

SPECIAL CELEBRATORY ISSUE

F1

RACING

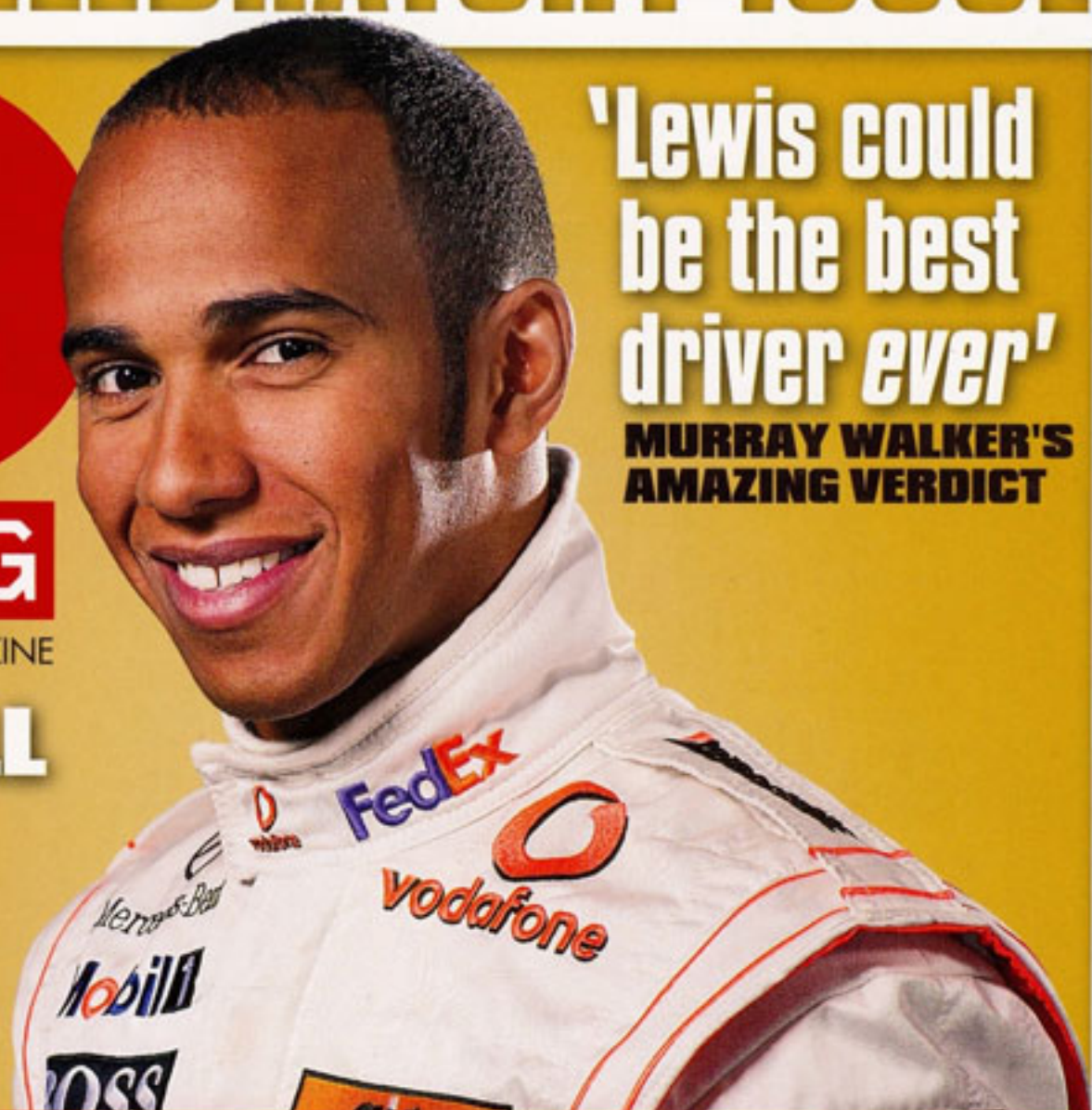
THE WORLD'S BEST-SELLING GP MAGAZINE

**'HOW LIFE WILL
CHANGE FOR
HAMILTON'**

**DAMON HILL WRITES
FOR F1 RACING**

**'Lewis could
be the best
driver *ever*'**

**MURRAY WALKER'S
AMAZING VERDICT**



LEWIS RULES!

EXCLUSIVE PICTURES: Behind the scenes of his epic season

NUMBER **154**

DECEMBER 2008

UK £4.20

www.f1racing.co.uk



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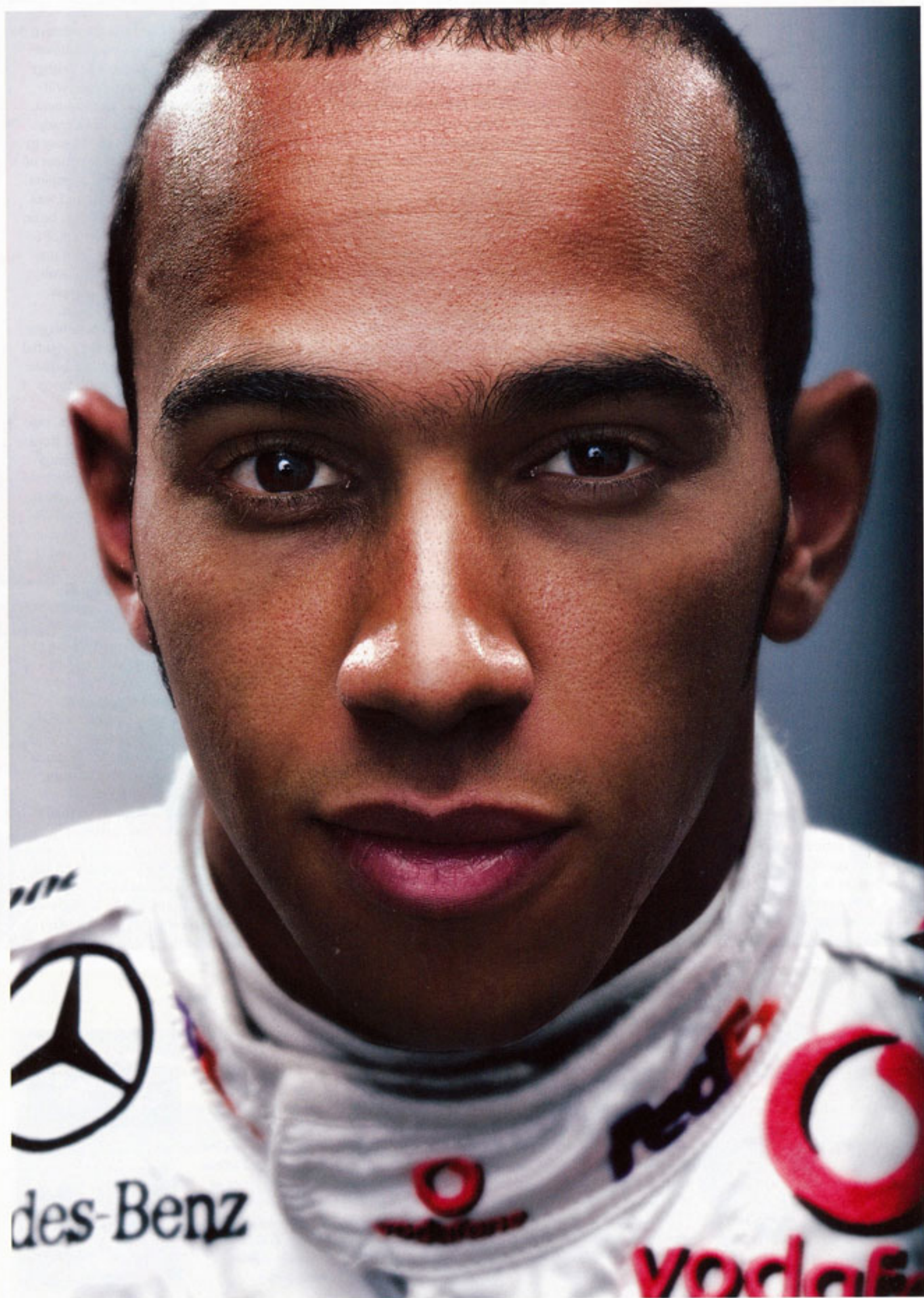
BEING WORLD CHAMPION

BY DAMON HILL

Britain's last F1 champion explains how winning the drivers' title will turn Lewis Hamilton's world upside down – and why he's ready to take it all in his stride

A few weeks ago I sat on a stage flanked by two of the leading names in British motorsport, Lewis Hamilton and Sir Stirling Moss. Given the level of respect and esteem all three of us were shown then, it is interesting to realise now that I was the only actual world champion present. But now all that has changed, and after a yawning 12-year gap Britain finally has yet another Formula 1 champion. After the dramatic last few moments of the title race in Brazil, I know I am not alone in having thought, "So, what if?"

Stirling's presence that evening was a poignant reminder that some drivers don't always get what they seem to deserve. But it also raised the question as to whether there is a big difference between having the title of, "world champion", and not? Cruel luck denied him the epithet for which he was willingly prepared to risk his life, and which, but for a near-fatal accident effectively ending his career, he surely would have won. Similarly, but for a few drops of rain, Lewis could have been spending a very different type of Christmas. But despite being separated by the momentous effects of such subtle twists of fate, they have a great deal in common. Just like Lewis, Stirling did not waste a fraction of his opportunity. ➤





The Moss comet blazed a very bright trail onto the motor racing scene. In his youth he stole the hearts and imagination of his generation, and earned the right to be called a people's champion. This is a title he has honoured for over 50 years, and in most people's minds (and certainly to the BRDC) he is a world champion. In fact, I would be surprised if many people knew, or even cared, whether Stirling had ever won the title or not. But now Lewis is a champion, what difference will it make to his life?

I hesitate to compare my experience with anyone else's. I have known and met many champions. Even my father was a two-time world champion. But how can it be explained what it means for one compared to another? How do I know what Kimi Räikkönen experienced next to Keke Rosberg, or Nigel Mansell? How will I know what this will mean to Lewis Hamilton? The

but every Saturday there are hundreds of matches played in every country. With F1, the whole world watches one grand prix, wherever it happens to be, 18 times a year, and the same players are in every match. This means just being on the grid will make you a global household name. When I lost the world championship to Michael Schumacher in 1994, I was voted BBC Sports Personality Of The Year, and I stood next to Steve Redgrave (now Sir Steve) who had won a record fourth consecutive gold medal at the Olympics. I can remember feeling a little embarrassed to have been voted ahead of him when, technically, I was the loser amongst us. But the point was made; F1 had grabbed a bigger share of people's attention. The enormity of the events of Brazil will (rightly or wrongly) probably blow many of the achievements of our Olympic stars away yet again, and I would be very surprised indeed if Lewis was not our next Sports Personality Of The Year.

But becoming a sports personality in your own country is one thing; the real measure of the F1 world championship is what happens all over the world. As a world champion, if you think you can get away with a quick, "Thank you very much and good night," forget it. The sponsors will want to milk the opportunity, and so they should. But the great thing is that you are paraded as the winner. All the fuss is not because you simply wanted more fame and attention; it is because of what you have achieved, and the sponsors help spread the message of your achievement all over the world. My experience has been that there is not any part of the planet where I am not either known, or known of, thanks to F1. The only exception is probably the USA.

In case you hadn't noticed yet, the USA has a new President who is black. On a simple level, Lewis will be lumped in with this theme, for a while at least. But the facts are that there has never been a black Formula 1 world champion, or (to the best of my knowledge) any black champion

of a major motorsport event in the western world. Hopefully to most people, whatever race a person happens to be will be neither here nor there, but the history books will show it and for that fact, and that moment, it will be of great interest; this has already proved to be the case. But it's all too easy to forget his equally significant achievement of being the youngest ever F1 world champion.

After I had won my championship, I was flown out on Concorde to New York to be on *The Late Show With David Letterman*. F1 was a European oddity back then, and my novelty value was that my father had won the Indy 500, and David Letterman was also a big Ayrton fan. I came and went. But I would expect Lewis to be much bigger in the US, and that he will have the potential to break F1 in America in a way that no-one has managed to do so far. Incredibly, even 72 years after Jesse Owens upset the established order in the 1936 Olympics, race is still an issue in the US, as is evident from the Obama campaign. In nearly all other sports, race barriers have been negated, but F1 represents wealth and exclusivity, and it has been, up until Lewis, one of the last all-white preserves in sport. If you think I am overplaying this aspect, consider the sad fact that without Lewis's success, the FIA probably wouldn't have had the need to start their anti-racism campaign. Anthony Hamilton has expressed how difficult it has been for his family on occasions – I have to say that without the commitment of Ron Dennis to support Lewis's career, and the courage and commitment of Anthony, I have my doubts that Lewis's talent alone would have been enough to see him through, which is a comment on our society as much as it is on our sport. For all this, his story will be of immense interest in the US.

The obvious comparison has been made to Tiger Woods and the comparisons are valid, for not only did Tiger defeat prejudice, he defeated everyone fair and square on the course. These facts, coupled to the way he conducts himself, means that he transcends divisions in society, and this (incidentally) makes him a marketing goldmine; likewise ➤

"One title will not be enough. Serial world championships are the objective"

only thing I can do is bring in a little of my experience and make a guess at how this will change things for Lewis. The one thing you can say for sure is that it will alter his immediate future completely and absolutely.

As a reader of *F1 Racing* you obviously have bought in to the fact that F1 is big news, with a capital 'B'. Globally, it is one of the most heavily televised and promoted events in the world today. Football is bigger,

16/03/08
AUSTRALIAN GP

"MY BEST EVER WIN"

First time out, Lewis makes it all look very straightforward, easing away from the opposition to an assured victory. Former karting team-mate Nico Rosberg joins him on the podium as title rivals Ferrari flounder with unexpected engine troubles for both cars



23/03/08
MALAYSIAN GP

Hamilton's first visit of the year to the stewards after impeding other cars at the end of qualifying on Saturday, along with team-mate Kovalainen. They're docked five grid spots and Lewis starts one place behind Heikki, from ninth position. The next day a bungled stop leaves him fifth while Kimi grabs a first win of his title defence



06/04/08
BAHRAIN GP

"A DISASTER"

He fails to complete his pre-start procedure, causing a sluggish getaway and putting him down the field. A collision with nemesis Alonso on lap 2 leaves Hamilton struggling to 13th with a damaged car. Massa leads home a dominant Ferrari one-two



Anyone got a massive trophy cabinet?" Lewis arrives back at the McLaren Technology Centre



27/04/08
SPANISH GP
Hamilton takes a solid third, behind the two Ferraris once again, in

a typically dull Barcelona race. He sits second in the points standings, nine behind reigning champ Kimi Räikkönen



11/05/08
TURKISH GP

"PROBABLY THE BEST RACE I'VE EVER DONE"

In spite of flak from the British media after a bizarre promotional event, Lewis drives his socks off. Tyre concerns force him to run a three-stop strategy, but he still takes a strong second behind Massa, including passing him on track



25/05/08
MONACO GP

"I AM SURE THIS WILL BE THE HIGHLIGHT OF THE REST OF MY LIFE"

Running second in the wet, Lewis tags the barrier on lap 6, requiring a pitstop – during which he refuels. A Safety Car just afterwards wipes out the time lost at the stop, Hamilton cruises to the win... and takes the title lead for good measure

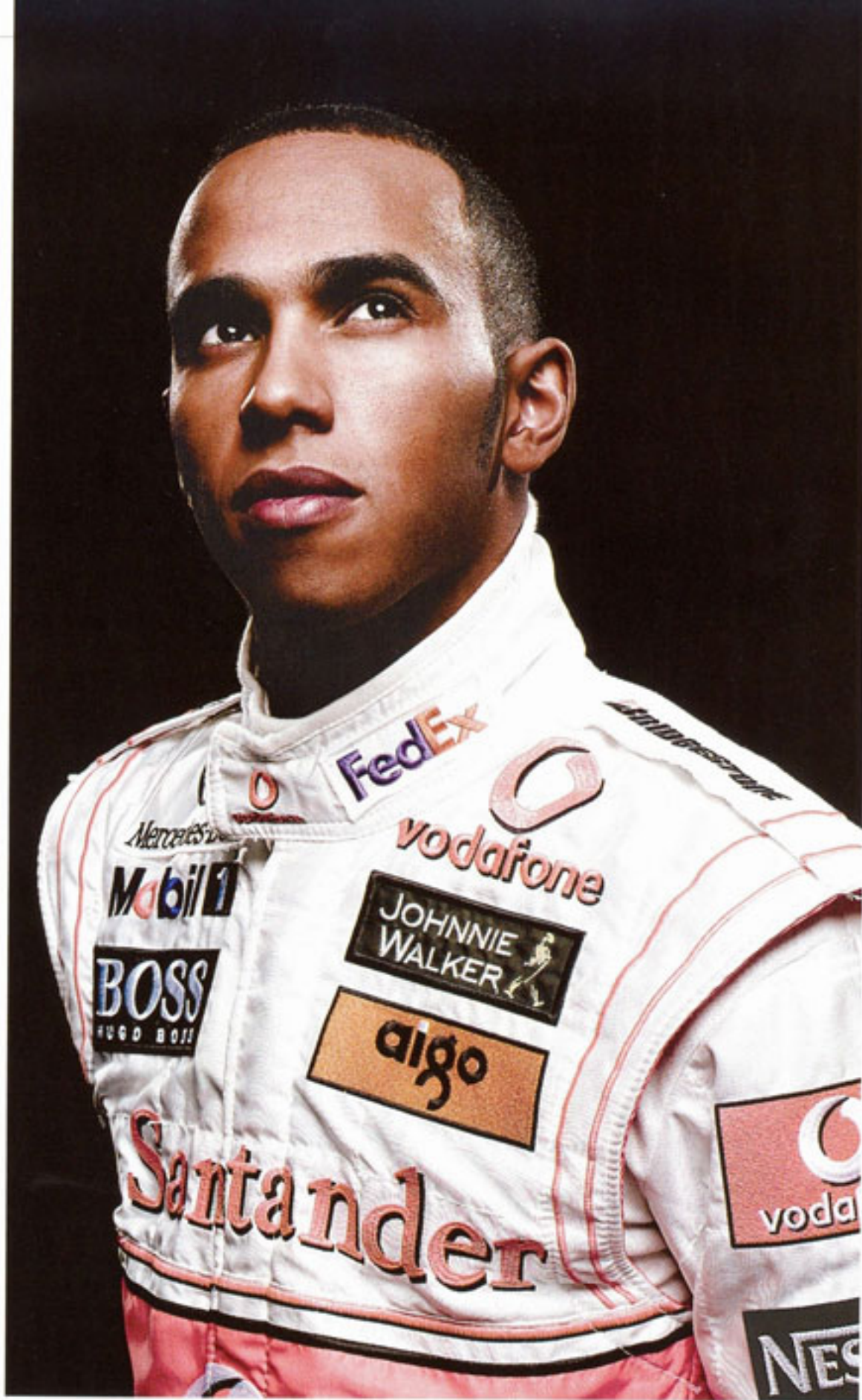




with Lewis. Also, Lewis is very savvy about this whole tricky subject. He has said that he feels proud to have done this bit for equal opportunities in sport, but he emphasises he is on the side of all races and creeds. He is smart, and has conviction about what is right and wrong, without forcing it down anyone's throat. His political skills will serve him well in the future, both inside and outside F1. But he will want recognition for himself, not for issues thrust upon him and beyond his control. To paraphrase Martin Luther King, he wants to be judged by the "content of his character", and it's this quality which I think will make Lewis a hero of Senna-esque proportions – as long as he keeps winning.

For his own achievement, he will become a darling of the politicians as they rush to take some of the credit. And this is where things change, because you start off just wanting to race cars and win, and the next thing you know you are a symbol for others to attach their message to. He will need a political advisor. Like it or not, Lewis will be asked by a million people to help a million different projects, and most of them will have a just claim to receive help. But he will not be able to help them all. Are people's expectations too high for our celebrated sports stars? Sometimes I think they are, but occasionally you realise you have a power to do good, and a simple autograph will mean a lot to some. To others, you're just an opportunity. It's tough to sift through the requests, and it can be heart-breaking to realise that you cannot help everyone. It can be difficult to know who to say no to, but you have to if you're going to keep sane. The Hamilton Administration Centre will have to be extended.

The greatest drivers were those who went on to assume the highest mantle which the title bestowed upon them; Fangio, Ayrton Senna and Jackie Stewart are the greatest in this respect. But Lewis's inspiration, Ayrton, was a special one. His compassion and sense



08/06/08
CANADIAN GP

"THIS RULE IS SILLY"

Quickest in qualifying on a crumbling track, Lewis leads the race until a Safety Car period.



Emerging from the pits, he fails to stop at a red light and crashes into Räikkönen, putting them both out of the race. After investigating the incident, the stewards hand Hamilton a 10-place grid penalty for the next round in France

22/06/08
FRENCH GP

"THERE IS NOTHING YOU CAN DO TO GET ME OUT OF F1"

In Magny-Cours, signs emerge that the pressure may be rattling Hamilton when he goes on the offensive against the press in an ITV interview broadcast before the race. After starting 13th, he is penalised with a drive-through for gaining an



unfair advantage when overtaking Vettel's Toro Rosso and finishes 10th. It's the first time he has two non-points-scoring finishes in a row in F1

06/07/08
BRITISH GP

"IT IS DEFINITELY AND BY FAR THE BEST VICTORY I'VE HAD"

Hamilton dominates the race in torrential rain showers. He's over a minute ahead of second-placed Nick Heidfeld and even laps his team-mate. The assured performance has the feel of a turning point in Hamilton's topsy-turvy second season





LEWIS

WORLD CHAMPION



"Lewis will need a political advisor – he will be asked to help in a million projects"

20/07/08
GERMAN GP

Hamilton takes a second successive win for the first time since mid-2007. A Safety Car period threatens to ruin his race when McLaren take the decision to leave him out on track rather than pitting. But a drive of controlled aggression sees him overcome his strategy and outfox Massa on the way to the win – and title lead



03/08/08
HUNGARIAN GP

"THE CAR IS THE BEST IT HAS EVER BEEN"

Hamilton starts from pole position but Massa outmuscles him at the first corner. He later suffers a puncture because of debris, dropping him to sixth – then Massa's engine expires. Lewis extends his points lead



24/08/08
EUROPEAN GP

"I'M PLAYING A LONG GAME"

After being fined for appearing late at a press conference, Lewis keeps quiet about a mystery neck ailment yet battles to second. "It's advantageous to score as many points as possible and live to fight another day," he concedes





"Do you still have a crafty hip in the broom cupboard?"
Lewis thanks staff at the MTC

of justice were quite literally overpowering, sometimes getting him into tight spots. I sense the same awareness of one's responsibility with Lewis – and the fire in the blood! It will be interesting to see how he develops. Over time, I can see Lewis becoming more mature and statesman-like, as his experience of meeting so many extraordinary people at events he will be invited to around the world takes effect. This can be very overwhelming for a young man who needs time to just be himself and have fun. The media are unlikely to leave him too many places to cut loose without him ending up in an embarrassing tabloid moment. Alternatively he will reject all the fuss and just say, "To hell with it all; I just want to race." I, for one, would not blame him if he did. However, we do have him on our shortlist for Presidency of the BRDC at some future date!

So these are just some of the peripheral disturbances that will intrude on his life as a racing driver, because you can be sure that Lewis will be around for a long time yet, winning a great many races. One world championship will not be enough. Serial championships are the objective of any serious F1 superstar. Sometimes it can be years of struggle to cross into the champion's circle. Lewis nearly had it right first time. To put that straight so emphatically at the very next opportunity is a huge confidence boost and endorsement of his credentials – as if he needs it! Lewis was already the self-proclaimed "best driver on the grid", as he explained to the Ferrari brief at the recent court of appeal. But now he has the diploma to go with it. In truth, it's not him who needs the proof; it's us. And this is where I come back to Stirling. For all of us who have followed this sport closely, we can see who has it and who hasn't. We don't need the certificate of proof. Tony Brooks had it; Gilles Villeneuve had it; ➤

07/09/08
BELGIAN GP
Lewis takes a dramatic win after passing Kimi Räikkönen in the rain during the final laps. His move is reported to the stewards but Hamilton remains confident: "It

was fair and square, but you know what they're like, so we'll wait and see." His fears prove well-founded as a 25-second penalty puts him third. McLaren choose to lodge an appeal, later rejected as inadmissible



14/09/08
ITALIAN GP
During a wet qualifying session, Lewis and his engineer take a gamble on the standard wet tyre during his first run in Q2. It proves disastrous as the rain worsens and



Lewis pits immediately. On his next run, he's unable to generate enough brake or tyre temperature and fails to make it into the final qualifying session for the first time ever. Lewis finishes seventh after a race in which his fortunes fluctuate wildly: he runs as low as 14th place and as high as second at one point, before crossing the line right behind title rival Massa, who finishes 6th





Ronnie Peterson had it; Stirling had it and, of course, Lewis has it. Many other drivers had it, but never had the right breaks. But all those who got through have one thing in common... when they got the chance, they took it. This is what makes a champion; what makes a worthy champion is the way they do it, and the way they do whatever comes next. I expect you have realised by now that I think Lewis is a very worthy champion indeed.

Joining one of the most exclusive clubs in the world is a very satisfying feeling. Mentally

“Senna’s compassion was overpowering, and I sense the same with Lewis”

you know you have come through one of the toughest challenges in sport, and prevailed. Personally, I felt quite good about this. I expect Lewis will, too.

I think he will change how he attacks the sport. Having one title under his belt will be a foundation, but he could be around for another 12 to 14 seasons. If he wins half of them, he could beat Michael Schumacher’s record of seven titles, but that is a very tall order indeed. Today’s competition is far closer than it used to be.

The biggest change to his life, however, will be the loss of that awful feeling that fate could intervene before the job is done. It will be replaced by a massive sense of relief. Secretly he will be thinking, “Thank God that’s over!” It might be great fun doing it, but it’s much better to get it done.

Well done, Lewis. Welcome to the club. **FO**

28/09/08
SINGAPORE GP
Hamilton crosses the line at the end of Q2 and finds himself 10th, with other competitors still on track. He faces a nervous wait as rivals fail to improve their time and squeaks through to Q3 by just tenths. He goes on to qualify second. On the Sunday, a Safety Car-interrupted race sees Lewis keep his head while his rivals self-

destruct. His calm third-place finish gives him a seven-point lead with just three rounds of the season to go



12/10/08
JAPANESE GP
He fluffs his start then outbrakes himself at Turn 1, which earns him a penalty. He’s also punted out of sixth by Massa on lap 2, and ends up out of the points



19/10/08
CHINESE GP
Chapter 17 of Lewis’ rollercoaster season: one week after non-scoring in Japan, he takes the hat-trick of pole, race win and fastest laps. What’s more, McLaren lead every lap in an utterly dominant performance. Hamilton heads for Brazil with a seven-point lead, exactly the same margin he had over Räikkönen 12 months earlier...

02/11/08
BRAZILIAN GP
Felipe Massa crosses the line – and thinks he’s won it. In the twisting second sector, Hamilton runs sixth – he needs fifth to take the title. Then on the last corner of the last lap of the last race of the year, Hamilton scythes past Glock’s dry-tyred Toyota into fifth. Massa’s triumph turns to despair; Lewis is world champion



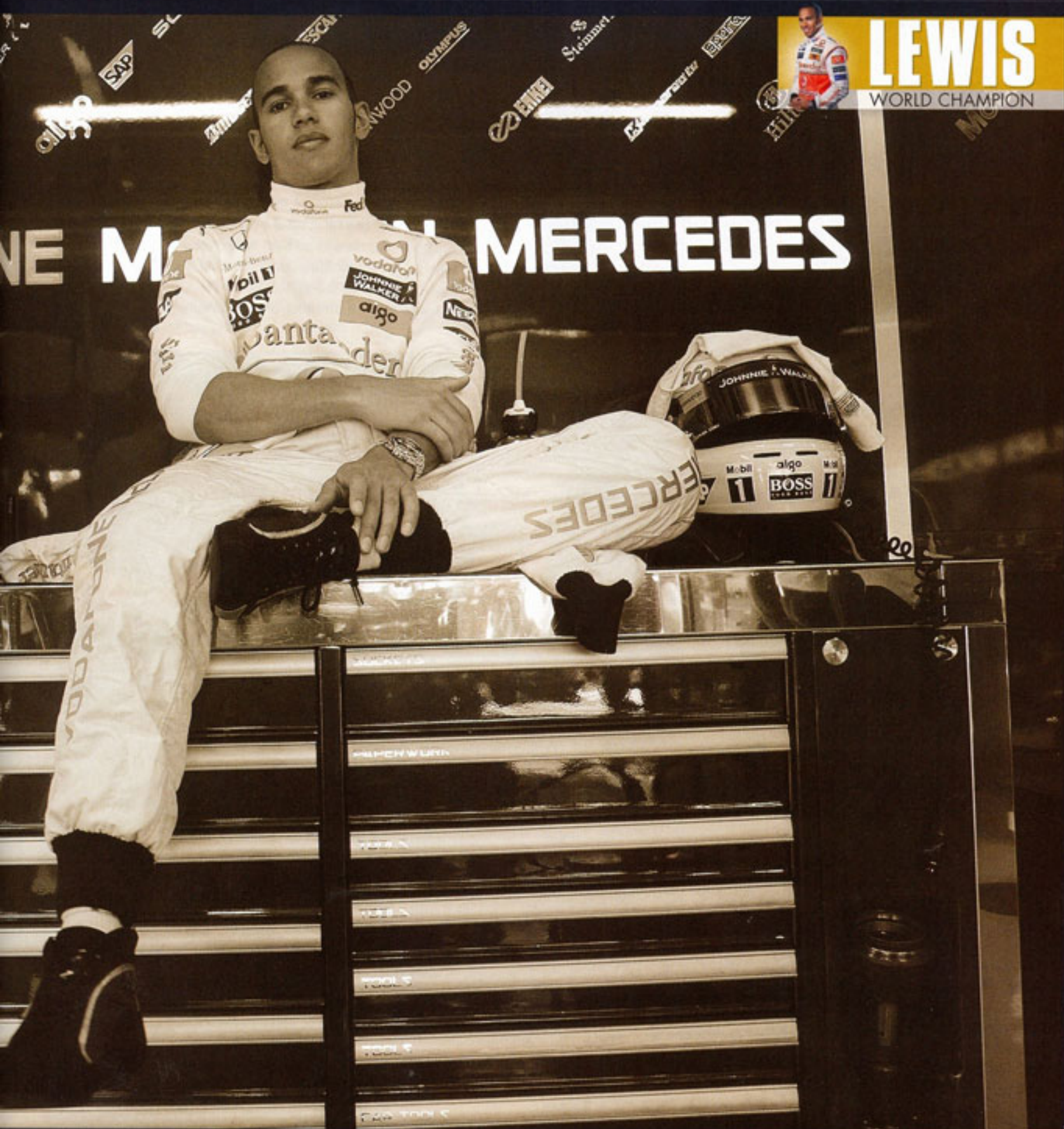
A YEAR IN THE LIFE OF LEWIS

In a season that lurched between hope and frustration but ended in triumph, photographer Jon Nicholson had unprecedented access to Lewis Hamilton every step of the way. Here are his unseen portraits of F1's new champion



FROM THE THURSDAY BEFORE the Australian Grand Prix back in March to the chaotic aftermath of the Brazilian Grand Prix, one man has seen more of Lewis Hamilton's championship-winning season than any other person – including Lewis's dad, Anthony.

As McLaren's official team photographer, Jon Nicholson has had exclusive access to Lewis Hamilton throughout the Formula 1 season, as part of a three-year project with Vodafone McLaren Mercedes and Olympus to document the team's quest for drivers' and constructors' championship glory. Jon has seen the incredible highs that Lewis experienced after his wins in Australia, Monaco, Britain and China; and also the frustration after Spa and Fuji. All in all, he caught the 2008 Formula 1 World Champion in moments of remarkable candour, seen here in *F1 Racing* for the first time...



LEWIS
WORLD CHAMPION



MELBOURNE

"Lewis is on his way to the press conference in this shot on the left, straight after sticking it on pole – that's Kubica and Kovalainen in the back. It's quite rare to see Lewis's dad smiling like this.

"The picture on the right was straight after the photocall where all the drivers have their portraits taken at the start of the season. Lewis was relaxed, but he couldn't wait to get back in the car."





MALAYSIA

"This was just before the race, after he'd put his car on the grid. Malaysia was so hot – everyone struggles to stay hydrated. He's concentrating incredibly hard here – he did all weekend. He kept himself to himself a bit more at this race."



BAHRAIN

"It's just before 1.30pm on race day – this is Lewis and his dad hugging. They often do this before a race. They didn't say a word, to be honest, it's just a moment of real father and son love. I actually gave both Lewis and Anthony a print of this picture. They each framed it and put it up in their houses."



ISTANBUL

"Lewis and Ron are on their way to the grid – it's about 2.40pm on race day. They're having a lighthearted chat. Ron likes a laugh, actually."



FRANCE

"This is at a debrief – Lewis is explaining something about the handling to Martin Whitmarsh. Lewis is very diligent with these things."

MONACO

"This was at about 6.30pm on the Friday of Monaco. Lewis had just been down the coast to do a TAG Heuer event, and on the way back it was just me, him and the guy steering the boat. He was very reflective – I think he was happy to be away from the madness for a moment.

"The shot of him changing his T-shirt was just after he'd won the race at Monaco. Everyone was screaming his name. He was saying to me, 'I can't change here!' It was quite weird really – he was totally buzzing about winning Monaco, but shy about changing his T-shirt in front of everyone."

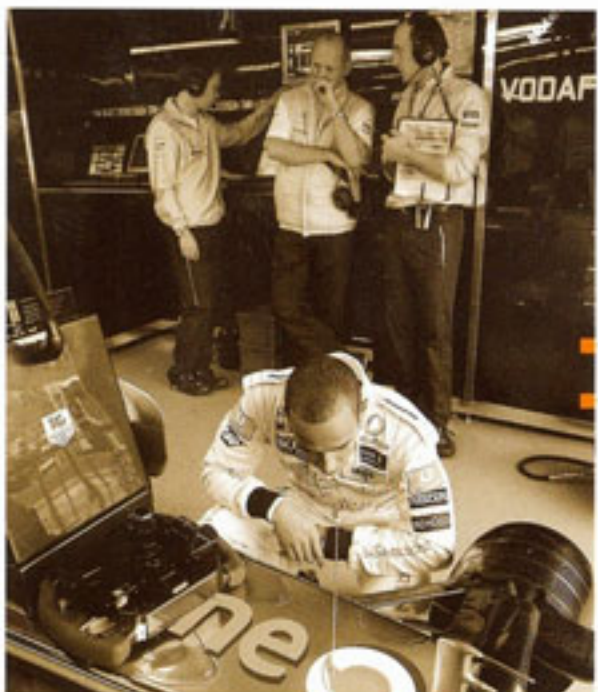


SILVERSTONE

"Lewis is back in the McLaren Brand Centre, having just done the press conference after winning the British GP. The guy on Lewis's left is the head of Santander – he was quite pleased, I can tell you!"

MONTREAL

"This is on the Friday – the first session had just started. Lewis often wanders round the car. He's just really interested in it. There's Ron chatting to the engineers. McLaren have this 'grey' image, but it's not true – they're professional, but very human."



VALENCIA

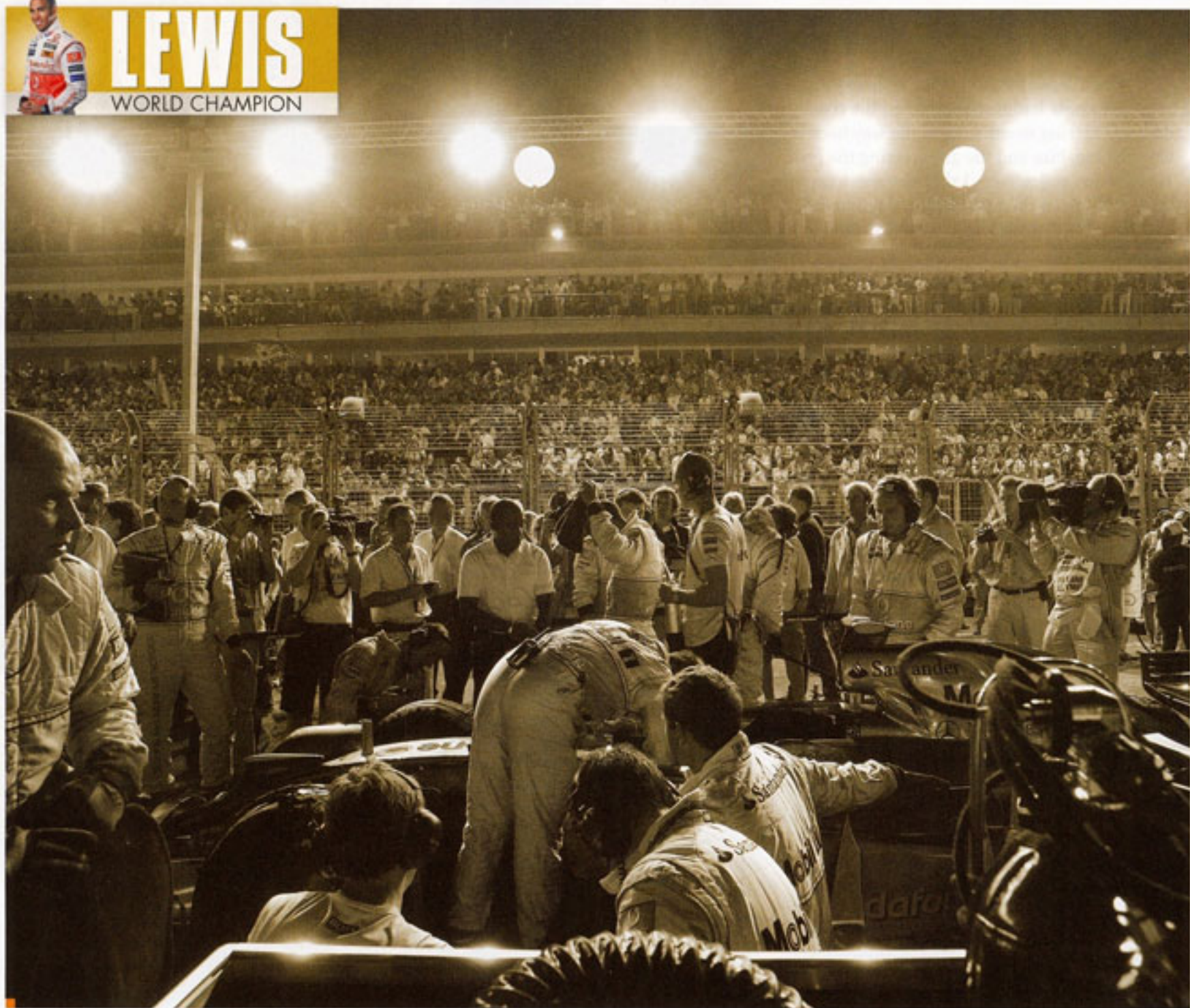
"Dave Ryan, in the middle, had just been given a piece of paper saying that Lewis was getting very close to cutting the white lines at the exit of the pitlane, and Heikki is explaining to Lewis what line to take. It took Lewis a while to get it! He and Heikki got on very well." ➤





LEWIS

WORLD CHAMPION



SINGAPORE

"This is on the grid at Singapore before the start of the race – Lewis is wrapping a cold towel around his head. He felt the heat more than the fact it was a night race. He was in a great mood all weekend, but you could sense a different atmosphere as the season got down to the final four races. I think this shot shows all the madness that surrounds him."

SHANGHAI

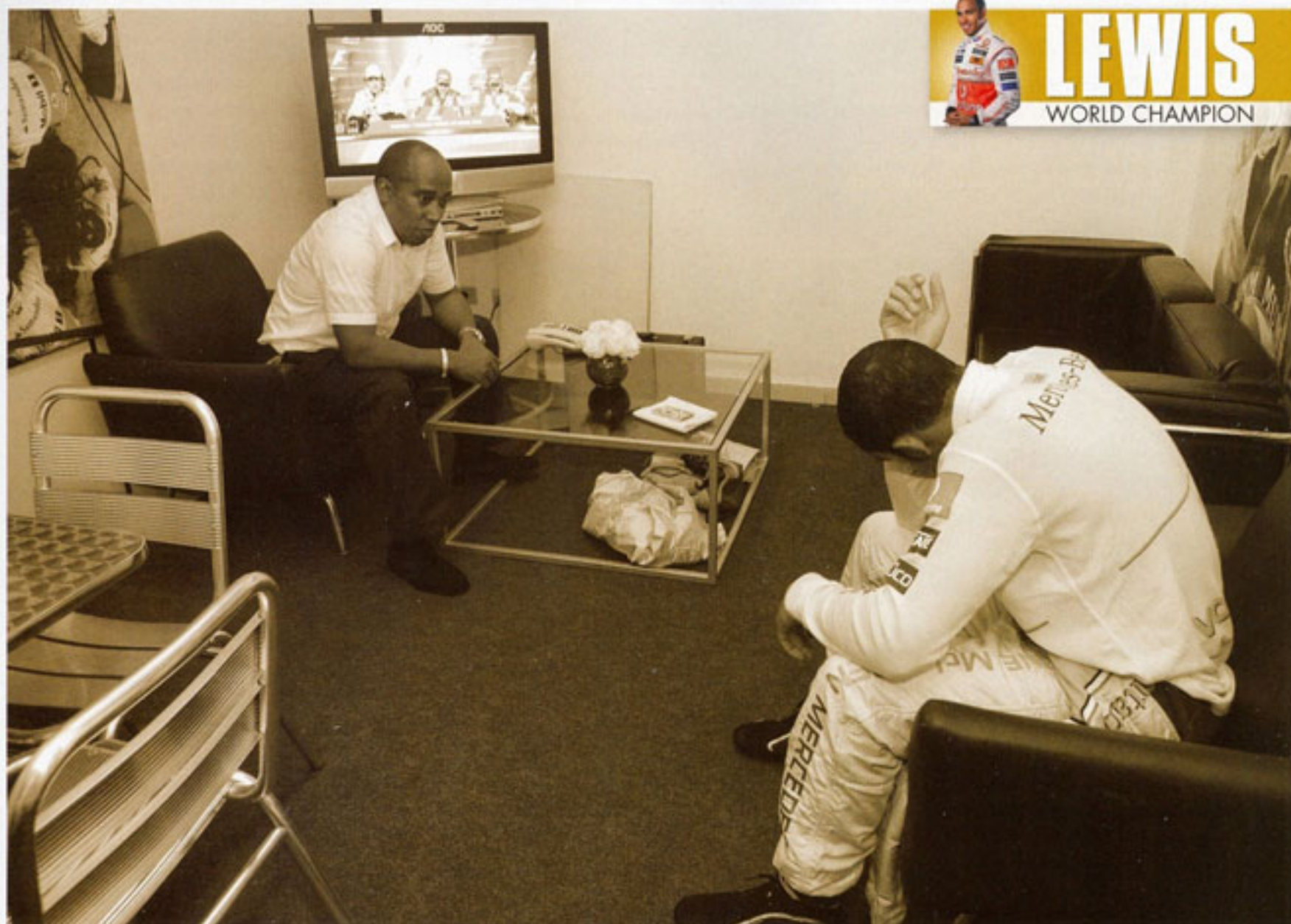
"This was taken straight after qualifying as the drivers all went to get weighed. Lewis is making this gesture at his engineers – I think he knew he'd win the race at this point. People think this type of thing is cockiness, but it was just a natural reaction. It's all part of his psychological edge."



WOKING

"On the Wednesday after Brazil, after arriving at the McLaren Technology Centre in the F1 car, there was a 30-minute slot for Lewis to sign things for sponsors, like all these miniature helmets. He does all this stuff very willingly, really. But then he was in a good mood that day." ➤





CHAMPION AT LAST

"The two main shots here were in McLaren's hospitality area in Brazil – Lewis had just run down the pitlane with the Union Flag. He was shaking and talking to himself, going, 'I'm world champion.' Then Anthony came in. They were both speechless. After I took these shots they both cried a lot – I felt a bit like I shouldn't have been there."

"The portrait above was on the Wednesday after Brazil in Woking. He didn't know I was taking it. I think he was just reflecting to himself that he was world champion." **FO**

PITPASS

The stories that matter from the world of Formula 1 this month



BERNIE'S AMAZING PLAN TO AWARD GOLD MEDALS INSTEAD OF POINTS

Radical F1 shake-up to award gold, silver and bronze medals – plus a re-fuelling ban, and qualifying decided by ballot!

"Who's top of the medals table now, Lewis?" "No idea. Don't ask Kimi, he gets confused easily"

SINOPEC
CHINESE
AND BRIX



F1 RINGMASTER Bernie Ecclestone has told *F1 Racing* he wants to scrap drivers' championship points in favour of gold, silver and bronze medals.

It's just one of a number of proposals he presented ahead of the Brazilian Grand Prix, including a re-fuelling ban and a ballot to decide part of the grid.

When quizzed on the ideas, he said, "I wouldn't have proposed them if I didn't think it was a good idea, and I'm sure the teams will agree to them."

Ecclestone wanted the two top drivers, Massa and Hamilton, to go into this year's season finale on equal terms. "Imagine if two guys had the same number of gold medals, then they would be fighting for the win," he added. "It would be better than a case where one guy is going for points and not fighting at the front."

If you apply the medal idea to the 2008 season it would mean Felipe Massa would be world champion, as he would top the medals table with six wins compared with Hamilton's five.

The proposals were set to be discussed at the next Formula One Teams Association (FOTA) meeting as *F1 Racing* closed for press. In Brazil a number of team principals were not prepared to comment until they had formed a united front, which suggests a counterproposal is in the offing.

However, Renault's team boss Flavio Briatore gave the plans his backing.

"We need a good package, and this is a very good one. In Brazil what we would have is a situation where two drivers have five gold medals. You don't expect them to race just to finish in the points, you'd want them to race to win. That would be great."

Based on the Olympic Games, where the medals table is weighted in favour of gold medals, a driver that has scored just one win in a season would be higher ranked than another driver who has, say, eight second places (silver medals). If applied to this year's championship, Fernando Alonso would be fourth, ahead of Robert Kubica because of his two wins, while Nico Rosberg would move up five places from 13th to eighth because of his two podium finishes.

Under the proposals, points would still be collected to determine the constructors' championship, but it was mooted that re-fuelling would be banned and the top six of the grid would be decided by a ballot. Plus an idea that could be introduced as soon as next year was discussed by the Sporting Working Group at Interlagos, where a point would be awarded for the fastest driver on low fuel in the Q2 session of qualifying.

2008 CHAMPIONSHIP STANDINGS AFTER BERNIE'S PLAN

F1 2008 POINTS TABLE		F1 2008 MEDALS TABLE		
		GOLD	SILVER	BRONZE
1 Hamilton 98	1 Massa	6	2	2
2 Massa 97	2 Hamilton	5	2	3
3 Räikkönen 75	3 Räikkönen	2	2	5
4 Kubica 75	4 Alonso	2	1	0
5 Alonso 61	5 Kubica	1	3	3

Lewis has become Formula 1's youngest ever champion – but did he deserve the title?



Did Hamilton deserve to be world champion?

Yes



Ivan Capelli
Raced for Ferrari
in 1992

"IF YOU TALK in terms of pure speed, then I think Hamilton deserves the world championship. I actually expected him to be a little bit stronger this year than he has been, and both him and Massa have made a lot of mistakes. But then, Lewis is still very young – plus he has raced in 71 grands prix fewer than Massa – so on that basis it's very impressive what he can do behind the wheel of his McLaren.

One of his strengths has been how he bounced back from last

year after all the in-fighting at the team with Alonso. Despite all that pressure, he proved that he could still win races. It wasn't an easy situation for him and yet he's been the one that all the other drivers want to beat.

Massa has been quick this year and has made a big improvement in qualifying, but at Silverstone he made too many mistakes. You don't deserve to be champion with all those errors. As a direct comparison, Lewis deserves the title with his performance in that race alone."

No



Emerson Fittipaldi
Former McLaren
world champion

"MASSA HAS HAD a brilliant season and my heart wanted him to take the championship.

He showed this year that he is in much more control of his adrenaline and his emotions and I think that he's shown a big improvement with how he's been able to handle the psychological pressure.

In all of the races in 2008 he's been very well prepared, and you only have to look at his performance in the final race at Interlagos which showed us again how strong he is.

Felipe was unfortunate with his engine problem in Hungary, so I feel that he deserved to be champion. But to be fair, Lewis has had a brilliant year too. I don't think that any rookie driver has led the championship for as long as he has in their first two years in Formula 1.

It hasn't been easy for Lewis because sometimes the officials penalised him for some of his moves on the track, but all in all I think both of them made it a great title fight and Hamilton will be a good world champion."

A full-page photograph of Bruno Senna, a Brazilian Formula 1 driver, standing in front of a chain-link fence. He is wearing a bright red Renault racing suit with white and blue accents. The suit features several sponsor logos, including 'Santander', 'RENAULT', 'OMP', and 'CARGLAS'. He is also wearing a blue racing helmet with 'Embratel' branding. He is leaning against a grey concrete barrier with his right hand in his pocket. The background shows a clear sky and some trees behind the fence.

PITPASS

BRUNO SENNA: "I SHUNNED WILLIAMS AND TORO ROSSO FOR HONDA"

New boy with the most famous name in motorsport tells *F1 Racing* exclusively about the biggest decision of his career

BRUNO SENNA TURNED down test drives with Williams and Toro Rosso to test for Honda at Barcelona earlier this week. The 25-year-old nephew of Ayrton Senna, who won all three of his world titles driving Honda-powered McLarens, began talks with the Japanese team after his GP2 victory at Monaco in May, and was keen to extend the Senna-Honda collaboration.

"Honda and the Senna name have a great history," Bruno told *F1 Racing* exclusively. "The Japanese were always very straightforward with Ayrton and he is still much-loved in Japan. I see Honda as a company that I would love to relate my name with because of the way they do things."

Senna's first F1 opportunity came with Williams at the end of 2007, when team sponsor Petrobras invited him to test last year's FW29. He turned the offer down, believing he wasn't ready for F1.

"I only wanted to test a Formula 1 car when I felt ready to race one," said Bruno. "That wasn't the case last year, but I learned so much in GP2 that I felt ready to drive one now. It's not that I didn't feel I could be quick last year; it had more to do with everything else that comes with F1 on the technical side."

Given the Senna family's links with Scuderia Toro Rosso boss Gerhard Berger, who was Ayrton's team-mate at McLaren for three years, Bruno's first test was expected to be with Toro Rosso, but the GP2 runner-up told *F1 Racing* that Honda were his primary focus.

"I spoke to [Red Bull chiefs] Mr Mateschitz and Dr Helmut Marko a month ago, and it was only then that they offered me a test," said Bruno. "I was already far down the road with Honda by then and I'm very excited by Honda's prospects. Ross Brawn tells me that the people and infrastructure in Brackley are every bit as good as when he was winning championships at Ferrari, so I'm sure they will be able to make a good car in 2009. Even if they aren't a championship-winning team, I'm sure they'll be challenging for points regularly."

Senna's first F1 test at Barcelona came after *F1 Racing* closed for press, but if the run proved error-free then Senna was expected to move into a race seat with Honda next year. If the drive comes at the expense of compatriot Rubens Barrichello, Bruno won't be sentimental.

"If me going into Honda means Rubens is going out, well, that's motor racing," said Bruno. "Some of the guys have been in F1 for a long time and I think it's time they made way for new talent."

With the introduction of the new kinetic energy recovery systems (KERS) for 2009, many of the teams are re-evaluating their driver line-ups based on weight. Both Barrichello (71kg) and Honda test driver Alex Wurz (79kg) could find themselves less attractive than, say, Anthony Davidson, who weighs a mere 56kg.

"I only wanted to test a Formula 1 car when I felt ready to race one"



Bruno Senna (with Honda Racing CEO Nick Fry) is aiming to capitalise on the Senna name's historic links with the Honda marque



Rubens Barrichello sported a one-off helmet design at his home grand prix this year - will it be the last time we see him in action on an F1 circuit?

Probable 2009 F1 grid



McLAREN-MERCEDES

Lewis Hamilton
Heikki Kovalainen



FERRARI

Kimi Räikkönen
Felipe Massa



BMW SAUBER

Robert Kubica
Nick Heidfeld



RENAULT

Fernando Alonso
Nelson Piquet



TOYOTA

Jarno Trulli
Timo Glock



TORO ROSSO

Sébastien Bourdais
Sébastien Buemi



RED BULL

Mark Webber
Sebastian Vettel



WILLIAMS

Nico Rosberg
Kazuki Nakajima



HONDA

Jenson Button
Bruno Senna



FORCE INDIA

Giancarlo Fisichella
Adrian Sutil



F1 stars take up boxing to improve fitness

Webber, Rosberg and Button work with the punch bag to focus on "balance and reaction times"

DRIVERS HAVE STARTED boxing because it's the best way to improve reaction times and hand-eye co-ordination – according to a top Formula 1 trainer.

Mark Webber, Nico Rosberg and Jenson Button have taken up the sport in a bid to get a competitive edge over their rivals, and have found boxing is the perfect preparation for the demands of racing in F1.

Prior to the Singapore GP, Red Bull's Mark Webber tried a variant of the sport called Thai boxing, which is a martial art that involves punching, kicking and using the elbows, fists, knees and feet – ideal to develop lightning-fast reaction times.

Webber has started to box regularly prior to grands prix and his trainer Roger Cleary believes that the skills he's developed are crucial. "Boxing is vital for improving hand-eye co-ordination, balance and reaction times," says Cleary. "He did some Thai boxing a couple of months ago and really enjoyed it, and we'll continue to work on it during the winter."

Cleary added that boxing is particularly good at improving a driver's balance, which is important for when they race at the three anti-clockwise circuits, Istanbul, Singapore and Interlagos.



The strengths drivers get from boxing will really help at anti-clockwise circuits like Istanbul, Singapore and Interlagos

"Boxing focuses the mind to split-second timing. Like in F1, if you just make a small mistake it's going to hurt!"

More drivers are starting to take up other sports to help with their training. Honda's Jenson Button regularly competes in triathlons to help with his endurance capacity, while Heikki Kovalainen competes in cross-country skiing in his native Finland. Also Sebastian Vettel is a keen trekker... Turn to page 102 to read about his night-time ramble up Mount Fuji on the evening after the Japanese GP.



THE AMAZING RULES OF F1!

Lesser-known laws of our great sport revealed

2008 Formula 1 Technical Regulations Article 8: Electrical Systems

8.9 Track signal information display

All cars must be fitted with red, blue and yellow cockpit lights the purpose of which are to give drivers

information concerning track signals or conditions. The lights must be LEDs each with a minimum diameter of 5mm and which are fitted in order that they are directly in the driver's normal line of sight.



WEIRD 2009 REAR WINGS WILL INCREASE OVERTAKING

Formula 1 tech chiefs believe they'll work, but will we grow to love them?

THE ODD-LOOKING wings on next year's cars will improve overtaking in 2009, according to senior F1 figures – so we'd better get used to them!

The cars will feature narrower, taller rear (and wider front) wings to improve the on-track action. Add to that a raft of other new rules, such as slick tyres and the new hybrid kinetic energy recovery systems (KERS), and it's no wonder teams were back on the track to test their 2009 cars just two weeks after the flag fell in Brazil.

The 'squashed' rear wings may seem ugly, but they've been designed to reduce the turbulence for a following car. Combined with new front wings which feature a driver-adjustable flap, they should allow

cars to run closer to one another. Fans may overcome their aversion to the look of the wings if they have the desired effect.

"Remember when the narrow track cars



New rear wings are the biggest change to the look of F1 cars in a decade – we'll soon get to like them if they improve racing

first appeared in '98, and how different they looked back then?" said Toyota's senior technical advisor, Frank Dernie. "I think that the '09 cars will be the same, but we'll get used to them quickly."

"I believe that two 2009-spec cars will be able to overtake better than two 2008-spec cars, because the chasing car will be less disturbed by the wake from the one in front."

Williams were the first to test the new wings at Jerez back in September and the team's technical director, Sam Michael, is in agreement.

"I've been looking at the new car in the windtunnel for months now and you do get used to the wings," he says. "And, theoretically, they should improve

"We'll get used to the cars quickly" Frank Dernie

overtaking. But whether that works in practice, no one can say yet, since it depends on how much better the wake is for the following car."

At the Barcelona test a fortnight after Brazil, all the teams ran an interim car with the priority to gain experience of running on slick tyres. They aren't expected to unveil their 2009 cars until after Christmas, when a rush of aero work will take place prior to the season opener at Melbourne on March 29.

"Over the course of the year there has been a lot of windtunnel work based around each team's own ideas," adds Michael. "When the new cars run in January, you'll get nine other windtunnels working overtime."

KERS will be introduced for next season, but is not mandatory. Indeed, Toyota have conceded that they will delay the introduction of their system until mid-season. Teams have encountered teething troubles with the safety of KERS – a BMW mechanic was electrocuted in the summer and teams have been taking a number of safety precautions, such as wearing rubber gloves, in testing.

Finally, the FIA have confirmed that engine life has been extended from two to three grands prix for next year. 2009 starts here!



Toyota may not race their kinetic energy recovery system until the middle of next year



Safety fears about KERS prompted teams to take precautions, like wearing rubber gloves

F1 MASTERMIND

Test your knowledge with our fiendishly tricky quiz



- Which team did Chris Amon and Jacky Ickx drive for in 1968?
- Which Formula 1 driver was dubbed the 'Monza Gorilla'?
- Niki Lauda and Alain Prost finished one-two in the 1984 F1 drivers' title. Who was third that year?
- What number did Damon Hill race with for Williams in the '93 and '94 seasons?
- In which year did the F1 constructors' championship start?
- What unfortunate statistic did Aguri Suzuki achieve during the 1989 season?
- Who was the 1960 drivers' world champion?
- At which race this season was the 800th world championship grand prix?
- Where did Keke Rosberg run this special gold-liveried McLaren (pictured)?
- Which manufacturer supplied engines to McLaren before Mercedes?

IN ASSOCIATION WITH



Answers: 1 Ferrari 2 Vittorio Brambilla 3 Elio de Angelis 4 Zero 5 1958 6 He failed to pre-qualify for every race that season 7 Jack Brabham 8 Singapore 9 1986 Portuguese GP 10 Peugeot

ASK F1 RACING

All your questions answered

What do the red letters 'N' and 'E' in circles displayed close to the cockpit on a Formula 1 car mean?

Paul Vynovich,
Nova Scotia, Canada

Inside the cockpit is a master switch that cuts off the electrics. 'E' indicates an exterior switch which performs the same function. The rules state that this switch (which has a horizontal handle and can be operated from a distance by



The 'E' master switch cuts off the electrics, while the 'N' switch disengages the clutch

a hook) must be situated at the base of the roll-over structure on the right hand side. 'N' is a switch to enable a marshal or driver to disengage the clutch so the car can be taken out of gear.

Send your F1 conundrums to askf1racing@haymarket.com

PADDOCK SPY

F1 is set for some big changes in 2009 - some things will be missed more than others



After 14 seasons and 246 starts in Formula 1 David Coulthard was honoured by the rest of the grid before the Brazilian Grand Prix - it's just a shame that Nelson Piquet and Jarno Trulli didn't turn up



"I'm not really this short" Steve Rider signs off ITV's F1 coverage



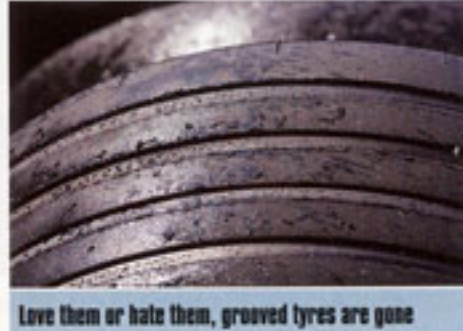
Goodbye to Brazil as the traditional season closer - it's Abu Dhabi from 2009



The rear wing as we know it will go in the '09 shake-up



F1's favourite minnows Toro Rosso say goodbye to Sebastian Vettel. He's off to Red Bull, who finished behind them in the constructors' standings...



Love them or hate them, grooved tyres are gone



Crazy aero appendages are also gone. Massive shame

An aerial architectural rendering of the Yas Viceroy Hotel in Abu Dhabi. The hotel is a massive, multi-tiered structure with a distinctive blue, scale-like facade. It is built over a section of the Yas Viceroy Hotel F1 track, which is a winding circuit with orange-brown runoff areas and grey asphalt. To the left of the hotel, a marina with several sailboats is visible. The surrounding area includes landscaped green spaces and other buildings in the background.

PITPASS

LATEST PICTURES!

ABU DHABI SET TO BE F1'S MOST SPECTACULAR TRACK

2009 finale will feature a 500-room hotel that will bridge part of the circuit

THE BRAND NEW Abu Dhabi circuit could be F1's most spectacular venue. *F1 Racing* has seen the circuit's latest plans, which will include a spectacular five-star, 500-room hotel that traverses the track.

The Yas Marina circuit – on 2,550-hectares of land – will replace Brazil as next year's season finale and will set a new benchmark for Formula 1. The 3.4-mile circuit is being constructed to wind around a Monaco-style harbour that will have space for 150 yachts and – Silverstone eat your heart out – 12,000 car parking spaces...

There will also be the most extensive array

of leisure facilities ever seen at a grand prix circuit. A Ferrari theme park is being built that will feature the first ever twin-track rollercoaster in the world, plus there will be shopping centres, golf courses, polo fields and a 60-metre, solar-powered "sun tower".

The £100million project is joint-funded by the United Arab Emirates government and Aldar Property, who are working hard to ensure complete ease for visiting race-goers next year. For example, the airport is only a five-minute drive from the circuit – and the organisers are planning a 10-lane motorway to ease the access!





The circuit will include spaces for 150 yachts and a Ferrari theme park

The Hermann Tilke-designed track is the only one in the world that has completely covered grandstands, with 50,000 seats. Plus the main pit building has 40 garages, and there's a separate support-race building with an additional 30 pitboxes.

Abu Dhabi has a seven-year agreement with Bernie Ecclestone until 2016 – the first being scheduled for November 1 next year. Bahrain is a short flight away and could be twinned as a 'back-to-back' race with just a week between the two in the future.



Construction began soon after the announcement of the race in February 2007

DO YOU REMEMBER WHEN...



...Mansell cut his hands on the podium?

WHY WAS IT THAT DRAMA always seemed to follow Nigel Mansell around during his career? Love him or loathe him, Our Nige had some truly unforgettable incidents. Remember Dallas '84 when he fainted while pushing his Lotus across the line? Or when he nearly didn't race in the 1991 Spanish GP after he had sprained his ankle while playing football with a group of journos?

Then there was Austria '87, when the moustachioed Brummie was being carried down the pitlane on top of a flat-bed truck. Mansell wasn't looking when his head smashed against the underside of the bridge.

But perhaps the most bizarre Mansell moment followed his first race for Ferrari at Rio, Brazil in 1989. Having taken a surprise win, he was presented with an enormous trophy and proceeded to cut his blistered hands on the award. Blood spurted everywhere as the wincing and moaning commenced...

PITLANE HEROES

F1 just couldn't exist without them

No 6
WILLIAMS' EVENTS
MANAGER

IF YOU'RE lucky enough to be a guest of the Williams F1 team, whether at a test or a grand prix, then Katie Aspinall will know who you are. She's responsible for Williams' hospitality programmes and has been at Grove since 2001.

But her time spent in the F1 paddock goes back



Katie Aspinall has been responsible for hospitality at Williams for seven years

further, as her first job was in the Tyrrell motorhome in the late 1990s. She worked for Ken Tyrrell for three years, until they were bought by British American Tobacco and became BAR.

"I've always worked for the small teams – family racers such as Ken and Frank, rather than the big

corporations," she says. "It's great because I feel I can talk to Frank about anything and I love the fact Patrick Head is so approachable."

Aspinall runs four hospitality programmes for Williams' VIPs, ranging from the team's motorhome, the premium grandstand, Paddock Club hospitality and testing, which includes viewing from the team's pitlane garage. "We care how we look," adds Aspinall, "but because Williams doesn't have the money of a manufacturer we don't spend money on looking tidy like some of the other teams!"

LETTERS

Massa's a true sportsman... and Gordon Brown needs to pay up for the British GP



Massa's emotional response to losing the title brought a tear to many an eye

MISSING THE POINT(S)

I know there's a recession on, but if Ferrari had paid someone to stand in front of Massa with a lollipop in Singapore instead of using a computer I'm pretty sure he would have got the point needed to win the championship.

David Swinden

Liversedge, W Yorks

The credit crunch has claimed yet another victim

THREE-SEAT MYSTERY

Further to the letter about whether F1 fans could tell each car apart without the livery (*F1 Racing*, November), I'd be incredibly surprised if the three-seater Renault featured in last month's mag wasn't related to the Larrousse F1 cars of 1993 and '94, judging by the tub, nose, rear wing and airbox.

As for telling the difference between a Red Bull and a Toro Rosso, it's surprisingly easy – the Toro Rosso is the one in front.

Mark Heenan

Littleworth, Staffs

You might have a point, there...



The 1993 Larrousse Lamborghini was driven by just one person, but performed like it had three sitting in the cockpit

DON'T CRY FOR ME, BRAZIL

I'm not the most sentimental of TV viewers but the finale of the Brazilian GP – and its immediate aftermath – brought a lump to my throat.

In an era when so many drivers act like spoiled children when they don't get their own way, Felipe Massa's conduct during the podium ceremony and post-race press conference was a powerful example of good sportsmanship. After experiencing what must have been a rollercoaster of emotions he acted with dignity and gravitas. I sincerely hope that one day he wins the championship he surely deserves.

Was it really necessary, though, for the television director to focus with such relish on the reactions of Massa's family and the Ferrari team as they realised Felipe had lost the championship?

Michael Staniforth

Via email

The TV coverage ought to capture the moment, it's just that 'the moment' made for uncomfortable viewing

IT'S A FIX! OR IS IT?

Many (myself included) are of the opinion that Timo Glock gifted the title to Lewis. To settle the speculation, why not publish the lap times for all those on dry tyres?

Mark Lee

Via email

Both Toyotas stayed on dry tyres. Glock's last lap was 1min 44.731secs, fractionally quicker than team-mate Trulli's 1min 44.800. The conspiracy theory doesn't really add up, does it?

STAR LETTER

PONY UP, GORDON

I was interested to see Gordon Brown jumping somewhat predictably on the Lewis Hamilton well-wishing bandwagon. Brown talked about the stellar achievement and sacrifices Hamilton has had to make in order to achieve his goal, and the fantastic job done by "our own McLaren team" in working to help Lewis get to the pinnacle of motorsport.

This is the same man who has refused time and again to provide government funding for the redevelopment of Silverstone to secure the future of the British GP, despite pumping billions into other projects (like the 2012 Olympics, which is already massively overbudget).

No matter how much Brown wants to ride the coat-tails of Lewis's success, it was achieved in spite of his "support" rather than because of it.

Perhaps now the government should put its money where its mouth is?

Alex Holmes

Via email



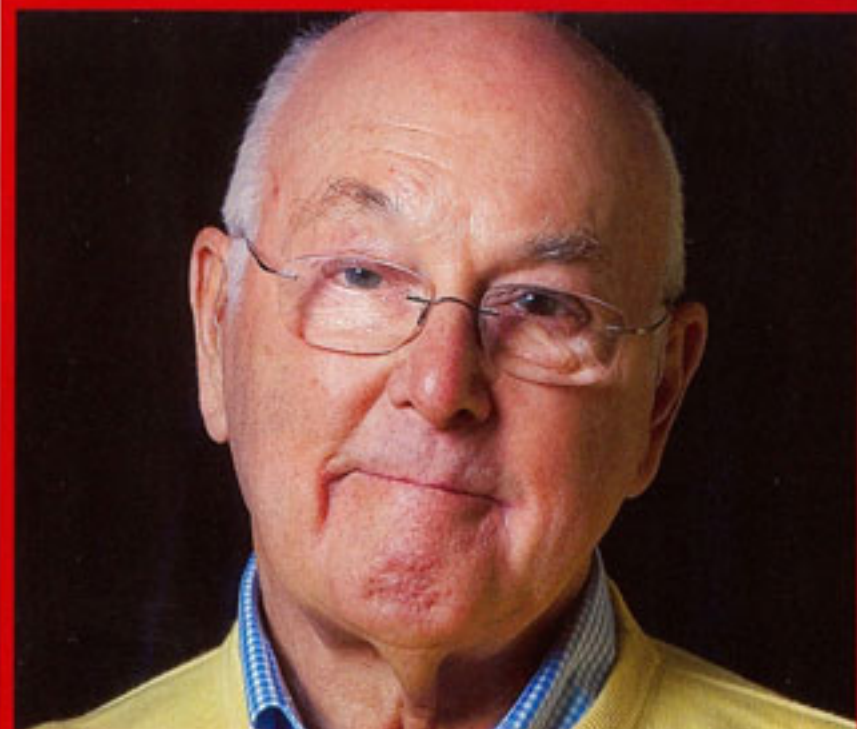
Gordon Brown congratulated Lewis on his title win, but F1 fans want the government to support the British GP

STAR PRIZE

Alex wins an Italian leather holdall from Caracalla Bagaglio's Commemorative Motorsport Collection. For more information visit, www.cbfil.co.uk



CARACALLA BAGAGLIO
FINEST ITALIAN LUGGAGE



MURRAY WALKER

The voice of Formula 1 speaks his mind every month – only in *F1 Racing*

BRAVO LEWIS!

Just as he did in his other race categories on his way to F1, Lewis Hamilton came good in year two – and what a way to do it! It's hard to overstate the magnitude of his achievement. As recently as early 2007 he was virtually unknown to the general public, but it wasn't long before he had captured their imagination, not only in the UK but all over the world. It wasn't just the fact he was an entirely new name that endeared him to them, it was his looks, his smile, his dignified demeanour and cheerful personality, his ability to communicate, his refusal to be dominated by his double-world-champion team-mate (who rapidly became the villain of the piece) and, of course, his sheer brilliance at the wheel. I've seen them come and I've seen them go, but never before have I had so many strangers stop me in the street wanting to know about this fresh-faced youngster who had kindled their interest in a sport they knew little about. Lewis has been a power of good for F1 at a time when it badly needed something to brighten its tarnished image.

We enthusiasts judge him with a slightly different yardstick, and he measures up to it very well. I've had people describe him as the greatest driver who has ever lived, which is a patently ridiculous thing to say, but in years to come he could be. To miss the title by a single point and to win four races in your debut season are unique achievements, but now, even as champion, he is only just beginning. With, potentially, another 15 years of racing ahead of him, he could eclipse Michael Schumacher's overwhelming string of records – provided, and it's a very big 'provided', he continues to enjoy the support of a top team with the right infrastructure. One of the things that's difficult for the general public to grasp is the extent to which Formula 1 is a team sport, and 'team' means



Lewis could eclipse the records set by Michael Schumacher, provided he has the right team around him

everyone in it. Without the unstinting support that Hamilton has had from everyone at McLaren – from Ron Dennis and his people in the paddock to Martin Whitmarsh and everyone at the McLaren Technology Centre at Woking – he wouldn't be where he triumphantly is today.

I'm delighted for Lewis, for his family and for everyone at McLaren, who have done a superb job. They've overcome seemingly crippling conditions, created in places other than their track rivals, that would have broken lesser people and they richly deserve their success. Well done indeed!

MORE NIGHT RACES? NO THANKS!

Now that the fully justified euphoria about F1's first night race in Singapore has died down it's a good time to think about whether this format is the way to go for other races. For my money it's not, for I believe Singapore owed its enormous success to its spectacular night-lit location rather than that the majority of the worldwide TV audience could watch it at a viewer-friendly time.

The big TV viewing figures are in Europe so, with over 25 per cent of races now held at unsocial hours for European viewers, why not exploit Singapore's success and run them all at night? Because, quite apart from the enormous costs, too many of them would be visually boring, PlayStation lookalikes which could be absolutely anywhere and totally devoid of distinctiveness. That's why.

Singapore worked brilliantly because it's a genuine street circuit surrounded by very impressive historic and high-rise buildings, which provide a dramatically lit backdrop to the racing and look fabulous at night. I think it would probably look even better in daylight but that's another story. Would the 'open country' circuits at Malaysia, Bahrain, Japan and China look even a fraction as exciting at night as Singapore (the NIMBY factor has already killed off any chance of a night race at Melbourne)? I think not, for the same reason the MotoGP at Doha in Qatar failed to ring the bell for me. You've got nothing to look at except the track, concrete barriers and metal catch-fencing. I'd rather watch them in my pyjamas as day races. I'm aware of the commercial considerations, but if people don't enjoy watching it they'll stop altogether. So let's just keep the night racing at Singapore please, Bernie.

Or am I the only one out of step?



MAX GETS IT RIGHT

Max Mosley's taken a lot of stick about his private life recently, but, in a situation where F1 needs a strong leader more than ever, he's shown that he's the right man for the job by his insistence on the need for the sport to be environmentally aware and responsible – consistently banging the drum about cost cutting and by his determination to use his

power to make it happen. If he retires at the end of 2009, as he has suggested, he will forever be remembered with respect for the vigorous and determined action he took to promote greater safety in F1 following the tragic deaths of Roland Ratzenberger and Ayrton Senna at that ghastly Imola weekend in 1994. Contentious though he may be, the sport owes him a great deal.

At a time of near-cataclysmic financial meltdown and hysteria about the carbon footprint and CO₂ emissions it's all too easy for the disinterested person in the street to see F1 as noisy, wasteful and irrelevant.

Honda have given a good lead with their practical and promotional 'green' initiatives, and, from 2009, F1 will be able to proudly demonstrate its relevance to production car benefits with KERS technology. But for the sport to continue long-term, cost cutting is absolutely vital to retain the smaller teams and the sponsors. Without wishing to sound sycophantic, which I inevitably will, I say it's a good job we've got Max Mosley.

Even if it's not for much longer. Allegedly.

"Lewis has been a power of good for Formula 1 when it was badly needed"



{WHATEVER HAPPENED TO...}



Then A rare F1 finish – 11th place in the Footwork at the Nürburgring in 1996



RICARDO ROSSET

**TYRRELL AND LOLA
BACKMARKER
WHO'S NOW A
RETAIL IMPRESARIO**

Like so many of his compatriots, Ricardo Rosset turned his back on his Brazilian homeland to pursue a racing career in Europe. A late starter in karts, he entered British F3 in 1993, went on to be a runner-up in Formula 3000, then found himself on the Formula 1 grid racing for Footwork – just three years after he left Brazil.

But the following year, '97, was a disaster. Rosset joined the new Mastercard Lola operation, but the cars were barely ready for the season opener in Australia. Rosset and team-mate Vincenzo Sospiri were a dozen seconds off the pace. The team quickly disbanded.

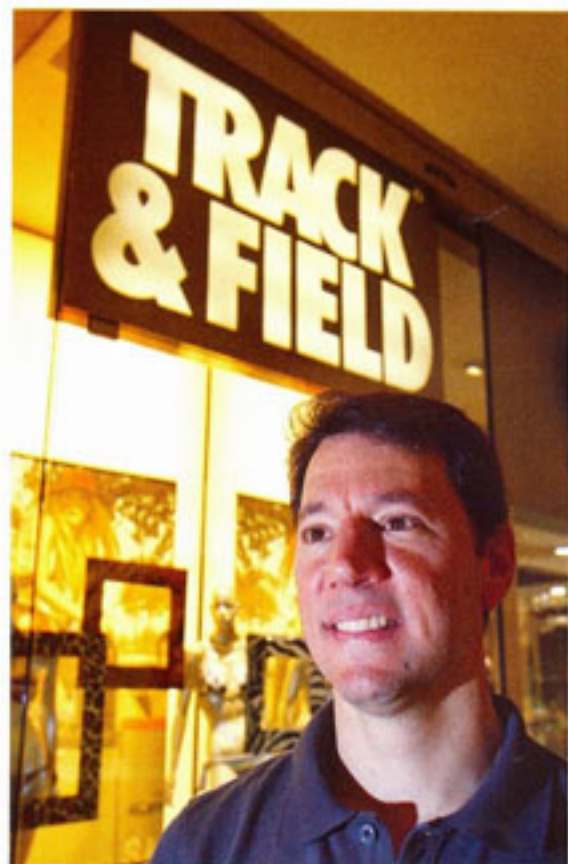
In '98 Rosset got a seat at Tyrrell, who had been bought by British American Tobacco, but failed to score a single point. Disillusioned, Rosset quit racing and went home – to a very different career...

"All the options to continue in F1 closed because it was a difficult time financially in the sport. Lola was a big disappointment and then Tyrrell was a difficult year with all the politics following the takeover. I thought that I was wasting my time racing. I was starting to push beyond the limits of the car and that's why I was having a lot of accidents. I thought I was going to get killed, or hurt – for what? Nobody cared about me and I thought that I should think about my life and what to do with the rest of it. So I decided to return home and work on my business. At that time I also got married and started a family. It was time to forget about racing.

"My family has had a textile business since the 1930s, which today employs over 3,000

people. My first job was making T-shirts for friends at school and then I started my own clothing business, called Track & Field, specialising in sportswear. It's now a successful company and we have 34 stores around Brazil, employing 650 people.

"Day-to-day I have my office in São Paulo and I look after the financial side, the budgets and IT. I learned a lot of discipline in racing that is useful in my business today. Firstly, with psychology – how to deal with the pressure – and, secondly, the discipline. I always used to be late, but in my short time in F1 I learned that I couldn't be one second late for anything. That's important for my life. F1 also showed me that a lot of people say one thing and mean another...



Now Rosset runs a clothing empire and is back racing in the Brazilian GT3 series

"This year my old friend Walter Salles invited me to have a go in the Brazilian GT3 series. I absolutely love it, even after my 10-year break, and will continue with it. Straight away, after the first few laps, it all came back to me. We won the first race and also have a chance to win the championship – it's the best year I've ever had in a racing car."

THE TOP TEN...

YOUNGEST F1 WINNERS

It can take a whole career to make the top step, but this lot were in a real hurry

1 SEBASTIAN VETTEL 21 YEARS 73 DAYS

When a Scuderia Toro Rosso took the chequered flag at Monza in September it was remarkable for a number of reasons. Not only was it the first for the unfancied minnows, but Vettel also broke the record for being the youngest winner of a grand prix – at 21 years, two months and 11 days.

2 FERNANDO ALONSO 22 YEARS 26 DAYS

Alonso burst into the record books when he piloted his Renault R23 to victory at the Hungaroring in 2003. It was the French marque's first win (with their own chassis) for 20 years – the Spaniard largely benefited by Mark Webber holding up the field behind him during the early stages.



Fernando Alonso takes his maiden grand prix victory in Hungary, 2003 – Renault's first win for 20 years

3 TROY RUTTMAN 22 YEARS 80 DAYS

Prior to Alonso, you have to go back nearly half a century to find the youngest winner of a world championship race (that's if you count the 1950 to 1960 Indianapolis 500s – which we do). Ruttman inherited the win at Indy in 1952 when Bill Vukovich – 20secs ahead – crashed out nine laps from the end with steering failure.

4 BRUCE McLAREN 22 YEARS 104 DAYS

It was a close finish at Sebring in 1959. At the wheel of his Cooper, McLaren slipstreamed race leader Jack Brabham (who was running out of fuel) and was followed by Maurice Trintignant too. As they came to the line, Trintignant had a look, but failed to beat McLaren by just 0.6secs.



Bruce McLaren celebrates becoming one of F1's youngest winners with a kiss from Miss Sebring at the 1959 US GP

5 LEWIS HAMILTON 22 YEARS 154 DAYS

Last season Hamilton was the youngest driver since Bruce McLaren to lead the F1 world championship, but he missed beating the winning record from his team's founder by two months. His first win came in the Canadian GP in 2007 and then he won again – at 22 years, five months and 10 days – at Indianapolis a week later...

6 KIMI RÄIKÖNEN 23 YEARS 157 DAYS

Fast-tracked to Formula 1 from the junior Formula Renault series, the Finn showed us all what he was capable of when he took victory at the 2003 Malaysian Grand Prix for McLaren. At that stage the fresh-faced Kimi had only seen 23 summers...

7 ROBERT KUBICA 23 YEARS 184 DAYS

A year on from Lewis Hamilton's triumph in Canada, Robert Kubica also slotted into the sport's youngest top 10 winners list when he headed BMW Sauber's one-two at Montreal in June. He snuck into seventh, ahead of Jacky Ickx by four days.

8 JACKY ICKX 23 YEARS 188 DAYS

In only his ninth world championship grand prix, Ickx won in the rain of Rouen in 1968. But the race is remembered for the tragic accident that killed Jo Schlesser. Ickx started on wet tyres and led at the end of the first lap. The Ferrari also led for all but one of the following 59 laps, including the most important one: the last.

9 MICHAEL SCHUMACHER 23y 240 DAYS

He holds most of the major records in the sport, but he's nearly two and a half years down on Sebastian Vettel (dubbed the new Schumi) when it comes to scoring his first grand prix win. The victory came at Spa in 1992 (just a year after his debut) when he was one of the first to opt for slicks on a drying track.

10 EMERSON FITTIPALDI 23y 296 DAYS

Following the untimely death of Jochen Rindt at Monza, the young Brazilian Fittipaldi was elevated into the role of team leader at Lotus. At Watkins Glen in 1970 he started on the second row, but was slow away. Eventually he chivvied his way back up to the front to give the Lotus team a glimmer of hope at the end of their tragic season.



Sebastian Vettel takes the chequered flag at Monza this year after his imperious drive in the wet

MY LIFE IN F1



ALEXANDER WURZ

Honda's test driver isn't an angry man – unless he meets Eddie Irvine

A **BMX CHAMPION** before he moved into motorsport, extreme sports fan Alex Wurz delights in spending his weekends hanging off the sides of mountains.

After becoming the youngest ever Le Mans 24 Hours winner in 1996, Alex got his F1 break substituting for Gerhard Berger at Benetton for three grands prix in '97. He impressed the team enough for them to offer him a full-time drive for '98, but they were already sliding into a period of uncompetitiveness that would last for several years.

Replaced by Jenson Button for the 2001 season, Alex spent the following five seasons as McLaren's test driver before moving to Williams for 2006. This led to a race drive in 2007, the highlight of which was the Canadian GP where he fought his way to a podium finish with a damaged rear wing.



Then in 2008 he combined testing duties at Honda's F1 team with a season of Le Mans Series racing in the fierce Peugeot 908 – as well as being F1 commentator for Austrian television. *F1 Racing* caught up with Alex during a rare breather at the Chinese GP.

MOST INFLUENTIAL PERSON **PAT SYMONDS**

"At the beginning of my motorsport career I'd say the most influential people were my father and [Austrian racing legend] Walter Lechner. But I had one chance at Formula 1, and that was my test with Benetton, so I'd say Pat Symonds. He said, 'This guy's good, let's give him a contract.' Everything else came from there."

FAVOURITE CAR McLAREN-MERCEDES MP4-17D

"It was a very good race car, well-balanced and easy to adjust on every circuit. I set a huge amount of test lap records with it – not that I got much out of them apart from the satisfaction! McLaren were developing the MP4-18 at the same time, so the 17D had its own dedicated group – a small number of engineers – and we were just let loose on this car, which hadn't been great the previous season. With a few changes to the suspension geometry and some other bits and bobs it turned into a really good race car. Every test we opened another door and it got better and better."



LEAST FAVOURITE PERSON IN F1 EDDIE IRVINE

"Eddie Irvine. I could never smell him. I don't know if that translates into English very well, but if you say in German you can't smell someone, it means you don't like them. No, actually, I don't want to give him any credit – let's not even mention his name. Oh, all right then – I'm not an angry man, but I can't think of anyone else I really dislike."



LEAST FAVOURITE CIRCUIT THE A1 RING

"I actually did the drawing for the first layout of the circuit because my father had bought it from the previous owners for €1. You couldn't do much with it because of planning regulations and issues with the landowners. I'd have thought I'd do better on this circuit but it was always a disaster for me."



LEAST FAVOURITE CAR BENETTON B199

"The Benetton B199 had the Front Torque Transfer system and it was far too heavy. Every lap I did in it, I was well over the legal weight limit. You know how some people complain that they can't distribute the ballast properly? Well, I couldn't have ballast. Driving this car was like having to carry a rucksack on your back. My team-mate Giancarlo Fisichella was 15kg lighter than me and he was just about on the weight limit. I lost about seven or eight kilos through dieting, but even then I was giving away about four tenths every lap because of the extra weight. The car wasn't much good, anyway. It makes me very angry thinking about it. You've ruined my day!"



FAVOURITE GRAND PRIX HUNGARY 1999

"I finished in seventh, and the car wasn't much good at the time. I remember going into the race thinking that I'd go flat out all the way, and from the very first lap to the last I didn't make a single mistake. I didn't even miss an apex. I treated every lap like a qualifying lap, and I nearly lapped my team-mate. But unfortunately there were no points for seventh place in those days, so I came away with nothing but a warm handshake from my race engineer."



{YOU ASK THE QUESTIONS}

JAMES ALLEN

He followed Murray Walker and saw it all – most notably Sebastian Vettel suggesting Ted Kravitz was a porker. But before he goes he'd like a word with his 'fans' on internet forums...

WORDS HANS SEEBERG PORTRAITS LORENZO BELLANCA/LAT

In a *You Ask The Questions* first, James Allen is feverishly thumbing through the cards containing questions from *F1 Racing*'s readers before answering them. "Not even Flavio Briatore did that," it's pointed out to him. "Well, I just want to make sure I don't shoot my bolt with the first question," he smiles.

Allen, sitting in the Honda motorhome at the Brazilian Grand Prix, is preparing to vacate the F1 commentary seat he's held permanently since the 2001 US Grand Prix, and he's on good form. He's a friendly and chatty chap at the best of times, and certainly doesn't seem to be bearing the load of someone gearing up

for their last day in their current job. Yet it's clear he's keen to set the record straight, and it's not hard to guess the subject matter that he's itching to tackle.

Since replacing the legendary Murray Walker, Allen has been subjected to a constant undercurrent of sniping from a small section of fans, most notably on the internet. Website *Sniff Petrol* even launched a campaign against him simply entitled Stop The Cock. But with a genuine feeling of achievement for what he's done in F1, the support of many in the sport and a BAFTA to back up his case, Allen takes the first card and gets stuck in. You can say what you like about him – he doesn't duck a challenge...

Was following Murray Walker the impossible job?

Martin Wellbelove, UK

Well, it certainly wasn't going to be easy. The thing with Murray was that he was the soundtrack for a lot of British success in Formula 1, with Nigel Mansell and Damon Hill, and because of that he was part of the national consciousness. I always had the confidence to follow him. I was quite close to him and I still am – he even gave me his microphone when he finished commentating. When I got the job he gave me two pieces of advice: be yourself, and remember that the Italian national anthem's got two parts and it's easy to talk over it. ➤

{YOU ASK THE QUESTIONS}

James, I think ITV radically increased the standard of F1 coverage, but over the years I've become alienated by the almost propaganda-style coverage given to Lewis Hamilton. Was this the decision of the ITV controllers, or you and your fellow presenters?

Richard Randle, UK

(Laughs) Good question. Clearly, when you have a period like the Schumacher years when there's no great British driver, it's like pushing water up a hill. Having a British driver at the forefront changes everything. I know the build-up show had a lot of Hamilton in it, but I made a real effort to talk about the whole race. The thing is, you naturally talk more about the people at the front. A commercial broadcaster like ITV probably didn't have much choice but to go big on a new British star, and I don't think the BBC will do it any differently.

Who gave you your most memorable ever interview?

Mark Day, UK

I remember interviewing Michael Schumacher at a Mugello test in 1998. It was the first time he'd really spoken about Jerez '97, and he was very contrite. He'd had a hell of a lot of crap fall on him about it, and although he understood he'd done something wrong he didn't quite get why he'd been so pilloried. I think I saw him at his most open, honest and humble that day.

As a commentator, what would the perfect race have?

Anders Ruen, Norway

Plenty of overtaking, unpredictability, some interesting plays on strategy... and a few spots of rain with 10 laps to go.

Does F1 benefit from having controversial figures like Michael Schumacher and Lewis Hamilton?

Mark Young, Australia

You've got to remember that this is sport. The people in it are very motivated to win, and guys like Schumacher and Hamilton flirt with the very limits of

what is and isn't acceptable. Schumacher obviously crossed that line on many occasions. I don't think Hamilton has crossed that line yet, although he's been quite close to it a couple of times. But I'm a great believer that sport doesn't build characters, it reveals them.

Do you feel you've made a positive contribution to the sport since you started commentating on it? If so, how does it feel to be the subject of such criticism by many fans, race after race?

David Rix, UK

Well, there's no getting away from the fact that I took over from Murray at a time when the internet opened up everyone being able to have their say on forums. It's the democratisation of the media, and I have absolutely no problem with that. You get a few people who get themselves worked up about stuff, but it certainly wasn't the majority opinion – we knew that because of all the market research we did. The broadcaster that appeals to everyone hasn't been invented yet. Do I feel I made a positive contribution to Formula 1? Definitely.

Do you think the media and public have enough access to Formula 1 drivers these days?

Adam Moulder, UK

Interesting question. At the moment Formula 1 is too exclusive, but it's been a part of the marketing of the sport – it's about aspiring to belong. A lot of people would desperately love to be inside the paddock, and somehow the fact you can't get in there adds to the attraction. It's a bit like a restaurant you can't get a table at – for lots of people, that just makes them want a table even more. But Bernie plays that card to a large extent. It doesn't happen by accident.

What's the worst grand prix you ever commentated on?

Indra Junor, Indonesia

Valencia this year was really, really hard work. Tedious. The other thing that got my goat was Austria 2002, when Ferrari

switched Barrichello and Schumacher on the finish line. The fans' reactions said it all. The good thing is that the sport and Ferrari in particular learned from it.

If he was commentating now, do you think Murray Walker would've been subjected to the same level of abuse from people on internet forums as you have?

Jane Saunders, UK

Yes, I do. Obviously it wouldn't be at the same level someone like me has had, but then again he wasn't following a massive name like I was. Internet forums tend to have a lot of negative opinions whatever the subject matter – people don't go on them and say, "Ooh, this is fantastic."

How seriously do you take your job? You're only telling people what you see on a screen, after all.

Sam Berger, USA

(Laughs) My seven and four-year-old sons say to me, "Daddy, your job is just talking about racing cars," and it's true. But it's more complicated than that. In football you just have the ball and whatever bloke happens to be kicking it – Formula 1 has 20 points of focus in each race. I take it very seriously and worked very hard, as anyone in F1 will tell you. But at the end of the day commentary isn't reinventing the gene structure or trying to find a cure for cancer – it's entertaining and informing people about something they enjoy.

How would Schumacher and Hamilton have fared against each other?

Yvonne Cragg, UK

Well, the only way you can answer that is to pick a similar point in their careers. Two years into their Formula 1 careers, I think Hamilton's got more control over himself, despite his performance in Fuji this year. Having said that, two years into his career Schumacher was up against some of the greatest drivers we've ever had, like Senna, Prost and Mansell. He had a tougher challenge than Hamilton has now. Michael was probably a little more win-at-all-costs.

What was it like working with Martin Brundle?

Audrey Powers, USA

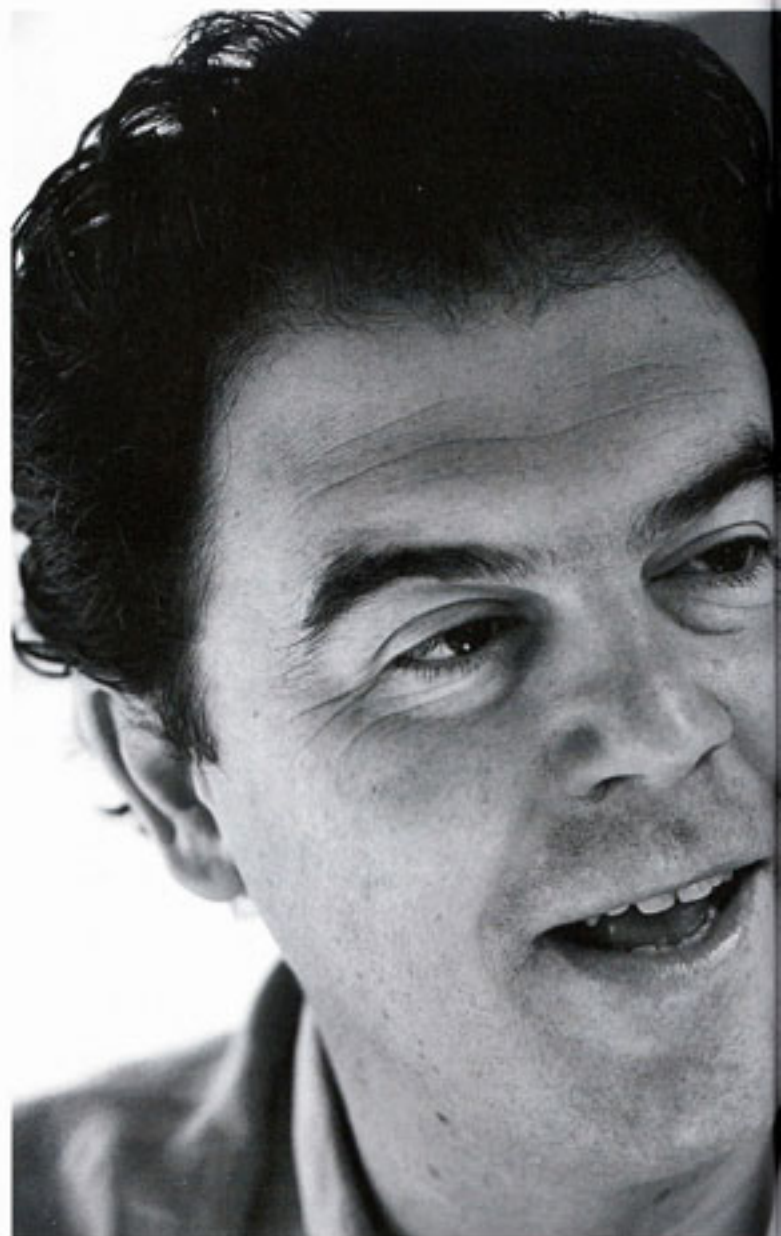
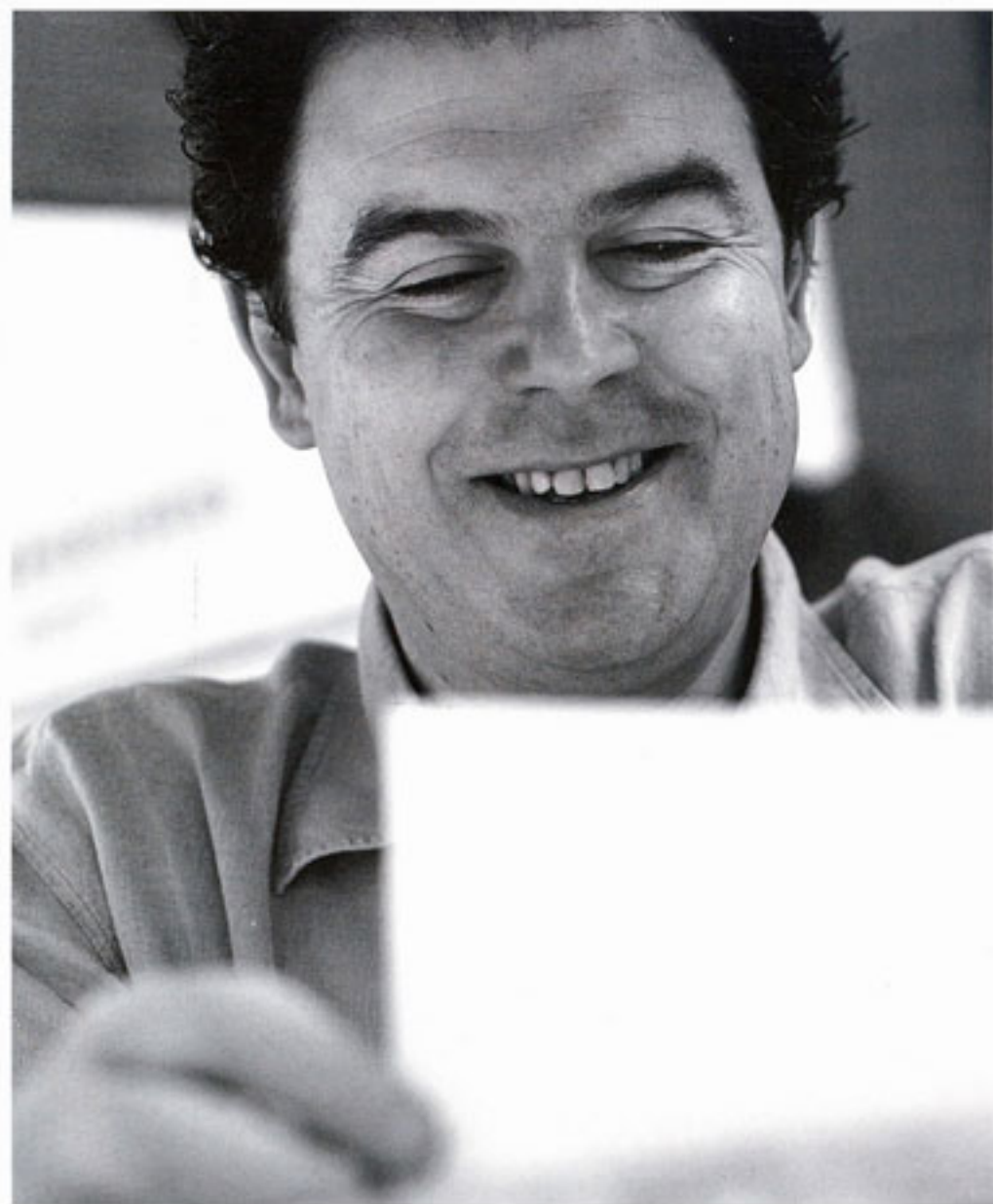
Martin is a very straightforward guy – very honest and open. He hasn't got a particularly big ego either, which is >

"I don't think Hamilton has crossed the line, but he's been close to it..."



Before his time in the commentary box, James Allen spent four and a half seasons as ITV's pitlane reporter. He was even Brabham's press officer in 1991, looking after Martin Brundle and Mark Blundell





{YOU ASK THE QUESTIONS}

unusual for a racing driver. He relied on me for a lot of the nuts and bolts, but he did more preparation than he'd probably like to let on. It's a bit like I was the centre forward and he was playing off me in the hole, like Wayne Rooney. But he's a terrific communicator and a great friend. He could do an awful lot of jobs in Formula 1.

What's the biggest commentating cock-up you've made in Formula 1? Do you regret it or just accept these things happen?

Graham Harris, UK

(Laughs) You have to accept that it's live television and you're going to make mistakes. I remember when Marc Gené was driving for Williams at Monza after Ralf Schumacher had hurt himself, and there was a race between Montoya and Michael Schumacher. Gené's helmet was very similar to Montoya's and I got them completely mixed up. I learnt a lot from that. But it's not like there's some sort of commentator's academy, is it?

What do you think it would be like commentating on a race with Bernie next to you?

Handaru Pratomo, Indonesia

Er, it depends on what mood he's in. It could be great fun because he can be absolutely hilarious. But if he's in one of his more monosyllabic moods I'd have to do an awful lot of the talking! But I reckon it'd be a right laugh.

Who would you rather have dinner with: Räikkönen or Alonso?

Daniela Bana, Croatia

(Laughs) Brilliant question. Räikkönen's obviously a more difficult person to get to know, but he has quite a good sense of humour – he's a real maverick, which not many sportsmen are these days. But I've always been very attracted by the character of Alonso. He's got a dark side, but he's extremely intelligent. Alonso would probably be more engaging over dinner. Mind you, if things got a bit out of control with Kimi on the vodkas, I'm sure it'd be pretty lively.



"Of all the bloody shirts." Brundle and Allen hit the mics

Mansell, Hill or Hamilton: who's the greatest British driver of the modern age?

David Stride, UK

Well, it's very early days for Hamilton. Damon was a terrific character, but I think he'd be the first to admit that he didn't have the levels of talent of Mansell or Hamilton. I knew Nigel very well and he was pretty unique. I think Lewis is a bit more of a proper racer, like Stirling Moss, whereas Mansell was a warrior. Who's the greatest? At the moment I'd say Mansell, but we'll see.

What's the magic ingredient that makes Formula 1 stand out as such a great spectator sport?

Petr Medi, UK

I think it's the sheer competitiveness and unpredictability of it. At the end of the day, you've got 20 cars with 750bhp driven by highly testosteroneed individuals. What's not to like?

Do you really believe, as many people claim, that the FIA is out to get McLaren?

Darrell Green, USA

That's a nice curveball! This is a really difficult area, because it's very easy to get dragged into that way of thinking when you look at some of the penalties. But you can't have a situation where the governing body is out to get a particular team – the whole thing would fall apart. There's no question McLaren have to be careful, and there's no question that there's some animosity between Max Mosley and Ron Dennis, but I don't think there's a massive vendetta.

A while ago a website called Sniff Petrol sold T-shirts about you, emblazoned with the slogan "Stop The Cock". Did you ever have one in your wardrobe?

Mark J Daniels, England

(Laughs) What do you think, Mark? Sniff Petrol enjoyed agitating things behind the scenes and made it look like I was the biggest catastrophe ever, but it comes with the territory. I met football commentator Barry Davies in 1998 and he said to me, "You'll get criticism and praise – don't believe any of it. What matters is that the people who employ you continue to employ you." I can't say I've enjoyed all the criticism and I can't say it exactly hurt either. But it would be a shame if people thought that all the criticism I've had is the view of the majority, because it isn't. It simply isn't.

Do you think Fernando Alonso was a spoilt brat during his last season at McLaren? I do.

Suzana Lepcic, Croatia

It was really difficult for Fernando. He'd dreamed all his life about driving for McLaren because it was Senna's team. The problem was that McLaren hired Lewis. He got a perfect start to the season while Fernando was still adapting to the Bridgestones, and McLaren allowed the Lewis fairytale to carry on. But Fernando would definitely have won the title in 2007 if, on a couple of occasions, they'd just given him the better strategy. I think he would've won this year's title in a McLaren as well. Fernando's very bitter about it.

Which character in Formula 1 made you laugh so much it hurt?

Chris Hallowell, London

Sebastian Vettel has all the makings of a good comedian. At a press conference earlier this year he was asked what was on his iPod, and he just started going on about German folk music, completely ripping the piss. But the best time was when I was in a restaurant with Ted Kravitz in Singapore and Vettel came over. Something had happened that day and Ted hadn't known about it. Sebastian just poked him in the stomach and said, "You were probably too busy having lunch." **FO**

JOIN OUR READER PANEL

Want to put a question to an F1 star? Visit www.f1racing.co.uk and join the Reader Panel. We'll let you know which interviews are coming up

"Kimi is a real maverick, which not many people in sport are these days"



THE MOST FAMOUS TROPHIES YOU'VE NEVER SEEN

The Formula 1 drivers' and constructors' championship awards are created with a skilful and loving hand. But how are they made? And why are they so rarely paraded?

WORDS MATT WARWICK
PICTURES CHARLES BEST

"Don't put your bag there, whatever you do!" Crikey, *F1 Racing's* only been here five minutes and we're already in trouble with one of Bernie Ecclestone's long-standing business associates. To be fair, we were about to place our bag against an open bath of cyanide.

"The copper bath's in the other room, away from the cyanide – otherwise it creates mustard gas," says Richard Fox, high-end silversmith and trophy maker for F1's world drivers' and constructors' championship trophies.

The weird and wonderful world of Formula 1 has brought us to an Aladdin's cave of trophies and trinkets... in Croydon. Down the end of an inconspicuous cul-de-sac, off a road with a builders' merchants and a row of modest houses, lies the place that produces what feels like everything that shines in high society. There are cabinets full of bespoke jewellery, salt and pepper pots bound for Downing Street, chalices for Lambeth Palace – even Rolls Royce's silver Spirit Of Ecstasy figures are made here.

"Right, where are these cups then?" The main vase of the constructors' trophy is lying on a wooden workbench surrounded by silver filings and lathes – right next to where *F1 Racing* is standing. But you could be forgiven for not recognising them. These trophies are only seen by a small percentage of F1's fanbase – that's those who witness the FIA Gala, held in Monaco every December, where the F1 circus receives its rewards for the season's toil, along with the rest of world motorsport.

"It would be nice to see these trophies more often, but the winners actually receive the trophy at the ball, rather than at the circuit after the season ends," says Richard.

And that's a massive shame, because the drivers' and constructors' championship trophies are things of rare beauty.

The two cups differ in design. Both are made from sterling silver, which is an alloy that includes 925 'parts' of silver per thousand and 75 of copper, or another element. The constructors' trophy has a laurel of lotus leaves around the bottom and top. The leaves are 'electroformed' by putting a mould in a silver cyanide bath, which makes a cast after running an electric current through the solution. It's an old process from the 19th century, and something that only three silversmiths in the country still do today.

The main vase-like part of the trophies are both spun up into a cylindrical form on a lathe after starting life as completely flat circular piece of silver. The constructors' has straight sides because of the badges of each marque. "It's 10-sided to make a decade, and then every level will be a decade of winning cars," says Richard. "I think it gives a nice historical record visually if you have the constructors' badges on there."

The 'doughnut' chequered ring at the base of both trophies is an association with the chequered flag and, cleverly, is part of a locking device enabling each trophy to be turned so that the most recent winner can sit above the title on the base.

The drivers' trophy is actually taller – about two inches, with a slightly bigger base – and is designed to feature 100 years of winners. "At the bottom is a small circle with a blue sodalite, which resembles the universe," says Richard. "The laurel then whizzes out of that circle and spirals up the trophy, 11 times, leaving 10 gaps between each revolution. The laurel wire is gold-plated and every revolution has a decade of driver signatures. At the top the laurel whips around and creates a slightly larger circle into which goes an enamelled globe – it's my interpretation of what the drivers are aspiring to."

The trophies were designed by Richard, in consultation with Bernie himself ("We were in his office looking at the plans and he was on all fours" >



Lewis takes his place in the pantheon of champions – the trophy has room for 100 signatures

folding bits of paper over... he's massively hands-on with whatever he's dealing with"). Drivers used to go away with a medal for the drivers' title, which was about eight inches in diameter, but Bernie felt that wasn't representative of the drivers' championship. "He wanted something special that would reflect the skill of the driver and the team," says Fox.

All handmade, hand-polished and hand-engraved, it takes three weeks just to engrave one drivers' trophy because of all the signatures, since Giuseppe Farina in 1950. It takes about eight weeks to make a trophy. The cups being put together by Richard and his team when *F1 Racing* visits are bound for Maranello and a massive house in Switzerland – or wherever Kimi keeps his ever-expanding trophy cabinet. Ferrari have ordered three, plus another for Räikkönen. "We're doing one drivers' for Ferrari and one for Kimi. Then two constructors' for Ferrari. I guess they'll keep one, but I don't know where the other one's going. But to make these it's nearly eight months' work."

Ferrari ordered these replicas after 2007's hard graft. The winning driver and constructor always have to hand back the trophies that are awarded at the FIA Gala – if you want a permanent reminder, and most do ("I think Jacques Villeneuve is the only one who hasn't got a replica"), you have to get Richard to make it for you. "No one can keep the original. We know which is the original trophy because of the date letter stamp on the hallmark."

"When we get the original trophies back we refurbish them and inscribe the new winner's name. Then it's presented in Monaco at the beginning of December. We've been known to have to knock out the occasional dent and polish away a champagne stain or two."

Thanks to his success, Richard has made many trophies for major motorsport events, including the World Rally Championship, the F1 Bahrain GP, various NASCAR cups and the Bernie Ecclestone Trophy (awarded to the national motorsport federation of the country whose drivers amass the most F1 points). "I won the tender to make the Bernie Ecclestone Trophy in



The trophies start out as a circular plate, gradually honed into a cup on a lathe. The constructors' (above left) has 10 sides; each trophy has an adjustable base (below left) so the most recent winner faces the front

1984 – it was my first big project after studying. Bernie asked me how long the initial designs would take on a Monday. I said a few weeks; he said, 'I leave the country on Thursday.' I knew immediately they had to be ready by then. Bernie's pretty good at making his mind up."

Since then, Richard hasn't looked back. "My proudest moment was getting the commission for the Formula 1 drivers' and constructors' trophies in 1995 from Bernie, because it was the biggest and best."

Want to own one yet? Well, tough. Richard is coy about the costs involved, but we're talking five figures. And even if you do have the cash, you wouldn't get one anyway: "The only people who can have one are the guys that win it. I get requests for replicas all the time from the public, but I won't do them on principle. If you put your life on the line for a year, you need to get something special as a reward – I don't think anyone can just come along and buy one."

"If you put your life on the line for a year, you need a special reward"

This is undoubtedly silverware of real class, so it's a shame that they so rarely see the light of day. We all have great memories of what seems like 100 pairs of hands clamouring for a feel of the solid gold World Cup trophy Diego Maradona once held aloft, as his team carried him along on their shoulders. It was an unforgettable vision of the drama and passion of a sport's highest accolade – and one that could be repeated in F1, rather than just watching another slightly cringeworthy, fist-pumping 'driver dance'.

"The drivers get a trophy at the end of every race, but this is what they're really racing for – this is the jewel in the crown. It's a very, very special trophy." **FO**

THE MAKING OF



MASSA

"You learn a lot with the career I've had," sighs Felipe Massa. This is the story of how one man stuck two fingers up at his critics, and so nearly became the world champion no one knew anything about





WORDS HANS SEEBERG
PICTURES CHARLES COATES/LAT

The history books, of course, will read, "Lewis Hamilton: Formula 1 World Champion 2008." For all the dedication, hard work and sacrifices a Formula 1 driver endures to win that title, the cruelty of professional sport dictates that no one ever remembers who came second. Maybe no one really cares. But if 2008 was the year that Kimi Räikkönen was strangely off-form and Robert Kubica emerged as a real F1 star of the future, it was also the year that one man filled with a newly found inner confidence took on his legions of doubters and well and truly shut them up. Who really expected this season to be anything other than Kimi vs Lewis, Round Two? A diminutive, smiley Brazilian chap called Felipe Massa, that's who.

F1 Racing is at a primary school in São Paulo, where the only audible sound is of wildly shrieking kids. But then it's not every day that a Brazilian F1 star pops in for a visit. Felipe Massa is here in his role as UNICEF's Champion For Brazilian Children, and the effect it has on these kids is staggering. "It's great to be able to come here and do this," says Massa bashfully. "I grew up in São Paulo, and coming back here reminds me of when I was young and all I dreamed about was being a racing driver. I try to help these kids and show them that, yes, life is tough, but you can achieve anything if you really want it and push hard every day."

It feels like Massa followed his own advice this year. Sneered at by critics who dismissed him as a man who "wouldn't make a worthy world champion", he simply knuckled down, finally stepped out of Kimi Räikkönen's shadow and was Hamilton's only serious challenger all season – even with Kubica's fleeting visit to the top of the drivers' standings in June. Yet for all the criticism of modern F1 drivers being anodyne robots who open their mouths only to thank their teams, sponsors, and occasionally even God, Felipe Massa could not be further from this description if he tried. Speaking to him is like returning to the days when sports stars answered questions freely, before "media training" was ever written on a whiteboard in some grey-walled sportswear giant's headquarters.

If you were someone who had dismissed Felipe Massa before the start of the 2008 season, maybe you've already changed your opinion of him. If you haven't, read this... ➤

Felipe, you've had plenty of critics throughout your career. Even though you missed out on the drivers' championship this year, do you still feel you silenced them?

Yes. I mean, you always have good things and bad things happen to you during a season, but I think that I grew up a lot as a driver this year. Some people probably look at me a bit differently now. Nobody expected anything much when I started out at Ferrari – especially as I was alongside Michael Schumacher. But that first

How intense was it to be in a championship battle that went down to the final race of the season?

It was intense, but if you look back it's not really that different from other race categories. Obviously Formula 1 is the most important and there's a lot of attention from the media and sponsors, but it's no different. Whatever level you're racing at, whether it's karting or Formula Renault or Formula 3000, all you think about is driving the car and winning. The feeling is the same.



season with him I finished on a good level and showed that I could be a competitive driver. I've improved every year since then, but you always want more.

Added to that, you always have that pressure of being Brazilian and therefore automatically being called "the next Senna". Is that a burden?

Well, there's always a lot of talk about it, but I don't care. Senna

But you can't compare racing go-karts to racing Formula 1 cars for the world championship, surely?

It's exactly the same. When you race go-karts it's your dream to win. Whatever you're racing that's all you think about – you don't think about any other series. It's the same feeling now I'm in Formula 1.

You've always had a reputation as a bit of an erratic driver, but you've become much more consistent. 2008 showed you

"Maybe some people who were surprised this year won't be any more. I wasn't surprised. I think I've proved what I can do"

was unique and he still is. He was a God for us in Brazil. You can't compare yourself with someone like him, and I never would – no matter how many championships I won.

Giuseppe Farina was the last man to win the world championship at his home race back in 1950. You had the opportunity of doing it in Brazil. Do you think the pressure was just too much?

Not really. I always like to race in my home grand prix. Of course there's a lot of pressure, but I actually love it. It's like a football team who's playing at home – you give more. São Paulo is amazing – every year I can feel the excitement of the people towards me building, and that's great. It shows you're doing something right.

can go for the small points as well as the big points...

I think experience helps a lot. Last year was a good season in terms of performance – yes, we had some problems, but I think it showed me how to improve for 2008. In some races this year I was quite conservative, but it's something you develop. Sometimes you get a great start and go on to win from there, other times you have a bad race like I had in Monza, where I was completely in the middle. But you need to be sensible and think about the points.

You seemed more confident this year. Did you lack self-confidence before, because you felt people doubted you?

To be honest, when you're racing and you have your back to the wall, it's always easier to make mistakes. When you get a real push and 100

per cent confidence from everyone in the team, you really improve. You get more... *mature*. And that helps a lot in this kind of sport.

Do you feel like this was the year you finally stepped out of Kimi Räikkönen's shadow?

Well, that's sport. Sometimes you have more possibilities for things to happen than other people, sometimes it's the other way round. This season was great for me, I was really consistent and did a good

Can you understand his north-east accent?

I never had a problem understanding his accent, to be honest – it's very clean. Maybe if he was talking to his father or something I might struggle. The thing with Rob is that he doesn't speak 100 per cent English anymore – he's started speaking Italian, mostly slang and swear words! But it's a big pleasure working with him, and I think the fact our relationship is so good is something that's helped my performance a lot.



If anyone can give advice on growing up from being a cheeky pizza delivery boy to an accomplished professional, Massa can. Felipe goes back to school to promote UNICEF's Champion For Brazilian Children campaign

job. I wasn't surprised with my performance, to be honest, but maybe some people who were surprised won't be any more. I think I've proved what I can do.

You mentioned Michael Schumacher. How much of an influence has he had on your career? He's always believed in you, hasn't he?

Yeah, I think Michael Schumacher was a real teacher for me. When you're a young driver, you naturally look to some of the older guys. Michael became a big friend to me and really helped my evolution. You know, he doesn't come down to a test and tell me which springs to use or how to set up the car or anything – he never did do that and I never asked him to. I have my own style and I know what I want in terms of my set-up. What I really learned from him is how he is with the team – how he is as a leader, and also the way he works in the race. I think he was the most talented guy in terms of tactics. He also taught me how to be aggressive but consistent. The thing is that everyone in Formula 1 can drive quickly, but it's not enough just to be quick. The vital thing is to be complete in all the other areas, and that's what Michael helped me with.

You seem to have a great relationship with your race engineer, Rob Smedley. Has working with him helped you improve as well?

Well, first of all he's a fantastic engineer. He's very talented, but I just think we complement each other. He helps me with my driving – lap by lap. If you heard how he talks to me, whether it's in free practice or a race, you would understand. We have similar ideas on how to set up the car, and that's helped, too. But, you know, what makes it a great relationship is that Rob is a great guy. Professionally he's very English – he just tells it like it is. Away from work he's completely wild. He's quite Latin, actually – the way he behaves you would think he's Brazilian!

Kimi got the better of you last year, but this year it's been the complete opposite. Why is that?

Well, I think the thing that's changed has been me getting the best out of the tyres, but also the lack of traction control. I think I've improved a lot without traction control. I was the kind of guy who would use it more than ever and that meant I didn't have so much throttle control, but when I learned how to drive the car without it I improved a lot quite quickly.

You seem to perform on some tracks, like Bahrain and Turkey, where you're absolutely unbeatable. But then there are some others where you look like you might not win if you drove around them all day. Why is that?

(Laughs) I don't know! It's difficult to say, because Bahrain is completely different to Turkey. If you go to street circuits like Monaco, Valencia and Singapore, I was quick at those, too – even if I didn't win at them all. But it's difficult to explain, to be honest.

When you look back at the season, it shows that Lewis Hamilton made more individual mistakes than you, but Ferrari made more mistakes than McLaren. People always like to say, "We win and lose as a team," but that must've been very hard for you to take...

You know, it's true – we *do* win and lose as a team. So many times when I've made mistakes the team have just given me 100 per cent support, and it's the same from my side. I will never blame anyone for any mistake – we are a team, we win and lose together and that's the way it is.

Judging by the 2008 season, would you say that Lewis Hamilton is your toughest rival on the track?

Oh, for sure. Definitely. He's tough and we had a lot of big moments together this season... ➤



Despite some trademark errors early in the season, Massa earned his title of most improved driver

“Away from work Rob Smedley is completely wild. He’s quite Latin, actually. The way he behaves, you’d think that he was Brazilian”

Well, you said before Fuji there’s a mutual respect between you two. Is it the same after you had one of those “big moments together”, like you did at the Japanese GP?

Yes. I mean, in that race I never did anything on purpose – I was fighting for position and we touched. It happens all the time, but it doesn’t change anything. We’re there to fight for our positions.

Quite a few other drivers attacked Lewis after the Italian Grand Prix for his driving style, yet you stayed noticeably silent. Why?

Well, people were saying he’s too aggressive... Sometimes he’s paid the price for that, but that’s his style. I have my own style too, but

I’m not going to attack someone else for the way they drive. It’s not important to me. Lewis wins a lot of races because of his driving style, so you can’t say he’s wrong.

But you can be aggressive, too: that blistering start at the Hungarian GP, when you beat Lewis into the first corner... Is it difficult to control that aggression as a driver?

Of course, because sometimes you make mistakes when you’re too aggressive. I’ve made so many mistakes in my career because of that and I’ve paid the price, but sometimes you need to take a risk. And when you do, you can never go back on it. You need to make a decision, go for it... and maybe hope for a bit of luck. ➤



“I used to play with toy cars in my room for hours. I even built a replica of Interlagos”

Looking at your careers, you could say that Lewis has always had everything on his side from day one: he's been at a top team from the start, in a very good car. Your rise to the top has been more of a struggle. Do you think this makes you more of a fighter?

Hmmm, it's difficult to say. You learn a lot with the kind of career I've had so far. I've had lots of ups and downs, but I wouldn't swap any of the experiences I've had. I think you learn more from the mistakes you make. My career has always been a bit like this – even in go-karts. My father didn't have a lot of money, so I always used to race with what I had. At kart races I used to look around me and there were so many drivers with about 25 engines, five chassis and all this other stuff – I had three engines, two chassis and that was it. But it was a great learning experience. I think Nelsinho [Piquet] is a great driver – he's very quick and consistent, but he never had this kind of career. He's always had everything he wanted since he started, and when he arrived at Renault, where there's another driver who's more important than him, it's not easy – especially mentally. That's why I think this season he'll grow more than in any other season he's had in the past. It'll be good for him.

Are you born a great Formula 1 driver, or is it possible to learn how to become one?

(Pauses) I think that first of all, it's got to be in your blood. You have to be given the talent and mentality or you'll never achieve what you want. But then you also need the direction from others. For me, that came from my father. He drove touring cars for fun, and I was always crazy for that – it was the only thing I had in my mind when I was a little boy. I used to go to the tracks with him and give him lots of



The Felipe Massa Reading Room is opened, before the kids reveal what they scrawled their homework on

advice – I'd be at the side shouting, “You need to go full throttle!” From when I was three until I was about 11, I used to play with small toy cars in my room for about four hours a day. I had around 500 of them. I even used to build tracks – I built a little replica of Interlagos in my room. I'd talk to my father lots about his races, but it was all touring cars for me at that point. Formula 1 was nothing to me then because it was too far away.

You've got some well-earned time off from Formula 1 now. What do you do when you're not driving?

I see my friends, play sports, go out to dinner – that kind of thing. During the summer I like to go out on boats. I don't have my own or anything, I just rent one. But I do have some nice toys as well – I have two Ferraris. I've got a 599 and an F430 Scuderia. Did I get them free with my job? No, I paid for them! But they gave me a good deal.

It's perhaps ironic, reflecting on this half hour of engagingly open conversation, that Felipe Massa was just one point away from being the world champion nobody really knew very much about. You get the feeling that he's been quite content to stay slightly in the background during the 2008 season, letting the Formula 1 talk centre instead around what exactly has been going on in Kimi Räikkönen's head, which team Fernando Alonso might end up at for next year, and, of course, the ongoing Lewis Hamilton circus. As a result of his success, though, Felipe Massa won't have the same luxury next year. But for now it's worth acknowledging another great story in the Formula 1 season that had just about everything – that of a genuinely nice guy confounding his critics. You sense that for Felipe Massa, that's been a triumph in itself. **FO**



Forget Max and Bernie – the men sitting around this table might just be the most important people in F1. They're certainly the most controversial.

Prepare to discover the secretive world of the F1 stewards...



WORDS BRADLEY LORD
PICTURES DARREN HEATH

Who'd be a referee, eh? On a football field, you spend 90 minutes being abused by fans and players; then every pundit takes a pop, questioning your competence with super-slow-motion reverse-angle replays. In F1, the 'referees' have dozens of cameras and access to every radio exchange... but still nobody's happy. If they show leniency, they're immediately blasted for inconsistency; when they dish out a penalty, others say they don't understand what goes on in the cockpit. But who *are* these men with the power to decide the world championship? ➤

It's 10:55 on Saturday morning in Fuji. The stewards' room is silent. "Radio check," says permanent steward Alan Donnelly into the intercom connected to Race Control. "OK," squawks the machine in response. Six men sit around the table: Donnelly, three stewards, a Japanese-speaking interpreter and a techie. They have a large, split-screen TV to watch, filled with camera and timing feeds – and a smaller, second screen which is used for the video playback system, although the feeds can be swapped between screens when required.

"After Hamilton's Spa penalty, almost every driver said he'd gained an advantage"

In front of them are copies of the circuit safety manual, the international code and the F1 sporting regulations. Each man has a 'reference guide' of common infractions, and a roster of all the offences during the season so far. Plus there's a telephone with a red label. "That's the Ferrari phone," deadpans Donnelly. He's joking. Probably.

The panel of F1 stewards is composed of a permanent steward – who is the non-voting chairman at every race – and three race stewards, one of whom represents the country organising the event. "A panel of stewards is formulated at the beginning of each year, from a range of nationalities," explains Fuji steward Graham Stoker. Stoker is Chairman of the MSA Motor Sports Council, a top London barrister – and began stewarding at the 1985 Formula Ford Festival. "We're all required to hold an FIA 'stewarding' super-licence. You have to work your way through the national system and officiate at other FIA events such as World Touring Cars before being considered."

Stewards Kazunari Yamanashi and Alan Donnelly survey the action during the damp third free practice session in Fuji



"One of the criticisms people have made about the stewards is that they're amateurs and supposedly inexperienced," continues Donnelly. "The fact is that all stewards have enormous experience and many of them are officiating every weekend – not just in F1." What happens, then, when the sport visits a new venue with no motorsport tradition; how can the national federation assign a qualified representative? "In Singapore, the national steward is Harold Netto," says Donnelly. "He came to several races this season to shadow the stewards, in order to gain that experience. He was very good in Singapore."

During the various controversies over penalties dished out during 2008, the most common criticisms have been that the stewards are not all permanent – and that they have no F1 driving experience. "There are two points to make," responds Graham Stoker. "If we were professional, it goes against the idea of making independent decisions – the whole point is that you're not paid. Also, there's a tradition in motorsport, from the marshals up, of depending on volunteers. The idea of full-time paid stewards is against the grain of motorsport."

But what of the absence of actual driving experience around the table? "The interesting thing after Hamilton's penalty in Spa was that almost every other driver said he'd gained an advantage," argues Donnelly. "Why would an old driver have taken a different decision? When people talk about getting old drivers to advise the stewards, they're actually talking about old drivers who don't



like the FIA." More pertinent, perhaps, is the fact that a former competitor, Jeff Allam, was used as a driving standards advisor in British Touring Cars in the late 1990s – but that the system was eventually replaced by improved in-car technology and cameras. "We'd probably all acknowledge that being an expert on motor racing rules and regulations is not the same thing as driving a car," adds Stoker. "It's actually very difficult to find someone that everybody's happy with."

Speaking a week after the race in Fuji, Fernando Alonso was one of many to call for a driver with recent experience to advise the stewards. But can you imagine his reaction if the FIA announced Michael Schumacher had got the job? It would be difficult for any ex-driver to escape the suggestion that their past with one team or another compromised their impartiality. Having said that, the idea of Schumi handing down official verdicts on driving standards is one worth savouring...

Mention 'stewarding' in the F1 paddock and the word that always crops up is consistency. Or rather, the lack of it. Take the pitlane penalties handed out to Felipe Massa and Ferrari at the European and Singapore Grands Prix; at the former, an unsafe release incurred a £8,000 fine – at the latter, a drive-through penalty. "I was stewarding at the European GP," explains Stoker. "Ferrari had a free area in front of their pitbox at that race. In the other incident, Massa forced himself in front of another car. We're very worried about safety in the pitlane – and don't forget that we still penalised Ferrari after the race in Valencia."

Donnelly was appointed permanent steward for 2008 with a brief to improve the speed and consistency of decision-making. One simple addition has been the 'rap sheet': a log of decisions, organised race-by-race and



Top left: the new-for-2008 video playback system gives access to every camera angle, plus GPS car and marshalling data

driver-by-driver, so stewards can see what their colleagues have done at previous races. The other is the video playback system which gives the stewards instant access to every camera around the circuit, as well as GPS positioning data for each car. At Fuji, there were 12 fixed cameras and two more in the pitlane to provide additional footage. "Ten years ago, we were relying on written reports from observers out on the circuit," says Stoker. "Now we have GPS information from every car and we can get full access to the data if necessary." ➤

STEWARDS PENALTIES (BY RACE)

2008



08 - France	Practice 2	14	S Bourdais	Pit Lane Speeding - 71.4 km/h	€ 2,400
08 - France	Practice 2	8	K Nakajima	Pit Lane Speeding - 61.1 km/h	€ 400
08 - France	Practice 2	1	K Raikkonen	Late for Drivers Briefing	€ 5,000
08 - France	Practice 3	12	T Glock	Pit Lane Speeding - 61.2 km/h	€ 400
08 - France	Qualifying	23	H Kovalainen	Pit Lane Speeding - 73.6 km/h	€ 2,800
08 - France	Race	23	H Kovalainen	Impeding another driver during Qualifying	5 place grid drop
09 - Britain	Practice 1	22	L Hamilton	Drive Through	€ 2,600
09 - Britain	Practice 1	1	K Raikkonen	Cutting a chicane and gaining an advantage	€ 1,800
09 - Britain	Practice 2	12	T Glock	Pit Lane Speeding - 72.1 km/h	€ 400
09 - Britain	Practice 2	9	D Coulthard	Pit Lane Speeding - 69.0 km/h	€ 800
10 - Germany	Qualifying	16	J Button	Pit Lane Speeding - 61.7 km/h	€ 5,000
10 - Germany	Race	21	McLaren	Pit Lane Speeding - 63.5 km/h	25 seconds added to elapsed race time
11 - Hungary	Practice 2	8	G Fisichella	Refuelling during Qualifying using non-approved equipment	€ 5,000
11 - Hungary	Qualifying	14	K Nakajima	Impeding another driver during Qualifying	€ 2,200
12 - Europe	Thursday	22	L Hamilton	Unlapping himself when not allowed to	€ 10,000
12 - Europe	Practice 2	9	D Coulthard	Late for scheduled press conference	€ 2,400
12 - Europe	Race	5	F Alonso	Pit Lane Speeding - 70.6 km/h	€ 2,500
13 - Belgium	Practice 1	1	K Raikkonen	Crossed the line at pit entry	€ 10,000
13 - Belgium	Practice 1	1	K Raikkonen	Unsafe release from pit stop	3 place grid drop
13 - Belgium	Race	23	H Kovalainen	Pit Lane Speeding - 71.9 km/h	€ 10,000
13 - Belgium	Race	12	T Glock	Pit Lane Speeding - 64.2 km/h	€ 10,000
13 - Belgium	Race	22	L Hamilton	Causing a collision	€ 10,000
14 - Italy				Overtaking under yellow flags	Reprimand and 10,000 euro fine
15 - Singapore	Practice 1	11	J Trulli	Cutting chicane and gaining an advantage	€ 2,400
15 - Singapore	Qualifying	3	N Heidfeld	Driving in opposite direction & crossing pit entry line	€ 2,500
15 - Singapore	Qualifying	17	R Barrichello	Impeding another car during qualifying	Drive Through
15 - Singapore	Race	2	F Massa	Crossing the line at pit entry	25 seconds added to elapsed race time
15 - Singapore	Race	7	N Rosberg	Unsafe release from pit stop	25 seconds added to elapsed race time
15 - Singapore	Race	4	R Kubica	Refuelling when the SC deployed and pit entry closed	No penalties applied
				Refuelling when the SC deployed and pit entry closed	€ 10,000
					3 place grid drop
					€ 10,000
					Drive Through
					10 second stop/go
					10 second stop/go

To improve decision making a 'rap sheet' was introduced this year, collating stewards' decisions from previous races

The stewards are called into action when an incident is reported to them by the race director (sometimes after being alerted by a team), or when they themselves refer something to the race director to determine if it should be investigated. And the onus is on them to act quickly. "There's no more sitting until midnight," adds Donnelly. "The stewards look at the evidence and at some point I say, 'Can we take a decision?' Someone will propose something and then either they'll agree, or propose something different. We haven't had to vote all season."

If the procedure's been speeded up so much, why did it take 10 laps to serve Nico Rosberg and Robert Kubica with drive-through penalties for refuelling when the pitlane was closed in Singapore – even though they were open-and-shut cases?

"When it comes to refuelling under Safety Car conditions, after the incident has been reported to us by race director Charlie

Whiting, we need to obtain confirmation from the timekeepers and pitlane observers that an infraction actually occurred," explains Alan Donnelly. "A team may put the fuel hose on the car but deliver no fuel, in which case no rules have been broken. While we were waiting for that confirmation in Singapore, the incident involving Massa's pitstop occurred. Thanks to video playback we were able to begin analysing it immediately, but it meant the other penalties had to wait."

Nevertheless, F1's regulations are famously opaque and leave room for interpretation – or what sceptics might term manipulation...

Alan Donnelly: "When team principals want the rules to be clearer, Max always says, 'Fine, you write them and send them to us.' So far, nobody's been able to do it."

Graham Stoker: "It's never black and white. It involves judgement."

AD: "If something is contentious, we ask the race director for precedents. In Hamilton's incident at Spa, there was a precedent from Suzuka '05: Alonso passed Klien, re-passed him too quickly and had to cede the advantage properly several laps later."

GS: "In reality, someone's got to make a decision. There are always shades of grey."

AD: "If drivers or team managers want to look at an incident and understand our thinking behind it, then we're happy to share

that with them. Someone raised an issue about the start of the race in Singapore, so the managers involved looked at the incident with us again, from two angles, and they said it was totally correct no action was taken."

That issue of accountability is important when it comes to giving the public confidence they're watching a fair process; post-season, the FIA confirmed that, among other measures, video footage used to make

"When teams say they want the rules clearer, Max says, 'OK, you write them'"

decisions will be posted on their website from 2009. Stewarding this season was strict; in football, the best analogy would be to a niggly referee who whistles for every foul rather than letting the game flow. But it's a big leap from 'strict' to 'unfair' or 'biased'...

At 12:00 on the dot, Alan Donnelly returns to Fuji's stewards' room. "I've checked with Charlie, and he's got nothing for us. That's it, gentlemen. Thank you." The room's been quiet throughout the session. No calls from Race Control – nothing to investigate. And no recriminations. Until race day... **F1**

Every circuit has to submit a comprehensive safety dossier before a grand prix. The stewards are in charge of that, too



THE HUMBLE CHAMPION WITH THE COOLEST NAME IN F1

ANDRETTI

Mario Andretti's amazing career took him from wartime refugee to F1 world champion. It's no wonder he's remembered as one of the sport's greats 30 years after winning the drivers' title

WORDS
ALAN HENRY
PICTURES
LAT ARCHIVE

Mario Andretti still wore the flash burns on both cheeks. He'd sustained them two months earlier in his Indianapolis testing accident, and they spread outwards across the thin sliver of skin which would not have been protected in the small gap between the lower edge of his goggles and the top of the Nomex balaclava just beneath. His Lotus 64 Indycar had suffered a wheel-hub failure, hit the wall and exploded in a ball of flame.

We were in the paddock at the old Nürburgring, just before practice for the 1969 German Grand Prix. Andretti was being strapped into the cockpit of his Gold Leaf-liveried Lotus 63, Colin Chapman's supposed four-wheel-drive F1 masterpiece. I was just one in a small cluster of fans watching in awe as that year's Indy 500 winner prepared himself for what would be only the third of his 128 career grand prix starts.

Up to that point his F1 experience had been confined to driving a Lotus 49B at Watkins Glen, where he started from pole the previous year, and then again at Kyalami for the '69 South African GP. He didn't distinguish himself at the Nürburgring, crashing heavily

in the difficult-to-drive type 63. In that paddock throng I didn't get an autograph. But I was close enough to hear the languid drawl which was so much part of his persona. Close enough to see the priceless Indy 500 winner's ring on a finger of his left hand.

Little did I know then I would be meeting America's most celebrated star driver on a regular basis over the decade that followed as my life unfolded as a Formula 1 journalist. There was no question about it: Mario shimmered with star quality and charisma. Italian-born in 1940, Mario and his family spent five years in a displaced persons' camp in the immediate chaotic aftermath of the Second World War. This bruising experience gave him a well-adjusted perspective on life. Andretti may have become a multi-millionaire by dint of his own relentless efforts, but he never forgot his modest roots and never lorded it over the less fortunate.

Thirty years ago, in 1978, Mario became the last of five drivers who would win a world championship at the wheel of a Lotus, following Jim Clark, Graham Hill, Jochen Rindt and Emerson Fittipaldi. The sight of the >

Mario Andretti: exuded
star quality and charisma



is international
is the Grand Prix.

Travelers Checks

Marlboro

Great taste...Less filling



Mario on his way to second place at Long Beach for the US GP West in the stunning Lotus 78 – the car in which Lotus pioneered ground effect



Lotus boss Colin Chapman keeps things running smoothly in the Long Beach pits in 1977. The pair would argue over wages for the '78 season

"Colin Chapman had threatened to sue him, but Andretti called his bluff"

silver-helmeted American driver strapped snugly in the cockpit of the striking black and gold John Player Special-liveried ground-effect Lotus 79 was the defining image of the '78 world championship season. A season in which the immaculate 38-year-old was at the absolute zenith of his F1 career.

The path to the world championship was long and convoluted. In 1955, when the Andretti family had been living near Lucca, 15-year-old Mario cycled several miles to watch the Mille Miglia field go through, spectating in awe as the winning Mercedes 300SLR crewed by Stirling Moss and Denis Jenkinson flashed by.

The following year the Andretti family moved to the USA. For some reason Mario was initially rather depressed – he believed that Italy was the epicentre of motorsport and somehow feared there would be little prospect of his trying to pursue it once his folks had crossed the Atlantic. How mistaken he was. By the time he retired from Indycar racing in 1994, at the age of 54, Mario had achieved a level of success across the broadest spectrum of the sport, such as to be regarded as possibly the most versatile racing driver of all time. F1, Indianapolis, sportscars or sprint cars – Mario had sampled them all, and won in every category.

He loved racing with a passion. He thought about the cars he drove and always had something considered and well-measured to say about them. Take his observations about Ferrari's seminal 312PB sports racer – effectively a two-seater F1 car – which he drove regularly during the '72 endurance racing season. "Those were racing cars you could really grow an affection for," recalled Mario nostalgically. "It's amazing how much you grow into part of a car when you're in it hour after hour. You hand it over to your co-driver and then, when you get it back again, it still feels the same. I've driven Fords and Alfas, but man, to drive a Ferrari sports car... well, it's on a level entirely of its own."

Recalling his second place with Jacky Ickx in the 1972 Kyalami nine-hour race, Andretti said that the two of them agreed they would simply drive flat-out for the balance of the race after losing a great chunk of time early on with battery and fuel-pump problems. "We settled down to what amounted to an eight-hour grand prix," he said. "We pulled back five laps on everything else on that race track. By the finish the car was still running well, but it looked as though it had just done the Battle Of Normandy!"

After Mario's excellent maiden F1 victory in the 1971 South African GP at the wheel of the elegant Ferrari 312B1, Enzo Ferrari tried to tempt him to come and live in Italy with the offer of a 'full-time' contract. But Mario wouldn't accept someone trying to tell him where his home would be.

"I didn't want anybody to tell me where I was going to live," said Andretti crisply. "I've been in this game a long time and if people can't accept the fact that I'll be there when I'm needed, that's their bad luck. It's nobody's business but mine whether I live in Switzerland, South America or the North Pole. Ferrari likes to have a driver right there all the time, and there was no way I was going to be subjected to all that."



Andretti's team-mate Ronnie Peterson (left) was tragically killed on the same day Andretti claimed the 1978 drivers' title in the Lotus 79 (above)

It was to Lotus that Mario would give the best years of his F1 life. He and Lotus founder Colin Chapman were thrown together through force of circumstance in 1976 – after failing to complete a long-term deal with Ferrari, Mario dallied with the half-hearted F1 operation fielded by former Indy 500 winner Parnelli Jones and Vel Miletich, but that collapsed amidst recrimination at the start of 1976. They decided to quit F1, but didn't inform Mario.

"I found out in the cockpit at the start of the race at Long Beach," said Mario. "The commentator said, 'Mario, how does it feel to be in your last F1 race?' I said, 'Do you think I'm going to kill myself or something?' He said 'Vel Miletich just announced this is his last race.' Vel hadn't said anything to me."

Andretti moved to the Lotus camp just as Chapman and his team were starting to unlock the complexity of ground-effect aerodynamics. Mario's victory in the '76 Japanese GP at Fuji was a crucial first step along the way. In 1977, armed with the Lotus 78 'wing car' Mario began winning regularly, although a spate of engine failures prevented him from challenging for the championship. Yet the signs were unmistakable; Lotus knew

something most of their rivals didn't. But for 1978, having lost Niki Lauda Brabham, Ferrari came back to Mario with a renewed offer. It left him facing a major dilemma.

Chapman had offered Andretti \$350,000 for the 1978 season, but Ferrari intervened. Asked what he wanted, Mario said \$700,000. Chapman threatened to sue him, but Andretti called his bluff. "You don't want an unhappy driver on your team," he told Chapman. "Every time your car breaks and a Ferrari finishes ahead of me and I'm getting paid half as much – well, it's not going to be pleasant." Chapman matched Ferrari's offer, and it turned out to be money well spent. In 1978, armed with the brilliant, full ground-effect Lotus 79, Mario surged to the title.



For that glorious title-winning campaign Mario would be partnered by popular Swede Ronnie Peterson. Though Mario initially had his reservations, the two men became firm friends – yet there would be a tragic sting in the tail of this wonderfully successful season. Peterson died from injuries sustained in a start-line collision during the Italian Grand Prix at Monza. Mario was bereft. That afternoon he'd clinched his world title in the same race, and the following morning he and his wife Dee Ann were driving to the hospital to see Ronnie when a guy in the tollbooth on the autostrada told him the terrible news that Ronnie had died overnight.

"I said, 'No!' And the guy said, 'Yes, I just heard it on the radio.' I was devastated. It was like the guy had hit me over the head with a sledgehammer. I couldn't believe it."

Mario would always look back on Ronnie as a huge talent, but he proudly believed that he had the measure of him throughout much of 1978. "Ronnie was a master of car control and a force to be reckoned with," he said. "I didn't win 18 poles in Formula 1 and the most poles in Champ Car racing by being a slouch. I was quick too."

Truly, Mario Andretti was a class act. And a hard one for anybody to follow. **FO**

WHO DOES WHAT

When the cars pull away from the grid for their formation lap, a stampede of mechanics and technicians scurry off carrying all sorts of equipment. Ever wondered what they all do?

WORDS STUART CODLING PICTURE LORENZO BELLANCA/LAT



NO 1 MECHANIC

LEFT REAR WHEEL

STARTER

ENGINE DATA

DATA ANALYSIS

SEATBELTS

ENGINE DATA

REAR JACK

WHEEL GUN

F1 cars don't have starter motors; they're turned over by attaching a compressed air line to the engine. The starter has to remain on hand in case the engine stalls unexpectedly (which happens less often these days now the cars have sophisticated electronics)

The number one mechanic reports to the chief mechanic, but is responsible for the running of the car – from signalling it out of the garage to making sure it forms up in the right place on the grid, then giving the order to restart the engine for the race

When the car reaches the grid it's jacked up so the wheels can be removed and wrapped in the tyre blankets. The jack may also be needed later if the car sticks in gear and stalls at the start – a rare occurrence, but it happened to Sébastien Bourdais at Monza this year

All F1 cars have six-point seat harnesses that converge on a central buckle. The belts need to be so tight the occupants cannot do them up themselves, so a mechanic is on hand to make sure the driver (in this case Jenson Button) is strapped in securely

ON THE F1 GRID?



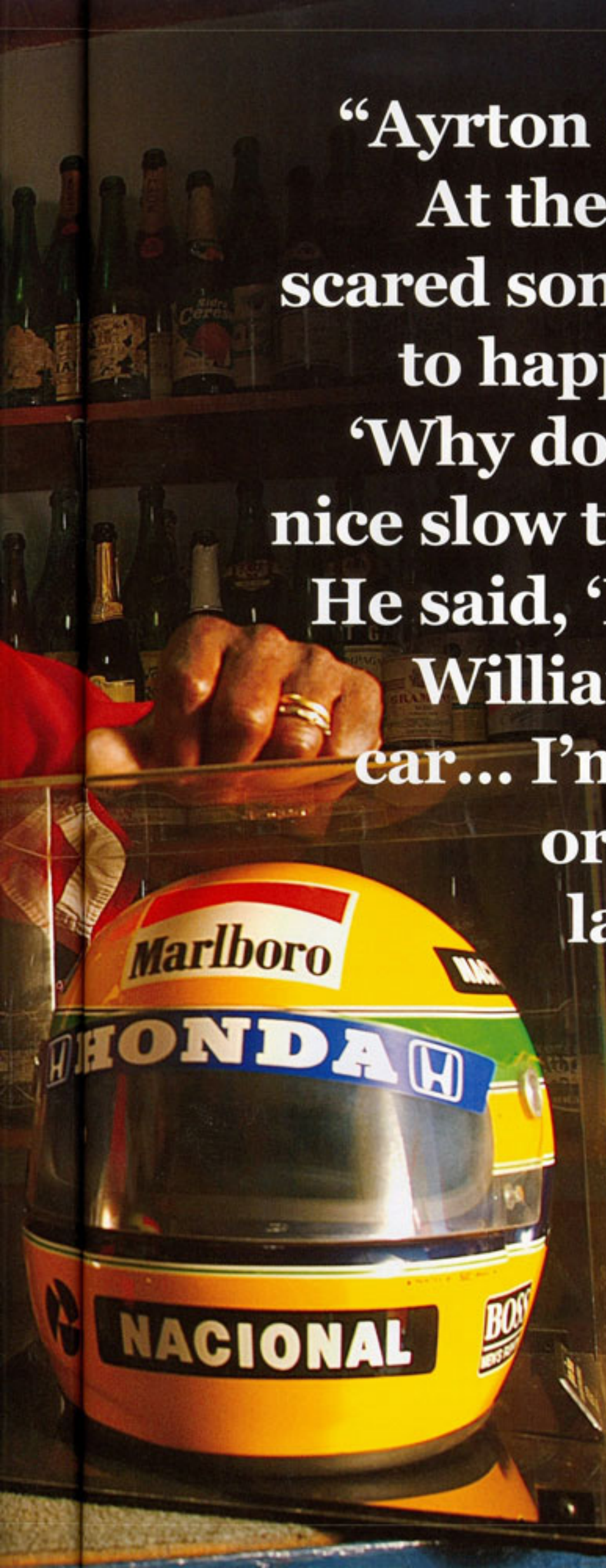
Engine technicians check the ignition system and monitor the temperature and pressures; they also make sure settings are right for the race start. Once the race is in progress they'll stay in the garage and monitor the telemetry, keeping an eye on the engine's health

Each corner of the car has a dedicated mechanic who removes the wheel when the car reaches the grid and fits the tyre blanket (checking that the temperature settings are right), then removes the tyre blanket and refits the wheel just before the race is due to start

These two grid trolley operators prepare the wheel guns and air lines, and bring the trolleys to the grid. Each trolley holds two tyre warmers, two sets of tyres, radiator fans, wheel guns, air lines, regulator and air bottles, plus umbrellas and driver drinks

Tyre pressures must be correct – he'll adjust them or bring out a different set in the event of a late strategic call. Left and right tyres aren't interchangeable (as Kovalainen found to his cost in Shanghai), so making sure that the correct wheels are in place is a vital part of the job





**“Ayrton always took risks.
At the end of 1993 I was
scared something was going
to happen to him. I said,
‘Why don’t you drive for a
nice slow team like Ferrari?’
He said, ‘I *have* to be in the
Williams, it’s the fastest
car... I’m here to win, lose
or die.’ Five months
later he was dead.”**

**In a São Paulo favela, *F1 Racing* meets Mauro
– Ayrton Senna’s first kart mechanic. This is his
intimate portrait of F1’s greatest ever driver**

WORDS HANS SEEBERG PICTURES CHARLES COATES/LAT

“To Mauro, you fucking asshole, from Ayrton Senna.” The silver writing on the dirty, dark blue jacket has just been translated to great mirth. Mauro, Ayrton Senna’s first ever go-kart mechanic, laughs the hardest, and his infectious guffaws reverberate around his humble home, located in one of São Paulo’s tough favelas. It’s a joke that shows the closeness 50-year-old Mauro had to the Brazilian legend he met as an aspiring, 16-year-old racing driver, as well as the devilish sense of humour Senna had behind his frequently focused face. It’s just the first in a collection of staggering insights into Senna’s life that *F1 Racing* is about to hear over the next few hours. Never heard before until now, they are stories that will stun this journalist into genuine, lump-in-throat silence, and make the tragic death of the world’s greatest ever Formula 1 driver feel as heartbreaking as it ever did. ➤

São Paulo, the Tuesday before the Brazilian Grand Prix. Formula 1's circus is preparing to descend on Interlagos, with its multi-million pound sponsorship money and legions of trucks carrying the most expensive motor racing equipment on the planet. Less than a mile down the road, children in stained clothes run bare-footed in conditions no one in the civilised world should tolerate. Rubbish teems onto deeply pot-holed streets. Aimless graffiti adorns ramshackle buildings of corrugated iron and breeze blocks. Electricity cables are just a mass of hopelessly tangled wires tied to posts. In practical terms, it's the biggest health and safety disaster you've ever seen. In human terms, it's the depressing backdrop many children here have as their playground.

The irony of F1's proximity to this primitive setting is not lost on CEDECA, an organisation that fights for the human rights of kids here. They want people to know that there's not just a race going on at Interlagos, as Lewis Hamilton and local hero Felipe Massa get ready to slug it out for what will be an epic climax to the season; there's a race to improve the lives of the children in these

watching, along with millions of others around the world, as his great friend Ayrton Senna tragically died at Imola. He sits down and slowly begins talking. This is the uninterrupted account of his memories of Formula 1's greatest ever driver...

"I first met Ayrton when he was 16. He'd started to come to the kart circuit where I worked, and soon I became his mechanic. It really became like a family relationship as well, though. Even when Ayrton eventually drove in Formula 1 he'd phone me and ask me to bring some karts to the track he had at his farm near São Paulo, so he and his friends could mess around with them.

"When he first turned up at the kart track, I have to say that none of us knew he'd go on to be a Formula 1 world champion. We knew he had *something*, but I must confess we didn't know what it was in those early days. But he was just *different* – the way he drove, the way he was with people... everything. I remember he wanted to win so badly that he just used to stay out on the track until he ran out of petrol. We'd wave him to come in but

"Ayrton wanted to win so badly he just used to stay out on the track until he ran out of petrol"

favelas, and to stop them descending into the predictable cycle of drugs and violence that shadows life here.

Curiously, it seems CEDECA have also become honorary members of this magazine. For the past few months, they've been helping to set up a meeting with the fabled Attamir Mauro de Oliveira Dias – or Mauro for short. As Ayrton Senna's first mechanic in karting, Mauro forged a friendship with Ayrton that would last nearly 20 years. Tracking him down has been one problem. The other is that it's too dangerous for *F1 Racing* to simply breeze into this part of São Paulo and knock on his front door without being escorted in by CEDECA workers.

After a jolting, bumpy negotiation of the favelas' intricate streets, Mauro's front door duly presents itself. Two things give it away. One is the karts in the porch. The other is the van outside with 'Mauro' painted on it in massive letters. A huge grin and pat on *F1 Racing*'s shoulder confirm him as instantly likeable. There he stands, surrounded by pictures of Senna, Rubens Barrichello and Luciano Burti, all of whom he worked with as youngsters.

The interpreter-assisted chit-chat continues as Mauro affably forges on with the guided tour. In one room, tens and tens of empty champagne bottles adorn the walls, each with the kart race winner and date on them. He picks one up. "Luciano Burti, 1st May, 1994," it reads. Not that Mauro was watching Burti win that day. He was

he wouldn't – we had to go and get his kart off the track when it eventually stopped. That's what marked Ayrton out from the drivers F1 has today. He just wouldn't stop.

"It's funny – nowadays Formula 1 drivers have all these expensive clothes and shoes, but Ayrton wasn't interested in any of that. He'd turn up to the track in jeans and a T-shirt and just drive. He had the money to be flash, but he didn't care about that stuff. All he wanted to do was drive fast.

"We had a great time with Ayrton in that karting team – we won two Pan-American championships and a Brazilian championship together. Soon after that he moved up the ladder. I remember the first time I saw him in Formula 3 – he had a big accident in his first race. His dad told him he should stop racing, but Ayrton refused. I'd never met anyone so *determined* before.

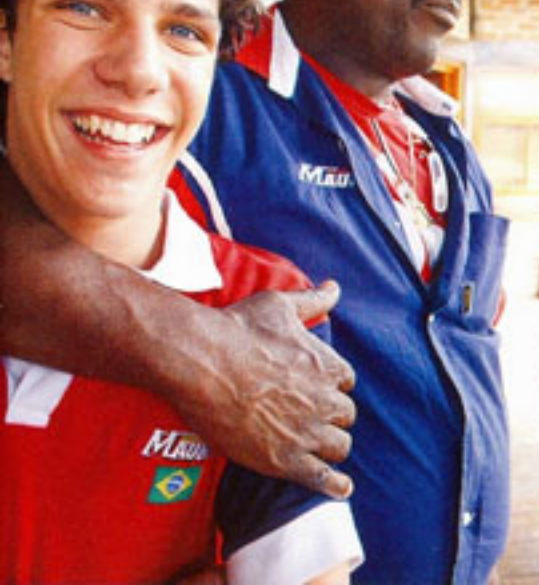
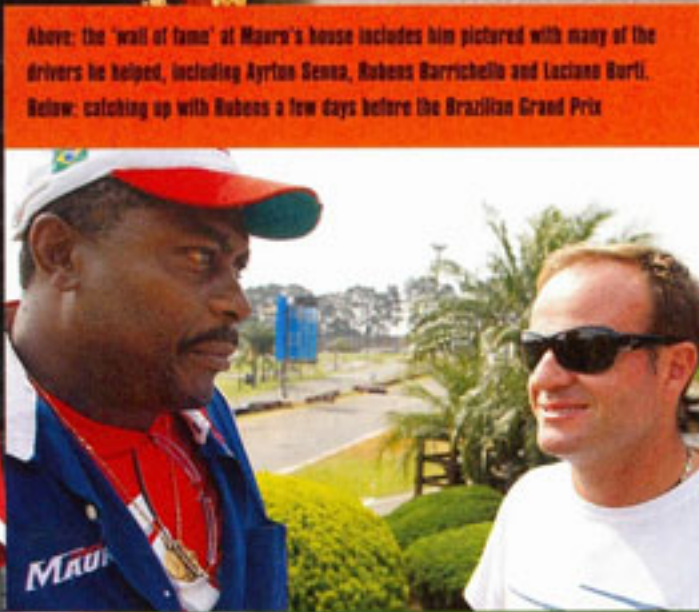
"When he won his first championship in Formula 1, I was so happy. The strange thing was that for us in Brazil, Ayrton was already an idol before he'd won the title. We had a three-time world champion in Nelson Piquet, but for some reason it wasn't the same. The one everyone cared about was Ayrton.

"He always took a lot of risks on the track – it's just how he was. I remember at the end of 1993 I was with him at his farm. I was getting worried about him – he'd been driving so fast and I was scared something was going to happen. I said to him, 'Ayrton, why don't you go and drive for a nice slow team like Ferrari?' He said, 'No, I have to be



Top, above and below: not far from Interlagos, São Paulo's ramshackle favelas show the other side of life in a city that loves Formula 1





in the Williams. It's the fastest car – don't piss me off, Mauro." He stopped for a minute. Then he looked at me and said, "I'm here to win, lose or die." That's the day he signed my blue jacket. [Pauses] Five months later he was dead.

"I missed Ayrton a lot after he died. It was tough. He gave me a pair of his driving gloves once. A while ago, I went up to this kind of religious sanctuary I know, about 200 miles from São Paulo. I took the gloves with me and left them there. It just felt like the right thing to do. [Pauses] I still have lots of great memories of Ayrton. Lots of other drivers will try to be like him, but no one ever will. I think he was just born great."

After Mauro's words are translated, there's silence. Pin-drop silence. It's hard to describe what's just been heard. A sort of cathartic stream of consciousness. A man who misses a great friend. An astonishing interview that didn't require any questions. Mauro stands up and leaves the room for a few minutes. You can hardly blame him.

Within an hour, the venue changes from the favelas to a kart track on the edge of São Paulo. This is where Mauro spends his days, nurturing the next batch of Brazilian superstars – and one in particular. "This is Bruno Bonifacio," he says proudly of the smiley 14-year-old next to him. "We have plans for him. In 2010 he'll move to Europe and do Formula BMW. I think he'll be ready for Formula 1 in 2012, when he's 18. Bruno is very composed for his age. Today drivers have all these electronics, but a great driver has to be able to *feel* the car. They have to be sensitive to what it's doing. That's what we help them with, and it takes time to learn."

Mauro knows what he's talking about. Unexpectedly, Jenson Button and Rubens Barrichello turn up at the track for a low-key Honda karting day, and Rubens greets Mauro like a long-lost brother. "I first met Rubens when he was eight," laughs Mauro. "All we're teaching Bruno is the same stuff we taught Rubens." Helping young drivers on their way is clearly special for Mauro, and not just as a motorsport fanatic. Living where he does, getting kids interested in something to keep them away from the murkier career choices the favelas have to offer is just as important as seeing them achieve great things in F1.

Soon Mauro is off, to intently perch by a fence at the edge of the track watching Bruno put in more laps; the same spot he watched Rubens Barrichello aged eight; the same spot he watched a 16-year-old Ayrton Senna. Mauro represents the side of F1 you don't see: a world away from Paddock Club hospitality and press conferences, yet all the while searching for the next star who'll one day sit in those very press conferences. When Bruno puts in his fastest lap of the day, there stands Mauro cheering wildly; as wildly as he no doubt cheered all the others, a link to F1's glorious past and bright future. **FO**

Above: the 'wall of fame' at Mauro's house includes him pictured with many of the drivers he helped, including Ayrton Senna, Rubens Barrichello and Luciano Burti. Below: catching up with Rubens a few days before the Brazilian Grand Prix

Below and right: Mauro's new protégé Bruno Bonifacio, tipped to be in Formula 1 by 2012

HOW DO YOU START AN F1 RACE?

Grands prix used to be kicked off by a man waving a flag (who then got out of the way *very* quickly). Modern F1 has a high-tech alternative...

WORDS JAMES ROBERTS
PICTURES DARREN HEATH

The tension. The excitement. There's nothing more thrilling in F1 than the start of the race, when the five red lights go out and 20 cars blast into motion.

The man who has been responsible for starting races for the last decade is Charlie Whiting. When he decides the race can commence, his index finger presses a button marked – oh yes – 'start'. In such a complex sport, it's probably the most simple thing of all.

Up on his gantry overlooking the grid, he uses a box of tricks that controls the start and pitlane lights.

As the drivers come to rest on the grid, Whiting will be looking for any driver who has stalled, but if there is no need to abort, the five red lights are illuminated, one-by-one. This system was introduced back in 1996 to increase the tension prior to the start. But why did F1 decide to ditch the green lights? "A couple of times in the past, the green didn't come on because of a malfunction and the race still started," says Whiting. "So that was a clear indication the drivers were only looking at the red lights going out."



F1 race director Charlie Whiting has been starting grands prix for more than 10 years

PITLANE EXIT LIGHTS

Used to control cars exiting the pitlane. For example: the pitlane is 'closed' during a Safety Car period until all cars on track pass the exit (see Canada '08). Then it's changed back to 'open'

CAUTION

Warns a driver leaving the pits of a car approaching at speed, but normally this is automated when a car passes a detection beam on the pit straight. 'Clear' turns the blue light off

EXIT



CLOSED



OPEN



CAUTION



CLEAR



START



FINISH

START

After the cars line up on the grid, Whiting presses this button and the five red lights come on in sequence. Two or three seconds later, he presses it again and they disappear. The race is on

FINISH

At the end of any session, this red button is pressed to activate the red lights on the pit straight gantry to indicate that the session is over

Formula One

Automatic

Manual

Preferences

Start Mode

Normal

Pit Exit

Manual

Next State

5 Second Count

Information

Waiting On Start

15:00:30

ce

MAIN SCREEN

The order of the starting grid appears on the right-hand side. As each driver stops on his correct grid slot, the name will change colour. Once everyone is in position, the race can begin

28
26
24
22
20
18
16
14
12
10
8
6
4
2

hella
Button
M. Webber
N. Rosberg
T. Glock
N. Piquet
S. Bourdais
S. Vettel
F. Alonso
K. Raikkonen

own

Button

Start 15:00:00

02:00:00

Race History

PITLANE ENTRY LIGHTS

For the past two years, when the Safety Car has been deployed, the pitlane is closed. 'On' initiates two flashing amber lights at the top of the pitlane entry to warn drivers the pits are closed. 'Off' re-opens the pitlane

ENTRY



ON



OFF

SELECT AND CANCEL

These are menu buttons that control aspects of the main screen. The countdown to a race's formation lap is pre-programmed and automatic, but Whiting can override any aspect manually using these buttons



SELECT



CANCEL

MANUAL



AUTO

LOCKED



HORN



CLEAR



ABORT



SAFETY CAR

ABORT

Hidden under a military-style latch, this is pressed when yellow flags are waved, or if Whiting can see a stalled car. Amber lights appear and the field sets off on another formation lap

SAFETY CAR

If a Safety Car is required, Whiting lifts the latch to activate SC mode — this is when the pit exit lights are controlled manually

CLEAR

This button turns the overhead gantry starting lights off

HORN

During the countdown to the formation lap, an audible warning system alerts the pitlane at intervals of 10, five, three and one minute before the start

VETTEL HITS THE HEIGHTS

"Let's do the interview while climbing Mount Fuji – at night!" said Sebastian Vettel. Very well, then. Ignoring icy, 60mph winds and a death threat, *F1 Racing* finds out more about the young star who's aiming to reach the summit of Formula 1

WORDS TOM CLARKSON PICTURES LORENZO BELLANCA/LAT

The clock reads 2am on the Monday after the Japanese Grand Prix. While the rest of the F1 world sleeps, Sebastian Vettel – who's just finished sixth at Fuji Speedway – is preparing to climb the highest mountain in Japan. He's dialled in the sat-nav for the Kawaguchiko 5th Station, which lies at 2,300 metres on the eastern side of the mountain. The Red Bull management don't want Sebastian climbing the mountain at all, let alone at night, but he's absolutely determined; he wants to try to make the summit for dawn.

Vettel has been in a hurry all his life. Since obtaining his first Red Bull sponsorship deal at the age of 12 for £1,700, he's shot up the racing ladder. He tested an F1 car for the first time in 2005 after winning the German Formula BMW Championship and he became the youngest man to score a world championship point when he finished eighth on his GP debut at Indianapolis in 2007. Then, of course, came Monza 2008, where he became F1's





youngest ever pole-sitter and youngest winner.

"I really don't think about these records," he says. "I was having a chat with Gerhard [Berger] the other day about the time when Alain Prost scored his 28th win in 1987. He said it was hard to imagine anyone in the next 100 years getting close to Prost's total. Then Michael [Schumacher] went on to win 91 races. I'll only be the youngest until someone younger comes and does it."

Vettel wants to get going – jogging on the spot like a boxer about to go into the ring. He ribs Alex Wurz, who's along for the ride, about his age. "Don't forget your walking stick," he shouts over his shoulder, disappearing into the darkness.

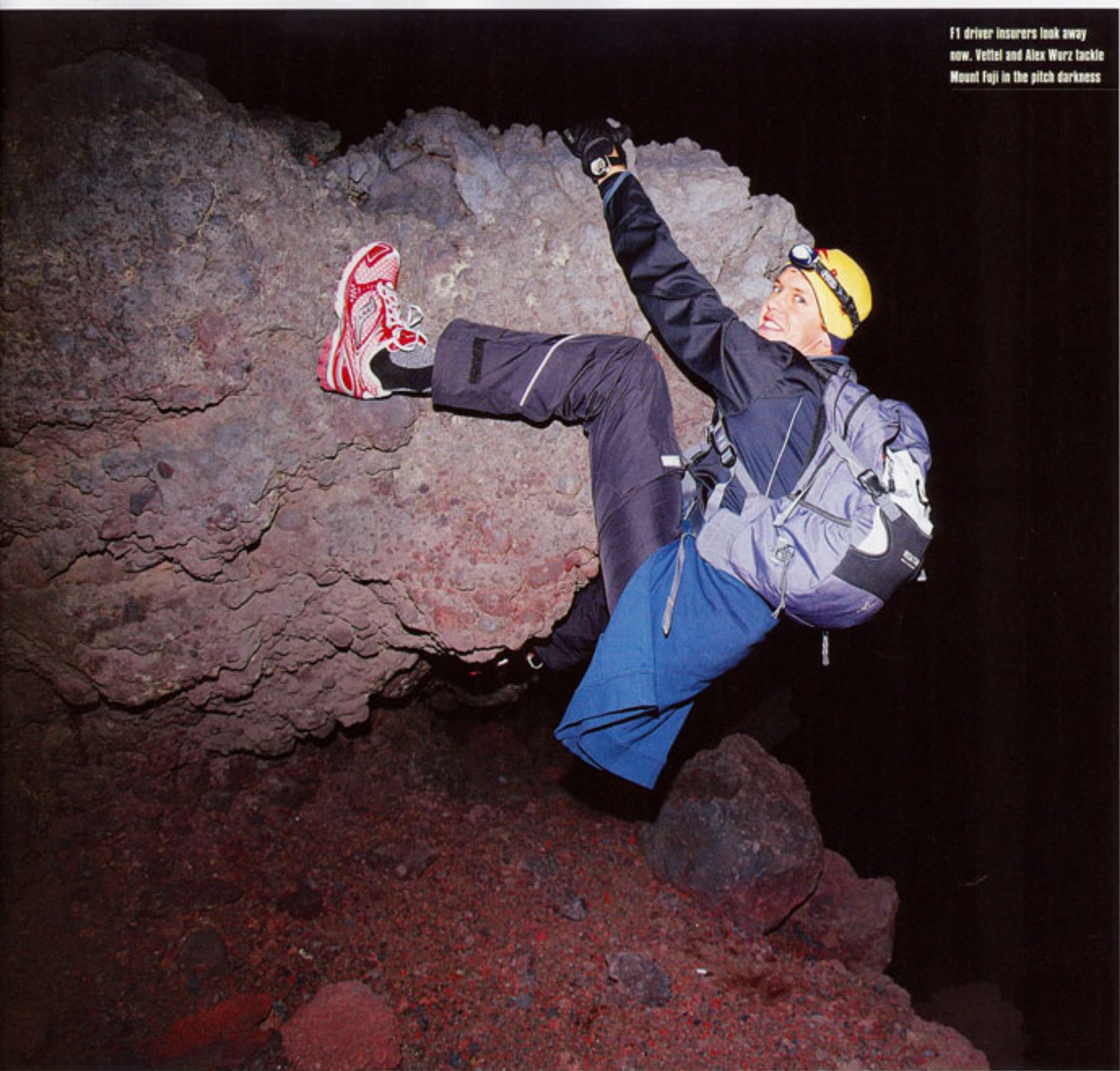
It's a clear night, but even with the light of the moon guiding us we need head torches. The going is rough: large volcanic rocks litter the route. But the first obstacle is a barrier blocking the way ahead, with a rather ominous message written in Japanese and English. "From October to mid-June, it's highly perilous to climb to the summit due to the extreme wind and weather conditions. Risk of snow, rain and avalanches." Vettel doesn't hesitate for an instant; on he goes.

"It's difficult to put the emotions of winning with Toro Rosso into words"

"This moment's a bit like when you start out in karting," says Sebastian. "You're beginning a long journey that has many pitfalls. You spend a lot of weekends away, you miss out on your friends' parties and it sometimes affects your school work. Your parents might wonder what it's all for, but you have to do it; you love what you're doing and you don't care about missing your friend's 16th birthday."

This is no party, though. The terrain remains good for the next hour and Vettel's soon climbed to an altitude of 3,000 metres, where the temperature

has dropped into single figures; it's well below freezing when you include the wind-chill factor. The group's huddled in front of a boarded-up mountain hut when suddenly Sebastian walks away. "Excuse me guys, I need to have a Jimmy Riddle." A piddle, of course, in cockney rhyming slang. The moment mirrors an incident on the opening day of his first test with Red Bull at Jerez in September, when he broke radio silence at the start of the day to announce that he needed a Pat Cash (a slash). It immediately endeared him to the team's mechanics and highlighted his fascination with English humour.



"Generally," he shouts over his shoulder, "I like British people a lot. I have no roots in England, but my English is good enough to understand what you're saying and to get some of your sense of humour. Most German people are too stiff to get your jokes, but I love them. Andy and Lou on *Little Britain* are brilliant. It's not politically correct to put a guy who isn't disabled in a wheelchair and take the piss out of people who are disabled, but the way it's done is very funny."

The terrain's getting harder: in places the path disappears with nothing more than a metal chain to guide the climbers. But Vettel presses on regardless, stopping only to count the number of head torches following him up the mountain. Shortly before 5.30am, a faint red glow appears to the east; dawn is on its way. Seb's 500 metres short of the summit, but stops to watch the sunrise. A purple haze engulfs the mountain and within five minutes the clouds appear below.

"Look at that light," says Sebastian. "It's so beautiful. I'm very happy to be up here experiencing this, rather than sitting in a bar in Tokyo with the other F1 drivers. On the drivers' parade today everyone was talking about where they were going tonight, but this is much more my scene."

Sunrise has beaten him to the summit, but it's not the first time that Vettel's found himself in the limelight ahead of time. In his first full season of F1, while driving for the smallest team on the grid, no-one expected him to take a pole position or win a race, but that's what he did in Italy. He's broken out of the shadows and will now have to finish his F1 apprenticeship in the glare of the public eye.

"It was really amazing to win with Toro Rosso," he says. "Even now it's difficult to put the emotions into words. It happened, but I still find it hard to believe when I think back. The first thing that Dietrich [Mateschitz] said was, 'This is getting too much; you are too crazy!'"

Mateschitz has been Vettel's biggest supporter throughout his career. It was the Red Bull founder who pushed for him to replace Scott Speed at Toro Rosso for last year's Hungarian GP and since then he's watched Sebastian grow in stature to become the most established product of the Red Bull Young Driver Programme. Their relationship is solid.

"I wouldn't say we have a father-son relationship," says Sebastian, "because I already have one of those. I discuss everything about my career with my father because I don't have a manager, and I would say that we are very close. He makes roofs for a living, but he has a good business mind and he understands the racing world. ➤

"Dietrich is quite a bit older than me, but in a way we are friends. I think he respects me, and I respect him and everything that he has achieved. He is one of the richest people in Austria, but he's remained very down to earth. He's not materialistic, and I like that."

The Fuji summit is at 3,776 metres; the temperature is just below freezing, but the wind makes it significantly colder. Progress slows dramatically because the air is thin – it's over 500 metres above the height at which it's mandatory for aircraft to have an oxygen supply. Sebastian and Alex complete this last section of the climb side-by-side, neither of them giving an inch in their efforts to prove who's fittest. Wurz might be 13 years older than Vettel, but years of physical conditioning have left him in good shape. Sebastian, however, is no couch potato. There are no signs of exhaustion, despite driving in a grand prix earlier in the day, and at a recent training camp for the world's Red Bull athletes he emerged fittest of all.

"I enjoy fitness training," he says. "I do all my training on my own because it's much tougher that way, and I have a good routine. Being fit helps me in the car, but it also makes me feel much stronger mentally. It gives me extra energy. If I was unfit, I wouldn't be able to do things like this."

At the summit there's a traditional Japanese *torii* gate, decorated with lions. Each climber wedges a coin into cracks in the frame in the hope that it will bring luck, before stepping onto the barren, windswept landscape. Vettel is surprisingly superstitious: he always steps into a racing car from the left-hand side and, despite the biting cold, he is meticulous in the manner in which he places his lucky coin into the woodwork. His isn't going to be the one that falls out.

At the top the temperature has plummeted to -15C and the wind's gusting at more than 60mph. Swirling mist gives the place a slightly sinister feel and, to make matters worse, a snowstorm engulfs the



Sebastian reaches the top of Mount Fuji, overcoming yet another challenge. It's no Snowdon, though, is it...

group. Vettel pulls his Red Bull hat down over his ears and walks alone towards the edge of the crater. The lip has been rounded by the elements and he stops short of the edge for fear of being blown over. He staggers around for a further 10 minutes, combating the wind and oxygen starvation, before scurrying behind a rock to find shelter.

The 21-year-old can no longer talk because his lips have been numbed by the cold; it's time to head back down the mountain. There are two recognised routes: the way he came up and a second path, which weaves its way along some volcanic ash. And then there's the

third: scree surfing. Alex claims a vertical bank of loose rock will be the quickest and easiest on the knees. Before discussing the idea, he's disappeared.

F1 Racing quickly lays a hand on Sebastian's shoulder, wary of a comment made by Toro Rosso's Franz Tost before we set out. "If Seb

"I really like the British sense of humour. Little Britain is brilliant"

is unable to drive in China," he said, "I will kill you." Vettel knows this but the impetuous Der Seb has followed Alex over the edge.

Sebastian jumps from parallel turn to parallel turn. Occasionally he looks round to reveal an enormous grin, but he presses on for about one altitude kilometre without stopping. A passion for the great outdoors is one of the reasons why Vettel believes he'll get on with new team-mate Mark Webber in 2009. "Mark is an active guy like me," he says, while leaning against a cliff at the edge of the scree. "I think we have a similar approach to life. I get along well with him, despite what happened at Fuji last year, when we crashed into each other behind the Safety Car."

"My target is to win the world championship as soon as possible and going to Red Bull is a step in that direction. I think we can have a good season next year because I'm confident that the car will be good, and there's not much wrong with the Renault engine. Some people like to make a big story about it lacking power, but when I tested it at Jerez I had to really concentrate to notice any differences with the Ferrari engine that we use at Toro Rosso."

Vettel comes across as a very composed character throughout the climb. He's happy to walk in silence, but ask him a question and he'll answer it fully, irrespective of wind, snow or scree. He also comes across as remarkably unselfish; Sebastian's the first to offer to carry equipment and to pass his drinks and energy bars around.

There's still a long way for him to climb in F1, but he's not one to shy away from a challenge. He's always looking ahead, thinking of his next move. "That was fantastic," he says as he heads back to base camp for some toast and honey. "What can we do next?" **FO**



Above: Vettel partakes in some extreme sports meditation. Below: an early morning stroll, formula 1 style



HOW F1 USED TO BE

Amazing shots from
the days of yore

RACE MEETING

It's the calm before the storm at a Grand Prix Drivers' Association get-together before the 1966 Belgian GP. The meeting was held to discuss the controversial matter of camera cars, as John Frankenheimer continued with his mission that became the film *Grand Prix*.

But, after the race, camera cars were the last thing on anyone's mind following Jackie Stewart's accident in a deluge at the Masta Kink. Trapped in the car for 25 minutes with broken bones and internal injuries, covered in fuel, and taken to hospital in a dirty ambulance which got lost on the way, Stewart was moved to begin his famous safety crusade.

WANT THE CHANCE TO WIN A PRINT OF THIS GREAT LAT PHOTO?

Email your answer to the following question below (including your name, address and daytime telephone number) to f1racing.competitions@haymarket.com. Please write 'How F1 Used To Be' in the subject line of your email. The winner will be the first correct entry drawn.

Who was the only driver on this photo not to win an F1 world championship race?

- (a) Jo Siffert
- (b) Mike Spence
- (c) Richie Ginther

The closing date is December 18, 2008. For full competition terms and conditions, please refer to www.f1racing.co.uk

1 JOHN SURTEES

From pole Surtees kept his Ferrari on the track in the wet, but when Jochen Rindt looked as if he had nicked the victory, he hunted him down as it turned dry to take the win. This was his last race for Ferrari; he quit after a spat with the team

2 PHIL HILL

It was the 1961 world champion Hill who was doing all of the camera car filming for *Grand Prix* at Spa. He used a 4.7ltr V8 Cobra-engined McLaren, but the GPDA subsequently sought to limit the use of camera cars to prescribed practice times only



3 JACKIE STEWART

Stewart's opening lap shunt was the first major accident of his career and came on the back of victory in the opening round of the championship. He only missed one race as a result, but the BRMs were never truly competitive thereafter

3 MIKE SPENCE

Drafted in by Colin Chapman to replace the injured Peter Arundell in 1964 and 1965, Spence found himself with Reg Parnell Racing for 1966, where he managed a couple of points finishes amongst a whole host of retirements. Belgium included

4 RICHIE GINTHER

This would be the American's last major season in F1. One of only seven runners left after the first lap accidents removed half the field, and driving a Cooper T81 while the new Honda was readied, he still managed fifth, three laps down on Surtees

5 GRAHAM HILL

Hill, vice-chairman of the GPDA, aquaplaned off with Stewart and American Bob Bondurant, and both were responsible for extricating Stewart from his upturned car, with the help of tools borrowed from a spectator's car

6 PETER GARNIER

Garnier was the sports editor of *Autocar* at the time, and responsible for the magazine's F1 coverage, as well a weekly column. He was also the honorary secretary and Treasurer of the GPDA, a post he had held for five years



8 JO SIFFERT

'Seppi', as he was affectionately known by the hordes of fans that adored his wild style, was about to start his first race in the Maserati-engined Cooper T81, run as usual by Rob Walker Racing. He was another casualty of the first lap rainstorm

7 JOAKIM BONNIER

Chairman and one of the main thrusts behind the GPDA, Bonnier had, for 1966, formed his own team - Anglo Suisse Racing - after being released by Rob Walker. But he was another Cooper T81 driver caught out by the fickle conditions on the opening lap



PETER WINDSOR'S RACE REPORT THE BRAZILIAN GP

I N T E R L A G O S 0 2 . 1 1 . 0 8



HAMILTON THE LAST-LAP HERO

Felipe wins, but Lewis snatches the championship in a dramatic season finale

So Lewis Hamilton ultimately won the championship – although exactly why this had to become the Race Of The Century is another matter. McLaren ran Lewis relatively fuel-heavy into Q3 and afterwards described Ferrari's tactics as three-stop and therefore unraceable; in reality, Felipe Massa had no trouble at all with his fuel load and won the Brazilian GP, setting fastest lap from the pole.

And, with mathematical supremacy in the championship finally under control, McLaren again played with fire by calling Lewis in for a late-race switch to Bridgestone wets.

I know. It's easy to be a Monday morning quarterback. Easy to say now that Lewis could have survived on dries and would have therefore sailed comfortably into a fourth-place finish. Easy to say now that the rain was only rain on the last of those 71 laps.

My point, though, is this: pitstops are always a risk and so you eliminate them whenever you can. Second, no-one in the world (with the possible exception of Sebastian Vettel) does a better job than Lewis when it comes to using dry tyres in the wet. Third, there were two gambles to be played out there. Either there was going to be a deluge for the last five laps or there wasn't. Equally, there was always the risk that other

drivers might not stop for wets, might gain track position... and might benefit if the rain came late. That was always a big unknown. Given the risk balance, the stay-out option looked to be the better one.

McLaren-Mercedes were not going to let us down, however. Not after all those Q2 nail-biters, Hockenheim pit calls and Shanghai tyre-swaps. Not after this year of now-you-have-it-now-you-don't. As a finale, we were never going to have it easy.

And so they left Timo Glock to decide the outcome – Timo and the Toyota pitcrew. Anything more blue-chip would not have been in keeping with this, the year of nobody-wants-to-win.

Not that Toyota haven't been an ever-rising force in 2008. In Brazil, on sector two of Interlagos (an undulating, fast-slow, traction-critical beauty of a sector) no one was faster all afternoon than Glock – a stat that would have irritated Lewis as the track dried towards half-distance. You put yourself in cruise mode to save the car and avoid mistakes but still you expect to be able to edge away from your Timos and your Jarnos. Lewis could do that on sectors one (back straight) and three (front straight) because his McLaren at Interlagos was very speed trap-friendly, even while he was nursing his Shanghai engine. Sector two, though, was an annoyance. One lock-up – and Lewis has been locking up plenty this year, given the McLaren's stiff front end and massively forward-biased brake balance – and Timo was going to be up there and inside him. Or, worse, up there and into him. It was tense stuff – but then Lewis isn't exactly used to Trying Not To Finish Sixth (as distinct from doing everything he can to win). This was new territory for him.

Anyway, about the only thing that was going to relieve Lewis of the Glock toothache were the pitstops. Timo duly sidled in on lap 36, four before Lewis, and in theory that should have been the end of it. It was a long two-stopper anyway and then the stand-in fuel guy (back problems sidelined the regular) double-shuffled: an extra three or four seconds lost, Timo sunk into the traffic.

On the McLaren pitwall: breathe easier. Now Lewis was fifth-going-on-fourth (give or take a Vettel pitstop or three) with Heikki (who was running on Hitco brakes for this race, so much were McLaren banking on the rain) now a comfortable sixth, cushioning Lewis from any further attacks from stray Glocks or Webbers. Heikki had given Lewis (who was on his regular CI brakes and thus slightly worried about temperatures) room at Turn 1 and had then been delayed in his first

fuel stop with a sticky right rear. As it turned out, he was now perfectly positioned: had he been second or something, it would have been complicated for him to have played the team role. He would have had to have slowed and dropped two or three places. P6, he was playing wing-man.

Enter again the rain – the issue around which McLaren had "strategised" on Saturday. What they really meant was this: "We believe it's going to be a wet race. A very wet race. We therefore want to give ourselves the biggest possible fuel stop windows in



David Coulthard ran a one-off charity livery for his final GP, but failed to see out the first lap after Nico Rosberg hit him in Turn 1



Sebastian Vettel chased down and passed Lewis Hamilton two laps from the end, temporarily relieving him of the drivers' title



Glock's gamble to stay out on slicks nearly gained him three positions – but Vettel and Hamilton demoted him on the last lap



Massa made the perfect start while Heikki Kovalainen shielded Hamilton from the attentions of Vettel and Fernando Alonso

McLaren again played with fire by calling Lewis in for wet-weather tyres

order to maximize our chances of being on the right tyres at the right time and not being caught out by pitlanes that may be closed."

This was a mighty big assumption, of course. They've learned by now not to trust official F1 weather forecasting even when we're at Monaco or Silverstone – so what price the predictions in Ferrariland Brazil? It rained on Sunday – but only for about 30 seconds mid-morning, for 10 short minutes as the race was about to start and then again right at the end. They delayed the race start, they immediately opened the pitlane, the track quickly dried – and a lap 1 Safety Car quickly nullified any strategy advantage that lighter cars may have had. By the time the climax came – by the time it began to rain, with seven laps left to run – everyone was at parity. So much for strategy.

Anyway, Lewis came in for his wets with six laps to go – used wets – and re-emerged a place down thanks to Timo staying on dries. P5 – but now with Sebastian Vettel behind him rather than Heikki. And, unbelievably, Lewis began to struggle. No grip. No balance. Tyres degrading badly. It wasn't really wet; that was part of the trouble. Equally, Seb was on newer wets – as was Robert Kubica, who decided to unlap himself and zap past both Seb and Lewis as if the BMW had another hundred extra bhp. So astonishing, indeed, was Kubica's pace that Lewis looked up for for a second, lost the front end and could do nothing but sit there helplessly as ➤

DID YOU KNOW?

■ This was the eighth time the championship has been settled by a point. The others are 1958, 1961, 1964, 1976, 1981, 1994 and 2007. In 1984 the gap was half a point

■ BMW matched Ferrari's record of two retirements (Kubica in Australia and Britain) all season, and also ran 6694.03 race miles, the longest in the modern era

■ Alain Prost remains the only driver ever to win the title with the number 2 on his car. The Frenchman managed this three times, in 1985, 1989 and 1993

■ Jarno Trulli's second place in qualifying for Toyota means that for the first time since 1981 seven teams managed at least one front row in a season

Vettel out-dragged him up the hill. Lewis was P6 and out of the championship...

Three laps became two. Two became one. And at last came the rain. Properly. For the first time that afternoon. Lewis in these moments justified everything good that has ever been said or written about him. He didn't panic. He didn't throw it into the wall. He didn't throw it into the back of Vettel.

He kept his head down. He stayed solid. Even as the points advantage slipped away, for the first time since mid-season. Even as the McLaren's handling turned to rubbish.

And, as he entered his last lap, he listened to his radio: "You're catching Glock, Lewis. You're catching Glock."

Lewis caught a flash of red and white ahead of him as he exited the hairpin at the top of the hill. He put his head down again and tucked in behind Seb. Don't brake too late into the slow left-hander. Let Seb choose the line. Stay cool. Look for Glock...

And now they were upon Glock – and it wasn't a mess. Glock was out there on the edge, struggling for grip and traction. Lewis followed Seb through, easing on the power, as delicate as he had never been before with a right foot that has won so many races.



When winning the race from pole – and setting fastest lap – isn't enough: Massa takes a moment to get his emotions under control

Lewis crossed the line 5.6 seconds ahead of Glock. 5.6 seconds in a Toyota pitstop that had decided the 2008 drivers' maths.

"Have we done it? Have we done it?"

The answer came in the affirmative, faces in the Ferrari garage suddenly turned pale. For 20 seconds or so, Felipe Massa had completed not only a dazzling home-soil hat-trick (pole, fastest lap, win) but had also won the numbers race.

The bittersweet rain that followed could not dampen the dignity and class of both Felipe and Lewis. There was a scrum out the

back of McLaren that dark early evening – a wet, wild pig-pen of a scrum, and the world was deprived of the Hamilton-Massa embrace that this season totally deserved. And yet there was something right about this finish – about Lewis being in his element, with his people and his family, all tears and hugs. And about Felipe, 100 yards away, staring dewey-eyed into a camera after the most superlative of victories, congratulating Lewis and saying that losing is a part of winning and that 2008 has not been at all bad for Ferrari. Not bad at all. **FO**

BRAZIL RACE RESULTS

RESULT	DRIVER	TOTAL RACE TIME	GRID POSITION
1st	Felipe Massa Ferrari	1h34m11.435s	1st
2nd	Fernando Alonso Renault	+13.298s	6th
3rd	Kimi Räikkönen Ferrari	+16.235s	3rd
4th	Sebastian Vettel Toro Rosso	+38.011s	7th
5th	Lewis Hamilton McLaren-Mercedes	+38.907s	4th
6th	Timo Glock Toyota	+44.368s	10th
7th	Heikki Kovalainen McLaren-Mercedes	+55.074s	5th
8th	Jarno Trulli Toyota	+68.463s	2nd
9th	Mark Webber Red Bull Racing	+79.666s	12th
10th	Nick Heidfeld BMW Sauber	+1 lap	8th
11th	Robert Kubica BMW Sauber	+1 lap	13th*
12th	Nico Rosberg Williams	+1 lap	18th
13th	Jenson Button Honda	+1 lap	17th
14th	Sébastien Bourdais Toro Rosso	+1 lap	9th
15th	Rubens Barrichello Honda	+1 lap	15th
16th	Adrian Sutil Force India	+2 laps	20th
17th	Kazuki Nakajima Williams	+2 laps	16th
Retired	Giancarlo Fisichella Force India	+2 laps	19th
Retired	Nelson Piquet Renault	0 laps – accident	11th
Retired	David Coulthard Red Bull Racing	0 laps – collision	14th

*started from pitlane

CONSTRUCTORS' STANDINGS

1 Ferrari 172pts	7 Red Bull Racing 29pts
2 McLaren-Mercedes 151pts	8 Williams 26pts
3 BMW Sauber 135pts	9 Honda 14pts
4 Renault 80pts	10 Force India 0pts
5 Toyota 56pts	11 Super Aguri 0pts
6 Toro Rosso 39pts	

For comprehensive F1 statistics visit WWW.FORIX.COM



DRIVERS' STANDINGS

POSITION	DRIVER		ROUNDS																		PTS
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	
1st	Lewis Hamilton	McLaren-Mercedes	10	4	0	6	8	10	0	0	10	10	4	8	6	2	6	0	10	4	98
2nd	Felipe Massa	Ferrari	0	0	10	8	10	6	4	10	0	6	0	10	10	3	0	2	8	10	97
3rd	Kimi Räikkönen	Ferrari	1	10	8	10	6	0	0	8	5	3	6	0	0	0	0	6	6	6	75
4th	Robert Kubica	BMW Sauber	0	8	6	5	5	8	10	4	0	2	1	6	3	6	0	8	3	0	75
5th	Fernando Alonso	Renault	5	1	0	0	3	0	0	1	3	0	5	0	5	5	10	10	5	8	61
6th	Nick Heidfeld	BMW Sauber	8	3	5	0	4	0	8	0	8	5	0	0	8	4	3	0	4	0	60
7th	Heikki Kovalainen	McLaren-Mercedes	4	6	4	0	0	1	0	5	4	4	10	5	0	8	0	0	0	2	53
8th	Sebastian Vettel	Toro Rosso	0	0	0	0	0	4	1	0	0	1	0	3	4	10	4	3	0	5	35
9th	Jarno Trulli	Toyota	0	5	3	1	0	0	3	6	2	0	2	4	0	0	0	4	0	1	31
10th	Timo Glock	Toyota	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	0	0	0	8	2	0	0	5	0	2	3	25
11th	Mark Webber	Red Bull Racing	0	2	2	4	2	5	0	3	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	21
12th	Nelson Piquet	Renault	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	8	3	0	0	0	0	5	1	0	19
13th	Nico Rosberg	Williams	6	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	8	0	0	0	17
14th	Rubens Barrichello	Honda	0	0	0	0	0	3	2	0	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	11
15th	Kazuki Nakajima	Williams	3	0	0	2	0	2	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	9
16th	David Coulthard	Red Bull Racing	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	8
17th	Sébastien Bourdais	Toro Rosso	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	4
18th	Jenson Button	Honda	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
19th	Giancarlo Fisichella	Force India	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
20th	Adrian Sutil	Force India	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
21st	Takuma Sato	Super Aguri	0	0	0	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
22nd	Anthony Davidson	Super Aguri	0	0	0	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0



Felipe Massa puts a brave face on his title disappointment and acknowledges the hearty support of his home fans

Fastest lap: Felipe Massa 1m 13.736secs (lap 36)





GARY ANDERSON

It's 'honours even' for the top two teams at the end of 2008

Strategy has been key in 2008, and McLaren have not always made the best decisions



IN 2008, THE DRIVERS' CHAMPIONSHIP was again decided by just one point. Not only does that make for exciting television, it highlights just how close the top two teams are in performance, funding and everything else that you need to win in F1. In that situation, it's the little details that make the difference: planning strategies for every conceivable race scenario, adapting quickly to changing circumstances, and getting all your routine procedures right every time.

Neither McLaren nor Ferrari had a distinct edge, and in fact none of the teams can claim to have been consistently super-sharp this year. Many of the most outstanding results, like Nelson Piquet's second place in Germany and Sebastian Vettel's win in Italy, involved a healthy slice of luck.

Just as uncontrollable events can make a

smart pitlane call look like pure genius, they can also cover up poor strategic thinking. McLaren took an enormous gamble in Brazil when they let Hamilton sit in fourth or fifth throughout the race, with almost no cushion. If he had tripped over a backmarker, or had even a small mechanical problem, it would have been all over. And it nearly was. If the rain had stopped on the penultimate lap, Felipe Massa would now be world champion.

Sometimes, however, you don't get away with it. Lewis got a lot of stick for drop-kicking Kimi Räikkönen in the pitlane in Montreal, but you could easily put that collision down to poor team strategy. Every single pit stop should have a routine, starting two laps before when you ask the driver about the balance of the car, continuing through to reminding him to put the speed

limiter on, warning him if the pit box is slippery – and reminding him if the pitlane exit light is red. If McLaren didn't follow that routine properly in Canada, then the guys on the pitwall have to take a good share of the blame for the crash.

With Lewis Hamilton bagging the drivers' title for McLaren and Ferrari picking up the constructors' championship, you could say that it was 'honours even' between the top teams. And that's a fair reflection of their performance. This year, both trophies are going to the right places.

As a technical consultant to RBS World of Sport, Gary Anderson provided post-race analysis throughout the 2008 season on www.rbs.com/F1.



PETER WINDSOR

Forthright views from our man inside the F1 paddock

OKAY. So let's recap. Our new British hero arrived on the F1 scene with bullet-like speed – so quickly that most of his peers still couldn't hide their resentment by year's end. And, from the start, his year was pock-marked with

scandal and controversy. The Fleet Street press condemned him for leaving the UK to live abroad. The paparazzi loved him – as did the supermodels and the A-list celebs.

As a McLaren driver, his fight, of course, was always with Ferrari. Twice he skirmished at the first corner with the red cars at critical points of the season, thus steepening his climb to the title. And, to Ferrari, he lost a classic victory. He had won it against all odds, when Ferrari seemed to rule the day...

"He is a different kind of sportsman, the first of the next generation"



There are many parallels between the rollercoaster championship seasons of Lewis Hamilton and James Hunt

but then he was penalised, knocking him sideways – knocking McLaren sideways, for they always raced, and fought, as a team.

And so the season reached its finale in a faraway country. He needed only a minor points finish to clinch the maths. It rained at the start and then it pelted down again in the closing laps. His tyres grained and lost grip; he began to struggle. As good as he is, nothing seemed to work. He slipped away from a points-winning position. In the Ferrari garage, with victory in sight, there were hugs and can't-believe-it smiles.

In the cockpit of his McLaren, he never gave up. He followed the driver ahead of him, trying to pressure him into a mistake, trying to create a hole, little suspecting that his race for the championship is actually with the car ahead of them both. He can't see it.

There is a blur. There are cars everywhere. In the spray, in the fading light, he can't be sure. He saw the chequered flag. And still he didn't know. It is only later, when he can talk to his team, that he can live with the knowledge that finally he has won the title.

In his galaxy he is a different driver – a different kind of sportsman. He is the first of the next generation. A few days later, though, as if in confirmation, the world nods in agreement: the most powerful nation on the globe heralds a new era, a new age, by voting in a Democrat to replace the tarnished, incumbent Republican.

And there you have it: James Hunt, Jimmy Carter and 1976.

WHY TIMO GLOCK DIDN'T 'GIFT' THE CHAMPIONSHIP TO LEWIS

I SEE THAT the conspiracy merchants lost little time accusing Timo Glock of 'gifting' Lewis the title on that closing lap of the Brazilian GP. Assuming they're right, I have only a couple of quick questions:

How did Toyota manage, to the millisecond, a sluggish pitstop (on lap 36) that would about 40 minutes later leave Timo perfectly positioned to carry out his deed? Answer: they didn't. Their regular fuel



"Well done, mate – by the way, I can take cash or cheque..." Conspiracy theorists have got into a lather over 'Glockgate'

man had a duff back and his stand-in took an extra couple of seconds to attach the hose.

How did Jarno Trulli, who was also on dry tyres in an identical car, record a final lap time almost identical to Timo's, despite the potential variables? Answer: because that was quite clearly the dry-tyre lap time.

Why in any event would Timo assist Lewis at the expense of Ferrari? Answer: he wouldn't. What would be the benefit?

DID FERNANDO ALONSO 'HELP' FELIPE?

SPEAKING of driver assistance, what about Fernando? Wasn't it in Japan that he said he would do all he could to help Felipe Massa? We all wondered whether this might take the form of the odd bit of

impediment – or maybe even a first-corner tap. What none of us imagined was that Fernando would actually split the two Ferraris in Brazil – would be quick enough to beat Kimi but not quick enough to beat Felipe.



"Of course, if you'd passed me I could have snapped your neck, like this..."

It was on the radio, too: "Come on, Fernando, your race is with Massa. Your race is with Massa..." I jest, of course – or am I confused? The way 2008 went, the real became the surreal, the unlikely the obvious...



ALAN HENRY

On Massa's grace in defeat, and Alonso's negotiating tactics

No question about it, Lewis Hamilton's last-lap lunge past Timo Glock's Toyota at Interlagos was one of those historic moves that guarantees both men immortality in the motor racing history books. Even if Glock never so much as scores

another championship point he will be recalled as the man who very nearly denied Britain's finest his first title crown.

For Hamilton, winning the championship was a fully deserved achievement after a year in which you'd have to say he was the best driver in the business – even though he sometimes seemed to be making heavy weather of his march to glory. But let's also not forget that Felipe Massa won six races to Lewis's five – which inevitably prompted rumblings about revising the scoring system so that there is more of a premium put on the business of winning.

When this view was expressed by one of the sport's leading power brokers, I must say I found it difficult to suppress a smirk. The whole reason behind revising the points system only a few years back in order to reduce the 'premium benefit' of winning was to help keep the title battle alive to the final race (in the interests of TV viewing figures). You really can't have it both ways.

Massa took his defeat with great dignity, so there was a degree of justice in Ferrari at

least winning the constructors' championship as a consolation prize. Considering the fact that they were operating under a totally new regime headed by Stefano Domenicali, Maranello did pretty well. But, as Felipe



Felipe Massa gets a hug of consolation from team boss Stefano Domenicali after missing out on the drivers' title by one point

was fighting back the tears, it was not the time to dwell on that cruel late-race engine failure in Hungary which had wiped 10 points off his potential total for the year.

Massa has grown in stature, probably more than any other driver on the grid. For the third consecutive year he set a blistering pace to dominate proceedings at Interlagos. Yet he was denied the chance of joining Fittipaldi, Piquet and Senna in the pantheon of great Brazilian world champions, much to

"Massa set a blistering pace to dominate proceedings in Brazil"

the disappointment of Emerson and Nelson, who were present to offer their support.

Hamilton underlined just how much he had matured by fighting his way out of a tight corner to grasp the ultimate accolade. Granted he made his fair share of mistakes, but he survived that utterly absurd penalty at Spa to keep his title challenge alive. When the chips were down, Lewis delivered the stuff of which legends are made.

IT COULD ONLY HAPPEN IN FORMULA 1

IF YOU THINK that the F1 business is charmingly crackers, or just plain profligate, this little story may set you wondering even more. When Fernando Alonso was negotiating his formal release from his McLaren contract 12 months ago, he agreed to meet the British team's legal eagles at an airport somewhere in Europe – to which both parties travelled by private jets.

When they arrived, the two aeroplanes parked alongside each other. Fernando resolutely declined to 'de-plane', with the result that the lawyers had to

shuttle back and forth between the two jets with all the requisite documents. When the business was completed, the door of

Alonso's plane was immediately slammed shut and it took off into the pale blue yonder. Plane crazy if you ask me. Sorry.



Fernando Alonso: double world champion, fierce negotiator – but not very good at getting off planes

FLYING TONIGHT?

MANY GP cars have had trouble refuelling this year, but I always thought that Boeing 747s were immune to such mundane problems. Not so the Sunday night British Airways flight back from the Brazilian GP – carrying such F1 luminaries as Bernie Ecclestone, Flavio Briatore and Honda's Nick Fry – which was delayed for six hours at São Paulo with a refuelling glitch. It then had to land in Madrid because the flight deck crew were out of hours.

Not a state of affairs calculated to bring the best out of Bernie or Flav, I would have thought.

WHAT'S IT LIKE TO...



Giancarlo Fisichella gets it wrong while leading the 1999 European GP at the Nürburgring

...CRASH WHILE LEADING?



FERNANDO ALONSO
HUNGARORING, 2006

"Most of the job was done. It was one of those crazy races where the rain destroys all strategies and you have to react in an instant. I took a lot of risks, but the car was feeling good: I was 15th on the grid because of a penalty, but I was fifth after three laps. I had a nice lead over Jenson Button when I pitted for dry tyres. After a few corners, I had a mechanical problem at the rear – the wheel wasn't fitted properly. I spun and it was all over."



GIANCARLO FISICHELLA
NÜRBURGRING, 1999

"After a few laps, rain began to fall. Häkkinen pitted for wet tyres but I stayed out on dry tyres, and then the rain stopped. I inherited the lead when Frentzen and Coulthard retired, but I spun out. I felt so sorry for the team... I went off the track because of my own mistake. It was so frustrating: my first win was there for the taking and I threw it away. I have a small justification, though: during the race, I lost my headrest. My head fell back and I lost control of the car which is why I crashed."



RENÉ ARNOUX
MONACO, 1982

"For Renault, the weekend didn't start too badly as I took pole position. Alain Prost and I were fighting big time that season – there was a lot of politics going on, and I really wanted to be ahead of him. At the start I took the lead and everything was under control, even though Alain was second. I had to push to keep a bit of a gap, but unfortunately I spun on lap 15. I felt a bit stupid, but there was nothing I could do: the car had stalled and I couldn't restart."



PATRICK TAMBAY
LONG BEACH, 1983

"It was only the second race of the season, but I was feeling at home with Ferrari. I started the race from pole position – the first of my career. Rosberg was right behind me, and on lap 26 he took the inside line entering the hairpin before the pits. I had to turn in, and my right rear tyre bumped his left front. My car flew into the air and spun backwards. The engine stalled. End of story. As you can imagine, I was more than a little upset."



PAT SYMONDS
ADELAIDE, 1994 (RACE ENGINEER TO MICHAEL SCHUMACHER)

"I remember it all incredibly well – I was really quite pissed off. At the time I thought we'd lost the championship because Hill carried on [after they collided]. But then he stopped at the end of that lap, and suddenly we thought we'd won. I was still angry and disappointed. Not at Michael, but at the turn of events: I'd love to have gone out and dominated the race. That's a lovely way to win a title."



STIRLING MOSS
MONACO, 1957

"It's a pretty short story: it feels bloody frustrating. I came down to the chicane in the lead on lap 4, and the front brakes locked. I had no stopping power so I was forced to go straight on. I'm not sure how many people believed me when I said what had happened. I got blamed for a lot of things that weren't my fault in my career, like breaking gearboxes, and that particular case wasn't down to me: it was a damn mechanical failure. In my day, cars weren't reliable like they are now."

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