

F1 75

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Drivers' World
Championship

**We rank the
best grands
prix of all time...**

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favourite make
the list?

THE 75 GREATEST
GRANDS PRIX



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FROM THE EDITORS
OF MOTOR SPORT
MAGAZINE

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THE 75 GREATEST GRANDS PRIX

This year Formula 1 reaches an important milestone as the World Championship for Drivers marks its 75th anniversary, with the sport showing no signs of slowing down. If anything, grand prix racing is accelerating like never before, reaching new audiences, territories and attracting ever more technical, commercial and sporting interest.

The top tier of our sport has come a long way since that very first world championship grand prix at Silverstone in 1950. Prior to the start of the 2025 season, a total of 1,125 F1 World Championship events have taken place, with 1,114 of those bearing the title 'grand prix' - the other 11 being the editions of the Indy 500 that formed part of the world championship between 1950-1960.

In total, F1 has visited 75 different countries across that time, competing at 77

different circuits under 54 different race titles. And *Motor Sport* has been there to report on each and every one. From 1.5-litre screamers, to raucous V12s and hybrid V6s, our reporters have witnessed all eras of the sport from trackside and documented within our archive each and every defining moment.

With such a rich history to draw from, and an anniversary to mark, it only felt right to nail our colours to the mast and attempt the impossible: ranking the greatest 75 world championship grands prix.

The entries are taken from contemporary reports and our previously published list of the greatest 100 GPs. They cover those formative races right up the tech-laden sprints we have today and were compiled and ranked by the editorial team here at *Motor Sport* - not without the odd argument.

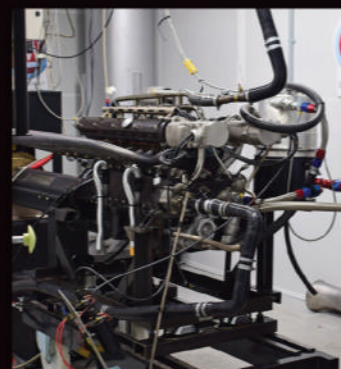
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BEFORE WE BEGIN...

What makes a great grand prix? That's the rather tricky question we had to ask ourselves in order to compile this list.

The hardest thing about ranking material such as this is each and every one will mean a different thing to a different person. Some favour certain races due to pure emotion, laden with memories of attending events with loved ones and friends, taking in the sights and sounds and seeing their heroes go to battle up close.

Others will be more impressed by certain historical significance, milestone achievements or virtuoso performances - a race won by over a minute may not sound enthralling, but it can be when the circumstance, skill and endeavour are appreciated. And then there's the reason we all fell in love with this sport, the simple thrill of seeing cars duelling wheel-

to-wheel, man and machinery intertwined and pushed to the limit in the simple endeavour of being the fastest. Within this list you'll find examples of all of this; from flat-out thrashes to defining moments, nail-biting title deciders, dramatic twists, photo finishes, surprise winners, feats of endurance and so much more.

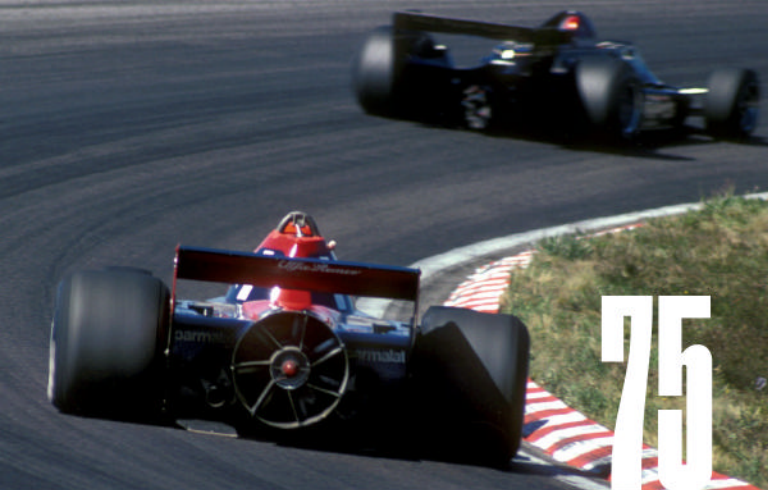
Will you agree with our choice and order? Probably not. In any exercise such as this, there is no definitive list - because there can't be. Our top 75 is based on opinion, nothing more, designed to be a bit of fun and to spark good-natured debate among fans of the world's greatest sport.

So turn the page, delve in - and whatever you do, don't take it too seriously.

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1978 Swedish GP

JUNE 17, ANDERSTORP

Like most of Gordon Murray's designs, the Brabham BT46B was a paragon of proportional elegance. It had a feature unlike any other, and holds the distinction of winning every world championship grand prix it started... albeit just the one

Colin Chapman had recently created an F1 template that endures by using aerodynamics as a performance aid - and for much of 1978 his Lotus 79 was borderline untouchable. In Sweden, however, it came up against Murray's BT46B, which featured a large fan mounted vertically beneath the rear wing. Brabham argued that its primary function was to cool the car's Alfa Romeo flat-12: the fact it also sucked air from beneath the chassis, creating a partial vacuum and colossal downforce, was apparently happy coincidence.

Mario Andretti took pole for Lotus, ahead of the Brabhams of John Watson and Niki Lauda... but there was a strong feeling that the latter had both been sandbagging. Andretti took the lead at the start, with Lauda second as Watson dropped swiftly to fifth, behind Riccardo Patrese and Ronnie Peterson. The Ulsterman would retire after 20 laps, when a sticking throttle caused him to spin.

Lauda shadowed Andretti for the first 38 laps, then took the lead and cruised away to win at his leisure, his margin of superiority only slightly amplified when Andretti stopped with piston failure.

The result stood, despite other teams' unhappiness, but Brabham then voluntarily withdrew the BT46B from service. Was this benevolence or politics? Fact: team chief Bernie Ecclestone had recently taken over as chief executive of the Formula 1 Constructors Association (FOCA)... and might just need his rivals' support. **SA**

RESULTS

1st Niki Lauda (Brabham-Alfa Romeo),
1hr 41min 00.606sec, 104.147mph
2nd Riccardo Patrese (Arrows-Cosworth)
3rd Ronnie Peterson (Lotus-Cosworth)
Pole position: Mario Andretti (Lotus-Cosworth),
1min 22.058sec, 109.867mph

1994 Japanese GP

NOVEMBER 6, SUZUKA

The world title should long since have been settled, but this was a season scarred by tragedy following the deaths of Roland Ratzenberger and Ayrton Senna at Imola, and controversy as teams, Benetton in particular, were accused of flouting the rules

Michael Schumacher had been disqualified at Silverstone and Spa - and barred from taking part at Monza or Estoril, following his failure to respect a black flag in Britain - so the campaign's dominant force was effectively competing in just 12 races to everybody else's 16.

As a result, he led the standings by only five points when teams arrived in Japan - where Damon Hill needed to beat the German to be sure of taking the title fight to the Australian finale.

In a proper Japanese deluge, Schumacher led initially and was 6.8sec clear of Hill when the race was red-flagged after 14 laps, Martin Brundle having spun off and struck a course worker - the latest in a string of mishaps, including accidents on the pit straight. The unfortunate marshal suffered a broken leg and the race resumed once he had been treated and the rain eased.

Hill took the lead when Schumacher refuelled - Benetton opting for two stops to Williams' one - and although they tussled for the aggregate lead on slightly different parts of the track, Schumacher's second stop gave his adversary a decisive advantage.

Hill has often cited it as one of his finest victories, given the conditions the grid faced. "It felt like I had a voice talking to me in one ear, telling me to push," he said, "while my mother was in the other, asking me to slow down..." **SA**

RESULTS

1st Damon Hill (Williams-Renault),
1hr 55min 53.532sec, 94.322mph
2nd Michael Schumacher (Benetton-Cosworth)
3rd Jean Alesi (Ferrari)
Pole position: Schumacher (Benetton-Cosworth), 1min 37.209sec, 134.940mph

74





73

1972 French GP

JULY 2, CLERMONT-FERRAND

"Bravo Stewart, but thank you Mr Amon," read a French newspaper headline the following day. Matra had won Le Mans in June, and now it had pulled out the stops to conquer the French Grand Prix, too

Its driver certainly delivered the performance required - only for his infamous bad luck to rob him once again.

Then again, the puncture that cost Chris Amon the race did lead to a fabulous, charging comeback. The Kiwi had been imperious around one of the last great road racing circuits and in many ways it was a performance that would define the career of a grand prix great - and yet also a man destined never to win a world championship race.

It must be said, Jackie Stewart's victory shouldn't be forgotten, given that Clermont-Ferrand marked his return to the cockpit following treatment for the ulcer that had forced him to miss six weeks of the 1972 season. But in truth, this race was all about Amon.

He'd qualified on pole position in the new MS120D, eight tenths clear of Denny Hulme's McLaren, which joined him on the front row ahead of Stewart and Jacky Ickx's Ferrari. From the start the three fastest qualifiers drew away and Amon began to build a gap as Stewart passed Hulme for second on lap 17.

But three laps later Stewart emerged in the lead, Amon's flat left-front tyre leading to a 50sec stop to replace it. The partisan home crowd groaned.

Loose stones on the swooping, demanding track had been a problem throughout practice, and one had already cost Helmut Marko his F1 career. In the early

laps of the race a stone was flicked up by a fat slick tyre, smashing through Marko's helmet visor and into his eye, causing irreversible damage. Consequently, his Formula 1 career is a footnote, and he's better known as Red Bull's outspoken driver development manager - Sebastian Vettel's biggest fan.

Following Amon's puncture, Stewart consolidated his lead as Emerson Fittipaldi moved up the order, the pair taking care to avoid the 'marbles' that had done so much harm. Amon pushed his wailing V12 to its maximum, throwing caution to the wind as others pitted with punctures. He passed both Ronnie Peterson and François Cevert on one lap, on a twisty circuit at which overtaking was difficult, and at the flag was just four seconds down on Fittipaldi.

Denis Jenkinson, not exactly known for dishing out praise, described the drive as "fantastic and almost unbelievable". It was one that deserved so much more. **DS**

RESULTS

1st Jackie Stewart (Tyrrell-Ford),
1hr 52min 21.5sec, 101.56mph

2nd Emerson Fittipaldi (Lotus-Ford)

3rd Chris Amon (Matra)

Pole position Amon (Matra), 2min 53.4sec, 103.91mph

1986 Spanish GP

APRIL 13, JEREZ

It was the heart of the turbo era, and while power was at its peak the races were dominated by fuel and tyre conservation. Parts of this recipe might just sound a touch familiar...

Like today, grand prix racing was far from perfect in the 1980s, but as Formula 1 returned to Spain for the first time since 1981 it proved it could still throw up a nail-biting thriller.

Ayrton Senna's Lotus 98T was the fastest thing around the brand new Jerez circuit in the spring of 1986, but with fuel consumption marginal over a race distance the Brazilian knew he couldn't afford to use all that performance for the duration.

At half-distance Nigel Mansell made his move and took the lead. But there was no panic from Ayrton. He maintained his pace as Alain Prost kept a wily watching brief in third.

Senna's pure speed in qualifying dominates how we remember him today, but races such as this underlined the power of his racing brain too. In the best traditions of nemesis Prost, he won this race using his head.

Mansell's push to pass had taken the edge from his tyres and he was forced to pit for fresh Goodyears. Now he went for broke in typical fashion and closed on Senna, sniffing a last-gasp victory. Nigel caught the Lotus and, as they rounded the hairpin for the final time, he charged for the line - missing out by just 0.014sec.

Unlucky Mansell? Or had Senna managed the duel to perfection, doing just enough to get the job done? You decide. **DS**

RESULTS

1st Ayrton Senna (Lotus-Renault),
1hr 46min 47.735sec, 104.471mph
2nd Nigel Mansell (Williams-Honda)
3rd Alain Prost (McLaren-TAG)
Pole position Senna (Lotus-Renault),
1min 21.60sec, 115.623mph

72



Moss was masterful at Monaco. **Right:** The Briton's Maserati leads Castellotti's Ferrari-Lancia around the harbour



1956 Monaco GP

MAY 13, MONTE CARLO

The maestro had been brilliant in practice, comfortably claiming the £100 for pole position around the Principality. But come the race Juan Manuel Fangio would put in one of the most uncharacteristically ragged drives of his career

Ahead of him, his former pupil from their year together at Mercedes truly came of age. Stirling Moss's first victory in Monaco, driving his beloved Maserati 250F, is less celebrated than his glorious defeat of Ferrari five years later, but it was a consummate performance nonetheless.

Moss took the lead from the start, seeing off Eugenio Castellotti and Fangio at the Gasworks hairpin, and was never headed thereafter. As for Fangio, he was soon in the wars. He spun at Ste Devote, then in his recovery caused Luigi Musso to ram the straw bales, breaking the Lancia-Ferrari's steering. It also forced Harry Schell's Vanwall into a wall, which bent its front suspension. Red-faced Fangio continued - but there was more to come.

On lap 32 he clobbered the harbour wall and damaged a wheel, which forced him to pit. Castellotti, who'd already retired his Lancia-Ferrari, took the helm while Fangio caught a much-needed breather. Meanwhile, young Peter Collins was running an impressive second, but he'd pit and hand his car over to Fangio - it wouldn't be the last time - and the Argentine set off once more after Moss.

With 10 laps to go, Stirling led by 28sec, but the gap began to come down as Fangio pushed. On the 100th and final lap the champion set the fastest time of the race, but Moss was unruffled and won by six seconds. His only scare had been nosing into Cesare Perdisa as he lapped the Maserati, causing his bonnet to lift a little. Other than that, 'The Boy' had out-mastered the master. **DS**

RESULTS

1st Stirling Moss (Maserati),

3hr 00min 39.0sec, 64.93mph

2nd Juan Manuel Fangio/Peter Collins (Lancia-Ferrari)

3rd Jean Behra (Maserati)

Pole position Fangio (Lancia-Ferrari),

1min 44.0sec, 67.646mph





“Hill rejoined with a very black and angry look on his face and his moustache bristling”

Hill fired up and in no mood to compromise.
Right: Swift recovery after his avoiding action

1965 Monaco GP

MAY 30, MONTE CARLO

It's not often that a grand prix winner hops out to push his car back into the race. But that's what Graham Hill had to do during his quest to chalk up a hat trick of wins in the Principality. 'Mr Monaco' earned his title during one of his very best drives

Graham Hill and his young BRM team-mate Jackie Stewart had dominated the early stages of a race that was missing both Jim Clark and Dan Gurney, who were on duty at the Indianapolis 500. But as Hill shot out of the tunnel on lap 25, there was Bob Anderson's Brabham crawling towards the chicane with a driveshaft problem. Hill took to the escape road in avoidance, resuming in fifth “with a very black and angry look on his face and his moustache bristling,” as Denis Jenkinson put it.

Now for the comeback. Ahead of him, Stewart threw away hopes of a first GP win by spinning on to the pavement at Ste Devote, leaving Lorenzo Bandini's 12-cylinder Ferrari ahead of Jack Brabham and John Surtees' V8 Prancing Horse. Stewart had rejoined in fourth, but soon allowed his BRM team leader past. Hill was on a mission.

Brabham took the lead from Bandini, but a broken rev counter would eventually contribute to a blown Climax engine. By lap 50, half-distance, Bandini led once again from Surtees, but Hill was right with them. The unstoppable Hill went on to pass both red cars and set a new lap record on his way to a third Monaco win on the trot. Had he been there, even Clark might have struggled to hold him back. **DS**

RESULTS

1st Graham Hill (BRM),

2hr 37min 39.6sec, 74.37mph

2nd Lorenzo Bandini (Ferrari)

3rd Jackie Stewart (BRM)

Pole position Hill (BRM), 1min 32.5sec, 76.05mph



1982 South African GP

JANUARY 23, KYALAMI

The ill-starred drivers' strike tends to dominate when thoughts turn to South Africa 1982. But after the politics, bus trips and 'lock-ins', the drivers delivered a classic grand prix as the turbo era began to get into its stride

The Renaults, Ferraris and Brabham-BMWs showed dominant pace, and no one could live with Alain Prost and René Arnoux come Sunday, but poor reliability and tyre dramas gave the Cosworth hordes hope and brought the race alive.

These days, Prost is too easily labelled as the intelligent driver who won by stealth. His sheer speed, particularly at this early stage of his F1 career, can be overlooked. Perhaps that was because he made it look so easy. When he lost a dominant lead with a puncture, the Frenchman used his power advantage to charge back to the front from eighth. As Jenks put it: "It had not been spectacular to watch, for Prost is not a spectacular driver, but fast he undoubtedly is, his driving well suited to the very efficient Renault."

His team-mate Arnoux also suffered Michelin problems, picking up a chronic tyre vibration that forced him to slow. It allowed Carlos Reutemann's normally aspirated Williams to finish second, outlasting the ailing turbos. What a difference from the final race of '81 in Las Vegas, when a watery performance cost him the title. On this occasion, the 'real' Carlos turned up. But soon he would be gone, quitting Williams and F1 to return home for a life in politics, enigmatic to the last. **DS**

RESULTS

1st Alain Prost (Renault),
1hr 32min 08.40sec, 127.86mph
2nd Carlos Reutemann (Williams-Ford)
3rd René Arnoux (Renault)
Pole position Arnoux (Renault),
1min 06.35sec, 138.36mph

69





68

2012 Spanish GP

MAY 13, BARCELONA

Everybody loves a surprise winner, and nobody was a bigger surprise in the modern grand prix era than Pastor Maldonado

Prior to Barcelona 2012, Maldonado and his Williams team had been largely nowhere, barely even scraping into the top eight with Williams' glory days long gone. However, on what was also a celebration of Sir Frank's 70th birthday, something or a miracle occurred.

The first surprise was Maldonado pipping home hero Fernando Alonso's Ferrari to pole on Saturday. But realistically nobody expected him to keep it there. Alonso drafted into the lead at the start and normal service was resumed. Or was it? Push as he might, Alonso couldn't shake Maldonado off, who remained close behind and eventually managed to undercut ahead at the stops when Alonso was delayed in traffic. Surely the Spanish hero would catch and eventually pass the little old Williams? Nope. Maldonado stayed ahead on the harder tyres and even overcame a slow pitstop when his left-rear refused to slot into place to draft back into the lead past Kimi Räikkönen's long-stinting Lotus. Across the final stages, Maldonado maintained a slender advantage over Alonso to secure Williams its first win since Juan Pablo Montoya in the 2004 Brazilian GP, and without any freak weather or extenuating circumstance in sight.

Just as memorable was the aftermath, with a fire engulfing the Williams garage following a fuel leak. The fact the result coincided with a special day for the Williams family was also enough to prompt wild conspiracy theories of a fix, all of which were dismissed - and regardless Maldonado would've still had to drive the car for 66 laps without fault, which he did. After becoming F1's first-ever Venezuelan winner, Maldonado attained national hero status with people flying banners in his name in the capital Caracas and he even received a congratulatory phone call from then-president, Hugo Chávez. Safe to say, he never troubled the podium places again. **RL**

RESULTS

1st Pastor Maldonado (Williams-Renault),

1hr 39min 09.145sec, 115.47mph

2nd Fernando Alonso (Ferrari)

3rd Kimi Räikkönen (Lotus-Renault)

Pole position Maldonado (Williams-Renault),

1min 22.285sec, 126.52mph



**"Four British drivers
dominating at the
Nordschleife in a manner
never seen before"**

Tony Brooks leads
the Ferraris of Collins
and Hawthorn over
Adenau Bridge

1958 German GP

AUGUST 3, NÜRBURGRING

One of Tony Brooks' finest days in a racing car, but also an occasion forever overshadowed by the loss of Peter Collins, who crashed fatally during a three-way battle for the lead – right in front of his Ferrari team-mate Mike Hawthorn

This was Vanwall vs Ferrari, four British drivers dominating at the Nordschleife in a manner never seen before. Stirling Moss, almost inevitably, made the early running, stretching out a lead in his Vanwall before stopping at Schwalbenschwanz with magneto failure on lap four. At this stage it appeared the two Ferraris had the race under control, with Brooks 22sec in arrears. But then Tony began to reel in the red cars.

Brooks engaged the Ferraris in a memorable duel, taking the lead decisively as they started the 11th of 15 laps. Then disaster: Collins, running ahead of Hawthorn, went off the road at Pflanzgarten, suffering severe head injuries from which he later succumbed. Hawthorn

raced on, but clutch failure forced him out one lap later. Hawthorn later pipped Moss to the title in Casablanca's season finale, but didn't have much time to savour his success as Britain's first world champion. He died in a road accident in January 1959. **DS**

RESULTS

- 1st** Tony Brooks (Vanwall),
2hr 21min 15.0sec, 90.30mph
- 2nd** Roy Salvadori (Cooper-Climax)
- 3rd** Maurice Trintignant (Cooper-Climax)
- Pole position** Mike Hawthorn (Ferrari),
9min 14.0sec, 92.10mph

67



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1970 Italian GP

SEPTEMBER 6, MONZA

"Jackie Stewart spent practically the whole race battling against 12-cylindere cars," wrote Denis Jenkinson. "If it wasn't a Ferrari it was a BRM, and if they weren't there it was a Matra, so he must be getting fed-up with the sound of 12 cylinders on full song."

Stewart's March-Cosworth V8 had been at the heart of a slipstreaming classic typical of the era. But it's the context of his performance that really makes one gasp, for the day before his close friend Jochen Rindt had died after his Lotus 72 snapped left into a barrier on the approach to the Parabolica. For those who would later accuse Stewart of cowardice over his stance on safety, his strength of character at Monza that weekend should have been remembered. There was, in fact, none more brave.

Unlike the race that would play out a year later, the battle for Monza '70 would not go to the line, Clay Regazzoni's Ferrari breaking the tow late on to claim a clear win that sent Italy into raptures. Stewart was left in his wake, edging Jean-Pierre Beltoise's Matra and Denny Hulme's McLaren for second. He'd raced to win, as usual, despite everything.

Jacky Ickx's clutch failure would contribute to Rindt eventually becoming Formula 1's only posthumous world champion - something that mattered not at all to Jenks. In Continental Notes, he wrote: "There are so many occasions when I get sick and tired of the Drivers' World Championship... at Monza I had to be very short with a lot of people. They were not saddened by the death of Rindt or the loss to Team Lotus, all they were worried about was whether the rules allowed a dead man to be champion."

"There have been years when I personally would not have awarded a world championship to any driver, and other years when the choice has been obvious, irrespective of the points scored under FIA rules. The

fact that Rindt was killed while he had an almost unassailable lead in the points race for the title of world champion put so many people into a flutter that it was really sickening...

"To win a championship by scoring more points than the next man is a bit like winning the football pools. To win all the races is much more impressive. So dead or alive, champion or posthumous champion, let's not forget that in 1970 Jochen Rindt had a record that read 1st Monaco GP, 1st Dutch GP, 1st French GP, 1st British GP, 1st German GP. A worthy driver, if not among the great artists of the sport of motor racing."

Jenks had been hard on Rindt and he would be tough on Stewart in the future, too - in both cases unfairly so. But his assertion that a race hard-won counted for more as a single entity than a title of world champion is one by which many true fans still stand. Or as he put it: "I still think that the reason for motor racing is for the combination of car and driver, coupled to the rest of the team that operate out of the limelight, to beat all the opposition and win the race for which they are entered."

Simple, isn't it? **DS**

RESULTS

- 1st** Clay Regazzoni (Ferrari),
1hr 39min 6.88sec, 147.07mph
- 2nd** Jackie Stewart (March-Ford)
- 3rd** Jean-Pierre Beltoise (Matra)
- Pole position** Jacky Ickx (Ferrari),
1min 24.14sec, 152.86mph

66





2025 RACE CALENDAR

Saturday 5 April
Silverstone Spring Start

Saturday 24 May
Donington Park

Saturday 21 June
Cadwell Park

Saturday 30 August
Mallory Park

2025 SPEED CALENDAR

Sunday 4 May
Curborough Speed Trials

Sunday 11 May
Wiscombe Park Hill Climb

Saturday 7 June
Harewood Hill Climb

Sunday 6 July
Shelsley Walsh Hill Climb

Saturday 2 & Sunday 3 August
Vintage Prescott Hill Climb

Saturday 6 & Sunday 7 September
Loton Park Hill Climb

Saturday 20 September
Prescott Long Course Hill Climb



EVENT INFO



SPEED TICKETS



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31 March



1982 San Marino GP

APRIL 25, IMOLA

Political wrangling between the governing body and the member teams of FOCA meant only 14 cars presented themselves at Imola. It hurt the fans, of course, but also the FOCA teams themselves, for Ferrari finished 1-2 – and needed those points

The fastest cars at Imola were the Renaults of Alain Prost and René Arnoux, but Gilles Villeneuve – a second and a half faster in qualifying than Ferrari team-mate Didier Pironi – took the fight to them from the beginning, and when they broke looked set fair to win his first race in Italy.

Once the Renaults were gone, Villeneuve – mindful that the Ferraris were very marginal on fuel – backed off, allowing Pironi to catch him, and even occasionally overtake. Gilles assumed he was playing to the crowd, but was concerned by fuel consumption, for whenever Didier led the pace was a couple of seconds quicker.

Towards the end, Villeneuve was in front again, slowing the pace once more, and at this stage he

believed his team-mate was behaving honourably, observing the ‘Hold’ signals from the Ferrari pit.

Not so. As they cruised round the final lap, just before Tosa – the last overtaking opportunity – Pironi suddenly spurred past, leaving Villeneuve no chance to respond. The crowd, it appeared, believed they had been ‘racing’.

After a furious slowing-down lap, Gilles brought his car into the paddock, slewing it to a stop after a final burst of throttle. As he stepped out, and removed his helmet, his face was livid. As I caught his eye, he uttered a single word – English, and of four letters – to sum up his feelings about his team-mate. He did not accompany Pironi and third man Michele Alboreto

“As I caught his eye, he uttered a single word – English, and of four letters – to sum up his feelings about his team-mate”



on the lap of honour. On the podium his expression said it all. This was farce, nothing less, and after a token appearance he left for the park where his helicopter awaited.

Two days later we spoke on the phone, and he told me he intended never to speak to Pironi again. Nor did he: in the last minutes of qualifying at the next race, Zolder, he clipped a slower car cruising in the middle of the track, and died in an accident of extraordinary violence.

For some of us, at a time when so much else was awry with F1, the loss of Villeneuve was almost too much to take in. **NSR**

RESULTS

1st Didier Pironi (Ferrari),

1hr 36min 38.887sec, 116.65mph

2nd Gilles Villeneuve (Ferrari)

3rd Michele Alboreto (Tyrrell-Ford)

Pole position René Arnoux (Renault),

1min 29.765sec, 125.59mph





Holy heck! Cornelius 'Neil' Horan runs across the Hangar Straight. Right: but he didn't dampen Ruben's joy

2003 British GP

JULY 20, SILVERSTONE

Two God-fearing men, one in a saffron skirt and the other in a Day-glo Ferrari, grabbed the headlines at Silverstone. The first, a former priest, scared the Bejaysus out of the drivers he ran towards on the Hangar Straight

The Brazilian had chosen to swim against the tide when he entered the temple of the Scuderia's 'Chosen One' in 2000. Criticised for passivity, he was under extra pressure at Silverstone because of a lacklustre first half of the season. He had, however, kept faith in his ability - and was swearing by a new, harder Bridgestone of a construction different to that selected by team-mate Michael Schumacher.

Rubens Barrichello was terse rather than his usual accommodating, cheery self. He'd had enough of the sniping. Beaten from pole by the Renault of Jarno Trulli and Kimi Räikkönen's McLaren, on lap 11 he secured second place with an inventive and

muscular pass of the latter. Enter Mr Horan to trigger the second bizarre Safety Car period in quick succession; the first had been caused by the self-ejecting head restraint of David Coulthard's McLaren. The pack was shuffled by stacking in the pits and Räikkönen moved back ahead of Barrichello when the latter was contained in his box by gamesmanship on Williams' part; Rubens dropped to eighth as a result.

He was not to be denied, though. Once past Trulli and the lagging Toyota of Olivier Panis, he uncorked a Schuey-like sequence to reduce Räikkönen's advantage from 9.4sec to under a second inside four laps. The McLaren still led when Barrichello emerged from his late second stop, but the Ferrari man 'simply' sat it out side-by-side through the daunting Bridge to take the lead on lap 42. On a day when overtaking was the new religion - Praise be! Everybody was at it - Barrichello had revealed his devil within. **PF**

RESULTS

- 1st** Rubens Barrichello (Ferrari),
1hr 28min 37.554sec, 129.72mph
- 2nd** Juan Pablo Montoya (Williams-BMW)
- 3rd** Kimi Räikkönen (McLaren-Mercedes)
- Pole position** Barrichello (Ferrari),
1min 21.209sec, 141.59mph

64



1979 Canadian GP

SEPTEMBER 30, MONTREAL

Racing's toughest nuts butted heads for almost two hours on a circuit that was hard on tyres and brakes. According to Denis Jenkinson of *Motor Sport*, they "made everyone else look like a bunch of old women." He wasn't wrong

Alan Jones was clearly the quicker of the two, his Williams' newfound reliability having allowed him to win three of the four previous rounds. Ferrari's Gilles Villeneuve, however, did not know when he was beaten. More than half a second slower than the Australian in practice, the local hero burst from the outside of the front row to take a lead that he was to hold for 50 laps.

Jones, with nobody in his mirrors, was able to sit tight and maintain an ominous presence and unrelenting pressure, feinting this way and that, and quickly making up time lost behind an inattentive backmarker. He was in control, though not in the lead, and his outbraking move at the hairpin appeared decisive when it eventually came. Having swiftly established a three-second lead, he felt able to switch to conservation mode.

His irrepressible rival immediately locked on again and Jones was forced to set the race's fastest lap seven laps from the end. His advantage at the finish was a whisker over a second.

Such was the pace of the top two, only Jones' team-mate Clay Regazzoni finished on the same lap as them - and the Swiss, a renowned tough nut himself, was well over a minute behind. PF

RESULTS

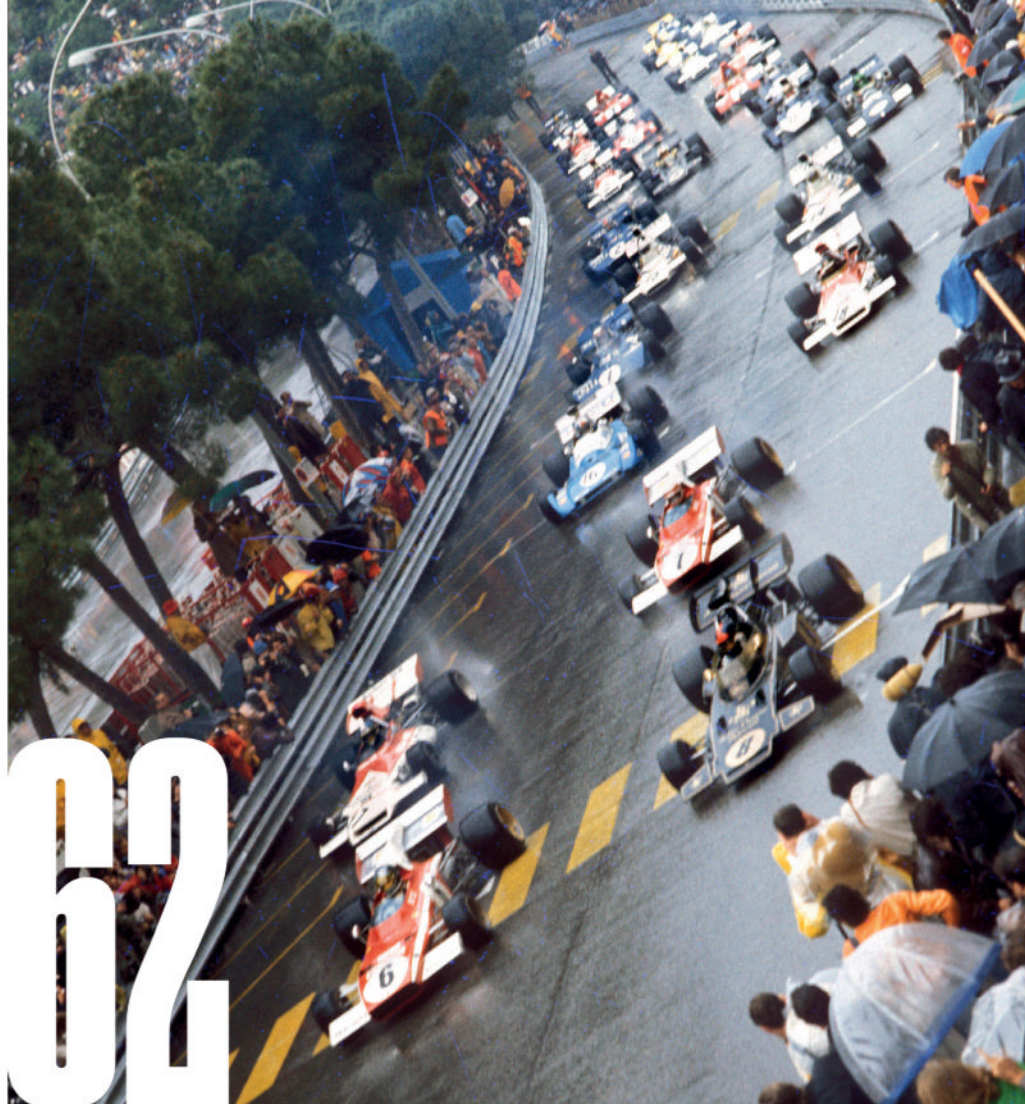
1st Alan Jones (Williams-Ford),
1hr 52min 06.892sec, 105.35mph
2nd Gilles Villeneuve (Ferrari)
3rd Clay Regazzoni (Williams-Ford)
Pole position Jones (Williams-Ford),
1min 29.892sec, 109.73mph

63





“With a clear view ahead, he sawed, all arm and elbow, at the wheel and skittered between kerbs”



1972 Monaco GP

MAY 14, MONTE CARLO

Jean-Pierre Beltoise had come close to winning a GP several times since his debut in 1966 but, at 35, time was running out. Plus he had coped for eight years with an injury that reduced his locked left arm to not much more than a steady prop

Hence the undeniable sense of his released frustration in the early stages of this race.

The Frenchman's BRM bolted from the second row and squeezed by the Ferrari of Jacky Ickx on the run to a Ste Devote recently narrowed by new Armco. It was a do-or-die manoeuvre. Beltoise knew that this was his big chance. His torquey V12 was competitive and the Manchester-like rain would ease the strain on his arms; he was forever asking the team to lighten his steering. With a clear view ahead, he sawed, all arm and elbow, at the wheel and skittered between kerbs. The chasing Ickx, in contrast, was smoothness itself; the Belgian wet-weather ace was also slower than the inspired leader.

After 20 laps of near mania, Beltoise settled into a necessary rhythm. It was going to be a long race, so slow was the average speed. It was a busy race, too. Retirements were few and the leader was forever

picking off slower cars. Chris Amon, for instance, finished three laps in arrears in his Matra and yet still scored a point. Fourth-placed Jackie Stewart, suffering the symptoms of the ulcer that would cause him to miss the next GP, was two laps behind in his misfiring Tyrrell. And pole-sitter Emerson Fittipaldi finished a lapped third in his Lotus. There was a hazard cloaked in mist around every soaked corner - only one of the seven DNFs did not result from an accident - and yet Beltoise single-handedly navigated them all. **PF**

RESULTS

1st Jean-Pierre Beltoise (BRM),
2hr 26min 54.7sec, 63.85mph

2nd Jacky Ickx (Ferrari)

3rd Emerson Fittipaldi (Lotus-Ford)

Pole position Fittipaldi (Lotus-Ford),
1min 21.4sec, 86.41mph



2023 Dutch GP

AUGUST 27, ZANDVOORT

Max Verstappen made a habit of running away with races during 2023, and while they were mostly all virtuoso performances, they didn't usually make for great grands prix.

However, when the championship dominator rolled into his home race seeking a ninth win in a row, he was tested to the limit in a topsy-turvy weather-blighted race at Zandvoort.

While Verstappen started from his customary pole position, rain before the end of the opening lap threw a soggy spanner in the works. Sergio Pérez was first to stop for intermediates, a move that would vault the sister Red Bull into the race lead just two laps later. Despite rejoining some 10 seconds back, Verstappen ate into his team-mate's lead, eventually undercutting back to top spot with an early stop to slicks just as the track began to dry.

Then the chaos began as Logan Sargeant crashed heavily in his Williams, bringing out a safety car to bunch the pack. But things really got spicy when a sudden downpour with 10 laps remaining sent cars scattering and caused a red flag. Pérez fell victim to cede second to Fernando Alonso, and when the grid was reset we were treated to a soaking six-lap sprint for the win, in which Verstappen managed to fend off the veteran Spaniard while Pierre Gasly grabbed a



surprise podium for Alpine after Pérez was penalised for speeding in the pit lane during one of the race's six pit visits. The race was so afflicted, Verstappen won with a sub-80mph average speed. **RL**

RESULTS

- 1st** Max Verstappen (Red Bull Racing-Honda),
2hr 24min 04.411sec, 79.33mph
- 2nd** Fernando Alonso (Aston Martin-Mercedes)
- 3rd** Pierre Gasly (Alpine-Renault)
- Pole position** Verstappen (Red Bull-Honda),
1min 10.567sec, 135.00mph

61

WHERE THE
GREATEST
CARS
ARE.



60

2012 European GP

JUNE 24, VALENCIA

He was a fraction over two-tenths slower than Q2's fastest lap – but 11th on the grid was 11th on the grid. Although it meant he had a set of fresh slicks for the race, disappointment for once peeked from behind his usual punchy optimism

Fernando Alonso had come up short at home. Sunday dawned hot. His getaway wasn't great but his car's body language was positive. Every first-lap opportunity had to be grabbed. He ran wide over turn one's kerb but kept his foot in to pass Jenson Button. Tenth. Nico Rosberg and Paul di Resta, clumsily mixing it and distracted, were outfumbled entering and exiting turns four and five. Ninth. And eighth. Alonso's second push was launched just before the first round of stops. Sixth

by lap 14, he stayed out longer than most, pushed like hell, and gobbled up another couple of places.

Now came the crux. Emerging behind a gaggle going long, he launched his third push immediately: Mark Webber, Bruno Senna, Michael Schumacher – eighth, seventh and sixth in the space of two laps.

Rosberg pitted. Fifth. One-stopping di Resta was a sitting duck on old rubber. Fourth. Only then did Alonso get his first break. Two in fact: a Safety Car



because of debris scattered around the circuit - and a cocked-up stop for Lewis Hamilton. Third. Romain Grosjean was lightly tagged and solidly mugged at the restart. Second.

Leader Sebastian Vettel was right to be disappointed: he would have run away with it had his Red Bull's alternator not packed up. But Alonso only won because he thought he could and drove like he might right from the start. He had walked tall at home. **PF**

RESULTS

1st Fernando Alonso (Ferrari),

1hr 44min 16.649sec, 110.43mph

2nd Kimi Räikkönen (Lotus-Renault)

3rd Michael Schumacher (Mercedes)

Pole position Sebastian Vettel (Red Bull-Renault),

1min 38.086sec, 123.57mph



**“Alonso only won because
he thought he could, and
drove like he might”**

**"As lightning lit a brooding sky,
Clark dropped his pace dramatically,
yet was still faster than his rivals"**



The classic view down to Eau Rouge, before the fickle Ardennes weather turned. Right: Clark in all his mastery



59

1963 Belgian GP

JUNE 9, SPA-FRANCORCHAMPS

Jim Clark was spooked by Spa. He almost jacked in the sport after his '58 international debut there in Border Reivers' Jaguar D-type, when the battling Lister-Jaguars of Masten Gregory and Archie Scott Brown lapped him as though he were standing still

Then later he'd driven through the smoke of compatriot Scott Brown's fatal accident.

He'd almost jacked it in two years later, too, despite finishing fifth in only his second GP: the Belgian, at you know where. For Lotus had endured its grimmest race meeting: Stirling Moss and Mike Taylor were badly injured in practice crashes caused by mechanical failures and Alan Stacey was killed during the race when he lost control after being struck in the face by a bird. Clark, who ended the race with blood on his car - he had skimmed past the lifeless body of another Brit, Chris Bristow - had understandably seen enough. Almost.

Yet Spa also gave him his first world championship GP victory. In 1962, after a troubled practice, he gradually increased his pace during the race and took the lead on lap nine. Even then, he had to bear witness to team-mate Trevor Taylor's 130mph tangle with the Ferrari of Willy Mairesse, which both men somehow contrived to survive. ●

Yorkshire Trev suffered another purler at Spa in 1963, cutting a cartoon-like hole in a wooden observation hut when “something went” during practice. Clark, meanwhile, was kicking his heels because of gearbox woes.

Having qualified only eighth, for a place on the third row, Clark stared uneasily at the back of the Ferrari of ‘Wild Willy’. Suitably spurred, the Scot led into Eau Rouge and rocketed away, albeit with the BRM of Graham Hill in tow. The circuit was damp and his Lotus kept jumping out of top gear, so Clark had his hands full until Hill retired at half-distance because of transmission bothers.

At which point it began to rain. Biblically.

As lightning lit a brooding sky, Clark dropped his pace dramatically. Reduced to 60mph in places, one of his laps took 6min 40sec compared to his 3min 58.1sec fastest lap. Yet still he was quicker than all of his rivals.

His boss Colin Chapman tried to get the race halted prematurely, but it ran its full 32-lap course. Soaked, and hardly in the mood to celebrate, Clark stopped mere yards beyond the chequered flag and trudged up the hill to the sanctuary of his pit. He had finished almost five minutes ahead of the Cooper of runner-up Bruce McLaren, whom he had allowed to unlap himself, but still the end could not come soon enough. Victory was a sideshow. Survival was paramount. **PF**

RESULTS

1st Jim Clark (Lotus-Climax),
2hr 27min 47.6sec, 114.11mph
2nd Bruce McLaren (Cooper-Climax)
3rd Dan Gurney (Brabham-Climax)
Pole position Graham Hill (BRM),
3min 54.1sec, 132.28mph



Spa's gonna Spa: a drenched Clark takes the flag, and hardly looked overjoyed after (above)



1982 Monaco GP

MAY 23, MONTE CARLO

Ever since his pole-setting Renault team-mate René Arnoux had spun out of a big lead on lap 15, Alain Prost had been calmly making a mockery of the old saw that a turbo couldn't win in Monaco

For some reason, however, he was unwilling to slacken his pace when the drizzle began with 10 laps to complete. This Prost still had some rough edges in need of polishing.

Riccardo Patrese had been fast and composed all weekend. He qualified second, and though outgunned by Prost's boost on the second lap, had kept the Frenchman honest (and a little worried, apparently) while holding the Ferrari of Didier Pironi at bay. But Prost's wheel-shedding crash at the Chicane on lap 74 (of 76) changed everything.

Now in the lead, Patrese, who was chasing his first GP win, appeared helpless as he spun in slow-mo at Loews Hairpin - and stalled. Murray Walker's trousers, smoking after Prost's shunt, went up in a flash.

New leader Pironi ran out of fuel in the Tunnel. Andrea de Cesaris would have taken the lead if his Alfa Romeo hadn't also run dry. And Derek Daly, in his second outing with Williams, might have inherited the lead had he not bashed his wing and gearbox against the barriers at Tabac.

Meanwhile, Patrese, having been pushed by marshals because he was deemed to be in a dangerous



position, had bumped-started his DFV on the descent to Portier. Disorientated, it was only when he passed the stationary Ferrari and Alfa on his slowing-down lap that he realised he might have won.

Had Patrese not been able to restart, the result would have been a 1-2 for the Lotuses of Nigel Mansell and Elio de Angelis. The latter, in an obstreperous mood throughout - he clashed with Prost and Pironi as they lapped him - was further enraged by his team-mate's pass for fourth place. On the last lap. Naturally. **PF**

RESULTS

1st Riccardo Patrese (Brabham-Ford),
1hr 54min 11.259sec, 82.18mph

2nd Didier Pironi (Ferrari)

3rd Andrea de Cesaris (Alfa Romeo)

Pole position René Arnoux (Renault),
1min 23.281sec, 88.96mph

58

1970 Belgian GP

JUNE 7, SPA-FRANCORCHAMPS

Spa had become divisive. Jackie Stewart despised its naked dangers – and said so. If it rained, he told Ken Tyrrell, he would not race. And his team boss couldn't argue as he felt this throwback road circuit had two years of Formula 1 left in it. At most

Pedro Rodríguez loved its naked dangers – and said so. Even if it rained, he told his GPDA peers at a meeting on Saturday evening, he would not give it a second thought: he would race. Hard.

The Mexican, who had recorded a startling 160mph fastest lap in a Porsche 917 during May's 1000-kilometre sports car race here, was not a rival that Stewart entirely trusted on track, although Stewart would concede that the faster the circuit, the better Pedro usually drove. Perhaps, thought Stewart, he needed the danger to perform, to concentrate.

In the same way, Stewart's 'enemies' had to concede that the Scot himself was no chicken. JYS disliked his March almost as much as he did Spa and yet he put it on pole by more than two seconds. Rodríguez, expected to shine in the V12 BRM, could do no better than sixth after losing much running time during practice because of first gearbox and then engine problems. Chris Amon, who missed the entire final session while the engine was changed in his works March, would start from the outside of the three-car front row.

Stewart's problems occurred during the (bone-dry) race. His Cosworth V8 broke an outer valve spring on the warm-up lap and, although he took the lead from Amon on the second lap, he sensed his impending doom as his engine ran progressively flatter before detonating as he passed the pits at mid-distance. Rodríguez and Amon were long gone by this stage.

The latter, his new engine running particularly strongly, had felt invincible – until Pedro blew by him on lap five. Chris ducked into the streamline, tucked his elbows in and clung on. A slide for Rodríguez exiting La Source on lap eight allowed the red March alongside – and to be credited with the lead of that lap – but nobody was braver than Pedro through Eau Rouge and he promptly resumed the lead.

The pair of them were rarely more than two seconds apart but Amon could do nothing about the super-concentrated Rodríguez. The New Zealander set the fastest lap on the last tour – just a 152mph average because of the insertion of a first-gear chicane at Malmédy – to close to within a second of the staunchly resonant BRM. And that was that.

Rodríguez had the victory he so craved. BRM had ended its four-year drought. And Spa, the old Spa, had held its last grand prix. Stewart had been incontrovertibly right about the track. But at least Rodríguez had got his chance to be gloriously, magnificently wrong. **PF**

RESULTS

- 1st** Pedro Rodríguez (BRM),
1hr 38min 09.9sec, 149.94mph
- 2nd** Chris Amon (March-Ford)
- 3rd** Jean-Pierre Beltoise (Matra)
- Pole position** Jackie Stewart (March-Ford),
3min 28.0sec, 151.42mph





**“Perhaps Rodríguez needed
the danger to perform,
to concentrate him”**

57

56

1955 British GP

JULY 16, AINTREE

The word was that Mercedes-Benz might let Stirling Moss win at home as a logical way of building bridges between the two countries. There were, however, no official team orders forthcoming from M-B's famed 'fat controller' Alfred Neubauer

If the young Englishman were to be helped by his inestimable number one Juan Fangio, he would have to earn it. Pole position - two-tenths faster than the Argentinian superstar - was, therefore, a good start.

Moss had spent the preceding 100-lap Dutch GP grooved in Fangio's wheel tracks: mainly learning, partly proving a point and always convinced that the maestro could pull away at will should he so wish. Aintree was different: he took the lead on the third lap. 'Okay, let's see what you can do.'

Fangio certainly kept him on his toes. Moss, running a shorter final drive than his team-mate and more at ease with the car's 'back to front' gearbox now that an interlocking mechanism had been fitted to prevent botched changes - was driving as hard as he knew how.

The silver machines were soon in control. Only the Maserati of Jean Behra was able to harry them, and it gave up the ghost with a cracked oil pipe after only 10 of the 90 laps. Thus the way was open for another display of German superiority, albeit softened by a British twist. Moss had displayed indisputable patriotism in the frustrating early stages of his GP



From left: Karl Kling,
Juan Manuel Fangio,
Alfred Neubauer;
Stirling Moss







"Many years later Moss asked directly if he had been allowed to win. Fangio replied, 'No. It was your day'"



career. Now, if he - and Britain - were to progress at the highest level, he needed to show that he could win in top-quality machinery.

Fangio moved ahead again for eight laps - mainly teaching, partly proving a point - before Moss repassed. With clever use of backmarkers, the local hero was then able to establish a 10-second lead a little beyond half-distance.

Neubauer hung out '*Regulare*': meaning hold position. Was that the sign?

Then '*Piano*': gently. No, was that the sign?

Moss throttled back, Fangio less so, and they were nose to tail once more.

On lap 88, Moss matched his pole time to set a new lap record - definitely making a point: fast and fit. Exiting the last corner of the final lap, however, and unsure of the etiquette on this loaded occasion, he hesitated, glanced and gestured. If there was a plan, be it Fangio's or otherwise, he was not privy to it. Fangio drifted wide and crossed the line still two-tenths in arrears, neither man going flat chat.

Although nothing was said in the immediate aftermath, Moss's gesture of placing the laurel wreath over his team leader's shoulders spoke volumes. Many years later, he asked directly if he had been allowed to win. Fangio replied, 'No. It was your day.'

Perhaps Fangio could have won. Perhaps Moss could have pressed home his advantage in the second half. Undoubtedly, the respect between them was total. Fangio considered Moss a worthy winner. And Moss was a worthy winner because it had not been handed to him on the plate.

Mercedes-Benz finished 1-2-3-4 that day - but it had crushed with a velvet glove. Moss and Fangio, team-mates Karl Kling and Piero Taruffi, Neubauer and designer Rudi Uhlenhaut had struck a perfect balance in every respect. That's a rare thing in GP motor racing. **PF**

RESULTS

1st Stirling Moss (Mercedes-Benz)

3hr 07min 21.2sec, 86.47mph

2nd Juan Manuel Fangio (Mercedes-Benz)

3rd Karl Kling (Mercedes-Benz)

Pole position Moss (Mercedes-Benz),

2min 00.4sec, 89.67mph

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1996 Spanish GP

JUNE 2, CATALUNYA

When Michael Schumacher signed for Ferrari for '96 it looked like his ego had got the better of him. Moving from Benetton, where he was about to win his second title, to a chaotic team that had won two races in five seasons seemed like insanity

Indeed, events leading up to the Spanish round were hit and miss. Three podiums were followed by a lap-one crash at Monaco after starting from pole, and at Catalunya he started third, a second slower than polesitter Damon Hill in the Williams.

Then, on race day, it poured. Jacques Villeneuve sped off into the lead as Hill and Schumacher floundered in the wet, but by lap 12 the German had caught and passed the Canadian. As Hill spun into the pitwall and out of the race, Schumacher set about building an insurmountable lead. He was in a class of his own, lapping up to three seconds faster than his rivals and finishing with a 45-second advantage.

On the podium the driver many fans saw as a robot jumped for joy and embraced team boss Jean Todt. With all that came afterwards it is easy to forget that Schumacher's early days with Ferrari helped rehabilitate his public image. No longer the dominant force in F1, he became the willing underdog, dragging a weary team back into contention. Stirling Moss, who was never a fan of Schumacher's, remarked: "That was not a race. It was a demonstration of brilliance." **ACH**



RESULTS

- 1st** Michael Schumacher (Ferrari),
1hr 59min 49.307sec, 95.55mph
- 2nd** Jean Alesi (Benetton-Renault)
- 3rd** Jacques Villeneuve (Williams-Renault)
- Pole position** Damon Hill (Williams-Renault),
1min 20.650sec, 131.11mph

55



1997 European GP

OCTOBER 26, JEREZ

After a second season with Ferrari, Schumacher's reputation was sky-high. While some could not forgive his title-winning chop on Damon Hill in '94 he had driven with tenacity in the third-best car and now had a chance to win the title

Benetton wasn't the sole reason for his success. Heading to Jerez for the final round of 1997 Schumacher led Jacques Villeneuve by one point; if he could simply finish ahead of the Williams he would win the title. Villeneuve, Schumacher and Heinz-Harald Frentzen bizarrely all set identical times of 1min 21.072sec during qualifying, but the Canadian would take pole as he had crossed the line first.

Schumacher seized the initiative with a fine start and led into the first corner, with Frentzen also beating his team-mate. After Williams gave the order to switch positions Villeneuve began to close in on Schumacher until, on lap 48, he was less than a second behind.

At Dry Sack Villeneuve dove down the inside, nosing ahead of the Ferrari. Schumacher hesitated for a moment, as if weighing up his decision before

steering into the Williams. The two cars tangled, then separated, Villeneuve gingerly carrying on, Schumacher ended up beached in the gravel, the championship lost.

The FIA stripped him of his place in the standings and although he kept his race results for the year, he lost the respect of many. Not even the best of his generation could get away with that. **ACH**

RESULTS

1st Mika Häkkinen (McLaren-Mercedes),
1hr 38min 57.771sec, 115.10mph
2nd David Coulthard (McLaren-Mercedes)
3rd Jacques Villeneuve (Williams-Renault)
Pole position Villeneuve (Williams-Renault),
1min 21.072sec, 122.17mph

54

1959 United States GP

DECEMBER 12, SEBRING

Formula 1 visited the United States for the first time in 1959 (if we set aside the Indy 500s that counted towards the championship in years past), settling on Sebring, Florida, for its inaugural grand prix

Already established on the sports car calendar, the venue was new to single-seaters and provided a challenge very different to even other airfield circuits. With punishing bumps and tyre-shredding surface changes it looked to be a race of attrition even before the cars ventured out of the pits.

Cooper's Jack Brabham arrived in Florida with a five-and-a-half point lead over Stirling Moss in Rob Walker's T51 and eight points ahead of Ferrari's Tony Brooks. All he had to do was beat his two rivals and the championship would be his. If only everything were that simple.

Cooper's plan was to have Masten Gregory - the team's fastest but least consistent driver - play the hare and goad Moss and Brooks into pushing the mechanical limits of their cars on the bumpy track. But Gregory had sustained serious injuries when he leapt from his Tojeiro Jaguar as it careened towards the earth bank at Goodwood months before. The feat saved his life but cost Cooper its ace in the hole. Young Bruce McLaren was tasked with beating the two older drivers instead.

Moss lined up first on the grid with Brabham, Schell, Brooks, Trintignant and von Trips up next, setting up a Cooper/Ferrari showdown. McLaren lay 10th, scuppering the works team's plans further.

Moss rocketed away at the start, building a 10-second lead in the first five laps before a gearbox failure put him out of the running. Brooks was subject to a bump from team-mate Wolfgang von Trips in the first corner and, ever careful, pitted to make sure his car was safe to continue.

The championship was now Brabham's to lose.

The race settled down into an orderly procession, only punctuated by retirements and Maurice Trintignant in the remaining Rob Walker Cooper tearing after the leading cars. McLaren had made a good start and now lay second behind his team leader. The two works cars were taking it easy by this time; with Brooks still in the race Brabham still had to finish.

Even with Trintignant making up time the race slowed to a procession with Brooks behind in fourth. That is, until drama erupted on the last lap. Brabham, having opted to run a risky fuel strategy, began to slow, his Climax engine sputtering and finally giving up 400 yards from the finish line. He waved McLaren past, giving him the first victory of his illustrious career, and leapt out of the car. He pushed the Cooper to the line, losing out to Trintignant and Brooks but arriving in fourth. The new world champion collapsed, exhausted but jubilant. His was the first F1 championship for an Australian, the first for Cooper, the first for Climax and the first for a rear-engined car.

In one season the little team had upset the established order and ushered in a new era. **ACH**

RESULTS

1st Bruce McLaren (Cooper-Climax),

2hr 12min 35.7sec, 98.82mph

2nd Maurice Trintignant (Cooper-Climax)

3rd Tony Brooks (Ferrari)

Pole position Stirling Moss (Cooper-Climax),

3min 00.00sec, 104.00mph

53



1976 British GP

JULY 18, BRANDS HATCH

The summer of 1976 was a scorcher in Britain, the hottest for 350 years. Maybe it was the heat that caused the rather un-British reaction to James Hunt's troubles at Brands Hatch, but there was definitely something in the air that July

Niki Lauda was on pole with Hunt alongside; it had long been obvious that the championship would be a two-horse race between them, but only if Hunt could shed his bad luck and get in the game. Hunt had won two grands prix to Lauda's four after the former was reinstated as winner in Spain.

At the start Clay Regazzoni, in the second Ferrari, got alongside Lauda at the top of Paddock Hill but lost it and the pair made contact. Hunt, immediately behind, was tagged by Clay's car as it rolled backwards, flew into the air and crashed down, breaking the McLaren's suspension.

The race was red-flagged and the damaged cars made their way back to the pits. Hunt took a shortcut down an escape road, saving him valuable time. As the cars were being repaired in the pits, things looked

bleak for McLaren. There was no way it could get the car out before the officials reformed the grid and Hunt had hurt his hand in the accident. When the cars came out without Hunt, the crowd began to respond.

In the sweltering Kent heat jeers rained down on the officials as bottles, cans and anything the crowd had to hand was thrown onto the track. The chant rose: "We want Hunt."

The delay gave McLaren time to patch up the number 11 car, and now fearing a riot the organisers felt they had no choice but to let it race. The restart went off without a hitch. Lauda led Hunt for 45 laps but could never pull out a significant gap. The McLaren was not in perfect shape after the shunt, even with the repairs, but got better as the race went on and as Lauda began to have trouble with his gearbox, Hunt

"The delay gave McLaren time to patch up the car, and now fearing a riot the organisers felt they had no choice but to let it race"



pounced. He increased his lead all the way to the finish while Lauda nursed his car home in second.

All seemed well after the race, but Ferrari had a plan brewing. Two months afterwards, with three races to go and Hunt only five points behind Lauda, the Italians protested the results of the British Grand Prix, saying that because Hunt had used an escape road and therefore not completed the lap, he had not done the full race distance. The FIA agreed and Hunt now found himself 17 points behind.

Now thinking himself out of the running the Brit drove sublimely without any pressure in the next two races, winning them both. Being disqualified might just have given Hunt the boost he needed to win the title. **ACH**

RESULTS

1st Niki Lauda (Ferrari),

1hr 44min 19.663sec, 114.25mph

2nd Jody Scheckter (Tyrrell-Ford)

3rd John Watson (Penske-Ford)

Pole position Lauda (Ferrari),

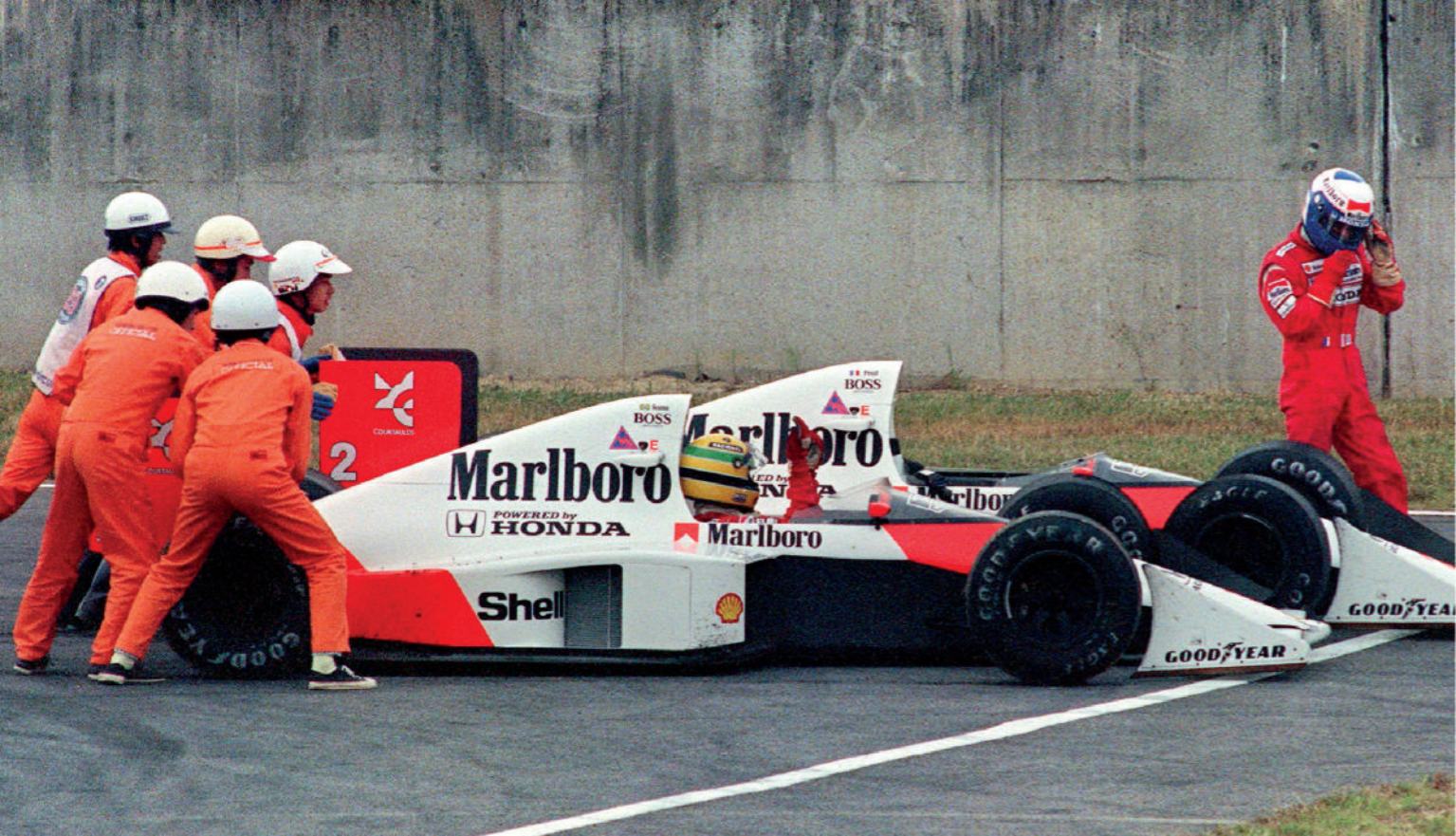
1min 19.350sec, 118.59mph



52



The flashpoint at the start as Regazzoni's Ferrari gets sideways alongside Lauda, leaving Hunt with nowhere to go



1989 Japanese GP

OCTOBER 22, SUZUKA

As expected the title protagonists and 'team-mates' qualified 1-2, with Ayrton Senna ahead, but Alain Prost quietly confident. "I'm going to drive an aggressive race," he said

"I want to win the championship by winning the race, and I've told the team there's no way I'm going to open the door any more - I've done it too many times..."

Prost was ever the master of set-up, his focus on race day. In the morning warm-up he was quicker than Senna, and immediately before the formation lap got his mechanics to remove a Gurney flap from his McLaren. With overtaking so difficult at Suzuka, Alain wanted to be quick in a straight line.

At the start he left everyone breathless, and drove a stupefying opening lap. After a dozen laps he was more than five seconds up on Senna, and even when he hit traffic, where Ayrton was usually demonstrably quicker, the gap barely reduced.

Over the long haul, though, Prost's lead was gradually whittled away: with six laps to go Senna lunged down the inside at the chicane, his right-hand wheels across the pit lane entrance, then on the grass, as he forced his way alongside Alain.

Prost indeed 'did not open the door', as he had promised before the start. Locked together, the two McLarens came to a halt in the middle of the track, both engines dead.

Alain at once climbed out, but Ayrton waved for a push - to which he was entitled, given that his car was in 'a dangerous place'. Problem was, he allowed himself to be shoved into the escape road, and

although this was no longer 'a dangerous place', he got a push start, and rejoined the race.

After stopping for a new nose, Senna caught and passed Alessandro Nannini's Benetton and took the chequered flag, apparently the winner. Later, though, he was disqualified, and thus Prost was the world champion of 1989.

The whole scenario happened in front of me, and I walked back with Prost. "I couldn't believe he tried it on that lap," he said, "because he was so far back - he'd been closer the lap before. At first I didn't realise he was trying to overtake me, but at the same time I thought, "There's no way I'm leaving him even a one-metre gap..."

"The chicane was the only place I could pass," said Senna, "and somebody who should not have been there closed the door..." Quite why Prost 'should not have been there', no one quite understood, but that was Ayrton. **NSR**

RESULTS

1st Alessandro Nannini (Benetton-Ford),

1hr 35min 06.277sec, 121.73mph

2nd Riccardo Patrese (Williams-Renault)

3rd Thierry Boutsen (Williams-Renault)

Pole position Ayrton Senna (McLaren-Honda),

1min 38.041sec, 133.68mph

51



2000 Belgian GP

AUGUST 27, SPA-FRANCORCHAMPS

50

If you asked anyone in F1 at the time, plenty would have said that Michael Schumacher needed a good talking to. But Mika Häkkinen, the quiet Finn who liked to let his driving speak for him, might not have topped the list of candidates to dish it out

Qualifying at Spa threw up a few surprises, namely the Jordan of Jarno Trulli and the Williams of rookie Jenson Button splitting the two title rivals on the grid. But early in the race the interlopers clashed, setting up a showdown.

Rain started to fall and Schumacher caught Häkkinen hand over fist until the latter spun, handing over the lead in the process. Schumacher's lead grew to almost 12 seconds, but it wouldn't last. As the track dried Häkkinen came back with a vengeance until, with only four laps to go, he caught his quarry through Eau Rouge.

As they raced down the Kemmel Straight it looked like a done deal. That is until Schumacher abruptly closed the door at 190mph, taking off a chunk of the McLaren's front wing in the process, something that would bring on strong words from the Finnish driver after the race.

Häkkinen backed off for a few corners and then renewed his attack. Catching Schumacher at the same spot, they came upon Ricardo Zonta's BAR in the centre of the track. Schumacher went left, Häkkinen dared to go right. Zonta had no idea the McLaren was even there but left enough room, unwittingly becoming part of one of the most audacious lead changes the sport has ever seen.

Exactly what Häkkinen said to Schumacher after the race may never be known, but for once he got his point across directly. His rival couldn't help but take note. **ACH**



RESULTS

1st Mika Häkkinen (McLaren-Mercedes),

1hr 28min 14.494sec, 129.53mph

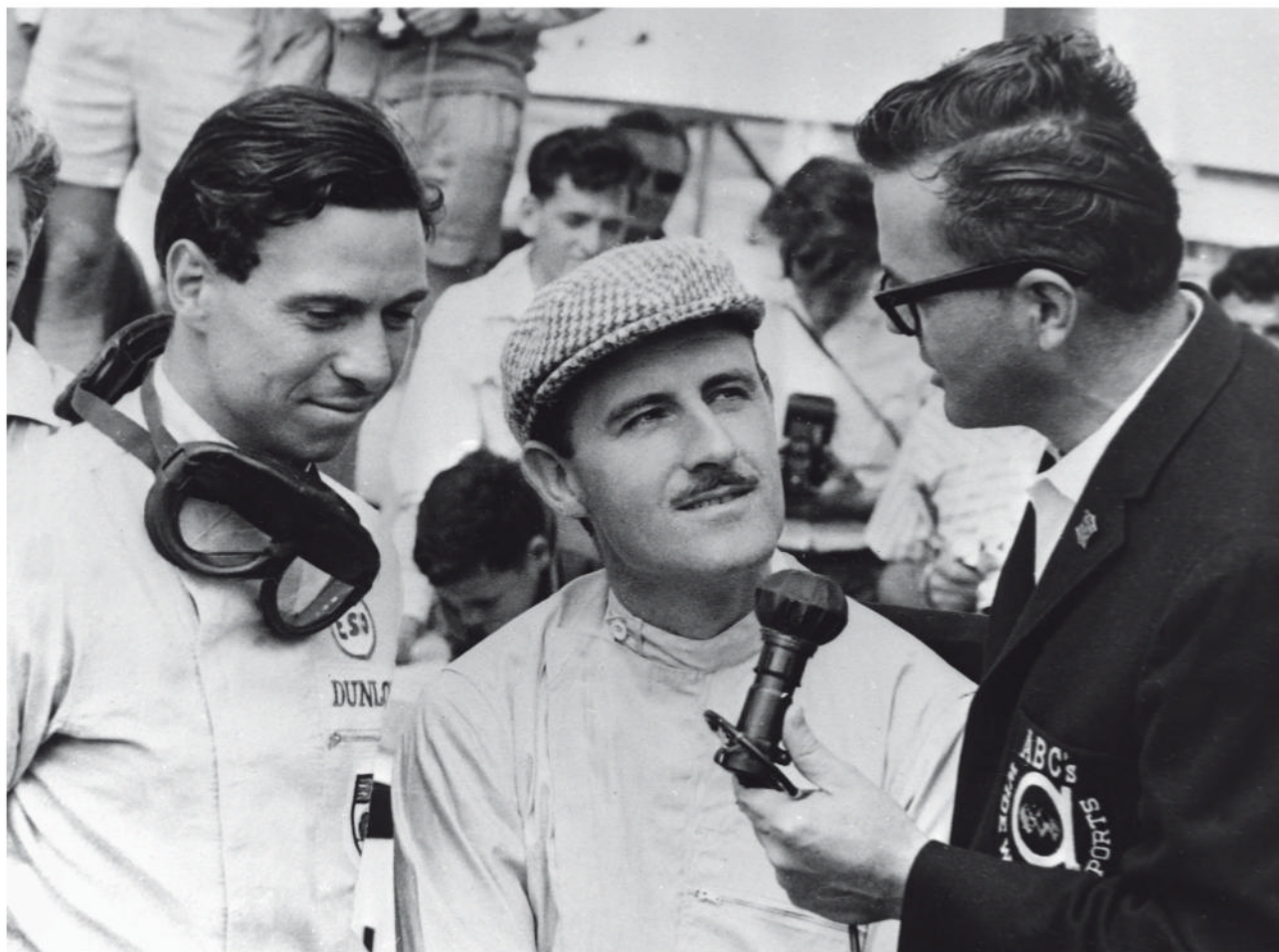
2nd Michael Schumacher (Ferrari)

3rd Ralf Schumacher (Williams-BMW)

Pole position Häkkinen (McLaren-Mercedes),

1min 50.646sec, 140.87mph





1962 South African GP

DECEMBER 29, EAST LONDON

During 1962 Jim Clark and Graham Hill had emerged as Britain's premier racing talents and their teams – Lotus and BRM respectively – were without doubt the ones to beat

By the last round at East London each had won three grands prix apiece and Hill was ahead on points due to the BRM's greater finishing record - but only just, due to the system of dropped scores. Whoever won the race would win the title.

Clark started from pole with Hill alongside him and it was the Scot who took the lead on the first lap. From there he built up an unassailable lead of the type F1 would become accustomed to over the next few years. Under the circumstances the unflappable Hill did well to build up a huge gap of his own over the chasing pack - the Coopers of Bruce McLaren and Tony Maggs were fighting closely with Jack Brabham - but there was nothing he could do about Clark.

The two circulated far apart for 61 laps until the Lotus started to leak oil. Clark stopped and the mechanics found that a locking washer had not been

fitted, causing a two-inch bolt to fall out and allow oil to spray over the exhaust. Whatever the result now, Hill would be champion.

The BRM crew couldn't relax just yet though, as there was still a race to be won and Richie Ginther's sister car had suffered an engine problem. No such troubles plagued Hill though, and as he crossed the line the demons of BRM's '50s mediocrity were exorcised and one of history's most popular champions was crowned. **ACH**

RESULTS

1st Graham Hill (BRM), 2hr 08min 3.3sec, 93.59mph

2nd Bruce McLaren (Cooper-Climax)

3rd Tony Maggs (Cooper-Climax)

Pole position Jim Clark (Lotus-Climax), 1min 29.300sec, 101.40mph

49



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1955 Ferrari 250 GT Europa - Ex Olivier Gendebien



1929 WO Bentley 4.5 Fully Restored



1962 250 SWB Competizione FIA HTP



1955 Lotus MK IX Ex-Tony Page



1953 C-Type FIA HTP



OldRacingCar.com

48

1964 Mexican GP

OCTOBER 25, MEXICO CITY

Two years after the dramatic season finale in South Africa – Graham Hill taking both race and title for BRM after Jim Clark's Lotus sprang an oil leak – the same pair vied for the big prize again, this time with John Surtees as a third interested party

Clark needed to win with Hill no higher than third, while second would suffice for Hill, irrespective of other results. Second might be enough for Surtees, so long as Clark was behind him and Hill – who had to drop one score, with only a driver's best six results counting – finished no higher than third.

Got all that?

As was the custom throughout the early Sixties, Clark led away from pole with Dan Gurney (Brabham) running second ahead of Hill and Surtees' team-mate Lorenzo Bandini. Surtees was back in fifth – and seemingly out of title contention.

Hill's chances were then partially torpedoed by Bandini, who ran into the BRM, spinning it around and damaging its exhaust pipe at the expense of the car leaking a few bhp. Clark looked ever more likely a champion... although with a few laps to go his Climax V8 began to leak oil.

On the penultimate lap the leader was forced to park with a seized engine and the advantage passed to Hill, but only until Ferrari gave Bandini a signal to slow and let Surtees through. While Gurney swept to victory, Bandini complied during the final lap and, for the sake of one point, Surtees became the first – and so far only – competitor to secure world championships on both two wheels and four. In the space of a lap and a half, the title had changed hands three times. **SA**

RESULTS

1st Dan Gurney (Brabham-Climax),
2hr 09min 50.320sec, 93.32mph

2nd John Surtees (Ferrari)

3rd Lorenzo Bandini (Ferrari)

Pole position Jim Clark (Lotus 33-Climax),
1min 57.240sec, 95.40mph



"Surtees became the first – and so far only – competitor to secure world championships on both two wheels and four"



Petition to bring back white and blue Ferraris. Below, from left: Gurney, Surtees, Clark and Hill converse; Bandini rams Hill around; Surtees in victory with Moss





47



2017 Azerbaijan GP

JUNE 25, BAKU

When Azerbaijan was first announced on the grand prix calendar for 2016 (then as the European Grand Prix), safe to say it was met with a fair bit of cynicism. However, the Baku circuit soon delivered great racing, with its second-ever event proving rather bizarre

Three safety cars, a red flag, the high drama of a hot-headed Sebastian Vettel ramming Lewis Hamilton, and then a stunning finish... few who saw it can forget the 2017 Azerbaijan Grand Prix.

Hamilton led away from pole as chaos reigned behind him when Kimi Räikkönen and Valtteri Bottas came together and Max Verstappen's engine broke signalling him to scold back to the pits "Yep, here we go again... f***". Then behind the resulting safety car Vettel hit the rear of Hamilton as he backed the pack up, the Ferrari driver then pulling alongside and deliberately hitting the Mercedes broadside in anger, feeling he'd been brake-tested by the British driver. Then the twin Force Indias collided, forcing a red flag as debris littered the track.

Hamilton continued to lead at the restart until his headrest worked loose and he was ordered to pit to have it secured, handing top spot to Vettel, but only until he was handed a 10-second stop-go for his antics behind the safety car. Through all this came Daniel Ricciardo, who had himself been forced to stop on lap six to have debris cleared from the brake ducts of

his Red Bull. That left him as low as 17th, but he made progress amid the chaos to run third before trouble befell the two leaders. Perhaps just as bizarrely, despite his first-turn clash and stop to repair a puncture, Valtteri Bottas then managed to drag past Lance Stroll's Williams on the run to the line to snatch second by 0.1sec as two cars that had been consigned to the pits early on found themselves first and second, with Stroll taking his first podium, and enduring a 'shoey' in celebration (*above*). Some turnaround. **RL**

RESULTS

1st Daniel Ricciardo (Red Bull Racing-Tag Heuer),

2hr 03min 55.573sec, 92.07mph

2nd Valtteri Bottas (Mercedes)

3rd Lance Stroll (Williams-Mercedes)

Pole position Lewis Hamilton (Mercedes),

1min 40.593sec, 133.49mph



1984 Portuguese GP

OCTOBER 21, ESTORIL

Speed vs stealth. Today Alain Prost has a reputation as the master strategist, a driver who prioritised race set-up over qualifying panache, but in 1984 he was a regular front-row qualifier while team-mate Niki Lauda relied on canny racecraft

The Austrian led the championship by 3.5 points coming into the season finale - the first Portuguese Grand Prix since 1959 - and to take the title Prost needed to win with Lauda third or lower, finish second with Lauda fifth or lower or third with Lauda outside the points. It was all going swimmingly, too.

Pole qualifier Nelson Piquet was slow away, but Prost dropped behind Keke Rosberg (Williams) and Nigel Mansell (Lotus), although it took only until lap nine for the Frenchman to work his way to the front. At that stage, Lauda was still mired in the top 10's lower reaches and France appeared destined to crown its first world champion.

As the race wore on, though, and Prost pulled away, Lauda made steady progress, picking his way through the pack with a succession of passing manoeuvres, mostly under braking for turn one.

By the time he'd made it up to third, on lap 33 of 70, he was half-a-minute behind the second-placed Mansell and the title looked more distant still. The Lotus later began leaking brake fluid, however, and on lap 51 Mansell lost time with a spin. Next time around he spun again, handing McLaren a one-two and giving Lauda the title by half a point - the tightest margin in championship history. SA

RESULTS

1st Alain Prost (McLaren-TAG Porsche), 1hr 41min 11.753sec, 112.18mph

2nd Niki Lauda (McLaren-TAG Porsche)

3rd Ayrton Senna (Toleman-Hart)

Pole position Nelson Piquet (Brabham-BMW), 1min 21.703sec, 119.09mph

46



Rosberg hunts the Ferrari before their clash. Right: Watson won and set a record that may never be beaten





Tambay leads from pole with Watson so far behind he's not even pictured



45



1983 USA GP West

MARCH 27, LONG BEACH

This was a race whose grid bore little relation to the racing reality. Ferrari seemed in good shape, with Patrick Tambay and René Arnoux locking out the front row, but McLaren's drivers struggled to make their Michelin qualifiers work

They lined up in close company, though, John Watson 22nd and Niki Lauda 23rd...

Tambay led into the first corner as Keke Rosberg separated the Ferraris, the Finn thumping Arnoux's front-right wheel in the process. Rosberg then spun a couple of corners later, but lost a place only to teammate Jacques Laffite.

Tambay continued to lead, using his Ferrari's straight-line speed to repel the nimbler Williams-Cosworths (Rosberg ahead once again after slicing cleanly past Laffite). On the 26th lap, however, Rosberg dived inside Tambay at the hairpin and tipped the Ferrari into a spin. Rosberg then collided with both Laffite and Jean-Pierre Jarier's Ligier before the lap was out, leaving Laffite at the head of the field from Riccardo Patrese's Brabham and the two McLarens, which worked brilliantly in race trim and had carved through the field. Lauda was now ahead, but Watson passed him on lap 31.

The McLarens moved up again when Patrese slid wide in his endeavours to usurp Laffite, but Watson showed how it should be done on lap 45. Lauda followed suit and the McLarens romped home well clear of Arnoux, the only other driver to finish on the same lap as Laffite slowed with tyre wear. An eventful sign-off, then, as Long Beach prepared to abandon F1 in favour of CART... **SA**

RESULTS

1st John Watson (McLaren-Cosworth),

1hr 53min 34.889sec, 80.62mph

2nd Niki Lauda (McLaren-Cosworth)

3rd René Arnoux (Ferrari)

Pole position Patrick Tambay (Ferrari),

1min 26.117sec, 85.07mph

1981 Monaco GP

MAY 31, MONTE CARLO

If ever proof were required to banish the notion that Gilles Villeneuve lacked finesse, this surely was it. Ferrari's first turbo car was bullet-quick in a straight line, but that ought to have been less of an advantage in Monaco than anywhere else...

Didier Pironi qualified his 126 CK 17th, which was a more accurate barometer of the car's potential, while Villeneuve was 2.476sec faster. It was a bit like putting a steroidal Triumph Herald on the front row.

It looked as though the French-Canadian's qualifying cameo would count for little, though, with Nelson Piquet's Brabham-Cosworth streaking away from pole position and controlling the race very comfortably. At least, he did once it eventually began.

Shortly before the scheduled start, a blaze had broken out in the Loews Hotel: it was swiftly put out, but the fire brigade's extinguishant leaked through the floor and landed on the road below... which also doubled as the Monaco tunnel. "And that," said Murray Walker, as the camera zoomed in, "is a very wet patch of water..."

It took about an hour before conditions were declared adequately dry, but the wait didn't appear to faze Piquet. Later in the race, though, a couple of slower cars would...

After a moderately clean start - only two drivers failed to complete the opening lap, Mario Andretti and Andrea de Cesaris having collided at the exit of Ste Devote - Villeneuve held second initially, but didn't waste much time trying to defend against Alan Jones when the Williams closed in. He allowed the Australian room down the inside at Mirabeau - not much, but just enough - and Jones later complimented his adversary's sound racecraft. He felt that Villeneuve would have gone off or broken his car if he had invested too much energy trying to keep the much more effective Williams at bay.

That sound judgment would be rewarded in due course. On lap 54, Piquet - aware that Jones was edging



closer - came up behind Eddie Cheever's Tyrrell and Patrick Tambay's Theodore, both of which had previously been lapped. Rather than wait as Cheever sliced past Tambay, the leader allowed his line into Tabac to be compromised and slid straight into the Armco, his race run.

That left Jones with a sizeable advantage over Villeneuve, but then his Cosworth began to misfire. He had time to pit without losing his lead, but an airlock had developed in his fuel system and there was no quick fix. He rejoined only a few seconds clear of Villeneuve... and with his DFV still faltering. With four laps to go the Ferrari took the lead as they raced towards Ste Devote, the springboard for one of Villeneuve's finest and least likely victories. Jones and Jacques Laffite (Ligier) completed the podium, while Cheever and Marc Surer (Ensign) completed the top six - a fine result for the Swiss, who had to progress through pre-qualifying before being allowed to take part in the rest of the meeting.

Pironi? He plugged on to finish fourth, more than a lap in arrears. **SA**

RESULTS

- 1st** Gilles Villeneuve (Ferrari),
1hr 54min 23.380sec, 82.03mph
- 2nd** Alan Jones (Williams-Cosworth)
- 3rd** Jacques Laffite (Ligier-Matra)
- Pole position** Nelson Piquet (Brabham-Cosworth),
1min 25.710sec, 86.44mph

44



1961 French GP

JULY 2, REIMS

This debut victory remains perhaps the purest of all Formula 1 fairy tales – although Milanese driver Giancarlo Baghetti wasn't quite the completely raw newcomer of popular perception

By the time he came to Reims for his first world championship GP start, he had twice represented Ferrari in F1, winning non-championship events in Syracuse (where he overcame strong opposition) and Naples (which was a bit more of a stroll). Despite his 100 per cent record, though, he wasn't strongly fancied in France – not least because there were three other Ferraris, handled by Richie Ginther plus title contenders Wolfgang von Trips and Phil Hill. While Hill took pole ahead of von Trips and Ginther, Baghetti lined up 12th, on row five.

Hill led initially from Ginther and von Trips, but Stirling Moss took third for a period while Ginther recovered from a spin. Behind the leading quartet, Baghetti formed part of a slipstreaming group of seven drivers, with the Porsches of Dan Gurney and Jo Bonnier, the works Lotus 21s of Jim Clark and Innes Ireland, Graham Hill's BRM and Bruce McLaren's Cooper. Moss gradually slipped back into this maelstrom after slowing with fading brakes.

Ferrari had issued instructions that von Trips should lead, but a failed head gasket sidelined the German after 18 laps. Hill then took over until he spun and stalled, rejoining a lap in arrears, while failing oil pressure stopped Ginther.

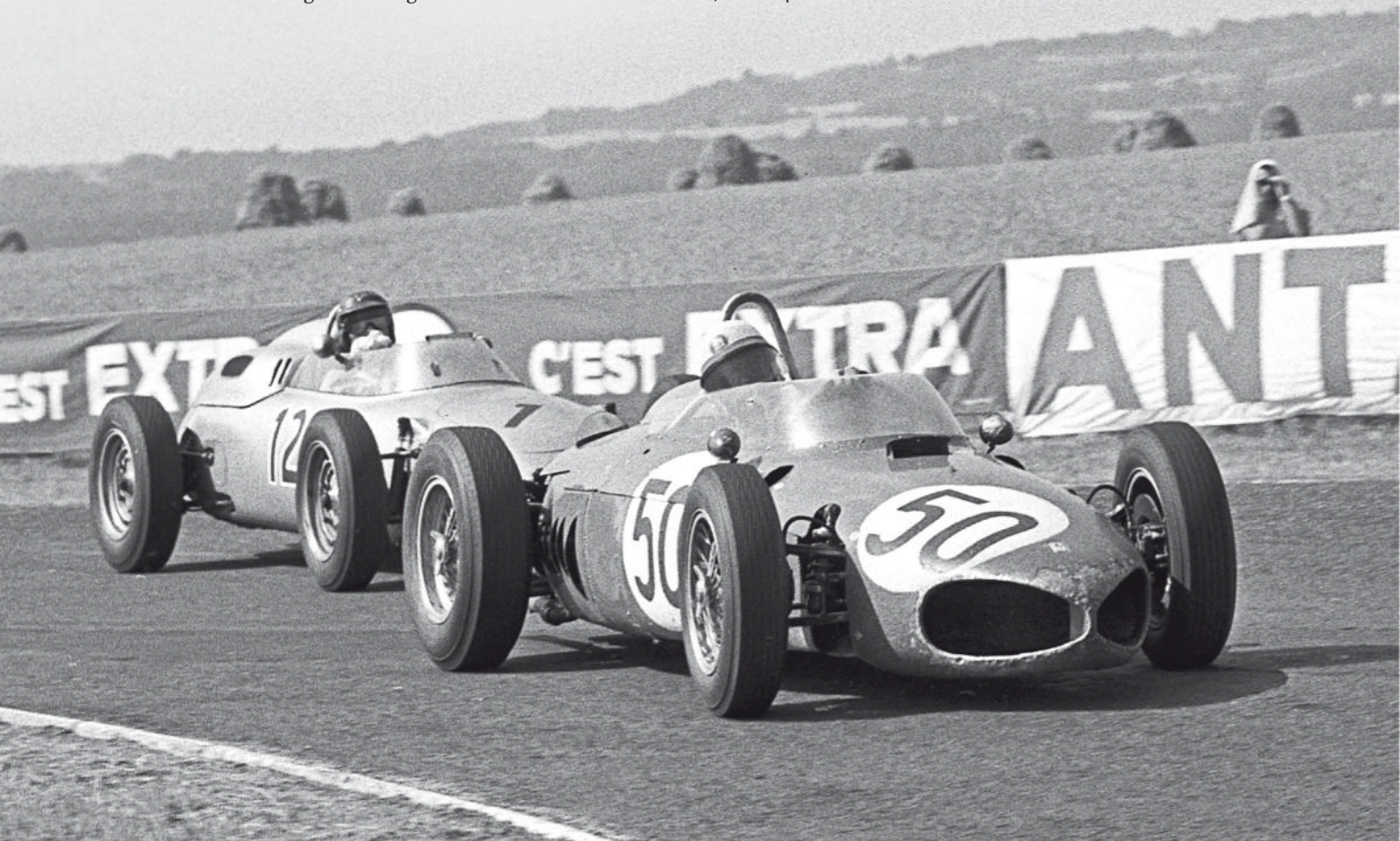
The slipstreaming mob was now fighting for the lead and it eventually boiled down to a two-way scrap between Gurney and Baghetti. The American was ahead exiting Thillois for the final time, but Baghetti was handily placed in his tow and ducked out to complete a hat trick.

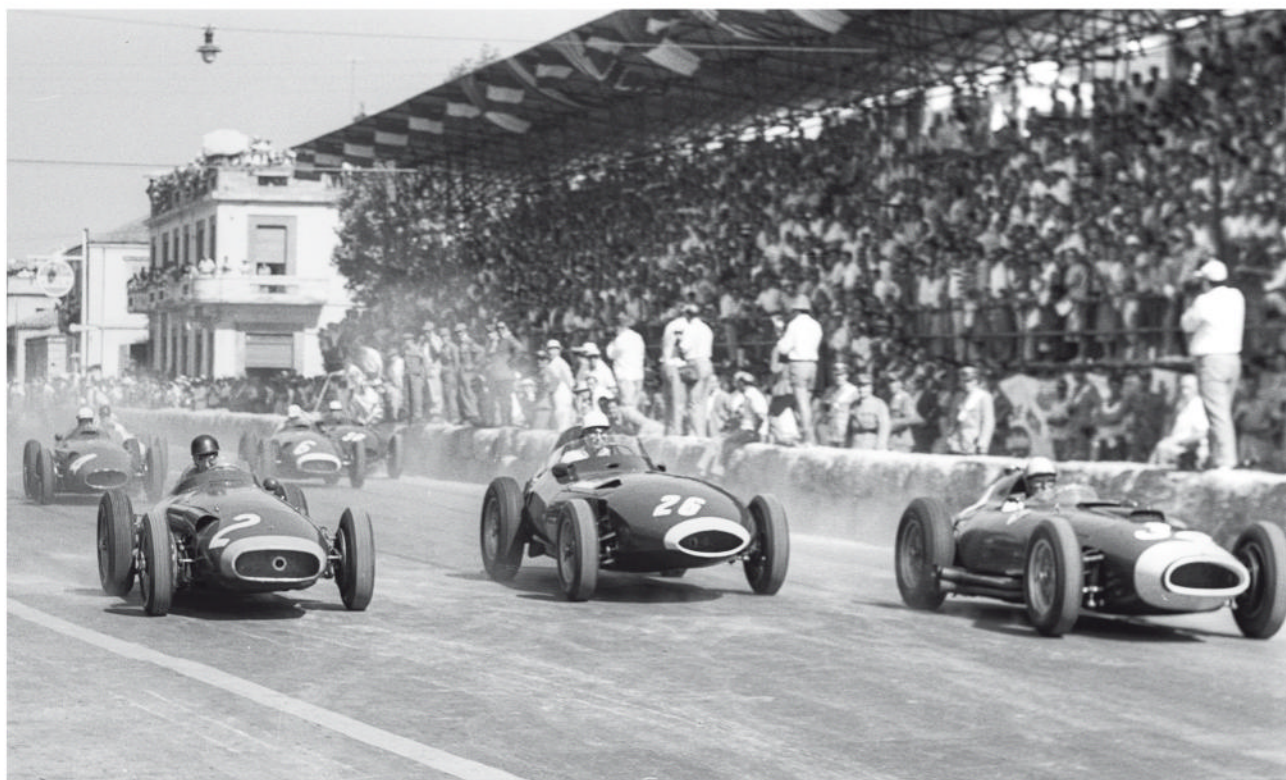
It was also his last major F1 success. **DS**

RESULTS

- 1st** Giancarlo Baghetti (Ferrari),
2hr 14min 17.500sec, 119.85mph
- 2nd** Dan Gurney (Porsche)
- 3rd** Jim Clark (Lotus-Climax)
- Pole position** Phil Hill (Ferrari),
2min 24.900sec, 128.16mph

43





42

1957 Pescara GP

AUGUST 18, PESCARA

The Nordschleife's reputation was forged through its hazardous essence and improbable length – but it lies only second in F1's world championship record books in terms of circuit distance. At 16.055 miles on public roads, Pescara just has the edge

Races had been staged close to the Adriatic town since the 1920s, but it hadn't featured on the calendar during the world championship's first seven seasons. In 1957, however, the sport had been forced to recalibrate following the Suez Crisis and motor racing's governing body needed willing promoters. The Dutch and Belgian GPs had been cancelled at short notice, after the organisers asked participating teams to accept reduced appearance money - a request twice declined. There was a risk that the calendar might be reduced to six grands prix - Argentina, Monaco, France, Britain, Germany and Italy - plus the Indy 500, so Pescara was gratefully embraced. It would be the first time two world championship races had taken place in one country during the same season.

Motor Sport contributor Richard Williams wrote a fine book on Pescara '57, *The Last Road Race*, and spoke to several participating drivers. "It was fantastic," Tony Brooks told him, "a real race circuit." 📍



"Moss enjoyed such control that he had the luxury of being able to pit for some precautionary oil and, at least as useful, a glass of water..."



Moss was a cut above and withstood the heat to win for Vanwall, before taking a much-needed drink, right



To me, grand prix racing is road racing and anything less than that is nothing like as rewarding or satisfying. It was a great challenge."

Jack Brabham was a little less effusive. "I thought it was horrible," he said. "Those road courses were bloody dangerous and nasty, nearly all of them, and Pescara was the worst."

The race may have featured a repeated series of laps, as had all such events since the 1906 Grand Prix de l'Automobile Club de France, but the track's length and character meant it had something of the spirit of bygone city-to-city contests.

Ferrari was effectively absent as a works entity: the Scuderia had been under pressure since that year's Mille Miglia, when the Alfonso de Portago/Ed Nelson Ferrari 335S left the road, killing its crew and nine spectators. There had since been endless legal complications and Enzo Ferrari saw no purpose in adding another home race to his team's itinerary. He did, though, loan a car to Luigi Musso, so that the Italian could defend second place in a championship already won by Juan Manuel Fangio. The Argentine was present in one of 10 Maserati 250Fs, with the works Vanwalls and Coopers completing the 16-car entry.

Fangio took pole from Moss, but Musso led initially from the outside of the front row. Moss moved ahead on lap two - and stayed there for the best part of three hours in the marathon event.

The fierce heat swiftly took its toll, Brooks (Vanwall) and Jean Behra (Maserati) retiring with engine failures while Stuart Lewis-Evans (Vanwall) lost time with a couple of tyre failures. Musso remained second until the 10th of the 18 laps, when his engine seized: he'd been leaking oil for a while and created a slick that caused Fangio to spin and damage a wheel.

The champion rejoined after pitting, but Moss continued in a parallel universe and won by more than three minutes as he moved up to second in the points table at Musso's expense. Such was his control that he had the luxury of being able to pit, on lap 13, for some precautionary oil and, at least as useful, a glass of water... **SA**

RESULTS

- 1st** Stirling Moss (Vanwall),
2hr 59min 22.7sec, 95.69mph
- 2nd** Juan Manuel Fangio (Maserati)
- 3rd** Harry Schell (Maserati)
- Pole position** Fangio (Maserati),
9min 44.6sec, 87.87mph

2012 Brazilian GP

NOVEMBER 25, INTERLAGOS

Trailing Sebastian Vettel by 13 points, but with 25 at stake, Fernando Alonso arrived in Brazil on the back foot, but his mission received 'outside assistance' within seconds of the start

41

Vettel was chopped by team-mate Mark Webber, dropped to seventh and then spun at Turn Four following contact with Bruno Senna's Williams. The Red Bull was damaged, but driveable.

Lewis Hamilton led initially, but rain soon hit and triggered a series of tyre stops - although Jenson Button and Nico Hülkenberg stuck with slicks and pulled well clear as the track dried. Hülkenberg led when the safety car was deployed on lap 23, because of track debris.

When the race resumed the top two headed Hamilton, Alonso and Vettel, who had been flying in the wet (despite iffy aero balance in the bruised Red Bull). Hamilton passed Button on lap 31, then led after Hülkenberg endured a half-spin. Back came the German, though, and when it rained again he was quicker... though his efforts to recapture the lead ended in a collision that eliminated Hamilton's McLaren. Cue a drive-through...

That left Button clear of the Ferraris - and second would be enough for Alonso only if Vettel finished eighth or lower, which never looked likely.

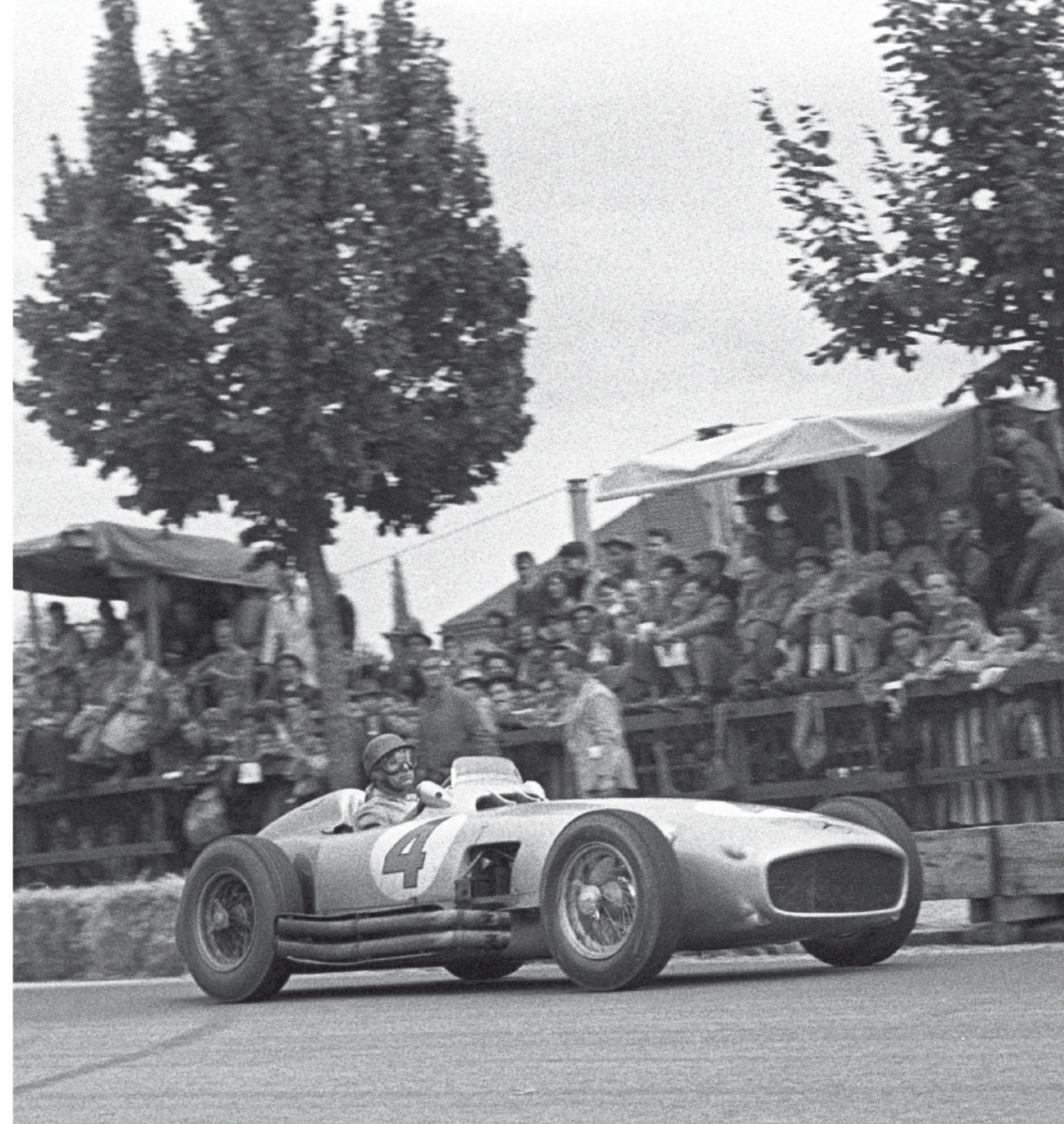
The German partially lost his radio at half-distance: he could hear his crew but not reply. He pitted on lap 52, for mediums, but returned two laps later because of rain. The team wasn't expecting him and had no inters prepared. He remained seventh, though, which became sixth when he passed Michael Schumacher. The title was his. "In terms of stress," said Red Bull's Christian Horner, "I've never known a race like it." **SA**

RESULTS

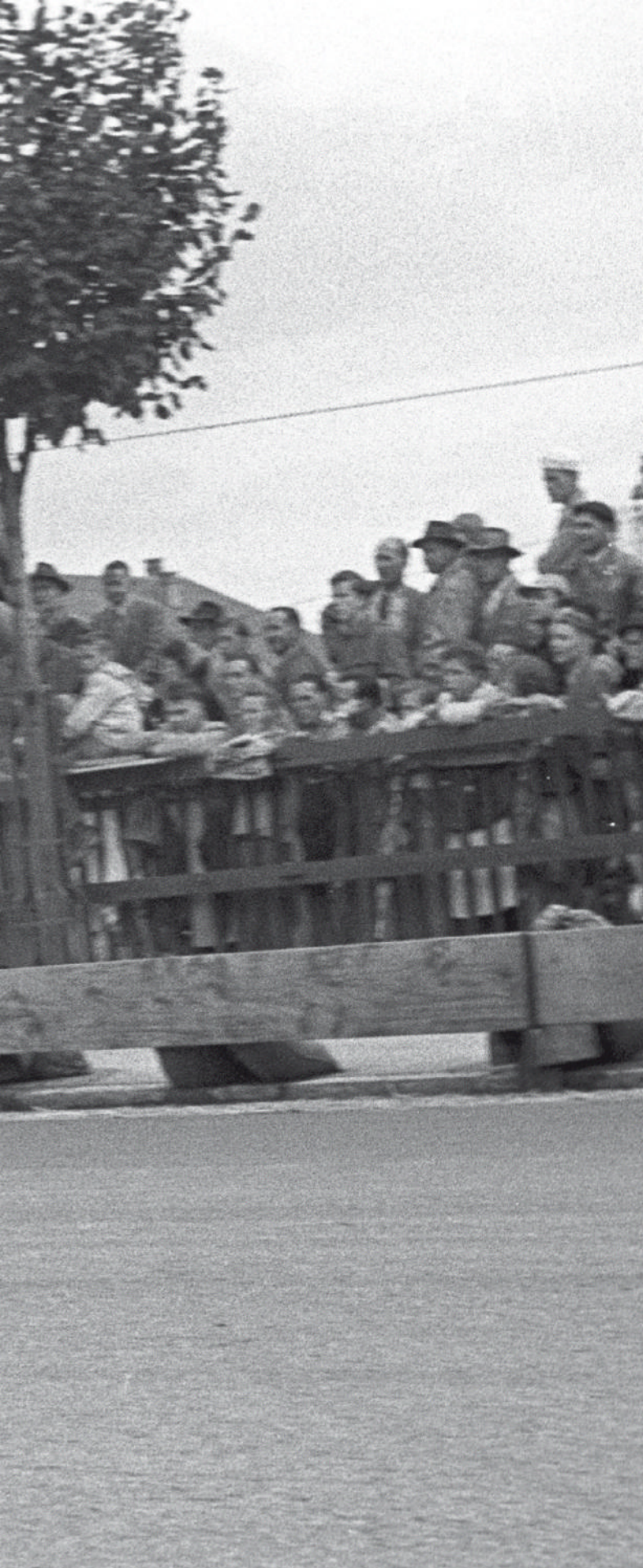
- 1st** Jenson Button (McLaren-Mercedes),
1hr 44min 19.66sec, 114.25mph
- 2nd** Fernando Alonso (Ferrari)
- 3rd** Felipe Massa (Ferrari)
- Pole position** Lewis Hamilton (McLaren-Mercedes),
1min 12.458sec, 133.02mph







"The 1954 race would be an appropriate swansong – not so much a nail-biting classic but a showcase for Juan Manuel Fangio's gift"



40

1954 Swiss GP **AUGUST 22, BREMGARTEN**

Funny to think that the Swiss Grand Prix was once perceived as a staple – an ever-present fixture once the FIA had followed the Fédération Internationale de Motocyclisme's example by creating a world championship

That all changed in 1955, when the Swiss authorities banned circuit racing in the wake of the Le Mans disaster and implemented a ban that endured for 63 years until Formula E got clearance in 2018 (although hillclimbs along mountain passes in the meantime were absolutely fine, obviously).

Located to the north of Bern, Bremgarten was a long, challenging, tree-lined track and there was no reason to think it might be consigned to history within the year. As it turned out, the 1954 race would be an appropriate swansong – not so much a nail-biting classic but a showcase for Juan Manuel Fangio's gift.

The Argentine led at the start, his Mercedes heading Froilán González's Ferrari and Stirling Moss' Maserati. The Englishman soon moved up to second, but the leading Silver Arrow was fast becoming a shiny dot ahead. Mike Hawthorn picked his way through the field to hold second for a while, but a sticking throttle delayed him and oil pump failure eventually sidelined his Ferrari. Moss retired for the same reason, allowing González to reclaim second, but such were mere details on a day when Fangio drove without flaw. He won by almost a minute and in the process clinched his second world title.

Today, a motorway bisects parts of the old track: fragments exist still, but clues to their glorious past are a touch scarce. **SA**

RESULTS

1st Juan Manuel Fangio (Mercedes-Benz),

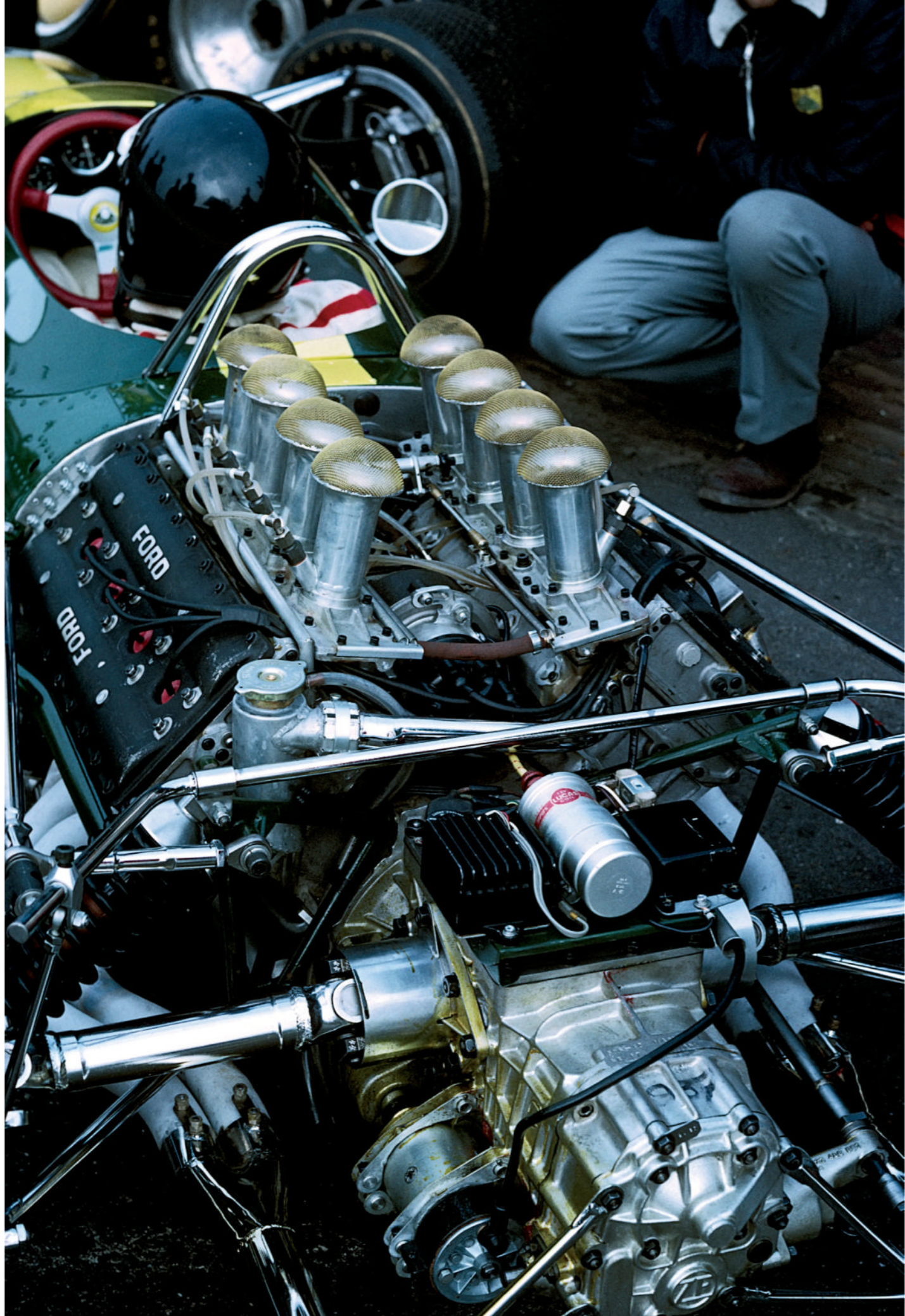
3hr 00min 34.5sec, 99.20mph

2nd José Froilán González (Ferrari)

3rd Hans Herrmann (Mercedes-Benz)

Pole position González (Ferrari),

2min 39.5sec, 102.10mph





Left: the arrival of a true game-changer, the Cosworth DFV.
Here: Clark leads Brabham

1967 Dutch GP

JUNE 4, ZANDVOORT

Was £100,000 ever better spent in Formula 1? It's hard to see how. Ford's top brass travelled to the circuit in the Dutch sand dunes to witness their big investment's bow, to be rewarded with a searing landmark in the history of grand prix racing

The race itself was hardly thrill-a-minute, but that's irrelevant: this was a 'great' grand prix for what it represented. Cosworth's Double Four Valve V8, the most successful and important engine in F1 history, arrived in a blitz of fastest practice times and a stunning debut race victory.

What's more, Colin Chapman's all-new Lotus 49 to which it was bolted relied on the DFV for more than just power. For the first time, both chassis and engine were mated as one, the DFV's block now a fully integrated stressed member. Once again, Chapman had changed everything.

Perhaps true justice would have awarded Graham Hill this historic win. After all, he'd carried out the development tests in 49/1. Indeed, it was Graham who set the practice pace while team-mate Jim Clark lost learning time in newly minted 49/2 with a hub failure. But despite taking a commanding lead from the start,

Hill's DFV failed him, broken teeth on camshaft driving gears changing the passage of fate. Clark, catching up for lost time, played himself in and then struck, passing Jochen Rindt and Jack Brabham on consecutive laps. As Jenks described in *Motor Sport*, from there he "just motored relentlessly into the distance".

Hill's failure was more indicative of the short-term frustrations of the DFV in that 'summer of love'. But for now, the significance of Clark's peerless performance was clear to all: a new F1 superpower was born. **DS**

RESULTS

1st Jim Clark (Lotus-Ford), 2hr 14min 45.1sec, 104.40mph

2nd Jack Brabham (Brabham-Repco)

3rd Denny Hulme (Brabham-Repco)

Pole position Graham Hill (Lotus-Ford), 1min 24.6sec, 110.86mph

39



1981 Caesars Palace GP

OCTOBER 17, LAS VEGAS

For some, Carlos Reutemann represents the archetype of a grand prix driver. He looked the part; a moody, enigmatic figure who drifted in and out of focus through the 1970s and early '80s with a languor that belied formidable talent and explosive speed

Reutemann should be listed as the 19th man to claim an F1 world championship. That he isn't only adds to his flawed magnificence, especially given the nature of his capitulation in Sin City, of all places.

The Las Vegas car park in which the '81 championship came to a head was a shabby backdrop, perhaps suitably so for a stylish man who deserved better. Carlos arrived at the final race of the year with a slender one-point lead over ambitious Nelson Piquet, but that made it simple. Having already bagged a convincing pole, the Williams just had to finish ahead of the Brabham to claim the crown.

But by the end of lap one, Reutemann had slipped to fifth, and the drift continued. The moment of truth came on lap 17, Piquet making his move - and passing seemingly without resistance. "He made it easy for me," said Nelson later. "Braked early, left the door open..."

As Alan Jones scored his final GP victory, the new world champion struggled to get to his feet, heat exhaustion being Piquet's only genuine rival when it mattered. Reutemann too had wilted, but this sporting tragedy - of almost Grecian proportions - had nothing to do with the weather. Surely the oddest title decider we've yet seen. **DS**

RESULTS

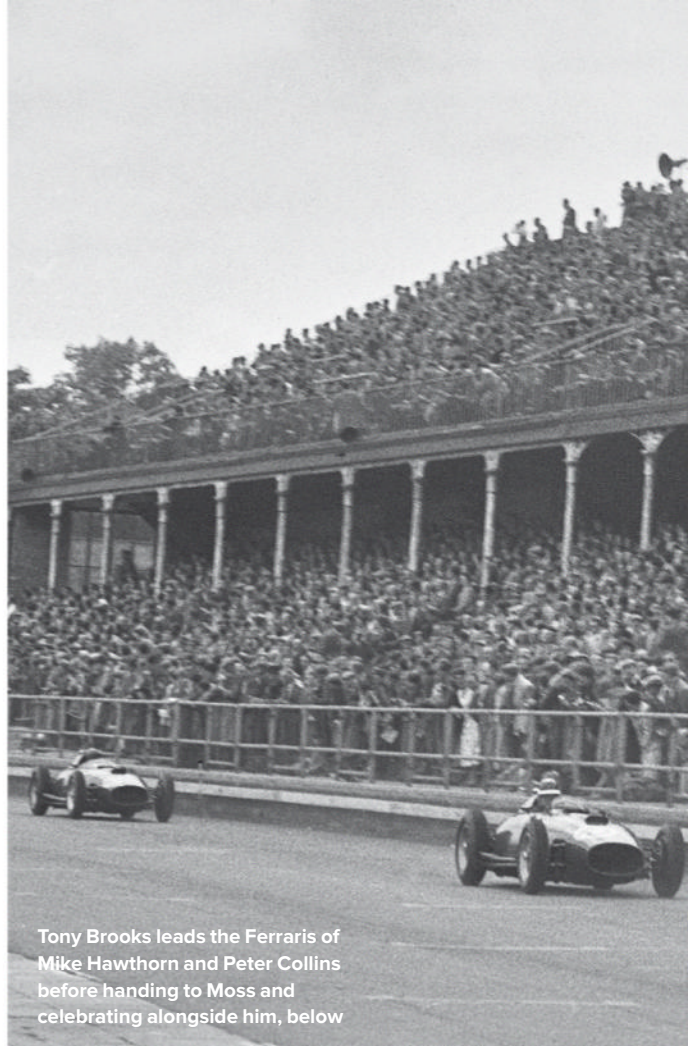
1st Alan Jones (Williams-Ford),
1hr 44min 09.07sec, 97.99mph

2nd Alain Prost (Renault)

3rd Bruno Giacomelli (Alfa Romeo)

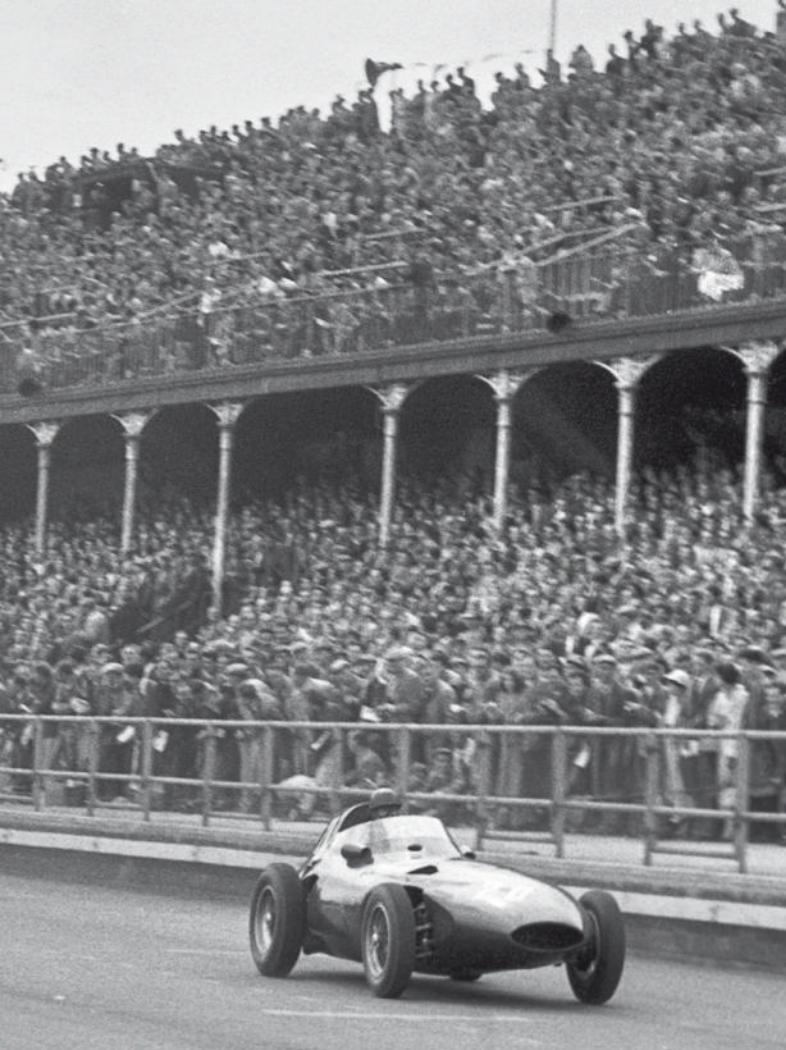
Pole position Carlos Reutemann
(Williams-Ford), 1min 17.82sec, 104.91mph

38



Tony Brooks leads the Ferraris of Mike Hawthorn and Peter Collins before handing to Moss and celebrating alongside him, below





37

1957 British GP

JULY 20, AINTREE

"Those last 10 laps were exhausting," wrote Tony Brooks in *Motor Sport*. "I was listening anxiously to the engine, changing gear with exaggerated care, and giving the cars I was lapping a generous berth." All from the confines of the Vanwall pit, not the cockpit...

Brooks had long given up his Vanwall for team leader Stirling Moss; now he joined the massed crowd in crossing his fingers. Surely this would be the first world championship GP victory for a British car?

The driver-share scheme had been pre-arranged, with Brooks' unquestioning blessing. Tony had been stuck in bed just a week before Aintree, after his Aston Martin Le Mans shunt. He'd survived a heavy DBR1 rolling on him, yet here he was a month later outpacing the great Moss in practice. But across a GP distance? That was a different matter.

Brooks was running fifth when the call came. Moss had charged past Jean Behra's Maserati to build a strong lead, only for a misfire to thwart his progress. Now on lap 26 Tony hauled his aching limbs from the cockpit to switch - and Stirling set off on another signature charge.

At half-distance the gap to Behra was a full minute, with Mike Hawthorn, the third Vanwall of Stuart Lewis-Evans and Peter Collins between them. But soon Collins would be gone, his Lancia-Ferrari suffering a water leak, then Behra's Maserati engine detonated - and Hawthorn picked up a puncture on the debris. Vanwall was back in the lead!

Moss was by Lewis-Evans before they'd even passed the giant grandstand, and now the tension began to rise. Nerves tightened further when Lewis-Evans slowed with gear-linkage problems, but Great Britain would not be denied today.

For Moss, Aintree '55 had been special, but this was something else again. Instead of foreign silver he'd done it in his beloved British Racing Green. **DS**

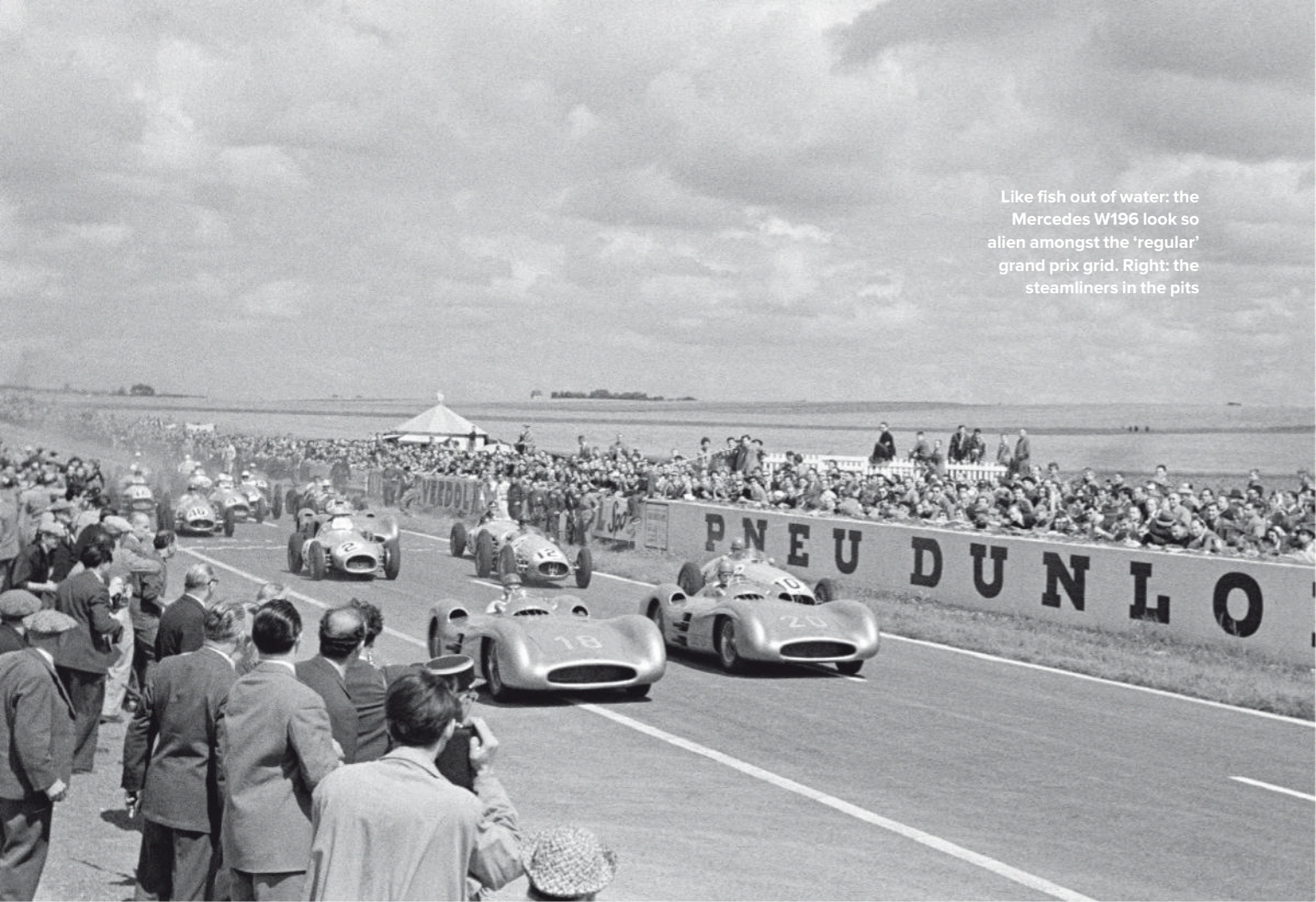
RESULTS

1st Tony Brooks/Stirling Moss (Vanwall),
3hr 6min 37.8sec, 86.80mph

2nd Luigi Musso (Lancia-Ferrari)

3rd Mike Hawthorn (Lancia-Ferrari)

Pole position Moss (Vanwall), 2min 00.2sec, 89.85mph



Like fish out of water: the Mercedes W196 look so alien amongst the 'regular' grand prix grid. Right: the steamliners in the pits

36

1954 French GP

JULY 4, REIMS

"Grand prix racing had certainly started on a new era of science vs the rest, with the rest found wanting," concluded Denis Jenkinson at the end of his race report for *Motor Sport*

Just nine years after the end of WWII, the German might of Mercedes-Benz was back, resuming exactly where it left off in September 1939. The motor racing world prepared once again to be in thrall to the Silver Arrows.

It's races such as this for which we long to time travel, and not simply because of the on-track spectacle of front-engined grand prix cars driven hard around the fast sweeps of an open road circuit. Given how much France had suffered in the six-year conflict, one can't help but wonder how the crowds responded to this latest formidable German invasion. Yet all *Motor Sport* tells us of is fascination as the four closed-bodied streamliner Mercedes W196s - three race cars, one spare - rolled into sight for the first time.

On the grid, Juan Manuel Fangio, newly signed to Mercedes, was welcomed with the biggest cheer, despite the presence of Gordini, Jean Behra and the like. Even at this stage, with 'just' one of his eventual five world championships to his name, the maestro 🟠

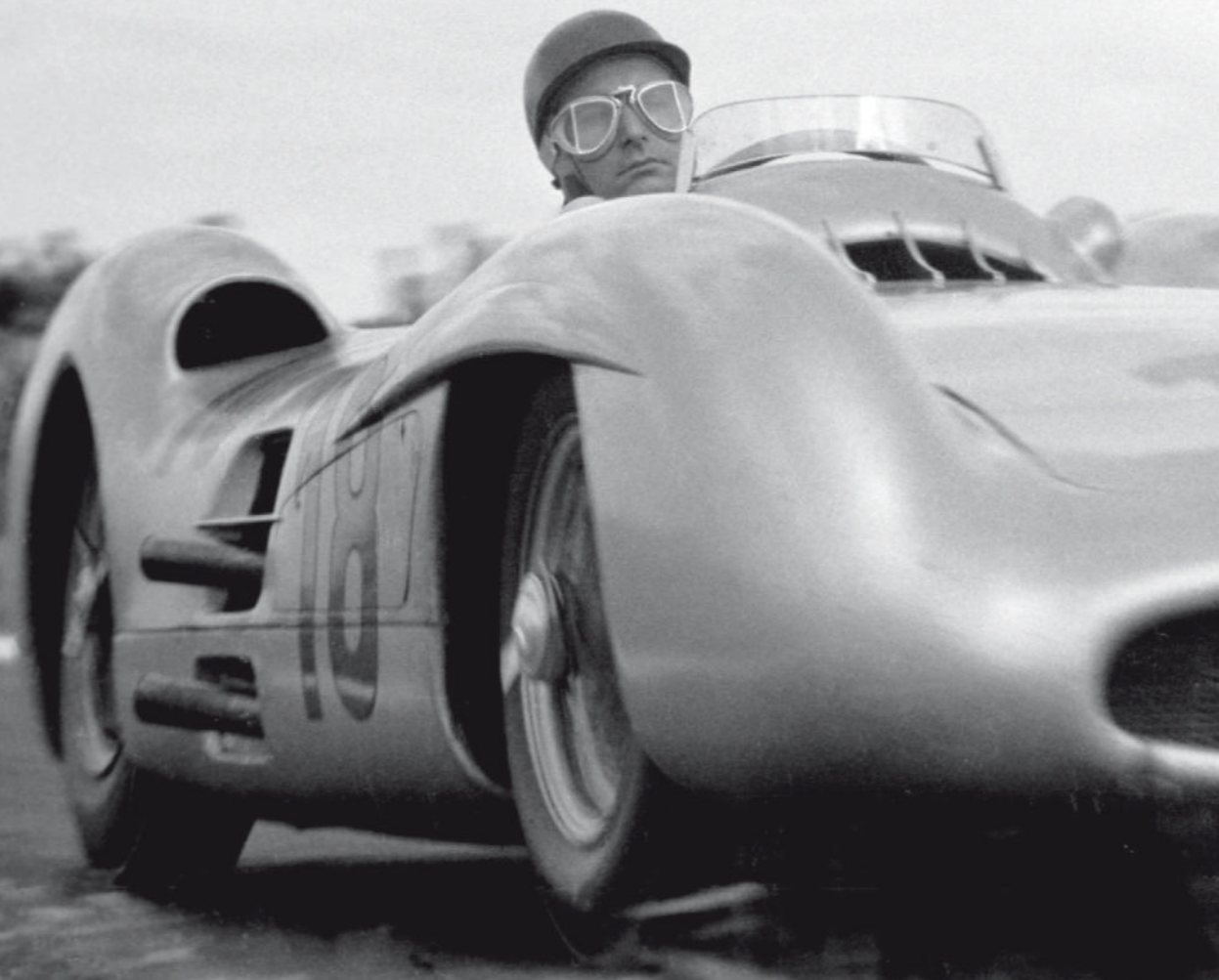


had won the hearts of the crowd - regardless of which team he was driving for.

He and team-mate Karl Kling were forebodingly dominant at Reims, finishing a full lap ahead of third-placed Robert Manzon. Perhaps Alberto Ascari, on loan from Lancia to Maserati to allow an Italian presence at the GP, might have given them something to think about had his transmission lasted beyond the first few yards. Then Froilán González characteristically gave his all, but his Ferrari couldn't stand the pace: his engine blew just 13 laps in.

There was some hope in Hans Herrmann's retirement with engine woes in the third W196 - perhaps these complex machines could be vulnerable after all? - and trouble with Silverstone's oil drums in the following British GP showed they could be beaten. But these were minor setbacks. The tide had turned, and it began that day in France.

Speaking to our editor-in-chief in June 1979, Fangio recalled just how remarkable the second era of the Silver Arrows had been during '54 and '55. "They were usually the fastest, of course, but they were also



amazingly strong,” he said. “To win with them was easy. The only problems I remember were with the streamlined car in 1954 at the small Silverstone circuit, where they marked out the course with oil drums. It was raining, and visibility from the cockpit was not good, and I kept hitting the drums, so I was only fourth.

“Later that season I had an oil leak at Barcelona, and the next year my engine failed at Monaco. Otherwise, nothing went wrong. I drove 12 grands prix for Mercedes, with eight wins, one second, one third, one fourth and one retirement. In those days F1 cars

were not so reliable, so the Mercedes was incredible in that way. Not so nice to drive as a Maserati, but you were almost sure to finish.” **DS**

RESULTS

1st Juan Manuel Fangio (Mercedes),

2hr 42min 47.9sec, 115.97mph

2nd Karl Kling (Mercedes)

3rd Robert Manzon (Ferrari)

Pole position Fangio (Mercedes),

2min 29.4sec, 124.30mph

“They were usually the fastest, of course, but they were also amazingly strong... to win with them was easy”

Juan Fangio led the slipstreaming revolution ahead of Kling as the Silver Arrows dominated the day



2021 Russian GP

SEPTEMBER 26, SOCHI

The Sochi circuit wasn't known for producing thrilling racing, and it's safe to say few probably miss it from the schedule these days, but it did stage a superb master versus apprentice showdown as its crowning glory

Having already been a podium finisher five times and heading to Russia after celebrating his best-ever result of second place in the Italian GP, Lando Norris was desperate for the top step in this weather-afflicted race. Too desperate, as it worked out.

Norris started his McLaren from pole but dropped to second before re-passing Ferrari's Carlos Sainz for top spot and then making his only required pit stop to switch to hard tyres. All was going to plan until the rain arrived with six laps to go.

Lewis Hamilton had made steady progress to run second and was soon on the gearbox of the McLaren, using every ounce of his experience to keep the slithering Mercedes on track as conditions worsened.

McLaren responded by radioing Norris to suggest a stop for inters, only to be met with a firm "NO!" from its driver, who was determined to cling on. Hamilton called it with four laps to go, switching to wet rubber.

Although it cost a heap of time, when he rejoined the Mercedes carved chunks out of Norris's lead, whose harder Pirellis offered no traction as the rain increased.

The duel was settled when Norris completely ran out of grip with two laps to go, sliding helplessly off. His day was compounded when he also understeered beyond the pit entry while trying to nurse the car back, picking up a penalty that left him a dejected seventh as Hamilton secured his historic 100th grand prix victory in dramatic fashion. **RL**

RESULTS

- 1st** Lewis Hamilton (Mercedes),
1hr 30min 41.001sec, 127.34mph
- 2nd** Max Verstappen (Red Bull Racing-Honda)
- 3rd** Carlos Sainz (Ferrari)
- Pole position** Lando Norris (McLaren-Mercedes),
1min 41.993sec, 128.25mph



“McLaren radioed suggesting a stop for inters, only to be met with a firm ‘NO!’ from its driver who was determined to cling on”



2006 Hungarian GP

AUGUST 6, HUNGARORING

The promise and optimism of his first F1 season seemed like a long time ago – probably because it was. Seven seasons is an age in grand prix racing and for Jenson Button a lot of water had flowed since that bright debut at Williams in 2000, aged just 20

Much of that water had been turbulent, but he'd survived the rapids with dignity intact. After all, he always had been good in the wet.

Amid the turmoil of an increasingly political Ferrari versus Renault championship battle, F1 arrived in usually balmy Budapest only to discover meteorological storm clouds too. The weekend started badly for Button and his Honda team, a spectacular engine failure landing him a 10-place grid penalty. He would start 14th.

But in mixed conditions, Button stealthily climbed the order while others lost their heads: Kimi Räikkönen dozed off and slammed into the Toro Rosso of Tonio Liuzzi; Michael Schumacher raced erratically on poorly performing Bridgestone tyres, eventually breaking a track rod after starting a penalised 11th; while Fernando Alonso, who started a place behind Button after also being docked places for brake-testing Robert Doornbos in practice, lost a wheel after a botched Renault pitstop.

But despite the travails of others, few could begrudge Button his first victory since Formula 3, especially as he had won through intelligence, racecraft and that uncanny knack of reading the trickiest conditions.

With what we know now, how strange it seems that until 2009 and the Brawn GP phenomenon Button looked set to be remembered as a modern equivalent of Jean-Pierre Beltoise: one GP win scored, on a day of days when rain levelled the playing field. Just as well for Jenson that water kept flowing. **DS**

RESULTS

- 1st** Jenson Button (Honda),
1hr 52min 20.941sec, 101.76mph
- 2nd** Pedro de la Rosa (McLaren-Mercedes)
- 3rd** Nick Heidfeld (BMW)
- Pole position** Kimi Räikkönen (McLaren-Mercedes),
1min 19.599sec, 123.11mph

34



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33

1998 Hungarian GP

AUGUST 16, HUNGARORING

The wins are so numerous they tend to blur into each other. Even Michael Schumacher and Ross Brawn themselves might struggle to recall them all. But we bet they both remember this one

Hungary 1998 was a special one, perhaps the best example of their partnership working at its most devastating best.

McLaren's MP4/18 held the upper hand in Hungary, as it did on most occasions in 1998, but tactical instinct and relentless pace won Ferrari the day. As Mika Häkkinen and David Coulthard circulated out front, Brawn rolled the dice. He switched Schumacher away from the standard two stops to three, bringing Michael in early for his second. McLaren's pitwall knew straight away what was happening and reacted by bringing in its pair, but it was already too late. Schumacher's pace was enough for a classic undercut and now he led.

But the real work was still to come. The task Brawn set Schumacher was to build a 27-second lead over the McLarens to allow him to pit for a third time and still retain his lead. Ross radioed Michael the good news. The response? "Thanks very much." Then Schumacher got his head down.

It helped that by this time Häkkinen was struggling with a broken shock absorber - and that McLaren delayed its decision to order Coulthard by to give him a chance of beating Schumacher. Frustrating for the Scot - although if truth be told, he probably would still have struggled to beat Michael on this day.

That third stint was like a string of qualifying laps, Schumacher's own version of Monaco 1961. As was typical of the time, there were no heroic passing moves, no banging of wheels. But it was still captivating, a classic of its era - and of all time. **DS**

RESULTS

1st Michael Schumacher (Ferrari),

1hr 45min 25.550sec, 108.15mph

2nd David Coulthard (McLaren-Mercedes)

3rd Jacques Villeneuve (Williams-Mecachrome)

Pole position Mika Häkkinen (McLaren-Mercedes),

1min 16.973sec, 115.43mph





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LISTA



1987 British GP

JULY 12, SILVERSTONE

I'd been counting down the gap, lap by lap, as the Williams duo blasted past into the braking area for Stowe. Nigel Mansell, the 'true grit, true Brit' hero of the masses, had been forced to pit for new Goodyears thanks to vibrations from a tyre imbalance.

Before the days of pitlane speed limits, he'd charged in and out in a fury - and was now refusing to accept defeat in front of his 'barmy army' of patriotic fans.

Despite the best efforts of Alain Prost at the start, Nelson Piquet and Mansell had already crushed the opposition in the Silverstone sun, Honda power and their brilliant FW11Bs a cut above the rest. Prost jumped the Williams pair from the second row, but by Maggotts poleman Piquet was through and Mansell was soon to follow. With an eye on tyre wear and fuel consumption, they still left the rest for dead.

The gap after Mansell's stop had been more than 25 seconds. We'd all thought it was over. But now the tension built as Mansell closed in on the enemy within - the team-mate whom he couldn't stand. We didn't

need the snatches of commentary from the useless speaker system to tell us what was possible. We could see, as lap records tumbled.

If I close my eyes, I can still see it all unravelling in a 190mph flash from my perfect vantage point: the cars appearing into view from Chapel Curve almost as one, the violent vibrations of speed down the Hangar Straight, the dummy left, Piquet's jink to defend and Mansell's glorious swoop to the inside. Through the turn the Canon-liveried rear wings were side by side, almost touching. But Mansell was past and gone - on lap 63 of 65. We roared as one, a moment of purest sporting joy.

It had been all or nothing, 'Red Five' running out of fuel after the flag. We swamped the track in



celebration - then dutifully climbed back over the sleepers in time to see 'the moustache' riding pillion on a police motorcycle. They stopped in front of us, Mansell climbed off - and kissed the track, Pontiff-style, at the point opposite me where he'd sold his dummy. Blessed was he that day...

At Club corner, unknown future colleagues and friends cursed Piquet's luck, having already seen through Mansell's pantomime histrionics. But as an impressionable 13-year-old, cynicism had yet to catch on. He'd defeated Piquet at Brands in '86, and would win here again in crushing fashion in both '91 and '92. But '87 was something else. It was the greatest race I'd ever seen. It still is. **DS**

RESULTS

1st Nigel Mansell (Williams-Honda),
1hr 19min 11.780sec, 146.20mph
2nd Nelson Piquet (Williams-Honda)
3rd Ayrton Senna (Lotus-Honda)
Pole position Piquet (Williams-Honda),
1min 07.110sec, 159.26mph



32

31

1956 Italian GP

SEPTEMBER 2, MONZA

Fear of tyre failures is nothing new. But if modern Formula 1 drivers were prepared to boycott after the troubles at the British GP this July past, what would they make of those at Monza 69 years ago?

This wasn't just flat-out Monza, remember - this was Monza complete with the rough, rubber-shredding banking. So much about the race that was officially called the *Gran Premio d'Europa* simply couldn't be countenanced today.

The Lancia-Ferraris were fast but vulnerable on their Engleberts, against the Pirelli-shod Maseratis and the Dunlop-tyred Vanwall of an inspired Harry Schell. Against all reason, Eugenio Castellotti and Luigi Musso ignored Ferrari's tyre fears and raced hard - until they were forced to stop for new sets. Castellotti would subsequently throw a tread on the banking, walking away from a frightening accident. It wasn't the only close call that day. 🚩



Left: Eugenio Castellotti trudges from his Ferrari after a burst tyre sidelined him. Here: Moss leads a slipstreaming pack into the famous banking







Straight down the camera:
Enzo Ferrari and Juan
Manuel Fangio (right)
celebrate the Argentine's
fourth world title. Right:
Monza's impact in focus



At the front, Moss looked peerless until his 250F faltered, out of fuel thanks to a leak. Maserati privateer Piotti saved the day, thinking quick to run up behind and push Moss's car pitwards (imagine!). Stirling was back in the race, behind new leader Musso. But then the Lancia-Ferrari suffered a steering arm breakage, the subsequent tyre blow-out sending Luigi into a pits-bound slide. As Jenks reported, "By sheer luck he came to rest a matter of inches from the pit counters and was helped out weak and very shaken, with the Italian GP once more wrested from his grasp."

Thus Moss took victory from the Lancia-Ferrari of Peter Collins - but now driven by Juan Manuel Fangio. Yes, the ultimate example of F1 as a team sport. The Briton gave up his car for the maestro (Musso wouldn't have it), allowing his team leader to claim his fourth title. Scandalous? No. Back then, simply sporting and the act of a gentleman. **DS**

RESULTS

1st Stirling Moss (Maserati),

2hr 23min 41.3sec, 129.73mph

2nd Peter Collins/Juan Manuel Fangio (Lancia-Ferrari)

3rd Ron Flockhart (Connaught-Alta)

Pole position Fangio (Lancia-Ferrari),

2min 42.6sec, 137.57mph



1988 Japanese GP

OCTOBER 30, SUZUKA

He'd come this close, nothing would stop him now. Was this destiny? Perhaps, if you believe in such things. For the rest of us, it was a performance of sheer guts and determination from the most driven man we'd yet seen in Formula 1. He just refused to lose

But that first title so nearly slipped from Senna's grasp when he stalled from his pole position. The slope at Suzuka's startline saved him, Ayrton just managing to bump start his Honda as McLaren team-mate Alain Prost disappeared into the lead. Now the comeback began.

As Senna charged, Prost found himself distracted - not the first time in '88 - by the 'minnow' that was Ivan Capelli in his Leyton House. The turquoise March even led briefly, before the Italian's brilliance was curtailed by an electrical failure. But now Prost had Senna on his tail.

Unlucky with traffic and managing a gearbox niggle, Alain had no answer to Ayrton. When the rain came, Prost hung on - his weakness in the wet was always a myth - but ultimately ceded the race and the world title. He'd scored more points than his team-mate, but on the curious dropped scores rule Senna was champion.

In later years Suzuka would be the scene of more controversial, untidy - and plain ugly - championship



showdowns. But in 1988, before the war that was to come, it brought out the best in Ayrton Senna. Now he'd achieved what had driven him from the start: he was champion of the world. **DS**

RESULTS

1st Ayrton Senna (McLaren-Honda),
1hr 33min 26.173sec, 119.22mph
2nd Alain Prost (McLaren-Honda)
3rd Thierry Boutsen (Benetton-Ford)
Pole position Senna (McLaren-Honda),
1min 41.853sec, 128.69mph

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1970 Monaco GP

MAY 10, MONTE CARLO

If this race had played out as it had started, there's little chance the 1970 Monaco GP would have made this list. But thanks to its unlikely and (depending on your perspective) comical finale, it is one of the most infamous F1 races in the venue's long history

Aside from the climax, this Monaco GP was also notable for the all-March front row, during those amazing first months for the Johnny-come-lately F1 constructor. Jackie Stewart famously hated the Tyrrell-run 701, but that didn't stop him taking pole, with Chris Amon's STP works car alongside.

Jackie subsequently ran away and hid in the race, victory seemingly a formality. He stretched away from Amon in the early going with apparent ease, while veteran Jack Brabham, Jacky Ickx, Jean-Pierre Beltoise, Denny Hulme and Jochen Rindt followed.

For Rindt, the weekend had been a struggle, Team Lotus' all-new wedge-shaped 72 proving wayward around the narrow streets. He'd been forced to fall back on the ageing 49C for this race, and expectations were not high.

But as the grand prix unfolded the old 49 rose up the order. Stewart lost a dominant lead with a misfire, gifting the lead to Brabham, who'd already passed Amon. Chris would retire when a suspension bolt dropped out, Ickx and Beltoise were early casualties and Hulme fell off the pace with gearbox trouble. Thus Rindt found himself second, albeit 15 seconds down the road from Brabham. There was surely no hope of victory - was there?

Jenks picks up the story: "With five laps to go Brabham had the race won and was easing back to cruise home to a safe victory, for Rindt was no danger,

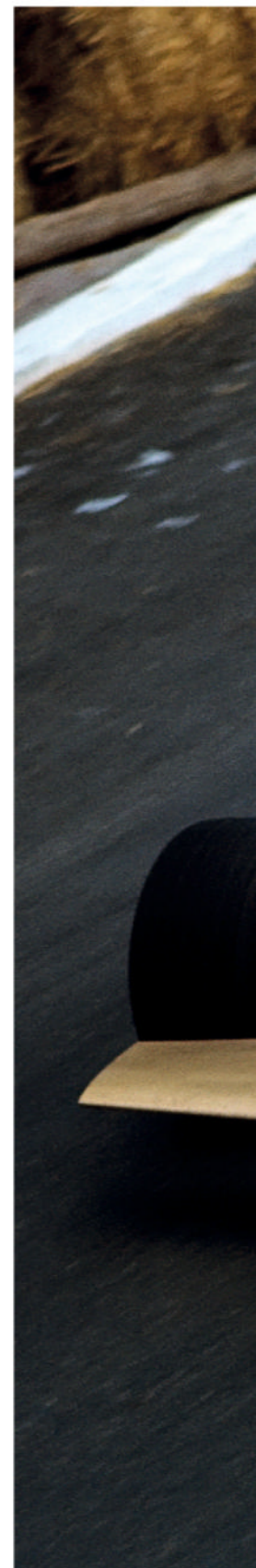
but suddenly the Austrian seemed to wake up and respond to pit signals."

A nine second lead then shrank to five when Jo Siffert unintentionally baulked the leader, and with two laps to go Brabham was in Rindt's sights. Still, the old man (the three-time champion was 44 and in his final season) had it all under control - didn't he?

Back to Jenks for the last lap: "Out of the Tabac on to the promenade Brabham was still four lengths ahead, and all seemed safe, but as he approached the Gasworks hairpin he passed [Piers] Courage and just in case Rindt tried any tricks like driving through on the inside, Brabham took a line for the apex, to shut the door, rather than the normal line swinging out to the left. He braked really late, locked his wheels and slid helplessly into the barriers. An amazed and amused Rindt took the normal line to win the Monaco GP for Lotus with an apparently obsolete car, while a red-faced Brabham trailed into second with the nose cowlings smashed. The 'old man' had goofed." **DS**

RESULTS

- 1st** Jochen Rindt (Lotus-Ford),
1hr 54min 36.6sec, 81.84mph
- 2nd** Jack Brabham (Brabham-Ford)
- 3rd** Henri Pescarolo (Matra)
- Pole position** Jackie Stewart (Matra),
1min 24.0sec, 83.75mph







1961 German GP

AUGUST 6, NÜRBURGRING

Once Jack Brabham had deposited his leading Cooper in the bushes at Hattenbach on the opening lap, it was left to the old, Rob Walker-run, four-cylinder Lotus of Stirling Moss to take the fight to the more powerful Ferraris

It was Monaco all over again. Always keen to take a gamble as an underdog, Moss had decided to start (from third on the grid) on Dunlop's high-hysteresis D12 rain tyre even though the circuit was merely damp. Dunlop's Vic Barlow advised vehemently against this, warning of overheating, chunking and sudden failures, but Moss felt that he had no choice if he were to win, which is all this inveterate racer ever wanted to do. Plus Team Lotus' Innes Ireland had won the recent non-championship Solitude GP in the dry on the same boots. The extra grip they afforded was worth the risk. Having painted over the tyre's indicating green spot to disguise his ploy,

Moss was 10 seconds ahead after just three laps, at which point the 'Sharknoses' - Ferrari had heeded Barlow's advice - began to circle as the track dried. Phil Hill and Wolfgang von Trips, though able to lap faster than Moss - both broke the nine-minute barrier - were, however, enduring a difficult ride on suspension that caused them to ground over bumps. (Hill reckoned his pole lap freakish.)

The Lotus they were chasing was more composed - as was its driver. Nobody could hold a candle to Moss at the Nordschleife, which was hosting its first GP since 1958. Yet the Ferraris' extra oomph was beginning to cause him concern as Hill and von Trips wound each other up and towed each other down the long finishing straight. Although Moss's car had been fitted with newer, smoother bodywork since his Monaco miracle, its top-end speed was still shy of the optimum.

Fortune favoured the brave on this day. The rain began to fall again, allowing Moss to stretch his lead to 21.4sec over the last three laps. His chasers, left now to fight among themselves, were lucky to reach the finish, so hectic was their internecine scrap.

Moss's final GP victory lacked the claustrophobia of a place like Monaco - the most traffic he experienced that day in Germany was a 40-minute jam near Düsseldorf while on his way home - and so he did not rate it as highly. However, it undoubtedly reaffirmed his position as the world's best driver - by a margin never bettered in any era before or since. PF

RESULTS

- 1st** Stirling Moss (Lotus-Climax), 2hr 18min 12.4sec, 92.14mph
- 2nd** Wolfgang von Trips (Ferrari)
- 3rd** Phil Hill (Ferrari)
- Pole position** Hill (Ferrari) 8min 55.2sec, 95.17mph

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2024 São Paulo GP

NOVEMBER 3, INTERLAGOS

The intricacies of modern grand prix racing make it rare that any driver starting outside of the top 10 can win a race. But nobody told Max Verstappen

The Dutchman cruised, almost literally at times given the conditions, from 17th on the grid to victory on a circuit that more often than not resembled a lake after torrential downpours in Brazil. In doing so he became the first driver since Kimi Räikkönen in 2005 to claim victory from such a lowly starting position.

By the time the São Paulo race rolled around, things were not going swimmingly for Red Bull. After making mincemeat of the opening half of the monster 24-race campaign with seven wins from the opening 10 races, Verstappen appeared to be cantering to a fourth world title. But things went backwards soon after as McLaren emerged as the car to beat, albeit with Lando Norris trailing Verstappen by 47pts having chipped away at the deficit. Prior to this race, Verstappen hadn't won

any of the previous 10 grands prix, finishing outside the podium places more often than not. Things appeared to be going the same way at Interlagos, with Verstappen managing only 12th in qualifying - which itself was delayed until race day due to torrential rain - and then being demoted a further five places after his car was fitted with its sixth engine of the season.

The drama began before the race did, with Lance Stroll binning his Aston Martin on the formation lap as the field got to grips with the soaked circuit on intermediate Pirellis. Start abandoned, the grid re-formed, only for four of the jumbled top five to then misinterpret a call from race control to begin their second attempt at a formation lap before the green light was shown. ◻





A full quarter of an hour later, the race did finally get underway with George Russell's Mercedes vaulting past pole-sitter Norris's McLaren to lead as Verstappen began tip-toeing his way up the order. The conditions demanded precision in the extreme, and on the day nobody did it better than Verstappen who took full advantage of the Red Bull's wet-weather prowess to quickly make up 11 places to run sixth after 10 laps.

This was when the weather really hit and the drizzle from race start became a monsoon, sending cars scattering as the now-worn inters struggled to cope. Nico Hülkenberg was first to go, beaching on the turn one kerbing and then earning himself the relative rarity of being black-flagged for receiving outside assistance from marshals to rejoin.

Russell and Norris pitted for fresh inters, which proved the wrong call as soon after the race was halted when Franco Colapinto smashed the barriers exiting the final turn after aquaplaning off in his Williams.

With Verstappen elevated to second in the melee and switched onto fresh rubber for the restart the signs were good. Even better when Carlos Sainz crashed his Ferrari to bring out a safety car to bunch the pack. At the restart, Verstappen scythed past Esteban Ocon's Alpine to snatch a memorable win, becoming just the third driver to win a race having started 17th. Ocon was followed home by team-mate Pierre Gasly to score the Enstone-based Alpine team's first double podium finish since Korea 2013 when it ran as Lotus-Renault. **RL**

RESULTS

1st Max Verstappen (Red Bull-Honda),

2hr 06min 54.430sec, 87.32mph

2nd Esteban Ocon (Alpine-Renault)

3rd Pierre Gasly (Alpine-Renault)

Pole position Lando Norris (McLaren-Mercedes),

1min 23.405sec, 115.54mph



Verstappen snatches the lead from Ocon after a crazy race. Right, from top: damp start soon turned soaking; black flag for Grosjean; Liam Lawson goes for a spin; double podium for Alpine

“The drizzle from the start became a monsoon, sending cars scattering”





1989 Hungarian GP

AUGUST 13, HUNGARORING

Ayrton Senna could 'do business' with Nigel Mansell. Racing against Alain Prost was akin to nailing jelly to a tree, whereas the moustachioed Englishman was a passionate racer, at his happiest wheel-to-wheel

Beating Prost was more important. Beating Mansell was more fun. Hell, losing to Mansell was more fun.

His Ferrari handling badly, as was Gerhard Berger's, Mansell concentrated on race set-up during qualifying, which caused him to line up 12th - and be quickest in morning warm-up. Although overtaking was notoriously difficult here, he had passed four by the time he exited the first corner.

After a period of consolidation, he then picked off Thierry Boutsen's Williams and Alex Caffi's Dallara (on Pirellis) before chomping into Prost's 17-second advantage. The latter's Honda turbo was hesitant, while team-mate Senna was bottled up by the leading Williams of Riccardo Patrese, the unexpected pole-sitter. The usually dominant McLarens had been denied their escape.

Buoyed by the news that Berger's stop for new Goodyears had been unnecessary, Mansell passed Prost without difficulty and closed on Senna for what became the lead when poor Patrese's radiator was holed by mechanical debris.

With 25 laps to go, Mansell was prepared to wait for his chance. It came six laps later when Stefan Johansson's Onyx emerged in front of the leader. The Swede had pitted because of a gear-selection glitch, which proved elusive to his team but promptly returned once back on the track. Badly baulked, Senna braked... and rapid-response Mansell flicked right to pass him.

Senna gave chase until Mansell set fastest lap on lap 66 and Senna's fuel read-out flashed 'red'. It was rare for him to settle for second yet he was smiley at the finish. The reason? He had 'done business' with Mansell, and beaten Prost. **PF**

RESULTS

- 1st** Nigel Mansell (Ferrari),
1hr 49min 38.650sec, 103.86mph
- 2nd** Ayrton Senna (McLaren-Honda)
- 3rd** Thierry Boutsen (Williams-Renault)
- Pole position** Riccardo Patrese (Williams-Renault),
1min 19.726sec, 111.30mph





**"The young Englishman took the
fight to Fangio, the pair of them
passing and repassing"**



25



Hawthorn (16) drags his Ferrari past Fangio's Maserati with just two laps to run in during a thrilling race-long duel that few actually expected the Briton to win



1953 French GP

JULY 5, REIMS

It almost didn't happen. Angered by its disqualification from the lead of the supporting 12-hour sports car race, which started at midnight, Ferrari threatened to take its ball home and boycott the GP

Given that it had won 10 on the bounce, however, and that its reigning champion Alberto Ascari had registered yet another pole, it realised that this would be cutting off its nose to spite its face.

Maserati, in contrast, was champing at the bit, having continued to narrow the performance gap to its Modenese neighbours. Its plan now was to upset Ascari's preferred rhythm at the front by starting Froilán González on half-tanks. The ruse might have worked, too, but for a mid-race spurt by team leader Juan Fangio, who also dragged along the Ferraris of Ascari, Luigi Villorosi, Giuseppe Farina and Mike Hawthorn, plus the Maser of his protégé Onofré Marimón. It was into the middle of this frantic slipstreaming scrap that González plopped.

The Maserati held the edge in terms of acceleration, whereas the Ferrari was better on the brakes. This led to a high-speed game of cat-and-mouse that nobody expected the inexperienced Hawthorn to win. Yet the young Englishman, 24, more comfortable than Ascari in the hurly-burly, took the fight to Fangio, the pair of them passing and repassing. On lap 58 (of 60), they crossed the line in a dead heat, as did Ascari and González a few lengths behind.

Hawthorn braked desperately late for the final corner yet also managed a good exit, and although the battling Maseratis drew closer on the long straight run to the flag - Ascari had been dropped by three seconds - he held on to score a remarkable victory by a single second. **PF**

RESULTS

- 1st** Mike Hawthorn (Ferrari),
2hr 44min 18.6sec, 113.63mph
- 2nd** Juan Manuel Fangio (Maserati)
- 3rd** José Froilán González (Maserati)
- Pole position** Alberto Ascari (Ferrari),
2min 41.2sec, 115.90mph

1981 Spanish GP

JUNE 21, JARAMA

Winning as slowly as possible was not Gilles Villeneuve's usual modus operandi. He had no option on this occasion, however, his truck-like Ferrari lumbering at the head of a 16-wheel trailer

Attacking starts were much more him. Blasting from the fourth row, and bending the front wing of Alain Prost's Renault in the process, he slotted into third on the run to the first corner. His wayward chassis at its best when anchored by full tanks, he then brazenly jumped the Williams of a surprised Carlos Reutemann for second place at the start of the second lap.

This opportunism was rewarded when easy leader Alan Jones locked up and buried his Williams in the sand on lap 14. Not that Villeneuve expected his lead to last. Already he was struggling. The chasing Reutemann, his transmission jumping out of third gear, did not seem in the (right) mood, however; the Argentine was shadow boxing rather than looking to land the knock-out punch. In contrast, 'Happy Jacques' Laffite was fighting mad. Fastest in practice, a dragging

clutch caused him to peck at the start and his Ligier reappeared down in 11th place. By lap 62 he had recovered to second place, passing Reutemann, and bringing John Watson's McLaren with him, when a backmarker intervened.

Villeneuve, weakening as he wrestled his car in 100-degree heat, now faced his strongest opponent. For 18 more laps, the so-called Québécois wild man tip-toed clear of the marbles on the twisty back section before launching his boosted V6 rocket down the pit straight. So watertight was this defence that Laffite began to worry more about losing second, third and fourth places to Watson, Reutemann and the Lotus of Elio de Angelis, so closely coupled was this caravan that had formed.

The spread between them all was just 1.24 seconds at the finish. But Villeneuve, a class apart, had been in a world all his own. **PF**

RESULTS

- 1st** Gilles Villeneuve (Ferrari),
1hr 46min 35.1sec, 92.68mph
- 2nd** Jacques Laffite (Ligier-Matra)
- 3rd** John Watson (McLaren-Ford)
- Pole position** Laffite (Ligier-Matra),
1min 13.754sec, 100.45mph

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1984 Monaco GP

JUNE 3, MONTE CARLO

Jacky Ickx, arguably the greatest wet-weather driver, had seen enough. Twelve years on from finishing second after 80 laps in similarly horrendous conditions, the Belgian, as Clerk of the Course, called a halt after 31

His decision split opinion: McLaren's Alain Prost wholeheartedly agreed; while Toleman's brilliant newcomer Ayrton Senna was fundamentally opposed. Two very different personalities and styles set on a collision course.

Prost had much to lose and Senna, making only his fifth GP start - and his second onMichelins following his team's split from Pirelli - everything to gain. The Frenchman was leading the championship thanks to two victories with his new team. The Brazilian had already caught the eye with two sixth places: in South Africa and Belgium. The Frenchman had started from pole but was struggling with his brakes. The Brazilian had started from 13th and tweaked his suspension when he clouted a kerb at the Chicane. The Frenchman, having brushed a marshal attending a spun-and-stalled car at Portier and watched Nigel Mansell's Lotus spin helplessly from a brief lead on lap 16, had lost his appetite. Senna, blessed (and cursed) with tunnel vision, was thirsting for success. The gap between them was less than four seconds - the equivalent of one more lap at Senna's closing speed - when the red flag was brandished and the result backdated.

This wasn't the only great what-might-have-been: Stefan Bellof, another newcomer, was catching the pair of them. The German had squeezed onto the 20-car grid - his Tyrrell the only non-turbo to do so - and was busy making hay while the rain fell. He was 13 seconds behind Senna when the race was stopped.



Could Senna and Bellof, neither a respector of reputation, have shared the same piece of road without colliding? Probably not. Would canny Prost have let them get on with it in the hope of picking up the pieces? Probably. What was sure was that the awarding of half-points - because three-quarter distance had not been reached - could not reduce the significance of this race. Prost knew now that Senna was gunning for him. It was personal. Bellof, too, would clearly pose a major threat with the right weapon to hand. Both had bright futures.

Bellof's would be cut tragically short. Killed at Spa's sports car encounter the following September, he had been linked with Ferrari for 1986. Denied his third place at Monaco - Tyrrell had been retrospectively struck from the season because of a weight infringement - and now denied his big-break meeting with Enzo, we'll never know how good he might have been.

Senna would not be denied. He, too, would be snatched away cruelly - but nobody, Prost in particular, could be in any doubt about his ability, speed and outlook. Those 32 laps at Monaco - Senna was still racing when Prost meekly parked up - were not bullet points. They constituted a new racing manifesto still in effect today. **PF**

RESULTS

1st Alain Prost (McLaren-TAG),
1hr 1min 7.740sec, 62.61mph
2nd Ayrton Senna (Toleman-Hart)
3rd René Arnoux (Ferrari)
Pole position Prost (McLaren-TAG),
1min 22.661sec, 89.62mph

23



**"Senna, blessed
(and cursed) with
tunnel vision,
was thirsting
for success"**

Senna announced himself to the world with an epic drive. Left, from top: Prost lost his nerve, but still won; Bellof in his Shadow

1962 German GP

AUGUST 5, NÜRBURGRING

Fussing over goggles steaming up in the rain and fretting about fouled spark plugs, Jim Clark forgot that he'd switched off his fuel pumps to avoid the latter. He remembered just as the carbs of his Lotus ran dry and the soggy flag dropped

Angry at his schoolboy error, he belatedly tore into the race determined to atone. He would drive faster in his career but never more wildly.

Tenth at the end of the first lap, he was fourth by lap eight. Freed from traffic, he immediately chopped eight seconds from the advantage of those ahead. Whereupon they responded to shed only two more to him next time around. The gap measured 14 seconds entering the 11th lap (of 15). Whereupon Clark scared himself silly with a tank-slapper of epic proportion. Realising that he was overstepping the mark, he settled for fourth. That he did so having got so close highlighted how brilliantly the leading three were performing.

Graham Hill, whose BRM had taken the lead from Dan Gurney's pole-sitting Porsche at the start of the third lap, and the Lola-Climax of John Surtees had circulated nose-to-tail throughout: harrying, jockeying, hoping to force a mistake. But none was forthcoming. Surtees annexed second on lap five while Gurney mulled over the best possible way of 'relocating' the



battery that was suddenly adrift in his cockpit, but thereafter a status quo of the tingling variety gripped them and the crowd.

Hill's BRM was faster on the long straight that funnelled them to the finish, but Surtees had a plan: get a good run exiting Schwalbenschwanz, nip by and then hold the centre of this narrow stretch of road. What he couldn't factor in was the sudden appearance of a backmarker in his path.

Hill, the winner by 2.5sec, reckoned this to be his greatest drive. **PF**

RESULTS

1st Graham Hill (BRM),

2hr 38min 45.3sec, 80.28mph

2nd John Surtees (Lola-Climax)

3rd Dan Gurney (Porsche)

Pole position Gurney (Porsche),

8min 47.2sec, 96.96mph

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Hill opens a lead as Gurney and Surtees do battle in the background. Above: Gurney congratulates the victor





2024 British GP

JULY 7, SILVERSTONE

There are some circuits that just suit grand prix racing, regardless of the rules set in operation, and Silverstone rarely disappoints

The old-school layout encourages drivers to run to the ragged edge and beyond, then throw in a spot of the great British weather and the stakes rise higher. Having gone a mighty unfamiliar two-and-a-half years without a race win, Lewis Hamilton produced a masterclass to come out on top of a cagey battle of wits and skill against McLaren's Lando Norris as the all-British fight thrilled the home crowd.

George Russell snatched pole ahead of Hamilton in an all-Mercedes front row and the pair held station through the early laps before the first rain shower hit. Now it was all about timing, judging when to jump from slicks to intermediates became key. Hamilton vaulted Russell for the lead before both slithered off, making it a four-way fight between the Mercedes and the twin McLarens of Norris and Oscar Piastri, all pressing on with slick tyres. Norris found his way into the lead with a fine slipstream on Hamilton just before a second shower at mid-distance forced the stops.

The battle was thinned when Piastri ran a lap longer than the others and lost chunks of time, and then Russell was forced to park up with water pressure troubles. With 12 laps remaining the sun appeared again and Hamilton opted to box for slicks again, a lap earlier than Norris, and rejoined out front, sealing the win when Max Verstappen demoted Norris late on. The victory was Hamilton's first for almost 1000 days, and his ninth in the British GP, setting a new record for wins at the same circuit. His emotion afterwards just added to the feel-good factor. **RL**

RESULTS

1st Lewis Hamilton (Mercedes),
1hr 22min 27.059sec, 138.45mph
2nd Max Verstappen (Red Bull Racing-Honda RBPT)
3rd Lando Norris (McLaren-Mercedes)
Pole position George Russell (Mercedes),
1min 25.819sec, 153.55mph

21

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Top: Stewart aboard his Matra MS80, borrowed from his team-mate after his off in the 4WD MS84. Here: Rindt put up a thrilling fight. Right: Stewart in victory

1969 British GP

JULY 19, SILVERSTONE

They had since Jim Clark's death fought a tacit battle to be the best: Jochen Rindt, perhaps the faster, attempting to put the fragility of his Lotus to the back of his mind, and Jackie Stewart, the more complete, revelling in his Matra's strength and security

The latter had been doing the winning: four victories and a retirement (when leading) from the first five GPs of the season to establish a huge championship lead. Rindt was in a very different place. The 'King of Formula 2' had yet to win in F1. He was also at daggers drawn with his team boss over wings - drastically lowered since his terrifying flight and crash-landing from the lead of the Spanish GP - and Lotus's impassioned development of a four-wheel-drive F1 car. An unconvinced Rindt flatly refused to drive the thing. A convinced Colin Chapman dug his heels. And the team suffered.

Matra was also assessing a four-wheel-drive chassis, but Stewart and his boss/mate Ken Tyrrell viewed it as an interesting sideline rather than a battle plan. That's why JYS was first out of the pits for practice and Lotus arrived late in the day.

It was Rindt, however, who grabbed pole, albeit by default. Stewart was two-tenths quicker when he clipped a dislodged piece of inside kerb, burst a rear tyre and spun backwards into the retaining bank at Woodcote. Forced to switch to team-mate Jean-Pierre Beltoise's car and settings, he had to forfeit his best time and start over. Second fastest was a fine effort in the circumstances.

Rindt led Stewart into Copse - just - and it was obvious by the end of the first lap that this would be a two-horse race. Stewart replied under braking for Stowe on the seventh lap, only to be baulked nine laps later by, ironically, Beltoise, relegated to the unfamiliar 4WD because of Stewart's accident.

Back in front, Rindt crossed the line first for the next 46 laps. Their dice, however, was never anything

other than captivating and beautiful, both men scribing graceful arcs, trusting to their skill and mutual respect as they peered over the edge without blinking.

Stewart increased the pressure at two-thirds distance with a fastest lap just one-tenth slower than his qualifying mark. But Rindt didn't falter. Even if his car did. A rear wing endplate came adrift and the collapsing structure began to rub on a tyre. Stewart immediately pulled alongside his friend and rival to warn him, an action that suggested he had been holding something in reserve though he had been without a clutch since the start. Rindt knew only one way at this stage of his career: flat out. Stewart knew several ways.

Rindt returned to the fray after a 30-second stop to have the offending item ripped off, only to pit again when his DFV, now low on fuel, stuttered eight laps from home.

Stewart's Cosworth also fluffed towards the end - and the Scot switched calmly to his reserve tank. Tyrrell had decided not to swap engines despite the enforced car change and Stewart, therefore, had been 600rpm down with an older-spec engine. Consistency, from within himself and his team, is what made him the best since Clark. **PF**

RESULTS

1st Jackie Stewart (Matra-Ford),

1hr 55min 55.6sec, 126.94mph

2nd Jacky Ickx (Brabham-Ford)

3rd Bruce McLaren (McLaren-Ford)

Pole position Jochen Rindt (Lotus-Ford),

1min 20.8sec, 130.09mph





1993 GP of Europe

APRIL 11, DONINGTON PARK

It was always going to be a momentous day. Since reopening the Donington Park circuit in 1977, driving force Tom Wheatcroft had pledged to bring grand prix racing back there for the first time since the Silver Arrows captured local imagination in the 1930s

Mission accomplished. Wheatcroft defied medical wisdom to attend - he was recovering from a recent heart attack - but that was too great a trifle to keep him away... or prevent him completing a pre-race demonstration run (via a gravel trap detour) in a Mercedes-Benz W154.

The mood was bright, but the same could not be said of the conditions. The Williams-Renaults of Alain Prost and Damon Hill had dominated Saturday's sun-dappled qualifying, but now things were distinctly British Racing Grey. Prost and Hill led away, while serial nuisance Ayrton Senna made an uncharacteristically sluggish start from row two and was scrapping for fifth place as the field scrambled through Redgate for the first time. When he reappeared at the same spot 90-odd seconds later, he led by several lengths. Where others wondered about grip on the greasy surface, he'd simply found it and sliced his way to the front. Such was the Brazilian's lead that McLaren assumed Prost must have been off the road - which he hadn't.

It was the opening gambit in a topsy-turvy, rain-affected afternoon during which pit stops were fumbled - and also made unnecessarily in the frequently changing conditions. Prost came in seven times (once with a puncture), Hill six and Senna five... although the latter didn't actually stop during one of those, netting him fastest lap as an unforeseen consequence of Donington's pit layout. A sticking left-rear wheel cost Senna time during his third stop, but for most of the afternoon he remained in firm control as he went on to win by more than a minute from Hill, with Prost a lapged third. Afterwards, the

Frenchman listed all the things he felt had compromised his race. At that stage McLaren was using a customer Cosworth V8 to counter Williams' Renault V10, so with comic timing, Senna turned to his nemesis and said, "Maybe you should change cars with me."

Despite being on the back foot, he'd won two of the campaign's opening three races - Interlagos and now Donington - in awkward climates.

There were other fine cameos, too. In only his third F1 start, Rubens Barrichello mastered the conditions to haul his Jordan-Hart from 12th on the grid to run as high as second on the road, although his chances of a top-four finish were dashed by failing fuel pressure with only six laps remaining.

And Johnny Herbert proved that multiple stops weren't really necessary at all. The Lotus driver switched from wets to slicks at the end of lap 10... and stayed out thereafter. "You couldn't really tell what the weather was going to do," he said, "so I thought it best just to keep going." His persistence was rewarded with fourth place.

It was Donington's only post-war grand prix to date - and it lingers still in the memories of all who attended. **SA**

RESULTS

1st Ayrton Senna (McLaren-Cosworth),

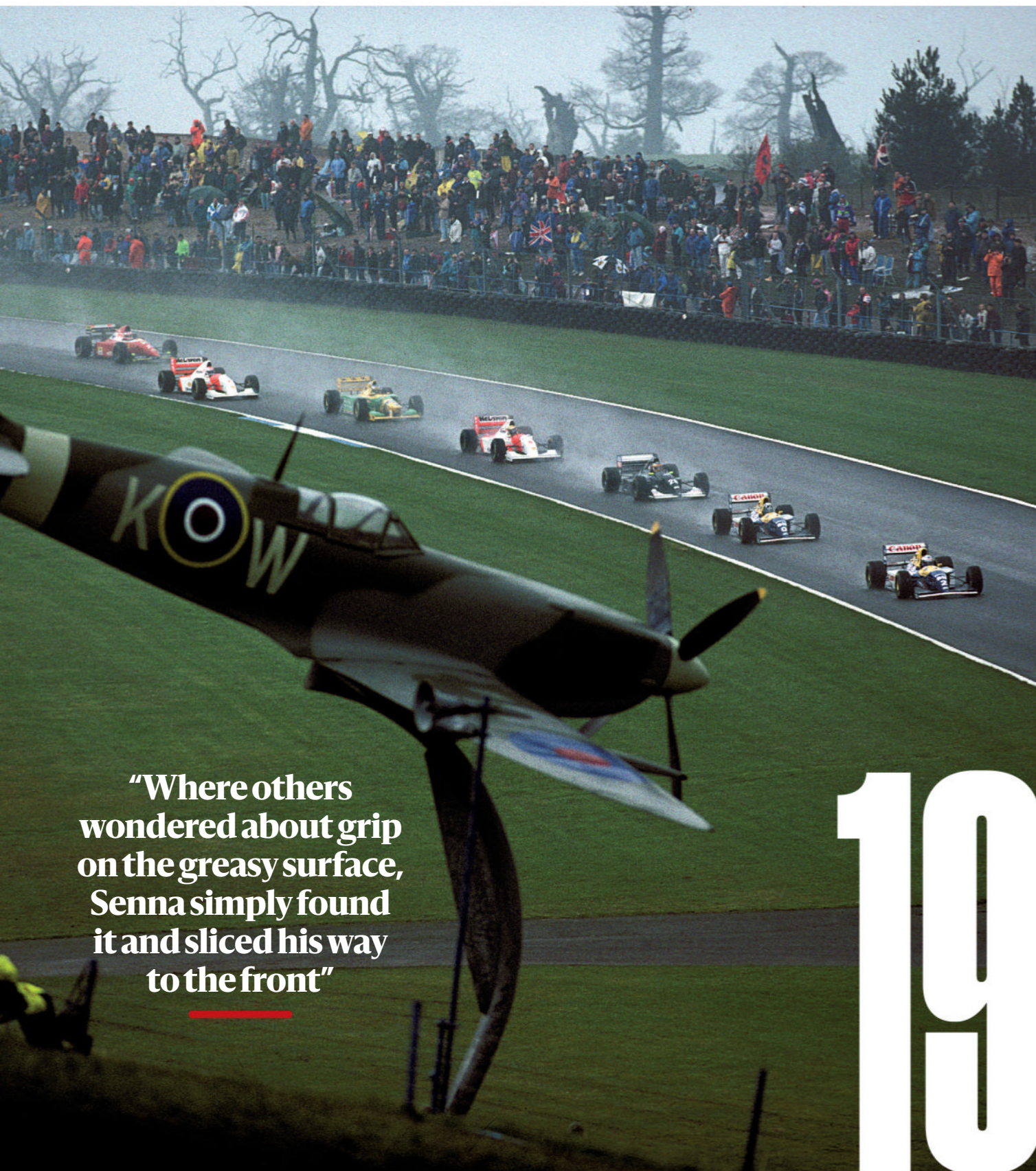
1hr 50min 46.570sec, 102.92mph

2nd Damon Hill (Williams-Renault)

3rd Alain Prost (Williams-Renault)

Pole position Prost (Williams-Renault),

1min 10.458sec, 127.72mph



**"Where others
wondered about grip
on the greasy surface,
Senna simply found
it and sliced his way
to the front"**

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1969 Italian GP

SEPTEMBER 7, MONZA

You'll notice that Bruce McLaren's name doesn't feature in the results panel here... even though he finished less than two tenths behind Jackie Stewart's winning Matra. At pre-chicane Monza, such margins were no guarantee of a headline result.

There had been a one-month break since the German GP, although most leading teams had taken part in the Oulton Park Gold Cup (where Jo Bonnier had crashed his Lotus seriously enough to have to withdraw from Monza). Long acknowledged as F1's next big thing, following the loss 17 months earlier of Jim Clark, Jackie Stewart came to Monza with a 29-point lead over Brabham rival Jacky Ickx and a chance of clinching his first world title. The Scot qualified third, behind Jochen Rindt's Lotus and Denny Hulme's McLaren, but all three would feature in an engaging, race-long battle featuring up to eight cars. Ickx, meanwhile, started at the back following a string of engine problems.

Matra brought along a four-wheel-drive MS84 - F1's *fad du jour* - for Stewart to try, but he would race the conventional, better sorted MS80. Lotus persisted with the 4WD experiment, though, entering a 63 for John Miles (not that many people noticed, because its engine would fail within a handful of laps).

Ferrari had a low-key presence. Its new 312B had proved troublesome in testing, so it brought a lone 312 for Tino Brambilla to drive initially, although Pedro Rodríguez subsequently took over for the duration. The Mexican qualified only 12th, but that failed to deter the *tifosi*: in line with tradition the royal park was absolutely rammed on race morning.

People talk fondly about the days of Formula Ford 1600 slipstreaming contests, but this was virtually FF3000 as each of the cars in the lead group was propelled by a Ford-Cosworth V8. Rindt, Stewart and

Hulme were deeply involved, of course, along with Piers Courage (Brabham), McLaren, Jean-Pierre Beltoise (Matra), Graham Hill (Lotus) and Jo Siffert (Lotus).

The lead swapped and changed constantly, mostly between Stewart, Rindt, Hulme and Courage, but period reliability eventually began to take its toll. Brake trouble slowed Hulme, Siffert stopped with engine problems, Courage began to suffer fuel starvation and, with five laps remaining, Hill pulled off with a broken halfshaft.

On the final lap, Stewart led on the run towards Parabolica but had to cede as Beltoise drew alongside in the sister Matra. The Frenchman had his nose in front as he entered the long, final right-hander, but began to drift wide and lost just enough impetus for Stewart and Rindt to slip ahead on the sprint to the line. Stewart's sixth win of the season secured that first title, with three races to spare, and he beat Rindt by 0.08sec, Beltoise by 0.17sec and McLaren by 0.19sec. The unlucky Courage was more than half a minute back in fifth and Rodríguez completed the top six, having been lapped twice. Who came up with the bright idea of chicanes? SA

RESULTS

- 1st** Jackie Stewart (Matra-Cosworth),
1hr 39min 11.260sec. 146.96mph
- 2nd** Jochen Rindt (Lotus-Cosworth)
- 3rd** Jean-Pierre Beltoise (Matra-Cosworth)
- Pole position** Rindt (Lotus-Cosworth),
1min 25.480sec, 150.47mph

18





2005 Japanese GP

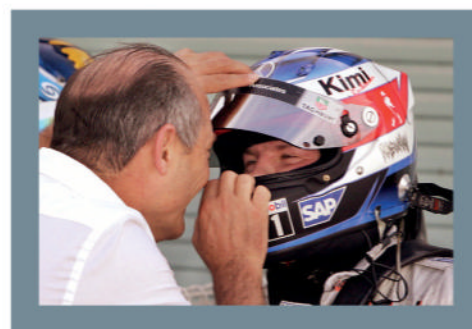
OCTOBER 9, SUZUKA

Reverse grids might be anathema to F1 purists, but when they're caused by natural phenomena – rather than regulatory artifice – the results can be uplifting and spectacular in equal measure

It began to rain during the decisive qualifying session, leaving Ralf Schumacher to take pole for Toyota as potentially faster rivals were forced to deal with an ever wetter track. This, after all, was during the days when drivers qualified one at a time.

Giancarlo Fisichella looked in best shape, third on the grid in the Renault R25 that had just carried Fernando Alonso to his first world title. "We have two McLarens at the back," the Italian said. "It will be difficult for them to get on the podium but it's going to be an interesting race." Michael Schumacher lined up 14th, Alonso 16th, Kimi Räikkönen 17th and Juan Pablo Montoya 18th.

Fisichella took the lead after the first round of pit stops and should have had the race under control as his peers scrambled through the midfield morass. Alonso pulled off the afternoon's best move, slicing around the outside of Schumacher at 130R: Renault's telemetry clocked the Spaniard at 206mph at the pivotal moment.



By the time the race moved into its closing phase, traffic had been dispatched and Fisichella led from Räikkönen, his advantage diminishing with each passing corner, while Alonso ran a distant third. On the penultimate lap the leader took a defensive line at the chicane: he was blocking only air molecules, but it cost him just enough momentum to allow Räikkönen to steal ahead as they entered turn one for the 53rd and final time. **SA**

RESULTS

1st Kimi Räikkönen (McLaren-Mercedes),
1hr 29min 02.212sec, 128.79mph
2nd Giancarlo Fisichella (Renault)
3rd Fernando Alonso (Renault)
Pole position Ralf Schumacher (Toyota),
1min 46.106sec, 122.42mph

17

16



Stewart, sans his rear wing, gets some air from one of the Nordschleife's many bumps. Right: Ickx, Amon and Rindt share the front row of the grid, with Stewart sixth



1968 German GP

AUGUST 4, NÜRBURGRING

It's an oft-repeated cliché that this was the apotheosis among many fine moments in Jackie Stewart's grand prix career, but the full circumstances bear repetition


In April 1968 the Scot fractured his right wrist in an F2 accident at Jarama and had since competed with his forearm in a plastic splint. He'd been obliged to skip the grands prix in Spain and Monaco, but the setback hadn't stopped him winning the rain-affected Dutch GP. It would be rather more ferociously wet in Germany.

During the build-up Stewart learned that he wouldn't require corrective surgery at the campaign's end, but there remained doubts that he'd be fit enough to withstand the Nordschleife's pummelling twists and leaps. As a precaution, his Monaco stand-in Johnny Servoz-Gavin completed many laps in a Matra 530 road car prior to the race weekend, to acclimatise to the track lest he should be needed.

He wasn't.

Stewart's Matra was initially fitted with a steering damper to reduce loads transmitted through the wheel, although he eventually requested its removal so as not to compromise feel. He qualified sixth, fully 50 seconds shy of Jacky Ickx's pole-sitting Ferrari, but the Belgian posted his time when conditions were merely misty rather than sodden.

Stewart's lap should have put him on row two, but so foul were the conditions that the organisers opted to convert the grid from 4-3-4 to 3-2-3, for reasons of safety. That put Stewart back, to the inside of row three instead.

He made a flying start, though, picking his way through the spray to lie third behind Graham Hill's Lotus and Chris Amon's Ferrari. He swept by the Kiwi before Adenau, then passed Hill exiting Schwalbenschwanz and was the best part of 10sec clear by the time he reached the finishing line for the first of 14 times. 

DPPI

Progress wouldn't be wholly smooth thereafter. The persistently rain never eased and even the best view in the house wasn't particularly clear, with mist lingering in the adjacent forest. Stewart also had to cope with an occasional sticking throttle and, at around half-distance, dipping oil pressure, but neither problem persisted. He continued to pull away by about 10sec per lap and finished more than four minutes clear of Hill - although the runner-up lost one of those when he spun on lap 12. He got out, straightened the car, set it rolling and then hopped back in to give himself a bump start. Amon spun too, but was unable to rejoin and handed third to Jochen Rindt, while Ickx, Jack Brabham and Pedro Rodríguez completed the top six. Dan Gurney might have featured, too, but suffered a front puncture that dropped him from fifth to ninth. The American left his mark, though, having competed in a Bell Star, the first time a full-face helmet had been used in the F1 World Championship.

The biggest impact, though, was created by Stewart. A set of highly effective 226-compound Dunlops had been no hardship against his closest rivals' Firestones and Goodyears, but the greater contribution had been his own. **SA**

RESULTS

1st Jackie Stewart (Matra-Ford) ,
2hr 19min 03.200sec, 85.71mph
2nd Graham Hill (Lotus-Ford)
3rd Jochen Rindt (Brabham-Repco)
Pole position Jacky Ickx (Ferrari),
9min 04.000sec, 93.89mph



From top: Jo Siffert had won the previous GP at Brands Hatch in his Lotus, but was out of luck; Dan Gurney dons F1's first full-face helmet, the Bell Star. Here: Stewart described the race as "teeth-gritting effort"





1985 Portuguese GP

APRIL 21, ESTORIL

In time the unexpected would become the expected, but this was only Ayrton Senna's 17th championship grand prix – and the first for which he'd taken pole. Sunday dawned dry, but by late morning it was tipping down and the air was too still to shift the clouds

Nowadays you'd have a safety car start, but this was 1985. Senna took off at the green light, settled into a consistent rhythm and left adversaries trailing by an ever-growing margin.

While he looked in total control, rivals were anything but. Jacques Laffite gave up because his Ligier was beyond gripless and he saw no point persevering until he crashed. The team later withdrew team-mate Andrea de Cesaris, because if Laffite couldn't cope... Meanwhile, championship leader Alain Prost was caught out by deep standing water on the pit straight and spun off to the left.

"The lack of visibility was hideous," says Martin Brundle. "The thing I recall most vividly is Keke Rosberg's Williams. He crashed at the final turn and the car sat in the middle of the track for several laps. Every time you approached you'd think, 'They must

have shifted it by now', but there it would be, inviting you to pass either side. It was incredibly dangerous."

Unfazed by the surrounding bedlam, Senna pressed on to such effect that only Michele Alboreto's Ferrari – more than a minute in arrears – was unlapped by the end. The Brazilian had one or two moments, but far fewer than most. It was an imperious display at a time when the only form of traction control was governed by one's right foot. **SA**

RESULTS

1st Ayrton Senna (Lotus-Renault),
2h 00min 28.006sec, 90.19mph

2nd Michele Alboreto (Ferrari)

3rd Patrick Tambay (Renault)

Pole position Senna (Lotus-Renault),
1min 21.007sec, 120.12mph

15



2014 Bahrain GP

APRIL 6, SAKHIR

The old saying goes that you only need two cars to make a race. And that has seldom been more true than when Mercedes team-mates Lewis Hamilton and Nico Rosberg put on an epic gloves-off duel in the desert

14

The Silver Arrows were in a class of their own come F1's switch to 1.6-litre V6 hybrid engines, with Hamilton and Rosberg mopping up 16 of the year's 18 races between them, so it was a good thing the needle that gradually developed between the two became the year's biggest talking point.

Bahrain was perhaps the race that lit the blue touch paper, as the two played out a lights-to-flag duel that threatened to get out of control. Rosberg had beaten Hamilton to pole, but places were reversed when Hamilton's better launch allowed him space inside at turn one. However, Mercedes had a predetermined plan to mix-up its tyre strategies, with

whoever was leading come the first stop being fitted with the faster option tyres, and whoever was second being allowed a second chance to attack by getting the options for the run to the flag.

Rosberg, visually quicker, made several lunges to displace Hamilton in the first stint, but the Briton doggedly fought back, including a superb pass as the pair ran wheel-to-wheel through the fast fifth turn.

Things reached a head when Pastor Maldonado's Lotus skewered Esteban Gutiérrez's Sauber, flipping it and calling the safety car. This set up a breathless final 10 laps with Rosberg on the quicker tyres, and Hamilton clinging on, his stern defence flaring



The best of frenemies? Hamilton and Rosberg may have grown up together, but their relationship soured at Mercedes as the two locked horns, starting with a classic in Bahrain

Rosberg's temper on the radio and making Mercedes staff shift uncomfortably on the pitwall.

Rosberg said: "I thought I had him about nine different times. We were so close, and there's this big dead angle on the car... so many times I just did not even know where Lewis was, then he'd suddenly reappear again, but he made it work."

Hamilton was similarly enthused: "Fantastic! I haven't raced like that since Indianapolis 2007. To have a real racer's race and be able to use whatever skills I've acquired since karting, pulling them all out of the bag again just felt great. One of the best feelings you could have." RL

RESULTS

1st Lewis Hamilton (Mercedes),

1hr 39min 42.743sec, 115.24mph

2nd Nico Rosberg (Mercedes)

3rd Sergio Pérez (Force India-Mercedes)

Pole position Rosberg (Mercedes),

1min 33.185sec, 130.36mph



1958 Argentinian GP

JANUARY 19, BUENOS AIRES

The 1958 Argentine Grand Prix is rightly regarded as one of Moss's greatest races, but until late in the day it had seemed as if Stirling would not even be taking part

Over the winter it had been decreed by the FIA that henceforth Formula 1 cars should run on commercially available aviation fuel rather than the alcohol-based 'dope' fuels of the past.

Vanwall, to whom Moss was contracted, and BRM declared there was insufficient time to modify its engines appropriately, and therefore it would not be going to Buenos Aires.

Although Maserati had officially withdrawn from racing, half a dozen privately-entered 250Fs were entered, and Moss was offered one of the Scuderia Centro-Sud cars. This he didn't fancy too much, so he approached Rob Walker, suggesting that his Cooper, with 2-litre Climax engine, be entered. Rob agreed,

but declined to make the trip to South America himself, a decision he was always to regret.

So late was this settled that the Cooper had to be flown to Argentina, which caused rather a sensation. Stirling being Stirling, the organisers were desperate to have him in the race, and the 'starting money' agreed allowed for the cost of transportation.

As it was, only 10 cars - three factory Ferraris, six Maseratis and the lone Cooper - took to the track for practice, and although Fangio and Behra were among the 250F drivers, Ferrari, with brand-new cars, was considered the favourite.

That said, neither Hawthorn nor Collins nor Musso took pole position, that going - perhaps inevitably - to



Juan Manuel, now in semi-retirement, but still as swift as he needed to be. Moss's little Cooper, regarded with some derision, not least by Ferrari, qualified seventh.

If Stirling's horsepower deficit were not enough, he had another problem, too, inadvertently caused by his wife: "Playing around with Katie on the Thursday night, her finger went into my eye, taking four millimetres off my cornea. A doctor gave me some pills to dull the pain, but I had to drive with a patch over my eye..."

Come the start Behra took the lead, but Fangio was soon by him, Hawthorn third and Moss fourth. By lap four, though, Stirling was in trouble, stuck in second gear: "The lever jammed solid, but just as I was about to stop, it suddenly freed itself..."

It had cost him 15 seconds or so, but quickly he began to catch up, at the same time concentrating on conserving his tyres, for the plan was to go through without making a stop, which was impossible for his rivals. As the others went in, Stirling continued, now in the lead.

"I kept checking the tyres in my mirrors," he said, "and with about 14 laps left I saw a little white spot - which got longer, and then became a continuous line. Both rears were down to the canvas, and I was worried about a burst. I kept on the oily, rubbery, bits of the track. Couldn't come in - Musso was catching me..."

In the pits Moss's mechanic, Alf Francis, made a show of preparing tyres and counting Stirling down to his stop. The subterfuge worked a treat. By the time it dawned on Ferrari that he was not stopping and Musso was given the signal to go all out, it was too late: at the flag Moss, completely drained, was 2.7sec to the good, having caused an historic upset. **NSR**

RESULTS

1st Stirling Moss (Cooper-Climax),

2hr 19min 33.7sec, 83.61mph

2nd Luigi Musso (Ferrari)

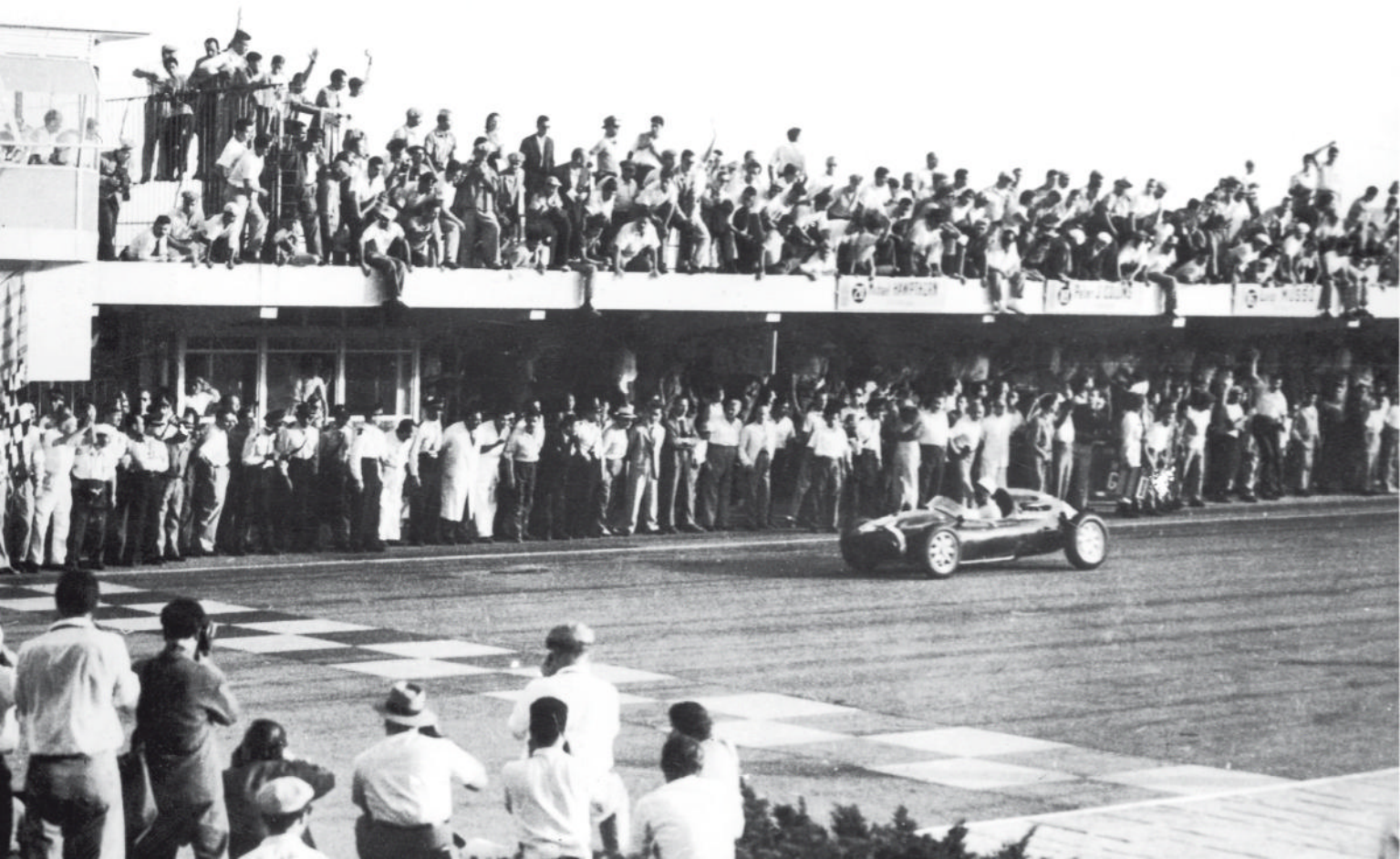
3rd Mike Hawthorn (Ferrari)

Pole position Juan Manuel Fangio (Maserati),

1min 42.0sec, 85.79mph

13

"Her finger went into my eye, taking four millimetres off my cornea... I had to drive with a patch over my eye"







2020 Turkish GP

NOVEMBER 15, ISTANBUL

Considering we were all stuck at home craving entertainment, Formula 1's hashed-together calendar actually ended up providing some much-needed tonic by featuring some cracking races, albeit with fans restricted to watching them on telly

One of the biggest factors of the Covid-inflicted schedule was F1 lost the ability to race where it wanted, when it wanted, leading to a huge calendar shuffle with some tracks doing double duty and other, more maligned venues getting new chances to host. Istanbul Park in Turkey was one such track, and the little-used facility did not disappoint, with a gripless surface and mixed conditions producing a thriller.

Having not hosted a GP since 2011, the track was hastily resurfaced two weeks before the race, which caught Pirelli out somewhat. The firm brought its three harder-compound tyres, but would have changed to softer ones, given more notice. Pirelli's motorsport boss Mario Isola saying at the time: "the result is basically very little grip. It is not a drama, in my

opinion, because it's an additional challenge for the drivers and a bit of unpredictability for the engineer. When you have this kind of situation, sometimes you have even better racing." He was bang on.

Lance Stroll became the first Canadian driver to secure a pole position since Jacques Villeneuve at the 1997 European GP, notably out-qualifying world championship leader Lewis Hamilton by nearly five seconds on Saturday.

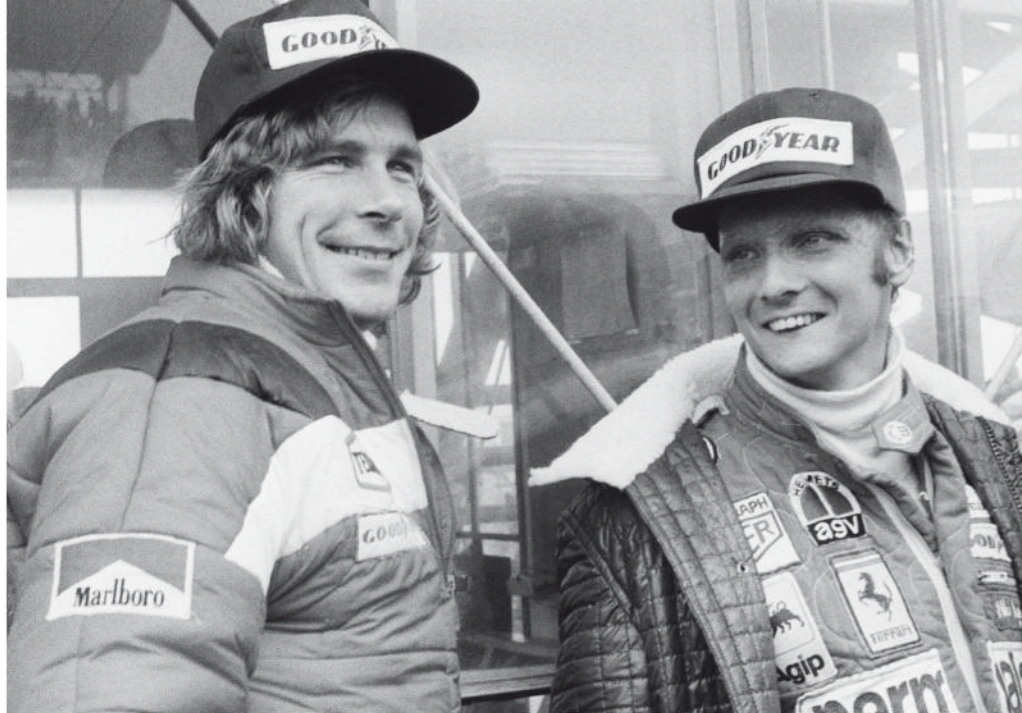
When the field slithered away under heavy rain for the start, the oil-slick surface made for compelling viewing as the cars scrabbled for traction. Two cars spun at the first turn - including Valtteri Bottas, who would go on to suffer a further five rotations on what would become a dire day for the Finn.

In full wet, Stroll looked imperious, but as the track dried and the field switched to intermediates things got trickier. Hamilton stopped a handful of laps earlier and made good progress to tour onto the tail of Stroll and pass for the lead as the Racing Point struggled to turn the new tyres on. From there, Hamilton wore his inters basically down to slicks, even declining a suggested 'safety stop' from his Mercedes team for fear of slithering off entering the pitlane as he had done in China 2007. The result was hard-earned, and secured Hamilton his historic seventh world title, tying him with Michael Schumacher as the sport's most decorated champion. **RL**

RESULTS

- 1st** Lewis Hamilton (Mercedes),
1hr 42min 19.313sec, 112.73mph
- 2nd** Sergio Pérez (Racing Point-BWT Mercedes)
- 3rd** Sebastian Vettel (Ferrari)
- Pole position** Lance Stroll (Racing Point-BWT Mercedes),
1min 47.765sec, 110.80mph

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1976 Japanese GP

OCTOBER 24, FUJI

The first world championship grand prix to be run in Japan was the final act in one of the most tumultuous seasons on record. On the surface it seemed simple enough: Lauda, with 68 points, looked to be favourite to win the title from Hunt, who had 65

Then you considered that in July, after the British Grand Prix, Niki had led James 58 to 35, that in August he had been given the Last Rites after a fearful accident at the Nürburgring, that in September - only six weeks later - he had returned at Monza, finishing fourth... Now, though, it was October, and Hunt was on a roll, having won four of the last six races.

The championship contenders qualified second and third at Fuji, behind Mario Andretti, but so foul was the weather on race day that postponement looked inevitable. "The track was flooded," said Lauda, "and we all said, 'We cannot race'. Then, at four o'clock, Bernie [Ecclestone] and the race director said, 'Guys, we're going to start because the whole thing is televised and soon it will be dark.'"

They got on their way, an hour and a half late, but after only a couple of laps Niki headed for pitlane, and climbed out, as did Carlos Pace and Emerson Fittipaldi. Ferrari suggested inventing a problem with Lauda's car, allowing him to save face, but he would have none of it: "I stopped because of the conditions - nothing to do with after-effects from the accident. Half an hour later the rain stopped, and if I hadn't withdrawn it would have been easy to get the points I needed, but I know what I did was the right thing..."

Lauda may have been out, but Hunt still needed four points - third place - to win the title. James led the race, but as the track started to dry he knew there would be tyre problems, and by means of hand signals - no radios back then - he began asking McLaren what to do. "Their response was to hang out a board with a big question mark on it! So that was very helpful..."

When Hunt finally came in, one tyre had blown, another punctured, so the stop was inevitably a long one, for it took time to get a jack under the car. Thereafter, he said, all he could do was shut his eyes, floor it, and pass as many cars as possible. "At the end they told me I was third, I was world champion, but, given McLaren's record, I didn't immediately believe it..."

It was true, though: by a single point, James had indeed won the title, as Niki was informed at the airport in Tokyo. "Actually I didn't mind," he said, "because it was James who had beaten me, and I liked the guy. All the problems between McLaren and Ferrari never made any difference to us personally..."

Back in Maranello, though, Enzo Ferrari was angered by Lauda's withdrawal, and suggested he should not have returned to racing so quickly: had he stayed out for the balance of the season, Ferrari could have lost the world championship, but been considered moral winners. That winter it was suggested to Niki that he should become team manager. The offer was contemptuously declined: Lauda won the world title again in 1977, then turned his back on Ferrari for Brabham. **NSR**

RESULTS

- 1st** Mario Andretti (Lotus-Ford),
1hr 43min 58.86sec, 114.09mph
- 2nd** Patrick Depailler (Tyrrell-Ford)
- 3rd** James Hunt (McLaren-Ford)
- Pole position** Andretti (Lotus-Ford),
1min 12.77sec, 133.99mph





Hunt v Lauda came to a dramatic conclusion when Niki stopped, leaving Hunt to chase down a podium, and the world championship



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2011 Canadian GP

JUNE 12, MONTREAL

Six pit stops, one puncture, two collisions, a drive-through penalty, and taking a race restart in last position. It's not normally a winning strategy, but Jenson Button hadn't read the script...

Persistent drizzle dictated a safety car start and the field was unchained at the end of lap four, pole winner Sebastian Vettel edging clear until the safety car reappeared on lap eight.

Lewis Hamilton clattered into team-mate Jenson Button on the pit straight and pulled off with his car in a precarious position, while Button was forced to pit for a check-up.

Rain intensified a few laps after the restart and the safety car reappeared, Button having served a drive-through for lapping too quickly when it was last out. Everybody switched to wets, but even safety car speeds felt treacherous and the race was suspended for more than two hours.

It resumed with everyone on wets, but was soon neutralised again after Button and Fernando Alonso collided at Turn Four. The Spaniard retired and Button crawled to the pits with a front-left puncture. When the race restarted he was 21st - and last.

It took about 10 laps for the track to be sufficiently dry for slicks and Button, who had steamed into the top 10's lower reaches, was one of the first to switch. He rejoined in ninth and began lapping 3sec faster than anybody - Vettel included. "The car was obviously pretty good in those conditions," said McLaren team principal Martin Whitmarsh, "but most of that performance was down to Jenson."

Button spent the rest of the race edging closer to the front - and began the final lap 0.9sec behind Vettel. The German then ran slightly wide through Turn Five... and opened the door to one of history's unlikely conquests. **SA**

RESULTS

1st Jenson Button (McLaren-Mercedes),

4hr 04min 39.537sec, 46.51mph

2nd Sebastian Vettel (Red Bull-Renault)

3rd Mark Webber (Red Bull-Renault)

Pole position Vettel (Red Bull-Renault),

1min 13.014sec, 133.60mph



Deluge and drama: Button splashes to a memorable victory. Below from left: Hamilton and Button clash early; Vettel looked to be favourite until the final stages; a soaking from Webber on the podium







Clay Regazzoni led early on before the Ferraris wilted on home turf. Right: Amon's Matra with its miniscule rear wing



1971 Italian GP

SEPTEMBER 5, MONZA

Italy 1971 has to be high on any list: because it was the last race at Monza before chicane blight, because five drivers crossed the line within six-tenths of a second, and because, with a winner's average of 150.754mph, it is still the fastest F1 race ever run

When the drivers arrived there the world championship had already been clinched by Stewart, so all that was at stake was victory in one of the season's most prestigious grands prix.

Highly favoured at such a fast circuit were the 'twelves' of Ferrari and BRM: less fancied was the only other such, the lone Matra of Chris Amon. How so? Because although the shrieking French V12 made a glorious sound, it invariably fell short on power: so hopeless had Chris's engine been at the Nürburgring that the team skipped the Austrian GP, and concentrated on resolving its oil churning problem.

This it achieved, so now Amon had an engine perhaps not on par with Ferrari and BRM, but at least a match for the ubiquitous Cosworth DFV.

Late in Saturday afternoon qualifying Jackie Ickx's Ferrari was shown as fastest, and only after the local papers had gone to press did the authorities concede that someone had gone quicker: Amon in the revitalised Matra, no less, complete with the tiniest rear wing ever seen on an F1 car.

If the *tifosi* were disappointed by that on race morning, they were soothed at the start, when Clay Regazzoni's Ferrari left before the rest, and screamed by in the lead at the end of lap one.

Early on, though, Ronnie Peterson's March was in front, hounded by the Tyrrells of Jackie Stewart and François Cevert, Jo Siffert's BRM, Regazzoni

DPPI

"The rev limit was 10,500, but I took it to 11,500 before snatching top gear, figuring the bugger would probably blow apart – but if it didn't I'd win!"





Peter Gethin's BRM (left) times it right to sneak past both François Cevert's Tyrrell and Ronnie Peterson's March

and Ickx. At Monza the attrition rate was always high, and before halfway Stewart was gone, together with both Ferraris, while Siffert found himself stuck in fourth gear.

Others, though, were coming into play, not least Mike Hailwood, returning to Formula 1 with Surtees after six years away. On lap 25 Mike - having qualified 17th - came by in the lead: "I didn't know what this slipstreaming lark was all about - I'd never done it before..."

As the race progressed Amon's Matra ran easily in fifth or sixth, but on lap 36 Chris decided it was time to go, at which point the Matra assumed the lead, and looked set.

Until lap 47, that is, when Amon came by in third place - and shielding his eyes. "I'd been losing tear-offs," he said, "so this time I'd taped it on more firmly - so firmly that when I pulled it off the whole bloody visor went! Actually, it didn't make a lot of difference, because then I started to get fuel starvation, as well..."

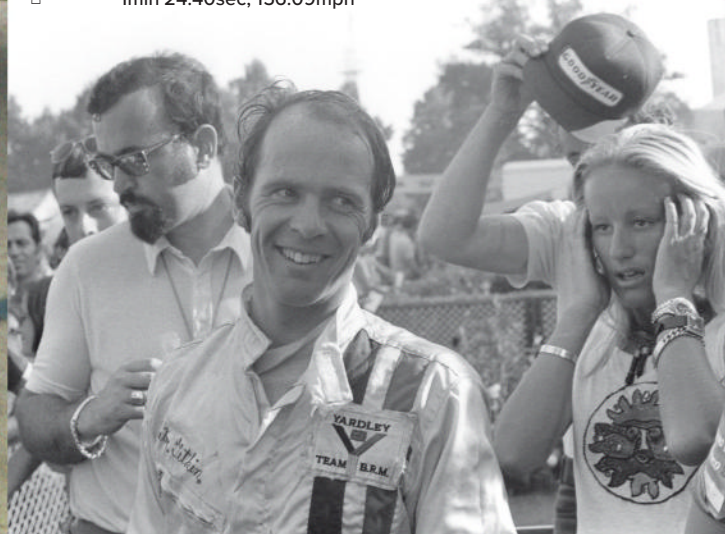
While the Matra fell away to sixth, where it finished, those ahead concentrated on the final sprint to the flag, on being in the right place at Parabolica. As it was, Cevert and Peterson arrived there side by side, braking too late and sliding wide - whereupon Peter Gethin's BRM snicked by the pair of them, and stayed there to the flag. "The rev limit was 10,500," said Peter, "but I took it to 11,500 before snatching top gear, figuring the bugger would probably blow apart - but if it didn't I'd win!"

Over the line he was a couple of feet ahead of Peterson, with Cevert third, Hailwood fourth and Ganley's BRM fifth. I was at the line as they went over it in a blur: I hadn't a clue who had won. **NSR**

RESULTS

- 1st** Peter Gethin (BRM),
1hr 18min 12.60sec, 150.75mph
- 2nd** Ronnie Peterson (March-Ford)
- 3rd** François Cevert (Tyrrell-Ford)
- Pole position** Chris Amon (Matra),
1min 24.40sec, 156.09mph

DPPI





2020 Italian GP

SEPTEMBER 6, MONZA

There's something about Toro Rosso and Monza. Despite being the home of Ferrari, Italy's smaller Scuderia has sprung a few shocks with perhaps its biggest one coming, ironically, in front of no *tifosi*

Some 12 years after Sebastian Vettel scored his astonishing victory for the then-Ferrari-powered team, Frenchman Pierre Gasly became the bloodline's second shock winner, guiding his Honda-engined AlphaTauri through a crazy race and surviving a nail-biting finish.

Mercedes looked like continuing its hot streak as runaway championship leader Lewis Hamilton lined up on pole. However, what followed was a race of drama and disruption. Hamilton looked to streak away from the twin McLarens of Carlos Sainz and Lando Norris, before home hopes were dented when Sebastian Vettel suffered a brake failure that sent him smashing through the Polystyrene boards at turn one. The race took its first turn when Kevin Magnussen's Haas ground to a halt before pit entry. Mercedes pulled what it thought to be a masterstroke by immediately calling Hamilton in, however the safety car was deployed closing the pit entry just as the Briton peeled in, earning him a 10-second stop/go penalty.

The race was then halted after Charles Leclerc got a snap of oversteer coming out of the Parabolica and demolished the tyre barriers. Fortunately, he emerged

uninjured, but it meant a full standing restart, and with race leader Hamilton yet to serve his penalty.


Gasly had worked his way up from 10th on the grid to run third. Cannily equipped with medium Pirellis for the restart he sliced past Lance Stroll's Racing Point for second, which became the lead once Hamilton took his penalty.

With Kimi Räikkönen's Alfa Romeo acting as the cork in the bottle behind, Gasly escaped by a few seconds, before Sainz made his way past the Finn and began to slice into Gasly's lead. What began as a three-second gap was within DRS range at the start of the final tour. Sainz got within a tenth into the first chicane, but Gasly just held on to snatch a famous win. **RL**

RESULTS

- 1st** Pierre Gasly (AlphaTauri-Honda),
1hr 47min 06.056sec, 106.77mph
- 2nd** Carlos Sainz (McLaren-Renault)
- 3rd** Lance Stroll (Racing Point-BWT Mercedes)
- Pole position** Lewis Hamilton (Mercedes),
1min 18.887sec, 164.26mph



A full-page photograph of Pierre Gasly, a French Formula 1 driver, sitting on a podium. He is wearing a white racing suit with various sponsor logos including 'myway', 'HONDA', 'AGELL', 'EDIF', 'CASIO', and 'FIT'. He is also wearing a black and yellow racing helmet. He has a surprised or contemplative expression, with his hand near his mouth. To his left is a large, multi-colored trophy and a bottle of Moët & Chandon champagne. The background is a green safety fence, and there is confetti in the air.

Penny for your thoughts: a shocked Gasly contemplates his victory. Left, clockwise: Hamilton leads at the start; Albon tangles; Gasly celebrates; Stroll let it slip

"Some 12 years after Vettel's astonishing victory, Gasly became the bloodline's second shock winner in a crazy race"

2008 Brazilian GP

NOVEMBER 2, INTERLAGOS

In 2007 the Paulistas had embraced Lewis Hamilton – a mixed-race tyro chasing the F1 championship in a mixed-race city – but one year on attitudes had changed. He was in title contention again, but this time up against Felipe Massa, a son of São Paulo

One of Hamilton's pre-race functions was hijacked by local pranksters. They threw him a toy black cat, a symbol of misfortune in Brazil. Hamilton was unfazed. "Where I come from," he said, "black cats are lucky."

The Englishman led the standings prior to the race – and fifth place would suffice to take the title. Massa needed to win and cross his fingers, but qualified on pole with Hamilton back in fourth. Fuel weight was a factor back then – and the Brazilian had been so swift that McLaren wrongly assumed he must be on a three-stop strategy...

Sunday's forecast was unsettled, but rain held off until just before the scheduled start and the race was put back by 10 minutes to fit wets. BMW left Robert Kubica on dries, against his wishes, and he peeled in at the end of the formation lap to change.

Massa led away from Jarno Trulli (Toyota), Kimi Räikkönen (Ferrari) and Hamilton, but David Coulthard's final GP was soon over, his Red Bull having been hit by Williams team-mates Nico Rosberg and Kazuki Nakajima. Nelson Piquet then flew off at Turn Three and the race was neutralised. 🚫





**"I had no idea what
position I was in, and no
clue that I was influencing
the championship"**



Force India put Giancarlo Fisichella on dry Bridgestones during the interlude - and within a couple of laps of the restart he was quickest, which prompted everybody else to change. McLaren left it late keeping Hamilton out until lap 11 - about two too many. That dropped him to seventh, although he was soon back up to fifth and driving a controlled, if subdued, race.

Massa made his final stop on lap 38, continuing to lead from Fernando Alonso, Räikkönen, Hamilton and Sebastian Vettel, whose Toro Rosso became ever more of a thorn in the McLaren's sidepod. Then, with 10 laps to go, the rain returned.

By lap 64 almost everybody had plumped for wets, but Toyota left its drivers out - and that promoted Timo Glock to fourth. With two laps to go Vettel pushed Hamilton down to sixth and the balance of power shifted. "I didn't know what position I was in," Vettel said, "and had no idea I might be influencing the championship outcome."

The rain had intensified when Hamilton began the final lap: he was running 0.754sec behind Vettel, 13.144sec adrift of Glock. As Massa finished comfortably clear of Alonso, he punched the air cautiously and awaited information. Half a lap behind, Vettel and Hamilton were approaching Junção - the final corner before the uphill blast to the flag - and closing on Glock, whose dry tyres were hopeless in the now ferocious downpour. "It was almost impossible to stay on the track," Glock said. "I had no idea who was behind me and didn't see where Lewis overtook." Ironically, he had the best view in the house but missed 2008's most critical moment.



"When I crossed the line the positions meant I was going to be champion," Massa said, "but then I was told Lewis had passed Glock. That's racing, though. There are always explanations for what happens in life and if things worked out like this today, it's just the way it was meant to be."

He had been the afternoon's outstanding performer, on and off the track. **SA**

RESULTS

- 1st** Felipe Massa (Ferrari),
1hr 34min 11.435sec, 121.08mph
- 2nd** Fernando Alonso (Renault R28)
- 3rd** Kimi Räikkönen (Ferrari F2008)
- Pole position** Massa (Ferrari),
1min 12.368sec, 133.19mph

6

1967 Italian GP

SEPTEMBER 10, MONZA

The classic iteration of Monza offered much to Formula 1: the sheer unrestrained speed favouring those willing to push to the edge and beyond. John Surtees may have won, but Jim Clark stole this day.

"There were no chicanes at Monza then, so it was very fast, but *anyone* could go quickly there, because it's more difficult to make up time on an easy track" says Jackie Stewart of his memories of an ultra-fast Italian GP era. "A driver with a little edge could use it at the Nürburgring or Spa, but at Monza it was all a matter of not scrubbing off speed, of being ultra-smooth..."

That being so, the 1967 race should rank highly among Clark's greatest performances. This was a comeback drive that may not have ended in victory, but still left an indelible memory for all those who witnessed it.


This was the first year of the Lotus 49 - and, more significantly, of the Cosworth DFV V8. From the start it was apparent that Keith Duckworth's masterpiece

had a clear power advantage, but the 49 was wayward in its early days, and not conspicuously reliable. Although Clark won four grands prix that year - twice as many as anyone else - he finished only third in the championship. Usually, though, Jimmy started from pole, and he did so at Monza, followed by Jack Brabham, Bruce McLaren, Chris Amon and Dan Gurney. The start was chaotic. These were the days of the dummy grid, whereby the cars lined up, and were then signalled to move up to the grid proper, but this time Brabham unfathomably took the flag to mean the start of the race, and headed off towards Curva Grande, the rest following suit. In the mayhem Amon almost hit the back of Clark, in so doing 'buzzing' the Ferrari V12, taking the edge off it. 🚩





Was this one of Clark's greatest-ever drives? He may have been denied, but the Scotsman's surge will go down in folklore. Right: Surtees won at an average of over 140mph



“Rejoining 15th, Clark began a mesmeric drive: in only six laps he made up 15 seconds on the leaders, and in another three had unlapped himself”

It wasn't long before Clark took the lead - but not long, either, before he had a problem. The 49 had a puncture, and by the time Jimmy had driven back to his pit and had the tyre changed, more than a lap had been lost. Rejoining 15th, he began a mesmeric drive: in only six laps he made up 15 seconds on the leaders, and in another three had unlapped himself, and started to leave them behind.

As Clark set endless fastest laps, his team-mate Graham Hill led from Brabham, John Surtees and Amon, but on lap 59, with only nine to go, Graham's DFV blew up, and as this was happening Clark - having made up a whole lap - went by Surtees into second place. A lap later he passed Brabham for the lead, and an unlikely victory looked assured.

Into the last lap they went - and at Curva Grande Jimmy's Lotus suddenly faltered, its fuel pumps refusing to pick up the last three gallons in the tank. Instantly Brabham and Surtees went by, and at the flag it was the Honda in front by half a car's length.

Twenty-five seconds later Clark stuttered over the line, third, and when it was all over the *tifosi* hoisted not only *Il Grande John* on their shoulders, but Jimmy, as well. They had seen him at his greatest, and that was very great indeed. **NSR**

RESULTS

1st John Surtees (Honda),

1hr 42min 45.00sec, 140.50mph

2nd Jack Brabham (Brabham-Repco)

3rd Jim Clark (Lotus-Ford)

Pole position Clark (Lotus-Ford),

1min 28.5sec, 145.33mph





As mesmeric a duel as
we'll perhaps ever see.
Villeneuve's gripless
Ferrari vs Arnoux's
stuttering Renault



DPPI

F



1979 French GP

JULY 1, DIJON

In July 1979 Jean-Pierre Jabouille won his, and Renault's, first world championship grand prix, and did it, what's more, in France. It is his tragedy that anyone at Dijon that day recalls only the duel for second place between Gilles Villeneuve and René Arnoux

Jabouille always had the look of a man who'd walked under too many ladders. "For me," he said, "the sad thing is that no one remembers who won the race - only the fight for second place! Still, when I saw the video, I was not surprised..."

Dijon '79 has passed into racing folklore. When they arrived there Jody Scheckter was ahead on points, followed by Jacques Laffite and Villeneuve, but Renault - the only turbo team - was going to be a threat anywhere with decent straights. Like Dijon.

Given their power advantage, Jabouille and Arnoux could run more rear wing than the rest, and qualified 1-2, threatened only by Villeneuve, who produced a stunning lap to join them in the 1min 07sec bracket.

"I need a win here," Gilles said, "to close the gap to Jody. If Jabouille gets into the lead it'll be impossible to pass him, so I have to make a good start, and at least split the Renaults..."

He did better than that, slicing past both of them before the first turn, and then it was Gilles at his purest, running away from Jabouille at a second a lap: "I knew I was hurting the tyres, but what was the alternative - run third all the way, and go to sleep?"

The auguries, though, were not good. Jabouille, running the race like the dedicated fisherman he was, paying out, reeling in, well knew the extent of his car's superiority. Taking scary chances through lapped traffic, Gilles stayed in front, but by mid-race his tyres were fading, and Jabouille swept by to assume top spot at the end of the straight.

"I could see his tyres were finished," Jean-Pierre said. "How he got to the end of the race on them, I'll never understand..."





In the Ferrari pit they got new Michelins ready, but Villeneuve stayed out, Arnoux now closing. With 10 laps to go, Gilles seemed like tethered prey, and once René came by ahead, all seemed over.

But Villeneuve was not like that. "When Arnoux passed me," he said, "I thought he'd run away, like Jabouille had. My tyres were gone, but still I could stay with him - so he had to have a problem, too..."

So he had: the Renault's fuel pick-up had begun to falter slightly. "I wanted to get him back as soon as possible," Gilles said, "because he wouldn't be expecting it. I wasn't quite close enough, but I left my braking really, really, late..."

No one - not even the drivers - really knew how many times the two cars passed and repassed in the last two or three laps, or how many times they banged wheels, slid wide, went off, rejoined. Halfway round the final lap Arnoux seemed to have it done, but Villeneuve somehow snicked by, settling it. As Jabouille took the flag, everyone was looking behind him.

On the slowing-down lap Villeneuve gave a wave of salute to his rival, returned by Arnoux, and when they stepped from their cars they embraced. At Silverstone, though, the two of them were grilled at a GPDA meeting by some of FI's elder statesmen, Niki Lauda, Emerson Fittipaldi, Scheckter and others calling them irresponsible.

"From where they were," Gilles drily commented, "what the hell did they know? I couldn't believe the things they were saying. Jesus, they're supposed to be racing drivers..." **NSR**

RESULTS

1st Jean-Pierre Jabouille (Renault),

1hr 55min 22.48sec, 81.33mph

2nd Gilles Villeneuve (Ferrari)

3rd René Arnoux (Renault)

Pole position Jabouille (Renault),

1min 07.19sec, 126.51mph

This shot would usually show the race winner, in this case Villeneuve vs Arnoux was all anybody saw. Right: Jabouille took the laurels, but not the memories



“This race has become something of a cliché in the sport’s folklore, but it was Fangio’s greatest day”





1957 German GP

AUGUST 4, NÜRBURGRING

In August 1954 Juan Manuel Fangio won the German Grand Prix in a Mercedes-Benz W196. The following year the race was cancelled, following the Le Mans disaster, but in 1956 it was back on the calendar, and Fangio won it in a Lancia-Ferrari D50

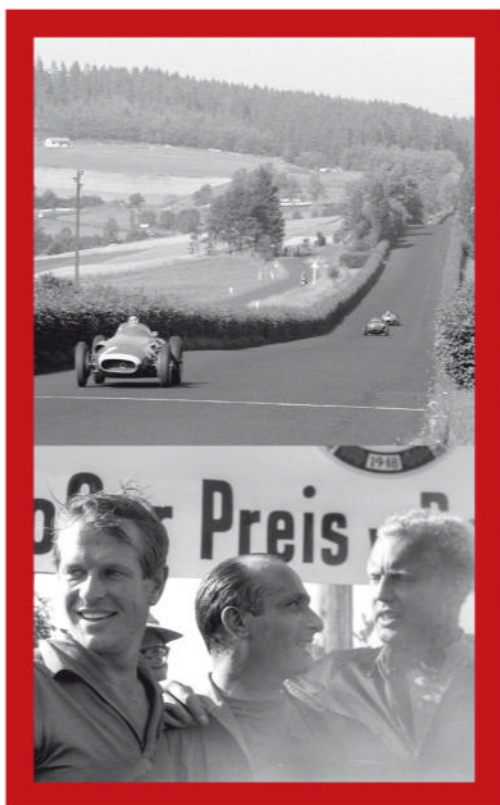
In '57 he won it once more in a Maserati 250F - a hat-trick at the Nürburgring, in three different makes of car - and if this race has become something of a cliché in the folklore of the sport, that is of no account, for it was Juan Manuel's greatest day of days.

The bare facts of the 1957 German Grand Prix are simple enough: it was Fangio against the Ferraris, for Vanwall, victorious at Aintree two weeks before, was in terrible trouble with its shock absorbers at the Nürburgring, to the point that Stirling Moss, Tony Brooks and Stuart Lewis-Evans were effectively also-rans: "We had our own motor race," said Stirling, "running seventh, eighth and ninth in the early stages. I finished fifth in the end, stiff, sore and exhausted..."

Vanwall's unexpected lack of competitiveness left only Mike Hawthorn and Peter Collins to offer any kind of challenge to Fangio, and from pole position Juan Manuel duly led them away, building up a lead of 30 seconds by half-distance. Unusually for those days, though, he and Maserati had planned a pitstop, so that he started the race on half tanks, and then came in, after 12 of the 22 laps, for fuel and fresh tyres.

Even by the standards of the day, it was not a swift stop, and by the time he went back out Fangio was close to a minute behind the Ferraris. Initially he made little impression, and they felt relatively secure, which was a big mistake. Only every 10 minutes or so could pit signals be hung out, and in the course of a single

Mike Hawthorn and Peter Collins lead early on in their Ferraris, but Juan Manuel Fangio would stun them aboard his Maserati, here in third



Beauty and madness: Fangio tames the famed Karussell corner in his Maserati on a day when he shone brightest. Left from top: Fangio leads Brooks and Hawthorn early on; the winner flanked by Collins and Hawthorn on the podium

lap Juan Manuel could do a lot of damage. By lap 16 he had halved the Ferraris' lead, and by lap 21 was right on them, then past.

In the course of his victorious drive the previous year Fangio had left the lap record at 9min 41.6sec; this time, in his pursuit of Collins and Hawthorn, he went round in a staggering 9min 17.4sec - over eight seconds faster than even his own pole position.

"I loved that Maserati," he told me. "It wasn't very powerful, but it was beautifully balanced - I felt I could do anything with it. Even now, sitting here with you all these years later, when I think of that race I can feel fear. The Nürburgring was always my favourite circuit - I loved it, all of it, and I think that day I conquered it, but on another day it might have conquered me, who knows?"

"Afterwards I knew what I had done, the chances I had taken - I believe that day I took myself and my car to the limit, and perhaps a little bit more. I had never driven like that before, and I knew I never would again..." **NSR**

RESULTS

1st Juan Manuel Fangio (Maserati),

3hr 30min 38.3sec, 85.53mph

2nd Mike Hawthorn (Ferrari)

3rd Peter Collins (Ferrari)

Pole position Fangio, 9min 25.6sec, 90.21mph



"The Nürburgring was always my favourite circuit – I loved it, all of it, and I think that day I conquered it, but on another day it might have conquered me, who knows?"





2019 German GP

JULY 28, HOCKENHEIM

This one just had everything you could ask for; mixed conditions, high drama, penalties, an in-house skating rink and more than a small dose of irony as Mercedes would be left red-faced at home

Mercedes' purple patch had rarely been more purple. Between them Lewis Hamilton and Valtteri Bottas had won nine of the first 10 grands prix of the season prior to arriving at Hockenheim, and Mercedes went all-in for its home race in what was an important year for the Stuttgart brand.

As well as being the event's title sponsor - the Mercedes-Benz *Grosser Preis von Deutschland* - the brand was also marking an important milestone. To celebrate both 125 years of its participation in motorsport, and its 200th grand prix start, the Silver Arrows went back to their roots, instead being decked out in a special white livery harking back to Mercedes' original 1930s colours. To add to the theme, all team members were encouraged to attend in period fancy dress (*above*). There was a sense of fun and frolic about the usually straight-faced team, like F1's version of Disneyland. Perhaps that contributed to what would eventually become something of a downfall.

Initially everything looked like going to plan when Hamilton annexed pole, however Sunday would be a different story as the Baden-Württemberg weather literally rained on the parade. Hamilton held the lead as the race began in soaking-wet conditions, but by mid-race the rain had abated opening a tiny window for those brave enough to try slick tyres.

This put the race on a knife edge as drivers toed extremely slender drying lines, well aware of the pitfalls awaiting beyond the margins. And there was no bigger pitfall than the Südkurve. Hockenheim's 🚩





《125》 Years of Mercedes-Benz Motorsport

Hamilton leads away at the sudden start ahead of Bottas.
Left: Mercedes' version of Disneyland on the pit wall



Away from the drama up front, Sebastian Vettel produced one of his finest Ferrari drives, going from last to second after his electrics failed in qualifying



“The Tarmac became a trap, dragging any car that got off-line helplessly into the barriers or the gravel”



**"It shows you can't fool about with
this stuff. We're not superstitious,
but we do believe in karma"**



Verstappen won on Mercedes' dire day. Top, from left: Leclerc's off; Hamilton sans half his front wing; Nico Hülkenberg also fell foul; Vettel after his storming drive



final turn featured run-off that doubled as a dragstrip, and in the conditions the super-smooth Tarmac was transformed into a booby trap, dragging any car that ventured off-line helplessly into either the barriers or the gravel. The first warning signs came when Ferrari's Charles Leclerc skidded out of second after seemingly innocently dipping one of his soft tyres onto a wet patch, his Ferrari sucked and swamped into the gravel.

Leclerc's off gave Hamilton a comfortable lead, but it all went wrong when he too fell victim of the same trap just a few laps later, ironically smiting the Mercedes-branded barrier, damaging his front wing. Hamilton got going and scrambled back to the pits, but in doing so crossed the track and skipped the pitlane entry bollard, earning himself a five-second time penalty that would dump him outside the top 10 come the next round of stops. Things were compounded for Mercedes when Bottas put a wheel on the wet stuff at turn one and crashed out.

Max Verstappen won for Red Bull, despite his own early spin on slicks, and Sebastian Vettel put in one of his finest performances in red. After missing qualifying due to an electrical issue, the German dragged his Ferrari from 20th (and last!) on the grid to second to delight his home crowd.

Hamilton would nick a single point for ninth, but it was hardly the celebration Mercedes had planned. Toto Wolff, Fedora barely hiding his reddened face, said: "It shows that you can't fool around with this stuff. You should concentrate on the job. We are not superstitious, but we do believe in karma..." We doubt he ever wore that hat again. **RL**

RESULTS

1st Max Verstappen (Red Bull Racing-Honda),
1hr 44min 31.275sec, 104.41mph
2nd Sebastian Vettel (Ferrari)
3rd Daniil Kvyat (Toro Rosso-Honda)
Pole position Lewis Hamilton (Mercedes),
1min 11.767sec, 142.56mph



“Moss’s victories bear comparison with any in history, and in each race he was the hare”

Moss conjured some magic at Monaco, hauling a seemingly out-dated Lotus to an unlikely victory. Below: Moss shares the front row with Ginther’s Ferrari and Clark’s newer Lotus 21



1961 Monaco GP

MAY 14, MONTE-CARLO

Rob Walker, his team owner, always reckoned that Stirling Moss’s victory at the Nürburgring in 1961 was his greatest drive, but Moss himself opts for Monaco the same year: “Without a doubt, it was the hardest race of my life, and I consider it the best.”



Ferrari was dominant in this, the first year of the 1.5-litre Formula 1, its V6 engines way more powerful than the four-cylinder Climax and Porsche motors used by the opposition. But in the hands of a genius a Lotus - even an obsolete one run by a small private team - could have something to say at a true driver's circuit. Moss's victories bear comparison with any in history, and in each race he was the hare, pursued by the Ferraris of Phil Hill, Wolfgang von Trips and Richie Ginther.

At Monaco Stirling took pole position, from Ginther and the latest factory Lotus of Jim Clark. In the early stages he ran second to the Ferrari before taking the lead on lap 14. "I never thought I'd be able to stay there to the end," he said, "but I wanted to lead for as long as possible."

By lap 26 team leader Phil Hill had moved into second place, but by now Moss led by 10 seconds, and at the halfway point - lap 50 - was still seven seconds to the good. ●

"A Ferrari pit board ordered Ginther to 'give all'... He found it amusing: 'I don't know what the hell else they thought I was giving?' "





Now, though, things began to look shaky for Stirling. By lap 59 Phil was only three seconds adrift, and Ginther, too, was right there. But this was Moss at his imperturbable greatest, and he began again to edge away.

Once it became clear that Hill had nothing for the Lotus, a Ferrari pit board ordered him to let Ginther through, another advising Richie to 'give all'. He found that wryly amusing: "I don't know what the hell else they thought I was giving..."

The last 25 laps distilled to a fight between Moss and Ginther. "That was certainly the best race I ever drove," said Richie, "and when Stirling said it was *his*, too, I felt incredibly proud. He was the greatest driver I ever saw - by a long way - and if I was able to push him to the best drive of his life, that meant something, believe me.

"That son-of-a-gun... In the Monaco programmes they credit me with the fastest lap for that year, but he equalled it the very lap after I did it!"

In qualifying Moss and Ginther had lapped in 1min 39.1sec and 1min 39.3sec, respectively. In the race their *average* lap time - over 100 laps, let's remember again - was 1min 39.5sec.

If that beggars belief, so also do their fastest laps, *three seconds* inside their qualifying times. On lap 84 Ginther, 'giving all', went round in 1min 36.3sec, and on lap 85 a peerless Moss duplicated it.

"That didn't break me, exactly," said Ginther, "but it was absolutely as quick as I could go - and he was able instantly to respond. You just felt, 'Jeez, what can you do about this guy?' And the answer, of course, was nothing..." **NSR**

RESULTS

1st Stirling Moss (Lotus),

2hr 45min 50.100sec, 70.70mph

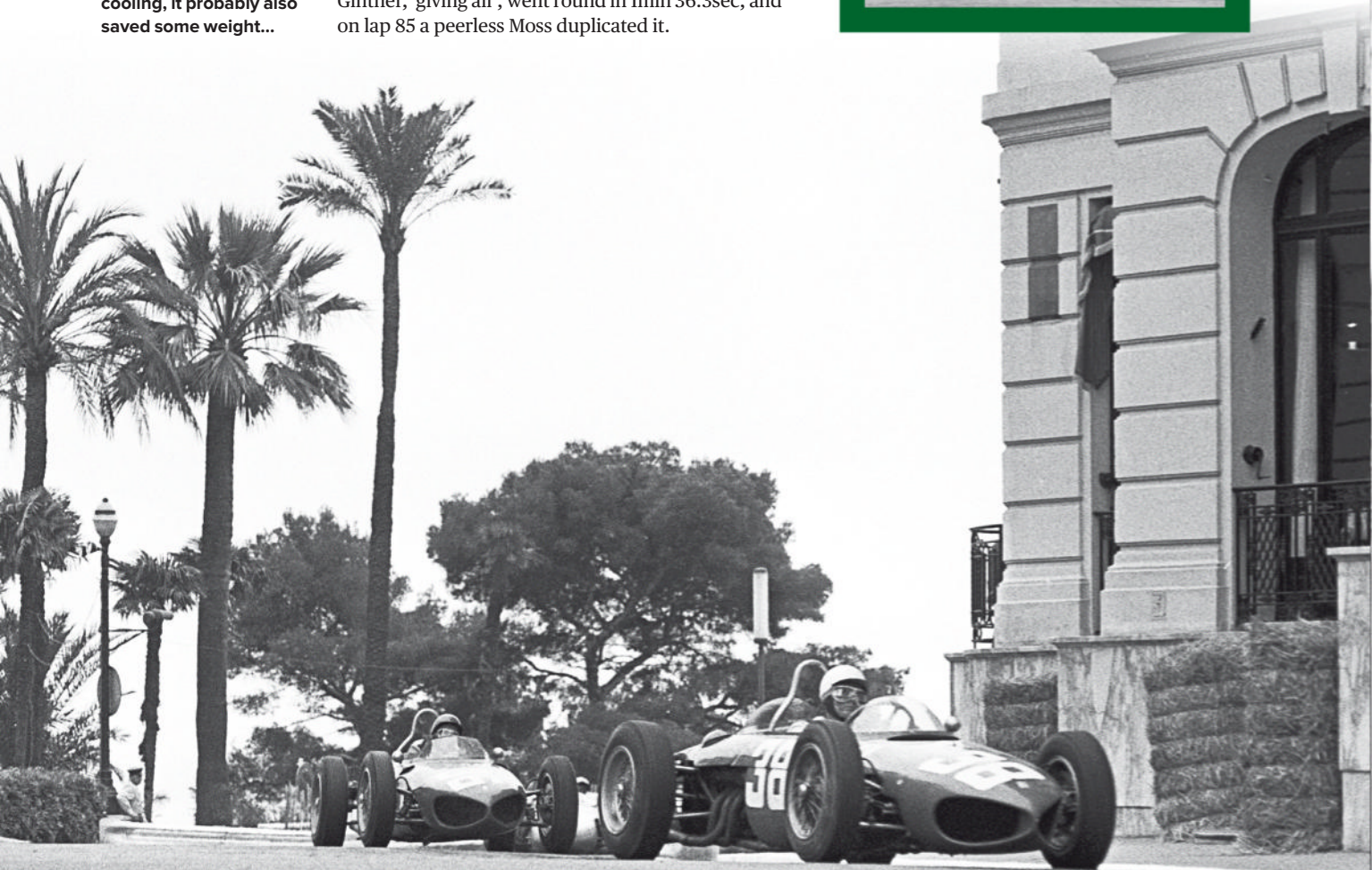
2nd Richie Ginther (Ferrari)

3rd Phil Hill (Ferrari)

Pole position Moss, 1min 39.1sec, 70.99mph



Hill and Ginther's Ferraris in formation. Inset: Moss' Lotus sans its side panels to aid cooling, it probably also saved some weight...





**He was the greatest
driver I ever saw. If
I could push him, that
meant something"**

1986 Australian GP

OCTOBER 26, ADELAIDE

"It's a long way down here, isn't it?" said Alain Prost. "I must say I'm glad to have a chance of winning the title, even if it's a small one..." This was Adelaide in October 1986, and Prost had that chance because of a brilliant drive in Mexico two weeks earlier

Through the year his McLaren-TAG had been outpowered by the Williams-Hondas of Nigel Mansell and Nelson Piquet, and while there had been demonstrations of his driving superiority - at Monaco he simply left everyone behind - he remained in title contention because he unfailingly got the maximum from his car, because his racecraft was without equal.

"In Mexico Alain drove a truly incredible race," said Ron Dennis. "We've always had a lot less power than the Williams-Hondas, but this time - to make it worse - he was on five cylinders for half the race and didn't dare to make a second tyre stop, for fear of losing the engine. On a very abrasive track he had to make two sets last the whole race: Mansell needed three, and Piquet four. Alain finished ahead of both of them..."

Prost's other surpassing skill, in that era, was juggling speed and fuel. In 1986 there was a restriction of 195 litres for a race, and it took a lot of will to keep your boost down in the early laps, while less disciplined rivals charged away.

Still his title hopes looked flimsy. A driver's score was based on his best 11 results (from 16 races), and both Prost and Mansell had already needed to drop points, having scored in more than 11 events. Nigel had 70 points, Alain 64, and Nelson Piquet 63 - but if either Mansell or Prost should add points in Adelaide, they would shed their lowest score once more, whereas Piquet would not. That said, Nigel was the heavy favourite: whatever else happened, third place would be enough.

Prost wasn't fazed. "Actually, I like this situation. In a way, it's like driving for your life - you have to win. For Nigel it's more difficult, because he has choices he can make..." 🍷





Full focus on the grid:
Mansell was at the heart
of a three-way title
showdown that ended in
dramatic fashion

It was not often back then that the world championship went down to the wire, and rarer still for more than two drivers to be in contention. If the weather - cool and grey - decided not to honour the occasion, it didn't detract from an extraordinary atmosphere through the qualifying days. Given his power deficit, Prost knew pole was out of the question, and concentrated, as always, on a perfect set-up for race day.

As anticipated, the fight for pole was between the Williams-Hondas, with Ayrton Senna's Lotus-Renault close by. Ultimately, Mansell took it, three-tenths faster than Piquet, with Senna third, Prost fourth. Alain grinned when he saw the times: "Ha! Three guys ahead of me - and they all hate each other!"

On Sunday the weather was again cheerless, but there was no forecast of rain. Senna was fastest in the warm-up, but Prost was next up, ahead of Mansell and Piquet.

The first lap was as intense as anyone could remember, with Mansell leading away, then - unwilling to get involved in any early wheel-banging - moving over to let Senna and Piquet by. At the end of the Dequetteville Straight, Nelson outbraked Ayrton, and thus the race already had its third leader in the space of two miles.

The man really on the move, though, was Keke Rosberg, who had started seventh, but was up to third by the end of the opening lap. Next time around Keke passed Senna, moving up to menace Piquet, and by lap seven he was into the lead, going away. "I'll never understand it," he sighed, "but the car was perfect for me, without its usual understeer. I hadn't liked it in practice, but on race day it transformed itself. I was enjoying myself so much I began to wish I hadn't decided to retire."

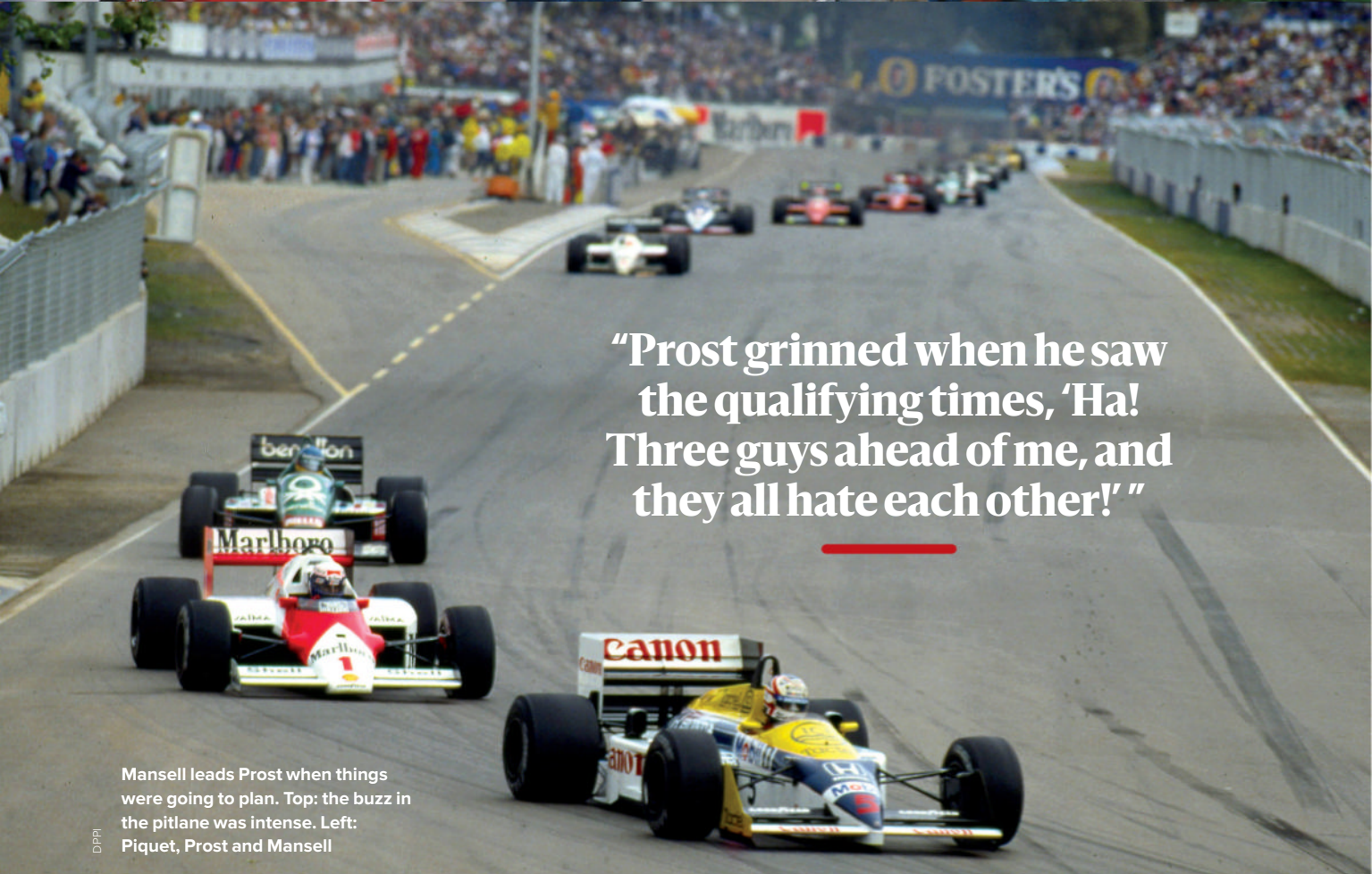
At the same time Prost began to move. Typically, he had begun quietly, sitting in fifth place, waiting for the initial dust to settle. Now he moved past Senna, and on lap 11 went ahead of Mansell.

"Often," said Patrick Head, "we'd be way ahead of him at first, and think, 'Where's Alain?' He'd qualify third or fourth, make a slow start, and you'd think, 'Great, that's him out of the way'. Then you'd see that he was fifth, fourth, third, and you'd think, 'Ooooh, s**t!' That inexorable quality was very much him. It was like that in Adelaide."

By lap 23, with Rosberg well ahead, Prost passed Piquet for second place, after which Nelson immediately spun, falling to fourth. For McLaren, now running 1-2, everything was looking good, for if it came to it, Keke would undoubtedly let Alain through before the flag. ●

DPPI





"Prost grinned when he saw the qualifying times, 'Ha! Three guys ahead of me, and they all hate each other!' "

Mansell leads Prost when things were going to plan. Top: the buzz in the pitlane was intense. Left: Piquet, Prost and Mansell

DPR

Mansell, though, continued to run third, where he needed to be. If he could hold station until the end he would be world champion, and on lap 32 his prospects vaulted, for Prost slowed, his right-front tyre punctured.

Tyre changes were then by no means an automatic feature of grands prix, and Prost seemed to be out of the championship fight. After a 17-second stop - it took time to get a jack under the McLaren in its lowered state - he rejoined, now a long way back. Immediately a series of record laps began.

"People probably won't believe me," Alain told me later, "but I was always going to change tyres - even the lap for the stop was agreed. To be honest, before the race I almost changed my mind - if the others weren't stopping, maybe I should do the same - but I came back to logic. I'd worked a lot with the car and tyres during practice: I knew it would be marginal to go all the way without changing - and I also knew my car was easier on tyres than the Williams.

"What lost me the time," he said, "was the slow lap back to the pits. After that, all I could do was push as hard as possible. There was nothing to lose - even second place was no use to me."

In the pits Goodyear engineers examined the tyres discarded by Prost, and concluded that the wear rate was less than they had expected. All being well, they felt, no one would need to stop.

Head grimaces at the memory. "We had a big horsepower advantage, and therefore were able to run more downforce than anyone else. Honda couldn't tell us how much power we had, because they didn't know. Their dyno only registered up to 1000 horsepower - which they were reaching at 9300rpm. We were revving to 13,500 or so...

"I've no doubt it was because we were able to run so much wing that we encountered tyre problems, and I was annoyed afterwards when one of the Goodyear people told the press that Williams had been advised to make a stop. That was absolutely not the case."

At this stage, though, Williams had no cause for worry. For close to 30 laps there was virtual stalemate, Rosberg still leading from Piquet, a serene Mansell, and a charging Prost.

Then, on lap 63, with 19 to the flag, the full drama of the day began to unravel: Rosberg heard unwelcome noises from the back of his McLaren, and swiftly parked, believing the engine had run its bearings. In fact, when he got out, Keke realised that what he had heard was a delaminating tyre flapping against the bodywork. His right-rear Goodyear was in tatters. "I was lucky," he said, "because one of my brake discs was about to come apart, and I wouldn't have wanted to find that out at the end of Dequetteville..." A sad end to his last GP, but he could savour a stirring finale.

As Rosberg retired, so Prost, running at the limit, passed Mansell for second place - but still Nigel had a lock on the four points he needed.

"At that stage," said Head, "he could have stopped for tyres and still won the title, because there was no one close behind him." 🍅





“Honda couldn’t tell us how much power we had, they didn’t know. Their dyno only registered up to 1000bhp”



Only a lap later the outcome of the world championship was settled. Mansell, flat out down Dequetteville, and in the process of lapping Philippe Alliot's Ligier, suddenly had his left-rear tyre disintegrate. From 190mph, he fought the bucking Williams to a halt, parking in the escape road, then stumbling back to the pits. "To be honest, I'm glad simply to be in one piece," he mumbled. It was beyond cruel for the British hero.

"At no time," said Head, "did we think we were taking any sort of gamble. I don't blame Goodyear for the fact that it happened, but they gave us no reason to consider we needed to change. You've got to remember that it didn't explode because it was worn out - the bits of tyre that were recovered indicated that the carcass had failed, by fatigue..."

Now it was simply Piquet against Prost, each needing the nine points for victory to take them past Mansell's total. It was winner takes all, and Prost was only two seconds behind.

As it was, the duel never materialised. "After Nigel's tyre had failed, we were really between a rock and a hard place with Nelson," said Head. "If we'd left him out, and he'd made it, we'd have looked like heroes, but if he'd had an accident and hurt himself, we'd have looked idiots. There was no choice but to call him in..."

Piquet stopped on lap 65, and was still in second place when he went back out. "It was the right decision, to change tyres," he said. "I knew I might be losing the championship, but I didn't care. I was alive."

Now it was Nelson's turn to apply the pressure, but he made little impression on Prost until the last four laps, when Alain was forced to dramatically cut his pace due to fuel concerns: "From the halfway point, my fuel read-out had been telling me I was five litres the wrong side - that I wouldn't make the finish unless I backed off. But of course I couldn't do that, because I was so far behind, after my puncture, so I just had to hope that, for once, the computer was wrong..."



It was. Although Piquet set another record on the final lap, Prost crossed the line four seconds to the good, both arms raised in salute.

For once a championship decider had not only lived up to expectations, but exceeded them. "These days," said Jackie Stewart, "you don't often see a guy win a GP in a slower car - but this guy's won the championship in one! People will say Nigel lost it because of his tyre failure, but you could also say he lost it in Mexico, where he started in third gear, dropped to the back, then began blistering tyres and finished fifth. He could have clinched the title that day, but instead he dropped four points to Prost - and he lost the title by two. To my mind, there's no one near Alain."

In my experience, this remains the most memorably dramatic F1 race of all time. **NSR**

RESULTS

- 1st** Alain Prost (McLaren-TAG),
1hr 54min 20.388sec, 101.04mph
- 2nd** Nelson Piquet (Williams-Honda)
- 3rd** Stefan Johansson (Ferrari)
- Pole position** Nigel Mansell (Williams-Honda),
1min 18.40sec, 107.82mph

Prost needed to win, but few expected the dramatic circumstances in which he would. Above: Mansell was just pleased to be in one piece



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