MALDONADO BEATS THE CHAMPIONS

"Hopefully this is just the beginning..." Sir Frank Williams

WILLIAMS TOO HOT TO HANDLE
CONGRATULATIONS PASTOR

for being the first Venezuelan F1 driver to win a race in F1 history! Pastor Maldonado hit the first spot on the podium in Spain for the fifth race of the season.

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POLE POSITION

Formula 1 is full of heroes — on the track and off

THANK GOODNESS THE FORMULA 1 paddock is full of quick-witted and fast-acting people, or instead of writing about how fantastic Pastor Maldonado’s success was for Williams in Barcelona on Sunday, I could’ve been lamenting a tragedy following its post-race garage fire.

I’m not sure who was more heroic: Maldonado for the manner in which he held off Fernando Alonso in those final laps, or the way staff from all teams grabbed fire extinguishers to ensure the inferno didn’t escalate. We applaud the brave souls who tackled the blaze, and wish those who required medical treatment a swift recovery.

Back to on-track matters, it has been fascinating to watch Maldonado develop from a rookie — utterly clueless about tyre management — when he began racing in GP2. Five years on, his judgement in Sunday’s final stint could not have been more savvy and intelligent. The underlying pace was always there; the brainpower has been added.

Not bad for a ‘pay driver’, eh?

And if Williams can keep its upward swing in motion, then there are few better drivers around Monaco than Pastor...

CHARLES BRADLEY EDITOR
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DAMPER’S WEEK

Well you can’t be too careful, can you Frank?
Ferrari, Williams and Lotus duke it out

Williams’s new hero Pastor Maldonado, who hadn’t finished higher than eighth before Sunday, goes toe-to-toe at the start of the Spanish GP with Fernando Alonso and Kimi Raikkonen, who’ve got 46 grand prix wins and three titles between them. And what happened? The Venezuelan got the better of both to score his maiden victory.

Pic: Tee/LAT
Williams win was not a fluke

Pastor Maldonado’s victory in last Spain last weekend was a shock, but there was more to it than luck. By EDD STRAW

The first Williams victory since the 2004 Brazilian Grand Prix was no fluke, with the team confident of continuing to compete at the front in Formula 1.

Pastor Maldonado did benefit from fastest qualifier Lewis Hamilton being stripped of pole position, but the Williams-Renault FW34 proved quick in all conditions in the Spanish Grand Prix last weekend. The Pirelli tyre formula has been characterised as a lottery, with track conditions causing teams to fall in and out of the optimum operating window for the rubber. But while Williams’s understanding of how to manage the tyres was one of the keys to victory, Maldonado was able to beat both Ferrari’s Fernando Alonso and the hotly-tipped Lotuses of Kimi Raikkonen and Romain Grosjean in a straight fight.

Chief operations engineer Mark Gillan stopped short of predicting further wins, but has no doubts that Williams can remain competitive.

“Barcelona is a stern test for the car,” Gillan told AUTOSPORT. “The teams spend endless hours simulating it and testing here. It’s a demanding circuit. So we’re pretty confident that we can compete at a good level.”

Williams made progress with upgrades at the Mugello test. But it also dedicated some time to better understanding the tyres, which has allowed the team to set up the car in a way that works its rubber well in a wide range of conditions. This allowed the FW34 to be competitive at track temperatures ranging from 30°C to the mid 40s in Spain.

Key to that is the strategy for warming up tyres during qualifying. Although track position played a vital part, with some potentially race-winning cars buried in traffic, Maldonado was able to jump Alonso in the second round of pit stops to win on merit. The Williams has often been competitive in race conditions this year and there has been a suspicion that its qualifying performances earlier in the year could have been better.

When asked whether Williams had tucked into the right operating window for tyres, Gillan replied: “I
FUEL RIG LED TO GARAGE FIRE

The Williams garage fire, which broke out around 90 minutes after the finish of the Spanish Grand Prix appears to have been caused by a fuel rig igniting.

The team has made no comment on the cause but multiple Williams sources told AUTOSPORT that it appeared to originate from the area of the fuelling rig. This was located at the rear of the garage on Maldonado's side. It's possible that this erupted while Bruno Senna's car was being drained of fuel. The trigger is unknown, but most likely some kind of spark ignited fuel vapour.

At the moment the fire broke out, Frank Williams was in the garage but, along with a large number of other team personnel who had been part of a celebratory photo a few minutes earlier, escaped the blaze. As AUTOSPORT closed for press, one crew member remained in hospital. Williams is confident that it will have a fully-operational garage in Monaco next week.

A SURPRISE WIN

While Williams was always confident that it had a strong car, it still came as a surprise that its long victory drought came to an end so quickly. The team has been quietly confident that it would have a good season but downplayed expectations. Gillian stated that the self-belief created by a victory that was near-flawlessly executed, save for a problem with the left-rear wheel change at Maldonado's third pitstop that cost around two seconds, will help to create more success.

"We are surprised," he admitted. "We haven't been playing things up. We have a clear plan, which was to qualify and finish in the top 10 and show an improvement in the season. Winning a race and starting on pole position is very good, but we need to be doing that consistently. That's the next step. It's very..."

REMEMBER WHEN...

1987

Piquet bags the drivers' crown as Williams takes title double, but team loses Honda deal and signs up to run Ford customer units in 1988.

1989

Renault becomes the Williams engine supplier. Thierry Boutsen wins in Canada on only the sixth start for the partnership.

1992

The Head/Adrian Newey-created Williams-Renault FW16B dominates the season, winning both titles with Nigel Mansell.

1993

Alain Prost canters to the world championship, with new signing Damon Hill helping the team to the constructors' crown.

Most racing teams are defined by their great drivers. A select few are defined by their founders or bosses. Williams falls into the latter category.

The achievements of Frank Williams, in astonishing adversity, are well known. The dynamic partnership that he formed with Patrick Head is the stuff of legend and it was heart-warming to see the great team that they built back on top last weekend.

But for a long time, talk has been of the future. The succession plan with Sam Michael failed. But there is every indication that the axis of technical director Mike Coughlan and chief operations engineer Mark Gillan has what it takes to succeed.

Coughlan is wary of the media, given his history, so it's difficult to get a handle on his vision for the future of the team. But he has given Williams decisive technical leadership. Gillan is the epitome of the methodical, focused engineering leader. Both see this win as a point on the road, not the ultimate destination.

It remains to be seen whether Williams can ever scale the heights that illustrious name demands. But the crucial thing is that one of F1's best-loved teams is on the right track less than a year after there were fears it was in terminal decline.

It was only right that Sir Frank Williams was there on a day when it was proved there's plenty of life left in this great racing team.
THE MAKING OF MALDONADO

Earlier in his career, the idea of Pastor Maldonado winning a grand prix that was dependent on tyre management would have been derided.

The Venezuelan has always had raw speed, but his aggressive style was more rock ape than artist. While he improved during his four years in GP2, in particular, he was still rough round the edges when he came into Formula 1 last year. But his remarkable win from pole in the Spanish Grand Prix is proof of how far he has come.

“Pastor has transformed himself as a driver,” said Williams chief operations engineer Mark Gillian. “He has become extremely strong. He has got a good understanding of the tyres and how to manage them, and you can see him doing it before we even tell him to do it.

Wurz works with drivers

During his time in F1, Maldonado has refined his driving style. His car control has always been excellent, but his aggression and rapid steering inputs have often served to destabilise the aero platform of the car. In qualifying in Barcelona, Maldonado combined aggression in the slower corners, keeping the minimum speed up despite missing several apexes, with precision in the faster sections.

Ex-Williams driver Alex Wurz, who acts as the team’s driver coach, believes that Maldonado’s performance was worthy of Jenson Button or Fernando Alonso.

“What was special today was that his race was driven totally rationally, while historically people from South America, and Pastor earlier in his career, tended to drive out of pure emotion,” said Wurz. “Still extremely fast, but in a situation like this, you need to drive rationally.

“Pastor is one of the best drivers in the world. He has got a good understanding of the tyres and how to manage them, and you can see him doing it before we even tell him to do it. He certainly extracted the maximum performance from the car. He didn’t put a foot wrong.”

encouraging and the effect goes all the way through the team. Once you start winning it becomes a bit easier to do it again. With a win under our belt, it has increased self-belief. We have been asking people to push very hard and this win is payback for that.”

CLEAR OUT IN 2011

Following the dismal start to last season, technical director Sam Michael tendered his resignation. He stayed on until the Singapore GP as part of the handover, but with aero chief Jon Tomlinson also departing it was clear that a new broom was sweeping through the team.

Three key appointments were made. Former McLaren chief designer Mike Coughlan joined as technical director-elect (initially he was chief engineer). While Michael oversaw the development of 2011’s FW34, Coughlan was charged with directing work on this year’s car. Gillian also joined, attending his first race in Singapore, while Jason Somerville returned to the team as head of aero.

But the change in personnel was only part of it. Effectively, Michael’s old technical director role was split in two. Coughlan, as technical director, holds ultimate seniority but Gillian was charged with overseeing the race team. Previously, the overloaded Michael had to do both. To ensure that the factory was serving the needs of the race team, this year the number of aerodynamic updates being thrown at the car has been reduced with the emphasis now on understanding the FW34. Previously, Williams would often struggle with upgrades that didn’t work. Under the new regime, the strike rate appears far higher.

“We are being very rigorous in only putting bits on the car that we understand and are working and testing everything as best we can and that is paying dividends,” said Gillian.

While Gillian is the public face of the technical side of the team and has been a key figure, Coughlan’s effectiveness as technical director
has also been crucial.

“It’s very big,” said Gillian of Coughlan’s influence. “What you want from a technical director is someone who knows what they are doing, who knows the direction they want to go in and makes those decisions clearly so that everybody knows where we are going, timeframes and what we are trying to aim at in terms of improvements.”

RENAULT ENGINE DEAL

The re-creation of the Williams-Renault engine partnership, which yielded 63 wins from 1986-1997, has been one of the key factors in the team’s turnaround.

“The Renault engine is a big part of our improvement, there’s no question of that,” said Gillian. But it’s not just the performance of the French powerplant. Gillian has praised the packaging advantages of the 2.4-litre V8 unit in the past, which required fewer cooling compromises in the bodywork than the 2011 Cosworth.

It was the fourth time in seven winters that Williams had changed engine suppliers, but the timing of the deal ensured that most of the usual teething issues were avoided.

Renault Sport F1’s engine supremo Rob White told AUTOSPORT: “Williams have put different engines in their cars quite a lot in recent times and we have certainly put our engine in different cars so we have a book two inches thick of instructions.

“The deal was done at exactly the right time. We knew mid-last year that we’d be dealing with Williams, which was the right time. There wasn’t any lost motion.”

The Renault engine made a difference immediately, so much so that Maldonado was raving about the step forward over the radio while on his first installation lap during the opening pre-season test at Jerez. The 64th Williams-Renault victory might have come as a shock. Now, though, the prospect of a 65th this year should be taken seriously.

Q&A

PASTOR MALDONADO

SPANISH GP WINNER

How has Williams turned around its performance since last year?

We made big changes in the factory, we have new staff in some departments and we have completely changed the approach to building the car. This year’s car has great performance and great potential to become even stronger.

Do you consider yourself a possible championship winner?

We are a little bit behind compared with the leaders and we need to keep working. We are not the best team at the moment. I’m driving well, I have a good feeling with the team and the car so everything is possible. We are looking forward to winning some races, to get a couple more podiums.

What happened at the start of the race?

It wasn’t the best start ever. The clutch slipped quite a lot. I tried to defend the position but Fernando [Alonso] was already on the better part of the track, so I decided to back off and follow him. We changed our strategy to attack Ferrari. From the second stop, we did pretty good and I think we surprised them because we did it so early.

Fernando put you under some real pressure at the end...

We were looking to manage the tyre degradation so I wasn’t pushing that hard just to keep the tyres alive for the end of the race. There were some moments where he was so close, especially at the end of the straight. I was managing the gap and controlling everything.

How much of a boost is it to get the first win heading to Monaco?

It’s a big motivation now in the team. We need to try to improve to get a better car there and I need to do my job. It’s possible to be competitive.

GARY ANDERSON: With this style of exhaust outlet, Williams has also been able to move the radiator exit to the same location. This allows the high-speed airflow from the exhaust to mix with the low-speed airflow from the radiator outlet. This then mixes with the mass airflow improving the performance of the Coke bottle to create more downforce.

NEW EXHAUST OUTLET

Williams raced with a tweaked version of its exhaust that was found to be more effective than the previous version (Inset).

2005

BMW partnership comes to an end at the end of the year. Williams switches to Cosworth engines for 2006.

2007

Switches to Toyota engines.

2010

Switches back to Cosworth power, taking first pole position since 2005 with Nico Hülkenberg in Brazil.

2011

Williams scores an all-time-low five points. Michael quits as technical director and Mike Coughlan is brought in to replace him. Mark Gillian also joins.

2012

Williams renews its partnership with Renault, ending a run of 131 races without victory thanks to Maldonado’s win in Spain.

May 17 2012 autosport.com 11
Lewis Hamilton is stalling on signing a new McLaren contract for 2013.

The 2008 world champion’s current five-year deal finishes at the end of this year, but he has yet to agree terms for next season.

AUTOSPORT understands that there have been talks between Hamilton’s management, XIX Entertainment, and McLaren, but that there is currently a substantial difference between the financial and commercial package being offered and what is being asked for.

After an up-and-down 2011 season that included a number of rudimentary errors, Hamilton has been outstanding this year but has yet to win a grand prix, owing largely to team mistakes. The latest was the fuelling error that cost him pole position in last weekend’s Spanish Grand Prix (see panel, right).

McLaren is keen to keep Hamilton alongside Jenson Button, who agreed a new long-term deal last year. But the 27-year-old insists that he is in no rush to make a decision, which suggests that his management believes he’s in a strong enough position in the driver market to hold fire in search of the best possible deal.

“I haven’t even got into thinking about it, to be honest,” said Hamilton when asked by AUTOSPORT about his future. “It’s such an intense season and I’ve got to stay focused. If I take my eye off the ball to focus on that and lose points because of that, I wouldn’t be able to forgive myself. I have to find a gap. I have to find the time to sit down and speak with my manager. But I’ve asked them [his management] to start thinking about things and start to plan what we would like to do in terms of future things, what we want to do further down the line with Reebok and with certain sponsors that we have. I don’t know when it’s going to happen, but it’s going to happen at some point this year otherwise I’ll be out of a job!”

Hamilton appears to be suggesting that it could be as late as August before he starts seriously to consider his future, but his management is known to be working behind the scenes.

Apart from McLaren, Mercedes is believed to be interested in him. It isn’t clear whether the German car giant would be willing to agree to his high-wage demands and, with Nico Rosberg under long-term contract, it would depend on Michael Schumacher not staying on for a fourth season.

Ferrari appears to be out of the question as Fernando Alonso would
**HAMILTON’S 2012 WOES**

Despite being one of the best-performing drivers, Lewis Hamilton hasn’t had a clean run in any of the first five races of the season – mostly because of McLaren problems.

**AUSTRALIA (3rd)**
Unfortunately-timed safety car costs Hamilton second place by allowing Sebastian Vettel to jump him.

**MALAYSIA (3rd)**
Baffling lack of dry race pace prevents third-placed Hamilton from fighting for the win. He also complains about slow pitstops.

**CHINA (3rd)**
Pre-weekend gearbox change earns Hamilton a five-place grid penalty and denies him a victory shot.

**BAHRAIN (8th)**
Two blunders by the left-rear pit gunman costs Hamilton a handful of points.

**SPAIN (6th)**
McLaren fuelling error denies Hamilton pole position and puts him last on the grid.

be wary of having Hamilton as a team-mate. While there is some scepticism within Red Bull’s race team about signing the Briton, he would appeal commercially to the energy drinks giant. This means that McLaren will be taking seriously the possibility of its most recent world champion leaving as negotiations become more intense.

McLaren team principal Martin Whitmarsh would not comment on the situation, although he did confirm that the team wants to retain Hamilton for a seventh season in 2013.

“The answer is yes, we want to keep him,” Whitmarsh told AUTOSPORT. “As you would imagine, it’s a private matter and it would be inappropriate for me to discuss that. When and if Lewis and McLaren have got something to say, we’ll say it.”

Currently, Hamilton appears to be the key player in the driver market. With no other active big-name drivers available, it’s unlikely that McLaren would turn its back on him even if his management’s terms don’t move closer to the team’s. All of which means that the stage is set for protracted contract negotiations.

With no agreement on the horizon, it could be months before Hamilton’s future is finalised.

Lewis Hamilton was excluded from qualifying for the Spanish Grand Prix, rather than just losing his Q3 times, because the stewards deemed it to be the only appropriate penalty, given the wording of Article 6.6.2 of Formula 1’s technical regulations. Hamilton stopped on track after his pole lap under instructions from the team. This was after McLaren realised that a mistake had been made while fuelling the car. It would not confirm the exact reasons that there wasn’t enough fuel in the car, but told the stewards it was simply down to human error. AUTOSPORT understands it was caused by the fuelling system initially being set to drain rather than to fill, so the car was sent out with insufficient fuel.

Given that Hamilton crossed the line with around 20 seconds to spare, the team did have enough time to add fuel had it realised the error before he left the pits. It would have taken as little as two extra seconds to do this as there was 1.3 litres left in the tank when the FIA took its sample after Hamilton stopped.

“During Lewis’s last qualifying lap, we saw in the data an indication that if he returned to the pits he may not have had enough fuel to provide the regulation one-litre fuel sample,” said McLaren team principal Martin Whitmarsh.

“We had a few seconds to make a decision and believed that if you need to provide a one-litre fuel sample then we should conserve that fuel, so we stopped the car.”

McLaren attempted to argue that the mistake constituted force majeure, which the stewards rejected. That meant the only sticking point was the punishment, but as the word ‘session’ refers to the full qualifying hour, not merely one segment, it was decided that the technical infringement should be punished with exclusion, rather than just a loss of Q3 times. This was also in keeping with the FIA’s usual policy of excluding cars that infringe the technical regulations.

**ARTICLE 6.6.2 OF THE TECHNICAL REGULATIONS**

“Competitors must ensure that a one litre sample of fuel may be taken from the car at any time during the event.

“Except in cases of force majeure (accepted as such by the stewards of the meeting), if a sample of fuel is required after a practice session* the car concerned must have first been driven back to the pits under its own power.”

* includes qualifying
THIS WEEK IN F1

If we’d done everything right, we could have put ourselves into first place. The car has been fast enough but we’ve been doing small things not correctly and I’ve made some mistakes. If everything was 100 per cent, we could have won. Our car can do it, but everything has to fall into place if we’re to be able to win.

Kimi Raikkonen believes that the Lotus E20 can win... and perhaps already should have done

VOLKSWAGEN RULES OUT ENTERING F1

Volkswagen won’t be entering F1 in the near future. The company had considered signing up when new engine regs for 2013 were being discussed (now put back to 2014). But new motorsport director Jost Capito has scotched any VW F1 ambitions: “It isn’t on the radar.” He emphasised that the company’s focus remains fully on rallying.

MORE TO COME FOR FERRARI

Ferrari is confident that further progress is there to be made with the F2012 following Fernando Alonso’s strong second place in the Spanish Grand Prix. Team principal Stefano Domenicali agreed that he is pleased that Alonso is still in the championship hunt. “With all the problems we’ve had, at least we’re there,” he said. “Still there is a lot of improvement that we need.”

MERC DEAL CLOSE

AUTOSPORT understands that Mercedes is close to agreeing terms with the commercial rights holder over the new-for-2013 Concorde Agreement. Over the Spanish GP weekend team CEO Nick Fry said the ball was in CVC Capital Partners’ court: “If CVC wish to float F1 they need this resolved fairly quickly, possibly more quickly than we do,” Fry told AUTOSPORT.

ROSSI AND CLOS MAKE DEBUTS

Formula Renault 3.5 racer Alexander Rossi and GP2 race winner Dani Clos made their debuts as Friday drivers in Spain. Rossi completed 25 laps for Caterham, ending up just over a second off regular driver Vitaly Petrov’s pace. HRT driver Clos did 19 laps and was 2.5 seconds off Pedro de la Rosa’s pace.

BRAWN FORCED TO MISS SPAIN

Mercedes team principal Ross Brawn missed the Spanish Grand Prix following medical advice. The team insists that he will be back for Monaco.
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MARK HUGHES
GRAND PRIX EDITOR

It seems Mercedes’ long and illustrious history counts for little when it comes to divvying up Formula 1’s wealth. What’s it done wrong? First off, it’s not called Ferrari...

An F1 flotation, negotiations about a new Concorde agreement? Sounds a bit dry and financial, does it not? But actually within those subjects is a wealth of material for some great black humour. The new deal agreed to by Ferrari, Red Bull, McLaren and others is apparently rather better than what the poor darlings currently struggle along with – an annual increase that will equate to about one third of their current budgets, it is said.

But Mercedes? Ah well, it’s clearly done something to offend have changed its name during that time and 4) it cannot object to Ferrari once more having a regulation veto. The Mercedes team fails all four of these requirements.

Since 1998 Maranello has had power of veto over the sport’s regulations. This was something that came out in the public spat between the teams and the FIA in 2009, but which was largely lost in the news mayhem of what was set to be the teams’ breakaway championship, but it’s worth repeating: essentially the teams compete against each other, but only pending the approval of one team in particular. You might think that was an outrageous tilting of the field, that it implied the others were just there to provide some noise for Ferrari’s championship, but of course you’d be wrong and terribly cynical; it’s simply that Ferrari is synonymous with the sport’s history, silly.

So Mercedes doesn’t have history in this sport?
No, not like Ferrari.
But didn’t Daimler (the manufacturers of Mercedes) actually invent the car?
Oh, that’s ancient history and doesn’t count. Besides, that’s not motor racing. Oh, but didn’t a Mercedes win an international race for the first time in 1901, when Ferrari’s founder was just five years old?
Ah, but that was before grand prix racing.
Yes, true enough. But didn’t Mercedes win its first grand prix in 1954 – almost half a century before the formation of Ferrari and at a time when that single annual grand prix was the equivalent of winning the world title today?

Well yes, but you’re...
And didn’t it win that event again in 1974?
Well, yes it did, but you’re going back to the last days of the Ottoman Empire there.
Oh? So that doesn’t count as history?
No of course not, it was far too long ago.
I see. So when does ‘history’ start?
Well, around 1950, something like that.
So the introduction of the supercharger into racing in 1924 doesn’t count?
Nope.
And all the supercharged silver arrows racers of the ‘30s that dominated the sport and advanced technology at breakneck speed?
La-la-la...
What about Benz, the company that merged with Mercedes in 1926?
Who?
The company that introduced a mid-engined, independently-sprung grand prix racer in 1923.
Doesn’t count.
Oh, what about the Mercedes grand prix racers that dominated the F1 world championship in 1954 and ’55. That’s after 1950, isn’t it?
Yes, but Ferrari was in Formula 1 before then.
That’s all very well, but it still falls down on the desired prerequisites, especially the one that establishes it’s not Ferrari.
So, if Ferrari approves, it’s OK. But if not, it isn’t?
Now you’re getting it.
Yes, quite simple once you get the hang of it.

“Mercedes has clearly done something to offend someone”
Lotus won't give up on Indy

Embattled British manufacturer remains committed to IndyCar engine programme despite team defections

Lotus has pledged its commitment to the IndyCar Series despite losing three of the four teams that started the season with its engines. Lotus Motorsport director Claudio Berro insisted that the programme would not be affected by the defections, Bryan Herta Autosport and Dreyer & Reinbold Racing parted company with Lotus after rounds three and four at Long Beach and Sao Paulo respectively, while Dragon Racing launched a legal action against the British manufacturer last week.

"Lotus has a five-year commitment to IndyCar and our intention is to be in the series for the long-term," Berro told AUTOSPORT. "We have no plans to suspend the programme." In the short-term, the priority for Lotus, Berro explained, is to improve the performance and reliability of its Engine Developments-built V6 powerplant.

"More cars or fewer cars is not the main thing," said Berro. "The most important thing is to make a good step forward with the engine development."

There will be improvements in the pipeline for the Indy 500 by the end of this month, said Berro, while suggesting that the emphasis was now being placed on longer-term developments. He pointed out that Lotus, which has powered only one driver to a top 10 finish all year (Sebastien Bourdais's ninth-placed result for Dragon at Barber Motorsports Park), had started its IndyCar programme six months after rivals Chevrolet and Honda.

"We have something planned for Indy and we're confident that we will improve the performance of the engine through the season," he said. "We're looking for the right way forward and how to be properly set up for the future.”

Berro refused to comment on the legal dispute with Dragon. Jay Penske's squad is suing Lotus for $4.6 million ([$3.5 million] for contractual fraud, alleging that it failed to provide the team with two chassis and has also delayed delivery of engines. As AUTOSPORT closed for press, Dragon was working to finalise an alternative engine supply for its two cars - driven by four-time Champ Car title winner Bourdais and his British team-mate, Katherine Legge - in time for the Indy 500.

According to Berro, Lotus is also discussing engine supply with other teams for the rest of the season.

"There are a lot of talks with teams and an open discussion with the series' organiser," he said, "but I don't have any more comment to make on this at the moment.”
NASCAR LEGEND RICHARD PETTY has described Rick Hendrick’s milestone achievement – winning 200 NASCAR Cup races as a team owner – as “real impressive”.

With seven titles and 200 race wins, Petty is the Sprint Cup’s most successful driver, and the Petty Enterprises outfit, set up by his father, Lee, holds the record for team victories with 268.

But he believes that Hendrick’s ability to notch up a double century – completed by Jimmie Johnson at Darlington last Saturday night (see below) – is equally meritorious.

“What impresses me is that they’ve been able to do what they’ve done, win all those championships and all those races, and still be able to operate with three or four cars,” said Petty. “That takes so much money and planning and everything to make it work. They have a heck of an organisation.”

Petty does not believe it is possible to compare the achievements of the two teams owing to the different eras in which they scored their greatest successes.

“Our 200 wins came with one driver. He’s trying to do it with a bunch of different drivers and different folks. The circumstances are so much different now than what they used to be,” he added.

“We operated strictly as a family team: my dad and myself, my brother, Dale Inman, and seven or eight other guys. We built the motors, we did the body, took it to the race track, did all the pitting.”

Driver Johnson said: “Doubt had started to linger and it wasn’t good. But now we’ve got the 200, we can win a bunch more races.”

AUTOSPORT SAYS...

MARK GLENDENNING US EDITOR
mark.glendenning@haymarket.com

At a recent IndyCar race, one now-former Lotus-powered driver was attempting to keep his frustration in check. And failing.

“I wish they’d just give us more power,” he said. “It’s going to break anyway; we might as well look good first.”

It’s true that if you put Chevrolet’s mass powerplant swap at Long Beach to one side, Lotus runners have suffered most of the engine problems this year. Its standard riposte that it arrived at the party later than its two rivals and has been playing catch-up ever since, is also true, although the recent and messy divorce from Dragon Racing suggests that the full picture from the opening months of 2012 is still yet to emerge.

But the crucial question is, what can Lotus do to turn matters around? As things currently stand, Lotus will be represented by just one car after the Indy 500. HVM and Simona de Silvestro are capable, but cannot reasonably be expected to shoulder an in-season engine development programme.

Without more input, it’s difficult to see how Lotus can inspire enough confidence in other teams to rebuild its roster – Michael Shank Racing has already opted not to race rather than eschew the Chevy/Honda route. Lotus does have the know-how to get its engines working. The real battle will lie in rebuilding the necessary trust it needs to convince teams to use them.

British runners boost Brands European grid

JAAFAR and TINCKNELL (22) will race

FOUR ADDITIONAL RUNNERS from British Formula 3 will boost this weekend’s Euro Series/European championship round at Brands Hatch.

Carlin has entered current British F3 title contender Jazeman Jaafar and his teammate Harry Tincknell alongside its Euro regulars Carlos Sainz Jr and Will Buller. Meanwhile, Double R Racing will field Fahmi Ilyas and Geoff Uhrhane.

Carlin boss Trevor Carlin said: “It’s a bit of experience on a local track, and Jaz is keen to do a few European races.”

Double R chief Anthony Hiatt added: “It will give us a heads-up on the Hankook tyres [before the British/European round at Norisring], and the boys need the mileage.”

Double R is also keen to contest the Spielberg round on June 2-3, and Fortec Motorsports is also eying the Austrian event.

Fortec boss Richard Dutton said: “It’s a much better bet than the Brands Indy circuit. I’ve got a £50 bet with Trevor [Carlin] that there’ll be no overtaking from the end of lap one to the chequered flag in the main races.”

MILESTONE

RICK HENDRICK’S 200TH NASCAR CUP WIN

Jimmie Johnson scored legendary team owner Rick Hendrick’s 200th NASCAR Cup win at Darlington last weekend. His first victory came when Geoff Bodine (below) won for his All Star Racing squad at Martinsville on April 29, 1984.

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Porsche works on wheel fix

Race cancelled over safety concerns; quick solution needed. By ADAM COOPER

The Porsche Supercup race supporting the Spanish GP was cancelled just minutes before the cars were due to head to the grid after problems were identified with wheels on two of the cars. What Porsche later described as ‘deformations’ on the inside of two rims were spotted and quickly analysed while the cars were waiting in the collecting area. After all the cars were checked, series manager Jonas Krauss opted to abandon the race on safety grounds and informed race director Herbie Blash of the decision.

The series switched from BBS to App Tech wheels this year, with the new wheels used for the first time in Bahrain last month. AUTOSPORT understands that Porsche now intends to switch back to BBS with immediate effect.

Porsche would not elaborate on what happened with the App Tech wheels, saying in a statement only that “Porsche Motorsport is working on finding a solution with all parties involved.”

It is believed that the problem was caused by the unusually high pressure levels that were required to mount the Michelin wets on the App Tech wheels in Bahrain.

A new Michelin wet was introduced in Spain, requiring less pressure when mounted. However it appears that the damage had already been done to some wheels that were fitted with the wets at the previous event. It was deemed that the deformations could become cracks.

“Either Michelin or some of the mechanics just said, ‘this doesn’t look right’,” a team source told AUTOSPORT. “I’m sure everything would have been OK, but who’s prepared to take that risk? It was five minutes before we were due to push the cars onto the grid. They asked us to take all the wheels off and check them.

“They use high pressure just to blow the tyres up when they go over the head. Then you go down to whatever pressure you want to use. With the wets we had in Bahrain, it was unusually high.”

Kuba Giermaziak, who had qualified second for the race, said: “It’s disappointing to get the race cancelled on the pre-grid. But it was the right decision. I just hope it’s fixed for Monaco.”

A decision on the race’s potential re-running is expected shortly.

Toyota ramps up Le Mans test programme

TOYOTA’S ALL-NEW LEMANS 24 HOURS contender was given its first endurance test in race conditions last week.

The Toyota TS030 HYBRID completed a 30-hour Le Mans simulation run over three days at Aragon. The test differed from the Japanese manufacturer’s previous test at Paul Ricard in February in that Toyota Motorsport GmbH attempted to run continuously with racing pit stops.

The test was without problems, according to TMG technical director Pascal Vasselon.

“We had a couple of issues but we fixed them to achieve a reasonable mileage,” he said. “We are closing on having a car capable of doing a 24-hour race.”

The test marked the resumption of endurance testing for the TS030. Its programme was interrupted by a crash in which the first chassis was damaged beyond repair at the start of April.

Toyota now has one more simulation, scheduled for Paul Ricard at the end of the month, ahead of Le Mans in June.

A replacement for Hiroaki Ishiura in the second car has yet to be named. It is understood that Toyota will opt for a proven driver with Le Mans experience.

MONTAGNY BACK IN ACTION

Former Peugeot Le Mans driver Franck Montagny returned to the prototype ranks at Laguna Seca last weekend. The Frenchman drove Level 5 Motorsports’ pair of Honda Performance Development ARX-03b LMP2 chassis in the American Le Mans Series and took second in class.

PIZZONI’S LMP DEBUT

Former Jaguar and Williams F1 driver Antonio Pizzonia made his prototype debut at last weekend’s Laguna Seca ALMS race. The Brazilian, 31, who has raced in Brazilian GTs, drove Conquest Racing’s Morgan-Nissan P2 with Martin Plowman and David Heinemeier Hansson.

ANOTHER LE MANS FOR NAKANO

Former LMP1 driver Shinji Nakano will make his sixth start at the Le Mans 24 Hours with the Boures Racing squad next month. The 41-year-old Japanese will race the Belgian team’s LMP2 class Oreca-Nissan O3 with Bastien Briere and Jens Petersen.

BERGMESTER RECOVERING WELL

German sportscar driver Tim Bergmeister is stable in hospital following his Super GT crash earlier this month. He wrote on Facebook that his injured lung is “healing working completely” and that he will have a collarbone operation next week.

LAMY BACK TO NURBURGRING

Four-time Nurburgring 24 Hours winner Pedro Lamy will contest this year’s race with the VitaOne BMW squad, sharing a 24 GT3 with Matthias Lauda, Ricardo van der Ende and Frank Kessel. BMW test and development driver Marco Wittmann will drive the second car.

FRAUCHITZ’S NEW NUMBER

Dario Franchitti will run #50 for this year’s Indianapolis 500 as a tribute to sponsor Target, which celebrates its 50th anniversary this year. The company has been a Chip Ganassi Racing sponsor for 23 years.

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Carroll Shelby 1923–2012

WHEN CARROLL SHELBY, WHO DIED last week aged 89, first journeyed to England in the spring of 1954 to race an Aston Martin, one of the first friends he made was AUTOSPORT’s founding editor Gregor Grant. A year later Carroll’s co-driver had crashed their Ferrari out of the Targa Florio and so, a spectator now, he sought out Gregor who was “drinking beer and laying up on the grass, asking everybody who came by – ‘What happened, what’s happening?’ The two of us sat there for six hours drinking away and I’ll tell ya – It was the best report on the race – a better report than Autocar or anybody had. And he and I sat getting drunk while he did it.”

A notable sports car racer in his homeland, Shelby won the national title – usually at the wheel of a Ferrari – in ’56, and also started eight world championship grands prix, scoring a best finish of fourth at Monza in ’58 in a Maserati shared with Masten Gregory.

After moving to Aston Martin in 1959 he experienced the frustration of its ill-fated grand prix car, but his win in the Le Mans 24 Hours with Roy Salvadori in Aston’s DBR1 brought him international acclaim and was pivotal in the manufacturer clinching that year’s World Sportscar Championship title.

Despite then adding the 1960 USAC road-racing title to his burgeoning CV, it’s what he achieved after he hung up his helmet that he’s best remembered for. That is the Shelby Cobra, which resulted from his liaison with AC cars and Ford. With a V8 motor mated to a radically-revised AC Ace, a GT win at Le Mans in 1964 came courtesy of Dan Gurney and Bob Bondurant in the Daytona Coupe version. Within another year the car had helped Shelby American to win the world championship GT division.

Ford’s reaction was to bring in Shelby’s operation to run its GT40 in long-distance races in 1965. Within weeks the car had won the Daytona 24 Hours.

Victories at Le Mans and Sebring followed over the next two years while Shelby-run machines helped Ford defeat Ferrari to win the ’66 World Sports Car Championship.

After also transforming the Ford Mustang into the GT350 and GT500 muscle cars in the late ’60s, Shelby ran a hunting company in Africa for a decade. He was back in the car business by the ’80s and recently produced a new range of Shelby Mustangs for the 21st century.

Those who knew him personally as well as those who never met him will have their special memories of this remarkable and multi-talented man. For me, however, he created his own epitaph many years ago when he proclaimed: “My name is Carroll Shelby and performance is my business.”

● Rinsey Mills, official biographer of Carroll Shelby

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BMW plays down GB hopes

Lack of experience at Brands will hold BMW back, admits its motorsport boss

BMW is unlikely to repeat its Lausitz DTM victory at this weekend’s Brands Hatch round – according to the company’s motorsport director, Jens Marquardt. Bruno Spengler scored the manufacturer’s first series win for 20 years last time out. The Canadian maximised his track position after qualifying on pole to beat the faster HWA-run Mercedes of Britain’s Gary Paffett, as hauling himself into title contention.

Marquardt has played down his hopes of scoring another win, however, blaming BMW’s inexperience at Brands Hatch relative to other championship venues they use.

“We haven’t driven one metre at Brands and have no set-up data, so the balance of power there will probably be completely different from Lausitz,” he said.

Andy Priaulx, who will be racing in front of his home crowd at Brands Hatch, was equally sceptical, despite having won twice on the Indy circuit during his World Touring Car Championship stint with BMW.

“The Indy circuit is a real challenge; one that’s really difficult to get just right, and there’s not much space between the cars,” said the RBM driver, who lies eighth in the points – ahead of champion Martin Tomczyk – following his sixth-placed finish in the season-opener at Hockenheim.

“We always said it would be a baptism of fire and this is just the latest one,” Priaulx added. “I’ve done all right there in the past, but this is a different game.”

Mercedes rivals Paffett and Jamie Green have been the fastest drivers in race trim this year, the pair taking a one-two finish at Hockenheim and finishing inside the top four at Lausitz.

Neither has won at Brands Hatch in the DTM, but Paffett believes he can add to Mercedes’ three victories at the Kent circuit this weekend.

“I’ve had a great start this year and I’m leading the championship, so I couldn’t really ask for more,” the HWA driver said.

“I like Brands Hatch, even though I’ve not won there in the DTM. Last year I was on the front row, so we have to be confident heading into the weekend.”
Volkswagen's incoming motorsport director Jost Capito says he expects the German firm to remain in the World Rally Championship beyond 2015.

Speaking to AUTOSPORT last week, ex-Ford chief Capito admitted he was impressed with Volkswagen's motorsport facility in Hannover. VW is already committed to running the Polo R WRC from the start of next season until the end of 2015.

"If you see what is here, what is built up here and what is coming, then it's difficult to believe it's going to be for just three years," said Capito. "VW does things on a long-term and strategic basis, it doesn't go in and out of programmes easily."

With Ford's Jari-Matti Latvala being tipped to drive a second Polo next year, there has been speculation recently that VW would only run two cars, ending the junior programme it has run for Andreas Mikkelsen and Kevin Abbring this season. But Capito has quelled such stories.

"We have [Sebastian] Ogier and I can lean back a little bit," he said. "I'm not under pressure - we have at least one driver who is capable of winning. The second driver has to be in a position to win rallies - you need two drivers to be in a position to win if you want the title."

On the subject of the junior programme, Capito said: "I would like to see it go on, but we have to see how it works. This year worked brilliantly and running the Skodas was very, very good - it really built the team up this year. I think with all the investment, we will want to find a way to benefit from that. We have spent a lot of time getting to know the young drivers and for them to get to know us."

Ogier has recently stated that he would like to run the Polo R WRC as early as possible - potentially in the final rounds of this year's WRC. Capito said he could understand the eagerness, but added that such a move would require a significant shift in the programme.

"The plan is to test this year and wait for Monte Carlo [2013]," said Capito. "But I have good experience from running the new Ford Focus in Australia in 2005 (ahead of its full debut in 2006). That was an excellent thing to do and I have not forgotten that, but there are a lot of things related to doing this - you have to have the homologation ready in time. That would implement a lot of changes to the programme and we would have to look and see if that was possible or not."

**Prodrive will continue to push the FIA for changes to Super 2000 regulations, despite building the first turbocharged car to win a round of the Intercontinental Rally Challenge last weekend.**

Dan Sordo won the Tour de Corse driving a Mini S2000, fitted with a 1560cc turbo instead of naturally aspirated two-litre engine. It is felt that cars such as the non-turbo Skoda Fabia S2000 are more powerful than the Mini, which is something Prodrive would like to be changed.

Prodrive's Richard Taylor said: "When we did our initial investigations, we thought a restrictor of 31mm instead of 30mm would give more parity between turbo and non-turbo S2000 cars. On the power stages in Corsica, you could see evidence of that and we feel we're being penalised for having a better chassis and driver; the regulations should deliver parity solely on engine power."

"We are delighted with the win - it's a great demonstration of what the car can do. Dan [Sordo] and Drive-pro [the team running the Spaniard] did exactly what we knew they could."
Rally GB chief hails 2012 route

RALLY GB CHIEF EXECUTIVE
Andrew Coe says the route for this year’s event is the best ever to come out of Wales.

The Rally GB for the September event was published last week and will start from Kielder and move down through the country on the first full day of competition, before spending the weekend based out of Cardiff.

Across the board, Coe said the 2012 rally was an improvement — including the Saturday (September 15) evening spectator stage at Celtic Manor, which runs alongside the 18th green of the Ryder Cup course.

“We refined the route as much as we possibly can in the constraints of the WRC regulations,” said Coe. “And we feel we have achieved everything we can as organisers, while balancing the requirements of the Welsh Government [as a sponsor]. This is as good as it’s going to get in Wales. We’ve got some pretty hefty spectator stages in terms of sweet lamb, which runs as part of the Hafren test, bringing Walters Arena back in, the Epynt stages — it’s the best of everything in terms of maximising spectator capacity. For everybody — the participants, the Welsh government, the WRC community, spectators — we’ve really maximised out on getting it right this year.”

RALLY GB TIMETABLE
Wednesday September 12
Qualifying Stage — Walters Arena
Thursday September 13
Ceremonial Start — Kielder
Friday September 14
SS1 Dyfnant (12.72 miles)
SS2 Hafren 1 (15.64 miles)
SS3 Myherin 1 (17.32 miles)
SS4 Dyfnant 2 (12.72 miles)
SS5 Hafren 2 (15.45 miles)
SS6 Myherin 2 (17.32 miles)
Saturday September 15
SS7 Chirchill (12.15 miles)
SS8 Dyfnant 1 (5.28 miles)
SS9 Halfway 1 (11.41 miles)
SS10 Dyfnant 2 (12.15 miles)
SS11 Epynt 1 (5.28 miles)
SS12 Halfway 2 (11.41 miles)
SS13 Celtic Manor (1.86 miles)
Sunday September 16
SS14 Port Talbot 1 (10.68 miles)
SS15 Rhondda 1 (5.64 miles)
SS16 Walters Arena 1 (9.25 miles)
SS17 Port Talbot 2 (10.68 miles)
SS18 Rhondda 2 (5.64 miles)
SS19 Walters Arena 2 (9.25 miles)
Finish in Cardiff

LATVALA: SKI INJURY WON’T HOLD ME BACK

FORD DRIVER Jari-Matti Latvala says his approach to next week’s Acropolis Rally won’t be any different, despite the Finn still recovering from a broken collarbone.

Latvala got back behind the wheel of a Ford Fiesta RS WRC last week in a two-day test, just four weeks after the skiing fall that broke his collarbone.

“Everything felt good,” said Latvala. “I had some pain in some of the compressions, but this pain went away as quickly as it came. When we get to the qualifying stage in Greece, I will start exactly the same.

“It would be better to fight for the win, but I really hope I could fight for the podium — that would be the target. The recovery has been a tight schedule and if the test had been earlier, it would not have been possible to drive.”

Latvala will not drive again until his two free-practice runs at the Acropolis shake down a week today (Thursday).

QUOTE OF THE WEEK

“I hope nobody was on the phone at the time.”
Andreas Mikkelson after noticing his Skoda Fabia S2000 had flattened a telegraph pole in his SS4 exit from the Tour de Corse.
SPANISH GP
Barcelona, May 13

ROUND 5/20

LAPS 66

WINNER
Pastor Maldonado
1h39m09.145s

POLE POSITION
Pastor Maldonado
1m22.285s

FASTEST LAP
Romain Grosjean
1m26.250s

RACE RATING
★★★★★
Not as much wheel-to-wheel as we’re used to, but very tense

DRIVERS STANDINGS
Vettel 61pts
Alonso 61pts
Hamilton 53pts

MILESTONES
• Five winners from first five races equals the 1983 record
• Last time it was Williams-Ferrari-Lotus? Dallas 1984: Rosberg-Arnoux-de Angelis
MALDONADO RIPS UP THE FORM BOOK

Circumstances helped the Venezuelan and Williams onto pole, and the ex-GP2 champ grasped his chance beautifully. By MARK HUGHES
QUALIFYING

Hamilton’s chances run out of juice as McLaren goof consigns him to the back

This can be a cruel, cruel sport. A mechanic turning a switch the wrong way, taking fuel out rather than pumping it into Lewis Hamilton’s car, got the McLaren thrown to the back of the grid after Lewis had decimated the field with a pole lap.5.5 clear of anyone else’s. The refuelling guy had realised his error and switched the pump back in the other direction, but with the seconds counting down the car needed to be sent out if Hamilton was to get across the line in time to begin his lap before the flag. You can only imagine the poor guy’s feelings.

The car was working beautifully and it was a pretty sensational lap from Hamilton. But with just 1.3 litres left in the tank at the end of it, and the requirement of a one-litre fuel sample, the team had no option but to instruct Hamilton to stop the car on the slow-down lap, which since Montreal 2010 has been against the regulations. Ironically it was a rule triggered by McLaren’s actions on that day.

Hamilton’s margin was only exaggerated by the fact that three key rivals – team-mate Jenson Button and the Red Ball pair – were caught out by a conspiracy of factors that left them unable to compete at the front. So it was that Pastor Maldonado’s Williams was able to go second quickest in Q3 with a typically distinctive lap, twitchy overtakes on entry to the slow turns but lots of momentum, leaving him by many of the apertures. It was a lap that, after a few hours of deliberations between the stewards and McLaren, became the official pole. That said, the FW34 with a host of upgrades – but not the new exhaust that was trialled on Friday – was genuinely impressive throughout the weekend. So Williams was on pole for the first time since Interlagos 2010, and on the weekend of Sir Frank’s 70th birthday celebrations.

The confidence of circumstances put both Sauber into Q3, while a struggling Button and Mark Webber were knocked out in Q2, and Sebastian Vettel had no new soft tyres left for Q3. It came about through teams being paranoid about not putting too many laps on their hard tyres, and the two-step separation in compounds chosen by Pirelli here, enough to give a one-lap pace advantage of 1.5s, so that even Red Bull felt obliged to use a set to graduate from Q1.

But the sin-length advantage the hards gave over the softs was going to be crucial in allowing a three-stop strategy rather than a four. So it was that Vettel was forced to use both his remaining sets of softs in Q2 after his first attempt wasn’t quick enough – and Webber elected to not do a second Q2 run. Combine that with some cloud cover late in the session that took the track temperature down from the mid-30s to below 30C and the circuit was suddenly significantly faster. It was a present to the Sauber drivers, who were out there at the right time. But it was a disaster for Button and Webber. “They’d just said ‘great lap,’” said Webber, “and 30 seconds later I was out.” He lined up 12th, one place behind Button, who was struggling badly to find chassis balance, with understeer throughout the fast corners and rear instability into the slower ones that left him trailing his team mate by 0.5s in Q2.

Helped by the struggles of Webber and Button, Fernando Alonso scrapped the upgraded Ferrari through to Q3 while keeping a set of new softs in reserve – and so he produced a fabulous lap to go third quickest, good for the front row after Hamilton’s penalty. “I think if I’d had a hundred sets of tyres I could have improved on that,” he said afterwards. Just like last year, he’d produced a ‘miracle lap’ around here and, although the car was significantly improved, his performance mattered. His time was a few hundredths shy of the Williams and almost exactly 0.55s of the McLaren. Under more normal circumstances there would be another McLaren, two Red Bulls, perhaps a couple of Lotus and the odd Mercedes in that 0.55 gap, which would normally have the Ferrari looking at a lower Q3 placing. But this was not abnormal.

According to the Lotus team, the series of small errors made by Kimi Raikkonen on his new soft-tyre run more than accounted for the 0.14s by which he trailed Maldonado, and it was Romain Grosjean who ended up the team’s faster qualifier – fourth best – after a few hundredths and one place ahead of Kimi. The Lotus E20s looked by far the fastest cars over a series of laps though, and hopes were high for Sunday.

Being on track just when the Q2 cloud cover came got Sauber’s Sergio Perez and Kamui Kobayashi through to Q3. Perez had a set of new softs left on which he’d hit a good lap to go sixth quickest, but Kobayashi was unable to take part in the session after his car stopped with a hydraulic leak on its Q2 in-lap. The car upgrades were working well and it seems to have maintained its place in the competitive order.

The Mercedes was not at its best here in the high track temperatures and long fast corners, even though the double-DRS was worth a lot of laptime. Nico Rosberg and Michael Schumacher made it through to Q3, but only Rosberg did a lap there. Without the benefit of new softs, all of which had been used up getting through to Q2 and Q3, he was seventh quickest. There was the feeling that the W03 had lost out to the cars around it in the latest round of upgrades.

Both Vettel and Schumacher elected to do only sector times in Q3, coming back in without completing a lap. Getting out first put the Red Bull ahead of the Mercedes, in seventh and eighth (later sixth and seventh). Just behind Button and Webber, the Force Indias were 13th and 14th. Paul Di Resta a scant half a second faster than Nico Hülkenberg, the pair a couple of tenths faster than the Toro Rosso of Jean-Eric Vergne and Daniel Ricciardo. Felipe Massa was a disastrous 17th for Ferrari, hindered by traffic, while Bruno Senna spun out attempting to graduate from Q1 at the last gasp.

Maldonado would soon be in the focus

P36 RESULTS All those vital stats
It had been a long, intense afternoon for Pastor Maldonado, but it wasn’t over yet. His radio crackled into life 18 laps from the end with the voice of race engineer Xavi Pujola: “OK, now you need to back off and keep them behind. We need to look after these tyres.” Not the most welcome of messages with Fernando Alonso coming at you, trying to deprive you of your first grand prix victory. At one point he’d been 8s ahead of the Ferrari, but now scarlet filled his mirrors. But it was just one more challenge to that faced by Lewis Hamilton, banished to the back of the grid. But the pole position Lewis’s penalty gifted the Williams just put into sharper focus the enormity of taking on the darling of the sea of humanity in the grandstands. Maldonado’s first pole; his first start anywhere near the front row — it was going to be difficult to treat this as just another race, and now the centre of all that adulation was in his peripheral view to his right.

But the routine helped: the dummy start, keeping up the brake and tyre temperatures on the warm-up lap, charging the KERS, turning the required steering buttons, stopping at the grid place... And finally the lights. As they went out, the clutch slipped more than expected, the grip on this side of the track maybe not so great either — and the red to his right was gaining on him immediately. He moved right, but Alonso, in front of this crowd, was not to be dissuaded, kept his foot buried. They sat accelerating up through the high gears, wheels close to touching, but the deed was done: Alonso on the inside and leading. The crowd roared its frenzied appreciation.

Maldonado: “I thought, ‘OK, the race is long, just stay with him.’ Our race became one of attack rather than defence.”

But it would be a measured attack. He would spend these early laps not trying to put a move on Alonso, but staying just far enough out of his wake that he wasn’t damaging his tyres, and in the meantime he would get a feel for where the Williams was strong and weak relative to the Ferrari. They were similar over a lap, but the Williams definitely had better traction out of the slow turns — which was a very useful asset, one filed away in Pastor’s mind. It meant that, should he later be in front of the Ferrari, he could get himself out of range of the DRS-trigger point, which was just after the exit of the slow final chicane — and that he’d be faster onto that long, long pit straight; which was good, because the Ferrari was faster by the end of it, its seventh gear apparently longer.

The fact that a Williams and Ferrari were fighting out the race was somewhat against the run of play of the 2012 season. Apart from Hamilton being at the back of the grid, you could point to the poor tyre choices made for the Red Bulls in qualifying, which had been triggered by the big two-stage gap between the tyre compounds here. And the other McLaren of Jenson Button had qualified outside the top 10. “I had slow-corner rear instability but understeer through the high speed,” he reported, “which left me with nowhere to go on set-up.”
Button is particularly sensitive to car balance but his tyre temperatures were imbalanced front to rear. It was the same story at Red Bull. “It used to be all about aerodynamics,” said team chief Christian Horner, “but now it’s about who can understand these tyres. I’m struggling to explain it.”

Even Alonso puzzled over it: “We finished P8 in Bahrain, one minute behind the leaders. Here we finish a minute ahead of the car that won in Bahrain. Our upgrades have worked a little better than expected but even.S I don’t really know where we are. I think some of the other teams have underperformed, or had problems getting their tyres working, because some of the results here feel very strange.”

No-one ever fully understands why they are fast or slow, but this year that’s true to a much greater extent than before. Maybe part of it is understanding how to balance the tyre temperatures front to rear, side to side. Pirelli certainly believes this may be the key, and it’s something that last weekend the Williams, Ferrari and Lotus managed notably better than many. But there are anomalies even within teams that challenge preconceptions. On this day, for example, Button would struggle to keep his tyres in shape on a three-stop, while Hamilton would be the only driver to make a two-stop, a strategy that required him to do almost half the race distance on his third set of tyres.

Maldonado was pleasantly surprised that the Lotuses were growing smaller in his mirror. He’d expected them to be all over him — they’d been much the fastest cars in the long runs on Friday. Kimi Raikkonen was being dropped by about 0.5s per lap; Romain Grosjean would pay for allowing Nico Rosberg to make an opportunist pass at Turn 4 on the first lap, being trapped behind the Mercedes for the first stint and much of the second. So the outcome of this race was going to be exclusively between Alonso and Maldonado, mano a mono.

The minor positions, meanwhile, would be fought out by Red Bulls and McLarens... Behind Grosjean ran Michael Schumacher’s Mercedes, Sebastian Vettel’s Red Bull, Button and the Sauber of Kamui Kobayashi. Sergio Perez’s third-row start was wasted within seconds when the Sauber took a puncture to the left-rear, from the front-wing endplate of Grosjean. Mark Webber was stuck in 12th, behind a fast-starting Felipe Massa. Hamilton, meanwhile, was slicing through the mirrors at the tall of the field and would through the day demonstrate some inventive passing.

Early leader Alonso pitted on the 10th lap from P1.1 in front. Williams responded, bringing Maldonado in a lap later. Coming in on those old soft tyres as Alonso was onto his fresh hard pumped that gap out to 3.4s.

Inside the Williams cockpit there was no panic, Maldonado just nibbling into that advantage, trying not to take too much from the fresh, hard tyres too early.

The hard would soon prove faster than expected, something that took Lotus engineer Alan Permane by surprise. He’d had both Raikkonen and Grosjean fitted with a set of used softs for their second stints: “We were expecting the soft to be much faster than the hard today, but it was actually only slightly faster.”

That tyre choice might ultimately have cost Raikkonen a place, but the bigger issue was where the speed shown earlier in the weekend.
had gone. “I don’t honestly know,” said Permane, just one more confused F1 engineer at Barcelona last weekend. “Maybe the drop in temperatures hurt us more than Williams and Ferrari.” Grosjean would go on to set the fastest lap but that was only to be expected as one of the last of the quick cars to go onto fresh tyres near the end when fuel loads were light.

With track temperatures down to 36°C, around 10°C lower than their peak the day before, the hard tyres were in their ideal temperature band. As the second stops approached, the hard-tyred Alonso-Maldonado duel was around 15 up the road from Raikkonen’s soft-tyred Lotus. Grosjean had finally used his DRS on Rosberg for fourth on the 16th lap, but all those laps at Mercedes pace had left him a further 20s adrift of Raikkonen.

The Merc just wasn’t working well at any stage during the weekend, overusing its rear tyres even more than in Australia. Schumacher had retired by this time; he had pitted from sixth and exited behind the yet-to-stop Williams of Bruno Senna, then clumsily crashed into it as he tried to pass into Turn 1, putting them both out. Schumacher received a five-place grid penalty for the upcoming Monaco GP.

This incident had released Vettel into sixth but he was soon to be called in for a drive-through, together with Massa, both of whom had been judged to have not slowed enough for the Schumacher/Senna yellow flags. The Red Bull had taken a hit to the front wing from debris that would later require the nose to be changed. Webber’s nose was also changed, requiring him to make his second stop several laps too early and consign him to being stuck in slow traffic for the rest of the race. Vettel’s penalty promoted Button, who was quite unable to shake off Kobayashi.

‘Box next lap Pastor,’ came the call on lap 24. He was just 1.56s behind Alonso as he peeled off for the pits, leaving the Ferrari to continue up the straight. Ferrari had just been outflanked by Williams daring to pit earlier than scheduled. It had appeared as if the Ferrari’s pace was beginning to fall off, but it had been Williams who reacted first to that and it was enough to leapfrog Alonso.

It was made worse for the local hero on the next lap as he encountered the Marussia of Charles Pic just as they arrived at the tight sequence from Turn 10 through to the end of the lap. It’s a difficult place to get out of the way, and the combination of that, plus two extra soft-tyred laps while Maldonado was on a fresh set of hard tyres, pulled that gap out to 7s. Initially Alonso kept it at that, keen not to overstress the new rubber. But sure enough, seven laps after Maldonado’s stop, he began to close. With the Ferrari catching at the rate of 0.59 per lap, Williams brought Pastor in for his final stop before it was too late — on lap 41.

A reluctant left-rear wheel left Maldonado stationary for an extra couple of seconds, but it seemed an age. With Alonso breathing down his neck, it was indeed a big chunk. Can you afford to give 2s to Alonso when he’s on the offensive, with the...
sniff of a victory in the air, as he senses the stirring of an expectant crowd! Three laps later the Ferrari made its stop.

At just this time there was another snag for Maldonado: Räikkönen, yet to stop and running long, was lapping over 1s slower than Maldonado’s potential pace — and Alonso was catching, catching, catching. For three laps Pastor was stuck there before putting a clear DRS move on the Lotus. Fernando, a lap later, was quickly by, the Ferrari geared better for its DRS, and at that point there was only 1.5s between them — and that’s when Pujola came on the phone, asking him to slow down and keep Alonso behind. With impressive judgement and restraint he set about doing exactly that.

Meanwhile, another remarkable performance was playing out further back as Hamilton made his unlikely two-stop work with a perfect alternate blend of patience and audacity. At one point he passed the two Toro Rossos in one long slalom manoeuvre through Turns 12–13, and he was on schedule for a points finish if only he could get the final set of tyres to last for 31 laps.

Rosberg was struggling badly, still in fifth but ever-slower. He’d earlier successfully repelled Button and then soaked up intense pressure from Kobayashi after the Sauber had sliced down the McLaren’s inside at Turn 5. Its front tyre bouncing off Button’s into the slow turn — a characteristic Kamui flourish. He would spend the next 30–odd laps looking for daylight in the Mercedes’ defensive wall before eventually finding a way through near the end.

There was in fact an unidentified problem with the Mercedes, as tech director Bob Bell explained: “There was a clear loss of downforce measurable on the data, and that made it even more difficult for Nico to look after his tyres properly.”

Not long after being passed by Kobayashi, Button was taken by the recovering Vettel into Turn 1. It was a move Seb would later have to repeat as he came back from the delay incurred with the misfit of his new nose. Button was in no shape to resist as he struggled to keep the tyres in shape.

But that was all just background noise and colour for the crowd as their man continued to sit in the leader’s wake. The Williams’s superior traction was preventing Alonso from getting a DRS move going, and he could only catch up again by the end of the straight.

“...starting from pole. For a lot of the race I just looked after the tyres”

Pastor Maldonado finds winning simple

It looked as if this may be decided by backmarkers. Things got particularly tense for Maldonado as they came to lap Massa in the other Ferrari with 13 laps to go. But Pastor judged it beautifully, ensuring he caught it near the DRS detection point, enabling him to stall his wing down the main straight and slip effortlessly by.

Alonso was trapped in a high-speed puzzle as Maldonado soaked up everything he could throw at him. Then with nine laps remaining, after clambering over the exit kerb at Turn 3, Alonzo felt a change in the car. “I suddenly felt a loss of rear grip. I thought I had maybe lost an aerodynamic part,” he reported. His loss of pace

“Ex-champs Räikkönen and Alonso filled the podium”

Hamilton only saw his pit crew twice in the race.

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**DRIVER BY DRIVER**

**KAMUI KOBJASHI**

Sauber-Ferrari C31-01

Start: 7th, Finish: 5th

A typically tenacious drive from 17th on the grid, but his outright pace was very slightly adrift of his teammate’s, but who nonetheless made it to Q3 only to suffer a hydraulic problem. Consistent and decisive in practice, he was rewarded with 10 points.

**SEBASTIEN PEREZ**

Sauber-Ferrari C31-04

Start: 5th, DNF

Starred in qualifying, putting his Sauber on pole, and proving it’s a seriously quick car with his pace through the middle sector. Race was over almost before it began thanks to a trip from Grosjean which cut a tyre. Quick while recovering, but gearbox problem ended it all.

**DANIEL RICCIARDO**

Toro Rosso-Ferrari STR7-01

Start: 15th, Finish: 12th

Camry only compare him to his teammate and Vergne both outqualified and out-powered him for the first time this season, this has to go down as less than perfect weekend. Wasn’t far off, but couldn’t quite force himself into a points position.

**JEAN-ERIC VERGNE**

Toro Rosso-Ferrari STR7-02

Start: 14th, Finish: 12th

Outqualified his teammate and Vergne both outqualified and out-powered him for the first time this season, this has to go down as less than perfect weekend. Wasn’t far off, but couldn’t quite force himself into a points position.

**PASTOR MALDONADO**

Williams-Renault FW34-02

Start: 1st, Finish: 1st

Put in a superb Q3 lap to take pole second and then got a lucky break with Hamilton’s exclusion. Defeated well off the line, attacked when he needed to and proved that he has come a long way from his rock and hard ways by nursing the tyres through the final stint. And all under pressure.

**BRUNO SENNA**

Williams-Renault FW34-03

Start: 17th, DNF

Qualifying was a catastrophe. Abandoned his first flying lap because of traffic, then spun into gravel on his final Q1 run. Team put him on a long first stint, but Schumacher rear-ended him at the first corner and put paid to a possible recovery drive.

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wasn’t drastic, but it was enough to get Maldonado off the hook. From being under 1s for many laps, the gap began to open, fresh air in between them at last as the red threat to Maldonado’s dream faded and the route to Williams’s first victory in eight years became clear.

Meanwhile, the Lotusers had made their late final stops and were flying on tyres that were much newer, Raikkonen eating into the big gap to Alonso by over 1.5s per lap. But barring something drastic it was too late.

Behind Grosjean, the picture was somewhat less clear: Rosberg could hold back Kobayashi no longer, the Sauber slicing down the inside into Turn 10 with five laps to go. Vettel was on a late recovery charge and, after doing a DRS pass on Button for the second time, was soon all over Hamilton, who on his old tyres had risen to seventh as everyone made their third stops.

It was a simple matter for Vettel to pass him, with the struggling Rosberg next in his sights. With one lap to go, almost out of rear grip, the Merc’s rear wheels spun as Nico tried to get the power down out of Turn 7, and Vettel was through, up the inside as they approached Campsa. Team-mate Webber was having no such luck in trying to find a chink in Nico Hulkenberg’s defences and the final point went to the Force India.

As Hulkenberg’s replacement at Williams, Maldonado had matched his achievement in setting a pole. Now he’d gone one big step further, taking a remarkable victory in just his second season with a faultless drive of remarkable restraint and intelligence. “It’s so much easier starting from pole,” he said. “For a lot of the race I was just looking after the tyres. It’s a trick that much of the rest of the field would like to understand."
Drawing board

Gary Anderson, Mark Hughes and Giorgio Piola reveal technical tweaks made by Ferrari, McLaren and Sauber for the first European GP of the season

**FERRARI RESHAPES DIFFUSER**

Part of Ferrari’s major upgrade was this new diffuser, to work in conjunction with the new sidepods and exhaust layout. The corners of the channels are more rounded and there is a shallow wing with a slot gap across the top. Accompanying these changes are the distinctive slatted ‘windows’ trailing from the bottom of the rear wing endplates. There is also a new front and rear wing, though the front wing is believed to be circuit-specific.

**GARY ANDERSON:** The smoothing of the radii of the corners is a positive change. If you have them too square you get two different air speeds on the surface and whenever they connect up they set up a vortex. You don’t really want that so far back on the car because you can’t direct it anywhere to be beneficial and it just creates drag. This will reduce separation and drag. The height of the diffuser is limited by regulation, but you’re allowed a gantry on top, across a defined width. Ferrari has made it into a wing section that turns the airflow more, thereby making the diffuser work harder. It effectively makes the diffuser bigger. The wing strakes are there to make the diffuser three-dimensional, in a bid to run the flow round into the low-pressure area behind the tyre, again extracting more air from the diffuser.
McLAREN HIGH NOSE CREATES EXTRA DEVELOPMENT SCOPE

McLaren used the higher nose that first appeared during testing at Mugello.

GARY ANDERSON: The previous, lower nose and horizontal splitter didn’t leave any potential to develop that area of the car by getting more air through. On the last day of pre-season testing McLaren switched to a vertical splitter that invites more airflow beneath the car and the team ran the car this way for the first four races. The next step is a higher chassis or a higher nose. With the chassis it has, all it can do is add the higher nose. McLaren has done the most it could do with this chassis, in that it has now created two separate main flows. With this philosophy, the car will now respond to a higher chassis – which it wouldn’t have done with the previous philosophy. In addition, the wing pillars, because they are in the middle of the front wing, have got the cameras down there too, which helps scavenge the front wing harder, and get more airflow between the front wheels. The outside of the wing works harder than the middle, which causes transverse flow, so you bring in the pillars to help the airflow straight.

SAUBER SIDEPOD PROFILE

Sauber’s sidepod featured an increased Coke-bottle profile following the resetting of the exhaust.

GARY ANDERSON: Cutting the Coke-bottle angle in tighter gives a double advantage. Firstly, more air is able to accelerate around the side, increasing its speed. And by making the sidepod’s upper surface a lot smaller there’s less lift creating air as it hurls into the low-pressure area at the back. The wing is a tool to reduce the lift on top of the sidepod, rerouting the airflow away from that upper surface.

McLAREN ADJUSTABLE BRAKE DRUM AIDS TYRE TEMP

McLaren’s rear brake ducts featured this adjustable drum around the disc. An adjustment slot in the bodywork allows the gap to be opened or closed to transfer more or less of the disc’s heat to the rims and tyres, according to whether more or less tyre temperature is needed. The inset image shows the mechanism of the system, while in the main drawing the disc can be seen with the drum in its open position.

GARY ANDERSON: With the Pirelli tyres being very sensitive to track temperature, this gives McLaren more adjustment of its tyre temperatures.

SAUBER REPOSITIONS EXHAUST

Sauber brought the new exhaust layout to Spain that it introduced during Mugello testing.

GARY ANDERSON: The key to this repositioning is two-fold. It’s improved the Coke bottle but it also provides a shorter route to the brazen winglets on the floor that masquerade as part of the brake ducts. If you get exhaust gas into those areas, it creates downforce directly onto the wheels. That’s good in itself, but there is an added bonus: because of the way the brake ducts are mounted as part of the floor, very low down, that effort on the ducts also stops airflow spilling underneath to the diffuser. The more you make the brake ducts work, the better the diffuser will work because there’s less disruptive spillage into it from the side. It’s not making the diffuser better, as before, but it will have the same effect and increase downforce on the ducts.
### SPANISH GP RESULTS

#### PRACTICE 1: Friday

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**Weather:** dry

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**Weather:** dry

### QUALIFYING STATISTICS

#### Read to Head

- VETTEL 1st
- WEBBER 2nd
- BUTTON 3rd
- ALONSO 4th
- Massa 5th
- SCHUMACHER 6th
- Raikkonen 7th
- Grosjean 8th
- Rosberg 9th
- KOBAYASHI 10th
- Ricciardo 11th
- Verge 12th
- Maldonado 13th
- Kovalainen 14th
- De LA ROSA 15th
- KARTHIKEYAN 16th
- GLOCK 17th
- PIC 18th
- Petrov 19th
- Kovalainen 20th
- De LA ROSA 21st
- Massa 22nd

**Weather:** dry

### THE GRID

#### Friday Testers

1. **Valterri Bottas**
   - Williams 1m25.120s

2. **Alex Rossi**
   - Caterham 1m28.448s

3. **Dani Clos**
   - HRT 1m31.618s
THE RACE: 66 laps, 193.843 miles

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<th>LAP</th>
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Constructors’ Standings

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**THURSDAY**

**09:27**  
@SauberF1Team Our new challenger for this season #P10 to desktop PC!127! Having a fast trip to Barcelona!

**11:06**  
Mercedes reveals that team principal Ross Brawn has opted to skip the Spanish Grand Prix because he is ill.

**13:31**  
@pauldierestafi Track walk done, mega to see so many Brits travelling to support the Spanish GP this weekend.

**14:38**  
Heikki Kovalainen tells @AUTOSPORT that Caterham has dropped the exhaust/floor upgrade it triad at Mugello.

**14:55**  
Reveals that HRT has brought a major upgrade package that includes new front and rear wings and floor. Pedro de la Rosa will run it on Friday.

**15:39**  
Vettel and Alonso discuss the German’s pass for the lead at Monza 2011. “He just thought my car was slower,” quips Vettel.

**15:56**  
Felipe Massa questions the value of the Mugello test. “We lost one test before the season. I’m not sure if that’s the way to do it.”

**16:04**  
Nico Rosberg describes his defensive tactics in Bahrain as “harsh but fair”.

**16:30**  
Caterham F1 Team: Alexander Rossi preparing for F1 outing tomorrow

**16:35**  
Michael Schumacher’s on his tyre complaints. “It is certainly nothing to do with the car being frustrated because I haven’t really been frustrated.”

---

**TRACKSIDE VIEW**

At Campsa a lone infield tree is the only protection from the rays our beautiful nuclear star is unleashing on this blue-sky Barcelona morning. The only shade and light out on track is the differing approaches to this blind uphill corner where high-speed delicacy and precision will determine your speed down the back straight. At fifth gear speeds the downforce effectively ensures that even the most man-handled car will somehow get through to the other end of the turn, but it's about how lightness of touch and sensitivity maximises your momentum here – and there are at least a couple of conflicting requirements to achieve that, especially in these early, low-grip laps.

The two McLaren drivers are visions of minimal input. As they reach the top of the hill and begin to turn, they balance the throttle to whatever revs they are already carrying and the pitch of the car remains absolutely unchanged, allowing the aero to do its magic. They smoothly pick up the throttle mid-corner and are gone. Kimi Raikkonen's early approach is much the same, aided by a Lotus that's supremely driveable. Adapting by the lap, he tries a slightly more abrupt lift, getting the car momentarily on the nose, reducing the understeer he's been finding. Next he tries a downshift upon entry before balancing the throttle. His approach evolving, ever more keyed-in to the subtleties of the moment.
**SATURDAY**

1116  Romain Grosjean’s Lotus stops at the chicane with a loss of fuel pressure in FP3.

1133  Schumacher has a brief off and rejoins, impeding Hamilton. He is later reprimanded by the stewards.

1147  Nico Hulkenberg hit with an €7200 fine for breaking the pitlane speed limit.

1620  Bruno Senna (right) spins into the gravel attempting to make the qualifying cut off.

1620  Sergio Perez is the only driver not to set a time on soft rubber in Q1 (but he did start a soft run). He still makes the cut.

1541  @InsideFerrari Mixed feelings: good Q2 for Fernando, not so good for Felipe, who had a lot of traffic

1500  Hamilton claims what appears to be McLaren’s 150th pole position.

1501  McLaren race engineer: “OK Lewis, we need to stop the car, we have a problem. We need to stop the car. Please turn off.”

1534  Stewards allow Kthilkeyan to start despite missing 107 per cent cut off.

1704  Williams chief operations engineer Mark Gillan insists that Williams can win. “We’re definitely in this race,” he says.

1929  Stewards issue a statement revealing that Lewis Hamilton has been excluded from qualifying for not returning to the pits after setting his lap time.

**FRIDAY**

0745  @InsideFerrari No revolution in the car, no B-car, just improvements, mainly in the aerodynamics.

1900  GP2 veteran Dani Clos takes to the track in Free Practice 1 for his grand prix weekend debut driving for HRT.

1901  Caterham reserve Alex Rossi heads out of the pits for his F1 weekend debut.

1003  Jenson Button starts the session running McLaren’s new high nose. He will go on to back-to-back it against the old version.

1007  @OfficialF1Team cecho’s car was smoking when coming back. A heat shield was a little close to the exhaust

1116  Clos (below right) grinds to a halt in the pitlane with an electrical problem.

1456  Mark Webber runs through the gravel at Turn 4.

1458  Narain Karthikeyan stops with electrical problems, meaning that he completes only two laps on Friday.

1504  Perez loses control of the rear of his Sauber and, after correcting, heads for the gravel at Turn 4. He recovers to the track.

1517  @alex_wurz The world champs [Vettel’s] style and his cars handling/feedback looks good, but not as mega as it could/should! Clearly visible!

2143  @kamui_kobayashi Still in meeting...

**SUNDAY**

1603  Marussia’s Charles Pic spins early in the race at Turn 3 but avoids being collected by any other cars.

1621  Schumacher rear-ends Senna while attempting to pass him at Turn 1 and describes him as an “idiot” over the radio.

1637  Vettel and Massa get drive-through penalties for not slowing for yellow flags.

1550  Venezuelan national anthem is played on an F1 podium for the first time.

1606  Kimi Raikkonen reflects: “We could have put ourselves in first place.”

1636  McLaren sporting director, and ex-Williams technical director, Sam Michael visits his old team’s motorhome to congratulate Frank Williams.

1707  Williams’ garage is engulfed in flames after fuel rig goes up. Rival teams help fight the blaze (right).

1837  Stewards confirm Rosberg v Hamilton will be investigated post-race. There will be no penalty.

1711  Schumacher hit with a five-place Monaco grid penalty for hitting Senna.

1834  @BSenna Mixed day today. Very happy for Pastor’s win! Team thoroughly deserves it! Hope everyone’s ok after the big fire!

1933  @alo-oficial Congratulations to Pastor Maldonado for his first victory in F1! Never forget that day…! ;)

May 17 2012 autosport.com 41
Giedo’s stop-start victory

Dutch Caterham Racing veteran Giedo van der Garde outsmarted his rivals in the pits to take his first GP2 series win since 2009.

THE SIMPLEST THINGS sometimes make the most significant difference.

James Calado knew last time out in Bahrain that something was seriously amiss with his Lotus GP Dallara, but no amount of tweaking could fix it.

Prior to last weekend’s double-header in Barcelona, however, replacement of the right-rear damper brought about a transformation.

“It’s chalk and cheese,” the Englishman said. “Suddenly, it feels as though I’m driving an F1 car...”

Pirelli brought soft and hard tyres to Spain and Calado used the former to take pole for the feature race — but it was the only time all weekend that the stickier compound would be used.

It was reckoned to be about four tenths quicker, but wasn’t durable enough for any kind of race stint.

Calado made a decent start, but neighbour Fabio Leimer’s was swifter still. The pair ran side-by-side most of the way to Turn 1, but Calado edged his rival towards the track’s outer edge. He called it “hard, fair and within the rules”, while Leimer thought it “dangerous”. The stewards saw nothing wrong, though, and the leaders ran almost nose to tail until pitting for a second set of primes on lap 13. “I was surprised to be called in so early,” Calado said, “but my guys saw Fabio’s crew preparing for a change and reacted.”

Racing Engineering made a fractionally swifter stop and Leimer emerged alongside as the two headed for the pit exit. Drag races of this nature are permitted in F1, but not GP2: Leimer was subsequently given an appropriately harsh drive-through for “unsafe release”, even though he backed off at the pit exit to allow Calado room.

Leimer’s race was effectively finished, but he would only have been racing for second anyway. Initially third, Giedo van der Garde made his tyre stop on lap 14 — and, unlike the initial pace-setters, opted to change only rear tyres rather than all four. “I remembered,” he said, “that my team-mate Charles Pic used the same tactic to win here last year.”

Time saved catapulted him to the front and he was able to repel Calado to the flag, with Stefano Coletti completing the podium from championship leader Davide Valsecchi, Nathaniel Berthon (who underlined the effectiveness of Racing...
**RACE RATING**

★★★★★

Great host city, climate and atmosphere - the circuit has it all... apart from passing

**MILESTONE**

First GP2 pole position for British Lotus driver James Calado

**REPORT **

**GP2 BARCELONA**

SIMON ARRON

reports

Engineering’s set-up, Fabio Onidi, Max Chilton and Luis Razia. Jolyon Palmer took ninth after the electrical problem that blighted both Bahrain weekends was thought to have been traced to a rogue radio antenna. “Circumstance has caused me to start near the back of the grid - he said, and I almost ended up doing it again after making a terrible start. It didn’t take long to recover most of the places I’d lost. Demonstration was completed - having been condemned to run in the midfield after a yellow flag compromised his only soft-tyre run in qualifying.

The Sunday sprint was slightly more straightforward - except for Palmer, whose electronic malaise struck yet again. The car cut out on the formation lap, for the third time in as many meetings, and the start was aborted to allow the iSport machine to be moved.

The race distance was cut from 26 laps to 25 and Razia led every one. His passage through the first turn was simplified when front-row neighbour Chilton bogged down and a four-abreast queue formed in the leader’s wake. Everybody made it through cleanly, and Berthon settled into second from Valsecchi, Chilton, Calado and Gutierrez, with Saturday’s winner van der Garde in seventh.

Razia was 0.65 clear within a lap - but Berthon stayed within touch until the final 10 laps. “The start was crucial,” Razia said, “but even though I got away well things were difficult, because Berthon was behind me and I had a lot of pressure.”

He didn’t put a foot wrong, and during the final laps he edged away as Chilton’s tyres faded.

Valsecchi stayed third to the end, despite the close presence of Calado. “I made a really good start,” the Brit said, “but if anything it was too good because I was boxed in by the cars ahead and had to brake. Esteban and van der Garde were on my tail; I got them back within the lap. After that I pushed a bit, passed Chilton on lap five and then tried to push Valsecchi up the order, but he’s just too experienced.”

Chilton took fifth, from van der Garde, Gutierrez and Coletti, who recovered well from a poor start. At least, though, he got to start - poor Palmer can only dream about such luxuries.

---

**RESULTS**

GP2 Series, round 1 of 12, Barcelona (ES), May 12-13

**RACE 1 GRID**

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**RACE 1 37 LAPS, 106,943 MILES**

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**CHAMPIONSHIP TABLES**

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“Advancement in Motorsport”

Over the past few years a gentle whisper of hope and promise has resonated into a mighty roar... the roar of adrenaline and high octane engines competing for pole position; a position made possible through the passion and expertise of the RGMMC team.

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IT WASN'T SO MUCH THAT
Daniel Abt jumped the start; more that he left the line almost before his rivals had completed pre-season testing...

The opening seconds of 2012's first GP3 race were notable for the spectacular optimism that catapulted Abt from sixth to first before Turn 1. It was only a matter of time before stewards removed the Lotus driver from the equation, but he wasn't alone. Carlin's pole man Antonio Felix da Costa capped a drive-through, too, for a start that was less blatantly premature but equally illegal.

As soon as both were convicted, MW Arden instructed third-placed Mitch Evans to hang back and conserve his tyres, to defend the lead he would soon inherit. The Kiwi's progress was subsequently interrupted only by the safety car, dispatched on the ninth of 16 laps to enable marshals to remove Kevin Ceccon's stricken Trident car, which had cut out on the circuit.

This was no barrier to Evans' progress and he was faultless at the restart, pulling away from Status driver Marlon Stockinger and opening up a 2.6s cushion during the final six laps. "Qualifying didn't go all that smoothly," Evans said. "I was a bit disappointed to start fourth. I made a good start, though, and the others were penalised. I'm not going to complai

...
Hendrick joins the 200 club

WITH THE CHAMPAGNE ON ICE

for so long it had almost
frozen solid, Jimmie
Johnson finally claimed
Rick Hendrick’s 200th
Cup win as a team owner
at Darlington last Saturday.

Johnson hadn’t won all
year, but an inspired call
from crew chief Chad Knaus
not to pit for fuel during a
late caution, and some
timely later yellows,
enabled the five-time
champion to score the
landmark victory.

His win was sealed
by a perfect restart at
the green-white-
checkered finish.

“I can’t believe it took
this long after 109,” said
Hendrick. “I am kind of
numb, but I’m glad it’s
over. I think we’re going
to win a few more now.”

Johnson ended the team’s
longest victory drought
since 2000/2001 after
fending off a strong
challenge from Kyle Busch.

“We’ve been awfully close
to winning the 200 for him
the last month or two,”
he said. “I’m very happy
we closed the deal today.

My mind goes back to the
early days, the guys that
won the early races, helped
Rick build Hendrick.

Motorsports into what it
is today. I think of Harry
Hyde, Tim Richmond, Geoff
Bodine, Kenny Schrader, a
lot of people that put a
time of effort and into
this organisation.”

Joe Gibbs Racing’s Busch
also stayed out to gain track
position when eventual
champions Denny Hamlin
and Martin Truex Jr. pitted.
It was a decisive call, and
one that paid off when
three yellows in quick
succession eased any fuel
worries the leaders had.

Hamlin was able to move
gibbs Toyota up to
second with a great restart
at the end, while Michael
Waltrip Racing’s Truex
could only reach fifth.

Tony Stewart was in the
hunt for his first Darlington
win, but fell short as he
brought his Stewart Haas
Chevy home third, just
ahead of Busch.

Roush Fenway
mates Matt Kenseth and
Carl Edwards came home in
sixth and seventh in their
Fords, but Greg Biffle, who
led early on from pole, lost
late places and finished in
12th. He still has the series
lead, but his advantage over
Kenseth has been slashed
to just two points.

Danica Patrick had an
unspectacular run in her
second Cup outing of the
year, taking the flag in
31st in her Stewart Haas
Chevy, six laps down.

- Connell Sanders Jr

RESULTS

1 Jimmie Johnson
   (Chevrolet Impala), 368 laps in
   3hr45min25s; 2 Denny Hamlin
   (Toyota Camry), +0.281s; 3 Tony Stewart
   (Chevy); 4 Kyle Busch (Toyota); 5 Martin
   Truex Jr (Toyota); 6 Matt
   Kenseth (Ford Fusion); 7 Carl
   Edwards (Ford); 8 Keselowski
   (Chevy); 9 Marcos Ambrose (Ford);
   10 Joey Logano (Toyota).

Points

1 Biffle, 411; 2 Kenseth, 409; 3 Dale
   Earnhardt Jr, 397; 4 Hamlin, 394;
   5 Johnson, 372; 6 Truex, 372; 7
   Stewart, 369; 8 Kevin Harvick, 361;
   9 Kyle Busch, 349; 10 Edwards, 337.

LOGANO TAKES CONTROVERSIAL 3rd NATIONWIDE WIN OF 2012

Joey Logano (20) won at Darlington after spinning Elliott
Sadler’s Childrens Chevy into the wall with five laps left.
Logano’s JGR Toyota teammate Denny Hamlin was second.

Ranking the world’s best drivers

WHAT HAPPENED THIS WEEK

Despite Jimmie Johnson’s Cup win at Darlington, it was Tony
Stewart’s (11) third spot that had the biggest impact on the Rankings
as the champion climbed three places demoting Matt Kenseth (12)
and Kyle Busch (14) in the process. Johnson stayed 17th.

To see the full list, visit castroldriverankings.com

1 Sebastian Vettel  27,970
2 Mark Webber  20,325
3 Jenson Button  19,588
4 Lewis Hamilton  19,247
5 Fernando Alonso  18,910

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Flying Pickett pair Luhr and Graf strike

KLAAUS GRAF AND LUCAS
Luhr took the American Le Mans Series points lead with victory in the six-hour race at Laguna Seca. Their Pickett Racing HPD was quickest all weekend as they brushed aside the Dyson Lola-Mazda of Guy Smith, Chris Dyson and Johnny Mowlem, which suffered a huge delay due to damage from debris. That allowed one of the LMP2 Level 5 HPDs to take second. Franck Montagny collided with a GTC Porsche while driving the sister HPD, but moved over to the Scott Tucker/Russ Dizd machine to earn a class victory.

In GT, the Corvette of Oliver Gavin and Tommy Milner took the lead with 50 minutes left. After a hotly contested battle for second, Jan Magnussen and Antonio Garcia completed a one-two for the Chevys.

Darren Turner took pole in Aston Martin’s Vantage GTE, with a lap 0.4 seconds ahead of Gavin. The Vantage drew a 10kg weight break after Long Beach, but leader Stefan Mucke fell to ninth after the first round of stops. A penalty for contact by Mucke led to eighth spot.

Wolf Henzler’s safety-car penalty forced the Falken Porsche team to gamble on taking fuel only at the last round of stops. Once Gavin slipped past him at Turn 11 to take the lead, Henzler held on for second for half an hour on worn tyres. When Bill Auberlen dived past at Turn 11 in his BMW and made contact, both were passed by Magnussen as Henzler fell to seventh.

RESULTS
1 Lucas Luhr/Klaus Graf (HPD ARX-03a), 242 laps in 6h00m00.064s, 2 Scott Tucker/Russ Dizd/Franck Montagny (HPD ARX-03a), 3 laps; 3 Jonathan Bennett/Colin Braun (ORECA FLM09), 4 Bruno Junqueira/Tony Drissi/Roberto Gonzalez (ORECA), 5 Alex Popow/Scott Kimbell-Smith (ORECA); 6 Mike Guasch/Memo Gidley/Archie Hamilton (ORECA). TCS LMP1 1 Oliver Gavin/Jan Magnussen (Corvette), 2 Jan Magnussen/Antonio Garcia (Corvette), 3 Jan Magnussen/Scott Pruett/ headline at Laguna.

Dallara duo make it back-to-back wins

RICKY TAYLOR AND MAX
Angellelli scored their second victory in succession in the Wayne Taylor Racing-run SunTrust Dallara Corvette, but they certainly didn’t have things all their own way in New Jersey.

Taylor started from pole position and led the first 38 laps, but he relinquished the lead briefly to the charging Ganassi Riley-BMW of Memo Rojas before handing over to co-driver Angelelli.

The Italian regained the advantage after the stops and remained under pressure from the Ganassi car (now driven by Scott Pruett), Alex Gurney in the Bob Stallings Corvette he shared with Jon Fogarty, and the David Donohue/Darren Law Action Express Corvette. Pruett and Gurney exchanged positions several times before colliding on lap 81 when reigning champion Pruett tried an ambitious move. Both were eliminated, prompting the first of only two full-course cautions.

Britain’s Ryan Dalziel moved his Starworks Riley to the front during the ensuing round of stops, but Angelelli forced his way back ahead with 12 laps to go and edged clear by the end.

Despite their dismal start to the season at Daytona, when they retired only 14 laps into the 24-hour race, Taylor/Angellelli have moved to within four points of Dalziel and co-driver Enzo Potolicchio in the standings. Daytona winners John Pew and Oswaldo Negri (Riley-Ford) also remain in the title fight for Michael Shank Racing after finishing third ahead of Donohue/Law. Six cars led in GT, but for the second race running it was the AIM Autosport Ferrari 458 of former champions Emil Assentato and Jeff Segal that won. Robin Liddell/John Edwards (Camaro) took second.

RESULTS
1 Ricky Taylor/Max Angelelli (Dallara Corvette DP), 117 laps in 2h45m34.833s, 2 Enzo Potolicchio/Ryan Dalziel (Riley-Ford MX-XXV), 3 Oswaldo Negri/John Pew/Luis Diaz (Riley-Ford), 4 David Donohue/Darren Law (Riley Corvette); 5 Michael Valletta/Richard Westbrook (Coyote Corvette), 6 Alex Popow/Lucas Luhr (Riley-Ford). Points 1 Potolicchio 117, 2 Taylor/Angellelli 113, 3 Negri/Pew/Diaz 112, 4 Popow/Luhr 110, 5 Westbrook 110, 6 Memo Rojas/Scott Pruett 108.
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Sordo wins after Mini island adventure

ANY SUGGESTION THAT DANI Sordo blitzed the IRC on his debut in the series in Corsica would be folly. While the records will show that the WRC regular took victory — a first for Mini’s revamped S2000 challenger — the Spaniard would freely admit he found the competition tough.

The problem was that his main rivals for his first win, Gianottenico Basso and Andreas Mikelsen, quickly vanished from the lead fight. Basso crashed on the road section to pare ferme on Thursday evening while leading in his A-Style Ford Fiesta Regional Rally Car, while Skoda UK man Mikelsen went off as he tried to extend his advantage early on Friday. Thereafter Sordo was in the clear, save for the menace of Jan Kopecky who, despite two mistakes, was driving arguably his best IRC event to date.

“My lead was OK but the stages were very difficult and you had to concentrate hard,” said Sordo, who took his first overall success at international level and became the first Spaniard to win in the IRC. “I had to learn the car — there is less power than the WRC and handling is less precise.”

That Sordo, in his turbocharged Mini, didn’t dominate will comfort the IRC regulars, the bulk of whom have invested in normally-aspirated cars. Kopecky’s runner-up spot came after a close battle with Pierre Campana (Munaretto Peugeot), which he edged after winning five of Saturday’s six stages. There was a brief moment when Campana looked to have beaten the factory Skoda man on the final test, until a timing split prompted the necessary hurry-up for the Czech.

Mikelsen recovered to fifth behind Bryan Bouffier (Delta Peugeot), whose anticipated podium bid was hampered by handling issues and illness. Irishman Craig Breen recovered well to sixth in his Santeloc Peugeot after a day’s drive-shaft failure had dropped him to 24th.

Graham Lister

RESULTS

1 Dani Sordo/Carlos del Barrio (Mini S2000), 1h22m03.6s; 2 Jan Kopecky/Pavel Dresler (Skoda Fabia S2000), 1h23.9s; 3 Pierre Campana/ Sabrina de Castelli (Peugeot 207 S2000); 4 Bryan Bouffier/Davide Panzeri (Peugeot); 5 Andreas Mikelsen/Ola Floene (Skoda);

Craig Breen/Kareen Roberts (Peugeot), Points 1 Mikelsen, 71; 2 Kopecky, 58; 3 Juho Hanninen, 43; 4 Sepo Wiegand, 34; 5 Bouffier, 27; 6 Sordo, 53.

Germany beats Brazil in tense climax at Motegi

ANDRE LOTTERER WON AT Motegi as the ‘TOM’S’ driver moved within a point of his team-mate Kazuki Nakajima in the Formula Nippon standings.

After taking pole by over half a second, Lotterer launched his Swift-Toyota into an immediate lead from Nakajima and Joao Paulo de Oliveira as the trio drew away from the rest.

De Oliveira emerged from his mandatory tyre stop in the lead following a storming lap, but on cold rubber he was powerless to prevent Lotterer breezing by his Impul Toyota car on the run down to Turn 3.

Despite fading brakes, Lotterer held on to beat the Brazilian, with Nakajima third. Honda-powered DoCoMo pair Takuya Izawa and Kodai Tsukakoshi were next up. Loic Duval (Kgymus) faded from sixth on the grid to 11th by the chequered flag.

Lotterer was on form

LINUS OHLSSON PULLED off a shock victory at the inaugural TTA Racing Elite League event at Karlsgoda in Sweden.

The Team Tido driver started from pole position in his Saab 9-3-bodied Solution F machine, and resisted extreme pressure from Fredrik Ekblom’s Polestar Racing Volvo S60 to reach the chequered flag first by just 0.4 seconds.

“The feeling is impossible to describe,” said Olofsson after his win in the new series, set up by a number of team owners to rival the Scandinavian Touring Car Championship.

“This is something I have dreamt about and now it’s real. I don’t think I understand what I have done yet.”

Ekblom was clear of another former STCC champion, Richard Goransson, who was third in his West Coast Racing BMW. Next up were Thed Bjork’s Polestar Volvo, Goransson’s team-mate Fredrik Larsson and Robin Rudholm in his Flash Engineering Saab.

A total of 15 cars started the first race of the new series, with Citroen represented alongside BMW, Volvo and Saab.

Carl Svensson

RESULTS

1 Linus Olofsson (Saab 9-3), 3 laps in 33m36.748s; 2 Fredrik Ekblom (Volvo S60), +0.74s; 3 Richard Goransson (BMW 3 Series); 4 Thed Bjork (Volvo); 5 Fredrik Larsson (BMW); 6 Robin Rudholm (Saab), Points 1 Olofsson; 2 Ekblom; 3 Goransson; 4 Bjork; 5 Larsson; 6 Rudholm.
The prancing foal gallops away
Ferrari junior Raffaele Marciello dominates on the streets

FEW PEOPLE SAW THIS ONE coming. Street-circuit virgin Raffaele Marciello did not exactly head to the Grand Prix de Pau as the favourite, and he was even less fancied when he thumped the barriers at the exit of the long Parc Beaumont right-hander in free practice. But the Swiss-born Italian jolted everyone with the two fastest times in qualifying, while visibly driving confidently and aggressively, to secure pole position for both races — to his own amazement. And then he drove his Prema Powerteam Dallara-Mercedes away from the field — to his team’s surprise.

In Saturday’s race his lead was artificially sliced by a safety car, but on Sunday — the Grand Prix itself — Marciello was sometimes lapping a whole second clear of the opposition. He was more than 14 seconds in front when he was baulked by bottling backmarkers, and even that delay didn’t seem to bother him.

Marcello may be a member of the Ferrari Driver Academy, but his prior results hadn’t suggested surefire stardom. Last year, his first with Prema, he was third in Italian Formula 3. This year he started with reversed-grid victory in the F3 Euro Series opener at Hockenheim, but a best of sixth in the ‘proper’ races. And now he’s a double winner of European F3 Championship races at arguably the most prestigious venue on the calendar, joining — among others — Tazio Nuvolari and Alberto Ascari as Italian winners of the Pau GP.

“Last year he was one of the youngest drivers ever to compete in F3,” explained Prema team boss Rene Rosin. “He was 16 — very young compared to the others and with only experience of one year in Formula Abarth. “At Hockenheim he was losing pressure on his second set of tyres in qualifying, and in the races he was sometimes good, sometimes so-so.”

“What really impressed about Marciello was that he had the confidence to go fastest in qualifying — the session after his shunt — whereas other drivers who had crashed in free practice confessed to needing time to rebuild their confidence. But one thing that has never been in doubt about the softly-spoken Marciello is that he is capable of racking it from the word go. “He has speed in his heart,” continued Rosin. “He can immediately get on the limit — and at a city circuit like Pau that’s important. Apart from his mistake on Friday, he was fantastic.”

Marciello was similarly effusive about his team. He had felt the rear tyres going off in qualifying, but reckoned “the car was perfect” in the races. “Forty minutes is a very long race [on Sunday], but I could manage the car very easily.” And that was the story of
RACE RATING ★★★★

Races were procession, but there was fantastic driving on the mean streets of Pau

MILESTONE

Jaafar is first Malaysian to take a Brit F3 maximum points haul

REPORT

BRITISH/EURO F3 PAU

MARCUS SIMMONS

Town chaos with traffic jams and stalling cars

It’s happened before and it will probably happen again: a street-race traffic jam. Mucke Motorsport F3 rookie Pascal Wehrlein, starting in his first street-circuit race, saw a gap on the inside of Macau GP winner Daniel Juncadella into the Lycee hairpin as they fought for second. The German-Colombian started filling it, then ran out of room to stop... This slow-speed toggle caused a tailback of Delasors that would probably have been issued on the traffic bulletins of the local Europaradio stations had the fabulously efficient circuit crew not got their cones into action tout de suite.

There was panic for Alex Lynn and Jack Harvey, who were second and third in the British F3 classification, as both stalled... “I was just thinking how I could get around them when it stalled,” said Lynn. “It just wouldn’t fire up so I had to reset everything. Then it worked. That was a Godsend – what a relief!”

As the field snarled to a stop, Harvey couldn’t avoid hitting Felix Rosenqvist, damaging his front wing and balking a trackrod. So bearing in mind he was pretty happy to hold onto fifth overall from a chasing Carlos Sainz Jr, Harry Tincknell and Felix Serrallés. Less fortunate was the hapless Pipa Derani. He needed a push-start from the jack and got black-flagged.

RESULTS

British Formula 3 International Series, round 3 of 10/11 European Formula 3 Championship, round 2 of 10, Pau F1, May 12-13

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First impressions are hard to shake

Just an Italian touring car series with a British round? ANDREW VAN LEEUWEN explains how the Superstars series is on a mission to prove it’s much more than that.

That’s the challenge the International Superstars Series is now facing. In a self-confessed stage of transition, 2012 is the year when this little series from Italy is making a play to be less Italian, less little, and much more than just another tin-top category.

This weekend, the inarguable progress the series is making will be on show at Donington Park. It’s not the first time that Superstars has been to the Leicestershire venue, but since the series’ last visit 12 months ago, things have changed.

FG Group, famous for having promoted the World Superbike Championship since 1989, has clearly earmarked this as the year Superstars takes its next step, and it’s doing so by putting all of the one-percenters in place. The driver-talent pool has deepened, the teams have taken their level of professionalism up a notch, and the Paddock Show-style of fan interaction (as well as an ongoing free-ticket giveaway) improved crowds at the first two rounds at Monza and Imola.

While the series is committed to developing its own brand of driver — a €100,000 Rookie of the Year prize is proof of that — the power of the household name is not lost on those at FG Group. That’s why the entry list boasts full-time programmes for guys like racing veteran Italian Gianni Morbidelli, ex-Red Bull Racing F1 driver Tonio Liuzzi, and former FIA GT champion Thomas Biagi.

But this weekend, the focus will be on Johnny Herbert. Having completed a full Superstars programme in 2011,
They are fun to drive, with lots of power and noise. That’s what makes it fun for me.”

Johnny Herbert

the former grand prix star is now focussing on sharing the unofficial ‘guest’ entry from Swiss Team with fellow former grand prix guns Mika Salo and Christian Fittipaldi. That means access to the same Maserati Quattroporte with which Andrea Bertolini won the title last season. With Salo having raced at Monza and Fittipaldi at Imola, it’s time for Herbert to make his first start of 2012 – and he’s excited about it.

“Racing is racing, and the limit is the limit,” says Herbert. “The limit in a Superstars car is just as fast as it is in sportscars or Formula 1. You’ve always got that passion to drive the car as fast as you can, and the opportunity to drive at Donington is an exciting prospect. My competitiveness is still there whatever I do — even golf!”

That so many fast, experienced drivers flock to Superstars is largely thanks to the cars. Too many touring car series have gone down the path of small-capacity engines and front-wheel-drive cars, which check the ‘market relevance’ box, but miss out on the ‘creating a spectacle’ part. That’s no issue for Superstars – the rules will allow anything from a V6 to a V12, so long as it’s pumping out somewhere in the region of 500bhp. Rather than restricting the rules, equality comes from performance ballast and ongoing parity checks. As a result, the cars are big, brutal, and a lot of fun to drive.

“I’m still trying to find out what the secret to driving these cars fast is,” admits Herbert. “They are heavy, about 1300 kilograms, and have around 500 horsepower; so it makes them quite difficult to drive. The tyres are always a factor in the races, and with that style of car you can’t be over aggressive. You have to be very line-perfect to get the maximum out of the car. There is a lot of concentration required.

“In a WTCC or BTCC car your tyres are small, and there is only a couple of hundred horsepower. In Superstars, you have a lot more power, so it’s a lot of fun. Considering what the cars are, they have quite a lot of grip, and that’s why I like the idea. It’s a standard car that people can relate to, with lots of power and noise. They are fun to drive, not easy, and they shouldn’t be easy. That’s what makes it interesting for someone like me.”

A welcome side effect of the all-encompassing technical regulations set by Superstars is variety. The 2012 season may only be two rounds old heading into the Donington weekend, but already there have been eight different makes of car at least one race. Out of those eight different makes, there have been three different race-winning manufacturers, and five different cars spread across the podium places. Put simply, there aren’t many series out there that give you the chance to see a Mercedes AMG C63, a BMW M3, an Audi RS5, a Maserati Quattroporte, a Jaguar XK, a Chevrolet Lumina, a Lexus ISF and even a Chrysler 300C all go head-to-head.

Different cars, young guns, household names and big-and-barge racing – there isn’t much not to like about the new-look Superstars.
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Reporting to the Head of Model Design, the successful candidate will possess excellent communication skills and a proven ability to work under pressure to the highest levels of accuracy and quality.

Candidates should be able to demonstrate extensive CAD skills in solid modelling and/or free form surface definition of complex shapes and profiles, preferably using NX.

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Aerodynamics R&D Engineer - ref. “HR ARDE 68”

Working as part of a team within the Aerodynamic Operations group, you will work on wind tunnel, model and instrumentation R&D projects. The work is varied including some support to the day to day operation of the wind tunnel and required maintenance. A professional qualification in electronic or mechanical engineering is essential, and you will possess excellent problem solving skills, a practical hands-on approach, and a flexible attitude to working hours.

Knowledge of specific Software used in Wind Tunnel environment (e.g. LABVIEW, Diablo) is beneficial.

This role requires some shift work, including night shift and weekends, and some on-call support.

To apply, please send your CV to HR Department, Scuderia Toro Rosso Spa Via Spallanzani 21 – 48018 Faenza (RA) – Italy Or upload your CV in our website: www.tororosso.com/jobs

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Purchasing experience within similar industries or environments would be advantageous but not essential.

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Ivan Bellarosa from the SPEED EuroSeries currently leads the Sunoco Rolex 24 At Daytona Challenge. Javier Morcillo took another great win in the Britcar Endurance MSA British Endurance Championship third round at Snetterton and has increased his point overall point score.

The Sunoco GRAND-AM 200 Challenge standings are extremely close and last weekend saw Mike Jordan lower his point score slipping down into second place - handing Lawrence Davey from the Legends Championship top spot in the overall standings.

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Great and British revival plan
Dunlop and the BARC pledge to rebuild premier race package for 2013

UK RACE ORGANISER THE British Automobile Racing Club, and tyre supplier Dunlop, are planning to revive their Great and British Festival meetings of the previous decade under a new name in 2013.

The original Great and British Festivals ran successfully between 2006 and 2010, with manufacturer-backed single-make championships from Ginetta and Radical, supported by a variety of Mini categories.

The Sport Maxx Cup (now Production Touring Car Trophy) was added in 2007, but the package contracted when Ginetta Junior joined the BTCC support bill in 2008, and Radical and the Mini Challenge moved to MSVR at the end of 2010.

Dunlop and the BARC have agreed a joint business plan with the aim of reintroducing a ‘TOCA-like’ package of televised races – similar to Great and British – under a new, yet-to-be-decided title season.

STATEMENT OF INTENT
Dunlop’s marketing director, James Bailey, said the new package would be based on the remains of the previous structure, which includes Production Touring Cars, Mini Se7en, Mini Miglia and InterSteps.

Bailey said: “The Great and British package proved that there was a need for a well promoted event, like a ‘TOCA-like day’, to give national motorsport an improved profile.

“During the last few weeks we have been approached by championships that are looking to work together to create a better-promoted platform. Therefore we believe there’s an opportunity to launch something stronger for 2013.”

Bailey would not reveal the identity of those series, but said Dunlop had been “approached by a car manufacturer” for a deal that would be a “great addition” to the package, if it came off.

“Dunlop and BARC have great experience in working together in promoting events such as the British Touring Car Championship,” Bailey added. “We hope to create a package that is attractive to championships, spectators and circuit owners, with six televised events in a format that focuses on value for competitors and spectators.”

PRODUCTION TOURERS
Bailey said the BARC had pledged to make more of the Production Touring Car Trophy, which has struggled for numbers in recent seasons. Only eight cars showed up for last weekend’s three races at Brands Hatch.

The club is inviting organisers of one-make tin-top championships to create their own competitions within the Trophy. Classes for Mini Challenge and Honda VTEC Challenge cars will be considered, alongside the Trofeo Abarth 500 grouping that is already permitted.

Bailey said: “There are about 20 cars in existence, but we have rarely seen more than 12 or 13 at the same time. What the figures disguise is that there’s been a real step forward in terms of quality. ‘There are some interesting new cars: the Volvo C30, Renault Megan 250 and a Ford Focus RS on the way, but the focus on growing the top class has allowed the other classes to disappear. We want to introduce new classes for one-make series that don’t have the grids. We’re all for consolidation and a lot of that is needed in motorsport at the moment.”

Avant Garde calls 24 Hours of Le Mans
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AUTOSPORT SAYS...

Ben Anderson
National Editor
ben.anderson@haymarket.com

THE DUNLOP GREAT AND BRITISH package was the lynchpin of BARC race programming for the latter part of the last decade, but it hasn’t really recovered since the Radicals and Mini Challenge decided to jump into bed with MSVR at the end of 2010.

Since then, the remains of the package have limped along. Mini 7 racing is still holding its own, but a fresh name and format hasn’t worked for the Sport Maxx Cup (now the Production Touring Car Trophy), and a single-seater addition in the form of InterSteps (nee Young Guns) has also suffered weak grids.

A new plan to revive the glory days of Great and British in 2013 is a bit short on detail at the moment, but the first step on any road to recovery is admitting you have a problem in the first place.

There’s clearly a priority to make more of the PTC, which just hasn’t taken off. The reasons aren’t entirely clear (too expensive, maybe?) but whatever the question is, I’m not certain that tackling other series onto the grid is the answer.

That said, amalgamating small grids is a good idea in the short term, while the controlling powers work on building their package back up. After all, it’s in their interest to again make a success of what was once Great and British.
THE FAMOUS TIGA marque will be relaunched with a Group CN car in the SPEED EuroSeries by two-time Le Mans class winner Mike Newton.

Newton has forged a partnership with the owner of the Tiga name, Mike Taylor, and bought the rights to the Chiron prototype of the early 1990s. It will be rebadged Tiga, and the plan is also to make a full range of spares available for Tiga’s Sports 2000 and Group C designs of the 1970s and ’80s.

Newton said: “We’re taking a good baseline design [from Chiron] and turning it into what we believe will be a competitive package.”

“The car has a steel-tube spaceframe chassis, and after looking at other CN cars out there, we believe that this is a good way forward.”

The new project, dubbed AD Team Tiga in deference to Newton’s AD Group, is being run by Dave Beecroft’s Xero Competition squad. Chiron designer Henry Nickless has been retained as a consultant.

The first Honda-engined Tiga CN car should be up and running within the next two weeks. A debut is planned for the Imola SPEED round at the end of June.

A second car will be brought on stream for customer drivers over the course of this season. Newton plans to make further cars available for sale in 2013.

Tiga was launched by ex-Formula 1 drivers Howden Ganley and Tim Schenken in 1979. It is best known for its successes in the Sports 2000 category, and also made Group C cars before it was closed in 1984.

British GT

German Lambo to British GT

GERMAN GT OUTFIT LEIPERT

Motorport will join an expanded grid for this weekend’s British GT event at the Nurburgring.

Marc Leipert, 27, who has raced in FIA GT3 and ADAC GT Masters, will share the team’s Lamborghini Gallardo LP600+ with Marco Attard, who raced in GT4 for Lotus at the Oulton Park season opener in April.

Swedish team JB Motorsports have also entered an Audi R8 LMS on the GT3 grid for one-time BTCC racer Jan Brunstedt and reigning Scandinavian Porsche GT3 champion Mikael Bender, while German Carrera Cup champion Nick Tandy will again partner Steve Parish in a Motorbase Porsche.

GT4 has also been boosted by the inclusion of French BMW specialist Espace Bienvenu, campaigning an M3, while the Jota-run Mazda MX-5 GT will make its series debut after missing the Oulton opener. Ginetta Challenge rivals Ryan Ratcliffe and Lee Mowle will make their British GT debuts in Optimum Motorsport’s Ginetta G50. Experienced sportscar racer Johnny Mowlem will also join the GT4 Lotus squad.

Blancpain Endurance Series

Lyons/Wakefield for Blancpain

FORMER BRITISH GT RACE WINNER

Michael Lyons will team up with Ginetta GT Supercup competitor Josh Wakefield to race for former world GT champion squad Vita4One in the Silverstone round of the Blancpain Endurance Series in June.

The pair will share Vita4One’s Ferrari 458 with Andrea Cecatto under the ‘Team Italy’ banner.

Lyons, who won an Historic F1 race at the Monaco GP Historique last weekend, will switch from the Scuderia Vittoria squad with which he finished third in British GT last year. He also contested the opening round of the BES at Monza last month.

Lyons said: “We have all the elements required for a successful weekend. I’m very happy to have Josh on board and looking forward to racing with a fellow Essex driver!”

Wakefield, 19, currently lies fifth in the GT Supercup, having scored three podiums across the first three rounds of the BTCC-support series.
Bishopscourt eyes more racing after successful ‘first’ car meeting

BISHOPSCOURT CIRCUIT COULD run car races regularly in future after a successful resurrection last weekend.

The Irish circuit, first used in 1962, held its first racing meeting for 39 years in an event run by the Leinster Motor Club.

After it fell into disuse, the area around the former RAF station changed substantially. The site was divided into three sections and sold off, but the part containing the main straight and the fast signature esses was bought by two motorcycle enthusiasts, who then brought kart and motorcycle events back to the venue.

Although organisers admit that more work is needed on the 1.8-mile circuit, more car racing could follow.

LMC’s Garry Manning, who coordinated much of the preparation, said: “We thought it would be a good thing for Ireland to have a third circuit, and track owner Jim O’Brien and his manager, Wilson McKibbon, were in favour. The BARC came on board to oversee things, and John Symes and Nicky Moffitt from the MSA supported the idea.

“The local planners only allow limited track use, and this will probably mean only a couple of car meetings per year, while work remains to be done before a full MSA track licence is granted, but now we know it all works.”

FORMER PORSCHE CARRERA CUP scholar Kieran Vernon will return to Formula Renault BARC at Rockingham this weekend, driving for former title-winning team Hillspeed.

Vernon, 22, who won a race during a part-season of FR BARC with Fortec Motorsport last season, before replacing Tim Harvey in the Carrera Cup, tested with Hillspeed at Silverstone last Friday. He will join Marcus Allen and Jacob Nortoft in an expanded three-car line-up.

Vernon said: “It’s almost a year since I was last in a BARC car, but it all went well in the test and we were one of the quickest out there. Hillspeed were great and the aim is to get them back at the front. I’m hoping we can be in contention for the podium, but having got used to the Porsche, which is quite different to drive, it might take me a weekend to get used to the Renault again.”

Rival squad MTECH Lite will also expand its line-up, entering extra cars for Lebanese racers Joe Ghanem and Shaham Sarkissian.

Freke to race Jag at Nurburgring

FORMER GINETTA G50 CHAMPION and Century Motorsport boss Nathan Freke will team up with experienced racers Colin White and Rob Carvell to contest the Nurburgring 24 Hours this weekend.

Freke, who also won the 2006 British Formula Ford title, will share a Jaguar XF for the German endurance classic.

“I did it in 2006 but in a slower car, so I’m excited to get into something more purposeful,” said the 28-year-old.

“The original plan was to use a Ginetta, but it would have been a lot of work to convert our car to GT4 spec, and the deal with the Jaguar and Carvell Motorsport was very attractive.

“Our prime objective is to finish the race and after that if a class win is possible then that would be a bonus.”

MARCUS PYE
HUMBLE PYE
The voice of club motor racing

First Historic Sporting Trials was a success

Mud-plugging or Monaco? The spectrum of historic motorsport last weekend could not have been wider. I didn’t make it to either, alas. Despite the obvious pull of Stars ’N’ Bars, overlooking the glitzy paddock in Monte Carlo, I actually fancied the green hills of Long Compton in Warwickshire, scene of the first Historic Sporting Trial.

The quintessential traditional pastime was enjoyed by racing’s kings in the 1950s and ’60s. Stirling Moss, Graham Hill and Lotus founder Colin Chapman enjoyed it when trialling equipment was pretty basic. It’s far more technical now, but no better fun! While ’70s Grand Prix racer Richard Robarts still competes, it’s hard to imagine today’s Formula 1 drivers finding time in their busier schedules.

Negotiating fiendishly laid-out courses on steep gradients demands concentration, delicate throttle control and skilful manipulation of fiddle brakes used for both traction control and steering by retarding a trials car’s driven rear wheels independently.

Cajoling a heavy 1172cc Ford side-valve-engine car along calls for a different skillset from handling a lithe bespoke car with a slow-idling and torquey modern alloy engine. Nonetheless, expat Australian Mike Cannon’s purpose-built bolides were state-of-the-art in their day. A number of survivors were among almost 20 cars (some double-driven) competing in the Historic Sporting Trials Association’s inaugural event.

Among luminaries watching at the regular Jacobean Trial venue was the 1970 BTTRDA Gold Star and 1980 RAC British champion, Gordon Jackson, who uniquely won national trials titles on both two and four wheels. Robin Jager (’75 BTTRDA champ) competed in the event, won by current exponent Mark Milne.

HSCC boss Graham White, who competed in the ’60s, speculated (his ex-works Cannon is being rebuilt by Tim Berrington), while Andrew Blenkinop brought the ex-Moss Cannon, a barn resident for 30 years, to show. HSTTA prime mover Martyn Halliday was blown away by everybody’s reaction to the initiative. “It seemed to go exceedingly well, but we have lots to sort out, not least formalising rules and regulations, perhaps including a control tyre.”

Another event is planned this year, followed by a short series from 2013. Several people have worked tirelessly to get this new focus-group off the ground. While I claim no credit here, I’m proud that the seed sown at our Sportings Trials, organised by Halliday, at multiple champion Ian Wright’s emporium in Kent last year (Humble Pye, March 17, 2010) is bearing fruit.”
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Famous Porsche for Lynn

Historic racer targets competitive outings in his newly acquired 917

**HISTORIC RACER SHAUN LYNN HAS acquired a Porsche 917 (chassis 026/31). Last month's Tour Auto winner has not yet decided whether to run 026/31 as a coupe or an open car because it led a double life, and was successful in both World Sportscars (as a JW Automotive Gulf-liveried 917K) and in a lurid Interserie spyder.**

Crashed by Mike Hailwood on its debut at Le Mans in 1970, 026's remains were rebuilt into chassis 031, in which Brian Redman won the 500Km and, with Jo Siffert, the 1000Km. Fifth in the 1971 Sebring 12 Hours (Siffert/Derek Bell) closed chapter one. Transformed into Jurgen Neuhaus's yellow and red-striped open 917/74A, it scored the first of seven race and hillclimb victories three weeks later. Franz Pesch and Porsche guru Jurgen Barth raced it through to 1973. In 1987 it was bought by the late American collector Mike Amalfitano. Lynn said: "I was bidding on it at auction in 2010, but didn't have the money. Subsequently, I contacted everyone with a 917, including some with no race history or very chequered pasts. Then I heard that the new owner of 026/31 hadn't even started it! Having committed last November, I had to sell my Lola T70 (MKIII), which I regret, and Bentley Speed Six to complete the deal. The biggest quandary I've got is whether to leave it as it is or put it back in the Gulf 917K of my childhood dreams."
OUTSTANDING DRIVES
by 21-year-olds Michael Lyons and Ben Barker were among the principal
highlights of the eighth Monaco Grand Prix Historique. Never before
had drivers so young emerged triumphant at this major event in the
historical racing world.

The Automobile Club de Monaco attracted some 65
three-litre Formula 1 cars up to 1978, with a division at
the end of 1972. The later period accounted for 40,
all bar one of which were
allowed to start. Time was
when 20 used to be regarded
as an absolute maximum
when the cars were new
and in the hands of the
top professionals!

On a wet track it took two
aborted starts, while some
of the tailenders fiddled
about, before the decision
was taken to start under the
safety car. That was fine by
poleman Lyons, who had
won the battle for pole
position with Bobby
Verdon-Roe’s McLaren
by 0.009s.

As soon as the safety car
pulled off Lyons made the
most of his advantage to
open up a few yards over
BV-R but nearly came
unstuck at the Fairmont
hotel hairpin, just glancing
the barrier as he skated
wide. His Hesketh 308E
escaped unharmed and
it was Verdon-Roe who
dropped it later round the
lap, a spin by the Swimming
Pool pushing him back.

Italian sometime F2 racer
Cosimo Turizio, in another
Hesketh 308E, found
himself in second after
nearly slipping past Ollie
Hancock’s Surtees TS10
into Mirabeau, only to
disappear permanently
down the escape road at
St Devote a few laps later.

Verdon-Roe soon caught
Hancock, who defended well
and seemed to have seen off
the McLaren only to suffer
the undeserved fate of
clobbering the barrier at the
two McLaren on the last lap
when his throttle jammed.

As Lyons continued
impressively on his way to
a masterly win, a chain-
reaction shunt at Rascasse,
punctuated by a slow
backmarker, nearly blocked
the track and eliminated
Paul Knapfield (Penske PC3)
from fourth. The following
Rob Austin (Surtees TS10)
negotiated the obstacle
course only to find himself
directed into the pitlane by
officials, handing the place
to Bob Berridge, like Austin
making his Monaco debut
in a Surtees. Both had been
overtaken earlier by the
Embassy Lola T570C of Mauro
Panes, who was surprised
and delighted to claim
the final podium place.

After more than 12
months away from racing,
Duncan Dayton returned to
the cockpit of the Brabham
BT33 with which he had
won on his past three visits
to Monaco. A fourth victory
looked unlikely from the
back of the grid after
problems in qualifying, but
he was helped by Joaquin
Folch (McLaren M6C)
jumping the start and
colliding with Frank
Sytner’s newly restored
March 721G, eliminating
both on the spot and
bringing out the safety car.

From pole position
(inherited from Roger Wills’
ex-Chris Amon March 701
after it had tripped over
Cengiz Artam’s ex-John
Love 701 in qualifying),
Andrew Smith’s ex-Jackie
Stewart, Spanish GP-
winning 701 led superbly.
That was until he glanced
the barrier along Beau
Porsche Carrera Cup racer Ben Barker put Peter Hiscox’s unfinished Lola T570 car among all the exotic Martini and Ralt pigeons by winning his heat with relative ease from pole and then repeating the feat in the final, which was stopped under the safety car when the rains came.

Ex-F1 driver Paolo Barilla (Martini MK34) and sometime motorcycle racer Matteo Marzotto (Ralt RT3) traded first place in their heat and second behind Barker in the final. Marzotto, whose uncle Vittorio won the 1951 Monaco Grand Prix, impressed mightily on his first weekend of racing cars as he clinched the runner-up spot.

David Shaw (ex-Nelson Piquet Ralt RT1) took first in the final, ahead of the locals Marc Faggionato, while sixth-placed Grant Tromans (ex-Michel Ferte Martini MK39) led a long line of battling cars. Among them was Eje Elgh’s Chevron B38, the Swede returning to racing for the first time since mid-1980 in the same car with which he came second to Derek Daly’s B38 in the 1977 British championship.

Elgh came home eighth.

Roger Wills (ex-Brabham McLaren Cooper T51) took on habitual winner Duncan Dayton’s Lotus 16 in the pre-1961 GP car race, with Gary Pearson a little way back in his Dutch GP-winning BRM P26. After an intense tussle with the Cooper always just in front, Dayton spun at St Devote and retired, leaving New Zealand’s Wills to stand on the top of the podium and listen to the British (sic) national anthem! Barrie Baxter brought his rear-engined BRM P48 home third after a good drive.

Looking like Jim Clark, Andy Middlehurst took an unchallenged win with the Lotus 25 in the 2.5-litre F1 race, finishing comfortably in clear air. His side by Cooper T66, which had to contend for much of the race with Paul Drayson (Lotus-BRM BRM24) until Drayson clambered in the hotel hairpin and fell back.

An unusually light sports car entry had no answer to Alex Buncombe’s virtuoso performance in the Jaguar Heritage Racing C-type. Previous double-winner John Each brought a Peter Mann’s Fraser Nash Le Mans Replica home second, half a minute adrift of Buncombe but clear of the C-type of Carlos Montevedre.

**Bronson and Dowling star in race of ERAs**

FOR ANYONE WHO has witnessed every race at the Monaco Historique since the series began in 1997, this was one of the classic duels, right up there with the Martin Stretton/Nigel Corner battle of 2000.

It all began in practice when Paddins Dowling (ex-Peter Whitehead/Nick Mason ERA R10B) set a time that stunned the pre-race favourite Julian Bronson, on a hat-trick with ‘Mac’ Hulbert’s R4D. In the second session Bronson rose to the challenge, took R4D by the scruff of the neck, and secured pole.

Come the race, the pair left the rest of a quality field way behind, Bronson just scraping into St Devote ahead of his Irish rival. For the next 30 minutes Dowling never eased up, trying just every line on just about every corner to find a way through, R10B juddering its whole frame under heavy braking into Mirabeau and the chicane, a tendency that lost Dowling a couple of lengths at one point.

He fought back, helped by some bad baulking of Bronson by Alfa driver Ed Davies, so that they started the last lap nose-to-tail. Bronson held on to take the flag just 0.75s ahead, setting the fastest lap just 0.1s off the magic two-minute mark.

Best of the rest, Michael Gans in ERA R1B, was over 45s adrift.

**RESULTS (10 LAPS)**

1. Julian Bronson (ERA R1B) 1:11.72
2. Paddins Dowling (ERA R10B) +0.70s
3. Michael Gans (ERA R1B)
4. Davey Lampkin (ERA R1B)
5. Frank Stippler (Maserati 8CM)
6. Willi Kauhs (Maserati 6CM)
7. Axel Brokkolsen (Bugatti T37A)
8. Ralf Eimmert (Riley Banana)
9. Julian Bronson (ERA R1B)
10. Tom Dare (Bugatti T50/B30/11)

Bronson 2m0.0000s (21.26mph)

Bronson won after dramatic ERA duel.

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**FORMULA 1967-1979**

10 LAPS

Michael Lyons (Brabham-Repco BT33) 3:55.131
Bobby Verdon-Roe (McLaren-Cosworth M8A) 3:55.200
Maurice Pane (Lola T70-Cosworth T308) 3:55.205
Marc Faggionato (McLaren-Cosworth M8A) 3:55.220
David Shaw (Brabham-Repco BT33) 3:55.240
Grant Tromans (M60A, FW30) 3:55.280
John Elgh (Chevron B38) 3:55.290
Michael Lyons (Brabham-Repco BT33) 3:55.320

**PRO-1992 SPORTSCARS **

10 LAPS

David Coulthard (BMW Z8) 1:19.258
Bruno Spengler (BMW Z8) 1:19.263
Christian Fittipaldi (BMW 855) 1:19.275
Maxime Martin (BMW Z8) 1:19.289
Joey Hand (BMW 855) 1:19.293

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Lyons beat the rain and Verdon-Roe to take win
Mosler seals win in dramatic final hour

A HECACTIC FINAL HOUR brought the third round of Britcar’s Endurance Championship to a thrilling conclusion. Having pitted out of sequence, partly in response to a flurry of safety car periods, the Mosler of Javier Morcillo, Manuel Cintrano and Paul White lay second, 3.9s behind Peter Storrey’s leading Ferrari with less than an hour to go. Then Morcillo reeled the 458 in with a succession of blistering qualifying-style laps. The chase looked set for a nailbiting conclusion until, with 15 minutes left and the deficit just 20s, Storrey dived into the pits for a late fuel stop, handing Morcillo’s Strata 21 team its second win of the season.

Storrey’s car stuck in gear when it resumed, dropping him to fourth at the flag. It was still enough for him and Simon Phillips to secure their first Class Two victory. Second overall went to the Rapier of Mike Millard/Ian Heward, which inherited third from the Lee Mowle/George Murrells Ginetta G55 after it tangled to 12th when it stopped for an alternator-belt repair.

Behind them, the Class Three-winning Chevron G85 of Tommy Field and Nick Jarvis benefited to complete the podium.

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Cartwrights down Marrs

IT TOOK YOUNG JAMES Cartwright a couple of laps to recover from a tandy start in the Ferrari Formula Classic race, but once into his stride he reeled in early leader Wayne Marrs and grabbed the lead in a bold move that started when they ran side-by-side through Lodge Corner.

“He’s a better starter than I am,” said Cartwright of Marrs, but there was an air of inevitability about the way the 24-year-old hunted down his rival.

The decisive moment came when Cartwright ducked back inside on the exit of Old Hall after forcing his rival deep into the bend. “The car practically does everything for me,” said Cartwright after reeling off the remaining laps, although Marrs never let him get too far away. In turn, Marrs had to keep one eye on third-placed David Tomlin, who was almost within striking distance at the flag.

Despite a misfire, the other Cartwright brother, Ben, bagged fourth.

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Bailey and Byrne take final-lap victory

WAYNE MARRS MUST wonder what he has to do to win an Intermarque race this season after losing victory on the final lap for the second time running. A rear puncture bobbled his Ferrari 335S with a lap to go and gifted victory to the Aston Martin N24 of Jerry Bailey and Steven Byrne.

It was an absorbing 45-minute contest, with Bailey cutting the early pace. In his wake, Marrs wriggled clear of a mighty contest for second as Mike Johnston, up from the back of the grid, forged into contention after a flat battery on the Sunbeam Tiger he was sharing with owner William Smallridge left them last in qualifying. But it was not to last.

“Just after I took over, it lost oil pressure,” said Smallridge. “Into the lead after the mandatory stops went Marrs, but the final blow came when a rear puncture developed with a lap to run. As Marrs struggled home, Byrne swept past and so did Nicholas King in his Aston Martin DB4. In fact, had King not earned a drive-through penalty for pitlane speeding, it could have been a very close finish. ‘What have I got to do?’ said Marrs after crossing the line.

---

Cartwright dominated in his Sunbeam
Hamilton-Smith hits back after penalty

THE FIRST TWO DRY
F3 Cup races of the season yielded two new winners, including the first overall victory for the newer Cup cars courtesy of Louis Hamilton-Smith.

Hamilton-Smith nearly didn’t feature in the opening encounter as he stalled on the formation lap, but he eventually got going and made a great start. He grabbed the lead into Copse but then slid wide at Brooklands, allowing poleman Chris Dittmann back through.

Hamilton-Smith later had his hopes dashed by a 10-second penalty for an out-of-position start.

Dittmann took the win after Linton Stutely also got a penalty — for exceeding track limits. Stutely was second, while Hamilton-Smith took Cup honours.

Hamilton-Smith shot into the lead in race two and never looked back. Dittmann was top Trophy runner but could do nothing to catch the leader.

The race came to an abrupt end when fourth-placed Gino Ussi spun at Becketts and got stuck in the middle of the track. Benjamin Harvey claimed fourth behind Jeremy Timms, despite picking up a penalty for exceeding track limits.

The Masters category was won by James Simons in both races. He was kept in close company by James Ledumun, who finished second on both occasions.

Stephen Lickorish

RESULTS (23 LAPS) 1 Chris Dittmann (Dallara F301 Renault); 2 Linton Stutely (Dallara F301 Ope); 3 Louis Hamilton-Smith (Dallara F301 Renault); 4 Gino Ussi (Dallara F301 Mercedes); 5 Tristan Clarke (Dallara F301 Toyota); 6 Mark Harrison (Dallara F301 Mugen Honda); 7 Hamilton-Smith; James Simons (Dallara F301 Renault), 8 Linton Stutely; James Simons (Dallara F301 Renault); 9 Gino Ussi (Dallara F301 Mercedes); 10 Tristan Clarke (Dallara F301 Toyota); 11 Mark Harrison (Dallara F301 Mugen Honda); 12 Hamilton-Smith; James Simons (Dallara F301 Renault).

Radical Clubmans Cup

A startline accident in race one could’ve stopped Bradley Smith’s SRS from taking two victories. He was aided after Donington double winner Matt Bell had reliability issues. Paul Marshall finished second both times.

Production BMW

Mike Tovey won both races in his E30. He was comfortably ahead in race one, but Matthew Pakes finished second in race two. Ben Wimrow recovered from starting last to finish third in race two.

Trackday Trophy

Jason Dainton/Robyn Welch took a dominant victory by nearly half a minute in their Peugeot 205, ahead of Andrew Bell/Adrian Walker’s Porsche. They were aided by the retirement of Lee McCormack in his Subaru.

Monte Carlo/Classic

There was a huge collision in the first race after the backmarkers failed to slow for a safety car, causing the first race to be postponed. When they did eventually race, Malcolm Scott won twice in his Dallara.

Monte Carlo/1800/Moto

Adrian Wright continued his good form from Donington by taking two victories, while main rival Marc Fortune could only manage third in race one before retiring from race two. 1800 honours went to Paul Britton and Ewan Sarginson.

Wright’s 1800 victory in More
Mason and Parry star on small grid

IT WAS A CASE OF quality over quantity for Intersteps at Brands Hatch last weekend. Just nine cars lined up on the grid, but the racing was fabulous.

Matt Parry was the early leader in race one but he missed his braking point at Clearways on lap three of 23 and ran wide into the gravel. That mistake dropped him to third, with rival Mason pulling away fast at the front.

Two tours later, Parry darted around the outside of Cameron Twynham for second at Paddock. A safety car period brought Parry back onto Mason’s tail.

He harried Mason for the remainder of the race, attempting to take the lead around the outside at Druids. The pair touched and ended up on the grass but escaped unscathed, with Mason hanging on to win.

The two Matts broke away from the pack in race two, Parry leading from start to finish. Jack Atkin — who missed qualifying to sit a French exam — came from the back of the grid to grab a fine third.

Mason dominated the third race, pulling away from Mason with ease.

Lasse Halmiinen was the man on a charge, taking third from Jan Schmitter and going after Mason. Mason was penalised for some robust defending that caused the duo to touch, with Halmiinen hitting the barriers on the entry to Druids and causing an early halt.

Matt Upton

RESULTS (23 LAPS)
1 Matt Mason
2 Matt Parry
3 Cameron Twynham
4 Lasse Halmiinen
5 Jack Atkin
FL Parry 6(4:27:6s (91.60mph)

RACE 2 (23 LAPS) 1 Parry, 2 Mason +6.844s, 3 Atkin, 4 Venter, 5 Jan Schmitter, 6 Twynham, FL Parry 42.263s (92.00mph)

RACE 3 (19 LAPS) 1 Parry, 2 Schmitter +11.301s, 3 Venter, 4 Atkin, 5 Mason, 6 Nikita Milutin FL Parry 47.436s (91.67mph)

Clutch problems cost Caudle a double win

JOSEPH GIRLING WENT two of the three races at Brands, but only after trouble befell former Mini Challenge champion Luke Caudle.

Girling’s Astra led race one early on, followed by the SEATs of Gary Duckman and Caudle. Caudle finally got the better of Duckman on lap seven of 23, pulling off a brilliant late-breaking manoeuvre around the outside at Druids. He performed a similar move on Girling to seize the initiative two laps later.

Duckman then took the place of the Astra at Surtees to make it a SEAT two-one.

It looked as if Caudle was going to make it a brace in race two, but it wasn’t to be. With two laps to go the clutch pipe on his Leon slipped off, gifting the win to Girling.

“He was a lot of effort for nothing,” said a distraught Caudle.

Maurice Hayden’s Renault Megane seized the initiative at the start of the reversed-grid race. He admirably held on until Girling went by at Paddock on lap 19 of 23.

The Yorkshireman went on to win, with Duckman and Caudle in hot pursuit.

Matt Upton

RESULTS (23 LAPS)
1 Luke Caudle (SEAT Leon)
2 Gary Duckman (Leon) +3.371s
3 Joseph Girling (Vauxhall Astra)
4 Maurice Hayden (Renault Megane)
5 Steve Johnson (Vauxhall Astra VX-R)
6 Antony Williams (Megane)

FL Caudle 53.177s (82.39mph)

RACE 2 (23 LAPS) 1 Girling
2 Hayden +19.330s, 3 Johnson
4 Williams, 5 Franklin
6 Duckman, CW Franklin

FL Girling 59.126s (82.13mph)

RACE 3 (19 LAPS) 1 Girling
2 Duckman, 3 Caudle, 4 Hayden, 5 Johnson

FL Duckman 52.875s (82.23mph)
Whelan's Peugeot wins Bimmer battle

IRISH TOURING CARS provided the headline action as car racing returned to BishopsCourt last Sunday.

They held two races, both of which fell to the rapid Peugeot 306 of the very experienced John Whelan, but he had to work for his laurels with Philip Brennan's BMW M3 right on his case throughout.

A broken driveshaft during qualifying meant that the Peugeot was forced to start race one from the middle of the pack, but a lightning start put him among the leaders as the 10-strong field dived into Turn 1 for the first time.

A lap later and it had become a two-car race, the red BMW leading initially with the Peugeot snapping at its heels.

Even when Whelan squeezed through a couple of laps, Brennan stayed with him, nipping ahead on occasion until, barely a lap from the finish, the German machine slowed to a halt.

This left Gareth Hayden's Honda Integra to take the runner-up spot ahead of the similar cars of Robert Savage and Eric Carroll.

The Franco-German battle was resumed in race two though, and this time the BMW stayed the course and remained in the hunt all the way.

Whelan was not to be denied, however, and when Brennan was held up by lapped traffic towards the end, the Peugeot eased away to take victory by just over three seconds.

Paul O'Brien's well-driven VW Scirocco took the third podium place from a squad of squabbbling Hondas.

Richard Young

RESULTS (BOTH 12 LAPS)
1 John Whelan (2.0 Peugeot 306 XSI); Gareth Hayden (1.8 Honda Integra) 22:34.5s; 3 Robert Savage (1.8 Honda Integra); 4 Eric Carroll (1.8 Honda Integra); 5 Paul O'Brien (1.9 VW Scirocco); 6 Robert Butler (1.8 Honda Integra); 7 Whelan 1m16.018s (86.35mph).

RACE 1: Whelan; 2 Philip Brennan (3.0 BMW M3) +1.528s; 3 O'Brien; 4 Savage; 5 Brian Sexton (2.0 Nissan Almera); 6 Caolan Timmons (2.0 Peugeot 307) FL Whelan 1m15.641s (86.81mph).

FORMULA SHEANE BISHOPS COURT, MAY 12-13
Sheane takes two wins but newcomer Swail is the star

THE FORMULA SHEANE brigade provided plenty of excitement in their three BishopsCourt appearances.

Tristan Quinn gained the upper hand in the first encounter after early leader Tim Swail, having only his second-ever race, had a couple of hard moments following a mighty start.

Swail recovered to take the runner-up spot from Kevin Sheane.

The trio were at it again in race two and Quinn again led most of the way, but blew his engine two laps from home, leaving Sheane to win from David Parks while Swail placed third.

Sheane did it again in the third race, despite the best efforts of Swail, who recovered from an early adventure to claim second from Parks.

Further consolation came in the form of a well-deserved driver of the day award.

Richard Young

RESULTS (12 LAPS)
1 Tristan Quinn; 2 Tim Swail +10.226s; 3 Kevin Sheane; 4 David Parks; 5 Robbie Allen; 6 John Linnane. FL Quinn 1m13.109s (89.33mph).

RACE 2 (13 LAPS)
1 Sheane; 2 Parks +8.074s; 3 Swail; 4 Allen; 5 David Mulligan. FL Sheane 1m12.514s (90.26mph).

RACE 3 (12 LAPS) 1 Sheane.
2 Swail +1.023s; 3 Parks; 4 Allen; 5 Mulligan; 6 Edin Crowley. FL Swail 1m13.303s (89.58mph).

Lee's victory in new era

RAY MOORE HAS BEEN the man in Irish Formula Vee for some years, but Lee Newsome has been on the rise in recent times.

After 12 close-fought laps it was Newsome's green Scania that led Moore's black Leastone across the line when it mattered to become the first BishopsCourt winner of the modern era.

Adam Macaulay stayed with the battling pair throughout, earning fastest lap into the bargain.

Moore really got his head down in the second race to lead all the way, although the winning margin was just 0.8 seconds after 12 more laps of racing. Macaulay again took third spot, but it was Newsome who got his name into the record books with fastest lap.

Richard Young

RESULTS (BOTH 12 LAPS)
1 Lee Newsome (Sheane FV93); 2 Ray Moore (Leastone) +1.005s; 3 Adam Macaulay (Sheane FV93); 4 John Denney (Leastone) +2.609s; 5 Kevin Grinnan (Leastone) +3.315s; 6 Trevor Delaney (Sheane FV99). FL Macaulay 1m17.825s (84.37mph).

RACE 2: Moore; 2 Newsome +0.821s; 3 Macaulay; 4 Ian Campbell (Sheane FV93); 5 Robert Casey (Sheane FV99); 6 Downey. FL Newsome 1m17.263s (84.99mph).

Northern Irish Sevens fought epic duel

SPORTSCARS

Three combined affairs for Strikers, N.I. Sevens and Legends provided great variety and a frantic battle for the lead between Ryan Magennis and Alan Davidson in their GMS Hondas.

The first encounter went to Magennis (the second (which finished behind the safety car) fell to Davidson, who was also victorious in the finale. The Striker winners were Alan Watkins (twice) and Dave Griffin, while Niki Meredith beat Bob King 2-1 among the Legends.

FORMULA LIBRE

Cannon Mathews's E5 topped the results when it lasted, beating Martin Daly's Formula Renault Tatuus in the second race by just over a second. Daly took the other two when the turbo machine came to a halt.

David Nicholl, Henry Campbell and John Stewart took a win each in a small FT1600 field.

IRISH GLOBAL LIGHTS

Peter "Mad Max" Brennan took two wins, but neither was certain until the final corner, with teenage sensation Sean Doyle, Adam Godfather, Alan Byrne, Keith Dawson and Ben Conway all in the mix. The races came in time for race three, which Paul Fitzpatrick won.

SALOON/PUINTO ABARTH

Green Wray's Alfa and custard liveryed Vauxhall Vectra took two victories, just ahead of Donald O'Call's SEAT Cupra. Behind, Alastair Kellett and Gary Miller led the Punto Abarth brigade in a spectacular series of battles that never relented. In the third (wet) race the Vectras fought for second overall behind O'Neil, while the Vauxhall circulated around at the back on slicks.

Lad Vectors of Vray won saleen races.
Palmer takes MX5 treble, but doesn’t actually know it

CHRISSY PALMER claimed three more Mazda MX5 Cup victories at Anglesey to take his tally to six from nine rounds, but the race that gave him most satisfaction was the one he was not even sure he’d won.

“I don’t care if I came second, that was so much fun,” said the Formula Ford Festival winner, who crossed the line side by side with Luke Herbert, with neither driver sure who had won when they were in parc ferme. Only when the printed results came out did realisation dawn on Herbert that he had lost out by six-thousandths of a second to Palmer, despite his advantageously-positioned transponder.

Sunday morning’s races were utterly dominated by Palmer, who had won twice at Silverstone and once at Snetterton before his first sight of the Welsh track. He led from Turn 11 (quickly, the first corner of the lap as the normal startline was out of use) to the chequered flag. Jordan Stipl’s challenge for the first two races had faded on lap three of the opener when problems selecting a gear (the got through three ‘boxes in the weekend) caused him to go off at the hairpin when running second. Paul Sheard and Herbert scrapped before completing the podium in both races. The reversed-grid finale delivered great action. Palmer started eighth but picked rivals off at Seafarman on three successive laps, grabbing the lead from Stipl on the third lap. Stipl streamlined back through to School with a lap and a half to go, but that left the leaders three-wide through the hairpin. Stipl was shuffled back to third, but from nowhere Herbert emerged from the final hairpin in the lead, only to miss out on the drag to the线. Adam Gore completed the line with a great attack of four positions.

- Ian Sommerv

RESULTS (ALL 9 LAPS)
1 Chrissy Palmer; 2 Paul Sheard
6:2.92s; 3 Luke Herbert; 4 Adam Gore; 5 Matthew Davis; 6 Jordan Stipl.
Fastest lap: Sheard 1m34.760s (72.88mph).

RACE 2
1 Palmer; 2 Sheard +5.267s; 3 Herbert; 4 Gore; 5 Stipl; 6 Davis.
FL Palmer 1m34.760s (72.88mph).

RACE 3
1 Palmer; 2 Herbert +0.006s; 3 Stipl; 4 Gore; 5 Sheard; 6 Davis.
FL Palmer 1m34.760s (72.88mph).

Murphy beats spinning Winn for three victories

JOHN MURPHY CLOSED the gap to Neil Winn at the top of the table with a treble. The Liverpudlian put his Van Diemen RF90 — a machine older than anything else in the 12-car field — on pole position and did little in the way of looking back.

A largely unapologetic winner was notable for round-one winner Luke Cooper getting a touch from behind as he braked late for Rocket, sending him clattering into Jay Wheats. After early place swaps, second was resolved in favour of Winn.

Sunday’s first race was livelier. Murphy was unable to escape from Winn and Martin Short, but Winn then spun at Peel. David McArthur overtook Short for second there a lap later. McArthur receded Murphy in and looked for all the world like a man poised to make an unsuccessful final-lap bid for the lead, which duly did, spinning back to third at Rocket.

In the finale, Winn tried to out Murphy at Rocket on each of the last two laps, outbraking himself twice.

- Ian Sommerv

RESULTS (ALL 13 LAPS)
1 John Murphy (Van Diemen RF90); 2 Neil Winn (Van Diemen LA10) +1.975s; 3 Martin Short (Van Diemen RF90); 4 David McArthur (LA10); 5 Jamie Jardine (Roy GR11); 6 Tom McArthur (LA10). Class winner: Winn. FL Murphy 1m34.968s (79.60mph).

RACE 2
1 Murphy; 2 Short +0.833s; 3 D McArthur; 4 Jardine; 5 N McArthur (LA10); 6 Winn. CW Short. FL Short 1m34.093s (80.34mph).

RACE 3
1 Murphy; 2 Winn +1.333s; 3 Short; 4 D McArthur; 5 Luke Cooper (Swift S10); 6 H McArthur. CW Winn. FL Winn 1m34.793s (79.75mph).
Robinson’s Falcon defeats BMW hordes

ANDY ROBINSON helped himself to a brace of clear-cut lights-to-flag victories from pole in his mighty seven-litre Ford Falcon as he threaded it through the tight confines of Cadwell Park.

First time out, with Vaughan Fletcher’s very swift Subaru Impreza falling to the grid due to electrical problems, it was left to the BMWs of Garrie Whittaker, Dennis Crompton and Kevin Wendt to take the fight to Robinson.

In the early stages of the race Robinson romped clear of the field, but second-placed Whittaker slowly started to reel him in. “I had a little breather in the middle, but saw Garrie coming and responded to that,” admitted Robinson.

Whittaker had to settle for second, well clear of Crompton and Wendt. At the bottom end of the top six, Doug Ellwood managed to squeeze his Marcos Mantis past Isha Cox’s SEAT on the final lap.

The second race had to be restarted after David Thomas’s Renault Clio had made hefty contact with the tyrewall exiting Charlie’s. Robinson sprinted away from the rest of the field, and the refitted Fletcher Subaru started a charge after lining up at the back of the grid. By lap five he was up to third and snatched second from Crompton at Coppice three tours later.

With Fletcher securing second the race concluded with an excellent BMW battle between Crompton and Whittaker for the final podium position. The experienced Whittaker tried all he knew, but his efforts were not rewarded and he finished fourth.

> Graham Read

RESULTS (13 LAPS)

1 Andy Robinson (Ford Falcon); 2 Garrie Whittaker (BMW E36 M3) +2.415s; 3 Dennis Crompton (BMW M3); 4 Kevin Wendt (BMW E46 M3); 5 Doug Ellwood (Marcos Mantis); 6 Isha Cox (SEAT Leon Supersport).

Plane: Whittaker; Crompton; Wendt; FL Whittaker 1m32.437s (84.63mph) record.

RACE 2 (10 LAPS)

1 Robinson; 2 Vaughan Fletcher (Subaru Impreza) +22.760s; 3 Crompton; 4 Whittaker; 5 Cox; 6 Wendt.

CW Crompton; Whittaker; Cox: Chris Bonin (Honda Civic Type R).

FL Robinson 1m33.283s (83.16mph).

Taylor charge can’t prevent Porsche double for Styрин

RICHARD STYРИН WОN twice in his Boxster, but he had to work hard for the second trophy.

First time out, the Leeds-based driver claimed a dominant victory from pole, reaching the chequered flag over six seconds clear of best of the rest, Gerry Taylor. Behind the leading duo there was an excellent scrap for the final podium position between Richard Sykes and David Beam, with Sykes just edging it.

Subsequently, Styрин again made the most of his pole position to lead Sykes through Coppice for the first time, before Taylor quickly passed Sykes.

For lap after lap Taylor pressured Styрин, but was unable to find a way past. Sykes again held off Beam for third.

> Graham Read

RESULTS (BOTH 12 LAPS)

1 Richard Styрин (Boxster); 2 Gerry Taylor (Boxster) +6.609s; 3 Richard Sykes (Boxster); 4 David Beam (Boxster); 5 Adam Craft (Boxster); 6 Steven Boatley (Boxster).

CW Stephen Potts (Boxster); Alastair Kirkham (9244); FL Styрин 1m41.451s (77.11mph); RACE 2 1 Styрин; 2 Taylor +0.475s; 3 Sykes; 4 Beam; 5 Craft; 6 Boatley.

CW Potts; Kirkham; FL Styрин 1m40.727s (77.66mph) record.

Mini honours shared

A BRACE OF TYPICALLY entertaining Super Mighty Mini encounters resulted in wins for Chris Morgan and Gary Patterson.

Morgan won the opening contest after lining up second on the grid. An excellent start enabled him to lead the squabbling pack for the first seven laps of 11 before Patterson got ahead of him at Coppice. Morgan struck back on the final lap at Park, leaving Patterson and 2011 champion Elliot Stafford as his podium companions.

When the lights went out at the start of the second race, poleman Morgan made a worse getaway than Patterson and the pattern of the race was established. Morgan kept Patterson honest, but had to settle for runner-up honours. Stafford tracked them, comfortably ahead of Neven Kirkpatrick.

> Graham Read

RESULTS (BOTH 11 LAPS)

1 Chris Morgan; 2 Gary Patterson +0.393s; 3 Elliot Stafford; 4 Neil Slark; 5 David Kirkpatrick; 6 Neven Kirkpatrick, FL Patterson 1m50.496s (70.80mph).

RACE 2 1 Patterson; 2 Morgan +0.383s; 3 Stafford; 4 Kirkpatrick; 5 Slark; FL Morgan 1m50.220s (70.97mph).
Godfrey makes a point with dominant display

JULIAN GODFREY made winning look easy at Knockhill on a day when taking the most difficult track in British Rallycross was a real challenge.

It came eight months after Godfrey claimed his first ever win — and the British crown — in pouring rain at the Scottish venue.

This time the day was dry, but mastering changing track conditions, as well as dealing with dust and the setting sun late in the day, presented new difficulties.

When a mistake in the fastest place in practice, and just four laps to assess conditions and set it, there was no time to waste.

Godfrey demolished his rivals by being more than two seconds faster over a single lap. It set the tone for the day.

His Fiesta was fastest in all three heats and he gained a bonus point for the fastest time of the day along the way, but was beaten away from pole at the start of the final. “The sun was setting and shining on the starting lights so I couldn’t see them,” he said. “I waited for Steve [Hill], who was alongside in his Mitsubishi] to move and then went. I did the Joker Lap on the first lap and pushed as hard as I could, but with the sun and the dust it was difficult.

“I hit the bank in the second corner on the third lap but got away with it, and then when Steve went into the Joker [section] on the last lap I got past him — it was almost perfect.”

Ollie O’Donovan had a quiet run to third and lost the points lead to Godfrey, while Pat Doran fended off Andy Grant and Simon Horton to land fourth in his new Citroën DS3.

The Joker section played a decisive role in the Supernational A final too, James Bird making his pass through on the last lap, by which time Ash Simpson had cut enough of his lead to snatch the win.

RESULTS — SUPERCAR A FINAL (5 LAPS) 1 Julian Godfrey (Ford Fiesta V1); 2 Steve Hill (Citroën DS3); 3 Ollie O’Donovan (Ford Focus); 4 Pat Doran (Citroën DS3); 5 Andy Grant (Ford Focus); 6 Simon Horton

Moran’s perfect score puts him back in command

A LONG WEEKEND FOR British Hillclimbers was dominated by Scott Moran, who took a maximum 49 points from the Barbon Manor/Harwood double-header.

Trevor Willis kept up his always-the-bridesmaid role with a trio of second places plus a third at Harwood, while Lee Adams and Roger Moran were equal third highest of the scavengers.

Adams scored well against what ought to be quicker opponents, while as Raptor team-mate Jos Goodyear continued his best-ever start to the season by scoring three top-sixes.

Previous points leader Wallace Menzies (DJ-Cosworth Firestorm) had a difficult weekend.

He scored zero in Barbon’s opening run-off with a mistake at the final hairpin, then took fifth later.

On Sunday he was excluded by the judge of fact for running wide at the unique Harwood finish line in the first stanza. Later he suffered a misfire and finished slowest.

Richard Spelding was next best of the 1960s, behind the Raptor duo.

Harewood big-car specialist Oliver Tomlin made his seasonal debut in Yorkshire and took a satisfactory five points.

The latest Gould (the motorcycle-powered supercharged GR50) made its first run-off appearance and scored at Barbon in the hands of Simon Moyse, who hasn’t competed regularly for five seasons.

Eddie Watler
Since taking control of Ginetta six years ago, Lawrence Tomlinson has become a big player in the UK motorsport scene. Not only has the ex-club racer launched three new models, he has also got two Ginetta championships onto the prestigious British Touring Car bill.

One of those is Ginetta Junior, for 14 to 17-year-olds, which gives Tomlinson an interest in the grassroots level of the sport — and he has some strong opinions.

He feels, for example, that having the 750 Motor Club’s Saxmax championship, the BRSCC’s new Fiesta Junior series, and InterSteps — as well as Ginetta Junior — means there are too many series aimed at young drivers.

“You’ve got Fiesta Juniors competing with Saxmax — it would be better to have one front-wheel-drive series,” he says for starters.

“Why would you let Fiestas come in when you have Saxmax?”

Unsurprisingly, Tomlinson feels his higher-profile series is the best, and believes the existence of the Ginetta Challenge and GT Supercup means his Junior graduates are more likely to stay in the sport.

“With junior series it is unique because you lose them as they get older,” he says. “There is a natural progression with Ginettas — you can take the G40 Junior and race it in a senior series just by taking the restrictor plate out and changing the carbs.

“People have tended to skip that and go from Juniors to G50s. I think it’s because they want to stay on the TOCA package, it’s what they know and what their sponsors know.

“We’ve got a very sensible formula for junior drivers. I think the MSA should stop certain series and I’d like to see more of a structure around junior racing,”

Tomlinson also feels the exposure Ginetta Junior drivers get will help them when they climb the ranks.

“You get off the podium and you’re interviewed live on TV,” he says. “Where else can you get that? We’re nurturing British talent and I genuinely think you could get a Jenson Button or Lewis Hamilton come through us.”

But is that really the best way? Drivers like Hamilton and Button have reached the top via high-level karting and then single-seaters. Should 14-year-olds not stay in karting rather than risk more expensive damage bills racing what are essentially small GT cars?
Tomlinson doesn’t think so: “The typical guy who is coming to us has done six years of karting — what more are they going to learn? If you’re going to go into cars I think you’re better off in Ginetta Juniors. You’re learning the circuits and understanding the procedures. It gives you an advantage and a clear example of that is Seb Morris [winning] in Formula Renault BARC this year. Karting is fantastic for control, but you’ve got more complexities with cars.”

There’s also the issue of safety — some Junior races can be rather fraught — but that is something Tomlinson feels strongly about too (see panel, right).

“I’ve got four kids and I would genuinely prefer they were in a Ginetta Junior than a kart,” he says. “Ginetta Juniors are 10 seconds or so slower than a G50. When you go somewhere like Silverstone, it’s pretty hard for them to hit anything. There’s a huge margin and they’re strapped into the car.”

It’s not just about potential F1 drivers, of course. With chances in top-flight single-seaters becoming ever harder to come by (without millions of pounds to fund them), increasing numbers of youngsters are turning to sportscars or touring cars.

Tomlinson has links to both. He helped former Ginetta Junior and G50 champion Nigel Moore to Le Mans, funded 2011 GT Supercup champion Adam Morgan into the BTCC, and is hoping to take his latest G55 model up the GT ladder.

“If you look at F1 today, a sportscar career seems attractive to young drivers,” he adds. “You can make a pretty good living driving sportscars and you can go on until you’re 50 or so.”

Tomlinson’s decision not to award a BTCC drive to the 2012 GT Supercup champion, after doing so for Morgan, could be seen as a move away from the tin-top route, but the man himself says he just likes trying different things.

“I randomly decided to offer the touring car prize,” he says. “There was no strategy. I thought it was an interesting thing to do. If you look at the speed of the G55 it is similar to the BTCC. It’s good training.”

“We’re bringing people into motorsport who might not necessarily have come. If you look at the touring car package, 50 per cent of the drivers are driving, or have driven, Ginettas. At some point the BTCC old guard will change and you’ll see more people who have come through Ginettas.”

Lawrence Tomlinson was an inexperienced club racer when he went to Cadwell Park to drive his Ginetta in the 750 Motor Club’s Sports Racing and GT Challenge in 2002.

He found himself in a fight with the more powerful Cobra clones of Tony Ciniardi and Stefan Gilboy, and was given a harsh demonstration of the dangers of the sport when the two clashed approaching the fast Copice left-hander.

In the ensuing crash, both were killed and the meeting was abandoned. “I really had no idea about racing,” recalls Tomlinson. “It was just to get another tick on my licence so I could go to Spa and race a historic.”

“I got a fantastic start and then got mugged by all the fast cars. I wanted to stay out of it and then I lost fourth gear. But I could press one of the Cobras and hounded him. I decided to settle back, but then I was passed by another Cobra and I sat behind them.”

“They came together near the start-finish line. It was a huge crash and it happened in front of me; it was like in slow motion. I drove through the wreckage and it was quite clear one was dead and the other didn’t look good.”

“It was horrific because I knew a lot of the guys on the grid were mates. From that point on, and being a mechanical engineer, I’ve always looked at it from the point of view that the cars will crash, rather than they might, so we’re continuously developing safety.”
Formula 1’s true sporting spirit

Few can deny the satisfaction of seeing Williams on the top step of the podium again. Maldonado’s surprise victory seemed to be warmly received by the whole paddock, but the fire in the Williams garage after the race was a reminder of the persistent dangers of motorsport.

That it was dealt with so swiftly by members of all teams showed unity, selflessness and courage. The teams rightly battle hard on the track, but Sunday afternoon in Spain was a demonstration of true sport, both during and after the race, and it is why I am proud to support motorsport at all levels.

Nigel Day, Witney, Oxon
THE LATEST GEAR
Desirable new releases for motor racing fans: books, DVDs, models, art and gifts

CHEVROLET WTCC MERCHANDISE
From £14.99 (autosport.com/shop)

If the Chevrolet World Touring Team is as successful as the Ray Mallock-run Cruze tin-tops, then watch out all other official merchandise. If you’re a fan of Rob Huff, Yvan Muller or Alain Menu – and want everyone to know – check out this little lot: team cap (£14.99), team T-shirt (£19.99), team polo (£29.99), team sweat (£49.99), team shirt (£54.99) and team jacket (£109.99).

MADNESS ON WHEELS
This original artwork by Colin Carter is a tribute to Gresini MotoGP ace Marco Simoncelli, who was killed in the opening few laps of last October’s Malaysian GP at Sepang. The giclee print of the Italian flat-out on the #58 Honda measures 90 x 70 cm and is limited to 850 prints. The frame is not included.

MADNESS ON WHEELS DVD
£24.90 (52 mins) (rallywebshop.com)

An incredible film from an incredible era of world rallying, this is a thorough account of the Group B era, including the glorious highs and the shocking lows. The in-depth analysis includes Joaquim Santos’s Portuguese crash, with eyewitness accounts and an interview with his co-driver Miguel Oliveira.

BUTTON 1:1:43 McLAREN
£59.99 (autosport.com/shop)

Spark’s 1:43-scale McLaren MP4-26 model replicates the car used by Jenson Button to win the 2011 Hungarian GP. It’s a poignant model and the perfect collector’s piece as the race marked the 2009 world champion’s 200th f

HOT ON THE WEB THIS WEEK

YOUTUBE: VILLENEUVE DRIVES HIS DAD’S FERRARI 312T4

Search for: jacques VILLENEUVE drive his father’s car (3:46)
Watched over by Ferrari president Luca di Montezemolo and current drivers Fernando Alonso and Felipe Massa, Jacques VILLENEUVE drives his father Gilles’s 1979 312T4 around Fiorano on the 30th anniversary of his death in 1982.
WHAT'S ON...

Your guide to the best events taking place in the UK and around the world this week – plus TV and online

**DONINGTON PARK (BRSOCC)**
19-20 May
Admission: £10 (Saturday)
£20 (Sunday)
Tel: 01332 810048
The Superstars International Series comes to the UK and stars ex-F1 drivers Johnny Herbert and Vitantonio Liuzzi.

**CROFT (DOMC)**
19-20 May
Admission: £12
Tel: 01325 721815
Croxthall hosts the Northern Saloon and Sports Car Championship and Saker Challenge on both days and the VW Fun Cup on Saturday evening.

**LYDDEN (SEMS)C**
19 May
Admission: £12
(Under 12s free)
Tel: 01304 830557
Double headers dominate Saturday at Lydden with the Saloon and Sports Car Championship heading the bill.

**OLUTON PARK (BARC)**
19 May
Admission: £13
Tel: 01629 760301

**ROCKINGHAM (BARC)**
19-20 May
Admission: £13
Tel: 01629 760301
Sports Saloons, 125cc Karts, MG Owners Club, Mazda V-Tec, Chevron GR8, Crosse 95 and Spirit of the 60s sports cars make up the schedule at the Northamptonshire venue.

**SNETTERTON (MSVR)**
19-20 May
Admission: Free
Tel: 0871 5896722
The BeNeLux Race Car Championship comes to Snetterton for the UK round of its championship.

**SILVERSTONE (HSCC)**
19-20 May
Admission: £9
Tel: 0844 3728200
New DTM batters ahead to Brands Hatch

**BRANDS HATCH DTM (MSVR)**
May 19-20
Admission: £15 (Saturday)
£35 (Sunday)
Tel: 01474 872331
The DTM returns to Brands Hatch and McLaren test driver Gary Paffett leads for Mercedes with fellow Brit Jamie Green in second. BMW has returned after 20 years away, Bruno Spengler taking victory in the second round at Lausitz. Former F1 drivers David Coulthard and Ralf Schumacher also feature. Fellow ex-F1 driver Damon Hill will make his racing return in the DTM supporting Volkswagen Scirocco Cup on Saturday, and there's European F3 action too.

**NURBURGRING 24 HOURS**
ADAC Zurich 24 hour race
May 19-20
www.nurburgring.de
The Nurburgring 24 Hours attracts over 220,000 fans to the legendary Nordschleife. The 2012 edition of the German endurance race caters for sportscars and tin-tops of all shapes and sizes – and levels of ability. Support comes in the shape of two races for the burgeoning British GT Championship.

**WTCC**
Rd 6/12
Salzburgring, Austria
May 20
www.fia2wtcc.com

**NASCAR SPRINT CUP**
Non-points AT1-Star race
Charlotte, USA
May 19
www.nascar.com

**NASCAR NATIONAL**
Rd 10/33
Iowa, USA
May 20
www.nascar.com

**NASCAR TRUCK SERIES**
Rd 5/22
Charlotte, USA
May 18
www.nascar.com

**V8 SUPERCARS AUSTRALIA**
Rd 5/15
Phillip Island, Australia
May 19-20
www.v8supercars.com.au
REVVED UP OVER WHAT’S ON THE BOX

We cast a critical eye over the best and worst of this week’s TV coverage.

THURSDAY MAY 17
1345-1445 Motors TV
European F3: Pau replay
1645-1755 Motors TV
Grand-Am: New Jersey highlights
1450-1655 Motors TV
ALMS: Laguna Seca highlights
2100-2230 Sky Sports 1
Spanish GP Highlights

FRIDAY MAY 18
1315-1515 Motors TV
NASCAR Nationwide: Darlington
1900-2000 Sky Sports 1
Legends: John Surtees
2100-2230 Sky Sports 1
Formula 1 season review 2006

SATURDAY MAY 19
0900-1000 1200-1600
2000-2100 Sky Sports 1
The F1 Show
1100-1500 Sky Sports 1
Spanish GP replay
1345-1515 Motors TV
GP3: Barcelona highlights
1500-1600 ESPN
ALMS: Laguna Seca highlights
1515-1620 Motors TV
British F3: Pau highlights
1600-1700 ESPN
Grand-Am: New Jersey highlights
1720-1750 Motors TV
Mem 1: The Grid
2000-2130 Eurosport 2
WTCC qualifying: Salzburgring

0900-0930 Premier Sports LIVE
NASCAR Sprint Cup: Charlotte All-Star race

SUNDAY MAY 20
0745-0815 Eurosport LIVE
WTCC warm-up: Salzburgring
0900-0940 Sky Sports 1
1982 Monaco GP
0940-1020 Sky Sports 1
1983 Monaco GP
1005-1105 Motors TV LIVE
Superstars: Donington race 1
1020-1120 Sky Sports 1
Back-to-back replays of the
2007-2011 Monaco GP s
1155-1250 Motors TV
VW Scirocco Cup: Brands Hatch
1200-1415 Eurosport LIVE
WTCC races 1 & 2: Salzburgring
1245-1430 ESPN LIVE
DTM: Brands Hatch Live
1515-1600 Motors TV LIVE
Superstars: Donington race 2
2100-2240 Motors TV
NASCAR Nationwide: Iowa

MONDAY MAY 21
1400-1715 ESPN Classic
Driven: Graham Hill
1900-2000 Sky Sports 2
NASCAR Sprint Cup: Charlotte

FOR A SPLIT-SECOND, two words sprang into my
mind on Sunday, 90 or so
minutes after the finish of the
Spanish Grand Prix at
Barcelona: Bradford City.
Sky Sports switched
from a live paddock
interview to a ominous
pall of smoke, billowing
out of the Williams
garage, for a couple of
horrifying moments it felt
it might develop like that
dreadful day in May 1985
— one of British football’s
worst stadium tragedies.
A live TV broadcast from
what should have been a
joyous celebration,
that instead looked
like it had the potential
for carnage.
Thankfully, there was
no loss of life, no-one
emerging from the smoke
engulfed in flames
like that terrible day in
Yorkshire, when a
title-winning celebration
game ended with 56
dead, God rest their
souls. Everyone who saw
those scenes on TV will
live with it forever.
Television can be
a powerful, and quite
frightening, medium
when an unexpected
disaster unfolds live.
Pitlane reporter Ted
Krautz was interviewing
Alex Wurz at the time of
the explosion just a few
yards away, and one of
his cameramen, Dave
Stanford, then grabbed
one of the Williams
mechanics from the
flames. There’s an
amazing photo doing the
rounds on the Internet;
that bloke deserves a
gallantry medal.
Krauzt handled the
situation well, giving a
running commentary
of the chaotic scene in
front of him and quickly
paying tribute to the
way personnel from rival
teams descended on the
garage to help fight the
fire. “What a horrible
end to a brilliant day’s
racing,” he summed up
appositely on the hoof.
The BBC had the back
of the garage covered
with its cameras, giving
a bizarre panorama if you
were watching both on
split-screen. If anything,
the huge column of
smoke from that side
looked more scary than
the open-ended front,
and I don’t blame Jake
Humphrey, DC, EJ and
Gary Anderson for not
wishing to get too close.
A nasty moment
handled well by all.
Revved Up

“Television can be a powerful, and quite frightening, medium when an unexpected disaster unfolds live”

Thankfully the Williams garage fire was contained

ON THE iPAD THIS WEEK

ON-BOARD LAP FROM PAU F3 WITH SAINZ JR
JAMES CALADO’S EXCLUSIVE BLOG
CARROLL SHELBY TRIBUTE
THE WEEK IN PICTURES

Our lensmen pounding the beat, from Barcelona to Corsica, via Sitges

GO FASTER PASTOR!
Spanish GP hero Pastor Maldonado carries his 12-year-old cousin Manuel to safety following the post-race fire in the Williams garage

FIRE WRECKS FRENCH PAIR’S HOPEs
The Skoda Fabia S2000 of locals Jean-Dominique Mattel and Patrick Scipilitti burned out in Corsica

SPANISH STARS STAMPEDE ROUND SITGES
Audi DTM ace Miguel Molina and WRC hero Carlos Sainz try out the abandoned Sitges circuit in Spain in a Red Bull Audi R8 LMS

COME ON BRYAN, PUT YER BACK INTO IT MATE!
World Touring Car ace Rob Huff cheers on Bryan Bouffler during the recent Tour de Corse IRC event

NEXT WEEK
FULL INDIANAPOLIS 500 PREVIEW
WHY 2012 COULD BE A CLASSIC
DON’T MISS IT!
FROM THE ARCHIVE

Colin McRae wins Tour de Corse, May 1997

“That day was Colin’s day, and in those wet conditions he could get that much closer to the limit” NICKY GRIST

“I LOOKED ACROSS AT CARLOS [SAINZ] AND SAW THAT he was looking a bit down. When he’s like that I know he’s vulnerable...”

To date, Colin McRae is still the only Briton to have triumphed in the Tour de Corse. His 1997 victory had not always appeared likely though — at least, not since an errant tyre choice on the seventh stage lost him a chunk of time and left him hanging on to seventh.

A string of fastest times on day two drew him ever closer to the leaders, and when the aggressive two-wheel-drive Peugeot 306 Maxi struggled on the final day, he was up into second. One stage remained, however, and on the 34km run from Propriano to Ajaccio he still had a seven-second deficit to Carlos Sainz to make up.

What resulted was one of his finest drives. As rain began to fall, conditions that suited his Subaru’s Pirellis rather than Sainz’s Michelin-shod Ford, he began to eat into the Spaniard’s advantage. With 10km to go, they were level. At the end, the swing was complete: the deficit transformed into an eight-second victory.

“We were on catch-up scenario,” McRae’s long-time co-pilot Nicky Grist recalls. “We’d lost about 30s, and we had met the dreaded Makinen cows – luckily about 200m past the crest Tommi did.

“We’d had a hell of a good second day though, and when we came into Propriano, with one stage to go, we were seven seconds behind. It was going to be a last-stage dash, and then it started to split... and we knew the Pirellis were good in the wet.

“Colin drove an absolute blinder, like a man possessed. As the rain fell he just pushed so incredibly hard. I could feel how much he was on the limit, but everything felt good. There was never an “Oh my God!” moment. Colin just had that knack of being able to take a few extra seconds when other people were absolutely on the ragged edge.

“I think some of it was Colin wasn’t afraid of the car stepping out. The finer aspects of tarmac rallying are keeping it smooth, but on this event, with the mixed surfaces – gravel and dirt – it just worked for him. That aggressive streak, of never giving up – the same streak that I think cost him many victories and possibly titles – worked so well.

“That day was his day, and in those wet conditions he could get that much closer to the limit. It just worked perfectly for us. Although incredibly fast, it also felt incredibly smooth. Some of my memories of that rally are a bit sketchy, but I will never forget that last-stage dash. It was one of his greatest drives.”

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FINAL DRIVE
PHOTO FINISH

THIS WEEK IN...

AUTOSPORT

MAY 17 1963

RACING GREEN ADORNED THE cover of AUTOSPORT this week in 1963 in celebration of Jim Clark’s dominant victory in the International Trophy Race at Silverstone.

A crowd of over 100,000, as well as HRH Princess Margaret, flocked to the British circuit for the BRDC’s Daily Express meeting — which was at the time among the most prestigious events in the country.

After several support races — which included a victory for Graham Hill’s Jaguar E-type in the GT event — Clark proceeded to dominate the International Trophy Race. In a field including Hill, John Surtees, Innes Ireland and Bruce McLaren, he led 49 of the 52 laps, averaged over 108mph and eventually established a winning margin — over McLaren — of 24.8 seconds.
ERIC VAN DE POELE

Spa 24 Hours, Spa-Francorchamps ■ August 1-2 1987 ■ BMW M3 ■ Victory amid travel chaos

I HAD TO REALLY CONVINCE BMW to let me do the Spa 24 Hours in 1987. It was on the same weekend as the DTM race at Wunstorf – 250 miles away – but they eventually agreed.

I did practice and qualifying at Spa on the Wednesday and Thursday and then got a helicopter to take me to Wunstorf, where I did the qualifying. I was third on Friday, but not happy, so I did Saturday morning too. I timed the laps on my watch in the car, and I was happy, but there was no chance to find out where I was because I had to go back to Spa in the helicopter.

As I stepped onto the Tarmac at Spa, I found out I’d got pole, so I was happy, but by the time I came to leave Spa – after two double stints during the night (seven hours in total) – I was really tired. The big problem was that it was raining and there was no chance for the helicopter, so we had to go to Liege and fly a small plane over to Germany. It was really tight.

There was nobody from BMW waiting for us at the airport so we had to get a taxi, and the girl driving was amazing. I was sure we’d be late, but when we arrived the cars were still on the pre-grid – including mine.

I leapt out of the taxi – helmet already on – ran across the pitlane and onto the track. “I’m here,” I shouted as I barged past my mechanics. I’d just fastened my seatbelts when we got the instruction to go for the warm-up lap. It was that close.

I finished third in the race, and took the championship lead, but I knew Spa was still going on, so I decided to get back. It was still raining, so it was back to the airport, the plane and Liege. We got there five minutes after the finish, and we had to find out who had won.

A little guy with a hat on came to the plane. “Who won at Spa, who won at Spa?” I asked him.

“Erm, it was a BMW,” he said. I said, “Martin? They won?” (my co-drivers). “No,” he said. So I listed the other drivers – Giroix, Sala, Ratzengerger... Every time: “No”. My wife turned around and said, “Van de Poele?”

“Yes,” he said. What a crazy way to find out you’ve won. We got in the car and made for Spa. When we got to the motorway junction at Spa, the police were there and said, “Stop. There’s a race going on. You can’t go there.” I said, “I know. I’ve just won.” They told me to go away, but I ignored them and just drove past. Soon I had a motorbike chasing me! I arrived at the top of the Eau Rouge and started running through the crowds to get to the podium, probably looking really stupid. But I was too late.

I’m still trying to make up for it by winning again!€€€€€€€

Eric van de Poele was talking to Jamie O’Leary

BELGIAN ERIC VAN DE POELE IS the most successful driver in the Spa 24 Hours, with five wins. The 1985 Belgian and Benelux Ford champion, he joined BMW two years later and won the DTM at his first attempt. After winning in the ETCC, he switched back to single-seaters and was the FIA F3000 runner-up in ’90. After five GPs for Modena, Brabham and Fondmetal in 1991-92, he moved to sportscars and won the Sebring 12 Hours twice as well as Petit Le Mans.

IN PROFILE

“...and the police said, ‘There’s a race going on, you can’t go there’.”

I said, ‘I know, I’ve just won’ and ignored them..."
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** 17.1% of drink drive accidents are between hours of 5am and 1pm (Source: Dept. for Transport, Road Accidents and Safety Annual Report 2010)

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