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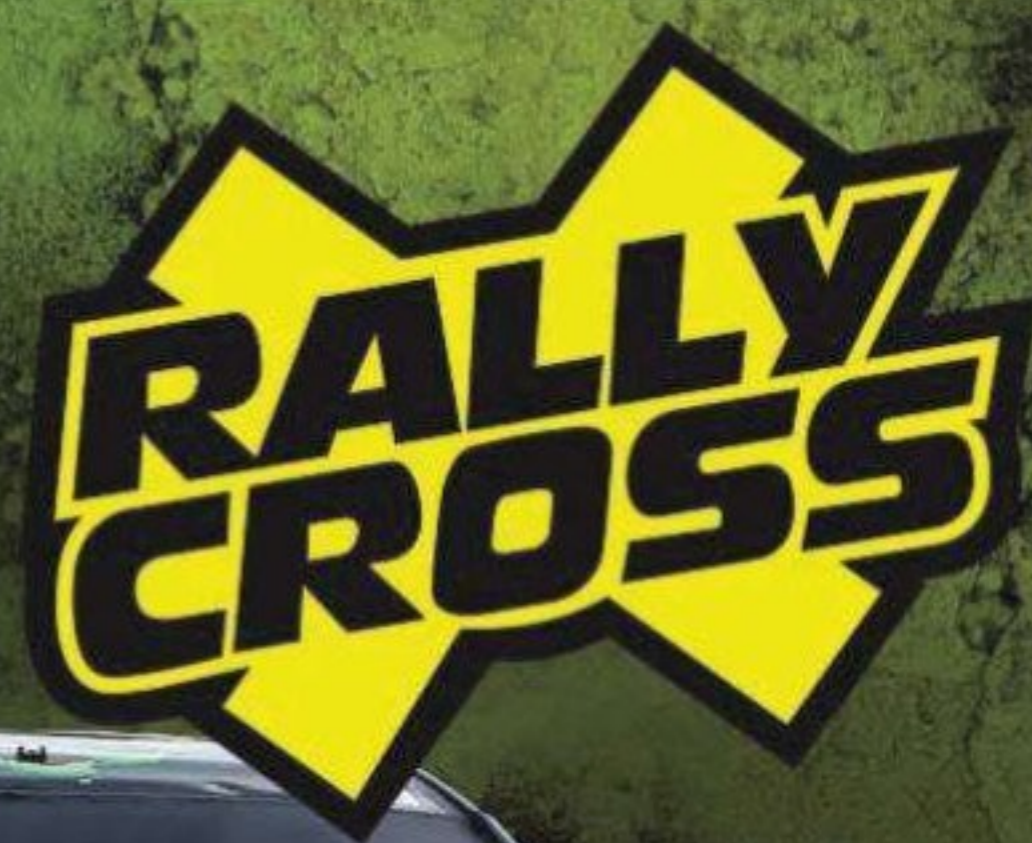
## ALONSO DENIES STORMING PEREZ



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# CONTENTS

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**“You can’t make a chicken salad out of chicken crap”**

INDYCAR SERIES BOSS RANDY BERNARD TELLS US (IN AMUSING STYLE) WHY HE’LL ONLY PROMOTE HIS SUCCESSFUL DRIVERS AS PUBLIC FIGURES

## 186

Combined total number of GP2 races (in all series) contested by Sepang top-two Luiz Razia (who’s done 79) and Davide Valsecchi (107). Well, they do say that practice makes perfect! Report on [page 44](#)

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## REPORTS



A victory Alonso didn’t expect, [p26](#)

### 26 Malaysian Grand Prix

Full coverage from Sepang – and how Alonso beat Perez. Includes technical news plus all those (near-unbelievable) stats

### 40 IndyCar St Petersburg

Castroneves takes first blood as series enters a new era

### 44 GP2 Sepang

Malaysian kick-off provides

early joy for Razia and Arden, as Calado wins reversed-gridder

### 46 World of Sport

NASCAR; Brazilian V8 Stock Cars; Indy Lights; British Rally

## FEATURES

### 52 BTCC preview

Looking ahead to Britain’s top racing series – which kicks off this weekend. Plus a look back

at 1987 – a year of a new breed replacing old. Sounds familiar!

### 63 Introducing...

...Bathurst 1000 winner Nick Percat

## REGULARS

### 5 From the editor

### 6 Snapshot

### 17 Mark Hughes column

### 80 Subscribe for a free gift

### 88 Final drive

Letters and latest gear

### 90 On track/on screen

The best action in the next week

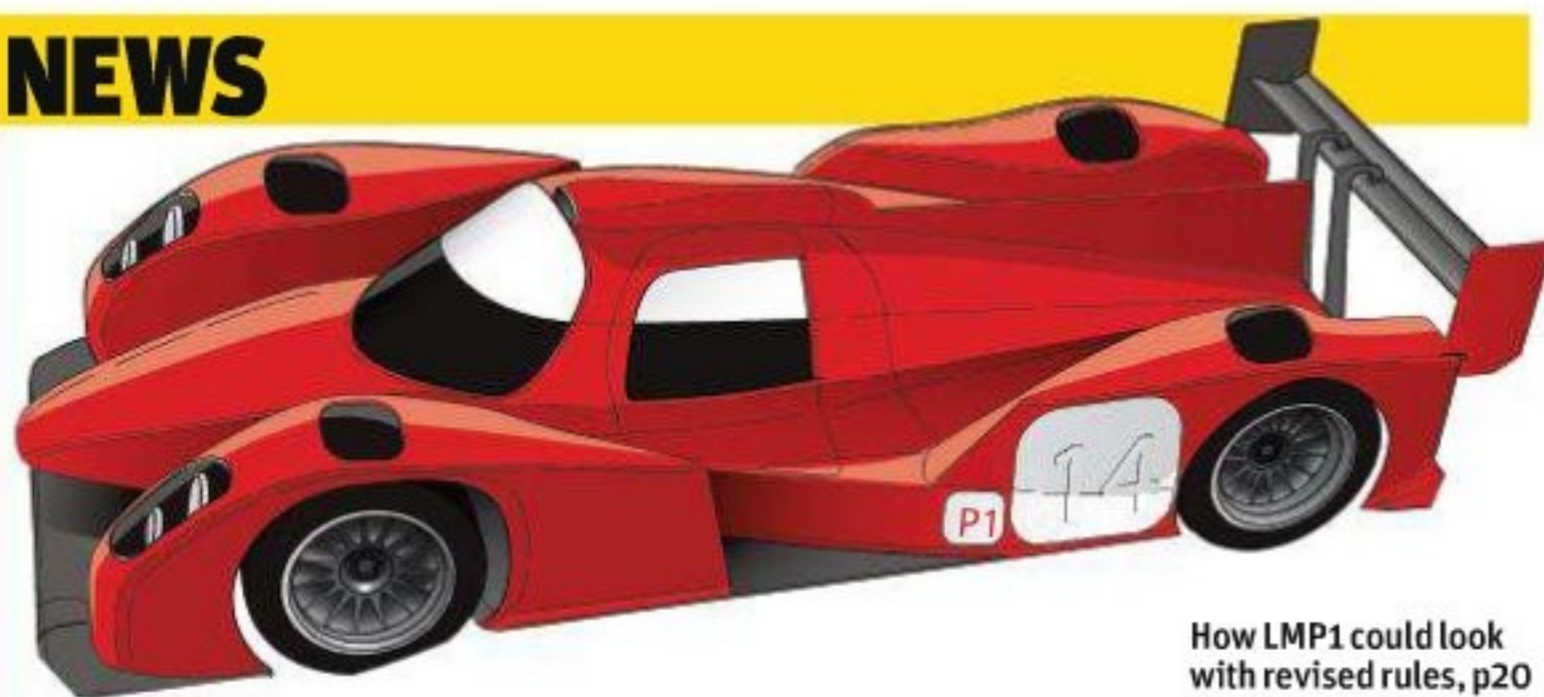
### 93 From the archive

Holden wins a BTCC race, 1987

### 94 Rally of my life

Mark Higgins, 1997 Manx Rally

## NEWS



How LMP1 could look with revised rules, [p20](#)

### 8 Ferrari update is vital...

Points leader Alonso is praying mods can keep him in the hunt

### 10 ...but is it too late for Massa?

Brazilian could turn things around, according to Ivan Capelli

### 12 Merc not on board Concorde

German giant limbers up to fight Bernie over future of F1

### 15 This week in Formula 1

### 18 New IndyCar gets praise

They look a bit weird, but they’ve got a lovely personality, say aces

### 20 Le Mans’ new LMP1 vision

Privateers given rule incentive

### 23 Last-minute MG set for debut

Plato reckons brand-new BTCC challenger can fight at the front

### 24 Toyota weighs up WRC

Global engine could mean rallies

## SPORTS EXTRA

### 77 Formula Ford US test prizes

More EcoBoosts emerge as series offers carrots on stick to victors

### 78 Fortec Renaults go abroad

UK-series team switches to NEC

### 82 National reports

Silverstone Britcar and BRSCC; Brands Hatch MSVR; Lydden British Rallycross; plus full results round-up

Ford gives incentives for series, [p77](#)





SERIOUS HEAD PROTECTION

## CONGRATULATIONS SERGIO

for being the first Mexican F1 driver on the podium after 41 years! Sergio Perez hit 2nd spot on the podium in Malaysia for the second race of the season.



### HP3

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## POLE POSITION

# Sergio Perez: don't be fooled by mixed messages



**THE WORST ADVICE I'VE EVER RECEIVED** from my mother was literally minutes before my racing debut: "Just remember, you don't have to drive fast."

I was reminded of this when that radio message was played from the Sauber pitwall to Sergio Perez as he was chasing Fernando Alonso with a maiden grand prix victory at stake: "Checo be careful, we need this position, we need this position." Of course, this 'advice' might have been relayed a lap earlier before it was aired on TV, but its timing was about as bad as my mum's.

I don't wish to belittle Sauber's lack of ambition; after all, Peter Sauber has put his neck on the line many times to keep his team afloat in harsh economic times. And although Perez insisted the message hadn't been a distraction, its sentiment was hardly, "Go for the win, you can do it!"

Perez proved on Sunday what I've thought for quite a while: that he's got what it takes to succeed at the highest level. If those around him believe that too, it just might actually happen.

*Charles Bradley*

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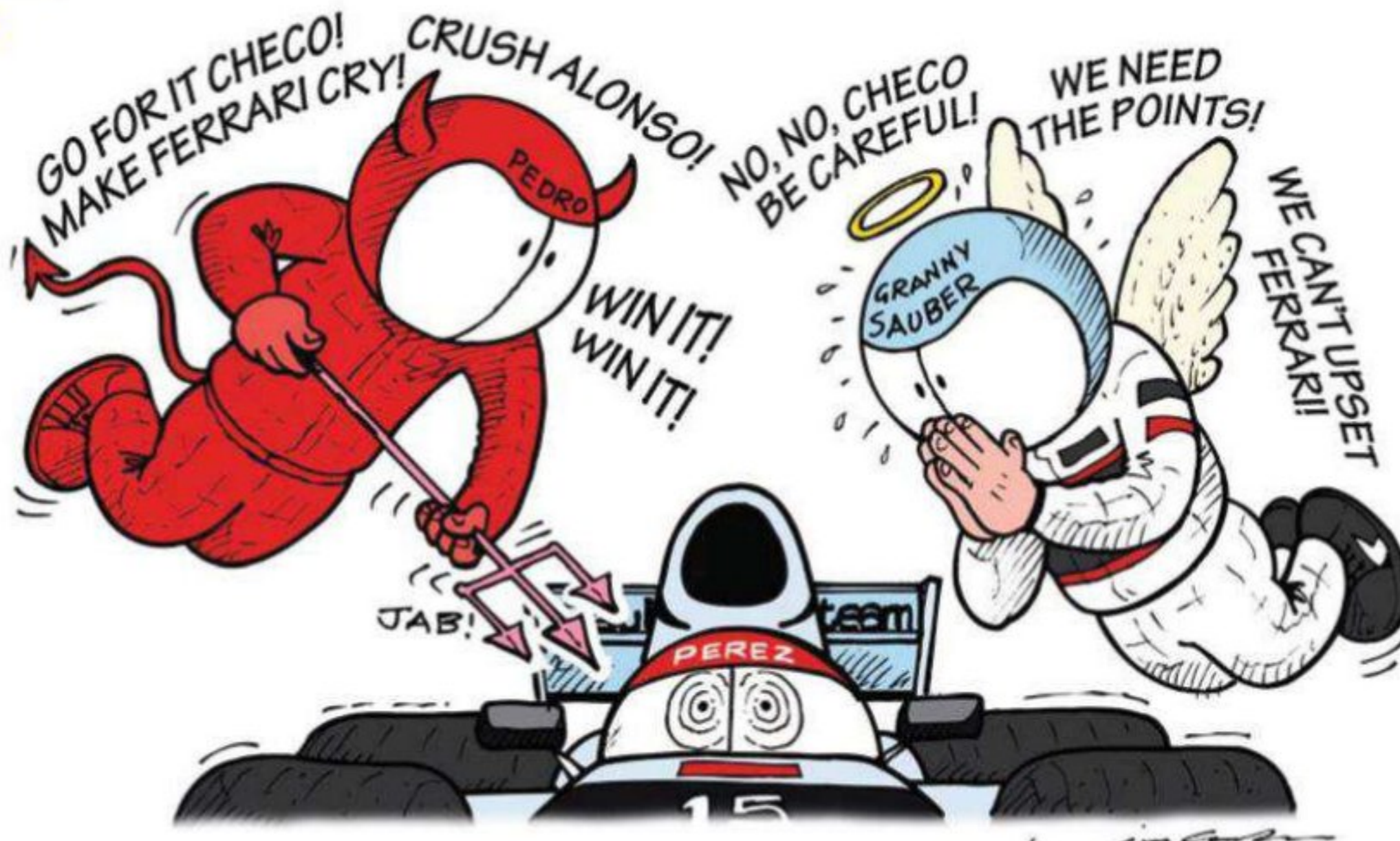
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## BAMBER'S WEEK





**FORMULA 1**

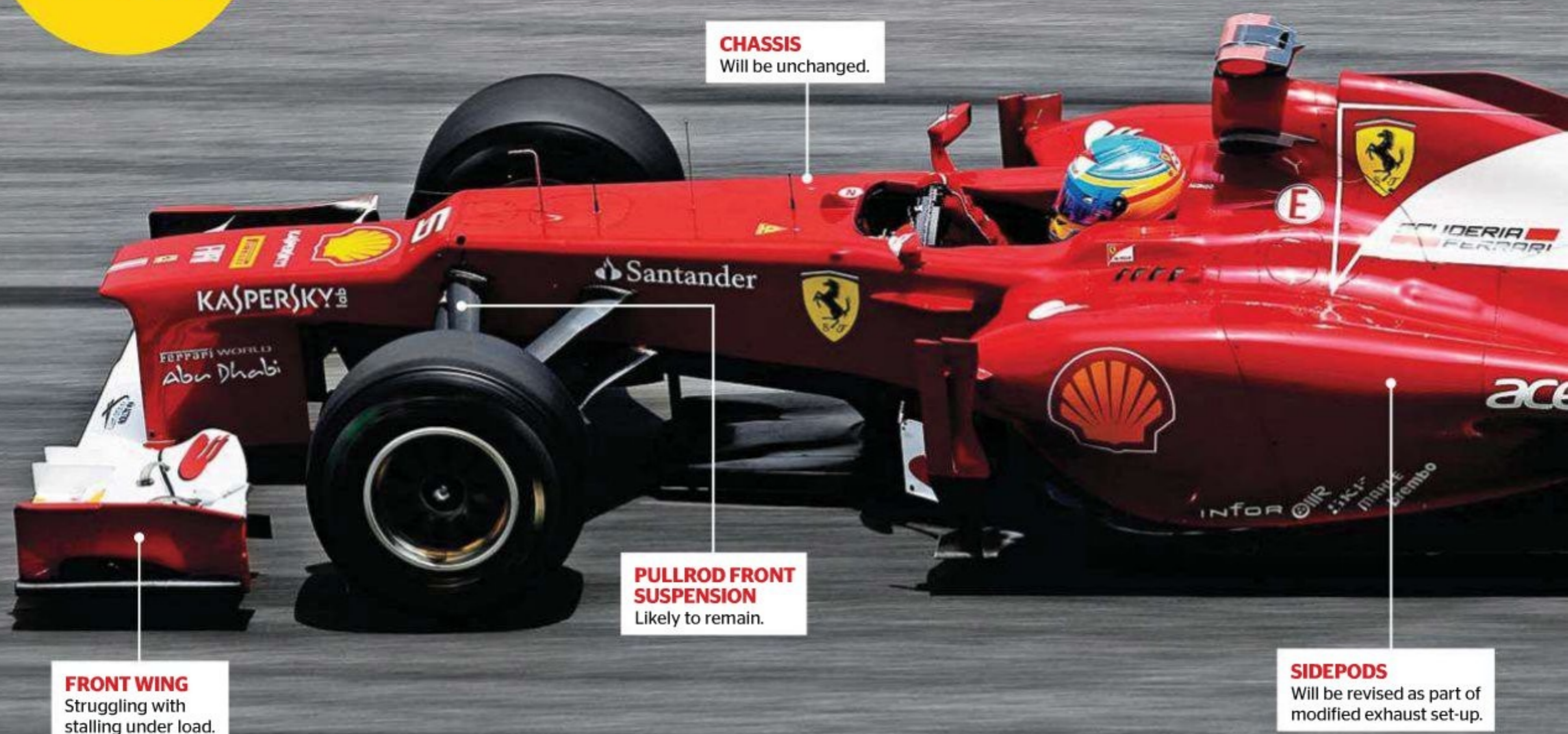
**Mexico's main man celebrates first F1 podium**

Last weekend in the wet/dry conditions that befell the Sepang circuit, young Mexican Sergio Perez came within an ace of his maiden grand prix win for Sauber. He became the first driver from his country to lead a race and finish on the podium since Pedro Rodriguez in 1971. 'Checo' was still pretty chuffed with second, though. Full Malaysian GP report, p26.

Pic: Robertson/Getty



**FOR MORE MALAYSIAN GP IMAGES,  
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# Ferrari upgrades must deliver

Fernando Alonso's surprise victory doesn't hide the fact that F2012 needs a lot of changes. By EDD STRAW

Ferrari's hopes of fighting for the Formula 1 World Championship hinge on a major update package that will run for the first time at the Mugello test on May 1-3 – despite Fernando Alonso taking a shock points lead thanks to his Malaysian Grand Prix victory.

AUTOSPORT understands that the package, planned to debut in May's Spanish Grand Prix at Barcelona, will feature substantially revised sidepods to allow the exhaust exits to be placed further forward.

This should allow Ferrari to emulate pacesetter McLaren in better harnessing the exhaust-blowing effect, while improving the airflow to the rear of the car and producing more downforce.

As part of the upgrade the sidepods will require an overhaul, with the Ferrari F2012's vertical radiators replaced with more-conventional angled examples. The side-impact crash structure could also be modified. This would require a crash test to be undertaken.

The updated Ferrari is also set to include a raft of aero tweaks, including a modified front wing. But reports that Ferrari will abandon its unconventional pullrod front suspension and bring out a B-spec appear to be wide of the mark.

While Alonso's win in the rain-affected Sepang race has given him a five-point lead in the drivers' championship, the Spaniard has no doubts that serious progress must be made with the troublesome F2012 if he is to remain a genuine factor in the title fight. The car would not have been a contender in a straightforward dry race and Alonso qualified just over 1.3 seconds adrift of polesitter Lewis Hamilton's McLaren. Even allowing for Alonso's lack of the KERS power boost in Q3, the gap is still close to one second.

"This win changes nothing in the approach for the next weeks," said double world champion Alonso. "At the moment this car has many problems. In the coming races we have a very aggressive approach in terms of development, but no revolutionary changes. A new car for Barcelona? There's no truth in that."

Car tweaks are also expected to be trialled at the Chinese Grand Prix in two weeks' time. Ferrari is determined that Alonso is able to continue to score relatively heavily, so that by the time the major upgrades appear he is still in touch for the championship.

While McLaren's Jenson Button and Hamilton are currently favourites, Red Bull and reigning champion Sebastian Vettel are expected to



Alonso delivered shock on Sunday

re-emerge as contenders after struggling with the upgrade package introduced at the final pre-season test, parts of which were dropped in Malaysia (see Drawing Board, p34).

Red Bull and McLaren do not regard Ferrari as a serious title threat on current form – Alonso's win came a week after he finished a distant fifth in the Australian Grand Prix.

Although May's updates could change this, and Hamilton and Button failed to convert their front-row lockout into a victory in Malaysia,

Whitmarsh knows Ferrari is not yet a genuine threat



McLaren team principal Martin Whitmarsh was unconcerned by giving points away to the Scuderia.

"Surprisingly, Fernando is leading the championship, which you wouldn't have predicted coming out of Australia," said Whitmarsh. "But a lot of those that we probably all consider to be the real contenders at the moment didn't score big points [in Malaysia]. It was damage-limitation and could have been a lot worse."

While Alonso can theoretically keep in touch with the championship battle with an inferior car until May, it is unlikely that he will be able to launch an attack for the title should the Mugello test package not produce the step forward that Ferrari expects.

It would also raise further questions about whether the wind-tunnel correlation problems that ruined Ferrari's 2011 campaign have really been solved.

## AUTOSPORT SAYS...

**EDD STRAW**  
F1 EDITOR

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**A**fter Fernando Alonso's astonishing Malaysian Grand Prix win, Ferrari team principal Stefano Domenicali was asked if Ferrari would have been fooled into thinking that the F2012 was a more potent machine than it really is if he had a clone of the Spaniard in the second car. No question, Alonso has flattered the car in a way that few other drivers could, and his victory had a little of Michael Schumacher at Barcelona in 1996 about it.

While Ferrari will doubtless be delighted to get the Italian media off its back, no-one at Maranello will be fooled. After qualifying, the Spaniard admitted that being in Q3 was about the limit of his ambitions and on outright pace the Ferrari

is a marginal top-10 car at best. Make no mistake, there is a lot of work to do if Alonso is to have any chance of being in the mix for the championship.

Alonso is Ferrari's get-out-of-jail-free card. Let's say that he picks up another couple of fifths in China and Bahrain, a perfectly realistic target. He will go to Spain with the championship leaders in sight and may just be able to keep Ferrari in the game long enough for a title shot.

That would be an extraordinary achievement, and likely some very senior figures at Maranello may end up owing their jobs to the maestro in the cockpit.



Alonso worked wonders

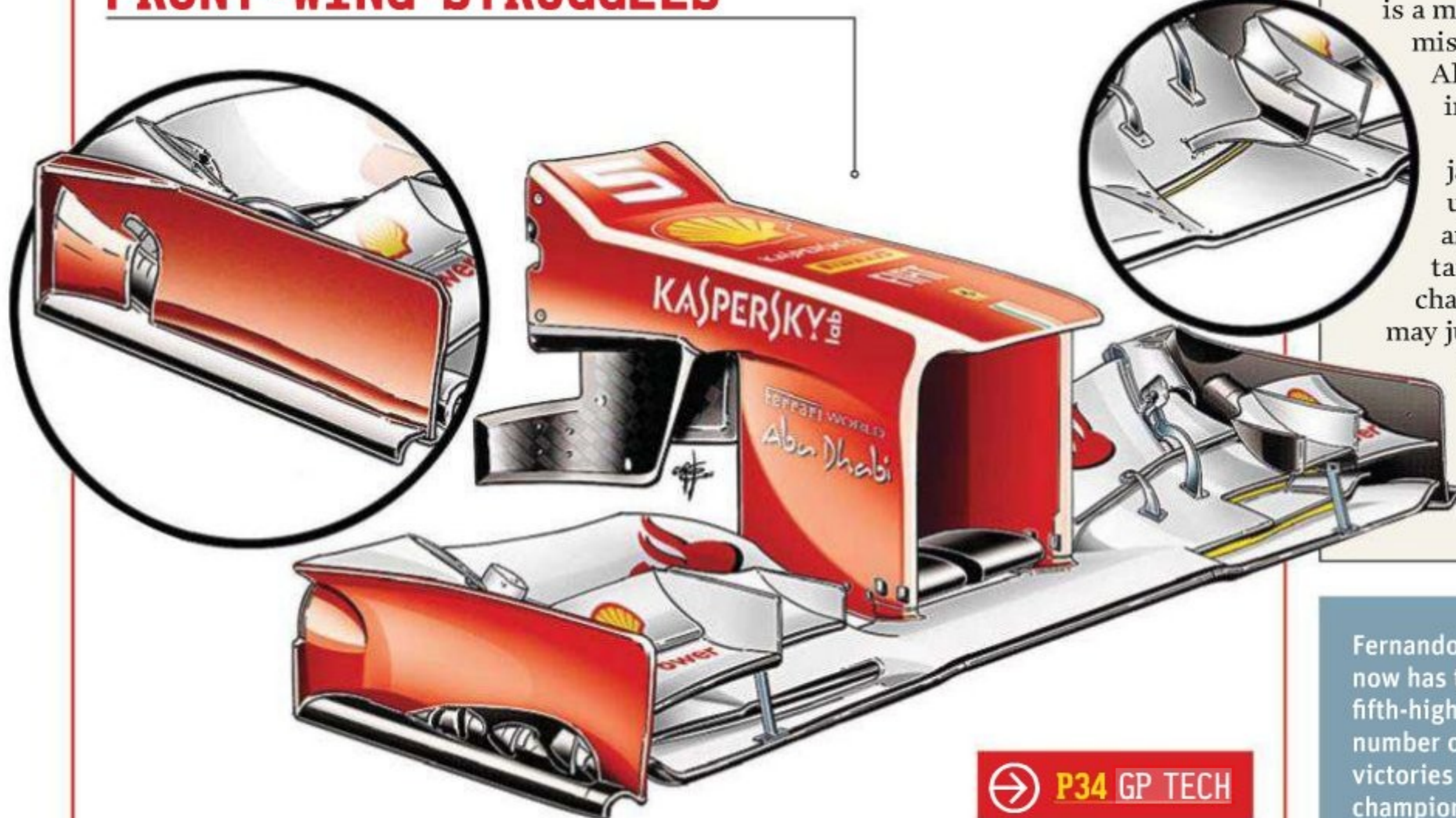
### EXHAUSTS

In an attempt to replicate the effect of the exhaust-blown diffuser of last year, Ferrari has its tailpipes as far back as possible, but appears to be unable to harness the gas flow as well as some other teams. The configuration also compromises the Coke-bottle area, a key part of the car for aero efficiency and in generating consistent rear downforce.



## ➔ P26 MALAYSIAN GP REPORT

## FRONT-WING STRUGGLES



Ferrari had a different front wing in Sepang, with a shorter-chord main plane and more-refined endplates.

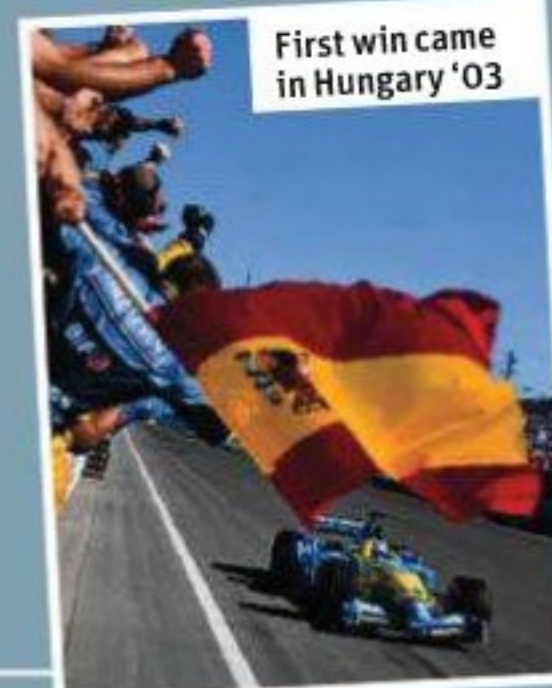
### AUTOSPORT TECHNICAL CONSULTANT GARY ANDERSON:

"Ferrari seems to be trying to get more consistency from the front wing. Whenever the car rolls in a corner, the outboard end gets closer to the ground. The team probably believes that it suffers from too great a stall when the front wing gets closer to the ground, so it has taken a section out of the outer end [yellow in main image]. This means that when it does stall, you

lose a smaller percentage of downforce. But the more slot gaps you put in, the less downforce you have at low speed with higher ride height. So it comes down to compromise. I believe that Ferrari's problem lies more with the endplate [original, top left] than with the wing and here we can see it trying to be adventurous with 3D thinking. The aim is to get the airflow better around the outside of the front tyre to keep control over the separation of the front wing without losing downforce. It's still a very basic endplate and needs to turn the air more around the tyre – which is the blockage that stalls the front wing.

## ➔ P34 GP TECH

Fernando Alonso now has the fifth-highest number of victories in world championship history. His Malaysian Grand Prix win moved him clear of Jackie Stewart.



First win came in Hungary '03

1	Michael Schumacher	91
2	Alain Prost	51
3	Ayrton Senna	41
4	Nigel Mansell	31
5	Fernando Alonso	28
6	Jackie Stewart	27



# Massa's destiny in his own hands

Ivan Capelli, the last full-time driver to get dropped early by Ferrari, explains that one good drive can be enough to get the Brazilian out of his doldrums

**B**eleagued Ferrari racer Felipe Massa can still save his drive with strong performances in the next few races.

That is the view of Ivan Capelli, the last full-time Ferrari Formula 1 driver to be axed during a season.

Capelli was dropped with two races to go in 1992 after scoring just three points to the 13 of team-mate Jean Alesi. He believes that Massa, who has failed to score points in the first two races of 2012 and is struggling to get to grips with the unwieldy Ferrari – while team-mate Fernando Alonso leads the world championship – needs just one strong result to turn around his year.

“When you are under pressure

as a Ferrari driver, everything becomes difficult,” Capelli told AUTOSPORT. “Even coming out of the pitlane and going onto the track, because you can feel that there is not the right support around you. It’s especially difficult for Felipe, because he’s an emotional guy.

“But he is experienced enough to understand that to continue his career at Ferrari, he needs to be just behind Fernando or just in front. If Felipe is in front of Fernando for just one weekend, it will be the end of the story. The team is genuinely focused on giving him the right equipment to prove that he is competitive.”

While Alonso raced to victory

in last weekend’s Malaysian Grand Prix, and Ferrari Driver Academy protege Sergio Perez was a close second in his Sauber, Massa drove to 15th place.

Publicly, Ferrari team principal Stefano Domenicali remains fully supportive of Massa, insisting that it is “not true” that a driver change is on the cards for the Chinese Grand Prix in two weeks’ time.

But there is the option for

**“Alonso did a much better job than me. I have never had any problem with telling the truth”**

Felipe Massa

Ferrari to trial a replacement – most likely Perez – at the Mugello test on May 1-3, and this could lead to Massa being replaced as early as the Spanish Grand Prix, which follows in mid-May.

While admitting that he was well off Alonso’s level in Malaysia, Massa himself remained defiant, insisting that his focus is on getting on top of the Ferrari F2012.

He showed improved pace in dry conditions in Malaysia, qualifying 0.352s off Alonso in Q2 thanks to a change of chassis and a revised approach to set-up. But in the race he was not in the same class as the Spaniard and complained of tyre-wear problems.

“No doubt it [the speculation]

## POTENTIAL REPLACEMENTS

### SERGIO PEREZ



It is believed that there is a mechanism that could allow Ferrari to call up the Mexican through his Driver Academy deal – and he was already under consideration for 2012 anyway. Race-sharp, continues to improve in the Sauber and would surely score heavily in a Ferrari.

### JARNO TRULLI



His nationality would play well in the home press – and for Ferrari president Luca di Montezemolo’s political ambitions. Vastly experienced, but after a poor 2011 season his F1 days should be behind him – although he could still be fast in the right car.

### ADRIAN SUTIL



An extremely capable driver with recent experience, and doubtless capable of scoring consistent points as an Alonso back-up. But his legal troubles after an incident in a Chinese nightclub count against him and Ferrari probably wouldn’t regard him as a long-term bet.

### JAIME ALGUERSUARI



Still young, and his Toro Rosso performances last year proved that he can score consistently. The fact that he has already been rejected by Red Bull could count against him as a long-term option, but he may be worth consideration as a stop-gap solution.



## PEREZ'S ERROR

Sports psychologist Don Macpherson explains why Sauber's radio call cost Sergio Perez victory in Malaysia



Chinese Buddhists call the voice in your head the 'Monkey Mind', because they believe it resembles a restless monkey swinging aimlessly from tree to tree, commenting on everything you do, and how you should do it. The monkey is very good at analysing, judging, criticising and logic, but rubbish at racing Formula 1 cars.

This is why racing drivers must drive with their subconscious, the right hemisphere of the brain. The monkey lives in the left hemisphere (conscious) – for words, numbers and technical stuff.

In Malaysia, Sergio Perez was driving with his right-side brain – automatically, instinctively – when he was closing on Fernando Alonso. He was so focused on catching; he was 'in the zone'.

Until another voice, a Sauber voice, entered his head via the radio – and told him to be careful, suggesting he should protect second place rather than go for the win. Suddenly the monkey woke up. Perez was now thinking about his driving, and had entered the world of 'what ifs'. The monkey had grabbed the wheel, and within minutes he had run off the track. The win had gone.

Surely if Perez had been allowed to keep on doing what he had done so well, he would have scored his first GP win. He insisted that the message had not distracted him, but then rather tellingly admitted: "I was thinking where I was going to save some KERS... and I just touched the kerb and ran wide and it was over."

The lesson is not to talk to the driver during the heat of battle, unless it's absolutely vital. Don't feed the monkey!

### ALONSO V MASSA 2010-2012

40	Races	40
7	Wins	0
21	Podiums	5
544	Points	262
2	Poles	0

up to Ferrari, even though his development as a driver may be better served by completing the season with Sauber.

Perez, 22, tested a 2009-specification Ferrari at Fiorano last September as part of his Academy programme and has conducted regular simulator sessions at the team's Maranello base as part of ongoing monitoring from the Scuderia.

Sauber's team principal Peter Sauber is adamant that there have been no conversations about a switch. But he declined to comment when asked by AUTOSPORT if there is any scope in Perez's deal for a Ferrari call-up.

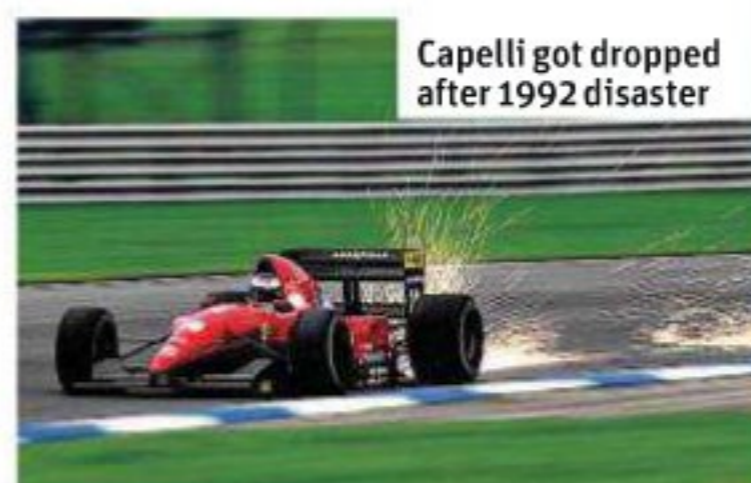
Even if there is nothing formal to that extent in the contract, Sauber's close relationship with its engine supplier Ferrari means that an agreement would likely be

reached if Ferrari wanted to put the Mexican in its car.

"It's a compliment if Ferrari is interested in this driver," said Sauber. "We have had no discussions about 'Checo'."

Should Perez leave Sauber for Ferrari during the course of the 2012 season, the most obvious replacement would be fellow Mexican Esteban Gutierrez, who is racing in GP2 and is also supported by Perez's backer Telmex. But that would depend on whether Gutierrez, the Sauber reserve, wants to derail a GP2 title bid.

Ferrari could offer a straight swap to Massa, who started his F1 career with Sauber, but the team may be nervous to take on a driver who is underperforming. Another possibility is Ferrari-contracted Jules Bianchi, although he would have to be extracted from his Force India reserve role.



will go on and there will be weeks when many things are said," Massa said. "The main thing is to find the right way to improve. Today, he [Alonso] did a much better job than me. I have never had any problem with telling the truth.

"I don't get frustrated with the pressure, all the comments and all the rumours. I don't care about that. It's not my problem."

Perez, by contrast, drove a near-perfect race in Malaysia after an inspired call to pit for wet-weather tyres at the end of the first lap allowed him to climb into frontrunning contention.

Only a late-race error cost him a likely victory, and few doubt that the Mexican is now ready to step

### JULES BIANCHI



Ferrari-contracted and still highly regarded, despite his underwhelming GP2 performances over the past two years. His inexperience means that it's no foregone

conclusion that he would do better than Massa. Would probably be better served focusing on his Force India Friday drives.

### ROBERT KUBICA



Remains some way off returning to the F1 cockpit. Although a fully-fit Kubica performing at his pre-accident level would be a shoo-in at Ferrari,

there is still too much uncertainty for him to be considered a serious contender for the drive at this time.

Perez 'in the zone' and chasing Alonso



# Mercedes ready to fight Bernie

Three-pointed star prepared to play hardball with commercial chiefs over what it views as an unfair deal for the future of the sport

**M**ercedes is considering taking legal action against preferential terms that it believes certain Formula 1 teams will receive under the mooted new Concorde Agreement.

The German marque is known to have concerns about whether such agreements are legal under Articles 101 and 102 of EU Competition Law (see right) and it is believed to be willing to go as far as quitting F1 if the situation is not addressed.

It's not clear whether Mercedes has threatened to quit, but the option is known to have been considered. And it is likely that the possibility of it doing so will be taken seriously, especially as it also has the option of continuing only

as an engine supplier even if it shuts down its team. But what is clear is that Mercedes is not afraid of taking on Bernie Ecclestone, who is working on behalf of F1 commercial rights holder CVC Capital Partners, and has the resources to fight a costly legal challenge. If such a challenge were to be upheld, it could have major repercussions for the sport.

## WHAT HAS HAPPENED

Ecclestone announced on Saturday that a "majority" of teams have agreed commercial terms to compete in F1 from 2013 onwards, forming the basis of a new Concorde Agreement. A final deal has not been signed, but with Ecclestone having already reached

agreements with the sport's grandee teams, Red Bull, Ferrari and McLaren, it is likely that he expected the rest to fall into line.

But amid reports that both Ferrari and Red Bull have agreed terms that would give them a 1.25 per cent financial bonus compared with the other teams – with the Italian squad potentially granted a place on the board of F1 amid talk of a possible flotation of the sport – Mercedes is believed to have turned down the deal that was accepted by Force India, Lotus, McLaren, Sauber, and Scuderia Toro Rosso.

AUTOSPORT understands that Williams is also on the verge of an agreement. This would leave Mercedes as the only significant team not to have accepted the terms that will form the basis of the Concorde, along with minnows Marussia, HRT and Caterham, none of which is believed to have yet been approached by Ecclestone.

Mercedes, in common with other teams, refused to make any comment on the situation other than a statement made shortly after Ecclestone's news went public on formula1.com.

"We would like to ask for your understanding that our team currently has nothing to say on this matter," said a Mercedes spokesperson. "We will, of course, inform you immediately at the appropriate time."

## WHERE DOES THE FIA STAND

There has also been speculation that Ecclestone wants to cut the FIA out of what has traditionally been a tripartite agreement between the sport's governing body, the teams and the commercial rights holder.

AUTOSPORT understands that it is more likely that the FIA will remain a signatory, as, in the words of one source: "F1 without a regulatory body would be close to untenable as no-one else who is involved is interested in getting involved with that side of things."

A report that ran on the Sky News website in the build-up to the Australian Grand Prix revealed that Ecclestone's deal features a number of terms that are used as a basis for special bonus payments. This applies to teams that have won the constructors' championship since 2000, teams that have not changed their name since the same date and a double-champions bonus for any team doing the drivers' and constructors' double in back-to-back seasons. These terms would favour Red Bull and Ferrari over Mercedes.

New deal favours Ferrari and Red Bull



Small teams are overlooked





Concorde era began in 1981

## What is the Concorde Agreement?

The Concorde Agreement is a document signed by all Formula 1 teams, the commercial rights holder and the FIA that details the way that the sport is governed.

The extensive document dictates the way that the sport's revenue is distributed, as well as the terms on which teams compete, while defining areas such as what constitutes a constructor team and who controls the television rights.

The first Concorde Agreement was signed in January 1981 as a result of the acrimonious FISA/FOCA war, which broke out between the governing body and a group of teams led by Bernie Ecclestone. Currently, the sport is governed by the sixth Concorde Agreement – signed in July '09 – that ended the breakaway-series plan announced by the Formula 1 Teams' Association at that year's British GP.

The current agreement expires at the end of this year.



### EXPERT VIEW

**JONATHAN NOBLE**  
GROUP F1 EDITOR

Bernie Ecclestone's statement just minutes before final free practice in Malaysia on Saturday that a "majority" of Formula 1 teams had agreed new commercial terms from 2013 caught the paddock on the hop.

The first that many bosses – even those who have signed up – knew about it was when his comments began spreading like wildfire over the internet. It was a classic case of F1's puppet master shaking the tree to find out where everyone stood.

But if Ecclestone had hoped that his statement would force the rebels into line he would be disappointed, for it appears to have led to Mercedes digging its heels in even more.

Sources inside the Brackley-based team are adamant that the special

terms being bandied about – for outfits that have not changed their names since 2000 for example – are questionable under the Treaty of the Functioning of the European Union.

Mercedes has invested heavily in F1, so it's clearly not happy to be effectively losing out in financial terms to those outfits who have had success with their own name.

The next step in this high-stakes chess game will be fascinating, as a challenge in the European Courts will not be relished by Ecclestone or F1's owners CVC. It's sabre-rattling for now, but soon someone will have to make that push for checkmate.



Merc doesn't want to be in the shadows

"Ecclestone has agreements with Red Bull, Ferrari and McLaren"

## European competition law

**Article 101** of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union is aimed at ensuring free competition. Key to Mercedes's case is likely to be the fact that it prohibits different conditions to be offered to different parties that would place them at a competitive disadvantage.

**Article 102** of the treaty covers the imposition of such anti-competitive terms that would place certain parties at a competitive disadvantage. While, say, the agreement binding English Premier League teams together awards money based on achievement and television appearances, the mooted Concorde appears to benefit Ferrari and Red Bull over Mercedes.

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Auto GP World Series 2012 calendar:

10-11 March Monza (I)

**31 March-1 April – Valencia (E)**

14-15 April – Marrakech (MA)

5-6 May – Budapest (H)

2-3 June – Portimao (P)

21-22 July – Curitiba (BR)

22-23 September – Sonoma (USA)

# THIS WEEK IN F1

## FORCE INDIA CASE JUDGEMENT

Jean-Claude Migeot's Aerolab/Fondtech concern has been ordered to pay €25,000 to Force India for the misuse of confidential information in the design of the 2010 Lotus T127. The judge found that Force India's copyright had been infringed relating to a vortex generator, rear-brake duct lower element and rear-view mirror. The judge did not accept Force India's full claim, which could have stretched to £13m.



## PARR QUILTS WILLIAMS

Williams chairman Adam Parr will leave the team tomorrow (Friday) after tendering his resignation. Parr joined the team in November 2006 and was credited by Frank Williams for his key role in the technical restructure of the team for this year.



## MERCEDES WING LEGAL

Mercedes' controversial DRS-activated f-duct system, which stalls the front wing when the DRS is deployed (AUTOSPORT, March 22), has been passed legal by the FIA. Leading teams are now set to create their own versions of the design.



## Bottas impresses on debut

Valtteri Bottas made an impressive debut as Williams' Friday driver in Malaysia. The Finn took over Bruno Senna's car in the first free practice session of the weekend and lapped 0.059s faster than team-mate Pastor Maldonado on what AUTOSPORT understands were directly comparable programmes.

## SILVERSTONE COULD HOST ROOKIE TEST

Silverstone is under consideration as a potential venue for F1's annual rookie test. Abu Dhabi, which has hosted the test for the past two years, is the other contender, although there are concerns about the logistics of running in the Middle East venue for three days after the grand prix before heading to the United States. If Silverstone were to hold the rookie test, it would take place after the British Grand Prix.



**Castrol** GRAND PRIX  
**EDGE** PREDICTOR

'Paul Bheemul' topped the second round of the Castrol EDGE Grand Prix Predictor after correctly tipping Fernando Alonso to triumph in a remarkable Malaysian Grand Prix. He wins a number of prizes including a certificate signed by Johnny Herbert. To play visit [predictor.autosport.com](http://predictor.autosport.com).

# 36



The number of fastest laps scored by Kimi Raikkonen in F1. He now lies third in the all-time list behind Michael Schumacher and Alain Prost

## HRT MAKES IMPROVEMENTS

Both HRT drivers qualified for the Malaysian Grand Prix after the team brought a functioning DRS and an improved power-steering system to Sepang. Despite cooling problems, both cars reached the finish, much to the surprise of the team, with Narain Karthikeyan running as high as 10th in the early stages.



# LET'S GO RACING



#### Ferrari 458 in brief

Length 178.2in  
Width 76.3in  
Height 45.8in

#### Dry weight

2689.6lb

#### Fuel tank capacity

24.8 imperial gallons

#### Engine type

V8 - 90°

#### Maximum power

570 CV at 9,000rpm

#### Maximum torque

540 Nm at 6,000rpm

#### Front tyres

255/650 19x9in

#### Rear tyres

305/690 19x11in

#### Top speed

325kmh 202mph

#### 0-100kmh

3.4secs

#### FERRARI CHALLENGE EUROPE 2012

1 April	Monza (ITA)
22 April	Imola (ITA)
3 June	Mugello (ITA)
1 July	Hungaroring (HUN)
15 July	Spa (BEL)
16 September	Silverstone (GBR)
7 October	Valllunga (ITA)
TBA	International Final

#### FERRARI CHALLENGE ROUND 1: APRIL 1, 2012

The Ferrari Challenge Europe kicks off this Sunday at Monza. This single-series racing experience is a chance for Ferrari owners to put themselves and their 458 V8 berlinettas to the ultimate on-track examination. Sign up soon to take part this season or keep up to speed with the latest news online.



# MARK HUGHES

## GRAND PRIX EDITOR

Mercedes' improved performance is a happy accident brought on by what was forced upon the team two years ago. Much like Renault a decade ago...

**T**he law of unintended consequences is often an amusing one. Cast your mind back to the disastrous 2001 Benetton with its 111-degree V10 Renault engine: the unintended development path that arose from that engine's severe vibrations led to the team claiming the world championships of 2005 and '06.

How so? The only way to cure the vibration inherent in that extreme vee angle, chosen to lower the centre of gravity, was to strengthen it internally and beef up a lot of the

fuel than the higher-revving, more powerful rivals, and its heat rejection was less, so the radiators could be smaller. Its driveability gave it great performance out of slow corners — as did the rear-biased weight distribution.

There was actually a more-than-proportionate increase in traction from having so much more weight over the rear wheels and that was to do with the traits of the Michelin tyres. They had so much longitudinal grip that cars with more-conventional weight distribution were not able to fully exploit it. So even as the team abandoned the wide-vee engine, it retained many of the key features previously forced upon it. The title-winning R25 and R26 were very atypical cars of the time, with a rear-biased concept that worked brilliantly with the Michelin tyres and great engine fuel and cooling efficiency. It had been stumbled upon admittedly, but was then exploited brilliantly.

Fast-forward to Mercedes and its controversial 'double-DRS' system. The clever way it redirects flow through hollows in the car to stall the front wing and give a yet-greater drag reduction than the DRS flap itself is giving a huge advantage, in qualifying at least. But reflecting upon the evolution of the idea of directing air through channels within the car, it actually goes back to 2010 and the flawed conception of that year's Mercedes. That was the year of the f-duct, as invented by McLaren. Mercedes couldn't initially take advantage of that concept because of its short razor-blade engine cover.

Instead, the team devised a system that took the air through hollow channels in the rear-wing endplates and blew onto the wing that way

instead of through the engine cover. And so began a train of thought. First was the so-called 'w-duct', in which it's believed air was taken through the nose inlet to ducts on the front-wing underside, the flow momentarily playing over the bargeboards on the loaded side as the car changed direction. Pre-season came an FIA edict banning the use of the nose inlet for anything other than driver cooling. But those ducts on the front wing's underside could surely be used to stall it when in DRS mode, if they were connecting to channels from the rear wing...

Now the unintended consequence of that contrived 2010 f-duct is upsetting key rivals, notably Red Bull, which has reason to be irritated as its own technical gizmos of the past couple of years were neutralised by the regulations.

Mercedes team boss Ross Brawn, predictably, is justifying it all and, as usual, is very convincing: "If you just opened the DRS slot you'd get a 5km/h increase yet we're all getting about 20. Why? Because every system is optimised to that slot moving, so the rear wing stalls, the lower wing stalls, the diffuser stalls. We all now have big rear-wing main planes and little flaps whereas two years ago we had big flaps and smaller main planes. The radiator exits in front of the rear wing, so when DRS is used the flow is optimised yet the radiators still work. There's a massive amount of things we do with DRS, so to pick on one of them and say, 'We don't like that one' isn't really fair. That's what the rule encourages you to do; it says the purpose of the DRS wing is to improve overtaking."

So this is the unintended consequence of that wording? ☹



mounting and componentry around it externally. Which caused it to be very heavy with all the excess weight around the rear of the car. It also led to development of the engine itself centring around improved driveability and fuel consumption, because the vibration issue meant that chasing ever-higher revs and power was out of the question.

It never developed into a great car, but the team began to see unexpected upsides. Some of that excess weight could be offset at the start of races due to it requiring less

PIC: FERRARO/LAT

**“Red Bull is irritated because its own gizmos were neutralised”**



Twenty-six new DW12s started at St Petersburg

INDYCAR

# New IndyCar gets thumbs-up

Dallara DW12 is faster than predecessor on debut and suffers few technical problems. By MARK GLENDENNING

**I**ndyCar's new DW12 chassis has been given the thumbs-up by drivers after being tried out in race conditions for the first time at St Petersburg last weekend.

The Dallara-designed car has been a talking point since it was first unveiled last year, initially due to its

styling, and later as the result of problems during initial testing. Many of the bugs were ironed out during the pre-season, but the cars still arrived in Florida facing questions ranging from concerns about its fuel range to how the new bodywork would stand up to combat

Most of the technical problems that arose were less to do with the chassis than the engines, such as the glitch that left several Chevrolet units struggling to generate sufficient charge in their batteries.

The car did, however, deliver on its pre-season objective to be quicker than its predecessor when Will Power bettered his own outright track record by 0.6s in qualifying; a feat he achieved despite not being able to use the kerbs this year after they were aggressively reprofiled.

Race winner Helio Castroneves admitted that the weekend had been a learning experience for the series.

"Everybody learned a lot today," the Team Penske driver said. "But I thought it was very good. I thought the race was clean. The cars looked great.

Speed-wise, Will [Power] broke the track record, so the car is good."

There was some criticism over a perceived lack of overtaking, although a significant number of passing moves were missed by the TV cameras, especially at Turn 1. Chip Ganassi Racing driver Scott Dixon suggested that the timing of the caution periods, turning it into a fuel race, also played a part.

"The first part the race was good; people were trying to pass," he said. "Once a fuel race starts, it turns into more of a rhythm, as opposed to pushing a car to its limits."



Overtaking moves were missed by TV



**P40**  
**INDYCAR**  
**REPORT**

## WHAT THE DRIVERS SAID ABOUT DW12

Leading IndyCar drivers give their verdict on Dallara's new machine

### HELIO CASTRONEVES

"It's definitely a good car. Unfortunately it came just a little too late for us. If we had had this car in the last race of the [2011] season [at Las Vegas], I believe Dan [Wheldon] would be here."



### RYAN HUNTER-REAY

"I learned quite a bit about the car in the race. The team did, as well. There's many things we need to fix to get it all right, but that's what we wanted - to learn."



### ORIOLE SERVIA

"It was fun to drive the car in the race. Everything held together well - it is a strong car. I had a couple of strong contacts, and nothing bent. It's encouraging."



INDYCAR

# Lotus outfits ask for more speed

## LOTUS TEAMS HAVE ADMITTED

that the manufacturer needs to increase its rate of development if they are to have any hope of closing the gap to squads powered by Honda and Chevrolet engines this year.

Lotus has been playing catch-up with its Judd-designed powerplant following a winter of late plans, tight timelines and administrative delays. Limited testing meant that the focus until now has been on reliability, but Dreyer & Reinbold driver Oriol Servia fears that the Lotus teams could fall even further behind the opposition unless horsepower and driveability problems are addressed.

"They've been making sure that we're not blowing engines up," the Spaniard told AUTOSPORT. "But we're achieving that, so now I hope we can start tweaking them up a little bit more. If not... St Pete is almost the racetrack with the shortest straights, so it's not going to get any better."

Servia's concerns were shared by



Bourdais and Servia want a performance increase

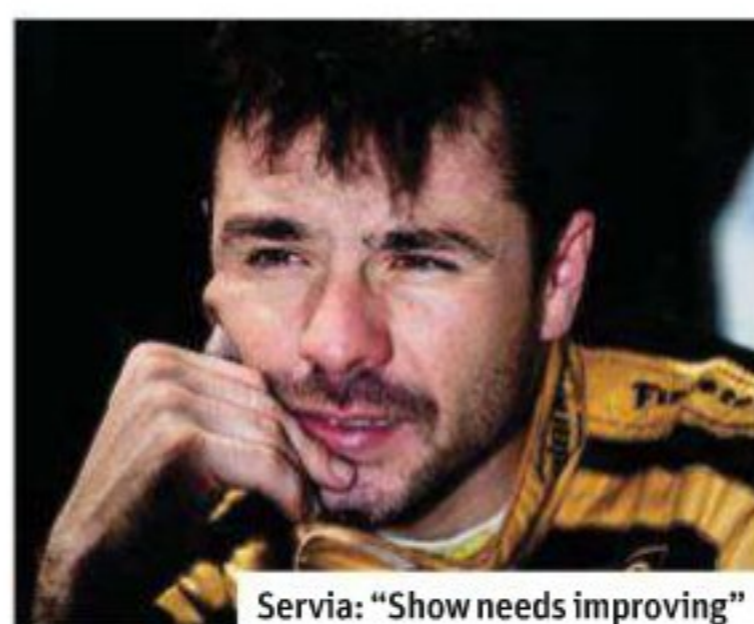
Dragon Racing's Sebastien Bourdais.

"It's a long way to go," he said. "There are some mappings, lots of little things [that need to be fixed]."

Lotus motorsport director Claudio Berro said that efforts to address the shortfalls are already in full swing. "We've already seen improvements in the engine, and we need to make some [more] improvements,

especially in the mapping and driveability of the engine," he said. "We have to fine-tune things like the throttle position."

Lotus is running two engines on Engine Development Ltd's dyno in the UK in the quest for more power, while driveability issues will be tackled in the early races and an upcoming test at Texas Motor Speedway.



Servia: "Show needs improving"

INDYCAR

## Calls for DW12 push-to-pass

### ORIOL SERVIA HAS CALLED ON THE

IndyCar series to reintroduce a push-to-pass system for the new Dallara DW12 following its race debut at St Petersburg last weekend.

The Spaniard, who finished 16th in the race, praised the DW12's maiden race performance, but he believes that the addition of the system would increase overtaking and add to the spectacle.

"I thought the new car was great," said the Dreyer & Reinbold Racing driver. "I just think we really need push-to-pass. We have turbos now, so we really should have it. The show would be so much better."

Push-to-pass was first introduced to American single-seater racing with Champ Car in the last decade. IndyCar adopted the system in 2009, and used it up until the end of last season.

## AUTOSPORT SAYS...

MARK GLENDENNING  
US EDITOR

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**W**hatever it was that you thought when you first saw a picture of the new DW12 IndyCar, chances are that you thought it fairly emphatically. It's not a car that inspires neutrality.

Well, it's even more striking in the flesh. Aesthetically, its detractors liked to claim that it was hard to tell whether it looked like a beefed-up single-seater or a stripped-down LMP1 machine. And from the rear, they have a point – if you'd stood in the right spot at St Petersburg and squinted a bit, you could have pretended that you were at an American Le Mans Series race.

But you'd also have noticed that they sound fantastic, particularly compared with their predecessor. Not only does the turbo's voice seem

racier and more purposeful, but you can detect differences between the engines of three manufacturers. The Lotus in particular has a distinctive, aggressive snarl.

One of the keys to Homosapiens' conquest of Earth was adaptability (well, that and opposable thumbs), and even the new car's most vocal critics will stop seeing it as a 'DW12' and start seeing it as an 'IndyCar' soon enough. The glitches will be ironed out. And if St Pete is any guide, the series will be left with a stronger, faster, safer, instantly-identifiable chassis that lends itself to decent racing. Mission accomplished.

You'll soon get used to this sight



GP2

## Addax admits attempts to sign Valsecchi in GP2

### GP2 TEAMS' CHAMPION

Addax has revealed that it was close to signing title contender Davide Valsecchi in the winter.

The Spanish squad has been a regular frontrunner in the Formula 1 support series, but its 2012 line-up of Josef Kral and Johnny Cecotto Jr was under scrutiny even before the team failed to score a point at the Sepang season-opener last weekend. And on Sunday team owner Alejandro Agag revealed that he had tried to sign veteran Valsecchi, who took pole for the first race of the year with DAMS.

"I think that DAMS is clearly the one to beat because they have two very good drivers," said Agag of Valsecchi and Felipe Nasr. "Valsecchi is a great driver, and we were about to sign him but he was taken away from under our noses."

"Anyway [we had] a race to forget. As always our objective is to regain the teams' title, and to do this we will maintain our policy of offering our drivers everything they need."



P44 GP2 REPORT



Valsecchi took pole for DAMS; Addax struggled

## REMEMBER WHEN...

JUNE 11, 2005



**...Chevrolet last won an IndyCar race?**  
Prior to Helio Castroneves' victory at St Petersburg, Chevrolet's last success as an engine supplier came when Tomas Scheckter won at Texas for Panther Racing in 2005.

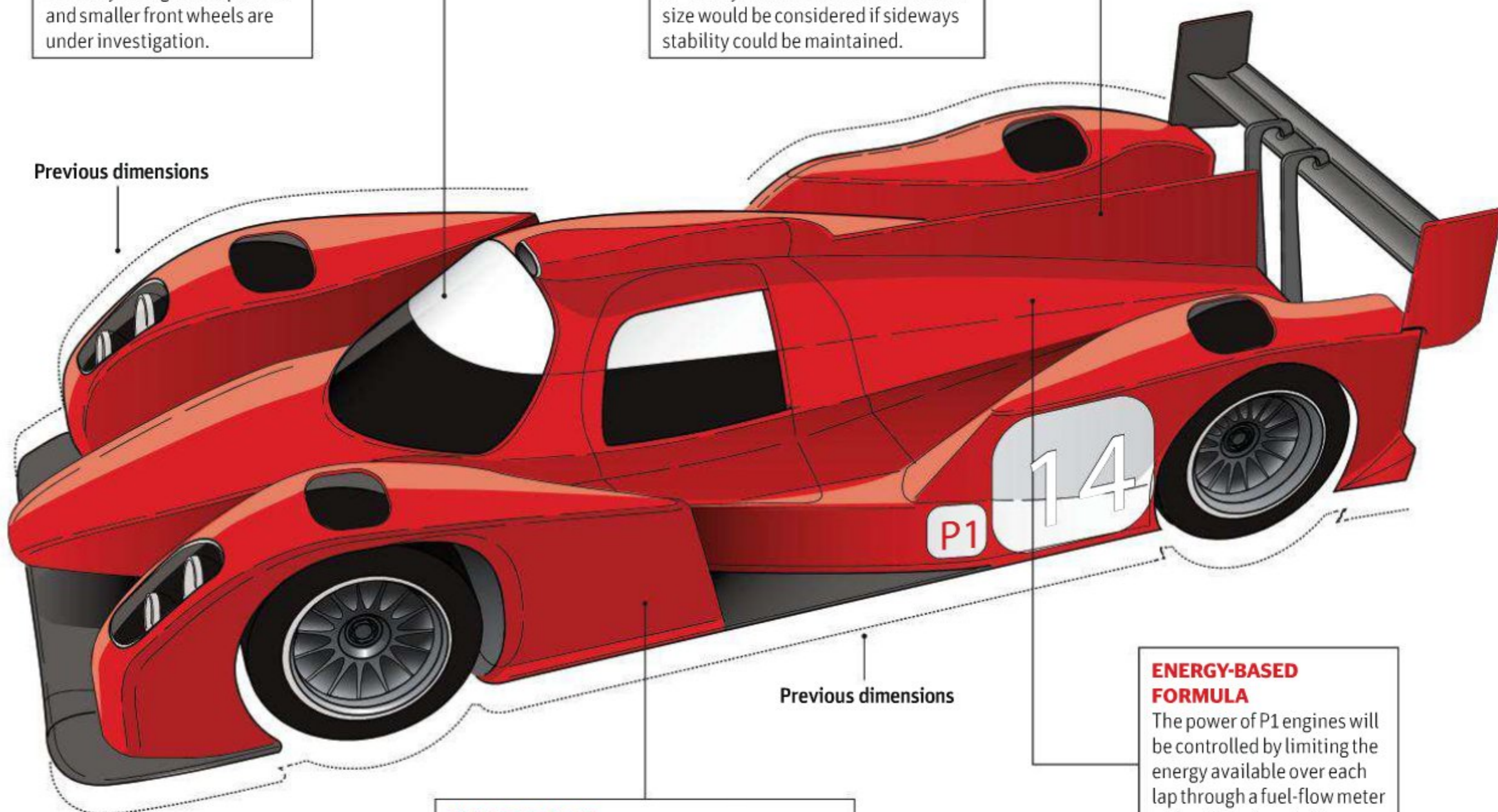
#### NEW LOOK

The look of coupe-only LMP1 machinery could change as part of a drive to increase drivers' visibility. A larger cockpit area and smaller front wheels are under investigation.

#### FIN REDUCTION POSSIBLE

The ACO/FIA document acknowledges that the shark fin, introduced last year, is "totally unaesthetic". A reduction in size would be considered if sideways stability could be maintained.

Previous dimensions



Previous dimensions

#### SMALLER CARS

A 2014 LMP1 will be five per cent narrower than current cars to reduce drag. The rear wing will be smaller but further back to increase its efficiency.

#### ENERGY-BASED FORMULA

The power of P1 engines will be controlled by limiting the energy available over each lap through a fuel-flow meter rather than air restrictors. Maximum engine capacity will be 5000cc.

**AUTOSPORT**  
**IMAGE**

LE MANS

# New vision for LMP1 future revealed

Le Mans organisers and FIA move to safeguard privateers' place in top sportscar class. By GARY WATKINS

A major shift in the philosophy of the Le Mans 24 Hours rulebook for 2014 will safeguard the place of privateers in the LMP1 class.

A private consultation document reveals that the FIA and Le Mans organiser the Automobile Club de l'Ouest, which are formulating the new P1 regulations, intend to make sure that non-hybrid cars run by private teams can be competitive. The original idea for the new energy-based formula would have almost certainly made it impossible for a car not using an energy recovery system (ERS) to run near the front.

It had been intended that the penalty for running a kinetic energy recovery system (KERS) in the current rules (by way of a smaller fuel tank) would be removed for

2014, when the scope of the rules is widened to allow other systems such as turbo compounding. The latest proposal is that non-hybrid cars will be allowed a larger energy or fuel allocation.

ACO sporting manager Vincent Beaumesnil said: "It's very important to make sure LMP1 remains affordable for privateers. We intend to make sure it is possible for privateers to compete at a high level."

The move has been welcomed by privateer teams running in LMP1.

JRM Racing team manager Nigel Stepney, whose squad is running an HPD ARX-03a in this year's FIA World Endurance Championship, said: "The expense of buying the hybrid systems and then managing them is probably beyond the means

**"There needed to be a change so the privateers didn't get wiped out"**

JRM team manager Nigel Stepney

of most privateers. There needed to be a change of direction so the privateers didn't get wiped out."

The move has been questioned by Audi, however. It insists there must be a clear incentive for teams running innovative technologies, which the new rulebook was conceived to encourage.

Head of Audi Sport Wolfgang Ullrich said: "I hope people who have made a big investment in future-orientated systems can get something out of it. If not, the

motivation will be removed."

The plan is for the new rules to distinguish between cars running what is being termed large ERS, intermediate ERS and non-ERS. Large ERS is defined as the use of two energy-recovery systems, which would include KERS on both the front and rear wheels.

The energy stored and released by hybrids could increase dramatically. From the present limit of 500 kilojoules it could go as high as eight megajoules – a sixteen-fold increase.

The new rules are also likely to reflect the greater efficiency of the diesel-combustion cycle compared with that of petrol. Petrol-engined machinery will be granted a fuel allocation between four and six per cent larger than the diesels.



Wittmann took last Signature win in Macau qualifier in 2011

## FORMULA 3

## Signature sign-off: but team will return to F3

## THE FRENCH SIGNATURE SQUAD

could return to Formula 3 as early as the Macau Grand Prix in November after its withdrawal from the Euro Series this week.

Signature, which won the Euro Series with Edoardo Mortara in 2010, opted against continuing in the championship after failing to find the calibre of funded driver it demanded together with engine supplier Volkswagen. But team boss Philippe Sinault has insisted that its absence from the category, in which it has been a frontrunner since the late 1990s, is only temporary.

Sinault said: "This is not the end of Signature in F3; it is just a year out. We didn't find the ideal package of drivers to win the title, so we decided to stop to analyse the evolution of F3

in 2012 and come back in the future."

A return in time for the F3 blue-riband event at Macau – which the team has won three times – at the end of this year is a possibility, according to Sinault. He also stated that it was his intention to be back in F3 and ready to win at the start of 2013.

Sinault called on the FIA to help safeguard the future of the category. He has previously criticised its failure to delay the introduction of the latest chassis rules for a year to coincide with the new engine formula in 2013.

The move leaves the Euro Series with 11 entries just a month before the series opener at Hockenheim.

Signature will continue its sportscar programme under the banner of its technology arm, Signatech.

## SIGNATURE STATS

Founded:	<b>1990</b>
Drivers titles:	<b>French F3 (2000)</b>
	<b>Euro Series (2010)</b>
Pau GP wins:	<b>9</b>
Macau GP wins:	<b>3</b>



Nicolas Lapierre took first Macau win in 2003

Alan Mann  
1936–2012

**ALAN MANN, WHOSE EPONYMOUS** racing stable was a major force in the 1960s, has died aged 75 following a long illness.

After gaining the attention of Ford with a successful run in the 1963 Marlboro 12 Hours in the US, he established Alan Mann Racing to compete as a works representative of the Blue Oval the following year. The team started the season with second place on the Monte Carlo Rally with Bosse Ljungfeldt in a Falcon.

The red-and-gold livery soon became famous on the racetracks of Britain and Europe, John

Whitmore taking the 1600cc European Touring Car title in 1965 in a Lotus Cortina, and Frank Gardner claiming back-to-back BTCC crowns in '67 and '68 in Falcon and Escort machinery.

The team also competed in world sportscars and at Le Mans with GT40s and Shelby Cobras, and designed and prepared the fast-but-fragile F3L.

After withdrawing from racing in 1969, Mann switched his focus to the aviation industry, but revived the team in 2004 with his son Henry to compete in high-profile historic events.

## ELMS

Sims to Status  
LMP2 line-up

## SPORTSCAR CONVERT ALEXANDER

Sims will contest the European Le Mans Series with Status GP alongside his duties as a test-and-development driver for the McLaren GT3 project.

Sims, who raced for Status in GP3 last season, will drive its LMP2 Lola-BMW/Judd B12/80 in the full series after shaking the car down at Snetterton. His co-drivers had not been named as AUTOSPORT closed for press on Tuesday.

Sims said: "I only had 10 laps, but I felt at home right away. It'll be good to get some endurance experience in an LMP."

Sims tested at Snetterton



## IN BRIEF



Stoneman plans return

## STONEMAN BACK IN F2 CAR

Ex-Formula 2 champion Dean Stoneman was due to return to F2 action at this week's Silverstone test. The 2010 champion, who did not race last year after being diagnosed with testicular cancer, said a series return is "a possibility".

## INDYCAR SET FOR HOUSTON

Houston is likely to join the IndyCar schedule with a street race in 2013. IndyCar is set to use the Reliant Park area that hosted Champ Car in 2006 and '07.

## QUAIFE-HOBBS TO STAY ON

Auto GP joint-points leader Adrian Quaife-Hobbs will complete the season with Super Nova. The British driver won at the Monza season opener with the squad.

## OAK DOWN TO ONE MORGAN

OAK Racing will field just one of its Morgan-Judd LMP2s in the European Le Mans Series opener at Paul Ricard this weekend. Team boss Jacques Nicolet will share with OAK regulars Guillaume Moreau and Dominik Kraihamer.

## BUEMI TO RACE AT RICARD

Toyota Le Mans driver Sebastien Buemi will make his sportscar race debut this weekend at Paul Ricard in the Boutsen team's ORECA-Nissan O3. He will share with F2 race winner Jack Clarke and Frenchman Bastien Briere as a one-off.

## SIGNATECH EXPANDS TEAM

Signatech will field its second ORECA-Nissan O3 in the FIA World Endurance Championship at Spa and Silverstone in addition to the Le Mans 24 Hours. Pierre Ragues is the only confirmed driver so far.

## WRT CONFIRMS AUDI PAIRINGS

Audi squad WRT has confirmed that factory driver Oliver Jarvis will be paired with Frank Stippler in the FIA GT1 World Championship. Stephane Ortelli will share the second R8 LMS with Laurens Vanthoor.

WRT Audis ran at Zolder



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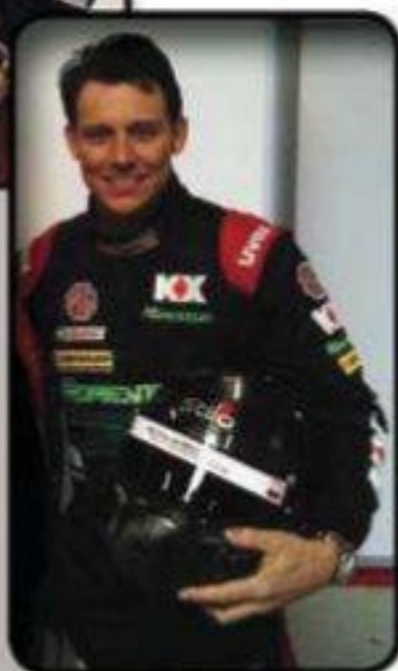
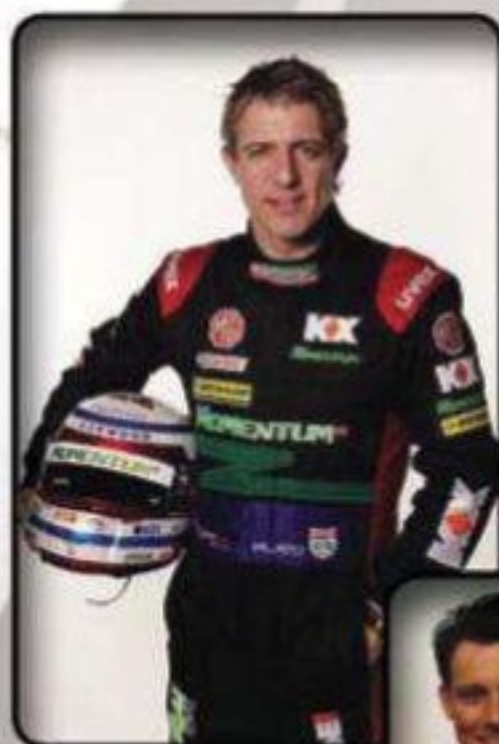
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## IN BRIEF



Scheider sported new look

### SCHEIDER'S LIVERY REVEALED

Audi unveiled the livery that former DTM champion Timo Scheider will carry on his Abt A5 in this year's series at the official Valencia test last week.

### JOHNSON GETS POINTS BACK

Jimmie Johnson has had his 25-point penalty, for running an illegal car at the Daytona 500, rescinded on appeal. His crew chief Chad Knaus and car chief Ron Malec have had their six-race bans lifted, but Knaus's \$100,000 fine was ratified.

### AUSTIN TO RACE AT BRANDS

Rob Austin has confirmed that he will race one of his pair of NGTC Audi A4s at this weekend's Brands Hatch British Touring Car season-opener alongside Mark Hazell.

### LIUZZI GETS TESTING

Vitantonio Liuzzi has had his first test in the Caal Racing Mercedes C63 AMG he will drive in Superstars at Magione. He's targeted a win at Monza this weekend.

### ROSENQVIST ON A HIGH

Felix Rosenqvist was fastest at the two-day F3 Euro Series tests at Valencia and Barcelona last week, heading his team-mate Pascal Wehrlein in a Mücke Motorsport one-two on each occasion.

### SAINZ TOPS BRITISH F3 TEST

Carlos Sainz Jr topped last week's British F3 test at Silverstone ahead of his Carlin team-mate Harry Tincknell. Fortec driver Alex Lynn headed the second day and was the best non-Carlin driver overall.



Sainz on top at Silverstone



Plato is sure Neal will be in the BTCC mix again

BTCC

# Plato eyes wins from the off

Former BTCC champion realistic ahead of MG debut, but won't rule out victory

**F**ormer British Touring Car champion Jason Plato believes he will be competitive at the Brands Hatch season opener this weekend, despite a lack of testing with his new MG.

Plato switched from the RML-run Chevrolet squad to the new MG team over the winter. The NGTC-spec MG6 appeared at the series media day earlier this month, but wasn't due to test until yesterday (Wednesday) at MIRA.

The 2001 and 2010 champion, who will be partnered by Andy Neate at the Triple 8-run team, said: "That MIRA test will be it; No point worrying about it, we always knew the timing was tight."

"Triple 8 has done a sensational job to get it ready. I don't want to tempt fate, but the level of detail and preparation on the car is very impressive."

Plato did not rule out fighting for victory at Brands. "I wouldn't say race wins are out of the question," he added. "I've pulled off some

unusual things in my career.

"We do want to control our expectations. We probably won't be the quickest, but if we're in the top six I'll be chuffed."

Although the other works squad, Honda, starts as favourite with its new NGTC Civic, Plato believes reliability issues for reigning champion Matt Neal and his team-mate Gordon Shedden in testing give others

an opportunity for success.

"It's quite a difficult one to call," said Plato. "Honda have had a lot of testing and probably know their car very well, but they have had a few problems. Motorbase and WSR will be in the mix."

"Based on the past, the Honda guys are going to be in it at the end of the year. You're always going to have the main characters at the end of the season."



MG6 seen at Silverstone was not the final version

**P52** FULL BTCC PREVIEW

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## SOLBERG JUMPS TO VICTORY

Petter Solberg won the Fafe Rally Sprint ahead of this week's Rally Portugal. The Ford driver beat Sebastien Loeb by 0.02s over the four-mile stage.

WRC

# Toyota evaluating WRC return

Japanese manufacturer reveals new engine that could herald a return to rallying's top flight. By DAVID EVANS

**T**oyota has moved a step closer to a return to the World Rally Championship with the production of a Global Race Engine.

The 1.6-litre turbocharged unit, which was fired up for the first time earlier this month, has been built at Toyota Motorsport in Cologne and is expected to be installed in a Yaris shell as a Super 2000 car



Toyota has entry-level Yaris

soon. A spokesman from TMG ruled out the potential for seeing the car in action this year, but admitted it had been running.

"We have no concrete plans for the car yet," said the spokesman. "But we're leaning towards an S2000-style of car which would be available for customers first. This is a development project, but it's very early days – the engine only fired up for the first time a few weeks ago. At the very earliest, a car won't be available until next year. Obviously, this being a Global Race Engine, it could go in any car, but the Yaris seems to make sense."

Toyota is a former powerhouse of the World Rally Championship, winning three manufacturers' and four drivers' titles before its switch

to Formula 1 for the 2002 season. The Japanese manufacturer spent time investigating a WRC return two years ago, when high-ranking officials from TMG attended rallies to consider an entry. The decision was then taken to develop the LMP1 TSO30 for this year's Le Mans 24 Hours and the World Endurance Championship.

The spokesman added that the WRC remained on Toyota's radar.

"Short-term, the focus is on the WEC project," he said. "But medium to longer-term there is a degree of logic in the WRC. We have been there before, but I wouldn't say this is Toyota heading towards the world championship, but it is a definitely a step back into rallying."

There has been considerable

speculation surrounding TMG's rally project for some time and the admission of the GRE validates speculation that the desire remains at the highest level of the company to attempt to recreate the glories of the firm's Celicas and Corollas.

The current regulations at the top of the WRC mean a S2000 car can be converted into a World Rally Car for minimal cost – with only a bigger turbo restrictor, different engine map and bigger rear wing needed to make the step up. Ford completes the switch from S2000 to WRC spec in around four hours.

Toyota made its return to rallying official late last year with the Yaris R1, an entry-level challenge car. The production of a GRE is, however, the biggest nod yet to a WRC return.

WRC

## DMACK pinning hopes on Rally Argentina tyre gamble

**DMACK IS TAKING ITS BIGGEST GAMBLE** yet in a bid to end Michelin's dominance of the World Rally Championship – by running a soft tyre on next month's Rally Argentina.

The Chinese firm is confident the tyres fitted to front-running Ford driver Jari Ketomaa's Fiesta WRC will last the distance – even on the 40-mile Matadero stage on the final morning of the WRC's fifth round.

DMACK's motorsport director Dick Cormack said: "The programme we have with Jari is all about results and that's why we're taking this tyre to Argentina. Yes, it's a gamble, but we're prepared to take it and we have confidence in the tyre. We have tested on single runs of more than 80km (50 miles) without any problems."

"OK, there are some long stages on the

event, but there's not going to be any asphalt this time around and these roads are quite soft and traditionally not too hard on the tyres."

Cormack admitted wet weather would help Ketomaa fight against the hard Michelin-shod factory cars – and few will forget the monsoon-like conditions that beset Rally Argentina four years ago.

Ketomaa flies the DMACK flag



BRC

# Bulldog chiefs: we will fight on

## THE ORGANISERS OF THE

Bulldog International Rally of Wales will forge ahead with plans to develop the event despite a series of setbacks that left last weekend's second round of the British Rally Championship running to little more than half the planned distance.

The two Friday-night stages through Dyfnant were cancelled due to a lack of entries and the final loop on Saturday afternoon was then lost after a rally car caught fire, forcing the closure of the A470, the main north-south route through Wales.

Rally manager Kevin Witton said: "Firstly, for the Friday night stages, you have to draw the line somewhere and we weren't willing to risk the



Tom Cave won shortened Bulldog

financial consequences of running those stages.

"As for the rest of the event, we were hit by a series of small incidents, including Alastair Fisher's car going on fire, a historic competitor rolling and then car #74 catching fire on the A470. We tried everything to run the last stage, but it simply wasn't going to be safe to do so. Nobody is more disappointed that the organising team, but this is

not going to put us off trying to run night stages and expanding the event again next year. If we don't try different things then the sport's not going to move forward."

Former Bulldog winner Elfyn Evans said: "It was just one of those things. It was a shame about the Friday-night stages – they would have been good practice for driving in the dark, but it's better that they stopped than risk the event."

## IN BRIEF



Ogier will no longer 'qualify'

### OGIER BINS QUALIFYING

VW driver Sebastien Ogier will take no further part in qualifying on this year's WRC rounds, after voluntarily ditching his FIA P1 seeding. Unable to match the World Rally Cars, the Frenchman said his Fabia S2000 would be faced with running at the front of the field on gravel rounds if he had to qualify. Instead, he will run directly behind the WRCs, starting in Portugal this week.

### THREE SKODAS FOR CoI

Skoda will field its strongest IRC entry of the season on next week's Circuit of Ireland Rally. Defending champion Andreas Mikkelsen's Skoda UK Motorsport car will be backed up by both the factory Fabias of Juho Hanninen and round-two winner Jan Kopecky.

### PORTUGAL SOFTENS BLOW

WRC crews will have an additional 10 tyres to choose from in the case of extreme weather on this week's Rally of Portugal. As well as their usual 40 harder-compound tyres,

drivers will have a softer option in case it rains. Citroen's Sebastien Loeb said: "I remember driving on muddy stages with hard tyres – it was terrifying. The soft tyres enable us to avoid unnecessary risks."

### DS3 POPULAR IN WALES

Four of the top 11 crews on the Bulldog International Rally North Wales made their debuts in Citroen's DS3 R3 on Saturday. Winner Tom Cave and runner-up Keith Cronin were the fastest to play themselves into the new car, while Jonny Greer and James Grint placed their cars P6 and P11 respectively.

### IoM BIDS FOR BRC RETURN

The Rally Isle of Man will return to the British rallying calendar this year following its 2011 cancellation. Running its traditional Thursday-Saturday format on September 20-22, the event will be observed for possible re-inclusion into the BRC for 2013 and will include a side-by-side Thursday-night superspecial on Douglas promenade.

### JARDINE HOSTS CoI FORUM

Tony Jardine will host an all-star forum at the Armagh City Hotel in Armagh next Wednesday (April 4) starting at 8pm. Andreas Mikkelsen, Kris Meeke, Craig Breen, Jimmy McRae, Malcolm Wilson and Gerard Quinn will all participate ahead of the IRC-qualifying Circuit of Ireland Rally.



McRae will act as sweeper in APRC

APRC

## McRae: road position will hurt chances

ALISTER McRAE BEGINS THE DEFENCE of his Asia-Pacific Rally Championship in New Zealand this weekend, but the Scot says his chances of success have been hit by a rule that forces him to run first on the road all year.

The FIA has altered WRC regulations to ensure the fastest drivers aren't hindered by running first on gravel rallies, but McRae's priority seeding for winning the 2011 APRC means he runs at the front on all six rounds.

The Proton driver, who starts the Rally of Whangarei on Saturday, said: "It's going to be quite tough being first on the road. All the APRC rounds are gravel and when it's dry there will be a lot of loose gravel for us to sweep."

McRae added that this year's APRC looked set to be one of the best in the series' history, saying he expects "a great fight" with rivals Per-Gunnar Andersson and Chris Atkinson.

## AUTOSPORT SAYS...

DAVID EVANS  
RALLIES EDITOR

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Whisper it: Toyota's back. And who could blame the Japanese firm for a return to rallying?

From the 1970s through to the '90s, a vast array of Corollas and Celicas were the chosen weapon of such aces as Bjorn Waldegaard, Juha Kankkunen and Carlos Sainz. The only thing missing in Toyota's world championship history is a Group B car. The 750kg, 750bhp MR2-inspired 222D that was being readied for Group S would have made up for that...

The switch to Group A brought Toyota its richest run in the sport, with a succession of Celicas overturning Lancia's mass dominance before facing an uprising from the blue side of Japan courtesy of Subaru. We shouldn't forget Toyota's darker side, when it was booted out of the WRC at the end of 1995 for forgetting that a restrictor was supposed to restrict the flow of air into its turbochargers.

It came back briefly with the Corolla WRC, and took Sainz within a whisker of a third title. But then came the dark decade of Formula 1 and the squandered millions.

Toyota is about to become a force in endurance racing again and a WRC effort would fit beautifully alongside that. And the reason Toyota is even considering a WRC return is thanks to the current technical regulations in the sport.

The governing body has, rightly, taken some flack in recent weeks, but the straightforward Global Race Engine-based rules are bang on right now.

And they're ready to let a former giant flourish once more.

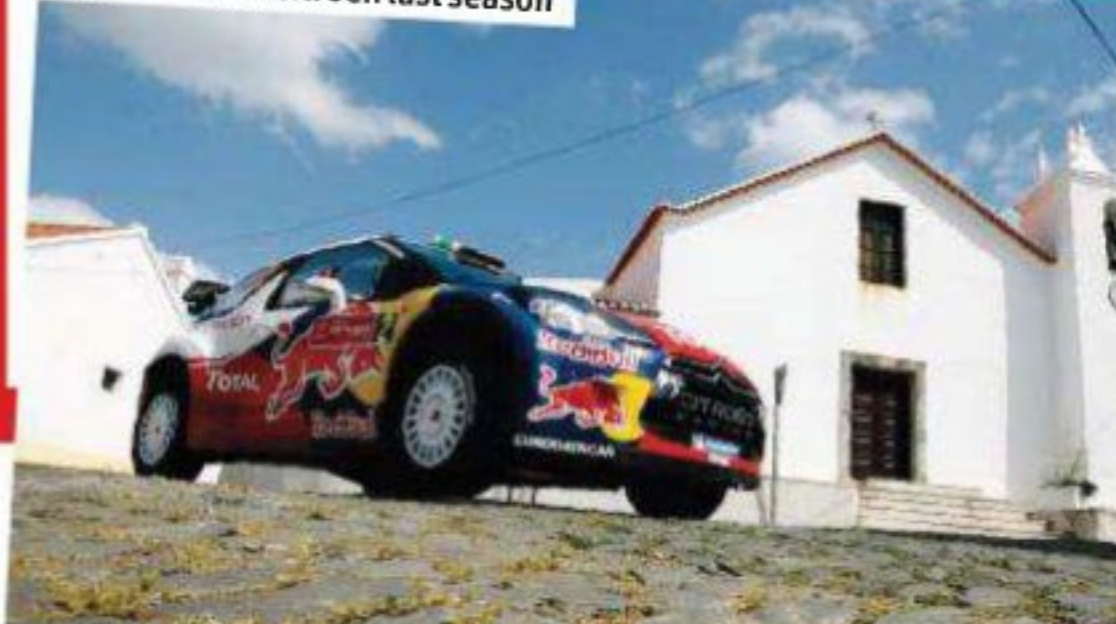
Toyota Celica was a WRC world-beater



## WRC PREVIEW

Event:	Rally of Portugal
Round:	4/13
Based:	Faro
Date:	March 28-April 1
Mileage:	270
Stages:	22
Surface:	Gravel
Last year's winner:	Sebastien Ogier
Championship leader:	Sebastien Loeb

Ogier won for Citroen last season





## MALAYSIAN GP

Sepang,  
March 25

**ROUND** 2/20

**LAPS** 56

## WINNER

Fernando Alonso  
2h44m51.812s

## POLE POSITION

Lewis Hamilton  
1m36.219s

## FASTEST LAP

Kimi Raikkonen  
1m40.722s

## RACE RATING

★★★★★

Eventful all the way through, and several starring performances

## DRIVERS STANDINGS

Alonso	35pts
Hamilton	30pts
Button	25pts

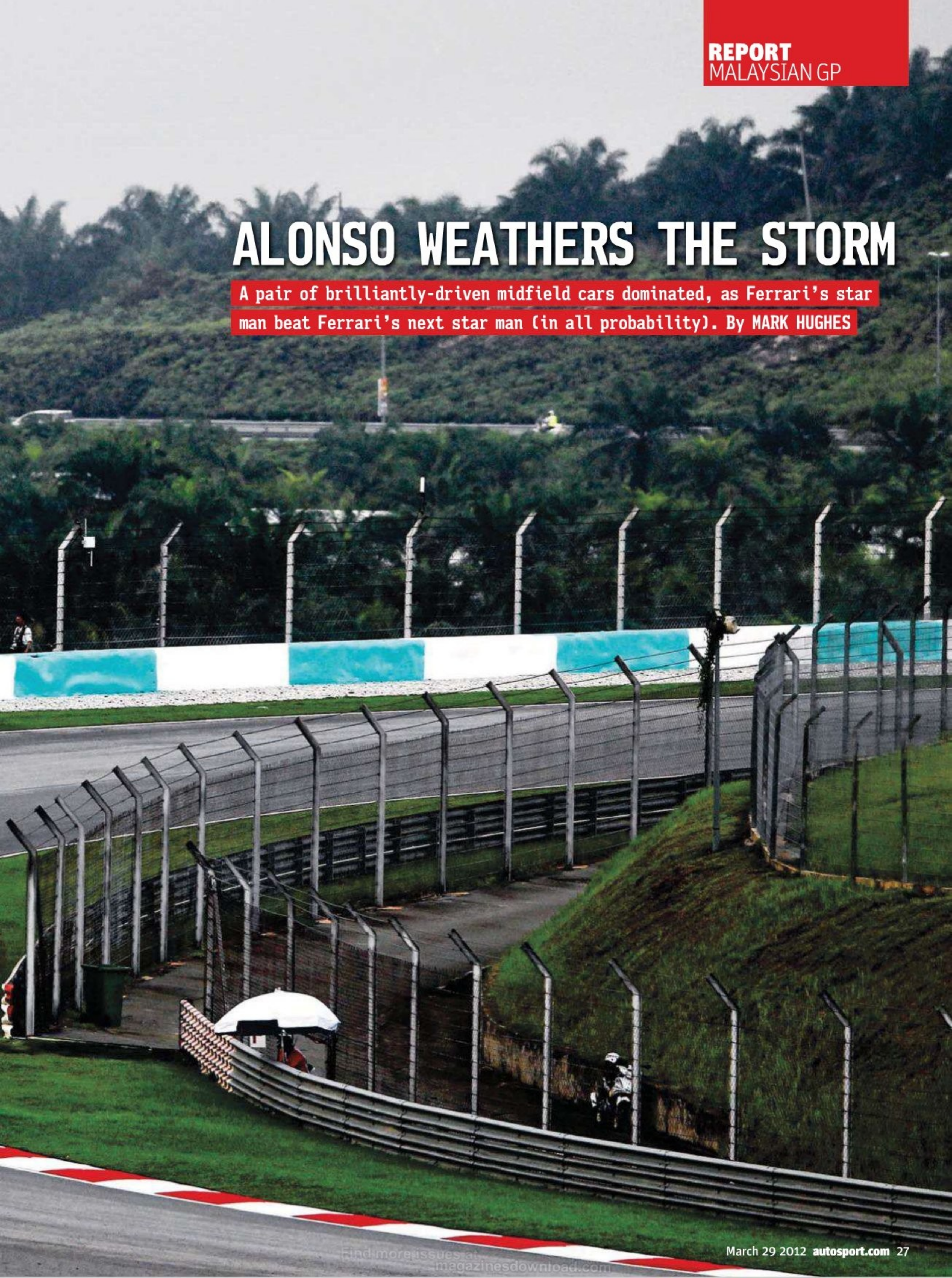
## MILESTONES

- Perez is first Mexican on F1 podium since Pedro Rodriguez in 1971 Dutch GP
- After six thirds, Sauber (as opposed to BMW) goes one better to get a second place



# ALONSO WEATHERS THE STORM

A pair of brilliantly-driven midfield cars dominated, as Ferrari's star man beat Ferrari's next star man (in all probability). By MARK HUGHES



# QUALIFYING

A very different track to Melbourne, but a very similar story as Hamilton takes pole

➤ This was a rerun of Albert Park: the McLarens were the fastest cars – just; the others were in and out of very narrow windows of set-up; Lewis Hamilton beat Jenson Button by 0.15s; and it was done on Lewis's first Q3 run, with no need to complete his second, which in any case was shaping up to be slower.

It's as if only the McLaren has a window that allows it to always be quick, whereas the others – the Mercs, Lotuses, Red Bulls – hit upon it occasionally but can't seem to control when or how. "We put a hole of front wing on Mark [Webber]'s car between his two runs in Q1 – and found a second!" said astonished Red Bull chief Christian Horner.

In Q2 Kimi Raikkonen took the Lotus round in a stunning time on the hard tyres, but was a couple of tenths off the ultimate pace in Q3 when he switched to the mediums. Sebastian Vettel scraped into Q3 by a bare 0.1s, but when fuelled-up the Red Bull was arguably the fastest car of all.

Earlier on Saturday morning, Pastor Maldonado had a set of hards fitted to his Williams and lapped in a time that Red Bull, Lotus and Mercedes could only match by fitting the mediums – yet when Pastor then ran on the softer tyre he went slower! The 2012 generation of car and tyre and how they combine is making for a perplexing lack of pattern that everyone, with the possible exception of McLaren, seems to be struggling to understand.

The McLaren is arguably the least changed of all the cars since winter testing began: essentially the same exhaust and rear-body layout and just a change of front wing/bargeboard. It appears to be essentially 'right', and Hamilton was at his spectacular best in wringing its neck when it counted, particularly in the high-speed direction changes of the middle sector, where he was 0.2s faster than team-mate Button. A dramatic lock-up into the final hairpin before the pit straight cost him a couple of tenths, but still that first Q3 run would stand as pole.

Button wound a lot of front wing on the car to get the balance he needed, did a solid first run that was 0.4s off Hamilton's, then trimmed all but 0.15s from that on his final effort. "It's difficult to get a clean lap around here with the heat," he explained of



That's two out of two for Hamilton

the challenge of keeping the tyres in shape for the whole lap with track temperatures of around 46C.

Michael Schumacher bettered his previous post-comeback grid place of just a week earlier, the Mercedes a scant few hundredths off the front row and absolutely flying through sectors one and three where straight-line speed is all, bringing more attention to the team's controversial double DRS. He was quick and aggressive all weekend and made just one Q3 run in order to save tyres for the race. He opted to run with less rear wing than team-mate Nico Rosberg who, just as in Melbourne, made a crucial lock-up error on the all-important lap. This left him down in eighth.

Schumacher's Mercedes was almost 9mph faster through the speed trap than either Red Bull. Webber outqualified Vettel for the second consecutive weekend, fourth and fifth on the grid respectively. Seb had only just scraped into Q3 and on the in-lap of his first Q3 run he radioed in that he believed he could match that on the harder tyre. The team was given added confidence in this by Webber's very quick

time on that tyre in Q1. But in order to be able to start on the hard – the whole point of the switch – Vettel would have to beat his medium-tyred time from the first Q3 run, and he did this by 0.6s. This was still a couple of tenths shy of Webber's medium-tyred time. Mark had considered the same switch but decided against it on the grounds that he'd had to use two sets of the harder tyre in Q1 as his first run had been unsatisfactory. "We've improved its light-fuel behaviour compared to Melbourne," said Webber, "but there's still a bit of a disconnect between its high-speed and slow-corner traits." The RB8s were 21st and 22nd fastest through the speed traps.

Splitting the Red Bulls on lap time but taking a five-place penalty for a gearbox change was Raikkonen's Lotus. He'd been comfortably fastest in Q2 but both his Q3 laps were scrappy, albeit an impressive demonstration of rally-like car control. The gearbox was changed as a precaution after enduring very high temperatures in Melbourne – a result of its cooler being blocked by debris and grass. Romain Grosjean locked up heavily into Turn 1 on his final Q3 flyer and spent the rest of the lap clawing back as much of that deficit as he could, leaving him seventh fastest, just ahead of the similarly afflicted Rosberg. Through the high-speed direction changes of sector two Grosjean was fourth quickest, behind only the McLarens and Webber.

Outside this year's big four teams there are only a couple of spare Q3 places left up for grabs and these were claimed by Fernando Alonso's Ferrari and Sergio Perez's Sauber. They duly went ninth and 10th

respectively. Both Ferrari drivers had felt it necessary to use a set of mediums to ensure they got through Q1, though Alonso actually set a better time there on the hards. In Q2 Alonso proceeded to lap 0.3s faster than Felipe Massa, the Brazilian in his new chassis closer than he'd been at Melbourne and 12th on the grid. Massa had been the guinea pig for a lot of new parts in practice and the end result was a significant shortfall in downforce to Alonso, prompting Massa to request a wholesale replication of Alonso's set-up before qualifying.

Perez took the recalcitrant Sauber by the scruff of the neck and forced it into Q3 apparently by sheer stubborn willpower. Team-mate Kamui Kobayashi was struggling with what turned out to be a broken rear-rollbar mount and was 17th, 0.6s off Perez. Maldonado's Williams couldn't quite repeat its Saturday morning practice speed and lined up 11th after a barge-board-damaging off in Q2 at turn 10. Team-mate Bruno Senna was 0.3s and two places back.

The Force Indias and Toro Rossos each fell out of that elusive point of balance, having nudged into it at various times. Paul di Resta was split from Force India team-mate Nico Hulkenberg by Daniel Ricciardo's Toro Rosso. Jean-Eric Vergne became a Q1 casualty, flat-spotting on the crucial lap.



Schumacher getting closer to front row



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All those  
vital stats





Red Bulls wait for impending Grosjean/Schumacher drama



#### RACE CONDITIONS

It was light rain on a damp track to start with. Then it was very heavy rain and a soaking track. And then it got drier again.

**T**he spray was gone. Now it was just dark, damp patches out of the grey of the groove, and Sergio Perez was eating the Ferrari for breakfast. Sauber had pitted him at least a lap too late as the time finally came to go onto slick tyres with 15 laps left, and at that moment he thought the victory was gone.

"I saw Fernando come in," Perez said, "and realised that it was the right time, but the team didn't call me. I thought then that the chance was gone." Doing the extra lap on worn intermediates as Alonso was rejoining on a fresh set of medium-compound slicks meant Perez's deficit changed from just over one second to seven times that.

Yet, unbelievably, Sergio could feel the car was even better now on its fresh, hard slicks. "They were faster than us today, no question," acknowledged Alonso. Perez took 1.4s out of the Ferrari on his first

flying lap back out, then 1.8s, 0.7s, 1.0s, 0.5s, 1.0s. By lap 49 that gap was down to just 0.5s.

The team desperately needs the money good results will bring and had just radioed him, 'Careful, we really need this position,' but it made little impact on Perez. "I knew I had to get him soon," he explained, "because I could feel in the fast turns of the middle sector I was already losing my front tyres with a lot of degradation." He was close enough now that he needed to be thinking of planning his move.

No matter how much faster he was, there was the small matter of it still being damp off-line – and of the other car being driven by Alonso. With just six laps left the Sauber was crossed up under power out of the hairpin of Turn 9 as he chased the Ferrari down, but not much time was lost. They went through the kink of T10 and up through T11, charging down the hill together, fifth-sixth gear on entry then hard on the brakes into the tightening radius of T13.

Here Perez needed to get close, so he could get into Alonso's slipstream and be less than 1s behind by the DRS-detection point at the end of the back straight, while keeping



Hamilton heads Button in McLaren duel

some KERS in reserve ready for the run out of the final corner...

That's all very well, but how had it come to this, to a race being fought out by a Ferrari and a Sauber when there was still a healthy McLaren and two Red Bulls?

The rain hit the track about 10 minutes before the start, but wasn't too severe. Intermediates weather – apart from the HRT guys at the back who took a gamble on full wets. Lewis Hamilton and Jenson Button

reached the first corner in grid formation and headed off, apparently destined to have a straight all-McLaren contest of wet-weather driving. Their advantage only increased as immediately behind them Romain Grosjean's Lotus and Michael Schumacher's Mercedes tangled four corners into the race amid the blinding spray, Mark Webber having opportunistically snaked his Red Bull past them as they squabbled. Alonso ►

◀ was one of those making a squeaking avoidance: "I think I passed one centimetre from Michael's front wing."

Hamilton, Button, Webber, Sebastian Vettel's Red Bull and Alonso all passed by in a screaming ball of spray, the rain still falling. Trailing into the pits came Perez for a shrewd change to full wets – and Bruno Senna for a new wing after clashing with Williams team-mate Pastor Maldonado at Turn 3. He too was fitted with wets. Both Perez and Senna were setting inters-matching times on their return to the fray – and both would star in this race.

It's in moments like these that crucial decisions can make or break your race, the sort of moments that have in the past enabled Button to turn fortune towards him. He made the call on the fourth lap, pointed that silver-and-dayglo vision down the pits for a set of blue-walls (wets). Next lap everyone was in, the rain intensifying now. The pneumatic clatter of wheelguns up and down the pitlane, frantic action, beautifully coordinated and practised work – and Hamilton exited just as Button on his warmed-up tyres was bearing down on him, Jenson almost colliding with his team-mate as they exited Turn 3.

That early stop for wets had jumped Perez all the way up to third, just ahead of Webber, Alonso, Vettel – who'd lost his place to Alonso through being stacked behind Webber in the pits – and the yet-to-stop Jean-Eric Vergne, impressively hanging on with inters on the Toro Rosso.

Suddenly it was just too damn wet. Cars were aquaplaning everywhere, the track like a lake in parts, Perez briefly leaving the track. The safety car came out, circulated for a few laps – then the race was red-flagged. So ended the first phase of the race, one in which Perez had



Bernd Maylander has led both GPs this year



Hamilton was delayed in the pits...



Vettel was another to lose points in a Karthikeyan clash

## DRIVER BY DRIVER by Edd Straw

**1**  **7/10**  
Event rating

**SEBASTIAN VETTEL**  
Red Bull-Renault RB8-01  
Start: 5th. Finish: 11th  
Realised how difficult it was going to be to break into the top three, and insisted on gambling on the hard tyres in Q3. After a feisty start, was on course for decent points in fourth place when he strayed a little too close to Karthikeyan's HRT and picked up a cut left-rear tyre.

**2**  **7/10**  
Event rating

**MARK WEBBER**  
Red Bull-Renault RB8-02  
Start: 4th. Finish: 4th  
Appeared to be bang on Vettel's pace during practice and ended up only a quarter-second off pole position. His race was pretty solid, although he was off the pace early in his long inters stint, and had his team-mate's puncture to thank for picking up fourth place late on.

**3**  **6/10**  
Event rating

**JENSON BUTTON**  
McLaren-Mercedes MP4-27-02  
Start: 2nd. Finish: 14th  
Appears to be coming to terms with the fact that no matter how quick he is on a qualifying flier, he'll usually be shaded by Hamilton. Pitted a lap earlier than Hamilton and almost jumped him, but race was ruined when he blundered into Karthikeyan's HRT.

**4**  **8/10**  
Event rating

**LEWIS HAMILTON**  
McLaren-Mercedes MP4-27-03  
Start: 1st. Finish: 3rd  
A second mighty pole position in the course of a week. This time he made a clean getaway to lead. Switched to wets later than he should have, dropping him behind Alonso and Perez. He surprisingly didn't have the pace to get back on terms with them.

**5**  **10/10**  
Event rating

**FERNANDO ALONSO**  
Ferrari F2012-295  
Start: 8th. Finish: 1st  
Impossible to argue with Alonso's assertion that he couldn't have done any better in qualifying in KERS-less F2012. Ruthless and opportunist as ever, he didn't put a foot wrong early on. He went on to win the race in a car that, frankly, had no business to be doing so.

**6**  **3/10**  
Event rating

**FELIPE MASSA**  
Ferrari F2012-293  
Start: 12th. Finish: 15th  
Big changes to set-up since Australia were responsible for upturn in form, rather than the chassis switch, but was still 0.35s off Alonso in Q2. Climbed to ninth on first lap but couldn't make his inters last long enough and had to make an extra stop, fading out of contention.



...while Button this time sparked his own downfall



Senna v Schumacher: star racer passes star qualifier

**“Button ran into the back of Karthikeyan, damaging his wing and putting himself out of contention”**

made his big gains and Alonso sniffed opportunity in the muggy air. Narain Karthikeyan's gamble of starting on wets and thereby not stopping had got the HRT up to 10th. For the next 50-odd minutes we waited for the tropical storm to pass, lightning bolts and all.

So fast does the track dry in this equatorial heat that, as the safety car pulled off at the restart, the track was ready for inters. Again Button seemed intent on trying to turn this race by decisive cockpit calls, trying to outwit Hamilton, playing the cat-and-mouse game with him on the restart but then peeling off pitwards for a set of green-walls (inters). Only a few followed him in, but next lap pretty much everyone pitted.

Maybe the track hadn't been quite as ready as Button had hoped, for his out-lap was not so quick. As he twitched down the back straight up to the hairpin, the pitlane was a hectic place. Hamilton had overshoot his marks, the time lost by shuffling the equipment up to him then snowballing into further delay as he couldn't now be released because of incoming traffic. Alonso passed by and was gone before Hamilton could rejoin – while Button had failed to jump ahead of Lewis, despite the sister McLaren's 3s delay in the pits.

Hamilton quickly passed the yet-to-stop Karthikeyan as Perez temporarily led the race, nailing a great hard in-lap pace. It was enough to get the Sauber out of the pitlane wheel-to-wheel with Alonso, Fernando cutting ruthlessly

across to take up the position.

By this time Button had run into the back of Karthikeyan, damaging the McLaren's wing and putting it out of serious contention. But amid his subsequent blur of lappery and pitstops would be seen some clues as to the unusual performance patterns of this race. Button would be briefly very fast before being held up in traffic, at which point the front tyres would lose temperature and the car would be slow. The McLaren was clearly struggling to keep the tyres in their operating-temperature zone – as if it were simply too stiff for the damp conditions. Was this why the fast cars weren't fast on Sunday? And why the slower cars were? The Ferrari was nothing like its unbalanced dry-weather self, the lower lateral forces seeming to mask its unpleasant traits, all the encouragement Alonso needed.

The inters phase of the race lasted from these stops until around lap 40, 25 laps during which Alonso and Perez left Hamilton far behind, Lewis in turn not challenged by the Red Bulls or Kimi Raikkonen's Lotus. Vettel had got ahead of Webber at the earlier round of stops, Mark delayed by incoming traffic in the pitlane, allowing Raikkonen to get between them. For the first half of this inters stint Alonso pulled steadily further clear of Perez until the gap was out to almost 8s. But then the Sauber's gentler use of the tyres began to pay back.

Nico Rosberg's Mercedes had emerged in fourth after Button's incident, but just as in Australia the car quickly degraded its rear tyres and he was in again for another set just 13 laps into his stint, after Vettel, Raikkonen and Webber had all sliced easily past him. “There's a conundrum to this car,” said team boss Ross Brawn. “There were little windows when we seemed to get the tyres working and other times ▶

**7**  **6/10**  
Event rating

**MICHAEL SCHUMACHER**  
Mercedes F1 W03-05  
Start: 3rd. Finish: 10th  
Downplayed expectations of fighting for pole but ended up just 0.17s off pole with an excellent lap. Spun on first lap after a touch from Grosjean and was 16th at the red flag. Made few inroads, although unlike his team-mate was at least able to make his inters last for a full stint.

**8**  **5/10**  
Event rating

**NICO ROSBERG**  
Mercedes F1 W03-03  
Start: 7th. Finish: 13th  
Just as in Melbourne, looked to have the pace for the front row but a big lock-up at Turn 1 left him eighth. Tyre degradation meant he was fighting a losing battle, which didn't excuse being such a soft touch when defending, something his rivals always count on.

**9**  **8/10**  
Event rating

**KIMI RAIKKONEN**  
Lotus-Renault E20-03  
Start: 10th. Finish: 5th  
Set-up tweaks on Saturday transformed the unbalanced Lotus into a potential front-row car. Starting 10th after a gearbox-change penalty, he showed prodigious pace in the closing stages in particular, as shown by fastest lap – on only the second race of his return.

**10**  **5/10**  
Event rating

**ROMAIN GROSJEAN**  
Lotus-Renault E20-01  
Start: 6th. DNF  
But for a big lock-up at Turn 1, was potentially quick enough to pip his team-mate given his pace on the rest of the lap. Made a great start to run fourth but clashed with Schumacher at Turn 4 on the opening lap and spun down to 20th. Aquaplaned out of 17th at Turn 6 while on inters.

**11**  **9/10**  
Event rating

**PAUL DI RESTA**  
Force India-Merc VJM05-02  
Start: 14th. Finish: 7th  
Had a wild Friday with several offs, but shaded Hulkenberg in qualifying. Repeated the trick in the race after getting back ahead of his team-mate courtesy of switching to wets a lap earlier. From there nothing perturbed him, other than the charging Senna.

**12**  **8/10**  
Event rating

**NICO HULKENBERG**  
Force India-Merc VJM05-03  
Start: 16th. Finish: 9th  
Lost out in the close battle with his team-mate by 0.013s, which made a difference of two places on the grid. Ran 11th when the race restarted and didn't put a foot wrong – didn't look like a driver who hadn't completed a grand prix since Abu Dhabi 2010.

◀ where we fell out of them completely. I don't believe that we are abusing the tyres, just not using them properly." It was a quote that could have come from many of the teams as they struggle to grasp the subtleties of the new-generation Pirellis with the rear downforce that disappeared with the 2012 exhaust restrictions.

From early in this stint Senna was lapping very quickly and began picking them off: Daniel Ricciardo, Kamui Kobayashi, Schumacher and Nico Hulkenberg on the track, Vergne at the subsequent stops for slicks. He was now up to eighth place and not finished with his attack yet. This was all the more remarkable given that the Williams was carrying significant body damage from its first-lap incident. The sister car of Maldonado was lapping similarly quickly but further back, having been delayed by an incident with Ricciardo.

It was the Aussie who was the first to venture onto slicks, bringing the Toro Rosso in at the end of the 37th lap. He was setting purple sector times on his out-lap – yet amazingly no-one was in a hurry to follow his example. "We were surprised by that," said Pirelli's Paul Hembery. "I think teams were nervous about changing because they'd not had any running of the mediums or hards in drying conditions. There was a bit of fear that they might not switch on straight away." It wasn't only that though. The radar was insisting more rain was on the way. Webber had been asking for several laps if he could stop but was told the rain was imminent. Eventually Red Bull relented and on lap 39 Webber and a few others further back made for slicks – at which point Ricciardo completed the race's first dry-tyred flying lap at 1m49.8s, around 5s faster than

the leaders had been lapping.

Alonso's brain was surely whirring at this point. Here he was leading the race, but that Sauber that had been 8s behind had now got itself right back onto his tail. As if he didn't have enough to think about, the car's telemetry was down and at the end of each lap Alonso was reeling off fuel figures and KERS messages to the team over the radio. But what to do? Come in first – and risk the rain arriving just as he changes to slicks? Or stay out and risk being undercut by the Sauber?

Ferrari brought him in on lap 40, Perez's radio remained silent – and Sergio felt sure he'd just lost a winnable race. The rain wasn't

**"Alonso's lead had just ballooned to seven seconds. But what was this? That damn Sauber was coming back at him..."**

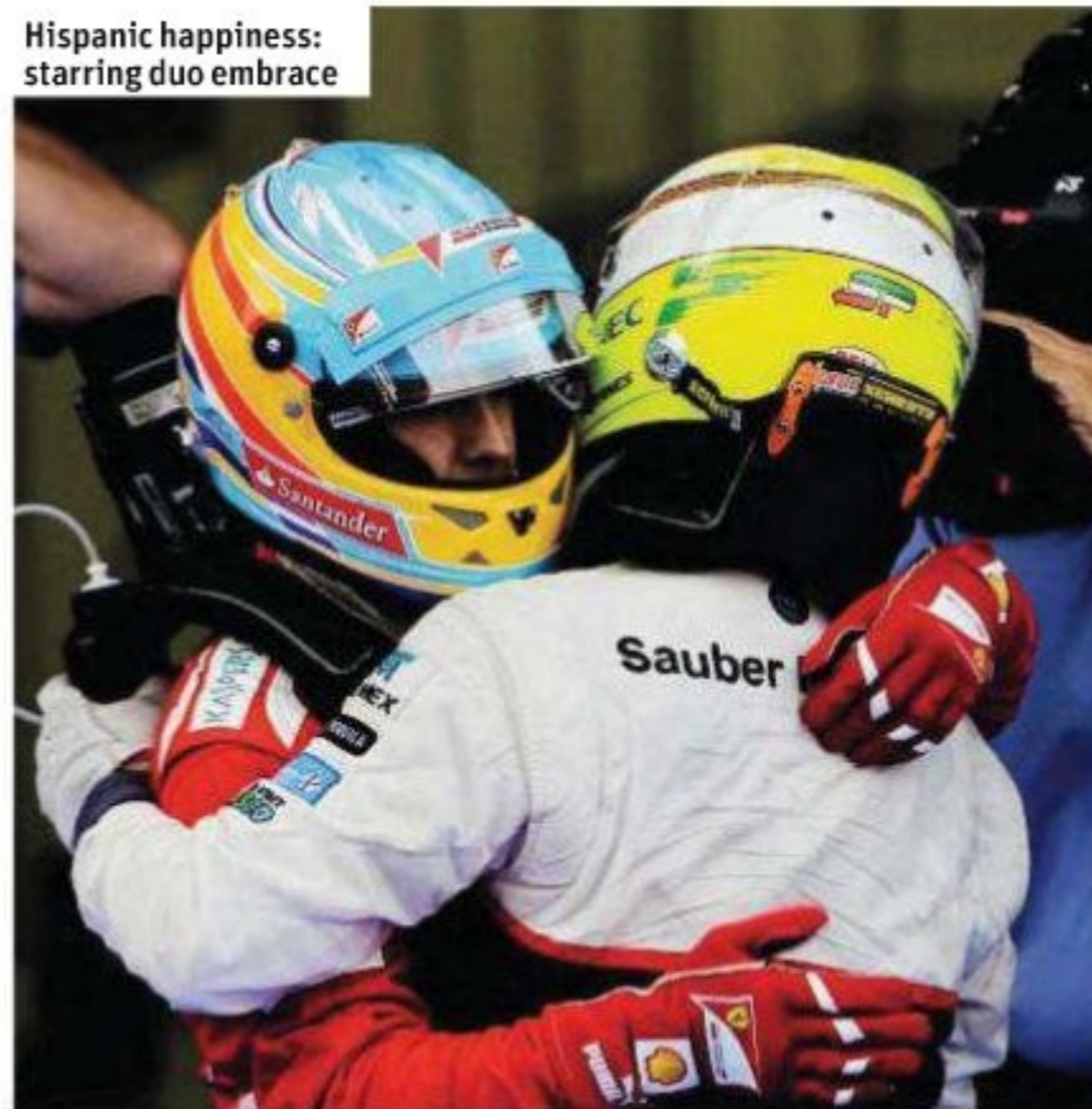
coming. Besides, even if it had he'd have needed to have been right next to the pit entry when it arrived, for his inters were now bald. Sauber belatedly brought him in the following lap. Hamilton came in on the same lap, McLaren also waiting for rain that never came. Alonso's lead had just ballooned back out to 7s. But what was this? That damn Sauber was coming straight back at him...

Webber's earlier stop had got him back ahead of Raikkonen and now Mark – on the medium tyres – began to close down on Vettel, on the hards. There seemed little performance difference between the two compounds.

Meanwhile, Senna's heady progress up the field continued, as



Hispanic happiness:  
starring duo embrace



## DRIVER BY DRIVER by Edd Straw

**14**  **5/10**  
Event rating

**KAMUI KOBAYASHI**

Sauber-Ferrari C31-01  
Start: 17th. DNF

Was very unhappy with the balance in qualifying thanks to a rear-suspension problem that was fixed before the race. Was one of the last raft of drivers to switch to wets, but got himself into the mix for points before braking problems set in and forced him to retire.

**15**  **10/10**  
Event rating

**SERGIO PEREZ**

Sauber-Ferrari C31-03  
Start: 9th. Finish: 2nd

Aside from one small error at Turn 14, an absolutely stunning weekend. Few paid attention to his superb qualifying performance, but they couldn't miss him in the race when a first-lap stop for inters laid the foundations for a race of relentless pace, whatever the conditions.

**16**  **6/10**  
Event rating

**DANIEL RICCIARDO**

Toro Rosso-Ferrari STR7-01  
Start: 15th. Finish: 12th

Couldn't quite replicate his very impressive practice form during qualifying, but was still only fourth tenths off making the top 10. Fell back in the early chaos and pulled off a few superb passes, but couldn't make his inters last long enough to climb into points contention.

**17**  **8/10**  
Event rating

**JEAN-ERIC VERGNE**

Toro Rosso-Ferrari STR7-03  
Start: 18th. Finish: 8th

A massive lock-up at Turn 1 at crunch time in Q1 meant he had to abandon second run and miss Q2. Made up for it by staying on inters all the way to the red flag. Restarted seventh and held his own in the top 10 with consummate ease, to be rewarded with his maiden F1 points.

**18**  **7/10**  
Event rating

**PASTOR MALDONADO**

Williams-Renault FW34-02  
Start: 11th. Finish: 19th

Arguably should have made it into Q3, such was the pace of the Williams. Ran well in the first half of the race, but didn't quite show his team-mate's impressive turn of speed as the conditions changed. Despite that, was on for a point when his engine let go.

**19**  **9/10**  
Event rating

**BRUNO SENNA**

Williams-Renault FW34-03  
Start: 13th. Finish: 6th

Just as in Melbourne, struggled with the tyres in qualifying and again had to pit on the opening lap, this time after a clash with Maldonado. From there, drove beautifully to climb the order, passing much of the mid-pack to take the best finish of his GP career.



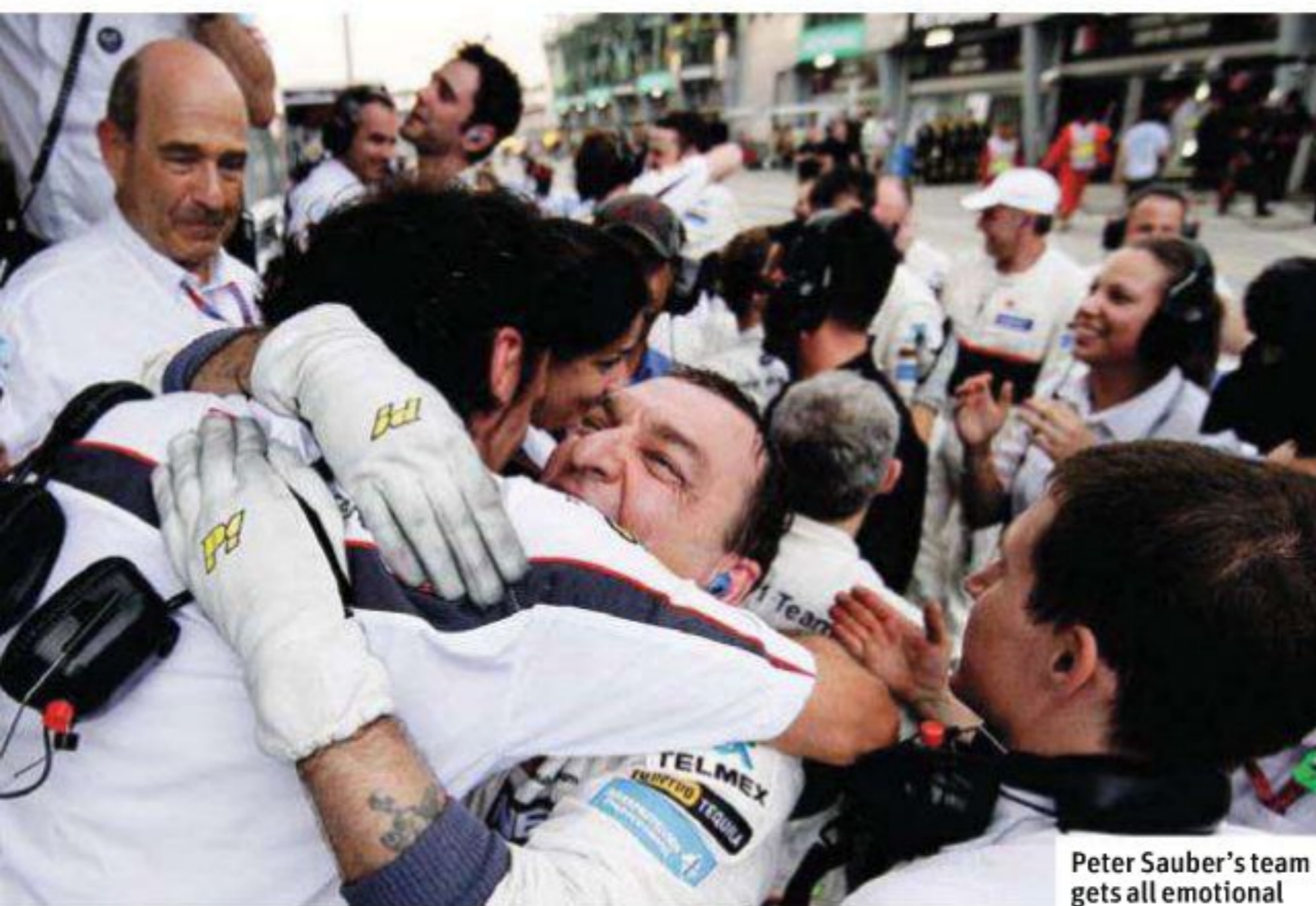
Alonso leads Perez:  
the unexpected story

overworked front tyres. As if in slow motion, the tyres nudged out of the groove and onto the damp line and from there onto the painted kerb, still very wet and slippery. There's plenty of asphalt run-off behind there, so he was able to rejoin. But he'd just dropped 4.5s to Alonso with six laps to go. Now he'd lost the race. But he'd surely won the respect of Alonso.

Amid the near-fairytale story of Perez it was easy to overlook what a massive result this was for the pressured Ferrari team. "It changes nothing," said Alonso. "We are in a position that we don't want to be – fighting to go into Q3 and then fighting to score some points. We want to fight for pole positions, for victories, so definitely in the first two races we find ourselves off the pace. We trust each other a lot in the team, we are very united at the moment and this win will make us very happy today and maybe the next two days in the factory, but it doesn't change our determination to improve the car and to keep winning."

Webber's fourth was well won and he was 12s clear of Raikkonen, but Kimi's pace towards the end did rather beg the question of what he'd been doing before, while Senna's sixth represented his first really impressive race-long performance as well as promising good things from Williams.

But the day really belonged to Alonso after a quite fabulous performance. Show him the slightest hint of an opportunity and this is what he does with it. His beleaguered team-mate Felipe Massa finished a lowly 15th and it was difficult to imagine which was the more troubling news for him: that Alonso had won with what is ostensibly the same car. Or that Ferrari Academy driver Perez had finished second... ❧



Peter Sauber's team  
gets all emotional

he picked off Paul di Resta's Force India for seventh and began closing on Raikkonen! At which point, Kimi seemed to wake up, rattling off a series of laps that Senna had no answer to, and which would culminate with the race's fastest lap. Vettel had just begun to respond similarly to Webber's pressure when his race was ruined, puncturing his left-rear tyre on the front-wing endplate of Karthikeyan as he was lapping him.

And so we arrive back at lap 50, with Perez right up with Alonso and looking to get into his slipstream out of Turn 14. Maybe it was just the wake from the Ferrari that caused the front of the Sauber to begin running wide on the fast entry to T13. Maybe it was the

**20**  **6/10**  
Event rating

**HEIKKI KOVALAINEN**  
Caterham-Renault CT01-01  
Start: 24th. Finish: 18th  
Tried to stay positive despite gearbox-change grid penalty that was always likely to drop him to the rear. Poor grip on his sole medium-tyre Q1 run but accepted there was no chance of bridging 0.8s gap to Q2. Replaced nose in race after an off and shaded by Petrov on pace.

**21**  **8/10**  
Event rating

**VITALY PETROV**  
Caterham-Renault CT01-02  
Start: 19th. Finish: 16th  
Qualified a quarter-second behind his team-mate, which was a solid effort as both grappled with the same tyre struggles. Impressed in the race, running ahead of Kovalainen and repassing him after his second stop to prove he's a tougher challenge than Trulli was.

**22**  **6/10**  
Event rating

**PEDRO DE LA ROSA**  
HRT-Cosworth F112-02  
Start: 22nd. Finish: 22nd  
Qualified for his first grand prix since Canada last year and was happier with the behaviour of the steering system. Thoroughly enjoyed himself in the race despite a drive-through penalty, and kept out of trouble on his way to finishing a race that he didn't expect to.

**23**  **7/10**  
Event rating

**NARAIN KARTHIKEYAN**  
HRT-Cosworth F112-01  
Start: 23rd. Finish: 21st  
Made the cut despite not being particularly happy with his best lap. Gambled on wet tyres at the start and kept out of trouble to climb to 10th. Inevitably fell back. Innocent party in the Button clash, but penalised (harshly in his opinion) for the incident with Vettel.

**24**  **6/10**  
Event rating

**TIMO GLOCK**  
Marussia-Cosworth MR01-02  
Start: 20th. Finish: 17th  
Wasn't too happy with his qualifying performance, although his struggle to get the tyres working well and the small errors that cost him a few tenths wouldn't have made any difference to his grid position. Hung on well in wet conditions but had no chance in the dry.

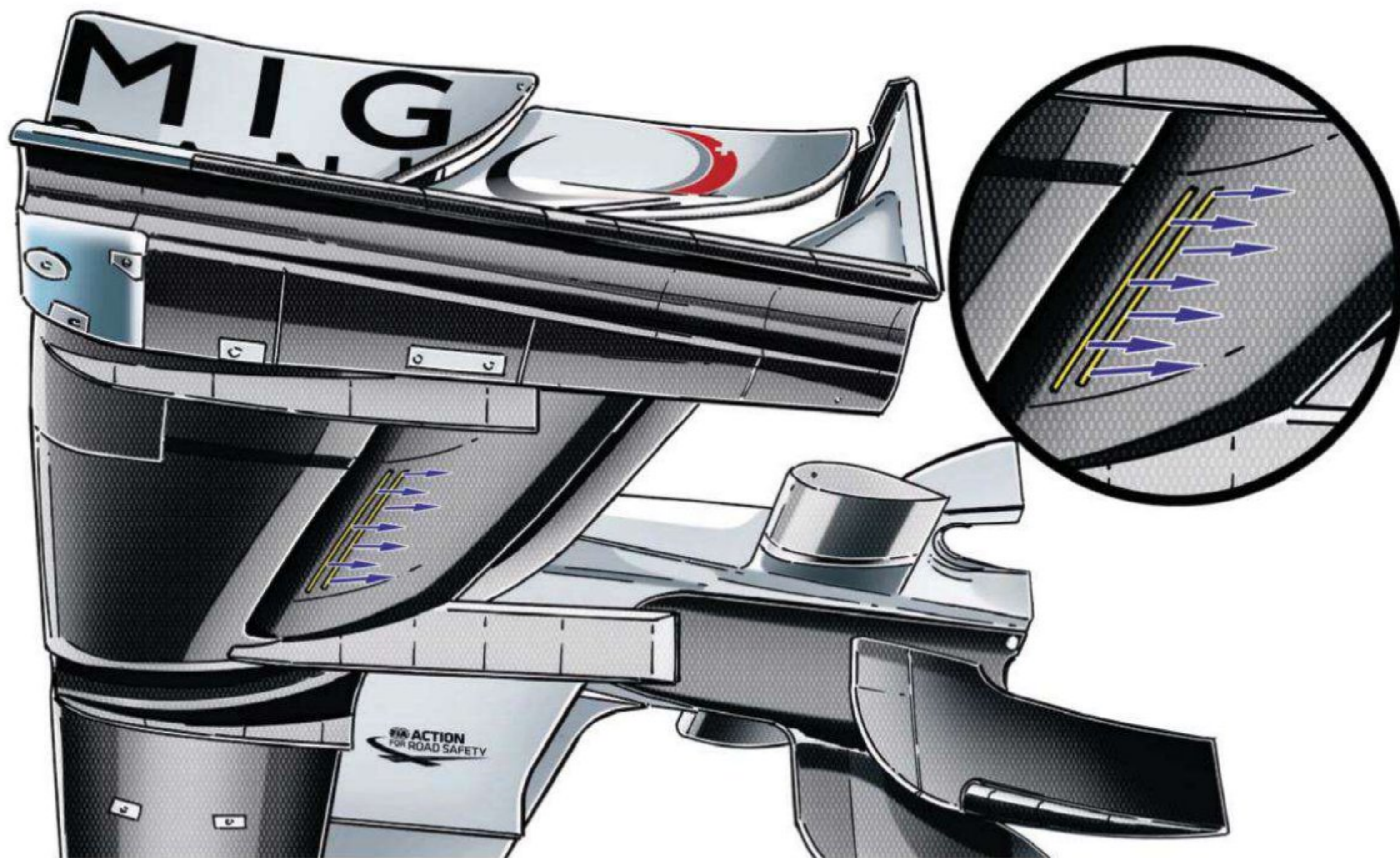
**25**  **6/10**  
Event rating

**CHARLES PIC**  
Marussia-Cosworth MR01-01  
Start: 21st. Finish: 20th  
Continued the impressive start to his F1 career despite limited preparation, qualifying three and a half tenths off Glock. Endured a tricky race in the conditions, but survived well, even though he struggled to match his team-mate's pace.

# Drawing board



Gary Anderson, Mark Hughes and Giorgio Piola analyse some of the technical tweaks made to the Mercedes, Red Bull and Sauber for round two at Sepang

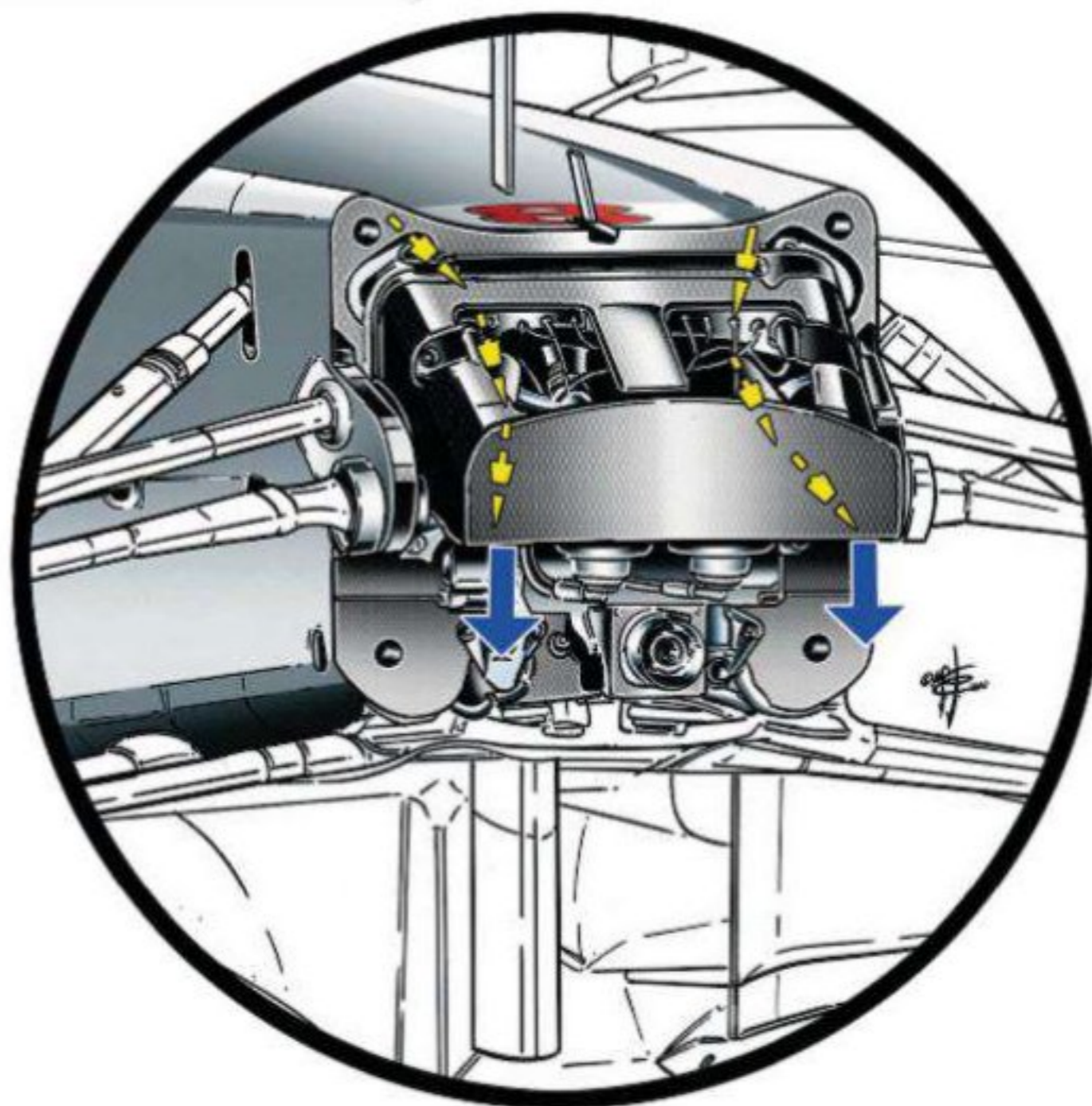


## MERCEDES DOUBLE DRS

➔ More of the details of Mercedes' ingenious double DRS system are emerging and here (yellow arrows over nose) you can see the front-routing of the air as it is drawn from the back of the car over the front of the chassis and downwards, exiting in these slots on the underside of the front wing.

**GARY ANDERSON:** The slots on the underside of the wing appear on the second profile and they act a bit like the DRS by stalling the wing. With the wing working normally, air flowing beneath the front profile speeds up as it expands over the second profile, increasing the downforce thanks to the increase in speed of the flow. But if you then have air blowing through these slots it will expand less, with the wing producing less downforce as a result. Think of the second profile as being similar to the flap on the rear wing and the front profile rather like the rear wing's main profile.

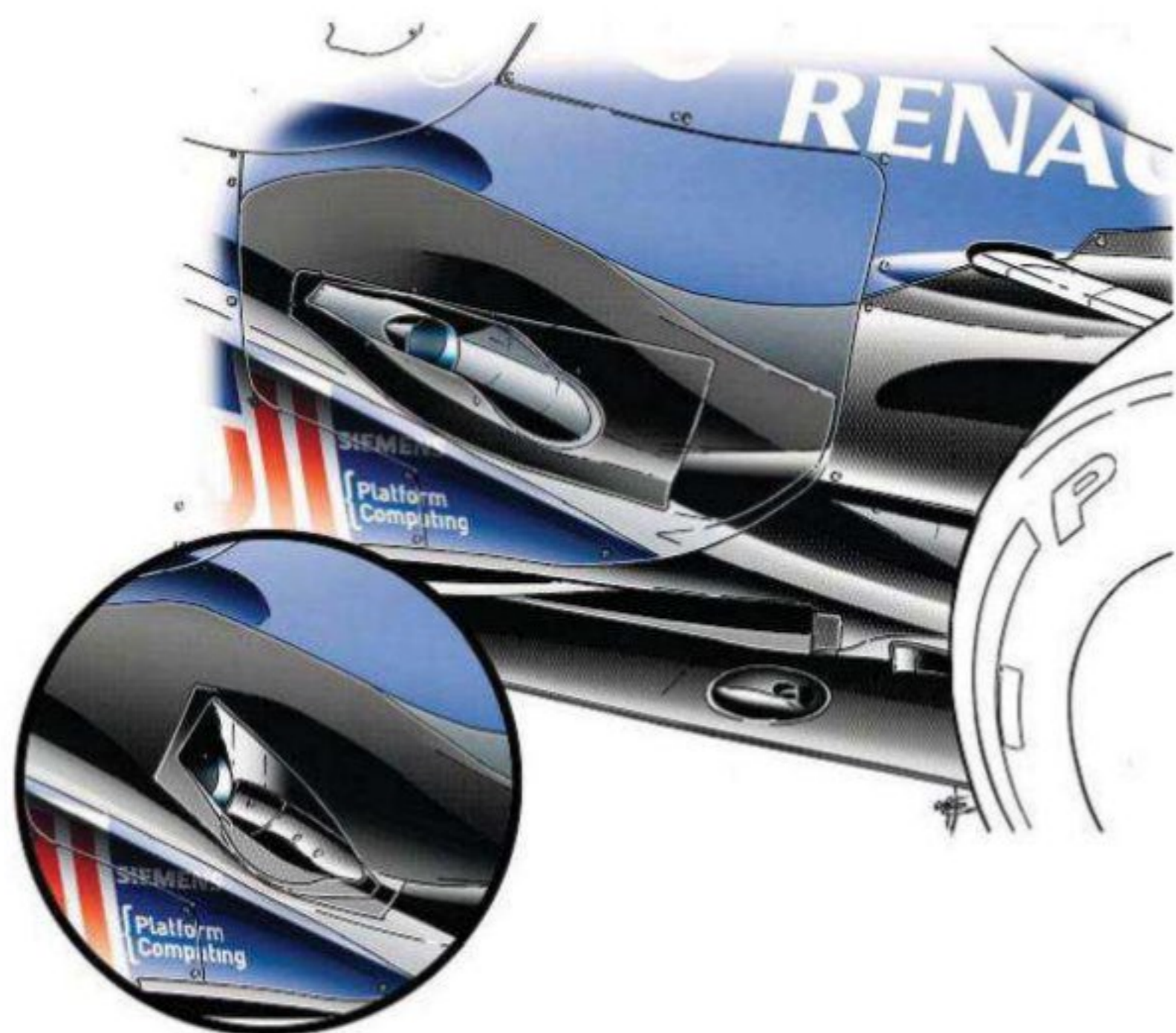
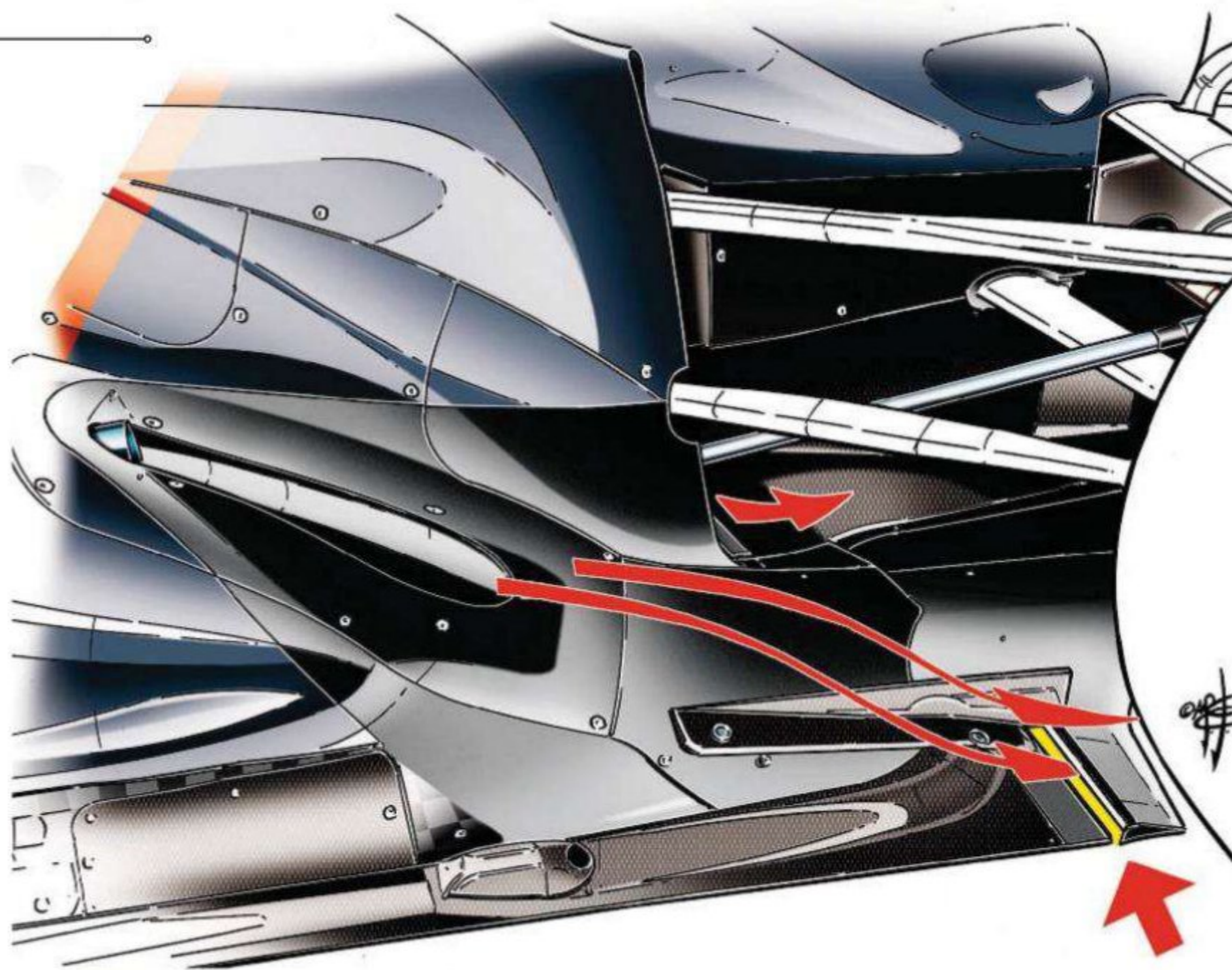
Move the flap and you stall the first profile. With this system of DRS, reduced front downforce will help the car because the rake will simply stay the same rather than increase. For qualifying it can be used through fast corners, giving the car a better balance. In the race, of course, it can only be used in the designated DRS zone. This is all very well, but if you don't do your homework correctly the rear tyres may suffer dramatically – with the rear wing shut during qualifying its grip pick-up will be instantaneous. The front wing, however, will still be able to suck air from the duct for a small amount of time – about a tenth of a second. As a result the rears will have an easier time during braking than they would without DRS, when the front wing is working at its maximum and the rears do a lot more of the braking grip. It's great for reducing the sensitivity of the front wing when the car dives under braking.



## SAUBER REAR BODYWORK

➔ The legality of Sauber's bodywork slot ahead of the rear tyre was questioned by rivals but passed as legitimate.

**GARY ANDERSON:** It is a fine line because the regulation says you can have a hole in the floor. However, if you can see any part of the car from underneath it's illegal. So, theoretically, you *can* have a hole here. By having it open it's got a periphery, whereas if the team ran it closed it may encounter more of a legal problem. The airflow around the tyre is getting displaced dramatically – it's going under the floor and spoiling the diffuser's performance. So you're trying to direct that displaced airflow somewhere less harmful. Last year, the exhaust arrangement down there helped teams to do that. With the 2012 rules, however, you have to try to set up the vortex, feed the slot and guide the displaced air. It's all about extracting diffuser performance and that's important because it's such a powerful tool. The rear wing counts for about 40 per cent of rear downforce, the diffuser about 60 per cent. But the diffuser works at between 10-15:1 efficiency (downforce to drag) compared with only about 3.5:1 for the wing.



## RED BULL EXHAUST COMPARISON

➔ Red Bull reverted to the exhaust bodywork arrangement used during the final days of Barcelona testing rather than the revised one used in Australia (inset). This was after a back-to-back test was conducted on Friday. The exhaust outlet of the one used appears to point further outboard, but without the same extent of surrounding walled bodywork to guide it.

**GARY ANDERSON:** Red Bull is trying to get the airflow to come down to the lower corner of the bodywork and get involved with setting up a vortex to seal the floor. But simulating it with mass flow of exhaust, as well as the mass flow of the whole car, is very difficult. You need to play with temperature sensors

on the bodywork to see where the hot part of the flow is going before channelling it where you want. The Coke bottle will not be as effective because of the blockage of the exhaust. Part of what the Coke bottle does is drag airflow inward that would otherwise try to go under the floor, so with the exhaust in the way you need to help prevent that flow from going under the floor. The hole you see here creates a bigger low-pressure area, allowing the flow to be pulled towards it rather than below the floor. To get the pulsing exhaust flow working (it's not just a constant flow) during simulation is very difficult. Circuit testing is really the only way to do it. This layout may be as a result of what Red Bull found from the heat sensors.



# MALAYSIAN GP RESULTS

## PRACTICE 1: Friday

POS	DRIVER	TIME
1	HAMILTON	1m38.021s
2	VETTEL	1m38.535s
3	ROSBERG	1m38.813s
4	SCHUMACHER	1m38.826s
5	GROSJEAN	1m38.919s
6	WEBBER	1m39.092s
7	RAIKKONEN	1m39.128s
8	DI RESTA	1m39.298s
9	BUTTON	1m39.323s
10	HULKENBERG	1m39.440s
11	BOTTAS	1m39.724s
12	MALDONADO	1m39.783s
13	MASSA	1m39.896s
14	KOBAYASHI	1m39.910s
15	ALONSO	1m39.980s
16	VERGNE	1m40.099s
17	KOVALAINEN	1m40.247s
18	RICCIARDO	1m40.469s
19	PETROV	1m40.857s
20	PEREZ	1m41.085s
21	GLOCK	1m43.170s
22	PIC	1m44.580s
23	KARTHIKEYAN	1m45.360s
24	DE LA ROSA	1m45.528s

Weather: dry

## PRACTICE 2: Friday

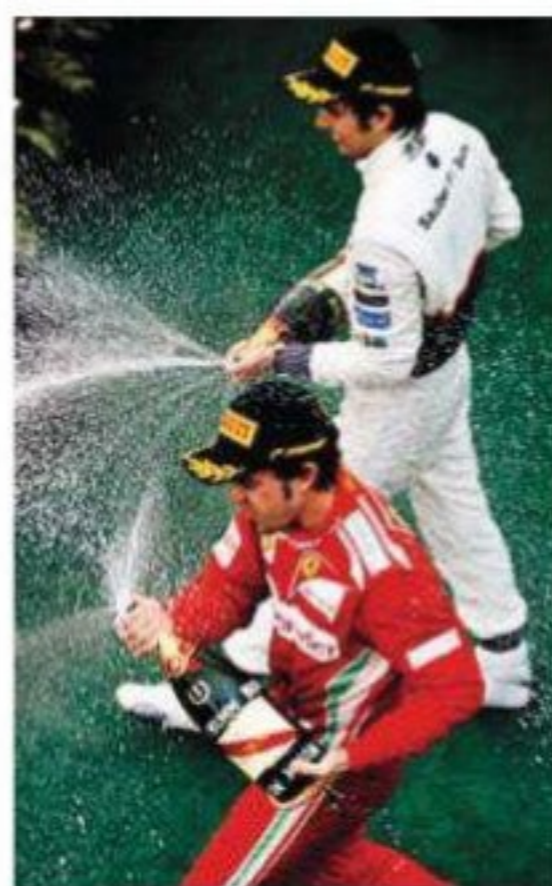
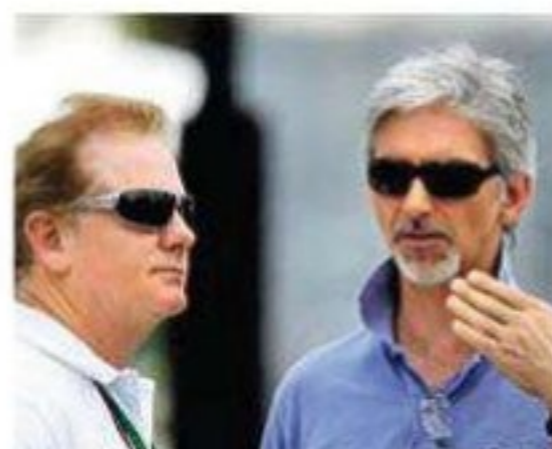
POS	DRIVER	TIME
1	HAMILTON	1m38.172s
2	SCHUMACHER	1m38.533s
3	BUTTON	1m38.535s
4	ROSBERG	1m38.696s
5	RICCIARDO	1m38.853s
6	ALONSO	1m38.891s
7	WEBBER	1m39.133s
8	VERGNE	1m39.297s
9	GROSJEAN	1m39.311s
10	VETTEL	1m39.402s
11	MALDONADO	1m39.444s
12	HULKENBERG	1m39.464s
13	DI RESTA	1m39.625s
14	KOBAYASHI	1m39.687s
15	RAIKKONEN	1m39.696s
16	MASSA	1m40.271s
17	SENNA	1m40.678s
18	PEREZ	1m40.947s
19	PETROV	1m41.464s
20	GLOCK	1m41.681s
21	KOVALAINEN	1m42.594s
22	PIC	1m42.874s
23	KARTHIKEYAN	1m43.658s
24	DE LA ROSA	1m43.823s

Weather: dry

## PRACTICE 3: Saturday

POS	DRIVER	TIME
1	ROSBERG	1m36.877s
2	VETTEL	1m37.320s
3	WEBBER	1m37.338s
4	RAIKKONEN	1m37.356s
5	GROSJEAN	1m37.382s
6	BUTTON	1m37.404s
7	MALDONADO	1m37.455s
8	SCHUMACHER	1m37.663s
9	HAMILTON	1m37.776s
10	KOBAYASHI	1m37.977s
11	SENNA	1m38.091s
12	PEREZ	1m38.178s
13	ALONSO	1m38.246s
14	HULKENBERG	1m38.285s
15	RICCIARDO	1m38.423s
16	VERGNE	1m38.640s
17	DI RESTA	1m38.794s
18	MASSA	1m39.209s
19	PETROV	1m39.704s
20	KOVALAINEN	1m40.189s
21	PIC	1m41.901s
22	GLOCK	1m42.007s
23	DE LA ROSA	1m42.464s
24	KARTHIKEYAN	1m43.378s

Weather: dry



## QUALIFYING TIMES

POS	DRIVER	QUALIFYING 1	QUALIFYING 2	QUALIFYING 3
1	HAMILTON	1m37.813s (6)	1m37.106s (5)	1m36.219s
2	BUTTON	1m37.575s (3)	1m36.928s (2)	1m36.368s
3	SCHUMACHER	1m37.517s (2)	1m37.017s (4)	1m36.391s
4	WEBBER	1m37.172s (1)	1m37.375s (7)	1m36.461s
5	RAIKKONEN	1m37.961s (8)	1m36.715s (1)	1m36.461s
6	VETTEL	1m38.102s (10)	1m37.419s (9)	1m36.634s
7	GROSJEAN	1m38.058s (9)	1m37.338s (6)	1m36.658s
8	ROSBERG	1m37.696s (4)	1m36.996s (3)	1m36.664s
9	ALONSO	1m38.151s (11)	1m37.379s (8)	1m37.566s
10	PEREZ	1m37.933s (7)	1m37.477s (10)	1m37.698s
11	MALDONADO	1m37.789s (5)	1m37.589s	-
12	MASSA	1m38.381s (15)	1m37.731s	-
13	SENNA	1m38.437s (17)	1m37.841s	-
14	DI RESTA	1m38.325s (13)	1m37.877s	-
15	RICCIARDO	1m38.419s (16)	1m37.883s	-
16	HULKENBERG	1m38.303s (12)	1m37.890s	-
17	KOBAYASHI	1m38.372s (14)	1m38.069s	-
18	VERGNE	1m39.077s	-	-
19	KOVALAINEN	1m39.306s	-	-
20	PETROV	1m39.567s	-	-
21	GLOCK	1m40.903s	-	-
22	PIC	1m41.250s	-	-
23	DE LA ROSA	1m42.914s	-	-
24	KARTHIKEYAN	1m43.655s	-	-

Weather: dry

## QUALIFYING STATISTICS

	HEAD TO HEAD		
VETTEL	0	2	WEBBER
BUTTON	0	2	HAMILTON
ALONSO	2	0	MASSA
SCHUMACHER	2	0	ROSBERG
RAIKKONEN	1	1	GROSJEAN
DI RESTA	1	1	HULKENBERG
KOBAYASHI	1	1	PEREZ
RICCIARDO	2	0	VERGNE
MALDONADO	2	0	SENNA
KOVALAINEN	2	0	PETROV
DE LA ROSA	2	0	KARTHIKEYAN
GLOCK	2	0	PIC



## THE GRID

2 BUTTON McLAREN 1m36.368s Inter	1 HAMILTON McLAREN 1m36.219s Inter
4 WEBBER RED BULL 1m36.461s Inter	3 SCHUMACHER MERCEDES 1m36.391s Inter
6 GROSJEAN LOTUS 1m36.658s Inter	5 VETTEL RED BULL 1m36.634s Inter
8 ALONSO FERRARI 1m37.566s Inter	7 ROSBERG MERCEDES 1m36.664s Inter
10 RAIKKONEN LOTUS 1m36.461s* Inter	9 PEREZ SAUBER 1m37.698s Inter
12 MASSA FERRARI 1m37.731s Inter	11 MALDONADO WILLIAMS 1m37.589s Inter
14 DI RESTA FORCE INDIA 1m37.877s Inter	13 SENNA WILLIAMS 1m37.841s Inter
16 HULKENBERG FORCE INDIA 1m37.890s Inter	15 RICCIARDO TORO ROSSO 1m37.883 Inter
18 VERGNE TORO ROSSO 1m39.077s Inter	17 KOBAYASHI SAUBER 1m38.069s Inter
20 GLOCK MARUSSIA 1m40.903s Inter	19 PETROV CATERHAM 1m39.567s Inter
22 DE LA ROSA HRT 1m42.914s Wet	21 PIC MARUSSIA 1m41.250s Inter
24 KOVALAINEN CATERHAM 1m39.306s* Inter	23 KARTHIKEYAN HRT 1m43.655s Wet

\*Five-place penalty

## THE RACE: 56 laps, 192.888 miles

POS	DRIVER	TEAM	LAPS	TOTAL TIME	FASTEST LAP	PIT STOP	TIME IN PITS	GRID
1	FERNANDO ALONSO	FERRARI	56	2hr44m51.812s	1m41.680s	3	1m10.051s	8
2	SERGIO PEREZ	SAUBER-FERRARI	56	+2.263s	1m41.021s	3	1m14.734s	9
3	LEWIS HAMILTON	McLAREN-MERCEDES	56	+14.591s	1m41.539s	3	1m18.570s	1
4	MARK WEBBER	RED BULL-RENAULT	56	+17.688s	1m41.017s	3	1m14.101s	4
5	KIMI RAIKKONEN	LOTUS-RENAULT	56	+29.456s	1m40.722s	3	1m17.570s	10
6	BRUNO SENNA	WILLIAMS-RENAULT	56	+37.667s	1m41.404s	4	1m46.079s	13
7	PAUL DI RESTA	FORCE INDIA-MERCEDES	56	+44.412s	1m41.819s	3	1m09.019s	14
8	JEAN-ERIC VERGNE	TORO ROSSO-FERRARI	56	+46.985s	1m41.922s	2	47.559s	18
9	NICO HULKENBERG	FORCE INDIA-MERCEDES	56	+47.892s	1m42.173s	3	1m10.763s	16
10	MICHAEL SCHUMACHER	MERCEDES	56	+49.996s	1m41.760s	3	1m11.088s	3
11	SEBASTIAN VETTEL	RED BULL-RENAULT	56	+1m15.527s	1m41.342s	4	1m38.597s	5
12	DANIEL RICCIARDO	TORO ROSSO-FERRARI	56	+1m16.828s	1m41.756s	4	1m36.267s	15
13	NICO ROSBERG	MERCEDES	56	+1m18.593s	1m41.863s	4	1m37.080s	7
14	JENSON BUTTON	McLAREN-MERCEDES	56	+1m19.719s	1m42.100s	5	2m13.730s	2
15	FELIPE MASSA	FERRARI	56	+1m37.319s	1m42.051s	4	1m38.518s	12
16	VITALY PETROV	CATERHAM-RENAULT	55	-1 lap	1m43.513s	3	1m24.412s	19
17	TIMO GLOCK	MARUSSIA-COSWORTH	55	-1 lap	1m44.757s	3	1m16.146s	20
18	HEIKKI KOVALAINEN	CATERHAM-RENAULT	55	-1 lap	1m43.803s	4	1m55.691s	24
19	PASTOR MALDONADO	WILLIAMS-RENAULT	54	engine	1m42.237s	4	1m34.539s	11
20	CHARLES PIC	MARUSSIA-COSWORTH	54	-2 laps	1m44.813s	3	1m38.083s	21
21	NARAIN KARTHIKEYAN	HRT-COSWORTH	54	-2 laps	1m45.909s	2	1m04.576s	23
22	PEDRO DE LA ROSA	HRT-COSWORTH	54	-2 laps	1m46.244s	2	1m23.054s	22
R	KAMUI KOBAYASHI	SAUBER-FERRARI	46	brakes	1m44.202s	3	1m18.039s	17
R	ROMAIN GROSJEAN	LOTUS-RENAULT	3	spun off	2m08.464s	0	-	6

Weather: damp, then wet, then dry. Winners average speed: 70.199mph. Fastest lap: Kimi Raikkonen 1m40.722s (123.110mph) on lap 53.  
Lap leaders: 1-13 Hamilton; 14-15 Perez; 16-39 Alonso; 40-41 Perez; 42-56 Alonso.

## TYRE CHOICE

STINT 1	STINT 2	STINT 3	STINT 4	STINT 5	STINT 6
Inter	Wet	Inter	Medium		
Inter	Wet	Inter	Hard		
Inter	Wet	Inter	Medium		
Inter	Wet	Inter	Medium		
Inter	Wet	Inter	Hard		
Inter	Wet	Wet	Inter	Medium	
Inter	Wet	Inter	Hard		
Inter	Inter	Medium			
Inter	Wet	Inter	Hard		
Inter	Wet	Inter	Hard	Medium	
Inter	Wet	Inter	Inter	Medium	
Inter	Wet	Inter	Inter	Hard	
Inter	Wet	Inter	Inter	Inter	Medium
Inter	Wet	Inter	Inter	Medium	
Inter	Wet	Inter	Medium		
Inter	Wet	Inter	Medium		
Inter	Wet	Wet	Inter	Medium	
Inter	Wet	Inter	Medium		
Wet	Inter	Hard			
Wet	Inter	Hard			
Inter	Wet	Inter	Medium		
Inter	dnf				

Option tyre in bold; new set in red, used set in black

## DRIVERS' STANDINGS

POS	DRIVER	PTS	AUS	MAL	PRC	BRN	E	MC	CDN	EU	GB	D	H	B	I	SGP	J	ROK	IND	UAE	USA	BR
1	ALONSO	35	5 <sup>th</sup>	1 <sup>st</sup>																		
2	HAMILTON	30	3 <sup>rd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>																		
3	BUTTON	25	1 <sup>st</sup>	14 <sup>th</sup>																		
4	WEBBER	24	4 <sup>th</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>																		
5	PEREZ	22	8 <sup>th</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>																		
6	VETTEL	18	2 <sup>nd</sup>	11 <sup>th</sup>																		
7	RAIKKONEN	16	7 <sup>th</sup>	5 <sup>th</sup>																		
8	SENNA	8	16 <sup>th</sup>	6 <sup>th</sup>																		
9	KOBAYASHI	8	6 <sup>th</sup>	ret																		
10	DI RESTA	7	10 <sup>th</sup>	7 <sup>th</sup>																		
11	VERGNE	4	11 <sup>th</sup>	8 <sup>th</sup>																		
12	RICCIARDO	2	9 <sup>th</sup>	12 <sup>th</sup>																		
13	HULKENBERG	2	ret	9 <sup>th</sup>																		
14	SCHUMACHER	1	ret	10 <sup>th</sup>																		
15	ROSBERG	0	12 <sup>th</sup>	13 <sup>th</sup>																		
16	MALDONADO	0	13 <sup>th</sup>	19 <sup>th</sup>																		
17	GLOCK	0	14 <sup>th</sup>	17 <sup>th</sup>																		
18	PIC	0	15 <sup>th</sup>	20 <sup>th</sup>																		
19	MASSA	0	ret	15 <sup>th</sup>																		
20	PETROV	0	ret	16 <sup>th</sup>																		
21	KOVALAINEN	0	ret	18 <sup>th</sup>																		
22	KARTHIKEYAN	0	dnq	21 <sup>st</sup>																		
23	DE LA ROSA	0	dnq	22 <sup>nd</sup>																		
-	GROSJEAN	0	ret	ret																		



## CONSTRUCTORS' STANDINGS

POS	TEAM	PTS	AUS	MAL	PRC	BRN	E	MC	CDN	EU	GB	D	H	B	I	SGP	J	ROK	IND	UAE	US	BR
1	McLAREN	55	40	15																		
2	RED BULL	42	30	12																		
3	FERRARI	35	10	25																		
4	SAUBER	30	12	18																		
5	LOTUS	16	6	10																		
6	FORCE INDIA	9	1	8																		
7	WILLIAMS	8	0	8																		
8	TORO ROSSO	6	2	4																		
9	MERCEDES	1	0	1																		
10	MARUSSIA	0	0	0																		
11	CATERHAM	0	0	0																		
12	HRT	0	-	0																		



## SECTOR 1 TIMES

POS	DRIVER	TIME
1	ROSBERG	25.832s
2	RICCIARDO	25.862s
3	RAIKKONEN	25.906s
4	HULKENBERG	25.907s
5	SCHUMACHER	26.029s
6	VERGNE	26.050s
7	DI RESTA	26.090s
8	VETTEL	26.096s
9	MALDONADO	26.107s
10	SENNA	26.130s

## SECTOR 2 TIMES

POS	DRIVER	TIME
1	PEREZ	33.954s
2	RAIKKONEN	33.961s
3	WEBBER	34.140s
4	VETTEL	34.191s
5	HAMILTON	34.285s
6	ALONSO	34.327s
7	SENNA	34.411s
8	DI RESTA	34.521s
9	MASSA	34.533s
10	RICCIARDO	34.637s

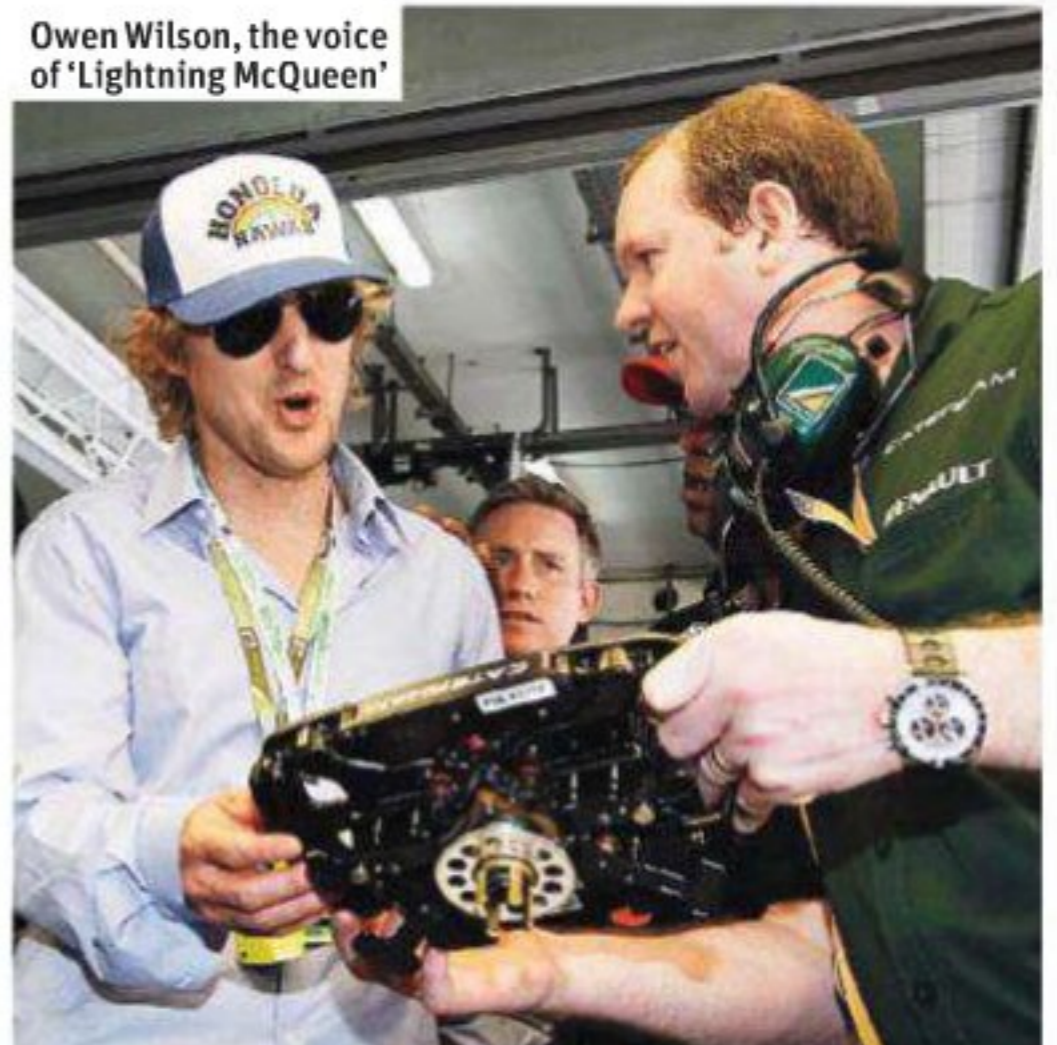
## SECTOR 3 TIMES

POS	DRIVER	TIME
1	WEBBER	40.597s
2	RAIKKONEN	40.601s
3	SCHUMACHER	40.699s
4	SENNA	40.719s
5	PEREZ	40.789s
6	HAMILTON	40.832s
7	ALONSO	40.903s
8	VERGNE	40.947s
9	BUTTON	40.973s
10	MASSA	40.983s

## SPEED TRAP (MPH)

POS	DRIVER	SPEED
1	VERGNE	186.2
2	HULKENBERG	186.0
3	KOVALAINEN	184.9
4	RICCIARDO	184.9
5	MALDONADO	184.3
6	DI RESTA	184.2
7	SENNA	184.1
8	BUTTON	183.6
9	RAIKKONEN	182.1
10	ROSBERG	182.1

Owen Wilson, the voice of 'Lightning McQueen'

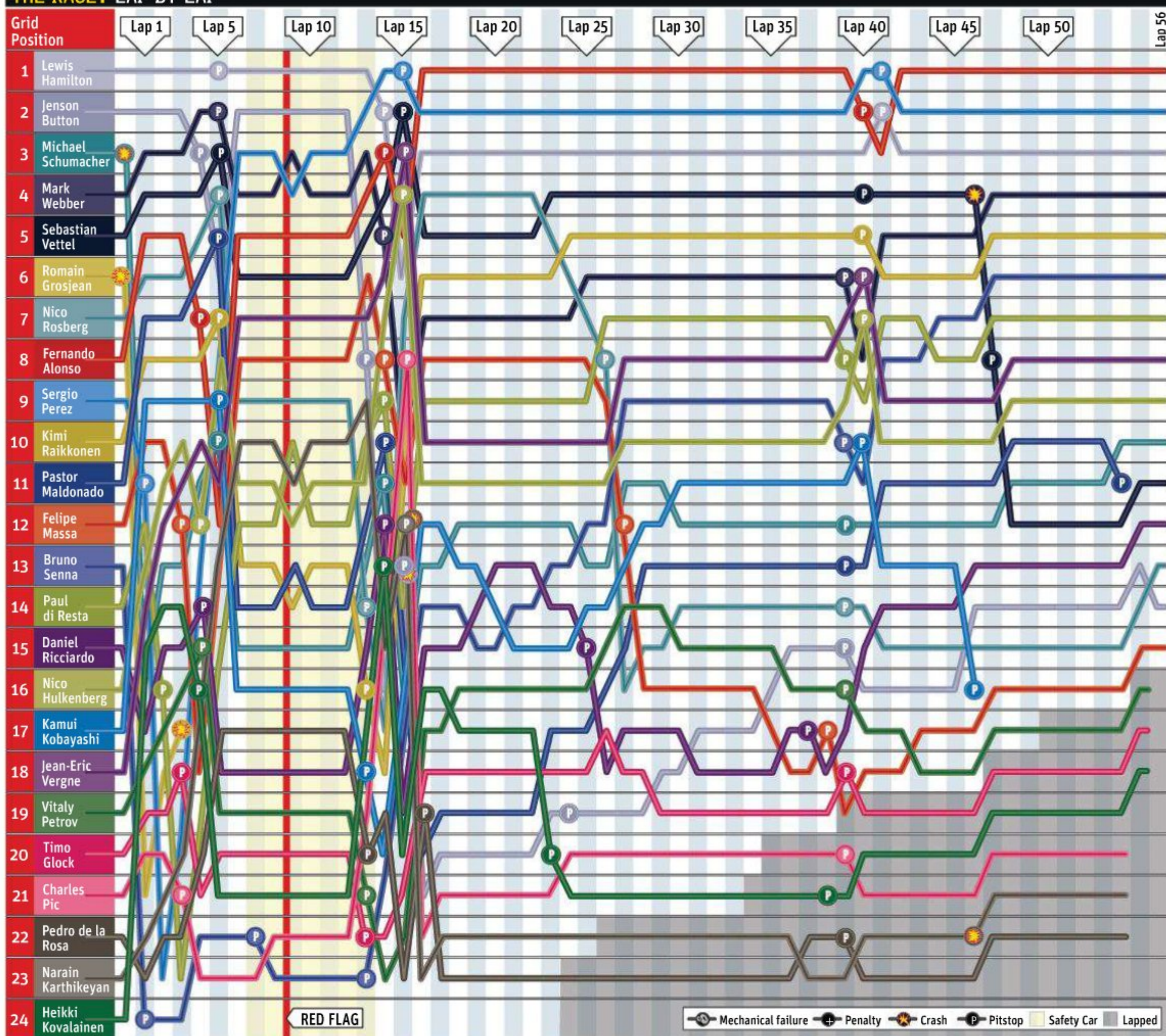


FOR IN-DEPTH F1 RESULTS

FORIX

# MALAYSIAN GP THE FINAL WORDS

## THE RACE: LAP BY LAP



## TRACKSIDE VIEW

**MARK HUGHES**  
GRAND PRIX EDITOR



There's 70 per cent humidity and the greenhouse smell of damp vegetation as the cars take to the track on Friday morning with the sun already fierce. Jenson Button's straight into a long run and the McLaren is beautifully poised, even amid the conflicting demands of turns 12-13-14, a fast downhill left with an adverse camber upon exit pulling the car towards the kerb just as it needs to get over to the left for the fast right of 13. The turn tightens in an ever-increasing radius into 14. On the approach to 12, Jenson closes the DRS, the car screams down the hill in sixth gear, nudges the exit kerb and is still accelerating against the forces as it turns in to 13. Four rapid, evenly-spaced downshifts under heavy braking follow. All is well in Button's world right now, but there's a black shadow in his mirrors, black-and-gold

actually. Raikkonen's Lotus is gaining, bit by bit. Button is metronome-like, putting in the hard strokes of tyre-analysis laps, Kimi is flamboyant in his chase, as if using the McLaren as a target. On one lap the Lotus goes beyond the exit kerb of 12 and onto the astroturf. Kimi fights the fishtailing, sixth-gear moment that loses him some distance but next lap through and he's made it back up. As the drivers approach 13 many take time to look at the national flags up on the banking – if they're fluttering straight on, they've got a tail wind and hence less downforce as they turn in. Today they are still and pretty much everyone's full chat into that turn. Jean-Eric Vergne's Toro Rosso gives a menacing little double twitch, but his throttle foot is unmoved. Jenson finally backs off, and as he makes his way to the pits there's a black-and-gold flash to his side.

**“Raikkonen fights the fishtailing, sixth-gear moment that loses him some distance”**

# GRAND PRIX DIGEST

The weekend in a nutshell - plus moments you might have missed...

## THURSDAY

**0005** @kamui\_kobayashi too noisy frog !! always crying at my room balcony



**1215** Pedro de la Rosa (right) confirms that HRT will have a functional DRS in Malaysia.



**1415** Kimi Raikkonen wants steering improvements to his Lotus, particularly to direction-change feel. "It is not as I have been used to in the past," he says.

**1450** @pastormaldo (Pastor Maldonado): going to the press conference now, I'm having a busy day with the press....



**1504** Force India confirms that it will be referring the use of its intellectual property by the now-Caterham team to the FIA.

**1505** Sergio Perez downplays rumours that he could get a Ferrari call-up. "The rumours...they are only rumours," says the Sauber driver.



**1515** FIA reveals that Caterham driver Vitaly Petrov (left) is the first driver to fit a second engine this year.

**1528** Valtteri Bottas passes the mandatory cockpit-exit-time test (stipulated by Article 13.1 in the regulations) ahead of his Friday debut on a grand prix weekend.

**1603** "We need track time to really understand what is going on with the car," says Sebastian Vettel of Red Bull's progress.

**1620** Ferrari's Felipe Massa blasts speculation that he's about to be replaced after a poor opening grand prix. "When I arrived here in 2008, I was out of Ferrari because I didn't finish Australia, but it was my best season."

## FRIDAY

**0755** @kamui\_kobayashi Good morning. I saw strange dream just we were in war and I had shotgun witch is go off accidentally it was so scary but very exciting dream.



**1003** Williams reserve Valtteri Bottas hits the track for first time in FP1.

**1005** Both HRT drivers report that their DRS system is working in FP1.



**1026** Romain Grosjean (left) informs his Lotus team "There is a problem. Something wrong." Problem is traced to loose right-rear wheelnut.



**1040** Paul di Resta hangs on to a huge slide at Turn 5.

**1042** Narain Karthikeyan's HRT grinds to a halt on the back straight in FP1 with hydraulic problems.

**1141** @InsideFerrari 13th position for Felipe, 15th for Fernando. It is the first session but it could not be too far away from the reality.



**1152** AUTOSPORT reveals that the FIA has dismissed a Mercedes query about Red Bull's Renault engines cutting more than four cylinders while off throttle.

**1408** Paul di Resta locks up and runs through the gravel at Turn 15 thanks to a brake problem (right).



**1449** Vettel fined €400 for breaking the pitlane speed limit by 1.1km/h.

## SATURDAY

**1036** The FIA confirms that Kimi Raikkonen has been hit with a five-place grid penalty for changing his gearbox after qualifying.

**1249** Bernie Ecclestone announces that a "majority" of teams have signed up to a new Concorde Agreement to run from 2013.

**1300** FP3 starts with a damp track after an earlier downpour. Lewis Hamilton soon runs off the track at Turn 14.

**1620** Jean-Eric Vergne falls in Q1 for the first time in his F1 career after having to abort his run following a big lock-up.

**1634** Pastor Maldonado (right) survives a trip through the gravel at Turn 10 in Q2. He recovers to set 11th fastest time.



**1815** Raikkonen reveals that his Lotus potentially had the pace to challenge the McLarens in qualifying.

**1821** HRT's Narain Karthikeyan tells AUTOSPORT that the team will struggle to finish Sunday's race despite making the 107 per cent qualifying cut.

**1905** Ross Brawn tells his rivals to put up or shut up regarding claims that its DRS-activated, front-wing-stalling device may be illegal.

**2012** @Tim\_Burgess (Charlatans lead singer): So are BBC and Sky both using Charlatans songs for Formula 1 coverage? There must be a racing car element to our songs I never noticed.



**2147** AUTOSPORT reveals that Mercedes is considering a legal challenge to the potential new Concorde Agreement using anti-competition law.

## SUNDAY

**1535** AUTOSPORT reveals that Marussia has asked the FIA to investigate a potential Concorde breach by Caterham over the Aerolab v Force India court case.

**1615** Jenson Button: "The last sector is like a lake! Last sector is like a lake!" Safety car is deployed, after 'red flag' appears briefly on the screens.



**1617** FIA confirms that red-flag notification issued earlier was a mistake.

**1624** Race red flagged and suspended.

**1715** Race resumes under the safety car with all cars on wets.



**1752** Radio message to Sauber's Sergio Perez, who is closing on leader Alonso: "Checo, be careful, we need this position, we need this position".



**1901** Karthikeyan apologises for collision with Button - despite the fact the McLaren man has already taken the blame for it.

**1910** Peter Sauber refutes conspiracy theories suggesting Perez didn't win the race because engine supplier Ferrari didn't want the Mexican to.

**1915** @JeanEricVergne (right): Well well well, not too bad...! Really happy to get my first points! :)



**1940** Karthikeyan given 20s penalty for causing a collision with Vettel.

**2003** Ferrari team principal Stefano Domenicali insists that Felipe Massa will not be replaced... for the Chinese Grand Prix.

## ST PETERSBURG

USA

March 23-25

IndyCar Series

Round 1 of 16



### AT A GLANCE

- Winner **Helio Castroneves**
- Pole **Will Power**
- Most laps led **Scott Dixon**
- Fastest lap **Power**



Tagliani was the best-placed Lotus driver in 15th for BHA



# Castroneves does it for Dan

The 2012 season-opener was the first since Dan Wheldon's death last October.

Winner Helio Castroneves dedicated his first victory since 2010 to the Brit



Dixon couldn't quite get the jump on rival Castroneves

### ON HIS SLOWING-DOWN

lap at the end of Sunday's season-opening race on the streets of St Petersburg, Helio Castroneves stopped his car on the side of the road at Turn 10, clambered out, and sprinted over to scale the catch fencing — a gesture the Brazilian has long made his trademark.

In the past, one trip up the fence has sufficed. But this time, he ran across the track and climbed the fence on the other side as well, completing the gesture by turning to a road sign mounted to his right and pounding it with his fist.

The sign read: Dan Wheldon Way.

The start of the 2012 season could have been about any number of things. For the first time in nearly a decade, the series had sent its teams into battle with completely new cars. For the first time since 2005, there were two new engine suppliers to join Honda on the grid. There was even a multiple grand prix winner on the grid. Narrow that scope down to Castroneves himself, St Petersburg could have been pitched as an opportunity to draw a line under the

worst season of his IndyCar career and start afresh.

All of those things contributed to the story of the weekend, but above all else, St Petersburg was about Wheldon. With hindsight, it was always going to be. This was the first time the race paddock had convened since the terrible events of Las Vegas and, five months on, the scars remained evident. Series boss Randy Bernard was frank when describing his winter.

"The past months since October have been very trying," he said. "There were

## RACE RATING

★★★★☆

More overtaking than the TV led you to believe but, at the end of the day, still a fuel race

## MILESTONE

Castroneves' third St Petersburg win. The first came in '06, also with Penske



## REPORT INDYCAR ST PETERSBURG

MARK GLENDENNING  
reports



Hunter-Reay took a podium finish for Andretti

weekend. In some ways it's nice to be fairly busy."

Andretti Autosport's Ryan Hunter-Reay agreed.

"It's still wide open, the wound," he said.

Castroneves' trips up the fencing were earned in part through strategy, and part through a neat overtaking move on Dixon with 27 laps left to run. The Penske car had been stalking its Ganassi rival for a few laps, and sensing that Castroneves was about to attack, Dixon took a defensive line through the first corner – only for Castroneves to drive around the outside of him instead.

Dixon admitted later that he'd perhaps made life easier for Castroneves than he could have ("I was probably a little cautious"), but he was struggling with his final set of tyres as it was, and had no answer when the uncorked Castroneves shot off into the distance. The gap blew out to as much as 7s before the Brazilian decided to back off to ensure he'd have enough tyres left to defend himself in the event that a late yellow brought Dixon back onto his tail. As it was, the race remained green to the end, and Castroneves picked up his first win since Motegi in September 2010.

"We just waited for the game," he said. "When the [first] yellow came, we just decided to play a different strategy compared to Will [Power], then a different strategy compared to Ryan [Briscoe]. We gambled, but with a safety net, and it paid off."

The strategy side of ▶

## Mixed bag for series rookies



Barrichello battled down in the pack

None of the series' three most prominent rookies had a particularly easy weekend in St Petersburg, which only serves to make their achievements on the Florida streets all the more admirable.

KV Racing's Rubens Barrichello struggled from the outset, finding the car difficult to tune to his liking, and his woes were compounded by having to learn the nuances of the circuit such as where the bumps were hidden in the braking zones. He managed to get onto the fringes of the top 10 in the race before running out of fuel right at the end.

Simon Pagenaud, on the other hand, was immediately competitive in the Schmidt-Hamilton entry, and he did an outstanding job to make the Fast Six in qualifying. Unfortunately, a precautionary engine change on Friday left him with a 10-place grid penalty, but he still managed to fight back to sixth.

The biggest surprise was reigning Lights champion Josef Newgarden. Sarah Fisher's team had only managed four days of testing before St Pete due to the late arrival of its engine, but Newgarden's pace early in the weekend defied his truncated preparation. He finished 11th, and the team later discovered that he'd driven most of the race with a damaged front wing that was costing him about 10 per cent of his front downforce.



Pagenaud climbed from 16th to sixth

a lot of sleepless nights. I hit my low in probably December. When you're a cowboy and you get bucked off, you get back on that horse. [The drivers] haven't been able to get back on that horse. Everybody wants to get on with the season."

Through both circumstance and design, Wheldon was central to the weekend. It was a coincidence that the first city that the series should visit after his death was his adopted home, but the Brit's connection with the St Pete was frequently highlighted by drivers

during the three days. The event began with Wheldon's widow Susie attending the ceremony that marked the renaming of a street in his honour, and on Sunday his sister Holly waved the green flag to start the race.

Ganassi driver Scott Dixon was asked whether the weekend had been harder than he'd expected.

"At some points," he said. "I think it's different for everybody, as well. It's important to keep the memory alive and reminisce about what a great guy he was. I think it's important. It has been tough this

Castroneves paid tribute to Wheldon after winning

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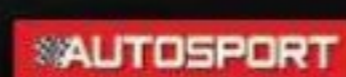
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3	15th April	Daytona Sandown Park	Grand Prix
4	20th May	Lydd, Kent	Clubman
5	17th June	Whilton Mill, Northants	National Circuit
6	8th July	Daytona Milton Keynes	International Extra
7	19th August	PF International, Lincs	Extended Circuit
8	16th September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



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'Hinch' excelled for Andretti

**"I had butterflies in my stomach, but they were flying in formation. They weren't crazy butterflies"**

Helio Castroneves

## REPORT INDYCAR ST PETERSBURG



Castroneves took first win since 2010

Poleman Power (12) led away at the start



◀ things was a bit of a crapshoot. With so many unknowns surrounding the DW12 (and at least one team, Dragon, admitting that it was battling with fuel-consumption woes), nobody was completely certain how many stops would be necessary. Popular wisdom put it at three, although several drivers managed with two.

Polesitter Power set out to capitalise on an early caution by pitting from the lead on lap 11, but he seemed to spend his entire second stint being shuffled ever further back. He recovered somewhat towards the end, but only as far as seventh.

Fellow Penske man Ryan Briscoe initially inherited the lead when Power first stopped, and made his own visit to the pits when James Jakes prompted another spell under yellows by hitting the tyres on lap 20. That left Dixon, Hunter-Reay and Castroneves leading a dwindling bunch of late-stoppers, and by lap 35 Dixon and Castroneves were the only holdouts. They pitted more or less in unison at the end of both their stints, with Castroneves briefly getting the jump on Dixon after the second stop. The Kiwi regained the lead at Turn 4 before losing it for the final time shortly afterwards.



Newgarden was 11th on IndyCar debut

Hunter-Reay was third at the end of a strong weekend for the Andretti team – new arrival James Hinchcliff was fourth, although Marco Andretti's race was derailed by his having to make a late stop for fuel. American Hunter-Reay believed he could have finished higher had he not been forced to go so easy on his fuel.

"I wish we could have fought at the end, really fought hard, because I think we had a really good car on old tyres," he said. "I would have liked to have given that a shot. But it was a race we were running. When you're in a fuel race, it's like having one arm tied behind your back."

As expected, reliability was a factor. The Chevrolet-powered teams were plagued by a battery problem that forced the drivers to rev higher than they'd like in order to keep the voltage up, while a couple of cars were forced to retire with fuel-pressure problems and other glitches. Eight of the 26 starters

failed to make it to the finish, and all but one were halted by failures. Such hiccups come with the territory of working with new equipment, and there was optimism that some of the wrinkles could be ironed out as soon as this weekend's race at Barber.

However, some things are less easily fixed, and that extends to a community as close-knit as the IndyCar paddock's raw shock at the loss of one of its own. A safe, successful return to the business of racing, in a city with close ties to former champion Wheldon, was not enough in itself to deliver closure. But it was certainly a start. ❧

## RESULTS

IndyCar Series, round 1 of 16, St Petersburg (USA), March 23-25

GRID	
2 BRISCOE 1:01.5357	1 POWER 1:01.3721
4 HINCHCLIFFE 1:01.9701	3 HUNTER-REAY 1:01.9321
6 DIXON 1:01.7636	5 CASTRONEVES 1:01.9987
8 KANAAN 1:01.8699	7 ANDRETTI 1:01.7895
10 RAHAL 1:02.0233	9 FRANCHITTI 1:01.9570
12 VISO 1:02.5146	11 CONWAY 1:02.5084
14 SATO 1:02.6015	13 B'CHELLO 1:02.2009
16 PAGENAUD 1:02.1095*	15 WILSON 1:02.2538
18 HILDEBRAND 1:02.4426	17 TAGLIANI 1:02.6506
20 JAKES 1:02.5271	19 NEWGARDEN 1:02.7155
22 KIMBALL 1:03.0437	21 SILVESTRO 1:02.8218
24 CARPENTER 1:03.3591	23 SERVIA 1:02.8771
26 BOURDAIS 1:05.6858	25 LEGGE 1:03.6048

100 LAPS, 180 MILES					
POS	DRIVER (NATIONALITY)	TEAM	CAR	TIME	GRID
1	Helio Castroneves (BR)	Team Penske	Dallara-Chevrolet DW12	1h59m50.9863s	5
2	Scott Dixon (NZ)	Chip Ganassi Racing	Dallara-Honda DW12	+5.5292s	6
3	Ryan Hunter-Reay (USA)	Andretti Autosport	Dallara-Chevrolet DW12	+7.5824s	3
4	James Hinchcliff (CDN)	Andretti Autosport	Dallara-Chevrolet DW12	+10.6526s	4
5	Ryan Briscoe (AUS)	Team Penske	Dallara-Chevrolet DW12	+11.7854s	2
6	Simon Pagenaud (F)	Schmidt-Hamilton Motorsports	Dallara-Honda DW12	+31.2623s	16*
7	Will Power (AUS)	Team Penske	Dallara-Chevrolet DW12	+34.6582s	1
8	EJ Viso (YV)	KV Racing Technology	Dallara-Chevrolet DW12	+35.5943s	12
9	Charlie Kimball (USA)	Chip Ganassi Racing	Dallara-Honda DW12	+43.1425s	22
10	Justin Wilson (GB)	Dale Coyne Racing	Dallara-Honda DW12	+44.3141s	15
11	Josef Newgarden (USA)	Sarah Fisher Hartman Racing	Dallara-Honda DW12	+44.8275s	19
12	Graham Rahal (USA)	Chip Ganassi Racing	Dallara-Honda DW12	+45.1080s	10
13	Dario Franchitti (GB)	Chip Ganassi Racing	Dallara-Honda DW12	+45.8468s	9
14	Marco Andretti (USA)	Andretti Autosport	Dallara-Chevrolet DW12	-1 lap	7
15	Alex Tagliani (CDN)	Bryan Herta Autosport	Dallara-Lotus DW12	-1 lap	17
16	Oriol Servia (E)	Dreyer & Reinbold Racing	Dallara-Lotus DW12	-1 lap	23
17	Rubens Barrichello (BR)	KV Racing Technology	Dallara-Chevrolet DW12	98 laps-out of fuel	13
18	Ed Carpenter (USA)	Ed Carpenter Racing	Dallara-Chevrolet DW12	-2 laps	24
19	JR Hildebrand (USA)	Panther Racing	Dallara-Chevrolet DW12	96 laps-fuel pressure	18
20	Mike Conway (GB)	AJ Foyt Racing	Dallara-Honda DW12	75 laps-gearbox	11
21	Sebastien Bourdais (F)	Dragon Racing	Dallara-Lotus DW12	73 laps-mechanical	26
22	Takuma Sato (J)	Rahal Letterman Lanigan Racing	Dallara-Honda DW12	73 laps-stuck in gear	14
23	Katherine Legge (GB)	Dragon Racing	Dallara-Lotus DW12	59 laps-overheating	25
24	Simona de Silvestro (CH)	HVM Racing	Dallara-Lotus DW12	22 laps-fuel/oil pressure	21
25	Tony Kanaan (BR)	KV Racing Technology	Dallara-Chevrolet DW12	21 laps-electrical	8
26	James Jakes (GB)	Dale Coyne Racing	Dallara-Honda DW12	19 laps-accident	20

CHAMPIONSHIP TABLE		
POS	DRIVER	PTS
1	Castroneves	50
2	Dixon	42
3	Hunter-Reay	35
4	Hinchcliff	32
5	Briscoe	30
6	Pagenaud	28
7	Power	27
8	Viso	24
9	Kimball	22
10	Wilson	20

Winner's average: 90.113mph.  
Fastest lap: Power, 1m02.7575s, 103.255mph.  
Qualifying: field divided into two groups for qualifying. The fastest six from each move into a 12-car second round. The fastest six from this move into the pole shootout.  
\*10-place grid penalty.

**SEPANG**

Malaysia

March 23-25

GP2 Series

Round 1/12

**AT A GLANCE**

- Race 1 Luiz Razia
- Race 2 James Calado
- Pole position Davide Valsecchi
- Fastest laps Valsecchi/Crestani



Crestani took a random fastest lap

# Razia sharp in battle of veterans

When Valsecchi (in his fifth year of GP2) lost his pole position advantage, Brazilian Luiz Razia (in year four) took an opportunity he would not squander



Razia leads Leimer as Valsecchi is left wide

**THERE WAS MOMENTARY**

confusion when Fabio Onidi peeled into the Coloni pit. Having been penalised three places on the grid, for impeding rival Rodolfo Gonzalez during qualifying (quite some feat, given the Venezuelan's sloth), the Italian had a slightly more physical encounter with his nemesis during the early stages of Saturday's GP2 curtain raiser at Sepang.

"Fabio was complaining about damage," said team principal Paolo Coloni, "but when he came in, the car looked undamaged. It took us a moment to realise one of the front-wing elements had disappeared entirely..."

The pitlane was an occasional hub of speculative conjecture when the eighth GP2 campaign began in Malaysia last weekend –

albeit for reasons other than the above. Mandatory stops are nothing new – they have been a feature since the category made its public debut at Imola in 2005, although tyre changes were then optional. That created the curious spectacle of cars coming in, pausing on the pit apron and rejoining without anything having been done, so tyre swaps were soon mandated and have been a feature of Saturday races ever since.

The difference this season is that teams no longer juggle a single compound but have a choice. As in Formula 1, Pirelli brings along two specifications (although drivers receive fewer sets – three prime and one option, which in this case translated to hard and medium respectively). Usage

is free, the only condition being that you may not run different tyre types together.

During pre-season testing at Barcelona, there was little to choose between these compounds. The medium had been worth a couple of tenths, but the confidence of fresh rubber ought to be worth that anyway, even without the extra softness.

Valsecchi was flipped after Ericsson contact



The dilemma at Sepang, then, was whether to use the medium only during free practice and sacrifice it as a learning tool, while saving the theoretically more durable (but similarly capable) alternative for qualifying and racing. And, in race one, a prime-prime strategy allowed teams the option of changing only rear

tyres during their mandatory stops... but would the time saved compensate for that lost to degradation during the race's second half?

Davide Valsecchi qualified on pole for DAMS, the team that guided Romain Grosjean to the title last year. There is something of a "so what?" attitude about Valsecchi within the motorsport community. Some feel he should be winning, simply because he's been at this level since 2008. But that's to overlook that he spent two seasons with an underfinanced team (Durango) and one with a newcomer (AirAsia, for which he won in Monaco). Only with iSport did he have a competitive seat – and he won the Asia title, although things didn't go quite so well in the main series.

## RACE RATING

★★★★☆

Competitive fusion of experience and zeal bodes well for campaign ahead

## MILESTONE

Max Chilton scores Carlin team's maiden GP2 podium in race one



## REPORT GP2 SEPANG

SIMON ARRON reports



It is often forgotten that he was still a bit-part Formula Renault driver when, as a teenager, he tested an F3000 car for Astromega (the team that brought Fernando Alonso to the wider world's attention) and created an extremely favourable impression. It just took a while for that potential to be given a showcase.

In light of his experience, it was unfortunate that the Italian selected a previously untried clutch map at the start of the race – a detail that left him floundering on the grid and allowed fellow front-row starter Luiz Razia to pull away. By the time Valsecchi had recovered to second, on lap seven, the Brazilian was more than five seconds up the road in his Arden International car.

Both ran the whole race on the harder rubber, Valsecchi stopping on lap 12 for a full set of fresh tyres, while Razia came in two laps later for rears only. A longer pitstop dropped the Italian into traffic that further compromised his chances of catching the leader, although it provided added bite that enabled him to set a string of fastest laps once he was in clear air. Razia had the

luxury of being able to drive at a controlled pace, which helped him nurse his tired fronts. By the race's end they were separated by almost eight seconds, but only one championship point thanks to bonuses Valsecchi accumulated for pole and fastest lap. On such details can championships be settled (although it helps, Davide, if you don't somersault out of the second race).

Max Chilton took a career-best third for Carlin – and he, too, opted for a prime-prime strategy. "I like the tyre situation," he said. "It's not quite the same as F1, but it adds a similar, strategic element – and the more closely we can mimic F1 the better, because that's where we're all aiming."

"I dropped a couple of places at the start on

Saturday, but we only swapped rear tyres at my stop and that helped me vault Fabio Leimer and Stefano Coletti. It left me a bit exposed in the second part of the race, though, because the fronts were gone and I was having to defend with huge understeer."

His advantage over Leimer was extinguished when backmarker Giancarlo Serenelli obstructed his path. Chilton didn't notice any blue flags, but nor did Serenelli when they were shown to him (quite often, as it transpired).

The 30-year-old Venezuelan has graduated from the LatAm Challenge, a VW-powered single-seater series in which he has been a serial frontrunner, so blue flags are an alien concept.

It isn't just tyre strategies that require acclimatisation.



Calado leads Gutierrez, or Andreotti leads Peterson?

## CALADO HEADS A TEAM ONE-TWO



Calado (centre) wasn't the last man to beat a Mexican to the flag

James Calado has taken part in only two GP2 meetings – and has won at both.

The Briton qualified his Lotus Dallara sixth for the main race, but couldn't hear his radio and had to drive by guesswork in terms of pit strategy. His drinks bottle failed too, at the race where rehydration is most vital.

He salvaged eighth, though, which earned him pole for Sunday – and was headed only briefly, when team-mate Esteban Gutierrez edged ahead on the run to Turn 1. But Calado claimed the corner and that proved decisive.

"Esteban made a better start," he said. "And that's something I'll have to work on. After that I just tried to nurse the [hard] tyres."

Carlin's Max Chilton added to Saturday's third place with a lively, traffic-intense run to seventh, which is where Jolyon Palmer had qualified for race one. But Palmer was obliged to start from the pits – upon seeing yellow flags for the stalled Tom Dillmann, he did likewise while resetting his start procedure and then caned his front tyres driving in the pack.

The other Brit in the field, ex-Formula Renault 3.5 racer Jon Lancaster, had a short Saturday. In his first race start since June, he retired with broken suspension after Simon Trummer clipped him during the opening lap. Lancaster picked his way through to finish 17th on Sunday.

## RESULTS

GP2 Series, round 1 of 12, Sepang (MAL), March 23-25

### RACE 1 GRID

1	VALSECCHI	1:45.494
2	RAZIA	1:45.554
3	CHILTON	1:45.558
4	COLETTI	1:45.577
5	LEIMER	1:45.588
6	CALADO	1:45.638
7	PALMER	1:45.758
8	V.D. GARDE	1:45.773
9	NASR	1:45.942
10	CECOTTO	1:46.012
11	CRESTANI	1:46.138
12	ONIDI	1:45.810*
13	RICHELMI	1:46.150
14	KRAL	1:46.160
15	GUTIERREZ	1:46.186
16	DILLMANN	1:46.264
17	HARYANTO	1:46.392
18	BERTHON	1:46.428
19	MELKER	1:46.489
20	ERICSSON	1:46.557
21	LANCASTER	1:46.662
22	LEAL	1:46.868
23	GONZALEZ	1:46.962
24	TRUMMER	1:47.004
25	TEIXEIRA	1:48.113
26	SERENELLI	1:49.620

### RACE 1 – 30 LAPS, 103.328 MILES

POS	NAME	TEAM	TIME	GRID
1	Luiz Razia (BR)	Arden International	56m00.250s	2
2	Davide Valsecchi (I)	DAMS	+7.817s	1
3	Max Chilton (GB)	Carlin	+27.366s	3
4	Fabio Leimer (CH)	Racing Engineering	+28.291s	5
5	Stefano Coletti (MC)	Scuderia Coloni	+32.217s	4
6	Felipe Nasr (BR)	DAMS	+33.378s	9
7	Esteban Gutierrez (MEX)	Lotus GP (ART)	+33.679s	15
8	James Calado (GB)	Lotus GP (ART)	+36.449s	6
9	Giedo van der Garde (NL)	Caterham Racing	+41.519s	8
10	Fabrizio Crestani (I)	Venezuela GP Lazarus	+43.240s	11
11	Nathanael Berthon (F)	Racing Engineering	+43.720s	18
12	Rio Haryanto (RI)	Carlin	+53.303s	17
13	Marcus Ericsson (S)	iSport International	+1m01.683s	20
14	Josef Kral (CZ)	Barwa Addax Team	+1m02.683s	14
15	Julian Leal (CO)	Trident Racing	+1m09.180s	22
16	Nigel Melker (NL)	Ocean Racing Technology	+1m10.399s	19
17	Jolyon Palmer (GB)	iSport International	+1m12.861s	7
18	Tom Dillmann (F)	Rapax	+1m27.810s	16
19	Stephane Richelmi (MC)	Trident Racing	+1m35.206s**	13
20	Fabio Onidi (I)	Scuderia Coloni	+1m39.125s	12*
21	Ricardo Teixeira (AO)	Rapax	+1m48.025s	25
22	Giancarlo Serenelli (YV)	Venezuela GP Lazarus	-1 lap	26
23	Simon Trummer (CH)	Arden International	+1m59.672s**	24
R	Rodolfo Gonzalez (YV)	Caterham Racing	13 laps-accident damage	23
R	Johnny Cecotto Jr (YV)	Barwa Addax Team	7 laps-wheel	10
R	Jon Lancaster (GB)	Ocean Racing Technology	1 lap-accident damage	21

### RACE 2 – 22 LAPS, 75.774 MILES

POS	DRIVER	TIME/REASON	GRID
1	Calado	41m08.048s	1
2	Gutierrez	+2.004s	2
3	Nasr	+3.440s	3
4	van der Garde	+10.760s	9
5	Razia	+11.430s	8
6	Leimer	+14.689s	5
7	Chilton	+15.685s	6
8	Berthon	+16.578s	11
9	Kral	+18.175s	14
10	Haryanto	+24.033s	12
11	Dillmann	+24.086s	18
12	Palmer	+25.547s	17
13	Onidi	+32.206s	20
14	Melker	+34.500s	16
15	Leal	+34.629s	15
16	Trummer	+35.226s	23
17	Lancaster	+40.340s	26
18	Gonzalez	+44.700s	24
19	Richelmi	+47.133s	19
20	Serenelli	+1m10.466s	22
21	Crestani	+1m21.035s	10
22	Cecotto	-1 lap	25
23	Coletti	20 laps-nose damage	4
24	Teixeira	19 laps-	21
R	Valsecchi	13 laps-accident	7
R	Ericsson	13 laps-accident	13

### CHAMPIONSHIP TABLES

POS	DRIVER	PTS
1	Razia	31
2	Valsecchi	24
3	Calado	19
4	Gutierrez	18
5	Nasr	18
6	Chilton	17
7	Leimer	16
8	van der Garde	10
9	Coletti	10
10	Haryanto	2
POS	TEAM	PTS
1	DAMS	42
2	Lotus	37
3	Arden	31
4	Carlin	19
5	Racing Engineering	17
6	Caterham	10

All drivers in Dallara-Mecachrome GP2/11.  
\*3-place penalty; \*\*20s penalty.  
Race 1 Winner's average speed: 110.700mph. Fastest lap: Valsecchi, 1m49.246s, 113.499mph. Race 2 Winner's average speed: 110.526mph. Fastest lap: Crestani, 1m50.690s, 112.018mph.

NASCAR SPRINT CUP FONTANA (USA), MARCH 25, RD 5/36

# 'Smoke' on the water – no fire in the sky!

**KYLE BUSCH DOMINATED THE** first 93 caution-free laps at Fontana as he, Toyota and the Joe Gibbs Racing team looked set for their first win on the high-speed Californian oval.

But quick as the #18 Camry was at the start of a fuel run, as the stints ran on the Chevrolet Impala of Busch's former team-mate Tony 'Smoke' Stewart loomed larger in his mirrors. And when Juan Pablo Montoya put up a fight to prevent going a lap down, Busch lost first his momentum and then the lead of the race.

Busch scraped the wall as he tried to fight back, but there wouldn't be time for him to reclaim his lead. Rain was forecast before the race, and the teams were anxiously trying to hold onto track position as lap



Stewart took advantage when Busch was blocked

100 – the halfway point, at which a result could be declared – approached.

As expected the rain did arrive, initially as a shower and then as a deluge, resulting in the race being declared after 129 laps.

There was time for one final piece of gamesmanship

from Stewart, who'd irked a number of rivals with his 'slide-pass' technique (essentially running too hard into the corner before drifting up in front of his rival, slowing them down).

As the field ran behind the pace car during the first flurry of rain, he feinted to

dive into the pits. Behind him, polesitter Denny Hamlin took the bait and took his Joe Gibbs Toyota onto pitlane. It was the wrong call and, with the race not restarting, he dropped to 10th. Hendrick Motorsports' Jimmie Johnson also came in, but the red flag proved

to be a godsend for the former champ as a cut oil line had brought him to a smoking halt just as the race was stopped – he held onto 10th.

Busch remained second, while Johnson's team-mate Dale Earnhardt Jr took third. Last year's winner Kevin Harvick finished fourth for Richard Childress Racing, ahead of the Roush Fenway Fords of Carl Edwards and points leader Greg Biffle.

● Connell Sanders Jr

## RESULTS

**1 Tony Stewart (Chevrolet Impala)**, 129 laps in 1h36m39s; 2 Kyle Busch (Toyota Camry); 3 Dale Earnhardt Jr (Chevy); 4 Kevin Harvick (Chevy); 5 Carl Edwards (Ford Fusion); 6 Greg Biffle (Ford); 7 Ryan Newman (Chevy); 8 Martin Truex Jr (Toyota); 9 Kurt Busch (Chevy); 10 Jimmie Johnson (Chevy).

**Points** 1 Biffle, 195; 2 Harvick, 188; 3 Earnhardt, 178; 4 Stewart, 177; 5 Truex, 175; 6 Matt Kenseth, 173; 7 Denny Hamlin, 171; 8 Clint Bowyer, 157; 9 Johnson, 156; 10 Newman, 155.

BRAZILIAN V8 STOCK CARS INTERLAGOS (BR), MARCH 25, RD 1/12

# Another good day for Bueno in Brazil

**NOT EVEN SHORTER RACES AND** heavier cars can prevent Caca Bueno from doing his usual job of winning – that was the message from last weekend's Interlagos season opener after a winter of rule-tinkering.

Starting from the inside of the front row, the Red Bull Chevrolet driver outdragged polesitter Allam Khodair's Vogel Motorsport-run example

into the Senna 'S' and then controlled things as he headed towards his 27th career win. It was a victory that will prove more vital than in previous seasons due to the four-round NASCAR-style 'Chase' format being dropped for the 2012 season.

Another rule change aiding the four-time champion is the reduction in race distances from 50

minutes to 40 and the dropping of mid-race refueling. With cars now running heavier at the start and tyre changes now an unnecessary evil, a premium has been put on drivers to preserve their rubber

more than in the past.

Khodair took too much out of his early on and, with no grip from the rear of his car, was powerless to prevent first Thiago Camilo – who used his 'push-to-pass' button – and former

champion Ricardo Mauricio from overtaking to complete the podium for, respectively, the RCM and RC Chevrolet squads. Former British F3 racer Mauricio had battled oversteer and a wrong set-up call from early on before making his move on Khodair on the final lap.

● Lito Cavalcanti

## RESULTS

**1 Caca Bueno (Chevrolet Sonic)**, 24 laps in 34m29.406s; 2 Thiago Camilo (Chevy), +1.326s; 3 Ricardo Mauricio (Chevy); 4 Allam Khodair (Chevy); 5 Atila Abreu (Chevy); 6 Daniel Serra (Chevy). **Points** 1 Bueno, 22; 2 Camilo, 20; 3 Mauricio, 18; 4 Khodair, 17; 5 Abreu, 16; 6 Serra, 15.



Bueno wasn't headed after the first corner

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Rankings

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STANDINGS

1	Sebastian Vettel	<>	29,770
2	Mark Webber	<>	21,638
3	Jenson Button	<>	20,358
4	Lewis Hamilton	<>	19,865
5	Fernando Alonso	<>	18,865

## Ranking the world's best drivers

### WHAT HAPPENED THIS WEEK

Tristan Vautier's win on his Indy Lights debut at St Petersburg breaks him back into the rankings in 1241st as a result. Esteban Guerrieri, second, rises three to 229th, while third man Sebastian Saavedra (234) drops 18 as he is losing 2011 IndyCar points.

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

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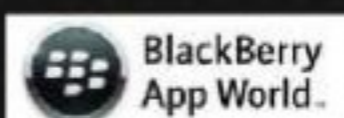
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## INTERNATIONAL RACES & RESULTS

### INDY LIGHTS

St Petersburg (USA), Rd 1/12

## QUICK RESULTS

- Winner **Tristan Vautier**
- Pole **Vautier**
- Fastest lap **Vautier**
- Points leader **Vautier**

## RACE RATING

★★★★★

Would have been a procession were it not for the safety cars

## REPORTS

WORLD OF SPORT

INDY LIGHTS ST PETERSBURG (USA), MARCH 24, RD 1/12

# Dominant start for Vautier on St Pete streets

## WITH FOUR INDY LIGHTS

titles from the past six years, there shouldn't be much doubt over Sam Schmidt Motorsports' claim to be the leading contender again this year. But if last week's season opener at St Petersburg is any guide, the real question is which Schmidt driver it will be.

Reigning Star Mazda champion Tristan Vautier threw his name into the mix with a lights-to-flag victory, and his victory margin was only as low as 1s due to three restarts.

"It was tough mentally because you manage to build up a small gap, and then you have to do it again," said the Frenchman. "But we know on street races it's pretty often the case, so I was not too surprised to have a yellow. When I built up the gap at first, I knew it was likely that I'd have to do it again."

Vautier's main opposition came from within his own



Vautier leads the way

garage. Team-mate Esteban Guerrieri qualified alongside him on the front row and finished in the same position, and were it not for a problem on Oli Webb's car it could have been a Schmidt 1-2-3.

Unfortunately for the Brit, a problem with his left-rear wheel at the final restart allowed AFS/Andretti driver Sebastian Saavedra — back after a year in IndyCar — to jump him at Turn 1 and take third.

"I think I got a little bit of

my experience with IndyCar, knowing it was going to be crucial to have the tyres in a good, warm condition," the Colombian said. "I took advantage of that to pass Webb on a very clean start. We needed the points. This is going to be a battle that is going to go throughout the championship."

The race was interrupted twice by full-course yellows. The first was triggered when David Ostella went off at the hairpin at half-

distance, while the second occurred when Juan Pablo Garcia's attempt to wrest fifth from Carlos Munoz succeeded only in firing Munoz into the wall.

● Mark Glendenning

## RESULTS

**1 Tristan Vautier**, 45 laps in 58m22.190s; 2 Esteban Guerrieri, +1.039s; 3 Sebastian Saavedra; 4 Oli Webb; 5 Victor Carbone; 6 Gustavo Yacamán. **Points** 1 Vautier, 53; 2 Guerrieri, 40; 3 Saavedra, 35; 4 Webb, 32; 5 Carbone, 30; 6 Yacamán, 28.

## IN BRIEF



Hawksworth won

## STAR MAZDA

Britain's Jack Hawksworth starred at St Petersburg. The ex-Formula Renault UK ace picked up a pole, a second, a win, two fastest laps and the championship lead with Team Pelfrey. Connor de Phillippi won the opening race.

## US F2000

Spencer Pigot achieved a clean sweep of both races at St Petersburg, although he had to see off a stiff challenge from his Cape Motorsports team-mate Matthew Brabham in both.

## FORMULA RENAULT ALPS

Red Bull junior driver Daniil Kvyat dominated proceedings at Monza, the Russian winning twice with the Koiranen Motorsport squad and taking the early points lead. Tech 1's Paul-Loup Chatin took two podiums while Britain's Melville McKee was second in race one with the Interwetten team.

## UAE GT CHAMPIONSHIP

With Rob Barff/Leon Price not present, John Iossifidis took the title after sharing a double win with his Aston Martin co-driver Martin Baers Schmidt at Yas Marina. Umair Khan won the accompanying touring car crown after two class wins in his SEAT.

## NASCAR NATIONWIDE

Eight of Joey Logano's 10 Nationwide wins have come at Fontana, following another win for the Joe Gibbs Racing Toyota driver last Saturday. Ricky Stenhouse Jr was second in his Roush Ford, cutting his points deficit to series leader Elliott Sadler (ninth) to just 18. Brad Keselowski was third.



Logano triumphed

BRITISH RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP BULLDOG RALLY (GB), MARCH 23-24, RD 2/6

# Cave finds his way out of the darkness to win

**TOM CAVE BROKE HIS BRITISH Rally Championship duck** on last weekend's Bulldog Rally. Actually, he smashed it — to smithereens.

The Welshman, 20, made his debut in a Citroen DS3 R3 and not only took the fight to Finn Jarkko Nikara and two-time title winner Keith Cronin (also out in a DS3 for the first time), but took them to the cleaners.

Nikara led from the first stage, Big Ray, on Saturday morning, just shading round-one winner Mark Donnelly. But after crossing the line, Donnelly played pinball with a telegraph pole and a tree at the corner after the flying finish, putting his Renault out of the rally.

Cronin and Cave were, therefore, second and third. Cave's early effort raised the

odd eyebrow but, when he hit the front with a scorcher through Dyfi Main, spectators took a step back in the ensuing test. Could he keep that pace up?

He could. Fastest through SS5, he was forced to give best to Cronin on the repeat of Big Ray. And then came his finest hour. Deep in the heart of Dyfi, Cave whipped 10s out of everybody to set up an incredible win. It came sooner than expected, a car catching fire after SS8, forcing police to close the road to the stages.

Cave had no complaints about an early start to celebrations. Cronin's second place was almost as merit-worthy as his rival's win, while Nikara ended the event 14.7s off in third. Osian Pryce (Citroen) was



Cave hustled his DS3 to win

fourth for the second straight event, while Elfyn Evans (Ford Fiesta) controlled R2. Jonny Greer rounded out the top six on his DS3 debut.

But the Citroen everyone was talking about was that of new series leader Cave.

"It's amazing," he grinned at the finish. "I love this car."

● David Evans

## RESULTS

**1 Tom Cave/Craig Parry (Citroen DS3 R3)**, 56m39s; 2 Keith Cronin/Marshall Clarke (Citroen) +3.0s; 3 Jarkko Nikara/Petri Nikara (Citroen); 4 Osian Pryce/Iestyn Williams (Citroen); 5 Elfyn Evans/Andrew Edwards (Ford Fiesta R2); 6 Jonny Greer/Damien Connelly (Citroen). **Points** 1 Cave 32; 2 Evans 30; 3 Pryce, 30; 4 Desi Henry 29; 5 Peter Taylor 23; 6 Mark Donnelly 20.



# Time for the privates to lead the platoon

With Honda and MG building new NGTC machines, there's a chance to vanquish the works teams in 2012. *KEVIN TURNER* takes a look at the likely contenders for the 55th BTCC crown

**T**his could be a year for the privateers to vanquish the works teams in the British Touring Car Championship. Only once in the past five seasons has the title gone to a driver not blessed with factory equipment (Colin Turkington in 2009), but it's all evened up for this year.

The crack RML Chevrolet squad has gone, the Triple Eight-run works MG team was without any proper testing within two weeks of the season opener, and Dynamics-operated Honda Racing has found it difficult to complete a race distance during its run-outs.

The move to NGTC regulations by MG and Honda has given both squads a big challenge. The MG deal came together late and has left the Jason Plato-led team with little time to prepare, while issues on the new Civic – including with the steering – have hampered Honda.

"Performance-wise, we're getting there slowly," admits reigning champion Matt Neal, who didn't complete a race

run until Rockingham last week. "With NGTC it's reliability, and there is the handicapping with the boost, so anything can happen."

The series has been conducting an engine flow-test programme over the winter, with the aim of evening out any inherent advantages and disadvantages of the various base motors. Neal feels Honda has been dealt a harsh hand.

"The calculation of the boost is a problem," he says, hinting at an issue that could be this season's point of argument. "We were 8km/h off at the media day test [at Silverstone]."

So who is best-placed to take advantage? Plato believes someone with an old-style Super 2000 chassis and a turbo could hit the ground running.

"I wouldn't be surprised if an S2000 comes out of the blocks first," says the double champion. "I think the BMW with the turbo will be tasty and Motorbase have a car they know."

Motorbase, running the same Mountune-engined Ford Focus as last year, is best-positioned in

"We've got to deliver the results early. As the season goes on the NGTC cars will get faster"  
**Mat Jackson wants to build an early lead with old Focus**



Motorbase man Jackson is gunning for first title



WSR has good line-up with three BMW turbos



### WHERE TO WATCH THE BTCC ON TV

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Neal will defend title in new NGTC Civic

understanding its machinery. Even WSR, which expands to three cars for a strong line-up of Rob Collard, Tom Onslow-Cole and Nick Foster, has to make its turbos work in the venerable BMW 320si.

There's little doubt the resources of the works teams will ultimately make the most of the bigger brakes and tyres the NGTC rules provide, but Motorbase lead driver Mat Jackson knows the opening rounds could give him a great chance to score big points.

"Potentially it's the best opportunity," says Jackson, who went to the 2011 season finale with a chance of denying the Honda and Chevy stars of the crown. "We're starting with something that's a proven package.

"In terms of raw pace, we're not going to know until Brands, but I expect the NGTCs to be quick, especially the Honda. It looks fast – there may just be a question mark over reliability.

"We've got to come out of the blocks and deliver the results early. As the season goes on, they'll get faster



### LAST FIVE CHAMPIONS

<b>2011</b>	<b>Matt Neal</b> Honda Civic
<b>2010</b>	<b>Jason Plato</b> Chevrolet Cruze
<b>2009</b>	<b>Colin Turkington</b> BMW 320si
<b>2008</b>	<b>Fabrizio Giovanardi</b> Vauxhall Vectra
<b>2007</b>	<b>Fabrizio Giovanardi</b> Vauxhall Vectra

and more reliable."

Motorbase, which scored four wins with the Focus in 2011, hasn't been standing still over the winter. "We've tried to make it stronger in every respect," says Jackson. "There were a few weaknesses highlighted last year and we have a few improvements on the chassis."

Jackson lost the Independents crown to James Nash last year, largely because he was chasing overall race wins, and he has no plans to change his approach.

"I want to win the main championship – that's what everyone remembers," says the man who finished as BTCC runner-up in 2008.

Of the established NGTC runners from last year, Frank Wrathall and Rob Austin would be considered strong threats too if both had experienced better winters. Austin was still putting the funds in place as AUTOSPORT closed for press, while Wrathall had yet to hit the track with his revised Dynojet Toyota Avensis.

"The way things have worked out we



Motorbase needs good start

could do with another month before the first round," says Wrathall, who finished as top NGTC driver of 2011. "There are quite a few modifications – the missing ingredient is the time to dial it in. We may find it takes a couple of races to find our feet again."

Wrathall believes that, despite their problems, Honda drivers Neal and Gordon Shedden still start as favourites. "At the start of the year I think Honda will be the benchmark, then I think MG will catch up," he says. "We do have an advantage in terms of the problems we've already overcome, but Honda has a big testing programme."

If Honda can overcome its problems, Andrew Jordan could be another factor as his Eurotech squad has exactly the same NGTC Civic, and Jordan seems increasingly ready to put a title challenge together.

It's all finely poised, but it's unlikely the independent drivers will get a better chance to succeed Turkington as the next privateer to win the outright BTCC title. ☼

### BTCC CALENDAR

**1 Brands Hatch**  
Mar 31-Apr 1



**2 Donington Park**  
Apr 14-15



**3 Thruxton**  
Apr 28-29



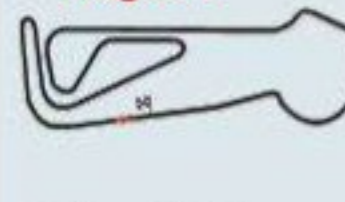
**4 Oulton Park**  
June 9-10



**5 Croft**  
June 23-24



**6 Snetterton**  
Aug 11-12



**7 Knockhill**  
Aug 25-26



**8 Rockingham**  
Sept 22-23



**9 Silverstone**  
Oct 6-7



**10 Brands Hatch**  
Oct 20-21



# Tin-top names to conjure with

The 2012 BTCC season will feature its traditional door-banging between nine different marques, with more poised to join in later. *KEVIN TURNER* and *TOM MALLETT* run through who's who



## Honda Racing Honda Civic

**Honda comes into 2012** after finishing one-two with Matt Neal and Gordon Shedden last season. The team remains favourite and has done a lot of testing with its new NGTC machine, but problems in

testing have given the opposition some hope.

Expect Honda to be on top of the car sooner rather than later, but the first few rounds could be interesting.

Shedden will probably be

more hungry for the title than anyone else, having been so close last year, while Neal knows how to run a championship campaign. Reliability aside, they'll take some beating.



**1** Matt Neal Age: 45  
BTCC debut: 1991 Starts: 466 Wins: 43  
Poles: 13 Fastest laps: 40 2011: **BTCC champ**



**52** Gordon Shedden Age: 33  
BTCC debut: 2006 Starts: 165 Wins: 21  
Poles: 8 Fastest laps: 22 2011: **2nd in BTCC**

## MG Racing/Triple Eight MG6

**Looking at the bare facts** - a late deal and little pre-season mileage - Jason Plato really shouldn't be in title contention this year. But with decent backing and the experienced Triple Eight squad putting the

NGTC MG together, the man himself is pretty confident.

Andy Neate is likely to find things tougher, and will be aiming for greater consistency than he showed last year.

Points finishes early would

be a fine achievement and once there are some miles on the car, the MG6 should be a force to be reckoned with. In the long term the Plato-Triple Eight-MG combo could prove to be a real BTCC powerhouse.



**99** Jason Plato Age: 44  
BTCC debut: 1997 Starts: 360 Wins: 68  
Poles: 33 Fastest laps: 61 2011: **3rd in BTCC**



**44** Andy Neate Age: 37  
BTCC debut: 2005 Starts: 62 Wins: 0  
Poles: 0 Fastest laps: 0 2011: **18th in BTCC**



## Motorbase Performance Ford Focus

**Mat Jackson finished fourth** in last year's championship, winning four races along the way. He has to be considered a 2012 title contender with the proven, turbo-engined S2000 Focus.

A canny racer, Jackson is unlikely to have the fastest car in the later stages of the year so needs to score points early on.

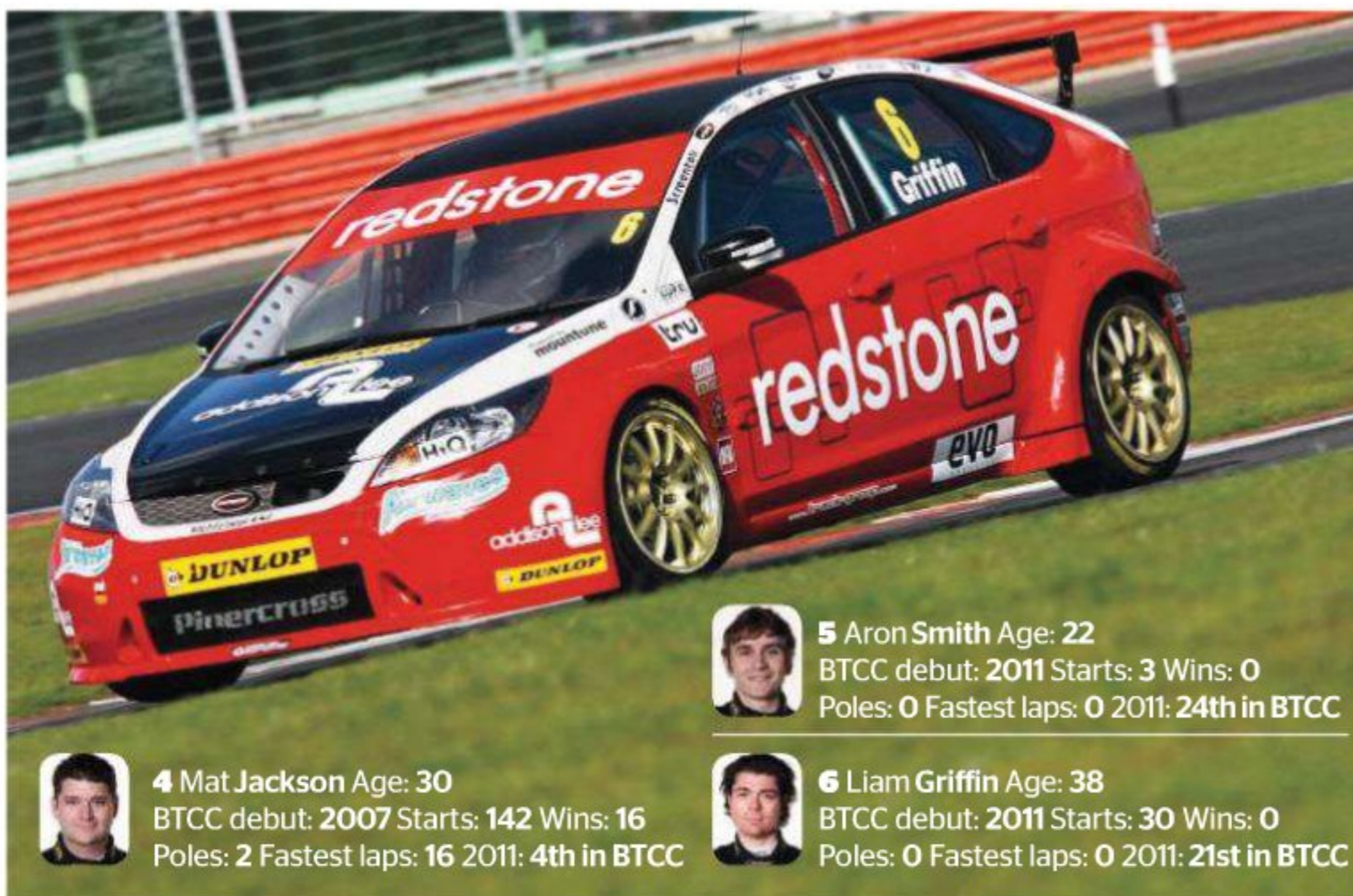
Aron Smith showed promise

in a one-off outing with Triple Eight last season and Jackson should provide a good benchmark by which to judge his performances. Liam Griffin had a tough debut season in the BTCC in 2011, but should improve now that he has extra experience of the car and tracks.

The team's Ford Focus proved to be competitive in its first year and that development

time should prove beneficial for 2012.

Team principal David Bartrum reckons he has a chance. "We're thoroughly looking forward to the season, having learnt a lot about our cars last year and over the winter," he says. "Our pre-season plans have gone well and we look forward to round one with cautious optimism."



**5 Aron Smith** Age: 22  
BTCC debut: 2011 Starts: 3 Wins: 0  
Poles: 0 Fastest laps: 0 2011: 24th in BTCC



**4 Mat Jackson** Age: 30  
BTCC debut: 2007 Starts: 142 Wins: 16  
Poles: 2 Fastest laps: 16 2011: 4th in BTCC



**6 Liam Griffin** Age: 38  
BTCC debut: 2011 Starts: 30 Wins: 0  
Poles: 0 Fastest laps: 0 2011: 21st in BTCC

## Tony Gilham Racing Honda Civic

**Tony Gilham stepped** into the BTCC last year and scored points straight away with Triple Eight. He switched to Geoff Steel Racing during the

season and now has his own team to run the ex-Dynamics Honda Civic. The car is quick and should allow Gilham to see how he stacks up in the BTCC.



**34 Tony Gilham** Age: 32  
BTCC debut: 2011 Starts: 27 Wins: 0  
Poles: 0 Fastest laps: 0 2011: 19th in BTCC



## Team ES Racing Vauxhall Vectra

**Chris James has got** hold of two ex-Triple Eight Vectras for his ES Racing team's second year in the BTCC. He won't challenge the

frontrunners, but new team-mate Dave Newsham may. He looked good at the end of last year and topped Silverstone's media-day test.



**17 Dave Newsham** Age: 44  
BTCC debut: 2011 Starts: 27 Wins: 0  
Poles: 0 Fastest laps: 1 2011: 15th in BTCC



**78 Chris James** Age: 33  
BTCC debut: 2011 Starts: 28 Wins: 0  
Poles: 0 Fastest laps: 0 2011: BTCC (0 pts)

## Dynojet Toyota Avensis

**Dynojet will once** again field a Toyota Avensis this year for Frank Wrathall.

Having won the Ginetta G50 championship in 2010, Wrathall graduated to the BTCC and impressed, despite having to get to grips with new NGTC machinery. Two fastest laps and a second place at Rockingham helped him to 12th in the table.

The Avensis has

been upgraded for 2012, but has yet to hit the track, so the promising 25-year-old will start on the back foot once again.

Wrathall may not be a contender for the title, but he and the team are capable of causing an upset given the right set of circumstances, particularly if the teams new to NGTC trip up over the problems Wrathall found last season.



**11 Frank Wrathall** Age: 25  
BTCC debut: 2011 Starts: 26 Wins: 0  
Poles: 0 Fastest laps: 2 2011: 12th in BTCC



## Welch Motorsport Proton Gen-2

**A latecomer to the** series in 2011, Daniel Welch surprised many with his performances in his NGTC Proton.

Welch will continue with the car this

season and will be hoping to break into regular points-paying territory, but may find the going tough against the influx of new NGTC machinery.



**12 Daniel Welch** Age: 29  
BTCC debut: 2011 Starts: 15 Wins: 0  
Poles: 0 Fastest laps: 0 2011: 22nd in BTCC



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## WSR BMW 320Si

**WSR is one of the dark horses** for the title this season. Despite an underpowered engine, the venerable BMW once again proved to be a good racecar in 2011 and Rob Collard was unlucky not to win a race.

If it can be made to work in

the rear-wheel-drive car, the Neil Brown-prepared turbo engine should give the BMW the extra performance it needs and the expanded line-up of Collard, Nick Foster and race winner Tom Onslow-Cole is one of the series' strongest.

How Collard and Onslow-Cole compare with each other will also be one of the interesting sub-plots of the year, while Foster showed enough potential in his rookie season in 2011 that he could get into the mix on occasion, too.



**8 Rob Collard** Age: 43  
BTCC debut: 2003 Starts: 233 Wins: 4  
Poles: 0 Fastest laps: 10 2011: 8th in BTCC



**18 Nick Foster** Age: 46  
BTCC debut: 2011 Starts: 30 Wins: 0  
Poles: 0 Fastest laps: 0 2011: 14th in BTCC



**38 Tom Onslow-Cole** Age: 24  
BTCC debut: 2007 Starts: 130 Wins: 7  
Poles: 4 Fastest laps: 7 2011: 13th in BTCC

## AmD Tuning Volkswagen Golf

**The popular VW Golf** team had a mixed season in 2011. Tom Onslow-Cole scored some good results before leaving and Martin Byford never quite got the results

he deserved when he stepped in.

GT racer Ollie Jackson gets his chance in the BTCC full-time after a toe in the water last year to see what he can do.



**48 Ollie Jackson** Age: 27  
BTCC debut: 2011 Starts: 6 Wins: 0  
Poles: 0 Fastest laps: 0 2011: BTCC (0 pts)



## Rob Austin Racing Audi A4

**Team boss Rob Austin** showed the NGTC Audi A4 had some promise once he'd got through various car issues last year. He was also one of the

true characters on the grid and it would be great to see him back this season if he can put a deal together.

Mark Hazell was the first to

be confirmed at the squad, but his record in the Porsche Carrera and Renault Clio Cups suggest points finishes may be a tall order.



**31 Mark Hazell** Age: 52  
BTCC debut: 2012 Starts: 0 Wins: 0  
Poles: 0 Fastest laps: 0 2011: N/A



**TBA Rob Austin** Age: 31  
BTCC debut: 2011 Starts: 25 Wins: 0  
Poles: 0 Fastest laps: 1 2011: 16th in BTCC

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## Eurotech Honda Civic

**There's a real buzz at Eurotech** this year as the team is the only customer outfit to get its hands on the NGTC Honda Civic as part of a two-year deal. There is also a data-sharing agreement, which should mean Eurotech makes gains as and when the

factory machines do.

Assuming the car can be made reliable, Andrew Jordan should be a regular contender for race wins. He put in some fine performances in the ageing Vauxhall Vectra last year and can be expected to keep works

Honda drivers Neal and Shedden on their toes.

Jeff Smith was spectacular to watch at times in his first full BTCC campaign last season, but may need to calm down a little if he is to be a consistent points scorer this year.



**77** Andrew Jordan Age: 22  
BTCC debut: 2008 Starts: 119 Wins: 3  
Poles: 1 Fastest laps: 1 2011: 6th in BTCC



**55** Jeff Smith Age: 46  
BTCC debut: 2010 Starts: 33 Wins: 0  
Poles: 0 Fastest laps: 0 2011: 17th in BTCC

## Speedworks Motorsport Toyota Avensis

**Speedworks has a** year's experience of its NGTC Toyota. It now also has an up-and-coming driver too.

Reigning Ginetta GT Supercup champ Adam Morgan should

copy fellow ex-Ginetta ace Frank Wrathall by not being over-awed by the BTCC.

Tony Hughes will find it tougher, but the improved car should help his cause.



**33** Adam Morgan Age: 23 BTCC debut: 2012 Starts: 0 Wins: 0 Poles: 0 Fastest laps: 0 2011: Ginetta GT Supercup champion



**50** Tony Hughes Age: 54  
BTCC debut: 2011 Starts: 17 Wins: 0  
Poles: 0 Fastest laps: 0 2011: BTCC (0 pts)



## Thorney Motorsport Vauxhall Insignia

**An experienced and successful team** at club level, Thorney steps up to the BTCC for 2012. Team boss John Thorne and expected second

driver Rob Hedley will have a lot to learn at this level, but there's little doubt the Vauxhall Insignia is a striking addition to the series.



**66** John Thorne Age: 42  
BTCC debut: 2011 Starts: 1 Wins: 0  
Poles: 0 Fastest Laps: 0 2011: BTCC (0 pts)

## Team Wood Racing Vauxhall Vectra

**Apart from a stellar** drive in the wet at Oulton Park that yielded a seventh, Lea Wood didn't have much to show for his 2011 efforts in an

ancient Honda Integra. He's now got hold of a Vauxhall Vectra, which is still quite old but fairly competitive, and should be a points contender.



**43** Lea Wood Age: 27  
BTCC debut: 2010 Starts: 36 Wins: 0  
Poles: 0 Fastest laps: 0 2011: 20th in BTCC



**OTHERS:** As ever, there are a number of teams that could join the BTCC during the season. Tech-Speed has Swindon turbo engines ready for its S2000 Chevrolet Cruze chassis, but needs a budget, while Special Tuning Racing is in a similar position with its turbocharged SEAT Leon. Geoff Steel Racing also has its BMW with a turbo unit, but has yet to confirm a driver and may concentrate on its Britcar campaign.

# Changing of the Touring car guard

Twenty-five years ago the BTCC was the scene of a clash between the established tin-top machines and the new breed that would shape the category in the years to come. *KEVIN TURNER* looks back



**N**ine race winners and four victorious marques only hint at the story of the 1987 British Touring Car Championship. While the history books show that Toyota driver Chris Hodgetts waltzed to a second consecutive crown by dominating the 1600cc class, the battles at the front provided a clash between old and new.

Coming into the year the Rover Vitesse and BMW 635 were the proven tin-tops of the leading Group A class. Representing the new was Ford with its RS Cosworth, a development of the XR4ti Andy Rouse had used to win the '85 crown. And, later in the season, BMW's archetypal touring car, the M3, would arrive.

In the end, the Class A title would go to a new driver in an old car: then-BTCC rookie Tim Harvey in a John Maguire-prepared Rover Vitesse.

Harvey, who already had tin-top and sportscar experience, hadn't planned to become a touring-car driver. But an FF1600 crash at Silverstone at the start

of 1986, in which he shattered both ankles, changed his career path.

"It was impossible for me to drive a single-seater because I didn't have the articulation in my ankles," he says. "It was my sponsor Istel that suggested I do touring cars because you could use your legs a little bit more. It turned out to be a blessing in disguise."

Harvey immediately took the fight to experienced hands Rouse (RS Cosworth) and Dennis Leech (Rover) at the Silverstone opener, but the engine blew. With a replacement TWR unit, he won the second round at Oulton Park.

"I think I brought a little bit of the younger single-seater driver's mentality to it, which was not necessarily a respecter of reputations," adds Harvey.

"The Cosworths all had the ability of turning the boost up in qualifying, so if you were the top normally-aspirated runner you were doing well.

"The Rover was heavier and more sluggish in changing direction, but as a package it was good. It looked after its tyres better, but the tide was turning."



## Qualy King Andy Rouse

For the six races in which Rouse did not appear, the average qualifying gap from first to second was 0.55 seconds. Rouse's six poles were taken by an average of 2.18s.

Harvey soon added two more wins, one after Rouse and the new M3 of Frank Sytner clashed at Brands Hatch, which would turn out to be the last of the big 3.5-litre Rover's 39 BTCC wins. Then a five-week period proved the final changeover point.

In Rouse's absence, Sytner beat all the older Class A cars to take an outright win for the M3 at Donington Park – thrashing the other Class B runners in the process – before an inspired tyre choice and some Cosworth unreliability allowed Mike Newman and Robert Speak to give the 635 the last of its four BTCC wins.

And then the knockout blow: the RS500. The revised two-litre turbocar brought improved aero, a bigger intercooler and twin injectors, among other things. Power went from around 350bhp to over 500bhp.

"We set it up for understeer," says Rouse, who took pole by three seconds on the car's debut at the second Donington race. "It was a delicate balance and was never a car you



Sytner's M3 was rapid as soon as it arrived



Newman flew the flag for ageing BMW 635



Rouse's Ford Sierra hounds Harvey's Rover

**"You couldn't take the overall title because there were too many winners"**  
**Tim Harvey**

could brake late in, but it was a great package really."

Nevertheless, it was two V8 drivers who went to the Silverstone finale fighting for the Class A title, with Leech leading Harvey by three points. After a superb battle, which also involved the Rover of David Carvell, a mistake by Leech allowed Harvey to take third and the class crown – by a single point.

"At times there were lots of cars that were quick and there were good battles," says Harvey. "I was very proud to win Class A – you couldn't win the BTCC title because there were too many different [overall] winners."

The Rovers might have won out in the standings, but there's little doubt who was quickest. Rouse, who missed six of the 12 events due to World Touring Car commitments, took pole in every race he entered and won three. Even in his absence, Rouse's car won twice more thanks to the efforts of Win Percy and Peter Hall.

"The Ford was a different animal to the Rover," recalls Rouse, who took the

## Making the BTCC a TV star



**The 1987 season was the last before the arrival of TV that would change the series forever**

There's little doubt that TV has helped make the BTCC what it is. And with record viewing figures last year, ITV's live broadcasts remain key to the championship's popularity.

That hasn't always been the case. Steve Rider, still the BTCC presenter, was a key figure – along with the BBC's John Phillips, BHP boss Barrie Hinchliffe, and Murray Walker – in setting the ball rolling.

"In 1986-87, the BBC had a contract with individual circuits and it was absolutely random [as to what was shown]," he recalls. "We thought it was daft we didn't cherry-pick and the right way to go was the BTCC and British F3."

"I'd worked with Barrie on rallying and we got the funding for six races initially, in 1988, probably in a way that wouldn't

be allowed at the BBC today. But we made the sponsors know that what they were paying for was the live TV coverage of an event [they were involved in], but the amount of time they got was dependent on how well they did."

"It was make-it-up-as-you-go-along, but we knew from the first races the viewer response was strong. You had some great characters – Frank Sytner and Mike Smith gave us some great dialogue! "With that kind of exposure on Grandstand it wasn't long before the manufacturers got interested."

With 12-14 cameras at some races, a lot of editing was required to produce the 'soap opera' highlights in the early days.

"Murray loved it and worked his socks off, spending hours in the editing suite," reckons Rider.

"Murray felt you couldn't do the BTCC live, but I felt if it was to have any status at all it had to be live."

"It's gratifying to see what it's become and Alan Gow has done a fantastic job."

1984 crown in a Vitesse. "The Cosworth had more power so it was quicker in a straight line, but the Rover handled better. The wheelarches on the Rover allowed us to run it low, but because we had to run as big a rear tyre as possible on the Ford to deal with the power, it had to run road car-type rideheight."

As well as that, the Ford didn't prove easy to get off the line. Rouse was often beaten away and Percy even stalled at the British GP-support race.

"It was a technique issue," says Rouse. "You had to give it a lot of throttle – you didn't have a lot of control and couldn't feed it in like you could with cars like the Rover."

But Harvey, who would go on to become one of the hordes of RS500 drivers of the 1988-1990 period, had no doubt about where the sport was going.

"It was very clear the Cosworth was the future," he says. "It was the last year of the Rover being competitive – and the BMW 635 – but they were both iconic Group A cars, and 1987 was the start of a long career for me."

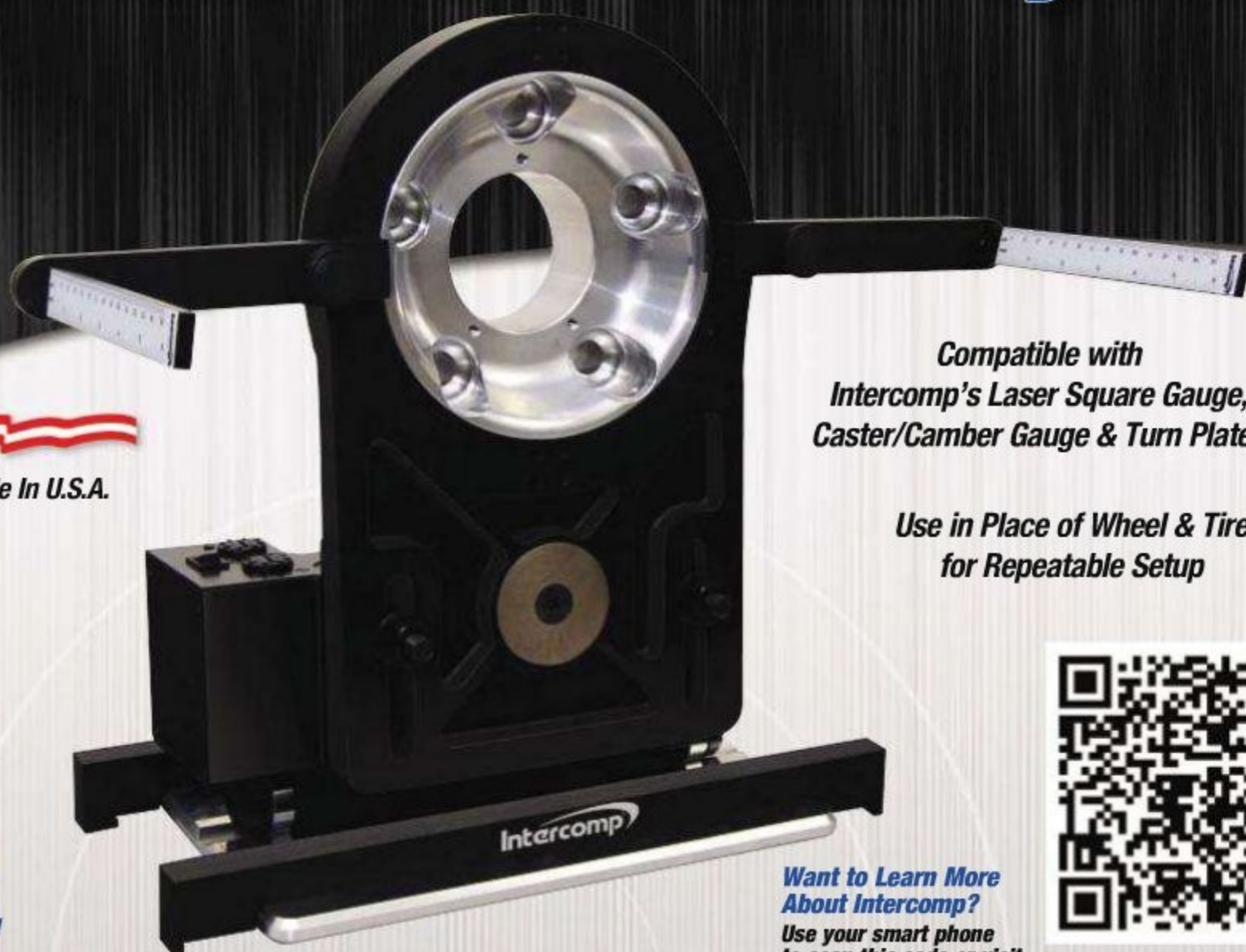
## 1987 BTCC WINS

- R1 Silverstone**  
Andy Rouse (Ford Sierra RS Cosworth)
- R2 Oulton Park**  
Tim Harvey (Rover Vitesse)
- R3 Thruxton**  
Dennis Leech (Rover Vitesse)
- R4 Thruxton**  
Andy Rouse (Ford Sierra RS Cosworth)
- R5 Silverstone**  
Tim Harvey (Rover Vitesse)
- R6 Silverstone**  
Win Percy (Ford Sierra RS Cosworth)
- R7 Brands Hatch**  
Tim Harvey (Rover Vitesse)
- R8 Snetterton**  
Mike O'Brien (Holden Commodore)
- R9 Donington Park**  
Frank Sytner (BMW M3)
- R10 Oulton Park**  
Mike Newman/Robert Speak (BMW 635CSi)
- R11 Donington Park**  
Andy Rouse (Ford Sierra RS500)
- R12 Silverstone**  
Peter Hall (Ford Sierra RS500)

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# INTRODUCING Nick Percat

Australian who shot to prominence with shock Bathurst 1000 victory

"No words can describe the feeling. I was a full-on HRT supporter when I was young - my dad's got photos of me aged eight in team gear!"



Percat won Australia's 'Great Race' in 2011

When Nick Percat won last year's Bathurst 1000 with Garth Tander, the general reaction in the Northern Hemisphere was 'who?' But the 23-year-old from Adelaide has been groomed for V8 Supercars stardom for some time now by the Walkinshaw Racing stable, which runs the factory Holden Racing Team squad with which Percat won at Mount Panorama.

After karting, Percat won the South Australian state Formula Ford series at Mallala before making the unusual step into Aussie Racing Cars - the Down Under equivalent of Legends. It was after he soared from 40th on the grid to win at Surfers Paradise in the wet

that he got his break with the late Tom Walkinshaw's empire. "I moved into national Formula Ford with their backing and support," he says, "and the third year I won the championship.

"I also did an apprenticeship where I worked for their V8 team in 2007. That carries on as I still work for Sonic Motor Racing [top Fford team]. I can rebuild a car and work as a mentor for the drivers."

For 2010 Percat moved to the second tier of V8 Supercars, initially with Jay Motorsport before the money ran out. "Walkinshaw bailed us out and since then I've run with them," he says.

That role included last year's

## NICK PERCAT CV



**Born** Sept 14 1988  
**From** Adelaide, Australia  
**2011** 7th in Fujitsu V8 Supercars; winner of Bathurst 1000; winner in Indian Formula MRF  
**2010** 4th in Fujitsu V8 Supercars  
**2009** 1st in Australian Formula Ford (12 wins)  
**2008** 2nd in AUS Fford (9 wins)  
**2007** 7th in AUS Fford (1 win)  
**2006** 2nd in Aussie Racing Cars (6 wins)  
**2005** 1st in South Australian Fford (10 wins)

enduros with Tander and his famous win at Bathurst. To his irritation this stands as his only V8 win, and he began this season with another pair of close-but-not-quite podiums on his home ground in Adelaide.

"It was crazy winning Bathurst!" he says. "No words can describe the feeling, especially as I was a full-on HRT supporter when I was young - my dad's got photos of me aged eight in the team gear! Brock, Skaife and Jimmy Richards have won it, so it was an honour to be up there; a dream."

Shortly after that, Percat also became the winner of the inaugural race on the Buddh Indian Grand Prix circuit, in Formula MRF: "I love single-seaters, but even in MRF I couldn't get full lock because of my height [he stands over six-foot-three]. I needed surgery after my Formula Ford career because I'd smashed up my knee on the damper."

So he's happy to race with HRT, now run by Walkinshaw's son Ryan. "He's taken charge and he's a leader," says Percat. "He's only 24 but he speaks his mind like Tom and stands his ground!"

"But I know that if I don't perform well I can be written off after a few months, so the goal is to win the championship this year. I don't want to leave the Walkinshaw family - they took a punt on me and they're responsible for where I am now."

He raced at Brands in 2008 FF Festival



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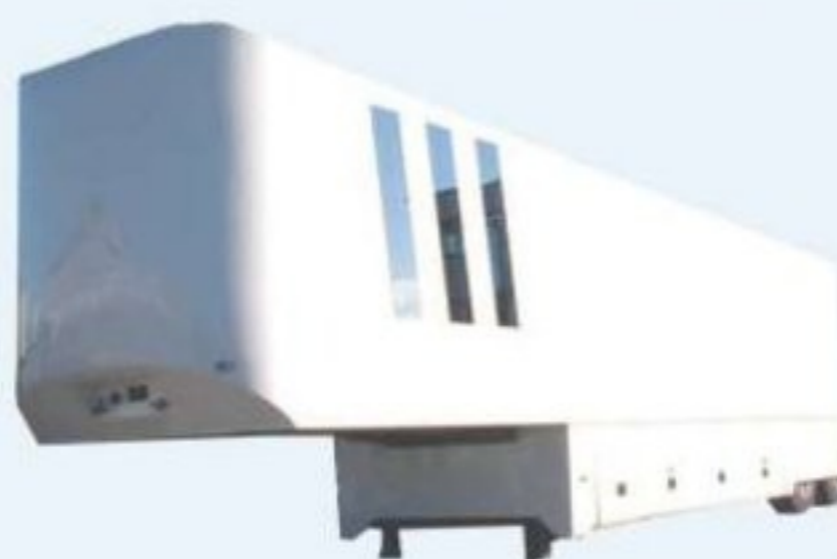
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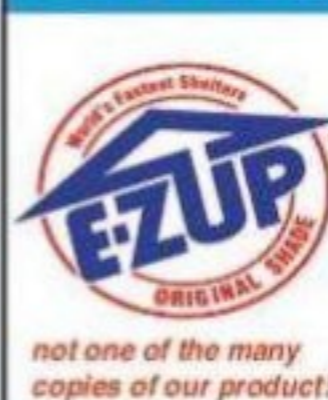
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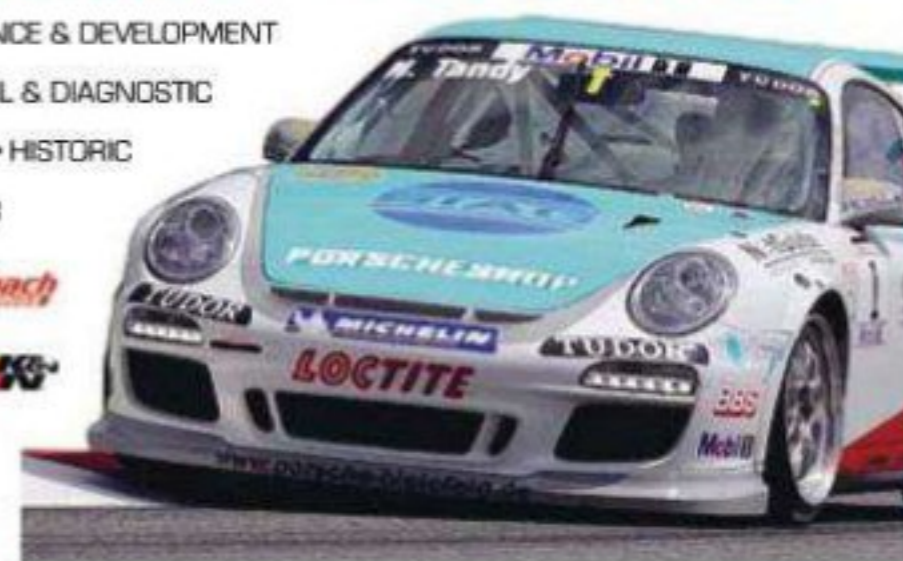
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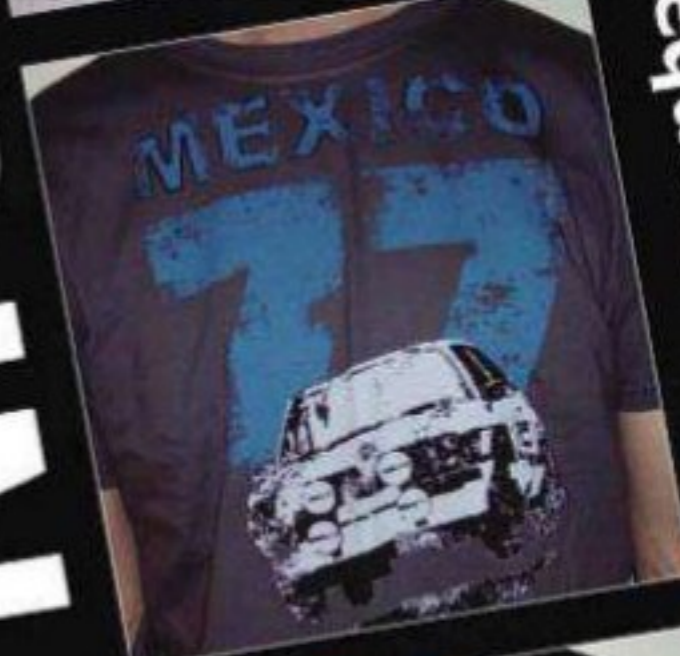
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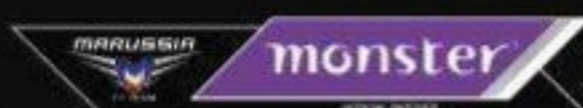
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# Challenge update



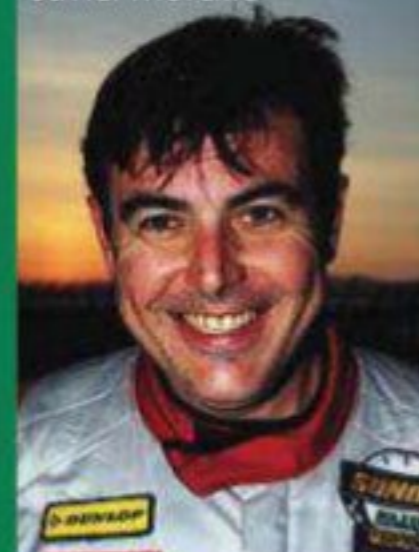
The Sunoco Rolex 24 At Daytona Challenge kicked off this weekend with the Britcar MSA British Endurance Championship opening round at Silverstone. Last years third place Challenge runner up, Javier Morcillo, missed out on the chance to race at Daytona after poor luck and reliability issues but is back for another season. Morcillo/Cintrano and White put in a sterling performance taking their maiden win – Morcillo secured pole position and the extra points crucial to the Challenge.

The sister Challenge, the Sunoco GRAND-AM 200 Challenge, kicked off this weekend for racers in the Britcar Endurance Championship classes 3 and 4, Britcar Production Cup and the Dunlop Production Touring Car Championship. Britcar Production Cup racer Mike Jordan takes the lead after a clean sweep of pole position, race win and fastest lap. Joe Girling in the PTC had a great opening round however due to gearbox problems Girling had to sit out race 2.



[www.sunocodaytonachallenge.com](http://www.sunocodaytonachallenge.com)

Javier Morcillo



Javier Morcillo is at the top of the standings, Morcillo also lead the Challenge this time last year – will it be all change after the SPEED EuroSeries first round this weekend?

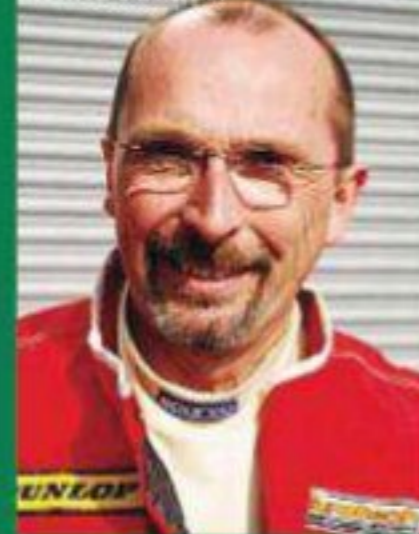
#### Driver standings – average per race\*

1	Javier Morcillo	Britcar Endurance	48
2	M Cintrano/P White	Britcar Endurance	40
3	Schulz/Moule/Murrells	Britcar Endurance	34
4	Dan Jones/Kyle Tilley	Britcar Endurance	32.5
5	M Millard/I Heward	Britcar Endurance	30



[www.sunoco200challenge.com](http://www.sunoco200challenge.com)

Mike Jordan



Britcar Production Cup and former BTCC racer Mike Jordan leads the Challenge with the Richard Abra/Mark Poole duo on the chase. F3 Cup will have their first point scoring round at Oulton Park on the 9th April.

#### Driver standings – average per race\*

1	Mike Jordan	Britcar Production	126
2	R Abra/M Poole	Britcar Production	100
3	Craig Davies	Britcar Production	95
4	Nigel Ainge	Britcar Production	90
5	Edward Cockhill	Britcar Production	86

\* points correct at time of print

Photographs by Oliver Read and Karl Bowdery

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Ford grid will be even mix of EcoBoost (leading) and Duratec

## Ford announces test prizes

New drivers head to British Formula Ford as series offers new incentives



### KARTING ACE FREDDIE

Martin-Dye and reigning Scholarship champion Cavan Corcoran have confirmed their British Formula Ford seats for the season opener as the series has announced new prizes.

This year's British Formula Ford champion will win test drives in USF2000 and American Star Mazda.

Ford motorsport manager Mike Norton said: "We've been fully behind EcoBoost from the start. It's a technology we want to actively promote and we want the championship to be as good as possible."

AUTOSPORT understands that it is unlikely Ford will fund its champion into another series, but Norton agreed that the cancellation of Formula Renault UK for 2012 could help boost Formula Ford. A future place on the TOCA package is not out of the question.

"For a series to collapse is never a good thing, but the flipside for Formula Ford is

that it strengthens its principals," he added. "It's an opportunity."

### NEW DRIVERS

Ford has also lent Martin-Dye an EcoBoost car for Oulton Park next week. It will be run by Enigma Motorsport, which hopes to get its own machine for later in the season.

The 23-year-old, who has been out of competition for the past five years, said: "It has all come together for me to have a go at FFord. I've never driven Oulton so it's going to be a steep learning curve."

Enigma boss Linton Stuteley, who will also run George Blundell and Olly Rae in Duratecs this season, believes Martin-Dye can be competitive in his first car racing season.

"I'm sure he'll be a frontrunner," he said. "When he tested our Duratec he was underneath the fastest time at Silverstone from 2011. He's definitely got the speed."

Ford has also lent Corcoran an EcoBoost Mygale free of charge (see AUTOSPORT, March 15), and he has now joined race-winning squad JTR.

Team boss Nick Tandy, who will run another EcoBoost car for South American karter Julio Moreno, said: "Cavan had a good learning season last year, which is a great basis for some good results."

Reigning Scottish FF1600 champion Kenneth Thirlwall will also race at Oulton, driving a Duratec Van Diemen for returning squad Myerscough College.

### TEAMS' VIEW

The grid is likely to include around 16-18 cars at Oulton's Easter Bank Holiday event, with entries split evenly between the new EcoBoost and established Duratec cars.

Tandy believes the series looks strong in the context of the current economic climate. "Ford has loaned Cavan one of the four test cars and they are realising the benefit of Formula Ford," he said.

"We're really pushing in the right direction. I think pretty soon there will be double figures of EcoBoost cars."

But Stuteley is less positive, and pointed to reigning champion Scott Malvern's struggles to get a drive for 2012. "I don't think Ford has done a terribly good job before," he said.

"EcoBoost has pushed budgets through the roof a bit, which teams have to pass on to the drivers, but I think prizes help."

"I don't think Formula Renault's problems will bring drivers in this year, but it may help in the longer term."

### AUTOSPORT SAYS...

**KEVIN TURNER**  
FEATURES  
EDITOR

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### BRINGING IN A NEW CAR ISN'T

always a great idea. It invariably pushes costs up and, as the plight of Formula Renault UK has shown, if it coincides with other problems, the series can be put at risk.

But Formula Ford undoubtedly has an opportunity at the moment. There is a void at the top of the UK junior single-seater tree and Formula Ford is the only manufacturer-backed category in that realm this year.

It's getting harder for drivers to raise funds for the more expensive championships at any given level, which is why FFord and Formula Renault BARC have been hit less by the recession than FR UK. FFord also has the chance of FIA support...

A funded prize drive in a higher series would probably seal the deal, but that's unlikely to happen, especially with the budgets in F3 and the like being such a big jump.

What could finally cement its position is a slot on the BTCC support package. The extra coverage would make it more attractive to backers, providing the move didn't come with too many extra costs. The series would also need to be careful the new teams that would then be attracted didn't push budgets too high.

There are still some question marks - there hasn't been an EcoBoost race yet and FR UK is not dead - but the next 12 months will be crucial in determining the future of junior single-seaters in the UK.

### Extra contact details

**Ben Anderson**, national editor  
ben.anderson@haymarket.com



Formula Ford champ will get test in American Star Mazda

## CONTENTS

**p82** REPORT  
BRITCAR/BRSCC

**p83** REPORT  
BARC OULTON

**p84** REPORT  
MSVR BRANDS

**p85** REPORT  
BRC LYDDEN



Formula Renault

# Fortec takes UK team overseas

Top squad moves to Formula Renault NEC for 2012 after demise of UK championship

Fortec's UK team will race in the NEC



**TOP SINGLE-SEATER** squad Fortec Motorsports has switched its Formula Renault UK team to the North European Cup following the late cancellation of the domestic series.

Fortec, which had four of the six drivers signed up for the UK championship, is hoping that second-year FR driver Josh Hill,

InterSteps champion Jake Dennis, Indian rookie Shahaan Engineer and Formula Ford graduate Dan de Zille will commit to an NEC campaign.

Team boss Richard Dutton said: "We didn't have a lot of choice. The Eurocup is full up, and we couldn't stop the UK team because we'd put so much effort into testing.

"The cancellation of the UK series

[on Monday last week] meant it was too late to get to Monza for the first round of the ALPS series [last weekend]. But we looked at NEC and the circuits are great, so we went full steam ahead."

The team dashed from the paddock at Brands Hatch, where the FR UK media day was supposed to take place last week, to Hockenheim for

a two-day NEC test. Among a field of 26 drivers, Dennis was quickest by half a second, with Hill and Engineer second and third overall.

Fortec has also added Caterham F1 protege Matt Parry to its InterSteps team. The 18-year-old Welshman, who contested British Formula Ford last season, finished second in both races at Oulton Park last weekend.

Star Mazda

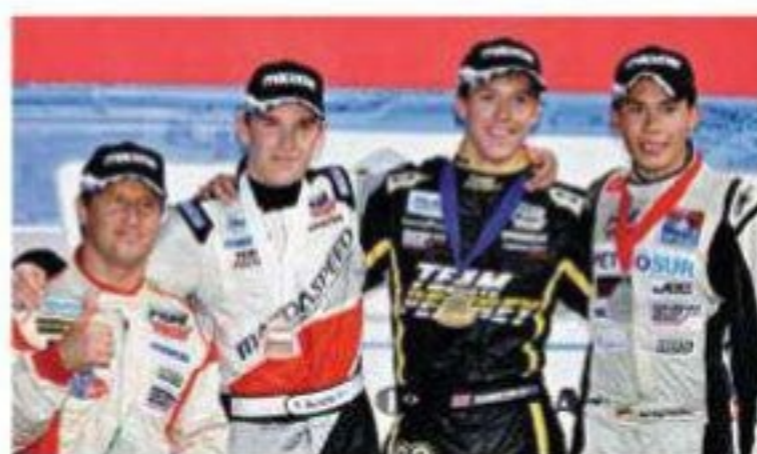
## Hawksworth wins on Mazda debut

**EX-FORMULA RENAULT UK RACER**

Jack Hawksworth took victory on the opening weekend of the US Star Mazda series on the St Petersburg street circuit last weekend.

The 21-year-old, who finished fourth in FR UK last year with one victory, finished second in race one and posted fastest lap in the process. He then started his Team Pelfrey car from pole for race two and led throughout.

"In terms of racing on streets, I was pretty much starting from ground zero, so to win first time it was really special," he said. "The competition in Star Mazda is really tough - I would say there are six or seven guys out there this year



Hawksworth (second from right) took Mazda win

who can win races."

American Spencer Pigot, who competed in the 2010 Formula Ford 1600 Festival at Brands Hatch and the Walter Hayes Trophy, took both USF2000 wins at St Petersburg and now leads the championship ahead of team-mate Matt Brabham.

Pigot, who now has three wins out of four, said: "It was crucial to get the lead on the first corner. I did that, and I think that's what really won the races for me."

Renault Clio Cup

## Rivett to defend Clio Cup title

**REIGNING RENAULT CLIO CUP**

champion Paul Rivett will return to defend his crown after striking a late deal.

The three-time champion will continue to drive for Stancombe Vehicle Engineering, having put together a budget just before this weekend's opening round at Brands Hatch.

The 33-year-old announced his drive at the Silverstone Caterham race day last Sunday. "I'm going for a fourth title, but this is the first chance I have to defend my crown," said the 2002, '04 and '11 champion. "It's such a great championship and is probably more competitive than

Touring Cars now."

Luke Wright has also confirmed he will stay at Scuderia Vittoria for another Clio Cup attack this year.

His SV team-mate James Dixon topped the Clio Cup test at Brands Hatch last week, 0.043s ahead of the Team Pyro machine of Jack Goff.

Rivett will be bidding for his fourth crown



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**Ginetta GT Supercup**

## Ingram steps up to Ginetta G55 for championship attack with JHR

**REIGNING GINETTA G50 CHAMPION**

Tom Ingram has joined JHR for an assault on the main G55 class in the GT Supercup this season.

Ingram took the Ginetta Junior title with Hillspeed in 2010 before his successful campaign with Plans Motorsport in the G50 Cup division of the GT Supercup last season.

"I'm really excited to be stepping into a new car and taking on a new challenge, and there's only one goal -

to make it a hat-trick by winning the championship," said the 18-year-old.

JHR founder Steve Hunter added: "He has proved over the last couple of years that he has the driving ability, technical feedback and mental strength you need to be a winner."

One of Ingram's 2011 rivals, Andrew Richardson, will also step up to G55s this season. The four-time G50 winner will stay with the family Richardson Racing team, which will also run a G50 for Ginetta Challenge ace Mark Davies.

Richardson said: "I would have been in contention for the title [last year] if I hadn't had to miss some races. The competition is going to be strong, but my aim is to fight for the championship."

Ginetta Junior runner Declan Jones will race in the GT Supercup in 2012, driving a G50 that could be run by Century Motorsport.



Ingram was G50 champ in 2011

**British GT**

## Chaplin to British GT4 with Aston

**REIGNING DOUBLE VW RACING Cup champion Steve Chaplin plans to graduate to British GT this season in an Aston Martin Vantage GT4.**

Chaplin will drive for David Appleby's Generation AMR team, which has recently acquired BTCC squad Triple Eight's premises in Greatworth Park.

No co-driver has yet been signed, but there is a possibility that Appleby's son James, who raced the Vantage in European GT4 last year, could join Chaplin for the opening round at Oulton Park on Easter weekend.

Chaplin, who will race the 4.7-litre Aston with the latest GT4

Chaplin will step up to British GT in Aston



upgrade package said: "Having won back-to-back titles in VWs, I decided the next step was to come into British GT."

"I don't have a team-mate at the moment. We've got people wanting to do one or two rounds, but I want a full-time driver because I want to win the championship."

**VW Racing Cup**

## Ex-champ Neuhoﬀ returns to VWs

**FORMER VOLKSWAGEN RACING CUP** champion Mike Neuhoﬀ will return to the series this year in a Golf GTI MkVI.

The 41-year-old won the title in 2001 and claimed the first victory for a diesel-powered car in Britain in a Golf TDI in '02. After seven years away from the series, he makes his comeback in a KPM-prepared machine.

Neuhoﬀ, who is also a former Porsche 924 and Ford Fiesta frontrunner, said: "The last racing car I drove in anger was the late Richard Lloyd's GT3 Jaguar XKR and I won't have a chance to try the Golf until

qualifying at Oulton Park on Easter Monday. Hopefully I will still be quick."

Team owner Kevin Poole, who plans to run seven cars in the series opener at Oulton Park next month, added: "It's going to be a busy season for KPM. Mike will be a valuable asset and will, once he is back up to speed, be a frontrunner."



Neuhoﬀ returns in 2012

MARCUS PYE

## HUMBLE PYE

The voice of club motor racing



BTCC manufacturer numbers have fallen since 1990s

Two very different series of events, both inaugurated in the 1950s, roar into life at Britain's most-hallowed circuits this weekend. One will be trumpeted to the heavens, one will barely raise a blip on racing's Richter scale, yet the quality of competition at the latter may match - and in some places exceed - that of the former.

I refer to the high-falutin British Touring Car Championship-headed TOCA package at Brands Hatch on one hand. And, in the amateur corner, the 750 Motor Club's season-opener at Silverstone, which showcases its full hand of 12 categories over 21 races.

Originated (as the British Saloon Car Championship) in 1958, the BTCC's stock is not at its highest, with only Honda and MG in the manufacturers' title race and no drivers from outside Great Britain and Ireland. A far cry from multiple marques investing heavily and a truly international cast. Yet it's still our biggest crowd-puller, by a massive margin.

The 750 Formula championship - the grandfather on today's MSA register - has been staged continuously since 1950, when Charles Bulmer triumphed in his ex-works Austin Seven Ulster. The class's significance can be gauged by its alumni, who include Colin Chapman and Jem Marsh of Lotus

and Marcos fame respectively.

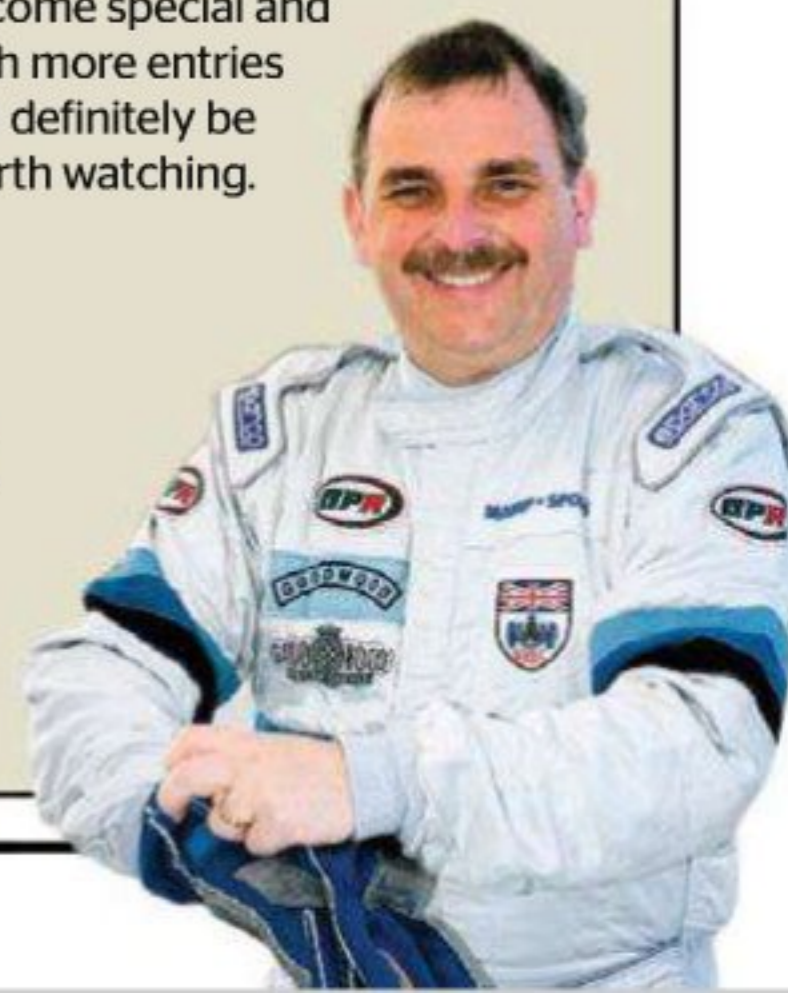
And then there are other great designer/constructors who started with the 750MC: Eric Broadley (Lola), Arthur Mallock, Mike Pilbeam, Adrian Reynard, Tony Southgate and Len Terry - to whom should be added Nick Walford, whose first Radical designs debuted there.

While big-name road-car makers Renault, Porsche and humble-rooted Ginetta populate the BTCC-support bill, old stock finds favour with 750MC's members' pockets: Toyota MR2s will provide Silverstone's fattest grids on Sunday.

Yet, mirroring motorsport at all levels today, some clubbie classes appear to be struggling. Formula 4, which I first watched in the 1960s, is struggling to muster double-figure fields. Reinvented several times, it still has much to offer but, with several 2011 frontrunners sitting this year out or favouring an attractive Monoposto calendar, it needs numbers to survive.

Those doing well include the ever-popular Stock Hatch (now paired with Classic Hatch, which has more oomph than Class B), Locost and the phenomenal Road-Going Bike-engined sportscars. RGB has become special and with more entries will definitely be worth watching.

**“The quality of 750 Motor Club competition may match - or exceed - that of the BTCC this season”**



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## IN BRIEF



Moss and C-type will reunite

### SIR STIRLING MOSS WILL DEMO

the Jaguar C-type XKC 005 he used to win the 1952 Reims Grand Prix at the Donington Historic Festival on May 6. The Reims victory was the first race success for a disc-braked car.

### REIGNING PRODUCTION TOURING

Car Trophy champion Adrian Churchill sat out the opening rounds of the series at Oulton Park last weekend because he was unhappy with the performance of his new Courtenay Sport Racing Ford Focus. "We decided the car wasn't good enough to go out and risk any damage," he said.

### TWO EX-PORSCHE CLUB CHAMPIONS

will run the Porsche 996 in the series this season. Mark McAleer and Peter Morris will drive the newly eligible model and organisers expect others to join them.

### THE MSA AND MIA HAVE LAUNCHED

a Contributors' Toolkit to help teams, venues, clubs and organisers maximise National Motorsport Week, which takes place between June 30 and July 8 this year. The toolkit can be downloaded at [www.nationalmotorsportweek.co.uk](http://www.nationalmotorsportweek.co.uk).

### NICK ELLIOTT, JULIAN REYNOLDS

and Rikki Proffitt all took category wins on round two of the British Historic Rally Championship, the Bulldog Historic Rally, last Saturday. Elliott and Dave Price topped Category Three in their Ford Escort Mk2, Reynolds and Patrick Walsh backed up their victory on the opening event by winning Category Two in their Escort Mk2, while the Porsche 911 of Proffitt/Phill Harrison took Category One.

### EUROPEAN RALLYCROSS ACE LIAM

Doran missed the scheduled debut of his new Citroen DS3 when problems with the supply of electrical components prevented it from running at Lydden's British series opener last Saturday.

### HILLCLIMBER WILL HALL GAVE THE

latest Force its first public appearance at Loton Park last weekend. The Force WH is powered by a Langford Performance Engineering-built 3.5-litre V6, formerly used in Formula Renault 3.5.



Hall tested new Force



Gray won in Sabre, now switches to Spire (behind)

RGB

# Former champ in RGB Spire

Tim Gray gets new car as 750 Motor Club series gathers momentum in 2012

### FORMER RGB CHAMPION TIM GRAY

will race a Spire in this year's 750 Motor Club-run series, giving the Derbyshire-based manufacturer the strongest representation on the grid.

Gray took the 2009 crown in an AB Performance Striker. He will now race an evolution of the Spire GT3 model previously driven by 2011 series runner-up John Cutmore.

Spire boss Paul Nightingale said: "Tim's quick in whatever he drives. The revised car features new front-suspension geometry with our own

fabricated uprights, 13-inch front wheels and revised bodywork, so we're excited by its potential."

Cutmore returns, while Mat Green, John Goodwin and Rob Gardner are also out in GT3s, and Locost frontrunner Nick Morley has bought the ex-Green GTR.

Despite losing Gray, who developed the original Sabre into a winner last season, AB Performance's Andy Bates is upbeat. "We've productionised the car over the winter, and made it lighter and stiffer," he said.

Former champion Derek Jones will race a new Sabre, while Lee Baverstock is expected to campaign the original. Mark Sammland is also due to join the fray for the Suffolk concern.

The BDN S3s of Colin Chapman and Bob Mortimer plus Tony Gaunt's new self-built Wolfe ZX2 are also due to challenge series champion Contour (with Paul Rogers and Gary Goodyear driving) in the rear-engined class.

This weekend's 750MC season opener at Silverstone has attracted more than 280 entries.

### Formula Vee

## Oliveira back for Formula Vee title tilt

**DOUBLE FORMULA VEE** champion Sam Oliveira will make a full-time return to the category this season.

The four-time Vee Festival winner will try to claim a third Formula Vee championship crown in the Sheane 'Jenvee' that carried him to his first two



Double champ returns

titles in 2006 and '09.

After winning the 2009 title, Oliveira tried to move up to British Formula Ford. He was unable to find the budget and opted to stay on the sidelines - save for his end-of-season Festival appearances and a

one-off championship race at Castle Combe in '10.

Oliveira, 26, will test the car tomorrow (Friday) ahead of the first round at Silverstone this weekend. "I've got to the age now where racing is racing, and if this keeps me racing I'd better go out and do it," he said.

"Paul Smith, after his run of race wins last year, will be quick and Martin Farmer is a strong pedaller. My brother [Jake] is back as well, and hopefully with me back it will spur him on and he'll be there to fight for wins."

### MSV F3 Cup

## Watts is latest to join burgeoning MSV F3

### FORMULA 4 FRONTRUNNER

Robbie Watts will graduate to the MSV Formula 3 Cup this season.

Watts, who has finished runner-up in 750 Motor Club F4 for the past two seasons, is rebuilding a Dallara F306 and expects to join the grid for round two at Donington Park on April 28-29.

Watts, who will run the car himself under his Raw Power Motorsport

banner, said: "I went over to Spain last week and bought the car. It's got the Toyota engine in it.

"There are only a couple of clashes, so I'm doing F4 again, as well as a couple of Monoposto rounds in my F3 Lola. It should be a busy year."

Watts set fastest lap and won both Mono 2000 races at Brands Hatch last weekend in his Lola F106/03.

Watts will race Dallara and Lola (below) in 2012





BRITISH ENDURANCE CHAMPIONSHIP SILVERSTONE, MARCH 24

## Mosler trio strike first blow as GT rivals falter

**THE OPENING BRITISH** Endurance Championship race of the season was one of attrition, which helped the Mosler on pole to win.

The Javier Morcillo/Manuel Cintrano/Paul White machine lost the lead at the start of the three-hour race to the Ferrari 430 of Andy Schulz, who started second.

Third-place starter Michael Millard was also on a charge and he had moved the SR2 to the front by the end of lap 22.

Schulz's valiant efforts in the Ferrari were in vain as its radiator started leaking during their pitstop – by the time it was fixed they had lost 30 laps. Meanwhile, Millard started to catch White, whose Mosler had

moved back into the lead, at a rapid rate of knots. His job was made easier when White served a drive-through penalty on lap 56 for speeding in the pitlane.

The fight still wasn't over. Just six laps later the Millard/Ian Heward machine stopped on the Wellington straight with an electrical problem, which was later rectified when the car was returned to the pits. This gave the Mosler an easy win, with the trio ending up over two laps ahead of their nearest rivals.

A delighted Morcillo said: "This is my first overall win for about 15 years so I'm really happy. It was a great effort by the team and it's our aim now to win the championship."



Mosler opened 2012 with victory

Second and Class Two honours fell to the Marcos Mantis of Owen O'Neill and Neil Huggins, after the similar machine of Chris Beighton/Jon Finnemore was penalised for pitlane speeding and the Kyle Tilley/Dan Jones Mantis suffered reliability problems.

Charlie Hollings and Toby Tarrant-Willis completed

the podium after their Ferrari passed the Porsche of Mike Donovan and Nick Dudfield in the latter stages.

● Stephen Lickorish

### RESULTS (3 HOURS – 80 LAPS)

**1** Javier Morcillo/Manuel Cintrano/Paul White (Mosler MT900R); **2** Owen O'Neill/Neil Huggins (Marcos Mantis) –2 laps; **3** Toby Tarrant-Willis/Charlie Hollings

(Ferrari 430 Challenge); **4** Mike Donovan/Nick Dudfield (Porsche 997 GT3); **5** Chris Beighton/Jon Finnemore (Marcos Mantis); **6** Richard Adams/David Green/Martin Byford (Lotus Evora).

**Class winners** O'Neill/Huggins; Tarrant-Willis/Hollings; Adams/Green/Byford; Jeff Mileham/Steve Gugliami (Lotus Elise). **Fastest lap** Paul Bailey/Andy Schulz (Ferrari 430) 2m04.558s (105.79mph).



Superlight season gets underway

CATERHAM SUPERLIGHT R300 SILVERSTONE, MARCH 25

## Controversy for Orton as Wilson takes R300 double

**JAMIE ORTON'S DEFENCE** of his Superlight R300 championship crown began in miserable fashion after he was excluded from race one.

Orton finished second on the road, having started fourth, but was later disqualified in controversial circumstances after avoidable contact with Ian Payne, who started third. He did appeal the decision, but was unsuccessful.

An annoyed Orton said: "It's disappointing. It was a frustrating race anyway and I think it was a harsh

decision. I went down the inside of him and locked up, but he did have space to avoid me. Hopefully I won't be excluded in the Ginetta GT Supercup next weekend."

It was last year's runner-up Paul Wilson who took the top step of the podium in race one, from Mark Shaw and Peter Ratcliff. Despite losing the lead to Shaw early on after starting from pole, Wilson was able to get back ahead by lap four to win.

With Orton not taking part in race two and Shaw

losing ground at the start, Wilson was able to take a comfortable lights-to-flag victory by over four seconds. Shaw again finished second, a whopping 25 seconds ahead of Paul Brannan, who passed Ratcliff on lap four.

Fourth went to Adam Balon after a remarkable recovery drive from the very back of the grid.

● Stephen Lickorish

### RESULTS (BOTH 13 LAPS)

**1** Paul Wilson; **2** Mark Shaw +3.836s; **3** Peter Ratcliff; **4** Paul Brannan; **5** Flick Haigh; **6** Magd Mohaffel. **FL** Haigh 2m23.232s (92.00mph). **RACE 2** **1** Wilson; **2** Shaw +4.218s; **3** Brannan; **4** Adam Balon; **5** Mohaffel; **6** Stuart Simpson. **FL** Shaw 2m22.626s (92.39mph).

BRITCAR PRODUCTION CUP SILVERSTONE, MARCH 24

## Last-gasp win for BMW

**THE WEATHER MIGHT** have been well-behaved but the Britcar Production Cup drivers were less so, a number of racers penalised for not respecting track limits.

At the start Mark Cunningham disposed of the similar SEAT of poleman Craig Davies as the BMW of Michael Symons climbed to second. Symons was first to pit and fell behind Davies and former BTCC racer Adam Jones after the stops. His co-driver Keith Webster then picked up a penalty for running off the track.

Webster was then disqualified for speeding in the pitlane. A penalty for Jones suggested the

Cunninghams would win, but with just three laps left Richard Abra/Mark Poole's BMW came through to snatch victory.

● Stephen Lickorish

### RESULTS (90 MIN – 38 LAPS)

**1** Richard Abra/Mark Poole (BMW M3 CSL); **2** Mark Cunningham/Peter Cunningham (SEAT Leon Supercopa) +14.063s; **3** Craig Davies/Adam Jones (Leon Supercopa); **4** Kevin Clarke/Wayne Gibson (M3); **5** Guy Povey/Graham Coombes (M3 CSL); **6** David Nye/Rex Nye (Leon Supercopa). **CW** Gavin Spencer/Tom Ferrier (Leon Supercopa); Nigel Ainge/Mike Jordan (Honda Integra); Edward Cockill/Harry Cockill (Honda Civic Type R); Andrew Elliott/Andrew Brindle (Integra). **FL** Keith Webster (M3) 2m14.833s (97.73mph).



BMW defeated SEAT late on

## NATIONAL RACES & RESULTS

BARC  
OULTON PARK

## NW SPORTS SALOONS QUICK RESULTS

→ Race 1 Ric Wood  
→ Race 2 Wood



Spark flew in Mini Se7ens

## REPORTS SPORTS EXTRA

NW SPORTS SALOONS OULTON PARK, MARCH 24

# Wood is unstoppable at Oulton in Opel DTM machine



Wood's Astra takes Allaway's Esprit

**RIC WOOD TOOK HIS** magnificent ex-Alain Menu DTM Opel Astra to a double victory in the opening round of the BARC NW Sports Saloons championship at Oulton Park last weekend.

"It is just unfortunate we have to run it within the noise regulations," he said of the muted beast.

Wood held back in a misty qualifying session,

so started the pair of races eighth and ninth. Former champion Rob Spencer — in a freshly built Stuart Taylor Locosaki — led the first race from pole, but he was passed by Simon Allaway's Lotus Esprit V8 clone at the start of the third lap. Wood charged through, passing Spencer at Knickerbrook and grabbing the lead at the start of lap four.

After a safety car period, Allaway spun into the Cascades gravel when a brake disc failed, shearing off the left-front wheel. That promoted Peter Davies (Caterham CSR) to second.

Allaway was ruled out of race two, which otherwise followed a similar pattern. Wood overhauled Spencer at the hairpin four laps in and went on to win by 42s. Davies had a great scrap

with Cam Forbes (Westfield) for third that was settled on the run to the final turn.

Approaching traffic, Forbes made contact with his rival, then the barrier. Both survived, but Davies was 12s clear.

● Ian Sowman

**RESULTS (13 LAPS) 1 Ric Wood (Opel Astra DTM);** 2 Robert Spencer (Stuart Taylor Locosaki) +10.335s; 3 Peter Davies (Caterham CSR); 4 Cam Forbes (Westfield SEiW); 5 Joe Spencer (Stuart Taylor Locosaki); 6 Nick Cresswell (Caterham 7). **CW** Spencer; Davies; Dennis Crompton (BMW M3); Jamie Cryer (Ford Fiesta). **FL** Wood 1m26.334s (92.82mph).

**RACE 2 (15 LAPS) 1 Wood;** 2 Spencer +42.588s; 3 Davies; 4 Forbes; 5 Cresswell; 6 Danny Bird (MK Indy). **CW** Spencer; Davies; Mike Hurst (Vauxhall Vectra); Chris Maries (BMW 325); Cryer. **FL** Wood 1m27.776s (91.29mph).

## IN BRIEF



Robinson took race two

## EURO SALOONS

Darren Dowling won the first race in controversial circumstances after on-the-road winner Andy Robinson was penalised for not respecting Silverstone's track limits. Robinson got revenge in race two as Paul Smith took over Dowling's TVR, but retired.

## CATERHAM ROADSPORT

Elliott Norris took his first-ever win at Silverstone after a battle with Brad Smith and Alex MacIndoe. Smith won race two after passing Norris on the final lap. Achille Corbellati finished a terrific second despite starting last, having been excluded earlier.

## CATERHAM TRACKSPORT

Mike Hart won the first two races of this new series after recovering from losing an early lead from pole on both occasions. However, his winning margin in race one at Silverstone was just 0.005s from Jon Mortimer.

## CATERHAM SUPERSPORT

Aaron Head won the opening Supersport race from Jeremy Webb, after Lee Wiggins was given a penalty for not respecting track limits. The pair finished in reverse order in race two.

## CITROEN 2CVs

Phil Myatt narrowly defeated Sammie Fritchley in a thrilling season-opener at Oulton, which had battles all the way down the order. Having become mired in the midfield in race one, Nick Paton was able to ease clear in the second race to win.

## PRODUCTION TOURERS

It was a win apiece for Courtenay Sport Racing team-mates Joe Girling and Martin Johnson, but neither had trouble-free days at Oulton. Girling missed race two after clutch failure as he closed in on race-one victory, while brake issues plagued Johnson.



Race one fell to Girling

INTERSTEPS OULTON PARK, MARCH 24

# Mason defeats Parry in opening InterSteps salvos

## FORMULA RENAULT

BARC race winner Matt Mason continued his 2011 end of season form with a double victory at the beginning of the 2012 InterSteps campaign.

Formula Ford graduate Matt Parry kept him honest at the beginning of the first race, although 19-year-old Mason eventually finished 2s clear. James Fletcher passed South African Liam Venter for third at Old Hall on lap two.

Parry made the best start to race two to claim the inside line for Cascades and the lead. But Mason made a bold move at Lodge on lap

six to go back ahead, and Parry could do nothing to retaliate.

Venter held off a train of cars for third position, while Fletcher — who missed second qualifying — picked off a succession of opponents to net fourth.

● Ian Sowman

## RESULTS (BOTH 14 LAPS)

**1 Matt Mason;** 2 Matt Parry +2.012s; 3 James Fletcher; 4 Liam Venter; 5 Jan Schwitter; 6 Jack Aitken. **FL** Mason 1m25.680s (93.52mph).

**RACE 2 1 Mason;** 2 Parry +3.526s; 3 Venter; 4 Fletcher; 5 Schwitter; 6 Cameron Twynham. **FL** Mason 1m25.862s (93.33mph).



The racing was close as Minis returned to Oulton

MINI SE7EN/MIGLIA OULTON PARK, MARCH 24

# Victory to the two Pauls

**PAUL SPARK TOOK** victory in the first Mini Se7en race to be held at Oulton Park for four years, but only after overcoming Andrew Deviny two laps from the end.

The pair pulled away from a three-way battle for third that was eventually topped by Gareth Hunt.

Paul Thompson's Miglia qualifying dominance was not replicated in the race, in which the top four were covered by 1.5s until Tony le May's penultimate lap retirement. Kane Astin harried Thompson through

Old Hall for the final time, then Peacock tried to wrest second from Astin at the chicane, but Thompson prevailed.

● Ian Sowman

## MINI SE7EN (10 LAPS)

**1 Paul Spark;** 2 Andrew Deviny +0.623s; 3 Gareth Hunt; 4 Damon Astin; 5 Tristen Knight; 6 Ashley Davies. **FL** Deviny 1m49.618s (73.10mph).

## MINI MIGLIA (10 LAPS)

**1 Paul Thompson;** 2 Kane Astin +0.318s; 3 Colin Peacock; 4 Richard Casey; 5 Aaron Smith; 6 Mark Cowan. **FL** Tony le May 1m39.385s (80.63mph).



Mason beat Parry in both encounters

## NATIONAL RACES & RESULTS

MSVR

BRANDS HATCH INDY

## NIPPON QUICK RESULTS

→ Race 1 Adam Lockwood

→ Race 2 Lockwood

"I was very hot in the car, but it got easier"

Lockwood overcame the unseasonal heat



Barnett won Champion of Brands

NIPPON CHALLENGE BRANDS HATCH, MARCH 24

# Lockwood's Nissan proves too quick for Nippon rivals

ADAM LOCKWOOD

proved unbeatable in the Nippon Challenge, despite having to fight his way through to the front in both races.

Lockwood's Nissan 200SX claimed pole for the first race, but it was fellow front-row starter Jason Jesse who surged ahead to lead into Paddock for the first time. As they dived into Druids, Lockwood slipped ahead of the Toyota Celica with a neat move on the inside, then eased away.

A little further back, Andy McLennan pulled away from Kevin Middleton, Steve Harman and James Janicki. Soon he was threatening Jesse's second place until he was forced to retire his Suzuki Swift GTI due to gearbox failure.

Then Adam Shale hurled his Hyundai into the gravel

trap at the bottom of Paddock Hill; fortunately the leading group managed to avoid him as they started to lap the tail-enders. But the group was soon depleted as first Middleton and then Harman struck trouble with their Subaru. So the Nissan Skyline of Janicki inherited third place, ahead of Lee Bennett-Neil, Jason Lanagan and Ross Stoner.

"I was very hot in the car, but it got easier as I pulled away," said the victor.

There was a similar start to the second race as Jesse shot away, but he only led as far as Druids on the first lap, when Lockwood once again dived underneath to snatch the lead. Bennett-Neil's Honda Integra led the chase followed by Janicki, Harman and Middleton.

Middleton romped up the field from 18th place in only



Nissan 200SX of Lockwood won twice

three laps, but then his Subaru began to yo-yo up and down the pack as the gremlins struck again.

After six laps Janicki's Skyline retired with a clutch problem, Middleton slowed again and Stoner eventually overhauled Harman to finish third behind Jesse.

Harman finished fourth, the last driver on the same lap as Lockwood, such was

the pace of the winner who finished almost the length of the Cooper Straight ahead of his nearest rival.

● Kerry Dunlop

## RESULTS (BOTH 16 LAPS)

**1 Adam Lockwood (Nissan 200SX);** 2 Jason Jesse (Toyota Celica GT4) +5.483s; 3 James Janicki (Nissan Skyline); 4 Lee Bennett-Neil (Honda Integra); 5 Jason Lanagan (Suzuki Swift GTI);

6 Ross Stoner (Toyota Celica GT).

**Class winners** Jesse; Bennett-Neil; Stoner; Gareth Newton (Mitsubishi Mirage). **Fastest lap** Andy McLennan (Suzuki Swift GTI) 55.892s (77.80mph).

## RACE 2 1 Lockwood;

2 Jesse +7.790s; 3 Stoner; 4 Steve Harman (Subaru Impreza); 5 Kevin Middleton (Subaru Impreza); 6 Newton. **CW** Jesse; Stoner; Harman; Newton. **FL** Lockwood 56.063s (77.56mph).



Watts beat Scott in both events

MONO 2000/CLASSIC/1600 BRANDS HATCH, MARCH 24-25

# Lola of Watts defeats Scott's Dallara in battle of Brands

THE FIRST MONO 2000 race was a real thriller and featured a ferocious fight for the lead starring the Formula 3 cars of Malcolm Scott and Robbie Watts.

Scott's Dallara led away from the start, chased by the Lola of Watts, Richard Purcell, Tony Bishop, Russ Giles and Antonio Impieri.

Watts soon began to attack, especially at Surtees, where he was visibly quicker, and he

was able to try and swoop around the outside of the leader at Clearways.

After several aborted attempts that were thwarted by backmarkers or lack of space, he chose a high, wide and handsome line that left Scott blocked behind slower traffic. Once in front and in clear air Watts set the fastest lap and opened up a three-second gap over the remaining three tours. In the closing stages Purcell

slid off the track and lost third place to Bishop.

"I knew there was more grip on the outside of Clearways because it's only March and the track is still green," said Watts. "Lady Luck gave me a kiss because she'd ignored me early on."

On Sunday Watts led all the way and held on to beat a fast-closing Scott by six tenths. Bishop's Dallara speared into the Cooper Straight barriers so Purcell inherited third place.

● Kerry Dunlop

## RESULTS (BOTH 15 LAPS)

**1 Robbie Watts (Lola F106/03);** 2 Malcolm Scott (Dallara F398) +3.073s; 3 Tony Bishop (F398); 4 Jared Wood (Reynard Vauxhall Lotus); 5 Antonio Impieri (Tatuus Formula Renault); 6 Jim Timms (Van Diemen Formula Ireland). **CW** Wood; David Parkinson (Reynard FF). **FL** Watts 47.033s (92.45mph). **RACE 2 1 Watts;** 2 Scott +0.154s; 3 Richard Purcell (Dallara F301); 4 Peter Venn (F398); 5 Timms; 6 Simon Lonnergan (Reynard Vauxhall Lotus). **CW** Timms; Nigel Davers (Van Diemen RF89). **FL** Watts 46.190s (94.14mph).

CHAMPION OF BRANDS FF1600 BRANDS HATCH, MARCH 24

# Barnett holds his nerve

ALTHOUGH JOSH Barnett led from start to finish, he had to put up with persistent pressure until the very last lap.

Adam Quartermaine looked likeliest to snatch the lead as his Van Diemen RF99 jinked around the tail of the leader's RF01. During the first half of the race he always drew alongside under braking for Paddock Hill Bend.

But in the closing stages it was Oliver White (RF01) who mugged Quartermaine on the top straight and then took the challenge to the leader. Luke Cooper's Swift slipped past Carl Hemming for fourth and he too moved up to join the Van Diemen-dominated lead pack.

With only a lap remaining the first four

cars were nose to tail, but then Barnett opened a slight gap when his pursuers jostled for position. At the flag he was just over a second clear, with White, Quartermaine and Cooper covered by just 0.7 seconds.

Hemming finished a lonely fifth, well clear of the evergreen Stuart Kestenbaum, who completed the top six in the 19-car field in his old Reynard 89FF.

● Kerry Dunlop

## RESULTS (12 LAPS)

**1 Josh Barnett (Van Diemen BR001);** 2 Oliver White (Van Diemen RF01) +1.225s; 3 Adam Quartermaine (Van Diemen RF99); 4 Luke Cooper (Swift SC10); 5 Carl Hemming (Ray GRS08); 6 Stuart Kestenbaum (Reynard 89FF). **FL** Barnett 51.001s (85.26mph).

QUAIFE/MN SALOONS & INTERMARQUE BRANDS HATCH, MARCH 25

## Ex-Webber rival heads the Field for two wins

**TOMMY FIELD, WHO** finished runner-up to Mark Webber in the 1996 Formula Ford Festival, proved he had lost none of his talent when he held off strong opposition to win both Saloons and Intermarque encounters.

Field surged away to lead race one, while Richard Smith snatched second spot into Druids from Chris Brockhurst in a Vauxhall Tigra 1-2-3.

Keith White zapped Mick Robertson coming down the hill to grab fourth, but the sensation of the race was Matt Moore, who was indecently quick in a sedate-looking Mk1 Escort – with a 500bhp Cosworth motor! Moore started from the fourth row of the grid but he soon scythed past the opposition to seize fourth.

As the race developed, Smith retook second place

from Brockhurst as Moore closed in on the leading trio. Towards the end backmarkers caused the leading contenders to close up, but at the finish Field was still half a second ahead of Brockhurst, with Smith a close third and Moore a fine fourth.

There was a messy opening lap to the second race. Field made good his escape, with Brockhurst in hot pursuit, but Moore's exciting charge towards the front ended when he overcooked it at the exit of Druids and spun the Escort, causing Daniel Smith to spin to avoid him.

Next time around, Richard Smith was tucked in behind the leader, just ahead of Brockhurst who was keeping White at bay.

Then Brockhurst retired his overheating Tigra and Smith spun after being passed by White, whose BMW Z4 chased Field to the finish. Smith was able to recover in time to retain third ahead of Jeff Simpson.

Unsurprisingly, the

silhouette racers had stormed away from the steel-bodied cars. Malcolm Wise led the MN saloons element in race one until a turbo pipe blew off his Ford Escort Cosworth, so Gavin Thomson won in his Peugeot 205. But Wise was back on top in race two.

● Kerry Dunlop

### RESULTS (BOTH 18 LAPS)

**1 Tommy Field (Vauxhall Tigra);** 2 Chris Brockhurst (Tigra) +0.592s; 3 Richard Smith (Tigra); 4 Matt Moore (Ford Escort Mk1 Cosworth); 5 Keith White (BMW Z4); 6 Daniel Smith (Peugeot 206). **CW** Moore; D Smith; Gavin Thomson (Peugeot 205); Malcolm Wise (Ford Escort Cosworth); Jez Francis (Vauxhall Nova); Ashley Hargreaves (Peugeot 306); John Chasey (Caterham 7); Nick Proudlock (Ford Escort). **FL** Moore 49.237s (88.31mph).

**RACE 2 1 Field;** 2 White +5.514s; 3 R Smith; 4 Jeff Simpson (Vauxhall Tigra); 5 Simon Smith (BMW Z4); 6 Chris Ayling (Volkswagen Corrado). **CW** Simpson; Moore; Wise; Thomson; Andy Woods-Dean (Renault Megane); Jordan Batts (SEAT Leon). **FL** Brockhurst 49.589s (87.69mph).

Moore impressed in bewinged Escort



BRITISH RALLYCROSS LYDDEN, MARCH 24

## Former champion takes victory on Supercar return

**WITH VICTORY IN HIS** first Supercar drive for two years, and the assertion that he can go faster, Ollie O'Donovan put down an early marker in the British Rallycross Championship at the Lydden opener last weekend.

The London-based Irishman, champion in 2007, took his ex-Doran Ford Focus by the scruff of the neck and threw it at the track. "I love Supercars. I'm getting used to it again, there's more to come yet,"

he said in contravention of the visual evidence.

Title holder Julian Godfrey was fastest, but had a difficult day. A 30-second penalty for missing the Joker Lap in the first heat cost him pole in the A final even, though he did manage a Best Time of Day run – and grabbed the bonus point – in the second heat.

His Fiesta then spun on the second lap of the A final while racing hard for second with Andy Scott, whose own challenge was ended by

a puncture. O'Donovan had led from the start and his job was now much easier.

Steve Hill ran second but dropped to fifth after the bonnet on his Mitsubishi Evo X came open. Pat Doran, driving George Tracey's Irish title-winning Citroen Xsara, rose to second, with Steve Mundy a fine third in his self-built Focus.

On the back of two Irish championship event wins, Ian O'Connell pitched up and showed the Supernational Brits a

trick or two. There was fine racing all day, and O'Connell took pole and then won after fending off early challenges from Ash Simpson and champion James Bird.

Circuit race wannabe James Ross won an outing in the Junior championship and drove a great A final to beat champion Aidan Hills, while Ulrik Linnemann trekked from Denmark and was unbeaten in Super1600 as he limbered up for next month's European event.

● Tim Whittington

### RESULTS – SUPERCAR A FINAL

**(4 LAPS) 1 Ollie O'Donovan (Ford Focus);** 2 Pat Doran (Citroen Xsara); 3 Steve Mundy (Focus); 4 Andy Grant (Focus); 5 Steve Hill (Mitsubishi Lancer E10); 6 Steve Harris (Citroen C4); 7 Andy Scott (Peugeot 306); 8 Julian Godfrey (Ford Fiesta VI).

**Points 1 O'Donovan, 20;** 2 Doran, 17; 3 Mundy, 15; 4 Grant, 13; 5 Hill, 12; 6 Harris, 11.

O'Donovan won with ex-Doran Ford Focus



## BRANDS IN BRIEF



Dugdale leads

### PROJECT 8 SALOONS

Robin Welsh's 540i was narrowly beaten by the E36 M3 of Mike Dugdale first time out; then in the second race Welsh pipped Robert Sadler (E36 M3) to victory. But on the podium Welsh confessed to passing under yellow flags, so Sadler was declared the winner.

### PRODUCTION BMW

Double winner Ben Winrow was by far the most successful BMW battler, but the best race was won by Stuart Waite. In a close finish Mike Tovey was demoted to third when he was pipped at Paddock by Liam Crilly.

### TOYOTA MR2

Paul Corbridge dominated the category with two straight wins as he raced home ahead of Mike Taylor, who was making his racing debut.

### MONO 1800

Marc Fortune proved a worthy double winner, although he had to set fastest laps to stay ahead of Dave Connor. Connor's brave efforts to challenge came to nought: first he was taken out by Adrian Wright, and then in race two his Jedi's clutch failed.

### TEAM TROPHY

After an hour of racing, there was a thrilling finish when the Stephen Darbey/Alistair Stenhouse BMW E36 caught and passed Antony Campbell's Porsche 968 on the very last lap.

### TRACKDAY TROPHY

Robin Welsh led initially, chased by Steve Sme. Then Welsh's team-mate Jason Dzenis lost ground and was passed by Martin Schofield, in for Sme. But Schofield was excluded for a safety car infringement, so Welsh and Dzenis took the win.

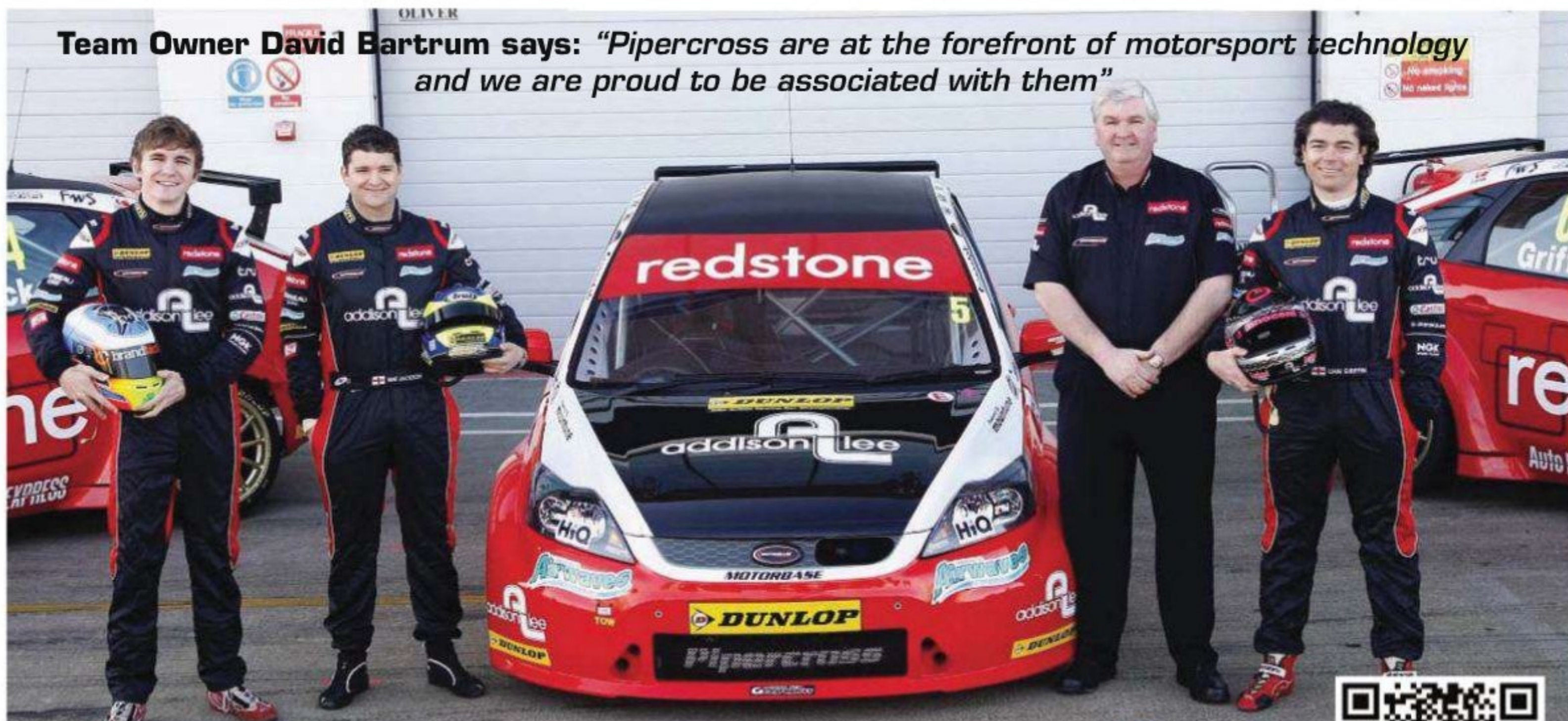


Leading Honda was excluded

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keep up to date with all the  
latest BTCC and Pipercross  
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Melbourne  
16-18 Mar



Kuala Lumpur  
23-25 Mar



Shanghai  
13-15 Apr



Sakhir  
20-22 Apr



Catalunya  
11-13 May



Monte-Carlo  
24-27 May



Montreal  
8-10 Jun



Valencia  
22-24 Jun



Silverstone  
6-8 Jul



Hockenheim  
20-22 Jul

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26-28 Oct



Yas Marina  
2-4 Nov



Austin  
16-18 Nov



Sao Paulo  
23-25 Nov

# SPORTS EXTRA RESULTS ROUND-UP



Silverstone Grand Prix



Oulton Park International



Brands Hatch Indy

Hart was Caterham Tracksport king in Silverstone races



## SILVERSTONE BRITCAR/BRSCC, MARCH 24-25

**EURO SALOONS AND SPORTSCAR (BOTH 9 LAPS)** 1 Darren Dowling (TVR Sagaris); 2 Andy Robinson (Ford Falcon) +0.597s; 3 Barry Squibb (Mitsubishi Evo 9); 4 Vaughan Fletcher (Subaru Impreza); 5 Ilsa Cox (SEAT Leon Cupra); 6 Ian Roberts (Mitsubishi Evo 5). **Class winners** Cox; Ian Craig (BMW E46 M3); John Hamilton (Renault Clio); Chris Boon (Honda Civic Type R). **Fastest lap** Dowling 2m14.627s (97.88mph). **RACE 21** Robinson; 2 Squibb +33.651s; 3 Derek Hale (Honda Accord Super Tourer); 4 Doug Ellwood (Marcos Mantis); 5 Cox; 6 Keith Butcher (Ginetta G50). **CW** Hale; Craig; Wayne Schofield (Suzuki Cappuccino); Boon. **FL** Robinson 2m16.770s (96.34mph). **CATERHAM ROADSPORT (BOTH 8 LAPS)** 1 Elliott Norris; 2 Robert Smith +0.603s; 3 Alex MacIndoe; 4 Robert Chappell; 5 Brad Smith; 6 Paul Hawthorne. **FL** R Smith 2m36.516s (84.19mph). **RACE 21** B Smith; 2 Achille Corbellati +0.213s; 3 Norris; 4 R Smith; 5 Mark Lewis; 6 Hawthorne. **FL** Corbellati 2m36.792s (84.04mph). **CATERHAM TRACKSPORT (BOTH 12 LAPS)** 1 Mike Hart; 2 Jon Mortimer +0.005s; 3 Tim Mashman; 4 David Robinson; 5 Terry Langley; 6 Adam White. **FL** Langley 2m33.070s (86.08mph).

**RACE 21** Hart; 2 Robinson +0.045s; 3 Mortimer; 4 Langley; 5 Kurt Brady; 6 Mashman. **FL** Brady 2m32.156s (86.60mph). **CATERHAM SUPERSPORT (BOTH 12 LAPS)** 1 Aaron Head; 2 Jeremy Webb +1.391s; 3 Stephen Collins; 4 John Saunders; 5 Carlton Brown; 6 Lee Wiggins. **FL** Brown 2m29.273s (88.27mph). **RACE 21** Webb; 2 Brown +0.214s; 3 Head; 4 Wiggins; 5 Steve Day; 6 Collins. **FL** Head 2m29.484s (88.15mph).

## OULTON PARK BARC, MARCH 24

**PRODUCTION TOURING CAR TROPHY (BOTH 13 LAPS)** 1 Joe Girling (Vauxhall Astra); 2 Gary Duckman (SEAT Leon) +6.302s; 3 Luke Caudle (SEAT Leon); 4 Antony Williams (Renault Megane); 5 Sarah Franklin (Fiat Abarth); 6 Stewart Calder (Astra). **CW** Franklin. **FL** Girling 1m34.293s (84.98mph). **RACE 21** Martin Johnson (Astra); 2 Duckman +0.274s; 3 Caudle; 4 Williams; 5 Calder; 6 Franklin. **CW** Franklin. **FL** Johnson 1m34.993s (84.35mph). **2CVs (BOTH 10 LAPS)** 1 Phil Myatt; 2 Sammie Fritchley +0.211s; 3 Alec Graham; 4 Wayne Cowling; 5 Nick Paton; 6 James Northfield. **FL** Graham 2m07.212s (62.99mph). **RACE 21** Paton; 2 Graham +3.422s; 3 Len Davies; 4 Sandro Proietti; 5 Mike Storey; 6 James Sutcliffe. **FL** Proietti 2m09.131s (62.05mph).

## BRANDS HATCH MSVR, MARCH 24-25

**PROJECT 8 SALOONS (16 LAPS)** 1 Mike Dugdale (BMW E36 M3); 2 Robin Welsh (BMW 540i) +1.871s; 3 Robert Sadler (E36 M3); 4 Tom Murphy (Ford Sierra Cosworth); 5 Stephen Pearson (E36 M3); 6 George Haynes (E36 M3). **CW** Don Hughes (Peugeot 306 S16); Ian Clark (Ford Capri); Colin Stubbs (Rover 216 GTi); Ian Russell (BMW E30). **FL** Nigel Innes (BMW 325i) 55.207s (78.76mph). **RACE 2 (14 LAPS)** 1 Sadler; 2 Welsh +4.493s; 3 Hughes; 4 Jason Christie (Ford Escort RS2000); 5 Mike Collins (E36 M3); 6 Eliot Dunmore (Toyota Celica GTi). **CW** Hughes; Clark; Stubbs; Russell. **FL** Sadler 55.372s (78.53mph). **PRODUCTION BMW (16 LAPS) (all 320i)** 1 Ben Winrow; 2 Mike Tovey +10.507s; 3 Matthew Parkes; 4 Chris West; 5 Harry Goodman; 6 Dean Spurr. **FL** Winrow 57.951s (75.03mph). **RACE 2 (15 LAPS)** 1 Stuart Waite; 2 Liam Crilly +0.528s; 3 Tovey; 4 Alan Wileman; 5 Kevin Welsh; 6 West. **FL** Crilly 59.014s (73.68mph). **RACE 3 (16 LAPS)** 1 Winrow; 2 Crilly +10.649s; 3 Parkes; 4 Wileman; 5 Spurr; 6 Nigel Olive-Jones. **FL** Winrow 58.137s (74.79mph). **RED DRAGON MR2 (9 LAPS)** 1 Paul Corbridge; 2 Mike Taylor +5.341s; 3 Dave Hemingway; 4 Richard Avery; 5 Peter Higton; 6 Neil Hurren. **FL** Corbridge 58.624s (74.17mph). **RACE 2 (15 LAPS)** 1 Corbridge; 2 Taylor +2.722s; 3 Hurren; 4 Avery; 5 Higton; 6 Neil Stratton. **FL** Corbridge 58.708s (74.07mph). **MONO 1800/MOTO MONO (BOTH 19 LAPS)** 1 Marc Fortune (Jedi Mk6); 2 Jason Timms (Speads RM07) +4.177s; 3 Adrian Wright (GEM AW3); 4 Ewen Sergison (Swift SC99Z); 5 Geoff Fern (JKS TFR11); 6 Craig Hurran (Jedi Mk4). **CW** Sergison. **FL** Fortune 47.648s (91.26mph). **RACE 21** Fortune; 2 Wright +20.671s; 3 Fern; 4 Timms; 5 Christian Parker (Seward F1010); 6 Sergison. **CW** Sergison. **FL** Fortune 46.665s (93.18mph). **MSV TEAM TROPHY (60 LAPS)** 1 Stephen Darbey/Alistair Stenhouse (BMW E36); 2 Antony Campbell (Porsche



Toyota MR2s get close on run to Druids at Brands

968 CS) +0.508s; 3 Neil Newstead/Stephen Ruxton-Cocker (BMW E36); 4 William Burnett/Marcus Burnett (BMW M3); 5 Tom McHugh (Porsche 944); 6 Lee McCormack (Subaru Impreza). **CW** Burnett/Burnett; McHugh; Julian Taylor (Mazda MX5). **FL** Darbey/Stenhouse 54.638s (79.58mph). **MSV TRACKDAY TROPHY (41 LAPS)** 1 Jason Dzenis/Robin Welsh (Peugeot 205); 2 Andrew Broad/Will Jackson-Moore (Renault Clio) -1 lap; 3 Michael Dickenson/Ricky Coomber (BMW Cooper S); 4 Paul Joslin/Warren Greenland (Honda Integra); 5 Simon Barnard (BMW M3); 6 Richard Evans/Edward McKean (BMW 325). **CW** Barnard; Paul Sheard/Anthony

Nield; Tom Pughe/John Chambers (Mazda MX5). **FL** Dzenis/Welch 55.706s (78.06mph).

## TIN TOP CHALLENGE (13 LAPS)

1 Ian Butler (Ford Focus RS); 2 Andrew Mitchell (Peugeot 205 GTi) +0.889s; 3 Curtis Mitchell (Peugeot 205 GTi); 4 Richard Johnson (Honda Civic); 5 Brett Lidsey (Ford Fiesta ST); 6 Peter Osborne (Renault Clio). **CW** A Mitchell; C Mitchell; Johnson; Vic Hope (Renault Clio); Vince Proto (Fiat Uno); Steve Rothery (Renault Clio). **FL** Butler 55.317s (78.61mph). **RACE 2 (12 LAPS)** 1 Butler; 2 C Mitchell +1.458s; 3 A Mitchell; 4 Rothery; 5 Johnson; 6 Lidsey. **CW** A Mitchell; C Mitchell; Rothery; Johnson. **FL** Butler 55.183s (78.80mph).

## Vauxhall versus SEAT in nine-car Production Trophy field at Oulton



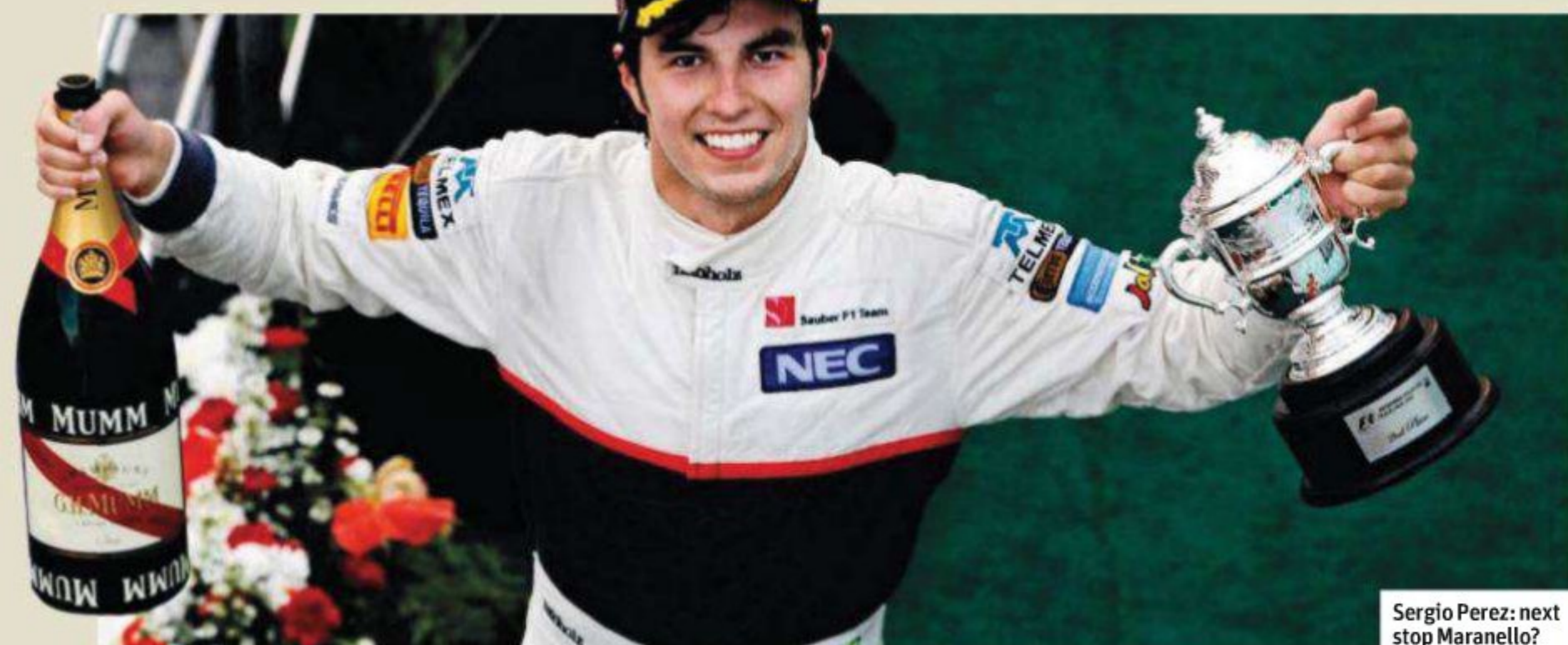
Winrow (5) was class of the Brands Production BMW pack

# FINAL DRIVE

LETTERS ■ GEAR ■ ON-TRACK ■ ON-SCREEN ■ PICS ■ TECH ■ ARCHIVE

## YOUR SAY

What you think of the motorsport news of the past week



Sergio Perez: next stop Maranello?

### Perez proves his star quality

Hats off to Sergio Perez; his performance on Sunday reminded me of when a young Brazilian, in a car that really wasn't that good, frightened the crap out of an established F1 star by catching him hand over fist in a race where the weather levelled the playing field. Alonso didn't have an answer for the Mexican, and Lewis couldn't stay with him.

Some will say it's only one race, but it takes a good driver to make the best of the car and the conditions; Sergio did just that with a stunning drive. What could he be capable of in a front-running car... a red one?

**Graham Dalley**, Banbury, Oxfordshire

AUTOSPORT.COM

### TOP FIVE ON OUR WEBSITE

1. **BRAWN HITS OUT AT RIVALS' EXHAUSTS**
2. **HAMILTON STAYS ON TOP IN SECOND PRACTICE**
3. **RAIKKONEN GETS FIVE-PLACE GRID PENALTY**
4. **HAMILTON BEATS BUTTON TO SEPANG POLE**
5. **RAIKKONEN SETS SIGHTS ON SEPANG PODIUM**

AUTOSPORT.COM PLUS

### TOP STORY ONLINE

DRIVERS RATED AFTER THE AUSTRALIAN GP

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.

FROM THE FORUM - [forums.autosport.com](http://forums.autosport.com)

WHAT OUR READERS ARE TALKING ABOUT RIGHT NOW

Why did Jenson Button not get a penalty?  
Will Massa finish the season with Ferrari?

CORRECTIONS AND CLARIFICATIONS

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)

EDITORIAL CONTACT [mail@autosport.com](mailto:mail@autosport.com)

#### The Malaysian GP was a

rare display of two drivers displaying a gift for transcending their machinery in difficult and rapidly evolving conditions.

The wild conspiracy theories serve as nothing but an insult to both Fernando Alonso and Sergio Perez.

The assumption is that Perez will be an automatic replacement for Felipe Massa. Based on his performance, why should we assume he would accept being number two at Ferrari in 2013?

If he can get out of his Ferrari Driver Academy

contract I see no reason why he should not aim for either Lewis Hamilton or Mark Webber's seat, both currently free next year.

Perez did a great job to take second best in Malaysia, let's hope his career goals are one place higher.

**David Herron**  
Washington, Tyne & Wear

#### Fantastic start to the F1

season. Proper race reporting again with the reintroduction of lap charts. Thank you very much indeed.

**Martin Redshaw**  
By email

**Great result for Ferrari in** Malaysia, but you have to question the viability of Felipe Massa in the team.

To finish 97 seconds behind your team-mate in identical machinery is an eternity in F1 terms.

Surely Ferrari will be considering its options with some urgency, particularly with the way that Sergio Perez is driving.

Peter Sauber must be rubbing his hands at the prospect of a Ferrari deal for his star driver.

**Duncan Sabiston**  
Didcot

**I'm 14 but I don't think you** need to be much of an expert to think Sebastian Vettel's comment about Narain Karthikeyan being an 'idiot' backmarker is a bit unjust.

Jenson Button claimed full responsibility for his accident, can't Vettel do the same?

**Benjamin Greig**  
Wokingham, Berkshire

#### Vettel hits Webber, blames

Webber. Vettel hits Karthikeyan, blames Karthikeyan. Button hits Karthikeyan, blames himself. Spot the difference.

**Peter Taylor**  
Ilton, Somerset

# THE LATEST GEAR

Desirable new releases for motor racing fans: books, DVDs, models, art and gifts

## FERRARI 512S 1:18 MODEL

£112.99 (autosport.com/shop)

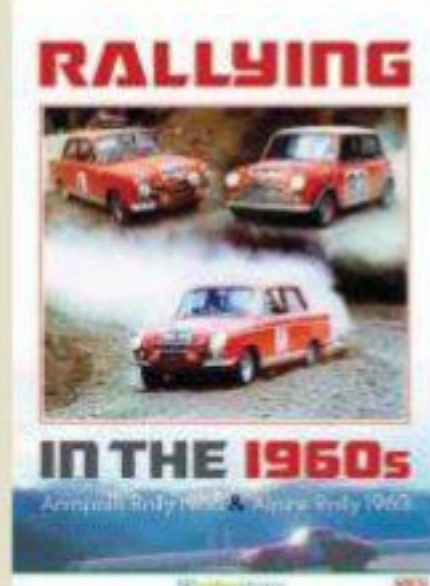
Mattel's 1:18-scale replica of the Ferrari 512S that won the 1970 Sebring 12 Hours is superb. This is the Nino Vaccarella/Ignazio Giunti car that was taken over by Mario Andretti after his sister car failed. Mario caught and passed the leading Porsche 908 of Pete Revson and Steve McQueen to seal a famous win. The detail is in keeping with expensive, large-scale models: the front and rear bodywork is removable and both doors open, while the treaded tyres and spaghetti exhaust manifolds are particularly impressive.



## MINI COOPER WRC 1:43

£59.99  
autosport.com/shop

Mini's return to the world rally championship was always going to cause a stir in the diecast model world. TrueScale Miniature's 1:43-scale Countryman WRC Presentation Car is a replica of the car that was unveiled to the public at the Paris Motorshow ahead of the famous marque's return to rallying's top flight.



## 1960s RALLYING DVD

£16.99 (67 mins)  
dukevideo.com

Two utter gems from the treasure trove that is the BP Video Library. The 1963 Alpine and '66 Acropolis Rally films feature colour footage of the superstars of the day: Erik Carlsson, Timo Makinen, Rauno Aaltonen and Paddy Hopkirk, with plenty of onboard material and rare interviews.



## ECURIE ECOSSE LTD. EDIT. BREMONT WATCH

£4500 (ecurieecosse.com)

To commemorate the 60th anniversary of the famous Ecurie Ecosse stable, watchmaker Bremont has been commissioned to produce a run of just 60 of these bespoke timepieces. The stainless-steel case is complemented by an appropriately blue calf-skin leather strap and unique 'chassis number'.

## HOT ON THE WEB THIS WEEK

**YOUTUBE: ALISTER MCRAE'S BIG ONE ON THE ISLE OF MAN**



**SEARCH FOR:** Golf kitcar, 1997 Manx International Crash, Alister McRae (0:43)

Before you turn to the final page of this issue and read about Mark Higgins's tortuous route to the 1997 British Rally title, check out the crash he refers to: the one in which Alister McRae loses that same crown. It's short but spectacular.

# WHAT'S ON...

Your guide to the best events taking place in the UK and around the world this week – plus TV and online

## SILVERSTONE

750MC

March 31-April 1

Admission: £9 in advance

Tel: 01327 857271

The popular 750MC descends on Silverstone this weekend for its first meeting of the season. Held over two days, it includes 750 Formula, Formula 4, Formula Vee, 750 Trophy, Sports Specials (nee Kit Cars), Locost, RGB, Stock Hatch, Classic Stock Hatch, Saxmax, Toyota MR2s and MR2 Super GTs.

## DONINGTON PARK

BARC

March 31

Admission: £15

Tel: 01332 810048

Kumho BMW, VSCC Pre War Sports Cars, Formula Junior and Caterham Graduates – and it's live on Motors TV.

## OULTON PARK

BRSCC

March 31

Admission: £13

Tel: 01829 760301

Northern Formula Ford 1600, Ford XR Challenge, BRSCC Porsche Championship, Mighty Minis and Superkarts.

## PEMBREY

BARC

March 31-April 1

Admission: £12 on the gate

Tel: 01264 882200

Pickups, Honda VTEC Challenge, Mazda Max5 and the Welsh Sports Saloons support the British Truck Racing Championship.

## KIRKISTOWN

500MRCI

March 31

www.kirkistown.com

Northern Irish FF1600, Irish Formula Vee, Saloons/GTs, Ford Fiestas, Roadsports/Legends and Irish Ginetta Junior.

There'll be a few dents by Sunday evening



## BRANDS HATCH

TOCA

March 31-April 1

Admission £30

Tel: 01474 872331

The BTCC kicks off its 2012 season at Brands Hatch this weekend. Reigning champion Matt Neal will be campaigning a new NGTC Honda Civic, while

Jason Plato returns to Triple 8 in the brand new MG 6. Both manufacturers have endured a tough pre-season, so perhaps this is a chance for privateers such as Motorbase Ford's Mat Jackson to come to the fore... Porsche Carrera Cup, Ginetta GT Supercup, Ginetta Juniors and the Renault Clio Cup will complete the line-up.

## INDYCAR SERIES

Rd 2/15

Barber Motorsports Park, Alabama, USA

April 1

indycar.com

IndyCar makes the 500-mile trip from St Petersburg to Alabama for the second round of 2012. Helio Castroneves ended a near-two-year winless streak and took an early championship lead following his triumph in the season opener.



Franchitti: reigning IndyCar champ

## RALLY OF PORTUGAL

World Rally Championship

Rd 4/13, Faro, Portugal

March 29-April 1

wrc.com

## EUROPEAN LE MANS SERIES

Rd 1/5

Paul Ricard, France

April 1

europeanlemansseries.com

## NASCAR SPRINT CUP

Rd 6/36

Martinsville, Virginia, USA

April 1

nascar.com

## GRAND-AM SERIES

Rd 2/13

Barber Motorsports Park, USA

March 31

grand-am.com

## INDY LIGHTS

Rd 2/12

Barber Motorsports Park, USA

April 1

indycar.com

## WORLD TOURING CARS

Rd 2/12

Valencia, Spain

April 1

fiawtcc.com

## AUTO GP

Rd 2/7

Valencia, Spain

March 31-April 1

autogp.org

## V8 SUPERCARS

Rd 2/15

Symons Plains, Australia

March 31-April 1

v8supercars.com.au

## SUPER GT

Rd 1/8

Okayama International, Japan

April 1

supergt.net

## SUPERSTARS

Rd 1/9

Monza, Italy

April 1

superstars.it

## Television

### THURSDAY MARCH 29

1630-1730 **Eurosport 2**  
WTCC: Monza highlights  
1730-1800 **Eurosport 2**  
IRC: Inside Rally Spain  
2000-2030, 2235-2305 **Motors TV**  
WRC: Rally Portugal preview

### FRIDAY MARCH 30

0200-0300 **Sky Sports 2**  
Racemax  
1240-1310, 1545-1620 **Motors TV**  
WRC: Rally Portugal preview  
2235-2305 **Motors TV**  
WRC: Rally Portugal day one

### SATURDAY MARCH 31

0115-0145, 0900-0935, 1230-1300, 1805-1835 **Motors TV**  
WRC: Rally Portugal day one  
0355-0420 **Channel 5**  
Motorsport Mundial  
1200-1300 **Eurosport LIVE**  
AutoGP: Valencia race one  
1610-1655 **Eurosport 2**  
WTCC: Valencia qualifying  
2235-2305 **Motors TV**  
WRC: Rally Portugal day two

### SUNDAY APRIL 1

0115-0145, 0530-0600, 0715-0750, 1015-1045 **Motors TV**  
WRC: Rally Portugal day two  
0830-0900 **Eurosport 2 LIVE**  
WTCC: Valencia warm-up  
1045-1400, 1555-1715 **Motors TV LIVE**  
ELMS: Paul Ricard  
1100-1800 **ITV 4 LIVE**  
BTCC: Brands Hatch

### 1315-1415 **Eurosport LIVE**

WTCC: Valencia race one  
1600-1700 **Eurosport LIVE**  
WTCC: Valencia race two  
1730-2230 **Premier Sports LIVE**  
NASCAR Sprint Cup: Martinsville  
1900-2100 **Motors TV**  
Grand-Am: Barber highlights  
1930-2200 **Sky Sports 4 LIVE**  
IndyCar: Barber  
1930-2030 **Eurosport 2**  
WTCC: Valencia highlights  
2235-2305 **Motors TV**  
WRC: Rally Portugal day three

### MONDAY APRIL 2

0110-0210 **BBC Four**  
Madness on Wheels:  
Rallying's Craziest Years  
0130-0330, 1300-1500 **Sky Sports 4**  
IndyCar: Barber highlights  
0900-0935, 1825-1855 **Motors TV**  
WRC: Rally Portugal day three  
1700-1800 **Eurosport 2**  
WTCC: Valencia highlights  
1830-1930, 2130-2230 **Sky Sports 2**  
NASCAR Sprint Cup: Martinsville  
2000-2205 **Motors TV**  
ELMS: Paul Ricard highlights

Group B doc on BBC4 airs  
in early hours on Monday



## Online

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Coming up in our premium web content this week



#### BUMPER BTCC PREVIEW

The British Touring Car Championship gets underway at Brands Hatch this weekend, so find out what Kevin Turner has to say about Jason Plato's switch to MG and what the two-time champ thinks of his opposition, and read our rundown of the field on AUTOSPORT Plus.



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## REVVED UP OVER WHAT'S ON THE BOX

We cast a critical eye over the best and worst of this week's TV coverage



No rain delay editing meant F1 replay overran IndyCar

**LIKE A MAN WITH GOUT**, the Sky F1 channel is proof that you can have too much of a good thing.

While there's no denying the quantity of the coverage that's been on offer so far, Sunday gave us the first example of there arguably being too much. Now, I fully appreciate that some people's interest in motorsport starts with an 'F' and ends with a '1'. And much as it's surely the case that more people will tune in to watch the turgid fare a match like, say, Wigan v Wolves will offer up instead of the silky skills on show in a game such as Bilbao v Mallorca, it's highly likely

that Sky wouldn't show a rerun of the English match while the Spanish was taking place, but that's more or less what happened last weekend.

The downpour that caused the GP to run the best part of an hour longer than expected hit the meticulously-planned schedule of post-race reruns and repeats of shows shown throughout the week. So much so that the first round of IndyCar's new era was reduced to a strange split strategy – starting behind the red button, with the end shown live on the F1 station.

That was fine if you were watching Sky via the traditional means of

a set-top box, but useless if you were relying on the much-vaunted abilities of the Sky Go app or via Virgin, where the red-button coverage cannot be accessed.

There would be no case to make if a live F1 race encroached into the slot scheduled for IndyCar, but I just can't understand why edited highlights couldn't be cut down to a length that allowed a live race to be viewed as it started.

And much as I like

Steve Rider's *Legends* series – I wish they were longer, there's clearly more material there – couldn't the Jody Scheckter episode have been postponed? It was on umpteen times over the rest of the week...

It may be that this conundrum never happens again. IndyCar returns to its traditional home on Sky Sports 4 next weekend – hopefully *Wrestlemania* highlights won't overrun...

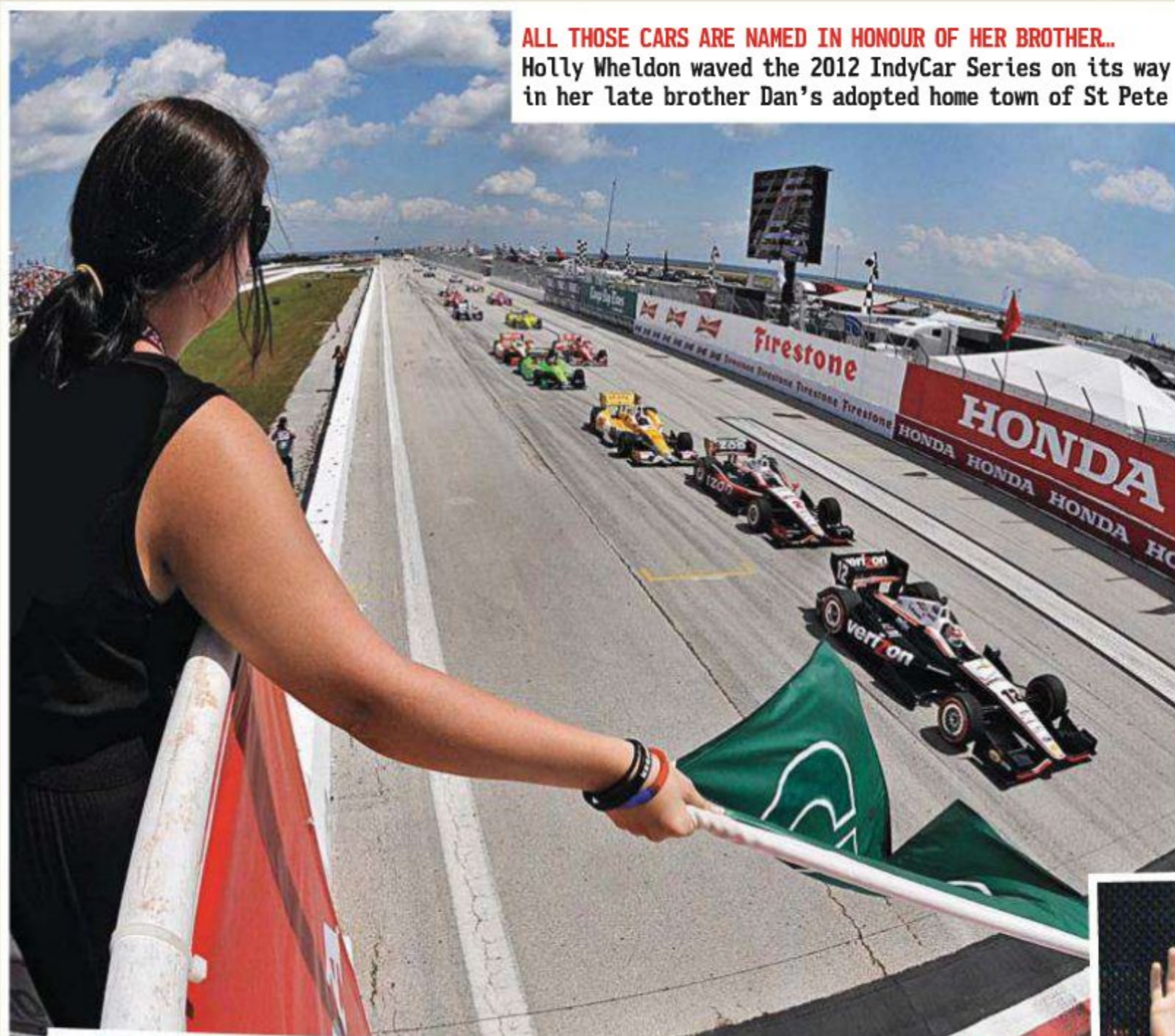
*Revved Up*

"I can't understand how the rerun couldn't have been edited to avoid it affecting a live IndyCar race"

# THE WEEK IN PICTURES

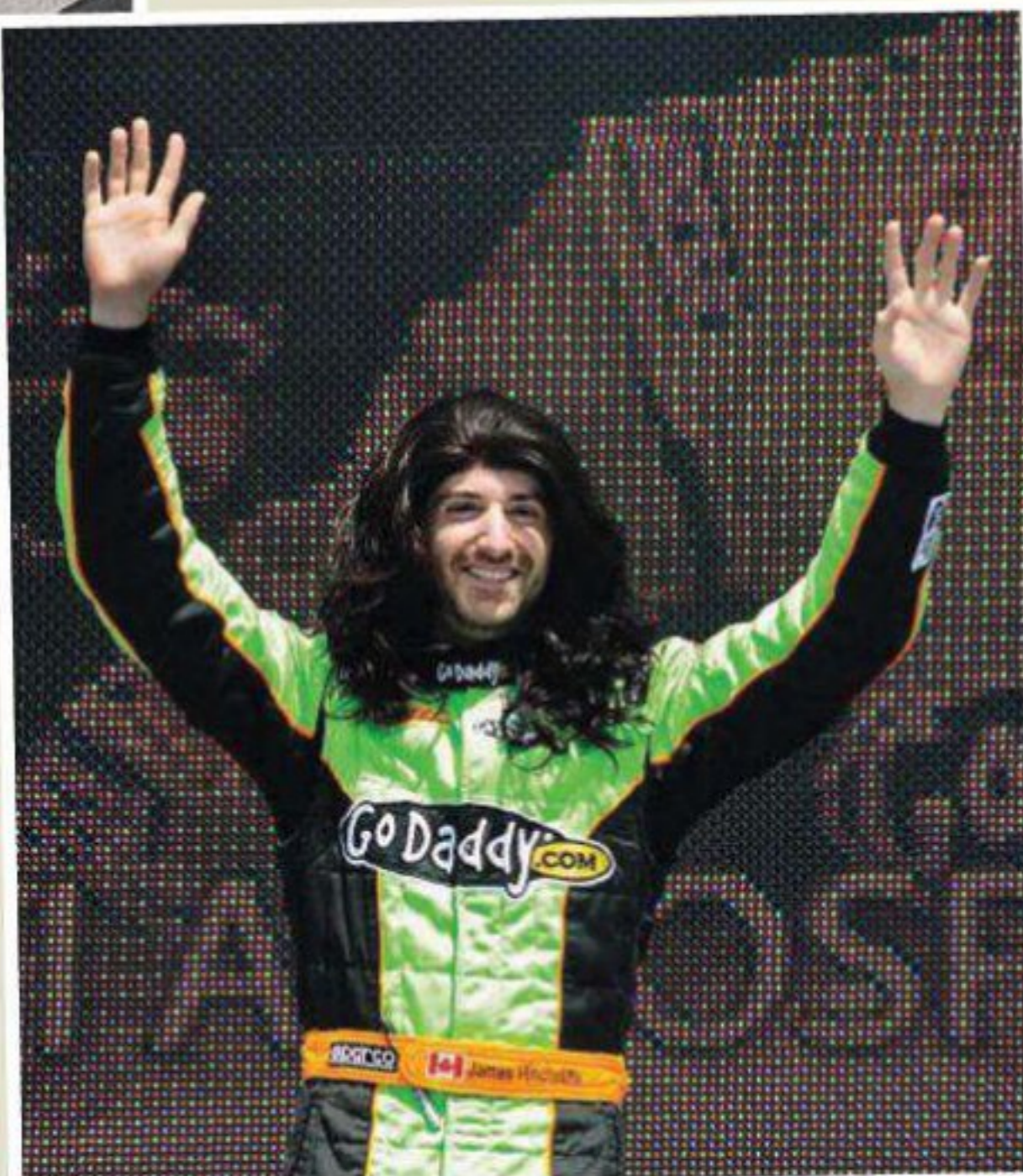
Our lensmen pounding the beat from St Pete to Sepang, via Silverstone

**ALL THOSE CARS ARE NAMED IN HONOUR OF HER BROTHER...**  
Holly Wheldon waved the 2012 IndyCar Series on its way in her late brother Dan's adopted home town of St Pete



**"HONOURED" EJ MOVES INTO REAL ESTATE**  
Eddie celebrates his OBE with the opening of the new Jordan Technology Park near Silverstone

**CALADO STICKS TO THE TASK AT HAND**  
This tongue-out celebration by GP2's James Calado didn't impress third man Felipe Nasr!



**INDYCAR'S NEW PRINCESS - IT'S MANICA!**  
James Hinchcliffe gets into the spirit as he replaces Danica Patrick in Andretti Autosport's IndyCar line-up

**NEXT WEEK** BRANDS HATCH BTCC ALL THE BEST ACTION AND PHOTOS FROM SEASON-OPENER **DON'T MISS IT!**

# FROM THE ARCHIVE

Famous Australian tourer finds going tough in the UK



O'Brien took solitary win in the Commodore

**ONE OF THE LEGENDS OF AUSTRALIAN TIN-TOP RACING,** the Holden Commodore didn't make a huge impact in the British Touring Car Championship. But during 1987, as the new Ford Sierra RS Cosworth and BMW M3 started usurping established cars such as the Rover Vitesse, the Aussie V8 briefly had a chance to shine.

Experienced racer Mike O'Brien, who had stepped into the BTCC in 1986, did a deal with Alan Docking to run a Commodore for the following season. The car wasn't ready for the first round at Silverstone, but arrived with a bang at Oulton Park as O'Brien pipped Tim Harvey's Rover to pole.

"It was far from new and we were on a pretty tight budget, but we had a go," remembers Speedsport boss O'Brien. "Everything was late so the first time I sat in the car was in free practice at Oulton.

"It was a big car, but it was nice. It didn't have power steering so it was heavy to drive – it was an exciting car. People talked about the power, but I didn't feel like I had an advantage."

O'Brien led BTCC rookie Harvey's 3.5-litre Rover at Oulton until the five-litre V8 went off song. "I felt comfortable and was sure I was sure going to win, but it jumped out of gear and buzzed the engine,"

says O'Brien of the misfortune.

With no spare, not only did it lose O'Brien the race, it hampered the Holden's year. "For a lot of the season we struggled with power delivery," he says. "It was very frustrating."

The car didn't look as competitive again until Snetterton's round eight in August: "We had a bit of testing and got it ironed out so it was where we needed it to be."

Despite two poor getaways (the race was red-flagged and restarted), O'Brien dived past Dennis Leech's Rover at the Esses in the closing stages to score what remains Holden's only BTCC victory.

A third and a fifth in the final two rounds also proved encouraging, giving O'Brien a confidence in the revised version of the car for 1988 that would be crushed by the power of Ford's RS500.

"I had the chance to drive an M3 for 1988, but I thought the updated Holden was going to be good, and we had a partnership," he admits.

"We were faster round the corners than the Cossies, but they could just point and squirt – in terms of power we were outclassed, and the M3s were more nimble."

"It was probably the dumbest decision of my life!"

## THIS WEEK IN...



MARCH 31 1967

### THE BARC-RUN WILLS TROPHY

Formula 2 event drew a stellar entry list to Silverstone this week in 1967, with world champions Graham Hill and John Surtees among the entrants.

Hill initially set the pace in practice, but his time was eclipsed in the afternoon by the Winkelmann Racing Brabham BT23 of Jochen Rindt – the Austrian lapping a remarkable 0.6s faster than the outright F1 lap record.

Rindt would go on to seal victory in both of the weekend's 20-lap races and take a commanding lead in the British series. Hill suffered broken suspension in the first race but came from the back of the grid to wrest second from Surtees in race two.

Future Arrows Formula 1 team boss Alan Rees took second on aggregate and snared maximum European F2 Championship points.



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# MARK HIGGINS

■ Manx International Rally ■ September 11-13, 1997 ■ Nissan Sunny GTI ■ Despair and delight in home rally



Higgins's P2 was good enough for the title

**HEADING INTO THE BRITISH** championship finale – the Manx Rally – in 1997 there was a five-way shootout for the title between Alister McRae in the VW Golf, Gwyndaf Evans in the Ford Escort, Robbie Head and Martin Rowe in the Renault Meganas and me in the Nissan Sunny GTI.

We'd scored our first win in the previous round in Ulster so it was the first time I'd come to the Manx – my home rally, remember – with a chance of winning.

The way the BRC points worked, I only had an outside chance but the rally started well and we took an early lead. We then had issues with windows misting up and a broken [suspension] top mount so we fell back.

We fought back into the top four or five, but it was very close all the way through.

On the second day all hell broke loose. Title favourite Alister had his big, end-over-end shunt on the bumpy Starvey stage, so he was out, then Gwyndaf crashed out as well. That then left Robbie and me fighting for the lead – at which point his engine blew.

At the end of that crazy day I had a good lead – half a minute or so – over Martin in the other

**“Halfway through the stage we hit a bump. The car kicked up and ran along on its nose with Phil Mills shouting ‘Noooooooooooo!’ Fortunately it landed the right way up”**

Megane. We were sat in the jacuzzi in the Hilton hotel that night laughing about how mad it all was.

On the third and final day I managed to maintain the gap over Martin for most of it and then I broke a driveshaft with only three stages left, which lost me a minute.

Heading into the Maughold stage, I thought, ‘I could hold on in second and take the title; but

I wanted to win this rally so badly. It was really important to me. Nissan team boss Dave Whittock then told me to go for it as we still had a chance of the manufacturers' title, which was really important.

So I did.

I took nine seconds out of Martin and, in my head, the fight was really on. And then I broke another top mount!

The penultimate stage was Curraghs and my steering was all to cock because of that broken top mount.

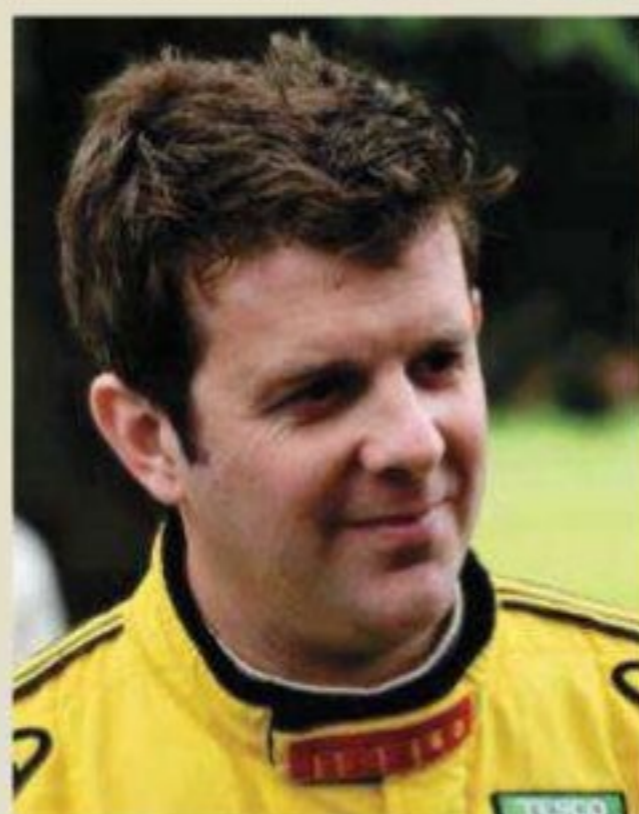
I was really pushing, though, and halfway through we hit a bump. The car kicked up and ran along on its nose with [co-driver] Phil [Mills] shouting ‘Noooooooooooo!’ Fortunately it landed the right way up, albeit facing the wrong direction. Less fortunate was that it had ripped the left-rear off.

It was a big downer, but it was driveable and I only had to get through the Castletown Stage and into service. On the way back I saw a police car in a lay-by up ahead. I overtook someone on the way past so they wouldn't see it and take umbrage at my three-wheeler. I got the car back to service and the boys had it fixed super-quick, just as the police, who had followed me, came over!

We held on to take second in the rally, behind Martin, which in isolation was actually a big disappointment to be honest, but then I remembered I'd won the British Rally Championship!

I vaguely recall there was a very good party afterwards! ☺  
*Mark Higgins was talking to Henry Hope-Frost*

## IN PROFILE



**MANXMAN MARK HIGGINS** BEGAN his career in karts and on trial bikes before discovering rallying at 17. He made his WRC debut aged 19 on the 1990 RAC, but would really star in the British series, winning rallies for Nissan, Vauxhall, Ford, Toyota and Subaru, as well as three titles. His best result on the world stage was sixth on Rally GB in 2002, and he continues to compete with brother David in China, when not on stunt driving stand-in duty for James Bond!

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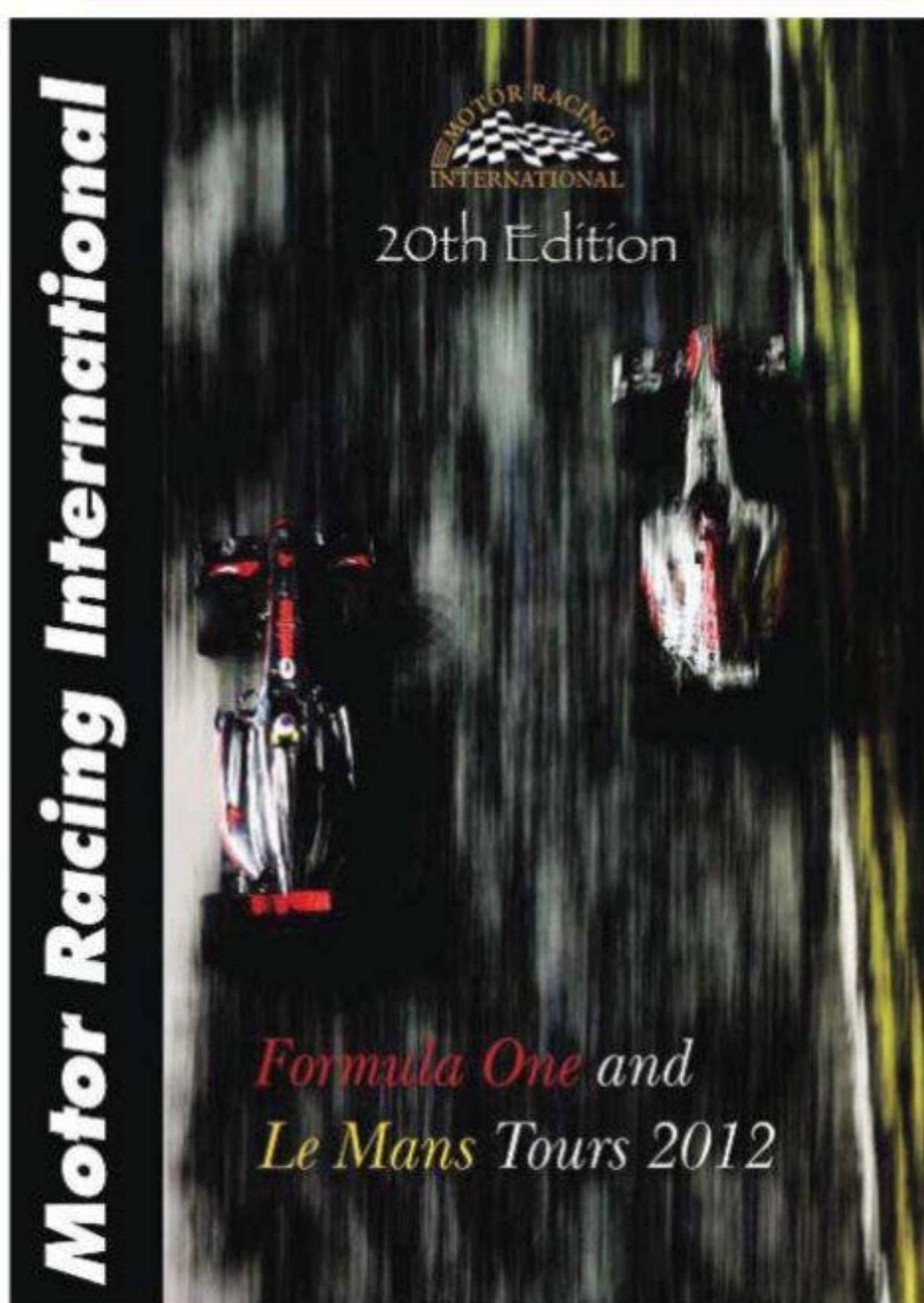
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