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How following Formula 1 has changed – and what it costs

How much does it cost to follow Formula 1 these days? It's a complicated question with multiple variables, including where you live and how you like to enjoy your sport, but it's one we have taken on in this week's special investigation (page 18).

Grand Prix editor Alex Kalinauckas has crunched many numbers to see how things have changed since our last assessment of costs to F1 fans, in 2015. We thank all those, including the venues, who provided information. What do you think about the results? Please let us know by emailing autosport@autosport.com.

Elsewhere in this issue, three-time GP winner and Le Mans victor Johnny Herbert helps us select the 10 best drives of his eclectic and illustrious career (p26), we meet the competitors who will represent the UK at the upcoming FIA Motorsport Games (p32), and hear how Tom Kristensen and Zak Brown got on when they decided to team up at Estoril to race a Porsche 935 and Ford Capri (p36).

The big events last weekend were the Bathurst 1000 and Petit Le Mans. Australia's greatest race turned into a demonstration run and Phil Branagan explains why on p40, while Porsche had reason to feel joy *and* disappointment in the closing stages of the IMSA finale, which was eventually won by Cadillac (p44).

As well as the United States GP, this weekend also includes the Formula Ford Festival at Brands Hatch. A full report will appear in next week's issue (24 October), but this week we use it as an excuse to pick out some of the category's best wins (p68).



Kevin Turner

Kevin Turner
Chief Editor

kevin.turner@autosport.com



Autosport editorial
Motorsport Network
Media UK Ltd
2 Stephen Street
London, W1T 1AN

@
E-mail
autosport@autosport.com


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FREE WITH THIS ISSUE



ENGINEERING SUPPLEMENT

Formula E's next big step, the latest Phantom club racer and RML's 40th birthday – as well as Engineering news – all feature in our latest free, 28-page supplement.

PIT + PADDOCK

Technical tie-up brings Toyota back to F1 with Haas

FORMULA 1

The Haas Formula 1 team has announced a technical partnership with Toyota Gazoo Racing, the motorsport division of the Japanese manufacturer. While the deal does not represent a fully fledged F1 return for Toyota, which was last active as a works team in 2009, it means it becomes the official technical partner to Haas and will share knowledge and resources.

Toyota Gazoo Racing will provide design, technical and manufacturing services to Haas, which will offer its own expertise and commercial benefits in return. Toyota drivers, engineers and mechanics will be involved in Haas F1 tests, helping them all understand the challenges of modern grand prix machinery. Furthermore, Toyota staff will assist Haas with aerodynamic development, design and the manufacturing of carbon fibre parts.

Haas team principal Ayao Komatsu, who had been working on the deal for several months, believes it is a significant moment for his squad as it bids to push up the grid. "The ability to tap into the resources and knowledge base available at Toyota Gazoo Racing, while benefiting from their technical and manufacturing processes, will be instrumental in our own development and our clear desire to further increase our competitiveness in Formula 1," he said. "In return, we offer a platform for Toyota Gazoo Racing to fully utilise and subsequently advance their in-house engineering capabilities. As the smallest team on the grid, we are lacking certain resources and hardware capability to understand certain things. And then in terms of being more competitive in the midfield, we are looking for somebody who can give us that horsepower and also have the hardware and know how to use that hardware."

The tie-up with Toyota has received the blessing of Haas's long-term partner Ferrari, which will continue to supply the squad with engines, gearboxes and other parts, and Haas will keep its design office base in Ferrari's Maranello factory. Earlier this year, Haas extended its deal to use Ferrari's wind tunnel. Komatsu was also keen to stress that Toyota's production of certain composite car parts for Haas does not mean that



SUTTON/MOTORSPORT IMAGES

the squad will no longer be working with Dallara.

Toyota Gazoo president Tomoya Takahashi believes that the arrangement will benefit his company's development by giving its drivers, mechanics and engineers an opportunity to get a taste of F1 – and a potential pipeline to working there – without Toyota actively having to enter the series. "By competing alongside Haas at the pinnacle of motorsports, we aim to cultivate drivers, engineers, and mechanics while strengthening the capabilities of Haas and Toyota Gazoo Racing," he said.

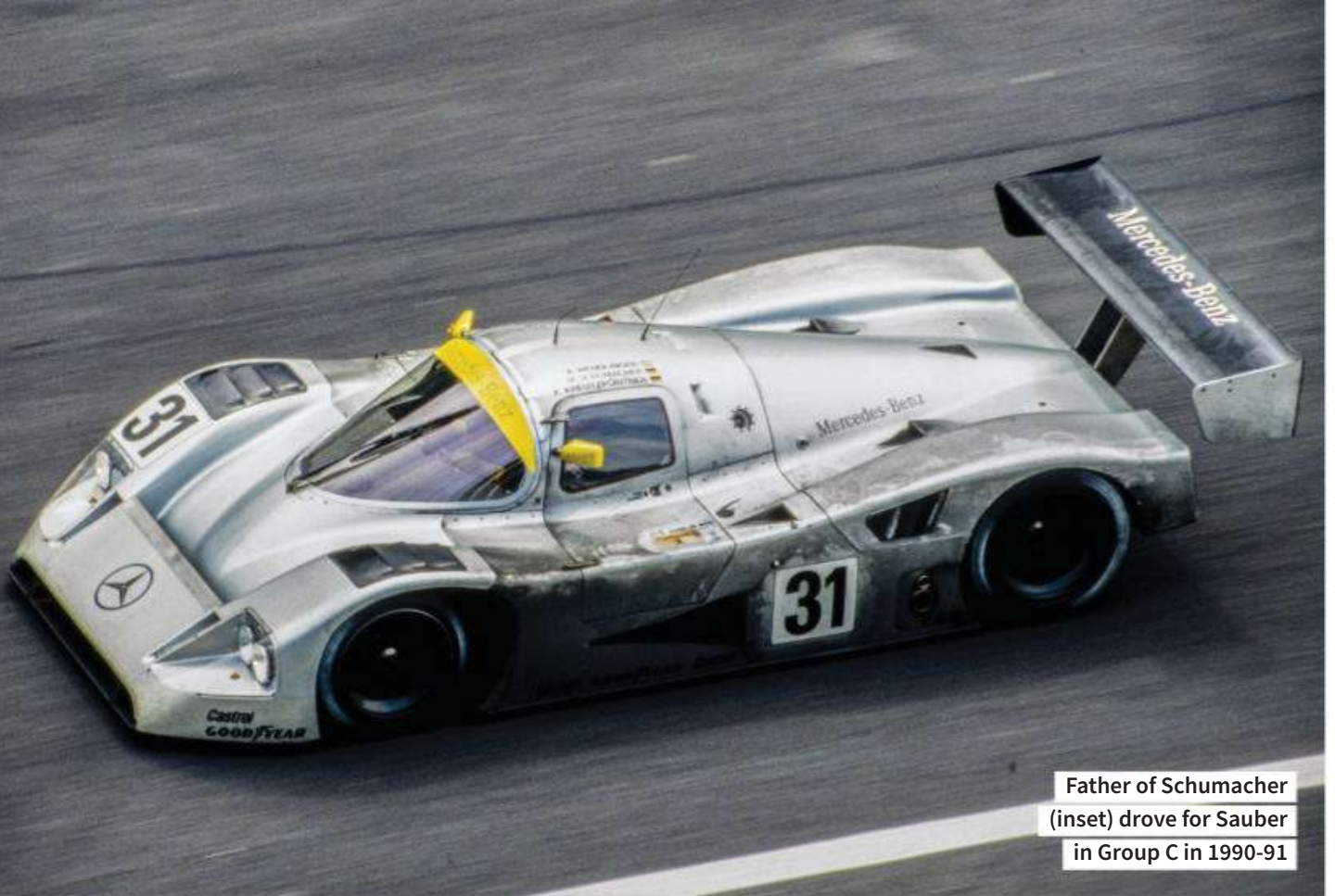
Toyota's announcement inevitably triggered the idea that it could be the first step in an official return to Formula 1. Since its decision to quit grand prix racing at the end of 2009, amid the fallout of the global financial crisis and its failure to win on track, F1's popularity has exploded to a point where a return could make sense. But in a press conference at Fuji Speedway, Toyota chairman Akio Toyoda made sure to rule that out. "Please make sure that tomorrow's headlines don't read, 'Toyota finally returns to F1,'" he stated. "Rather, it would be great to see headlines and articles that inspire Japanese children to dream of the possibility that they, too, could one day drive the world's fastest cars. I'm the person who quit F1. I think that, somewhere deep in his heart, that ordinary older car-loving guy Akio Toyoda had always regretted having blocked – by pulling out of F1 – Japanese youths' path toward driving the world's fastest cars."

As part of the deal, Toyota Gazoo Racing's branding will appear on the Haas F1 cars driven by Nico Hulkenberg and Kevin Magnussen from this weekend's United States Grand Prix.

ALEX KALINAUCKAS & JONATHAN NOBLE



GALLOWAY/MOTORSPORT IMAGES



Father of Schumacher (inset) drove for Sauber in Group C in 1990-91

Schumacher emerges as contender for Sauber seat

FORMULA 1

Mick Schumacher has emerged as a late contender for a seat at the Audi-owned Sauber team in what could be his last chance to return to Formula 1.

The German has acted as a reserve for Mercedes for the past two seasons after losing his drive at Haas at the end of 2022. He had hoped to get the nod at Alpine for its vacancy

next year, after racing for the French manufacturer in the World Endurance Championship, but the squad elected to take rookie Jack Doohan instead. That appeared to leave Schumacher with little hope of an F1 comeback, but it has been revealed that Audi's new chief Mattia Binotto now has him on the radar for 2025.

Sauber is still on the hunt for a team-mate for Nico

Hulkenberg, and looked set to decide between incumbent Valtteri Bottas or F2 points leader Gabriel Bortoleto, with Williams also appearing to be interested in loaning out Franco Colapinto. Speaking to Italian newspaper *Corriere della Sera*, Binotto acknowledged that Schumacher was an option too and said that the team does not need to make a swift decision.

"We are definitely evaluating

him," Binotto said about Schumacher. "I met him and spoke to him. I have known him for a long time having been part of the Ferrari Driver Academy. I know his strengths and advantages. He is one of the names we have in mind. We can afford the luxury of not rushing, since all the other teams have decided their line-ups."

JONATHAN NOBLE

Andretti step back does not hinder GP plan

FORMULA 1

Michael Andretti's decision to step back from the day-to-day running of his Andretti Global race team will have no immediate bearing on its Formula 1 bid.

The former F1 and IndyCar racer has handed the keys of his motorsport empire to fellow shareholder Dan Towriss, taking a reduced advisory role at the team. But Autosport has learned that plans are still going ahead to gain approval to race in F1 from 2026. Andretti's Silverstone factory continues to recruit staff in a bid to have a full 2026 chassis ready before the new year, and the team is working 16-hour days in Toyota's wind tunnel in Cologne as it designs parts for the new regulations.

Despite FIA approval, Andretti failed in bids for his team to enter F1 with



Andretti is still pushing ahead with his F1 plan

OWENS/PEC

General Motors backing, with F1 judging that it did not feel the team would be competitive or add value to the championship as an 11th entrant from 2026. The 62-year-old drew heat from F1 and rival team bosses with his aggressive push for an F1 entry.

By handing the operation over to

Towriss, the revamped team may look to reset relations with F1 management. It could also restart the process to become a fully fledged GM works team with its own Cadillac engine from 2028, something that F1 feels would make it a more credible bid to enter the series.

BEN HUNT

Barrichello reunites with his old F3000 team

INTERNATIONAL GT OPEN

Rubens Barrichello may be entering this weekend's International GT Open finale at Monza in a GT3 Lamborghini Huracan rather than a DeLorean, but the Formula 1 veteran will be winding the clock back 32 years as he reunites with the Il Barone Rampante team.

The Brazilian finished third with Giuseppe Cipriani's squad in the 1992 International Formula 3000 championship, a consistent rookie season netting four podiums in a Reynard 92D. Barrichello graduated to F1 in 1993 and took 11 grand prix victories before bowing out at the end of the 2011 season with 322 starts.

Two Brazilian Stock Car titles later, Barrichello will resume his affiliation with 59-year-old Cipriani, who has already clinched the Am class title in GT Open and will step up to the Pro-Am division to share with Barrichello in Sunday's 500km race.



Barrichello, here in F3000 in 1992, will now race Lambo of Cipriani (inset)

"Obviously the team has changed category and members, but they are still an excellent team," remarked Barrichello, who took Italian GP spoils at Monza in 2002, 2004 and 2009, and whose son Fernando is racing in the Euroformula Open support series. "I'm competing in the GT Open for the first time and so it will all be new for me. I had the opportunity to do some laps with the car in Barcelona

and I have to say that I felt good."

The GT Open title is likely to be decided between Simon Reicher/Christopher Haase (Eastalent Racing Audi) and Alessio Deledda (Oregon Team Lamborghini), who are tied atop the standings. Meanwhile, British GT4 aces Zak Meakin and Mikey Porter will guest aboard an Optimum McLaren 720S on their GT3 debut.

JAMES NEWBOLD

Supercars bins tradition for NASCAR format

AUSSIE SUPERCARS

Australia's Supercars series is to introduce a NASCAR-style Finals format to determine its 2025 champion.

The championship will switch to a three-stage split season, starting with the opening eight rounds counting for a Sprint Cup, and then the two endurance races – including the Bathurst 1000 – determining an Enduro Cup champion. Should those be two different drivers, both will be seeded into the final three events along with however many others are needed to make 10. From then on, drivers will be eliminated until four are left to vie for the title at the final event, the Adelaide 500.

All 10 Finals qualifiers will go to the first event at Surfers Paradise reset to 3000 points, then 4000 for



the next race at Sandown. Any driver who wins at those venues will be automatically seeded into the final four to remain in title contention for Adelaide, along with the next highest points-scorers.

Supercars CEO Shane Howard explained: "The emphasis was on improving

the racing product and giving drivers the opportunity to always attack without an external factor preventing them from being aggressive. Our fans wanted more excitement, more unpredictability, and a true test to find the best champion. The Finals series

will do just that. This format is set to change how we crown a champion, and we're confident it will keep fans on the edge of their seats until the very last lap."

Supercars has also announced format changes for the 13-event series, which is up from one in 2024. Every round other than at Albert Park will feature a Top 10 Shootout for pole position, and different tyre compounds will be used for each Saturday Sprint race and its respective qualifying session at most Sprint rounds. Teams will also have to cope with new soft and supersoft tyre compounds introduced by Dunlop.

The traditional pre-Bathurst 500km enduro will move to The Bend Motorsport Park in South Australia.

PHIL BRANAGAN



Westbrook decides to hang up his helmet

IMSA

Richard Westbrook has called time on a career in which he drove for multiple manufacturers, claimed a pair of Porsche Supercup titles, class victories in the Daytona and Sebring enduros in North America and two overall podiums at the Le Mans 24 Hours. Last weekend's Petit Le Mans 10-hour round of the IMSA SportsCar Championship at Road Atlanta was his last race, he has confirmed.

Westbrook has hung up his helmet with a year to go on his contract with the JDC-Miller MotorSports Porsche GTP squad. The time was right, he said, to call it a day at 49. "You can't do it forever and at some point you have to be honest with yourself, say you've had a good run and pass on the baton," said the Briton. "This was the first season that I have felt like that. My performances were still there, but the enjoyment factor had gone a bit.

"I wasn't so excited about getting in the car as I had been in the past. If that's the



Westbrook (left) on 2016 Le Mans podium with Scott Dixon and Ryan Briscoe

GILBERT/MOTORSPORT IMAGES

case, you have to question whether you should be doing it. I'm really happy with my career and the way it has ended. I probably wasn't going to achieve a lot more and now it has been my decision to stop."

Westbrook said that his biggest achievement was racing for 23 years after he started competing again following six years of inactivity after his single-seater career stalled in Formula 3 in 1996.

"I have to pinch myself sometimes what has happened over the past 20-odd years," he explained. "Everything happened so

quickly: I went from doing nothing to driving for all these manufacturers." Porsche, Chevrolet, BMW, Aston Martin, Ford and Cadillac all paid Westbrook during that time.

But there are regrets, he said: "When I look back I think I should have won more championships. There were big wins in IMSA, like Daytona and Sebring, but never a championship. That will always rankle."

GARY WATKINS

[P44 PETIT LE MANS](#)

BLACK/PEC



Foster secures IndyCar seat

INDYCAR

Recently crowned Indy NXT champion Louis Foster will graduate to IndyCar next season with Rahal Letterman Lanigan Racing after agreeing what deal has been termed a multi-year deal. The 21-year-old Briton, a two-time finalist in the Autosport BRDC Award, will join Graham Rahal and a yet-to-be-announced third driver at the team.

Foster's first taste of IndyCar machinery came in September last year with Andretti Global – the team with which he won in Indy NXT – at Road America. In an effort to further his

preparation, RLLR is currently working to solidify a programme that may include a test later this year.

"I'm hoping that coming off the experience gained from winning the Indy NXT championship, that will leave me in a good stance to get the ball rolling," said Foster.

RLLR co-owner Mike Lanigan compared Foster to Graham Rahal's team-mate from 2008 with Newman/Haas Racing. "I look forward to watching him grow into a future IndyCar star," he said. "He reminds me of another driver – the late, great Justin Wilson."

JOEY BARNES

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DAMS takes plunge into F3 as more drivers named for 2025

FORMULA 3

DAMS, the French team that has been a stalwart of Formula 3000, GP2 and Formula 2 since the 1980s, is to expand into the FIA Formula 3 Championship for 2025.

The team, which was taken over by ex-F1 driver Charles Pic in 2022, has taken the place of Jenzer Motorsport, which withdrew after an unbroken 15-year stint in GP3/F3 to focus on its other programmes, including its F4 teams. It represents a return to the third tier for DAMS, which competed in GP3 in 2016 and 2017 while still under the control of its late founder Jean-Paul Driot.

F3 introduces its new car for 2025, and Pic (below) believes this is the ideal time to enter the series. “This is a logical step for us as we’re already competing in F2, and this latest endeavour means we can develop younger drivers from our F3 programme into our F2 team, using systems we have put in place to support and train drivers on the technical side,” he said. “Starting the championship with the arrival of a brand-new car is great timing, as we can reuse our methods that we’ve developed over the years.”

The F3 driver market continues



to move apace, with the top three drivers from this year’s Formula Regional European Championship by Alpine all named in plum seats during the past few days. Newly crowned champion Rafael Camara has joined Trident, the Brazilian Ferrari junior leaving the environs of Prema Racing for his graduation. Current runner-up James Wharton is another to move on from Prema and has headed to ART Grand Prix, and the Australian will be joined there by third-placed Finn Tuukka Taponen, like Camara a Ferrari protege.

Prema, meanwhile, has recruited palindromically named Mexican Noel Leon, who showed flashes of good form in his rookie season this year with Van Amersfoort Racing.

These drivers were all in action in last week’s two-day test at Jerez, which was topped by Campos Racing duo Nikola Tsolov and Mari Boya (below). Italian F4 champion Freddie Slater was in action for Rodin Motorsport, but sources suggest that the Briton will be competing next year in Formula Regional.

TOP 10 JEREZ TIMES

POS	DRIVER(TEAM)	TIME
1	Nikola Tsolov (Campos)	1m29.758s
2	Mari Boya (Campos)	1m29.881s
3	Martinius Stenshorne (Hitech)	1m30.050s
4	Noah Stromsted (Trident)	1m30.072s
5	Ugo Ugochukwu (Prema)	1m30.175s
6	T Inthraphuvasak (Campos)	1m30.202s
7	Charlie Wurz (Trident)	1m30.221s
8	Josh Dufek (Hitech)	1m30.230s
9	Freddie Slater (Rodin)	1m30.263s
10	Christian Ho (Jenzer)	1m30.317s

IndyCar to race on Texas streets

INDYCAR

IndyCar will return to Texas in 2026 with a new street track in the city of Arlington in a collaboration between series owner Penske Entertainment, American football giant the Dallas Cowboys and the Texas Rangers baseball team.

The 14-turn, 2.73-mile layout has been designed by IndyCar’s long-time street track architect Tony Cotman. It features a 0.9-mile straight, as well as a ‘horseshoe’ carousel that makes up Turn 6. A double-sided pitlane, similar to the Detroit street race, will be used. The track will go underneath hospitality and suites in two different areas.

Two-time champion Josef Newgarden, who attended the unveiling in Arlington, told Autosport: “It’s kind of got everything. It’s got the typical low-speed sections that you would find on a street course, but then it has some complex double-apex corners that kind of wrap around the stadium seating, so that will be really unique for fans.

“It’s got one pretty high-speed corner that leads onto the longest straight. And then the straightaways are very long, so I think understanding efficiency with downforce is going to be a topic here that’s not necessarily a topic on other street circuits. So, that could be an interesting element.

“How are you going to stay out front if you’re leading this thing? I think you’re going to be exposed around a track like this. So, it could be very entertaining to watch. It could be a draft-fest on that long straightaway. That’s what you’re going to be dealing with and we’ll figure it out as we do.”

IndyCar had an unbroken run from 1997 to 2023 of competing on Texas Motor Speedway, while there was also a round at US Grand Prix venue Circuit of The Americas in 2019.

JOEY BARNES





ERC World Rally Championship event winner Hayden Paddon has become European Rally champion for the second successive season. The Kiwi, together with co-driver John Kennard, led last weekend's Rally Silesia in Poland in their Hyundai i20 before surviving a brief off-road scare and settling for third. Skoda driver Andrea Mabellini took his first ERC victory, with Northern Irishman Jon Armstrong claiming a maiden podium in the series thanks to claiming second place in his M-Sport Ford. **Photograph by Hyundai Motorsport**

YELLOLY SPLITS FROM BMW

Nick Yelloly has parted company with BMW after six years that encompassed victories in the 24-hour GT3 classics at the Nurburgring and Spa in 2020 and 2023 respectively, and the first IMSA win for the M Hybrid V8 at Watkins Glen last year. The 33-year-old Briton's plans for 2025 were due to be announced after Autosport closed for press.

LAURSEN IN A LEXUS

Dane Conrad Laursen will join the Auto Sport Promotion Lexus squad for the World Endurance Championship's Bahrain finale next month to drive its #78 entry alongside Kelvin van der Linde and Arnold Robin. The ELMS Ferrari regular replaces Clemens Schmid as the silver-ranked driver in the line-up.

CRAWFORD STAYS PUT

While DAMS is busily setting up its Formula 3 team (see left), it has also found time to secure the services of Jak Crawford for its Formula 2 line-up in 2025. The Texan teenager, who is fifth in the 2024 standings and is a protege of the Aston Martin F1 team, therefore remains on board at the squad for a second season.

ROC MOVES TO AUSTRALIA

The Race of Champions is to make something of a change for 2025, with a move from the snow and ice of Pite Havsbad – its home in 2022 and 2023 – to the former Olympic venue in the Australian metropolis of Sydney. Following a one-year sabbatical in 2024, the event will take place in March on a purpose-built asphalt track in the Accor Stadium. Australian Supercars star Jamie Whincup, a Race of Champions veteran in Bangkok and Barbados, has already been named as one of the drivers.

KOREA TRIP CANNED

Japan's Super Formula series has canned its planned trip to Inje Speedium in South Korea for 2025 for what would have been its first 'foreign' round since 2004. Promoters are still working on expanding the series' pan-Asian footprint for 2026.

ERT: new name; Porsche power

FORMULA E

The ERT Formula E team has new owners, a new name and new powertrains for the upcoming 2024-25 season.

The team has been acquired by US-based investment firm The Forest Road Company, via additional capital from Ares Management, and will race under an American licence as Kiro Race Co. It will retain its base at Silverstone and has announced a new technical partnership with Porsche to run the manufacturer's 99X Electric powertrain, which has been renamed the 99X Electric WCG3. The unit will undergo an upgrade ahead of the new Gen3 Evo era, but will essentially be an older spec than those used by the factory team and customer squad Andretti, while Porsche will be the only manufacturer to supply three teams on the grid.

"This is truly a historic moment for



ROMNEY/MOTORSPORT IMAGES

our team," said team principal Alex Hui. "Their [Forest Road's] investment allows us to build with confidence for the future and compete at the highest level. We are excited to work with them and Porsche."

ERT, which stood for Electric Racing Technologies, has raced in several guises since FE was founded in 2014, including NIO 333, NEXTEV and Team China Racing. The team, which ran Dan Ticktum and Sergio Sette Camara (above) last season, is the only one yet to confirm its line-up for the 2024-25 campaign.

STEFAN MACKLEY



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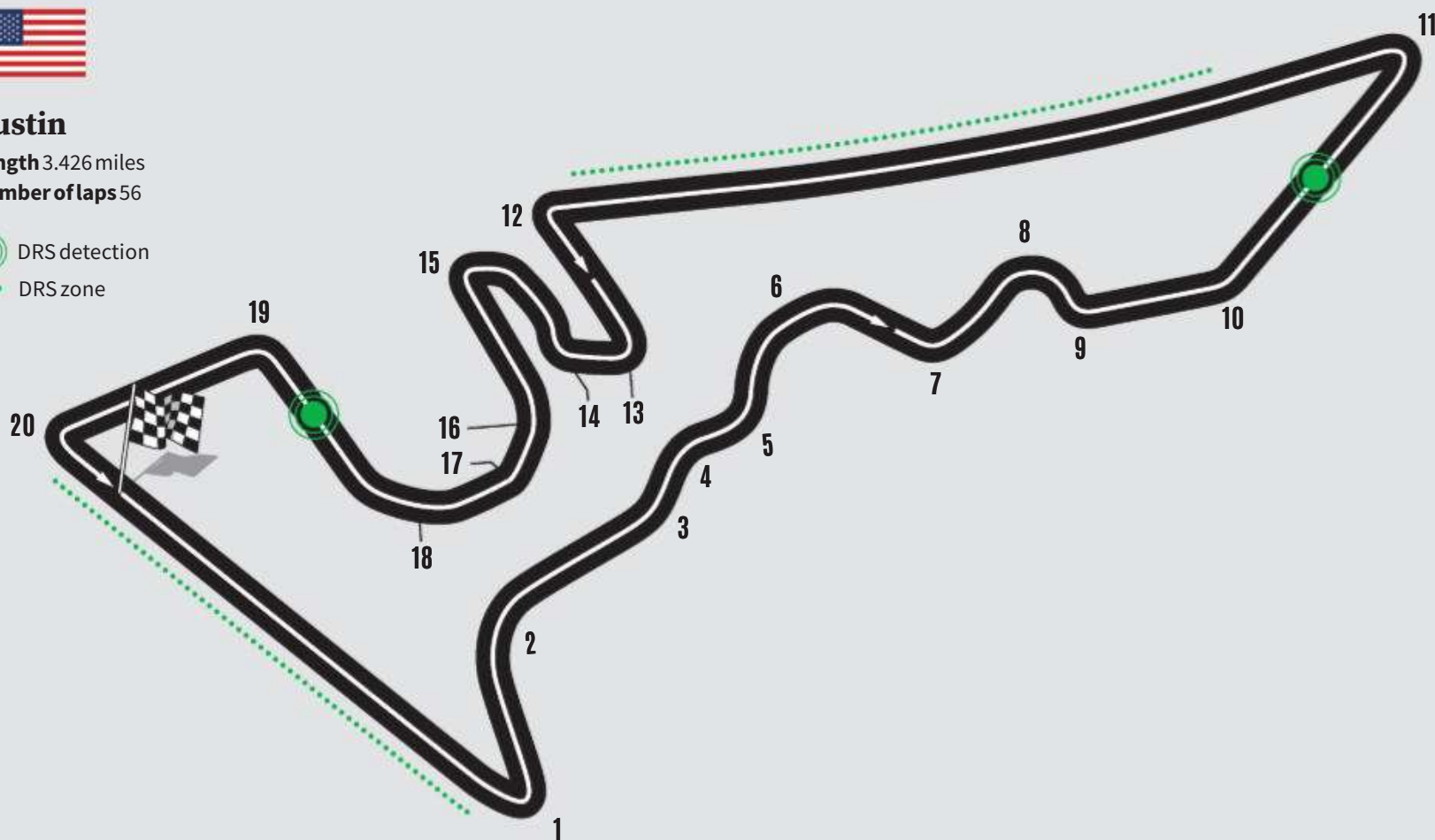
F1 UNITED STATES GRAND PRIX PREVIEW



Austin

Length 3.426 miles
Number of laps 56

DRS detection
 DRS zone



UK START TIMES

Friday 18 October

FP 1830

SPRINT QUALIFYING 2230

Saturday 19 October

SPRINT 1900

QUALIFYING 2300

Sunday 20 October

RACE 2000

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BBC RADIO 5 LIVE

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TYRE ALLOCATION



CHAMPIONSHIP POSITIONS

Drivers

1	Verstappen	331
2	Norris	279
3	Leclerc	245
4	Piastrri	237
5	Sainz	190

Constructors

1	McLaren	516
2	Red Bull	475
3	Ferrari	441
4	Mercedes	329
5	Aston Martin	86



AUSTIN STATS

Previous winners

2023	Max Verstappen	Red Bull
2022	Max Verstappen	Red Bull
2021	Max Verstappen	Red Bull
2019	Valtteri Bottas	Mercedes
2018	Kimi Raikkonen	Ferrari
2017	Lewis Hamilton	Mercedes
2016	Lewis Hamilton	Mercedes
2015	Lewis Hamilton	Mercedes
2014	Lewis Hamilton	Mercedes
2013	Sebastian Vettel	Red Bull

2023 POLE POSITION

Charles Leclerc
1m34.723s

POLE LAP RECORD

Valtteri Bottas
1m32.029s (2019)

RACE LAP RECORD

Charles Leclerc
1m36.169s (2019)



Podiums

Lewis Hamilton	9
Max Verstappen	5
Sebastian Vettel	4
Nico Rosberg	3
Kimi Raikkonen	2
Daniel Ricciardo	2
Valtteri Bottas	1
Lando Norris	1
Romain Grosjean	1
Sergio Perez	1



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Albon's road to an F1 century

As he prepares for his 100th grand prix start, the Williams driver has reached a point in his career where it comes naturally to push his team for a car worthy of his talents

ALEX KALINAUCKAS

There's a Taurus-shaped hole in Alex Albon's Formula 1 CV. It's why he wasn't celebrating reaching 100 grand prix starts along with his fellow 2019 rookies Lando Norris and George Russell this time one year ago as they headed to the United States Grand Prix.

Like so many Red Bull juniors, Albon wouldn't be at this point without the energy drink giant. In a parallel universe, the glittering constellations are shining down on a smart, successful, polite and engaging Formula E driver. That's had Helmut Marko not come calling again ahead of the electric championship's Valencia pre-season test in late 2018. Back then, the late great Jean-Paul Driot – whose e.dams squad Albon was essentially refusing to race for to make his F1 dream finally a reality – wondered if the now 28-year-old lacked the “political” edge to thrive in Red Bull's set-up.

Albon's speed got him into its main squad from what was then Toro Rosso after just 12 races in 2019. But his lack of results against Max Verstappen the following year meant he was pushed aside and Sergio Perez's career prolonged right at the point of its extinction.

Four years on, such decisions amid the ‘headache’ of Verstappen's overall brilliance can only be viewed as how Red Bull's once great junior scheme has badly broken down. For Albon, Williams has revived his career away from that confusion. He has now spent 61 of those 99 GP races he should cap as a century on

“The past five years have brought some of the hardest but most rewarding times”

Sunday with the historic British squad. These days, however, he's acting just as Driot once feared he could not.

Ignore the overdone team radio debate about how Franco Colapinto “divebombed” at the start last time out in Singapore. Instead, listen to Albon elsewhere – chastising Williams for being “too indecisive” in the Hungarian GP. Or pointing out, with an exasperated touch, “that wasn't a very good out-lap for tyres”, after having to push hard on new rubber to escape the warring Pierre Gasly and Kevin Magnussen at Monza. This is the kind of demanding driver-to-team attitude lionised in successful racers such as Verstappen and Lewis Hamilton.

But it's also proof of exactly how far Albon has come. Williams insiders speak of how his confidence has been revitalised since joining the team in 2022 – when F1's most recent memory of

Albon was how he recreated Hamilton's line at Copse after the 2021 British GP in a failed bid from Red Bull to get the FIA to review that crash with Verstappen.

Williams team boss James Vowles recently said that Albon has “become a real leader of the organisation” and is “committed [for] the best years of a career” in F1 with it.

Albon's career progression heaps pressure upon Williams within his story. Vowles is open in saying that Williams is set to sacrifice 2025 with the aim of nailing the rules reset coming in 2026. “The past five years have brought with them some of the hardest but most rewarding times, and I'm grateful for every minute,” Albon said this week, which will feature his FW46 sporting a commemorative starts century logo at Austin.

Albon committed early to a new multi-year contract extension beyond his existing agreement to race for Williams in 2025. That took him out of the dramatic driver market excitement this year, but it shouldn't be forgotten that Red Bull still offered him a first-option deal (which might have resulted in a three-year contract) from 2026. Although his new Williams contract scuppered this, it suggests a path back to F1's current top teams may not be totally off the table for Albon – with Ferrari and McLaren closed off for the foreseeable future, but Verstappen the cork in two line-up bottles for Red Bull and Mercedes. But Vowles is bullish – actually in relation to Albon's future team-mate Carlos Sainz – that “when we're beating Ferrari, I think he'll prefer to be here”.

Vowles convinced Sainz not to sign the Sauber/Audi deal the Spaniard had long had in his grasp because he in turn believes that the current Ferrari driver can lead Williams to finally become a top F1 squad again. Sainz certainly has experience of top-class teams from his decade-long F1 career. Vowles wants him to highlight those best practice elements that stood out at Ferrari. But Albon had those years within Red Bull to expound similar notes to his Williams colleagues. And that Sainz has been hired to supposedly lead Williams to its next gains jars somewhat with Vowles's claims on Albon's burgeoning leadership style with the team.

Yet the thrust behind pairing these two similarly cerebral drivers is that they should push each other to greater heights. It's certainly a plan that has come together magnificently at McLaren in pairing Norris with Oscar Piastri. And the outcome for either Albon or Sainz in 2025 will shape the horoscope-like readings that so often carve F1 narratives for the next phase of their careers. Given he is a three-time GP race winner, the stakes are correspondingly higher for Sainz. But, what with Albon's loyalty and clear progress through his second F1 chapter since the start of 2022, it really is on Williams to soon deliver a car that he can take to compete on terms with Verstappen and co in the leading pack. Then F1 will see exactly how high his peaks truly will be. ✨



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SCAN ME



Team UK means business

Team UK's captain for the upcoming FIA Motorsport Games at Valencia has a point to prove this time around

CHRIS FROGGATT

Unfinished business. That's what the FIA Motorsport Games are for me. But to understand why, we need to look at what the Games are.

The FIA's Motorsport Games is a three-day, multi-discipline motorsport event covering everything from karting to Esports to GTs and even – new for 2024 – truck racing. It's essentially a motoring-oriented equivalent of the Olympics, with a plethora of events taking place and, crucially, drivers competing for their countries. That swap to countries over teams makes it a very different prospect – both for drivers and for fans.

For fans, it's almost the perfect gateway into other forms of racing. It showcases some of the best motorsport you'll see, with simplified versions of the different categories. It's a purer approach, where it's racing at its most fundamental. This is especially true in the GT classes. Rather than a lengthy race with rules that could be confusing to newcomers and multiple classes all racing at the same time, here it's one pitstop, a driver swap, and the first over the line is the winner. No class winners, no six-hour-long races with different cars at different stages and strategies putting people out of position – just an hour-long race to decide who walks away with the gold.

The nationality-based teams also make it more accessible for finding who to support. Drivers competing for their country means that new fans can see their national team and see how their country is doing. It immediately makes it easier for someone to feel invested – instead of tuning in to see cars and teams and drivers you've perhaps not heard of, your country is right there in front of you.

Another thing that makes the games different – you get the chance to see huge names compete alongside, and against, stars of the future. Touring car veteran Tom Coronel and Le Mans class winner Matt Campbell both stood atop podiums in 2022, while a certain Andrea Kimi Antonelli won gold in the Formula 4. Two years later, he'd been announced as Lewis Hamilton's replacement at Mercedes for 2025.

Nowhere else will you see a better collection of names competing in earnest. And that's part of what makes Motorsport Games unique – the opportunity to watch hungry young drivers taking on experienced pros. The upstarts desperately want to prove themselves on this global stage against seasoned professionals, while those same professionals almost have their reputation on the line each time they take to the track.

The winner-takes-all aspect heightens that – there are no dropped scores, there are no other rounds to try and make up a points deficit. You win or you lose, and that's that.

With so many events – there are 28 different categories this

time – there's always something going on. You can immerse yourself in so many different types of motorsport, and it really keeps you occupied as a fan. It allows you so much exposure to not only different kinds of racing but different racers, and this can bring a lot of eyeballs from a lot of other kinds of racing.

Perhaps you're a formula fan and haven't been able to get into GT racing because of the length of races – no problem, the races are an hour long. Maybe you're a karting fan but

“With so many events – there are 28 different categories – there's always something going on”

fancy checking out drifting – that's there as well. Always been intrigued by cross car racing? They've got you covered.

Of course, competing for your country also changes it for us drivers. You're more focused on the result because you know you're doing it for everyone at home. A bad result isn't just a bad result for you or your team, but for your country. Nobody wants to let the side down, and that adds a lot more pressure.

That's where I come in as Team Captain. I'll be acting as the figurehead for the team – a support structure, offering advice and help in as much or as little of a capacity as each individual driver wants. It's a role I'm immensely proud to be taking, and it brings us to my unfinished business.

I took part in the first iteration of the games back in 2019. Competing alongside Flick Haigh – the first woman to win the British GT3 championship – we flew the flag for Team UK in the GT Cup.

The 2022 Games were the next up and, while I'd again be competing in GT Cup, this time it was to be alongside my role as captain of Team UK – or, at least, that was the plan. A severe bout of food poisoning confined me to my hotel room having made it out to Paul Ricard, forcing me to listen to the unmistakable sounds of racing that I should have been a part of just outside my window.

GT racer Sam Neary was drafted into both the driver's seat and team captain role and, alongside Ian Loggie, secured one of the two medals Team UK scored that year.

Now, I'm back. And during that last weekend of October, I have some business to take care of. I'll see you there. 🍀

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YOUR SAY

I'm starting to realise that I'm leaving many meetings not only frustrated, but feeling decidedly short-changed!

MARTIN WELLS

Motorsport's diminishing value for money

Motorsport is not cheap, for either competitors or spectators, and having attended the last two rounds of the British GT Championship at Donington Park and Brands Hatch in the latter capacity, I'm starting to wonder if either of us are getting value for money.

Both rounds were blighted by extended periods of full-course yellows and safety cars, and it's no fun for anybody when their hard-earned cash is being wasted as cars trundle around in single file at well below racing speed.

And it's not an isolated issue. With most timetables packed with multiple short races – and today's health and safety-conscious environment requiring a safety car to deal with any stationary vehicle – resolving most incidents usually means losing at least a quarter of the race, and a couple leads to less than half the scheduled laps being run.

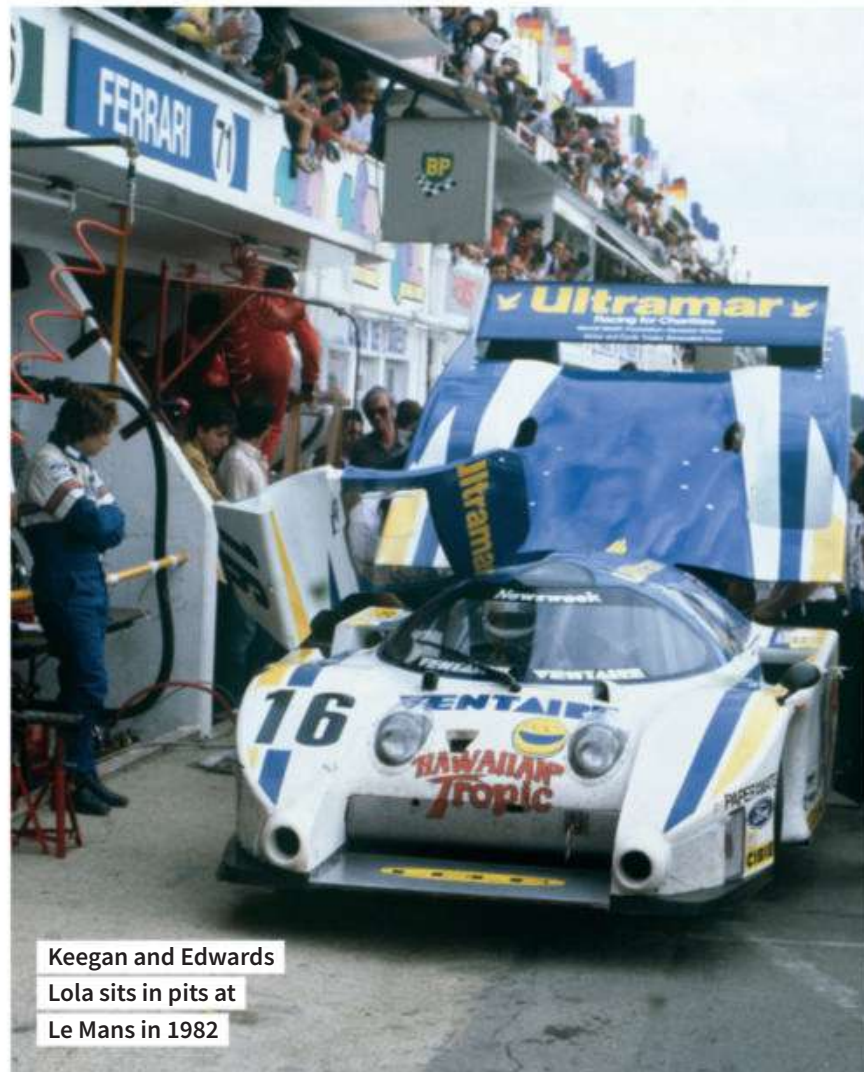
When you throw in the fact that track-limits penalties regularly mean the order in which the cars cross the line is not the one that appears in the final results and that single-seaters no longer seem able to race in the rain in the UK, I'm starting to realise that I'm leaving many meetings not only frustrated, but feeling decidedly short-changed!

I'm not sure what the solution is, now that the sport has backed itself into such a tightly-regulated corner, although judicious use of red flags would certainly have allowed both GT races to run significantly more laps, but with so many other sports and pastimes competing for the pound in people's pockets, one needs to be found before teams, drivers and fans decide they are not getting what they paid for and start spending their money elsewhere.

Martin Wells
Buckingham

Rupert Keegan remembered

I was very sad to hear that Rupert Keegan had passed away (Obituary, Autosport 3 October). My lasting memory of Rupert is when my young son and I were at Le Mans and we wanted to get a photo of Rupert signed by him.



Keegan and Edwards
Lola sits in pits at
Le Mans in 1982

Unfortunately, Rupert and Guy Edwards had mechanical trouble and retired their car early. We went into the pit area and went to his motorhome to get the autograph. When we found his motorhome, he invited me and my son in, signed the autograph and we enjoyed a chat and a drink with both Rupert and Guy.

He will be sadly missed I am sure.

Tony Boyce
By email

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The cost of being an F1 fan

Spectator ticket prices to attend grand prix events grab headlines, but how much have these actually increased over the past decade? And what are fans paying to follow Formula 1 and support their favourite drivers and teams in other ways?

ALEX KALINAUCKAS

Almost 10 years ago, Autosport asked: “Is Formula 1 a rip off?” We crunched the numbers on ticket prices, subscriptions in the early days of the pay TV takeover, team merchandise, travel and more – everything we thought you needed to be an F1 fan in 2015.

Those were the days before Liberty Media took over as the championship’s commercial rights holder. Since it did so, the company has massively changed the way F1 is promoted and consumed.

Here we present a fresh assessment for 2024. Given Autosport’s typical audience, we have kept things UK-focused for simplicity (with a few exceptions) and dropped much of the previous focus on travel. After all, some are willing to pay much more than others to attend races – in the UK or around the world – while even getting to events has changed, with an increased focus on park-and-ride schemes alongside existing public transport infrastructures. City-based races are massively up, too.

We’ve kept plenty the same, however, including assessing the cost of and ways to watch F1 on TV, as well as how much you’ll pay for team kit these days. There’s also a new assessment of which races offer best bang for your buck from a sporting perspective, plus a look into the new deals Liberty has made to promote F1 since 2017.

Here’s what we discovered.

Following F1 at home

Outside the United States and Italy, F1 fans have just one chance to watch the action live in their home nations every year. This, and motorsport’s fast and complex nature, means it remains among the most TV-focused sports. In data provided to Autosport by FOM (Formula One Management), it is claimed that F1’s global TV audience average for each race is now 58.9million people. That’s up from a 48.2million average in 2018, when FOM fully started to track its audience data under Liberty ownership.

In the UK since 2012, Sky Sports has held the rights to show every F1 race live. Since our last look at such things, Channel 4 now shows just one race live on terrestrial TV each year, compared to the BBC showing 10 in 2015.

Compared to 2015, the cost of the packages required to watch F1 on Sky has increased by £72 per year to £636 – although this is under the rate of inflation. To follow the Channel 4 offering, viewers will need to buy a BBC TV licence – at £169.50. An alternative, and cheaper, way to follow all 24 races is to buy a Sky Sports day pass from Now TV at £14.99 a pop.

Taking the Now TV approach would mean missing out on the full driver onboards selection Sky offers its F1 channel customers via its Sky Sports app, Q and Glass systems. But because of Sky’s exclusivity arrangement, this in itself significantly sells UK TV viewers short on what F1 offers to viewers in other territories. This comes via the F1TV OTT (over-the-top) platform introduced by FOM in 2018.



F1TV’s ‘Pro’ top offering provides two commentary teams of the live action for English language viewers (one is FOM’s in-house production, the other is Sky’s), plus all the onboard feeds from every car. And, critically, to viewers in select territories outside the UK, where the ‘Pro’ level is not available due to the Sky deal, these remain available at any time afterwards.

If you can multi-task well enough to follow multi-feeds via the Sky Sports App, along with its TV coverage, that’s fine. But anyone wanting to see additional action at their leisure cannot. UK F1TV subscribers can only get its ‘Access’ level at a cost of £19.99. This does come with

access to live timing, driver tracker and limited telemetry data, which Sky also provides.

In terms of non-live TV content, Netflix’s *Drive to Survive* is credited with massively boosting F1’s popularity globally, and many other sports have tried to launch their own versions, with varying degrees of success. It was far from the first such behind-the-scenes sport documentary, but its heavy narrative focus and release timing ahead of the COVID-19 pandemic – where viewers had much more time to consume the show’s first three series by the second year of lockdowns in the west – proved very successful.

In the UK, a standard Netflix subscription costs £10.99. As well as *DTS*, a new series focusing on the all-female F1 Academy championship is currently in production. Netflix is also bringing out a drama series based on the life of Ayrton Senna next month.

Since 2022, F1 has doubled its official gaming releases, with *F1 Manager* sold alongside the annual season-specific racing title released by Electronic Arts since it bought long-time F1 game producer Codemasters in 2021. The PlayStation 5 versions of these games cost £39.99 and £69.99 respectively.

F1’s other major ‘at home’ project is the upcoming Apple-produced, Joseph Kosinski-directed and Brad Pitt-starring *F1* film. This is essentially a big-budget marketing follow-up to *DTS*, as F1 attempts to replicate Mattel’s success with *Barbie* in showcasing its intellectual property to a wider audience. The >>

F1 MEDIA COSTS	
MEDIA TYPE	PRICE
Sky Sports F1**	£636
Channel 4**	£169.50
Now TV (day pass)	£14.99
F1TV**	£19.99
Netflix*	£10.99
F1 Exhibition at ExCeL	£33
F1 Arcade	£17.95
F1 24 Game	£69.99
F1 Manager Game	£39.99
Apple film (average UK adult cinema ticket)	£7.92
Autosport subscription** (AS+ and online digital mag)	£39.99
*per month **per year	

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average UK adult cinema ticket is £7.92.

Outside UK homes are the 'F1 Arcade' bars packed with game simulators in London and Birmingham. One 30-minute race session costs £17.95 per person, alongside the usual city-centre prices for food and drink. F1 opened its first international Arcades in Boston and Washington DC, with a further bar planned to open in Las Vegas.

Currently running at London's ExCeL is the F1 Exhibition that first opened in Madrid last year. Tickets for the display, which shows items from F1's history and looks to its future, cost £33 at peak times.

Following F1 at live locations

Although F1 is best followed on screen when it comes to understanding the 600 individual races (including sprints) completed by every driver across the current 24-event calendar, there's still nothing like being at a circuit and seeing the cars live. The smell of the burning tyres, the wheel squeals from driver mistakes, the roar of the crowd – they're clichés for a reason.

Below and right is the breakdown for attending each race on the 2024 calendar. As with our 2015 calculation, we've stuck with assessing the cheapest single-day (Sunday) ticket for each race (where available) to provide a comparison in that period.

This also means that F1 events can be compared to other forms of motorsport, different sports and live events generally in 2024 – examples of which we've also provided here. Typically, these single-day tickets provide General Admission access only and so do not come with reserved seats.

From the comparison of F1 single-raceday tickets, we can see that many prices have risen above the rate of inflation – but with several notable exceptions. Singapore, for example, has barely changed in terms of its offering at this price point, while there are interesting direct comparison alterations in the relevant price levels for Silverstone and Monza.

Of course, there is much debate about the appropriate level of ticket prices in 2024 – something that's not limited to sporting events. Rising prices had been occurring even before the current cost of living crisis turbocharged the focus on higher payments, as well as hidden fees and additional charges on ticketing websites.

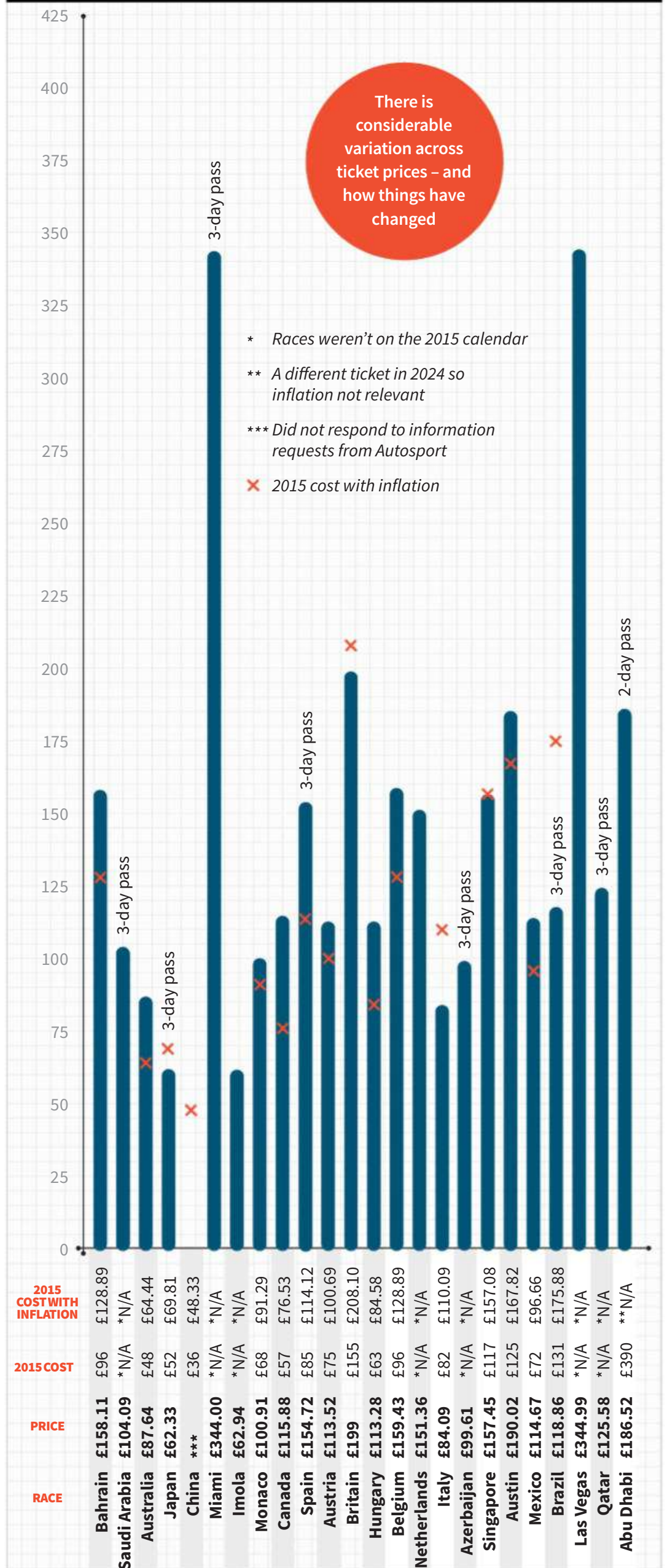
The British GP has courted much controversy for its prices in recent years, particularly after its dynamic pricing debacle when tickets for its 2023 event went on sale in September 2022. We also recognise that many fans feel steep costs of food and drink at races, as well as parking and camping costs being taken into consideration, often leave them frustrated.

Many F1 fans will also want to attend a whole race weekend and take in the practice, qualifying and support series showings too. As our 2015-24 comparison table shows, there has been a notable increased prevalence of races selling multi-day tickets now as standard.

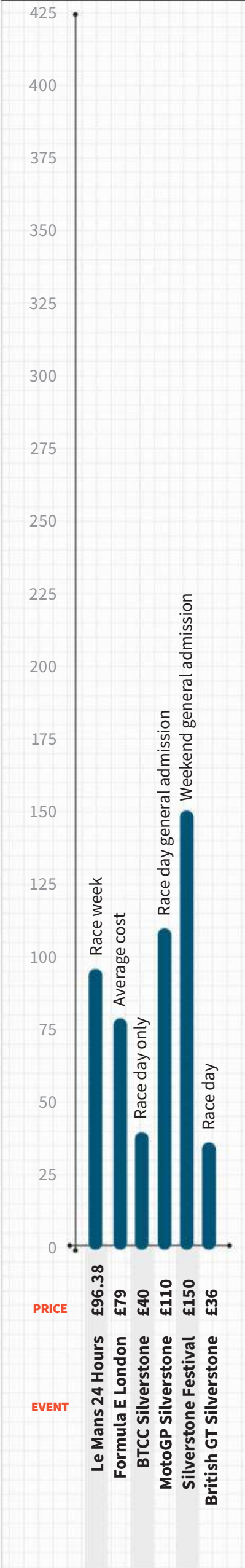
This is up to individual promoters and their business models, but in many cases – and with prices rising sharply for grandstand or hospitality tickets – this means prices for groups or families can quickly reach many hundreds of pounds.

A key difference here from 2015 is how FOM now requires promoters to provide additional value – typically in the form of concerts and shows, but it can also mean better investment in facilities and transport access – in their ticket prices. This has led to many F1 events being promoted more along the lines of >>

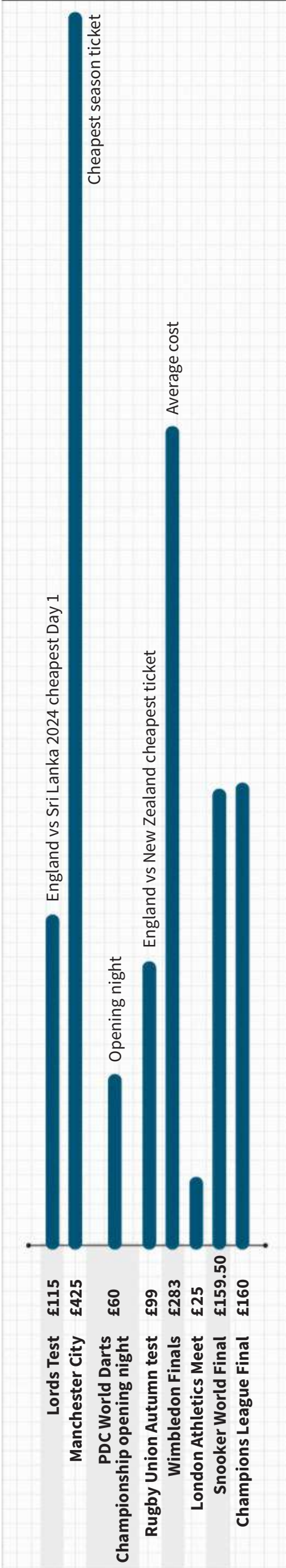
2024 F1 TICKET PRICES



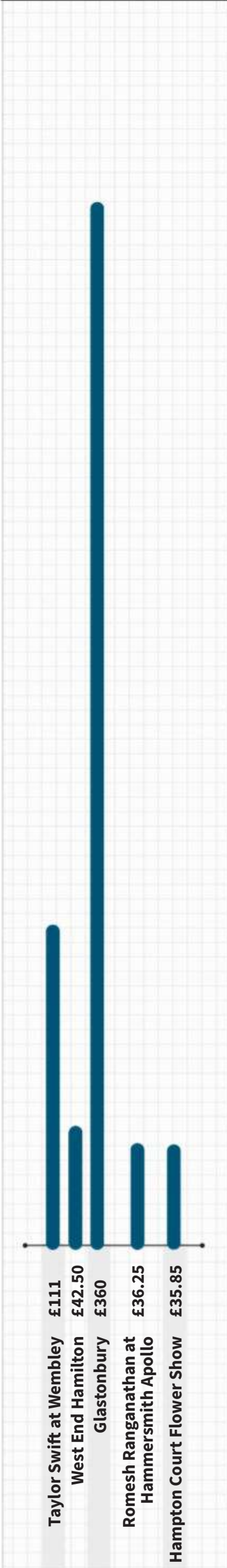
OTHER MOTORSPORT EVENTS



OTHER SPORTS TICKETS



OTHER EVENTS



BEST F1 TRACK FOR SPECTATOR ACTION VALUE FOR MONEY

RANK	TRACK	RANKING SCORE
1	Monaco	2
2	Mexico City	3
3	Zandvoort	4.5
4	Interlagos	4.5
5	Singapore	5.5
6	Hungary	6
7	Montreal	8
8	Shanghai	9
9	Barcelona	11.5
10	Bahrain	12
11	RB Ring	12.5
12	Austin	12.5
13	Imola	13.5
14	Miami	13.5
15	Abu Dhabi	14
16	Suzuka	15
17	Qatar	15.5
18	Baku	15.5
19	Melbourne	17
20	Las Vegas	18
21	Silverstone	19.5
22	Monza	21.5
23	Jeddah	22
24	Spa	23.5

Criteria: Race duration/car sightings total combination - tiebreaker is number of race laps



DUNBAR/MOTORSPORTIMAGES

music and other festival types. In the data given to Autosport by FOM, it is claimed that the overall annual race attendance figure is now 6million. F1 also claims that 40% of people attending a race in 2023 did so for the first time.

While the numbers must speak for themselves here, and annoyingly premium prices for concessions at live events is a long-standing issue, we decided to look at statistics that matter to many fans – perhaps including those who feel alienated by the championship’s recent push for races to hold non-sporting productions and feature altered sporting formats. We have therefore gone through every race on the current calendar (not including sprints) and worked out which races are best for seeing the cars most in racing scenarios. Simply put, how many times and for how long will you see the racing machines in action, having laid down your hard-earned cash for the privilege.

This is a subjective exercise – it may be that visiting the hallowed ground at certain tracks (assuming you can stomach the traffic trouble common at many of the purpose-built facilities) is worth it even though their score on assessment is low. To calculate this, we ranked the races in order of each one’s most recent dry race duration, then redid the order based on their race lap totals each year. Unsurprisingly, shorter, slower layouts come out higher – but if you want to wander around a circuit to see F1 cars in action at different corner types, this may be an important consideration.

Monaco tops the list (see page 21) – which isn’t brilliant for watching F1 on a budget given its tax-haven status – and this comes down to its tight confines and concise lap distance. You also won’t ever see the current ground-effect machines in the corner types where they’re designed to work best. Handily, the next six races are in locations where the track is either in or close to a major metropolis.

Showing that you follow F1

F1 merchandise remains a major part of the fan experience. FOM outsources its online merchandise offering via the Fanatics platform that sells official products from all the US sports leagues. It means you can buy comparative merch from all the teams – although they don’t all sell the same stuff – from the same place. But we found that prices differ (usually slightly lower, in our research) if you buy from team websites directly, so as ever it pays to shop around.

But given the compact and official Fanatics platform, we’ve used this to compare prices for various items to show your support in similar ways for different teams. We’re focusing on the F1 squads and their generic team-branded clothing and kit but, if you wanted a T-shirt or cap with the number and name of your favourite driver, it seems that you will have to pay slightly more.

The table above shows how prices stack up for the teams in typical merchandise purchases. By way of comparison from our 2015 investigation, taking the most expensive cap then (Ferrari’s,





F1 TEAM MERCHANDISE COMPARED					
TEAM	CAPPRICE	T-SHIRTPRICE	HOODYPRICE	JACKETPRICE	KIDST-SHIRTPRICE
Red Bull	£28	£55	£95	£140	£40
McLaren	£28	£55	£95	£130	£40
Ferrari	*N/A	£66	£114	£133	*N/A
Mercedes	£38	£62	£110	£152	£47
Aston Martin	£43	£66	£114	£176	£52
RB	*N/A	£69	£129	£99	*N/A
Haas	£40	£55	£95	*N/A	*N/A
Williams	£43	£57	£100	£110	*N/A
Alpine	£41	£55	£79	£130	£50
Sauber	£45	£55	£89	*N/A	*N/A
F1	£20	£25	£50	*N/A	£15

OTHER SPORTS MERCHANDISE			
SPORT	JERSEYPRICE	CAPPRICE	JACKETPRICE
Football (Premier League champion)	£80	£18	£70
Football (Serie A champion)	£150	£24	£105
Rugby Union (English Premiership champion)	£60	£20	£85
NFL (Super Bowl winner)	£105	£34	*N/A
Cricket (County Championship champion)	£45	£30	*N/A
NBA (2024 champion)	£96	£32	£120

*Unavailable for sale on Fanatics at time of assessment

at £32) and contrasting with Sauber being top today, we can see that costs on these items specifically come in roughly in line with inflation (£42.96). In some specific examples – Red Bull’s team cap, which was £25 in 2015 and is now £28 – the prices haven’t gone up that much at all. We also note how Aston Martin’s team merch is regularly towards the top of the comparisons above, which reflects its parent company’s positioning as a luxury brand (even among F1 rivals that are doing exactly the same).

In terms of buying F1 team merchandise at live races, we went to the official stores at the British and Hungarian races over the summer to compare prices.

We discovered, rather inevitably, that buying the same products at a grand prix costs more than online. The equivalent Mercedes team cap is £38 online but being sold for £60 at Silverstone. Interestingly, convert Hungarian forints to pounds and the price for the same product at the Hungaroring was only £4.30 cheaper. This is within the context of the Budapest race’s popularity within cost consideration for many British fans each year – as the ticket price table on

page 20 shows, a GP ticket can come in at nearly half the price.

Track merchandise is sold by Puma-owned Stichd (the company also makes apparel for Mercedes, Ferrari, Aston and Williams) – with prices set from specific market research for each location. Merchandise offered at the circuits is bought by Stichd and then sold on to fans.

Now that Ferrari is selling a Scuderia football shirt, we compared the price with the new home shirt of reigning Premier League champions Manchester City. This came out at an £80 high-scoring draw. UK fans wanting to buy the new home strip of 2023-24 Serie A champion Internazionale will have to fork out £150. Manchester City team caps come in at £18 from the team’s website.

Those who can afford it – and these prices are simply staggering – might be interested in a new F1 team upcycling initiative from Mercedes and its team wear partner Puma. Made in conjunction with designers from Raeburn, the team has made jackets, bags, hoodies, T-shirts and hats using panels from the Nomex fire suits used in the 2022 season.

A press release announcing the project claimed “the collection blends motorsport engineering with cutting-edge fashion design returned to fans, featuring pieces crafted from the race-worn suits of Mercedes F1 drivers Lewis Hamilton and George Russell, as well as the team’s mechanics”.

It is unclear how many items in the collection were produced, but at the time of writing they are all sold out at Mercedes’ team website. The ‘Masterpiece Anorak’ retails at £1275, trousers £675 and T-shirt £350.

In one final area of F1 fan merchandise for you to consider, costs have, however, changed more notably compared to clothing covered above. Diecast model cars, for example, have risen on average by slightly above the rate of inflation. But this is really just in relation to 2015 – because as we noted at >>



SUTTON MOTORSPORT IMAGES

SPECIAL INVESTIGATION



the time, a £40 1:18 model bought in 1996 would cost £59.08 nine years ago and £77.93 now. This shows prices have risen less steeply of late. In this area, albeit with less detailed models, F1 has also made recent moves to provide official offerings with Lego and Mattel's Hot Wheels toy car brand.

How following F1 has changed

From here, we leave the cold realm of statistics and reflect on something rather less tangible, but ultimately still very important given the emotive power of sport and its cash-guzzling extras. This is how the experience of being a fan has changed in the past decade and with the Liberty takeover again in mind.

Famously, former F1 boss Bernie Ecclestone felt social media was a “nonsense” that he “couldn't see any value in”. And one of the first things the new FOM regime did was unlock the restrictions around teams, drivers and the championship itself posting into the internet's ether.

That won't be new in 2024, but it does represent a big difference to our last assessment of how much it costs to be an F1 fan. After all, social media accounts are free (in terms of the major platforms and their basic offerings) and that allows for fans to interact with the championship in different ways compared to previous generations. Clips of F1 track action and behind-the-scenes shots from the paddock are widespread now when before there was a strict clampdown. F1's data claims that the championship now gets an average of 10.9million people watching qualifying and race highlights on YouTube – versus 2.5million in 2018.

It is often claimed that the prevalence of social media F1 access means a direct link to the protagonists, but plenty of drivers have long left handling their social channels to professional admins. Russell, for example, recently explained that he only signs off “on all the captions and the photographs – I always send through my content” to a specific team.

“It's a double-edged sword, to be honest,” he added. “Because I really enjoy seeing the memes and the banter that goes around. And that stuff is positive – you're spinning off the funniness and certain comments and whatever. But then on the flipside, there's a lot of hate and negativity. And it's almost impossible to avoid.”

According to F1's own calculations, its total follower count on its official social media platforms comes in at 90million





and up from 12.1million – a claimed 744% rise from 2018 when it fully started capturing data. Adding up the championship’s official English language account followers from Instagram, TikTok, YouTube, X, Facebook, LinkedIn and Threads comes in at 80.1million.

The championship also claims, without providing a headline figure, that one in three of its total fanbase started following F1 in the past four years and that one in three TV viewers are under 35 years old, with a 2% increase in fans under 35 overall compared to 2018. F1 says it has registered a 5% rise in terms of its female audience – from 37% of its overall calculations in 2018 to 42% today.

FOM also says its official website and app got 104million unique visitors in 2023 versus 47million in 2018. Here, it’s important to note how much more of a publisher F1 has become under Liberty. Unlike the Bernie days, where selling TV contracts and exclusive advertising spots was the king approach, now F1 provides content offerings that put it in competition with partner broadcast channels such as Sky and independent publications such as Autosport.

Here we can reflect how the F1 media landscape overall has changed considerably in recent years, too – particularly the proliferation of ‘clickbait’ websites that spin up stories written by reputable publications and sell the same information in a deliberately sensationalist way.

But it’s not just media where FOM now takes a different approach – a secondary element to consider also chimes with much of the information we’ve covered on merchandise and fan costs. This is how, since 2015, F1 has struck deals with high-street apparel brands, while also selling its own branded merchandise at race events and online. Autosport understands this is selling in increasing numbers, which suggests fans are not just keen to highlight their affiliation to teams and drivers.

F1 has official agreements with UK high-street brand H&M to sell clothes featuring F1 IP, while in the US there is a similar deal with PacSun that is aimed specifically at selling clothes to Gen Z customers.

Conclusions

Change is generally constant and F1, with its regular rule alterations and design refreshments, embodies this very well. It is up to the individual to decide whether the information we have presented is good, bad or the same as it was nearly a decade on from 2015.

Given the current cost of living crisis and recent controversies about dynamic pricing – infamously in the UK involving the band Oasis, plus those memories of Silverstone’s 2022-23 saga – the relevant price rises we’ve noted will stand out. This is especially important for anyone considering buying multiple tickets or pieces of merchandise to fulfil a family pastime.

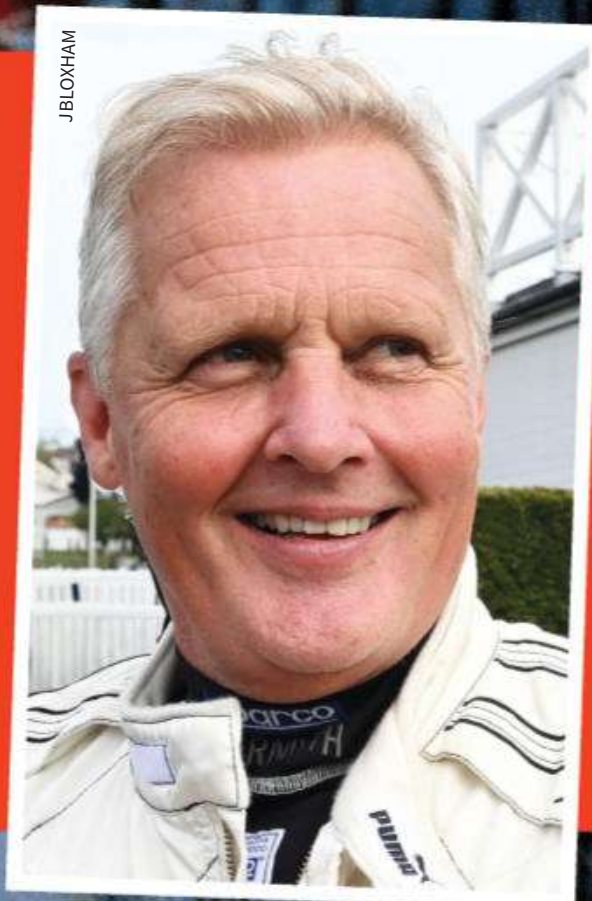
Motorsport has always been an expensive pursuit for its protagonists. But, while we must recognise how specific changes to things we consume are reflected from trends in wider society, F1, as the top category, has to take care to avoid upsetting its long-standing fans when it comes to cost. Although these days it provides a much increased offering for consuming its action and stories, it can’t risk losing the emotional touches that truly mean so much to its fans, and ever-rising prices would surely do just this.

And if the biggest change we’ve highlighted shows how many ways it’s now possible to be an F1 fan, these supporters also have far more ways than simply voting with their feet and not attending specific races. The impact of many wider changes now ultimately comes with a bottom line for the championship. Through all that, it should never lose the critical, historical connections that got it to this point in the first place. ✨

JOHNNY HERBERT'S 10 GREATEST DRIVES

It's 25 years since the Le Mans winner took the last of his three grand prix victories. He helps Autosport select the best performances from his long and eclectic career

KEVIN TURNER



J.BLOXHAM



After a tricky start to his F3 weekend, Herbert starred at Monaco

10

1987 MONACO F3 GP**REYNARD 873**

STARTED 4TH RESULT 3RD

Already the class act in British Formula 3 in 1987, Herbert's trip to Monaco against European opposition didn't start well. Aside from having to learn the circuit and different tyres to his usual crossply Avons, he had the wrong set-up. A spooled differential and locked rear end had "worked brilliantly" at Snetterton and Thruxton, but created massive understeer around the tight streets. The result was 22nd in the first qualifying session.

"The general consensus was that Johnny was making the wrong move," said Autosport. "Sitting pretty in England, why go and get blown away by French and Italians on an unfamiliar circuit and unaccustomed Michelin radials?"

But Eddie Jordan Racing engineer Dave Benbow sorted the diff' for Friday's running and Herbert leapt to fourth, heading the Reynard charge. "Remembering that Herbert had not been to Monaco before, a second-row

slot was pure class," reckoned Autosport.

Come the race, Herbert was held up by Alberto Apicella's Dallara before making it into third when the Italian spun at Rascasse. Didier Artzet's KTR Ralt and the ORECA Dallara of Jean Alesi were too far ahead, but finishing on the podium was still a fine result. "He was behind a circuit specialist and the ORECA team leader," added Autosport. "What says more about him than anything, though, is that he was disappointed. It was written all over his face. This man is a winner."

Today, Herbert thinks it was a key moment: "It was the first time I'd done a good job in front of the F1 paddock."

9

2003 PETIT LE MANS**ROAD ATLANTA AUDI R8**

STARTED 3RD RESULT 1ST

Herbert scored many successes in Audi R8s, including taking the 2004 Le Mans Endurance Series title with Jamie Davies, but it's arguably one of his 'easier' victories that means the most to him...

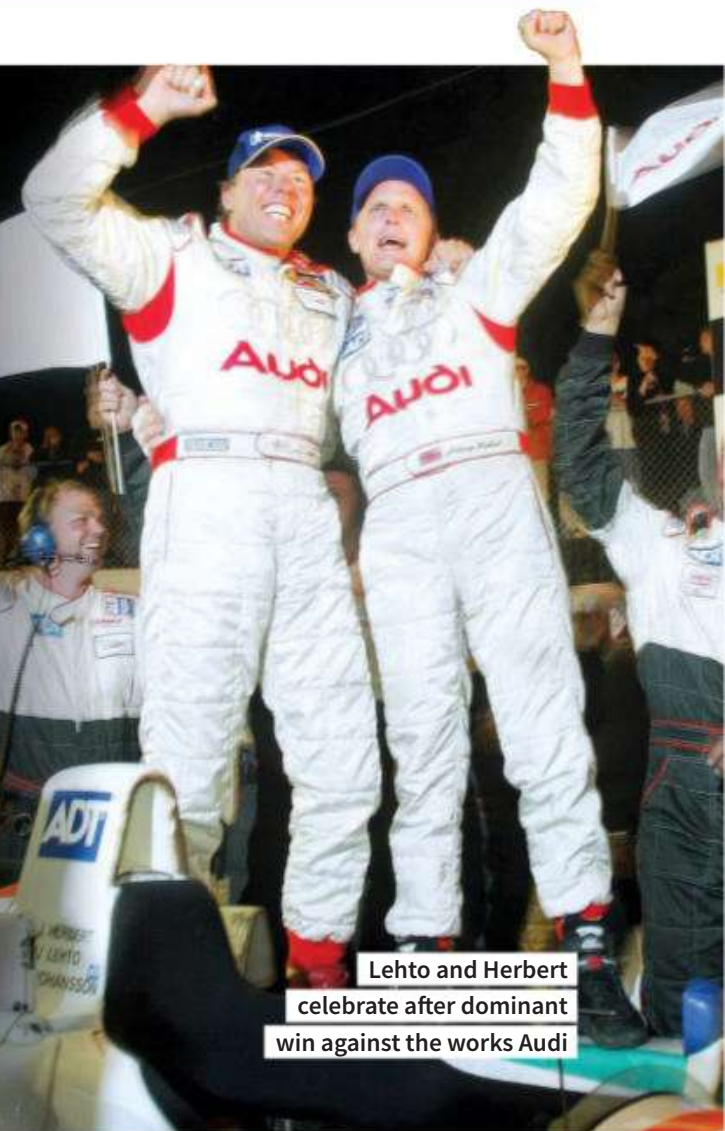
Herbert and JJ Lehto were a constant threat in their Champion R8 during the 2003 American Le Mans Series, but it was normally the Joest-run factory car of Frank Biela/Marco Werner that led the way. The Germans duly went to the Petit Le Mans finale as favourites to wrap up the crown, but it was Herbert and Lehto who had an event to remember.

Werner took pole at Road Atlanta, ahead of the Dyson Lola-MG of James Weaver. Lehto qualified 'only' third, but was leading inside a lap. Both he and Weaver dived ahead of Werner at the getaway and, when Weaver was told to drop behind the polesitter for jumping

the start, Champion moved into a lead it was never to lose. Weaver, sharing with Andy Wallace and Butch Leitzinger, soon hit electrical issues and, when Biela crashed in the second hour – requiring a new rear-end and front suspension on his silver R8 – Lehto and Herbert comfortably outpaced the field. They led every one of the 394 laps!

"Beating the works was nice," says Herbert, who twice finished second at Le Mans in R8s. "And that was in the days of pushing flat-out, threading through the traffic. Brilliant."

It wasn't enough for Lehto to snatch the title, but that doesn't overshadow Herbert's memories: "It was with JJ and [team boss] Dave Maraj and the small Champion team – builders, woodworkers, electricians. They all came together for that weekend and it was a wonderful environment to be part of."



8

1997 HUNGARIAN GP**HUNGARORING SAUBER C16**

STARTED 10TH RESULT 3RD

The Sauber-Ferrari C16 was a decent F1 car and Herbert was a consistent points contender on his way to 10th in the standings. The highlight was third at the Hungaroring, where Damon Hill's Bridgestone-shod Arrows would have won but for a late hydraulic problem. While Jacques Villeneuve's Williams overtook Hill on the final lap to win, the Arrows staggered to second, 11.4s ahead of Herbert, who beat Michael Schumacher to be the second Goodyear runner home.

"We'd had a good year," confirms Herbert. "It was quite a competitive car and it performed very well in qualifying in Hungary."

Herbert had qualified 10th, but key to his race was being able to look after the soft-compound

Goodyears that most runners blistered, including polesitter Schumacher's Ferrari. "On the long runs we did, the car was so driveable," adds Herbert, who jumped to eighth on the opening lap. "Blistering tyres was a big issue and I was able to manage it. The pace was really strong and we were able to race Michael for a little bit and outrace them. It was an enjoyable ride because the car was doing everything I wanted it to do on a tricky track.

"It was a lovely race that gave me a lot of good feelings because it was a thoroughly enjoyable performance from my point of view, and it was nice to be on the podium with Jacques and Damon – we're all good friends."





7

1995 BRITISH GP

SILVERSTONE BENETTON B195
STARTED 5TH RESULT 1ST

Despite the pain,
Herbert held on
to win at home

SUTTON

"I was screaming in the car. A few laps before, I knew it was going to come. I'd been trying to do left-foot braking, so I did one lap left, two right, one left, two right and I did that for the last 16 to 18 laps."

The 1995 British GP is largely remembered for the clash between title rivals Michael Schumacher and Damon Hill. That shunt, which removed both, and a penalty for David Coulthard gave the impression that Herbert's first F1 win was fortuitous. But he earned it given the pain he had to go through in the closing stages, as he usually did thanks to the terrible foot injuries he sustained in

his 1988 F3000 crash at Brands Hatch.

And Herbert was in the mix from the start at Silverstone, despite a nasty accident on Saturday, qualifying fifth and running there early on. He then jumped Coulthard's Williams and the Ferrari of Jean Alesi during the first round of pitstops.

After 45 of the 61 laps, Schumacher and Hill were three quarters of a minute ahead of Herbert, but their crash handed him a narrow lead over Coulthard. The Williams attacked the Benetton and made it past on lap 49, but Herbert already knew the contest was over: DC had to serve a stop/

go penalty for speeding in the pits. Herbert's fight with his pain continued to the flag, which he took 16.5s clear of Alesi. "I did most of my races knowing that, with about 15 laps to go, my toe on my left foot would get super-sensitive and painful," adds Herbert.

"That's a special one because it was the first win, the home GP in front of the home fans, on a track I'd driven thousands of miles on."

Autosport's Nigel Roebuck summed it up at the conclusion of his report: "It was a lovely drive, devoid of mistakes, and a result richly enjoyed in the pitlane, as well as in the stands."

6

1991 LE MANS 24 HOURS

MAZDA 787B
STARTED 19TH RESULT 1ST

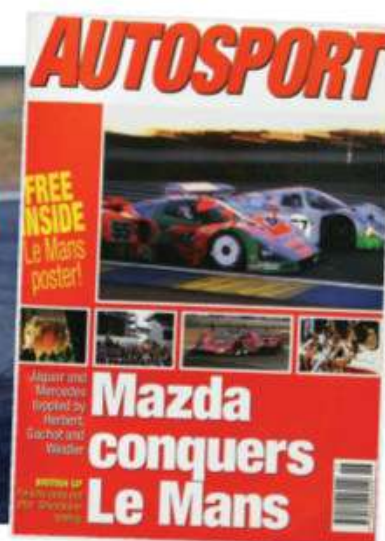
"It wasn't the quickest thing on Earth," recalls Herbert of the Mazda 787B that has become a Le Mans icon. "Yes, it had a cracking sound, but it wasn't the most enjoyable car to drive – it did porpoise a lot and bounced through the Porsche Curves."

F1 drivers Herbert and Bertrand Gachot were placed with Volker Weidler to spearhead Mazda's attack on the greatest sportscar race. Thanks to a rules break, the rotary-engined machine enjoyed a 170kg advantage over the other fuel-restricted 'Category 2' machines, such as the Mercedes C11 and Jaguar XJR-12. Weidler qualified 12th fastest, but the car only started 19th as the new 3.5-litre naturally aspirated cars lined up at the front.

"I was racing F1, and me and Bertrand did it to make a bit of money," says Herbert. "Did we go into it thinking we were going to win? No!"

But the works Mazda became more and more of a threat as the race developed. After the new Peugeots had enjoyed a short spell at the front, the Sauber-Mercedes team stamped its authority on the race. Showing fine pace and fuel economy, the Mazda climbed the order, proving faster than the Jaguars and avoiding the troubles that befell the best of the Porsches.

"It was possibly the very early days of flat-out



Le Mans," adds Herbert. "The only thing we did, though we still pushed, was easing off in the latter part of the straight just to save fuel."

"Volker was probably the quickest of the three and was also the best on the fuel, so our aim was to get faster and use less fuel. And that's exactly what we did – we all improved, getting faster and faster, and saved fuel."

Although the ORECA-run Mazda established itself in the top five in the first quarter of the race, the three C11s looked out of reach. That was until a weakness with an alternator bracket made itself known. When the leading car of Jean-Louis Schlesser/Jochen Mass/Alain Ferte succumbed

while sitting three laps clear with three hours to go, the screaming Mazda moved to the front.

Herbert completed the final two-hour stint to record the first victory in the 24 Hours for a Japanese manufacturer, ahead of a Jaguar 2-3-4. But so exhausted was he that he required medical attention and missed the podium.

"It was tough, there was no power steering and it was very hot inside," he recalls. "I learned a big lesson that weekend – I didn't eat enough. Because of nerves, I suppose, I could only eat small, easy food like noodles with no nutrition whatsoever. What I did learn after that was to have more fatty food, which aided my performance."

5

1999 EUROPEAN GP

NURBURGRING STEWART SF3
STARTED 14TH RESULT 1ST

“Herbert the hero”, shouted Autosport after one of the most dramatic races in F1 history.

Herbert outqualified team-mate Rubens Barrichello for the first time in 1999 – at round 14 – but that was only good enough for 14th on the grid at the Nurburgring as the Stewart SF3 had one of its less competitive Saturday showings. But the race was all about playing the changeable conditions and keeping the car on the road.

After Pedro Diniz’s spectacular first-lap crash and ensuing safety car period, Herbert ran 13th while Heinz-Harald Frentzen’s Jordan, the McLarens of Mika Hakkinen and David Coulthard, and Ralf Schumacher’s Williams battled up front.

An early burst of rain sent Hakkinen to the pits for rain tyres, only for the track to dry. As others made their scheduled pitstops, Herbert rose to fifth on his harder-compound Bridgestones before his own pit visit. Elsewhere, calamity reigned. Hakkinen returned to the pits for dry rubber, Eddie Irvine’s stop was comedic as Ferrari appeared to forget that his F399 required a right-rear wheel, Frentzen’s Jordan suffered an electrical failure as he rejoined, and Coulthard threw it off the road while leading. Crucially, Herbert had decided on his in-lap to go for wets as the rain returned.

“Normally when you talk about rain you don’t see it coming, it just appears,” he says. “But on this occasion going down to the hairpin I’d see this wide, teardrop cloud coming from Spa. I watched this cloud and, as it came, it never deviated and was coming dead straight

over the track. It was quite a dark colour and I thought, ‘When that hits it’s going to be an absolute deluge’.

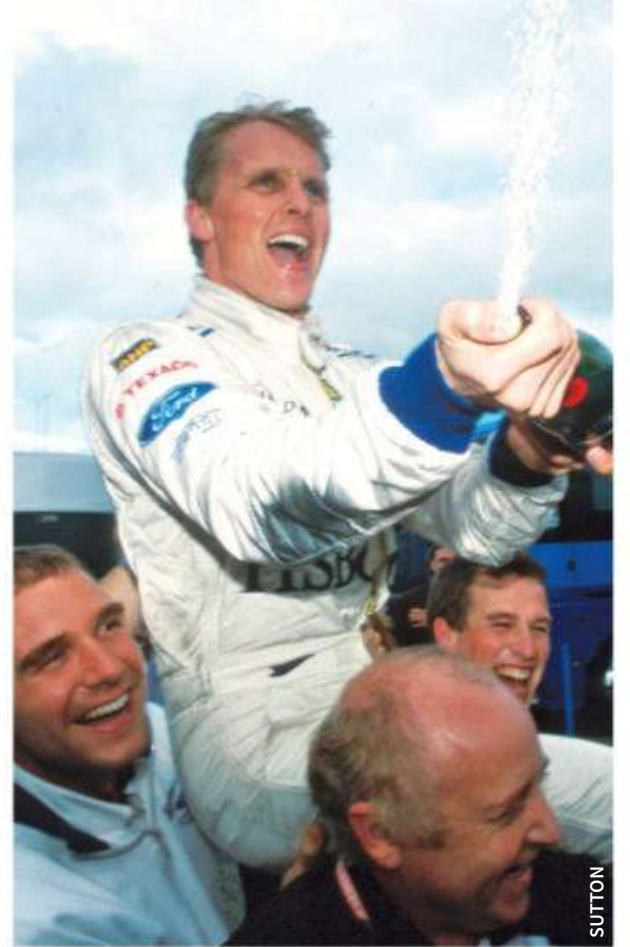
“I was very lucky because I got the radio call to pit and as I got down to the hairpin it absolutely chucked it down, so I got on the radio and said, ‘Wets’. When Rubens came in [two laps later] the team decided to leave him on slicks.”

Most chose slicks at this point, giving Herbert a big advantage. “It was absolutely sodden, slicks almost impossible and cars whizzing off all over the place,” he recalls. “It was a crazy race to be in!”

At two-thirds distance, Schumacher led while Herbert was third, behind Giancarlo Fisichella’s Benetton. Schumacher then pitted and, with the track drying once again, Herbert came in for dry-weather tyres on lap 47 of 66.

That left Fisichella in the lead, but he threw away his chances and then Schumacher’s Williams suffered a puncture. Suddenly Herbert found himself with a 16.4s lead over Jarno Trulli’s Prost with 16 laps to go. He kept clear, while Trulli successfully battled to hold off a charging Barrichello, and gave Stewart its only F1 win by a surprisingly comfortable 22.6s.

“I’m glad I was able to make that call to put wets on at exactly the right time,” says Herbert. “If I hadn’t, I’d never have been in that position. It was a special one because it was Sir Jackie and Paul’s only win, and it was at the venue where Jackie took his last F1 win.”



4

1989 BRAZILIAN GP

RIO DE JANEIRO BENETTON B188
STARTED 10TH RESULT 4TH

The man himself doesn’t rate the drive – “It’s not one of my best races, the Rio circuit suited the condition I was in” – but those who know what he had to deal with on his F1 debut do. Just seven months after his horrific Brands Hatch F3000 crash, Herbert probably wasn’t fit to drive in a GP and doesn’t believe it would be allowed today. But Benetton manager Peter Collins kept the faith, and so Herbert partnered Alessandro Nannini to drive the previous year’s B188.

Herbert beat Nannini to 10th on the grid, but had already had to overcome a major hurdle, which he largely kept to himself. “There was a big bump at the last right-hander before the back straight [Nonato],” he recalls. “My left foot was like a melon, really swollen and sensitive. Every time I went over the bump it would jar my foot and hurt like hell. Eventually I learned to let it hang in the monocoque, when it hit the bump my foot would slam



against the side, I’d scream my head off but it overcame the pain. That crack allowed me to continue. I had to do it on the first lap of any session and that made it a lot easier – I had to find ways around the problem I had.”

A first-corner clash involving Gerhard Berger’s Ferrari, Ayrton Senna’s McLaren and the Williams

of Riccardo Patrese helped Herbert climb to eighth on the opening lap, though Nannini got past. When Thierry Boutsen’s Williams suffered engine failure, Herbert ran seventh. He then made an early pitstop for fresh tyres and moved forwards as others pitted.

Patrese retired with 10 laps to go, handing Herbert fourth. And he was closing on Mauricio Gugelmin’s March and Alain Prost’s McLaren, struggling on old rubber and with an inoperative clutch. Herbert duly finished fourth, 2.7s covering the trio.

Herbert thinks that remarkable result could have been better: “I worked to get in close to Mauricio for that last-lap possible lunge and as I got close to him going across the line to start that last lap, the chequered flag came out! I’d be given the wrong information. I don’t know if I’d have finished second or not but reckon I probably could have done.”

Herbert would struggle more at subsequent tracks with heavier braking demands and was dropped by Benetton. He would have to wait until the end of 1990 and Lotus – again thanks to Collins – before being able to gather some F1 career momentum via a stint in Japan.



3

1985 FORMULA FORD FESTIVAL

BRANDS HATCH QUEST FF85
STARTED 3RD (IN FINAL) RESULT 1ST

"It was an important weekend for my career because until that point every race I seemed to be up against Damon Hill in a Van Diemen, Mark Blundell, who was in a Van Diemen, Bertrand Gachot, who was in a Van Diemen... I was more or less the lone Quest. I'd been competitive during the year but was always beaten by a Van Diemen."

The 1985 Formula Ford Festival at Brands

Hatch put Herbert on the map, partly because his event started so badly in qualifying: "I remember going out, looking up at Druids and thinking it was a bit damp, so I've got to wait for the track to start to dry. And on my first flying lap into Paddock the back end stepped out very quickly and the next thing I knew I was wrapped up in the catch fencing!"

The result was that Herbert had to start at

the back of his heat – these were the days of 150-plus entries – with a 10s penalty. "I remember thinking, 'I'm only racing Damon, Mark, Bertrand, Paulo Carcasci and Jonathan Bancroft' – five guys," he says. "Everybody else, not a problem. I think that mindset enabled me to get through the heats, quarter-final and semi-final and get myself in the perfect place on the outside of the front row for the final."

"The Quest was a very short wheelbase compared to the Van Diemen. It was more darty and reacted a much closer way to the karts I was used to. It suited me."

Having carved repeatedly through the pack in the races beforehand (to sixth in his heat, fourth in his quarter-final and second in his semi), Herbert had a different job to do in the finale, though his cause had been aided by Gachot and Carcasci dramatically crashing out in their semi. Herbert led into Paddock, chased by Bancroft.

"He tried to pass me once into Druids but I always thought, 'He's not going to commit', so I never really had any worry," remembers Herbert. "I knew I could outrace and outfox him. Because of the way the heats and other races had gone, my confidence was pretty good. There was momentum."

And beating Bancroft and Hill provided career momentum for Herbert, who would soon be in British F3: "Winning the hard way was a damn powerful thing for my career because there was a wow factor about it, and even today people still have good memories of that day."

2

1988 MONZA F3000

REYNARD 88D
STARTED 10TH RESULT 3RD

Herbert's F3000 campaign had gone awry and he didn't know why. Since winning the Jerez opener in his Eddie Jordan Racing Reynard, he hadn't scored a point as the circus headed to Monza in June. "I'd been struggling for the last couple of races," says Herbert. "The speed we'd had earlier in the season had been a bit more difficult to do."

The struggles continued at Monza. Herbert qualified 10th, 0.61s off polesitter Roberto Moreno's similar Reynard, and "wasn't going anywhere" early in the race. But then there was a red flag following an enormous crash involving Fabien Giroix and Massimo Monti after 13 laps. The long stoppage gave the team a chance to try something different.

Herbert asked if anything had changed. Eventually the Zytex engine guys admitted they'd changed the fuelling: "They said it made no difference at all, but I said to go back on what we did, to try it."

The car was transformed. Despite having to start at the rear of the now 18-car field as his engine initially refused to fire, and being delayed by more chaos, Herbert became

the driver to watch: "I was one second a lap quicker than anyone else. The car became alive again and the pace was unbelievable."

"All eyes were now on Herbert," reported Autosport's Marcus Pye. "Johnny was driving a blinder, his car control a joy to behold. The crowd loved it, going wild when he appeared."

With the result decided by the aggregate of the two parts, Herbert had no chance of victory, but he charged to third on the road and put enough distance between himself

and his pursuers to take the same spot overall. Only Moreno and the March of Marco Apicella remained ahead.

"Suddenly everything came together, I came alive," recalls Herbert. "Every input made sense to me and it was so, so easy to do it. I got a call from Enzo Ferrari's PA wanting to meet me, but he died in August."

"That was my last 'best' race before Brands. Bar one race it's the last time I remember it being a doddle..."



Hakkinen closes
in on impressive
Herbert's SF3



1

1999 MALAYSIAN GP

SEPANG STEWART SF3
STARTED 5TH RESULT 4TH

The number one race is a great example of driver insight helping see through the obvious. The headlines around the penultimate round of the 1999 F1 season concerned the controversial championship fight between Ferrari's Eddie Irvine and McLaren's eventual champion Mika Hakkinen, but Herbert rates the Malaysian GP as the one time in an F1 car he felt like he did prior to his F3000 accident.

"Everything I'd done until that crash at Brands I totally believed I could beat anybody, anywhere, any car, any condition," he says. "Everything I did on track was very simple. I found it so easy to get speed out of the car."

With consistent pain at the end of GPs and a lack of sensitivity with his left foot, Herbert found things came less naturally after 1988. But on F1's first visit to hot and humid Sepang, things were different.

Herbert committed to a one-stop strategy on a day when most opted for two-stoppers. With a heavy fuel load, he fell to sixth early on – behind the Ferrari and McLaren duos, plus Stewart team-mate Rubens Barrichello – but kept himself in range while the returning Michael Schumacher tried to orchestrate things up ahead.

"I felt I could look after the tyre," adds Herbert. "My pace with one-stop fuel was pretty much as good as the two-stoppers. I'd won at the Nurburgring and the confidence you get from winning a race carried on."



After Schumacher handed team-mate Irvine the lead, he tried to delay the McLarens, though David Coulthard swiftly found a way through. Coulthard then lost fuel pressure after 14 of the 56 laps, promoting Herbert to fifth. As others pitted, Herbert briefly rose to second before making his own stop.

Once Barrichello had made his second stop, Herbert found himself in a lonely fourth – lonely until Hakkinen made his second stop and emerged behind the Stewart. On ageing rubber, Herbert almost held off the Finn for the final podium spot before making a small error with just three laps to go and allowing the faster car

through. "Unobtrusively excellent" was how Autosport described Herbert's race.

For a while, Herbert was classified second after the Ferraris were thrown out for an aerodynamic bargeboard infringement. But Ferrari's appeal was upheld and the record books show Herbert classified fourth, nearly 15s clear of Barrichello.

The only thing that frustrates Herbert is that he never worked out why things felt different that day. "I was really consistent and it was easy," he says. "It was exactly like I felt before. I only had it that once and I do not know why. I wish I bloody did know! All the senses that I'd lost came back. It was my best race."

**JOHNNY
HERBERT**

GP STARTS 160

GP WINS 3

LE MANS PODIUMS 4

2004 LMES CHAMPION

2008 SPEEDCAR
CHAMPION

Members of Team UK celebrate Esports success at the 2022 Games. Can they win more this time?



MEET TEAM UK

The third FIA Motorsport Games takes place later this month. Here's who will be representing the United Kingdom in Spain

CIRCUIT



**TEAM CAPTAIN/GT CUP
CHRIS FROGGATT**

Froggatt did not have a conventional route into racing via karting and single-seaters, and first competed in the European Ferrari Challenge. He's become a GT racing regular and won the 2021 GT World Challenge Europe Endurance Pro-Am Cup and the Bronze Cup in the same series two years later, both times with his long-term team Tempesta Racing. Food poisoning meant Froggatt missed out on competing at the 2022 edition of the Games, even though he was present,

but he returns aiming to make his mark with Team UK. This year he will be partnered with James Cottingham in Tempesta's Ferrari 296 GT3 to test his mettle on the 2.5-mile Circuit Ricardo Tormo, as well as leading Team UK.



**GT CUP
JAMES COTTINGHAM**

A competitive racer in historics, Cottingham has also proved to be a capable performer in contemporary GT machinery. He was runner-up in the 2023 British GT championship with three victories alongside Jonny Adam in a 2 Seas Mercedes. This year he has been racing McLaren's 720 GT3 Evo, with Garage 59 in GT World Challenge Europe and United Autosports in the World Endurance Championship.

**GT SPRINT
DARREN LEUNG**

Leung has made an impressive impact on GT racing despite being another driver to start late. He only began competing in the Ginetta GT Academy in 2021 and yet, just over two years later, was crowned British GT champion alongside rising star Dan Harper in a Century Motorsport BMW M4 GT3. He currently lies third in the World Endurance Championship LMGT3 standings with WRT, though the 37-year-old faces a stern challenge going it alone in the GT Sprint contest.



SRO / KEVIN PECKAS

KARTING

KARTING SPRINT JUNIOR JORGE EDGAR

The 14-year-old will represent the UK in the Karting Sprint Junior category, following in the footsteps of his sister Jess, who competed in the 2019 FIA Motorsport Games. Edgar was one of a field of 112 drivers at the recent FIA Karting World Championship in the OK-Junior class, and was the 2021 British IAME Cadet Open Champion.



KARTING MINI AUSTIN GIBSON

Gibson will be joining the team in the Karting Mini discipline, following a successful year in the 2023 British Kart Championships, where he took the Water Swift Restricted title in a field of nine 8-12-year-olds. He was also awarded Kartmaster Champion. It will be interesting to see how the promising 10-year-old stacks up in a competitive field.

KARTING ENDURANCE TEAM TITAN

Rhianna Purcocks, 2023 British University Karting Championships Graduate Drivers' champion, will be competing as part of Team Titan, alongside brothers Jack and Andy O'Neill in the Karting Endurance division. This is Purcocks's second time competing in the FIA Motorsport Games, and she also has experience in the Club 100 series.

Touring Car contest could provide a medal chance for Brickley (below)



SRO / NICODEUMILL



GT SINGLE-MAKE (FERRARI) JAMES OWEN

Owen began competing in motorsport in 2023 and has completed two seasons of the Ferrari Challenge Europe series. Last year he dominated at Silverstone's GT Cup round in the GTC class, with his Ferrari 488 Challenge Evo cruising to victory in all four races. The 35-year-old Welshman is keen to continue on his success in Valencia as Team UK's Ferrari specialist.



TOURING CAR JENSON BRICKLEY

Brickley will be joining the team in the Touring Car discipline, competing in his Cupra Leon VZ TCR. Following in his father Ian's footsteps, Brickley scored successes in short-oval competition, then Fiesta Junior before graduating to TCR. He was third in the UK last season and is currently leading the TCR Spain standings. Brickley works on his own car during race weekends.

FORMULA 4 REZA SEEWOORUTHUN

Currently in his second year of the Motorsport UK Academy, an opportunity to try out karting during a family holiday piqued Seewooruthun's interest. He was third in Ginetta Junior in 2023, helped by a hat-trick of wins at Brands Hatch. He then stepped into single-seaters this year, winning two races and finishing third in British F4 with Hitech. He should therefore be pretty familiar with the Tatuus machinery he'll race at Valencia.



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DRIFTING LWI EDWARDS

Drifting has grown massively over the years, and Edwards will be competing in his 1997 BMW E36 Coupe, fitted with a Magnuson supercharger-equipped Chevrolet LSX376 V8 engine. His family has a background in rallying, so going sideways is very familiar to Edwards, and the 16-year-old has had their full support as he continues to make an impression on the British drifting scene – last year, he won the Motorsport UK Drift Pro Championship.



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RALLYING

RALLY 2

OLLIE MELLORS AND IAN WINDRESS

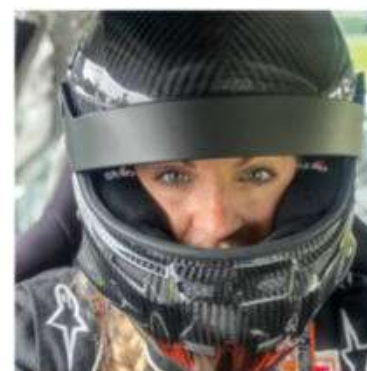
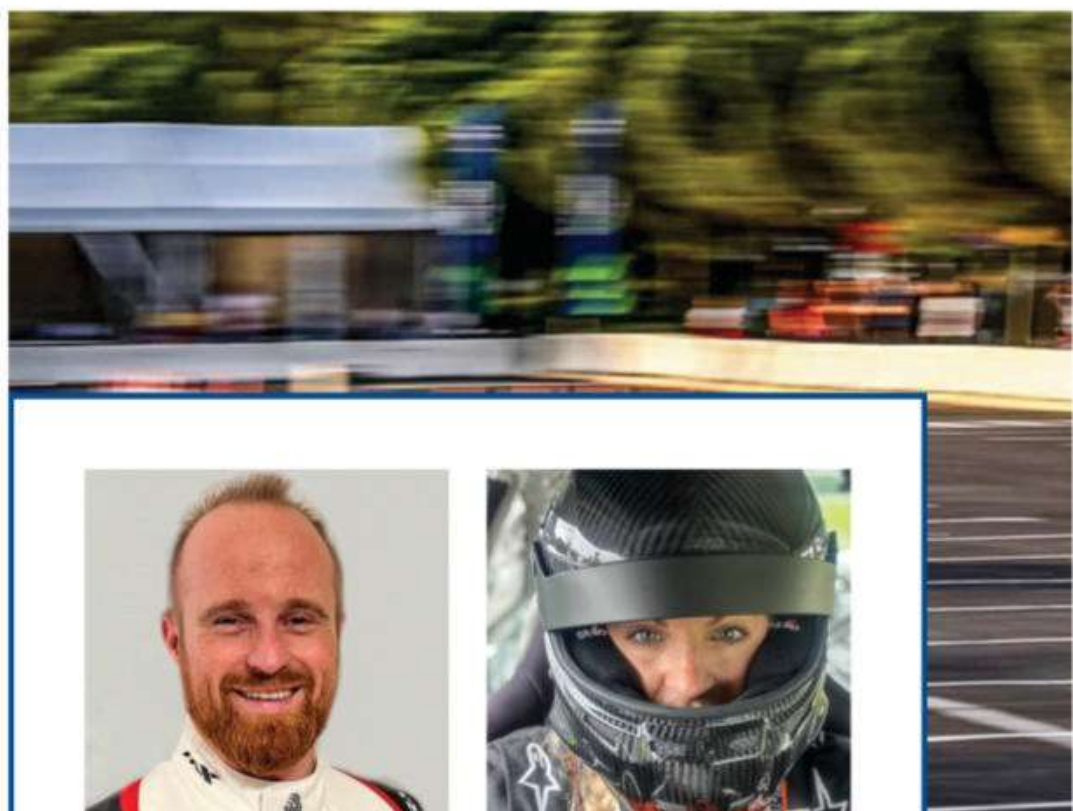
Derbyshire-based driver Mellors returns to compete for the second time in the Games, alongside older brother Ben. Ollie, 29, took the second Phil Price Memorial Woodpecker Rally win of his career this year, overcoming tricky conditions. He has racked up plenty of experience – and class wins – in his Proton Iriz R5 in recent years, chiefly in the UK but has also competed in France. He will once again share with Windress.



HISTORIC RALLY

BEN MELLORS AND ALEX LEE

The older Mellors brother will compete in his rare 1979 Toyota Celica GT RA40, buoyed by a recent win at the Rallye Vosges Grande. Mellors, Lee and the rear-wheel-drive Toyota should be a potent combination and could improve on Team UK's fifth in 2022, but that was an event dominated by a 4WD Audi Quattro...



AUTO SLALOM

MARK KING AND TESSA WHITTOCK

King will compete in the FIA Motorsport Games for a second time. He finished seventh in the Auto Slalom at the 2022 edition in Marseille, despite it being his first time competing in a left-hand-drive vehicle. King emerged as the fastest driver in three out of the four sessions in which Team UK participated. He will join forces with Whittock, a renowned drifter, who is making the transition to the Auto Slalom to fly the British flag.



HISTORIC RALLY GRAVEL TEAM FLEXIFLY

Ernie Graham and his co-driver daughter Anna will compete in the Historic Rally Gravel in their Ford Escort RS. Their team, which has also run a BMW M3, has a history of success abroad, having proved competitive during the 2019 FIA European Historic Sporting Rally Championship, held in Rome.

HISTORIC RALLY TARMAC TEAM FLEXIFLY

James Potter and co-driver Tim Sayer are the UK representatives in the Historic Rally Tarmac section. Sayer, with Ernie Graham in the driving seat, won the Historic Class in the 2017 Donegal International Rally in a Ford Escort Mk2.



Auto Slalom could be another strong event for Team UK this year

SRO / KEVIN PECKS

ESPORTS

GT
KIERAN PRENDERGAST
 The Rocket Simsport and Brabham Motorsport driver will compete in the new GT Category.

FIA F4
MATT CARUANA
 Multiple Esports champion Caruana will race in F4, in which he has been a frontrunner before.



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KRISTENSEN AND BROWN AT ESTORIL CLASSICS

GROWING OLD GRACEFULLY

*What do a Le Mans legend and an F1 team boss do on a spare weekend?
For Tom Kristensen and Zak Brown, it means a trip to Estoril
to race some United Autosports-run classics*

GARY WATKINS



The last time Tom Kristensen raced a Porsche, he put down a marker in the sand. His performance at the 1997 Le Mans 24 Hours aboard Joest Racing's WSC95 LMP on the way to a debut victory with Michele Alboreto and Stefan Johansson gave more than a hint of what was to come over a stellar career at the Circuit de la Sarthe. A string of fastest laps culminating in a new lap record, during what at the time was an unprecedented quadruple stint in the night, made the world sit up and take notice. Now he's behind the wheel of a very different kind of Porsche but, 10 years on from the end of his contemporary racing career, he shows the old magic is still there.

This particular German machine isn't a prototype and is loosely based on a 911 road car. And the thing has a roof and an engine that's slung out the back. It's a Porsche 935 IMSA GTX class racer, the tubeframe JLP-3 commissioned in 1981 by John Paul Sr, the car in which his namesake son anchored victory in the 1982 IMSA Camel GT Championship. The car is owned by McLaren Racing CEO Zak Brown, who is Kristensen's team-mate at the Peter Auto-run Estoril Classics weekend earlier this month.

“It looked like it could dry out and I immediately felt staying on slicks was the right thing to do”

Kristensen is strapped into the Porsche, run by the historic arm of the United Autosports team that Brown co-owns with Richard Dean, and about to leave for the dummy grid for the Classic Endurance Racing II event when there's a return of the rain from a qualifying session in which the car had ended up only 15th in the aggregate times: the 935 wasn't out on the circuit when conditions are at their driest. “It looked like it could dry out and I immediately felt staying on slicks was the right thing to do,” says Kristensen. What follows proves him right.

At the end of the opening lap of the race for GT cars built between 1975 and 1981 and prototypes from 1972 to 1981, Kristensen is up to 11th. Three laps later, he's fourth. Progress is halted by a safety car before it's time for Brown to take his turn. Our famous duo end up 13th and third in the GT2 class, their trip onto the podium aided by a late retirement ahead of them. A bit more green-flag running and >>



Kristensen and Brown celebrate podium finish



Kristensen's canny tyre call aided progress through the field

CLASSIC COLLECTION'S WINNING PEDIGREE

It's been done since, and on more occasions than you might think, but the Porsche 935 that Kristensen drove at Estoril did it first! That accolade was winning the Daytona 24 Hours and the Sebring 12 Hours outright in the same year. JLP-3's successes in 1982 explain why a

car that helped John Paul Jr to the IMSA GTP title has a place in Brown's collection of 40-odd racing cars. That roster of machinery once included a 1979 McLaren-Cosworth M28: it was what then team boss Ron Dennis offered a dozen or so years ago when Brown suggested

he needed a McLaren F1 car in a stable now looked after at United by Paul Haigh.

“It's one of the reasons why the M28 went,” says Brown. “I also had Michael Schumacher's first podium F1 car [a Benetton-Ford 191B that he raced at the start of 1992]. It was a great thing, but it wasn't a winner. My number one collecting criteria is that I will not have a car in my collection, regardless of what it is or who drove it, unless it won at least once in period.”

The 'Cologne' Capri fits the bill. Yes it was raced by Niki Lauda in the 1974, but it was a winner in others' hands. It notched up a pair of victories in the final two rounds of the ETC at Zandvoort and Jarama with Jochen Mass, Rolf Stommelen and Klaus Ludwig among the drivers, while the last-named also won in the German DRM tin-top series at Hockenheim.



Capri was a winner, but not in Lauda's hands

EMIDIO COPETO

KRISTENSEN AND BROWN AT ESTORIL CLASSICS



Porsche is run by United Autosports' historic arm



Kristensen relishes chance to drive "such great cars"

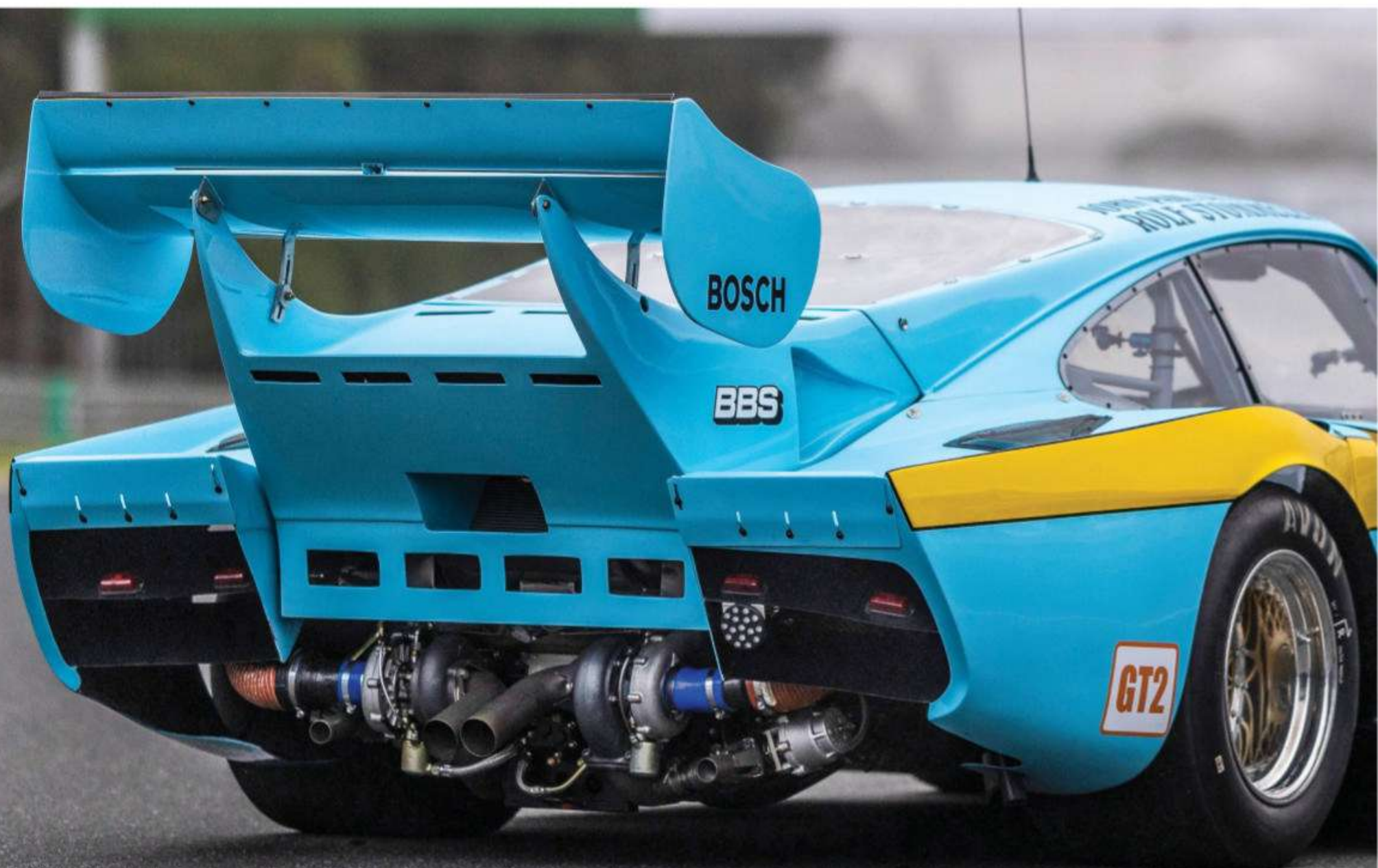
without the penalty that comes with having a multiple Le Mans winner in your car, and they would be further up the order. The United Porsche has to sit stationary for 20 seconds at its stop for having what is termed an elite driver.

"I'd never driven a car like that before," says Kristensen, whose historic exploits date back beyond his Goodwood Revival debut in 2010 – he raced a Mini Cooper in the Copenhagen Historic Grand Prix as long ago as 1998. "You have to nail it on the brakes and then turn in as you trail brake into the corner. If you come off the brakes before you start thinking about turning in, it picks up a bit of understeer. The car definitely worked in those conditions with the weight out over the rear axle – we know 911s like it when it rains. I was able to pass quite a few prototypes that were struggling a bit more than me on slicks."

This is an away day for Kristensen, who in current times is variously president of the FIA Drivers' Commission and a member

of the governing body's World Motor Sport Council, a Formula 1 TV commentator and an ambassador for Audi, the manufacturer with which he notched up seven of his record-breaking nine victories at Le Mans. The Dane, now 57, is not just driving the Porsche, he's also turning out in another of the machines from Brown's mouthwatering collection looked after by United. He gets to drive a Ford 'Cologne' Capri RS3100 in the Heritage Touring Cup. Double the joy, he thinks. "They're both such great cars," says Kristensen. "Just proper, and so much fun to drive."

Kristensen stars, too, in the tin-top race in one of Ford's Group 4 homologation specials built for the 1974 European Touring Car Championship. He again makes rapid progress through the field from a lowly grid position: the team has been saving its new set of wet-weather tyres for the race. Only Kristensen isn't using them: slicks, he reckons, are the better option, an opinion not shared by the majority of the field in the race for touring cars built between





VIAPLAY

FORMER TOP TESTER BACK IN AN F1 CAR

Tom Kristensen's Estoril foray wasn't the first opportunity he got this year to sample one of Zak Brown's cars. The first came a few weeks earlier at the Red Bull Ring aboard something a bit more up to date and not from Brown's personal fleet, when he got back behind the wheel of a contemporary Formula 1 car after an absence of a quarter of a century.

The opportunity of a short run in a 2022 McLaren-Mercedes MCL36 came as part of the British team's Testing for Previous Cars programme that more usually allows it to give young drivers experience of near-contemporary F1 machinery outside the strict rules on testing. The outing at the Red Bull Ring (above) came at Brown's suggestion after a random interjection at the end of last year when Kristensen was interviewing in his F1 TV role.

"All of a sudden Zak interrupts me, and asks, 'Tom, when was the last time you tested a modern F1 car?' It stopped me in my tracks a little bit. I said it was a long time ago, 23 years to be exact. Straight away he said, 'We need to change that.'"

Kristensen never raced in F1, but he did accrue as many as 10,000km for Michelin as it geared up for its return to grand prix racing in 2001, first in a Williams and then a Stewart.

Brown stuck to his word, and then some. "It was a proper test," smiles Kristensen. "I went to Woking to have a go in the simulator and have a proper seat fitting." And, of his runs in the car, "they were enough to get me out of breath".



EMIDIO COPELO

Daytona Classic outing could
be on the cards for Kristensen

1966 and 1984. Kristensen again finishes the opening lap in 11th position from 18th on the grid and the upward progress continues despite having to pump the brakes. The Capri is third when it pits, though it goes no further. A front calliper seal has popped: it's game over. "It was one of the classic cases of a one-quad part failing," groans Brown. "It's a shame because Tom did an amazing job to hang on in those first laps. It was definitely a wet track at the start and he was one of about three drivers of 30 to go for slicks."

Kristensen and Brown go back a long way, but not quite as far as Kristensen and Dean: they were contemporaries on the Japanese racing scene in the early 1990s. The Le Mans legend has driven cars from the Brown stable in the past, but never raced them. He's been up the hill at the Goodwood Festival in a Cosworth-powered Lotus 79 that Mario Andretti used on the way to taking the 1978 F1 drivers' title, when he shared the seat with its former occupant in 2021. They took alternate runs that weekend in the Lotus and the

"It was one of the classic cases of a one-quad part failing. It's a shame because Tom did an amazing job"

Lola-Chevrolet T332 Formula 5000 in which Andretti scored seven wins across 1974 and 1975 in North America.

The opportunity to actually race a couple of Brown's cars came up at the Imola World Endurance Championship round in April. Kristensen was suggesting to old mucker Dean that he had the "perfect life": running a top-line sportscar team competing on multiple fronts around the world, and getting the chance on his weekends off to race some wonderful machinery with Brown.

"Deany said he wasn't so sure," recalls Kristensen. "He explained he's working flat-out, perhaps a bit too much now he's running the McLarens in LMGT3 in the WEC. Then he said, 'You should come and drive some of Zak's cars. Estoril is right before Petit Le Mans [last weekend's final round of the IMSA SportsCar Championship in which United competes in LMP2], so I'm going to be pretty busy.' He dropped a line to Zak with the idea there and then, and he came straight back: the message read 'Make it happen!'"

That explains how Kristensen has ended up at Estoril. But it may not be the last time we see him in a United-run car. Despite his storied career, he never got to race at the Daytona International Speedway in the big North American 24-hour enduro. Brown and United have already discussed putting that right next year in the end-of-season historic extravaganza. "Tom and I talked about doing the Daytona Classic because he's never raced at that track," says Brown. "We could pop up together there depending on our schedules." And Brown's weapon of choice? It would almost certainly be his 1989 Jaguar XJR-10 twin-turbo IMSA GTP racer. ❄



EMIDIO COPELO

Kostecki throws them all under the Erebus

The reigning Supercars champion was totally dominant in the big one – the Bathurst 1000 – with Todd Hazelwood

PHIL BRANAGAN

It takes 161 laps to win a Bathurst 1000. In the 2024 edition of the Great Race, Brodie Kostecki did much of the heavy lifting to take his maiden Bathurst win in the space of 161 seconds.

On Saturday evening, Kostecki used 125.5 of those seconds to plant Erebus Motorsport's Chevrolet Camaro squarely on pole position for the second consecutive year. On Sunday morning, he leapt away well enough to lead the field up Mountain Straight and, 30 seconds into the race, turned in at the circuit's second corner, Griffin's Bend, firmly in the lead. Before the end of the lap, Kostecki had to shrug off a half-challenge from Richie Stanaway at The Chase but, from that point on, he and co-driver Todd Hazelwood hit their marks and watched as the race for second-best unfolded in their rear-view mirror.

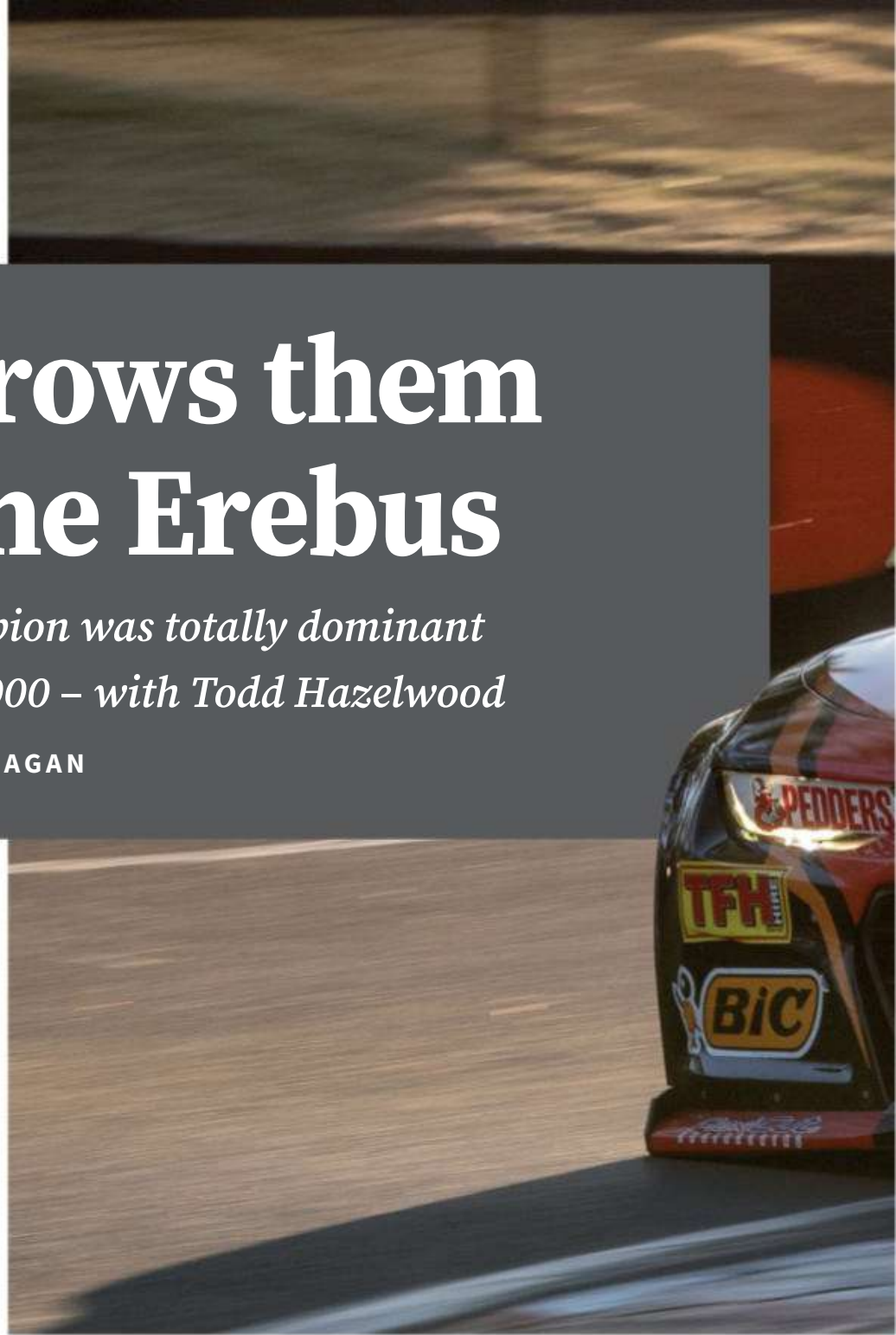
The winning margin of 1.35s falls far short of demonstrating the level of the pair's domination of the race, but a look at the lap chart certainly doesn't. The #87 Triple Eight Chevrolet, piloted by Will Brown and Scott Pye, led four laps – or rather, on four separate occasions it led one lap. To stay out of the way of the team's other car and thereby avoid having to 'stack' at pitstops, it was pitted a lap later than most of the frontrunners, so it took the lead on laps 28, 57, 86 and 115, after Erebus pitted its leading car. Every other lap – all 157 of them – was led by the #1 with either Kostecki or Hazelwood at the wheel, and the gap was often as much as 16s.

Such an emphatic performance was framed by a perfect storm of unusual circumstances, one of which is, even when he is feeling unwell (as he was at Mount Panorama), Kostecki is pretty darn fast. He set the race's second fastest lap, a scant 0.015s slower than the best set by Triple Eight's Broc Feeney (on the same lap, 142).

Hazelwood, who raced the Erebus Camaro at Bathurst's

season-opening round when Kostecki stepped aside for two rounds, was not the fastest of the co-drivers all week (he was fourth and ninth in the two dedicated pre-event co-driver practice sessions). But he was when it counted on Sunday, and did not make any mistakes worth mentioning on the way to his first Bathurst win – in fact, his first win in any Supercars race beyond Super2.

Their track position and strategy were underlined by a remarkable race in which no safety cars featured in the first 132 laps, locking the leaders into their pit windows. As if to further cement the teams' strategies, a first-time regulation required all 26 'primary' drivers to start the race, meaning that for much of the going, lead drivers were racing lead drivers and co-drivers were racing co-drivers. With only one retirement in the race, any mistakes were punished severely and, when teams did slip up, there was little or no chance to go off strategy and make up for



Feeney took second with Triple 8 chief Whincup...



...while sister Brown/Pye car led during pitstops

ALL PHOTOGRAPHY: HORSBURGH/EDGE PHOTOGRAPHICS/MOTORSPORT IMAGES



“Such an emphatic performance was framed by a perfect storm of unusual circumstances”

lost time. That meant track position was king – and Kostecki and Hazelwood held that all race long.

To put the lack of safety cars in perspective, last year’s race featured three; the average over the past 10 1000km races is six; and the last race to feature none was in 1991.

As a demonstration of how close the fuel windows were, the final dash to the chequered flag was carefully managed by a number of the teams, and best of all by Kostecki, who saw the chequered and his low fuel alarm at the same time. Slightly further back others were less fortunate; Stanaway ran out of fuel on the final lap, dropping him three places to finish ninth in the Grove Racing Ford he shared with Dale Wood.

Feeney and co-driver (and team co-owner) Jamie Whincup finished second, and Brown and Pye third, the Chevrolet teams sweeping the podium. At one point Erebus and Triple 8 had the rare feat of filling the top five places between them, with Jack Le Brocq/Jayden Ojeda (Erebus) and Craig Lowndes/Cooper Murray (in T8’s wildcard) within sight of the podium finishers, before the latter two were delayed by a slow pitstop (Le Brocq) and a restart penalty (Murray).

Feeney chased hard but could not get onto Kostecki’s tail, even though both thought the T8 Chevy was slightly faster as the clouds covered the track in the final laps. In third place, Brown rued a lack of outright speed, and had to content himself with an extended championship points lead.

But for one second on Friday afternoon, things might have been different. Feeney was on his way to provisional pole position – and



Kostecki takes Aussie-style drink from a shoe

by a convincing margin – when the session was red-flagged after Will Davison cannoned the Dick Johnson Racing Ford into the wall at The Esses. At the moment the session was frozen, Feeney was perhaps 50 metres short of completing his lap; another second and he would have been on provisional pole rather than Matt Payne. And as the last man to start the top 10 shootout on Saturday, Feeney might have been able to beat Kostecki to pole.

As things went, Cameron Waters was the best of the Ford Mustang drivers in fourth, after starting from the front row of the grid. In a busy week for the Ford teams, with a change to the camshaft specification immediately prior to the race after a rash of recent failures, the Tickford car looked to be closest to the Chevrolets for pace, but Waters’s cause was set back when he speared up an escape road while placed third on lap 23, dropping him to 10th, from where the team had to play catch-up. >>

The other Ford to feature in the top six for much of the race was that of Chaz Mostert/Lee Holdsworth, the 2021 race-winning combination never quite distilling the speed out of the Walkinshaw Andretti United Mustang to challenge for the podium positions. After a podium finish at Sandown last month, James Golding/David Russell finished sixth in the PremiAir Racing Chevrolet, ahead of Anton De Pasquale/Tony D'Alberto (Dick Johnson Racing).

Many of the other contenders never got the opportunity to recover from their setbacks. Fastest in Friday qualifying, Payne had a high-speed off during the Sunday morning warm-up and the

“It’s not often that 14th place is worthy of a mention, but in this race it should be”

Grove Mustang was quickly repaired, but it was his missed shift that prompted a crash that provoked the only safety car of the race. Andre Heimgartner and Declan Fraser looked to have top-six potential, but the Kiwi dropped to 10th in his first Bathurst shootout when he ran wide at the first corner, and any chance to make up ground vanished at the first pitstop when the Brad Jones Racing crew only managed to get 20 litres of fuel into the Chevrolet (about 100 shy of what was intended) due to fuel in the return hose. The duo finished 16th after a particularly meritorious performance from Fraser, who had found out that in his absence, all his possessions had been destroyed in a fire at his Gold Coast home.

One of the other fancied runners, David Reynolds, had any hopes of a top six result derailed early. After his qualifying crash set his Team 18 Chevy back on the grid, he suffered flat-spotted tyres early in the race and dropped to last, leaving the 2017 winner



Waters and Moffat were top Ford crew home, in fourth

and co-driver Warren Luff to soldier on as best they could.

It’s not often that 14th place is worthy of a mention, but in this race it should be. After Lowndes picked up places steadily in his opening stint, Murray was truly impressive, looking just as comfortable running against the full-time drivers as he did at Sandown last month, and was firmly in the fight for sixth. His pitlane penalty was for a silly error, but it will do little to diminish the smiles on the faces at Erebus Motorsport, which has him under contract to replace Kostecky for 2025.

It’s probable that Triple Eight and Brown will wrest the title from Erebus and Kostecky. But in a season that began with the biggest controversy Supercars has known for some time – the reigning champion declining to drive for the team with which he had won the crown – Kostecky, Hazelwood and Erebus will accept a deserving Bathurst 1000 victory, especially one won in such emphatic style. 🏆

EXPERIENCED HANDS COME A CROPPER BEFORE THE RACE

An irony of Bathurst 2024, the fastest 1000 in history with a single retirement, was the amount and severity of crash damage prior to the race. Within the space of 24 hours on Thursday and Friday, Scott Pye, David Reynolds and Will Davison crashed hard in either practice or qualifying, prompting their teams to perform late-night (or all-night) repairs to badly damaged cars.

While those drivers were not alone, what was notable was that all had more than a decade’s experience. So why were they crashing? A common thought seemed to be the combination of the Fords and Chevrolets and the current Dunlop control tyre. The Gen3 cars are intentionally designed to have far less grip and in-car adjustability than their predecessors so they are, by definition and

specification, both slower and harder to drive than were the Gen2s.

As a result the fastest Supercar lap of the weekend actually came in Super2 qualifying, Aaron Cameron doing a 2m04.7010s in a three-year-old Kelly Racing Gen2 Ford Mustang. That was 0.8s better than Brodie Kostecky managed in the top 10 shootout.

Another factor impacting all this was that last year, when the Gen3 cars made their Bathurst debut, they were raced on the softer and grippier of Dunlop’s tyres. So, on the harder tyre this year, drivers were facing something of an unknown.

Five-time Bathurst victor Garth Tander mused that some drivers might have been still thinking of the previous generation Supercar. “Hard tyre, low downforce,” he said. “Everyone has probably still got a lot of muscle memory from that hard tyre from the Gen2 car.”

The closest qualifying session in the race’s history featured the top six split by 0.14s over a 3.9-mile lap and the top four covered by about one metre. No wonder the drivers were pushing so hard for every single metre.



It wasn’t just the old blokes. Payne puts it in the wall at The Cutting

There's a reason why
this track is so revered...



RESULTS BATHURST 1000, AUSTRALIAN SUPERCARS ROUND 10/12, MOUNT PANORAMA (AUS), 13 OCTOBER (161 LAPS – 621.552 MILES)

POS	DRIVERS	TEAM / CAR	TIME	TOP 10 SHOOTOUT
1	Brodie Kostecki (AUS) Todd Hazelwood (AUS)	Erebus Motorsport / Chevrolet Camaro ZL1	5h58m03.0649s	1 Kostecki 2m05.5119s; 2 Waters 2m05.6429s; 3 Feeney 2m05.8618s;
2	Broc Feeney (AUS) Jamie Whincup (AUS)	Triple Eight Race Engineering / Chevrolet Camaro ZL1	+1.3496s	4 Stanaway 2m05.9286s; 5 Brown 2m06.1625s; 6 Le Brocq 2m06.1827s;
3	Will Brown (AUS) Scott Pye (AUS)	Triple Eight Race Engineering / Chevrolet Camaro ZL1	+13.6404s	7 Payne 2m06.2373s; 8 De Pasquale 2m06.2385s; 9 Mostert 2m06.5411s;
4	Cameron Waters (AUS) James Moffat (AUS)	Tickford Racing / Ford Mustang S650	+15.1169s	10 Heimgartner 2m15.1206s.
5	Chaz Mostert (AUS) Lee Holdsworth (AUS)	Walkinshaw Andretti United / Ford Mustang S650	+15.8428s	QUALIFYING Payne 2m05.6452s;
6	James Golding (AUS) David Russell (AUS)	PremiAir Racing / Chevrolet Camaro ZL1	+17.5856s	Waters 2m05.6512s; Feeney 2m05.6565s; Kostecki 2m05.6646s;
7	Anton De Pasquale (AUS) Tony D'Alberto (AUS)	Dick Johnson Racing / Ford Mustang S650	+26.7384s	Brown 2m05.7663s; Mostert 2m05.7888s; Heimgartner 2m05.9268s; Le Brocq 2m05.9775s;
8	Jack Le Brocq (AUS) Jayden Ojeda (AUS)	Erebus Motorsport / Chevrolet Camaro ZL1	+29.7233s	De Pasquale 2m05.9942s; Stanaway 2m06.1052s; 11 Golding 2m06.1581s; 12 Hill 2m06.1681s;
9	Richie Stanaway (NZL) Dale Wood (AUS)	Grove Racing / Ford Mustang S650	+32.2044s	13 Percat 2m06.1788s; 14 RWood 2m06.2512s; 15 Evans 2m06.2532s;
10	Cameron Hill (AUS) Cameron Crick (AUS)	Matt Stone Racing / Chevrolet Camaro ZL1	+33.6141s	16 Davison 2m06.2801s; 17 Jones 2m06.5656s; 18 Murray 2m06.5881s;
11	Tom Randle (AUS) Tyler Everingham (AUS)	Tickford Racing / Ford Mustang S650	+34.4170s	19 Randle 2m06.5956s; 20 Love 2m06.6722s; 21 Reynolds 2m06.6807s; 22 Winterbottom 2m06.7368s; 23 Courtney 2m06.7475s; 24 Fullwood 2m06.9160s; 25 Slade 2m06.9791s;
12	Will Davison (AUS) Kai Allen (AUS)	Dick Johnson Racing / Ford Mustang S650	+34.9590s	26 Chahda 2m07.9523s.
13	Macauley Jones (AUS) Jordan Boys (AUS)	Brad Jones Racing / Chevrolet Camaro ZL1	+40.2488s	CHAMPIONSHIP
14	Craig Lowndes (AUS) Cooper Murray (AUS)	Triple Eight Race Engineering / Chevrolet Camaro ZL1	+55.9923s	1 Brown 2538; 2 Feeney 2334;
15	Ryan Wood (NZL) Fabian Coulthard (NZL)	Walkinshaw Andretti United / Ford Mustang S650	+1m14.0957s	3 Mostert 2313; 4 Waters 2074;
16	Andre Heimgartner (NZL) Declan Fraser (AUS)	Brad Jones Racing / Chevrolet Camaro ZL1	+1m47.7824s	5 Golding 1718; 6 Payne 1659;
17	Nick Percat (AUS) Dylan O'Keeffe (AUS)	Matt Stone Racing / Chevrolet Camaro ZL1	+1m50.5959s	7 Percat 1548; 8 Randle 1543; 9 De Pasquale 1531; 10 Davison 1530.
18	Mark Winterbottom (AUS) Michael Caruso (AUS)	Team 18 / Chevrolet Camaro ZL1	+1m56.6408s	
19	Tim Slade (AUS) Cameron McLeod (AUS)	PremiAir Racing / Chevrolet Camaro ZL1	+1m58.6041s	
20	Jaxon Evans (NZL) Dean Fiore (AUS)	Brad Jones Racing / Chevrolet Camaro ZL1	+2m01.5311s	
21	James Courtney (AUS) Jack Perkins (AUS)	Blanchard Racing Team / Ford Mustang S650	-1 lap	
22	Bryce Fullwood (AUS) Jaylyn Robotham (AUS)	Brad Jones Racing / Chevrolet Camaro ZL1	-1 lap	
23	Aaron Love (AUS) Aaron Cameron (AUS)	Blanchard Racing Team / Ford Mustang S650	-1 lap	
24	David Reynolds (AUS) Warren Luff (AUS)	Team 18 / Chevrolet Camaro ZL1	-2 laps	
25	Matt Chahda (AUS) Brad Vaughan (AUS)	Matt Chahda Motorsport / Chevrolet Camaro ZL1	-15 laps	
R	Matt Payne (NZL) Garth Tander (AUS)	Grove Racing / Ford Mustang S650	130 laps-accident	

Winners' average speed 104.155mph. Fastest lap Feeney 2m078610s, 108.696mph.

Van der Zande snatches it for Cadillac

PETIT LE MANS

ROAD ATLANTA (USA)

12 OCTOBER

IMSA SPORTSCAR ROUND 11/11

Last Saturday's 27th edition of Petit Le Mans, the 10-hour brainchild of the late Dr Don Panoz, was truly a classic. It had everything: a record-sized field (and crowd), intense competition, excitement aplenty, precious few yellow-flag interruptions, and a thrilling climax as Renger van der Zande performed a spectacular pass on Nick Tandy's Penske Porsche in Turn 1 with 15 minutes remaining to secure an incredible come-from-behind victory for Chip Ganassi's Cadillac Racing team.

There was plenty of trepidation as a total of 53 cars lined up on a gorgeous autumn morning, especially given the context of last year's race, which ended behind the safety car after a record 12 cautions. But after a trio of relatively minor interruptions during the first 100 minutes, there was only one more until just inside the final hour. The lack of cautions proved frustrating for a few potential contenders in the four classes, who were unable to use their strategic nous to overcome some early issues.

Prime among them were the two Cadillacs. Jack Aitken qualified the Action Express-run Whelen car on pole and controlled the early stages until being handed a penalty for overtaking under a local yellow flag. The car fell off the lead lap after co-driver Tom Blomqvist also incurred the wrath of race officials by inadvertently tipping Jesse Krohn's BMW into a spin at Turn 7.

Ganassi's squad also experienced early drama. The team thought it had rectified a torque-sensor issue that had reared its head during qualifying, but received a warning



Cadillac came out top in late battle

merely seven minutes into the race when IMSA's monitoring system detected a "failure to adhere to the controlled powertrain parameters". Ten minutes later, Sebastien Bourdais was called into the pits with what is termed a "mechanical black flag". Engineers from the team and Cadillac worked feverishly and diligently – along with IMSA's technical personnel – to identify the problem, and were certainly fortunate that the three early caution periods ensured the car lost only one lap.

With both Cadillacs in catch-up mode, the pair of Porsche Penske Motorsport 963s crewed by Tandy/Mathieu Jaminet/Kevin Estre and Felipe Nasr/Dane Cameron/Matt Campbell took control, albeit unable to shake off the Wayne Taylor Racing with Andretti Acura ARX-06 of Filipe Albuquerque/Ricky Taylor/Brendon Hartley.

The #7 Porsche of Nasr curiously did not make a pitstop at the first time of asking during a caution immediately after the four-hour mark. The ploy not only precluded an opportunity for several rival teams to gain a lap back, but it also played into the hands of the sister Porsche, which took the lead at the restart.

Estre, however, was unable to take full

advantage, since both the privateer Proton Porsche of Alessio Picariello and Blomqvist's Cadillac had not pitted and therefore took the green flag directly in front of the Frenchman. Right behind, too, were Colton Herta, in the #40 WTR Acura, and the Ganassi Cadillac of Scott Dixon, both desperate to get back on the lead lap. It took a while, but both were able to achieve their objective. Still, with half of the race remaining, they would require assistance to truly get themselves back into contention.

A drive-through penalty for Tandy after 242 laps following contact with an LMP2 car proved to be but a minor inconvenience as the fired-up Englishman charged hard to make up the lost ground.

With two hours remaining, the contest seemed to be boiling down to a straight fight between the #6 Porsche and the #10 Acura. The #7 Porsche also was in contention, albeit on a slightly different fuel strategy and having lost some time with an off on cold tyres for Campbell immediately after a pitstop on lap 319.

Tandy took advantage of some traffic to nip past Taylor for the lead on lap 369. At this stage it was nip and tuck. Both leaders pitted together with 392 laps in the books but, while the WTR Acura team managed to release Taylor in the lead, the American almost immediately became yet another victim of cold Michelin tyres and slipped off the road at Turn 3. Tandy was back in front.

The final caution was triggered when the GTD Proton Ford Mustang of Corey Lewis was left stranded in the road after heavy contact on the exit of Turn 5. A huge group of cars, including the overall leaders, were forced to take evasive action in the darkness. Taylor, unfortunately, collided with the stranded Ford, causing extensive damage to the left-front corner of the Acura.

Van der Zande was the primary



Acura lost its shot at victory thanks to shunt with GTD car



GALSTAD/MOTORSPORT IMAGES



Tandy and co lost out in fight for victory...

RESULTS PETIT LE MANS, ROAD ATLANTA (USA), 443 LAPS - 1125.22 MILES

GTP

POS	DRIVERS	CAR	TIME
1	Scott Dixon /Sebastien Bourdais /Renger van der Zande	Cadillac V-Series.R	10h00m36.290s
2	Kevin Estre /Mathieu Jaminet /Nick Tandy	Porsche 963	+2.948s
3	Matt Campbell /Felipe Nasr /Dane Cameron	Porsche 963	+13.832s
4	Augusto Farfus /Philipp Eng /Jesse Krohn	BMW M Hybrid V8	-1 lap
5	Tom Blomqvist /Jack Aitken /Pipo Derani	Cadillac V-Series.R	-1 lap
6	Alessio Picariello /Bent Viscaal /Gianmaria Bruni	Porsche 963	-2 laps
7	Colton Herta /Louis Deletraz /Jordan Taylor	Acura ARX-06	-3 laps
8	Romain Grosjean /Andrea Caldarelli /Matteo Cairolì	Lamborghini SC63	-13 laps
9	Brendon Hartley /Filipe Albuquerque /Ricky Taylor	Acura ARX-06	405 laps-DNF
10	Maxime Martin /Nick Yelloly /Connor De Phillippi	BMW M Hybrid V8	170 laps-DNF

LMP2 (435 LAPS)

POS	DRIVERS	CAR	TIME
1	Hunter McElrea /Mikkel Jensen /Steven Thomas	ORECA-Gibson 07	10h01m12.942s
2	Josh Burdon /Felipe Fraga /Gar Robinson	ORECA-Gibson 07	+17.097s
3	Connor Zilisch /Ryan Dalziel /Dwight Merriman	ORECA-Gibson 07	+25.017s

GTD PRO (413 LAPS)

POS	DRIVERS	CAR	TIME
1	Mirko Bortolotti /Jordan Pepper /Franck Perera	Lamborghini Huracan GT3 EVO2	10h01m14.785s
2	Alessandro Pier Guidi /Davide Rigon /Daniel Serra	Ferrari 296 GT3	+2.361s
3	Roman De Angelis /Alex Riberas /Ross Gunn	Aston Martin Vantage GT3 Evo	+4.206s

GTD (411 LAPS)

POS	DRIVERS	CAR	TIME
1	Cedric Sbirrazzuoli /Albert Costa /Manny Franco	Ferrari 296 GT3	10h01m47.779s
2	Devlin DeFrancesco /Loris Spinelli /Misha Goikhberg	Lamborghini Huracan GT3 EVO2	+0.718s
3	Aaron Telitz /Parker Thompson /Frankie Montecalvo	Lexus RC F GT3	-1 lap



DOLE/MOTORSPORT IMAGES

Dixon (right) with last-hour hero van der Zande

beneficiary, his deficit of almost a lap instantly erased. The Dutchman was on a mission at the restart, especially after losing out in the closing stages one year ago. After 430 laps and with Tandy losing a little momentum through the final corner, van der Zande pulled off a breathtaking move to the inside at Turn 1. He was through. And gone. "I was all in," he said later. "Win it or bin it. I'm just so overjoyed."

"This is the last big one that was missing from our trophy case," added team owner Ganassi, reflecting upon several near misses in the endurance classic - and in his team's final race with Cadillac, which will switch allegiance to WTR/Andretti in 2025.

Penske Porsche gained solace with Nasr/Cameron winning both the overall GTP crown and Michelin Endurance Cup.

The other classes also provided tremendous excitement, with Steven Thomas/Hunter McElrea/Mikkel Jensen scooping LMP2 honours for TDS Racing, Franck Perera/Mirko Bortolotti/Jordan Pepper topping the GTD Pro field in their Iron Lynx Lamborghini, and the Conquest Racing Ferrari of Manny Franco/Albert Costa/Cedric Sbirrazzuoli securing their first GTD win by less than a second.

JEREMY SHAW



HOCHZIME/PORSCHE

...while team-mates Cameron (left) and Nasr beat them to GTP crown



Auer chases Baert's Aston and Goethe's McLaren late on, but fourth was enough for title

Engel finally gets his finest Auer

**GT WORLD CHALLENGE EUROPE
SPRINT CUP
BARCELONA (ESP)
12-13 OCTOBER
ROUND 5/5**

Maro Engel and Lucas Auer triumphed at the Circuit de Catalunya to secure GT World Challenge Europe title honours in a weekend where atypical Spanish weather wreaked havoc for the opening race of the much-vaunted championship showdown.

Engel and Auer arrived in Spain two points behind triple Sprint Cup champions Dries Vanthoor and Charles Weerts, whose Team WRT-run BMW M4 GT3 struggled for pace in qualifying. Vanthoor could only manage 18th whereas title rival Auer bagged third in the Winward Racing Mercedes-AMG GT3 Evo and the usual Balance of Performance grumbles began. The BMWs were given an adjustment for the opening race, shedding 15kg, but the

benefit wouldn't be seen as over 50 minutes of the hour were run behind the safety car.

Polesitter Patrick Kujala (Barwell Motorsport Lamborghini Huracan) led to Turn 1, where Reece Barr's Mercedes squeezed Dylan Pereira's Audi, the two colliding and the R8 LMS GT3 catching fire. Cue a long safety car period that was then compounded by heavy rain falling and cars aquaplaning. The safety car therefore stayed out all through the pit window, at which point Max Gotz (Boutsen VDS Mercedes) headed for wet-weather tyres whereas most had already done so. So Gotz gained a free pitstop and Jules Gounon brought the car to the flag ahead after just five minutes of real racing to take the win, his first in Sprint Cup and the first also for the team.

The shouting began during the race, since the regulations say that the pit window will be delayed if the safety car is on track and this was not done, so an angry Team WRT protested the result.

It was dismissed, but the Belgian squad has pledged to appeal the stewards' decision. So with Engel and Auer third and Weerts and Vanthoor ninth (sixth in class), it was advantage Mercedes for day two.

Again the BMW struggled and Engel (who had outqualified Weerts) kept out of trouble in the opening stint, led by polewinner Patric Niederhauser (Rutronik Racing Porsche 911 GT3-R). Sven Muller kept the Porsche ahead in the second stint, escaping from the pack as behind him Nicolas Baert (in for Mattia Drudi) kept his Comtoyou Aston Martin Vantage GT3 ahead of a charging Benji Goethe (for Tom Gamble) aboard the Garage 59 McLaren 720S GT3. Fourth sat Auer, heading for the title, Vanthoor seventh with WRT unimpressed with their BoP. "It seems like the championship was decided before we got here..." said Weerts before the start.

"I've come close before," said Engel, who lost the 2019 title on a tie-break, "so this is really special." It was also a maiden Pro title for American-based Winward Racing.

After a first-lap puncture in race two scuppered the hopes of Lucas Legeret and Simon Gachet for the Gold Cup crown with their CSA Racing Audi, fellow Audi crew Max Hofer and Luca Engstler wrapped up the title in their debut GTWCE season. Team WRT's Calan Williams took the Silver Cup gold with the help of new co-driver Sean Galael, who drove a good stint on Sunday to assist the Australian. In Bronze, Dan Harper guided Darren Leung's Paradine Competition BMW M4 to the crown, as Dustin Blattner and Dennis Marschall added to Rutronik's joy with a class win in the race.

DAVID ADDISON



Jolly good Sho claims a double at Fuji for TOM'S

SUPER FORMULA
FUJI (JPN)
12-13 OCTOBER
ROUND 6/7

Sho Tsuboi put himself in the driving seat for this year's Super Formula title with a double victory last weekend at Fuji.

TOM'S driver Tsuboi arrived at Fuji 14.5 points behind championship leader Tomoki Nojiri, and seized the initiative by becoming the first driver to win two races in a single weekend since Andre Lotterer in 2011, making it three victories from three at Fuji this year. He therefore goes to the Suzuka finale next month 14.5 points clear of nearest rival Tadasuke Makino, with Nojiri third, a further two behind.

In Saturday's opener, Tsuboi battled his Toyota-powered Dallara forward from seventh on the grid, doing much of the hard work in the first three laps to fight his way up to second, between Team Mugen Honda-engined pair Nojiri and Ayumu Iwasa. Iwasa performed an undercut on the lead pair by pitting on lap 10 of 41, but Tsuboi was able to clear Nojiri by virtue of an overcut before cruising up to Iwasa and



Tsuboi leads Makino early doors on Sunday

passing the Red Bull junior with ease.

As Nojiri struggled for pace and slipped to sixth, Kamui Kobayashi (KCMG) came through for his first Super Formula podium since 2019 in third.

Tsuboi grabbed his first pole of the year on Sunday, and spent the race fending off the other Toyota-engined KCMG car of Nirei Fukuzumi, who had topped Saturday qualifying only to slump to fifth in the race after making a poor start. Makino (Dandelion Racing Honda) beat Ren Sato for the final podium spot, although Sato was later penalised for making light contact with Makino behind the safety

car and was then disqualified when his Honda-powered Nakajima Racing car was found to be underweight.

Nojiri suffered a dismal race in eighth, two places behind Iwasa, who recovered from 12th on the grid to sixth after a track-limits infraction cost him his best lap in qualifying.

Nyck de Vries bowed out of Super Formula with two 11th-place finishes for Team Impul, losing a chance of points in the second race when a five-second penalty for making contact with Kenta Yamashita dropped him down from eighth.

JAMIE KLEIN

Larson president of roval office

NASCAR CUP
CHARLOTTE (USA)
13 OCTOBER
ROUND 32/36

Kyle Larson was a dominant force from the start of Sunday's Round of 12 elimination race at the Charlotte roval, passing polesitter Shane van Gisbergen early and later besting another road course ace, AJ Allmendinger, in the final stages. From there, he held back Christopher Bell to collect his series-leading sixth win of the 2024 season



Larson's sixth win of the season

in his Hendrick Motorsports Chevrolet.

But the real story was around the playoffs' elimination zone. Tyler Reddick needed a right-rear toelink replaced during the second stage after colliding with fellow Toyota driver (and his 23XI Racing boss) Denny Hamlin at Turn 7 in an impact that sent Reddick's car up off the ground. On fresh tyres, he made a heroic charge in the closing laps, going from 26th to 11th. That was enough to take the car co-owned by Michael Jordan into the Round of 8, eliminating Team Penske's Joey Logano.

The playoff fight didn't quite end with the chequered flag... Hours later, Alex Bowman's Hendrick Chevy was found to be underweight in post-race inspection, leading to a disqualification that stripped him of most of the points he scored at the roval. Suddenly, he was the driver eliminated from the playoffs along with Daniel Suarez, Austin Cindric and Chase Briscoe, allowing Logano to move forward in his place.

NICK DEGROOT

WEEKEND WINNERS

GT WORLD CHALLENGE EUROPE SPRINT CUP

BARCELONA (ESP)

Race 1 Max Gotz/Jules Gounon (below)
 Boutsen VDS (Mercedes-AMG GT3 Evo)

Race 2 Patric Niederhauser/Sven Muller
 Rutronik Racing (Porsche 911 GT3-R)

SUPER FORMULA FUJI (JPN)

Races 1 & 2 Sho Tsuboi
 TOM'S (Dallara-Toyota)

NASCAR CUP CHARLOTTE (USA)

Kyle Larson
 Hendrick Motorsports (Chevrolet Camaro)



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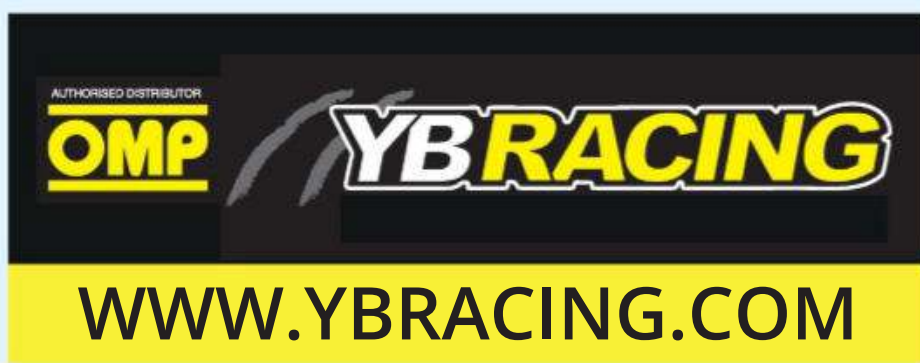
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British GT racer handed ban for outburst at officials

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Ferguson handed six-week race ban following Snetterton official outburst

BRITISH GT

British GT driver John Ferguson has received a racing ban for his behaviour towards race director Peter Daly at the end of the Snetterton weekend in July.

The RAM Racing driver and owner received a six-week ban with a further six weeks suspended, which started on the 26 September, and meant Ferguson missed the Brands Hatch season finale last month.

The punishment came after he and co-driver Max Hesse, as well as RAM's GT4 entry, were disqualified from both Snetterton races following team members arguing that another competitor should have been penalised for lapping traffic under safety car conditions in race two.

Had the car – driven by Maximilian Gotz and Kevin Tse – been penalised, the RAM GT3 pair would have taken victory, but “Ferguson’s manner was agitated, loud and forceful”, according to a recent National Court report following a hearing on the matter.



Ferguson missed the British GT finale



Comments were made against race director at Snetterton in July

Ferguson allegedly accused race control of “incompetence”, referencing Donington Park in May, when slick-tired cars skidded off at a wet Redgate and it took 12 minutes for a red flag to appear while a tractor recovered stricken cars.

Mark Heywood, chair of the court panel, said: “He accused Mr Daly of ‘nearly killing people’ at an earlier round at Donington Park and accused him of not knowing what he was doing. This outburst followed on from another verbally abusive complaint made by others associated with RAM Racing.

“Mr Daly responded, quite properly, that Mr Ferguson’s behaviour would be reported. Mr Ferguson responded with a grossly offensive remark about where Mr Daly could stick the championship and then walked off.”

Heywood added: “Mr Ferguson could have thought better of his behaviour; however, he posted a comment [online] accusing Mr Daly of incompetence and of making rules up as he went along. Worse still, he suggested that ‘everyone’ felt the same way.”

The court report added that Ferguson has now apologised for the incident, with the Irishman also ordered to pay a contribution of £5467 towards court fees. “Referees speak highly of Mr Ferguson and his positive contributions to the sport,” concluded Heywood. “It makes Mr Ferguson’s behaviour even more disappointing, but we give him credit for now admitting his fault.”

Autosport approached RAM Racing, but the team declined to comment.

ED HARDY

Gotz keen to continue in 2025

BRITISH GT

Mercedes factory driver Maximilian Gotz is planning to continue in British GT in 2025 despite a mixed debut campaign this year.

The 2021 DTM champion finished seventh in the GT3 standings alongside 2 Seas Motorsport co-driver Kevin Tse having won at Spa and Snetterton.

But the pair finished outside of the top five in the other seven races, with such inconsistency denying them a title challenge. The final two rounds even featured non-scores after Tse was involved in opening-lap collisions at Donington Park and Brands Hatch.

Gotz is hoping for a more successful return in search of the fifth title of his career.

“We’re in discussions for next year,” said the German, who has also won Formula BMW, ADAC GT Masters and Blancpain GT Sprint Series crowns. “My calendar is already quite full, but I wish to come back. I want to win as many championships as possible and it would be nice to have British GT on the list, so for sure it’s my intention.”

ED HARDY



Gotz and Tse took the victory at Spa

Fairclough to graduate to GB3 with Hitech

GB3

Reigning British Formula 4 champion Deagen Fairclough will graduate to GB3 next season with the Hitech GP squad.

The 18-year-old claimed this year's F4 crown with Hitech in dominant fashion and with an event to spare after taking a season-record 14 wins from 30 races, all of which helped earn him a spot in the final four of the Silverstone Autosport BRDC Young Driver Award shootout later this month.

Fairclough's bid to race in single-seaters came after he won the 2022 edition of the ROKiT Racing Star Esports competition, for which the prize was a fully funded season in British F4 for 2023. After finishing third with JHR Developments, Fairclough moved across to Hitech for this year.

Fairclough, who joins Nikita Johnson in Hitech's GB3 line-up, said: "I'm thrilled to be taking the next step in my single-seater career; 2024 has been an incredible season, one I'll never forget. To win the British F4 drivers' title, and set a new record, is a dream



Reigning British F4 champion will be aiming for another title in 2025

come true. None of this would have been possible without the support of firstly ROKiT and its Racing Star programme and now Hitech, who have prepared a fantastic car all season and provided the environment for me to be able to perform and develop.

"I'm proud that our success in the drivers' cup helped them win the teams' cup too. I can't thank ROKiT and Hitech enough for the journey so far and their support for me as I step up to GB3. I look forward to rewarding their faith in me on the race track."

Also joining Hitech's ranks next season

will be Thomas Bearman, younger brother of future Haas F1 driver Ollie. Bearman will race in British F4 after making his debut in the series at the last two rounds this season, where he recorded a best result of 10th.

"Racing with Deagen and Reza [Seewooruthun] has been fantastic; it's been great to watch and learn from them," said Bearman. "They've set a high bar and this experience of working with them has been really motivating. I can't wait to get into winter testing now and the hard work for next season starts there."

Green wins Ginetta Junior Scholarship for 2025



Nephew of DTM star will make car racing debut

GINETTA

Fred Green, the nephew of DTM ace Jamie, has been selected as the next Ginetta Junior scholar after being chosen from a record-high number of entrants.

The 15-year-old impressed in a series of driving, media and fitness

tests held at Blyton Park last weekend and was joined by Rocco Coronel, son of tin-top ace Tom, Andy Consani, Lewis Goff and Noah Wolfe in making the final. Green will now receive a fully-funded season in the Ginetta series next year.

"I'm so happy to get


given such a good opportunity," said Green. "It's massive for me to start my car racing career. The scholarship has been such a competitive event and you can never be too confident with how good everyone was, but I feel my hard work paid off and I'm over the moon to win."

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Magnussen Jr targeting car racing debut in UK with GB4 assault

GB4

Luca Magnussen, son of ex-Formula 1 driver and sportscar legend Jan, is on course to begin his car racing career in the UK next year. Magnussen Sr has revealed that he is targeting a GB4 Championship campaign in 2025 for his 15-year-old son, who this season is competing in the Italian-based ROK Cup kart series after winning the Danish X30 senior title in 2023.

“At the moment we’re talking to GB4 teams to come over, hopefully soon there will be a test and plan is to do GB4 next year,” said Magnussen of his younger son, half-brother of Haas Formula 1 driver Kevin.

“GB4 is more economically viable than

doing F4 in Britain or wherever, and there is lots of testing and some great tracks. I think for year one for Luca in cars it’s the right way for him to feel things out.”

Magnussen, who cut his racing teeth in Britain in Formula Ford 1600, winning the Formula Ford Festival in 1992 before progressing to Formula Vauxhall Lotus and Formula 3, stressed the importance of the contacts he has in the UK as another reason behind the plan.

“We have a good network of people who can be there when I can’t,” added Magnussen. “He won’t be able to travel by himself because he is only 15 and he will have somewhere to stay.”

GARY WATKINS

RoR launch event held at Thruxton

RACE OF REMEMBRANCE

A special launch event to mark the 10th anniversary of the Race of Remembrance was held at Thruxton last week and also provided the chance for those involved with charity and organiser Mission Motorsport to come together.

The 12-hour endurance race has been held at Anglesey since 2014. It was set up by Mission Motorsport founder James

Cameron and circuit manager Jon Earp, both members of the military, to offer a means of support for servicemen and women, as well as their families.

The race, which had to be run virtually in 2020 due to COVID-19, will celebrate its decade when it is held on 8-10 November at the Welsh circuit, and a record 56 entries are expected.

The Thruxton event allowed

nearly 200 people to learn more about the contest and charity, alongside taking part in on and off-track activities, as well as experience a flyover by a Chinook helicopter.

Among those attending was Motorsport UK chairman David Richards, who was on hand to sign the Armed Forces Covenant, with the governing body committed to giving its ongoing support to the Armed Forces community.

PALMOWSKI’S FE TEST

Multiple GB4 race winner Alisha Palmowski will take part in Formula E’s all-female test next month at Valencia for Envision. The 18-year-old took three wins and finished runner-up in the drivers’ standings during her maiden campaign in the UK single-seater series for Elite Motorsport. This also included winning €30,000 for being the top female driver and aid her bid of joining the F1 Academy grid.

PROTOTYPE DEBUT

Northern Irishman Brandon McCaughan will make his prototype debut this weekend in the Ligier European Series at Portimao. The GB4 race winner has tested the Ligier JSP4 and will link up with Team Virage, the Spanish squad currently the reigning champion two years running and leading this year’s teams’ and drivers’ standings.

COOK MEMORIAL AWARD

British F4 driver Martin Molnar has become the first recipient of a new award that remembers the series’ former driving standards advisor Jake Cook, the ex-racer who died last year. The Jake Cook Memorial Award was voted on by team bosses with the winner the driver to have shown great improvement over the season. Molnar was presented with the award by Cook’s widow, championship manager Eve Lake-Grange. Molnar received a £500 cheque from Cook’s family, while £500 was donated to mental health charity Mind.

UK YOUTH AMBASSADOR

Ginetta Junior and one-time GB4 racer Nickolas Ellis has been selected as an ambassador for the UK Youth charity. The teenager joins 1992 Formula 1 world champion Nigel Mansell (who is its president) in representing the organisation, which works to help give children the skills and opportunities they need to thrive. “I’m looking forward to the incredibly rewarding opportunities this position holds for me and reviewing this amazing programme in the coming months,” said Ellis (below, with Mansell).





STEVE JONES

CSCC adds Zolder to expanded calendar

CSCC

A first visit to Zolder is among an expanded Classic Sports Car Club calendar for next year that also features returns to Castle Combe and Cadwell Park.

The club's season is due to kick off at the start of March on the Silverstone International circuit and includes other popular tracks such as Brands Hatch and Donington Park. Its Thruxton fixture (above) is back to a two-day event in September, while the CSCC

will also race on Silverstone's National layout but has elected not to use the Grand Prix configuration amid high circuit hire costs and the need to amalgamate multiple categories. The Belgian Zolder circuit also appears for the first time, with the CSCC's Open Series due to visit in July.

"We're running at the Spa Six Hours but, unfortunately, we're not doing the Spa Summer Classic as it clashed with other dates," explained CSCC director David Smitheram. "Instead,

we're going to Zolder and it's the first time we've been there. I did a trackday there about 20 years ago in a Caterham and thought it was a great circuit. It's a Belgian equivalent of Oulton Park – it's something different and the date fitted. We're aiming for three races there and we're going to take our Open Series, so pretty much everyone can do it."

Having enjoyed a successful 2024 season, for which several categories joined the CSCC's roster as it ran championships

for the first time, the club has been emboldened to book more track time for next year than ever before.

"Because we've had a good financial year this year we can take a risk next year, so what we've done is taken on more dates and more two-day meetings," added Smitheram. "We will [therefore] have a few less amalgamated grids. Swinging Sixties is booming and we've got to offer them two races everywhere."

STEPHEN LICKORISH

New Cupra makes UK race debut

TCR UK

The latest version of Cupra's successful run of TCR touring cars made its UK debut at Silverstone last weekend.

TCR UK race winner Steve Laidlaw and son Sam have acquired two examples of the Cupra Leon VZ that the Spanish marque introduced earlier this year to replace its second-generation Leon Competicion. Laidlaw Sr had taken his first series win in the older Leon at Thruxton last month, while Laidlaw Jr previously

raced the Hyundai i30 N in which his father had made his category debut.

The pair, who are both now running with Area Motorsport, debuted the cars at TCR UK's 2024 season finale ahead of a planned full campaign next year. "Both Sam and I agreed that we wanted to be a part of TCR UK for the long term, so we've made our commitment to the championship by purchasing two brand-new Cupra Leon VZ TCR cars," said Laidlaw Sr, who finished second in the final race.

The move also freed up the family's



Hyundai for Audi TT Cup frontrunner Andrew Dyer and his ARK Motorsports squad to make their TCR UK debut, achieving a best result of 11th.

MARK PAULSON

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Old Avon products are being reindustrialised



Nova signs multi-year deal to become HSCC's tyre partner

HSCC

Nova Motorsport, the new company that acquired the assets of Avon, has been appointed as the official tyre partner of the Historic Sports Car Club from next season and will provide a range of Avon products for several championships.

Nova-manufactured tyres will be used in the Historic and Classic Formula Ford 1600 series as well as the Derek Bell Trophy, which it will also sponsor. HP Tyres has been appointed as Nova's distributor for the HSCC.

"We are delighted to welcome Nova Motorsport as the official tyre partner to the HSCC," said club CEO Andy Dee-Crowne. "The speed with which

the brand has returned period-correct Avon Motorsport products to manufacture is highly commendable. The preservation of the supply of Avon Motorsport products ends a period of uncertainty for the HSCC and our members. Now, through our partnership with Nova Motorsport, we look forward to building an exciting future together."

Historic F3 and Historic FF2000 will also transition to Avons for the 2026 season with competitors able to use existing stock from other manufacturers first. The club said the four-year deal will bring many commercial benefits that will be reinvested to help its members.



Polley enjoys strong first WEV outing

FORMULA VEE

Dan Polley enjoyed a winning debut in a new Formula Vee car for the 750 Motor Club category's season finale at Donington Park last weekend.

The 41-year-old Irishman only took delivery of the ex-Craig Pollard WEV chassis on the Monday before the meeting and first drove it in anger during the Friday test

day. This lack of preparation time did little to slow down Polley, and he took pole by over 1.5 seconds.

He then went on to achieve the first win of the day and was comfortably leading the second race until a head stud caused oil smoke to trail behind the car. Polley called it a day before any further damage could be done.

When asked about what the

car – which won the 2022 title in Pollard's hands as well as in 2019 with its creator Graham Gant – is like, Polley said:

"Very different to any other single-seater. We're still learning what the car can do."

The car, which has around 105bhp and revs to 7000rpm, will return to the UK next year when Polley's schedule allows.

MACIEJ HAMERA

TURNER CORRECTION

Mike Henney returned the 'Tatty Turner' to racing at the Castle Combe Autumn Classic on 21-22 September, not the Snetterton Classic Sports Car Club event, as reported in Autosport (3 October, p67). Henney finished ninth in the FISCAR race at Combe before heading to Snetterton.

HERON CATCHES A SIXTH

Fourteen-year-old Ministox star Oliver Heron impressed on his circuit racing debut in Fiesta Junior at Silverstone last weekend. Driving a Jamsport-prepared Mk6 ST, last year's Scottish champion finished sixth in race two and would have repeated that in race three but for a track-limits penalty. "I can't believe how much I've come on with the car," he said. "The car felt amazing."

PARKER TAKES CNC TITLE

Steven Parker was crowned CNC Heads Sports/Saloons champion at Oulton Park last Saturday, after a dramatic finale. Parker's Ford Fiesta led into the weekend and he played his double points joker in race one, taking a class win. But he suffered an engine and gearbox failure and retired from race two, which left Lee Bull's Renault Clio set for the title. But Bull then suffered a front suspension breakage and he was out too, crowning Parker champion after all. Ric Wood's Kia Optima and Ben Roberts's Locost were the overall race winners.

COCKHILL CROWNED IN 2CV

Alex Cockhill sealed the Citroen 2CV title at Oulton Park last weekend, after finishing third in the finale. Cockhill's KT Racing team-mate Kris Tovey managed to win all of his sprint races this season. But, with both drivers scoring for each other as a team, Cockhill (below) managed to secure a number of additional points for fastest laps, handing him the title in his maiden season of racing, despite not achieving a win himself.



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Super Nova's rapid launch

The new company is off to a flying start as tyre manufacturing began ahead of schedule. Now it needs to continue avoiding delays as production intensifies

STEPHEN LICKORISH

As a nation, we are used to delays. Whether they're related to huge queues on our busiest roads, trains that are nearly always late or major infrastructure projects that are massively behind schedule, it is depressingly common to hear of things running behind. It is therefore almost unheard of to come across an initiative actually ahead of schedule. But that's the impressive position fledgling tyre manufacturer Nova Motorsport currently finds itself in.

For those who need reminding, this is the company created after the demise of the much-loved Avon brand last year when parent organisation Goodyear decided to close the Melksham tyre-making facility. Many of the key staff transferred across to the Nova 'start-up', which falls under the SPC Rubber Group umbrella, and its initial ambition was to continue supplying and producing tyres for disciplines synonymous with the Avon/Cooper names for decades: principally historic racing, hillclimbing and rallycross. An existing Camac factory in Portugal was acquired and all the old Avon equipment was transported across the continent from Wiltshire. The aim – set at the start of the year – was for the first tyres to be produced in September, which Nova's management felt was an ambitious target. Yet it smashed that by five weeks as track testing of new ACB9 Formula Ford tyres began in August, Nova's commercial director James Weekley describing the

“It went flawlessly – we couldn't have hoped for a better result from those tests”

company's rapid development as “phenomenal”.

“It took less time to ship the equipment than we were expecting, so that's one area where we gained time,” explains Weekley of the factors that helped Nova get ahead of schedule. “Also the technical and engineering teams in Portugal have done an astonishing job of implementing everything we had from Melksham into the factory – the team's been going above and beyond to a whole other level.

“The pace is picking up now, it's very much the snowball effect. We've got countless track tests and evaluations lined up, starting imminently, and will be flowing at a significant pace for many, many months now as we roll through the range and industrialise them and start bringing things to market.”

Given the breadth and diversity of categories catered for by Avon's old range of rubber, Formula Ford may sound like an

intriguing choice for Nova's first tyres, especially considering the Kent-powered cars are no longer the essential stepping stone on the single-seater ladder they once were. But Weekley explains there are “multiple factors” that make the ACB9s a very logical starting point. “There's a lot of Formula Ford cars out there,” he says. “There's a lot of good drivers and there's an ocean of data, so it was a very easy and cost-effective product to go out and test. You don't have to go and hire a circuit exclusively with a team that's going to bring 15 mechanics along for a single day's testing. It was an easy one for us to arrange a test at short notice and get very high quality data that we can reference back with data of old, so for those reasons it was a really obvious choice.”

Initial testing commenced at the Braga circuit in Portugal, half an hour from Nova's new factory. Further assessments were then conducted at Snetterton and Brands Hatch, with experienced historic racer Simon Hadfield completing much of the running, to ensure the new rubber performed exactly the same as the old UK-made Avons. “That went fantastically,” says Weekley. “There's always a few nerves going into these things – no matter how much homework you've done, until you start turning laps, you never truly know how it's going to work. But it went flawlessly – we couldn't have hoped for a better result from those tests. The tyres were indistinguishable from the products produced in Melksham previously, which is exactly what we aimed to do.”

Full-scale production of those tyres is now due to begin by the end of this year, while the floodgates are set to open as a host of old Avon ranges are reindustrialised. Stock was built up in the final months of the Melksham factory's operation and this is being continuously monitored by the Nova staff to ensure they prioritise making the tyres that are needed most urgently.

Alongside the manufacturing in Portugal, plenty of work has been going on behind the scenes by the commercial team as Nova signs new agreements with various organisers. The latest example is a wide-ranging deal with the Historic Sports Car Club (see News), but Weekley says more announcements are imminent. “We've got a number of irons in the fire and there's a quite significant amount of new business,” he states. “The announcements for the new contracts are quite major because they are certainly some flags in the sand as to where we're going.”

All this positive progress from Nova is important for the motorsport industry as a whole. The tyre sector has been in strife for years, triggered by Brexit and the coronavirus pandemic, then exacerbated by developments such as the uncertainty over Avon's future and some brands cutting their ranges. There are still supply concerns in places, but Weekley believes this “turbulent time” is finally starting to settle. Now it just needs Nova to continue avoiding any delays as the next phase of its development begins. ✨

Boardley retains his TCR UK crown

SILVERSTONE INTERNATIONAL BRSCC
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Carl Boardley successfully retained the TCR UK title with three measured drives on the Silverstone International circuit, while his closest rivals Callum Newsham and Brad Hutchison split the wins.

Bouncing back from a heavy accident at Thruxton last month, Newsham might have taken a hat-trick but for clutch failure on his Hyundai i30 N in the finale. Polesitter Newsham inherited the opener after Adam Shepherd's recurrent fuel-pressure problems slowed him on the final lap. The pair then duelled in the reverse-grid race, each passing debutant Ryan Bensley's leading Lynk & Co before Newsham ran wide. Shepherd's Cupra Leon surged ahead, only to expire.

A relatively long hold on the lights in race three precipitated Newsham's clutch disappointment and Shepherd's seemingly inevitable retirement then let in double podium finisher Hutchison (Cupra) for victory in the season-closer.

But Boardley completed a trio of fourth positions, having nursed a suspected differential problem on his Cupra and additional vibration, which was more than enough to secure the title. He said: "It was just a case of using your head, picking your battles, letting people go when you don't need to have a race, and bringing it home."

Alastair Kellett capped a provisional Fiesta ST240 crown with a dominant race three win, his eighth of the season. He had earned the honours with a champion's comeback drive to the podium in the opener, as a sticking turbo valve consigned him to 11th on the grid before a wild moment on cold tyres at Village on



A trio of fourth places was enough for Boardley to retain his TCR UK title

the opening lap dropped him to 17th.

But, aided by a mid-race red flag when Simon Horrobin was turned heavily into the pitwall, Kellett charged back to third as Zach Lucas held off Gary Miller for victory. Miller was declared winner of a much-shortened and crash-strewn middle stanza, ahead of Lucas, the pair then filling the podium behind Kellett in the finale.

Thirteen months after his first race in cars, Jenson O'Neill-Going celebrated Fiesta Junior Championship success with a largely untroubled hat-trick on the Mk6's category swansong. Severely hampered by a tyre coming off the rim after contact in the opener, Finn Leslie charged to fourth behind repeat podium finishers Jacob Hodgkiss and Alfie Garford in race two, then took second in the finale, enough to pip Hodgkiss to second (and best Mk7) in the standings.

Bradley Burns extended his run of Audi TT Cup victories to eight in nine races after a terrific dice with podium men Sam Heading and Matt Luff on Saturday's drying

track. He was swamped by the pair after spotting a tardily-removed safety car sign in the sequel, but Luff's win couldn't deny Burns the crown. The champion climbed from row five to finish third in the finale as Adam Blair held off Carl Swift for victory.

Three-time Mini Se7en conqueror Jeff Smith earned his first Miglia title with a trio of podiums in races won by outgoing champion Aaron Smith, Andrew Jordan and Endaf Owens. Having missed the Cadwell Park replacement opener, Jordan had the edge in drying conditions for Saturday's second race. But he sat out race three, which was the pick, as a lead pack of eight or nine cars jostled throughout with Owens usually at its head.

Max Edmundson clinched a second consecutive Civic Cup title with an unusually dominant opening-race victory. Eight seconds back, Wesley Swain also kept clear of the battles behind for a maiden podium, while Lewis Kent benefited from team-mates Liam McGill and Alistair Camp's clash to snatch third.

Sunday's reverse-grid polesitter Dave Marshall came under pressure from fellow FN2 pilot Camp until his car slowed on the final lap and he limped home seventh. This allowed Camp to claim his third win of the year ahead of Josh Files and Edmundson, a reversal of the trio's championship positions.

On only his third outing of 2024, five-time Compact Cup champion Steven Dailly scored a double, following a 6s victory with a much tighter triumph over Connor Grady and Alex Read. A slightly nervy fourth in the opener was enough for Joe Doble to provisionally scoop the title, emulating brother Mikey's 2022 success, and so he sat out the season finale.

MARK PAULSON



Burns added another Audi TT Cup win to his growing honours list at Silverstone

ALL PHOTOGRAPHY: OLLIE READ



WEEKEND WINNERS

TCR UK

Races 1 & 2 Callum Newsham (Hyundai i30 N)
Race 3 Brad Hutchison (Cupra Leon Competicion)

FIESTA ST240

Race 1 Zach Lucas
Race 2 Gary Miller
Race 3 Alastair Kellett

FIESTA JUNIOR

Races 1, 2 & 3 Jenson O'Neill-Going (Mk6 ST)

AUDI TT CUP RACING

Race 1 Bradley Burns
Race 2 Matt Luff
Race 3 Adam Blair

MINI MIGLIA

Race 1 Aaron Smith
Race 2 Andrew Jordan
Race 3 Endaf Owens

CIVIC CUP

Race 1 Max Edmundson (EP3, below)
Race 2 Alistair Camp (FN2)

COMPACT CUP

Races 1 & 2 Steven Dailly

MINI SE7EN

Races 1 & 3 Joe Thompson
Race 2 Ross Billison

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TITLE SUCCESS AT LAST FOR THOMPSON

Five years after a jump-start penalty cost him the Mini Se7en title, Joe Thompson finally laid the ghost to rest by clinching the crown, having also finished second or third in the standings every year since – barring the pandemic-disrupted 2020 season, which he spent largely on the sidelines.

A run of six wins in 13 races since mid-May put Thompson out of Ross Billison's reach following Saturday's Cadwell Park replacement race – with two 20-minute contests on Sunday still remaining. He had finally emulated father Paul, who twice took the Mini Se7en title before adding a Miglia crown in 2010.

"We got close [in 2019] but then my mistake, I literally gave the title away," said the 24-year-old, who won the novice title in 2017. "The most satisfying thing for me is it's all our engine stuff. We buy parts from people, but my dad builds absolutely everything at home; we do all of our own tuning, developing. We do get assistance from outside, but very little."

A regulation change last year allowing twin-barrel carburetors tested the duo's engineering expertise but they have risen to the challenge.

"It opens up a whole host of new developments," explained the Leicester-based racer. "Everything we've spent hours, days, months tuning on the rolling road just goes out the window and you've got almost a clean sheet. Knowing where the power band differs, where you can extract the most of it, exactly what inlets to use. And then you've got set-up changes because the dynamics of the car have changed with the way it delivers power."

"We've had a little bit of pace struggles in the last couple of years [as a result]. But the old man's managed to really crack it,



Champion: Thompson finally finished first

the first-third of this year, and the car's just been an absolute dream ever since. When you're up against people that have professionals to build engines, and from our little garage he's building something that can be not just competitive but also beat them, that's where we really enjoy it."

Parts from Thompson Sr's original Se7en are still used on Joe's car. Meanwhile, his title-winning Miglia – which Joe raced occasionally alongside his Se7en in previous years – returned to the track at Silverstone last weekend. Converted to Se7en spec, it had 2009 champion Kane Astin aboard, doubling up with his Miglia ride "for a bit of fun".

Astin scored two podiums, while Thompson celebrated his title with another win in race three. He might have had a hat-trick if he'd avoided a tangle at the last corner of race two when Damien Harrington turned around Mike Jordan, which let Billison in for victory.

Now the time has come for a new direction. Having finally achieved his goal of conquering the Se7ens, Thompson will graduate to Miglias full-time next year in a new-build car. "That was always the aim, and that was why it was a little bit frustrating before when I gave it away," he said. "We've been hunting it ever since."

MARK PAULSON



Thompson (c) emulated his father after clinching the Mini Se7en title

Fennymore recovered from stalling to defeat Glasswell and Harrison



Back to front Fennymore's Silverstone Pinto prize

**SILVERSTONE NATIONAL
HSCC
12-13 OCTOBER**

Second on the Historic Formula Ford 2000 grid, Graham Fennymore was “dead last into Copse, having stalled, then got so much wheelspin” on the damp track, but on Historic Sports Car Club Finals Saturday an incredible recovery enabled him to grab victory at Silverstone from Ben Glasswell and title successor Samuel Harrison.

Fennymore hit the front on lap 16 of 19, the Reynard drivers subsequently three abreast down the Wellington Straight. “That was just stunning, the best race I’ve had in 10 years,” said Fennymore. Runner-up Glasswell was on a high, too. “It was difficult finding grip, but my first time leading on merit,” he reflected, as Harrison secured his third different club title in three seasons. “It was great watching close-up, but I preferred to keep a distance,” admitted the Yorkshireman.

With Harrison absent, Fennymore was 10 seconds clear on Sunday when a partially detached HT lead left his Pinto sounding like a tractor. As he spluttered home seventh, third qualifier Jonty Hair beat Andrew Storer and impressive debutant David Robinson for his maiden single-seater victory, a fortnight after his Oulton Park Clubmans win in Jim Yardley’s Beagle.

Neil Fowler Motorsport’s wet tyre call on Saturday equipped Chris Porritt to take his first Derek Bell Trophy win in the ex-Divina Galica Chevron B40 as F2 cars ruled the restart. Slick-shod chasers Marc Mercer (ex-Bill Gowdy Ralt-BDG RT1) and race rusty Richard Evans (ex-Eddie Cheever March-BMW 782) made Sunday’s running, Evans swooping past at Maggotts as a collapsed wheel bearing ended Mercer’s stout defence. David Thorburn (ex-Ingo Hoffmann March 762) shot from 15th to depose Neil Glover (ex-Bruce Allison F5000 Chevron B37) from second. Porritt avoided oil at Brooklands/Luffield to wrest third

from Glover on the penultimate lap.

Tom McArthur extraordinarily won all four Formula Ford races in Simon Hadfield’s Titan. Closest pursuers in the Historic pair were respectively Dane Mads Gravsén (back in Chris Sharples’s Champion of Brands-winning Palliser after six years) and Spencer Shinner (Merlyn Mk20). Shinner clinched the championship with fourth behind Simon Toyne on Saturday, a memorable 21st birthday present.

The Classics were tighter, with McArthur’s Saturday victory coming over champion Benn Simms (Jomo JMR7) and previous conqueror Jordan Harrison (Lola T540E). Sunday’s was sensational, led by Harrison, Simms, McArthur and Andy Gosling (Van Diemen RF79), whose order chopped and changed breathtakingly at every turn, watched by Rick Morris and, from the back, Adriano Medeiros. “Tommy Mac’ was twice shuffled to fourth, but crucially was ahead when yellow flags at Becketts covered Colin Williams’s beached PRS. “These are the races I live for,” said McArthur. “I’d rather have finished fourth in that one than won by miles.”

Callum Grant and Sam Wilson shared Formula Junior golds after titanic scraps, Grant complimenting Wilson for building an engine “at least as good” as his own. The championship fight took a twist when Nic Carlton-Smith, chasing D2 class rival Andrew Hibberd’s sister Lotus 20, retired through engine failure on Saturday.

Carlton-Smith switched to his C2 Kieft overnight, needing to win with Hibberd not finishing for a fourth straight title. He fulfilled his obligation, but Hibberd



Rowe headed Gibney's Elan for emotional Road Sports win

ALL PHOTOGRAPHY: MICK WALKER

WEEKEND WINNERS

HISTORIC FF2000

Race 1 Graham Fennymore (Reynard SF81)

Race 2 Jonathan Hair (Reynard SF78)

DEREK BELL TROPHY

Race 1 Chris Porritt (Chevron-BDG B40)

Race 2 Richard Evans (March-BMW 782)

HISTORIC FF1600

Races 1 & 2 Tom McArthur (Titan Mk4)

CLASSIC FF1600

Races 1 & 2 Tom McArthur (Titan Mk4)

HISTORIC FORMULA JUNIOR, REAR-ENGINE

Race 1 Callum Grant (Merlyn Mk5/7)

Race 2 Sam Wilson (Cooper T59)

HISTORIC FORMULA JUNIOR, FRONT-ENGINE

Races 1 & 2 Ray Mallock (U2 Mk2)

GUARDS TROPHY

Adam Sykes (McLaren M1A)

HISTORIC ROAD SPORTS & TOURING CARS

Race 1 Robert Rowe (Lotus Elan S3)

Race 2 Frazer Gibney (Lotus Elan S1)

70s ROAD SPORTS

Races 1 & 2 John Williams (Porsche 911SC)

For full results visit: tsl-timing.com

bounced back from a languid spin down to 11th at Becketts while scrapping with former champion dad Michael (Lotus 22) to regain a class-winning fourth and claim the coveted crown.

Ray Mallock shaded front-engined rivals in father Arthur's beam-axled U2 Mk2, while Condor men Alex Morton – stopped by a broken diff on Saturday – and Adrian Russell squabbled with Lola stalwart Robin Longdon.

Richard Taylor's Autotune team and Andrew Wareing engineered a tactical Guards Trophy victory by leaving leader Adam Sykes in the 5.9-litre McLaren-Chevrolet M1A for the duration. Champions Rob and Benn Tusting finished eight seconds shy after a great chase in their Lenham, clear of Dan Eagling in Dan Pickett's Chevron-BMW B16 after the B8 of Ted Pearson/Callum Grant was excluded for a yellow-flag infringement, which Grant has appealed.

A brilliant Historic Road Sports drive left Bob Rowe effusive, then emotional, having beaten champion Frazer Gibney for his first win after a decade of effort. Despite his Elan S4 being 55kg heavier than Gibney's S1, Rowe harassed Gibney in a gripping season finale, with the Sevens of Mark Godfrey and Jonathan Stringer buzzing round them in the corners and splitting them from Rupert Ashdown's Elan S1.

John Williams's Porsche won both thin 70s Road Sports races. Mark Leverett switched Lotus Elan S4s overnight following transmission issues, but Howard Payne's Europa outran him again to win the title.

MARCUS PYE



UNIQUE KOALA John Joyce's Koala Motor Racing Developments of Toowoomba, Australia created the unique P2, which finished third in Queensland Formula Junior in 1963. Bristling with interesting features, including bespoke wheels and twin exhausts, it won Joyce an engineering job at Lotus. It was later raced by expat Briton Roger Ealand, but bought from Michael Rowe by Dane Erik Justesen – who still owns it – for FJ's 60th anniversary tour. Back home, Joyce created the successful Bowin FF1600s.



CONDORS FLYING HIGH Aston Martin racer Ted Whiteaway built three front-engined Condor S2 Formula Juniors in Worpleston, Surrey. Two have raced regularly in recent years. Alex Morton's has been super-competitive, but he is having to work harder since Adrian Russell debuted his ex-Keith Roach car with a double win at the Spa Six Hours event. "It's a different pleasure [to his Lotus 22] but just as much fun," said Russell (above right), who finished second after Morton's broke on Saturday.



HAWKE GRABS PODIUM Former Team Lotus engineer David Lazenby's Hawke concern began in Formula Ford 1600 but was in at the start of FF2000 in 1975 with its DL14, Tiff Needell winning three championship rounds. Needell, Clubmans convert Geoff Friswell and Stu Baird won in them in 1976, and the evolution DL16 triumphed thrice in 1977 with Philip Bullman. David Robinson raced the ex-Bullman chassis brilliantly in a Historic FF2000 sampler at Silverstone, finishing fourth and third.

Champions crowned after thrills and spills at Donington

DONINGTON PARK
750MC
12-13 OCTOBER

Several champions were crowned as the 750 Motor Club tackled Donington Park's Grand Prix loop last weekend amid changeable weather that caught out many drivers.

One of the most dramatic races of the weekend was undoubtedly the opener for the Sports 1000 brigade, where championship contenders Clint Newman and Ryan Yarrow clashed with explosive results. Newman led the early running and looked set to win until a safety car drew the field together, allowing Yarrow a chance to overtake at Redgate once racing restarted. Newman covered the line and heavy contact ensued, with Yarrow trying again at McLeans, but again Newman shut the door hard, with both Spire cars half spinning on the exit of the corner.

Yarrow was spat off onto the grass but managed to recover to secure victory and, after the race, Newman – who finished third – defended his actions. He said: "I watched the Alpha Live footage and it did look awful but, from my own perspective and other drivers' onboarders, there's a much clearer representation of myself."

Yarrow had put the title out of reach following the first race but wasn't pleased with Newman. "I put my car on the inside and he turned in on me and continued to turn in on me," said Yarrow. "There are incidents on the track that are not being picked up on and that's upsetting for everyone."

When asked about his opinion on Newman not being penalised, Yarrow



Yarrow (l) won the title but came to blows with Sports 1000 rival Newman

added: "It's not fair that he has no points on his licence." Race two proved a calmer affair, with Dan Clowes winning in his Mittell after on-the-road victor Newman was penalised for an out-of-position start.

Among the Formula Vee competitors, Dan Polley was in a class of his own as he took a dominant victory in race one. The Irish driver confidently led the second race with the fastest lap under his belt until a head stud failure resulted in clouds of smoke billowing from his WEV. After Polley parked his mount, Matt Harbot took the win and secured the championship in the process. "It was a lucky race to be honest," said Harbot. "I lost the tow to Dan and then I just tried to follow. Then I saw his engine

let go, which was a stroke of luck."

The F1000 Championship was decided the moment the lights went out in race one as Rob Welham failed to get off the line due to a master switch fault. With Welham out, Tom Gadd could take an uncontested win ahead of title favourite Craig Pollard.

Even though he hadn't tested on Friday, nor raced on the Donington GP layout in five years, Gadd triumphed again ahead of championship winner Pollard in the reverse-grid race two. "I managed to have quite a good getaway," said Gadd. "I knew Craig wasn't going to fight me because of the championship. He made it easy for me." Gadd then went on to make it three out of three when he



Pollard (92) claimed the F1000 title as Gadd (r) took a hat-trick of victories



Harbot came out on top in Formula Vee title race

ALL PHOTOGRAPHY: STEVE JONES

WEEKEND WINNERS

SPORTS 1000

Race 1 Ryan Yarrow (Spire GT-3)
Race 2 Dan Clowes (Mittell MC-53)

FORMULA VEE

Race 1 Dan Polley (WEV)
Race 2 Matt Harbot (AHS Dominator)

F1000

Races 1, 2 & 3 Tom Gadd

BIKESPORTS

Race 1 James Keevill (Radical SR3 RS)
Race 2 Shane Stoney (Radical PR6)

ROADSPORTS

Scott Parkin (Audi TT TDI)

5CLUB RACING MX-5 CUP

Races 1 & 2 Ben Short

TOYOTA MR2

Race 1 Shaun Traynor (Roadster, below)
Race 2 Adam Lockwood (Roadster)

116 SPRINT TROPHY & 120 COUPE CUP

Race 1 Anthony Seddon (120i)
Race 2 Rob Carvell (120i)

116 TROPHY

Mack Priestwood

CLUB ENDURO

Claire Norman/Alan Blencowe
 (SEAT Cupra TCR)



For full results visit: tsl-timing.com

took the flag in the finale, as Pollard claimed a hat-trick of seconds.

With the track still sodden with rain, the Bikesports runners tip-toed their way around the circuit for their first race. Even so, multiple cars spun into gravel traps around the slippery track and the safety car was deployed. But, when racing resumed, more cars became stranded. The officials decided enough was enough and threw the chequered flag early for winner James Keevill (Radical SR3). The drivers tackled a still damp track in the tamer second contest with a split opinion on tyre choice, as Shane Stoney secured the win in his slick-shod Radical PR6.

The 45-minute Roadsports encounter

was decided in its final moments, with Scott Parkin's Audi TT TDI the eventual victor but only after a spirited battle with the BMW Compact of Ian Jones. After coming out of Hollywood side by side, the pair touched, which caused Jones' BMW to shoot off the track at the Craner Curves and into the gravel. With smoke pouring from the stricken car, he retired on the spot.

"Racing incident, as short and sweet as that," said Jones. "It broke a rim and off I went. Ripped the splitter and damaged the oil system when I hit the gravel." Parkin had a similar account of the incident: "Going through Hollywood, he squeezed me and I ended up clipping the kerb. Then that bounced me sideways and we touched, which gave him a puncture. Close racing but definitely closer than I wanted it to be!"

The 5Club Racing MX-5 Cup was the first grid to brave the weather on Saturday and it quickly became apparent that the elements were throwing up a few hurdles. Ben Short came away with the win after climbing back up through the field following a poor start. For the second race, a sprinkle of rain attempted to destabilise the order but, once the weather and the pack settled down, Short managed to take his 16th win of the season.

Among the Toyota MR2 ranks, Shaun Traynor took the chequered flag in the first contest after trading fastest laps with championship rival Adam Lockwood. Lockwood got his own

back by triumphing in the second race by passing Traynor on the last lap. Traynor was delayed out of the chicane by a backmarker under yellow flags, which allowed Lockwood to set up a move into the Melbourne Hairpin, but Traynor had enough points to be crowned champion. "The problem was the red and grey car in my mirrors," joked Traynor. "It was just a matter of preservation in that one. Adam thinks I gave him that last one but that's not true. I think his brain was more switched on than mine."

Anthony Seddon prevailed in a race-long struggle against Rob Carvell in the 116 Sprint Trophy & 120 Coupe Cup opener. The status quo was then reversed in race two when Carvell took the flag ahead of Seddon's similar 120i.

MACIEJ HAMERA



Keevill mastered the conditions in Radical



Blundell (1) was able to defeat Hill (4) in 1985. As well as Herbert, who is the fifth car in shot...

THE 10 GREATEST FORMULA FORD WINNERS

There have been plenty of memorable performances in the single-seater category over the years and, ahead of this weekend's Festival, here's a look at some of the best

STEVE HINDLE

JAMIE SHARP & RORY SMITH

2021/2023 FORMULA FORD FESTIVAL WINNERS

10

There's no denying that Formula Ford is now past its heyday, but these two are shining examples of how it can still provide the best racing.

In 2021, Jamie Sharp put two battle-scarred seasons in British F4 behind him (against the likes of Oscar Piastri and Jack Doohan) to deliver a virtuoso performance of attack and defence and lead a train of six across the line with just over a second between them.

Following a washout in 2022, Rory Smith did likewise last year. The grid for the final featured

an all-BM/Medina front row (Smith, then Sharp), and an all-Dolan/Van Diemen second row (Niall Murray then Chris Middlehurst). What happened next was 20 laps of magic.

Murray piled on the pressure, climbing all over Smith before jinking to the outside at Paddock Hill Bend to take the lead. Smith then threatened to repeat before switching to the inside and sending Murray wide, only for Murray to immediately launch back around the outside at Druids. It was brilliant but, with just two laps remaining, the Irishman raised his hand and slowed with a misfire... brilliant, yet brutal.



Sharp narrowly prevailed in 2021

GARY HAWKINS



Last year's final featured epic Smith (left) and Murray scrap

GARY HAWKINS

MARK BLUNDELL

1985 ESSO CHAMPION

9

To see Mark Blundell race was akin to watching the hybrid of a raging bull and Rudolf Nureyev; a man possessed with force, speed, agility and huge cojones.

His drive for success was spawned partly by his father's acumen, and from early experiences racing dirt bikes. "You either led the way or were trampled into the mud," he recalls.

Blundell spent 1984 acquiring his craft and rounding off edges: "In those days, you could race almost every weekend, and I made the most of it; exploring lines that nobody else would use while understanding the car's response to conditions. It wasn't just about technique; I was learning to win."

The next year, he did just that. He'd perfected the art of slipstreaming (vital at Silverstone) and everyone else (including Damon Hill) knew it.

CONOR DALY

2008 WALTER HAYES TROPHY WINNER

8

In 1990, journalist Jeremy Shaw had a point to prove: that young Americans could cross The

Pond and be successful against the cream of British and Irish talent. Starting with Jimmy Vasser, then Bryan Herta in 1991, Shaw – with support from IndyCar’s Rick Galles and others – prepared young drivers for the trip to Brands Hatch where they would be supplied with a competitive car run by a top team.

After forays with F3, Formula Opel and Formula Palmer Audi, Team USA returned to Formula Ford 1600 in 2008 with two exceptional proteges: Josef Newgarden (now a two-time IndyCar champion) and Conor Daly. Though American by birth, Daly was no stranger to these isles and is the son of Derek Daly, the Irishman who won the 1976 Festival and later enjoyed a solid

career in Formula 1 and CART.

Newgarden was the first to shine, taking victory at Brands in a Ray but, when the racing moved to Silverstone, the weather changed from bright to stormy. Newgarden won his heats and was on pole for the final, whereas Daly had built steadily. He’d also been paying close attention to another rising star, Peter Dempsey, a late entry who had to start at the back of both the progression and last chance races before emerging victorious.

Daly’s homework paid off. With rain teeming, polesitter Newgarden crashed out at Brooklands, then Graham Carroll (Scottish champion) lost grip and the lead as he slid into the gravel at Woodcote. Although he had never made a wet safety car restart, and had stalwart Michael Vergers on his tail, Daly held his nerve to become the first American to win the event.



AYRTON SENNA DA SILVA

1981 RAC AND TOWNSEND THORESEN CHAMPION

6

Following successes by Emerson Fittipaldi, Chico Serra and Roberto Moreno, there was much anticipation in 1981 over the arrival of Brazil’s latest karting sensation. Treading the familiar path to Van Diemen, Ayrton Senna da Silva was everything that his predecessors were not; sometimes

brash, often aloof, his awkwardness belied the fact that he was driven by the singular belief that he was destined to be the best.

Van Diemen’s proximity to Snetterton meant testing could happen almost daily, allowing Ralph Firman to soon recognise the talent his squad had acquired. Firman duly supplied Senna with the best of everything, including Moreno’s Festival-winning engine (known as ‘Patch’). As the season approached, Senna confidently stated he would be winning by his third race – and he did just that. Indeed, he won 12 times and had five second places from 20 starts.

His team-mates had been expected to provide his toughest test but, in the end, it was Rick Morris who stood up to his pace. Morris should have his own place on this list, and still races today, yet is destined to be most remembered for the day in 1981 when he hunted down the Brazilian at Silverstone, then swooped around the outside at Woodcote to beat him.



HAWKINS/MOTORSPORT IMAGES

JOEY FOSTER

2004 WALTER HAYES TROPHY WINNER

7

Joeey Foster is not only the most successful racer ever at the Walter Hayes Trophy (with four wins), he also has two Festival victories.

A win here in 2003 (pictured), together with success in the Formula Renault Winter Series, led to a subsidised Renault drive in 2004 with Motaworld. Despite fifth and a podium on his debut, his lack of budget led to limited testing and development before the campaign was curtailed. Foster’s dreams were shattered but, with encouragement from James Beckett, he returned to the Hayes to defend his title, finding that he would be pitched against former Formula Renault champion Danny Watts.

Watts was absent on Saturday due to coaching duties but made swift work of Sunday’s progression to the final. Foster, on the other hand, was simply supreme. Through torrential rain, he headed the field, waiting for a glimpse of Watts’s helmet in his mirrors; it never came. They finished first and second but, for Foster, it was more than that – he’d proven, whatever was thrown at him, he would always bounce back.



SUTTON/MOTORSPORT IMAGES

MOTORSPORT IMAGES

ROLAND RATZENBERGER

1986 FORMULA FORD FESTIVAL WINNER

5

Planned preparation is a common theme here, yet in 1986, just days before Festival week, Roland

Ratzenberger arrived at Space Racing to find his team had run out of cash. He was left with just his Van Diemen RF86 car, some wheels and spares, and the promise that he could borrow the transporter (which was quickly repossessed when he arrived at Brands Hatch). With help from Graham Fuller, F3 technician Chris Weller was recruited to lend his truck and his time, while mechanic Andy Barber loyally stayed on in support. Meanwhile, Dave Minister had created another 'special' (aptly named 'Rocket'): 'No Space Racing' was duly formed.

Even using an old engine in testing, Ratzenberger was quickest so, with 'Rocket' employed, his journey to the final appeared effortless. In the end, it turned out to be a straight race between the two most likely; Philippe Favre and the Austrian. Leading off, Ratzenberger was inch perfect and, though Favre stayed glued to his gearbox, he simply couldn't break the rhythm, until a momentary lapse of concentration on the final tour meant the red car entered Clearways a fraction too early, sending it wide as Ratzenberger headed through Clark. It was a drag race to the flag, but 'Rocket' did its job, securing the win by 0.05 seconds.



SUTTON/MOTORSPORT IMAGES



MOTORSPORT IMAGES

DAVID KENNEDY

1976 RAC AND TOWNSEND THORESEN CHAMPION

4

It would be impossible to have a list of Formula Ford greats without at least one flame-haired Irishman.

After honing his skills around Mondello Park and Kirkistown, David Kennedy and his girlfriend Fiona arrived in England in an old Bedford bus that had once housed chickens. They were an exceptional partnership, Fiona just as keen to change gear ratios as she was handy with a pitboard.

"I'd spent time in Australia, working in the mines to earn enough cash to pay for my racing, and to keep the bus on the road," he recalls. "But, if we wanted to eat, I had to win prize money too, it was as simple as that."

The 1976 season was a golden year for talent: Dereks Warwick and Daly, and Nigel Mansell were among many seeking to make their name. And, though his Crossle was spritely when cornering, it lacked refinement, meaning that Kennedy not only needed to be very fast but also incredibly brave.

He won two championships in the UK that year, and was on course to win in Europe too, but that's another story.

ROBERTO MORENO

1980 FORMULA FORD FESTIVAL WINNER

3

Inspired by Nelson Piquet, Roberto Moreno arrived in the UK in 1979, acquired a Royale, and was taken to Minister to equip it with a good engine.

Outstanding races at Mallory Park and Silverstone brought him to Ralph Firman's attention and, for 1980, he became part of the Van Diemen squad. Despite leading the championship, a mid-season dip in form (later attributed to an incorrect roll bar)

sent Minister into a frenzy of development. This resulted in the birth of 'Patch', the legendary engine that would propel Moreno to success.

Equipped with a car that was back to its best, Moreno knew that his time had come. While others had to rely on wheel-banging heroics, he focused and delivered, all weekend long. Only a lunge off the line in the final by either Jonathan Palmer or Tommy Byrne could stop him but, by the time they arrived at Paddock, he was already on the way to the top of the podium.



MOTORSPORT IMAGES

VINCENZO SOSPIRI

1988 FORMULA FORD FESTIVAL WINNER

2

As always, a sizeable overseas contingent arrived at the Festival in 1988, seeking to make their name, including a young German called Michael Schumacher. He soon learned that attempting to go through Graham Hill Bend alongside Andrew Guye-Johnson doesn't always work.

Come the final, Reynard's Jose Cordova claimed pole, but behind were some of the fastest/hardest of their time. A flash of light across the gantry convinced the Spaniard and Derek Higgins that the race had started; but it hadn't. Lengthy debate followed before both were allowed to resume. At the restart, Cordova, Higgins, Bernard Dolan and Rick Morris all got away well, but Sospiri had been in neutral and slipped back. The polesitter, however, was not enjoying his new tyres.



SUTTON/MOTORSPORT IMAGES

Higgins, Dolan and Morris went by before Sospiri, now on a charge, also joined the leaders. Then, while fighting over a smaller-than-anticipated gap, Morris

and Dolan were out. It could, and should, have been Morris's year, but instead he left Sospiri clear to make a run on Higgins and earn the win.



SUTTON/MOTORSPORT IMAGES

NEXT WEEK
Full report on the
Formula Ford Festival
24 October issue

GERRIT VAN KOUWEN

1984 FORMULA FORD FESTIVAL WINNER

1

It's fitting that our number one coincides with commemorations of a historic win, and celebrations of a remarkable life at this weekend's Festival.

Ever since Kees van der Grint (Bridgestone) advised Gerrit van Kouwen to travel to England and experience the spectacle of the Festival, the Dutchman's greatest ambition was to win it. He was already a double champion in Europe, but

this became the one that counted.

Hugely likeable and with an inquisitive and analytical mind, he was soon surrounded by people with the knowledge and resource to support his endeavour. Together with his obvious talent, this stood him apart and gave an immediate advantage. Mike Blanchet put his own reputation on the line to put the full backing of Lola into developing the T644E, while Dave Minister and Graham Fuller continued to

innovate, building another all-conquering engine (John Pratt had 'Patch') known as '633 Squadron'. An industrial kettle element fitted into the bell housing and run off a portable generator pre-heated the oil in the assembly area and delivered a critical 2-3bhp gain off the line.

Such was the Dutchman's confidence that, all weekend, he smashed records and never faltered. Therefore, 1984 wasn't a side-by-side thriller; rather, it was perfection.

FINISHING STRAIGHT



Bring your rally game right up to date



VIDEO GAME

EA SPORTS WRC UPDATE

Update price: £17.99

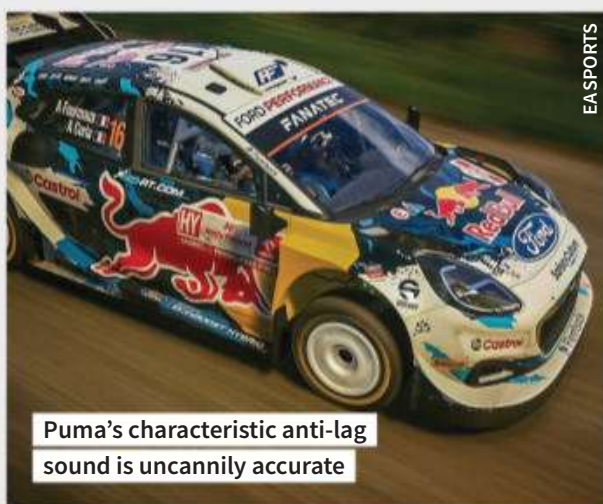
Full game including update: £44.99

If you are not fortunate to have the budget to go rallying for real, then blasting through narrow asphalt roads and gravel forest tracks in the virtual world is the next best thing.

EA Sports WRC does this job brilliantly, and now there is an update bringing the delights of the 2024 WRC to your living room. So if you have a yearning to pilot Sebastien Ogier's black Toyota GR Yaris or pretend to be Hyundai's Ott Tanak or M-Sport Ford's Adrien Fourmaux, now you can.

The game was originally released last year, produced by British studio Codemasters, which created the seminal *Colin McRae Rally* series in the late 1990s. This helped take rallying to the masses, before it went on to produce the ultra-realistic *Dirt Rally* franchise.

EA Sports WRC, developed for PC, PlayStation 5 and Xbox Series X/S, has built on the success of the *Dirt Rally* series to deliver an accurate simulation that not only caters to those new to the WRC, but also seasoned enthusiasts. The 2023 release



Puma's characteristic anti-lag sound is uncannily accurate

contained 200-plus stages, including the 13 WRC calendar rallies and an unrivalled roster of 78 cars dating from the Group 4 era of the 1960s and '70s right up to today's 500bhp Rally1 hybrid beasts.

But akin to the motorsport industry, nothing stands still for long and now the game has undergone its first major update, with its 2024 season expansion launched last week. This offers new rallies, stages, cars and liveries in a bid to recreate this year's World Rally Championship. The update is priced from £17.99, or if you don't own the original title the update is included when buying the game (£44.99).

The WRC added Rally Poland and Rally Latvia to its calendar this year, and these fast gravel events have been painstakingly recreated in the virtual world. The recreation is both impressive and enjoyable to drive and, while the events themselves are similar in their make-up, they both feature different characteristics that set them apart.

Poland is much bumpier and features both wide and narrow sections and some asphalt, while Latvia is much smoother. But just like real life, these stages demand respect and total commitment otherwise a roll is likely if a bank is clipped or a corner misjudged. Thankfully, if this occurs there isn't a costly repair bill.

In addition to the new rallies is a roster of 2024 cars, drivers and 52 new liveries, although sadly the wildcard Martins Sesks Ford Puma Rally1 and Sami Pajari Toyota GR Yaris Rally1 colour schemes are missing.

The Toyota GR Yaris, Hyundai i20 N and Ford Puma Rally1 cars have been modified to varying degrees. All three are now resplendent in their 2024 liveries and have each undergone refinement. The Puma features its new-for-2024 rear wing, for example, and has had its sound completely reproduced to replicate the rasping noise and those pops and bangs – even the anti-lag sound is eerily accurate.

Two new vehicles are on offer, with the introduction of the Toyota GR Yaris Rally2



GR Yaris Rally2's brilliant handling rewards pushing harder

and the Ford Fiesta Rally3 Evo – both made their real-world debuts this season.

The GR Yaris Rally2 is an absolute peach to drive and possibly one of the most satisfying to pilot, particularly across the new Poland and Latvia stages. It is easy to handle, which encourages you to push that little bit extra. It looks stunning and its unique three-cylinder engine noise is perfect. Likewise, the four-wheel-drive Rally Fiesta is a brilliant entry level car for those new to rallying games, with its intuitive handling and manageable speed.

Adding further realism to the update is the inclusion of the new points system that has divided opinion among fans. It now means cruising through the latter stages of a rally is costly, just like the real world. There is also now the prospect of losing all of your hard-earned Saturday championship points if a retirement occurs on the Super Sunday stages.

If you are a hardcore fan, this update is met with a firm thumbs-up, and there's more good news on the way. Two more updates are on the horizon following the announcement of the 'Le Maestros' and 'Hard Chargers' content packs, priced at £8.99 each. The former will include yet-to-be-announced cars, the Brianconnet Monte Carlo test and the famous Fafe, Rally Portugal stage. The latter is expected to feature the Umea and Umea Sprint stages from Rally Sweden, as well as the Acropolis Rally's Harvati test.

TOM HOWARD

WHAT'S ON

INTERNATIONAL
MOTORSPORTUnited States
Grand Prix

F1 World Championship

Round 19/24

Austin, USA

19-20 October

TV Live

Sky Sports F1,
Sat 1800, Sun 1955

TV Highlights

Sky Sports F1, Sun 2330,
Channel 4, Mon 0935Central European
Rally

World Rally

Championship

Round 12/13

Bavaria, Germany

31 October-3 November

TV Live TNT Sports 3,
Thurs 1400, 1715, TNT
Sports 3, Fri 0700, 0830,
1200, TNT Sports 1, 1500,
TNT Sports 2, Sat 0645,
0800, 1315, TNT Sports 3,
Sun 0800, 0930

TV Highlights TNT

Sports 4, Sat 1215,
TNT Sports 1, Sun 0000,
TNT Sports 3, 2300

Australian Grand Prix

Australian Grand Prix

MotoGP

Round 18/21

Phillip Island, Australia

19-20 October

TV Live TNT Sports 2,
Sat 0430, Sun 0315

TV Highlights

ITV4, Mon 2000

Super GT

Round 6/8

Autopolis, Japan

19-20 October

TV Livestream

Motorsport.tv, Sun 0445

European

Le Mans Series

Round 6/6

Portimao, Portugal

19 October

TV Livestream

YouTube

DTM

Round 8/8

Hockenheim, Germany

18-20 October

TV Live Premier Sports
(streaming only), Sat 1215,
Sun 1215

TCR World Tour

Round 6/7

Zhuzhou, China

19-20 October

TV Livestream

YouTube

NASCAR Cup Series

Round 33/36

Las Vegas, USA

20 October

TV Live Premier Sports 2,
Sun 1900

Silverstone MSVR

19-20 October

GT3 Legends, HRDC
(Allstars, Gerry Marshall
Trophy, Jack Sears
Trophy), MRL (Historic
Touring Car Challenge,
Pall Mall Cup, Pre-'63
GT, Woodcote Trophy
& Stirling Moss Trophy)Donington Park
BARC

19-20 October

Caterhams (270R, 310R,
Academy, Roadsport,
Seven UK), Caterham
Graduates (Sigma 135,
Sigma 150)

TV Livestream

barc.net

Mondello Park MPSC

20 October

Fiesta STs, Fiesta Zetecs,
Formula BOSS, Irish
Strykers, Mini Challenge,
Legends Ireland, SEAT
Supercup Ireland

TV Livestream

iccr.ie/live

Snetterton CTA

20 October

Racing Hondas

UK MOTORSPORT

Brands Hatch BRSCC

19-20 October

Formula Ford Festival,
CityCar Cup, Evolution
Trophy, Mazda MX-5s
(Championship,
Clubman, Supercup)

TV Livestream

brscc.co.uk

Oulton Park CSCC

19 October

BMW Championship/
Open Series/Slicks Series,
Magnificent Sevens, Modern
Classics/Future Classics,
New Millennium/Turbo
Tin Tops, Swinging Sixties,
Tin Tops/Puma Cup

autosport.com/podcast



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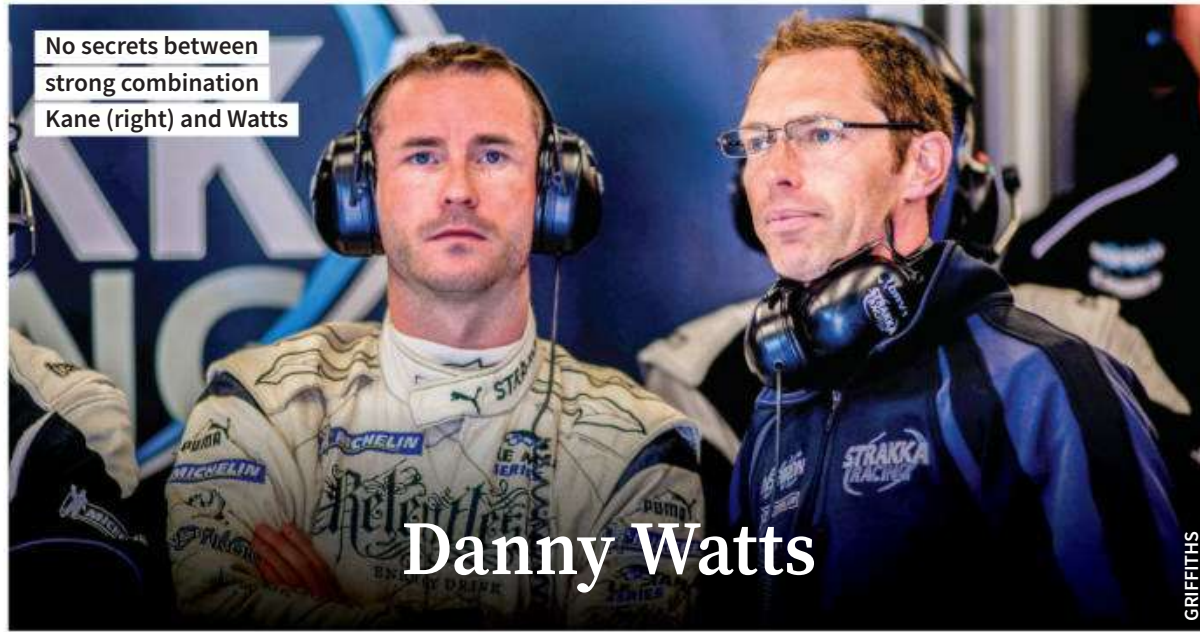
Autosport Podcast: US GP preview

Ben Hunt and Alex Kalinauckas join host Bryn Lucas to preview the United States Grand Prix. Catching up with all the news from the unofficial mid-season break, the trio discuss McLaren's championship potential, track changes for this year's running and how interesting strategy choices can play out at the Circuit of The Americas.



Formula Ford Festival

GARY HAWKINS



Jonny Kane could never have imagined that A1 Grand Prix biofuel testing might provide the origins of his favourite team-mate partnership. But a fruitful collaboration at Strakka Racing with Danny Watts, best remembered for a famous LMP2 class victory at the Le Mans 24 Hours in 2010, began in 2007 when the duo had been team-mates of sorts away from the public eye.

Kane, selected by A1GP general manager John Wickham as a trusted pair of hands, was tasked with a “fairly full-on” schedule to put miles on the World Cup of Motorsport’s Lola-Zytek. “The first lot of fuel did something to the seals of the engine, or the fuel tank lining, so I had to keep repeating it,” the 1997 British Formula 3 champion recalls. “Those cars were very physical to drive and doing 70-lap runs of Snetterton over and over, you get fairly fatigued. They got Danny in a couple of times to finish off a day if I’d run out of steam.”

They became team-mates proper in 2010 and, together with Strakka boss Nick Leventis, started 35 races together until Watts called time on his professional career after Le Mans in 2016. In addition to the Le Mans win that Kane likens to “a fairytale” and netted fifth overall, they became the first LMP2 crew ever to win a Le Mans Series race outright at the



Hungaroring in 2010, joined Audi on an outright World Endurance Championship podium in the 2012 Bahrain 6 Hours, and led the unofficial privateer class at Le Mans in 2013. What Kane describes as “a really good working relationship” – the pair did the heavy lifting alongside amateur racer Leventis – benefited from total openness.

“We never had an issue with sharing what we were doing,” he stresses. “It made us a strong combination, because there were absolutely no secrets at all.”

Kane reckons that he and Watts “generally always wanted a similar car” throughout their seven-year association and “just gelled” in the close-knit team Watts had joined in 2009.

“Everybody knew each other well,” reflects Kane. “Meals were always together and after an event we’d all go for a beer. It was nice to be a part of.”

JAMES NEWBOLD



ALL PHOTOGRAPHY: MOTORSPORT IMAGES



Motorsport Network Media UK Ltd,
2 Stephen Street, London W1T 1AN

Email autosport@autosport.com

Individual email firstname.surname@autosport.com

Website www.autosport.com **Twitter** @autosport

SUBSCRIPTIONS

UK 0345 120 2004 **Overseas** +44 (0) 1604 828 743

Email help@asm.secureorder.co.uk

EDITORIAL

Chief Editor **Kevin Turner**

Deputy Editor **Marcus Simmons**

Grand Prix Editor **Alex Kalinauckas**

F1 Writer **Jake Boxall-Legge**

Chief Motorsport Writer **Ben Hunt**

Production Editor **Peter Hodges**

Group National Editor **Stephen Lickorish**

Performance and Engineering Editor

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Editor **Haydn Cobb**

News Editor (ASP) **Sam Hall**

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Photography

Steven Tee
Glenn Dunbar
Sam Bloxham
Zak Mauger
Jakob Ebrey
Mark Sutton

Special Contributors

Sunita Davies
Jonathan Noble
Marcus Pye
Rachit Thukral
Damien Smith
Gary Watkins
Tim Wright

CORRESPONDENTS

Argentina Tony Watson **Australia** Phil Branagan

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ADVERTISING

Tandem Media

Director **Richard Rowe**

richard@tandemmedia.co.uk **Tel** +44 (0) 1233 228757

Account Manager **Joel Tanton**

joel@tandemmedia.co.uk **Tel** +44 (0) 1233 228753

RECRUITMENT

Head of Motorsport Jobs **James Robinson**

james.robinson@motorsport.com

ADVERTISING PRODUCTION

autosport@tandemmedia.co.uk **Tel** +44 (0) 1233 220247

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MANAGEMENT

President, Motorsport Business & F1 Liaison, Motorsport Network Media **James Allen**

Head of Content **Mike Spinelli**

Editorial Director **Travis Okulski**

Editor in Chief **Rebecca Clancy**

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2 East Poultry Avenue,
London, EC1A 9PT.
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WHY FORMULA E'S GEN3 EVO IS A 'WHOLE NEW WORLD'



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Gen3 Evo will make its debut later this year, with testing due to begin next month

FORMULA E'S NEXT LANDMARK INNOVATION IS AN IMPORTANT STEP

Formula E enjoyed its first big birthday last month, so it seems only appropriate that as the all-electric world championship turns 10, it should get a new toy to play with. Although the Gen3 Evo may not look enormously different, the difference it will make when the new campaign begins in December with the Sao Paulo E-Prix will be profound. As Stefan Mackley outlines in the cover feature (page 10), a package of alterations headlined by the onset of all-wheel drive will radically impact how races in Formula E play out.

Among the changes to anticipate will be the arrival of new Lola/Yamaha powertrains with Abt. Starting from scratch, there will be a steep learning curve as it seeks to challenge rivals with mature programmes, but in Formula E's most experienced driver Lucas di Grassi

it will have a handy reference point. Our regular columnist outlines how the development process has evolved and the elements to prioritise on page 7.

With multiple options on the table for the World Rally Championship's future (see news, p4), among them combustion engines, hybrid and EV powertrains, these remain unpredictable times for industry specialists. But following its British Touring Car Championship success with West Surrey Racing and Jake Hill, Neil Brown Engineering is committed to sticking to its guns. Senior engineer Gavin Harrison explains all in our guest column (p9).

Another well-regarded name going strong is RML. In its 40th anniversary year, it no longer has a competition arm, but as Marcus Simmons discovered (p20) its diversification strategy should serve it well for many years to come.



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BAGNALL/MOTORSPORT IMAGES



James Newbold
JAMES NEWBOLD
Editor
james.newbold@autosport.com

EDITORIAL

SUB-EDITOR
Peter Hodges

ART DIRECTOR
Lynsey Elliott

ART EDITOR
Michael Cavalli

CONTRIBUTORS
Lucas di Grassi,
Gavin Harrison,
Stefan Mackley,
Marcus Pye,
Marcus Simmons

ADVERTISING ENQUIRIES
Catherine Rowe
catherine.rowe@tandemmedia.co.uk
01233 228750



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WRC/WORLD RX REGULATION CONVERGENCE MOOTED BY FIA

Manufacturers could be enticed to build cars for both rulesets in 2027

A crossover in technical regulations for the World Rally Championship and World Rallycross Championship in 2027 is being investigated by the FIA. The world motorsport governing body is in the process of forging the 2027 technical rules for the WRC, which will be presented to the World Motor Sport Council in December.

According to FIA chief technical and safety officer Xavier Mestelan Pinon, the regulations could offer the prospect for manufacturers and tuners to develop a car that would be eligible to compete in both the WRC and World RX.

Internal combustion engines, hybrid and EV powertrains remain on the table for discussion for WRC, alongside the possibility of some form of

Equivalence of Technology if various approaches are permitted simultaneously. The FIA is working to reduce costs, with a €400,000 cap for Rally1 cars among the ongoing talks.

Mestelan Pinon told Autosport: “This is a project that we need to discuss with the World Rallycross ecosystem, but for me it could make sense. If €400,000 will be the cost cap that we will validate, that means that the car would be very close to the current cars in rallycross.

“If we want to launch an EV version [of a WRC Rally1 car] we can imagine some common parts like the battery that could be suited for rally. This is something we’re working on; it’s too early to say yes or no. This is something that could be good for

the future of rallycross also.”

World RX switched to an all-electric platform ahead of the 2022 season, with all cars in the top RX1e category using spec Kreisel powertrains. Last year’s campaign was paused following a devastating fire at Lydden Hill that destroyed Special ONE Racing’s Lancia Delta Evo-E RXs. This year, internal combustion engine cars are once more eligible to compete alongside EV machinery in the ‘Battle of Technologies’.

The FIA has already dabbled in crossover regulations following the launch of the new touring car TC Lite class, which shares existing Rally4 and Rally5 technical regulations.

TOM HOWARD



Lousada track that hosted special stage on WRC Rally Portugal will return to World RX calendar next year

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EX-LOLA WIND TUNNEL COMPLETES £0.5M UPGRADE PACKAGE, OFFERED FOR SALE

A state-of-the-art wind tunnel previously used by Lola Cars has been put up for sale after recently undergoing a £500,000 upgrade.

The moving road wind tunnel, which is scaled at 50%, was first opened in 1998 and acquired by Lola Cars from British Aerospace, where it was used for the motorsport company’s in-house research and development and also included work from several Formula 1 teams.

Following a three-year lease to Lola Cars, which was re-formed in 2021 by businessman and racer Till Bechtolsheimer after the

original company folded in 2012, the wind tunnel has been put up for sale by owner Peer Group plc. The facility includes an array of supporting workshops as well as a seven-post chassis rig, with a guide price of £2.5million.

Peer Group managing director Howard Dawson said it would represent “incredible value in relation to the cost of building and developing a new wind tunnel, especially as its modular steel construction makes it ideal for relocation to wherever a buyer wishes”. He explained that the major upgrade to the tunnel’s



Tunnel is on the market following upgrades

PEERGROUP

systems completed this year now provides for pre-programmed automated testing with full model motion control and easy integration with the latest sensor

technologies. It is controlled by Cosworth’s specialist Diablo software, designed for advanced wind tunnel applications.

STEFAN MACKLEY



Prodrive-built Dacia got first run-out in Morocco

FGSERIES

PRODRIVE'S DACIA CHALLENGER WINS ON DEBUT IN MOROCCO

Prodrive's preparations for the 2025 Dakar Rally got off to the perfect start last week in Morocco when its new Sandrider claimed a 1-2 in the Rallye du Maroc. Nasser Al Attiyah secured his third World Rally-Raid Championship title by leading team-mate Sebastien Loeb with a 5m10s margin.

The Sandrider, which replaces Prodrive's Hunter T1+ in which Al Attiyah had won two of the past three rounds, immediately showed promise when the Qatari won the first test. Loeb was fastest on two stages after a disastrous Prologue in which he incurred suspension damage that meant he

began the rally proper from the rear of the field.

Reflecting on the performance of the three-litre twin-turbo V6-powered car, which uses synthetic fuel, Loeb said: "It's important to do a rally like this to see what breaks and what we need to improve for the Dakar. Of course, there are a few things we need to sort out, but overall, we're very happy."

The new petrol-engined Mini JCW Rally 3.0i had been in podium contention with Guerlain Chicherit until problems on the final test. But X-raid team principal Sven Quandt professed himself "very happy with our performance".

SKODA LAUNCHES NEW EV RACING CONCEPT

Skoda Motorsport unveiled an all-new electric racing car concept last week that incorporates technology from its World Rally Championship Rally2 car.

Based on the Czech manufacturer's road-going Enyaq SUV, the new Enyaq RS Race has been developed in-house by Skoda Motorsport since 2023 with the aim of creating a performance-purposed EV that closely matches the handling of its Fabia RS Rally2 challenger.

The car can generate 340bhp and a top speed of 180km/h from two electric motors married to an 82kWh battery, taken from the production car. Inside, the car features a rally-specification rollcage and hydraulic handbrake, while the pedal box is taken directly from the Rally2 car. Biocomposite components that incorporate flax fibres in the interior and body have contributed to a 316kg saving, and could point to Skoda's future direction in a fast-changing motorsport landscape.

TOM HOWARD

EV is fitted with components used in Fabia RS Rally2



SKODA



Ansible says new base at Snett will allow for growth

ANSIBLE MOTION RELOCATES TO NEW SNETTERTON HUB

Ansible Motion is to move to MotorSport Vision's new Innovation Park in Snetterton from its current base in Hethel. The company, which supplies Driver-in-the-Loop simulators to leading teams and manufacturers across multiple racing series, will become the first tenants of the 13-hectare site adjacent to the MSV-owned Snetterton Circuit.

Ansible managing director Dan Clark said the move would "connect us with a broader growth ecosystem", and described its relocation as "an excellent fit for us". The new Snetterton base will be double the size of the existing facility it has used since 2009, Clark said, and would "allow us to house all our research and development, design and manufacturing under one roof". The company also plans to expand its current workforce from 55 staff to around 90 within the next three years.

MSV boss Jonathan Palmer added: "The development will give new life to the circuit and bring new race teams, motorsport businesses and advanced engineering firms to the area."

HANNAH NEWMAN

IN BRIEF

Rodin drivers will benefit from set-up work on sim



S BLOXHAM/MOTORSPORT IMAGES

RODIN INVESTS IN NEW SIM

Leading Formula 2 squad Rodin Motorsport has purchased a new DMG-1 simulator supplied by Dynisma. The new rig's arrival would be "a game changer" in Rodin's preparations for 2025, its F2 team manager Benn Huntingford said. In addition to driver training "it allows us to really look at our car set-up and evaluate things in a landscape where testing just isn't possible."

KVYAT VERSUS AI

Ex-Formula 1 driver Daniil Kvyat will be part of a 'man versus machine' exhibition race organised by the Abu Dhabi Autonomous Racing League at Suzuka next month. The A2RL development driver will race an autonomously driven Super Formula Dallara SF23 on 9-10 November in the second event it has staged following an AI showcase at the Yas Marina Circuit in April.

LIGIER H2 TEST MILESTONE

Ligier Automotive says its hydrogen-powered JS2 RH2 co-developed with Bosch Engineering has now covered over 5000km of circuit testing without encountering issues. The French sportscar manufacturer anticipates that top speeds of around 300km/h are possible, but COO Richard Tur says "there are still some technological hurdles to overcome" as it develops solutions based on liquid hydrogen.

BTCC SUSTAINABLE FUEL

Plans to introduce 100% sustainable fuel to the British Touring Car Championship will progress after trials at Silverstone and Brands Hatch. Daryl DeLeon's Unlimited Motorsport Cupra reported no issues with the drop-in solution from Haltermann Carless, which supplies the regular 20% renewable mix. Series boss Alan Gow said the "significant milestone" was "an important and essential step" for the BTCC.

DeLeon became BTCC's 100% sustainable fuel pioneer



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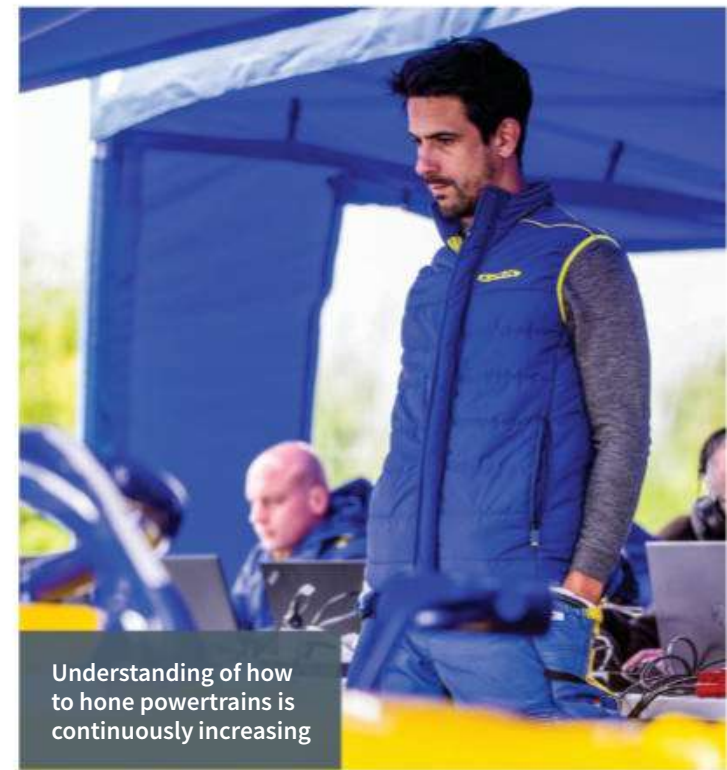
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DRIVING CHANGE LUCAS DI GRASSI

THE COMPETING DEMANDS OF POWERTRAIN DEVELOPMENT

As progress continues on the latest Formula E powertrain, the championship's most experienced driver explains what goes into developing a project from scratch



Understanding of how to hone powertrains is continuously increasing

When developing a new electric powertrain for Formula E, multiple objectives must be balanced and prioritised. Power, efficiency and controllability are all crucial for manufacturers, and compromise is inevitable when determining the best overall package. A highly efficient powertrain is of little use if it cannot reach maximum power quickly enough, has too much inertia, or lacks the necessary software controls for energy management.

Each of these core elements also involves additional considerations, highlighting the extensive work required to bring a project from concept to the track. Since Formula E began a decade ago, and powertrain development was opened up in season two, several aspects of the design and development process have matured hugely. We now have more knowledge and better tools than we did back then.

Proof of this can be seen in the inverters, which convert DC current from the battery into AC current for the motor. The inverters are now over 99% efficient, and the electric motors we use are more than 98% efficient. This high level of development can largely be attributed to improvements in motor construction, electronics precision and speed, and advances in materials science,

resulting in increased hardware capacity.

When Formula E first began with a standard powertrain capable of 150kW in race mode, we used a five-speed gearbox as we couldn't achieve maximum power early enough. My team, Abt Sportsline, reduced this to three gears in season two, two gears in season three, and eventually one gear in season four. Eliminating multiple gears was a major breakthrough in the Gen1 era as gear shifts result in time loss and hurt efficiency. Now, every team uses a single gear, which requires specific treatments for the gear teeth. These teeth are made wide and shallow to reduce friction, which

improves efficiency and allows the cars to accelerate seamlessly from 0-300km/h.

Arguably the biggest difference between past and present development lies in advances in software calculations and predictive engineering. These impressive advancements allow for more precise simulations of reality, streamlining the development process and enabling

faster innovation. Instead of producing several powertrain iterations and testing them physically to find the best solution, much of the optimisation can now be done virtually before parts are manufactured.

So, what are the main criteria we look for in a Formula E powertrain? First, it's essential to achieve maximum power across all revs as early as possible. We are limited to 350kW, so the motor must operate at its peak without exceeding that limit, which would result in a penalty. Power control is challenging, particularly when the motor, gearbox and driveshaft oscillate over kerbs or bumps.

“Striking the right balance is a complex task that always requires compromises”

A throttle map that delivers torque smoothly is a key area where the driver can influence development. I focus on how the motor behaves under braking, how its positioning affects the car's balance, and optimising software controls, like how the motor responds to regenerative braking.

Incremental gains in efficiency are a continuous area of focus. We're always looking for an extra 0.1% or 0.2%. The important thing is achieving efficiency across the entire package, not just in the motor and inverter. In addition to high peak efficiency, we aim for high average efficiency, which requires a large motor. A larger motor with thicker copper wiring typically has less resistance. However, a larger motor also means more mass and weight, so other factors must also be considered. Lightness has clear benefits for efficiency, and low inertia is also critical.

Striking the right balance is a complex task that always requires compromises, but the advances made over the past 10 years have been truly remarkable. ■

Development continues at pace with new Lola-Yamaha powertrain that Abt will race in upcoming Formula E season



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DAVID MCROBERT
D.MCROBERT@FLYFIVE.CO.UK





ENGINEER'S VIEW GAVIN HARRISON

NAVIGATING A COURSE THROUGH CHANGING TIMES

One year on from the death of Neil Brown, the engine-building company that bears his name is sticking true to the core principles he espoused, as its senior engineer explains

I joined Neil Brown Engineering in 1989 when electronics came into motor racing and engine management systems became increasingly popular. My brother-in-law already worked here and I'd been helping him out a little bit as a newly qualified electronics engineer, so Neil offered me a job. I said, 'I'll do it for a few years to see a bit of the world.' That was 35 years ago!

We have a core of staff who have worked here for 30-plus years together with Neil and they're still together now he's gone, with the same values in place and the same desire to succeed. In that respect, things haven't changed that much. We just picked up the pieces that Neil used to do and everybody has taken on a bit more.

Although we have worked in the British Touring Car Championship with West Surrey Racing and Speedworks Motorsport – and prior to that with Team Dynamics – with great success during the hybrid era, we don't get too involved in electric vehicles and stay true to our core expertise with internal combustion engines.

Although the hybrid system has to work with the IC engine in the BTCC, the two are actually fairly separate. There are some things we have to do to accommodate

the hybrid, such as introducing a blip on downshifts to look after the electric motors, but as Cosworth is the supplier and it's not our area of specialism, there's very little we have to take care of.

I first worked with WSR during its time as a leading team in Formula 3; we both went our separate ways and then I ended up working with them again in touring cars. The key people are all the same, we've known each other for a long time and they trust me to ensure the engine is working to its maximum, as I trust them to make sure the chassis is. At race weekends, I check the engine data after each session to ensure

“What is current now will become classics, which has become a big part of our business”

we're leaving nothing on the table.

NBE has always considered the BTCC as an important championship, simply because it's high-profile in the UK. More people know us through our involvement with BTCC than from our days in F3, for example, so it's always been important to us to make sure that we're involved with

supporting our teams and are competitive.

As far as the future is concerned, we are led to some degree by manufacturers. And that is all up in the air because they don't seem to be in unison on how they want to move forward. Some claim they will stay with the ICE, some are saying they're going to other formats. Until they decide, it makes things difficult for NBE to strategise. As a result, we're forging our own way as we try to protect our traditional markets wherever possible. If manufacturers do decide to stop making IC engines, it may mean that we produce one ourselves that allows us to continue the format.

On our part, there's no thoughts of 'things are getting a bit slow, we'll think about winding it up'. We're moving forward and we'll take on new challenges as they arrive. Maybe going to hydrogen eventually, or maybe just sticking with the historics, whatever markets come along. We're driven by our market and we've always undertaken to be as competitive as possible. If that means learning new processes or keeping up to date with manufacturing processes, test equipment or whatever it may be, we do it.

Ultimately, I see the ICE era continuing for some time to come. What is current now will become classics, which has become a big part of our business. We've shown our skills in producing engines which we still service today, and that has produced more custom even as we've lost traditional F3 over the years.

As long as there is demand for combustion racing, I would like to think that NBE will be at the forefront. That's certainly what we're planning for. ■



BTCC is an important platform for NBE, explains Harrison



Harrison first worked with Dick Bennetts's WSR team in its F3 days

'WHOLE NEW WORLD'

It looks similar from the outside, but the significance of Formula E's latest upgrade cannot be underestimated

BY STEFAN MACKLEY



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ynonymous with motorsport and not short on glitz or glamour given its picturesque Mediterranean

coast location, Monte

Carlo played host earlier this year to the unveiling of Formula E's newest challenger – the Gen3 Evo.

A traditional step change that's come at the midpoint of the four-year cycle for all generations of Formula E car so far, on the surface the Gen3 Evo appears no different from its older brother, which has been used for the past two seasons.

As ever, though, the devil is in the detail and a closer look at the bodywork reveals noticeable differences. The general shape of the car has been refined and the sidepods pulled in tighter around the cockpit to give it a sleeker appearance while not impacting the tub's integrity

or compromising safety requirements.

The front wing, a component that has almost certainly become one of the most in-demand items at the spare parts unit during a race weekend, has been strengthened in a bid to prevent it becoming damaged and falling off entirely during races. The part could have been made stronger when the Gen3 car was launched in 2022, but the robustness of the sturdier Gen2 front wing meant at times it was used as a battering ram by some drivers – with little in the way of a performance hindrance.

The decision to create a comparatively flimsier front wing to combat that issue somewhat ironically coincided with the Gen3 car producing copious amounts of drag compared to its predecessor. This created a peloton-style of pack racing, which has meant constant changes of position that often leaves carbon fibre strewn in its wake. ▶

FORMULAE



Gen3 Evo incorporates minor bodywork tweaks, but the biggest changes are internal



Coulthard gave Gen3 Evo a first public demonstration in Monaco

These modifications to the outside of the car will have a minimal performance effect. Under the bodywork is where the major change has occurred. The front motor itself is nothing new; the spec part has been a feature of the Gen3 car since its inception, its sole purpose being to harvest and recoup energy in braking zones. But from next season the motor will provide power to the front axle, producing all-wheel drive (AWD) for the first time in the all-electric championship as it embarks on its second decade.

McLaren's chief engineer Albert Lau, who joined the championship in 2018 and helped Nyck de Vries to the 2021 title with Mercedes, believes the new technology will be "a game-changer".

"Honestly, it's a whole new world," Lau tells Autosport. "To put a number on it, you're talking about two to three seconds of lap time in qualifying, which is significant. Our drivers [Sam Bird and Taylor Barnard] have hopped into the car in manufacturer testing and both came out thinking, 'Wow, that's quite awesome'."

The changes for this year mean that a maximum 50kW of energy from an allotted 350kW can be sent to the front wheels, but only in certain situations. This includes the qualifying duels, when drivers go head-to-head to determine grid positions, at the start of the race and during both Attack Mode activations.

The introduction of the technology made headlines from the off back in April, when Formula E's PR machine announced that its 0-60mph time of 1.82s would fractionally beat the benchmark set by a Formula 1 car.

The Gen3 Evo was put through its paces publicly for the first time that weekend by two-time Monaco Grand Prix winner David Coulthard, who was enthused by the experience. So too the current generation of Formula E drivers, with several able to experience the new car via manufacturer running before teams embarked on their own post-season schedules ahead of pre-season testing, which commences in Valencia at the start of next month.

One of the first given the chance to experience new car was DS Penske's reserve driver Oliver Turvey. With 88 Formula E race starts to his name and an engineering degree that's helped him remain a McLaren F1 test driver since 2009, the 37-year-old Briton believes it will be a hit. "[The AWD] made quite a big difference," he relates. "Certainly on the kind of street tracks or tighter

tracks that we race on, it's going to be quite powerful. It'll certainly make the cars a lot quicker in qualifying and make the Attack Mode more useful. It's definitely going to make the car nicer to drive.

"In the race, when you go from rear-wheel drive to then AWD in Attack Mode, adapting quickly to that will be important. But I still think you can take some lessons from last year and that will benefit you in aspects of the race when you're only running RWD."

Although up to 50kW can be sent to the front axle, that certainly doesn't mean the maximum amount will be used at every opportunity. Finding the perfect balance between front and rear traction will be a constant quest for drivers and teams. Its use will also likely create greater strategic possibilities during races, with Attack Mode set to be taken later in proceedings





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BAGNALL/MOTORSPORTIMAGES



McLaren's Lau is excited to see what will be possible with AWD

ROMNEY/MOTORSPORTIMAGES

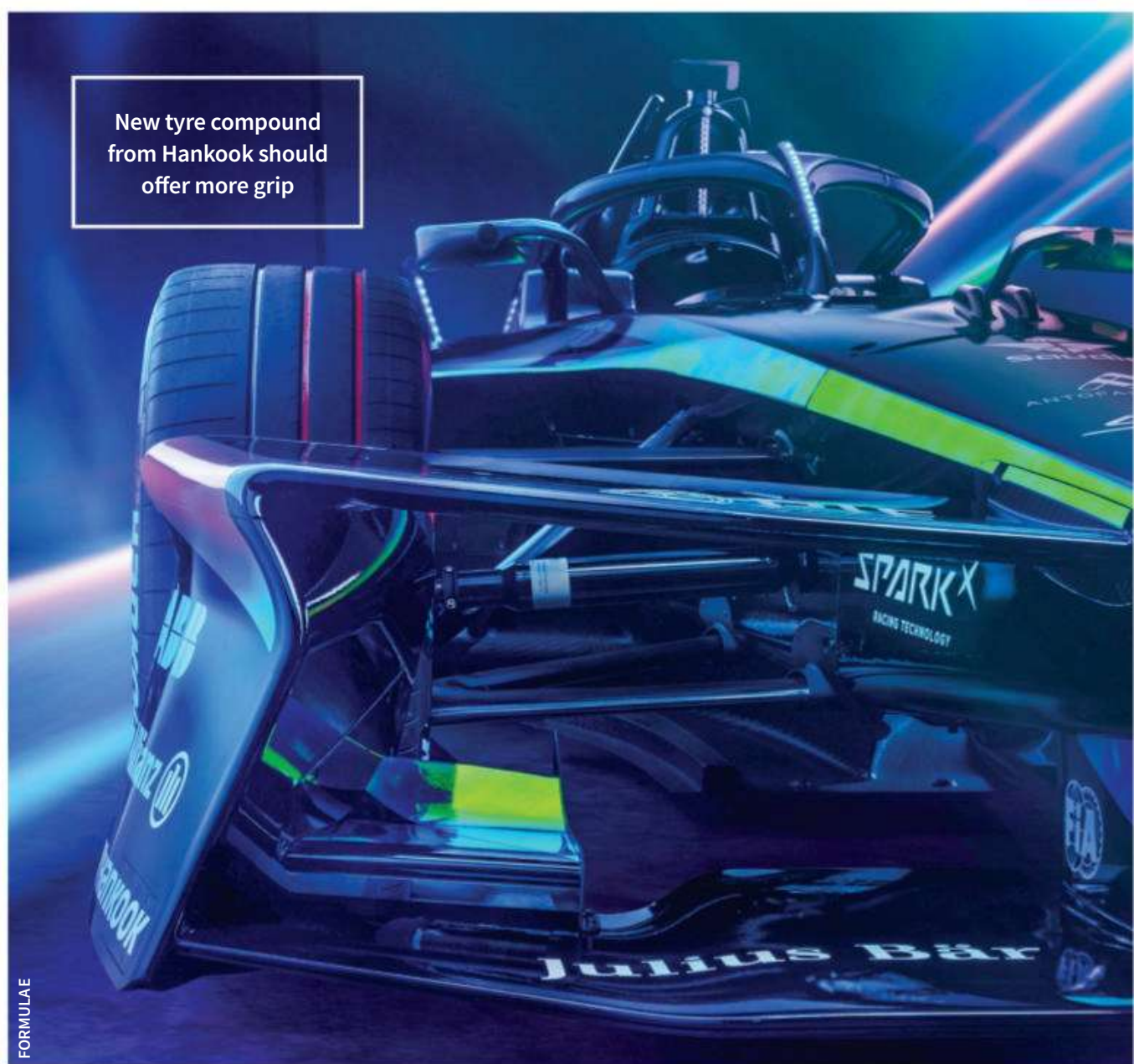
“You’re given an extra thing to play with, and we’re going to push”

due to the sheer performance advantage it will provide and power to help change the complexion of races. But with the new technology comes possible compromises, according to Lau.

“The AWD is going to make a big difference just because you’re going to be pushed to use a little bit more energy and that’s going to change the shape of the race,” he says. “In terms of how we use the 50kW, it’s a lot more complicated than that [using the maximum amount] because ultimately the front powertrain is a spec part that everyone’s running. It’s not going to have the level of efficiency of the rear powertrains that the manufacturers spend thousands of hours on the rigs, just to fine-tune that detail of efficiency.

“There’s always going to be a little bit of, ‘Should I be using more of the rear, more of the front? Where do those efficiencies lie? How do I get the best drive out of the car out of the corners?’ You’re weighing all of those things to make sure you have exactly the right amount of torque coming from the front or the rear for that corner where the efficiencies lie, which axle is grip limited, all of those things.

“When I said it was a whole new world, that’s the kind of area I’m talking about.



New tyre compound from Hankook should offer more grip

FORMULAE

You’re given an extra thing to play with and as engineers, we’re always going to push to find the most performance out of it.”

While AWD technology is nothing new, having been utilised in the World Rally Championship for decades, and more recently in the World Endurance Championship, its use in single-seaters is far more rare. The end of the 1960s and early 1970s was when it was last taken seriously at motor racing’s pinnacle by the likes of Colin Chapman at Lotus, and at McLaren and Matra, with limited success. But with the technology now an integral part of electric road vehicles, it was an avenue the championship and

governing body the FIA felt needed to be explored both from a sporting and technical perspective.

“Formula E already had the front powertrain for the regeneration and after 10 years one of the questions that our promoter and the FIA always asks is, why not innovate?” says Pablo Martino, the FIA’s Head of Championship for Formula E.

“Especially on a feature that is quite relevant for the automotive industry, because all the electric cars are four-wheel drive almost from inception. So why not use that expertise to try to transfer and provide additional features that can be interesting for the automotive industry? ▶

Johnny Servoz-Gavin's sixth place with AWD Matra in 1969 Canadian GP was a rare high point



MOTORSPORT IMAGES

We have two things: first the performance gain, which is always interesting to get, that's why we decided to move forward with this four-wheel drive, and the second one is the relevancy for the automotive industry."

The move towards a greater amount of grip also coincides with the other big change ahead of the 2024-25 season, which is a softer compound of Hankook tyre. The manufacturer believes it will offer 5-10% more grip than the previous iteration. Having come in for blunt criticism from drivers for being ultra-durable to the extent of offering limited grip, the Korean brand has worked to supply a tyre that should also yield lap time improvements.

"It's closer to a racing tyre than the

"It's been amazing to see the progression of Formula E"

previous one," adds Martino, "which is good but it's going to be challenging as well for them. We have a policy where we're trying to think of the environment and the waste of tyres, so we will run with the same quota for the tyres. It's also important to note that this tyre features 35% renewable materials, an increase of 7% compared to its predecessor. They offer a little bit more performance and it will bring some other challenges in terms of tyre wear, but at

the end, it's part of racing."

It means that, whereas energy consumption has previously been the number one factor in determining the outcome of races, managing tyres at certain venues with an abrasive track surface and high temperatures could now become the critical element and part of the strategy.

While focus is on the Gen3 Evo and the impact that will create on Formula E over the next two seasons, work is already

running at full pace on the Gen4 car, which will bring another significant performance upgrade when introduced for the 2026-27 season. Bridgestone will replace Hankook as tyre supplier, while the Spark Racing Technologies group will continue to supply the chassis – having done so since the outset of the championship.

Two types of tyre will be used for the first time in the championship's history. These include a 'baseline' rubber, which will be a grooved all-weather tyre that "must guarantee sufficient grip to ensure safe racing in light rain", says Martino, and a second 'typhoon' compound will be "mandatory in heavy rain".

Separate high and low downforce configurations will be available, while there will be a power increase that will peak at 600kW – nearly double the current level. Combined, it will help to create another leap for electric technology.

"It's been amazing to see the progression of Formula E – in 10 years they've really achieved a lot in terms of electric racing," says Turvey. "Each generation of car has been a good step forwards in speed and range. The car from Gen1 to Gen2, we



All-wheel drive promises to open up more strategic variation

FORMULAE



Spec nature of front powertrain remains, giving teams plenty of work to optimise

BAGNALL/MOTORSPORT IMAGES



RACE FOR FAST-CHARGING

One of the longest running sagas of Formula E's Gen3 era has surrounded fast-charging pitstops, which could appear later this season having been tested extensively during the off-season.

The concept, where drivers would be required to pit during a race for approximately 30 seconds and receive a charge of power equal to 10% of the battery, was initially slated for the start of the Gen3 era in 2022.

This was pushed back by a year due to the introduction of the new machines, which put a strain on available parts and the general Formula E infrastructure, with testing of the technology taking place at various points last season in official practice sessions.

The technology, which could eventually have a huge impact for consumers if successful, is yet to be implemented in a race as the finalisation of its development is ongoing.

"It comes with big challenges; it's not only pushing boundaries on the charger side but also on the battery side," says FIA Head of Championship for Formula E Pablo Martino.

"Through all the summer period this year, the manufacturers have had access to this technology, so they have been testing with that technology in place.

"They have performed quite a relevant amount of charging already. The technology is there, the technology is working.

"There are just a few operational corrections that need to be addressed, but nothing related to the technicality. We are now in the last phase of sign-off, let's say."

Teams have been able to use the charge boosters during testing to work on the procedure from an operational perspective, with further running set to take place at pre-season testing in Valencia. The four-day test will also include a mock race, with the fast-charging pitstops set to feature, giving teams and the FIA the chance to see the technology used in a dynamic race situation.

"From an operational point of view, we're pretty close," adds McLaren chief engineer Albert Lau. "But we just haven't had, I guess, the volume of boost charges that would for me sign it off to the point where we're happy that it's all OK.

"You're talking about a boost charge per race, per car, and you add that up; you need hundreds of boost charges signed off before you're going to go into a season. You don't go to Le Mans and do a 24-hour test. You've done a 36-hour test beforehand and it's the same thing for this."

However, even if the technology proves reliable and teams are up to speed with it operationally, there's no guarantee that it will be implemented for the upcoming season.

Martino admits that further simulation and research are currently taking place to ensure that adding the procedure into a race won't diminish the spectacle or create any unforeseen issues.

"We also need to understand how this Attack Charge affects the race," he says. "This is something that needs to be captured, hence why we are planning to do a race simulation in Valencia. That will also be taken into account for a final decision."

GALLOWAY/MOTORSPORT IMAGES



FIA's Martino welcomes the opportunity for innovation

went from two cars to racing with one car, and then from Gen2 to Gen3, the speed of the cars has increased as well.

"Not only just the feeling to drive, but just the actual speed of the cars, the power they have now. Again, for the Gen3 Evo, it's another step forward in terms of performance, it has the four-wheel drive and the better tyres – they're going to be another couple of seconds a lap quicker.

"It's definitely a challenge for the drivers; the new car is going to be the fastest Formula E car yet. They've also managed to keep the racing close and exciting, and there's a lot of strategy involved – the races have always come down to the final few laps. It's a really tough, challenging series where all the details matter now."



ROMNEY/MOTORSPORT IMAGES

PHANTOM PR24

PHANTOM OF THE CLUBMANS OPERA

The storied constructor's latest offering is already a serial winner

BY MARCUS PYE

IN THE BEGINNING

The Phantom story dates back 51 years to 1973, when Jaguar engineers Chris Greville-Smith and Richard Cresswell built their first Clubmans car. Cresswell won his class in the 1974 Silverstone-based Tricentrol championship, but CG-S – who subsequently transferred to Ford – continued the project solo, racing and developing his chassis and building a handful more, among them the ex-Kimber Crossley/David Childs P79 still raced by Steve Chapman. Arguably the most consistent challengers to Mallock's offerings over the period, Phantoms were subsequently created by several firms, including John Maguire Racing in Coventry, before being taken over by Jan Nordgren in Sweden, from whom Alex Champkin acquired the project. Greville-Smith still engineers cars, helping recent Brands Hatch race winner Michelle Hayward in Tom Commander's Zetec-engined P82TR.

THE CURRENT ERA

After polishing wheels as a lad for Clubmans racer dad Jamie – now Motorsport UK's legal eagle – Alex Champkin evolved a Vision chassis before starting his mainstream business VMEP (Vision Motorsport Engineering Products). Initially it made chassis set-up floors, air jacks and pit equipment, but is now a market leader in bespoke flight cases for race teams and other industries that need secure transportation of precision equipment worldwide. Since bringing Phantom back to Warwickshire, close to its Coventry birthplace, Champkin won the MSVR-badged Clubmans Register CSP1 championship in 2022 with Ford Zetec power. In 2023 there



was double success running James Clarke in the existing CSP1 car and Mathieu Gauthier-Thornton to the CSP2 crown with Rover power.



CHANGE OF DIRECTION

In a four-category structure split equally between historic and modern concept front-engined sportscars, the Clubmans Register's frontrunning P1 division's regulations provide the same scope for innovation as the original BRSCC's Clubmans did when Nick Syrett introduced a competition for Lotus 7-type cars in 1965. The motorcycle-engined option appealed to Alex Champkin and ignited the enthusiasm of Ashley 'Captain Aerospace' Pearce,

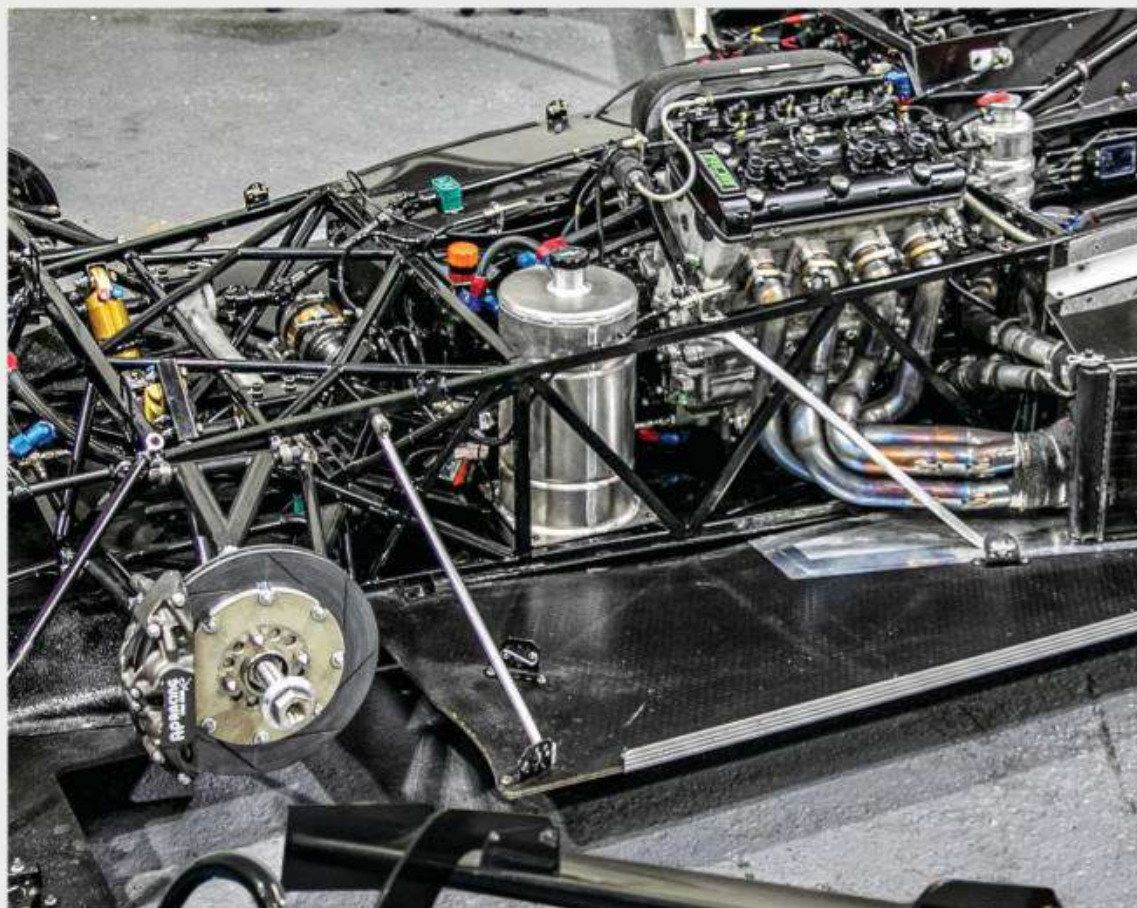
whose first automotive passion remains bikes. He joined VMEP as a welder, but has brought his knowhow to creating and detailing the PR24. Lightning quick from its debut at Castle Combe in August, Champkin (left) won both races, leaving a 1m05.119s (102.14mph) lap record as evidence. A month later the combo completed a hat-trick in the wet at Oulton Park, then added a Brands Hatch double for a five from seven win rate.



ALL PHOTOGRAPHY: JOYBATCHELOR

CHASSIS EVOLUTION

The tubeframe chassis, fabricated in-house by Pearce, is based on the previous PR22's, but the Suzuki engine/gearbox is mounted significantly further back within its wheelbase. But for a 'power bulge' in the bonnet's flank, different water radiator requirements and greater oil cooling – fed by twin nostrils in the nose – the PR24 retains the distinctive low-slung Phantom look. To optimise handling given the revised front/rear weight balance, the chassis requires greater rake than conventional versions. Another frame is on the stocks for 2025 delivery.



TRANSMISSION

Mounted longitudinally, as opposed to transversely in motorcycle applications, the Suzuki Hayabusa engine is mated to its own compact six-speed gearbox, operated by a paddle-shift system – flat up, autoblip down – developed by the highly rated Tim Gray Motorsport. Two more cogs than conventional Clubmans 'car' boxes is advantageous, although overall gearing to suit different circuits is altered by changing between 3:3:1 and 3.1:1 ratio diffs. Drive is transmitted by a long shaft to the left of the cockpit, with stout impact protection for safety.



RLM SUZUKI HAYABUSA

Built by racer Richard Webb's renowned RLM Racing concern in Leicestershire, the engine selected for the Phantom application is 1340cc capacity, with stock internals, although some rivals use 1500cc derivatives. Weighing just 84kg, the shrill Hayabusa revs to 10,500rpm in first to fifth and 11,000rpm in top. It is rolling-road tuned to provide 180bhp at the wheels, the CSP1 category maximum for bike engines. A 55kg weight saving over 200bhp Ford Zetec or Rover K-series engined cars endows the PR24 – weighing in at 500kg, less driver – with 360bhp/ton performance and 145mph potential.



DE DION AXLE

A constant of Phantom cars, the de Dion tube rear axle reduces unsprung weight and provides a stiff, stable location for the independent driven wheels with zero camber change during cornering. Static camber adjustments are made via shims, to maximise tyre contact patches, and there is also toe control for alignment. Mounted by a Watts linkage, with outboard radius arms, the robust tube is suspended by Spax dampers with bump and rebound valving within vertical coil springs. Front suspension is inboard, pushrod operated. Wheels are 13in diameter, with 9.5 and 10.5in widths.

STOPPING POWER

Brake fluid has an unseen but crucial role in achieving consistent lap times

BY JAMES NEWBOLD



There are few more unsettling feelings for a driver than arriving at a corner and being unable to trust that the brakes will slow them down. A long pedal that means apexes cannot be attacked with appropriate vigour carries a clear lap time penalty, and over a stint such inconsistency can make all the difference between victory and mid-pack anonymity.

“Front-wheel-drive performance is all about your brakes and how you can manage them to load up the front axle, keep the weight over the nose and control the balance,” explains Aron Taylor-Smith, the British Touring Car Championship’s Independents’ title winner in 2024 with the Power Maxed Racing Vauxhall squad.

But braking systems are a package deal. Disc and pad wear isn’t the only brake-fade catalyst. Even the best pad/disc combination will have limited use if not complemented by effective brake fluid, the often-overlooked hydraulic element that transmits the force from the pedal.

“The only connection between your foot and the calliper is the brake fluid,” points out Dan Stafford. The chief chemist at Halo by Orthene, the racing sub-brand of the family-owned Orthene company that has since 1976 developed brake fluids, says their significance shouldn’t be overlooked.

“You want the brake fluid to have a very low compressibility,” he explains. “Force transfer has to be consistent. On a straight, you have a massive cooling effect, then in a braking and cornering event you get instantaneous heating of the brake system. If the

fluid can’t adapt to those dynamic temperature ranges and has changed its compressibility in any way, you’ll get control issues.”

All the same, in the experience of Halo by Orthene chief marketing officer Mike Biscoe, there is a tendency for mechanical and electrical engineering to completely overshadow chemical engineering approaches when it comes to unlocking lap time.

“There are teams and engineers who understand the importance of brake fluid, but I’d suggest they’re a minority,” says Biscoe. “When it comes to braking, everyone thinks about the mechanical components at that calliper end, not about the fluid that transmits that force.”

However, that may not be the case for much longer. As both Stafford and Taylor-Smith recognise, demands on braking systems are only growing as the trend of adding weight shows no signs of abating. When this is combined with greater electrification – regen, so fundamental to extending battery life, occurs under deceleration – the heat that racing braking systems must cope with is extreme.

Not meeting this reality face-on can have serious consequences. When brake fluid boils, bubbles form and the fluid becomes more compressible, with the resulting loss of pressure making it harder to stop. This explains the mind-bending 341C boiling point of Halo P1, the company’s latest motorsport-focused product.

Sensors on a master cylinder measuring pedal travel across different temperatures are a great indicator of how compressible the brake fluid is. For Stafford, very low and stable compressibility over a wide temperature range is one

Maximising front-wheel-drive performance is “all about the brakes”, states BTCC star Taylor-Smith



Stafford points out how it's the fluid that connects foot to calliper

US-based Flying Lizard team has been a key development partner for Halo by Orthene



SAM COBB

Braking systems will be flushed and fresh fluid added throughout a race weekend



of P1's core traits, its high temperature lubricity the other.

“Having a fluid where the boiling point is that little bit higher, the compressibility is that little bit better,” says Taylor-Smith, who has used the new-for-2024 P1 formulation in his Astra this year.

The Irishman cites Donington and Oulton Park as examples of circuits with multiple back-to-back heavy braking zones that afford little opportunity for cooling where brake fade was “a huge issue”. One of the first measures PMR identified for improved braking consistency at these tracks was in brake fluid, and Taylor-Smith believes his overall podium finishes at both circuits this year “is probably no coincidence”.

“Other brake fluids might be able to replicate a one-lap pace when all the fluid is fresh,” he says. “But I've found with P1 that

“When it comes to braking, everyone thinks about the mechanical components”

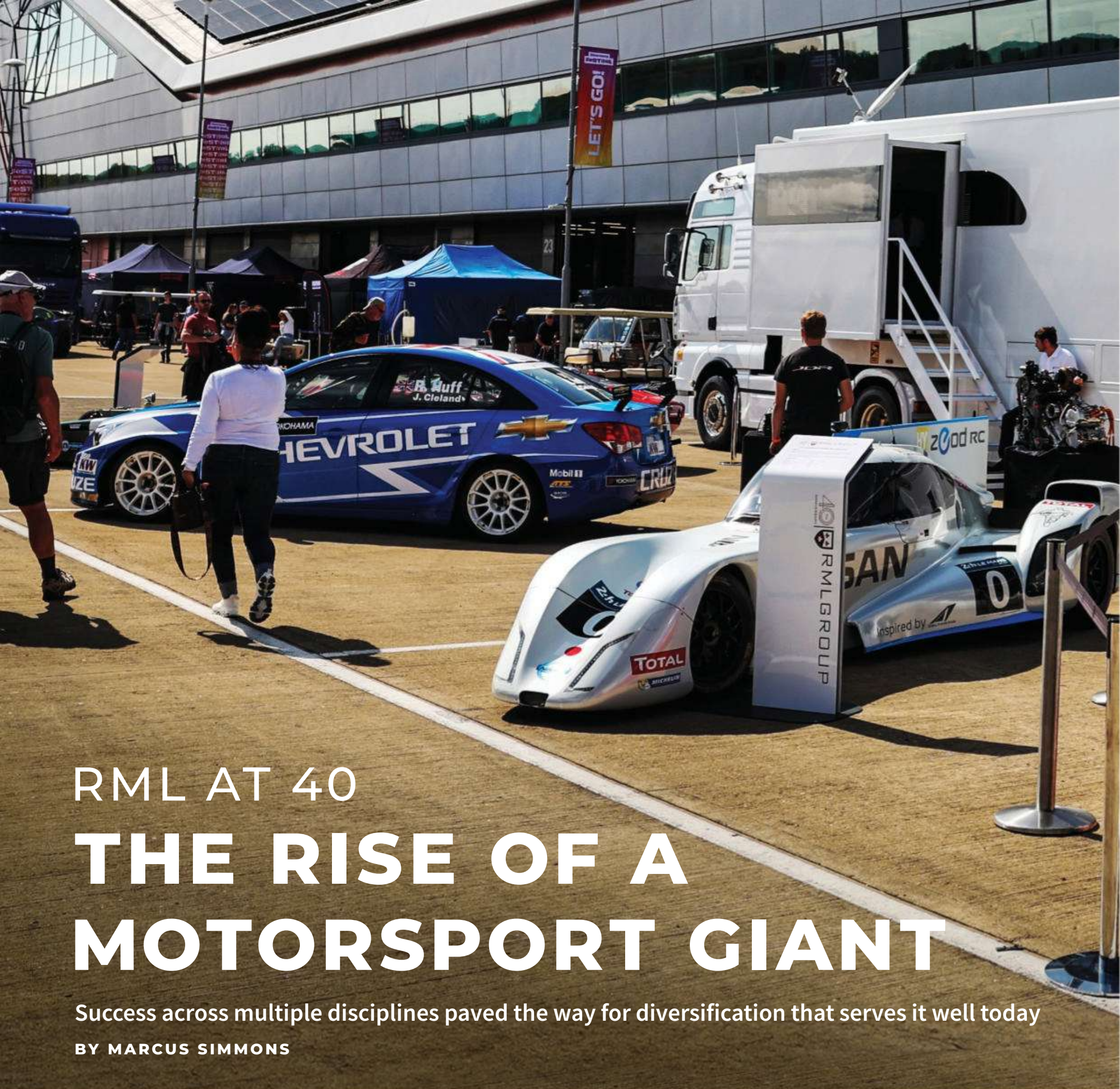
in the last few seconds of qualifying, when the track is at the grippiest, you still have the peak of brake performance.”

Unlike road-going brake fluid, which is subject to prescribed standards to ensure it can perform at extremely low temperatures, racing brake fluid involves fewer compromises that Biscoe notes “allows us to push the envelope of performance”. Top teams will ‘flush’ the systems multiple times over a race weekend, Stafford explains, “not just to ensure you've got fresh fluid in there, but to remove any elastomer dust” generated when new or rebuilt brake systems are bedding in.

Stafford notes that additives present in automotive fluids to prevent corrosion, potentially resulting from water entering the brake fluid after encountering puddles, “doesn't come into it” with racing, and longevity of the fluid itself isn't such a concern either. But the right degree of viscosity, lubricity to avoid unduly wearing components, as well as compatibility with the varied exotic metallurgy used in those components, are also important qualities.

Halo by Orthene is already exploring options for new formulations. Stafford points out that motorcycles “need slightly different properties” to cars since there is far less brake fluid and the dynamics flowing through the system are very different. “We've been working with a team in British Superbikes and they're looking for a very particular characteristic with the brake fluid which we managed to solve,” he says. “From a chemical perspective, we'll probably start to see some divergence.”

As motorsport continually strives for faster lap times, so in its unseen way, will brake fluid evolve to play its own part. ■



RML AT 40

THE RISE OF A MOTORSPORT GIANT

Success across multiple disciplines paved the way for diversification that serves it well today

BY MARCUS SIMMONS

The crash at the Druids hairpin looked nasty, especially when fire broke out with the driver stuck inside. But, for those who believe that all things happen for a reason, it was validation.

Ray Mallock's new company, Ray Mallock Limited, was in its first year of operation when it pitched up at the 1984 British Grand Prix meeting at Brands Hatch to compete in the Thundersports support race with its Ecosse C284. RML had been running the Ecurie Ecosse programme on behalf of the team's patron Hugh McCaig in the world sportscar championship while, in parallel, Mallock himself was driving for the Nimrod-Aston Martin team. At Brands, Mallock was having a rare outing in the Ecosse, leading

the race and about to hand over to David Leslie – the start of their fated relationship as racing partners – when disaster struck.

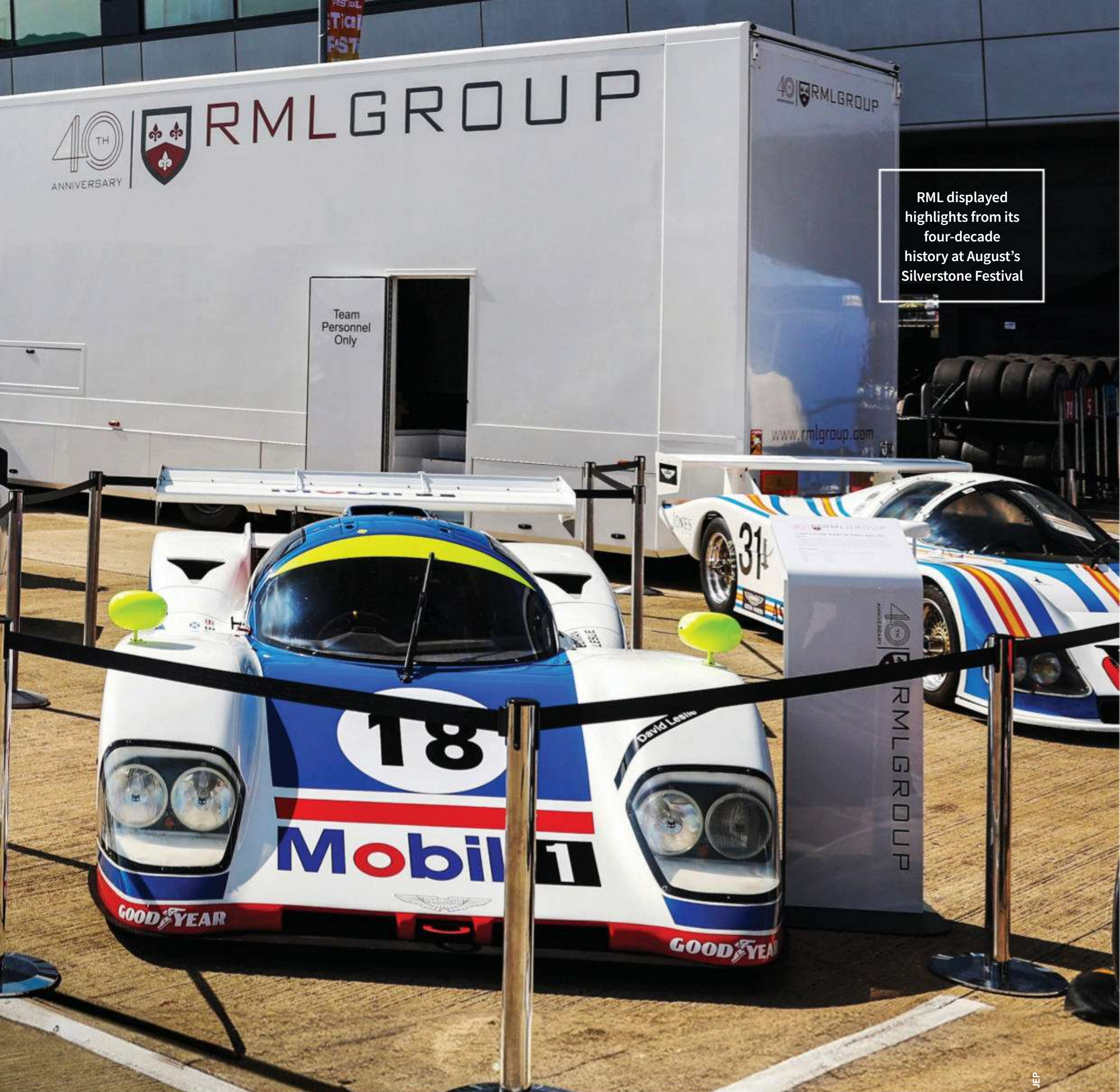
“The brakes failed – it wrote the car off,” reflects Mallock today. “I was stuck in the car while it was on fire – all on TV with Murray Walker commentating! Horrible crash but fortunately Hugh had insured it for that race, and that enabled us to create our own chassis for the following year.”

Mallock's son Michael, then not yet two years old, adds: “One of my earliest memories is being at Brands Hatch, and looking out of the window and seeing Dad have an off at Druids when he had a brake failure. It's amazing how these things stick. It was exciting!”

Today, Mallock Jr is CEO of the RML Group and in charge of a workforce of 120

– but which can expand to 180 during build projects – at its factory in Wellingborough, eight years after his father handed over the reins. “I essentially retired although I remained as chairman,” explains Mallock Sr in this, the company's 40th anniversary year. And the work has continued.

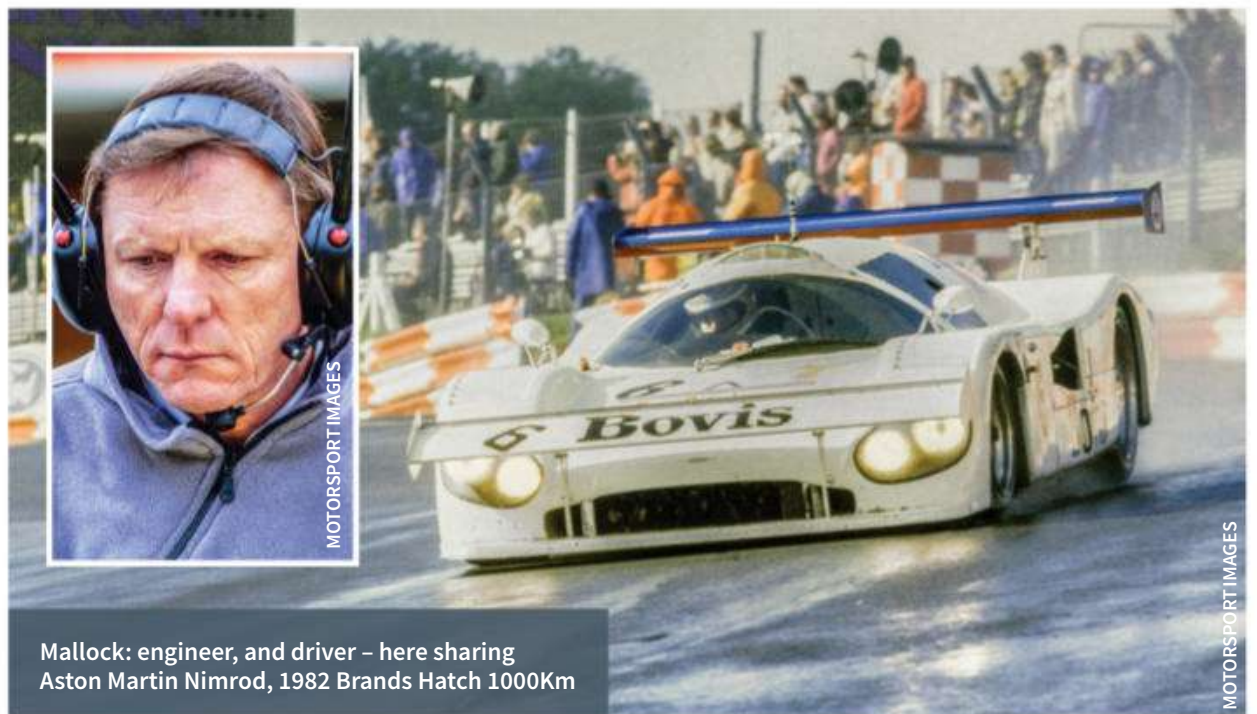
RML may be famed for its title successes in the World and British Touring Car championships, and before that its world sportscar exploits. But its influence continues: a swathe of high-performance projects for track and road, a clandestine involvement as a key supplier of battery technology to teams in Formula 1 and the Le Mans Hypercar class, not to mention every car in the modern-era BTCC carrying RML spec parts including subframe and steering system.



RML displayed highlights from its four-decade history at August's Silverstone Festival

When Mallock 'retired' from the company he founded, he never slowed down. He still competes today in Historic Formula Junior in machinery built by his own father Arthur, whose influence was – and remains – key: “I was very fortunate to have Dad as my tutor in motorsport. His thing was always about looking at a problem from first principles and being as simple as possible. He loved the idea of a racing car with well-thought-through dynamics, particularly on the suspension side – he was one of the first people to really understand the importance of kinematics in suspension.”

Mallock's own reputation as a driver flourished until “I was getting enquiries about testing and developing cars and I set up my own business in 1979, and ▶



Mallock: engineer, and driver – here sharing Aston Martin Nimrod, 1982 Brands Hatch 1000Km

RACE-KEEPER

COMING SOON

RACE-KEEPER CONNECT

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- Fast GPS
- OBD-II Data
- CAN data
- Live Streaming over 4G & WiFi
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that was really a forerunner to RML. We got our own premises just over the road from my dad and brother.”

Two Formula Atlantic titles in 1979 and 1981 sandwiched a campaign in the 1980 Aurora British F1 Championship, before the glass ceiling in single-seaters sent him on a different path. Group C was starting in the world sportscar arena, and there was an Aston Martin effort for 1982. Mallock describes it as “a *Boy’s Own* project that was full of good intention and ambition”, but crucially it enabled his pre-RML business to establish its reputation. “It got quite a few people’s attention, and we really did

“It got people’s attention, and we really did punch above our weight”

punch above our weight. I still drive it sometimes. It’s like putting on an old pair of slippers – it’s a lovely car to drive.”

When McCaig came calling, wanting to create an Ecosse Group C2 car for his proteges Leslie and David Duffield, Mallock was receptive. RML was born: “I’d been doing all the work on the Nimrod. I’d created the new bodywork design for the 1983 cars – that’s when we first went into the wind tunnel at MIRA in Southampton. Amazingly, using my dad’s ethos of taking the simplest, most economical, most straightforward route, I was able to cut and shut the Nimrod bodywork and clothe what was a De Cadenet Group 6 car in that cutdown body. We took a heavy mould of the Nimrod and got a rotary jigsaw out, cut it up along the lines and stuck it all together again, and created what was a fabulously effective Group C2 car.”

Nimrod had ended its programme in the aftermath of tragedy at Le Mans in 1984, when tyre failure sent John Sheldon into the barrier and a marshal was killed by the debris. From 1985-88, Mallock moved over to the Ecosse project to share with Leslie and, later, Marc Duez, the versatile Belgian

1987 Fuji 1000Km: Mallock and Leslie shared Ecosse-Ford C286; Mike Wilds and Marc Duez drove sister car

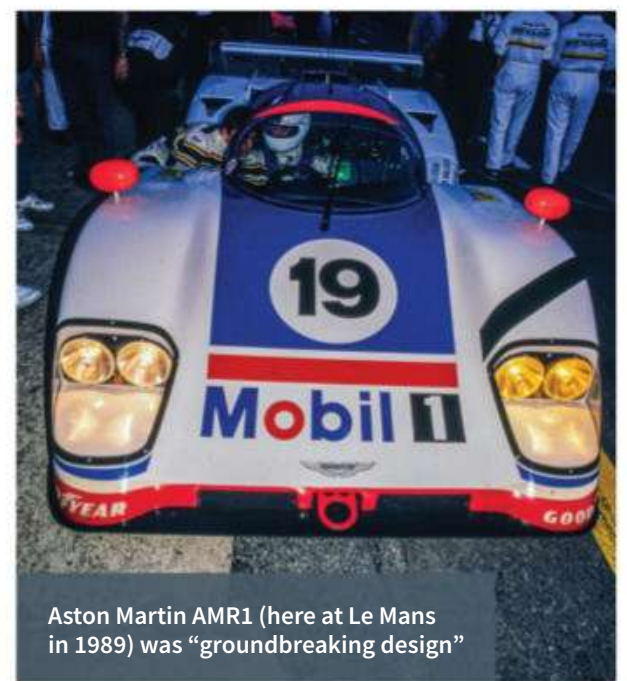


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brought in for 1986 when the Ford Cosworth engines were replaced by the Rover V64V unit from the Metro 6R4. Mallock himself was twice runner-up in the Group C2 standings – once with Leslie – and Ecurie Ecosse became teams’ world champion in 1986, but a move into the big league was beckoning. RML would produce a new Aston Martin factory racer – the AMR1 – for 1989.

“That was an opportunity to create a car from a clean sheet of paper, and it was a groundbreaking car in a lot of ways,” recalls Mallock. “I had very little to do with the detail design – I chose a chief designer, a guy called Max Bostrom, who worked closely with me on the Ecosse programme.

“Max’s main business was wheels actually, but he was a very creative and first-principles design engineer. That was the first Group C car to have a full carbon monocoque with an integral roll structure within the roof. Very sophisticated front aero with highly adjustable front downforce, and our own transmission with the final drive ahead of the axle centre line. It was a great shame that the programme got canned so early on as a



Aston Martin AMR1 (here at Le Mans in 1989) was “groundbreaking design”

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result of the Group C regulations changing when Bernie [Ecclestone] decided that Group C needed to have F1 engines.”

RML would move into touring cars to become a colossus of the BTCC in the 1990s and, a decade later, the WTCC. In between, its work on the Saleen S7R GT car had been a huge success on track, but a dispute with the American marque had brought the company to its knees. A stint in the ASCAR series at Rockingham – RML won the title with Nicolas Minassian in 2002 and Ben Collins in 2003 – was part of the survival process, “and it was interesting going into a different category and starting with basics, and trying to get our head around going oval racing on crossply tyres. It was a lifeline for us but an interesting time.”

The WTCC’s inception for 2005 brought in Chevrolet with RML, which had returned to the BTCC in 2004 for one year with SEAT. Since its BTCC programme with Vauxhall finished at the end of 1996, RML had kept a relationship with General ▶



RML bestrode British Touring Car Championship in the 1990s

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Motors through building rally cars for sister marque Opel, and now another GM brand was ready to make a splash. “The boss of Chevrolet Europe at the time, Nick Reilly, had been a supporter of ours since our BTCC Vauxhall days and I’d kept in touch with him – he really understood the value of a successful race programme,” says Mallock. “When WTCC was announced he realised that it would suit them very well. It also coincided with Chevrolet taking over Daewoo, and rebadging the Daewoo Lacetti as a Chevrolet!”

After a difficult first season, RML took the bold step of bringing its engine preparation in-house. The Lacetti used what “was basically the same engine, commonly referred to as the red-top Vauxhall” as the Cavalier Super Tourer,

“We do some incredible stuff – most of which the guys can’t talk about”

explains Mallock. “It was the right decision because it enabled us to get more power and performance out of it, and to be able to continually develop the engine. We were constantly finding brake horsepower here and there by pushing the boundaries, which as a customer to an engine supplier we wouldn’t have been able to do. That enabled us to win the championship in 2010 [with Yvan Muller in the Cruze, which replaced the Lacetti] with a normally aspirated engine, when the odds were against us really.”

Behind the scenes, Mallock also worked with FIA president Max Mosley – handily a Mallock Clubmans customer of the 1960s! – on an early concept of touring car racing’s current creed of performance equalisation: “That was important to us, especially with the Lacetti, which didn’t have good race car aerodynamics and also it was narrow track, and quite an old-fashioned engine. We did a lot of work on performance equalisation, and meeting

with Max to talk about it. I presented a document to the FIA Touring Car Commission about how we felt the cars could be evened up in an objective rather than subjective manner. That was an important part of the touring car journey.”

After RML protege Rob Huff won the 2012 WTCC crown, Chevrolet pulled out of the series in the wake of giving up on the European car market. The team carried on as a privateer in 2013, claiming another championship for the Cruze with Muller, but the landscape was changing. Mallock Jr, who had been a talent in his own right in sportscar and GT racing, had acted as development driver alongside McLaren’s Chris Goodwin for the McLaren-Mercedes SLR one-make series, run by RML. “When the McLaren and Mercedes partnership dissolved we were just kicking off development of a GT3 version,” he says. “We were going to have a full-on factory Nurburgring 24 Hours attempt, which would have been cool.”

Alongside Aston Martin and GM, the company had maintained its relationship with Nissan via numerous road-car and high-performance projects that continue to this day. In 2012 came the debut of the DeltaWing at the Le Mans 24 Hours.

“We were engaged by Nissan Europe to initially do an engineering simulation package to check the thing worked and didn’t topple over when it turned out the end of the pitlane,” recounts Mallock Jr. “By the end we were responsible for all the engineering, all the build, the race operations and so on, including designing a new engine for it – built by RML Power.”

From this came the hybrid-electric ZEOD RC of 2014, which, says Mallock Jr, was “very much the spiritual successor” to the DeltaWing: “There were some incorrect assumptions made before we took control of the project. It would have been massively overweight if it was at the spec it originally was. Battery technology at the time was very immature compared to what it is now, and the estimate was that it needed a 40kg battery; our estimate was that it needed 140kg. It actually ended up being 150. It would have been overweight for the tyres that Michelin had already developed for the DeltaWing, so there were two key things on the ZEOD RC: the efficiency of the battery and the e-motors, and the mass of the whole vehicle, which is why we ended up with magnesium steering racks that were the length of your finger and all this kind of incredible stuff.

“That was our first real battery project as well, which set us on the path to where we are now. We believe we’ve got the most



PHOTO4/MOTORSPORT IMAGES



Electric Czingher C21 set production record at this year’s Goodwood FoS

JEP/MOTORSPORT IMAGES



Nicola Larini's Chevrolet Lacetti kicks up the grass at 2005 Puebla, Mexico WTCC round



SAMCHICKPHOTO

RML CEO Michael Mallock was passed the reins by his dad

power dense battery in a homologated road vehicle now. That's going in an American hypercar – the Czinger C21. It ran at the Goodwood Festival of Speed this year and set the production record.”

Battery technology is now an RML speciality, with the Nurburgring Nordschleife record-breaking NIO EP9, in which Peter Dumbreck set a 6m45.9s in 2017, “a good example of the whole RML engineering capability”, asserts Mallock Jr. “It was 1MW of power at the wheels, it had full torque vectoring, active aero, active ride height control, a swappable battery system so you could change the batteries in eight minutes instead of waiting for it to charge and cool and whatnot. Massive downforce – 24,000Nm at 150mph, which is bonkers. Which meant it needed bespoke tyres and brakes. It was a real technological marvel. And the batteries themselves – very high efficiency.”

In RML's Power division, “we're supporting a couple of OEMs with their next generation battery systems and development for probably the two highest profile motor racing series that there are...” Mallock Jr then confirms that these are F1 and Le Mans Hypercar, and that “we do some incredible stuff – most of which



Nissan ZEOD RC set hybrid-electric powertrain and weight challenges

GILBERT/MOTORSPORT.COM

the guys can't talk about”. A nod towards the Aston F1 factory – we're talking in the Silverstone paddock – and an inquisitive eyebrow raise brings a denial that it's there, so draw your own conclusions.

What Mallock Jr can talk about is the RML Short Wheelbase supercar: “A way to wave the flag of what we can do, have a product that we can talk about, that the staff can be publically proud of.” Or the ‘Goldfinger’ Aston Martin DB5: “My

favourite bit was the bullet-resistant shield that we tested at the Bisley shooting range!”

No doubt, RML's Wellingborough facility will continue to thrive into its fifth decade amid its diversification. “We're well respected by our peers in the motorsport industry,” says Mallock Jr. “We have excellent graduate and apprenticeship programmes, where we've built some incredible talents, but a lot of the F1 teams around this area know that we do that very well. Quite often those people get poached, but it's amazing how often they return.”

What does his dad think of RML today? “It's been a realisation of my dream as a schoolboy to make a living out of this sport, and to be able to do it with so many good colleagues and friends, and people who have given me advice over the years, has been

great,” smiles Mallock Sr. “It's been about doing it properly and having a pride in doing it properly, and bringing a team of people along with me – the teamwork element has been so important. And now Michael's taken the business into areas I don't understand and he does.”

“I was a good driver and not really an engineer – I'm more commercially minded,” adds his son, “whereas Dad was a good driver and an incredible engineer.” ■

HOW TO BE AN ACE ENGINEER

Trevor Foster reflects on a remarkable career that has traversed every discipline

BY JAMES NEWBOLD

After more than 50 years, Trevor Foster remains engaged in the business of making racing cars go quickly through his Pegasus Classic Engineering concern, specialising in historic vehicle preparation. This latest venture only adds to the impression that there's little he hasn't encountered across two spells in Formula 1 with Jordan and stints with Shadow, Tyrrell and Lotus, while also tasting Le Mans and Formula Ford glory. Yet even after filling every conceivable role in racing organisations – from mechanic to team owner, race engineer, team manager and managing director – Foster retains an open mind.

“You have to come to work with a view that ‘I don't know everything, I'm still learning’ and I explain that to my guys,” he says. “You have to be willing to learn and not be too fixed on your ideas.”

This was a lesson Foster picked up early in his career, after an affiliation with rising star Roger Williamson was cut tragically short in 1973. He then joined Shadow and credits its chief mechanic Peter Kerr with the most useful pieces of advice “I've often referred to through my career”. The Kiwi drilled into Foster the importance of critically diagnosing problems and taught him that “the more detail you put into your car preparation, the better chance you have of success”.

Fairly obvious perhaps, but diligence was vital in the 1970s when mechanics had to be accomplished across multiple areas. “You did your gearbox, rebuilt your uprights, knew every inch of the car,”



ADAMPIGOTT

Foster now runs Pegasus Classic Engineering preparation company

reflects Foster. While teams in modern F1 are far bigger and roles tend to be more prescribed, the modest size of historic racing operations affords opportunities “to understand how to diagnose a problem with a car”, Foster notes, and there is greater individual responsibility too. As such, the discipline's appeal isn't limited to the draw of nostalgia. Foster believes it can be a valuable training ground: “If a historic car has a misfire, you have to do your own self-diagnosis. You can't just plug a laptop in and it says ‘error code 37, change the distributor pick-up.’”

Foster learned quickly during his tenure as a partner in Pegasus Motorsport that chasing sponsorship deals wasn't for him. “I took it too personally,” he says, pointing to an unsuccessful pitch at the Bostik adhesive company as the moment he felt most deflated. Despite the huge success he'd enjoyed during its maiden season in 1983, capped by Andrew Gilbert-Scott capturing the Formula Ford Festival, and winning races in British Formula 3 with Gerrit van Kouwen, it was no hardship for Foster to move away from team

ownership. It came as a relief to focus on engineering, initially at Swallow Racing before starting a journey with Eddie Jordan Racing in Formula 3000 that continued into F1. He famously ran Michael Schumacher on his debut in 1991.

Foster, feeling he couldn't do justice to dual team manager and engineering duties at Jordan, departed for Lotus but soon recognised its financial situation was not sustainable. He later returned to Jordan before a segue into sportscars as Zyteck's racing director, then became a key cog at United Autosports for its LMP2 graduation in 2017. He believes the level of detail it undertook with the unpopular Ligier JSP217 helped it to hit the ground running upon switching to the ORECA 07 that resulted in a Le Mans 24 Hours, World Endurance Championship and European Le Mans Series sweep in 2020.

Having achieved “everything I wanted to do”, Foster departed in 2021 but couldn't resist the pull of reviving the Pegasus name. These days, the main objective for himself and his loyal customers is enjoyment. Winning is merely a bonus. ■



Foster's Pegasus Motorsport team quickly found success, taking 1983 Festival win with Gilbert-Scott

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TOP TIPS FROM TREVOR FOSTER

- Even if you're not involved in looking at the whole package, that shouldn't stop you trying to understand the car and why something perhaps isn't working as it should. You don't learn as much by saying ‘buy me a new one of these’.
- Motorsport can involve a lot of smoke and mirrors, so you have to dissect them and work through problems logically.
- Always come away from a race thinking, ‘What could we have done better?’ It's never perfect!

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