

20-PAGE US GRAND PRIX PREVIEW

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POLE POSITION

Can Texas create long-term ties between F1 and the US?



DOES AMERICA NEED F1 OR DOES F1 NEED America? It's a debate that's been raging for the best part of 30 years, and one that's yet to get a satisfactory answer.

On the face of it, Austin stands a better chance of succeeding than many of its ill-fated predecessors. It's a cool, multi-cultural town – expect huge support for Sergio Perez this weekend – and it's a purpose-built facility designed to accommodate F1. Yet it's been scheduled against the NASCAR season finale, so US TV ratings will probably be poor. Surely any world championship worthy of the name should have a US presence, but Austin is going to need time to establish itself in probably the most saturated sporting marketplace there is.

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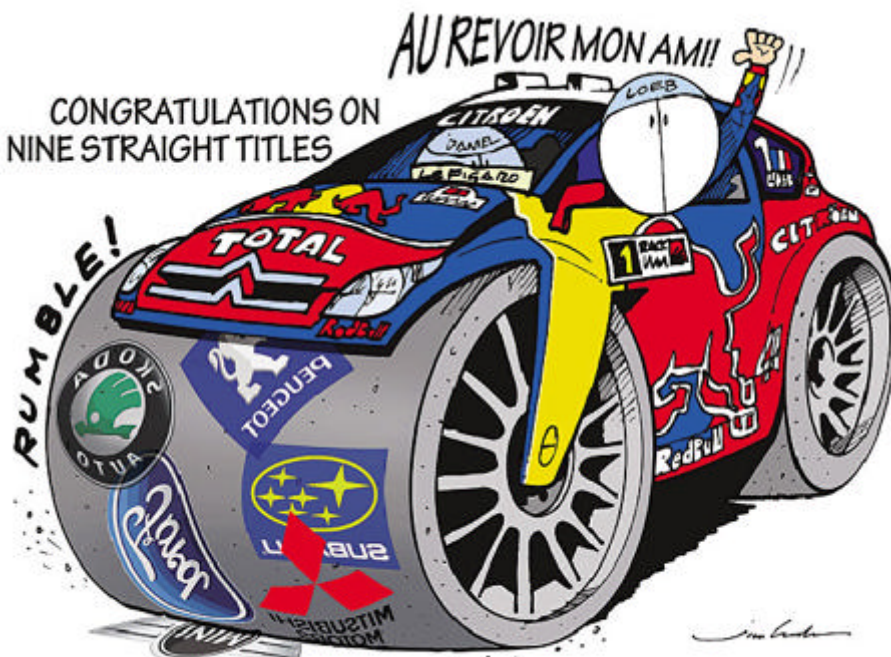
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NASCAR SPRINT CUP

Crash, bang... and lots of wallops

Clint Bowyer's Toyota limps away from his clash with Jeff Gordon at Phoenix, triggered by the Chevrolet driver in retaliation for an earlier incident. Their spat spilled off the track, with Bowyer's crew duking it out with Gordon's team, and Bowyer then trying to confront his adversary in the paddock. NASCAR report, p54.

Pic: LAT South



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Red Bull wary of Brazil showdown

Sebastian Vettel won't try to cruise to a third world title. By EDD STRAW



Sebastian Vettel and Red Bull will go all-out to seal the drivers' championship in this weekend's United States Grand Prix to avoid the potential lottery of a title decider at Interlagos.

Red Bull has won the last three Brazilian Grands Prix, twice with Mark Webber and once with Sebastian Vettel, but the team is determined to seal this year's drivers' and constructors' crowns before heading to Brazil. A finale at a more forgiving modern circuit would create less concern, but the Sao Paulo track has a history of wet races and fewer asphalt run-off areas than most tracks, increasing the chances of a race-ending incident.

Vettel has remained consistent in his approach during the world championship run-in. Throughout, he has emphasised the potential for something to go wrong and the need not to slip into a conservative mindset since he took the world championship lead in Korea. His ability to seal the crown in Austin is dependent on where Alonso finishes, but if Vettel wins he will go to Interlagos, at worst, needing a top six finish to guarantee the title.

"India was a great race but a couple of laps from the end we had some sparks [from the tea tray dragging on the ground]," said Vettel on his fear of a retirement. "It was not a problem, but it doesn't take much imagination... if something like this comes up, it shows how vulnerable you are no matter what position you are in. You might end the race not scoring the points that you were looking for and then the whole picture looks different again."

While Vettel is unlikely to clinch the title in America unless Alonso hits trouble (see sidebar), the Circuit of the Americas looks well-suited to the Red Bull. The fast sweeps of the first half of the lap resemble Suzuka, where the RB8 was unbeatable, but the twisty final sector could bring McLaren into play. If Vettel does win, Alonso will face a tough challenge to finish second, unless Ferrari is able to make a major step forwards with the further upgrades it has promised for

Austin and Brazil. Given that the parts introduced in Abu Dhabi were only a qualified success, that appears unlikely.

Ferrari president Luca di Montezemolo piled more pressure on a technical department that is already at full stretch after Abu Dhabi. He demanded a major turnaround in Texas to improve the car so that it can fight for its first win since Alonso's German Grand Prix triumph in July.

"It's clear that we have to do more for the coming races," said di Montezemolo. "That is what I requested of [Stefano] Domenicali and his team. We have 10 crucial days ahead, during which we must do everything to arrive in Texas with a car that can fight for the victory."

This demand appears unrealistic. Ferrari is expected to try out further front and rear wing tweaks in Austin, although there is nothing in the pipeline that can have a transformative effect on the car's performance.

This means that, realistically, the title is Vettel and Red Bull's to lose. But in Brazil, the potential for doing that is greater than at most circuits.



Two-way fight for the title



Vettel wins title this weekend if

- He wins and Alonso is outside the top four
- He finishes second and Alonso is outside the top eight
- He finishes third and Alonso doesn't score

AUTOSPORT SAYS...

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If Fernando Alonso needs reminding of what can happen when the Brazilian Grand Prix decides a world championship, he need only ask team-mate Felipe Massa, who lost the 2008 crown when Lewis Hamilton passed Timo Glock for fifth place with barely 20 seconds of the season remaining.

Ever since the Red Bull juggernaut built up a head of steam at the start of the end-of-season flyaways, there's a feeling that Alonso has been counting on hanging in there until a race that has thrown up more than its share of wild cards over the years. Even with a car disadvantage, in a one-off event, anything can happen.

The odds are that Sebastian Vettel won't clinch the drivers' championship in Austin this weekend. You can be pretty sure that, barring some misfortune or a repeat of his rare mistake at the start at Suzuka, Alonso will be at the sharp end come the race. So although Vettel's 10-point lead is likely to be extended on Sunday, the question is by how much?

Even if Vettel's advantage is 24

points, Alonso will be very much in the game in Brazil, especially if the expected rain hits at Interlagos. After all, two of Alonso's victories this year have been rain-assisted. But such a turnaround likely relies on Red Bull or Vettel throwing it away.

That's what this championship has now boiled down to. All Alonso can do is stay close to Vettel and hope that something goes wrong. Unless, of course, he can get close enough to his rival to force a mistake.



Brazil is likely to play a role

World championships clinched in America

The drivers' championship has been sealed in a race in America six times. Sebastian Vettel hopes to be the first driver in three decades to join this club.

1959

Jack Brabham pushing his Cooper across the line to finish fourth at Sebring in 1959 is an iconic image. But it's often forgotten that he would have won the championship even if he hadn't done so.



racers remaining in the season, nobody was close enough to touch him.

1981

Brabham's Nelson Piquet and Williams's Carlos Reutemann were separated by just a point heading into Las Vegas. But Reutemann was subdued and fifth place was enough to earn Piquet his first world title.



1970

Jochen Rindt, who had lost his life at Monza a month earlier, became F1's only posthumous world champion when Jacky Ickx managed only fourth place in the final round at Watkins Glen.



1982

Keke Rosberg's fifth was enough to clinch the title in this most dramatic of seasons. Tyrrell driver Michele Alboreto beat John Watson into second place, denying the McLaren man the crown.

1974

Three drivers started the season finale at Watkins Glen with a shot at the title. Emerson Fittipaldi's fourth place put the crown beyond Clay Regazzoni and Jody Scheckter.

1977

Niki Lauda wrapped up his second world championship for Ferrari with fourth place at Watkins Glen. With two



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F1 must 'work harder than ever' to succeed in USA

Simply staging a race is not enough to win over the American market, says McLaren chief



McLaren team principal Martin Whitmarsh is leading calls for Formula 1 to work harder to promote itself in the United States if the sport's return to America is to be a success.

This weekend's United States Grand Prix at Austin's Circuit of the Americas is the first world championship race to be staged in the country since 2007. But despite universal approval in the F1 paddock about the return to the USA, simply staging a race there is not enough.

"We have to remember that America doesn't need F1," Whitmarsh

told AUTOSPORT. "We need America more than it needs us, so we have got to be conscious that we have to work harder, perhaps harder than we have ever worked.

"It's the land of the automobile and we are the pinnacle of motorsport. We should be able to make a fantastic success of America. But even if the first race appears successful, we really have to work to develop the fanbase. We have to treat it as a new and extremely important market."

Unlike many of its rival sports, F1 has no mechanism for centralised promotion. Generally, the bulk of the

promotion is done by the individual teams, event promoters or team partners trying to 'activate' their sponsorship deals.

Potentially, once the next Concorde Agreement has been signed, the Formula 1 Teams' Association, which is currently headed by Whitmarsh, could play a leading role in co-ordinating such promotion. Although there will be a FOTA fans' forum in the build-up to the race, this is an event very much targeted at existing hardcore fans and will make little difference to the wider profile of F1.

Attempts were made to stage a major demonstration event in New York this year. Although disappointed it did not come off, Whitmarsh admits that it could be resurrected in the future. Logically, it would be used to promote the delayed New Jersey Grand Prix, which could make its debut on the calendar in 2014. But it would also get extensive media coverage throughout the USA.

"We have got an interest in it and we do what we can," said Whitmarsh of FOTA's role. "Everyone has to. Collectively, we have to put on a good show, try to explain our sport and



project the passion for it. It won't happen overnight.

"We had a look at trying to put on a street demo in Times Square, New York, with pitstops and other sorts of things, but politics got in the way. The Texas promoter pulled out, but all of the teams were still willing to go there after the Canadian Grand Prix. It was a missed opportunity but we can always try to set it up again in the future."

Peter Windsor, ex-sporting director of the stillborn USF1 team, has extensive experience of the American market. He believes that F1 can be a success, but that the promotion needs to be done throughout the year. He suggested that the race winner should go on a post-race promotional tour in a





F1 could hit New York, like NASCAR



Indy 2000: F1's biggest crowd



'05 farce hurt Indy crowd



IndyCar demo in Las Vegas

60 SECONDS WITH

CHRISTIAN HORNER

Red Bull team boss.



Given that simply being there isn't enough, what does F1 need to do to become genuinely successful in America?

It needs to engage the American public if it's to appeal to the fans out there. And it's got to promote itself well and put on a great show. It's not easy. F1 is perceived as a European sport from an American perspective. Red Bull tried to change that with its driver initiative, which helped Scott Speed into F1 [with Scuderia Toro Rosso in 2006-07]. What that demonstrated was that having an American driver in F1 wasn't enough; it needed to be a driver that was running at the front fighting for victories in order to get the general public really interested. It would be great to see an American driver in the future. That's a crucial ingredient for F1 to really take off in the States. Hopefully, in the coming years, there will be some exciting talents coming out of the US.

But is an American driver enough as there are plenty of home drivers to support in NASCAR? F1 must still engage with the fans. It would be fantastic if we could get a race on the east and the west coast in the US. If we had a street race, that would be great – taking F1 to the cities has proved to be very popular in places like Singapore. Hopefully when the New Jersey race starts we will take a step forward.

When talking about F1 promoting itself, who exactly are we talking about. The teams? The FIA? The commercial rights holder?

It needs everybody to work together. All of the teams recognise that the US is an extremely important market. Red Bull has put an awful lot into promoting F1 in the US, whether it be driving around the streets of New Jersey, driving a car in Austin, putting Tom Cruise in an F1 car. And Sebastian Vettel has appeared on the Jay Leno show. We have pushed F1 hard in the US and the response has been extremely positive. There's certainly more that could be done collectively.

F1 hasn't traditionally been strong when it comes to doing that. Do you see a genuine chance of that happening?

History tells us no, but it's still something that we should strive to do. Never say never.



Christian Horner was talking to AUTOSPORT F1 editor Edd Straw



Tom Cruise tried Red Bull

VIEW FROM AMERICA

The 'sold out' stamps all over the ticketing section of the Circuit of the Americas website paint an encouraging picture ahead of this weekend's rebirth of the US Grand Prix. But filling the grandstands is one thing; putting down roots is another. And on that front, Formula 1 has some work ahead.

Promotion of the race in Austin has been vigorous. For the rest of the country, engrossed in a presidential election, the fortunes of their NFL fantasy teams and, for those of a motorsport inclination, the climax of the NASCAR title fight, F1 hasn't registered.

NASCAR gains some of its public recognition by stealth. Its TV deal with sports juggernaut ESPN means that it's impossible to watch a gridiron, basketball or baseball game without seeing an ad for the upcoming race.

NASCAR rules in USA



It also translates into coverage on news updates. The Speed Channel does a decent job with F1, but if the only people seeing it are already fans, then the scope for developing that fan base is obviously limited.

That should change next year when F1 moves from Speed to the NBC Sports Network which is one of IndyCar's broadcasters, and which will open up opportunities for broader exposure. The job, as IndyCar can tell you, will be convincing viewers to take the bait and tune in.

● Mark Glendenning

similar way to that undertaken by the winner of the Indianapolis 500.

"F1 does seem to have this attitude that, if it goes there, that's enough and it's up to the country to make the most of it," said Windsor. "Jay Leno loves motor racing, but how many F1 drivers have we had on his show other than Sebastian Vettel? How many phone calls has he had offering drivers? Probably none. And David Letterman loves it as well.

"It's not only about being there for four days, it's about promoting it for the 11 months when F1 is not there."

Whitmarsh has said that he expects the first race to be a success, but that the hard work begins in year two. But given F1's long-term failure to promote itself in a coherent way, there are very real doubts over whether the sport will have taken a step forward in America 12 months down the line.



US GRAND PRIX
SPECIAL P32

Kovalainen on brink of pointless record

One-time grand prix winner likely to end 2012 with a statistic to forget



GHINZANI: AN UNENVIABLE RECORD

Italian Piercarlo Ghinza won the European Formula 3 championship in 1977 and the Italian title two years later, but never had the machinery worthy of his ability in F1.

He scored his only points with fifth place in the attritional 1984 Dallas Grand Prix driving for Osella. He left the Italian team for Toleman in mid-1985, but returned for the 1986

season. In 1987 and 1988 he drove for Ligier and then Zakspeed before seeing out his F1 career with a third stint at Osella in 1989, failing to pre-qualify 13 times.

Ghinza was only a classified finisher 15 times during his 59-race pointless run. During that stretch, his best results were seventh in Italy in '84 and Belgium in '87.



Ghinza's only F1 points: Dallas '84

Heikki Kovalainen is set to claim an unwanted record for the number of Formula 1 race starts between points finishes.

If the Caterham driver does not finish in the top 10 in this weekend's United States Grand Prix or in Brazil a week later, he will break Piercarlo Ghinzani's 59-race pointless record. Ghinzani's record stretched from the 1984 British to the 1989 Australian GP, a run interspersed with 22 failures to qualify that do not count towards the total.

Kovalainen's streak began with the 2009 Japanese GP, when he was still a McLaren driver. The Abu Dhabi GP was his 58th start without a point since finishing seventh in Singapore three years ago.

But despite the lack of results, Kovalainen, whose Caterham/Lotus machinery has not been good enough to finish any higher than 12th during the past three seasons, insists that it isn't demoralising.

"Of course, I'd much rather be setting a record for most consecutive points-scoring positions rather than non-scoring positions,"

Kovalainen told AUTOSPORT. "But it is what it is."



Best Caterham/Lotus finish is 12th

I'm still giving 100 per cent effort regardless and have made the most of what I have.

"You want to achieve better results, but something keeps me going [without them]. A point would be like a victory. But I still feel good when I know that I've given 100 per cent every lap and got the car to where it needs to be. That's the objective. But one day, if the car can be competitive, it would be an easy transition for me. The performance of the car would just carry me up the grid."

Kovalainen's F1 future is uncertain (see right). Since joining Caterham when it competed as Lotus in 2010, his stock has risen in the paddock after hitting rock bottom at the end of two disappointing years with McLaren. He has proved himself to be good enough to merit a place on the grid, although the financial pressures on teams could lead to him being replaced by a driver with a budget. Vitaly Petrov is still in contention to remain at Caterham provided he can come up with the necessary funding, with both GP2 racer Giedo van der Garde and Marussia racer Charles Pic also potential signings.

"It's not in my hands," said

Kovalainen. "I'm not in favour of raising a budget and I've told IMG [his management] that I don't want to do that. If I don't get a seat here and get paid, so be it. That's the way it is."

"If we get a big sponsor or a big backer [that's different] but to go out there and try to raise a few million pounds to get a seat doesn't achieve anything. There needs to be a plan and a structure. What can I do? I just have to keep giving the maximum and see what I get."

Kovalainen believes that he still has a lot more to offer in F1. While he has been competing in the bottom half of the grid, he is driving better than during his days at McLaren.

"My qualifying performances have got better," said Kovalainen. "I learned something from Jarno [Trulli, team-mate in 2010-2011] and was able to pick the good things from what he did to become a good qualifier. The race performances have been a bit better. At McLaren, they were not good enough. But I've always been ahead of the other new teams and have been the one who sometimes gets into Q2 and hangs on with the guys ahead of me. These are the things that hint that things have gone better here."

NO TEST ROLE FOR KOVALAINEN

If Heikki Kovalainen is unable to land a race seat for 2013, he has no intention of taking a third-driver role.

The Finn's Caterham future is uncertain and whether or not he stays on could hinge on the team reclaiming 10th place in the constructors' championship from Marussia. To do that, Kovalainen or team-mate Vitaly Petrov need a 12th-place finish.

"A third-driver role doesn't interest me," Kovalainen told AUTOSPORT. "If I don't get a race drive, I'll have to do something else. I have some ideas, but I haven't thought about it thoroughly yet."

The 31-year-old is sceptical about switching to most other forms of motorsport, although did suggest that he might be open to a switch to rallying if his F1 career ends.

"There are not many things in the world of motorsport that interest me apart from F1," he said. "Sportscars wouldn't interest me. DTM? No. America? No. Rallying is the only thing that interests me but we've seen how difficult it is. I haven't really thought about it."

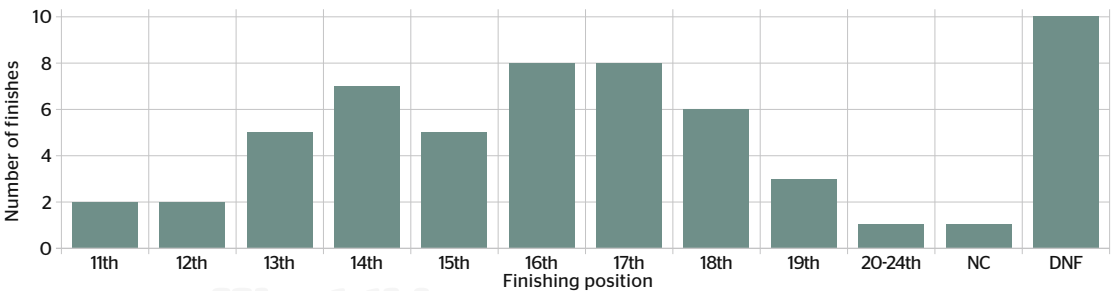
"It could be that I have to do something else totally different. If that's how it's going to be, it would be a shame. But sometimes that's how life is."



Rally future is an option

KOVALAINEN'S POINTLESS RESULTS

Here's how Kovalainen's results stack up from the 2009 Japanese Grand Prix to the 2012 Abu Dhabi GP. The 2010 Spanish GP, which he did not start after suffering a pre-race gearbox failure, is not included in the total of starts without points.



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THIS WEEK IN F1

Magnussen tops young-driver test

Kevin Magnussen set the pace in last week's three-day young-driver test in Abu Dhabi. The 20-year-old, a racewinner in Formula Renault 3.5 this year, completed a total of 91 laps for McLaren on his F1 test debut. He shared track time with McLaren's regular testers Gary

Paffett and Oliver Turvey. Robin Frijns also made his F1 test debut, driving for Sauber on the opening day and later for Red Bull as a prize for winning the Formula Renault 3.5 crown. The Dutchman was unable to show his ultimate potential in the Red Bull

because of the way the test programme was set up for the day. Double Macau F3 Grand Prix winner and DTM ace Edoardo Mortara also made his first appearance, driving for Lotus after impressing with his pace in the simulator.



Magnussen topped times

"I think he has on occasions [regretted his decision]. I hope he thinks today that he's made an awful mistake and I hope he thinks that next year"



McLaren team principal Martin Whitmarsh on Lewis Hamilton's decision to move to Mercedes

Silverstone ticket refunds cost almost £1 million

Silverstone paid out close to £1 million in refunds to ticket holders who did not attend the Saturday of the British Grand Prix this year. Just over 10,000 ticket holders received refunds after fans were told to stay away on Saturday to preserve the grass car parks and ensure that race day went well.

Abiteboul becomes Caterham team boss

Frenchman Cyril Abiteboul has succeeded Tony Fernandes as team principal of the Caterham F1 team. The former Renault Sport F1 deputy managing director joined the team in September as CEO.

TEST TIMES, YAS MARINA, NOVEMBER 6-8			
1	Kevin Magnussen	McLaren	1m42.651s
2	Davide Valsecchi	Lotus	1m42.677s
3	Antonio Felix da Costa	Red Bull	1m42.679s
4	Esteban Gutierrez	Sauber	1m43.093s
5	Oliver Turvey	McLaren	1m43.176s
6	Robin Frijns	Red Bull	1m43.233s
7	Gary Paffett	McLaren	1m43.407s
8	Edoardo Mortara	Lotus	1m43.418s
9	Robin Frijns	Sauber	1m43.775s
10	Nicolas Prost	Lotus	1m44.194s
11	Johnny Cecotto Jr	Toro Rosso	1m44.569s
12	Luiz Razia	Toro Rosso	1m44.691s
13	Giedo Van der Garde	Caterham	1m45.106s
14	Alexander Rossi	Caterham	1m46.485s

REMEMBER WHEN...

A Magnussen raced a McLaren Magnussen Jr was a three-year-old when his father Jan raced a McLaren to 10th place in the 1995 Pacific Grand Prix.



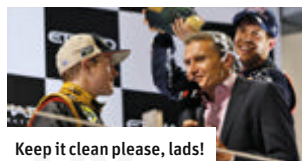
OCTOBER 22 1995

Juncadella got Ferrari run



Juncadella tests Ferrari

European F3 top gun Daniel Juncadella tested a 2009 Ferrari F60 at Vallelunga last week. The 20-year-old completed 48 laps, setting a best time of 1m18.650s. Riccardo Agostini and Eddie Cheever Jr, the son of the ex-F1 racer, also drove as their prize for finishing first and second respectively in Italian F3.



Keep it clean please, lads!

Drivers warned over swearing

The FIA has written to F1 teams to warn them about their drivers' use of bad language during media events. This follows both Kimi Raikkonen

and Sebastian Vettel swearing during the post-race interviews on the Abu Dhabi Grand Prix podium, which were broadcast live on TV.



UNITED STATES GP PREVIEW

FACTS, STATS, TRACK GUIDE, TV LISTINGS AND MORE



New US track is ready to go

Back in the States at new Texas track

Much has been promised, and much is expected. What kind of race can we look forward to this weekend?

Much is expected of the new Circuit of the Americas, which will become the 10th different venue to stage a world championship race in the United States. There has been plenty of positive press for the circuit in the build-up to the race, so it has a lot to live up to.

Overtaking should be possible, with a DRS zone on the long back straight that leads to the second-gear Turn 12 left-hander likely offering the best chance. With a slow hairpin leading onto the straight, it's very similar to the overtaking-friendly sections common to all new tracks.

But the parts of the Circuit of the

Americas that are likely to stick in the mind are earlier in the lap. Turn 1, a blind-entry left-hander at the end of a steep climb precedes the fast, sweeping Becketts-esque section from Turn 3-9. Gradually, the drivers will drop down the gears through this section, but as far as a challenge goes this will become the trademark of the new circuit.

It remains to be seen how popular 'COTA' is. There are question marks over the twisty final sector, for example. Only once the drivers have some serious mileage under their belts will we discover whether this is a great, or merely a good, circuit.

➔ **P20**

TRACK GUIDE AND GARY ANDERSON'S AUTOSPORT SUPERGRID



Hairpin is passing spot



Some sections flow better than others

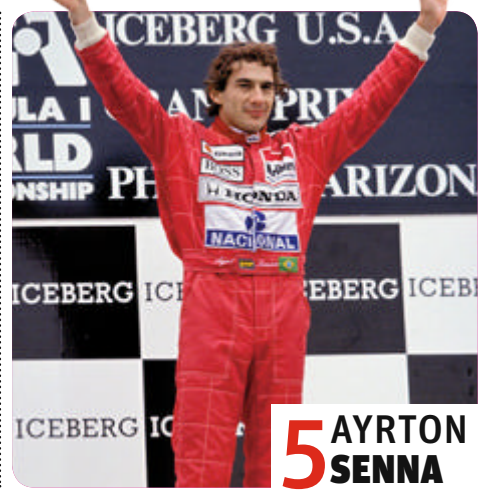


**American drivers
who have won world
championship GPs**

5



5 MICHAEL SCHUMACHER



5 AYRTON SENNA


Winning drivers IN USA

Most Races: 20 (Watkins Glen)

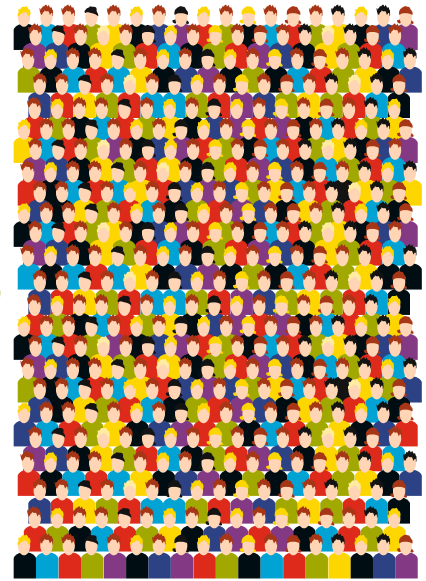
00

**NUMBER OF POINTS-PAYING
RACES HELD IN THE USA**

1984



**Last time a
grand prix was
staged in Texas**



11

**NUMBER OF
TIMES THE
INDIANAPOLIS
500 WAS A
WORLD
CHAMPIONSHIP
ROUND**

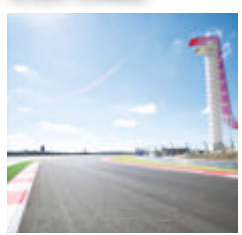


225,000

**Attendance for the
2000 United States
Grand Prix at Indy, a
record for Formula 1**

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1845-2100 **Free Practice 2 LIVE**
(Sky Sports F1)
- **SATURDAY NOVEMBER 17**
1445-1610 **Free Practice 3 LIVE**
(Sky Sports F1)
1700-1945 **Qualifying LIVE**
(Sky Sports F1)
- 1755-1905 **Qualifying LIVE**
(BBC Radio 5 Live SX)
2100-2215 **Qualifying
Highlights** (BBC2)
- **SUNDAY NOVEMBER 18**
1730-2215 **Race LIVE**
(Sky Sports F1)
1855-2045 **Race LIVE**
(BBC Radio 5 Live)
2225-0025 **Race Highlights** (BBC1)



First track action is on Friday

**GET THE LATEST FROM THE F1 PADDOCK
AS IT HAPPENS WITH**

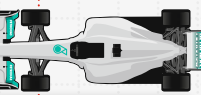


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GARY ANDERSON'S SUPERGRID

AUTOSPORT technical correspondent Gary Anderson is compiling an index, created by taking each driver's percentage deficit to the outright pace over the season, using their best lap from each grand prix weekend. This graphic shows each driver's average after 18 races compared with the theoretical absolute pace, expressed as 100.

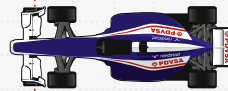
100%



Rosberg 100.931



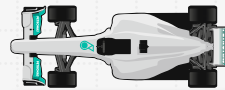
d'Ambrosio 101.664



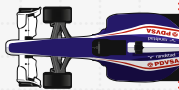
Maldonado 100.971



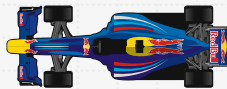
Ricciardo 101.763



Schumacher 101.092



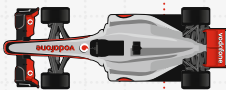
Senna 101.779



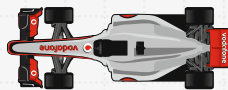
Vettel 100.512



Perez 101.207

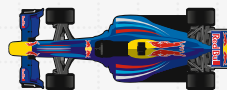


Hamilton 100.296

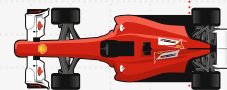


Button 100.626

101%



Webber 100.688

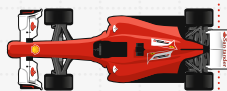


Massa 101.277

Lewis Hamilton has eased away from the chasing pack at the front of the field

Felipe Massa continues to make up ground, closing on Sergio Perez as the Mexican falls away from the leaders

10



Alonso 100.732



Hulkenberg 101.307



Grosjean 100.752



di Resta 101.320



Raikkonen 100.864



Kobayashi 101.376



FLASHBACK

HAMILTON DOUBLES UP IN NORTH AMERICA

Lewis Hamilton followed up his maiden grand prix victory in Canada with a win at Indianapolis a week later. Hamilton sustained race-long pressure from teammate Fernando Alonso, who had swerved towards the McLaren pitwall in a show of frustration a lap after the pair went wheel-to-wheel into the first corner. Further back, Sebastian Vettel took a point on his debut.

2007 UNITED STATES GP RESULTS

POS	DRIVER
1	LEWIS HAMILTON (McLaren)
2	FERNANDO ALONSO (McLaren)
3	FELIPE MASSA (Ferrari)

TYRE ALLOCATION

TYRES USED THIS WEEKEND

SUPER-SOFT



SOFT



MEDIUM



HARD





AND THE REST...

All four of the tail-enders made up ground in relation to the front of the field over the Abu Dhabi Grand Prix weekend, with Charles Pic making the most progress.

Glock 104.914

Pic 105.160

De la Rosa 105.781

Karthikeyan 106.283

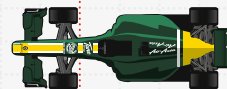


Vergne 102.269

Jean-Eric Vergne has lost ground to the tail of the midfield scrap



Petrov 103.792



Kovalainen 103.412

2%

103%

104%

TRACK GUIDE

CIRCUIT OF THE AMERICAS	
NUMBER OF LAPS	56
CIRCUIT LENGTH	3.427 MILES
LAP RECORD	N/A
UK START TIME	7PM



IN-DEPTH GUIDE P38



Floats like/Stings like.

The new Mercedes-Benz SL is the perfect balance of agility and power. Its aluminium bodyshell trims 125kg off the weight, while the muscular new 4.7 litre V8 engine packs a 700Nm punch. The lithe SL-Class. Beauty with a sting in its tail.

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Official government fuel consumption figures in mpg (litres per 100 km) for the new SL-Class range: Urban: 16.6(17.0)-28.5(9.9). Extra urban: 33.6(8.4)-46.3(6.1). Combined: 24.4(11.6)-37.7(7.5). CO₂ Emissions: 270-169g/km. Model featured is a Mercedes-Benz SL 500 at £90,235.00 on-the-road including optional AMG Sports package at £5,535.00 and Cerrusite Grey metallic paint (matt finish) at £1,255.00 (price includes VAT, delivery, 12 months' Road Fund Licence, number plates, new vehicle registration fee and fuel). Prices correct at time of going to print.



STRAIGHT TALK DAVID COULTHARD

13-time GP winner and 2001 world title runner-up

The first US Grand Prix for five years takes place at a purpose-built venue close to a cosmopolitan Texan city. There's every reason, then, to feel this could be the making of F1 in America

So off we head to Austin this weekend for the first United States Grand Prix since 2007, and I'm pretty interested to see how the whole event goes.

The Circuit of the Americas, to give the track its proper name, is an excellent venue, and I know because not only have I driven it on Red Bull's simulator recently, but I also drove one of the team's Formula 1 cars around the layout itself a couple of years ago – albeit before the track surface had been laid, so making it more like a rally stage than a grand prix venue.

It's a track that I feel most of the drivers will like, especially in light of having been introduced to some pretty average new circuits over the past decade. I'd even go so far as to put it on a par with Istanbul, which was previously, in my opinion, Hermann Tilke's standout creation.

The opening section is the real attraction, from Turn 1 with its steep

uphill braking zone that looks like something from the old Osterreichting, and then dropping away into a fast, downhill succession of sweeps that look like they've been heavily-influenced by the Maggotts/Becketts section at Silverstone and will really give drivers that 'yee-haw' moment on a flat-out qualifying lap.

The final section lets it down a bit, in the same way that the last few corners do at Yas Marina, but you can't have everything.

AUSTIN THE PLACE

I sincerely hope – and believe – that this is Formula 1's best chance of making itself work in the USA in modern times.

Whereas Indianapolis was possibly the right place, the track was dull and unimaginative. Austin, as I've previously said, is anything but.

Like Indy, the track is only about 20 minutes from the city, and the city itself is vibrant, is full of students and

has a huge music scene. I think F1 will generally have a nice time there, and that means that even the most cynical guys from the paddock will probably end up saying nice things about it.

Plus it only takes about 90 minutes to fly there from Los Angeles and has a lot of catchment in terms of Mexico and South America; lots of Venezuelans have bought tickets, I've heard, and will be well up for cheering on their hero Pastor Maldonado.

NO SWEARING PLEASE, WE'RE BRITISH

Most of you will have, by now, seen the podium interviews I conducted post-race in Abu Dhabi and heard the answers given by Kimi and Sebastian.

Kimi's four-lettered utterance wasn't unexpected, but Seb's was a bit of a surprise. Also, I had the director in my ear who was talking to someone else in the gallery and saying, 'He didn't just say that, did he?' It was a little bit awkward so I just made my excuse for them and moved on.

Since then the drivers as a whole have been told to watch their mouths, and although some people might say that's Big Brother going a bit, I think everyone's just got to remember that the moment was being beamed into hundreds of millions of living rooms worldwide and that you just can't offend the majority of viewers – including young kids – to satisfy the amusement of a few.

It's a bit like when I flicked Michael Schumacher the bird at Magny-Cours in 2000. It's what my emotions – which were running high at the time – told me to do, and despite me apologising in the press conference afterwards, it didn't alter the fact that I'd made the gesture in the first place.☺

PIC: PENNINGTON/GETTY



DC tried Austin layout before it was finished

“I hope this is F1's best chance of making it work in the USA”

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MARK HUGHES

GRAND PRIX EDITOR

The drivers' championship is ready for Vettel's taking this weekend. But Alonso's superior strategy could help ensure it'll be snatched in the South, and not the North, of America

READ MARK HUGHES' FRIDAY GP FORM GUIDE ON
AUTOSPORT+

Now that it's boiled down to a duel, it would be sort of appropriate if gunslingers Vettel and Alonso settled their business in Texas this weekend, and didn't take their quarrel south of the border the following week. Either driver would be a worthy champion, but the right team is already on the verge of the constructors' title.

Of course, only Vettel could seal the drivers' championship this weekend – and even then he'd need to beat Alonso by many places. If Seb wins the race, Fernando must finish fifth or lower for Vettel to take it. If Vettel is second, Alonso needs to finish ninth or lower. If Seb can only get third then Alonso must non-score. Otherwise, it all moves on to the Interlagos finale.

Vettel has driven some brilliant

races this year – Spa from 10th to second and his repeated passing moves into the final chicane come to mind – but essentially he's just gone with the car. When it suddenly switched on, from Suzuka onwards, he instantly became the winning machine of 2011 once more. Prior to that, there was no strategy for him to follow. All he could do was max the car, which might have been fourth, could've been third, was once – in Bahrain – first. A robbed dominant victory in Valencia was a real kick in the stomach; especially galling because in the races that followed the Red Bull was nowhere near such form.

But Alonso has tailored his approach according to circumstance. A take-no-prisoners first lap and restart from 11th on the grid in Valencia, and the heady victory that unfolded, was a sharp contrast to the yin and yang of alternate attack and protection of his position in Hockenheim. The odd one was the start in Japan, where – with a handy points lead and a car that had by now been overhauled by the Red Bull – he opted for a Valencia-like approach at the start. Within seconds the whole dynamic of the championship switched heavily in Vettel's favour, Alonso's 29-point lead reduced to four with five races still to go for that Red Bull to stretch its legs. Did the Red Bull's superiority around Suzuka make Alonso believe that a 29-point margin was going to be nowhere near enough, with six races still to go? Was he already thinking that he needed to gamble, that he couldn't afford to play safe? It's certainly the approach he's been forced to take since – when the only thing he can do is wring the neck of a slower car

and ensure that every move he makes is the right one, that no sniff of opportunity is passed up. And he's been quite brilliant at it.

But although he lost a likely second place and the 18 points that go with it in Japan, that's not where the heaviest losses were incurred. Strategic conservatism marked Ferrari's mid-season when the car was consistently highly competitive. It lost Alonso the win to Williams and Maldonado in Barcelona, a possible victory in Monaco rather than third, a likely second in Montreal rather than fifth and a possible victory at Silverstone rather than second. That's 42 points lost right there.

If Alonso can pull a podium from Austin – not a difficult scenario to imagine – then it's very much game on for Brazil. Even if the Red Bull retains its advantage there, trying to predict Interlagos and its tempestuous climate is folly. If Alonso could somehow steal the drivers' title, there is no one who could decry it as anything other than a magnificent achievement, regardless of Seb's brilliance. But with the constructors' title all but in the bag for Red Bull, that is the right outcome – for it has produced a faster car and been strategically stronger.

Looking at the shape of Alonso's season, the car was uncompetitive in the dry for the first four races, but one of the few that got good tyre temperatures in the wet – this allowing him to steal that Malaysia win. The Sepang storm was essentially the platform his title campaign has been built around, ensuring he wasn't already a long way behind when the car came good for the European season. ☼



Vettel must trounce Alonso to take the title in Austin

“If Alonso can take a podium in the US, it's game on for Brazil”



Gordon (24) wrecked Bowyer's Toyota

NASCAR

Retaliation moves 'must stop'

NASCAR ace Keselowski says Gordon/Bowyer incident is damaging to the sport. By MARK GLENDENNING

New Sprint Cup points leader Brad Keselowski has launched an extraordinary attack on driving standards in NASCAR following last Sunday's retaliatory crash between Jeff Gordon and Clint Bowyer at Phoenix.

Gordon, angry at having been tapped into the wall by Bowyer with seven laps to go, waited for the Michael Waltrip Racing driver to come back around on the next lap and slid down the track into Bowyer's car. Both were wrecked, as well as the Joe Gibbs Racing car of Joey Logano. The encounter then spilled over into the pits, where a

brawl erupted after Bowyer's crew charged at Gordon, and later outside a Hendrick Motorsports truck, to which Bowyer ran in an attempt to confront his rival.

Keselowski said that the culture of retaliation is damaging to the series, and dangerous for the drivers.

"The retaliation is out of control in this sport," he said. "We've got a bunch of drivers that feel like they have to retaliate or they're being challenged as a man, and that's ridiculous. It's not what this sport needs. I don't think it's good for anybody, and someone's going to get hurt. We walk a line between



Ugly brawl ensued

chess players and daredevils, and we're not walking it very well. I'm disappointed in the quality of racing we saw today, and I was ashamed to be a part of it."

The precedent was in place for

Gordon to be suspended for this week's season finale at Homestead – a punishment that would have ended his record streak of 688 consecutive starts – however NASCAR officials instead imposed a \$100,000 fine and docked Gordon's team 25 points. Bowyer's crew chief Brian Pattie was fined \$25,000 for being involved in an altercation at the track and not controlling his crew members.

Gordon's team owner Rick Hendrick said: "I've always respected Jeff for standing his ground. We also respect that NASCAR needs to police the sport."

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NASCAR

Drivers question lack of yellows

LEADING NASCAR DRIVERS HAVE

questioned the series' decision not to put out yellow flags after Danica Patrick's crash late in last Sunday's Sprint Cup race at Phoenix.

Patrick crashed at the last corner on the penultimate lap, leaving an oil slick across the circuit. The lead cars hit the slick at racing speeds as they approached the finish, sending several into slides and causing a multi-car crash along the main straight.

"I'm not sure if race control had time to react, but you would expect that they'd see the oil slick," said Kyle Busch, who finished third. "It wasn't small, by any means. It was three-foot wide."

Kevin Harvick, who won the race, agreed. He said: "There was more oil than race track, I'll give you that. It was very visible."

While some drivers suggested that NASCAR officials may not have had time to react, the series' vice-president of competition Robin Pemberton admitted that he simply hadn't noticed the oil.



Chaos erupts behind Harvick

"We didn't see any fluid or anything," he said. "Patrick rode around on the apron, and when she pulled up on the racetrack there was smoke, but it looked like tyre smoke. It's easy to look back on it and wish that you did something different, but at the time it didn't appear like there

was any fluid coming out of the car."

Despite the crash Stewart Haas driver Patrick was classified 17th, her best result of the season in Sprint Cup competition.

P54 PHOENIX REPORT

AUTOSPORT SAYS...

MARK GLENDENNING
US EDITOR

@m_glendenning



Where you stand on the Jeff Gordon/Clint Bowyer incident – and by extension, Brad Keselowski's reaction to it – depends mostly on what you want from your racing.

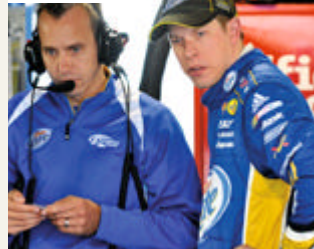
It's a trade secret that some motorsport journalists identify certain drivers in the series they cover as the 'voice of reason' – the ones to go to when they want to know what's really going on. According to my colleagues in NASCAR, Keselowski is that guy. Fast, smart, eloquent, and maybe, just maybe, too much of a purist to tolerate the thin line that NASCAR walks between sport and entertainment.

NASCAR's 'boys have at it' philosophy has cooled off a little since the end of last year, when Dan Wheldon's death in an IndyCar race at Las Vegas and Kyle Busch's idiocy at Texas a couple of weeks later reminded us that racing can be dangerous. The retaliation philosophy has offered a few entertaining moments (my favourite was Danica Patrick crashing while trying to avenge Landon Cassill at Kansas), but this is the first time NASCAR's resolve has been tested since Busch at Texas in 2011.

Gordon's punishment suggests NASCAR believes what he did was bad, but having a four-time champion benched for the title showdown would have been even worse.

Barring disaster, Keselowski will be champion by this time next week, and his words will carry more weight through 2013. It's going to be fascinating to see how much.

Keselowski is the voice of reason



NASCAR

Vickers to race for Gibbs in Nationwide

BRIAN VICKERS WILL MAKE A FULL-TIME RETURN TO THE NASCAR Nationwide Series next year after landing a plum drive with Joe Gibbs Racing.

Vickers, 29, won NASCAR's second-tier title in a Hendrick Motorsports Chevrolet in 2003 when it was known as the Busch Series, before moving up to the Cup the following year.

"The opportunity came as a surprise," said Vickers, who will also contest nine Sprint Cup races with Michael Waltrip Racing's Toyota squad. "I just wanted to be in a team where I could be happy and get to the track with a chance to win every week.

"So when I got the call I thought it would be a lot of fun. The stars kind of aligned and all the criteria fit."

Vickers stopped racing mid-way through 2010 after blood clots were found on his lungs, forcing him to have surgery. This year he has contested five Cup races with MWR and made a number of appearances for the team's sportscar arm – run in conjunction with Italian team AF Corse – in a Ferrari.



Vickers won '03 title



Smith tested NGTC car

BTCC

Smith wants NGTC Focus

BRITISH TOURING CAR RACEWINNER

Aron Smith wants to race an NGTC Ford Focus next year after sampling Motorbase Performance's machine at Brands Hatch.

The Irishman, who finished eighth in his rookie BTCC campaign in an S2000 Focus for Motorbase, said the difference between the cars was significant.

"As soon as I got into the NGTC I could immediately feel the difference from the S2000," Smith said. "It's got so much more grip, and as good as the car is in its current set-up, you can tell that it's still only running at about 70 per cent of what it's capable of. I'm working very hard to secure a deal to be in it next year."

Smith's 2012 Focus was driven by Ginetta G55 racewinner Jake Hill and MG Metro champion Tom Grainger.

REMEMBER WHEN ...

FEBRUARY 18, 1979



NASCAR's highest-profile fight broke out? Donnie Allison and Cale Yarborough collided on the last lap of the Daytona 500 while disputing the lead and fought afterwards, Allison swiftly joined by his brother Bobby.



DTM

ALEX IS BACK

Alex Zanardi drove a DTM car for the first time during the 40th anniversary of BMW's M brand at the Nurburgring last week. The Italian does not expect it to lead to a race seat in 2013.

WTCC

Huff sure no foul play planned

WTCC title contender expects order to be restored in Chevy ranks following Chinese clash . By PETER MILLS

World Touring Car title favourite Rob Huff is confident of a clean and sporting finale on the streets of Macau this weekend, following the intra-team battle at Chevrolet that blighted the penultimate event in China earlier this month.

British driver Huff arrives at Macau leading the WTCC standings on 390 points, with his team-mates Alain Menu and Yvan Muller 35 and 41 behind with only 55 available from the Asian double-header.

"There are a lot of people suggesting foul play might be involved and all the rest of it, but I don't think that for one minute," Huff told AUTOSPORT. "I certainly hope that is not the case. If it is, I will be very upset and very angry, but I am going there to win a world championship and I will do anything it takes to win that."

The penultimate event at Shanghai was marred by contact between Huff's season-long rival Muller and title outsider Menu. Huff denied that the RML-run team's drivers had been let off the leash after Chevrolet won the manufacturers' crown at the

preceding meeting in Japan.

"We won the manufacturers' in qualifying in Suzuka, and we all agreed to race to the same rules and strategies that we had kept beforehand," said Huff. "I stayed well out of the way after the accident in China. The last thing RML wants me to do is go over and wind Yvan and Alain up, but I'm not that sort of person anyway."

Muller received a post-race time penalty for the Menu incident after race officials decided he had caused an avoidable collision. Despite Huff achieving a double win at Macau last year, he was unable to prevent Muller claiming a third WTCC title. Huff believes the experience has left him better-equipped to complete the job.

"There is no doubt experience comes into it," said Huff. "But I knew what was required last year, and I went and did everything that I needed to do. The concentration at Macau is at the absolute maximum for longer than anywhere else. It needs to be, because that one very small mistake of braking one metre too late can put you out."



Huff won twice at Macau in 2011

Menu said: "I was obviously disappointed with the outcome of race two in China, but I'm still in a position to win the title, so I will fight to the end. The points favour Rob quite a lot, but Macau is Macau and you never know what will happen on those streets."



MACAU
PREVIEW P59



SUPERLEAGUE FORMULA

Superleague to meet A1 in new series?

A REVIVAL OF THE SUPERLEAGUE
Formula one-make single-seater series is being planned by one of the top teams from the football-themed championship of 2008-2011.

Azerti Motorsport boss Wim Coekelbergs is working to re-establish the series in time for a relaunch at the end of next season. The Belgian plans to use the original Panoz DPO9 chassis and the 4.2-litre Menard V12 powerplant, but will ditch the link with football clubs in favour of national identities in a manner similar to A1GP.

Coekelbergs said that he has reached an agreement with the Spanish owners of Superleague to take control of the cars and the trademarks, provided he secures the necessary finance. He is also talking to Menard about purchasing the stock of V12 engines, which he would place with a European engine specialist to maintain.

"We are working on a survival programme," he said. "We are in talks

Last Superleague event: Zolder 2011



with some partners, meaning venues. We do have some verbal agreements, but the only thing that counts is money."

A series of races largely outside Europe is envisaged by Coekelbergs. He said he was in talks with promoters in the middle-east, far east and South America.

Coekelbergs believes that the majority

of teams previously involved in Superleague will want to return.

Alan Docking, whose eponymous team won the title in the final, truncated season of Superleague, said: "If Wim gets it off the ground and there's a strong business case, we'd be very interested because it was a good category."

IN BRIEF



Bourdais will stay

BOURDAIS TO STAY AT DRAGON

Sebastien Bourdais will remain with Dragon Racing in IndyCar next year, as predicted by AUTOSPORT (September 13). The Frenchman finished 25th in this year's points, sharing his car with Katherine Legge during the second half of 2012.

FUMANELLI TOPS GP3 TEST

David Fumanelli set the pace in GP3's official post-season test at Estoril last week, the Italian out-pacing his MW Arden team-mate Daniil Kvyat by 0.092s overall and Manor's Tio Ellinas by 0.368s. Kvyat set the pace on day one.

McLAREN TO POWER FORMULA E

McLaren will provide the engines, electronics and transmissions for Formula E from 2014. It has linked up with a group of specialists to form Spark Racing Technology, which will be run by Frederic Vasseur, boss of GP2 squad ART.

HARVICK TO LEAVE RCR

Kevin Harvick is set to leave Richard Childress Racing at the end of next year after driving for its NASCAR Sprint Cup squad since 2001. Harvick has been linked to a Stewart Haas Racing seat for 2014.

SEARS GETS NAME ON TROPHY

The BTCC will introduce a separate prize for the best-performing S2000 driver next year, as predicted by AUTOSPORT (October 18). The Jack Sears Trophy is named in honour of the 1958 and '63 champion.

LMP TO TEST AT DAYTONA

An LMP2 car will take part in this week's two-day Grand-Am test at Daytona to provide data to help create the new class structure for the unified 2014 US sportscar series. Martin Plowman will drive Conquest Racing's Morgan-Nissan.

LARBRE DROPS BRAZIL APPEAL

Larbre Competition has dropped its appeal against disqualification from its GTE Am win at the Interlagos World Endurance Championship round. The Corvette squad clinched the teams' trophy for the class at the following event at Shanghai.



No Larbre appeal

EUROPEAN F3

Lynn signs Prema deal

ALEX LYNN WILL RACE IN EUROPEAN Formula 3 next year after joining Prema Powerteam.

The deal means that the 19-year-old Briton will be run by a team other than Fortec Motorsports for the first time in his single-seater career.

"It's hard to imagine life without Fortec," said Lynn. "I've been with them since I started testing Formula BMWs at 15, but I needed to move out of my comfort zone. I know I'll need to raise my game, but I have to push myself if I want to go far. We wanted to do Europe and it's hard to ignore what Prema have done."

Lynn was a racewinner on his way to fourth in the British F3 points with



Lynn is leaving Fortec for the first time

Fortec this year and also made selected European outings with the team.

Prema team manager Rene Rosin said that Lynn's speed at a recent test for his outfit at Vallelunga had left him convinced of his potential.

"We've wanted to do this deal ever since," Rosin said. "Alex is very fast and an easy-going guy, he'll do well."

AUTOSPORT understands that Ferrari Academy driver Raffaele Marciello and Sven Muller, who both won Euro Series races for Prema this year, will also remain with the squad next year.

[P56 MACAU PREVIEW](#)

BRAZILIAN STOCK CARS

Castroneves' V8 debut

INDYCAR DRIVER HELIO CASTRONEVES will make his Brazilian V8 Stock Car debut at the Interlagos season finale.

The three-time Indianapolis 500 winner will join fellow US-based Brazilians Rubens Barrichello, Tony Kanaan and Raphael Matos, all of whom competed in last weekend's V8 race at Brasilia, on the grid.

"I was delighted to get the opportunity

to do this race and with Rubens, Tony and Rafa there too, I'm in good company."

Castroneves, who will drive a Peugeot 407 for the Mattheis team, was previously involved in V8s in 2004 as a co-owner of the Castroneves/Amir Nasr team.

The Interlagos race, which will decide a seven-way fight for the title, also delivers a purse of over £308,000 to the event winner.



Helio will have a roof

PICS: EBREY, GIBSON, PRICE/LAT

WRC

NIKARA STARS

Jarkko Nikara wants to return to Prodrive for further WRC outings next year after finishing a career-best fifth on his Mini debut on the Rally of Spain. "We're definitely looking at getting him back," said team principal Dave Wilcock.



WRC

Solberg ready to quit WRC

Former world rally champion will walk away rather than paying for his drive again. By DAVID EVANS

Petter Solberg is on the verge of quitting the World Rally Championship as his hopes of finding a seat for 2013 fade.

The 2003 world champion, one of the sport's most popular figures, says he will not pay to drive in the WRC next year, having previously funded his own team for three seasons. Solberg had been linked to a Citroen factory seat for the 2013 campaign, but

team principal Yves Matton says the race to replace the retiring Sebastien Loeb is now between Dani Sordo and Mads Ostberg.

Solberg has struggled to repeat the early-season form that took him to three podiums on the first four rallies in the works Fiesta RS WRC. It appears that recent results have cost the 37-year-old Norwegian his chance to partner Mikko Hirvonen in the second DS3

WRC in 2013.

Solberg said: "I'm not paying to drive rally cars now. I've worked hard to keep things going, running my own team, but it's so hard. I can't do that again. I will retire if it comes to that. OK, it's not nice to think that I might not be in the championship next year, but it's the way things are right now."

Solberg came close to departing the WRC when he was struggling to fund his final season with the Petter Solberg World Rally Team in 2011. He says he already has options for next season.

"If I have to go then I have to go," he said. "There's nothing with Citroen and it's possible there's nothing here at Ford. I have an option to do the Dakar and maybe it's going to be time to look at going racing again, I can start talking about these things."

AUTOSPORT understands that if Sordo is not given a seat at Citroen, he will drive for M-Sport, and that the same scenario applies to Ostberg. While he could take

money to M-Sport, Sordo would need to be paid. Evgeny Novikov is the other driver in the frame for a return to the team.

M-Sport managing director Malcolm Wilson said: "I can understand Petter's perspective on this, but we have to be realistic. It's quite possible that we can find other ways. For example, we can find a sponsor to come with Petter, then he's not using his own money.

"We're talking to a lot of people right now and we have a huge number of balls in the air. We have great technical support from Ford and the car is looking very, very exciting for next season, but we have to get the financial side sorted first.

"With no disrespect to the drivers, I have to sort out the funding for getting the team in the championship before I start to look at who's going to be driving the cars."



Solberg set-up his own team in 2009

➔ P50 WRC SPAIN REPORT

WRC

New champ Breen faces uncertain future

CRAIG BREEN IS FACING A TOUGH winter of sponsor-chasing as he readies himself for the step-up to the frontline of the World Rally Championship in 2013.

The 22-year-old Irishman won the Super 2000 World Rally title on last weekend's Rally of Spain to add to the WRC Academy title he took last year. But he admits that his biggest success to date is no guarantee of a drive next year.

Breen, who drove a Ford Fiesta S2000 to his title success, said: "I have zero budget, nothing to start from, nothing to work with. All I have is two support world titles to my name and a heart of gold to try to make it happen. From now on I will work my arse off during the next couple of weeks and try and get to the start of the championship.

"I'd love to be in a World Rally Car. I've got good experience of the European events but I need to broaden my experience and get to the long-haul rallies. I just need to try to get the



Breen took another title

budget to do it."

Breen's fightback from the Targa Florio crash in June, in which his co-driver Gareth Roberts was killed, was one of the talking points of the WRC finale last week.

Nine-time world champion Sebastien Loeb paid tribute to Breen, saying: "It

shows an incredible strength in Craig's character to come through what he has come through to be world champion. It's incredible for him."

[P53 SWRC SPAIN REPORT](#)

IN BRIEF



Loeb's getting more work

CITROEN WORKS LOEB HARD

Despite Sebastien Loeb's last full World Rally Championship season having now come to an end, the nine-time champion will still be engaged in the manufacturer's 2013 test programme with the DS3 WRC. "They're making me work right up until Christmas," said the Frenchman.

RALLYCROSS FOR M-SPORT?

M-Sport is understood to be building a Ford Fiesta for the European and Global Rallycross championships next season. A source close to the Cumbrian outfit said work on what will be a 600-plus bhp Fiesta is already underway.

PAGENAUD EYES RALLYCROSS

IndyCar Rookie of the Year Simon Pagenaud says he is open to future outings in the Global Rallycross Championship. The Frenchman tested GRC star Brian Deegan's Ford Fiesta at a course in Las Vegas last week.

NOVIKOV'S LANDMARK STAGE

Evgeny Novikov collected the first fastest stage time for a car on Chinese-made DMACK tyres in the World Rally Championship. The Russian, who was driving a privately entered Ford Fiesta WRC on Rally Spain, set the pace on the fourth stage, but crashed on SS5, ruining his hopes of a strong result.

SLIM HELPS GUERRA TO TITLE

Benito Guerra's Production World Rally Championship title was only made possible when the world's richest man, Telmex owner Carlos Slim, stepped in to help the cash-strapped Mexican ahead of the Rally of Spain. Guerra became his country's first world rally champion on the event.

FISHER TIPPED FOR RETURN

Alastair Fisher is likely to return to the works Proton team after finishing fourth on his first SWRC outing for the British-based squad. Fisher, who won a round of the WRC Academy last year, said: "It was amazing to join a factory team like Proton and the car was fantastic. I'd love to be back."



Fisher was fourth in SWRC

AUTOSPORT INTERNATIONAL

10-13 January 2013, NEC



HUGE RICHARD BURNS DISPLAY

As a tribute to 2001 world rally champion Richard Burns, seven of his cars will form the centrepiece of the rally display in Birmingham next year.

JACKIE STEWART HONOURED

Three-time F1 world champion Sir Jackie Stewart will appear on both public days. A selection of his grand prix cars will be on display throughout.



GORDON SHEDDEN ON SHOW

New British Touring Car champion Gordon Shedden will attend the show on Saturday and Sunday.

TICKET INFORMATION

AUTOSPORT International is open to the public on January 12-13, 2013 with trade days on 10-11. To buy tickets or for more information, please call 0844 5811420 or visit www.autosportinternational.com

WRC

VW boss insists early Latvala release is 'safer'

VOLKSWAGEN MOTORSPORT director Jost Capito has called on Ford to sanction Jari-Matti Latvala's early switch to the German team on safety grounds.

Latvala left the Ford team after last weekend's Rally of Spain and will meet his new employer at its Hannover base this week. The precise date for his first time in the Polo R WRC he drives next season has yet to be confirmed, however.

Latvala said: "I know that M-Sport will release me for the testing, but

we have to wait and find out the decision from Ford."

Capito added: "We want to get Jari-Matti in the car as soon as we can. Usually, there is an unwritten rule between the teams that the drivers can test on snow, gravel and asphalt before the end of the season.

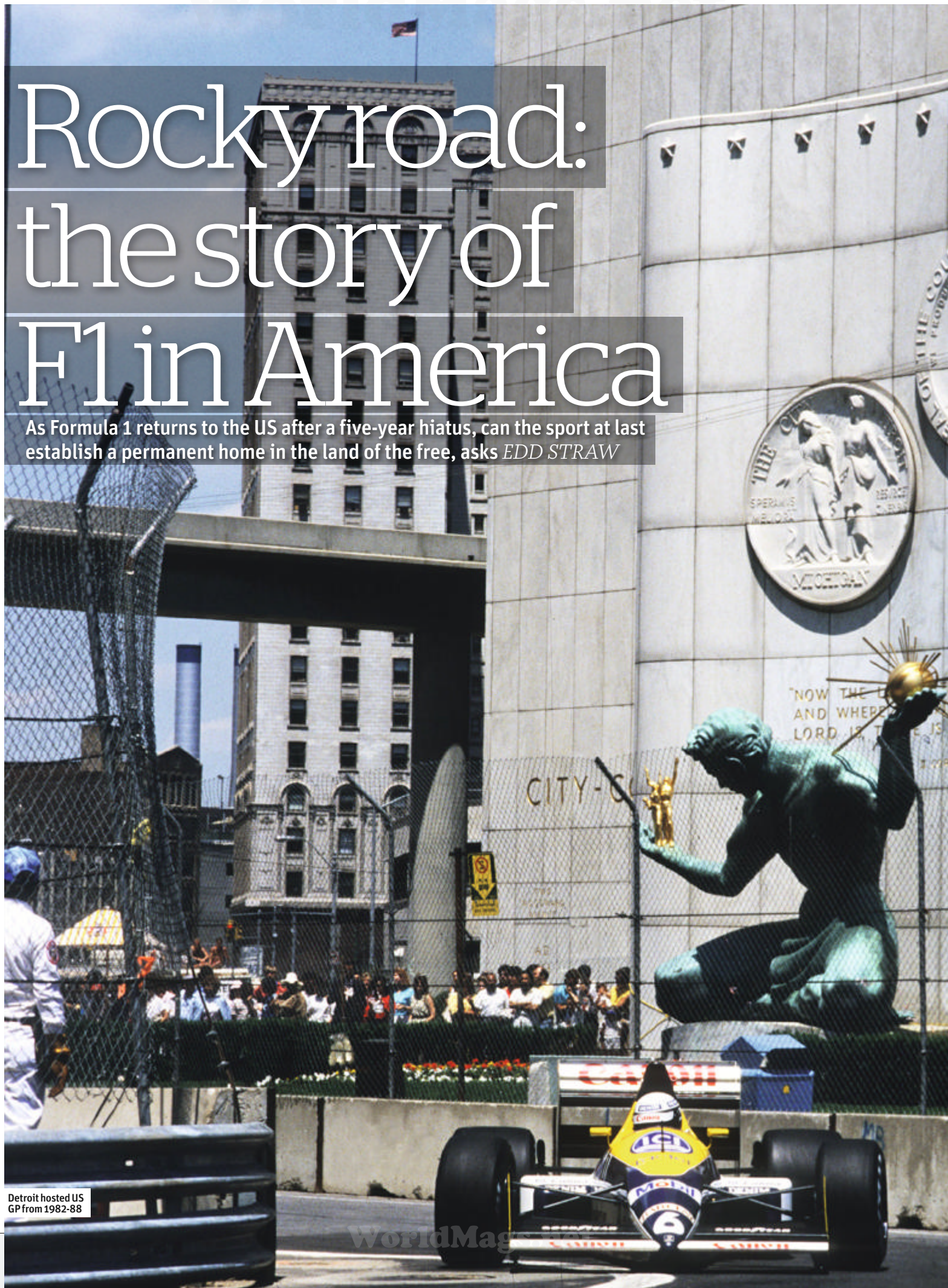
"If he can't drive the car before January 1, then maybe it's not so safe in Monte Carlo that he goes there and drives flat-out in the rally, having only tested the car for the first time in the week before."



Latvala has had his last Ford event

Rocky road: the story of F1 in America

As Formula 1 returns to the US after a five-year hiatus, can the sport at last establish a permanent home in the land of the free, asks *EDD STRAW*



Detroit hosted US
GP from 1982-88

WorldMag

Only Britain and Italy have staged more world championship grands prix than the US. Yet even with 62 points-paying races listed in the history books, the United States is still looked upon as virgin soil for Formula 1, ripe for exploitation. This weekend's race at the Circuit of the Americas ends a run of four years without a grand prix in the country, so expect to hear plenty of soundbites about how significant it is for the sport.

The trouble is, F1 has been here before. In the land where the auto racing landscape is dominated by NASCAR, with IndyCar, sprint cars, drag racing and the like also on the radar, F1 is very much the interloper. The idea that simply turning up and racing in the USA is enough has been debunked time and time again. Yet still some buy into it.

Press the decision-makers in the F1 paddock and they have a good idea of the scale of the challenge. The sport has failed there repeatedly and much-vaunted initiatives such as the stillborn USF1 team have proved that interest is sparse. The question is, what has changed now?

"Every country has its own racing philosophy," says Williams executive director Toto Wolff. "F1 has tried to be successful in the US, but wherever it went, it was never sustainable. There, you have NASCAR, but the worldwide phenomenon of F1 doesn't seem to function in the US. The spectators don't get it.

"But the media environment has changed completely since we last raced there. We have much more access to people now than we used to with social media. We last raced at

Indianapolis five years ago. That is like a thousand years on the internet."

Wolff makes a good point. There is reckoned to be a decent hardcore fanbase out there and the web can be used to corral them more effectively.

Mercedes motorsport boss Norbert Haug thinks so. "It's not right to say there are no Formula 1 fans in the US," he says. "There are quite a few and they are very knowledgeable. It's certainly not the number-one national sport, but when I speak to people over there, they really know what they are talking about."

So, let's assume that the acorn of that support is nourished by F1's increasing, but still vastly underdeveloped, use of social media. Still, it's going to take time to develop that into a fanbase strong enough to sustain regular races in the US. If that happens, there are commercial opportunities to be seized.

"There is a massive amount of potential interest, but obviously there isn't a huge amount of real

interest because we know the viewing numbers," says Peter Windsor, the ex-sporting director of USF1 who has a long association with grand prix racing in the country through his former role with Speed TV.

"But it's such a shame that the history of F1 in the States has been so fragmented. The poor Americans haven't had any consistency. It has moved from track to track, state to state and era to era.

"When I was briefly involved in the US on the money-raising front, we looked at several different areas. We looked at the silicon valley technology sector, the blue chip corporate advertising sector and so on.

"Depending on who you were talking to, the reactions were very different. But in silicon valley there's a lot of interest in the technology of F1 and the fact that this is the only championship where you have to design and build your own car. But because of the lack of profile relative to NASCAR and the

Fans felt cheated by '05 GP six-car farce



WHAT AMERICA CAN OFFER F1

The US offers Formula 1 a mixed bag of commercial opportunities. On the one hand, the territory is Ferrari's major market, being larger than its next two (China and Germany) combined. On the other, serial world champion engine supplier Renault does not get a look in.

True, associate automotive brand (and Red Bull sponsor) Infiniti is a successful niche player, but is overshadowed in the executive car market by Mercedes, which outsells the Japanese brand 3:1 and leads the sector.

Pirelli has a manufacturing plant/R&D centre in Rome, Georgia, primarily supplying the German so-called 'transplant' factories and a strong high-performance aftermarket, but the products are by no means consumer favourites, largely due to their premium pricing.

McLaren title sponsor Vodafone is unknown in North America, being

represented by Verizon, while Mercedes partner Petronas is alien to the region. Lotus has Microsoft as partner and is expected to run Star Wars branding in Austin, but has only tenuous links to the road car outfit.

Sauber's Mexican brand recognition varies according to population group/area, while mention of Williams' primary sponsor PVDSA draws blank stares. Caterham has in the past been mistaken for Caterpillar, with HRT likely to be associated with a medical procedure. Marussia? Could that be Vladimir Putin's mother?

Which brings us to Red Bull Racing/Toro Rosso: owner Red Bull commands a massive 35 per cent of the US energy drinks market, with the region accounting for 20 per cent of the company's annual five-billion can sales.

However, such penetration has been achieved off the back of sponsorships

like the Stratos space jump, Indianapolis MotoGP round, NASCAR and suchlike. Consider that F1 has been absent from the US since 2007; what F1-related exposure the brand received in the US has been purely electronic-media driven.

Thus it is clear F1 needs the US more than vice-versa – as has always been the case. What F1 needs is a consistently strong foothold in the US; only then can its associated brands begin to prosper.
Dieter Rencken



NASCAR has helped raise Red Bull profile



ARE YOU READY FOR THE CHALLENGE?

CIRCUIT OF NAVARRA 14TH - 17TH OF MARCH 2013

The Longest Circuit Race in the World. 48 hours non-stop for GT's, touring cars and prototypes in 5 categories. Teams of 5-8 drivers. Major prize fund of € 200,000+.

The objectives of the organisers of the Maxi Endurance 48 Hour event have always been clear: to offer a unique new race opportunity, to raise the level of challenge of endurance racing - and at the same time to keep costs at a reasonable level.

With limited total tyres per car, Euro 98 pump fuel and sharing expenses across up to 8 drivers per car, we strongly believe our actual costs per driver hour are better than for all major 24 hour races. And with the opportunity to compete in the first 48 hour race in a generation, we look forward to an exceptional field.

Three more team bosses from the burgeoning and diverse MAXI SPORT class comment this week:

"Following in the famous tyre tracks of Caterham's factory effort at the 2002 Ring 24 hours (that car was built by Andy McMillan, in fact), the Maxi Endurance 48 hours provides a special opportunity in 2013 for the McMillan Motorsport team and its drivers.



The Caterham R300 has provided us with consistent performance for the last three seasons - and the prospect of a 48hr race is an exciting challenge to the car, team and drivers."

- Andy Adshead, team manager McMillan Motorsport (Caterham R300 MAXI SPORT)

"The Maxi Endurance 48 hour race presents a great opportunity for motorsport teams, and those interested in pushing the boundaries in sport. Although there is a history of classic events, both on road and track, surpassing this duration, in recent times twice round the clock has become the benchmark - and the limit - for endurance racing.

In reviving and renewing an old concept, the 48hr brings to modern racing important new challenges for both man and machine, and it will be fascinating to see who will prevail, and which team can maintain the racing spirit through the night - twice."



- Jim Cameron, team principal Mission Motorsport (Nissan TBA MAXI SPORT)

"We are certainly keen to take part with the Vantage GT4 - and 48 hours will surely be 'very interesting'. With up to 8 drivers I guess one can do a stint, come out have a rest, play 9 holes of golf and then have another drive! Seriously, the many possible driver lineup options and race strategies should make this event quite special.



We still have a couple of seats open; interested drivers should get in touch with us as soon as possible."

- David Appleby, team principal Generation AMR (Aston Martin Vantage GT4 MAXI SPORT)

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“F1 can be mainstream. It will be seen more as a global sport as opposed to just European”

Christian Horner

◀ other big American sports, it was a very hard sell.”

Concerted efforts to make that task easier have been attempted over the years. The US Grand Prix at Indianapolis, which ran from 2000-07, was a logical move, harnessing a racegoing fanbase in the city that attracted big crowds.

McLaren also tried to break America by bringing Michael Andretti into F1 in 1993. While it proved to be a disaster, it wasn't as foolish as some suggest, for Andretti had the ability and the profile to make a big difference.

“We had a go,” says McLaren team principal Martin Whitmarsh. “If Michael had had a successful F1 career it would have worked. He was a good driver. At the time, he and Al Unser Jr were the two top American drivers. We considered both and decided to take Michael. He was a great name as well. If he had been successful... Looking back, it was worth it. It was a realistic attempt.”

Once again, the message is the same. There are no quick fixes. The US is a mature, saturated market with its own motor-racing culture. What F1 needs to do is take a long-term view. But as Red Bull team principal Christian Horner points out, there are precedents for fringe sports making inroads. He cites the MLS (Major League Soccer), which was launched in 1996 and has been gradually gaining a foothold in a country where ‘football’ equals Gridiron in the same way motor

Long Beach (below) and Watkins Glen both held F1 races in 1979



McLaren had high hopes in '93 for Andretti, says Whitmarsh

Bid to set up USF1 team founded



racing equals NASCAR.

“It can be mainstream,” says Horner. “Football in the US is growing significantly and F1, as it continues to grow, will be seen more as a global sport as opposed to just a European sport. F1 can engage with the American fans.

“It would be fantastic if we could get two races, on the east and west coasts. It would be fantastic if we could have a street race, taking F1 to the cities. That could be so popular.”

F1 has already got something of a roadmap set out. Hopefully, in 2015 the New Jersey Grand Prix that was originally due to make its debut next year should join the calendar. Add to that a third race in, say, California, and you have the seeds that could lead to F1 at least gaining some ground.

But it's a very long way off. Remember that when you hear F1's bigwigs talking about breaking America this weekend. ☼

11TH TIME LUCKY?

The Circuit of the Americas is the 11th circuit to host world championship F1 races in the United States...

Indianapolis Speedway (1950-60)

The Indianapolis 500 was included in the first 11 championships to justify the ‘world’ tag. It was an irrelevance to the Eurocentric championship.

Sebring (1959)

The Floridian airport circuit held one grand prix in 1959 and is famous for Jack Brabham pushing his Cooper towards the line to clinch his first world title.

Riverside (1960)

Poor promotion led to the Californian circuit disappearing from the calendar after just one, poorly attended, appearance by F1.

Watkins Glen (1961-80)

The only circuit that truly allowed F1 to make a long-term home, Watkins Glen only disappeared from the calendar because of lack of investment to make the required track improvements.

Long Beach (1976-83)

The Long Beach Grand Prix was one of the highlights of the calendar for its eight events. Unfortunately, it fell off the F1 calendar and became an IndyCar event thanks to issues over money.

Las Vegas (1981-82)

F1 and Las Vegas was potentially

a good fit, but the circuit around the car park of the Caesars Palace hotel was recognised as one of the worst tracks ever used.

Detroit (1982-88)

The combination of the home of the automobile and F1 was irresistible, for seven years at least, before plans to switch to a circuit at Belle Isle (which ultimately became an IndyCar race) faltered.

Dallas (1984)

Supposedly, this would be F1's long-term home, but after one race, famous for the track surface breaking up, plans to build a permanent circuit

faded and F1's first foray into Texas was abandoned.

Phoenix (1989-91)

The unloved Phoenix street track comprised largely 90-degree corners, although did produce that famous battle for the lead between Jean Alesi and Ayrton Senna in 1990.

Indianapolis Road Course (2000-07)

F1 again seemed to have found the permanent home it needed, but the infamous six-car 2005 race hurt the crowd numbers and the race disappeared after two more grands prix.

Can F1 in the US work this time?

Another track, another attempt to establish F1 in America. *MARK GLENDENNING* asks US racing legend Mario Andretti if Austin can succeed where others have failed



Andretti leads the pack at The Glen, '78

Formula 1 has had plenty of swings at getting a race to put down roots in the United States. Watkins Glen was the most resilient, delivering 20 grands prix before time finally caught up with – and then overtook – its facilities.

Elsewhere, venues such as Sebring, Las Vegas, Riverside, Detroit, Long Beach, Phoenix and, most recently, the Indianapolis road course have come and gone; the collateral damage of bad promotion, bad timing, bad venues, bad management, bad finances, bad tyres and, sometimes, just bad luck.

Can Austin succeed where so many US tracks have not? Mario Andretti, the last American to take the F1 crown, thinks the fact that Circuit of the Americas is a permanent, purpose-built venue rather than a temporary track like several of its predecessors at least gives it a fighting chance.

“Now at least we have a track that is designed specifically to host Formula 1,” he says. “In the past, that did not exist.”

“Even though the Watkins Glen event was extremely popular, the fact is that it did not keep up with the times. There was no reinvestment back in the circuit and the infrastructure and so forth, and all of a sudden we were off to all these temporary venues. And the word ‘temporary’ means exactly that.”

F1 was supposed to have had a ‘permanent base’ at Indianapolis. That venue would be forever tainted by the farcical 2005 race – we’ll get to that shortly – but with hindsight, Andretti is not convinced that it would have endured anyway.

“Quite honestly, I felt that Indianapolis might have been a firm base,” he admitted. “But I don’t think the track itself was really what F1 liked, or was up to a standard that you would expect for Formula 1. And that falls back to it being a dual-purpose facility. It’s very difficult for a road-racing event to be successful inside an oval track.”

“Daytona is another example – the 24 Hours, even since the 1960s, has never really taken off. You’d never see the fans that you’d see at Sebring, for instance, which was just a few



Andretti (r) is COTA ambassador, which adds credibility

miles down the road.

“Daytona has all the amenities, the hotels and everything, but it doesn’t have the ambiance for [road] racing, and that’s where Indianapolis suffered. And there are no other road-racing facilities in the United States that have really kept up with the times.”

Formula 1 earned itself a lot of ill-will in the US following the 2005 race, when Michelin encountered problems with its tyres on the banking and was unable to find a compromise solution with the FIA. The French company consequently withdrew its cars from the field on safety grounds, and left the spectators to watch a six-car race between the Bridgestone-shod runners: Ferrari, Jordan and Minardi.

Even Andretti admits that had he been a paying fan, he’d “have been angry and probably wouldn’t have gone back again”. But he’s optimistic that Austin will represent enough of a fresh start that some aggrieved fans might be tempted to return.

“I hope so,” he says. “There’s a lot of buzz, and I think the organisers deserve all that because they’ve done a really great job. We have the private sector investing – it’s not government money – and in today’s economy, that takes a lot of courage. I hope it gets rewarded.”

Andretti is also excited about the

prospect of Austin as a host city. Earlier this year, a local described it to this writer as an “island of normality in the middle of Texas”, and this is borne out by a visit to the city itself. Green, lively, with a strong live music and bar scene and a lifestyle centred around the Colorado River, Austin is unusually liberal by Texan standards – many are surprised to learn that Whole Foods was founded there. It has left little imprint on the motorsport world up to this point, which Andretti believes represents an opportunity.

“Austin is a charming city in many ways, and I think it should be a very good host for this event,” he said. “They have a number of other events on a national level and are very successful there, and being the capital of Texas there is also a lot of pride that goes with it”

But what of the circuit itself? As he’s a COTA ambassador you’d expect Andretti, who christened the track with a demonstration lap in his 1978 title-winning Lotus 79, to have nothing but praise for the layout. The reality is a bit more complicated.

“I think in general it’s a typical Hermann Tilke race track,” Andretti

“There’s a lot of buzz, the organisers deserve that. They’ve done a great job – I hope it gets rewarded”

Mario Andretti

says. “I don’t always love what he designs personally, but each driver will be able to draw his own conclusions. There are some areas that I think are quite good. If I’d have designed it then maybe I would have done a couple of things different, but that’s me, that’s my opinion.”

“The track in general and the presentation is fabulous, all the safety aspects are there, you have fabulous viewing areas, and the fans will get real enjoyment out of it. From that perspective, the grand prix is going to be a great success.”



'05 aside, Indy wasn't up to scratch for F1, reckons Mario



Andretti drove new track in a Lotus 79

PICS: ETHERINGTON / LAT; CIRCUIT OF THE AMERICAS / LAT ARCHIVE

What it's like to drive Austin

With F1's first visit to Austin fast approaching, we got Le Mans winner Darren Turner to take a virtual lap of the track on his Base Performance Simulator. By *SAM TREMAYNE*



TURN 12 MIN SPEED: 50MPH GEAR: 2

Long straights seem to be a growing trend, and Austin is no exception. As a result Turn 12 is a likely hotspot for overtaking, but otherwise it's fairly straightforward.



TURN 16-17-18 MIN SPEED: 155MPH GEAR: 6

I'd actually call this one turn – you certainly take it as one. It's another nice corner because you accelerate into the apex, get the car slowed down mid-corner and then put

the power back on for the exit. It's a bit of a mini version of Turn 8 at Turkey; not quite on the same scale, but it's very challenging and you probably have to come off the throttle part way through. You're also significantly loading the front left.

TURN 19 MIN SPEED: 127MPH GEAR: 4

A traditional medium-speed corner that drops away on the exit. It's high speed: probably fourth gear.

TURN 20 MIN SPEED: 62MPH GEAR: 2

This is much slower than the previous left – probably second gear. You might be able to pass on the entry, but the exit will be the key part, and any overtakes will be vulnerable to the cut back. Unless you have a major moment through the final two turns, there's not much to them.

TURN 11

MIN SPEED: 53MPH GEAR: 2

This is a big corner, both in terms of lap times and for overtaking. It's interesting how wide it grows on entry - if the track was parallel it would be relatively

simple, but it opens up on the left and this raises the possibility of muscling down the inside on the entry. We'll have to wait and see whether anyone can make it work, but it's good to have something there to allow you more options.

TURN 8

MIN SPEED: 80MPH GEAR: 3

While the left-hander of Turn 9 is more important in terms of lap time, it's Turn 8 that's most interesting in this sequence. You come in with quite a bit of momentum, but you have to compromise

your exits to get the best line through 9. It's similar to the middle section of Budapest: a great combination of corners in which you have to keep speed up without barrelling in too deep and hurting yourself all the way to Turn 11. Remaining neat and tidy is the key.



TURN 3-5

MIN SPEED: 125MPH GEAR: 5

This complex is all about rhythm, very similar to the manner of the Becketts complex at Silverstone. You go in

fast and have to slow the car down through the sequence. Admittedly it should be a bit faster than at Becketts, but it's very much the same in terms of the approach needed.

TURN 13-14-15

MIN SPEED: 65MPH GEAR: 2

This is a really nice sequence to drive. It's reasonably quick through all three sections, and you've got some lovely changes of direction that culminate in the double-left Turn 15. If you're having to look after tyres you won't want to hug the kerb on the first, so you could get some Kobayashi-esque dives down the inside.



TURN 1

MIN SPEED: 55MPH GEAR: 2

Turn 1 is pretty unusual as a corner: it's a massive uphill climb followed by a slow hairpin at the top. You come in aiming for the skies, and you need to head for the apex before you can see it: it's right on the crest. You have to find your line before it appears. It's the same for braking, but

with the hill helping out you're going to be able to brake very late. That could reduce potential overtaking, as could the fact that you can afford to compromise your entry and still not lose too much time through Turn 2. It has the potential to become the defining corner of the circuit even if, like the Corkscrew at Laguna Seca, it isn't necessarily the best turn.



TURN 2

MIN SPEED: 125MPH GEAR: 5

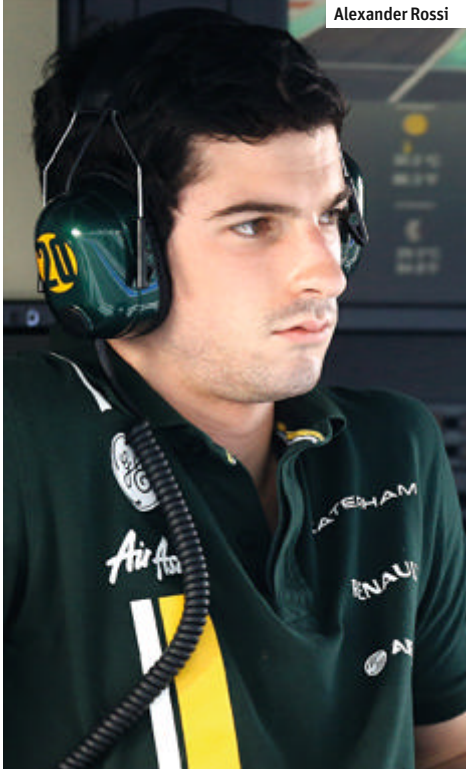
A fairly comfortable corner, even if you've had to compromise your line through Turn 1. It flows nicely downhill and has a similar feel to Turn 3 at Budapest; although it's another level completely in terms of speed.

OVERVIEW

In general, there's a great selection of corners and Austin has got a bit of everything. There's a mix of high-, medium- and low-speed stuff, but there are also gradient changes that lend the circuit real character. It could be that you'll get stand-out corners during the races, but only time will tell whether the individual parts, or the circuit as a whole, stand out most.



Alexander Rossi



Conor Daly

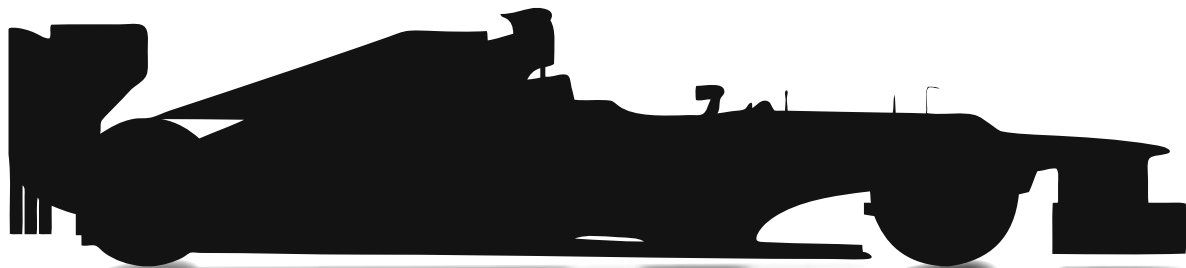


Felix Serralles



Who will be America's next F1 star?

It's been a while since there was an American fighting for the F1 world championship. *EDD STRAW* asks whether that could soon change



Nineteen years ago, Michael Andretti stepped off the podium after finishing third in the Italian Grand Prix and walked away from Formula 1. Since then, no American has scored a point, with only Scott Speed's ill-fated 28-race stint for Scuderia Toro Rosso in 2006-2007 offering any interest to fans from the US of A.

Before Andretti, Eddie Cheever flew the flag with some strong performances during his long grand prix career. But you have to go all the way back to 1978, when Andretti's father Mario won the world championship, for the last occasion when the star-spangled banner was heard anywhere near a grand prix podium.

That's a remarkable drought considering the United States has a proud history in Formula 1, with Andretti Sr the last in a line of five drivers hailing from the country to win races (not counting 1950-1960 Indy 500 qualifiers). As Christian Horner, team principal of Red Bull, whose parent company ran a driver search programme specifically to

“A quick American driver would have huge appeal not just to Red Bull but any F1 team”

Christian Horner

identify a talent and take him all the way to F1, points out, anyone with the talent to succeed would be fought over by the teams.

“An American driver, a quick American, would have huge appeal not just to Red Bull but to any of the teams,” says Horner. “Hopefully, in a couple of years, there will be some exciting talent from the United States. And whoever it is needs to come through the proven, tested system in the European feeder categories.”

Horner has a valid point. For while many of the top drivers in the United States probably had the fundamental ability to make it in F1, their path never led to the European mainstream. And, looking at those Americans who are on that well-trodden route, it seems there are few genuinely on the F1 radar.



Daly: a winner in GP3 this year

Three names stand out. One is Alexander Rossi, who became the first American driver in almost four years to participate in an F1 session for Caterham in Spain but who had a disappointing season in Formula Renault 3.5 this year. The other is GP3 racewinner Conor Daly, the son of naturalised American Derek Daly, a former Williams and Tyrrell F1 driver. He has dabbled in F1 machinery with Force India, although has not made the same impact as GP3 rivals Mitch Evans and Antonio Felix da Costa. The final member of the trio is Puerto Rican Felix Serralles, who has shown great promise in British Formula 3 this year.

Daly is targeting FRenault 3.5 next year, while Rossi is likely to remain in the Caterham fold with its GP2 team. He also tested for the F1 team in Abu Dhabi last week. A lot depends on how he gets on in GP2 next year after a difficult year in which he proved unable to capitalise on the work done in his rookie season in FRenault 3.5 in 2011, when he won two races and finished third overall.

It will take a good GP2 campaign to ▶



Rossi got Caterham F1 run in Abu Dhabi

TEAM USA SCHOLARSHIP

As one alumnus of the Team USA Scholarship pointed out, it's ironic that the man who has done more for the hopes of American drivers making it in European single-seaters over the years is a Brit. The man in question is long-time AUTOSPORT contributor Jeremy Shaw, who has run the programme for two decades.

While none of the scholars made it to F1, the closest being Bryan Herta, who tested a Minardi at Donington Park in 2002, the scheme has had an impressive strike rate of picking up very promising drivers early on. As well as Herta, 1996 Champ Car Champion Jimmy Vasser, 2004 Indianapolis 500 winner Buddy Rice, BMW DTM racer Joey Hand, impressive IndyCar rookie Josef Newgarden and near-Indy winner JR Hildebrand all passed through the programme, to name but a few.

“The objective originally was aimed at getting somebody towards F1 with the early guys like Herta,” says Shaw. “But now, I

bring them over to Europe more because it's an opportunity to get them out of their comfort zone and find out what racing in Europe is about, rather than F1. The goal for most of these guys is to get to the top level of American racing. In some ways, the racing is so much more intense over here and gives them a different perspective.

“Most drivers in the States don't consider F1 as being even vaguely attainable. The only exception to that in recent years from among the scholarship guys is Conor Daly, who has got his sights firmly on F1.”

Shaw believes that with relatively few Americans aspiring to F1, the financial hurdles that must be overcome and the need to race in Europe full-time to have a chance play a big part in the lack of drivers from the US.

With such a small pool of aspirants, it should be no surprise that American F1 prospects are so rare.



Shaw (tallest) is US talent scout

PICS: DUNBAR, EBREY, KALISZ, LEVITT/LAT

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AMERICA'S F1 WINNERS

Setting aside the anomalous Indianapolis 500s of 1950-1960, which counted for points but were never truly regarded as part of the championship, five American drivers have won grands prix.



Mario Andretti

Claimed pole position at his second attempt for Lotus in 1968, although it wasn't until he rejoined Colin Chapman's team eight years later after stints with Ferrari, March and Parnelli that he emerged as a regular winner. Went on to take the 1978 title.

ACTIVE: 1968-1982
Starts: 128; Wins: 12

Dan Gurney

His results don't do justice to his ability as he never had the machinery to win consistently in F1. His best years came with Brabham from 1963-1965 when still an emerging team, although he's best known for his win at Spa in 1967 in his own Eagle.



ACTIVE: 1959-1970
Starts: 86; Wins: 4



Phil Hill

America's first champion is arguably better known for his sportscar exploits than for his F1 prowess. He's held in higher esteem by those who raced against him than by history, perhaps because he had little success after joining the ATS team in 1963.

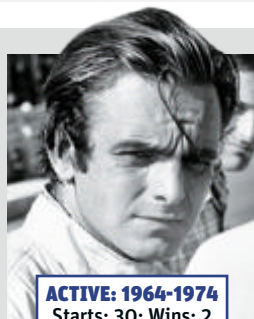
ACTIVE: 1958-1966
Starts: 48; Wins: 3

Richie Ginther

The Californian had stints with Ferrari and BRM before switching to Honda and claiming its first F1 victory in Mexico in 1965. While not in the same class as his contemporary Jim Clark, on his day he was capable of running at the front in GPs.



ACTIVE: 1960-1967
Starts: 52; Wins: 1



Peter Revson

Flirted with F1 in 1964 and had a one-off for Tyrrell at the end of '71, but his big F1 break came with McLaren in '72 after success in IndyCars and Can-Am. Won the 1973 British and Canadian GPs but died in a testing accident for Shadow at Kyalami in 1974.

ACTIVE: 1964-1974
Starts: 30; Wins: 2



Felix Serralles starred in Brit F3

◀ prove that he's worthy of serious consideration as an F1 driver. But Rossi, who puts his F1 interest down to the influence of his father, recognises the need for success in Europe to open doors in grand prix racing. Even before he started competing in that arena he raced in the Formula BMW Americas championship that was very much of the European school.

"F1 is a very, very ego-driven sport and they want to see you deliver on the European stage, not the American stage," says 21-year-old Rossi. "Winning everything in America isn't enough. We realised that early in my career and that's why I came over in 2009. But I don't think the lack of American drivers has much to do with the feeder series there, it's because there isn't that interest in F1. Americans aren't brought up watching F1, they watch IndyCar and NASCAR, so it's difficult to develop an ambition for it. Having the US Grand Prix is a massive boost.

"Americans are very patriotic and

want something they can get behind and support. Having an American driver on the grid would be great, but a driver in 15th or 18th, or even 10th or 12th, can only go so far. You need an American putting the stars and stripes on the top step. That's definitely a goal of mine. I don't just want to get to F1, I want to win races."

Despite being one step away from F1, Rossi still has a long way to go to prove that he has the potential to do that. It's a similar story for both Serralles and Daly, although raising money for the next step could prove difficult for Daly. As with so many promising drivers, it takes a lot even to get the chance to prove yourself worthy of a shot at the big time.

"F1 is a very, very ego-driven sport and they want to see you deliver on the European stage"

Alexander Rossi

So, as to where the next Mario Andretti is coming from, that's an impossible question to answer. It all depends on how many American drivers are encouraged to take to the European path to F1, for as their numbers grow it's highly likely that a driver with world-championship-winning potential would emerge. But for that to happen, interest in F1 in the US needs to increase, so that the best talents don't all aspire to NASCAR or IndyCar by default. And for that to happen, a successful American driver needs to emerge.

A classic chicken-and-egg situation, then, and one that doesn't look like being resolved any time soon... ❧



Andretti Jr: last US driver on F1 podium

RACING IS THE WINNER

Thank heavens the action was so good, because IndyCar's habit of incessant politics was never far from the surface. By *MARK GLENDENNING*



Hunter-Reay won crown with Andretti Autosport

After its tumultuous winter of 2011, the IndyCar Series reinvented itself for this year amid a cacophony of bangs and whimpers double-tracked with the growl of turbochargers. Such was the scale of change that the new engine formula – normally-aspirated V8s giving way to V6 turbos – went mostly unremarked. Competition from other new developments, such as the return of engine manufacturers, the introduction of a new chassis for the first time in a decade, and an organisational overhaul proved too strong in the fight for column inches.

The 2012 IndyCar season will be remembered for all of those, but above all else it will be the quality of the racing that ultimately defined the year. Perhaps the only point upon which the famously divided paddock would agree was that it was the most competitive season of US single-seater racing in recent memory but, more than that, it was probably the most competitive professional racing series on the planet this year. The field was deep in talent and, with very few exceptions, the technical package delivered outstanding racing across road courses, street circuits and ovals.

But while IndyCar is now unified as a series, political schisms remain, and these – culminating in the post-season departure of CEO Randy Bernard – were responsible for most of the wobbles that prevented its growing momentum from hitting full tilt.

HOW IT WAS WON

A better headline would be, 'How it was lost'. Just when it seemed that Team Penske, and in particular **Will Power**, had exhausted all possibilities for scuttling a championship bid, they managed to do it again. Penske was the dominant team and Power the dominant driver all season and, going into the final round, a 17-point buffer over **Ryan Hunter-Reay** should have been enough. The team's effort to repair Power's car after he'd buried it in the wall at the Fontana finale provided one

Sato (spinning) nearly denied Franchitti Indy win



“Hunter-Reay answered a lot of doubters this year, not least with his mental resilience”

of the most dramatic episodes of the year. How much consolation they were able to draw from that, in the midst of Hunter-Reay's post-race championship celebrations, is another matter.

STANDOUT PERFORMERS

Hunter-Reay answered a lot of doubters this year, not least with his mental resilience. Being torpedoed by **Alex Tagliani** at Sonoma should have dealt his title hopes a death blow; instead, he went into full-attack mode over the final two rounds and received the ultimate award. Power, meanwhile, remains the most enigmatic figure on the grid: at his best he is untouchable, and he continues to improve year on year. Not all of the points squandered this season were his fault: he couldn't have done much to avoid being taken

THE CHAMP IN HIS OWN WORDS



RYAN HUNTER-REAY

We had a breakout year. We really fought for this thing. I always believed that if I got the right opportunity and worked hard enough, I could be in the position to win races. But then you go from winning races to competing for a championship, that requires another level of consistency; it comes from continuity and a team that believes in you. And you build on that year after year. That's why we're in this position now.

Winning the series as an American is also important to me. I always looked up to the American greats when I first raced karts. Now here I am on the other side, and I see these kids that are looking up to us drivers. To win this against the Ganassis and the Penskes, and the talent in the series... I feel like I'm up against the best in the world.

out by **Mike Conway** at Indy, and he seemed especially prone to being short-changed by safety cars. But whether the accident that sealed his fate at Fontana was a poorly-timed aberration or a sign that he's still not quite the complete package is a question that can't be answered before 2013.

And what of Chip Ganassi Racing? **Scott Dixon** was again one of the strongest runners in the field, and again was unable to fully capitalise. Race director Beaux Barfield was quick to apologise for incorrectly penalising the Kiwi at Milwaukee, for example, but that didn't help to recover all those points from the cistern. The odd mechanical failure also played its part, and Dixon was quick to burn through his allocation of five engines for the season. Indeed, he and **Dario Franchitti** said little publicly, but there were several members of the Ganassi camp who believe that some deeper digging from Honda will be needed during the off-season if they are to be contenders next year.

Reigning champion Franchitti admitted that his team needed a couple of rounds to learn how to make the DW12 happy but, while his 2012 season was not perfect, nor was it as poor as his final position of seventh may suggest. Indy was the obvious standout, but for all the other stirring drives (14th to second at Detroit) there were banana skins such as the engine blow-up on the warm-up lap at Iowa Speedway.

Elsewhere, IndyCar officials were quick to rule new arrival **Rubens Barrichello** out of contention for rookie of the year honours on the grounds that his 322 Formula 1 starts might represent an unfair advantage, but they needn't have bothered – the Brazilian was rarely a threat to **Simon Pagenaud**, who was outstanding with the single-car Schmidt Hamilton squad.

SOMETHING TO REMEMBER

The racing. You'll often hear talk of '20 drivers within 1.5s' or 'any of the top 15 are capable of winning'; and the 2012 IndyCar season had all of that. But what made the real difference was that the actual on-track product was superb. ▶

Fontana crash ended Power's 2012 title charge



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◀ Pretty much every race, except perhaps Mid-Ohio, was worth more than the price of admission, and the excitement was achieved without any of the contrivances that are sometimes rolled out elsewhere. Lowering the downforce levels for Texas was a particular masterstroke, and turned the former pack-racing stronghold into one of the most demanding tests of car control that you'll see. Just find any in-car clip from that race, and look at how often the driver is turning right...

SOMETHING TO FORGET

The politics. On paper, IndyCar was unified three years ago, but the season-long drama surrounding Bernard's future demonstrated that not only do divisions still exist, but that the paddock is still yet to learn an elegant way to manage them. Both sides were equally guilty – the Hulman & Co board's apparent indecision in the days leading up to Bernard's departure did little to inspire confidence, while Bernard shot himself in the foot when he Tweeted about attempts to have him fired just a couple of days after a thrilling Indy 500. He insisted for weeks

afterwards that it didn't detract attention from the race, but go back to the news stories from that point of the season and look at what everyone was talking about.

WHAT NEXT?

Bernard was fond of talking about 'momentum' and, even without him at the helm, that's what IndyCar needs to run with next year. He's left some potentially exciting legacies to get things rolling, such as the Indianapolis/Pocono/Fontana Triple Crown. More importantly, the groundwork should also be in place for another season of high-quality racing, which will be reassuring for those who believe that if the product is right, everything else will follow.

But Bernard also left a couple of loose ends, such as the still-unresolved aero-kit issue, and the direction in which that decision swings could have a huge impact upon the spectacle. Above all though, the new CEO and their regime need to establish themselves as a beacon of credibility across all of the sport's stakeholders, including the owners and fans, and give the series a genuine chance



Randy Bernard: now you see him...

to tap into its genuine potential.

And if Penske can finally go out and win the title, a lot of people will probably experience an odd sense of release, regardless of whether they actually have anything to do with the team or not. ❧

OUR TOP 10 DRIVER RATINGS



1. WILL POWER
The driver to beat on just about any given weekend had his mojo abandon him right when he needed it most.



2. SCOTT DIXON
Often seemed that if he didn't have bad luck he'd have no luck at all, but as quick as anyone when everything was working as it should.



3. RYAN HUNTER-REAY
Not as consistent as he'd have liked to have been, but his knack for stepping up on crunch weekends paid off in a big way.



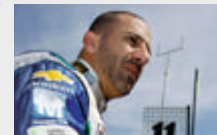
4. DARIO FRANCHITTI
Quick once he unlocked a few of the new Dallara's secrets; unfortunate not to have returned to Victory Lane after his Indy 500 win.



5. SIMON PAGENAUD
Gave the big guns something to think about with his drives in single-car entry.



6. HELIO CASTRONEVES
Encouraging return to form for the Brazilian after a disappointing season in 2011.



7. TONY KANAAN
Remained as strong a force as ever in races – problem was he usually qualified too low.



8. SEBASTIEN BOURDAIS
Ended year on a part-time programme. Bad fortune, but no doubting his speed.



9. JUSTIN WILSON
Texas win came with, some said, 'illegal' aero. But his racecraft sets the standard.



10. JAMES HINCHCLIFFE
Stunning in first half of season, but struggled on home turf and not as convincing after.

2012 INDYCAR SERIES																			
POS	DRIVER (NATIONALITY)	TEAM	ENGINE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	POINTS
1	RYAN HUNTER-REAY (USA)	ANDRETTI AUTOSPORT	CHEVROLET	3	12	6	2	27	7	21	1**	1	1**	*7	24	18	1	4	468
2	WILL POWER (AUS)	TEAM PENSKE	CHEVROLET	*7	1	1	*1**	28	4	8	12	23	15	3	*2**	*2**	*6**	24	465
3	SCOTT DIXON (NZ)	CHIP GANASSI RACING	HONDA	2**	1**	23	17	2	*1**	18**	11	4	25	10	1	13	4	3	431
4	HELIO CASTRONEVES (BR)	TEAM PENSKE	CHEVROLET	1	*3	13	4	10	17	7	6	6**	6	1	16	6	10	5	435
5	SIMON PAGENAUD (F)	SCHMIDT HAMILTON MOTORSPORTS	HONDA	6	5	2**	12	16	3	6	13	5	12	20	3	7	3	15	387
6	RYAN BRISCOE (AUS)	TEAM PENSKE	CHEVROLET	5	14	*7	25	*5	16	3	14	18	19	8	7	1	2	17	370
7	DARIO FRANCHITTI (GB)	CHIP GANASSI RACING	HONDA	13	10	15	5	1	2	14	*19	*25	*17	6	17	3	13	2	363
8	JAMES HINCHCLIFFE (CDN)	ANDRETTI AUTOSPORT	CHEVROLET	4	6	3	6	6	21	4	3	17	22	12	5	26	15	13	358
9	TONY KANAAN (BR)	KV RACING TECHNOLOGY	CHEVROLET	25	21	4	13	3	6	11	2	3	4	18	6	10	20	18	351
10	GRAHAM RAHAL (USA)	CHIP GANASSI RACING	HONDA	12	4	24	16	13	19	2	9	9	23	4	11	5	11	6	333

11 JR Hildebrand (USA), Panther Racing Chevrolet, 294; 12 Rubens Barrichello (BR), KV Chevrolet, 289; 13 Oriol Servia (E), Dreyer & Reinbold Racing Lotus/Panther/D&R Chevrolet, 287; 14 Takuma Sato (J), Rahal Letterman Lanigan Racing Honda, 281; 15 Marco Andretti (USA), Andretti Chevrolet, 278; 16 Justin Wilson (GB), Dale Coyne Racing Honda, 278; 17 Alex Tagliani (CDN), Bryan Herta Autosport Lotus/Honda, 272; 18 Ed Carpenter (USA), Ed Carpenter Racing Chevrolet, 261; 19 Charlie Kimball (USA), Ganassi Honda, 260; 20 EJ Viso (YV), KV Chevrolet, 244; 21 Mike Conway (GB), AJ Foyt Racing Honda, 233; 22 James Jakes (GB), Coyne Honda, 232; 23 Josef Newgarden (USA), Sarah Fisher Hartman Racing Honda, 200; 24 Simona de Silvestro (CH), HVM Racing Lotus, 182; 25 Sébastien Bourdais (F), Dragon Racing Lotus/Chevrolet, 173; 26 Katherine Legge (GB), Dragon Lotus/Chevrolet, 137; 27 Sébastien Saavedra (CO), AFS Racing/Andretti Chevrolet, 41; 28 Wade Cunningham (NZ), Foyt Honda,

29; 29 Ana Beatriz (BR), Andretti/Conquest Racing Chevrolet, 28; 30 Townsend Bell (USA), Schmidt Honda, 26; 31 Michel Jourdain (MEX), Rahal Honda, 16; 32 Giorgio Pantano (I), Ganassi Honda, 16; 33 Jean Alesi (F), Fan Force United Lotus, 13; 34 Bryan Clauson (USA), Fisher Honda, 13; 35 Bruno Junqueira (BR), Fisher Honda, 12. All drivers were in Dallara DW12.
RACES: 1 St Petersburg, March 25; 2 Barber Motorsports Park, April 1; 3 Long Beach, April 15; 4 Sao Paulo, April 29; 5 Indianapolis, May 27; 6 Detroit, June 3; 7 Texas Motor Speedway, June 9; 8 Milwaukee, June 16; 9 Iowa Speedway, June 23; 10 Toronto, July 8; 11 Edmonton, July 22; 12 Mid-Ohio, August 5; 13 Sonoma, August 26; 14 Baltimore, September 2; 15 Fontana, September 15.
POINTS SYSTEM: 50-40-35-32-30-28-26-24-22-20-19-18-17-16-15-14-13, 12 for rest of top 24, 10 for rest. Most laps led: 2, denoted by **. Fastest in qualifying: 1, denoted by *. Extra bonus points for Indianapolis qualifying.

PICS: EABBOTT, LEVIT, WILLIAMS, DAVIS/LAT

All-Inkl #38 scored just one win in 2012



CONSTANT IN THE EXTREME

Marc Basseng and Markus Winkelhock, in the All-Inkl Merc, proved that consistency is crucial when uncertainty is unfolding all around. *GARY WATKINS* explains

There wasn't much on which you'd wager your bottom dollar in the FIA GT1 World Championship this year. Certainly not the basics, like which cars would show up and when, and where the next race was. But a surefire bet would be on the #38 All-Inkl Mercedes-Benz making a super-speedy start, getting turned around in the pits in double-quick time and then finishing the race.

That's why **Marc Basseng** and **Markus Winkelhock** can call themselves world champions for life. The All-Inkl Mercedes squad, and in particular its lead pairing, shone like a beacon through the fog of uncertainty

that was the GT1 World Championship in what turned out to be its final season.

No one else strung together a coherent campaign in the same way as the team from the Eastern-most part of Germany. That allowed its lead line-up to come through to take the title despite winning just once, and in a Qualifying Race at that.

HOW IT WAS WON

Not on outright performance, that's for sure. The Mercedes-Benz SLS AMG was never the fastest car on the grid in the 2012 World Championship: not in the hands of Basseng and Winkelhock, or those of team-mates **Nicky Pastorelli** and **Thomas Jäger**.

Only once did a Merc qualify on the front row (during the second round, at the Slovakia Ring), and only once was it truly a competitive proposition in the race (at the Algarve circuit); but those starts and that teamwork in the pits resulted in some amazing consistency.

Basseng and Winkelhock never failed to score points (their Donington exclusion aside), only finished outside the top six once and were on the podium 10 times from the 18 races.

The penultimate round of the series, at the

Nurburgring, summed up their season – and propelled them into the championship lead. The #38 Merc qualified eighth, Winkelhock jumped to fifth at the start of the Qualifying Race and then Basseng was propelled to third during the pitstops.

The German had to fight a stout rearguard action to hang on to it, but he was successful. Just as Winkelhock was to be fighting over the same position in the Championship Race. Put simply, the starts and the pitstops made up for a performance shortfall in the Mercedes.

The other team that went to the hastily arranged championship finale at Donington Park with a title shot simply didn't have the same consistency. **Michael Bartels'** Vita4One squad – which as Vitaphone Racing had triumphed in the inaugural year of GT1 World with the Maserati MC12 – won four times. But the boss and his team-mate **Yelmer Buurman** fell just short in their attempt to regain the title with the BMW Z4 after a year away.

The French Hexis team had the fastest car in the McLaren MP4-12C; its lead pairing of **Frederic Makowiecki** and **Stef Dusseldorp** won more races than anyone else, and finished just one point behind. That's the reason why

Hexis Racing duo won at Donington



they'll look back and feel that they lost the championship two or three times over.

STANDOUT PERFORMERS

Makowiecki reinforced his reputation with another strong season, and outperformed single-seater refugee **Alvaro Parente** in the other Hexis McLaren. Buurman, meanwhile, forged himself a reputation. The Dutchman is no stranger to GT racing, but 2012 was his first season at this level and he proved that he has a bright future ahead of him.

SOMETHING TO REMEMBER

Maxime Martin was only present in GT1 World for three weekends, but he reminded us that he's arguably the best GT driver on the planet – and undeniably the best when it's raining – as he drove away from the field at Zolder. His drive in the Valmon Aston Martin DBRS9 wasn't rewarded with a decent result, but it was certainly spell-binding to watch.

SOMETHING TO FORGET

It wasn't how anyone wanted the short history of the FIA GT1 World Championship to end. A red flag, a wrecked car and a driver on his way to hospital brought the curtain down on the series at a dank Donington Park.

Winkelhock was, quite rightly, excluded for

The two Audis collided at Zolder



moving over on Buurman and putting him into the unyielding Donington concrete wall. Whether or not it decided the destination of the world title will never be known.

WHERE NEXT?

A whole new championship, carrying on the principles of GT1 World and to be known as the GT Sprint Series; and without the onerous world championship banner and the financial implications that come with it. Stephane Ratel is probably right when he says that there's room for sprint series for GT cars, but the evidence suggests that there might not be the need for an all-professional championship.

That's why Pro-Am and Am classes will be part of his new venture. And why it won't reach the heights of the FIA GT1 World Championship in its glory years of 2010-11. ❄

CHAMP
IN HIS OWN WORDS

MARC BASSENG



The key to our season was pitstops. That's why, although Markus and I are world champions, every team member should be a world champion, too. Our pitstops were so good that I'd put a minimum of 50 per cent of our success down to them.

The other main point was consistency. Our performance didn't vary much, but it did for our rivals. Sometimes McLaren would beat us and sometimes the BMW, the Porsche or the Ferrari, but we were always there scoring some good points. We had excellent support from AMG all year and they gave us a car that never suffered from a single technical problem.

Only once, at the Algarve circuit, did we have a truly competitive car; we made the most of it and won both races as a team.



OUR TOP 10 DRIVER RATINGS

1 FREDERIC MAKOWIECKI
The best driver in the championship – admittedly with the best car – never had an off-day.

2 YELMER BUURMAN
Quick from the get-go with Vita4One, he shone throughout the season.

3 MARC BASSENG
Proved again that he can juggle team management with driving a racecar hard and fast.

4 MARKUS WINKELHOCK
Every bit as quick as Basseng, but Donington left a black mark against his name.

5 STEF DUSSELDORP
Eradicated the mistakes and inconsistency of last season to emerge as a true top-liner.

6 TONI VILANDER
Drove his heart out despite having a car and team-mate that weren't the quickest.

7 ALVARO PARENTE
Proved his credentials during a first full season of sportscar racing.

8 NICKY PASTORELLI
Pastorelli remains the fastest All-Inkl team driver over one lap.

9 PETER KOX
Proved that he's still quick aboard the Reiter Lambo, at the age of 48.

10 MAXIME MARTIN
His Zolder drive alone was sufficient to get the series irregular a place on our list.

2012 FIA GT1 WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP

POS	DRIVERS (NATIONALITY)	TEAM	CAR	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	POINTS
1	MARKUS WINKELHOCK (D)/MARC BASSENG (D)	ALL-INKL.COM MUNNICH	MERCEDES-BENZ SLS AMG GT3	6/3	6/9	5/2	4/3	1/2	3/2	2/5	3/2	5/EX	145
2	FREDERIC MAKOWIECKI (F)/STEF DUSSELDORP (NL)	HEXIS RACING	McLAREN MP4-12C GT3	NS/R	4/5	1/1	9/2	4/3	8/R	4/1	R/10	1/1	144
3	YELMER BUURMAN (NL)/MICHAEL BARTELS (D)	VITA4ONE RACING TEAM	BMW Z4 GT3	12/10	1/2	3/5	3/1	2/5	1/1	10/7	4/4	9/9	144
4/5	LAURENS VANTHOOR (B)/STEPHANE ORTELLI (MC)	WRT	AUDI R8 LMS ULTRA	1/1	12/6	9/10	11/6	10/6	5/5	1/4	2/6	2/4	122/104
6	NICKY PASTORELLI (NL)/THOMAS JAGER (D)	ALL-INKL.COM MUNNICH	MERCEDES-BENZ SLS AMG GT3	7/4	2/4	6/3	8/10	6/1	4/8	5/8	6/8	6/6	100
7/9	FILIP SALAQUARDA (CZ)/TONI VILANDER (FIN)	AF CORSE	FERRARI 458 ITALIA GT3	5/6	13/3	10/9	1/4	12/R	7/6	9/R	8/1	R/8	84/80
8	FRANK STIPLER (D)/OLIVER JARVIS (GB)	WRT	AUDI R8 LMS ULTRA	2/2	11/10	8/8	6/5	3/R	R/4	3/3	7/R	R/7	81
10	PETER KOX (NL)	REITER ENGINEERING	LAMBORGHINI GALLARDO LP560	8/7	8/13	4/7	-	R/4	6/7	-	1/3	4/2	78
11	ALVARO PARENTE (P)/GREGOIRE DEMOUSTIER (F)	HEXIS RACING	McLAREN MP4-12C GT3	4/R	10/7	2/4	R/R	R/R	9/9	6/2	5/R	3/3	65
12	NIKOLAUS MAYR-MELNHOF (A)/MATHIAS LAUDA (A)	VITA4ONE RACING TEAM	BMW Z4 GT3	11/11	5/14	7/6	10/7	5/8	2/3	7/10	9/5	8/R	56

* Neither Ortelli nor Vilander competed in the final round at Donington Park, so results for their cars at that event are listed in italics, and they have different points totals to Vanthoor and Salaquarda respectively.
TEAMS' CHAMPIONSHIP: 1 All-inkl.com/Munnich, 245; 2 Hexis, 209; 3 WRT, 203; 4 Vita4One, 200; 5 AF, 126; 6 Reiter, 98; 7 Exim (Muhlner), 38; 8 SUNRED, 5.

RACES: 1 Nogaro, April 8-9; 2 Zolder, April 21-22; 3 Navarra, May 26-27; 4 Slovakia Ring, June 9-10; 5 Algarve, July 7-8; 6 Slovakia Ring, August 18-19; 7 Moscow Raceway, September 2; 8 Nurburgring, September 22-23; 9 Donington Park, September 29-30.

POINTSYSTEM: In race one at each round: 8-6-4-3-2-1. In race two at each round: 25-18-15-12-10-8-6-4-2-1.



RALLY SPAIN

Salou

ROUND 13/13

WINNER

Sebastien Loeb
4h14m29.1s

QUALIFYING STAGE

Sebastien Loeb

POWERSTAGE WINNER

Jari-Matti Latvala

RALLY RATING

★★★★☆

Ostberg was a day-one hero, but Loeb remained king of Spain

DRIVERS' STANDINGS

Loeb	270pts
Hirvonen	213pts
Latvala	154pts

MILESTONES

● Craig Breen wins his first SWRC title
Benito Guerra takes maiden PWRC title

DAVID EVANS
reports



Rivals forced to pick up Loeb's pieces of eight

Mads Ostberg and Jari-Matti Latvala had a good go, but nothing could stop Sebastien Loeb taking an eighth straight win in Spain



WHICHEVER WAY HE TRIED, Sebastien Loeb couldn't get his overalls any higher. He needed a coat. He needed to be elsewhere. He certainly didn't need to be 14th on the road and 25 seconds slower than Mads Ostberg in 16 miles. He scoffed at early talk of victory at the end of the weekend. But then did what he does. He won the rally, to extend his Catalan dominance to eight years.

Jari-Matti Latvala signed off from Ford with second place and Ford signed off from the WRC with the same result. Emotions were running high in Salou last week — and nowhere were they higher than in the Craig Breen camp. The 22-year-old let some light into his darkest year yet with the Super 2000 World Rally

Championship title. The world — and then some — smiled on Waterford's finest and fastest on Sunday.

LEG ONE (130.24 miles)

RAIN/OVERCAST - AMBIENT TEMPERATURE
RANGE ON STAGES 11-17C

Remember the summer? Remember pandemonium? Well, the opening ceremony of London 2012 had nothing on last Friday in Tarragona. That was proper pandemonium.

And it had all started with such surreal gentility outside the Cathedral of the Holy Cross and Saint Eulalia, slap bang in the middle of Barcelona.

When Loeb stepped up and selected 14th on the road for the opening day, the message was clear: the roads

would be cleaning, dust wouldn't be a problem and the rain wouldn't be coming. At least not straight away.

At least one of those was true: dust was definitely not a problem on Friday.

As soon as Citroën's collective curtains were peeled back on the first morning, the problem was clear. In the mountains it was pouring down and first

— not 14th — on the road was the place to be.

Loeb was philosophical. "We got it wrong," he said with a shrug, before a shocking, if smiling, admission: "We can't control the weather."

And even fewer could control their cars. At just four miles, Gandesa was little more than a loosener for the longer stages to

follow. And the new-for-this-season stage gave little hint of the chaos that was to follow. Jari-Matti Latvala was quickest, half a second up on Loeb, with Mikko Hirvonen and Petter Solberg 1.7 and 3.5 seconds down respectively. Nothing unusual there...

The overnight rain had slowed to little more than a drizzle, but when the course car got to the end of the second stage, the driver looked uneasy. The rain was coming and coming properly.

Citroën's Thierry Neuville was first to go, hooking his DS3 into a fastish left-hander and snapping the suspension in an unseen rock in a rain-washed-away hole. Having retired in Pesells last year, Solberg wouldn't be making the



Latvala was just 7s shy of farewell Ford victory



The star of the early running was Ostberg



Loeb: win #76 made it eight in a row in Spain

Hirvonen took a distant podium



same mistake again. Actually... yes he would. Minutes after the Belgian's day was done, Solberg was in the same boat. And minutes after that, VW's Andreas Mikkelsen suffered the same misfortune. One rock in one hole took three cars – and there would, according to the victims, have been more had Solberg's co-driver Chris Patterson not stood in the rain and warned the

oncoming crews to give the hole a wider berth than anticipated. Citroen got word of the rain in just enough time to make sure its cars went out with soft tyres. It didn't work for Neuville and, as the rain grew heavier and heavier, the boots beneath Loeb made little difference in the sodden stages. The seven-time Spanish winner was fourth after stage

two, 21.2s behind leader Ott Tanak, who held the smallest possible margin of a tenth over Mads Ostberg, with Hirvonen third. Tanak overcame a mighty moment that thankfully turned into an overshoot and then damaged the steering when he clipped a rock in SS2. "Leading?" said the Estonian soon after stage two. "OK... but I think there have been some problems." Ostberg was similarly bemused. "This is hopeless," he said, his voice full of frustration at finish line. "We have completely the wrong tyres. We are on hard tyres all around and we have no grip. Nothing. Hopeless." One stage later and he was leading. But, like his P1 predecessor, not sure how.

"In stage three," said Ostberg, "the car was sliding all the time. I could feel no grip at all. Then we dropped six seconds on the Tarmac section and had a spin. We have used all the road and a lot of the ditches to get here, but this is weird..."

Hirvonen and Loeb told the same story, one of ruts full of water that created horrible moments of aquaplaning.

"We took no risks," said Loeb, "there were a lot of cars off the road – including [Dani] Sordo early in the third stage and after that I thought: 'We have to survive!' But even that was hard, it was hard to stay on the road. It's mornings like this one that convince me that I made the right decision for next season!"

The sight of so many cars – including the Fiesta of his factory Ford team-mate – had well and truly spooked Latvala. Going into SS3, he told the team to send him no split times.

"This was not the good time to take the pressure and start pushing," said Latvala. "It was raining like hell in the stages. And the problem for me is that so many cars ahead of me had gone, so I had 12 minutes between the previous car and mine and that meant all the rain was really lying in the ruts. It was deep. It was not nice."

Nor was his time. He dropped 28 seconds in 27 miles. But still fared considerably better than Jamaican WRC debutant John Powell, who stopped his Fiesta RS WRC for a breather in the middle of Terra Alta and then declined the afternoon's re-run in favour of a lie down in a

darkened room.

"It was horrific," said Powell with a grimace. "And it looks so easy on TV!"

The afternoon provided more of the same, but it was Evgeny Novikov who stole the early afternoon march with a stunning scratch time, the first for DMACK tyres. His time moved him from seventh to sixth, but that was as high as he would go after he dropped the DMACKs and the Ford into a ditch on the very next stage.

Third quickest, Ostberg's lead grew to 26.6s, with Tanak still second and Hirvonen third. Loeb had dropped a further 17.6s in the rain.

People were starting to talk. What was going on?

The champion wasn't happy. He wasn't comfortable and he was doing what he always does in these situations. He reverted to his base level of driving and got from start to finish with no histrionics, perfectly safe, utterly spectacular, still in the mix.

And then, with slightly less mud and slightly more grip on the re-run long stage, he put a stop to all that talking. And went fastest.

The fightback had begun, leapfrogging him into P2.

"That stage was much better," said Loeb at the end of SS5. "Finally, I felt I could drive like I wanted to and I made no mistakes. I tried really hard and we are here."

Such is the honesty of the nine-time champion, when he talks about trying hard, you know he's genuinely on it. And it's just that kind of ability that has frustrated his various team-mates down the years. Nothing's changed in that department. ▶

Novikov gave DMACK its first stage victory



STAGE TIMES

SS1 GANDESA (4.34 MILES)

Fastest: Latvala 4m40.5s
Leader: Latvala

SS2 PESELLS 1 (16.52 MILES)

Fastest: Tanak 15m54.5s
Leader: Tanak

SS3 TERRA ALTA 1 (27.35 MILES)

Fastest: Loeb 30m37.3s
Leader: Ostberg

SS4 PESELLS 2 (16.52 MILES)

Fastest: Novikov 16m03.9s
Leader: Ostberg

SS5 TERRA ALTA 2 (27.35 MILES)

Fastest: Loeb 31m19.0s
Leader: Ostberg

SS6 SALOU (1.24 MILES)

Fastest: Hirvonen 2m35.7s
Leader: Ostberg

SS7 LA MUSSARA 1 (12.72 MILES)

Fastest: Latvala 11m31.4s
Leader: Ostberg

SS8 EL PRIORAT 1 (28.56 MILES)

Fastest: Loeb 26m20.0s
Leader: Loeb

SS9 RIBA-ROJA D'EBRE 1 (8.82 MILES)

Fastest: Loeb 9m19.1s
Leader: Loeb

SS10 LA MUSSARA 2 (12.72 MILES)

Fastest: Sordo 11m23.2s
Leader: Loeb

SS11 EL PRIORAT 2 (28.56 MILES)

Fastest: Sordo 25m52.7s
Leader: Loeb

SS12 RIBA-ROJA D'EBRE 2 (8.82 MILES)

Fastest: Tanak 9m32.0s
Leader: Loeb

SS13 RIUDECANYES 1 (10.15 MILES)

Fastest: Sordo 10m33.9s
Leader: Loeb

SS14 SANTA MARINA 1 (16.47 MILES)

Fastest: Sordo 15m42.7s
Leader: Loeb

SS15 LA SERRA D'ALMOS 1 (2.55 MILES)

Fastest: Sordo 2m37.1s
Leader: Loeb

SS16 RIUDECANYES 2 (10.15 MILES)

Fastest: Latala 10m30.7s
Leader: Loeb

SS17 SANTA MARINA 2 (16.47 MILES)

Fastest: Latvala 15m43.5s
Leader: Loeb

SS18 LA SERRA D'ALMOS 2 (2.55 MILES)

Fastest: Sordo 2m38.3s
Leader: Loeb

Sordo shone for Mini in the latter stages



Hirvonen couldn't get close to the sister car. Shorn of the confidence Loeb had just found, Hirvonen headed in the opposite direction down the leaderboard. Citroen #2 was 45s slower than its sister DS3.

"I had a big moment after eight kilometres," said the Finn, "and after that I was just sliding around on top of the mud. There was no grip."

After a dash down the Salou seafont, the cars returned to PortAventura for a 75-minute service in which their jacked-up gravel warriors would be turned into hunkered-down asphalt racers for the weekend.

Ostberg couldn't help but smile. But he remained completely realistic.

"The weekend will be all about Sebastien," he said. "The guy is unbelievable and we won't fight him for the win. My focus is on the fight with Jari and the fight for third in the championship. In the end, I can't complain today – it's been a good day. The key has been to keep it clean and push as hard as you could."

Ostberg had done an exceptional job and richly deserved the end-of-day lead. While he talked of little more than a passing interest in the times Loeb would set for the next two days – he was fully focused on the 47s that separated his Fiesta from the third-placed factory version driven by Latvala.

The battle for bronze would begin here.

Hirvonen was fourth, with his season silver secure.

Tanak slipped to fifth by

the end of the day, having suffered brake problems earlier on. His early efforts were, however, almost as merit-worthy as Ostberg's.

Talking of merit-worthy drives, with so many of the front-running World Rally Cars hitting trouble, SWRC leader Craig Breen found himself in a stunning sixth overall on Friday night.

POSITIONS AFTER DAY ONE

1 Ostberg/Andersson	1h41m32.4s
2 Loeb/Elena	+27.2s
3 Latvala/Anttila	+47.0s
4 Hirvonen/Lehtinen	+1m02.6s
5 Tanak/Stikk	+1m10.8s
6 Breen/Nagle	+6m00.9s

LEG TWO (88.86 miles)

OVERCAST – AMBIENT TEMPERATURE RANGE ON STAGES 13-22C

When Loeb had only taken 2.3s out of Ostberg on the opening asphalt stage of Saturday, there was a glimmer of hope. Maybe Mads could hold on. Maybe.

Unfortunately for the Norwegian, the second stage was his undoing. Passing through the stage a couple of hours before him, his gravel-note crew relayed information of a part-dry-part-wet road on the El Priorat test. Ostberg elected to whip the spare, hard Michelins out of the boot and stick them on for the 28-miler. Six miles in, he found a damp patch on the way into a hairpin, spun and dropped 40 seconds.

"We had the [hard] tyres crossed," said Ostberg, "we had had a hard at the front-left and one at the right-rear. It was difficult.

I'm really disappointed."

First had become third. Worse was to follow for Ostberg as he struggled with a car way too soft for the drying conditions as the afternoon unfolded. The contrast between the final service on Friday and Saturday night was marked. At the end of day one, he spent much of the evening bathed in the lights from television cameras. A day later, he was largely untroubled and left to ponder how he'd fallen to P5.

"Yesterday was a hard day as well," he said, "it's not like I was really in heaven last night. But it's tough today. I think we might have broken something on the car, I don't know – it just felt horrible."

Asked how much he was prepared to risk in pursuit of Latvala and that possible third place in the championship, Ostberg said: "I will push, but I have Christmas presents to buy in a month – so I'd rather not be paying for a crashed car!"

Latvala's day had started superbly, with a blistering time through the day's opener. Even he thought he might be overcooking it.

He said: "When I saw the last split said I was seven seconds up on Loeb, I thought: 'Maybe I should slow down. Am I going to crash?' But I didn't."

Latvala slashed the gap to 12.7s between the pair.

Loeb smiled a rueful smile at the start of the next stage.

"I think the car had too many espressos," he said.

"The car was nervous in there, jumping around. The set-up was not so good for that stage, but it should be better for this one..."

It was. And Loeb went quickest. And then again in the morning's final test. By lunch, 18.9s split the top two.

Latvala's focus had shifted to looking rearward. "Maybe it's more important to focus on staying ahead of Mads than catching Loeb. I have been fourth three times in this championship, fourth in the PWRC and fourth in the British Rally Championship – a third might be nice..."

Having talked at length about not fixating on Loeb and not taking any risks to catch him, the Finn undid



Fifth was great effort by Jarkko Nikara



It was a familiar end to Loeb's full-time career

REPORT WRC SPAIN



Breen once again showed his class

all that good work when he answered the question of whose splits he would follow through the afternoon.

"Loeb's..." he said smiling. The pursuer remained just that after another perfect afternoon from the leader, who would carry a 27-second advantage into the final day.

Would that be enough? "If it doesn't rain," was the reply, followed quickly by... "Will it rain?"

Latvala might have dropped time to Loeb on day two, but he built a bigger lead over countryman Hirvonen, who held an overnight third in his DS3.

Tanak continued his sublime run on this event with a fastest time on the final stage of the day – scuppering Sordo's chances of a clean sweep after the recovering Mini driver had won SS10 and SS11. Tanak was 14.7s behind Hirvonen and 2.6s ahead of Ostberg.

"It's going to be a great fight for the final day of the season," he said, relishing the

rallying equivalent to an end-of-term tussle with lads from the school across town.

POSITIONS AFTER DAY TWO

1	Loeb/Elena	3h16m14.1s
2	Latvala/Anttila	+27.0s
3	Hirvonen/Lehtinen	+1m14.1s
4	Tanak/Sikk	+1m28.8s
5	Ostberg/Andersson	+1m31.4s
6	Weijts/Degandt	+9m02.9s

LEG THREE (38.11 miles)

OVERCAST - AMBIENT TEMPERATURE RANGE ON STAGES 14-19C

After putting Loeb to the sword on day one, the weather gave the leader another scare on Sunday. On the final loop, the Citroen team sent its rally leader out with three hard and three soft tyres in or on the DS3 WRC. The theory was that the rain would be coming on the second run through the Santa Marina test. It didn't. Latvala took 10s out of Loeb, but it just wasn't enough. It was a scare. But you don't get nine titles and 76 wins without being able to deal

with the odd scare.

Latvala would have loved to end his Ford career with a win and the records will show he was just seven seconds away from doing that. But in the end, the peerless Alsatian was just too quick. Again.

Like Loeb, Hirvonen retained his position despite the attentions of a quickly closing Ford. Ostberg was another seven seconds back in fourth. Jarkko Nikara was an impressive fifth, benefitting from Tanak's late departure as the Estonian tried to make time back on his M-Sport team-mate.

One place behind Nikara was Breen, taking an exceptional sixth overall as well as confirming his place as the world's fastest Super 2000 driver.

And that was Salou, Spain and the season. Loeb remained the master but, as Breen would testify, this had been a year of the highest highs and the lowest lows.

Adios, 2012. ❄️

SWRC/PWRC

Breen and Guerra prove themselves a class apart

⤴️ Craig Breen and Benito Guerra celebrated world championship wins with dominant class victories on last week's Rally of Spain.

Breen's fourth SWRC win from seven starts was enough to cement the Irishman's second WRC title in succession, coming after he took the WRC Academy last year. Forced to give best to his main title rival, Proton's P-G Andersson on the first morning, Breen hit the front when Andersson's Satria broke a driveshaft. And he stayed at the front when the Swede broke the steering in his efforts to make the time back in the afternoon.

Swamped by friends and family, Breen said at the finish: "I can't believe I've done this, I just can't. I'm just a kid, how have I managed it? It's just incredible."

After his problems in the first half of the event, Andersson was forced to sit

and watch his rival win the world title he wanted for himself. Sportingly, as the event moved into the final morning, the Proton driver said: "I wouldn't want to win it now, it's for Craig – he's earned it and to lose it now would be too much for anybody. We will have a pint together tonight."

Andersson's co-driver Emil Axelsson took the co-drivers' SWRC title due to Paul Nagle joining Breen in the middle of the year.

Like Breen, Guerra took a middle course through the final day of the rally, risking absolutely nothing on his way to the biggest moment of his career. The Mexican's title was pretty much assured when his chief rival and Mitsubishi Lancer team-mate Michal Kosciuszko crashed off the road on Saturday morning. Marcos Ligato's Subaru led early on but dropped to second after developing serious brake trouble on day two.

The delighted Guerra said afterwards: "This is the best day of my life – the first Mexican to take a world rally title and we're number one in PWRC. Incredible."

Jose Suarez won the final Academy round of the season after Pontus Tidemand and Elfyn Evans suffered punctures. Evans' third place was his fifth straight podium. The Welshman had already secured the Academy title in France last month.



Guerra: the Seb Vettel of PWRC

RESULTS

Rally Spain, Salou, November 8-11

18 SPECIAL STAGES, 251.952 MILES

POS	NO	DRIVER/NAVIGATOR	CAR	TIME
1	1	Sebastien Loeb/Daniel Elena	Citroen DS3 WRC	4h14m29.1s
2	3	Jari-Matti Latvala/Mikka Anttila	Ford Fiesta RS WRC	+7.0s
3	2	Mikko Hirvonen/Jarmo Lehtinen	Citroen DS3 WRC	+1m46.8s
4	10	Mads Ostberg/Jonas Andersson	Ford Fiesta RS WRC	+1m56.4s
5	23	Jarkko Nikara/Jarkko Kalliolepo	Mini John Cooper WRC	+16m07.9s
6	32	Craig Breen/Paul Nagle	Mini John Cooper WRC	+18m10.4s
7	12	Chris Atkinson/Glenn Macneall	Mini John Cooper WRC	+19m14.7s
8	33	Per-Gunnar Andersson/Emil Axelsson	Proton Satria S2000	+20m16.1s
9	37	Dani Sordo/Carlos del Barrio	Mini John Cooper WRC	+25m40.6s
10	22	Evgeny Novikov/Ilka Minor	Ford Fiesta RS WRC	+25m46.6s

OTHERS

11	4	Petter Solberg/Chris Patterson	Ford Fiesta RS WRC	+26m05.6s
12	8	Thierry Neuville/Nicolas Gilsoul	Citroen DS3 WRC	+26m23.7s
17	34	Alistair Fisher/Daniel Barritt	Proton Satria S2000	+31m39.7s
21	26	Andreas Mikkelsen/Ola Floene	Skoda Fabia S2000	+38m56.2s

CHAMPIONSHIP TABLE

POS	DRIVER	PTS
1	Sebastien Loeb	244
2	Mikko Hirvonen	213
3	Jari-Matti Latvala	154
4	Mads Ostberg	149
5	Petter Solberg	124
6	Evgeny Novikov	88
7	Thierry Neuville	53
8	Ott Tanak	52
9	Martin Prokop	46
10	Sebastien Ogier	41

MANUFACTURERS' POINTS

1	Citroen Total WRT	453
2	Ford WRT	309
3	M-Sport Ford WRT	170

Starters/finishers: 70/52
Leaders: SS1 Latvala; SS2 Tanak;
SS3-7 Ostberg; SS8-18 Loeb

RALLYROUTE As usual, the rally was based out of the PortAventura theme park in Salou and included the WRC's only genuine mixed-surface event with gravel on Friday and asphalt for the weekend. There were two new stages for this season, the event opener and a seafront spectator stage in the centre of Salou.

INTERNATIONAL RACES & RESULTS
NASCAR SPRINT CUP
Phoenix (USA), Rd 35/36

QUICK RESULTS
→ Winner **Kevin Harvick**
→ Pole **Kyle Busch**
→ Laps led **Kyle Busch**
→ Points leader **Brad Keselowski**

RACE RATING ★★☆☆☆
Dramatic finish and some big championship implications

Harvick had been winless for a year



NASCAR SPRINT CUP PHOENIX (USA), NOVEMBER 11, RD 35/36

Harvick wins as Johnson smash dents hopes

KEVIN HARVICK WON A chaotic race at Phoenix that was marred by a series of accidents, including one that put a serious dent in Jimmie Johnson's hopes of winning a sixth NASCAR Cup title.

Harvick passed Kyle Busch, who had been the dominant driver for most of the afternoon, on a restart with eight laps remaining, and then held his advantage

at a green-white-chequered restart to secure the win.

"I gave the race away," said a disappointed Busch. "I just didn't pick the right lane [at the restart]."

The winner was involved in a late flash of controversy when his Richard Childress Chevrolet team argued that he had crossed the start/finish line before the yellows were triggered by Danica

Patrick crashing at Turn 4 with a lap to go, which would effectively have ended the race under caution. Replays showed that Harvick did not beat the yellows to the line, but Patrick's accident would prove to have more serious ramifications.

Her trip into the barriers had left the track streaked with oil, which went undetected by race control and left the cars to encounter it at speed on the final lap, triggering several spins that escalated into a full-blown pile-up on the finish line. Kurt Busch, who was one of the drivers involved, was taken to the medical centre but released shortly afterwards.

Penske driver Brad Keselowski was lucky to thread his way through the

chaos and finish sixth – a huge result on a day when main rival Johnson suffered a right-front tyre failure and slammed into the wall while running seventh with 77 laps remaining. The Hendrick man's misfortune leaves Keselowski with a 20-point lead going into this weekend's Homestead finale.

The other talking point from the race was an on-track clash between Jeff Gordon and Clint Bowyer that snowballed into a full-blown fight in the pitlane. Bowyer had made contact with Gordon earlier in the race, prompting Gordon to retaliate by putting Bowyer (and himself) into the wall later on. Bowyer's furious crew launched into a melee with

Gordon's team, and Bowyer then tried to continue the skirmish by charging into the paddock and seeking out Gordon at his team trailer before NASCAR officials intervened.

● Mark Glendenning

RESULTS

1 Kevin Harvick (Chevrolet Impala), 319 laps in 2h52m09s; 2 Denny Hamlin (Toyota Camry), +0.580s; 3 Kyle Busch (Toyota); 4 Kasey Kahne (Chevy); 5 Ryan Newman (Chevy); 6 Brad Keselowski (Dodge Charger); 7 Greg Biffle (Ford Fusion); 8 Kurt Busch (Chevy); 9 Paul Menard (Chevy); 10 Mark Martin (Toyota). **Points** 1 Keselowski, 2371; 2 Jimmie Johnson, 2351; 3 Kahne, 2321; 4 Clint Bowyer, 2319; 5 Hamlin, 2309; 6 Matt Kenseth, 2297; 7 Biffle, 2293; 8 Harvick, 2285; 9 Tony Stewart, 2284; 10 Jeff Gordon, 2281, 11 Martin Truex Jr, 2260; 12



Johnson hit the wall

Castrol EDGE
Rankings

CURRENT STANDINGS

- | | | | |
|---|-------------------------|---|--------|
| 1 | Sebastian Vettel | ◇ | 22,232 |
| 2 | Sebastien Loeb | ▲ | 20,327 |
| 3 | Fernando Alonso | ▼ | 19,105 |
| 4 | Mark Webber | ◇ | 18,447 |
| 5 | Lewis Hamilton | ◇ | 18,242 |

Ranking the world's best drivers.....

WHAT HAPPENED THIS WEEK

Brad Keselowski reached a new all-time high as he climbed to 13th. He closed on title rival Jimmie Johnson (8) and Denny Hamlin, who slipped to 12th despite finishing second at Phoenix. Kevin Harvick (31) gained five spots while Kyle Busch moved back into the top 20.

To see the full list, visit castroldriverrankings.com

INTERNATIONAL RACES & RESULTS

BRAZILIAN V8

STOCK CARS

Brasília (BR),
Rd 11/12

QUICK RESULTS

- Winner **Max Wilson**
- Pole **Thiago Camilo**
- Fastest lap **Camilo**
- Points leader **Caca Bueno**

RACE RATING

★★★★☆

Figueiredo's charge is the highlight of an entertaining Brasília race

REPORTS WORLD OF SPORT

BRAZILIAN V8 STOCK CARS BRASÍLIA (BR), NOVEMBER 11, RD 11/12

Wilson sets up seven-star finish

MAX WILSON LED HOME

Ricardo Mauricio in a one-two finish for the RC Chevrolet squad at the penultimate race of the season at Brasília last weekend.

Neither man looked like threatening Thiago Camilo for victory, especially after the polesitter tore away from the field during the early stages. But a puncture 13 laps in dropped the RCM driver down the field and left Wilson in a lead he would not relinquish.

Behind Wilson, who recorded his first V8 win since his title-winning 2010 season, Atila Abreu,

Giuliano Losacco and Mauricio scrapped over second place, a battle eventually won by Mauricio thanks to clever use of his 100bhp 'push-to-pass' facility and a superior pit strategy.

The drive of the race, however, came from Nono Figueiredo. The AMG Chevrolet man started 23rd after predicting a dry race and not using his boost during qualifying. He had 16 boosts to play with on Sunday, while those who'd used the extra power in qualifying had just four. He passed car after car to climb to third by the finish.



Poleman Camilo led Wilson at start

Rodrigo Sperafico and Luciano Burti both passed Abreu by the finish while Caca Bueo (Red Bull Chevy) saw his series lead reduced to just 10 points with 44 on offer at the double-points season finale after finishing ninth. Seven drivers can now win the title at Interlagos in a race that also carries a

winner's prize of £308,000.

Rubens Barrichello qualified eighth, but retired early with suspension damage. Tony Kanaan and Raphael Matos finished 19th and 23rd.

● Lito Cavalcanti

RESULTS

1 Max Wilson (Chevrolet Sonic),

41 laps in 41m43.118s; 2 Ricardo Mauricio (Chevy), +3.126s; 3 Nono Figueiredo (Chevy); 4 Rodrigo Sperafico (Peugeot 407); 5 Luciano Burti (Peugeot); 6 Atila Abreu (Chevy); 7 Daniel Serra (Chevy); 8 Ricardo Zonta (Chevy); 9 Caca Bueno (Chevy); 10 Valdeno Brito (Peugeot). **Points** 1 Bueno, 159; 2= Abreu, Serra & Mauricio, 149; 5 Wilson, 138; 6 Brito, 136.



Scott (1) passed Larson late on

NASCAR TRUCK SERIES PHOENIX (USA), NOVEMBER 9, RD 21/22

Scott grabs victory with late-race pass

A LATE-RACE PASS REWARDED

Nationwide Series regular Brian Scott with a Truck Series victory at Phoenix last Friday.

Points leader James Buescher set up a green-white-chequered finish when he suffered a blow-out and hit the wall with less than two laps to go, and Kyle Busch Toyota driver Scott made his move on Kyle Larson's Turner Motorsports Chevy at Turn 2 to set himself up for his first series win since 2009.

Buescher finished a lap down in 17th but retained his points lead over Ty Dillon, who was involved in one of the many accidents

that peppered the race. Nine cautions were needed during the evening, most of them for multi-truck accidents including the four-truck crash on lap 65 that accounted for Texas winner Johnny Sauter and multiple champion Ron Hornaday.

● Mark Glendenning

RESULTS

1 Brian Scott (Toyota Tundra), 153 laps in 1h44m49s; 2 Kyle Larson (Chevrolet Silverado), +0.666s; 3 Joey Coulter (Chevy); 4 Timothy Peters (Toyota); 5 Ryan Blaney (Dodge Ram); 6 Ryan Sieg (Chevy). **Points** 1 James Buescher, 777; 2 Peters, 766; 3 Ty Dillon, 765; 4 Coulter, 748; 5 Parker Kligerman, 740; 6 Matt Crafton, 727.

NASCAR NATIONWIDE SERIES PHOENIX (USA), NOVEMBER 10, RD 32/33

Sadler's hopes take a heavy hit

JOEY LOGANO TOOK A comfortable victory at Phoenix, while a late-race accident dealt a huge blow to Elliott Sadler's championship hopes.

Logano cruised to victory ahead of Joe Gibbs Toyota team-mate Brian Vickers to claim his ninth win of the season, but it was Sadler's accident that defined the race. He was sitting 12th with a lap remaining when he became caught up with Cole Whitt's car, slid backwards into the wall and then spun into the

oncoming car of Richard Childress team-mate Brendan Gaughan. The impact tore the front from Sadler's car and forced the race to be red-flagged.

Up to that point it had been a great recovery drive by Sadler, who'd been forced to start from the rear of the field in a spare car after crashing in qualifying. Reigning champion Ricky Stenhouse Jr crossed the line in third, giving the Roush Fenway Ford driver a 20-point buffer going into the season finale at

Homestead this weekend.

● Mark Glendenning

RESULTS

1 Joey Logano (Toyota Camry), 204 laps in 2h04m48s; 2 Brian Vickers (Toyota), +0.668s; 3 Ricky Stenhouse Jr (Ford Mustang); 4 Kyle Busch (Toyota); 5 Kasey Kahne (Chevrolet Camaro); 6 Austin Dillon (Chevy); 7 Michael Annett (Ford); 8 Brian Scott (Toyota); 9 Brad Keselowski (Dodge Challenger); 10 Danica Patrick (Chevy). **Points** 1 Stenhouse, 1212; 2 Elliott Sadler, 1192; 3 Dillon, 1187; 4 Sam Hornish Jr, 1105; 5 Annett, 1050; 6 Justin Allgaier, 1043.



Logano celebrates his ninth win of '12

The best track in the world

Edoardo Mortara is bidding for his fourth successive Macau victory this weekend. He guides *JAMIE O'LEARY* around a Chinese street track that drivers universally love

Read that headline again. It's not a statement that any racing driver makes lightly, but in the case of Edoardo Mortara he may have a point when talking about Macau.

The 25-year-old Italian won the fabled Formula 3 Grand Prix on the streets that wind their way around the former Portuguese enclave in 2009 and '10, and then added victory in the supporting GT Cup event

for GT3 machinery last year.

He's back this weekend, armed with an Audi R8 LMS ultra to take on arguably the best GT field ever assembled for the event, a line-up that includes Romain Dumas, Lucas di Grassi and Danny Watts.

Let Mortara be your guide around the 3.8 miles of asphalt that will this weekend be the centre of the motorsport world (with apologies to Austin, Texas).

LISBOA

PASS HERE

If you've done everything right on the straight section, you should be able to pass at Lisboa. It's definitely the best opportunity. The key is not to have got too close behind a car before the sweeps, because that just makes the car understeer and you have to back off. It's all about strategy.



HOSPITAL BRIDGE

DON'T CRASH

The scariest moment I ever had at Macau was in 2008. I'd just lost the lead of the F3 race to Keisuke Kunimoto and was trying not to let him get away, but then I had a big moment at the left-hander at Hospital Bridge, clipped the wall and bent the wishbones on the right front and rear. Macau is tricky enough with a perfect car, so you can imagine how terrible it was with damage. I was lucky to get to the finish in second, but that was my hope of winning gone.



MATERNITY

SKIM THE WALLS

You have to skim the walls everywhere you can. You won't get the laptime otherwise. One of the things that's most off-putting when you go to Macau first is that the barriers are painted yellow and black, and yellow is such a flashy colour that it's quite easy to get distracted by it, especially in the twisty sections like around Maternity Bend.



SOLITUDE

CONCENTRATE

It's such an intensive workout for your brain, because the track gets much more narrow on the mountain than down by the sea. The closeness of the walls makes your brain think you're going much faster than you really are, and you have to fight the temptation not to back off. It's most difficult during F3 warm-up, at 8am, because when you've got the sun in your eyes - and then out, and then in again - going up the hill, it's not so nice.



R BEND

F3 v GT

An F3 car is a joy to drive at Macau: lots of grip, minimal weight, easy to develop a nice rhythm and not too difficult to correct an error. With a GT I was expecting something less enjoyable, but with the Audi R8 I was impressed because you don't lose that much time to an F3. The big difference is you can't make a mistake. If you start to slide, you're gone, the extra weight meaning you can't get it back.



RESERVOIR/MANDARIN

HOLD ON TIGHT

I've driven Monaco in a GP2 car and it's boring by comparison. It's all first and second-gear corners and you can't transfer all that power you have to the road. Macau has a wonderful mix of fast corners on the shoreline and a twisty series of corners that all flow into one and really reward precision.



EDOARDO MORTARA'S MACAU CV

Year	Start/finish	Category
2007	26/10	F3
2008	1/2	F3
2009	3/1	F3
2010	1/1	F3
2011	1/1	GT

*Start denotes grid position for final

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The stakes are high

Who are the men to back in the F3 GP and the WTCC title shootout on the streets of gambling mecca Macau?

FORMULA 3 MACAU GP

A top-quality entry for the headline Macau Formula 3 Grand Prix means Daniel Juncadella has his work cut out to emulate Edoardo Mortara as a two-time winner of the event.

With a brace of European titles in the bag in 2012 (FIA and Euro Series), as well as victory in the Masters, the Spaniard is the first man since Takuma Sato in 2001 to simultaneously hold the F3 Triple Crown of Macau, Zandvoort and championship. Now he needs to emulate the Japanese driver by doing them all in the same calendar year.

The competition is ferocious, not least from his Prema Powerteam Dallara-Mercedes team-mates. Raffaele Marciello may be making his first visit to Macau, but has already won in style on street circuits at Pau and Norisring this year, while Hannes van Asseldonk was the top Macau rookie last year.

British F3 champion Jack Harvey makes the trip east, but is the only one of the six-driver



Juncadella is going for the F3 clean-sweep

superteam in Carlin's Dallara-Volkswagens never to have raced on the Asian streets. Among his team-mates, Antonio Felix da Costa is on a stunning roll of success, Felipe Nasr was runner-up last year and Carlos Sainz Jr won in Macau in Formula BMW.

Meanwhile, Japanese champion Ryo Hirakawa lines up in his

regular RSS Dallara-Toyota, while TOM'S – which has a stellar track record in Macau – draughts in British F3 runner-up Jazeman Jaafar alongside Yuichi Nakayama.

Others to watch include Mucke Motorsport's late-season form man Felix Rosenqvist and rookie team-mate Pascal Wehrlein (like

Marciello a street-circuit ace), while Fortec Motorsport – led by Felix Serralles and Alex Lynn – traditionally has great form on low-downforce tracks. And then there's Alexander Sims, with a Macau-spec Nissan engine that T-Sport reckons is pretty much the loudest F3 powerplant ever. *Marcus Simmons*

WTCC FINALE

Rob Huff's gripping season-long fight with his factory Chevrolet team-mates reaches its conclusion in Macau. The Briton was locked on points at the head of the standings with triple world champion Yvan Muller for over a month between the US round and Japan in October. But a controversial collision between Muller and third RML Chevrolet racer Alain Menu at the penultimate meeting in China has gifted Huff a sudden cushion of 35 points in the title race. Fittingly, in Chevrolet's final season of works WTCC involvement, all three of its drivers remain in contention.

The Macau bookies will have made note of Huff's outstanding record around the Macau Guia circuit when formulating the Briton's odds. Huff boasts pole position at Macau for three consecutive years, four wins in four years and a double victory in 2011. With just 55 points on offer, it would take a major upset to deny Huff a maiden title.

"The only strategy I have is to

try to get it done in race one," admits Huff. "If it drags on into the second race there is an obviously an extra risk."

An anguished Menu candidly voiced the view that his title chances were over in the wake of his accident in Shanghai, but the Swiss veteran remains Huff's closest challenger.

"I'm not the sort of person to wind up a situation," says Huff. "I just stayed out of the way and let [Yvan and Alain] deal with the accident. I got the impression that Yvan put his hand up and said, 'I made a mistake.' It is not ideal for them, but I can't not be happy about the way it worked out for me."

The Independents' title fight is spiced up by double points in Macau. Zengo BMW racer Norbert Michelisz, a Macau winner in 2010, holds a slender lead over Spanish rising star Pepe Oriola. Both will be wary of the challenge from revitalised veteran Stefano D'Aste, whose Chinese win double has upped the Italian's status to 'formidable threat'. ❖

Peter Mills

Briton Rob Huff has a mega record in Macau

MACAU WTCC TV SCHEDULE
FRIDAY NOVEMBER 16
 0730-0815 Eurosport LIVE WTCC Qualifying
SUNDAY NOVEMBER 18
 0015-0045 Eurosport LIVE WTCC Warm-up
 0300-0415 Eurosport LIVE WTCC Race 1
 0415-0500 Eurosport LIVE WTCC Race 2
 2100-2200 Eurosport 2 WTCC Highlights
MONDAY NOVEMBER 19
 0800-0900 Eurosport WTCC Highlights

MY SEASON ANTONIO FELIX DA COSTA

It was all-or-nothing for the Portuguese racer this year. Then Red Bull called



“Being a Red Bull junior was a big thing, but I was having fun and enjoying it because you never know when the chance might end”

Red Bull signed da Costa in June

Aside from my days in go-karts, this was my busiest season of racing. And that was something no one was prepared for at the beginning of the year. I started with a GP3 deal with Carlin, and by the end of the season I was driving a Red Bull F1 car! Crazy.

My deal with Carlin was for a full season, but it was going to depend on results a little. I told my father that if nothing happened with my career then I'd go back to school, or look into making money doing some GT racing. Then Red Bull came along; now I'm not even considering returning to school.

I was at the WTCC race in Portimao with Tiago Monteiro in June when Trevor Carlin told me that Helmut Marko [Red Bull motorsport director] was going to call. But I'd heard that two or three times before and it had never happened, so I tried not to think about

it too much. Then on the Monday I got a call from an unknown number, and it was Helmut. I went to see him a day later and things moved quite quickly.

In GP3 I was playing catch-up in the championship, and when I didn't score any points in Germany I forgot about the title. Then I was able to win some races, throw myself into some crazy overtaking manoeuvres and put some pressure on Mitch Evans. We got to Monza, and he retired from the first race while I was leading. If it had finished like that we would have been equal on points for the final race, and he would be starting from the back. Then my car became stuck in fifth gear and I was out. But that's racing; it was my only mechanical failure of the year. Mitch took the title because it is won across eight weekends, and he was better than us over the whole season.



Podium leaps in GP3 and FR3.5

My first two weekends in Formula Renault 3.5 in the middle of the season were difficult. But during the summer break we had a day of testing and I was able to experiment a little, and that was when it clicked. After that our worst result was a P5, and we outscored everyone from the moment I came in. I didn't know that at first, but it was cool.

Before the F1 young-driver test, I spent the Abu Dhabi Grand Prix weekend with Red Bull, listening, watching, learning and trying to get as much of a head start as I could. And it was a big help. To drive for two days with a world championship-winning team was a real pleasure. If I could go back six months and someone had told me that I'd be going to test for Red Bull, I would have told them to go away!

Being on the Red Bull Junior Team was a big thing. But I was having fun and enjoying it, because you never know when that sort of chance might end. ❄

DA COSTA'S CV

Born
August 31, 1991
From
Lisbon, Portugal
2012
3rd in GP3 (3 wins);
4th in Formula Renault 3.5 (4 wins); F1 test with Red Bull
2011 13th in GP3 (1 win); 8 races in Formula 3
2010 7th in F3 Euro Series (3 wins); 4 starts in GP3; F1 test with Force India
2009 Formula Renault NEC champion (9 wins); 3rd in Formula Renault Eurocup (3 wins)
2008 2nd in Formula Renault NEC (1 win); 13th in Formula Renault Eurocup; races in Formula Renault UK/Portugal winter series

Testing this year's Red Bull F1 car



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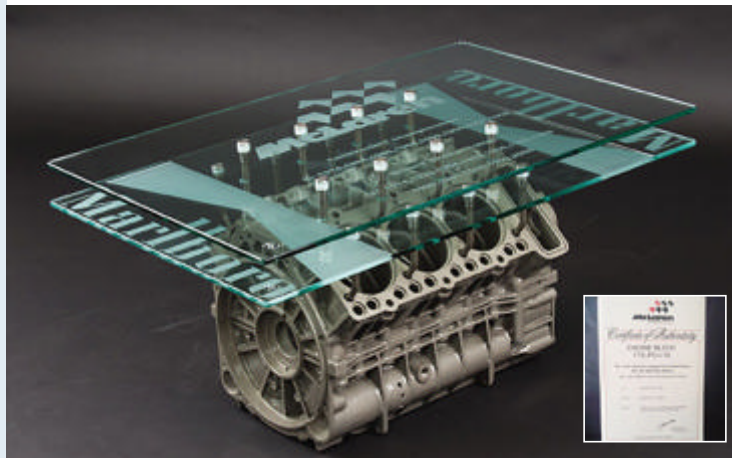
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Sennan ended the season with five race wins and five other podiums to his name, as well as three pole positions and five fastest laps. He also ended as one of the most consistent drivers in the series, being one of only two drivers not to retire from a single race all season.

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HRDC to revamp weak series

Move part of grand plan to avoid repeat of this year's losses



MGB50 did not maintain its strong start to 2012

» **THE HISTORIC RACING** Drivers Club will amalgamate three of its series, introduce membership fees and not run race meetings in 2013 in a bid to avoid a repeat of this season's losses.

Despite promising starts in 2011, Grand Touring Greats (for pre-1966 sub-1500cc GTs) and TC63 (pre-1964 touring cars) experienced falling grids this season. The new-for-2012 MGB50 also suffered a drop in support after a strong start.

The three grids will now be amalgamated to form HRDC Allstars, for which three 2013 outings are currently planned. The races are set to appear on the bill of a Vintage Sports-Car Club meeting, an Aston Martin Owners Club Racing event, and one other.

Although the club's Touring Greats category, catering for pre-1960 tin-tops, has been successful, it will now become a regular part of

AMOCR meetings. The HRDC will not run its own events in 2013 and, for the first time, will introduce membership fees.

WHY THE CHANGES?

While Touring Greats filled 86 per cent of its available grid slots in 2012, the other series were well behind, which meant the club lost money. TC63 managed 59 per cent, GTG 51 per cent, and MGB50 41 per cent, excluding the standalone Live TV outing at Mallory Park.

HRDC boss Julius Thurgood believes the figures are not financially sustainable.

"We're not out to make money, but there were too many shortfalls," he said. "If you're not getting around 80 per cent occupancy you're losing money. It's financial suicide."

"We've amalgamated the series in an attempt to keep them alive. We got a huge amount of commitment that

wasn't translated into entries. It was the busiest year in the UK this century, with the Jubilee and Olympics, and I think people said they couldn't do it. It's disappointing to have to amalgamate but we've done it before, like at MGLive, and raced successfully, because the cars have similar performance."

KEEPING OPTIONS OPEN

Despite the changes, Thurgood has not ruled out running his own meetings again beyond 2013, or separating his series out again if interest recovers.

"I'm not running my own events so we can regroup and keep Touring Greats in a good place," he added.

"They don't have anywhere else to race, which may be a contributing factor [in the series' success], and I think it's a good fit with AMOC."

"By the end of the year I may put on standalone races [for the other series] – there are cars out there."

WARNING TO OTHERS

Thurgood also believes that increasing circuit costs will present all clubs with difficult challenges in the near future.

"We can't offset costs by sponsorship because it's not there," he said. "It's not sustainable with current circuit prices."

"Unless people think outside the box I think you'll see a lot of casualties and I don't intend the HRDC to be one of them."

AUTOSPORT SAYS...

BEN ANDERSON
NATIONAL
EDITOR

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JULIUS THURGOOD HAS BEEN

around motorsport for a long time – and is a very successful organiser.

He's also a realist, and that's why he's going to amalgamate the HRDC's weaker grids and seek the support of third party organisers for 2013, rather than tread water on his own.

His warning to others is stark: "It's not sustainable with current circuit prices. Unless people think outside the box you'll see a lot of casualties."

One ex-racer (now running a car for his son) suggested to me recently that the entire financial model on which club racing is based at the moment needs reviewing. He tried to pin-point why the cost of racing has risen so sharply compared with 20-odd years ago when he was driving, and found the biggest single relative disparity (allowing for inflation etc) was in race entries.

He argues the circuits have settled on an easy revenue stream, by which they charge organising clubs the price necessary on hire to make their money – then the clubs just pass that cost on to competitors. He feels the entire system risks implosion if racers continue to bear the brunt.

The fear has to be (and Thurgood has surely seen it first-hand) that competitors will simply stop racing if it becomes too expensive. Then how will the clubs and circuits survive?

Our ex-racer's solution is to drive spectator numbers with promotion, thereby imploring circuits to make more money from punters, ease the pressure on clubs, and grow grids with lower entry fees. He even tried to buy a gate and promote a meeting himself, but found little appetite from the circuit in question...

Extra contact details

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GT Greats is one of the three amalgamated HRDC series



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Formula Renault BARC

Renault rivals clash in finale

Jack Aitken fights tough against Matthew Brabham, but still loses Winter crown

Aitken (left) and Brabham discuss details of their dice

THE FINALE OF LAST Saturday's Formula Renault BARC Winter Series ended controversially with a clash between winner Jack Aitken and Team USA Scholarship driver Matthew Brabham.

Fortec racer Aitken and Cliff Dempsey Racing driver Brabham clashed as they disputed the lead in the closing stages of the second race at Rockingham on Saturday.

Brabham started a damp race on slick tyres, while most opted for

wets. He rose rapidly up the order as the track dried and was lapping several seconds quicker than leader Aitken as the race neared its end.

The pair banged wheels several times, with Brabham spinning and dropping to third on the final lap as Aitken took the flag. However, Brabham was reinstated in second after officials realised the race should have ended a lap earlier than it did.

The stewards summoned both drivers and CDR boss Cliff Dempsey

considered protesting Aitken's driving but decided against it.

"It was a bit disappointing," said Dempsey. "The chief steward said Matt deserved to win the race and probably would have won it if it had been a regular-season race. Honestly, we could have protested the decision but that's not the way you like to win. Everybody saw how well Matt drove. He made his point."

Fortec team manager Steve Lynch conceded Aitken's defence had been

"rigorous" but said the controversy was a result of the race not being flagged in time.

"It should never have got to that point because it should have finished a lap earlier," he said. "Jack apologised to Matt and Matt retained second so it was a fair result in the end."

Brabham was not eligible to score in the series, so Aitken inherited bonus points for fastest lap but still missed out on the title to team-mate Seb Morris by one point.

Formula Renault Eurocup

Renault picks Eurocup squads

ORGANISERS OF THE FORMULA Renault Eurocup have revealed the 12 teams they have pre-selected for the 2013 championship.

Italian European Formula 3 squad Prema Powerteam and Swiss GP3 outfit Jenzer Motorsport have both secured a provisional return to the category, at the expense of British team Atech Reid GP and Spanish squad EPIC Racing.

Atech joins Italian outfit BVM Racing on the standby list, while EPIC has been dropped from the series entirely.

All of the pre-selected teams will have to confirm their wish to compete

LIST OF CHOSEN TEAMS

- Arta Engineering (F)
- Fortec Motorsports (GB)
- Interwetten.com Racing (A)
- Jenzer Motorsport (CH)
- Josef Kaufmann Racing (D)
- Koiranen Motorsport (FIN)
- KTR (B)
- MP Manor Motorsport (NL)
- Prema Powerteam (I)
- R-race GP (F)
- RC Formula (L)
- Tech1 Racing (F)
- Standby teams: 1. BVM Racing (I)
- 2. Atech Reid (GB)

in the 2013 Eurocup before the definitive entry list is confirmed on March 5 next year.

Each team will be permitted to run a total of three cars on the grid.

Rallycross

Knowles targets Euro campaign

ANDY KNOWLES EXPECTS TO compete in European Rallycross next season after being declared British Super1600 champion.

Citroen C2 driver Knowles, 26, miscalculated that he had lost the title after receiving a penalty for going off-track in the 2012 finale at Croft last month, but has now received confirmation from BRC organisers that he is champion.

Knowles said: "At AUTOSPORT International I did deals [with sponsors] all based on winning the British championship and then getting the budget to move up,

so thinking I had lost it at Croft screwed everything up.

"It's not easy to explain now that I won, but it's the end result that counts and now we're working hard for 2013. I'm going to pay more attention to points charts in future!"

Knowles has been confirmed as champion



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Aston Martin

Special Brands race meeting to celebrate Aston's 100th birthday

ASTON MARTIN'S CENTENARY

will be marked by a two-day race event at Brands Hatch next year.

Aston Martin Owners Club Racing will help organise the meeting on July 13-14, with the Saturday action on the Indy circuit and the Sunday events on the Grand Prix layout.

AMOCR's Duncan Wiltshire said: "We're still very much putting the plans together, but it would be remiss of us not to mark such an important point in the marque's history.

"The reason we are on the GP circuit



Brands will host Aston celebration in 2013

is so we can run full noise that day and get some of the modern race cars from the factory for demonstration runs."

Wiltshire also confirmed the meeting, which will be separate to the club's traditional annual St John Horsfall event, will include a special one-off Aston Martin race.

"We are planning a centenary race," he added. "The idea is to have all the older Astons - up to the 1960s Project cars - competing together. The point is to make it a festival atmosphere."

The centenary will also be marked at the Silverstone Classic, on July 26-28, along with the 50th anniversaries of Lamborghini and the Porsche 911.

The race programme has yet to be finalised, but is likely to include a similar mix of Formula 1, sports car, GT, and touring car machinery similar to what appeared in this year's Classic. The Group C/GTP series has already been confirmed on the bill.



Alfa beats Porsche in Rally Test by eight minutes

Paul Wignall and Mark Appleton took victory on the 11th Rally of the Tests, an event that recreates the RAC rallies of the 1950s. Wignall's 1959 Alfa Romeo Giulietta Sprint headed 51 survivors from 72 starters.

British GT

Predator Ferrari taken by thieves

THE FERRARI 430 SCUDERIA GT3

raced by Adam Wilcox and Phil Burton in British GT was stolen last week.

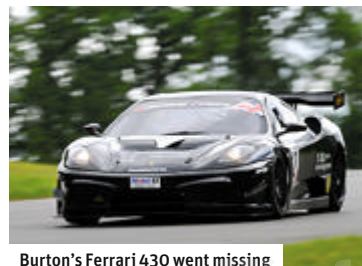
The black car, in which the pair contested nine of the 10 races in British GT3 this season, was housed inside a black PRG ProSporter trailer in a hotel car park on Norwich Road in Hethersett, Norfolk. Thieves broke off the hitch lock and stole the trailer and car on the evening of last Thursday, November 8.

The trailer was towed away by a nearly new, long-wheelbase white Mercedes Sprinter van.

The car wasn't in the care of the JMH Automotive team that ran it for the second half of 2012 at the time.

Norfolk police put out an appeal for information in their efforts to find the car and apprehend the thieves.

AUTOSPORT understands the Ferrari was found the following Tuesday, apparently unharmed and still locked up inside the abandoned trailer.



Burton's Ferrari 430 went missing

MARCUS PYE

HUMBLE PYE

The voice of club motor racing



Award finalists were closely matched

The scintillating testing phase of this year's McLaren AUTOSPORT BRDC Award at Silverstone last week was undoubtedly the tightest yet, an indicator not only of the quality of the six candidates but also of the equality of the Williams-designed 425bhp (500bhp with overboost) Audi-engined JPH1B Formula 2 cars, provided for the third successive season by Jonathan Palmer's MotorSport Vision organisation.

Candidates Jake Dennis, Jack Hawksworth, Josh Hill, Jordan King, Melville McKee and Josh Webster - whose ages range from 17 to 21 - earned their run-off places through impressive campaigns in Formula Renault and rotary-engined Star Mazda cars on opposite sides of the Atlantic Ocean. Nobody, however, anticipated them being so closely matched in the headline trials.

While we judges have become accustomed to car technology evolving, a live-timing facility was a fascinating aid for the first time. The ability to compare each driver's performances as they happened, on a smartphone or tablet, while observing from different vantage points, brought an exciting new element to the competition. Needless to say, more information, instantly, hasn't made our ultimate decision-making process any easier. Until we've analysed and

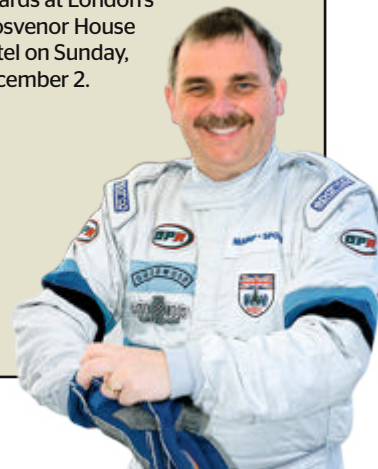
interpreted all the data the result appears too close to call. And the standard was high across the six.

As ever, the professionalism of the James Goodfield-led MSV engineering staff impressed the panel, chaired by BRDC President Derek Warwick, whose early circuit racing activities in Formula Ford I remember vividly. Fresh out of the short oval arena, in which he won the 1973 World SuperStox Championship, Derek's graduation to F3 - to which some of today's youngsters aspire for 2013 - was self-run and relied on instinct and feel, not computer traces.

The sport is very different today; indeed it has changed dramatically since David Coulthard was hailed as the inaugural Award recipient back in 1989. Coulthard's record of 13 F1 grand prix wins was only surpassed this season by '98 winner and 2009 F1 world champion Jenson Button's.

Before we reach our decision this time round, there is much F2 output to study, plus data from Mercedes-Benz DTM and McLaren MP4/12C GT3 runs to consider. Fortunately, we have a bit of time to mull everything over before it is ratified at the McLaren Technology Centre later this month. The 24th victor will be crowned at the AUTOSPORT Awards at London's Grosvenor House Hotel on Sunday, December 2.

“Until we have analysed all the data the 2012 Award result appears to be too close to call”



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MSA

MSA in driver coaching push

Governing body rolls out new qualification in strive to formalise instructor standards

THE MOTOR SPORTS ASSOCIATION has developed a new coaching qualification that it hopes will set new standards for motorsport instructors in the UK.

International sportscar racer David Brabham, BTCC ace Tom Onslow-Cole, Radical racer Bradley Ellis, ex-single-seater driver Tom Gaymor, and British rallying ace James Wozencroft have all completed the MSA Level 2 Coaching Award in motorsport.

The award has been developed by the MSA in association with accredited qualifications body 1st4Sport and is in line with the UK's national standard for sports coaching.

Onslow-Cole is now Level 2 qualified

MSA performance

director Robert Reid said: "We are moving motorsport in line with principles that are already well established within almost every other sport, and the creation of an accredited coaching infrastructure is going to be a great thing for UK drivers."

"Currently, anyone can set themselves up as a driver coach, probably on the back of being a reasonable driver themselves, but we all know that being good at doing something doesn't necessarily make you good at teaching it."

"We will be rolling out the Level 2 award in the course of 2013 to ensure that the principles of coaching start to permeate throughout the whole sport. These first coaches have been through the pilot delivery and are, in many ways, the trailblazers for the future."

IN BRIEF



Upgraded GT3 Nissan will test in Portugal

LEADING BRITISH GT SQUAD JRM is inviting prospective teams and drivers to test the upgraded 2013 version of the Nissan GT-R GT3 car at the Autodromo do Algarve later this month. The circuit has been hired for an exclusive two-day test on November 27-28.

THE MINI CHALLENGE WILL HOLD its annual sampler day at Brands Hatch on December 1. Prospective drivers will be offered 20-minute sessions in 220bhp turbocharged JCW cars for £150 each, and 130bhp Club Class Coopers for £100.

BRSCC CHAIRMAN BERNARD Cottrell has been appointed chairman of the Volunteer Officials Advisory Panel for 2013 by the MSA. The panel represents marshals' interests as well as those of other volunteers and officials. Cottrell will also sit on the Motor Sports Council to speak for volunteer officials.

ARNIE BLACK, OWNER OF THE Crossle Car Company for the past 15 years, handed over management of the concern to Crossle racer Paul McMorran earlier this week. McMorran owns the 1968 US Formula B-winning 12F, and the unique ex-John Watson 17F Formula 3 car.

ZOLDER CIRCUIT, VENUE OF THE Belgian Grand Prix in 1973, '75-'82 and '84, is planning to celebrate its 50th birthday next year with a dedicated historic race meeting on June 28-30. The event's content has yet to be determined.

DAVID DENYER, SENIOR CONTROL Systems Engineer at Force India F1, and formerly a development engineer at Racelogic, rejoined his old colleagues to finish fifth on his race debut in the Fun Cup 12 Hours at Snetterton last Saturday.

BEN AND ADAM UREN, WINNERS OF the Club MSV Team Trophy race at Brands Hatch with their Bab Motorsport SEAT Leon Cupra last weekend, are following the wheeltracks of their great uncle Jeff, who won the 1959 British Saloon Car Championship in a Ford Zephyr.



Uren brothers won MSV Team Trophy race



Fun Cup

Team O'Br wins Fun Cup 12 Hours



Fun Cup enduro gets underway

TEAM O'BR DEFEATED A 12-CAR grid, including two Mazdas, to win the Fun Cup 12 Hours race at Snetterton last Saturday.

Team O'Br, spearheaded by Eugene O'Brien, dropped from pole to sixth while Eco Racing led the first hour in the hands of Tom Mills.

That left O'Brien with work to do when he took the wheel for the second stint, and he responded with gusto, surging ahead and pulling out a gap of more than a minute.

But although team-mate Neil Walker (in his first outing for four years) further extended their advantage, a safety car period erased it in a matter of moments.

This brought Eco Racing back

into play as the mid-race momentum swung to and fro.

Eco reclaimed the lead on lap 75 with Paul Abraham at the helm, only for O'Brien to fight back in his second outing, blasting past into Riches on lap 131. Abraham returned the favour in his next turn to move ahead in the eighth hour, but just as he started to pull away brake problems pitched him into the barrier at Oggies, forcing an unplanned stop to remove the damaged front splitter.

Eco's misfortune handed the advantage back to Team O'Br and this time they held on to the finish, despite a late charge by GT racer Phil Keen at the wheel of the Sheradize UK/Solutions Racing entry.

BRDC Formula 4

Single-seater return for Bell

RADICAL CLUBMAN'S CUP

frontrunner Matt Bell will return to single-seaters next season in the new BRDC Formula 4 Championship.

The 22-year-old, who has previously made sporadic appearances in Formula BMW and Formula Palmer Audi, finished third in the one-make Radical sportscar series this year.

Bell will now join Jonathan Palmer's new initiative for 2013 and will be run by his father, Trevor.

"We're really looking forward to racing next year and can't wait to get our hands on the new car," said Bell Jr.

"Having little single-seater experience is going to make things a steep learning curve for us against some stiff competition, but our goal is to win and we're certainly not here to make up the numbers!"



Bell won races in Radical Clubman's Cup

NATIONAL RACES & RESULTS

BARC
ROCKINGHAM

FR BARC WINTER SERIES RESULTS

- Race 1 **Seb Morris**
- Race 2 **Jack Aitken**
- **Champion Morris**

“They race tougher over here than in the States!”

Matt Brabham had a culture shock in Corby



Cook's Evo 9 scored a victory



BARC ROCKINGHAM, NOVEMBER 10

Morris snatches Winter title

Morris (leading) did just enough for the title

JUST A SINGLE POINT decided the Formula Renault BARC Winter Series title in favour of first-year single-seater racer Seb Morris at Rockingham, after a highly unpredictable and thoroughly enjoyable championship finale.

Going into the event a mere two points adrift of Matt Mason, 16-year-old rookie Morris – who won both of the main season encounters at the Northamptonshire track in May – dominated the wet qualifying session to lock-out the top spot on the grid for each race.

Converting race one pole into a clear victory, despite having his lead eroded due to safety car interventions on two occasions, Morris bagged the fastest-lap bonus

points. These proved the determining factor in the Fortec driver claiming his third car-racing title in three years.

“The entire team worked together the whole weekend to prevail against some seriously talented opposition,” said the champion. “It’s the perfect way to end my first year in single-seaters.”

Although Morris carried a 10-point lead over team-mate Jack Aitken into the final round, InterSteps graduate Aitken almost managed to usurp Morris by claiming his maiden Formula Renault BARC win in only his fourth race in the category.

Aitken was pushed incredibly hard during the closing stages by an inspired Matthew

Brabham. The grandson of F1 legend Sir Jack had gambled on slicks, while the bulk of the grid – including Aitken – chose the safer option of treaded Michelins despite a rapidly drying circuit.

The last couple of laps became a bruising affair between the top two. Aitken’s robust defence almost resulted in Cliff Dempsey Racing driver Brabham – who had been lapping two seconds quicker than anyone else – hitting the wall in the braking area for Deene.

Twice more the duo got too close for comfort, leading to a final-lap spin for Brabham, as Aitken held on to win.

With Brabham ineligible to score points due to his international racing licence, Aitken picked up

the fastest-lap bonus; but fourth on the road for Morris (and so points for third) enabled the former Ginetta Junior champion to claim the crown.

Hong Wei Cao took a season’s best finish of second in race one, his maiden podium. Although erstwhile points leader Mason climbed the rostrum in the second encounter, a weekend battling set-up issues dropped him to third in the final standings.

Harry Woodhead took a surprise Ginetta Junior Winter Series title for HHC Motorsport by just three points from Ollie Chadwick, after superbly bouncing back from a qualifying excursion that prevented him setting a time.

Starting 11th for race

one (of three), Woodhead brilliantly fought his way onto the podium behind first-time pole position qualifier Oli Basey-Fisher (Douglas Motorsport) and winner Chadwick.

After going one better in race two – from 12th on the grid, to finish runner-up behind Andrew Watson (Douglas) – Woodhead sealed the title in style with victory in the finale.

In the BARC Sports and Saloon Challenge, which is contested by drivers representing the various BARC centres across the UK, Mitsubishi Evo 9 pilot Peter Cook won the opener for Darlington & District. In race two, Vauxhall Tigra driver Jeff Simpson earned the spoils for the South-East.

● Marc Orme



Woodhead took the winter crown for HHC

FORMULA RENAULT BARC WINTER SERIES (15 LAPS) 1 Seb Morris;

2 Hong Wei Cao +5781s; 3 Jack Aitken; 4 Chris Middlehurst; 5 Matt Mason; 6 Ivan Taranov. **Fastest lap** Morris 1m31.625s (76.22mph).

RACE 2 (14 LAPS) 1 Aitken; 2 Matthew Brabham +1.026s; 3 Mason; 4 Morris; 5 Cao; 6 Middlehurst. **FL** Brabham 1m22.562s (84.59mph).

POINTS 1 Morris, 113; 2 Aitken, 112; 3 Mason, 104; 4 Middlehurst, 95; 5 Cao, 82; 6 Cameron Twynham, 54.

GINETTA JUNIOR WINTER SERIES

(5 LAPS) 1 Ollie Chadwick; 2 Oli Basey-Fisher +0.514s;

3 Harry Woodhead; 4 William Palmer; 5 Elliot Paterson; 6 Jamie Chadwick. **FL** O Chadwick 1m57.714s (59.32mph).

RACE 2 (9 LAPS) 1 Andrew Watson; 2 Woodhead +5.739s; 3 Palmer; 4 O Chadwick; 5 Paterson; 6 Basey-Fisher. **FL** Paterson 1m46.707s (65.44mph).

RACE 3 (9 LAPS) 1 Woodhead; 2 O Chadwick +2.765s; 3 Paterson; 4 Palmer; 5 Basey-Fisher; 6 Watson. **FL** Watson 1m40.979s (69.16mph).

POINTS 1 Woodhead, 91; 2 O Chadwick, 88; 3 Palmer, 70; 4 Paterson, 67; 5 Basey-Fisher, 63; 6 Watson, 55.

BARC SPORTS & SALOON CHALLENGE (12 LAPS) 1 Peter Cook

(Mitsubishi Evo 9); 2 Robert Spencer (Stuart Taylor Locosaki) +3.909s; 3 Colin Simpson (Marcos Mantis); 4 David Botterill (Porsche 944 Turbo); 5 Lewis Smith (Peugeot 205); 6 Richard Smith (Vauxhall Tigra). **Class winners** Spencer; R Smith; Mark Smith (BMW E90 M3). **FL** Cook 1m38.112s (71.18mph). **RACE 2 (13 LAPS) 1 Jeff Simpson** (Vauxhall Tigra); 2 R Smith +0.478s; 3 Bill Addison (Caterham R400 Superlight); 4 Spencer; 5 Mick Robertson (Volkswagen Corrado GT); 6 C Simpson. **CW** Addison; Spencer; M Smith. **FL** Tommy Field (Vauxhall Tigra) 1m28.530s (78.88mph).

QUICK RESULTS

→ Lotus 6Hrs **Michael Lyons/Rob & David Fenn**
→ Vee Fest **Sam Oliveira**

“It just fired me up to get my head down and win the race”

Michael Lyons was undeterred by late contact

MSVR BRANDS HATCH, NOVEMBER 10-11

Rapid Lyons laps seal Danby glory

THE JOHN DANBY

Motorsport Elise won the Lotus Six Hours thanks to a series of fastest laps by Michael Lyons during the closing stages.

Despite a very wet track, Sean Edwards (Apex Europa) made a perfect start and immediately began to pull away from Lyons. Further back, Jamie Stanley (Fox Elise) and Clio Cup champ Jack Goff (CAST Exige) started a spirited scrap for third.

But it was all change after the second round of pitstops. Campbell Cassidy lost the lead soon after taking over the Apex car; he then went off backwards at Surtees, necessitating a lengthy additional pit visit.

Michael Schryver's Hoffmans Exige and Mark Fullalove's 2-Eleven led briefly until they fell off/pulled off respectively, so that left Stanley's Fox car out in front. However, he was under pressure from Lyons, who took the final stint after Rob and David Fenn.

Lyons soon sped past, but Stanley fought back and tipped the Danby Elise into a spin at Druids. Lyons quickly resumed, set fastest laps again and then seized the lead back at the same corner. Once in front

Lyons cruised on to victory as Stanley nursed his ailing car home in second, seven laps clear of Doug Setters in the Combat Exige.

The MSV Trackday Trophy event featured a superb solo performance from the winner, Henry Curtis, who had raced only once before. The Peugeot 205 driver led from Darren Langeveld's Clio until an early pitstop dropped him down to 18th.

After all the stops had played out, Curtis moved up to second behind Chris Hoey, in for Langeveld. On the final tour he cut inside the Clio at Graham Hill Bend, seized the lead and held on to win by less than a second.

Third-place James Reed might have been in the mix, too, but he was stymied by the lapped Porsche of Colin Brackley, which failed to keep up with the safety car.

Sunday's first Victor Meldrew handicap event provided a win for James Hebditch (VW Scirocco) in his first race of the season.

Mark Fowler (BMW M3) had to overcome a 35-second handicap, but he raced through to finish second.

Fowler was delighted with the result of the



Lyons survived assault from Stanley to win

second race: his car won the event in the hands of David Margalies, four seconds ahead of Vic Hope (Corrado).

The third race was literally a triumph of Hope over adversity, as his VW slowed dramatically on the last lap. But he still held on to beat Stephen Cassar's Proton.

In the MSV Team Trophy, Kevin Maxted's Gaz Shocks BMW set the pace from the start, chased by the similar Climax car driven by Marcos Burnett.

The Climax squad used the first pitstops to seize the lead so that

William Burnett (the father) now led Nick Starkey's Gaz Shocks car. On lap 34 Starkey nudged Burnett into a spin at Surtees, and both cars were collected by a backmarker. Starkey's car was too badly damaged to continue.

The incident meant that Ben Uren's SEAT inherited a healthy lead and went on to win from Mark Gillam's Nissan. David Thomas finished a close third.

Sam Oliveira started the Vee Festival Final from pole position and was never headed over 16 laps.

Newly crowned 750MC champion Paul Smith

stayed in touch until Druids, where he ran wide on the first lap; so Oliveira took his fifth festival win by a massive margin of 14 seconds over Smith.

There was plenty going on behind as Dan Pitchford overhauled Matthew Perks, Paul Taylor and Ian Jordan, before sweeping around the outside of Pete Belsey at Paddock to seize third place.

Belsey fought back strongly – indeed he briefly drew alongside Pitchford on the last lap – but at the flag he was still half a length behind.

● Kerry Dunlop



Oliveira remains unbeaten in five Vee Festival events

LOTUS SIX HOURS

(352 LAPS) 1 Rob Fenn/David Fenn/Michael Lyons (Elise);

2 Paul McNeilly/BJ Chong/Jamie Stanley (Elise) +50.654s;

3 Doug Setters/Chris Setters/Chris Headlam (Exige);

4 Phil Capstick/Jack Goff/Neil Stothert (Exige Cup);

5 Andrew Wright/Steve Quick (Elise); 6 Craig Denman/Andy Sandford (Elise).

CW Wright/Quick. FL Lyons

52.439s (82.92mph).

CLUB MSV TRACK DAY

TROPHY (36 LAPS)

1 Henry Curtis (Peugeot 205);

2 Chris Hoey/Darren Langeveld (Renault Clio)

+0.934s; 3 Richard Preece/James Reed (Ginetta G20);

4 Simon Barnard (BMW M3);

5 Richard Evans/Edward McKean (BMW 325);

6 David Thomas/Chris

Murray-Brown (Renault Clio). **CW** Barnard; Chris Webster/Matt Nicoll Jones (Mazda MX5); James Barton/Robert Mogford (Honda Integra R); Ben Roberts (Mazda MX5). **FL** Curtis

1m03.530s (68.44mph).

VICTOR MELDREW

TROPHY (15 LAPS)

1 James Hebditch

(VW Scirocco); 2 Mark Fowler

(BMW M3) +7.605s; 3 Alan Yearley (Proton Coupe);

4 Ian Clark (Ford Capri);

5 Gordon Streeter (Ford Anglia); 6 Stephen Cassar (Proton Coupe). **FL** Steve Rothery (Renault Clio)

54.144s (80.31mph).

RACE 2 (15 LAPS) 1 David Margalies (BMW M3);

2 Vic Hope (VW Corrado)

+4.804s; 3 Mike Collins (BMW M3); 4 Reece Jones (Honda

Civic); 5 Warren Gazzard (BMW); 6 Danny Cassar (MG ZR). **FL** Jody Halse (BMW M3) 54.907s (79.19mph).

RACE 3 (15 LAPS) 1 Hope;

2 S Cassar +3.317s; 3 Halse;

4 Jones; 5 Garry Barlow (Proton Coupe); 6 Glen Rossiter (Renault Clio).

FL Matt Seldon (BMW M3)

53.753s (80.89mph).

CLUB MSV TEAM TROPHY

(59 LAPS) 1 Ben Uren/Adam Uren (Bab SEAT Leon);

2 Steve Burke/Mark Gillam (Lizard Nissan 350) +3.548s;

3 David Thomas (Renault Clio); 4 George Wright/Jim Cameron (Air Supply Porsche 993); 5 William Burnett/Marcos Burnett (Climax BMW M3); 6 Mike Marais/Clint Compaan (SEAT Leon Cupra).

CW Burke/Gillam; Wright/Cameron; Matt Nicoll-Jones/

Mark Wania (Mazda MX5).

FL Mike Moss (BMW M3)

54.144s (80.31mph).

VEE FESTIVAL FINAL

(16 LAPS) 1 Sam Oliveira

(Sheane Jenvee); 2 Paul Smith (AHS Dominator)

+14.158s; 3 Daniel Pitchford (AHS Leastone); 4 Peter Belsey (Spyder Mk2); 5 Ian Jordan (Sheane Jordan);

6 Ben Miloudi (Ray Bowles 97).

FL S Oliveira 51.832s (83.89mph).

HEAT 1 (14 LAPS) 1 S Oliveira;

2 Jake Oliveira (Storm) +11.416s;

3 Belsey; 4 Smith; 5 Jordan;

6 John Stapleton (Leastone JHO02). **FL** S Oliveira 51.874s (83.83mph).

HEAT 2 (14 LAPS) 1 S Oliveira;

2 Smith +2.461s; 3 Pitchford;

4 Matthew Perks (GAC);

5 Paul Taylor (GAC); 6 Belsey.

FL Oliveira 52.021s (83.59mph).

REDEMPTION FOR MEADOWS

The ex-Porsche scholar made up for heartbreak in 2011 by lifting the Carrera Cup. By BEN ANDERSON



Meadows was usually ahead of the pack

Last year, **Michael Meadows** came within half a dozen laps of becoming Porsche Carrera Cup champion, until a cruel slow puncture robbed him of a top-six finish and handed James Sutton a second title.

But motorsport is good at dealing out disappointment – it's how you react to it that counts, and Meadows rebounded in the best way possible by taking the crown with a round to spare in 2012.

The result was the culmination of three years of hard graft, which began with winning the Porsche Scholarship for 2010. Meadows has got better year on year and began this one as the favourite on account of his near miss in '11. Five wins across the first eight races of the season (which could easily have been six but for a track-limits penalty in the season opener at Brands Hatch) were the bedrock of his success.

Qualifying is key in the Carrera Cup and was Meadows's strongest suit last season. He carried that into this year, sweeping the top spot for each of the first six races. By the midpoint of the year though, the competition began to ramp up and Meadows found the going tougher. After taking his fifth victory at Oulton Park in June, he didn't win again until the penultimate round of the season at Silverstone...

PORSCHE CARRERA CUP GB FINAL STANDINGS		
Driver (Team)	Pts	Wins
1 Michael Meadows (Redline)	320	6
2 Ben Barker (Parr)	282	5
3 Sam Tordoff (Parker)	274	4
4 Jonas Gelzinis (Juta)	259	1
5 Rory Butcher (Celtic)	254	2
6 Daniel Lloyd (Parker)	202	1

Richard Plant (Parker) also won a race.

In the meantime, several others staked a claim to be best of the rest. The star man for much of the second half of the season was **Ben Barker**. The ex-Australian F3 champion made a couple of guest outings in the Carrera Cup GB last year (dovetailing these with a race-winning campaign in the Aussie Carrera Cup) and returned for his first full season with Parr Motorsport.

Things took a while to click for this one-man band, but a breakthrough podium at Snetterton in August presaged a fantastic run of five straight poles and victories, from Knockhill to Silverstone via Rockingham, as Barker got on top of his qualifying strategy and became the form man. This purple patch allowed him to shade Team Parker Racing's top boy **Sam Tordoff** for the championship runner-up spot.

This was a strong second season in the category for ex-Clio Cup racer Tordoff, who superbly beat Meadows to pole and two wins at Snetterton in August, and was mighty in the wet at the Brands GP finale.

The other man to star in the rain at that final meeting was **Jonas Gelzinis**. For a while the Lithuanian was next best in the title race behind Meadows, thanks to a super-consistent run of eight podiums from the first 10 races. But that solitary – if sublime – Brands win was one of only three further visits across the second half of the season, which meant he slipped to a distant fourth in the points. Some of that (getting excluded for driving into Pro-Am1 champ **Ahmad Al Harthy** at Snetterton) was his own fault, some

(such as the engine problem that ruined his second race at Knockhill) was not.

Ex-Scottish Formula Ford champion **Rory Butcher** (a maiden double winner at Croft), Porsche Scholar **Daniel Lloyd** (mesmeric on slicks in the wet at Thruxton) and **Richard Plant** (chief beneficiary of Meadows's penalty at Brands) were the other race winners in a competitive year for the category. Witness the return of reigning British GT champion **Glynn Geddie** (who left mid-season after failing to trouble the podium), the arrival of ex-factory Aston Martin sportscar driver **Andy Meyrick** (one podium in 10 races) and a late comeback from reigning champ **James Sutton**, who subbed for Geddie and finished second at Silverstone but was otherwise fighting to make the top six. ❄

THREE WHO STOOD OUT



1. BEN BARKER

Fantastic first full season in the Carrera Cup GB for this ex-British Formula Ford racer. Took a while to hit his stride, but was almost unplayable once he did. By then, Meadows was out of reach.



2. MICHAEL MEADOWS

The former Porsche Scholar was unlucky to miss out on the title last season and fully deserved the crown this year. Dominant early-season form left the rest playing catch-up.



3. SAM TORDOFF

Just edges Gelzinis and Butcher on account of taking more victories than they did this year. Went from a one-time podium finisher in 2011 to a four-time race winner in 2012.

WHAT'S LUCK GOT TO DO WITH IT?

A fair bit, it seems, as mechanical trouble denied Paul Rivett. *By BEN ANDERSON*

Bad luck is an overused excuse in motorsport, but **Paul Rivett** can feel justified in using it to explain why he didn't win an unprecedented fourth Renault Clio Cup title in 2012.

The category's most successful driver (38 victories and counting) won six times (the most of any driver), but failed to finish three of this year's 16 races, and in a season that featured no dropped scores (on account of a truncated calendar designed to reduce costs) it was more important than ever to keep bringing the car home.

Rivett held his hands up for one DNF: clipping the Knickerbrook tyre stack and losing second place in race one at Oulton Park in June. But the other two were down to mechanical failures on his Colin Stancombe-run car. The first (a steering breakage while leading the season opener at Brands) left him playing catch-up; the second (a broken throttle cable in the first race of the season finale – also at Brands!) effectively ended that chase.

By contrast, the man who beat him to the title – first time champ **Jack Goff** – reached the end in every race this year. The Pyro youngster only won two races, and finished off the podium more often than on it, but was always fast (as a run of four straight poles at Snetterton and Silverstone shows) and only twice finished outside the top six.

It was this superb consistency that crowned him a worthy champion, but there's no denying that with just one fewer retirement (or retention of the two-dropped-scores points system used before 2011) Rivett would have celebrated a fourth title.

The only man with a better finishing record than champion Goff was third man **James Dixon** – the worst results of his year being four sevenths. He achieved his best finish yet in the points table, but failed to add to his tally of wins. A move from multiple title winner TCR to ambitious young squad Scuderia Vittoria over the winter didn't really work out, and Dixon was

back with TCR from round four at Oulton. That he scored each of his five podiums over the second half of 2012 suggests it was the right move, but this was still an underwhelming year for a man who won four times in '11.

The driver who filled Dixon's seat at Vittoria enjoyed a much better time. **Stefan Hodgetts** is a known quantity at this level and always goes well in the Clio Cup. Funding from the new KX Academy helped keep him on the grid and he repaid the faith shown in him by winning twice first time out at Oulton. He got into some unnecessary scrapes with title contender Goff in the next round at Snett, then was off the pace at Rockingham (thanks to suspension damage and a suspect ECU), but finished the season on a high with two more wins at Brands Hatch.

Westbourne's **James Colburn** (twice at Thruxton) and 20Ten's **Josh Cook** (both at Silverstone) also won races. Cook somehow claimed the rookie title, despite having done six races in Clios in

THREE WHO STOOD OUT



1. PAUL RIVETT

A silky-smooth driver and the class act in Clios. Won more races than anyone else and can count himself unlucky not to have claimed a fourth title. Deserves a BTCC chance.



2. JACK GOFF

Fantastic consistency guided him to the crown in his third season in the Clio Cup. Super-quick over one lap and showed great maturity to bring it home in the sodden Brands GP finale.



3. STEFAN HODGETTS

Won 40 per cent of the races he started and took seventh in the points despite missing the first three rounds. You wonder where he'd have ended up if he'd contested the full season...

2010, while Colburn was a lowly ninth in the overall standings, having been a title contender in '11.

Of the rest, former Ginetta Junior racer **Adam Bonham** became a regular top-six runner in his second season, while Pyro team-mate **Josh Files** (of Thoroughbred Triumph fame) showed great pace – particularly at Brands – and probably should have won a race.

Others to show well were Fiesta graduate **Mike Bushell** (within 0.4 seconds of denying Hodgetts in the final race at Brands) and ex-Mini ace **Ant Whorton-Eales**, who races superbly at times but hasn't mastered qualifying and still gets into too many scrapes. ❁

Goff fought Rivett (right) for Clio title



RENAULT CLIO CUP UK FINAL STANDINGS		
Driver (Team)	Pts	Wins
1 Jack Goff (Pyro)	373	2
2 Paul Rivett (Stancombe)	354	6
3 James Dixon (Scuderia Vittoria/TCR)	330	0
4 Adam Bonham (Pyro)	297	0
5 Josh Cook (20Ten)	287	2
6 Josh Files (Pyro)	268	0
Other wins to Stefan Hodgetts (SV) 4 & James Colburn (Westbourne) 2		



Return to TCR bore fruit for Breeze

Breeze at last

Ex-Formula Renault champion finally nailed a Ginetta title. *By MARC ORME*

For one of the most emotional championship victories of 2012 it was impossible to look beyond the Ginetta GT SuperCup success of TOCA-package stalwart **Carl Breeze**, who sealed the title at his and Total Control Racing's fourth attempt.

Overtaking what appeared to be an insurmountable 118-point deficit to **Tom Sharp**, a lead the IDL racer had established after just three weekends, Breeze secured the champion's trophy during the final race of the year – before poignantly dedicating the success to his late sister, Sarah, who tragically lost her life the year after he won the 2001 Formula Renault UK title.

For Sharp, the season delivered a serious case of déjà-vu. Making a storming start, as he did the year before, the early pacesetter won the first five races and although reigning G50 Cup Champion **Tom Ingram** ended Sharp's winning streak with victory in the sixth race of the season at Donington, the championship leader instantly returned to winning ways with a hat-trick at Thruxton.

Breeze, who began the season with Tollbar Racing, switched back to TCR – with whom he had finished runner-up the previous two seasons – in time

GINETTA GT SUPERCUP FINAL STANDINGS		
Driver (Team)	Pts	Wins
1 Carl Breeze (Tollbar/TCR)	719	5
2 Tom Sharp (IDL)	714	11
3 Tom Ingram (JHR)	658	6
4 Andrew Richardson (Richardson)	469	1
5 Colin White (CWS)	402	0
6 Hunter Abbott (Century)	386	0

Other wins to **Mark Davies** (Richardson) **2. Jake Hill** (Tollbar) **1 & Nathan Freke** (Century) **1**

for Oulton Park and the move proved to be the turning point of his year.

Although JHR Developments' Ingram grabbed two wins in Cheshire, Breeze secured his first of the season during round four at Croft as his reinvented campaign began to gather momentum.

Jake Hill, who replaced Breeze at Tollbar, started the second half of the season at Snetterton with his maiden success in the G55 class, but another win for Breeze, followed by two more at Knockhill, further boosted his title bid.

Knockhill was notable for the return to action of 2009 champion **Nathan Freke** at the wheel of one of his own Century Motorsport G55s. Competitive throughout, Freke fended off former arch rival Breeze for a win.

Bagging more than 100 points north of the border, the Scottish race meeting was a key moment in the season for Breeze, as Sharp was only able to take a best of four. Ingram, meanwhile, took a pair of runner-up spots in the first two races but his title challenge was dealt a cruel blow in race three when a horrifying startline shunt wrecked his car and resulted in badly bruised legs.

Regaining full fitness for the trip to Rockingham, Ingram hit back in style with two wins while Breeze ate further into Sharp's ever-shrinking points lead with two podiums – Sharp having been forced to retire from the opener following a tangle with **Jamie Orton**.

Silverstone and Brands Hatch, the final two venues of the season, delivered two new winners in the form

of **Andrew Richardson** and **Mark Davies**. Richardson, who enjoyed a strong end to the campaign, finished the year fourth in the standings despite non-scoring at Donington and Oulton.

Davies, who dominated the G50 Cup with 14 wins – off the back of the Ginetta G40 Challenge title in 2011 – stepped up to the headline G55 class for the series finale and showed the established runners the way with two wins from three races at Brands GP.

All eyes, of course, were on the main title battle and three podiums for Breeze gave him the crown by five points. The stars had already aligned for the TCR man though, when a heart-broken Sharp was unable to contest race one because of driveshaft failure. ❧

THREE WHO STOOD OUT



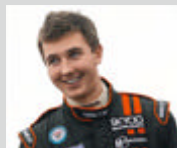
1. CARL BREEZE

Winning the title looked impossible after the first three rounds but Breeze dug deep, used his experience and, after returning to TCR, produced a memorable fightback to pip Sharp at the post.



2. TOM SHARP

On his day the quickest driver in the series, and achieving twice as many wins as anyone else speaks for itself. Mid-season dip, not dissimilar to 2011, made the difference in the end.



3. TOM INGRAM

Although a third car-racing title in three years – after winning Ginetta Junior in 2010 and the G50 Cup in 2011 – wasn't possible, KX Akademy-backed Ingram was an expected potent force.

Robertson rides the Junior rollercoaster

Last year's runner-up soaked up the pressure to win Ginetta Junior title. *By MARC ORME*

With tremendous resolve and a true never-say-die attitude, 15-year-old **Charlie Robertson** overcame a series of knockbacks to claim a well-deserved Ginetta Junior title after a very tense, and often fraught, three-way battle with **Sennan Fielding** and **Niall Murray**.

Despite a season packed with incident, HHC Motorsport driver Robertson proved his quality over the course of the 20-race campaign with six victories and seven other podiums.

Beginning the year as favourite, having ended his 2011 debut second to Seb Morris, things looked to be getting off to the perfect start for the Surrey-based Scot. But a puncture cost him victory in race one at Brands and set the scene for a rollercoaster year.

Hitting back with victory in race two, Robertson then finished second to early points leader Murray during round two's opener at Donington Park – a race blighted by questionable driving standards and a multi-car pile-up.

Feelings ran high after the incident, with some in the paddock beginning to question running with slick tyres – something newly introduced into the category for 2012. So displeased was 2011 Winter Series champion **George Gamble**, he chose to withdraw from the championship with immediate effect after his car was written-off.

Although leading to some less-than-favourable column inches for the series, some fantastically close action during the remainder of the season went a long way to undoing the negative impact of the Donington incident. Plus, with the MSA ruling that under-16s will be prevented from racing on slick tyres from next year, the furore surrounding the issue is becoming a distant memory.

Controversy at Donington reared its head again in race two, when contact between Murray and Robertson boiled over when the Irishman tagged the rear of his rival's car at the foot of Craner Curves, putting Robertson out. Fielding went on to bag his maiden win of the

season, following on from his first 2012 podium the day before.

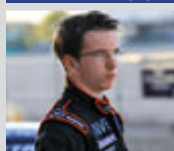
For eventual champion Robertson, the next event at Thruxton went far more smoothly, with a dominant pair of wet-weather victories moving him to the top of the standings for the first time. However, winning doubles for Murray and Fielding, at Oulton Park and Croft respectively, followed.

Rookie revelation **Pepe Massot**, who chalked-up four overall podiums during the first half of his debut season in cars, properly announced his arrival after the lengthy two-month summer break by taking a sensational outright victory in the opening encounter at Snetterton.

Fearless and incredibly quick in equal measure, the Spaniard went on to take another win during the penultimate weekend at Silverstone, which helped carry him to fourth in the standings and easily the best of the rookies.

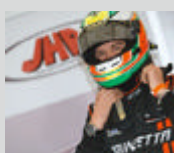
Back among the experienced top three, Robertson returned to the top of the podium in the second Snett race

THREE WHO STOOD OUT



1. CHARLIE ROBERTSON

After finishing his rookie campaign in 2011 as runner-up, 15-year-old Robertson had to go one better this year and he didn't disappoint despite some serious bad luck during the season.



2. SENNAN FIELDING

With five wins, only one fewer than Robertson, Fielding was a real contender for the title. He claimed second in the championship due to Niall Murray's collection of expensive penalty points.



3. PEPE MASSOT

Undoubtedly the surprise package, and easily the best of the rookies, the Spaniard earned his first podium in round two at Donington and went on to claim two outright and 11 Rookie Cup victories.

and added a popular double on home soil at Knockhill to move back to the top of the table. At the next two events though, Rockingham and Silverstone, two more new faces came to the fore with **Ollie Chadwick** and **Andrew Watson** each claiming a maiden win.

Going into the final two races on the Brands Hatch GP circuit, Robertson led Fielding by 25 points on dropped scores and was able to seal the title with fourth in race one – two spots ahead of his main rival. Murray had the largest overall total, but too many visits to the clerk of the course meant 21 costly penalty points, which dropped him to third in the final table. ☼

Robertson took a crucial double win on 'home' soil at Knockhill



GINETTA JUNIOR FINAL STANDINGS

Driver (Team)	Pts	Wins
1 Charlie Robertson (HHC)	507	6
2 Sennan Fielding (JHR)	481	5
3 Niall Murray (Douglas)	468	5
4 Pepe Massot (Hillspeed)	395	2
5 Andrew Watson (Douglas)	367	1
6 Harry Woodhead (Beacon/BOMAG)	351	0

Ollie Chadwick (JHR) also won a race.

YOUR SAY

What you think of the motorsport news of the past week



Silverstone's seat of the problem

Having been to Silverstone for F1 for four years on the bounce now, my husband and I are not going in 2013. Coping with the mud was fine. But we're fed up with forking out for a three-day grandstand ticket with only 'roving access' to grandstands 'not guaranteed' on the Friday and Saturday.

If I pay £340 for a seat in a grandstand for three days, I expect to be able to get in. I feel unpatriotic not supporting my national race, but if I do return, it will be only on the Sunday to a guaranteed seat – which means I miss out on all the fun of camping/general atmosphere etc.

Meanwhile, we're heading to the Spanish and Italian Grands Prix, where we've had fabulous guaranteed seats.

Amanda Longhurst, by email

AUTOSPORT.COM

TOP FIVE ON OUR WEBSITE

1. F1 DRIVERS WARNED OVER LANGUAGE
2. FERNANDES TO STEP DOWN FROM CATERHAM
3. McLAREN RECKONS HAMILTON HAD REGRETS
4. RIVALS SAY VETTEL WAS LUCKY IN RACE
5. MAGNUSSEN FASTEST ON OPENING DAY

AUTOSPORT+

TOP STORY ONLINE

F1'S RISK OF FUTURE IRRELEVANCE

To read this exclusive feature and many others like it, log on to autosport.com/plus and choose which package you'd like. A month will cost £5.50, a year £46. Includes access to Forix – the ultimate stats website.

WIN!



ROAD ANGEL VANTAGE

This week's star letter will receive a Road Angel Vantage – a dedicated safety camera and blackspot locator that displays the legal speed limit of every road you drive, automatically and wirelessly updating its database every few minutes as you drive. For more details on Road Angel visit www.roadangelgroup.com Please ensure that your full address is included on all correspondence.

CORRECTIONS AND CLARIFICATIONS

● Apologies to Daniil Kvyat, who did not win this year's Formula Renault NEC title, as we wrote on p21 last week, but the ALPS crown instead.

EDITORIAL CONTACT mail@autosport.com

This magazine's race

reporting is considered the best in the business, but, in my opinion, with one omission; along with the huge amount of information in the race results, could you please endeavour to find room to include a reminder of the method of points scoring for each of the multitude of race series covered.

I wonder how many of your knowledgeable readers can recite the points scoring system for the BTCC, for example. As this wonderful season is almost at an end, perhaps you would make a

resolution to consider it for next year.

Brian Winstone
Saffron Walden, Essex

We'll see what we can do. In the meantime, points scores are listed in our season reviews – ed

Richard Williams, writing in

The Guardian, tells of a novel way that F1 teams use to stop sensitive radio transmissions from being given TV air time. They ensure "an obscenity forms a prominent part of the conversation".

Mike Rushton
Little Budworth, Cheshire

Why was Red Bull allowed

to gain an advantage as a result of a 'punishment'? Surely the car should still be under parc ferme rules and should not have had the option to start from the pitlane in Abu Dhabi.

Gary Plato
By email

For a car that's been

disqualified from qualifying to be able to have set-up changes is wrong. Vettel got such an advantage that finishing in the top six was never going to be a problem.

Chris Blades
By email

Sebastian Vettel pay driver?

Drivel (Letters, November 8). Lewis Hamilton was no different with McLaren. In fact, all drivers have backing – Vettel, Hamilton etc got backing because of talent.

Vettel had the talent and wanted success. He should not be placed in the same bracket as a pay driver. It was never a question of pay first and ability later.

He has rewarded the confidence placed in him, and is a very worthy world champion.

BJO'Shea
Fleet, Hants

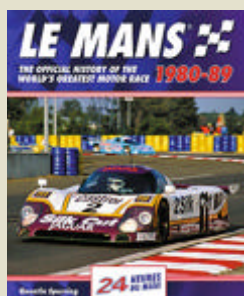
THE LATEST GEAR

Desirable new releases for motor racing fans: books, DVDs, models, art and gifts



CARRERA DIGITAL SLOT RACING
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Recreate the Sebastian Vettel/Fernando Alonso/Lewis Hamilton battles of Formula 1 2011 with Carrera's latest digital slot-racing set. The 1:32-scale set-up allows you to race all three cars at once, with the 6.9m of circuit (you don't have to run it in Aston Martin-grille shape!) featuring two lane-change sections for added wake-up calls.



LE MANS 1980-89 BOOK
£45 (978 0857 3312 81)
haynes.co.uk

The fourth in former AUTOSPORT editor and sportscar racing guru Quentin Spurring's decade-by-decade Le Mans 24 Hours histories covers the 1980s and recounts authoritatively the halcyon days of Group C. The key moments, significant milestones and best visual memories are all here.



RAIKKONEN LOTUS 1:43
£54.99
autosport.com/shop

Attention model collectors: you'll need this miniature replica of Kimi Raikkonen's Lotus-Renault E20 now the real thing is a grand prix winner. Spark's 1:43-scale model is based on the Finn's Monaco GP car, complete with a driver figure sporting a James Hunt retro helmet design and Angry Birds logos.



JACKIE STEWART T-SHIRT
£26.95
retroformula1.com

With the official blessing of three-time F1 world champ Sir Jackie Stewart himself, this latest portable creation from the best purveyors of retro F1 clobber in the business is crafted in 100 per cent cotton and comes in sizes S-XXL. Check the website for ordering details, while lusting over the other gear.

HOT ON THE WEB THIS WEEK

YOUTUBE: ONBOARD AT MACAU WITH SEBASTIAN VETTEL



SEARCH FOR: MGP – Guia Circuit – F3 Lap (2:28)
Ride around the Macau Guia circuit with a teenaged Sebastian Vettel in a Carlin Dallara during his second visit to the legendary street race. Just a few months later he made his F1 debut – with Sauber-BMW in the US GP at Indianapolis...

WHAT'S ON...

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



Macau hosts the blue-ribbon F3 Grand Prix

UNITED STATES GRAND PRIX

Formula 1 World Championship

Rd 19/20

Austin, USA

November 18

formula1.com

F1 returns to America for the first time in five years and Sebastian Vettel could wrap up a third straight drivers' title.

NASCAR SPRINT CUP

Rd 36/36

Homestead, USA

November 18

nascar.com

WORLD TOURING CAR CHAMPIONSHIP

Rd 12/12

Macau, China

November 18

fiawtcc.com

MACAU GRAND PRIX

Non-championship

Macau, China

November 17-18

macau.grandprix.gov.mo

V8 SUPERCARS

Rd 14/15

Winton, Australia

November 17-18

v8supercars.com.au

FORMULA NIPPON

Non-championship

Fuji, Japan

November 17-18

f-nippon.co.jp

SUPER GT

Non-championship

Fuji, Japan

November 17-18

supergt.net

AUTOSPORT SOAPBOX

In the first of a new series, our staffers look at what they love – or hate – in our sport. BY KEVIN TURNER



What do 1997-spec Michael Schumacher and 2012's Robin Frijns have in common? You can probably guess. Both were the most impressive drivers of their respective seasons and both spoiled it all thanks to clashes with their title rival in the finale.

I admit to wanting Schuey to win the 1997 F1 title; he performed near-miracles in the F310B against a sometimes underwhelming Jacques Villeneuve in the superb Williams FW19 and seemed a more worthy champion. Right up to lap 48 of the European GP, that is, when his desperate move on a charging Villeneuve left me desperately hoping the Williams would get to the end.

Fast-forward 15 years and Frijns was the exciting Formula Renault 3.5 rookie against GP2 exiles Jules Bianchi and Sam Bird. In arguably the series' best season ever, it was hard not to like the new talent that had thus far been overlooked by F1 teams. And then came the contact with Bianchi that made Frijns champion.

Moments like these might grab headlines, but they are not good for



Schumacher got thrown out of 1997 F1 standings

the sport. Great drivers have to know how to lose as well as win, but the FIA and race stewards are reluctant to teach people lessons.

Of all the title clashes over the years, Schuey's was the only one that got 'serious' punishment: he lost second place in the standings. But would the FIA have done the same if the move had worked and he'd become champion?

I'm not so sure: just look at Suzuka in

1990, Adelaide in 1994 or that Formula Renault 3.5 finale at Barcelona this year. If it means changing the champion, there is a reluctance to properly punish.

And it's not a case of not being sure who is at fault. As with most incidents, apportioning blame can be tricky, but with title clashes there should be an added air of suspicion. Stewards at Barcelona agreed Frijns was in the wrong and handed him a 25-second penalty: right decision,

meaningless punishment. He wouldn't have cared about losing sixth place in the race, as the title was assured.

It can no longer be an excuse that championships don't have sufficient punishments in their rules armoury, either. This sort of thing has been around long enough that every serious series should have a contingency.

It'd be nice to think that drivers could sportingly and morally police themselves and some can, but it's clear many don't. Modern drivers are too used to testing the limits. The stakes are so high that the right thing to do can often get buried.

Which is why those governing the sport need to step in. It's not just to make sure championships are settled in a satisfactory and fair way, it's also about sending messages to junior drivers.

If Ayrton Senna invented the professional motorsport foul and Schumacher made it a strategy to be called upon when required, somebody else needs to make it clear that it's not acceptable. It's not cricket and, more importantly, it's not motorsport.

Television

THURSDAY NOVEMBER 15

0725-0800 [Eurosport](#)
Inside WTCC
1830-1930 [Sky Sports 3](#)
Racemax
1855-2100 [Motors TV](#)
NASCAR Nationwide: Phoenix
1900-1945 [Sky Sports F1 LIVE](#)
US Grand Prix: Drivers Press Conference



WTCC finale hits Macau

FRIDAY NOVEMBER 16

0730-0815 [Eurosport LIVE](#)
WTCC Macau: Qualifying
1445-1650 [Sky Sports F1 LIVE](#)
US Grand Prix: Free Practice 1
1845-2050 [Sky Sports F1 LIVE](#)
US Grand Prix: Free Practice 2
2235-2340 [Motors TV](#)
WRC Spain: Highlights

0415-0500 [Eurosport LIVE](#)
WTCC Macau: Race 2
0600-0700 [Sky Sports 3](#)
Racemax
1650-1750 [Motors TV](#)
WRC Spain: Highlights
1730-2215 [Sky Sports F1 LIVE](#)
US Grand Prix
1805-1900 [Premier Sports](#)
NASCAR Sprint Cup: 2012 Highlights
1900-0000 [Premier Sports LIVE](#)
NASCAR Sprint Cup: Homestead
2100-2200 [Eurosport 2](#)
WTCC Macau: Highlights
2225-0025 [BBC1](#)
US Grand Prix Rerun

SATURDAY NOVEMBER 17

0355-0425 [Channel 5](#)
Motorsport Mundial
0830-0925 [ITV4](#)
Motorsport UK
1445-1610 [Sky Sports F1 LIVE](#)
US Grand Prix: Free Practice 3
1650-2100 [Motors TV](#)
GrandAm: Season Review
1700-1945 [Sky Sports F1 LIVE](#)
US Grand Prix: Qualifying
1855-2100 [Motors TV LIVE](#)
NASCAR Nationwide: Homestead

MONDAY NOVEMBER 19
0240-0335 [ITV1](#)
Motorsport UK
0800-0900 [Eurosport](#)
WTCC Macau: Highlights
0900-1000, 2000-2100 [ESPN Classic](#)
F1 Retro: 1975
1005-1105 [Motors TV](#)
WRC Spain: Highlights
1900-2000, 2230-2330 [Sky Sports 3](#)
NASCAR Sprint Cup: Homestead
Highlights

SUNDAY NOVEMBER 18

0015-0045 [Eurosport LIVE](#)
WTCC Macau: Warm-up
0300-0415 [Eurosport LIVE](#)
WTCC Macau: Race 1

Online

AUTOSPORT+

Coming up in our premium web content this week

These are on offer in Texas this weekend



FORMULA 1 RETURNS TO AMERICA

AUTOSPORT's F1 team analyses the key aspects of the inaugural GP at Austin, and the potential conclusion of a season-long fight between Sebastian Vettel and Fernando Alonso. Can the Spaniard take the title down to the final round?

WHAT TO LEARN FROM BUTTON

Glenn Freeman argues young drivers could learn a thing or two from Jenson when it comes to on-track battles.



THE 10 BEST OF INDYCAR IN 2012

Our IndyCar reporter Mark Glendenning explains his top 10 driver picks.



REVVED UP OVER WHAT'S ON THE BOX

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

Brian Pattie offered some criticism after Phoenix brawl



BOXING. IT'S NOT AS popular as it once was. Myriad licensing bodies creating endless world champions. There's a heavyweight division in which the two best fighters refuse to meet up. And there's Audley Harrison.

One of Ernest Hemingway's "true sports" has seldom been in worst shape. But that's not because people don't love a good punch-up. Oh no. NASCAR's huge popularity stems from a freak snowstorm and a good ol' fashion brawl between Cale Yarborough and Donnie and Bobby Allison

following a collision in the 1979 Daytona 500. And 33 years on, little has changed.

"He's [Jeff Gordon]... turning Clint Bowyer into the wall, collecting Joey Logano," deadpanned commentator Marty Reid. "Almirola slides in. Late laps retaliation."

A mass brawl soon broke out between his pit crew and Bowyer's – to a huge cheer from the crowd...

"Mayhem in the late laps at Phoenix," said Reid, without a hint of surprise.

It was an outrageous incident. Bowyer still had a shot at the title until then, yet there was barely a hint

of condemnation from the commentary box. The contrast to the shoeing Romain Grosjean got for accidentally nerfing Mark Webber at Suzuka could hardly have been starker.

Not that the crowd cared. When Bowyer leapt from his car and sprinted off to Gordon's motorhome for some retribution, they were on their feet like Ali was hammering into Frazier in the *Thrilla in Manila*.

Any criticism came from Bowyer's crew chief Brian Pattie: "It's kinda crazy that the champion [sic] will take you out like that. It's a fricking shame that this team works hard every week and shit like that happens."

Apologies soon followed. Terrible sportsmanship: fine. Violence: fine. Swearing: won't somebody please think of the children! The world's truly gone mad. *Revved Up*

"It was an outrageous incident with barely a hint of condemnation from the commentary box"

THE WEEK IN PICTURES

Our lensman pounding the beat. From South America to Spain, and a fire in Arizona



BEST SERVED CHILE'D
How does a Formula 1 car end up in a Santiago vineyard? Red Bull and David Coulthard out promoting again



FIERY DANICA CRASHES OUT AT PHOENIX
Patrick's oil-dumping shunt caused mayhem for everyone else



CATALUNYA CROWD THRILLER
Saudi Arabian Yazeed Al-Rajhi entertains all with his stunts on the way to third in the SWRC class at Rallye Catalunya

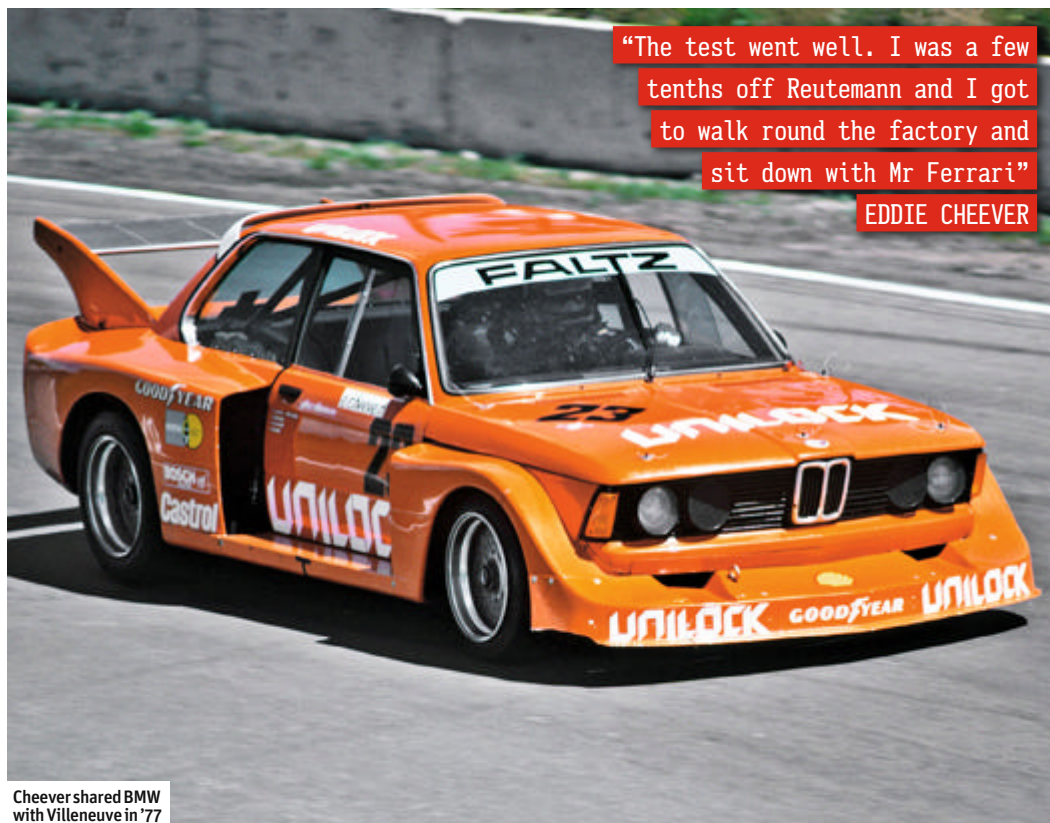
TONY TAKES STOCK IN BRAZIL
IndyCar star Tony Kanaan finished 19th on his stock car debut at Brasilia. Fellow series debutant Rubens Barrichello retired



NEXT WEEK US GRAND PRIX REPORT EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW FROM F1 STATESIDE **DON'T MISS IT!**

FROM THE ARCHIVE

Eddie Cheever on his – and his son's – test with Ferrari, aged just 19



“The test went well. I was a few tenths off Reutemann and I got to walk round the factory and sit down with Mr Ferrari”
EDDIE CHEEVER

Cheever shared BMW with Villeneuve in '77

THIRTY-FIVE YEARS BEFORE FERRARI HANDED

19-year-old Eddie Cheever his recent prize test at Vallelunga, the Scuderia had tested his father – also 19 at the time – at its Fiorano facility. It was, as the elder Cheever puts it, a rare moment of serendipity.

But it was also more than that; it was the 35th anniversary of Cheever's decision to walk away from the Scuderia. He had been given a contract by the Italian squad for the 1978 season, only for Gilles Villeneuve to then be given his own deal. It was the French-Canadian who ended up winning the race for a full-time seat, and a legend was born. Cheever, driven by youthful impetuosity, decided he would break with Ferrari and find his own way into F1.

“I had actually driven with Gilles before – first when we both competed at Pau, and then sharing a BMW 320 at Mosport (where they finished as class winners). He was very quick, undoubtedly.

“I had been doing well in F2 around that time, and had been getting calls from someone saying they were from Ferrari. I thought it was a prank from a friend, so I kept putting the phone down.

“Eventually it was sorted and I went up to meet them. I signed a contract before testing for five days. It was very

intense, but it was also a massive highlight of my life.

“The test itself went well – I totalled one car trying to take a corner flat on day three, but on the final day I was given a set of the new Michelins Ferrari was testing and was just a few tenths off Carlos Reutemann. And when I wasn't testing I got to walk around the factory and also had a two-hour sit down with Mr Ferrari. I was very lucky.

“Of course, Gilles was given a deal and for me that was so frustrating. You look at things very differently with 54-year-old eyes, rather than when you were 19. I felt like I could do no wrong – I was quick in everything, and I wanted to be racing in F1. Ferrari wanted me to do a year testing, doing lots of laps, but I wanted to race so I said no.

“I don't regret it, but after Ferrari I wanted to get into F1 so badly that I took anything – it was a bit messy and I kind of fell off the face of the earth. It wasn't until Tyrrell took up a pre-contract on the final day that my F1 career started in earnest to be honest.

“Now serendipity has it that my son tested, not just with Ferrari, but at 19 too. A lot of fuss is made of it, and it's great that Ferrari offer this prize, but he now has the reality-check of going back to the lower formulas and needing to win. He has the humility of that, and hopefully the fact I have lived it makes it a lot easier too.”

THIS WEEK IN...



NOVEMBER 12 1954

AUTOSPORT CELEBRATED THE repeal of the 'Red Flag Acts' and the emancipation of the UK motorist with a special red cover this week in 1954.

The Parliamentary acts had controlled the use of mechanical vehicles in the latter stages of the 19th century, but in 1896 the law finally allowed motorised vehicles to travel on highways at a speed limit of 14mph.

To celebrate the concession a rally was organised between the London and Brighton Metropole hotels, with the first official winner, Leon Bollee, making the 60-mile trip in 3h44m35s. The rally became an annual event and in 1954 the RAC Veteran Run, as it became known, attracted a record 223 vehicles, the majority of which were from the pre-1905 era.



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PIERRE DIEUDONNE

■ British Formula 3 ■ Snetterton ■ June 15, 1975 ■ March 753-BMW ■ Pivotal race for first-year F3 racer



Dieudonne threads the March through Russell

THIS EVENT WAS THE MOST important of my career, maybe not the greatest all-out race but it was certainly the most influential.

That season was my first in Formula 3 and really the first time in my career that I had a 'proper drive'. I was with the Bang & Olufsen Team Michel Vaillant. Brian Lewis ran the operation and they also had a team in F2 that year. It was a nice set up and very professional which, after many years of hand-to-mouth racing, was nice for me. We were up against talents like Gunnar Nilsson and Alex Ribeiro in the works March team, Danny Sullivan (works Modus) and Patrick Neve (works Safir), so some serious competition.

The Toyota Novamotor engine was the dominant force that year but the BMW units were coming on strong in their first season. A month prior to the Snetterton race, my team heard that BMW had a new development engine and tried to get it for the biggest race of the year at Monaco. There was some resistance from BMW because we were an unknown quantity at that stage and I had only competed in four F3 races. Instead, they gave it to Freddy Kottulinsky for his Modus – he was more experienced. At Monaco I was quicker than

"I could match Nilsson's pace but was thinking, 'I've destroyed one tub, got a warning from the team and now I can get a great result, if I keep out of trouble'"

Freddy in qualifying but had an electrical issue in the heat and didn't make the main event. Still, it made the BMW people take notice. They gave us the engine for the Swedish GP support at Anderstorp. On the way to Sweden I stopped at Schrick, the BMW tuners, to pick up the engine. I had it on the seat of my hire car all the way to Anderstorp. Motorsport logistics were different in those days! There

was an installation problem so we could not fit it. Just as well, because in qualifying I destroyed the car!

I arrived for the next race at Snetterton, which after Monaco and Anderstorp felt pivotal.

This time we had the engine fitted and could really show what we were about. Ribeiro took pole and I was seventh. Nilsson was just ahead of me in fifth. It rained just before the start and it was delayed

while we all changed to wets.

Ribeiro crashed on the first lap – it was the usual very wild first few laps of an F3 race. Suddenly I found myself in second just behind Gunnar. I could match his pace – he was struggling at some corners as the rain had stopped and the wet tyres were going off. I was thinking: 'I've already destroyed one tub, got a warning from the team and now I can get a great result, if I just keep calm and out of trouble'.

I could see Gunnar was going to defend the position aggressively. That, added to the fact it was so slippery off-line made the decision for me. I came second. The team were delighted and it was my best result in F3, which meant Frank Williams, Ken Tyrrell and Max Mosley would take notice.

Of the top eight drivers in that year's championship table, seven made it to F1 (Nilsson, Ribeiro, Neve, Sullivan, Eddie Cheever, Larry Perkins and Ingo Hoffmann). I was in that eight and the only one not to make it to F1.

Maybe if I had gone for it, my career might have taken a different path. But I did what felt right at the time and sometimes in racing that is what you have to do. ✪
Pierre Dieudonne was talking to Sam Smith

IN PROFILE



PIERRE DIEUDONNE COMPETED IN Super Vee, F3 and F2 in the 1970s before a touring car switch yielded the '76 European title for BMW and a Spa 24 hours win for Mazda in '81. Equally adept in sportscars, he took three Le Mans IMSA class wins for Mazda from 1987-'89. After 'retiring' in the early 90s, he took up management roles with Mazdaspeed and ORECA. Recently, Dieudonne (65) has helped oversee Audi Sport Belgium Team WRT's Blancpain Endurance Series title.

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** 17.1% of drink drive accidents are between hours of 5am and 1pm (Source: Dept. for Transport, Road Accidents and Safety Annual Report 2010)

* 4 Pints of Abbot Reserve contain 14.8 units of alcohol (Source: Greene King) and each unit takes 1 hour to leave the body (Source: NHS). Therefore 14.8 hours after 9pm the alcohol will have passed from the body.



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