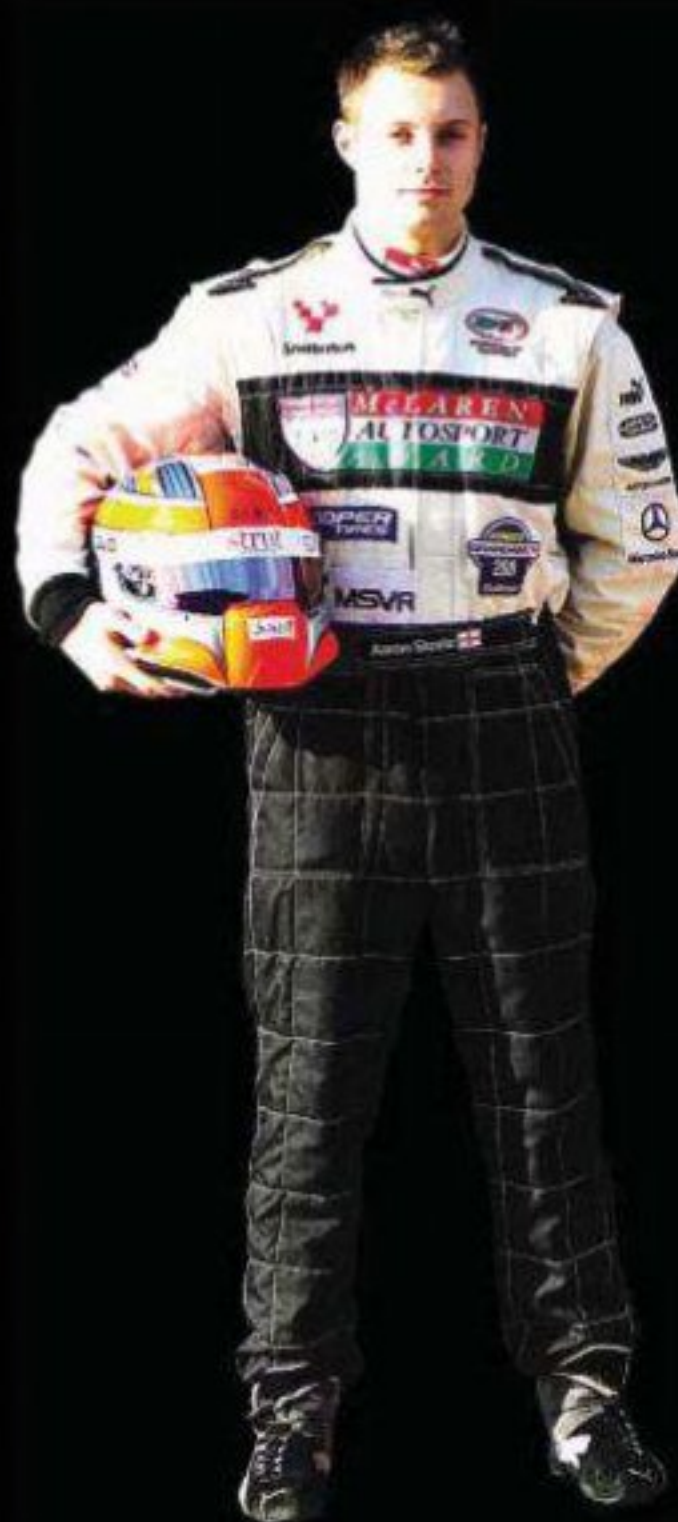
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Endurance  
CHAMPIONSHIP

**SPEED**  
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## INTERNATIONAL RACES & RESULTS

### NASCAR NATIONWIDE

Daytona (USA), Rd 1/33

## QUICK RESULTS

- Winner **James Buescher**
- Pole **Danica Patrick**
- Most laps led **Kurt Busch**
- Points leader **Elliott Sadler**

## RACE RATING

★★★★☆

Chaotic end ruins potentially thrilling finish

## REPORT WORLD OF SPORT



NASCAR NATIONWIDE SERIES DAYTONA (USA), FEBRUARY 25, RD 1/33

# Last man standing takes Daytona win

Buescher (30) avoided last-lap pile-up ahead

## ENTERING THE FINAL

corner of the last lap of the Nationwide Series season opener at Daytona, James Buescher was running 11th. Without a tandem drafting partner, the best he could hope for was to hold station and bring his Turner Motorsports Chevy home.

Then a miracle of near-biblical proportions happened – but it wasn't the Red Sea that opened in front of him; it was a path to victory. The Busch brothers led, but were under pressure from the two-car pairings of Tony Stewart and Elliott Sadler, and Joey Logano and Trevor Bayne.

Kurt Busch went up the track to block Logano's Joe Gibbs Racing Toyota, but the Phoenix Chevy driver

only succeeded in taking out most of those following.

"I saw them get together and I went to the bottom and kept my foot in," said Buescher, 21, of his maiden Nationwide win. "I dodged all the bullets. It's awesome!"

With cars everywhere, drivers dashed to haul their wrecks over the line, Penske Dodge man Keselowski keeping up his pace to take second from Sadler's Childress Chevy.

Cole Whitt took fourth. This capped an eventful race, in which he tapped his polesitting JR Motorsports Chevy team-mate Danica Patrick into a spin that effectively ended her race. With a push from Dale Earnhardt Jr, Patrick led the first lap, and the pair ran

close to the front until she got high through Turn 1 and was forced to lift. She was less comfortable in the pack, but was fuming with Whitt after his tap sent her spinning into the outside wall. "What the 'bleep' was he thinking?" was the message the radio played.

Reigning Truck champion Austin Dillon was among the frontrunners and clung on to take fifth. By contrast next man home Tayler Malsam never featured at the front, yet picked his way through the mayhem for an unexpected sixth.

The last-lap incident was the second 'big one' of the day. The first involved 20 cars and caused a temporary red flag as a piece of debris was removed

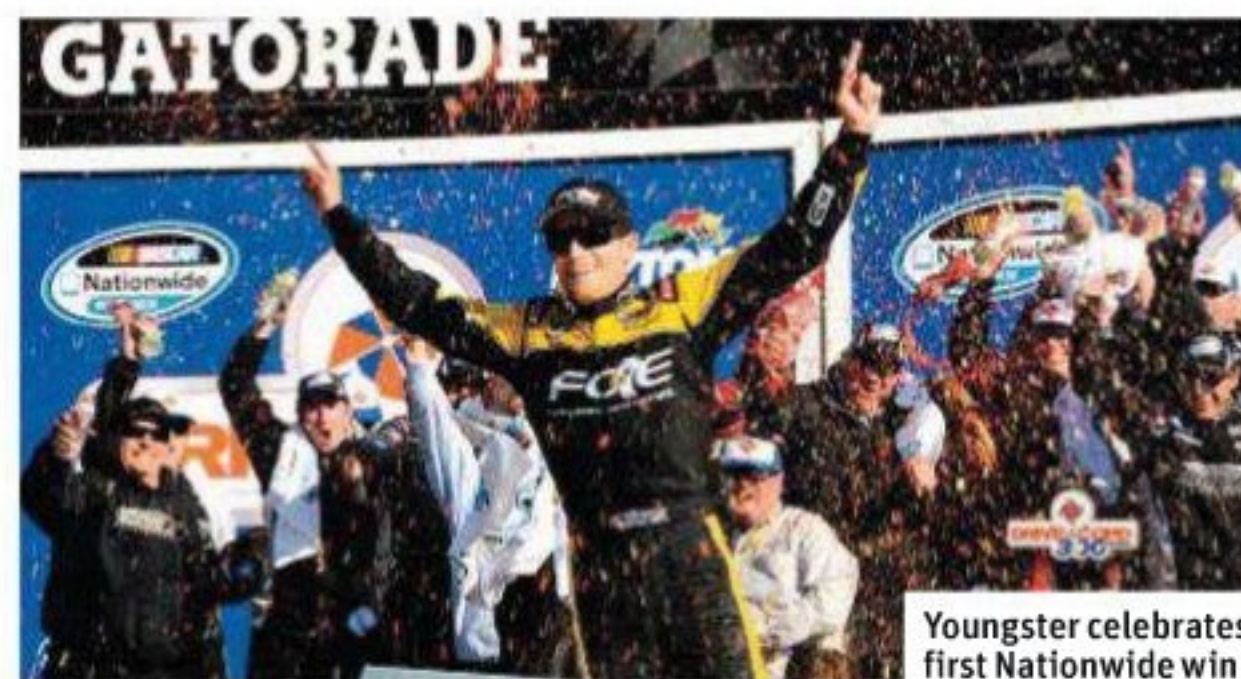
from the SAFER barrier. It also ended the hopes of Denny Hamlin and rookie Michael Annett, who'd driven well to that point.

● Andrew van de Burgt

## RESULTS

**1 James Buescher (Chevrolet Impala)**, 120 laps in 2h18m51s; 2 Brad Keselowski (Dodge Challenger); 3 Elliott Sadler

(Chevy); 4 Cole Whitt (Chevy); 5 Austin Dillon (Chevy); 6 Tayler Malsam (Toyota Camry); 7 Timmy Hill (Ford Mustang); 8 Tony Stewart (Chevy); 9 Kasey Kahne (Chevy); 10 Kurt Busch (Chevy). **Points** 1 Sadler, 42; 2 Whitt, 40; 3 Dillon, 39; 4 Malsam, 38; 5 Trevor Bayne, 34; 6 Benny Gordon, 32; 7 Danny Efland, 31; 8 Blake Koch, 27; 9 Ricky Stenhouse Jr, 25; 10 Sam Hornish Jr, 25.



Youngster celebrates first Nationwide win

**Castrol EDGE**  
Rankings

CURRENT  
STANDINGS

- |   |                         |   |        |
|---|-------------------------|---|--------|
| 1 | <b>Sebastian Vettel</b> | ◇ | 31,442 |
| 2 | <b>Mark Webber</b>      | ◇ | 21,777 |
| 3 | <b>Jenson Button</b>    | ◇ | 19,745 |
| 4 | <b>Lewis Hamilton</b>   | ◇ | 19,305 |
| 5 | <b>Fernando Alonso</b>  | ◇ | 18,663 |

## Ranking the world's best drivers

### WHAT HAPPENED THIS WEEK

James Buescher's Nationwide win vaults him 28 spots to 587th. But the big mover further up is Andreas Mikkelsen (58), climbing 22 places after his Rally Azores win. Stephane Sarrazin (45) drops 11 after losing his Monte Carlo Rally points from 2011 this week.

To see the full list, visit [castrolriverrankings.com](http://castrolriverrankings.com)





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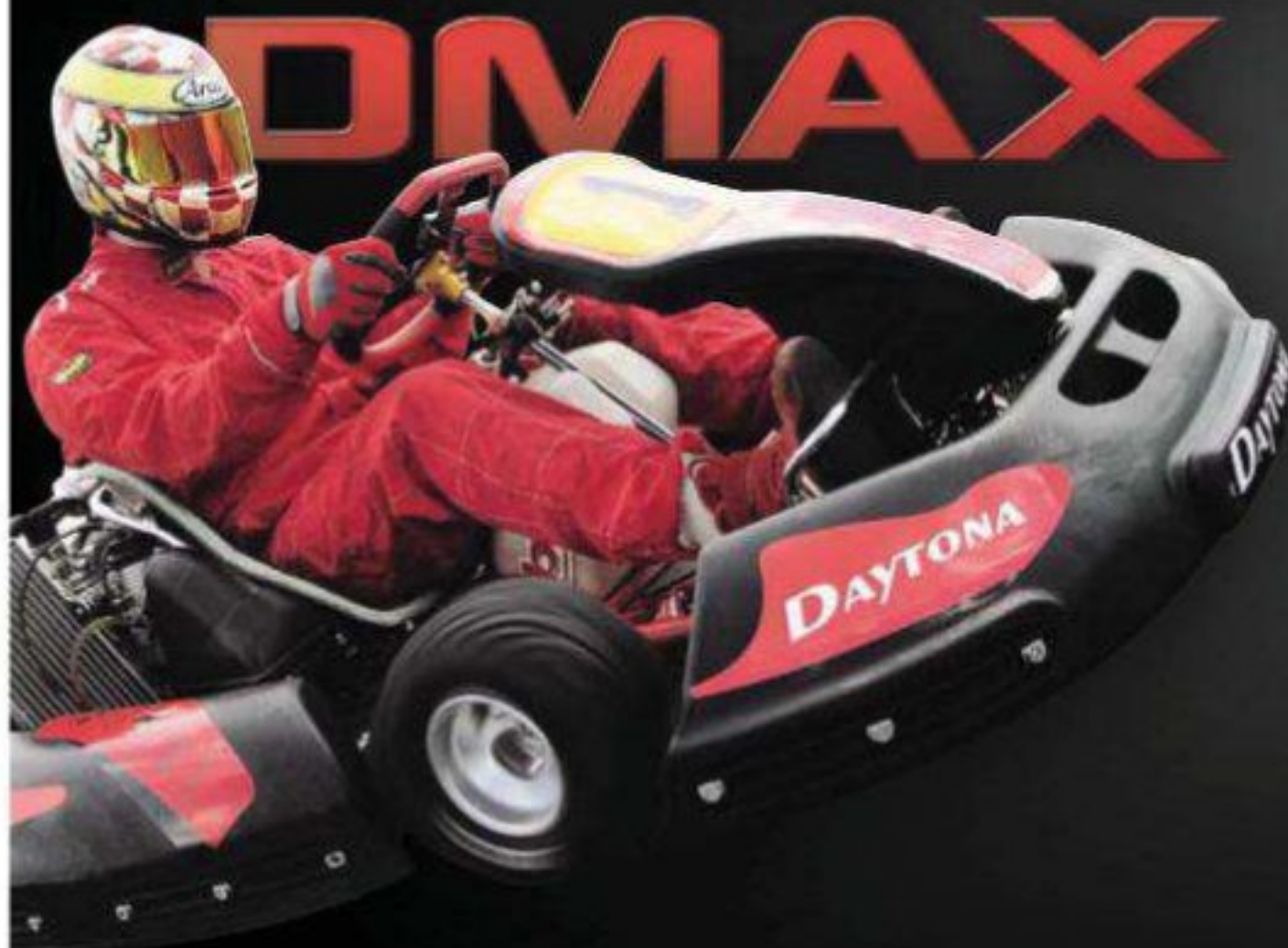
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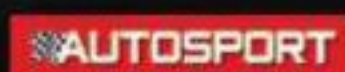
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1	19th February	Daytona Milton Keynes	International
2	18th March	Wilton Mill, Northants	International
3	15th April	Daytona Sandown Park	Grand Prix
4	20th May	Lydd, Kent	Clubman
5	17th June	Wilton Mill, Northants	National Circuit
6	8th July	Daytona Milton Keynes	International Extra
7	19th August	PF International, Lincs	Extended Circuit
8	16th September	Daytona Milton Keynes	International
9	21st October	Rye House, Herts	Raceway Circuit
10	18th November	Daytona Sandown Park	Alternate

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## INTERNATIONAL EVENTS & RESULTS

IRC  
Rally Azores (P),  
Rd 1/13

## QUICK RESULTS

→ Winners **Mikkelsen/Floene**  
→ Production Cup **Moura/Eiro**  
→ 2WD **Maciel/Gouveia**  
→ Points leader **Mikkelsen**

## RACE RATING

★★★★☆

Same protagonists as last year, but a different winner this time round

## REPORTS WORLD OF SPORT

INTERCONTINENTAL RALLY CHALLENGE RALLY AZORES (P) FEBRUARY 23-25, RD 1/13

# Mikkelsen's perfect start to title defence

**SKODA UK DRIVER** Andreas Mikkelsen proved just what a difference a year and a championship win makes, by dominating Rally Azores to defeat the factory Fabia of Juho Hanninen – which had forced him into second place in 2011.

Mikkelsen, 23, also becomes the first driver to win three IRC events in a row, following his victories in Scotland and Cyprus at the end of last season.

"It definitely made a difference to come here as champion," he said. "I feel a bit more confident and there's not so much of a need to prove myself."

Hanninen ended the first day just 1.4 seconds adrift of Mikkelsen, but a spin on the slippery gravel of a wet second morning cost him 12s and he was never able to get back into contention.

"Looking back, it would be easy to say that this was the turning point, but that doesn't tell the whole story," said the Finn. "Andreas drove fantastically and he deserves this win."

The two latest-specification Skodas ended up more than 90s ahead of Bryan Bouffier, who finished a lonely third for Peugeot after the similar car of former event winner Bruno Magalhaes crashed out on the second morning while battling for a podium.

Behind them, there was a fierce battle for supremacy between two young German Skoda drivers, both of whom have been linked with a factory Volkswagen drive in the future: Sepp Wiegand and Hermann Gassner Jr. Although Gassner held the upper hand until the final day, a



Mikkelsen was flying high all weekend

stall and a puncture settled the score in favour of Wiegand, who made good use of his soft-compound tyres in the cool and soft conditions of Saturday to seal fourth. With the top five reversed in running order on the last two days, Wiegand was forced to run first on the road for the majority of the event – only his second gravel rally.

The key retirements included Oleksiy Tamrazov,

who crashed his Ford Fiesta S2000 on day two, and Romanian Subaru driver Marco Tempestini.

Production honours went to Azores hero Ricardo Moura – for the third year in a row – while another local, Paulo Maciel, claimed the two-wheel-drive win, after Britain's Harry Hunt damaged a radiator in an accident and retired from the class lead.

● Anthony Peacock

## RESULTS

**1 Andreas Mikkelsen/Ola Floene (Skoda Fabia S2000),**

2h12m43.2s; 2 Juho Hanninen/Mikko Markkula (Skoda), +25.1s; 3 Bryan Bouffier/Xavier Panseri (Peugeot 207 S2000); 4 Sepp Wiegand/Timo Gottschalk (Skoda); 5 Hermann Gassner Jr/Klaus Wicha (Skoda); 6 Ricardo Moura/Sancho Eiro (Mitsubishi Lancer Evo IX).

**Points** 1 Mikkelsen, 25; 2 Hanninen, 18; 3 Bouffier, 15; 4 Wiegand, 12; 5 Gassner, 10; 6 Moura, 8.

BRITISH RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP RALLY SUNSEEKER (GB), FEBRUARY 25, RD 1/6

# Donnelly bags maiden win on BRC's new dawn

**AFTER THE SUN** came the champagne for Renault driver Mark Donnelly on Rallye Sunseeker, the opening British Rally Championship event of the 2012 season.

The Northern Irishman emerged from a nail-biting battle with highly-rated Finn Jarkko Nikara to take his first

BRC win. The Bournemouth event staged a great fight between the two pace-setting R3 crews on what was also the BRC's new, two-wheel-drive, dawn.

Donnelly was quickest on the opener, taking 1.1 seconds out of Nikara, but the former Pirelli Star Driver hit back on the next two to

hold a 3.3s advantage when the crews arrived in service for the first time, saying he needed time to bed himself in to his new mount.

A big charge from Donnelly through Somerley brought his Clio to within 0.6s of the DS3 and a stage later he was ahead again. With three to go the pair were tied on time. As the south coast rally fans basked in the sunshine, a breath-taking battle was brewing.

Nikara moved ahead again, but then disaster struck for the Asquith team as the DS3 was ruled out with an engine problem.

After trading tenths in the morning, Donnelly was left to defend over a minute's lead until the finish.

"It's disappointing Jarkko had to retire," said Donnelly. "We would like to have won

on pace. But it's fantastic to have won a BRC round."

A spirited run – and a first BRC stage win – lifted Desi Henry's Citroen to second, with Elfyn Evans overcoming a significant power disadvantage over the R3 cars to take a staggering third in his Fiesta R2.

Osian Pryce, Peter Taylor and Jussi Kumpumaki rounded out the top six.

● David Evans

## RESULTS

**1 Mark Donnelly/Dai Roberts**

(Renault Clio R3), 1h07m06.0s; 2 Desi Henry/Niall Burns (Citroen DS3 R3); 3 Elfyn Evans/Andrew Edwards (Ford Fiesta R2); 4 Osian Pryce/Iestyn Williams (Citroen); 5 Peter Taylor/Andrew Roughead (Renault); 6 Jussi Kumpumaki/Jani Salo (Ford).

**Points** 1 Donnelly, 20; 2 Henry, 18; 3 Evans, 16; 4 Pryce, 15; 5 Taylor, 14; 6 Kumpumaki, 13.



Donnelly splashed to victory

## IN BRIEF

### BATHURST 12 HOURS

Audi made it back-to-back wins with Darryl O'Young, Christer Jons and Christopher Mies in their Phoenix R8 LMS GT3 finishing a minute clear of the Erebus Mercedes of Peter Hackett, Tim Slade and Jeroen Bleekemolen in a race affected by rain and fog.

### NASCAR TRUCKS

John King (Red Horse Toyota) broke his series duck after three green-white chequers at Daytona. The Turner Chevrolets of Miguel Paludo, Nelson Piquet and James Buescher dominated the race, but all fell by the wayside in various incidents.



King was a happy man



# Huff v Muller part three

Britain's top WTCC man might be gunning for that pesky Frenchman, but Chevy colleagues are good pals off-track, he tells *PETER MILLS*



Huff and Muller doing battle, here at Porto in 2011

**T**he short daylight hours of winter are known to induce various behavioural changes, mostly of a sedative nature. But anyone attributing the Chevrolet World Touring Car team's outward lack of activity over the close season to a bout of seasonal lethargy, or an indication that the RML-run team has been resting on its laurels after two straight titles, need think again.

"We've had a fair amount of time off, out of the car, since the last race at Macau," confirms the team's 2011 championship runner-up Rob Huff. "We've not done nearly as much testing as we did last year. The car is very much the same. We've got a slightly different suspension set-up, and we've made small changes to the

engine, because obviously we're only allowed one for the season. So it has been mainly revisiting changes on the car that we've done before – but we're very happy with where we are."

After narrowly missing out to Chevy team-mate Yvan Muller in a gripping title fight last year, Huff cannot be accused of idleness in his preparations for the forthcoming season, which kicks off Sunday week at Monza, on March 11. Aside from joining nemesis Muller at Valencia last month to complete a successful 500 miles of running, the Briton's protracted spell away from the steering wheel has been used to focus on his objectives.

Entering his eighth WTCC season in an RML Chevy, Huff can concentrate on the details, he hopes, that will allow him to deliver that elusive drivers'

**"For 1.6 turbocharged saloon cars to be welcomed to race in America, on such a circuit, is a great breakthrough"**

**'Huffy' is excited about Sears Point trip**

crown. To do so, the 32-year-old will have to contend with more than just returning favourite Muller. An influx of manufacturers into this year's series has rejuvenated the grid, and swollen the ranks of British drivers to six.

Contrary to expectations, Huff and Muller have not been ensconced in silos for the past three months, scheming of ways to outwit one another. For a start, Huff does not possess the character to allow simmering enmity to build towards a rival, even if triple WTCC champion Muller is forming an





'Don't forget the Battle of Agincourt, mate'

infuriating habit of denying him the title. The kinship between the pair is almost a surprise considering their hardened scrap of 2011.

"Contrary to popular belief we do get on really well," says Huff. "We remain in regular contact, and are always trying to come up with new ideas. Yvan and I are very similar characters in what we love doing in life, not only at the races, at our jobs, but away from it as well. We've been trying to look at new ideas for what we can do with Chevrolet and RML, and we've got a couple of little things in the pipeline that may pop up."

Those thinking caps may prove beneficial, given the welcome arrival in the WTCC of Arena Motorsport with a pair of Ford Focuses. Ford's commitment to the championship has provided an uplift for passionate series promoter Marcello Lotti. To date, Arena and RML have not tested their WTCC machinery together. Despite the potential of the newcomers to become a thorn in RML's side, Huff is keen to see Ford competitive from the off – and not only for the health of the series.

"The last thing we want is manufacturers coming in and struggling," explains Huff. "I keep reading that they've done lots of testing, which is good, so hopefully they're going to put up a good fight for us. I think everyone is very excited to see where they're going to be at Monza. Everyone wants equality, so the best and most consistent driver in the championship wins."

Increased factory interest in the WTCC is exemplified by Honda's planned return to the series, expected towards the end of this year, before a full campaign is staged with partner JAS in 2013. SEAT has taken the building of the Lukoil SUNRED Leon engines in-house, in an attempt to reel in the dominant Cruze.

The FIA Touring Car Commission has set base weights for Chevrolet and BMW at 1160kg but, as the championship-winning car, the Cruze has been deemed eligible for 40kg of success ballast at Monza's first race. The subject of weight and equivalency is one that Huff has to be coaxed into discussing, but he confirms a preference for all the teams to start on an equal footing.

Although Arena, and the established BMW and SEAT teams, could challenge for honours, Huff's opposition for the drivers' crown appears likely to come from within the RML camp. The operation is characterised by its stability; Huff's car crew has remained unchanged for the past two years. Indeed, engineer Duncan Laycock's working relationship with Huff dates to the pair's spell in



Huff has won 18 races in his seven-year WTCC career

the British Touring Car Championship with SEAT in 2004.

Reassuringly, RML's recent upheavals and withdrawal from the BTCC are not expected to rock its WTCC operation, the two having been run as separate entities. The most noteworthy change among RML's technical personnel is on Alain Menu's side of the garage. The Swiss, seeking to re-establish himself after finishing a relatively distant third last year, will have a new race engineer in the form of the experienced Phil Barker.

The dynamic element of this year's WTCC extends to the calendar, if not all the driver line-ups. Three new circuits will host rounds this season: the Slovakia Ring, Salzburgring and Sears Point. The significance of the US race in California is not lost on Huff.

"Obviously, as Chevrolet is massively supported by the American market, it's great for us," says Huff. "But more than that, for 1.6 turbocharged saloon cars to be welcomed to race in America, on such a circuit, is a great breakthrough for not only the championship but – possibly – for the future of road cars in America as well. With the economy the way it is, everyone is looking for ways of cheaper motor cars. I think they'll be surprised, and I hope they wonder why touring cars as we know them in Europe and the UK haven't been out there before."

No one is anticipating the American market to engage with the series overnight. But if Huff and Muller's duel continues to be as entertaining as in 2011, who knows? The honourable conduct of the duo is perhaps an under-appreciated contribution to the enduring nature of their partnership.

"I think that is definitely one of the reasons we are both still here again this year," agrees Huff. "At no point last year did it get really bitter between us. I don't know many team-mates who have been through what we've been through over the past 24 months, and have come out at the end of it still being good mates."

The 2012 WTCC season kicks off at Monza, the scene of wild, on-track fighting between the Chevy trio in 2011. If RML has indeed got its pre-season sums right, it's easy to envisage plenty more occasions when Huff's and Muller's hitherto-successful relationship will be put to the test. 🏁



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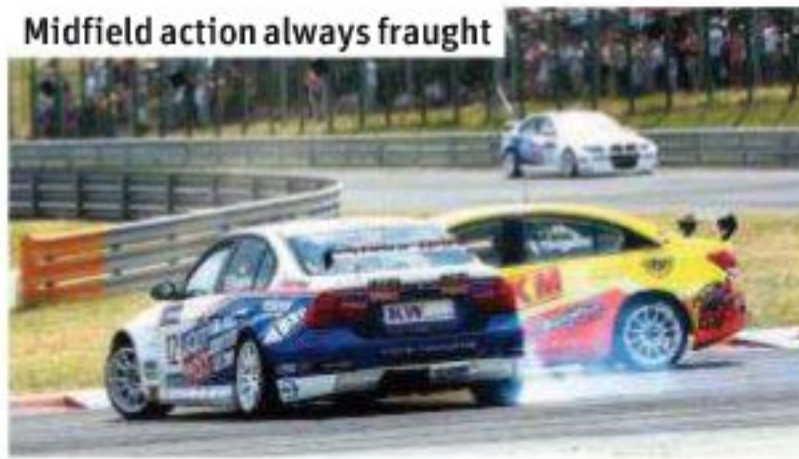
## PAST FIVE CHAMPIONS

<b>2011</b>	Yvan Muller Chevrolet Cruze
<b>2010</b>	Yvan Muller Chevrolet Cruze
<b>2009</b>	Gabriele Tarquini SEAT Leon TDI
<b>2008</b>	Yvan Muller SEAT Leon TDI
<b>2007</b>	Andy Priaulx BMW 320si



Honda plans to join fray

Midfield action always fraught



## WHERE TO WATCH ON TV

Series promoter Eurosport will again provide extensive live television coverage



## WTCC 2012 CALENDAR

<b>March 11</b>	Monza, Italy
<b>April 1</b>	Valencia, Spain
<b>April 15</b>	Marrakech, Morocco
<b>April 29</b>	Slovakia Ring, Slovakia
<b>May 6</b>	Hungaroring, Hungary
<b>May 20</b>	Salzburg, Austria
<b>June 3</b>	Estoril, Portugal
<b>July 22</b>	Curitiba, Brazil
<b>September 23</b>	Sears Point, USA
<b>October 21</b>	Suzuka East, Japan
<b>November 4</b>	Shanghai, China
<b>November 18</b>	Macau

## OTHERS TO WATCH



### Yvan Muller (RML Chevrolet Cruze)

The man the opposition is gunning for looks as formidable as ever. But there are signs that Muller's adversaries are closing, given his narrow three-point championship-winning margin in 2011.



### Gabriele Tarquini (SUNRED SEAT Leon)

Tarquini's hopes largely rest on SEAT's new 1.6 turbo engine proving competitive. The 2009 champion summoned plenty of fight last season, winning at Zolder and frequently being at the centre of incident.



### Tom Coronel (ROAL Motorsport BMW)

The ebullient Dutchman was top non-Chevy driver in 2011, and achieved a tenacious victory at Suzuka. The Italian ROAL squad remains a top operation, and can be expected to lead the harassment of the RML machines.



### Tom Chilton (Arena Ford Focus)

Reigate driver Chilton switches to the WTCC after a 10-year run in the British Touring Car Championship. Arena's, and presumably Chilton's, stated ambition is to achieve the WTCC title in three years.



### James Nash (Arena Ford Focus)

The reigning BTCC Independent Champion knows several of the circuits on the WTCC calendar from a spell in the SEAT Leon Eurocup in 2008. The intra-team battle at Arena could prove intriguing as the Focus is developed.

Muller trials '12  
Cruze at Valencia



No Spain, no gain:  
fewer SEATs in '12?





# How BMW stole

The BMW M3 and Ford Sierra RS500 battled for the first World Touring Car crown 25 years ago. *GARY WATKINS* explains why the faster car lost



Legends were born back in 1987. That year's one-off World Touring Car Championship was the starting point of the mystique that still surrounds two of the greatest tin-top racers ever built.

It was a head-to-head battle between two wild homologation specials, the BMW M3 and the Ford Sierra RS500, a pair of cars whose far-reaching fame was built on their successes on the race tracks of the world. But how did a normally-aspirated, 2.3-litre Bimmer from a secondary category vanquish a fire-spitting turbo that pushed out more horses than were in its name?

Ford, it should be remembered, only lost the title that really mattered, the

one we all recall today. Everyone knows that Schnitzer BMW driver Roberto Ravaglia was crowned world champion at the end of an often-controversial season of racing. The fact that Ford came out on top in the manufacturers' rankings is largely overlooked today, despite the lavish advertising campaign that followed its 'success'.

It's also largely forgotten that the drivers of the lead factory-backed Eggenberger Ford, Klaus Ludwig and Klaus Niedzwiedz lost out on the drivers' title by just a solitary point.

Forgotten too is the points system itself that played a significant part in Ravaglia's eventual success. An outright win for an M3 yielded 40 points, 20 for the overall and 20 for the win in



'Regular-strength' Cosworth is hounded by pesky M3 at Jarama



# Ford's world title

Class 2. Third place behind a pair of Fords gave a Bimmer driver 12 points based on the overall classification and 20 based on the class order.

The story of the '87 WTCC, or the WTC to give the series its period nomenclature, most definitely wasn't about Ford's success in the makes' championship, rather it centres on the failures that cost it the drivers' title.

There were any number of those, but a fact that's overlooked today is that the M3 and the RS500 didn't go head-to-head through the full season. The Eggenberger squad from Switzerland and Britain's own Andy Rouse Engineering, the two Ford teams that registered for the series, started off with the new Ford Sierra RS

Cosworth. The RS500 didn't come on stream until round six of the 11-round contest in August at Brno in the old Czechoslovakia.

A car maker had to build 5000 units to homologate a car under the Group A touring car regulations, which Ford duly did when the RS Cosworth grew out of the XR4 Ti project. A manufacturer was subsequently able to produce a 500-off special. That rule explains the Ford's type number, but its power output explains why it can be said in no uncertain terms that Ford threw away the WTCC.

The arrival of the RS500 was a game-changer in the battle between Ford and BMW in '87. Prior to its arrival at Brno, there wasn't a lot to

choose between the M3 and the original Cossie. Afterwards, the Ford was in a different league.

"To my mind, the original Cosworth was a souped-up road car and the RS500 was a proper race car," says tin-top legend Steve Soper, who shared the second Eggenberger entry with Pierre Dieudonne. "It was a significant evolution."

The homologation of the RS500 allowed the Ford teams to bolt on a series of upgrades, including a bigger turbo and a new inlet manifold, twin injectors and that famous double-decked whale-tail rear spoiler.

"It was quite a package," explains Rouse. "After its introduction we had 500bhp, perhaps even more, in sprint ▶"



◀ spec, but before that we could make 360 at a stretch. The smaller turbo just ran out of breath and the little intercooler got hot.”

That explains Ford's dominance from Brno on. Eggenberger was never off pole position and won four of the last five races, at least on the road. The one race you won't find the Ford listed as winner in the history books is the Bathurst 1000 in Australia. The black-and-red Texaco cars finished one-two, Soper and Dieudonne leading home Ludwig and Niedzwiedz, but they were disqualified weeks after the event. It was a decision that ultimately cost the two Klauses the title.

The infringement concerned the Ford's inner front wheelarches. They had been mounted too high and had been beaten out of shape, but what exactly went on behind the scrutineering shed doors at Bathurst isn't entirely clear.

It was a pretty murky, even sordid, affair. There's even a tale of plaster casts made of the arches (because there was no road-going RS500 at Bathurst against which to compare the racers) going missing at one stage.

It's an affair that isn't illuminated with hindsight. Some of the players, such as Rudi Eggenberger, have disappeared from the scene, while others, the likes of FISA technical delegate Marcel Servais or RS500

engineer Eberhard Braun, are either unable or unwilling to shed any light on what happened.

Yet what is clear is that Eggenberger had the opportunity to rectify the issue that eventually led to his car's disqualification. The cars were eventually thrown out on the Friday of free practice at the WTCC finale at Fuji, a month after the Bathurst race.

The Fords were pulled off the track from free practice and the cars made legal before they returned. The fact that Ludwig and Niedzwiedz went on to win the Japanese race backs up the drivers' contention that the mod offered nothing in the way of performance.

“It was really just a little thing that offered no performance gain,” says Dieudonne. “The cars had run the same way all year; we weren't running anything different at Bathurst.”

“A week later, Steve and I won at Calder with the car in the same configuration. There was no protest and we kept the win.”

Soper continues the story: “After we got kicked out and after all the stigma of Bathurst, Rudi wouldn't move the arches down. He left them in the same place and got the FIA [FISA] to check them and they were deemed legal.”

That was typical of a team owner who was intransigent in the extreme. According to Soper, “it was his way or the highway”.



Ford's 'works' RS500s always attracted a crowd

Ludwig recounts a telling story from round seven at Silverstone earlier in the season that backs up the Briton's opinion.

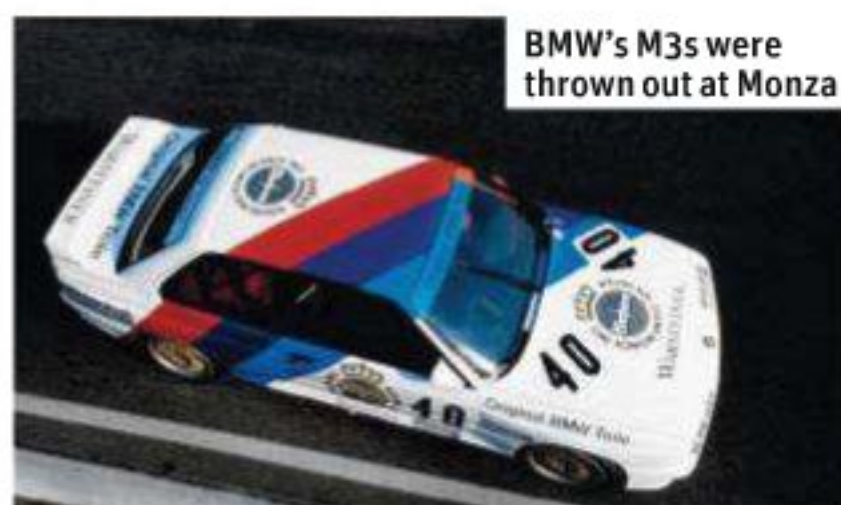
“Eggenberger had gone to Cosworth to collect some parts and I decided on my car to go shorter on the rear axle ratio,” he recalls. “Someone told Rudi when he came back and he ran into his motorhome, shut the door and wouldn't talk to anyone. He said, ‘If you don't change it, I'm going home.’”

“He was the strangest man I ever met in motorsport. He was very introverted, almost like a child.”

Soper describes RS500 as “significant evolution”







Soper tells another tale of Eggenberger's strange ways. Unhappy that his drivers were being too hard on his babies' gearboxes, he came up with a novel scheme to identify who was to blame.

"I remember turning up at one race and there were no gearknobs in the cars," says Soper. "We didn't think much of it, until just before practice and Ludwig asked where they were."

"Rudi told us that he was upset because his gearboxes kept getting bugged up. He said: 'I want to see which of you has the biggest mark on his hand after the race, and then I will know who is being hard on the transmission.' He was being serious!"

Yet Eggenberger might have had an excuse for his refusal to bend. For a start, Servais had declared his cars legal in scrutineering at Bathurst, just as he had done at every preceding race, and it appears that there might have been a strange agreement in place between Ford and BMW.

The Fords' Bathurst disqualification appears to have its roots in the controversial start to the championship at Monza in March. Neither the Fords nor the BMWs scored points that weekend in Italy. The RS Cosworths were withdrawn before the race over a dispute over their electronic injection systems, while no fewer than seven M3s, including the winning CiBiEmme-run entry driven by Riccardo Patrese and Johnny Cecotto and the Schnitzer car shared by Ravaglia and regular team-mate Emanuele Pirro, were thrown out after the race for bodywork irregularities.

Contemporary reports talk about an unofficial moratorium between BMW and Ford not to protest each other after the messy events of Monza. No one on either side remembers that today, but it is fact that the protests at Bathurst came from Australian teams (see panel).

The points lost by the two Klausen at Bathurst meant that second-place

points for Ravaglia [he and Pirro finished third behind the Klausen and a non-registered Japanese-run RS500] at Fuji was enough to make him world champion, but Ludwig argues that intransigence at Ford's motorsport headquarters in Cologne played a part in the failures.

The original WTCC, unlike its namesake today, was made up of two-driver endurance races. A driver could be entered in more than one car, though he would only score points if he drove just the one. Ravaglia was repeatedly held back to maximise his scoring opportunities.

"It was a tool we had and were always ready to use," says Schnitzer team manager Charly Lamm. "That was why Roberto would always drive last."

Schnitzer only saw the tactic through on one occasion. Ravaglia's regular car, shared as usual with Pirro, went out on the third lap with propshaft failure at Brno, but the eventual champion swapped to the team's second entry started by Roland Ratzenberger and came away with 25 points.

The boss of Ford Motorsport in Cologne, Lothar Pinsky, refused to play the same game, much to Ludwig's chagrin.

"We should have mixed the driver pairings up," says Ludwig today. "Either myself or Klaus Niedzwiedz should have started all the races and then the other one waited until the last stint and then jumped in whichever was the best-placed car. We discussed it with Pinsky, but he said no; he said that both drivers should win the championship or not at all."

Ludwig puts Ford's failure to win the 1987 WTCC down to human error on the part of the Eggenberger team and the manufacturer's senior management.

"Too many people made too many mistakes," he says. "We were idiots: we were hopeless and, because of that, on too many occasions we ended up pointless." ❧

## WITCH-HUNT ON THE MOUNTAIN?



The Australian fans didn't take to the fancy-pants Europeans coming over to *their* race and showing the home heroes the way. A Ford may have won the 1987 Bathurst 1000, but the two Eggenberger RS500s had beaten Peter 'Perfect' Brock's Holden Commodore V8. "They booed Pierre and I on the rostrum," says Steve Soper. "They were shouting, 'Brock, Brock, Brock'. The whole atmosphere at that event seemed to point at us being up to no good."

"When our cars went to scrutineering, they were in there for two hours. The local cars barely stopped rolling. I don't know what happened, but there were some strange politics going on."

Soper's team-mate Pierre Dieudonne had similar feelings: "It was the first time Bathurst had been invaded by Europeans [on a big scale]. I think they felt that we were trying to take over their race, and they didn't like it."

But long-time Bathurst secretary of the meeting Ivan Stibbard denies there was any kind of witch-hunt.

"If there was any needle, I didn't pick up on it," says the man who ran the Great Race from 1973-97. "I'd say quite the contrary was true."

"That was one of the most successful Bathursts ever. I think I'm right in saying that, even with the success of V8 Supercars today, 1987 was one of the biggest crowds."

What there was, however, was a clear difference of interpretation in the Group A rule book between Australia and Europe. One Australian official, who doesn't want to be named, said he heard the phrase, "oh, we allow that" from a FISA scrutineer over the course of the meeting.

The Eggenberger RS500s were protested on five points by four of the Australian teams, though only the Frank Gardner Racing BMW squad went through with the protest. It was upheld on the Friday of the Fuji finale and a later appeal by Ford was rejected.

The result was that Holden legend Brock claimed his ninth win on the Mountain and, ultimately, a Ford driver failed to win the WTCC.





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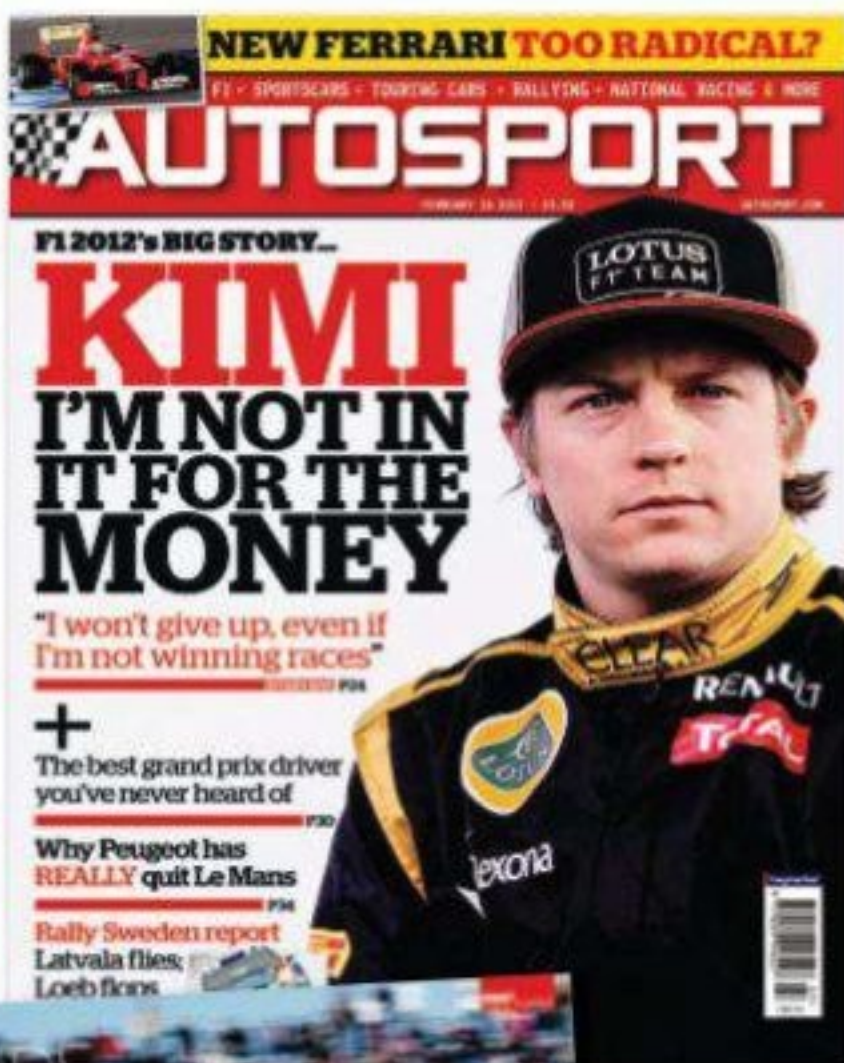
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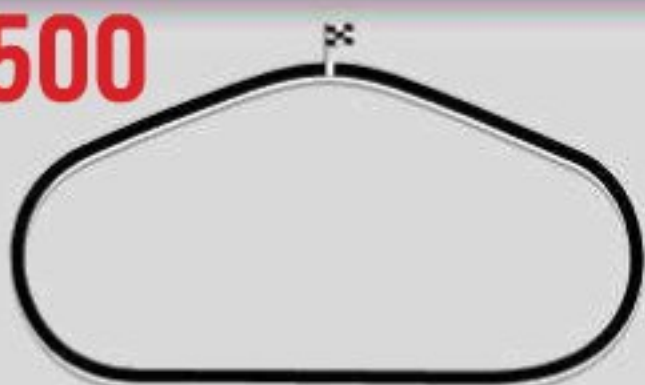
MO312P



# DAYTONA 500

USA

February 27-28  
NASCAR SPRINT CUP  
Round 1/36



## AT A GLANCE

- Winner **Matt Kenseth**
- Pole **Carl Edwards**
- Most laps led **Denny Hamlin**
- Points leader **Kenseth**

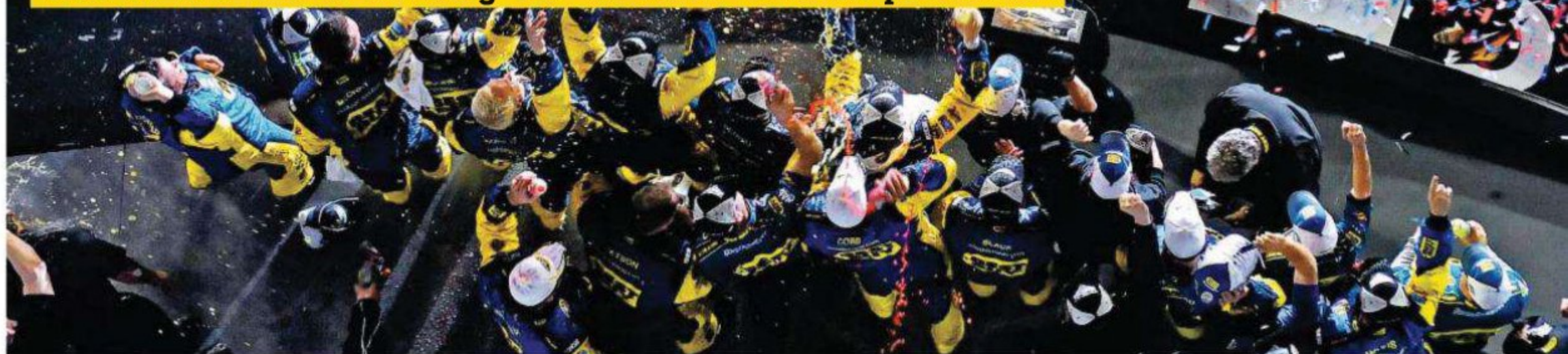


Kenseth's winning margin was 0.21s



## Kenseth wins trial by fire and water

It finished two days after it was scheduled to start, but it was worth waiting for as Matt Kenseth prevailed



Poleman Edwards leads Biffle and the rest of 43-car pack

**AFTER A BIZARRE JET-FUELLED** bonfire temporarily halted the race — already delayed some 30 hours by rain — the Daytona 500 finished in the wee hours of Tuesday morning with Ford's Matt Kenseth holding the trophy.

Despite the unusual circumstances, the race came down to the traditionally intense battle at the front of the field, this one between three cars during a green-white-chequered finish.

In a race where new rules were designed to limit tandem racing, Roush Fenway Racing's Greg Biffle

could not manage to catch Ford-mounted leader and team-mate Kenseth, despite a tandem-type push from Dale Earnhardt Jr in the Hendrick Motorsports Chevrolet Impala.

"We couldn't even get up to Matt," said Earnhardt, who went from third to second by passing Biffle at the exit of Turn 4 on the last lap, but still fell a car length and more short of victory.

"I waited until the last minute for Greg to pass him, but it wasn't materialising. So I pulled out to see if I could pass Greg."

Biffle was surprised he couldn't make a move on his team-mate for NASCAR's biggest prize. He tried once on the front straight coming into the final lap, but Kenseth defended. The same thing happened at Turn 4 coming to the finish.

"All night, Junior had been shoving me against the back of Matt's car at will," said Biffle. "But we weren't locked together [at the bumpers]. Once he got against my bumper on the final restart and I made sure he stayed with me through [Turn 2], once we got



## RACE RATING

★★★★☆

Slight anti-climax at the finish, but bizarre events will stick in the memory

## KEY MOMENT

Lap 202

Biffle (16) fails to work with Earnhardt on last lap, allowing Kenseth to win

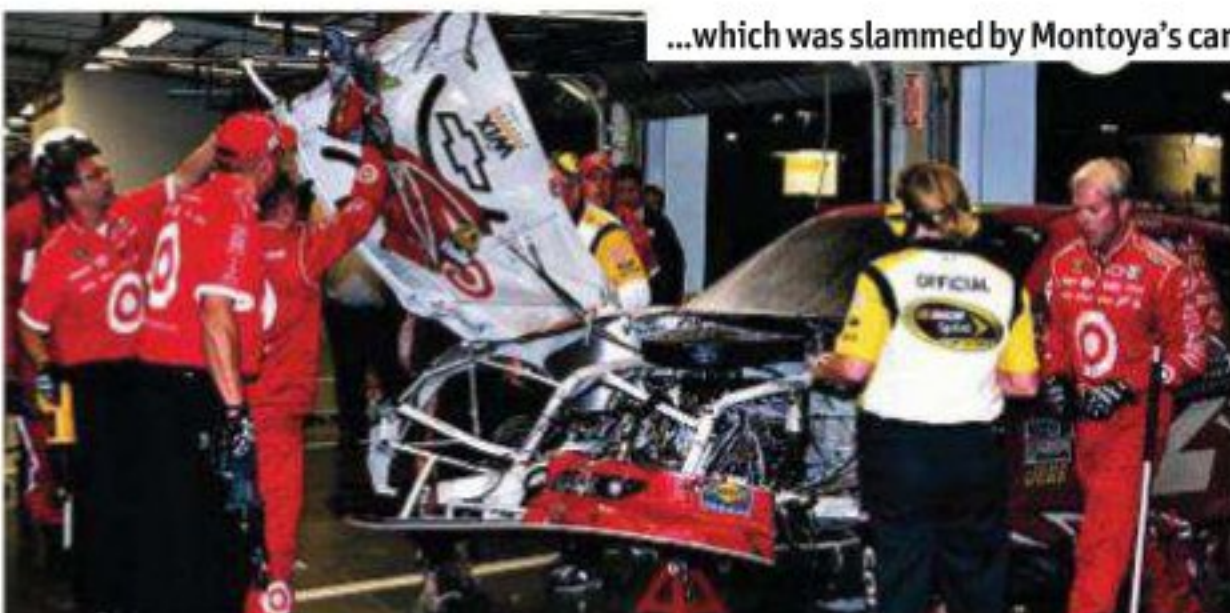
## REPORT DAYTONA 500

JONATHAN INGRAM  
reports



Kenseth dominated closing stages for his second Daytona 500 victory

Jet-blower driver is helped away from flaming truck...



...which was slammed by Montoya's car



Crowd looks on as Avgas burns track

straight I thought we'd drive up to Matt without any problem. There must have been enough air [space] between us that Matt got five or six feet in front of me, so we were all going at the same speed."

Kenseth, who won his Gatorade Duel qualifying race on Thursday (see [page 66](#)), credited a strong Ford engine and his experience of leading the pack to the line earlier in the week.

"Our car was faster once we were out front," said Kenseth, who led the final 38 laps. "Like Thursday,

when I got in front it was harder for anyone to get attached. I learned some things then for what to do in those final laps."

Not to be drawn on his tactics, Kenseth evidently used a buffer of air and managed to keep the same distance between his car and the Ford of Biffle.

In retrospect, Biffle said he should have dragged his brake to create a bigger gap between him and the leader. That would have enabled his Ford and Earnhardt's Chevy to develop a head of steam. "That's probably what I

should have done," Biffle admitted, "put distance in between us. For sure, I didn't think I needed to do that. Monday morning quarterbacking — sure, that's what I would do now."

Earnhardt declared himself unhappy to finish second, but satisfied with the points he earned despite not ending a losing streak that dates to 2008.

"I don't feel it right now but I know later tonight and tomorrow and the rest of the week it's going to eat at me what I could have done to win the race. So that is kind of frustrating," he said.

Junior also praised the new style of restrictor-plate racing brought on by restrictions on engine cooling, in part: "It definitely suits my style better and I can do things on my own. In the old package you needed someone else the entire race and that's not fun."

In general, the new McLaren-engineered electronic fuel injection systems worked well, although the contending Toyota of Michael Waltrip Racing's Clint Bowyer lost fuel pressure and his car had to be pushed into the pits,

while Hendrick's Jeff Gordon had an unexplained major engine failure after running in the lead pack.

Jack Roush, whose team celebrated its 300th victory in all forms of NASCAR racing, said his cars and engines performed so well in preparation for the race that he was more concerned about the new fuel injection.

"I was more nervous about the durability of all the components that were unknown in the fuel injection than I was about being competitive," he said.

Capping a week of high-speed wrecks in preliminary events, the grandstands were surprisingly full despite the rain delay and the first Daytona 500 on a Monday night. Originally postponed to noon on Monday following day-long rain on Sunday, the race was moved to prime time and started shortly after 1900 to avoid additional morning and afternoon showers. It was the first time in the 53-year history of the race that it was not started on Sunday.

The race was expected to be faster due to smaller rear spoilers and larger restrictor plates, a green,

grippier track after a day of steady rain and the cooler night temperatures. With average lap speeds generally over 200mph, it made for one of the fastest Daytona races in the restrictor-plate era. But there was also an unmistakable element of the draft not being universally beneficial.

For much of the race, the same cars and drivers fought for the real estate in the low groove. Three drivers led the bulk of the laps up until the fateful lap 161 when the fire broke out. Denny Hamlin had led 57 laps in the Joe Gibbs Racing Toyota, Biffle was in front for 44 and Jeff Burton headed 24 in the Richard Childress Racing Chevy.

It was under the night's seventh caution that Juan Pablo Montoya's Chevy broke entering Turn 3 and crashed into a jet blower being used to clean the track surface. The impact broke the jet-fuel tank, setting the truck, Montoya's car and the track ablaze. Montoya and the unfortunate driver of the jet blower — used for drying the track, or in this case blowing dust and debris off it — both escaped without serious injury.

Montoya had made a ▶



# 13

## NUMBER OF LEADERS

Dave Blaney (right) led when the red flag flew for the Montoya/jet-dryer interface. If it had rained, he would have been declared a shock winner



# 300

## ROUSH NASCAR WINS

That makes 126 wins in the NASCAR Sprint Cup, 124 in Nationwide and 50 in Trucks

## KENSETH GIVES ROUSH DUEL WIN



Kenseth (17) dives inside team-mate Biffle

Matt Kenseth became the first driver to take the chequered flag in a Daytona Duel behind the wheel of a Roush-entered car following a frantic last-lap dash.

Kenseth's team-mate Greg Biffle had led the majority of the race in his Fusion, but was duped into a blocking move that opened the door for his rivals. He slipped to fifth, dropping behind Regan Smith, Jimmie Johnson and Elliott Sadler in the process.

In a pretty unspectacular race, veterans Dave Blaney and Joe Nemechek raced their way into the 500, while Bill Elliott was able to use his champion's provisional to join the starting 43 despite finishing a lap down.

In contrast the other Duel was a cracker. An early crash was caused

when Michael McDowell turned David Gilliland into Juan Pablo Montoya, who in turn wedged Paul Menard into the wall. Most of the field pitted under caution, meaning they were in a marginal fuel run to the end.

Their cause was helped when Michael Waltrip spun as he rejoined from his splash-and-dash.

A grandstand finish was on the cards, with Tony Stewart holding the fast Dale Earnhardt Jr behind him, when Danica Patrick was sent spearing into the infield wall following a tap from Aric Almirola.

With the race under caution, Stewart was able to coast over the line for his 17th win at the Speedway. McDowell and Robby Gordon raced their way into the 500 in fourth and fifth respectively.

◀ second pitstop for the crew to check a problem in his drivetrain and was driving solo in the low groove in order to catch the crocodile of cars behind the pace car. A vibration had continued as he went through the gears exiting the pits: "I was talking to the spotter asking him to look at the rear while it was moving when the car turned sideways." It slid up the banking and broadsided the truck.

The red flag lasted two hours as the track crews spent several minutes dousing approximately 200 gallons of spilled jet fuel before using quick-dry to remove the oil. The crews then used large boxes of Tide detergent to clean the track along with water from fire trucks. The final step was to put a bonding agent on the track to seal the narrow strip where the fuel had run down the banking like burning lava.

The field of drivers sat under a red flag just down the way on the backstraight, wondering if they would be able to resume with 40 laps remaining.

Dave Blaney, Landon Cassill, Tony Raines and David Gilliland sat at the front of the field (before the red flag, they had been preparing to make a pitstop after the leaders had cleared pit road). There was some

doubt the damage to the multi-million-dollar paving, which had been installed after a pothole halted the race in 2010, could be repaired.

All was not doom. As journeyman Blaney and his struggling team owner Tommy Baldwin Jr contemplated a possible victory, Brad Keselowski occupied his time by tweeting a photograph of his view through the windshield, which brought in 51,000 new followers. "Nobody else has a phone [in their car]," he said. "They should get one."

Kenseth, whose Jimmy Fennig-led crew got him off the pit road the quickest among the leaders, had to contemplate a premature finish with four backmarkers picking up the lion's share of money and glory ahead of him, despite what he knew

was a very fast Ford. There was no guarantee the track could be prepared for racing again after the freak accident as the midnight hour approached.

Kenseth had his doubts as well. "Sitting there, for sure you want to go back racing," he said. "Yeah, Blaney was leading and we were fifth. But when you go back racing you have just as much chance to get in a wreck as much as win."

"You could hear gravel hit the crush panels when you went over it in the middle of the track," continued Kenseth of the initial laps run under caution. "But there was no problem in the lower groove. Also, it was a pretty narrow strip."

In the earlier, more twinkly atmosphere of the first night-time version



140,000 crowd stayed until 1am on Tuesday

Stenhouse (6) gets pushed into Stewart







Truex nipped ahead at half-distance

## \$200,000 PAY DAY

Martin Truex was leading at the halfway point, which bagged the Michael Waltrip Racing driver a cool fifth-of-a-million dollars

# 42

## REPORT DAYTONA 500

### NUMBER OF CAUTION LAPS

There were 10 yellows, and one red flag – which lasted 2h05m

of the Daytona 500, the return of pack racing had taken out another pallet of potential Cinderella stories on the second lap when Jimmie Johnson's Chevy was spun into the wall by Elliott Sadler on the front stretch.

Last year's surprise rookie winner Trevor Bayne, this year's rookie 'sensation' Danica Patrick and Kurt Busch, a bad boy trying to make good after getting fired by Roger Penske, were all taken out in the ensuing wreckage. (Busch then continued his ongoing penance by working on the James Finch-owned car alongside the team's eight full-time crew members.)

"It just stinks to sit around and wait for that long," said Bayne of his early

exit. "I'd just told my guys on the radio that we were sitting in a good spot and as soon as I let off the button they started wrecking in front of me."

For Patrick, who returned after losing 62 laps of repairs to gain seat time, it was the third time she was crashed through no fault of her own in three races during Speed Week.

David Ragan, the winner at Daytona last July, was also knocked out while looking to rebuild his career at Front Row Motorsports after Roush Fenway Racing dropped him. Then during an ensuing caution, AJ Allmendinger's first drive for Penske was interrupted when a pitroad collision sent him to the garage for lengthy front-end repairs.

The early crash settled down antsy drivers as the field began to click off the laps in a rather gentlemanly version of pack racing.

With rain still in the vicinity, the halfway mark – at which point a result can be declared whatever happens – was awaited with unusually high anticipation. Plus, a \$200,000 bonus had been put up by the track for whoever was in front at halfway. Leader Biffle became a sitting duck for the tandem draft of second-placed Martin Truex Jr and third-placed Hamlin, foreshadowing that a tandem strategy would be needed at the finish.

Unfortunately for Biffle and Earnhardt, once Kenseth got in front it didn't turn out that way.



End of lap one, and Ragan (34) and Patrick (10) collect Johnson

Turn 1 'big one' eliminated 2010 winner McMurray (1)



## RESULTS

NASCAR Sprint Cup, Daytona 500 (USA), February 19-28, round 1 of 36

### GRID

1 EDWARDS 194.738MPH	2 BIFFLE 194.087MPH
3 STEWART 193.607MPH	4 KENSETH 193.245MPH
5 EARNHARDT 194.038MPH	6 SMITH 191.053MPH
7 AMBROSE 193.999MPH	8 JOHNSON 193.449MPH
9 BURTON 192.777MPH	10 SADLER 191.270MPH
11 McDOWELL 190.990MPH	12 LOGANO 192.868MPH
13 HARVICK 192.914MPH	14 KY BUSCH 191.873MPH
15 ALL'DINGER 193.121MPH	16 J GORDON 193.803MPH
17 R GORDON 188.229MPH	18 NEWMAN 193.224MPH
19 McMURRAY 191.840MPH	20 KAHNE 192.583MPH
21 STENHOUSE 193.665MPH	22 MARTIN 193.503MPH
23 K'SELOWSKI 192.992MPH	24 BLANEY 191.506MPH
25 RAGAN 193.249MPH	26 TRUEX 193.665MPH
27 ALMIROLA 193.382MPH	28 KU BUSCH 191.363MPH
29 PATRICK 191.738MPH	30 BOWYER lap time dq
31 HAMLIN 191.127MPH	32 B LABONTE 190.022MPH
33 GILLILAND 190.046MPH	34 NEMECHK 191.160MPH
35 MONTOYA 192.600MPH	36 MEARS 193.844MPH
37 MENARD 193.374MPH	38 REUTIMANN 189.235MPH
39 CASSELL 190.905MPH	40 BAYNE 193.615MPH
41 RAINES 192.534MPH	42 STREHME 191.963MPH
43 T LABONTE 191.522MPH	

### 202 LAPS, 505 MILES

POS	NAME	TEAM	CAR	TIME	EARNINGS	GRID
1	Matt Kenseth (USA)	Roush Fenway Racing	Ford Fusion	3h36m02s	\$1,589,387	4
2	Dale Earnhardt Jr (USA)	Hendrick Motorsports	Chevrolet Impala	+0.210s	\$1,102,175	5
3	Greg Biffle (USA)	Roush Fenway Racing	Ford Fusion	+0.258s	\$804,163	2
4	Denny Hamlin (USA)	Joe Gibbs Racing	Toyota Camry	+0.613s	\$702,091	31
5	Jeff Burton (USA)	Richard Childress Racing	Chevrolet Impala	+0.771s	\$559,550	9
6	Paul Menard (USA)	Richard Childress Racing	Chevrolet Impala	+0.999s	\$427,900	37*
7	Kevin Harvick (USA)	Richard Childress Racing	Chevrolet Impala	+1.031s	\$415,261	13
8	Carl Edwards (USA)	Roush Fenway Racing	Ford Fusion	+1.141s	\$403,466	1
9	Joey Logano (USA)	Joe Gibbs Racing	Toyota Camry	+1.151s	\$346,063	12
10	Mark Martin (USA)	Michael Waltrip Racing	Toyota Camry	+1.166s	\$323,313	22
11	Clint Bowyer (USA)	Michael Waltrip Racing	Toyota Camry	+1.249s	\$339,002	30
12	Martin Truex Jr (USA)	Michael Waltrip Racing	Toyota Camry	+1.261s	\$535,052	26
13	Marcos Ambrose (AUS)	Richard Petty Motorsports	Ford Fusion	+1.345s	\$341,858	7
14	Bobby Labonte (USA)	JTG Daugherty Racing	Toyota Camry	+1.380s	\$331,196	32
15	Dave Blaney (USA)	Tommy Baldwin Racing	Chevrolet Impala	+1.474s	\$296,513	24
16	Tony Stewart (USA)	Stewart Haas Racing	Chevrolet Impala	+1.516s	\$379,025	3
17	Kyle Busch (USA)	Joe Gibbs Racing	Toyota Camry	+1.644s	\$341,821	14
18	Terry Labonte (USA)	FAS Lane Racing	Ford Fusion	+1.894s	\$292,200	43
19	Tony Rains (USA)	Front Row Motorsports	Ford Fusion	+2.050s	\$292,763	41
20	Ricky Stenhouse Jr (USA)	Roush Fenway Racing	Ford Fusion	+5.054s	\$304,275	21
21	Ryan Newman (USA)	Stewart Haas Racing	Chevrolet Impala	+6.382	\$336,221	18
22	Landon Cassill (USA)	BK Racing	Toyota Camry	+22.939s	\$319,945	39
23	David Gilliland (USA)	Front Row Motorsports	Ford Fusion	-1 lap	\$309,133	33*
24	Regan Smith (USA)	Furniture Row Racing	Chevrolet Impala	-2 laps	\$332,421	6
25	Casey Mears (USA)	Germain Racing	Ford Fusion	-3 laps	\$304,746	36
26	David Reutimann (USA)	BK Racing	Toyota Camry	196 laps-accident	\$309,335	38
27	Elliott Sadler (USA)	Richard Childress Racing	Chevrolet Impala	-6 laps	\$305,788	10
28	Joe Nemecek (USA)	NEMCO Motorsports	Toyota Camry	-8 laps	\$287,363	34
29	Kasey Kahne (USA)	Hendrick Motorsports	Chevrolet Impala	189 laps-accident	\$297,988	20
30	Michael McDowell (USA)	Phil Parsons Racing	Ford Fusion	-13 laps	\$292,175	11
31	Jamie McMurray (USA)	Earnhardt Ganassi Racing	Chevrolet Impala	188 laps-accident	\$318,608	19
32	Brad Keselowski (USA)	Penske Racing	Dodge Charger	187 laps-accident	\$322,295	23
33	Aric Almirola (USA)	Richard Petty Motorsports	Ford Fusion	187 laps-accident	\$320,986	27
34	AJ Allmendinger (USA)	Penske Racing	Dodge Charger	-25 laps	\$328,325	15
35	Trevor Bayne (USA)	Wood Brothers Racing	Ford Fusion	-38 laps	\$283,200	40
36	Juan Pablo Montoya (CO)	Earnhardt Ganassi Racing	Chevrolet Impala	159 laps-accident	\$312,391	35*
37	David Stremme (USA)	Inception Motorsports	Toyota Camry	156 laps-engine	\$282,075	42
38	Danica Patrick (USA)	Tommy Baldwin Racing	Chevrolet Impala	-64 laps	\$281,715	29*
39	Kurt Busch (USA)	Phoenix Racing	Chevrolet Impala	-89 laps	\$277,913	28*
40	Jeff Gordon (USA)	Hendrick Motorsports	Chevrolet Impala	81 laps-engine	\$317,549	16
41	Robby Gordon (USA)	Robby Gordon Motorsports	Dodge Charger	25 laps-engine	\$268,150	17
42	Jimmie Johnson (USA)	Hendrick Motorsports	Chevrolet Impala	1 lap-accident	\$327,149	8
43	David Ragan (USA)	Front Row Motorsports	Ford Fusion	1 lap-accident	\$267,637	25

### POINTS

POS	DRIVER	PTS
1	Kenseth	47
2	Earnhardt	42
3	Biffle	42
4	Hamlin	42
5	Burton	40
6	Menard	39
7	Harvick	37
8	Edwards	36
9	Logano	36
10	Martin	35

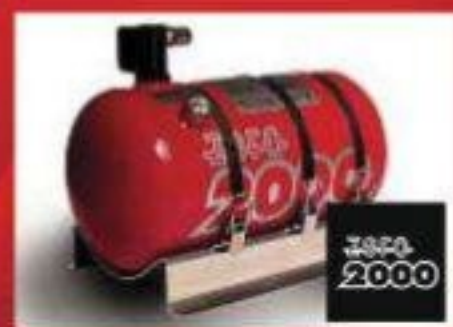
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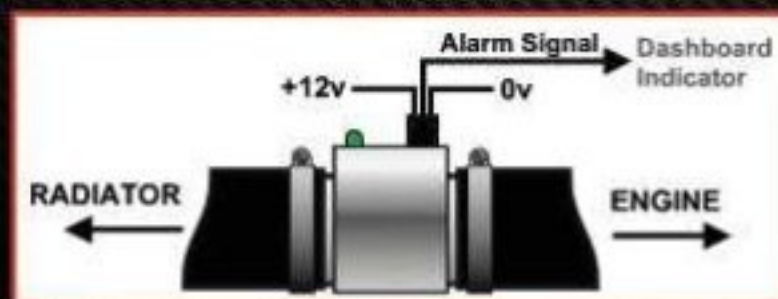
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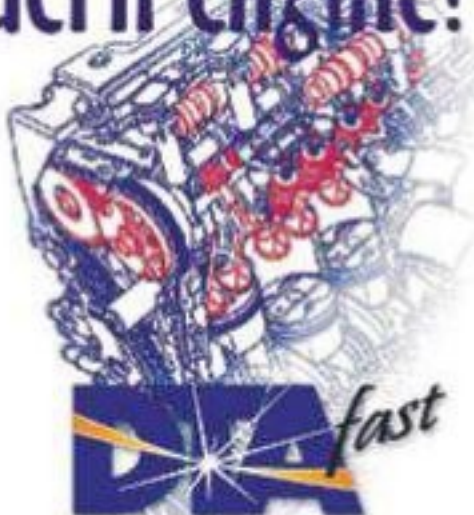
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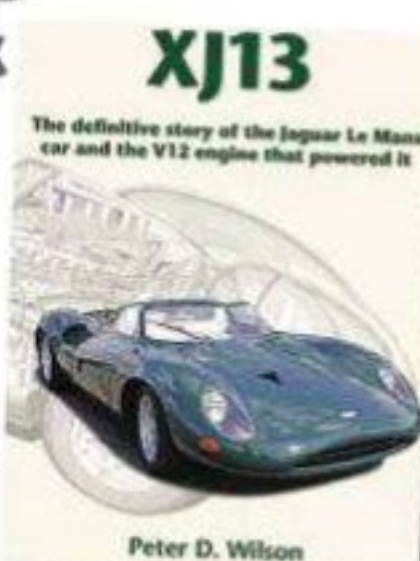
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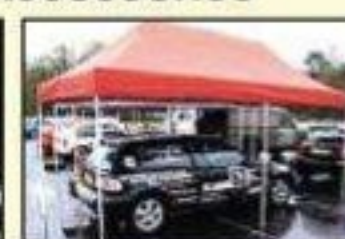
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The knowledge of structural testing methods will be beneficial.

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Reporting to the Group Leader Composite, the successful candidate will be self-motivated, a good communicator and be expected to work under pressure to meet critical deadlines. You will work closely with Designers and Aerodynamicists and provide guidance for junior engineers.

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Reporting to the Group Leader Composite, the successful candidate will be self-motivated, a good communicator and be expected to work under pressure to meet critical deadlines.

The ideal candidates will have an Engineering degree, a good level of composites design experience within the MotorSport/Aerospace industry and experience with current composite manufacturing techniques. F1 Experience, prior use of NX and knowledge of Italian will be an advantage.

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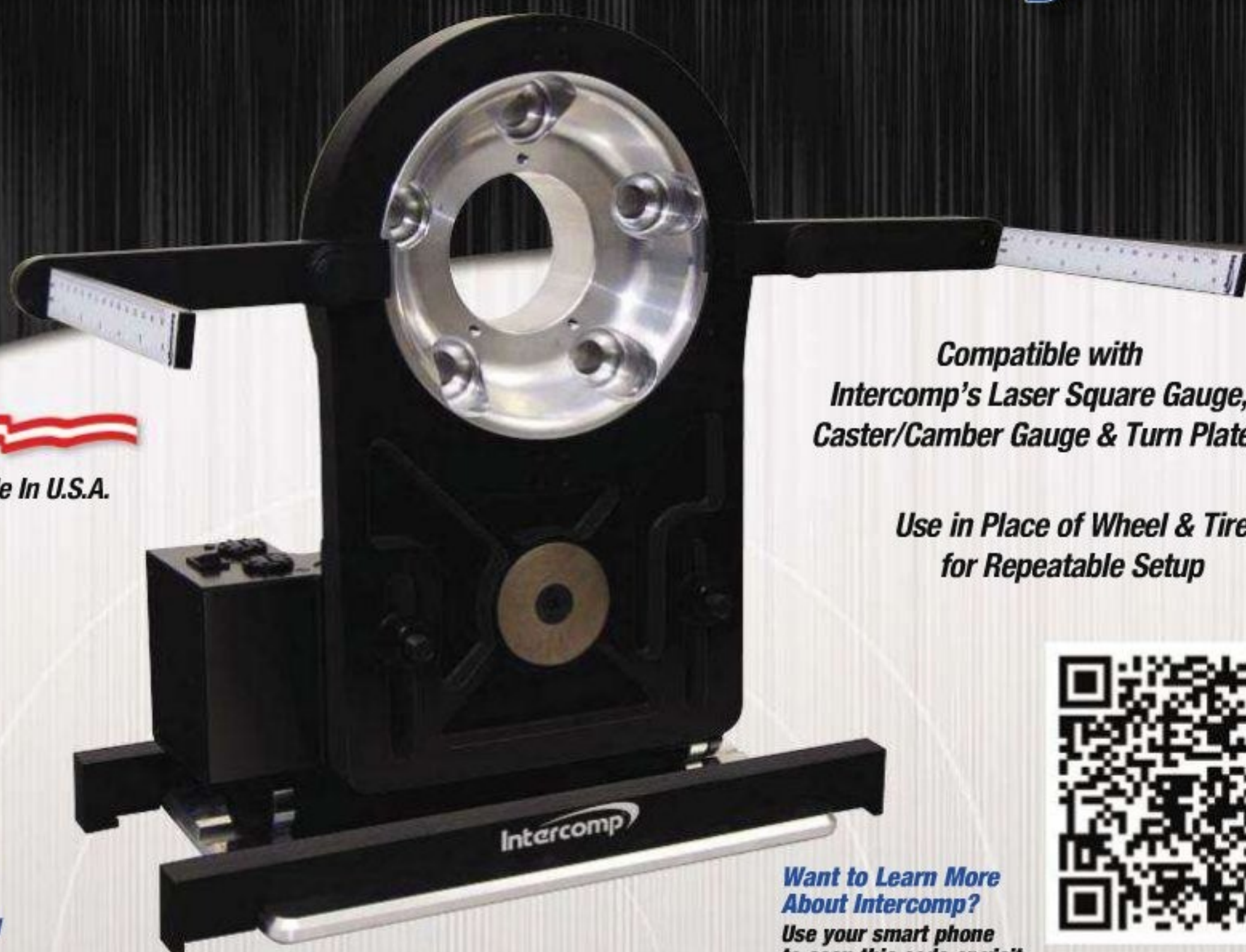
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Masarati feels SV has been hurt by rule change

## Vittoria boss hits out at rules

Piers Masarati says new time penalties for all-silver driver line-ups are unfair

» LEADING BRITISH GT TEAM boss Piers Masarati says revised rules governing driver pairings in the 2012 championship are unfair and are putting racers off joining the grid.

British GT drivers are classified into four categories (A-D) based on their experience, and certain combinations are prohibited. For 2012, series promoter SRO has also laid out a series of increased penalties for certain permitted driver combinations in the rules.

Category A (platinum) drivers will carry a 55kg weight penalty (up from 40kg in 2011) if paired with a category C (silver) racer, while category B (gold) drivers will carry 40kg (up from 25kg in 2011) if paired with a C. However, two category C drivers would be handed a new four-second time penalty (for each hour of the race) at their mandatory pitstops under the new rules, if paired together.

Masarati, whose Scuderia Vittoria squad ran category C pairing Charles Bateman and Michael Lyons to third in last year's title race in a Ferrari 458, said the new rules would put pairings such as this at an unfair disadvantage because of the propensity for random variables such as safety cars to wipe out any legitimate advantage built up by C drivers over their category D (bronze) counterparts.

Masarati said: "Anyone who knows racing will see that if a safety car comes out before a pitstop – as it did five times

last year – their race will be over because, with the best will in the world, a silver driver will never be as quick as an Allan Simonsen, Jonny Adam or Matt Griffin.

"I'm not opposed to a rule change, but it's got to be properly thought out, consider the whole picture, and the rest of the regulations should be adjusted too.

"A GT car is 1200kg, so 40kg is three percent of the car. That won't make any difference [to the outcome of a race]. I understand it's a pro-am championship, but when you want to attract young drivers that can't afford Formula Renault or Formula 3, this puts them off.

"It's stopped me running a second car. I've had five or six drivers that had the budget to do the championship but were not prepared to have 8-12s penalties in the longer races when a safety car could come out and wipe their advantage away. I could try to put gold drivers alongside them, but

you're not going to find many [silver] drivers that will to hire a car and pay a pro driver [gold or platinum] to go with them."

Series boss Benjamin Franassovici confirmed the rules may still be adjusted further during the season, but said it was important to better balance silver/silver driver pairings to maintain the pro-am ethos of the category.

He said: "When you look at how many seconds there are in an hour it's the difference between an average pitstop and a good one. Two silver drivers, keeping a cool head, [still have] a big advantage.

"If you look at last year, 95 per cent of entries were pro-am. We don't want to stop young guns arriving, but I've got to be careful because it's my job to make [the championship] as fair as possible.

"If it costs me some entries, it's also given me more stability and that's been key to our success."

'Silver' pair Bateman (left) and Lyons were third in 2011



### AUTOSPORT SAYS...

**BEN ANDERSON**  
NATIONAL  
EDITOR

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### THE PROBLEM OF PERFORMANCE

balancing is one that haunts GT racing wherever it goes.

Usually, it's disparities between cars that cause a fuss, but as British GT heads into 2012 on the back of one of its strongest-ever seasons, driver balancing has become the sticking point.

A new time penalty for all-silver (third tier) driver pairings has been introduced to discourage a mimicking of what happened in FIA GT3 in 2011, where former Italian F3 racer Francesco Castellacci was paired with fellow twenty-something Federico Leo (who has German F3 and Formula Renault 3.5 on his CV) to take the crown for AF Corse.

For a form of racing that relies heavily on wealthy bronze (usually gentlemen) drivers to fill its grids with exotica, this is a sensitive issue.

Looking on from Britain, British GT boss Benjamin Franassovici has decided to act to protect the conventional pro-am driver pairings that are the bedrock of his category.

But by doing this he has also upset a team manager who feels two evenly-matched, better-than-amateur-but-not-as-good-as-pro drivers, of the type he ran last year, will be disadvantaged unfairly.

SRO has every right to tweak the regulations if it feels the need for better balance in its championship, but consistency is the key. By using time to balance one type of pairing against the field, while using weight to govern the rest, it has opened itself up to charges of trying to equate apples with oranges unnecessarily.

Surely a set of rules that stipulates only weight, or only time, being used to reign in overly strong driver combinations would be the fairest way forward?

### Extra contact details

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## CONTENTS

**p86** SERIES FOCUS  
EURO NASCAR



Ginetta Junior

# New Irish team to Ginettas

Ex-Vauxhall champ Douglas plans two-car Junior attack



Murray won two races in Ginetta Junior in '11



**EX-FORMULA VAUXHALL** race winner Wayne Douglas will enter a new team in Ginetta Junior this year to run series frontrunner Niall Murray and Irish graduate Andrew Watson.

Douglas, who won the 1995 Formula Vauxhall Class B title as a privateer and was a finalist in that year's McLaren AUTOSPORT BRDC Award, will run two Ginetta G40s under the

Douglas Motorsport banner.

Douglas aided Murray's run to fourth in last season's Ginetta Junior title race with Beacon Racing and ran Watson in Irish Ginetta Junior.

His new team will be based at Rockingham, thanks to Irishman Douglas's connections to circuit director Alfred Buller. The move into racing represents an expansion for Douglas's squad, which runs a

driver-development programme throughout the UK and Ireland that has helped drivers such as Bruno Senna, Will Stevens and the Christodoulou cousins acclimatise to single-seaters before racing them.

Douglas, who plans to recruit freelance engineers using his contacts in Formula Renault, said: "We just intend to run two Ginetta Juniors for this year and next –

there's no point getting too big.

"We've got a chance of the title with Murray – by the winter series he was breaking the lap record at Snetterton – but it's a game of luck where you could just as well finish fifth as win a race!

"Andrew has a lot on his plate with exams in Ireland, but once he gets testing he should be grand, and a top-six runner by the middle of the year."

Formula Renault UK

## UK Renault bow for Cassidy

**REIGNING TOYOTA RACING SERIES** champion Nick Cassidy will contest the Formula Renault UK season opener at Brands Hatch as part of his deal to complete Fortec's 2012 Eurocup squad.

Kiwi Cassidy will drive alongside 2011 FR UK runner-up and McLaren AUTOSPORT BRDC Award winner Oliver Rowland, InterSteps graduate Ed Jones and Finnish karting ace Mikko Pakari at Brands on March 31-April 1 before the Eurocup season kicks off in May. He is set to join up with his new team for a test at Paul Ricard next week.

Cassidy, 17, said: "I've been working towards racing in Europe

from the moment I started karting. I'm under no illusions as to how hard it will be, but I'm determined to make the most of this great chance."

Fortec team manager Jamie Dye added: "Nick has really marked himself out as one to watch. Winning the Toyota Racing Series by such a large margin is no mean feat."



Cassidy won five times in 2012 TRS

Formula Renault BARC

## Fortec seat for kart ace Tillett

**WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP KART** racer Laura Tillett will graduate to single-seaters this season in Formula Renault BARC.

The 20-year-old daughter of renowned kart-seat manufacturer Steve Tillett will drive for the Fortec Motorsports team that ran Josh Webster to the runner-up spot in last season's FR BARC championship.

She had been weighing up a move into the Clio Cup and tested for leading squad Total Control Racing earlier this year (see AUTOSPORT, February 2), but has instead decided to move into single-seaters after run-outs with Fortec at Brands Hatch



Tillett tested twice with Fortec last week

and Silverstone last week.

Tillett, who may also contest the three-round GP Cup for BARC cars within Formula Renault UK, said: "The Clio Cup car was a lot of fun, [but] the Formula Renault suits my driving a bit better. I feel more at home with it."

Team manager Steve Lynch added: "We're delighted to have Laura onboard for the new season – she's a great name from karting."

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British Formula Ford

## Tandy praises new Formula Ford after trying Mygale at Silverstone

EX-FORMULA FORD FESTIVAL

winner Nick Tandy believes the category's new EcoBoost regulations will improve racing after testing the new Mygale for the first time.

The JTR boss drove the car at Silverstone last week. Doubts had been raised that the increased grip of the EcoBoost machines could damage the racing spectacle, but Tandy believes that will not be the case.

"I think the racing will be even better

Tandy tried JTR's new EcoBoost Mygale



because it's a bigger car so there will be more of a tow - it'll be even harder to break away," said the British F3 race winner and Porsche GT driver. "The braking distances are similar because it's faster on the straights and has more grip [than the old Duratec car]."

AUTOSPORT understands the new Formula Fords are currently considerably faster than the Duratec machines, with lap times comparable to Formula Renault BARC cars.

"The car's mega," added Tandy. "The Ford cars [test machines lent to teams for them to acclimatise to the new engine and rules] are great, but now we've got our own car, and can do what we want, it feels even better."

JTR regular Tristan Mingay also drove the car at Silverstone and is considering his options for 2012.

Formula Renault BARC

## Malvern considers BARC switch

**REIGNING BRITISH FORMULA Ford champion Scott Malvern has not ruled out a Formula Renault BARC campaign after testing a car at Silverstone last week.**

Malvern, 23, had been looking at a switch to GTs (see AUTOSPORT, January 19), but continuing budget problems are hampering his plans.

He tested for Cliff Dempsey Racing, which has switched from British Formula Ford to Formula Renault for this season, and which ran Malvern to second in the Formula Ford table in 2010.

"The GT route I thought we could achieve, but they're talking about budgets I can't reach," said Malvern. "I've been ringing around everywhere because I need to

keep racing and try to keep winning [races].

"Cliff needed someone to shake the car down so I took the opportunity to drive a racing car again. I enjoyed it and I've had quite a few calls from other Renault teams.

"It's not my first choice, but it's definitely not out of the question."

Malvern shook down Renault



Porsche Carrera Cup

## Geddie to Redline for Carrera Cup

REIGNING BRITISH GT CHAMPION

Glynn Geddie will return to the Porsche Carrera Cup this season with leading squad Redline Racing.

The Scot will dovetail a campaign in the Carrera Cup - in which he first

Geddie finished fourth in 2010 Carrera Cup



competed between 2008-10 - with a defence of his GT crown in a new McLaren MP4-12C.

Geddie, 21, who scored podiums but no wins during his first stint in the Carrera Cup, said: "In the Carrera Cup in 2010 I finished fourth so feel like there's a bit of unfinished business there. If I can win a one-make championship it will hopefully pave the way for me to break into the Supercup."

Redline team boss Simon Leonard added: "I've never worked with Glynn but he's always stood out for me and there's no doubt he'll win races with us."

MARCUS PYE

## HUMBLE PYE

The voice of club motor racing



Kart restorer Magee (l) met 'Whizzo' Williams

Memories of the inaugural Race Retro - the dedicated historic motorsport show, put together by Ian Williamson at Stoneleigh Park - of 2004 are vivid. How could anybody forget the biting wind that cut through the autojumble areas, threatening frostbite? Those of us who ventured outside for the rally stage were stamping our feet against the cold.

Still at the National Agricultural Centre, the quality of content at last weekend's ninth edition was arguably the highest yet. Porsches, from Speedster and RS61 through fabulously scary Martini and Gulf-liveried flunder-bodied 908s to 956 and 962s, celebrated 60 years of the marque's racing heritage.

BRMs (plus TechCraft-BRM from the Coventry Transport Museum) and Phil Hill's 1960 Italian GP-winning Ferrari Dino drew admiration, while a host of charismatic machines from major event organising clubs covered the spectrum of eras and tastes. As a meeting place for members it's a curtain-raiser for the season ahead.

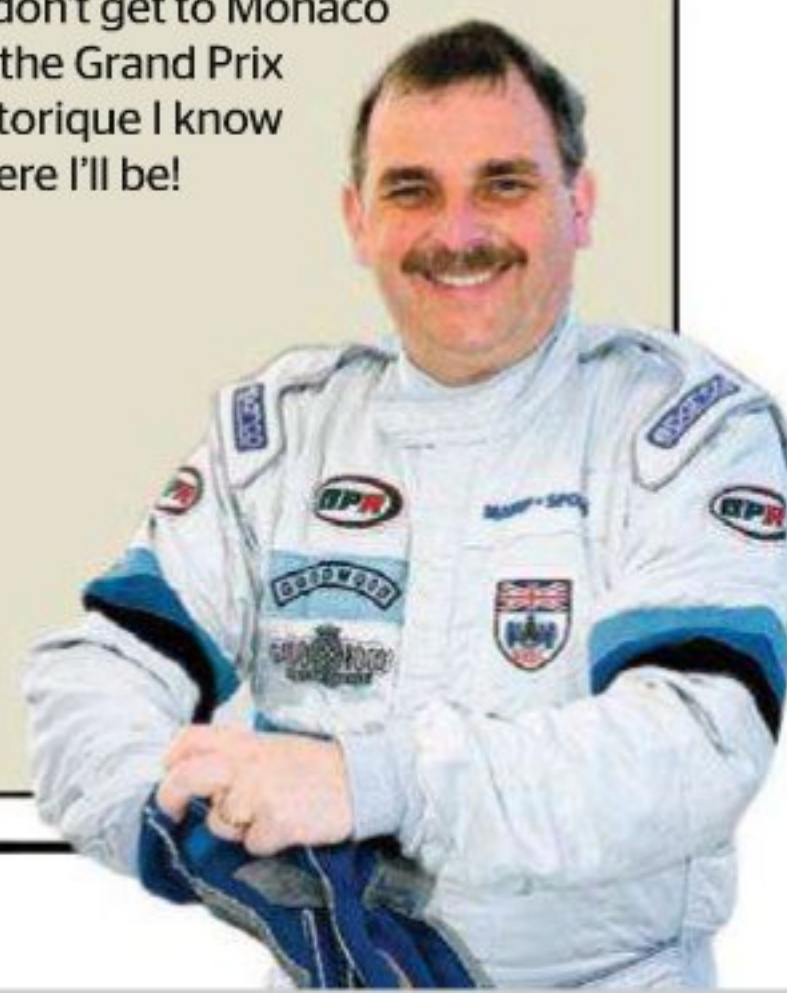
Numerous cars caught my eye under the spotlights - which again highlighted just how modern techniques and paint finishes have transformed the presentation of rebuilds or reconstructions - and I was taken by the effort that went into Michael Waller's restoration of

the unique Fiat-powered Hillwood Formula Junior, one of four fringe front-engined machines looking to earn coveted Goodwood grid slots.

Historic karting is going from strength-to-strength, thus it was also great to introduce 1960s gearbox racer Brian Magee (who produced the decals I designed for Arthur Collier and his ex-John Turner F5000 Leda-based Skoda-Chevrolet supersaloon in the '70s) to pioneer karter Barrie Williams. Brian had just renovated one of the Villiers-engined Fastakarts that 'Whizzo's father made in Bromyard from '59 until '63. With its Babycham turquoise frame it looked a treat...

Having got excited about sporting trials last March, following a day out at multiple champion Ian Wright's emporium in Kent, I was delighted that the Historic Sporting Trials Association (which Wright, Martyn Halliday and cohorts kicked off shortly afterwards) has taken off. Sixty plus cars - or at least entities - are now registered, including Martin Grindrod's ex-Rex Chappell/Eric Jackson Cotton-based RPD4. The inaugural dedicated event will take place at Long Compton in Oxfordshire on Sunday, May 12. If I don't get to Monaco for the Grand Prix Historique I know where I'll be!

"The quality of content at last weekend's ninth Race Retro was arguably the highest yet"





## IN BRIEF

Simonsen will race 458



### INTERNATIONAL GT RACING ACE

Allan Simonsen will return to British GT this season. The Dane will partner long-time co-driver Hector Lester in a Rosso Verde Ferrari 458 Italia.

### FERGUS WALKINSHAW, SON OF

legendary team boss and racer Tom, will race for leading squad Century Motorsport in this season's Ginetta GT Supercup. The Scottish student and British GT4 race winner Josh Wakefield will both race Ginetta G55s for former G50 Cup and Formula Ford champion Nathan Freke's team.

### BRITISH RALLYCROSS

frontrunner David Binks will partner former World Rally champion Marcus Gronholm in Best Buy Racing's assault on the Global Rallycross Championship this season. Binks and Gronholm will drive a pair of OMSE-run Ford Fiesta VIs in the seven-event GRC, with Binks, who finished third in last year's BRC, also carrying out test and development duties with the team.

### OLIVER BASEY-FISHER HAS BEEN

awarded a fully funded season in this year's Ginetta Junior championship after winning the marque's second annual Ginetta Junior Scholarship. Basey-Fisher contested last year's Winter Series at Snetterton with TJ Motorsport.

### FORMER ARP F3 CLASS A AND

Britcar Production champion Gino Ussi will return to Club F3 this season. The South African has joined Grays Motorsport to contest the MSV F3 Cup, which has attracted 21 registrations ahead of the category's return to championship status.

### SAXMAX RUNNER-UP WILL

Davison will race in the Renault Clio Cup this season with Westbourne Motorsport. Davison, who tested at Donington Park last week, will drive alongside series returnee James Colburn and Mini Challenge graduate Ant Whorton-Eales.



Davison has bought a Clio



Lola racer Schleifer has linked up with Masters

Masters Historics

## Can-Am revival joins Masters

Historic club to run four-round series for Can-Am and InterSerie sportscars

### MASTERS HISTORIC RACING HAS

joined forces with the Canadian American Challenge Cup to promote a four-round series for Can-Am and InterSerie sports-racers this year.

The Can-Am InterSerie Challenge will cater for cars of the 1966-1974 Can-Am era and sports-prototypes built between 1971 and 1978.

Peter Schleifer originally announced his plans for a Can-Am series in 2010 (see AUTOSPORT, November 18 2010), and has now linked up with the Masters InterSerie Revival. Races will be run at Barcelona, Brands Hatch,

Spa, and Donington Park.

Masters Historic Racing event manager Rachel Bailey said: "This is a great step forward for the Can-Am and InterSerie classes. The cars are powerful, spectacular and great crowd-pleasers but that section of the sport has been fragmented recently.

"InterSerie was the European equivalent of Can-Am and there are plenty of cars around that will fit in and be competitive. We've had some great cars on the grids in the past, and with cars from mainland Europe coming to race as well, we should have a series

that goes from strength to strength."

There will be three classes for sports-prototypes based on age and engine size, and two classes for Can-Am cars, split at the end of 1969. Touring cars, previously allowed in the InterSerie Revival, will not be eligible.

The initiative comes after the Supersports series, which previously allowed big-banger Can-Am machines to compete, moved solely towards European two-litre sportscar championship cars to match the Historic Sports Car Club's Martini Trophy (see AUTOSPORT, January 5).



Martini Lancia at La Sarthe

Group C/GTP

## Second Lancia for Group C grid

**TWO MARTINI LANCIA LC2s WILL** be on Group C Racing grids this year.

Roger Wills has acquired the longest-serving of the turbocharged Ferrari V8-engined cars with the intention of debuting it in the Le Mans 24 Hours supporting event in June.

Chassis 002, which was sold by the factory to the USA when it was retired, contested the French endurance marathon twice in 1983

and '85. It finished sixth in 1985 with Bob Wollek and Alessandro Nannini sharing with Australian Lucio Cesario. In '83 it won the Imola 1000kms with Teo Fabi and Hans Heyer.

Kiwi Wills, who has raced a Courage-Porsche in the historic retrospective to date, has entrusted the Lancia to series prime mover Bob Berridge's team, which has already fettled Rupert Clevely's LC2.

### Radical UK Cup

## Radical return for Padmore

### SUCCESSFUL BRITISH

sportscar racer Nick Padmore will dovetail his return to the French VdeV championship with a comeback to Radical racing in 2012 with a new team.

VdeV race winner Padmore will share a Team TFT Norma M20 for a second season in the French series with Jean-Lou Rihon, while also spearheading Gary Kane's attack on the Radical UK Cup with new squad RAW Motorsport.

The new team, headed by Radical works driver Rob Wheldon and Keith Bisp, will run a new SR3 RS for Padmore/Kane in the Supersports class of the UK Cup, which gets underway at Snetterton on March 10.

Padmore said: "It almost feels like I'm going back to my roots as Radical Sportscars gave me my first break into sportscar racing back in 2002, so I will be out to add to the success and thoroughly enjoyable five seasons I had in the championship."



Porsche Club

# Famous Mowlem Porsche returns

## THE PORSCHE 993 IN WHICH

Johnny Mowlem secured two Porsche Cup titles in the 1990s is to return to racing in the Porsche Club Championship this season.

Mowlem, who now races sportscars in American, took the 1996 and 1997 titles with the 993 C2. He won all 17 rounds of the series on his way to his second crown.

Class One racer Richard Bennett acquired the 993 last year and has now rebuilt it ready to contest a full season in 2012.

"In 2011 I stepped up to Class One with a 968CS, but I never got on with the car," he said. "Then I went off at Thruxton and had to stand and watch as someone else went off, hit my car, and wrote it off.

"I had always been tempted by a 993, and found one in Ireland that turned out

to be the ex-Mowlem car. It was part of the Porsche Club display at the AUTOSPORT Show in January, and I met Johnny. He jumped in it, saying, 'this was the car that really started my

international career'. He then signed the car, so I'm hoping I can do the car and myself justice."

The seven-round championship kicks off at Brands Hatch on May 5.



Mowlem dominated Porsche Cup in 993

Britcar

# White joins Spanish Mosler pair for Britcar campaign

## BRITISH ENDURANCE CLASS 1

champion Paul White will join rivals Javier Morcillo and Manuel Cintrano for a part-campaign in the series this year.

White and Calum Lockie won the 2011 class title in a Mosler, but work commitments mean White will not run his own team this year.

Instead, he will share the Azteca version with Morcillo and Cintrano. All three will drive in the longer races, while White and Cintrano will take turns to race with Morcillo in the shorter events.

In Britcar's separate Production Cup, ex-Ford Fiesta aces Harry and Edward Cockill plan to contest the full series, plus the Silverstone 24 Hours, in their Honda Integra Type R. The brothers won their class by a lap, and finished fourth overall, on their first outing in the car at Brands Hatch in November.

MMC Motorsport, which previously raced under the Race Car Spares

banner, will also run a BMW for Dave Cox and sons Michael and Jason in a full Production Cup assault. A SEAT Leon Supercopa will be added to the line-up at selected events. Gavin Spencer will be the main driver and will be joined by a pro for each outing, with former BTCC racer Tom Ferrier expected at the Silverstone opener.

Mazda MX5 racers Clive Bailey and Paul Black have also teamed up to contest the BEC with an ex-Eurocup Leon Cupra.



Azteca Mosler is often a Britcar pacesetter

Ginetta Challenge

# Pearson to race G40

## REIGNING GINETTA G20

Challenge champion Stuart Pearson will graduate to the top G40 class of the single-make championship this season.

Former 750 Motor Club Stock Hatch and Ginetta Club champion Pearson earned use of a G40 for 2012 as his prize for beating Gary Simms to last year's G20 class title within the Ginetta Challenge.

He will run the car under his own Stuart Pearson Racing banner and has also conducted a contest on the Ginetta Facebook page asking fans to design the livery for the car.

The winner was due to be chosen as AUTOSPORT closed for press this week. They will also be invited to attend a race meeting of their choice as part of their prize.

## IN BRIEF



Falcon for Jordan

## BTCC TEAM BOSS MIKE JORDAN

will share Westley Harding's Ford Falcon in the opening Masters event of the season at Oulton Park later this month. Both drivers were joined by Oliver Bryant at Donington last Thursday, as there are plans for Bryant to share the car later in the season.

## EX-RENAULT CLIO AND SPIDER

frontrunner David Shaw returned to the tracks last Thursday when he tested his ex-Nelson Piquet Ralt RT1 for the first time at Donington Park. Shaw is coming back to racing in the Classic F3 after a lengthy lay-off.

## FORMER FIAT CHALLENGE RACE

winner Richard Puddle will contest this year's Ma5da MX5 championship after winning the annual scholarship run by frontrunning squad Blendini Motorsport.

## THE UNIQUE HILLWOOD FORMULA

Junior is to race again in Britain this season, having been returned from the USA after half a century. Class expert Michael Waller has restored the front-engined Fiat-powered car and hopes to race it at Goodwood.

## HILLCLIMBERS CHRIS MERRICK

and Simon Durling will try circuit racing in 2012, having acquired a brace of early '60s sports-racers for HSCC Guards Trophy events. Merrick has bought a 1600cc Lotus twin-cam-powered Merlyn Mk6, while veteran Durling will race a two-litre BMW-engined Elva Mk7S.

## MG OWNERS' CLUB REGULARS PAUL

Clackett and Jody Bowcott are both moving into the Ford Fiesta Challenge this season. "We wanted to race in something different, competitive and with full grids," explained Clackett, after both drivers tried their new cars at Donington for the first time last week.

## MIKE SMITH'S FORD ESCORT IS THE

provisional winner of this year's Pomeroy Trophy event at Silverstone.



Escort won on Pom's 60th birthday

VAG Trophy

# BTCC team to race Mk4 Golf

## BRITISH TOURING CAR SQUAD

AmD Milltek Racing is planning to enter the new Volkswagen Golf MkIV class in the VAG Trophy.

AmD, which has run a Golf in the BTCC for the past two years, will soon start building a car for the new low-cost category.

Team boss Shaun Hollamby said: "There are some guys here who want to race and this is a good way of doing it.

"This is a cheap way of moving forward and it looks like a good championship.

"It's not a massive amount of work - a week and I think it'll be done."

Hollamby, who retired from the BTCC as a driver during 2011, did not rule out racing the MkIV himself at some point during the season.



New Mk4 racers are in build



# NASCAR'S NEW FRONTIER

**With official support from across the Pond, Frenchman Jerome Galpin hopes his fledgling V8 stock car series will become the breeding ground for a new European generation of NASCAR superstars. By BEN ANDERSON**

Culturally speaking, the US often seems such an insular country to the rest of the world, and its motorsport reflects that: Americans do things their way, and everyone else can, well, take the nearest freeway.

NASCAR is the epitome of the American way of going motor racing – brash, basic, (im)pure and simple. We have plenty of short-oval stock car racing in the UK of course (as any hardened Wimbledon resident will know), but no-nonsense oval thrills without frills have never quite captured the European racing imagination in the way they have dominated the psyche of our friends across the Pond.

Whether this is down to ignorance or snobbery, it's an attitude that Frenchman Jerome Galpin is hoping to change with his Racecar Euroseries, which this year became the first European category to be officially sanctioned by NASCAR. It's a series that was born of rally team boss Galpin's love of American stock car racing, and has grown quickly from its domestic base on the French Grand Tourisme package (equivalent to the UK's TOCA) into a pan-European championship that will support the DTM and World GT in 2012.

Beyond a wordy new title (Euro Racecar NASCAR Touring Series), and the chance for his drivers to rub shoulders with the Tony Stewarts and Jimmie Johnsons of this world at the annual NASCAR prizegiving gala, Galpin hopes this marriage will allow a young French stock car series to become the launching pad for European drivers wanting to become NASCAR superstars.

"NASCAR now recognises our series as part of their family at Touring Series level, where the potential drivers start if they want to progress," says Galpin, who administers Euro Racecar through

his Team FJ organisation, which builds the stock-block V8-powered cars used in the series. "The series is a K&N Pro Series East and West equivalent – the first step for all European drivers to enter NASCAR."

To get to this point has been a softly-softly-catchy-monkey process that began with Galpin ingratiating himself with the NASCAR community by visiting races up and down the United States. Six years ago he also secured a deal to become a French importer for Sunoco, and the experience he gained supplying fuel to the French VdeV sportscar championship gave him the confidence to start his own series.

Support from Federation Francaise du Sport Automobile president Nicolas Deschaux helped Galpin get things off the ground at Nogaro in April 2009, and that inaugural season caught the attention of NASCAR. By the following year, Galpin had managed to convince NASCAR representatives to come to the Nurburgring and see Racecar Euroseries for themselves. They clearly liked what they saw.

"NASCAR in the world of racing is a huge name and the more you get involved, the more you understand that it's much more than a style of racing – it's like a family of passionate people with the same spirit and philosophy," explains Galpin. "In Europe it's a fight between series, where everyone tries to catch each other out. In NASCAR, they do everything they can to help each other. Over here, the top level of racing is much more important than the bottom level. In NASCAR, the top-level driver is interested in the lower levels and races in them."

"We tried to keep our own identity [at first] and not overstate our case. As part of that family now we will get our own page on the NASCAR website,



## Euro NASCAR tech spec

CHASSIS	FIA certified tubular
ENGINE	5.7-litre Chevrolet V8
POWER	450bhp
GEARBOX	G-Force four-speed manual
TYRES	Michelin slicks & wets
BRAKES	Brembo 4-pot with steel discs
PRICE	€64,000 (before VAT)

Racecar Euroseries joined DTM at Brands in 2011



V8 cockpit is a 'no-frills' environment



## THE FRENCH INVADE KENT

Getting sideways in V8 grunter



### THE EURO RACECAR NASCAR TOURING

Series recently held a sampler day at Brands Hatch, to allow prospective drivers to get a flavour of NASCAR-style racing cars. The cars look similar to the European Late Models that regularly tear up the short-oval tracks of Europe – except these lightweight V8s are designed to turn right as well as left!

“We wanted this car to be a middle point between GT and NASCAR,” explains Galpin, whose Team FJ builds the lightweight V8s at its Blois base in France. “Everything is spec because we want pure racing. We want the most important part of the car to be the driver so everyone has the same chance.”

Team FJ brought three wet-shod Dodge Challengers to a cold and damp Brands – cars that were also used in last year’s Race of Champions event in Germany. With major set-up changes broadly limited to adjusting the rear rollcentre via trailing links to the rear axle, it’s pretty much all about just getting in and driving.

The locked rear differential induces notable understeer through the slower corners and the car’s large mass creates plenty of inertia, which makes it difficult to stop and turn efficiently. But the glorious grunt of the V8 engine more than makes up for this on the straights.

They are simple, unrefined, American-style muscle cars, with big bodies, big engines, big tyres and big steering wheels. They are about forearms and feet. As one colleague remarked: “You feel like Thor when you’re driving one.”



Galpin (right) tells AUTOSPORT his vision

which has five million hits per year and will make our drivers known as potential stock car racers and road-course specialists.

“Our ultimate aim is to have our drivers in the NASCAR Nationwide and Sprint Cup and get more European drivers racing in NASCAR.”

It’s a bold ambition and one Galpin recognises is largely dependent on his drivers doing well when they do finally race in the US. For the past two seasons, Team FJ has paid for its top driver to contest the NASCAR Toyota All-Star Showdown at Irwindale in California, where last year former French Formula Renault champion Lucas Lasserre finished 15th against a field of the best regional NASCAR racers around.

Unfortunately, future editions of that event were cancelled last August, after NASCAR’s sponsorship deal with Toyota expired, but Galpin is already working on a deal to enter 2011 champ Eric Helary in a K&N race at Sears Point this season. With firm links established Stateside and cars that last year obtained FIA safety certification, focus has shifted to

attracting more teams and drivers from beyond a mainly French base.

“We had 25 cars in 2011, but because we started as an FFSA series most of our teams and drivers are French,” says Galpin. “For 2012, I expect 30 cars and I want to push for more foreign teams. We’ve already secured teams in Belgium and have people coming from Switzerland, but I want to get an English team. We are not a big manufacturer like Porsche or Renault, so we have to take it step by step.”

**“We are a K&N Pro Series East and West equivalent – the first step for all Europeans to enter NASCAR”**

**Galpin’s series should feed US stock car scene**

It’s this step-by-step approach that’s been key to Galpin’s efforts in bridging the cultural divide between European and US stock car racing. The next test is in convincing more European racers that their future lays in the United States, and that their first step on that road should be taken with him. ☼



## YOUR SAY

What you think of the motorsport news of the past week

Maldonado and Senna:  
worth a punt by Williams



### Williams' rich source of talent

Do you know, I'm sick of reading people slating Williams for taking Pastor Maldonado and Bruno Senna this year. Did Rubens Barrichello sort out the problems last year's car had? No. Did Maldonado regularly outqualify him? Yes. Enough with the rose-tinted Rubens glasses. Bruno and Pastor have potential as well as buckets of cash, so why not take a punt? Come on Williams!

**Duncan Scargill**, Wakefield, West Yorks

EDITORIAL CONTACT [mail@autosport.com](mailto:mail@autosport.com)

**Sir, I find myself compelled** to write to complain about the styling of the so-called modern breed of so-called Formula 1 car.

The placement of the engine behind the driver is an appalling affront. Such placement can come to no good for it can only lead to further abominations.

I implore the Commission Sportive Internationale to ensure that if there are to be so-called wings on these cars that they remain high on thin stilts as surely the only aesthetic allowable.

While we must sit up and

beg the CSI to see sense, the driver may be able to increasingly recline within the horror of a streamlined so-called chassis, and how we envy his inability to see the sprouting of engine covers, underbody tunnels and X-wings.

Of course tyres cannot go without mention since all of this so-called modernity will only lead to future generations seeing tread only when the weather is inclement. Remembering, sir, that as standards become lower so will the engines, expanding so-called V-angles

and leading to the possible reduction in the number of cylinders to below the 16 that surely represents civilisation at the minimum bearable?

In conclusion, all F1 cars must conform in perpetuity to the shape that I became accustomed to when I struck out to seek my fortune at 14. For, to continue my earlier prediction, removal of the engine to the rear will surely open the way to a small and unappealing bump on the chassis in front of the driver.

God save the King!

**Paul Irwin**  
Bexleyheath

**To anyone considering** paying £30 per month for the Sky F1 channel, can I point something out?

The 2012 F1 season runs from March 18 to November 25, with a shutdown in August. But the channel has a 12-month minimum subscription. Therefore, before you sign up, ask Sky, 'What do I get for my monthly £30 during the whole of August and between December 2012 and mid-March 2013?'

One thing is for sure, it will not be a refund...

**Jonathan N Palmer**  
Rotherham

AUTOSPORT.COM

### TOP FIVE ON OUR WEBSITE

1. FIA TO CLOSE OFF ECU LOOPHOLE
2. ANALYSIS: WHAT'S WRONG WITH THE LOTUS
3. LOTUS PULLS OUT OF BARCELONA TEST
4. VETTEL IMPRESSED BY McLAREN PACE
5. TRULLI 'SURPRISED' BY NUMBER OF OFFERS

AUTOSPORT.COM PLUS

### TOP STORY ONLINE

F1'S TOP 10 PRE-SEASON TESTING SHOCKS

To read this exclusive feature and many others like it, log on to [autosport.com/plus](http://autosport.com/plus) and choose which package you'd like. A month will cost £5.50, a year £46. Includes access to Forix – the ultimate stats website.

WIN!



### ROAD ANGEL VANTAGE

This week's star letter will receive a Road Angel Vantage – a dedicated safety camera and blackspot locator that displays the legal speed limit of every road you drive, automatically and wirelessly updating its database every few minutes as you drive. For more details on Road Angel visit [www.roadangelgroup.com](http://www.roadangelgroup.com). Please ensure that your full address is included on all correspondence.

### CORRECTIONS AND CLARIFICATIONS

● On p13 of last week's issue, the number of starts by the 2011 and 2012 F1 grids were the wrong way round.

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)



# THE LATEST GEAR

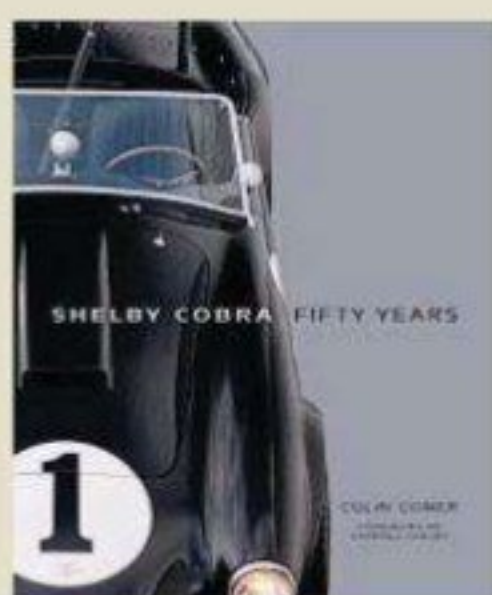
Desirable new releases for motor racing fans: books, DVDs, models, art and gifts



## McLAREN 2012 F1 MERCHANDISE

From £19.99 (autosport.com/shop)

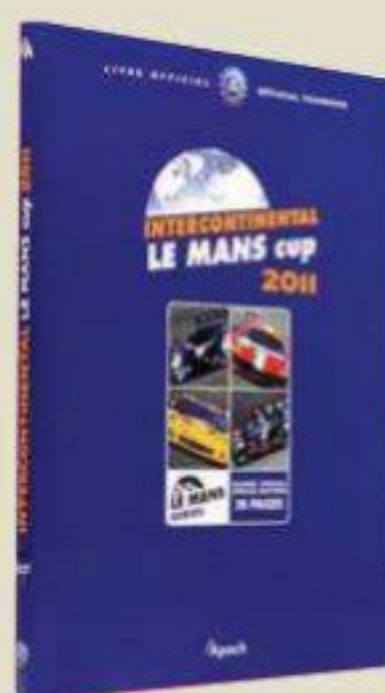
Right, pay attention Jenson and/or Lewis fans: the 2012 range of McLaren Mercedes official F1 team clobber is upon us – and just in time for the start of the season. The five most popular items are sure to be the beanie hat (£19.99), baseball cap in Jenson or Lewis livery (£24.99), T-shirt (£39.99), Polar-fleece sweatshirt (£69.99) and waterproof jacket (£149.99). Check the website for the full selection.



## SHELBY COBRA BOOK

\$40 (978 0760 340 295)  
C Comer (motorbooks.com)

This is the story of how Texan chicken farmer-turned racing driver and car manufacturer Carroll Shelby exceeded his ambition to create an iconic, high-performance sportscar. Half a century later, the Cobra still commands a cult following and that fact is borne out in this authoritative work.



## ILMC REVIEW 2011

£25.99 (978 2930 354 607)  
autosport.com/shop

Renowned sportscar writer and historian Jean-Marc Teissedre – he of official ACO Le Mans annuals fame – brings all the stories from the final season of the shortlived Intercontinental Le Mans Cup, with 156 pages of reports, tech focus, statistics and pics – from all the prototype and GT classes.



## BURNS RALLY MODEL SET

£129.99 (1:43-scale)  
autosport.com/shop

The late, great Richard Burns, world rally champion of 2001, won his home event – Rally GB – three times on the trot and Trofeu's limited-to-99-pieces, 1:43-scale set celebrates those wins in 1998 for Mitsubishi and 1999/2000 for Subaru. Order now – they will go very quickly...

## HOT ON THE WEB THIS WEEK

### YOUTUBE: FORD LOSES 1987 BATHURST VICTORY



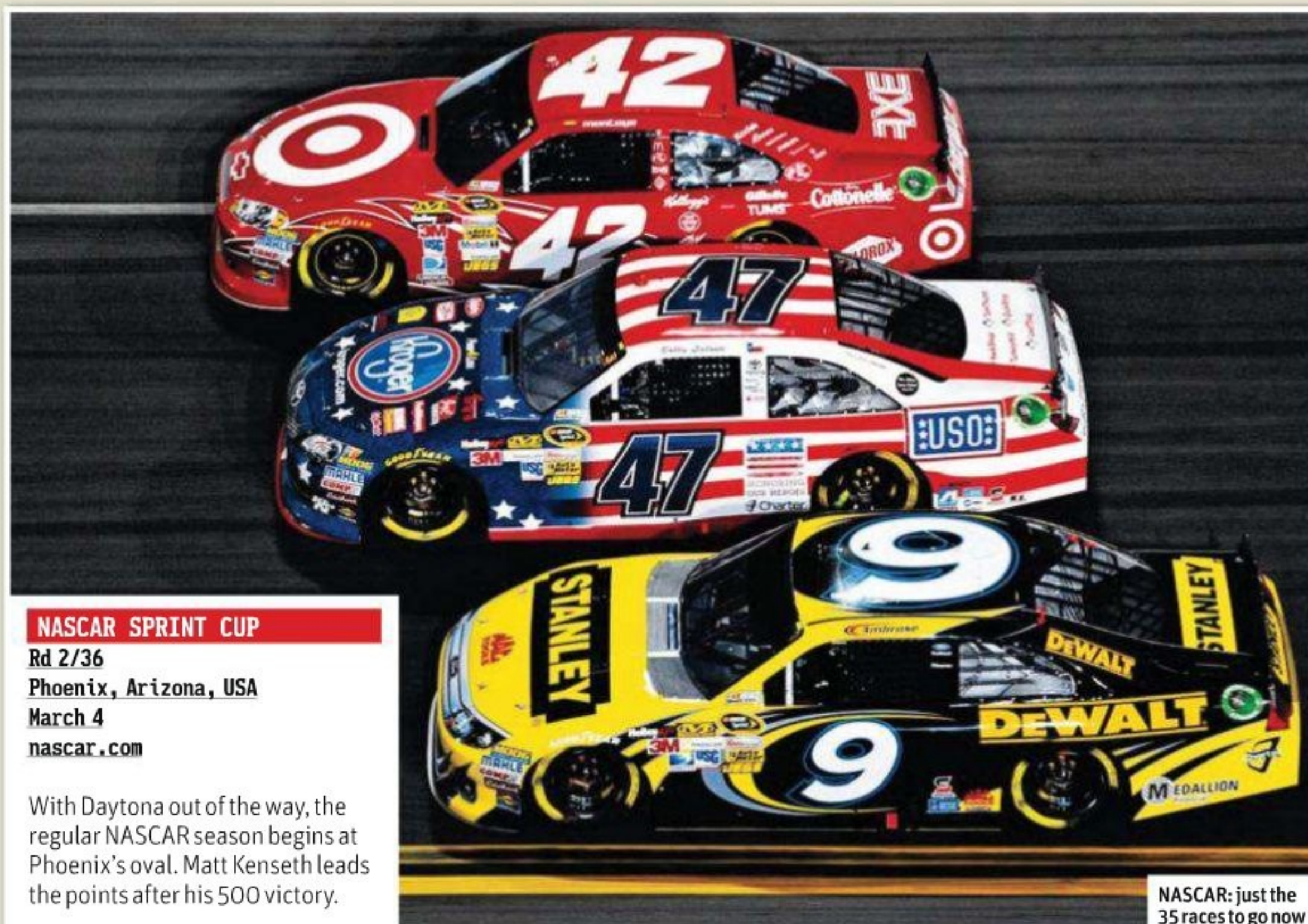
### SEARCH FOR: 1987 Bathurst 1000 Part 1 (9:35)

If you've read Gary Watkins' retrospective on the 1987 World Touring Car showdown between BMW and Ford elsewhere in this issue (p58), check out this two-part cracker from the greatest tin-top race in the world.



# WHAT'S ON...

Your guide to the best events taking place in the UK and around the world this week – plus TV and online

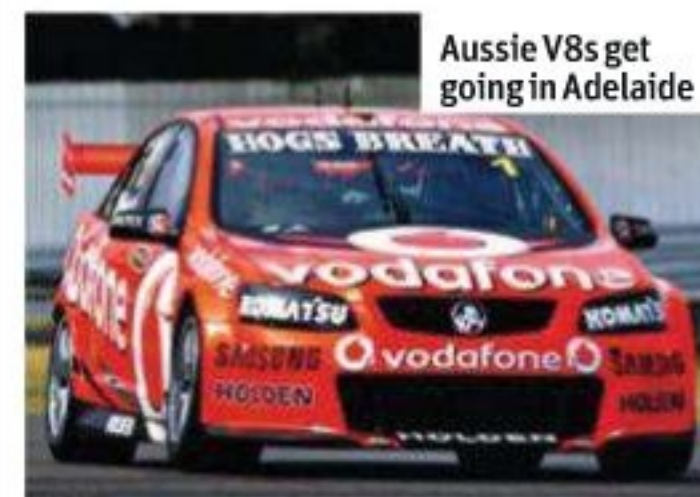


## NASCAR SPRINT CUP

Rd 2/36  
Phoenix, Arizona, USA  
March 4  
[nascar.com](http://nascar.com)

With Daytona out of the way, the regular NASCAR season begins at Phoenix's oval. Matt Kenseth leads the points after his 500 victory.

NASCAR: just the 35 races to go now



Aussie V8s get going in Adelaide

## V8 SUPERCARS

Rd 1/15  
Adelaide, Australia  
March 3-4  
[v8supercars.com.au](http://v8supercars.com.au)

## NASCAR NATIONWIDE SERIES

Rd 2/33  
Phoenix, Arizona, USA  
March 3  
[nascar.com](http://nascar.com)

## EURO F3 OPEN WINTER SERIES

Rds 1 & 2/2  
Paul Ricard, France  
March 3  
[gtsport.es](http://gtsport.es)

## HERITAGE MOTOR CENTRE

The Heritage Motor Centre is home to the world's largest historic collection of British cars and draws together the collections of the British Motor Industry Heritage Trust.

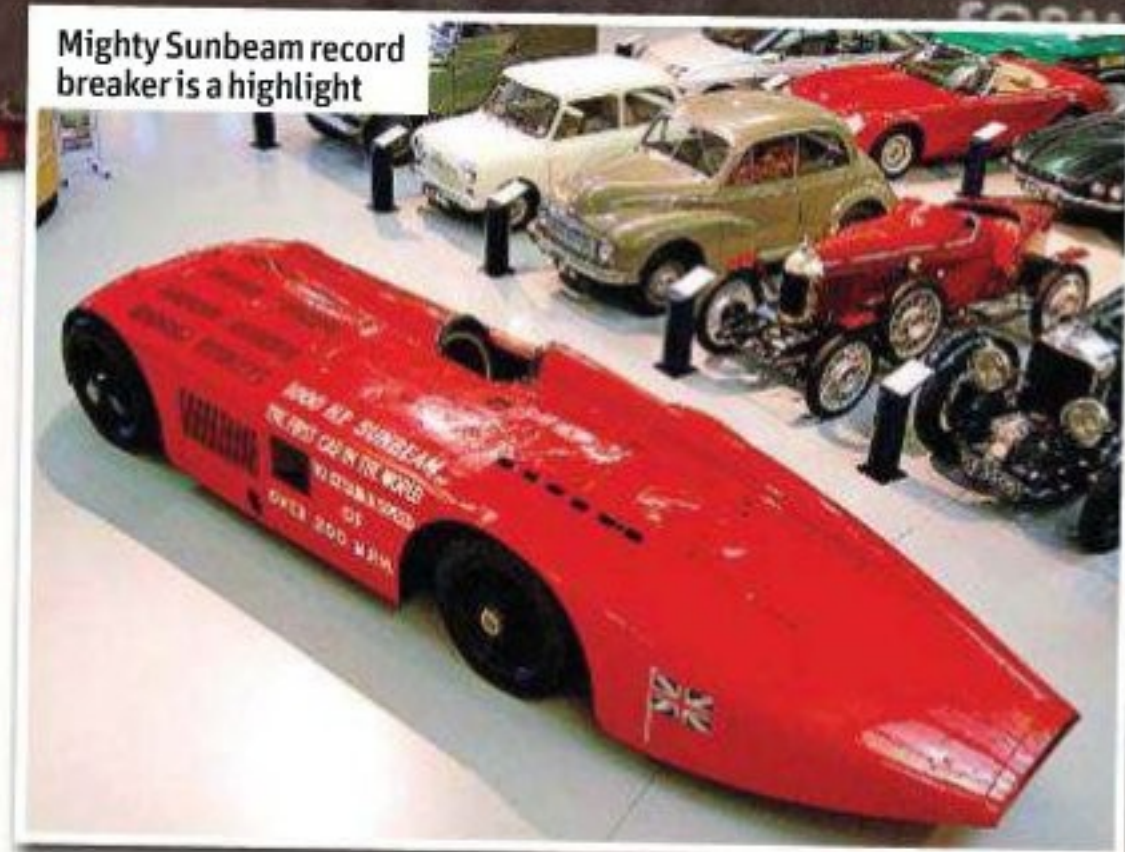
The collection boasts over 250 cars that span the classic, vintage and veteran eras. It includes iconic cars such as Austin's 100 HP, the first Land Rover and Morris Minor off the production line, the MG 'Old Number One', the Thunderbirds 'Fab1' car and a 2000-spec Jaguar F1 car.

Its special exhibition for 2012 – fittingly in the year

of the London Olympics – is entitled 'Best of British Motoring Record Breakers'. The display includes the Sunbeam 1000hp, the first car ever to set a Land Speed Record of over 200mph, and the steam car 'Inspiration', which holds the Land Speed Record for a steam car – set in 2009. The previous record was set way back in 1906!

There's also a selection of pukka racing cars to look at in the main hall, including a Computervision-liveried Metro 6R4 and Triumph TR7 – among other classic rally cars in a Monte Carlo-

Mighty Sunbeam record breaker is a highlight



themed display – plus a Unipart March Formula 3 car and Group C Aston Martin.

There is no extra charge to see the Motoring Record Breakers Exhibition, which runs from now until September 2, as it is included in the standard museum entry fees, which

are: adults £11; children £8 (5-16 years); under-five free; concessions £9; and family £34 (two adults & up to three children).

The Centre is situated in Gaydon, Warwickshire just off junction 12 of the M40.

More details at [heritage-motor-centre.co.uk](http://heritage-motor-centre.co.uk).

# ACCESS ALL AREAS

Our guide on how to keep the motorsport flame burning through the cold winter months



## Television

### THURSDAY MARCH 1

0010-0315 [Motors TV](#)  
Dubai 24 Hours: Highlights  
0030-0130 [Sky Sports 4](#)  
Max Power  
0430-0500 [ESPN](#)  
Planet Speed  
0600-0700, 1200-1300, 2100-2200  
[ESPN Classic](#)  
MotoGP: Australian Grand Prix 2007  
0800-0900 [Premier Sports](#)  
NASCAR Sprint Cup: Daytona 500  
Highlights  
1750-2100 [Motors TV](#)  
NASCAR Nationwide: Daytona  
Highlights

### FRIDAY MARCH 2

0315-0600 [Motors TV](#)  
Dubai 24 Hours: Highlights  
0600-0700, 1200-1300, 2100-2200  
[ESPN Classic](#)  
MotoGP: Malaysian Grand Prix 2007  
1830-1900 [Premier Sports](#)  
NASCAR: The Ultimate Motorsport  
(documentary)  
2100-2200 [Premier Sports](#)  
NASCAR Sprint Cup: Daytona 500  
Highlights

### SATURDAY MARCH 3

0355-0420 [Channel 5](#)  
Motorsport Mundial  
0600-0700, 1200-1300 [ESPN Classic](#)  
MotoGP: Spanish Grand Prix 2007  
1200-1300 [Sky Sports 3](#)  
Max Power  
1340-1445 [Motors TV](#)  
Dubai 24 Hours: Highlights

### 2115-0010 [Motors TV LIVE](#)

NASCAR Nationwide: Phoenix  
2230-2330 [Premier Sports](#)  
NASCAR Sprint Cup: Daytona 500  
Highlights

### SUNDAY MARCH 4

0600-0700, 1700-1800 [Sky Sports 3](#)  
Racemax  
0700-0800 [Sky Sports 4](#)  
Max Power  
0800-0900 [ESPN Classic](#)  
MotoGP: German Grand Prix 2007  
0800-0900 [ESPN Classic](#)  
MotoGP: Australian Grand Prix 2007  
1015-1045 [Premier Sports](#)  
NASCAR: The Ultimate Motorsport  
(documentary)  
1105-1210 [Motors TV](#)  
Dubai 24 Hours: Highlights  
1650-1925 [Motors TV](#)  
NASCAR Nationwide: Phoenix  
Highlights  
1900-2000 [ESPN Classic](#)  
MotoGP: Malaysian Grand Prix 2007  
1930-2330 [Premier Sports LIVE](#)  
NASCAR Sprint Cup: Phoenix

### MONDAY MARCH 5

0200-0300 [Sky Sports 4](#)  
Racemax  
0505-0600, 1340-1445 [Motors TV](#)  
Dubai 24 Hours: Highlights  
0930-1000 [Premier Sports](#)  
NASCAR: The Ultimate Motorsport  
(documentary)  
1100-1200 [ESPN Classic](#)  
MotoGP: Japanese Grand Prix 2007

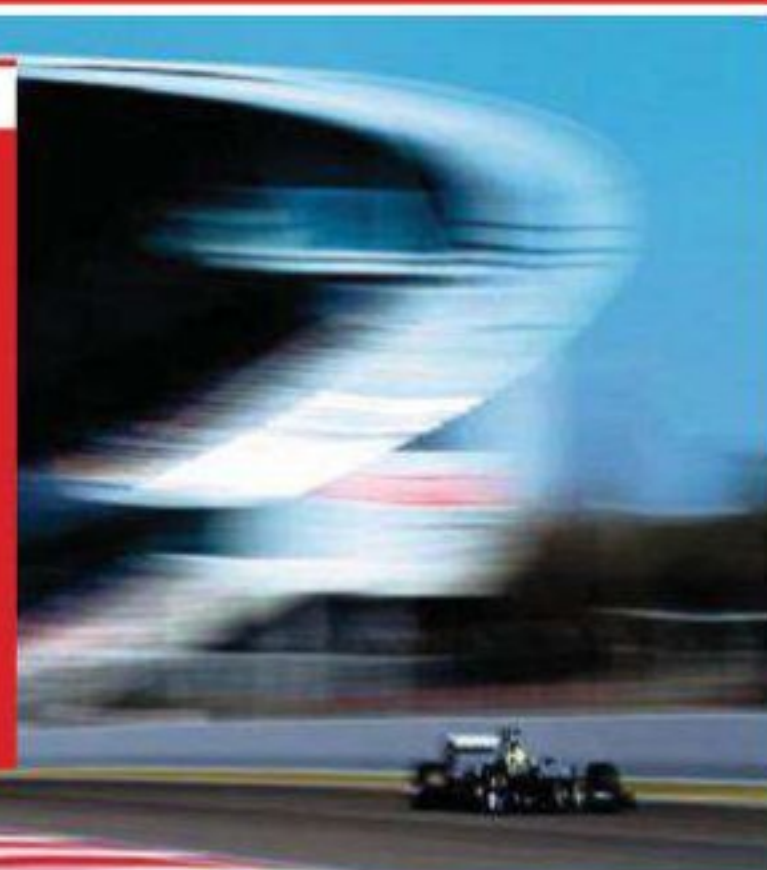
## Online

## AUTOSPORT.COM

Coming up on the web this week

### FINAL FORMULA 1 TESTING

Formula 1's teams have only four days of testing left at Barcelona to sort out any car problems ahead of the season-opening Australian Grand Prix. AUTOSPORT will, as ever, be at the heart of the action for the running at Barcelona to bring you breaking news, the best analysis and unparalleled live commentary coverage from the Spanish circuit.



Read AUTOSPORT.com on your phone to keep up to date

### AUTOSPORT.COM ANDROID APP OUT NOW

The AUTOSPORT app is now available for Android. Dial up AUTOSPORT.com on your smart phone for instant access to news, feature articles, image galleries and live text race commentary for a one-off fee of only £2.99 (there is no renewal cost). For more info, visit [www.autosport.com/app](http://www.autosport.com/app)

## REVVED UP OVER WHAT'S ON THE BOX

We cast a critical eye over the best and worst of this week's TV coverage



A wet Sunday in Florida produced four hours of TV

"HERE COMES THE RAIN again," Annie Lennox once famously sang. And, flagrantly mixing up my Eurythmics lyrics, who am I to disagree?

Certainly not at Daytona, where Annie would have been spot on with her soothsaying inclement-weather-based '80s classic. The world-famous 500-mile race was washed out for the first time in its history, which meant that host broadcaster Fox's pre-race show morphed into its entire four hours of coverage. Fill-in central usually makes for agonisingly painful television, but in NASCARland the

maestros of filling went into overdrive.

We learned that Joey Logano has an English Bulldog puppy (that bites), a bored Kevin Harvick had gorged on steak and eggs, and Marcos Ambrose was literally full of bacon.

Kasey Kahne compared knee-operation scars with pit reporter Krista Voda, and – ye Gods! – Danica Patrick had found her first two grey hairs. I bet a few lines of copy were filed over that revelation.

In the studio the Waltrip brothers, Darrell and Michael, entertained with their easy-going charm and authority as former race winners.

A question: "Do you want to be leading or running second in the race to the chequered flag?"

Michael: "I wanna be second so the guy in front thinks I'm pushing him to the chequered flag, then I'm gonna pull out and beat him."

Darrell: "I wanna be leading, and when the guy behind me pulls out to pass... BODYSLAM!"

And you thought Ricky Bobby was a work of fiction!

But the cherry on its

cake was Fox's snazzy virtual car, complete with Jeff Hammond on the telestrator, so he could highlight the new fuel injection, roof flaps, cockpit gauges and fuel pick-up lines. Anchorman John Roberts effortlessly plucked a wisecrack from thin air that Ron Burgundy would have been proud of: "I've always wanted to know about your pick-up lines, Jeff."

Stay classy, Daytona.  
*Revved Up*

"During the incessant rain we learned that fan favourite Danica Patrick had discovered her first two grey hairs"

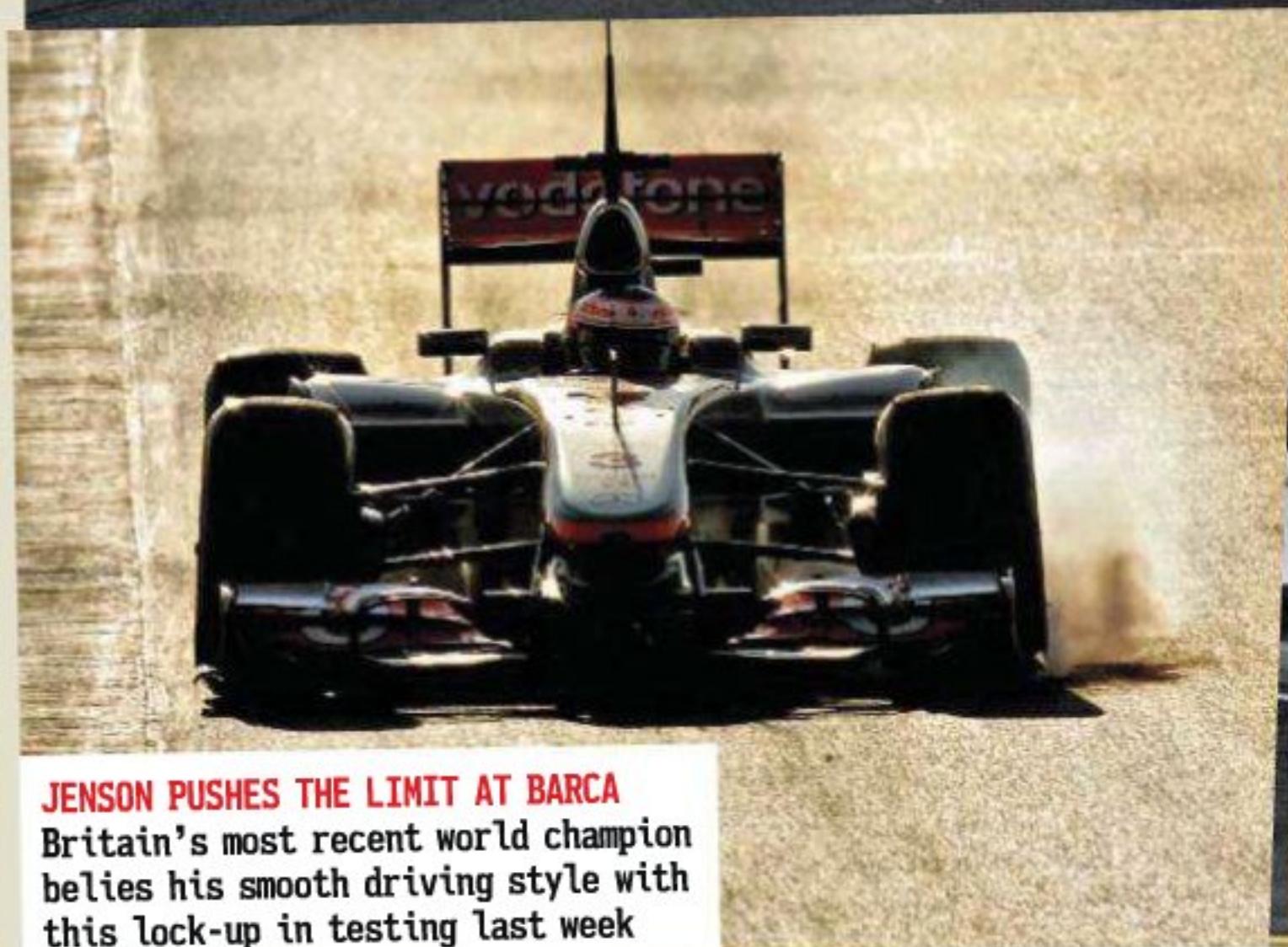


# THE WEEK IN PICTURES

Our lensmen pounding the beat from Bathurst to Daytona

## A SPLENDID PANORAMA DURING THE BATHURST 12 HOURS

The Audi R8 of Craig Lowndes, Warren Luff and Mark Eddy chases a rival around Bathurst's majestic Mount Panorama circuit

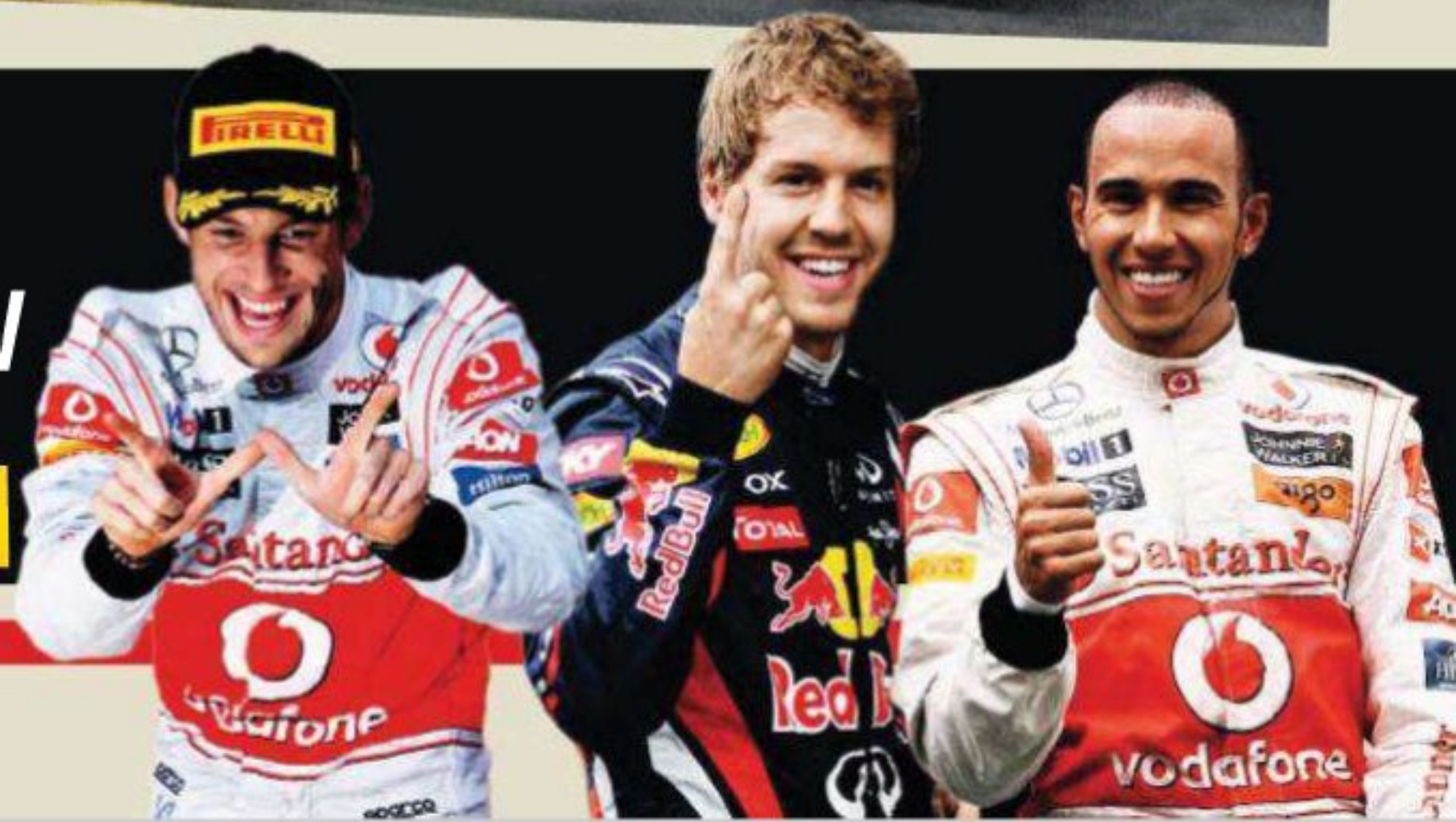


**JENSON PUSHES THE LIMIT AT BARCA**  
Britain's most recent world champion belies his smooth driving style with this lock-up in testing last week



**TAKING THE HIGH LINE AT DAYTONA**  
NASCAR Truck racer Joey Coulter (22) took a trip into the catchfencing on Friday night

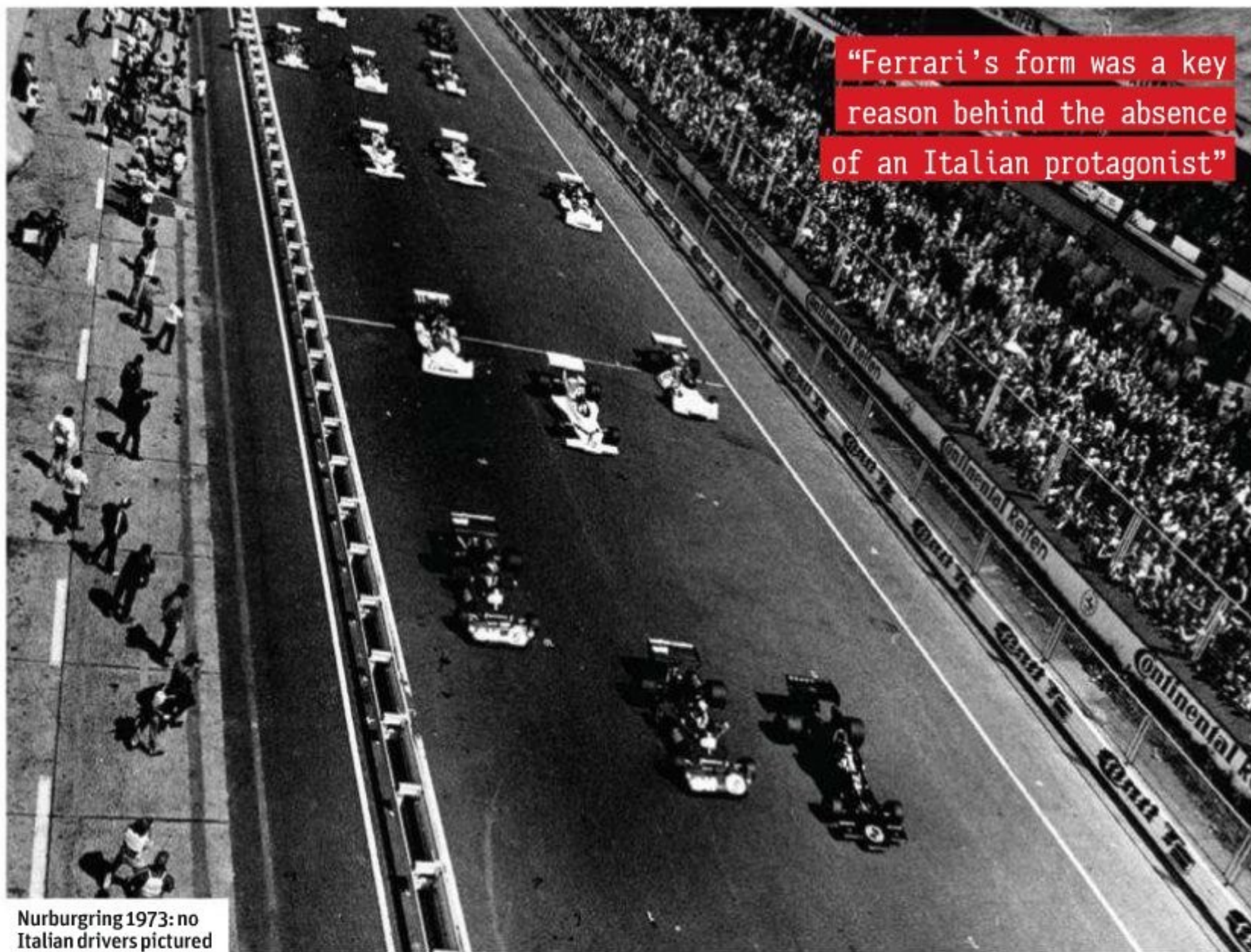
**NEXT WEEK**  
**F1 2012 SEASON PREVIEW**  
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# FROM THE ARCHIVE

Germany 1973: the last time no Italians were entered for a GP



Nürburgring 1973: no Italian drivers pictured

**HISTORY, AS A FLUID CONCEPT, CAN OFTEN LEND A** significance to events that was not felt at the time. So it was with the German Grand Prix of 1973, which remains – until this year's Australian GP at least – the last time that a world-championship Formula 1 race has not had an Italian on the entry list.

At the time, the milestone did not seem too significant. There had, after all, been no Italian entered at the previous round either, the Dutch GP at Zandvoort in which Roger Williamson tragically lost his life in one of F1's most haunting accidents. It was against that backdrop that F1 was simply happy to return to something approaching normality as it arrived at the Nürburgring.

Ferrari's form was a key reason behind the absence of an Italian protagonist. The Prancing Horse, unhappy with an uncompetitive 312B2 and struggling to bring in its B3 replacement, opted to skip the round, depriving Arturo Merzario of the chance to compete. Andrea de Adamich and Nanni Galli had also competed earlier in the season, but were without drives by the time of this, the 11th round of '73.

Victory at the 'Ring was eventually claimed by Jackie Stewart, while team-mate Francois Cevert completed a dominant race for Tyrrell by following him home, 1.6s behind. In contrast, Jacky Ickx, making a guest

appearance in the third works Yardley McLaren, finished more than 40s down in third.

Italy's fortunes were revived the following season, with Vittorio Brambilla joining Merzario in flying the Italian flag, and Carlo Facetti and Lella Lombardi each attempting to qualify for a race. For the next two decades the country was well represented through the likes of Michele Alboreto, Elio de Angelis, Riccardo Patrese and Andrea de Cesaris.

The 1996 Japanese GP also gains a new significance when viewed through an Italian prism. Remembered as the race in which Damon Hill clinched the world championship for Williams, it was also the last race in which an Italian did not compete.

Four Italians had started the season: Giancarlo Fisichella and Giovanni Lavaggi at Minardi, and Luca Badoer and Andrea Montermini at Forti, which succumbed to financial problems following the British GP, leaving Badoer and Montermini without a drive.

Fisichella only did eight races that year, so only Lavaggi lined up for Japan. He had 30 laps experience of Suzuka, in a Porsche sportscar in 1989, and failed to qualify, posting a 1m46.795s – almost eight seconds slower than poleman Jacques Villeneuve. Now, with Jarno Trulli and Vitantonio Liuzzi out of favour, Italy faces the 2012 season opener in Melbourne with no driver to represent it. ❧

## THIS WEEK IN...

A Haymarket publication 28 February 1974 17p

AUTOSPORT RACING CALENDAR - CAPRI II ANNOUNCED

**AUTOSPORT**

Walter Hayes discusses Ford and motor sport



**FEBRUARY 28 1974**

### RICHARD PETTY BECAME THE FIRST

driver to win back-to-back Daytona 500s this week in 1974, racking up the fifth of his record seven wins in Florida.

Unlike this year there was no rain to contend with, but unnervingly strong crosswinds dusted the track and buffeted the 40-car field as the race got underway. Petty qualified on the front row alongside polesitter and old rival David Pearson, and the pair was joined by Donnie Allison in the lead scrap.

Pearson dropped back with exhaust trouble, and the lead pack – consisting of 11 cars for the first 200 miles – thinned as the race wore on. Eventually it came down to Petty and Allison, both of whom suffered tyre problems due to bits of broken engine on the circuit. Petty punctured, while Allison was pitched onto the grass and wasn't able to recover, allowing The King to win.



PIC: LAT



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# KEN TYRRELL

■ German GP ■ Nurburgring ■ Jackie Stewart, Matra-Cosworth MS10 ■ August 4, 1968 ■ The JYS raindance



Stewart conquered the conditions for Tyrrell

**THE RACE I REMEMBER MOST** of all was the German Grand Prix. It must have been August of '68, at the Nurburgring.

Our introduction to grand prix racing that year had been a little easier than some people's. We had never constructed a car and had no intention of constructing a car, but Matra, who we had been with for two years in Formula 2, agreed to build a chassis, if we could get the then-new Cosworth engines.

It was one of those very bad weekends for weather, which were fairly common at the old 'Ring. There was quite a lot of fog around the whole track as we started practice and we sent Jackie off around the short loop just to bed brakes and pads. After that we sent him out to have a go on the long lap. Just as we did that they cancelled practice - you couldn't see between the marshals' posts.

Practice, as I remember it, was lost for the next day and then the next day, so anyone who had been on the long circuit in that first half an hour of practice on the first day, who had completed a lap, was almost certainly on the first rows of the grid.

We hadn't managed a single lap, so had to make do with the time

**"Jackie was reluctant to drive so, as a cricket fan, I leaned into his cockpit and said, 'You think you've got problems - England are 86 for 6 right now!'"**

Jackie set the next day in the wet. He was about sixth on the grid, something like that.

Raceday dawned with the rain still coming down. There were rivers of water across the track, so the organisers decided they would put on an extra practice on the Sunday. It meant the drivers could go out and see where the all the water was. It really was awful.

Jackie said that he didn't want to go out and, for the first time ever, I insisted my driver went out to see what it was like.

He agreed very reluctantly and went out to have a look. When he came in he told me the conditions were appalling and there shouldn't be a race. I listened to him and then, being a fan of cricket, I leaned into his cockpit and said,

"Jackie, you think you've got problems - England are 86 for 6 right now!"

Well, finally everything was ready and the race started and Jackie got into first position by the end of the very first lap and he led more or less from start to finish. It was staggering. I think in the end he finished up something like four minutes in front of the second-place man which, if I remember correctly, was Graham Hill in the Lotus.

It was the first time I had to make a racing driver drive a racing car and I didn't like that very much. He was reluctant to drive, the conditions were appalling, yet he still dominated the race

There is no question that Jackie was the best driver I have ever had and that was one of his greatest performances. ❧

First published April 14, 1988

## IN PROFILE



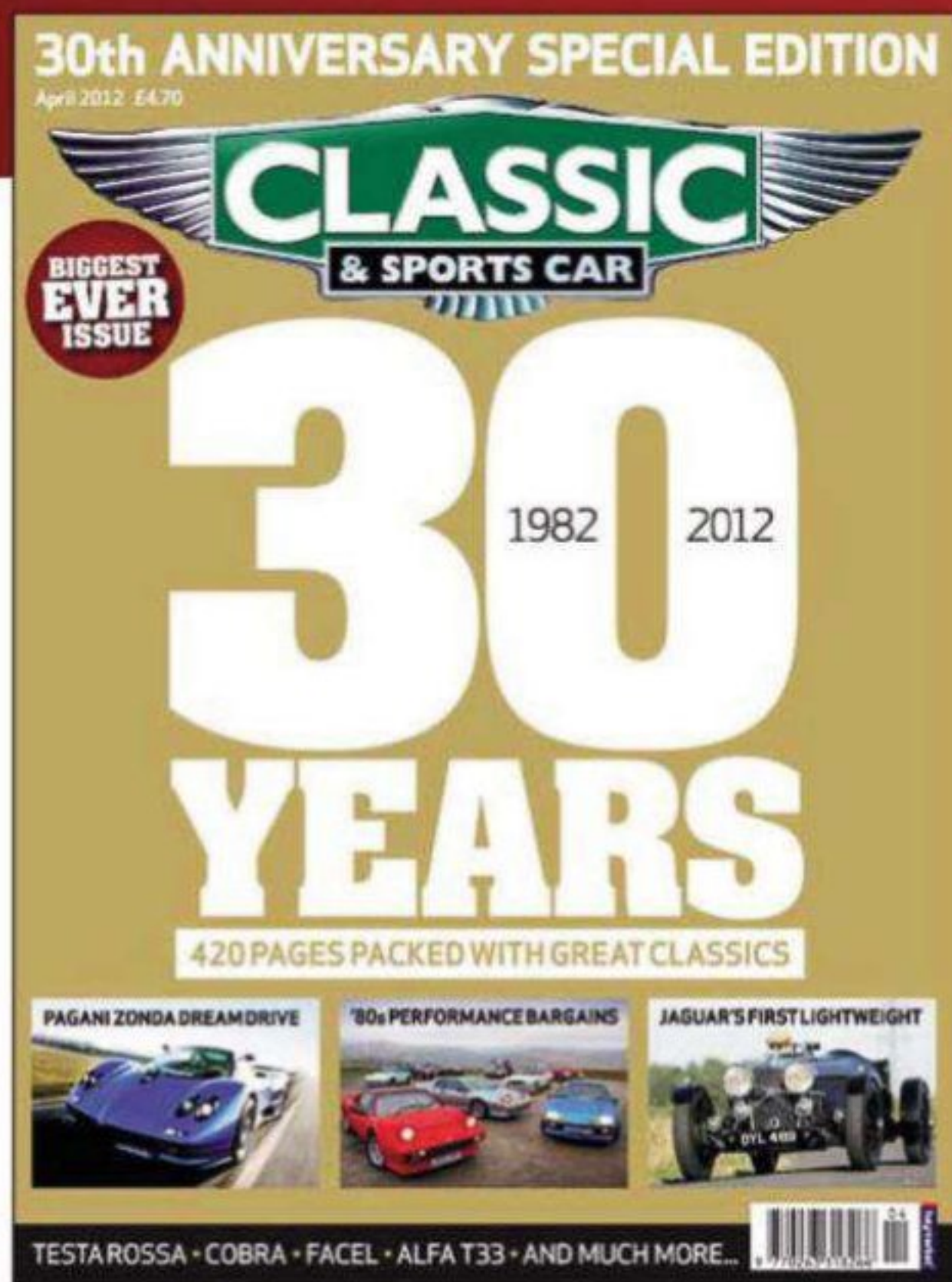
**FORMER TIMBER MERCHANT KEN** Tyrrell raced as an amateur in F3 and F2 before starting his own team in 1959. He ran cars in FJunior, F3 and F2 with close connections with Cooper and Matra. His relationship with Jackie Stewart began in the mid-1960s and together they won three F1 world titles in Matra ('69) and Tyrrell ('71 and '73) machines. Tyrrell continued in F1 until 1998 when he sold his team to British American Racing. He died, aged 77, on August 25 2001.

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WEEK**  
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