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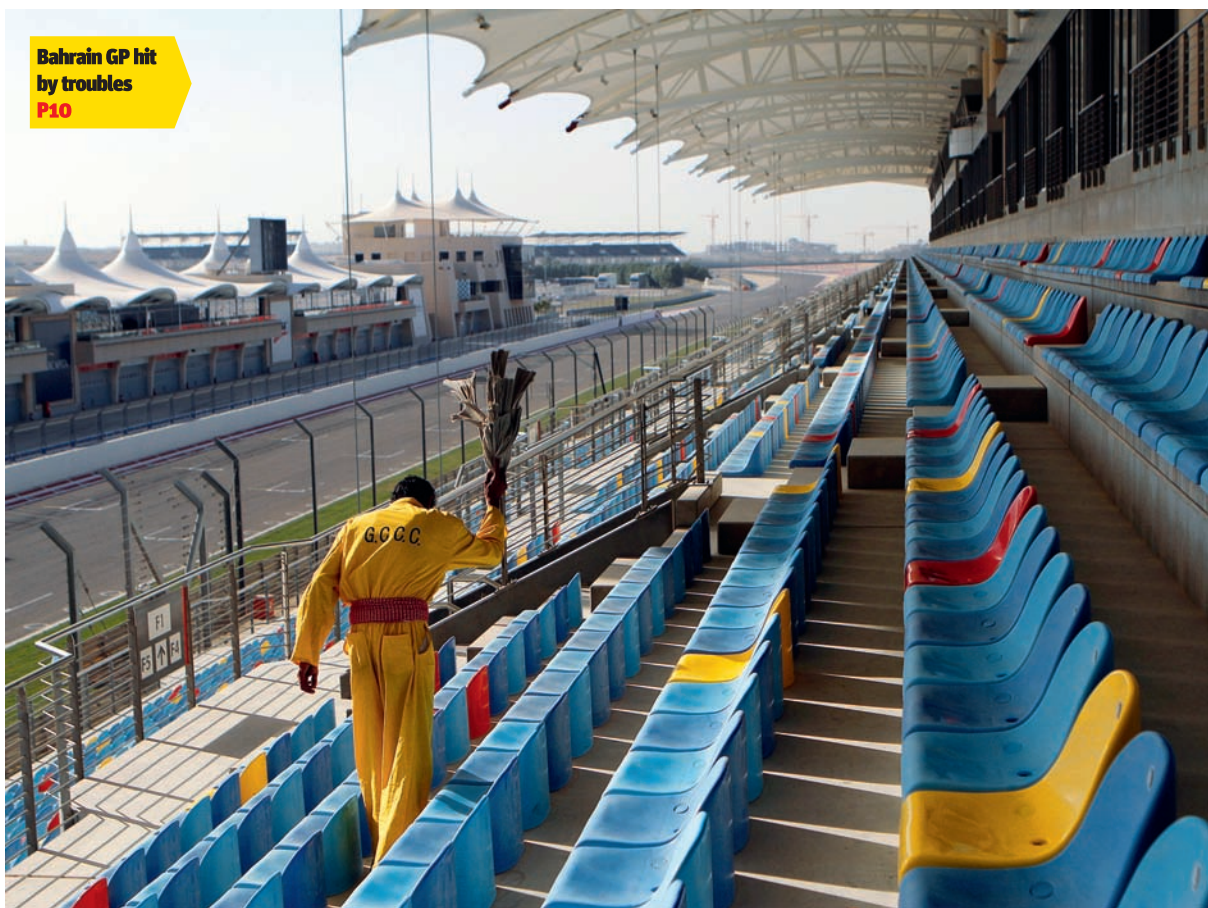
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"That's an Asia series race so it's not terribly important. We didn't want to take chances so we pulled it"

BERNIE ECCLESTONE ON THE 'OTHER' BAHRAIN CANCELLATIONS - THE GP2 RACES. WE'RE SURE THE TEAMS WILL FEEL WELL-LOVED AFTER THAT

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16-17/04
30/04-01/05
18-19/06
02-03/07
20-21/08
17-18/09
08-09/10

Motorland Aragon
Spa-Francorchamps
Nürburgring
Hungaroring
Silverstone
Paul Ricard
Catalunya

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Hail the heroes who stunned NASCAR rivals



whose golden era seemed well behind them.

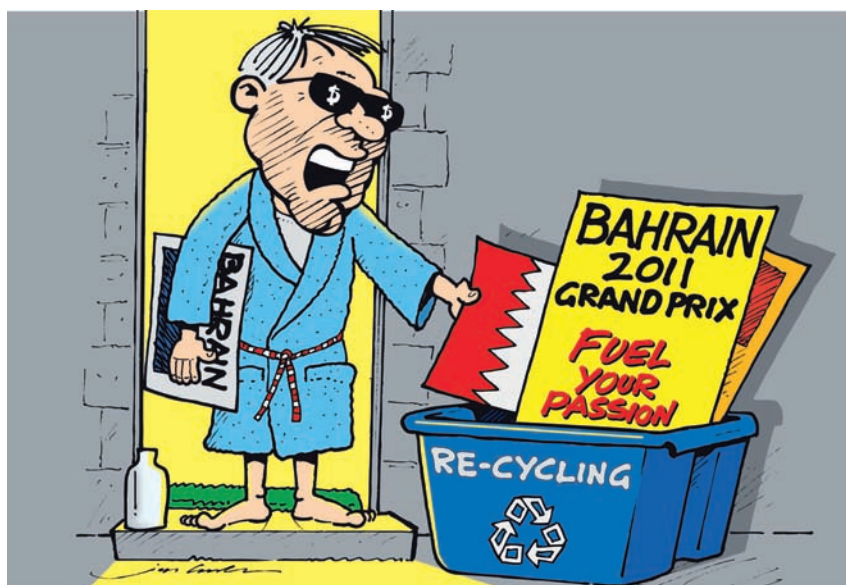
It's not the first time there's been an upset in the 500 (Derrike Cope's victory in 1990, for example), but Trevor Bayne is a talented 20-year-old with a massive future. AUTOSPORT salutes him and the Wood Brothers on their amazing achievement.

Robert Kubica's future is far from clear but, as he tells us in this issue, he will work as hard as he can to return to full fitness and hopefully reclaim his race seat at Renault. We wish him well.

● The cancellation of the Bahrain GP has resulted in AUTOSPORT delaying its bumper, in-depth 2011 Formula 1 season preview. This will now run in the March 17 issue. Don't miss it!

Andrew van de Burgt, editor

BAMBER'S WEEK





FORMULA 1

Going back in time in Montreal

A spot of nostalgia this week, to tie in with our McLaren MP4/4 story. Alain Prost leads Ayrton Senna and the Ferraris at the start of the 1988 Canadian GP. And check out Eddie Cheever's unusual line mid-pack in his Arrows...

McLaren MP4/4/Brabham BT55, p34

Picture: LAT



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Cancelled Bahrain GP won't be rescheduled

Planned season opener is highly unlikely to find a later slot in this year's calendar. By EDD STRAW



The Bahrain Grand Prix is unlikely to return to the Formula 1 calendar this year, despite talks to reschedule the cancelled race.

The crown prince of Bahrain, Salman bin Hamad bin Isa Al-Khalifa, who is also the promoter of the race, issued a statement on Monday announcing that his country would not hold the F1 season opener on March 13. This followed a week of unrest in the island kingdom.

"We still hope to host an F1 grand prix in this calendar year – we are already in negotiations," said Al-Khalifa after Monday's announcement. "We hope that we can reschedule the race later this year and be a valuable addition to the F1 calendar."

But Bernie Ecclestone remains equivocal on the possibility of a replacement date being allocated to the race. AUTOSPORT understands that the race contract does not compel F1 to head to Bahrain later in the year. As it was Al-Khalifa



Crown prince remains hopeful of a GP in 2011

that called off the race, the sport will still be paid the race-staging fee, meaning that there is currently little financial incentive to find an alternative date.

With the remaining 19 races creating a packed calendar (see panel) and teams' resources already stretched, there is likely to be opposition from the teams to slotting Bahrain into the schedule without further financial reward. It would also fall to the FIA to approve such a decision, with the sport's governing body making clear that it "is responsible for the international calendar" in its statement on the race cancellation.



Circuit won't be lit up by F1

Political situation
led to cancellation

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P17 MARK HUGHES' VIEW

F1's calendar conundrum

The reduced 19-race F1 calendar is now spread over just 36 weeks, leaving only 16 without a grand prix taking place. This will make fitting in a rescheduled Bahrain Grand Prix a huge challenge.

There is a two-week gap between the Chinese and Turkish grands prix in May, but with uncertainty remaining over the situation in Bahrain it would be too early to reschedule the race here with any confidence. From then until the end of July, the calendar is log-jammed with the European season and June's visit to Montreal.

The three-week gap between Hungary and the Belgian Grand Prix in the last weekend of August is the obvious candidate, but this period encompasses the pre-arranged factory shut down. It is also one of the few chances that team personnel have to take time off, and there would be strong resistance to shoe-horning in a visit to Bahrain.

After the Belgian and Italian races, the sport has a series of visits to Asia, leaving the only potential remaining slots at the end of the season.

The weekend between the Indian and Abu Dhabi GPs has been mooted, but making the dash to Bahrain from the subcontinent is regarded as a big risk by F1. Extending the season is unlikely, so this leaves the weekend between Abu Dhabi and the Brazil finale as the only obvious candidate.

2011 schedule		
March 25-27	Australia	
April 1-3		
April 8-10	Malaysia	
April 15-17	China	
April 22-24		
April 29-May 1		
May 6-8	Turkey	
May 13-15		
May 20-22	Spain	
May 27-29	Monaco	
June 3-5		
June 10-12	Canada	
June 17-19		
June 24-26	Europe	
July 1-3		
July 8-10	Britain	
July 15-17		
July 22-24	Germany	
July 29-31	Hungary	
August 5-7		
August 12-14		
August 19-21		
August 26-28	Belgium	
September 2-4		
September 9-11	Italy	
September 16-18		
September 23-25	Singapore	
Sept 30-October 2		
October 7-9	Japan	
October 14-16	Korea	
October 21-23		
October 28-30	India	
November 4-6		
November 11-13	Abu Dhabi	
November 18-20		
November 25-27	Brazil	

AUTOSPORT SAYS...

EDD STRAW
F1 EDITOR

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John Donne had it right – no man is an island. What's more, no sport is an island, either.

This idea that sport and politics don't mix is at best idealistic and at worst wilfully naive. And when it comes to whether F1 should put on a government-run race at a government-owned track, to promote a country in which paramedics have reportedly been assaulted to prevent them from tending to the brutalised, the idea is just offensive.

Right now, Bahrain is toxic for F1. While it would probably have been possible to stage the race around the unrest, it would have been plain wrong to do so. Had Mercedes, Renault, Lotus, Pirelli, Vodafone and their ilk been represented on the grid in Bahrain, they – and every other company and individual involved in the sport – would be endorsing the government that they are there to promote.

And with the rise of state-sponsored grands prix, this situation was inevitably going to occur one day. There are countries on the F1 calendar with questionable human rights records – Amnesty International has some interesting things to say about the likes of China and Malaysia – and it's time for the sport to think about ethics.

It's not a clear-cut issue. You can make a case of sorts against just about every race on the calendar, including the UK. But with sponsor-finding now a needle-in-a-haystack exercise, perhaps it's time to discard the amoral 'sport and politics don't mix' mantra.



Bahrain is a no-go zone

WHY DID IT TAKE SO LONG?

Ecclestone came under fire in some quarters for delaying for so long before the event was cancelled. Sources indicated that there was little doubt the race would be cancelled several days before the crown prince's announcement.

As well as concerns over safety, teams were also worried about the potentially negative impact on F1's image of racing in a country wracked by political violence.

AUTOSPORT understands that a number of sponsors had also expressed concerns about the damage that hosting a race there could potentially do.

The Gulf coast country has a contract to stage a grand prix each year through to the end of 2015 as the result of a deal struck with Ecclestone. Had he pulled the race unilaterally, F1 would have been exposed to breach of contract action, despite invoking force majeure. This is why the crown prince had to be persuaded to make the decision.

NEW TEST SCHEDULED

With the final pre-season test session in Bahrain, scheduled to start on March 3, also called off, a replacement has been added in Barcelona to start five days later.

FOTA's sporting regulations working group met in Barcelona on Friday night to discuss contingency plans in the expectation that the Bahrain race would be called off.

Several alternatives were reportedly considered for the test, including Jerez, Paul Ricard, Silverstone and Abu Dhabi. But Barcelona was chosen because of its value as a test track, and the logistical convenience of continuing to test in Spain.

Pirelli had already shipped a batch of its test allocation of 30 tyres per team to Bahrain, but it is expected to have no problems supplying the new test.

However, it would have been unable to provide tyres for a mooted fifth test, which was talked about as a potential replacement for the Bahrain race.

REMEMBER WHEN...



...a GP was last cancelled? The 1987 Canadian GP was canned because of a legal case following the promoter signing a sponsorship deal with Molson when rival company Labatt (pictured sponsoring the '86 race) claimed to have first-refusal rights.

Exhaust issues hamper McLaren

Hamilton and Button lose valuable track time as team tries two different exhaust options in Barcelona testing



McLaren is pinning its hopes on the final pre-season Formula 1 test at Barcelona next month, as it continues to struggle to make its innovative exhaust system work.

Although difficult to see in detail, it appears that the exhaust pipes carry the airflow inwards and then

feed hot gases into the centre of the diffuser — unlike main rivals Ferrari and Red Bull, whose exhaust exits are located on the outer edge of the car. AUTOSPORT understands that this solution has caused a raft of heat-related problems for McLaren, because there is limited external

airflow to cool that area of the car.

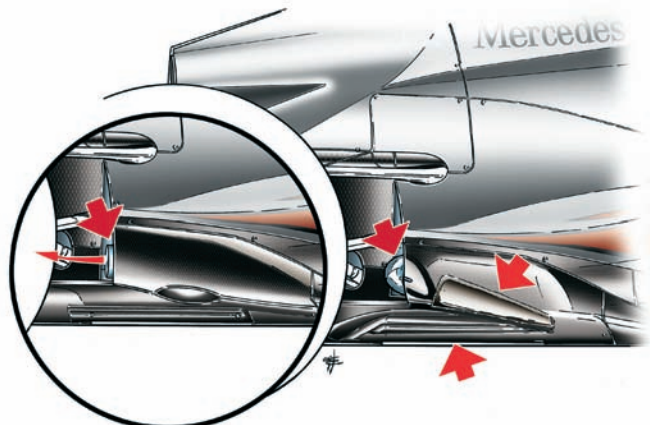
The team switched between its new exhaust and a more orthodox design in Barcelona last week, with the change allowing it to complete more running on the final two days of the test. McLaren completed 950 miles (300 fewer than Ferrari) in Barcelona, and has fallen behind on its set-up work.

When asked by AUTOSPORT about the car's visible lack of front-end grip heading into the long, fast Turn 3 at Barcelona, Jenson Button said: "You go out on one run and you have oversteer and you might try and adjust the front wing to help with that, then you put another tyre on and the car is completely different. It's very difficult to get right and we need more experience with the tyres."

"It's taking a little time and at a circuit like this it's very tricky to get the aero balance right."

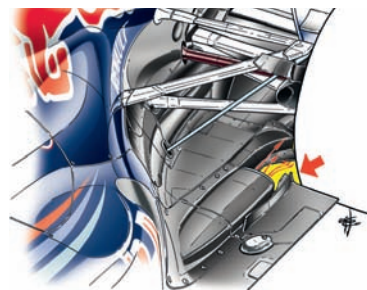
McLaren will introduce a series of tweaks at next month's final test. It hopes these will cure the problems and allow it to realise the potential of its radical design.

McLAREN'S SYSTEM

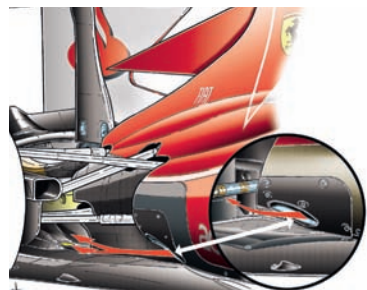


The inset shows McLaren's orthodox, rear-facing exhaust, but in the main image it's clear that the pipe is redirected inwards. It is believed that this feeds into the centre of the diffuser, which is why no exhaust exits are visible when the MP4-26 runs in this configuration.

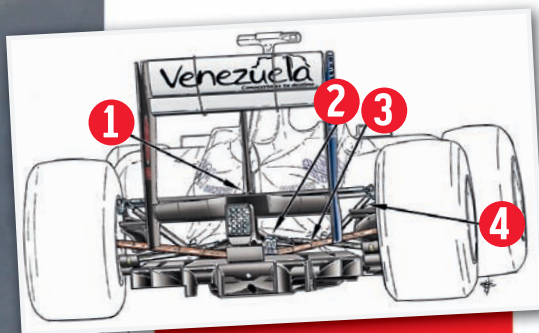
THE RIVALS...



Red Bull is running a very low, flat exhaust that is shrouded in carbon fibre. This feeds high-energy exhaust gases into and under the diffuser to increase airflow rate in this area and create an area of low pressure beneath the car's rear.



Ferrari's exhaust position allows the gases to 'mingle' with the airflow in the coke bottle area. The exit is angled upwards, channelling air into the middle and upper areas of the diffuser. It will also aid the lower rear wing's performance.



WILLIAMS REAR PACKAGING

1 The pick-up points for the upper wishbones are integrated within the main rear wing support. This ensures a cleaner airflow to the beam wing, although it requires strengthening of the support structure.

2 To improve the efficiency of the beam wing, the Williams has the lowest-lying rear section of the car in front of the rear wing, 20mm lower than anyone else.

3 The driveshafts are mounted at an angle of 14 degrees, some five degrees more than any previous F1 car. This is dictated by the layout of the gearbox and differential, which is positioned lower than usual.

4 Williams has switched from pushrod to pullrod suspension – a result of the most compact gearbox packaging in F1.

Lewis Hamilton in the fledgling MP4-26

DUNBAR/LAT

Toro Rosso's extreme floor

The double floor of the Toro Rosso is an exaggerated version of the sidepod undercut now common to F1 cars.

GARY ANDERSON EXPLAINS: Achieving low pressure in the coke bottle area helps to drag the air from underneath the front of the chassis, which in turn accelerates airflow from the front wing because the air doesn't have to deal with too much of a blockage. It also helps the performance of the floor's leading edge, which is designed to increase the airflow's velocity.

STR has made the undercut longer to increase these effects by effectively scavenging more air from beneath the chassis. That creates low pressure under the car, increasing downforce. There are resulting losses from the surfaces below the sidepod, which you have to balance against the gains. There are also the challenges of compromising KERS, radiator and fuel tank packaging to achieve the pronounced undercut.



STR has extreme sidepod undercut



Ferrari treatment is more conventional

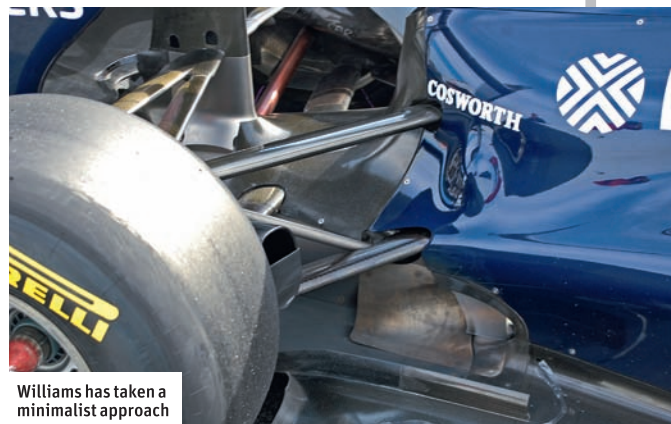
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GARY ANDERSON
TECHNICAL CONSULTANT



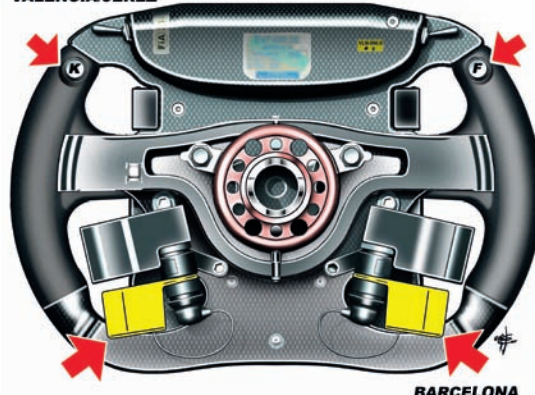
The packing at the back of the Williams is very extreme. When I was technical director at Jordan, we ran driveshafts with a nine-degree angle but could go no further without losing lots of power. There are also question marks over the strength of driveshaft joints with that kind of angle. Although Williams has done a huge amount of test and development work, it's hard to be certain the concept will hold up at circuits with the most violent kerbs. It has been okay so far in testing, though, and the team is quietly confident.

Williams has clearly decided to go for broke in maximising the downforce produced to make up for the double-diffuser ban. The whole rear end is very aggressively designed. It lowers the centre of gravity and removes as much of the blockage as possible to allow better airflow to the rear diffuser and beam wing.



Williams has taken a minimalist approach

VALENCIA/JEREZ



BARCELONA

Ferrari controls change

Much has been made of the challenges faced by drivers in operating both KERS and adjustable-rear-wing buttons while in the cockpit. In the first two pre-season tests, at Valencia and Jerez, Ferrari drivers had to use their thumbs to activate the wing and KERS (top arrows, above). At Barcelona this week, Ferrari ran with paddles below the gearshifters for this purpose (lower arrows), allowing drivers to use their fingers rather than thumbs to activate the systems.

Webber's race run looked impressive



Alonso fears Red Bull

Red Bull, Ferrari on top

Barcelona race simulations offer best hints yet about what to expect at the front of the field this season

Red Bull is in good shape to start the new Formula 1 campaign with a pace-setting car as it prepares for next month's final pre-season test, at Barcelona.

An analysis of race simulations from the third test, which took place at Barcelona last weekend, suggests Red Bull has an edge on its rivals in terms of both single-lap and long-stint pace.

Red Bull's Mark Webber and Felipe Massa of Ferrari completed race simulations at similar times on Sunday afternoon, with the Australian setting a faster best lap in three of his four stints. Both are believed to have started on soft tyres before switching to hards, with Webber switching back to soft rubber for the final stint.

The graph (right) plots Webber's race run against Massa's and a Monday simulation conducted by Renault driver Nick Heidfeld, which was curtailed by a red flag. Webber sets the fastest lap of the trio – 1m25.0s – right after his final stop, but tyre degradation

means that his times drop below Massa's. However, Webber's drop-off is shallower than might be expected throughout his race simulation.

Massa was able to minimise tyre degradation during the middle of his stints, before losing time rapidly during the final laps.

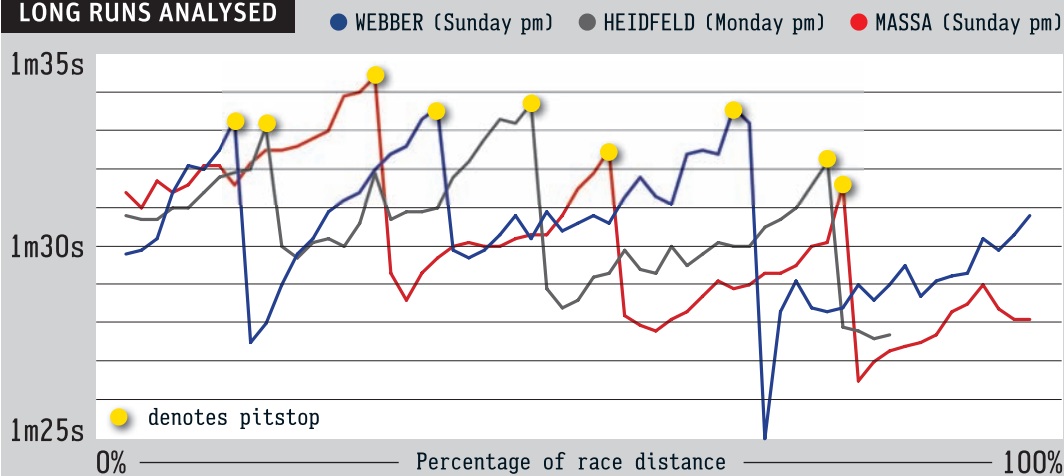
Speaking at the end of his run, Webber pointed to Ferrari as Red Bull's strongest opposition, while Ferrari rival Fernando Alonso admitted that Red Bull's pace was his main concern.

Heidfeld's speed also hints that the Renault R31 is a potential winner. The German was able to

lap consistently, despite not showing the same performance peaks as Red Bull or Ferrari.

The graph below was compiled using data from the Barcelona test, with anomalous laps – caused by traffic, or a driver backing off – removed and in/out laps disregarded.

LONG RUNS ANALYSED



F1 TESTING: BARCELONA, FEBRUARY 18-21

POS	DRIVER	CAR	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY
1	Felipe Massa	Ferrari F150th Italia	-	-	1m26.508s	1m22.625s
2	Nico Rosberg	Mercedes MGP W02	-	1m24.730s	1m23.168s	-
3	Sebastian Vettel	Red Bull-Renault RB7	1m24.374s	1m23.315s	-	-
4	Mark Webber	Red Bull-Renault RB7	-	-	1m24.995s	1m23.442s
5	Vitaly Petrov	Renault R31	1m35.174s	1m26.884s	1m23.463s	-
6	Jaime Alguersuari	Toro Rosso-Ferrari STR6	1m25.638s	1m23.519s	-	-
7	Sebastien Buemi	Toro Rosso-Ferrari STR6	-	-	1m26.155s	1m23.550s
8	Nick Heidfeld	Renault R31	1m44.324s	1m24.242s	-	1m23.657s
9	Lewis Hamilton	McLaren-Mercedes MP4-26	-	-	1m23.858s	1m24.003s
10	Fernando Alonso	Ferrari F150th Italia	1m25.485s	1m23.978s	-	-
11	Rubens Barrichello	Williams-Cosworth FW33	1m26.912s	1m24.008s	-	-
12	Pastor Maldonado	Williams-Cosworth FW33	-	-	1m24.815s	1m24.057s
13	Adrian Sutil	Force India-Mercedes VJM04	-	-	1m25.270s	1m24.177s
14	Kamui Kobayashi	Sauber-Ferrari C30	1m25.641s	1m24.243s	-	-
15	Sergio Perez	Sauber-Ferrari C30	-	-	1m25.557s	1m24.515s
16	Jenson Button	McLaren-Mercedes MP4-26	1m26.365s	1m24.923s	-	-
17	Paul di Resta	Force India-Mercedes VJM04	1m26.575s	1m25.194s	-	-
18	Jarno Trulli	Lotus-Renault T128	-	-	1m25.454s	1m29.992s
19	Heikki Kovalainen	Lotus-Renault T128	1m30.065s	1m26.421s	-	-
20	Jerome d'Ambrosio	Virgin-Cosworth MVR-02	1m30.950s	-	-	1m26.501s
21	Timo Glock	Virgin-Cosworth MVR-02	-	1m27.242s	1m26.568s	-
22	Vitantonio Liuzzi	HRT-Cosworth F110	-	1m27.044s	-	-
23	Michael Schumacher	Mercedes MGP W02	1m27.512s	-	-	1m27.079s
24	Giorgio Mondini	HRT-Cosworth F110	-	-	1m28.178s	-
25	Daniel Ricciardo	Toro Rosso-Ferrari STR6	-	-	1m28.329s	-
26	Narain Karthikeyan	HRT-Cosworth F110	1m28.393s	-	1m30.722s	-
27	Ricardo Teixeira	Lotus-Renault T128	-	1m31.584s	-	-

Liuzzi refuses to pay for HRT seat

VITANTONIO LIUZZI insists he won't pay for a seat in Formula 1 as he chases the final spot on the grid with HRT.

The Italian tested the car at Barcelona on Saturday, impressing the team by improving both the aerodynamic set-up and the engine-braking characteristics.

He is trying to negotiate a seat, but HRT is likely to prefer a funded driver.

"I've never brought money to race and I don't want to start now," Liuzzi told AUTOSPORT. "I will help as much as I can with my experience and speed, but money is not something I can do."



Liuzzi: last F1 chance

Rear wing won't make overtaking too easy

OVERTAKING WITH Formula 1's new adjustable rear wing will require a driver to be within 12 metres of the car ahead when he enters the passing zone, an AUTOSPORT analysis reveals.

Technical editor Gary Anderson conducted a detailed investigation into the use of the wing in Barcelona. Working on the basis of the overall rear-wing drag being cut by 0.7 per cent when the slot is opened, the following car would need to be about 0.16 seconds behind to get alongside by the next turn.

The wing can only be activated if a driver is within one second of the car in front, which means there is no guarantee that a pass can easily be completed.

It is expected that the adjustable wing's effectiveness will increase as teams develop modifications that boost the drag reduction of an open slot gap.

Governing body the FIA has also reserved the right to increase the length of the designated overtaking zone, to fine-tune the idea and create the desired amount of passing.



Will F1's new wings create more passing?

12 Metres

The maximum distance between two F1 cars if adjustable wings are to have the desired 'passing' effect in the designated zone

ADJUSTABLE WING SPEED DIFFERENCE

DISTANCE	LEAD CAR	SECOND CAR
600m	265km/h	265km/h
500m	280km/h	281km/h
400m	291km/h	294.3km/h
300m	298km/h	303.7km/h
200m	303km/h	311km/h
100m	307km/h	316km/h
0m	309km/h	321.5km/h

THIS WEEK IN F1



RED BULL Team owner Dietrich Mateschitz has claimed that Red Bull has only the fourth-biggest operational budget in F1. "We are definitely behind Ferrari, McLaren and Mercedes," said the Austrian.



McLAREN Jenson Button has no regrets about McLaren's decision to delay running its new car, despite the team's troubles. "It was the right thing to do because we were able to back-to-back the tyres [in Valencia]," he said.



FERRARI Fernando Alonso believes F1 drivers can never be absolutely safe while away from the circuit. In reaction to Robert Kubica's career-threatening rally crash, he said: "We need to have something to get a bit of adrenalin out of our system."



RENAULT Vitaly Petrov believes that resolving his braking struggles is crucial to his chances at the start of the season. "We were struggling all last year with brake stiffness and retardation," he said. "We need to sort it out."



WILLIAMS The team is due to launch its 2011 livery online today (Thursday). The car has so far run in an interim livery with limited sponsorship decals.



FORCE INDIA The Silverstone outfit completed its first day of running with its KERS system active during the final day of the Barcelona test. Adrian Sutil completed 64 laps and the team had no reliability problems.



SAUBER Rookie Sergio Perez is able to make a contribution to the team's development work, despite having less than 2000 miles at the wheel of an F1 car. That's the view of technical director James Key. "He's starting to offer his own opinions without being asked," said Key.



TORO ROSSO Daniel Ricciardo returned to test action for the ex-Minardi team at Barcelona last weekend. The Australian completed 42 laps on the third day of the test as he works towards a possible F1 race debut later this year.



LOTUS Technical director Mike Gascoyne was forced to call an early end to the team's Barcelona test with a shortage of parts after a mechanical failure caused Jarno Trulli to crash on the final morning.



HRT Team principal Colin Kolles was impressed with Giorgio Mondini's pace when the Italian tested in Barcelona on Sunday. It was Mondini's first F1 outing since 2006 and he is believed to be a contender for the team's second seat.

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MPH Mark Hughes

AUTOSPORT grand prix editor

Formula 1 may try to remain neutral but, as Bahrain's troubles have shown, the sport cannot avoid getting embroiled in world politics in the end...

Events in Bahrain have shown that the direct link between Formula 1 and politics can suddenly become very clear. It may even be that violence against the protesters there was triggered by the impending grand prix date.

Bernie Ecclestone insists that F1 never, ever gets involved in politics but no matter how genuinely held this stance is, by definition it cannot fail to be involved. Quotes in the *Washington Post* attributed to a spokesperson of the Bahrain protesters even specifically target the grand prix as a point of contention, arguing that it is the plaything of the Crown Prince and would undoubtedly become a target.

"There is a big connection between [the uprising] and Formula 1," runs the quote. The spokesperson claims that threatening the race has given protesters more of a bargaining tool for negotiation. Whether true or not, this claim illustrates that F1 becomes de facto

involved in politics regardless of the wishes of its participants, owners or even governing body.

Ironically, Bahrain has hitherto been seen as the most progressive of the Arab states. But its move towards greater democracy is a delicate process within that region. The apparently extreme initial reaction to the protests – in the context of what has happened recently in Tunisia and Egypt – illustrates how that process is still in its very early days.

The existence of the Bahrain Grand Prix might actually have enhanced the protesters' cause. Yes, on the one hand it could be interpreted as the plaything of the wealthy minority. But on the other, it is very easy to imagine that the imminent date of the event did not just trigger the initial reaction, but also the sudden abandonment of the violent strategy in response to it.

With the world paying close attention, the grand prix gave the political situation much more international focus than similar protests at the same time in Libya, for example, where many more demonstrators were killed than have been in Bahrain. F1's representation and profile in the country gave the Bahrain protesters a much louder voice than they would otherwise have had. If there are decent grounds for their grievances, F1 has been good for their cause – albeit inadvertently.

There is a case to be made that for countries on the route to democracy, allowances have to be made for transgressions along the way. That is not to excuse what has happened, but if such mistakes

along the path resulted in the instant severing of the democratic world's relationship with them, there would surely be every chance of progress being halted or even reversed. So on the one hand F1 could be criticised for taking races to regimes that are less than fully democratic, thereby laying itself open to being affected by instability in those countries. On the other, it could be argued that events such as F1, the Olympics and the World Cup are a good incentive for regimes to continue making strides towards democracy.

Given that there has been a grand prix in Bahrain since 2004, any move F1 had made – whether it had decided to go or not go – would be viewed as political. The reasons given, and perhaps even the true motivations, may be unconnected with politics, but the impact of F1's decisions is not.

One of the biggest challenges for F1 is to control its image in a fast-changing world. The sport has always been a reflection of the world in which it exists, and it's a Utopian dream to think that any sport should remain pure and unconnected with the wider world.

The sudden contagion of rebellion against inequality simply ensures that more than ever, this sport should be less exclusive, and should reach out to all levels of society. F1 has always been a sport that reacts rapidly to the environment around it, and for the sake of its own future it needs to become part of the solution to world ills. Recent events have just served to illustrate how potent a force it can be – even if unwittingly. ☒



“The Bahrain GP has potentially enhanced the protesters' cause”



Bayne was as shocked as the fans at his win

NASCAR

Bayne, Wood Bros cash in on Daytona

Plans for rookie to contest expanded Sprint Cup programme after surprise Daytona 500 win, but rule changes mean the youngster scores zero points

Trevor Bayne and Wood Brothers Racing are looking to expand their NASCAR Sprint Cup programme beyond their original schedule of 17 races following their surprise victory in last weekend's Daytona 500.

Bayne caused the series' biggest upset in recent memory by winning Daytona in just his second-ever Cup start, although rule changes introduced for the new season mean that the would-be points leader is ineligible for the championship because he has registered for the Nationwide Series. NASCAR introduced a rule forcing drivers to register for one championship only, ironically to prevent

Nationwide competitors being overwhelmed by Cup drivers in the second tier.

The 20-year-old's victory was accompanied by a prize purse of \$1.46m, and Wood Brothers team co-owner Len Wood said the money would make it possible to enter additional races during this series.

"I think we had a pretty big payday today," he said. "We were talking about running the first five [races]. But I now think it's Martinsville here we come. That will be the sixth race. Hopefully somebody watching us today will start up a little interest, and maybe they'll want to join us."

Bayne could elect to switch his registration from

Nationwide to Sprint Cup, although he would not be awarded his Daytona points retrospectively. Nevertheless, the driver from Tennessee said the team would be looking to use the win as a springboard for more Cup races in an effort to pick up owner points.

"I think the cars still get points if I'm not mistaken," said Bayne. "I don't know how the Chase works, driver or car or what. We'll be the guys that say we should have won the championship if that's what it comes down to."

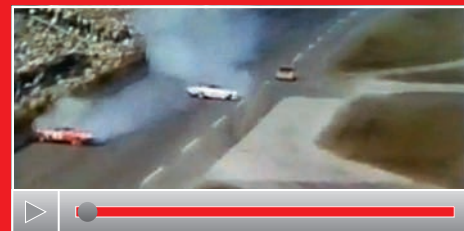
"Our plan is to still run the full Nationwide deal. It's kind of crazy: the only thing on the car was Ford Racing. They picked up this race because we had nothing on it."

"We can keep doing this deal and that deal. Whatever plays out, that's what was supposed to happen. We'll just keep running with it."



A win but no points for Bayne

PLAYBACK



SEARCH FOR: *Daytona 500 1976 finish – live*
This clip shows David Pearson scrambling across the grass after a last-corner clash with Richard Petty to claim Wood Bros' last Daytona win prior to Bayne.

REMEMBER WHEN...



...Wood Brothers last won a Cup race? Elliott Sadler caused a huge upset with his victory in the Food City 500 at Bristol in 2001.

BIG NUMBER

600

Trevor Bayne's Daytona victory was Ford's 600th at NASCAR's top level. Jimmy Florian won the Blue Oval's first at Dayton Speedway back in 1950.



**P56 DAYTONA 500
REPORT**

NASCAR

Older Keselowski's Cup dream

BRIAN KESELOWSKI is targeting Sprint Cup Rookie of the Year honours after being helped into the Daytona 500 field by younger brother Brad.

The elder Keselowski, who has raced primarily in ARCA and NASCAR Nationwide, qualified for the 500 after being pushed by his brother in a sustained tandem draft to finish fifth in last Thursday's second Gatorade Duel 150-mile qualifying race. The feel-good factor of his qualification sparked several offers of help for his unsponsored, self-run car.

Keselowski had arrived at Daytona with just one set of tyres before Ray Evernham stepped in to pay for additional sets. A more powerful engine offered by Penske had to be refused, however, as it could not be made to fit Keselowski's Evernham-built 2006 Dodge in time for the race.

Keselowski's weekend ended early when he was eliminated in a 14-car melee on lap 29, but he has lodged an entry for the next race at Phoenix and

said that he hoped to do more. "I am definitely trying to do the Cup races," he said. "I've signed up for Rookie of the Year in the Cup Series, and I'll be going against Andy Lally.

"This is where I think I should be, and I want to go forward. I think this can work out. This was a great start;

an unfortunate ending to a great start, but it was a great start at least. I think if we can keep this ball rolling, we can make some things happen."

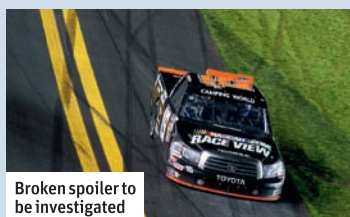
Keselowski said that several potential sponsors had been in touch during the Daytona weekend, but no deals had yet been signed.



Brian (left) owed his start to Brad

NASCAR TRUCKS

Waltrip wings it



Broken spoiler to be investigated

NASCAR HAS taken the rear spoiler from Michael Waltrip's race-winning NASCAR Truck for inspection after half of it broke loose during last Friday's race at Daytona.

Waltrip led only the final lap to take an emotional win on the 10th anniversary of his victory in the Daytona 500, also the same day his team owner Dale Earnhardt was killed in 2001.

NASCAR rules mandate a specific spoiler angle, which Waltrip's broken wing clearly did

not meet, but the two-time Daytona 500 winner said that he had been unaware of the problem at the time.

"I'm so thankful it hung on until the chequered flag because I didn't even know it was an issue," he said.

NASCAR has blamed the problem on a parts failure. Officials are yet to decide whether there will be a points penalty or fine, but have confirmed that Waltrip will keep the win regardless.

AUTOSPORT SAYS...

MARK GLENDENNING
DEPUTY F1 EDITOR

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Paul Tracy's own NASCAR track record shows a best result of 24th from six Busch Series starts in 2006. But if you followed him on Twitter during the Daytona 500, you'd have got a slightly manic but emotionally accurate account of the final laps.

Some speculation on the effect of a Dale Earnhardt Jr win on house prices was followed by a dramatic reaction to Junior's race-ending crash (see below). His next post was one of resignation: "They may as well end the race now, who cares who wins if Jr is out", followed by an immediate change of heart and, presumably, television: "Wood Brother win!!!!!! [sic] That's the greatest!!!!!"

The 2011 Daytona 500 took the concept of 'feelgood' to almost Disneyesque levels. That Junior didn't win on the 10th anniversary of his father's death didn't matter — such a victory would probably have been written off as contrived anyway.

Instead we had a kid winning NASCAR's biggest race in his second start, with Trevor Bayne feeling bad about all the

veterans who were still trying to match his achievement. We had Brad Keselowski literally pushing his older brother Brian and his antique, underfunded Dodge onto the grid. We had Michael Waltrip winning the Truck race a decade after his bittersweet of victory in the main event.

Adding to the spectacle is a constant preoccupation for most racing categories. Daytona showed that sometimes, things just take care of themselves.

Bayne the kid steals the show



NASCAR

Tandem drafting draws driver fire

SPRINT CUP drivers have criticised the tandem drafting at Daytona, with several accidents being blamed on the two-by-two style of racing.

Higher grip levels brought about by the track's new surface prompted a shift from large-pack drafts to drivers running behind one another in pairs, helping each other to speeds in excess of 200mph. A string of crashes prompted calls for tandem-drafting to be addressed.

"You've got to either be shoving somebody or getting shoved, and it's an aggravating way to race," said Matt Kenseth, who crashed out on lap 136. "You've got to watch your mirror and keep riding the brakes and try to

get to somebody, or you've got to be in front of somebody and hope they slam the brakes. It's just a difficult way to race."

Rookie Robert Richardson Jr, who was another casualty, said that he hoped NASCAR could address the

situation before the next restrictor-plate race at Talladega.

"It's crazy," he said. "It is definitely not Daytona racing. It is tough to get a handle on and trust the guy behind you. Hopefully by Talladega they will have something figured out."

Drivers say two-by-two is 'crazy'



QUOTE OF THE WEEK



For the love of God!!!!!!!
I just threw my drink through my \$5000 TV"



Paul Tracy on Twitter, reacting poorly to Dale Earnhardt Jr crashing out of the Daytona 500

IN BRIEF



INDY START TIME MOVED

The Indianapolis 500 start time has been moved forward one hour and the race will now start at noon. It means there will be more daylight in which to complete the race in the event of rain.

GOOD SIGNS FOR STONEMAN

Reigning Formula 2 champion Dean Stoneman is making good progress in his battle against testicular cancer, according to his management. Stoneman is planning to attend selected Formula Renault 3.5 rounds as a guest of the ISR team, which holds an option on his services for 2012.

TONY GEORGE RETURNS

Former IndyCar CEO Tony George has returned to the board of the family-owned Hulman & Co, which owns the Indianapolis Motor Speedway, two years after his acrimonious departure. George is not expected to have any involvement with the IndyCar Series.

GP3 GRID TAKING SHAPE

The 2011 GP3 grid is continuing to fall into place, with MW Arden having confirmed that Brit Lewis Williamson and New Zealander Mitch Evans will join its ranks. Elsewhere, Tech 1 has announced that Doru Sechelariu will return for a second season.

VILLA GOES TIN-TOP

GP2 refugee Javier Villa will race a BMW in the World Touring Car Championship with champion independent team Proteam Racing. The Spaniard will be partnered by Mehdi Bennani and Fabio Fabiani.

PAGENAUD TARGETS INDYCAR

Simon Pagenaud (below) has hinted that he could race in IndyCar this year, although he is yet to reveal details. The Frenchman, who said he was working towards a part-programme in 2011 ahead of a full season in 2012, was Will Power's team-mate in Champ Car, but has more recently been playing his trade in the ALMS.



GP2 ASIA

Asia Series left in limbo

GP2 looking for alternative fixtures after double Bahraini cancellation

The 2011 GP2 Asia Series remains in a state of flux after the remaining two rounds in Bahrain were cancelled.

AUTOSPORT understands that the series is working to find at least one meeting to replace the dropped races, although it is believed that any deal was still some way from being finalised as we closed for press. Series

director Bruno Michel was unavailable for comment.

Teams were already in Bahrain last week when the Gulf state was plunged into turmoil as protests against the ruling monarchy turned violent. The race scheduled for last weekend was initially postponed by one day, due to the circuit's medical personnel being needed to deal

with casualties in capital city Manama. The postponement was soon followed by an official statement indicating that the Bahrain Motorsport Federation had cancelled the event due to force majeure.

The third and final scheduled Asia Series round, which was set to run as a Formula 1 support event on March 11-13, was cancelled earlier this week, along with the Bahrain GP.

In addition to the obvious undesirability of the current Asia Series title being decided over a single round – a double-header in Abu Dhabi, held earlier this month – the cancellations create myriad potential complications.

One problem is the fact that driver contracts typically guarantee a certain number of races – a detail reflected in the budget that is required to secure the seat.



The series raced in Bahrain last year



Where will GP2 Asia race next, if at all?

In this respect, most entrants are covered by clauses accounting for unforeseen cancellations or force majeure and any possible refunds are likely to be at the discretion of individual teams.

Some of the difficulties will be harder to resolve for both teams and series organisers, however. One of the immediate issues is making arrangements for cars and equipment to be collected. Everything was left in Bahrain when teams flew out of the country late last Friday. There is also the question of money teams pay for transportation and freight.

At the time of writing, series bosses had yet to indicate where a replacement event could take place.

Qatar's Losail circuit is one possibility, having previously hosted an Asia Series round in early 2009, but circuit management could not be contacted for comment.

A stand-alone meeting in Europe is also thought to be under consideration.

INDYCAR

IndyCar rules out Europe, for now



The last US foray to Europe – Champ Car at Assen in 2007

THE US-BASED IndyCar Series is unlikely to add any European races to its schedule in the near future.

Championship boss Randy Bernard admitted last week that some figureheads in the series are keen to investigate opportunities in Europe. The former professional bullriding supremo says,

however, that working on races in North America remains his top priority.

"It's going to be a few years before we can move an event to Europe," said Bernard. "We have to look out for the best interests of our sport. We can't get ahead of ourselves."

Bernard added that the importance of

strengthening IndyCar's profile in its home continent was behind the decision to drop the Japanese round at Motegi from the schedule in 2012.

"It just didn't help the series," he said. "When you're trying to create momentum going into the championship [finale], there's no momentum when you have a race outside the United States and broadcast it while most people [in America] are asleep. You can't pull any ratings and you don't have any press."

Series bosses will also focus on ensuring the calendar retains a blend of ovals and road courses – a greater priority than expanding into other countries.

"Right now we want to make sure we maintain a balanced series," said Bernard. "We want to get as close as we can to a 50-50 split between road courses and ovals. We are seeing a lot of cities that want to bring us street races, but we have to keep it balanced."

GP3/INDY LIGHTS

Daly opts for mixed schedule



Daly: set to earn a few air miles

STAR MAZDA champion Conor Daly will combine his rookie season in GP3 with a part schedule in Indy Lights.

It was recently announced that the 19-year-old would switch to racing full-time in Europe with Carlin in GP3, after starting his career in the US. But Daly, son of former grand prix driver Derek, will continue to compete on home soil after agreeing a five-race Indy Lights road-course deal with frontrunning team Sam Schmidt Motorsports.

Daly's American deal comes with assistance from Mazda. The Japanese manufacturer is keen to support its graduates as part of the rejuvenated ladder system being put in place by the IndyCar Series.

"I'm extremely pleased to have all my plans worked out for 2011," Daly said. "It's taken a lot of work and I'm extremely thankful to everyone at Mazda for supporting me."

RENAULT 3.5

Webb's late switch

BRITISH F3 race winner Oli Webb has abandoned plans to take the fourth seat at top F3 Euro Series team Signature and will instead graduate to Formula Renault 3.5 with Pons Racing.

Webb won two races and finished third in the championship in his rookie British F3 season last year. He tested with Signature at Nogaro last October and appeared set to race in the Euro Series as a Volkswagen-supported driver in 2011.

The deal was delayed, however, and he will instead race in Formula Renault 3.5, having signed to drive for motorcycle legend Sito Pons' squad last week.

"It [Renault] is what I wanted initially,

but we didn't have the money," said Webb. "The VW thing came along and that's all we were chasing, but it was taking too long [to finalise]."

"Three World Series teams offered us a deal and Pons came up with the best one. They've had an average two years, but were very good before and won the championship with [Heikki] Kovalainen [in 2004]. It just clicked with them – it seemed like it was meant to be."

Webb drove for Fortec in a Formula Renault 3.5 prize test at Motorland Aragon last year and is due to test for his new team at Valencia tomorrow (Friday). Signature has signed a driver for its fourth F3 Euro Series seat and is expected to announce their identity soon.



Webb tested for Fortec last year

STCC

STCC set to adopt BTCC rules

Mixed reaction to Scandinavian championship's plan to go down the NGTC regulations route from next year



STCC will feature S2000 and NGTC cars from 2012

The British Touring Car Championship's new NGTC technical regulations will be adopted by the Scandinavian series next year.

The STCC – which will feature former BTCC champions James Thompson, Colin Turkington and Rickard Rydell on the grid this year – is currently run for Super 2000 machines only. But it will be opened up to machines built to the low-cost formula from 2012 onwards.

Initially the series will be open to both S2000 and NGTC cars, while every car must run to NGTC

specification from 2013.

STCC managing director Bob Huzell said: "We have support from the car industry and this is very important. Also, because Britain is starting to use NGTC this year, it will be easier for our teams to use these cars in the STCC next year."

There has been opposition from a number of leading teams. Polestar Racing team principal Christian Dahl, who won last year's Scandinavian Cup with Robert Dahlgren, is among those who think the short-term financial implications of the switch could

damage the series. "STCC is very strong at the moment," he told AUTOSPORT. "And S2000 rules work very well for us. I think changing the rules is the wrong thing to do and teams are going to struggle to find the money to build and develop their own cars."

"I think many teams would want to just buy NGTC cars from Britain, but I don't think many BTCC teams will be in a position to sell in less than two years' time."

BTCC series director Alan Gow said that he expected more championships to follow the NGTC

route in the future, although he played down suggestions that the rules could become the de facto standard for touring cars worldwide, as happened with TOCA's Super Touring regulations in the 1990s.

"These are incredibly well-devised rules," he told AUTOSPORT. "And the fact that the STCC is going to adopt them is a firm endorsement as to the concept and validity of NGTC regulations."

"We have also had enquiries from other countries that are looking at which direction they may go in the future."

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BRITISH F3

DOUBLE VISION

Formula 1 driver Karun Chandhok got back behind the wheel of an F3 car last week when he tested one of Double R Racing's Dallaras at Pembrey. Ex-British F3 racer Chandhok, who was keen for some single-seater running ahead of an expected F1 test with Lotus, completed 140 laps.

JAPANESE F3

Brit Bradley lands plum TOM'S seat

SINGAPORE-BASED BRIT Richard Bradley will make his Formula 3 debut with the elite TOM'S squad in this year's Japanese championship.



Bradley to make F3 debut

The reigning Formula BMW Pacific champion tested with the team during the winter, and said that he was thrilled at the prospect of racing with the 14-time championship-winning team.

"I've always admired TOM'S and having the opportunity to drive for them is a real honour," he said.

Susumu Kuomi, head of the TOM'S racing department, said that there was no pressure on Bradley to

deliver immediate results. "It would be good if he could win the championship in his first year of F3 like he did in Formula BMW, but as everyone knows it is not easy," he said. "It's probably best to stay in F3 for two seasons because there is so much to learn. It's a long-term relationship we are building here, and realistically we'd like to see him as a world-class driver in three or four years."

DTM

Audi adopts youth policy for DTM squad

AUDI HAS made four changes to its DTM line-up to give its squad a youthful overhaul for the coming touring car season.

The German marque has added reigning F3 Euro Series champion Edoardo Mortara, Race of Champions winner Filipe Albuquerque and sometime GT racer Rahel Frey to its line-up at the expense of Alexandre Premat, Markus Winkelhock and Katherine Legge.

Le Mans winner Mike Rockenfeller will move up into the crack Abt Sportsline squad, with German Martin Tomczyk moving down to a 2008-spec car run by Team Phoenix.

Audi tested several other drivers before Christmas, including Romain Grosjean, Alexander Sims, Nick Tandy, Christian Vietoris, Rene Rast and Christopher Mies. Audi Sport head Wolfgang Ullrich said that bringing in young talent was key to rejuvenating the team after it struggled against Mercedes last year.

"We are certainly going to have a



Mortara, Albuquerque and Frey will race with Audi

team that is very young and strong," said Ullrich. "I'm confident these three will be a genuine reinforcement to our squad."

Ullrich added that he expects the likes of former champions Mattias Ekstrom and Timo Scheider to show that they are still young enough

to be a force in the V8 tin-top series.

"It goes without saying that the guys who have been our spearheads over the past few years will still be around," he said. "After our bad year [in 2010] they are more motivated than ever, and eager to prove that they are not that old just yet."

IN BRIEF

EKSTROM INJURED

Former DTM champion Mattias Ekstrom faces a race against time to be ready for the new season after breaking his wrist during Audi's fitness camp last week. The Swede fell awkwardly while playing volleyball with his team-mates.

COLLARD STAYS WITH WSR

Rob Collard will remain with WSR for another season of BTCC competition, and was set to test his updated BMW 320si at Thruxton as AUTOSPORT closed for press. His team-mate will be BMW CSL Cup graduate Nick Foster.

WELCH OPTS FOR PROTON

Welch Motorsport has chosen the Proton Gen-2 as the base model for its British Touring Car Championship NGTC machine. Dan Welch, son of team principal John Welch, will debut the car, which will be powered by the TOCA engine, at Snetterton in August.

BOARDMAN STAYS ON DECK

Special Tuning Racing's BTCC assault will again be led by Tom Boardman this year. He tested one of the team's four SEAT Leons, fitted with the TOCA engine, at Rockingham last Friday. Boardman said that the team was likely to run two cars.

SUMO SHOOT-OUT SCRAPPED

Plans for a shoot-out in Qatar for the final seats at the Sumo Nissan FIA GT1 World Championship team set for early next month have been abandoned. Event organisers have blamed the political uncertainty in the Gulf region.

ALL-STAR LINE-UP AT UNITED

Ex-Formula 1 drivers Stefan Johansson, Eddie Cheever and Mark Blundell have been re-signed by the Anglo-American United Autosports Audi squad for the Spa 24 Hours in July. The team is running three Audi R8 LMS GT3 contenders at Spa.

MASERATI GT1 HOPES FADING

The chances of Maserati participating in the FIA GT1 World Championship are getting "more unrealistic by the day", according to Vitaphone Racing boss Michael Bartels. He is searching for a second team, mandatory under series rules, to allow Vitaphone to return to defend the title it won in 2010 (below).



Mini was tested to breaking point



WRC

Mini ragged to breaking point

Meeke salutes durability of new Countryman after Prodrive gives drivers green light to try to destroy it

Northern Irish rally star Kris Meeke has given the thumbs up to the Mini Countryman World Rally car after being told to drive it to its breaking point.

Factory Mini team Prodrive was in Fontjoncouse in the south of France for the car's first durability test, with Meeke and team-mate Dani Sordo driving.

The duo each completed a day and a half of running, totalling approximately 310 miles on the roughest terrain the car has been subjected to so far.

Prodrive business development

director Richard Taylor said: "Prior to last weekend, strange as this sounds, we hadn't actually managed to break anything on the car.

"Yes, there had been some small things, but nothing that stopped the drivers bringing the car back to service. Last weekend was about driving the car to break it. We're well aware of how rough some of the roads can be in the WRC and we need to test the car's durability."

Meeke added that he was impressed with the way the Mini handled the test. "It was one of the

toughest places to go to in Europe for testing and was done in all extremes of weather," he said.

"A massive storm came in the day before I tested so it was like a real quagmire, which was perfect for us. It threw up lots of little things, even like how the windscreen wipers react after a watersplash. Because Dani got to run in the dry he was able to do some higher-speed running, so it was a really productive test for the team."

The Mini WRC team has still not revealed when the car will be seen in competition for the first time,

but Taylor confirmed that the squad would be launched at Mini's Cowley plant in Oxford on April 11. It is tipped to make its debut on the Rally d'Italia in May.

Taylor also confirmed that Mini has requested specific competition numbers for the two factory World Rally Cars this year. It is hoped that 37 and 52 can be used, in deference to Paddy Hopkirk's 1964 Monte Carlo Rally win and Timo Mäkinen's subsequent success on the same event 12 months on. The cars will be painted in the traditional red with a white roof.



Solberg wants more mileage in Norway

WRC

Swedes want to share more of their WRC round with Norway

RALLY SWEDEN could feature a full day of stages in Norway next year.

The event's Lovhaugen stage crossed the border into Norway twice on Friday when it ran earlier this month. Now rally chief Bertil Klarin has said he wants the cross-border initiative to be extended.

"We want there to be more cooperation with the Norwegians," said Klarin. "We see a lot of good drivers coming from Norway and a lot of interest from the people there, so I can see us working together more in the future. A full day

in Norway next year is possible."

Leading Norwegian driver Petter Solberg has backed the plans, adding: "Personally I would like two days in Norway and two days in Sweden but at least this is a start. There are good opportunities for sponsors."

Norway hosted a WRC event in 2007 and '09 but has since slipped from the calendar due to financial constraints.

Sweden will learn whether it has a slot on the 2012 WRC calendar when the FIA's World Motor Sport Council meets in March.

IRC

Scottish premier backs home rally



Hanninen won Scot event in '10

RALLY OF Scotland's future appears safe after Scottish First Minister Alex Salmond confirmed support for the Intercontinental Rally Challenge round.

The event has been dogged by speculation of a rift between its promoter and chief backer Event Scotland. Salmond confirmed that Event Scotland would continue to support the rally.

"It gets a high level of support from Event Scotland and that's going

to continue," Salmond told the *Scottish Sun*. "We invest because we recognise the benefit to Scotland and we will learn any lessons that make 2011 better."

The support from Salmond appears to cement Rally of Scotland as the penultimate round of the IRC from October 14-16. The Perth-based event scores points and a half in an effort to boost entries.

Salmond continued: "People often ask me about the IRC; why

did Event Scotland push the boat out to get that event? We think it has proved itself to be a world-class event, and it displays and advertises the country."

Salmond echoed Rally of Scotland organisers' calls for more support for the event, adding: "I would urge the British and Scottish rally championships to come on board."

The rally has lost money for the past two years due to the poor entry, but has received universal praise.

IN BRIEF

POOR ENTRY FOR MEXICO

Next week's Rally Mexico is set for the lowest number of entries in the modern history of the World Rally Championship, with just 25 registrations. The event forms the opening round of the Super 2000 WRC, which contributes five cars.

PRODRIVE GO BRAZILIAN

The new Brazil World Rally Team, which breaks cover on Rally of Portugal next month, will be run by Prodrive from the company's base in Banbury. Daniel Oliveira will drive a Super 2000 version of the Mini Countryman in Portugal and Jordan before switching to the WRC version from Sardinia onwards.

PADDON FINDS THE KEY

Former Pirelli Star Driver Hayden Paddon met with New Zealand prime minister John Key last week. The pair talked about the recently founded New Zealand World Rally Team and Paddon's PWRC plans for this year. Paddon said Key was also interested in coming for a ride during a test of the team's Symtech Racing Subaru Impreza.

GREER SET FOR BRC

Northern Irishman Jonny Greer is expected to register for the British

Rally Championship ahead of this weekend's season-opening Rallye Sunseeker. In doing so, Greer will become the first Skoda Fabia S2000 driver to be eligible for the series. Fellow Irishman Robbie Barrable is also planning to pilot one of the Czech cars in the BRC this season.

KOSCIUSZKO GETS THE SET

Polish rally man Michal Kosciuszko will switch to the PWRC in 2011. Kosciuszko, who will drive a Mitsubishi Lancer X, completes the set of WRC support series, having tackled the SWRC and JWRC. He starts his bid in Portugal next month.

AL-ATTIYAH UNDER WAY

Dakar Rally winner Nasser Al-Attiyah (below) will get his SWRC campaign underway in Mexico. The Qatari, who leads the Middle East championship following his first-round victory, will drive a Ford Fiesta S2000 under the Barwa World Rally Team banner.



WRC

Novikov to 'fly' in Ford



Novikov returns to WRC action

RUSSIAN STARLET Evgeny Novikov has been tipped to shine by Ford rally boss Malcolm Wilson when he makes his debut in a Ford Fiesta RS WRC on Rally Mexico next week.

Novikov starred in the WRC in a Citroen Junior Team C4 in 2009, but he switched to his domestic series last year due to a lack of funds.

He has inked a six-event deal with Wilson's M-Sport squad, and will team with Belgian co-driver Stephane Prevot. "If you look through Novikov's history, he's been blisteringly quick," said Wilson. "There's no question that he's got huge potential. He's also got an experienced co-driver. It's a promising combination."

Novikov, 20, won't get to sample his Fiesta until shakedown for the event a week today. "The sooner I try the car in action the quicker I will get a rhythm when I get to Europe," said Novikov.

AUTOSPORT SAYS...

RICHARD RODGERS



PWRC cars will take a back seat in Britain

Change is coming in the British Rally Championship. With the two-wheel-drive-only era 12 months away, spectators on Rallye Sunseeker this Saturday will get a flavour of what lies ahead.

The event, a newcomer to the BRC, is one of four gravel rounds where 2WD crews will run at the front of the field. The thinking is to raise the profile of the class while the four-wheel-drive Group N production machines, the BRC's flagship division since 2006, die out over the course of the season.

With the 2WD cars simply not packing the same punch as the 4WDs, it's hardly the all-action start to the season the BRC needs, nor is it likely to thrill the fans as the series graces the forests of Dorset for the first time.

But the BRC bosses' foresight could yet be rewarded, just as it was when World Rally Cars were outlawed from the series at the end of 2005 in favour of Group N, which breathed new life into the championship.

With interest in the showroom class now waning, the more affordable 2WD rules should make the series cheaper and more accessible, particularly to younger drivers. Rallye Sunseeker could be the start of a very bright future for the BRC.

BRC PREVIEW

Event:	Rally Sunseeker International
Round Based:	1/8 Poole/Bournemouth
Date:	February 25/26
Stages:	11
Surface:	gravel
Competitive miles:	60
Last winner:	Marcus Dodd (National rally)
Fact:	First time as a BRC round



Kubica: on the slow road to recovery

Italian journalist *ROBERTO CHINCHERO* is a long-time friend of Robert Kubica. He visits the Pole in hospital after his horrific rally crash and finds him in good spirits

Life has never treated Robert Kubica kindly. He has achieved everything that he has accomplished to date by working hard and facing all kinds of obstacles. From the age of 13 he's been making his own choices, but fate now has changed the course of his life.

Just when he was enjoying well-deserved success, he suddenly and unexpectedly had to face the most difficult of all the challenges he has dealt with so far, as a man and as a driver.

The scene is Pietra Ligure, a small touristic town in Italy, halfway between Genova and the French border. On Sunday morning, February 6 2011, Kubica was admitted to the intensive-care unit of the Santa Corona Hospital after a high-speed crash during the Ronde di Andora rally. A few weeks before, his manager had convinced him not to take part in the Monte Carlo Rally, as driving the icy Monte stages at the wheel of a Renault Clio had been judged too much of a risk. Ironically, he had been given permission to take part in the Ronde di Andora – a much smaller event – in a Skoda Fabia, long before the Formula 1 season got underway.

Right after the crash, Kubica's close friend and manager, Daniele Morelli, and his doctor, Riccardo Ceccarelli, rushed to the hospital,

anxiously waiting for news on the condition of the Polish driver. With not only his arm but also his life at risk, the situation was genuinely critical. Time seemed to have stopped, with his many friends reflecting on the surreal absurdity of what had just happened.

The first news from the operating theatre was definitely reassuring, as doctors judged Kubica to be sufficiently fit to undergo delicate surgery that would attempt to reattach his right hand, avoiding amputation. Five days later, another operation took place to fix the breaks in his shoulder and his right elbow, with the elbow needing a further operation after five days. Following a total of 30 hours of surgery, Kubica will now face a long and difficult rehabilitation programme before it becomes clear whether or not he can come back to racing.

How is Robert coping with all this? He's only 26 years old but, if you get the chance to speak to him, it's easy to see what a mature person he is. He is intelligent and incredibly determined, and this has helped him to understand his physical condition exactly and fully accept what is to come next. When we finally get the chance to speak to him, we're all almost shocked by the positive attitude he shows, despite the trauma. "Look at all my monitors!" he points out gleefully. "The first line is my heartbeat, the second one is my ►





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◀ blood pressure and the third one... I really don't remember. Doctors look at this data all the time, just as we do in the pits. Maybe they'll have to change my control unit!"

The Pole is recognised throughout the world as a supremely talented Formula 1 driver, but this is only one aspect of Kubica. He has an incredible personality and everybody is longing to see him back on track. Unfortunately, it's still too early to imagine when exactly that might happen, although hopes are high. His incredible optimism is likely to play a key role in his recovery, with the Renault team ready to have him back probably sooner than we expect.

When we visit him in hospital, Kubica is eager to know everything about the latest F1 tests in Spain and the behaviour of the new Pirelli tyres. We just keep chatting as if nothing had happened. He has to pause now and then because of the pain, and this is the only sign that reminds us of his suffering. Every little movement he makes requires disentanglement from wires, tubes and all sorts of vital gadgets used to monitor his condition. Being in an intensive-care unit, we have to wear sterile outfits that at least provide Robert with a laugh: "Nice outfits, you look a bit funny with those on..." he comments before

moving on to describe his new 'office'.

"There are all sorts of alarms, and when the IV infusion ends it makes a little noise," he points out. "Instead, when something more important happens it sounds a siren and at night it makes a real racket." As usual, he is thinking more of others than himself, even though he is lying in bed with a collection of broken bones and over 30 hours of surgery in 10 days.

Robert keeps us entertained by playing with his right hand. "Look! I can move my forefinger!" he says. "I know I'm not in good shape, but I consider myself very lucky. I'm going to have to face a long and difficult rehabilitation programme, sure, but it doesn't worry me".

It's comforting to hear the sound of his voice, a sort of miracle. It's always difficult to feel at ease in front of a hospital bed surrounded by all sort of medical devices, and even more so if the patient is a Formula 1 driver, and that driver is Robert Kubica. He knows his many friends are by his side and that the doctors are doing all they can to help him. But he also knows that he'll have to face the pain once more on his own this time, as he did when he seriously injured his right arm as a passenger in a road accident in 2003.

A dramatic situation such as Kubica's at least ▶

"Robert keeps us entertained by playing with his right hand. 'Look! I can move my forefinger!' he says. 'I know I'm not in good shape, but I consider myself very lucky'"



Barrier sliced through Kubica's Skoda Fabia

Renault F1 team sends 'get-well' message



Zanardi says RK is a "unique man"



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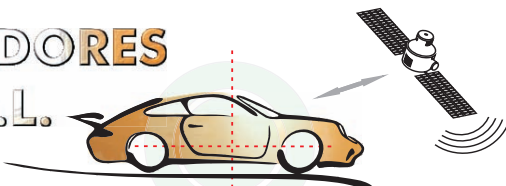
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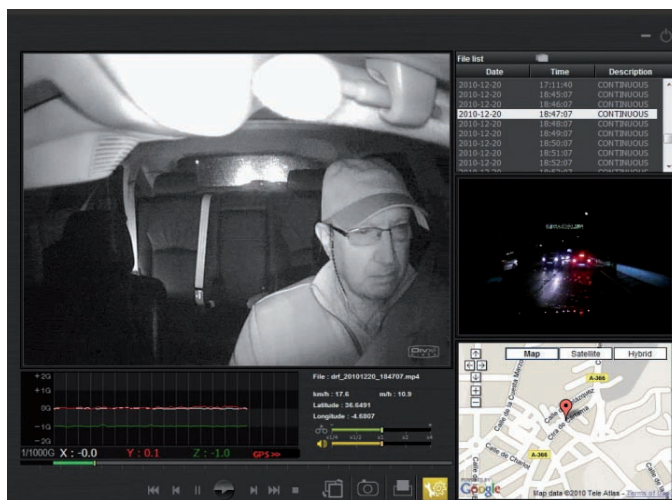
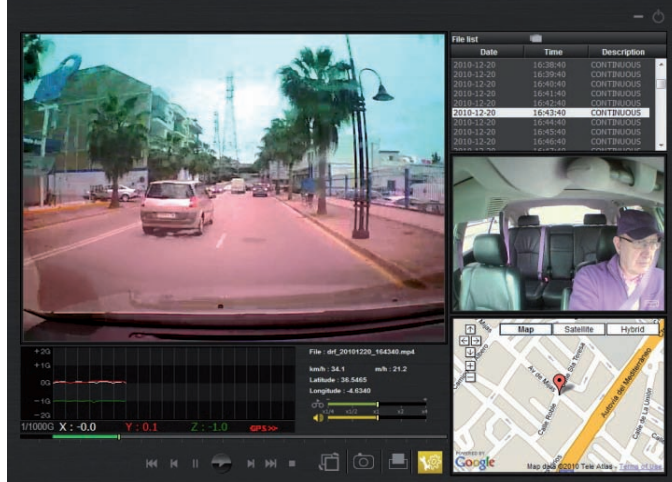
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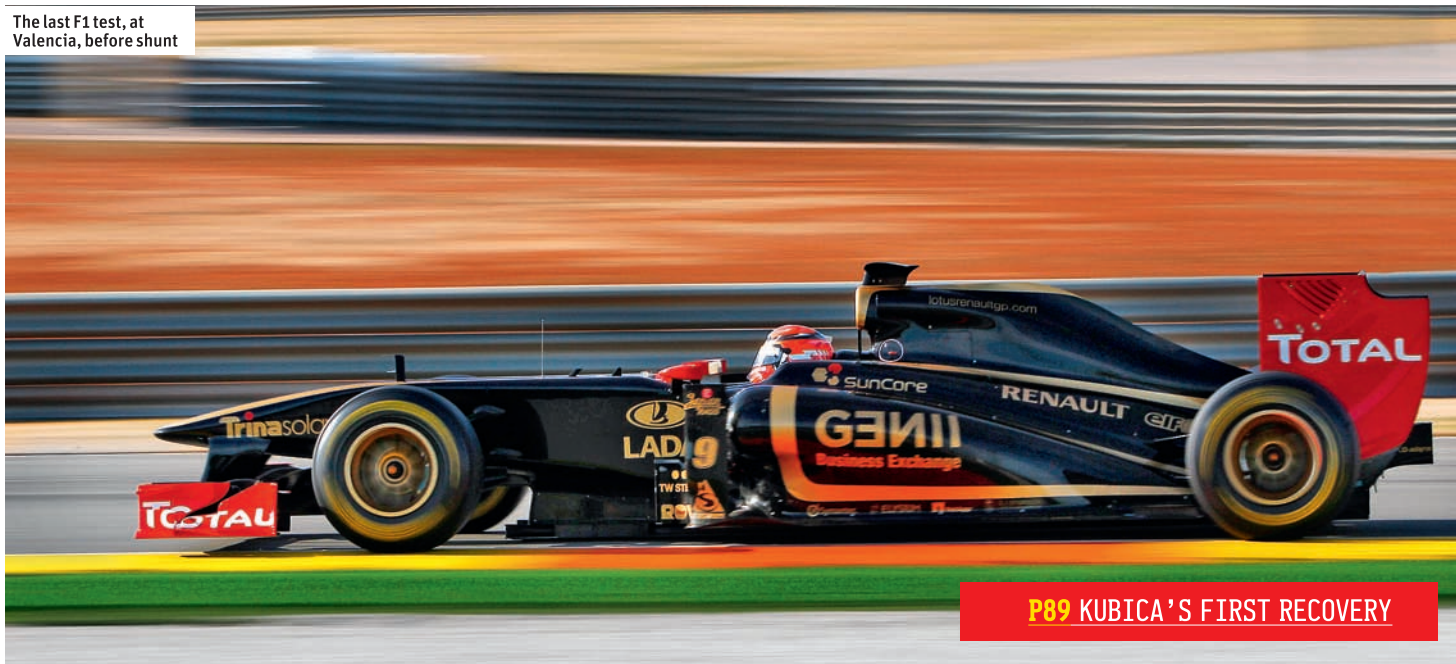


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The last F1 test, at Valencia, before shunt



P89 KUBICA'S FIRST RECOVERY

“Why is he so popular? He’s never driven a top car, has no motorsport family background or political connections. He’s just an honest person and exceptional driver”

Liuzzi wants to play poker



Ceccarelli is RK's doctor



With team boss Boullier

◀ helps you understand that there is still room for genuine people with human feelings and values, even in the business-driven world of F1. His good friend Vitantonio Liuzzi jokingly said: “Don’t worry, he’s still the same old Robert. He’d better start using his right hand soon because I want to beat him at poker and get my money back!”

Liuzzi isn’t the only one who’s visited Kubica to keep his spirits high. Fernando Alonso rushed to the hospital only a few hours after the accident, and so did Giancarlo Fisichella and Pastor Maldonado. Mark Webber also visited him and shared his memories of the mountain-bike accident that he had to deal with at the start of the 2009 season.

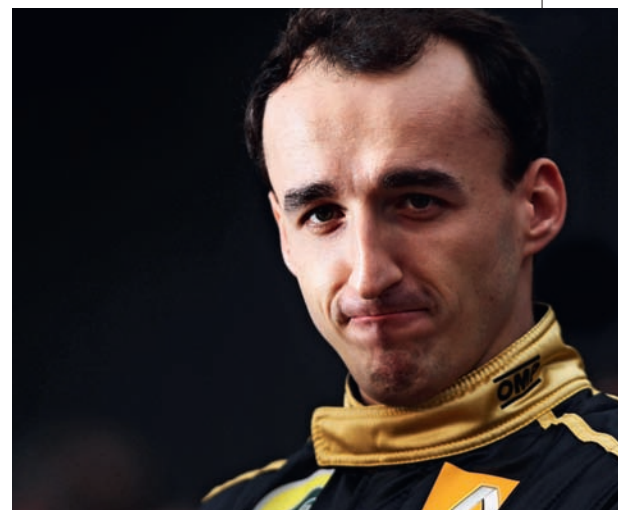
Many fans and journalists have been gathering outside the hospital to follow the situation avidly since the day of the accident. This huge interest on Kubica’s wellbeing has spread from Italy to Poland, and beyond. Why is Kubica so popular? “Certainly not for his PR skills,” Renault team principal Eric Boullier comments. So far, Kubica has never worked for a top team nor driven a top car such as a Ferrari or a McLaren. Neither does he have a motorsport family background nor important political or business connections. His popularity simply stems from being an honest person and an exceptional driver.

As Alex Zanardi once said during a prizegiving ceremony: “Robert is a great driver, a genuine champion and above all a unique man.” And Zanardi was right. An example of Robert’s uncomplicated straightforwardness can be found in his recent comment about what it was like to work with the Renault F1 team.

“It’s a fantastic team, with hard-working people who are committed to their jobs,” he said. “I haven’t told them this yet though, because I don’t want to sound as if I’m buttering them up. The trust and respect I have in them will show in time.”

Those who know Robert best realise that he fears nothing, including personal sacrifices and lengthy rehabilitation – which he has already experienced, although never on this scale before. After all Robert is a human being like everyone

else, and even though he hides his suffering, he does feel the pain acutely. He is well aware that the weeks to follow will be crucial for his racing career: even though the chances of seeing him back in Formula 1 increase day by day, there still remains the possibility that this will never happen. For a man who has spent the past 15 years in a motor racing paddock, this would be a terrible scenario: not only for himself but also for those of us who have always pictured him with his helmet on,



ready to take to the track for the next challenge.

All his friends hope and trust that the doctors will give him the chance that he needs to be the same as before, as he was prior to the fateful morning of February 6. Should this happen, it will be a day to remember for Robert and for all those who have supported him, including the doctors who hopefully will give him the chance to return to his normal life. It will also be a day to remember for Formula 1 as Kubica, though not quite a top name yet, still has a lot to give. Kubica’s career cannot end here: we would miss his unique driving style, his intelligent way of tackling life and his genuine character, both as a driver and as a man. ❧



Nick Heidfeld

Back in the saddle

The F1 veteran was back in action for new employer Renault in the Barcelona test. EDD STRAW caught up with the bearded wonder

Did the fact that you've taken Robert Kubica's drive in difficult circumstances make it a little uncomfortable for you?

Yes, very, but not so much when I'm at the track working with the team, because then I'm too focused on the job to think about it. After I saw on the Sunday that Robert had the crash, that was a very intense time. Obviously it was far worse for him, but I knew that there might be a chance for me. It was one of the worst feelings that I've ever had. It's not a situation that I hoped for, but you have to take it and I'm happy to be at this team.

Many people quickly concluded that you were the outstanding candidate to fill in. It can't have taken you long to come to the same conclusion...

The first thought was that hopefully Robert would be fine, but the second thought was that I might have a chance. I had been in contact with the team both for last year and for this season, so I had a good relationship with Eric Boullier [team principal] and Gerard Lopez [majority owner] and knew that they rated me quite highly. I knew that I would be on the list and with Vitaly Petrov only having one season behind him it makes sense to have an experienced guy.

You worked with Robert at BMW Sauber for four years – does that make it any harder?

It's a coincidence, but it doesn't change the situation a lot. I know him probably better than I know a lot of people, but when it comes to working with the team, no difference.



Boullier rates Heidfeld highly

Robert has said that he found the environment at Renault very different to BMW Sauber. Is your experience the same?

I agree. They are very open here and the driver can have a lot of input into what directions to take. I am enjoying this very much. Even compared to all of the other teams that I have been in, it's more open. Probably BMW Sauber was one extreme and what I've seen here is the other extreme.

So you can see why this team has had so much success, going back to Fernando Alonso's titles in 2005/06?

This might partly explain why good drivers have had even more success here than with other teams and perhaps why some of the not-so-good drivers didn't do so well. The driver can have a bigger impact than just the driving, but can be more involved in things.

The car has shown flashes of pace and should be near the front. When you first drove the car, did you have that feeling?

I had a good feeling, but not that it was perfect. Expectations have maybe been a bit too high lately because of Robert's quickest lap at Valencia and mine at Jerez. We are definitely not the fastest. Red Bull are in front and then we have the usual candidates – Ferrari and McLaren – and some other teams seem to have made a leap forward. We hope that we won't be too far away but it's unrealistic to expect to be the quickest team at the moment.

Is it a big job to get the car working with its innovative front-of-sidepods exhaust exits?

It is different, and technically it's the guys who design the system who will sort those things out. It's my job to say what the car is doing. The exhaust has not been done before in this position, but because I've been around for a long time I can give some input quickly without having to test too much.

You're only a stand-in at Renault, so does that change your outlook?

Not at all. At the moment, we don't know how long it will be before

Robert can come back. Hopefully it will be soon – but I will do the best that I can knowing that he will be back.

You have started 172 grands prix without a win. Is the Renault R31 the car that will end that record?

I hope that the chance I've been given to drive this car will allow me to win in the future. Whether it's with this car, I don't know, but I've got the chance to show people again what I can do. It's not only about now, the next races or the next season, but about spending many more years in F1 in successful cars. Of course, I would love to win a race, but I don't see it as such a huge issue for me as it is for some other people. From the outside, it's hard to follow every single driver and what has happened to them, but I know that if I have the chance I can win. The only driver that won a race as my teammate was Robert, and normally I have outperformed my team-mates – and even that win [Canada 2008] could have been mine. ☑





Did Brabham flop inspire McLaren's greatest car?

Was the all-conquering McLaren MP4/4 of 1988 really the little brother of the disastrous Brabham BT55? *GARY WATKINS* asks the men involved



There can be no argument with the stats: 15 wins from 16 grands prix, 15 poles, 10 fastest laps and 1003 laps led from a total of 1031 make the 1988 McLaren-Honda MP4/4 the greatest one-season Formula 1 car of all time. Yet there is disagreement, an increasingly bitter one, about who should take credit for the all-conquering design that gave Ayrton Senna his first world title.

F1 design legend Gordon Murray and Steve Nichols, respectively technical director and chief designer at McLaren in the late 1980s, have both been described as the designer of the MP4/4 over the past 23 years. That can't be the case, and in truth the term should probably be given to neither of them. F1 technical directors, then as now, don't usually design racing cars, while Nichols describes himself back then as someone "leading a team of people better than me".

The quarrel is really about who was the brains behind the MP4/4, who conceived a car that gave new meaning to the word 'domination' in F1. Both Murray and Nichols, backed by some of his cohorts, lay claim to the concept.

For Murray, the MP4/4 is a continuation of the low-line philosophy he pioneered at Brabham for the 1986 season with the unsuccessful BMW-powered BT55. His version of events is that he arrived at McLaren as technical director at the back end of '86, "determined to make the BT55 concept work".

Nichols dismisses the idea that the MP4/4, the first all-new McLaren since 1981, was designed around this concept and insists that he has ►

THE EVOLUTION OF THE SPECIES

McLAREN MP4/2C

Barnard's successful MP4/2 (seen in 1986-spec) was designed with 220-litre tank, resulting in what Nichols calls "beetle-back" appearance.



MP4/3

First Nichols McLaren retains family look, but tub designed for 195-litre tanks results in more compact shape. Note lower sidepods with side exits.



◀ "never thought of it as overly revolutionary". He argues that the '88 McLaren was "a continuation of what had gone before" and a reaction to a changing rulebook in the final year of the turbocharged engine.

Murray claims his arrival at McLaren from Brabham was too late to do anything about the 1987 MP4/3, a chassis he variously describes as a "real hotch-potch" and a "consortium car". That's a scathing assessment of a car good enough to win three grands prix, though the first pukka Porsche-engined McLaren to fail to win the world championship. But he's probably got it right when he says, "I couldn't see any glaring advantage over other people."

That was something the BT55 was meant to offer. Murray's final Brabham had been conceived to give the team,

says its designer (invoking the term coined by Mark Donohue in the 1970s), the "unfair advantage".

"I'd got to the point with the BT52 where even with a huge rear wing and the winglets stuck out the side, we couldn't get any more downforce," he explains. "It became pretty obvious that the way to get more downforce was to clean up the airflow to the rear wing."

The idea he came up with was to cant the engine over at 18 degrees and lay the driver down from the normal 45-degree seating angle to something approaching 30 degrees. Thus, the Brabham 'rollerskate' was born.

The BT55 didn't work for various reasons (see panel, below right) and ultimately hastened Murray's departure from Brabham. Team boss Bernie Ecclestone's increasing

involvement in F1 politics — "he was moving into the bigger picture" — was one reason for his departure, but he admits that "the BT55 failure didn't help". When John Barnard left McLaren for Ferrari, team boss Ron Dennis decided he needed a star name by way of replacement and Murray was his man.

Murray explains that he spent his "first months redesigning the design office and getting autoclaves into the company". Then his attention turned to the 1988 car.

"I got the guys together and showed them some Brabham drawings; you aren't allowed to do that these days!" he explains. "I didn't have full working drawings, but I certainly had sketches with a 30-degree back angle to the driving position in eighth or 10th scale. I showed it to Steve and the guys and told them that that was what we were going to do."

That conflicts with what Nichols has to say. According to the American, the low-line nature of the MP4/4 was "only one aspect" of the car and one he "didn't consider of overriding importance". He insists there was no all-encompassing plan to design a low-line car and that there was no big secret to a car that was more evolutionary than revolutionary.

Nichols, during a meeting with this writer, pointed to a picture of the 1987 MP4/3 and said: "If you look at that car real quick, you think, 'There's the 4/4', but it's not. It's the 4/3."

He's right, the similarities are there to see. "Look at that car [the MP4/3] and then the 4/4," he adds. "Where do you think the 4/4 came from?"

The switch from the Porsche-built



Low-line Brabham BT55 (left) replaced BT54 in '86

MP4/4

The monocoque is all-new courtesy of revised footbox regulations, but sidepods and aero treatment clearly have roots in previous year's car.



TAG engine to the Honda V6, a brand-new version of its title-winning twin-turbo, and a reduction in fuel capacity from 195 to 150 litres, had a lot to do with the way the MP4/4 ended up, he insists.

"The smaller engine and the smaller fuel tank meant it could be the next step on from what went before," he says. "The Porsche engine was a little taller and had two pop-off valves, one on each bank, so the profile was a little fatter.

"It was all down to the components. We had a lower engine and a smaller fuel tank, so what were we going to do, sit the driver up in front of it all? It was natural for the driver to lay down and be within that profile."

Nichols, like Murray a fan of Colin Chapman's low-line Lotus 25, insists the lower driving position was a logical development and not the result of a "eureka moment in the bath".

Yet Murray's version of events is at least partially backed up by two members of the design team at McLaren in 1987.

Neil Oatley, who went on to head up the design team on a swathe of title-winning McLarens, has some recollection of the meeting Murray describes, though he says he's always

"I got the guys together and showed them some Brabham drawings; you aren't allowed to do that these days! I certainly had sketches"

Gordon Murray

thought of the MP4/4 as "Steve's car".

"I am pretty sure something like that happened," he says, though he concedes that he wasn't "involved myself". (Oatley was heading up the project that would result in the MP4/5, powered by Honda's forthcoming normally-aspirated V10.) "I certainly saw layout drawings of that car [the BT55] lying about in the office."

Bob Bell, aerodynamicist on the MP4/4 and now en route to Mercedes, says that Murray "brought a view to bear on how much we could lay the driver down, but I don't know how much of it was natural evolution and how much it was Gordon pushing for it. The ownership of the car conceptually is a pretty difficult thing to pin down."

Key to the concept of the BT55 had been the lay-down engine. The second obstacle in the way of clean airflow to the rear wing after the driver had been the tall, production-based, straight-four BMW turbo engine, which came complete with a Formula 3-style air intake "that sat up miles behind the driver". Murray says that when it became clear what powerplant McLaren would have for 1988, he "got Honda to lower" the engine.

Honda had worked on the V10 project for a couple of years by then, according to Osamu Goto, team leader and development head at the manufacturer's racing division at the time. But it calculated that the turbocharged route was still the way to go, despite the 45-litre cut in fuel allocation, and set about producing a new engine with a different bore and stroke to replace the one that ultimately went on to win the world title with Nelson Piquet and Williams in 1987.

"That little V6 was pretty low anyway but they lowered it again," says Murray. "I explained the whole concept of the car and they lowered the crank height substantially for me."

That claim is backed up by Goto. ▶

BRABHAM BT55: STRONG CONCEPT NEVER REALISED

The Brabham BT55 worked on paper and in the windtunnel, but not out on the racetrack. The team and engine partner BMW spent the better part of the 1986 season chasing the problem and, when they found it, were unable to solve the issue.

"The gearbox, which could have been a problem, worked, but the

engine didn't," explains BT55 designer Gordon Murray. "It didn't like lying over at that angle."

The problem was that in left-handers "the oil rushed up the block into the cylinder head and stayed there," says Murray. "The engine mechanicals were churning up the oil, which explained the high temperatures.

The car would come out of the corner and wouldn't accelerate."

A second issue was the rigidity of the monocoque, Murray and Brabham's first full carbon-composite tub.

"I did a very skinny monocoque and, with such a long-wheelbase car, I don't think it was stiff enough. If we'd had a year to develop the concept, I'm sure

we would have overcome these problems. We were a small team and we'd tried to do it all over the winter."

The oiling problem remained for the 1987 season when Brabham, much to the surprise of new designer Sergio Rinland, had to continue using the lay-down engine. BMW was treading water and wanted out of F1.



LUCKY ESCAPE: THE PORSCHE V12

Imagine how different the history of Formula 1 might be had McLaren not landed Honda engines for 1988. Then imagine how things would have turned out if the team had ended up with the Porsche V12.

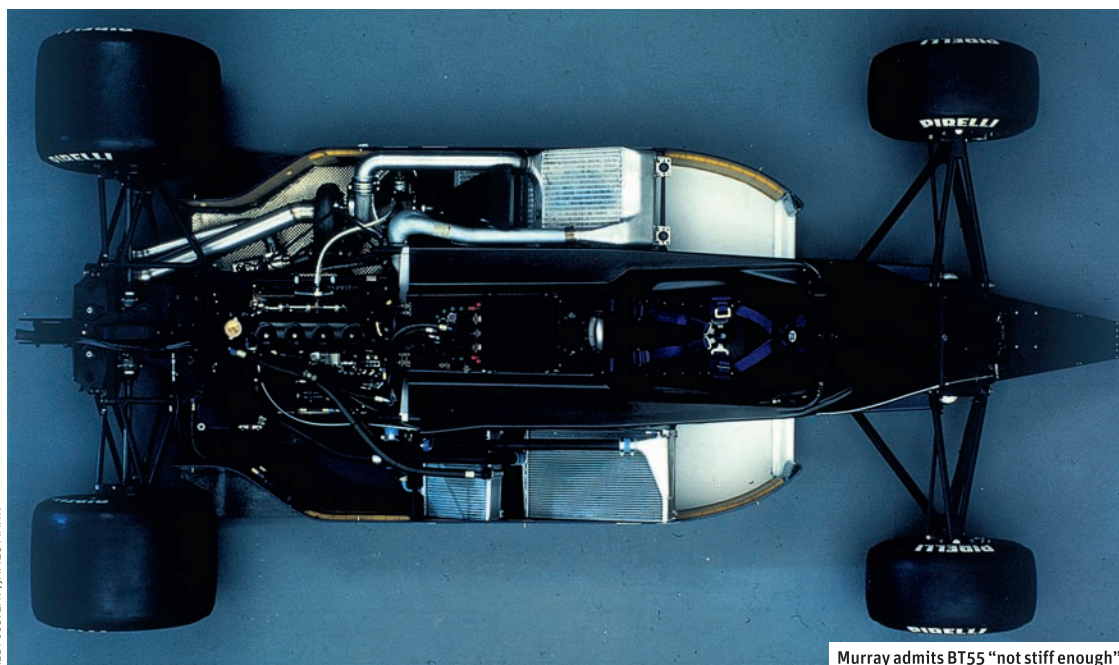
McLaren had already had one bid for Honda engines and the services of Ayrton Senna rebuffed for 1987 and TAG, which funded the Porsche

turbo V6, was desperate to call time on the project. The void could have been filled by the disastrous Porsche V12 that eventually ended up with Footwork (nee Arrows) for '91 (right).

"The Porsche engineers came along with their proposal and one of them pulled out a single drawing," remembers McLaren chief designer Steve Nichols. "He started unfolding

and unfolding and unfolding. It eventually filled the whole table.

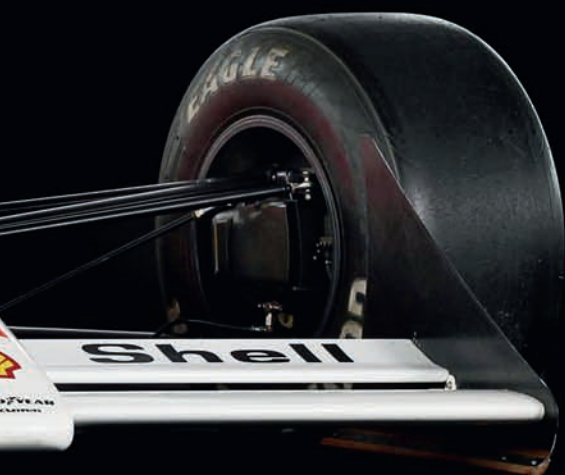
"It was this V12 thing, which was essentially two of the turbo engines stuck together with a shaft [the power take-off] coming out through the vee. It was hugely long and quite tall. It looked like something that should be in the back of a Leyland bus."



ALL PICS: LAT, JAMES MANN

Murray admits BT55 "not stiff enough"





Senna used MP4/4 to devastating effect in '88



Murray (left) and Nichols flank Ron Dennis and Senna

◀ “He said he wanted to keep the same driving position as the BT55 Brabham,” he says. “Therefore he’d like a lower engine.”

The gearbox that McLaren designed to take advantage of the new V6 was very much Murray’s project, in fact it was his baby. No-one involved in the project disputes that.

The crank height of the new V6 was 28mm lower than on its predecessor, which required a new gearbox. The use of a conventional two-shaft transmission would have resulted in power-sapping driveshaft angles, so

“I don’t think there was much chemistry between Steve and Gordon and they could both be a bit stubborn in their own ways”

Neil Oatley

Murray turned to the twin brains who had designed the so-called Z-drive gearbox that brought the power back to the centre of the car from the offset crank of the BT55’s BMW unit. The late Pete Weismann, who had a relationship with Brabham stretching back to the 1960s, and David North, who Murray brought in from Brabham, came up with an innovative three-shaft ‘box that allowed for the correct driveshaft angles.

“The key to success of the MP4/4 was the gearbox, because we couldn’t do it with a two-shaft gearbox,” says Murray. “Once again, Peter Weismann came to the rescue with David. It was a huge risk technically to do a vertical three-shaft ‘box. It was potentially the Achilles’ heel.”

Lotus, the other team to use the new Honda engine in 1988, chose to continue with its existing gearbox and titled the engine fore to aft to achieve the right shaft angles. By doing that, of course, it negated much of the benefit that came with the lower engine.

Nichols and close friend Matthew Jeffreys, who was responsible for the design of the MP4/4 from the front bulkhead forward, agree that Murray was involved in the detail design of the new transmission. “If there was one area that Gordon got involved in technically,” says Jeffreys, “it was in the gearbox.”

Murray’s approach to the technical director’s role was “more directorial than technical”, according to Nichols. “He said he didn’t want to disrupt things and left us to get on with the car. He was much more involved in looking to the future and dealing with the new factory and drawing office.”

That was certainly true at the start

of Murray’s tenure at McLaren, but by the time the design of MP4/4 had worked up to a full head of steam in August 1987, both the workshops and design office had long since moved to the team’s new headquarters on Woking Business Park. Another story, told by one of the men brought in to Brabham to replace Murray, suggests that his input stretched beyond the general concept of the car.

Sergo Rinland had been hired by Ecclestone when it became clear that Murray was looking for pastures new in the middle of 1986. The former Williams engineer resurrected a novel front-suspension layout pioneered on the ground-effect BT49 for the ’87 BT56, and bizarrely got Murray to draw it.

“Gordon was leaving but he was very good to me,” says Rinland. “He offered to help out and said, ‘Tell me what you want me to draw and I’ll draw it’”

This pullrod system, which did away with the need for a rocker, was also used on the MP4/4. At one race in 1987 – “Monza, I think” – Rinland remembers Murray and Nichols appearing at the front of the Brabham pit garage. “I was doing the set-up and Gordon was explaining to Steve how the system worked,” he says. “I’m not sure they could see anything, but I wasn’t happy.”

Quite why Murray and Nichols aren’t content to share the accolades for arguably the best F1 car of all time isn’t clear. They back away from rubbishing each other, but those who worked with them suggest their relationship wasn’t a happy one.

“I don’t think there was much chemistry between them and they could both be a bit stubborn in their own ways,” says Oatley. “Maybe Steve resented Gordon coming in.”

Nichols admits that he had told McLaren boss Ron Dennis that there was no need to replace Barnard. “The main man had gone,” he says, “and we wanted to do it for ourselves.”

Nichols and his team did do it themselves in a way they never had under Barnard. “With John,” says Jeffreys, “it was important to him that he had his stamp on everything. He could be very dictatorial. Gordon left us to our own devices much more.”

There is no doubt Nichols, and the likes of Jeffreys, Bell, North and Steve Nielsen, designed the MP4/4 or did the detail work. But the concept? Surely the evidence laid out above proves that Murray, as is fitting of a technical director, was central to that.

Murray’s claim that he took “the BT55, turned it into a McLaren and solved the technical problems” is sweeping generalisation. But, maybe, not so far from the truth. ❧





PATH TO AN AMERICAN REVOLUTION

Part two of our Indy 500 series: the post-war years end in a rear-engined invasion from afar

By PAUL FEARNLEY

It was homespun verging on hokey. Superfan Larry Bisceglia carved a media niche by being first in the queue every year (as from 1950), his bestickered Chevy panel van arriving even ahead of the crowning of the-girl-next-door Festival Queen (from '60). It was weeks before the floats floated, the marching bands marched, the twirlers twirled and the balloons – hundreds, all brightly coloured – went up (as they did from '48). 'Back Home Again in Indiana' would boom sentimentally across the PA system (from '46) before the 'gentlemen' of the grid were theatrically requested to 'start your engines' (perhaps as early as '48).

In the absence of an American Grand Prix, the Indianapolis 500 was a round of the world championship from 1950-60, not that its cars conformed to the regulations or that their drivers – bar Alberto Ascari, a contestant with Ferrari in '52, and Juan Manuel Fangio, a non-qualifier in '58 – cared. With its six-figure prize fund and attendance, and hundreds of affiliated radio stations (a growth that began in '52), this race didn't need global approbation to prosper.

The 1950s were a Golden Era for Indy – American heroes in American

cars powered by American engines and sponsored by American companies fighting tooth and claw to win America's race. But though outwardly strong, its inward-looking attitude would leave its magnificent 'dinosaurs' vulnerable to alien viruses, to the comet that sped over the Atlantic in the '60s and rattled the Brickyard's foundations.

Indianapolis Motor Speedway had survived worse of course, as three-time 500 winner Wilbur Shaw would attest. He got a shock when, as general manager of Firestone's aircraft division, he arrived in November 1944 to test some new synthetic-rubber road tyres: the infield was a jungle, weeds infested the track and the infrastructure was collapsing. Not a stroke had been done since 1941. Shaw grasped the nettle and met with Eddie Rickenbacker, reputed by now to be Indy's sole owner, in New York to thrash out a proposal. There was still haggling to be done, but Shaw reckoned that 20 partners investing \$25,000 apiece would seal the deal. He received plenty of support – and a tangled web of attached strings. Shaw wanted the circuit to remain independent and considered buying it himself even after he was introduced to Anton 'Tony' Hulman Jr.

The grandson of a German ►



R-l: poleman Flaherty, Rathmann, O'Connor blast off in 1956 500

ALL PICS: INDIANAPOLIS MOTOR SPEEDWAY

CLOSE, BUT NOVI CIGAR

Crowd favourite could never quite win

A NOVI NEVER won the 500 – never won any race for that matter – but its supercharged V8 wail, fearsome reputation and frustrating near-misses made this Detroit-based marque the people's favourite.

Born of conversation between tuner Bud Winfield and Novi-based team owner Lew Welch – and designed by Leo Goossen and built by Fred Offenhauser – the engine was first installed in a Miller chassis and raced to fourth in 1941 by ex-Harley bike hero Ralph Hepburn.

Novi returned in 1946 with a front-driver designed by Frank Kurtis. 'Hep' was the fastest qualifier and led for 44 laps until slowed by brake problems.

Stuntman Cliff Begere led the first 23 laps of 1947 before being forced to commandeer his team-mate's car, which he guided to fourth.

The legend really began in 1948. 'Hep' was killed in practice, team-mate Chet Miller was spooked

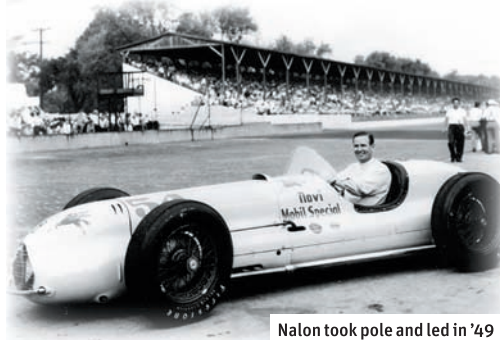
and stepped down, and Duke Nalon bravely stepped in. He was the fastest qualifier and could have won had he got a full fill at his only stop. A splash-and-dash relegated him to third.

In 1949, it was Nalon's turn to suffer the Novi's wrath. Starting from pole, he was leading when a fiery crash on lap 24 put him in hospital. He returned in '51 to set pole, as did Miller in '52 to become the fastest qualifier – but the retirements continued to pile up.

A rear-wheel-drive Kurtis- Novi allowed Paul Russo to shine in 1957, leading for 24 laps before finishing fourth. Juan Fangio sampled it in

'58 but nothing came of it.

The engine's brash new owners, brothers Andy and Vince Granatelli of Chicago, provided the Novi's final hurrah. Jim Hurtubise, as brave as they come, qualified in the middle of the front row in 1963 and led the first lap – but despite the Granatellis' subsequent adoption of Ferguson four-wheel drive from '64 in a bid to harness the power, the victory never came.



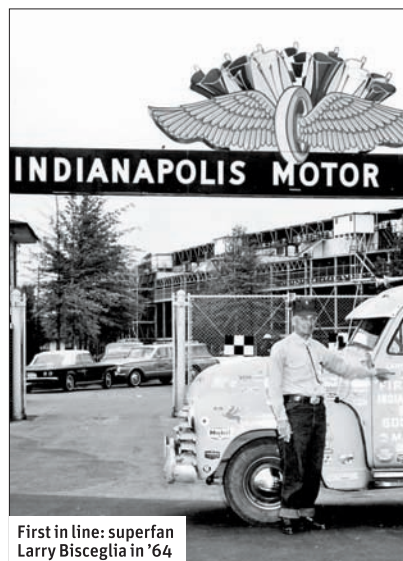
Nalon took pole and led in '49



1946: infield was a mess after hostilities



Wilbur Shaw (left) was at forefront of IMS



First in line: superfan Larry Bisceglia in '64





Shaw's promotion drew in the crowds



Indy fact
1946 winner
George Robson was
born in Newcastle-
upon-Tyne!



1952: Agabashian's turbo diesel special

ALL PICS: INDIANAPOLIS MOTOR SPEEDWAY

◀ immigrant, this Terre Haute businessman had a reputation for restoring failing companies. He was a racing fan too, and his father knew Carl Fisher, Indy's founder. Details of the meeting at Indianapolis Athletic Club on November 14 1945 are hazy, but it was Hulman who emerged as the new owner. A private man, he was happy for Shaw, his president and general manager, to be the public face. But although Hulman's long-term view was that his new acquisition should make neither a profit nor a loss, the pressure was on. He wanted the 500 to be as central to Indianapolis as the Derby was to Kentucky. He knew that his first 500 must set this tone, but there were only six months in which to prepare.

Entries flooded in – 56, including nine from overseas – and practice began as usual on May 1. The gates remained closed to the public for 15 more days, however, because the renovation, which included a new iron-and-steel paddock, was ongoing. This delay only served to pique interest and the crowds poured in when allowed. The run-up was marred by the practice crash that almost killed Rudi Caracciola, the three-time European champion, but the access roads were gridlocked come race day. The fascination, that vital intangible, remained strong; the 500 would survive.

There was an unsurprising slump in 1947 – the last year that fewer than 33 cars started – as post-war economic reality bit a chunk out of its cousin, optimism.

There was a power struggle too, between Shaw, poacher-turned-gamekeeper, and the recently formed American Society of Professional Auto Racing. Led by boisterous Joe Lencki of Chicago, some of its members wanted a share of the gate rather than to race for a guaranteed purse. This standoff meant just 17 cars qualified by the close of official practice. Extensions – and prize-fund increases – eventually raised this to 30. Only one of the renegade cars finished in the top six and ASPAR was a broken force. Not for the first time – nor the last – Indy, American racing's rock, had weathered a political storm.

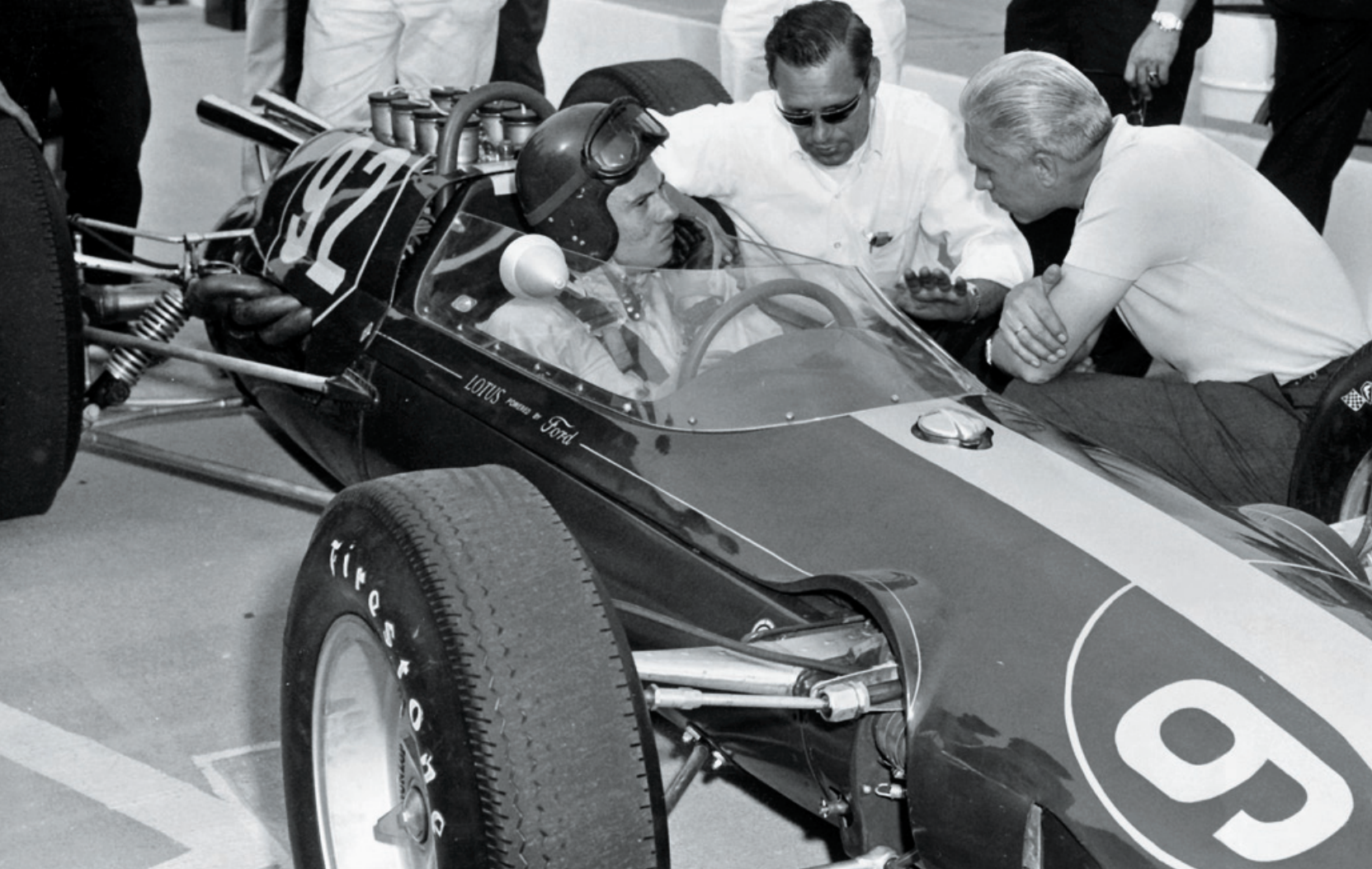
That 500 saw the creation of the first post-WWII dynasty: the Blue Crown Spark Plug Specials run by Lou Moore, the second-placed driver of 1928. Two years in succession Mauri Rose, a wiry, wily engineer from Ohio, led team-mate Willard 'Bill' Holland to a one-two; Holland, a champion roller- and ice-skater out of 'Philly', made it three in a row in '49. These early post-war races were a battle between specialised front-wheel-drives like the Blue Crowns, reckoned to provide superior grip and stability, and rear-wheel-drive dirt-trackers modified for Indy's unique

“In 1952, Kurtis concocted a breakthrough recipe. ‘It looks like a roadster,’ said ‘Vuky’. It stuck. An era was born”

demands, and multi-talented, LA-based can-do artisans were still ruling the tech roost: Offenhauser, under the auspices of three-time winner Louis Meyer and Dale Drake, continued to churn out its thunderous four-cylinder mill, while the likes of Emil Deidt, 'Lujie' Lesovsky, Eddie 'Kazoom' Kuzma, Quin Epperley and Frank Kurtis fashioned chassis, the fit and finish of which were a match for anything European. Although its technology would eventually maroon it, peacetime Indy was not totally allergic to the newfangled: disc brakes, mechanical fuel injection, a turbocharger (for Kurtis's pole-setting diesel of '52), even twin engines and six wheels. Meyer-Drake, Halibrand, Hilborn and Firestone provided the building blocks in the way that Cosworth, Hewland, Lucas and Goodyear would for '70s F1, while burgeoning hotrod clubs and myriad local short ovals were the American version of the UK's 500cc Formula 3 and airfield circuits – a conveyor that supplied gangs of young, hungry drivers, some buddies since adolescence, and with no preconceptions. These constituent parts coalesced in '52 when Bill Vukovich, a tough tractor-driving Cali kid from hardscrabble Fresno, grabbed the resultant car by its scruff.

Kurtis had an eye for form and function, a penchant for experimentation and a flair for surrounding himself with like-minded people. His rear-wheel-drives ended the Blue Crowns' streak in 1950 – ex-vaudevillian Johnnie Parsons winning a rain-shortened race – and Lee Wallard backed that up with a popular victory in '51, but it wasn't until '52 that he concocted a true breakthrough recipe: extended wheelbase, driver to its right, lowered engine and transmission to his left. “It looks like a roadster,” said ‘Vuky’. It stuck. An era was born.

Vukovich, the son of Serbian immigrants, was the most enigmatic, most emulated of Indy's stars. A scowling dirt-track tyro who hated the press and had no time for back-slappers, he was obsessed with leading every lap of every race: a rebel with a cause. He led for 150 in 1952, and was within eight of victory when his roadster's steering failed, leaving the door open for fellow punk-kid Troy Ruttman to become, at 22, the youngest – heaviest and tallest – winner. (Ruttman was driving a Kuzma for JC Agajanian, a ►



◀ Stetson-wearing businessman/showman of Armenian extraction.)

Vukovich made amends in 1953 by memorably qualifying on pole, despite a rain shower, and winning after leading for 195 laps in roaring heat. Humidity took its toll the following year – the 11th-placed car cooked five different drivers – yet Vuky again soloed to victory. He despised the hat-trick hype of '55, and on lap 57 became entangled in someone else's shunt and vaulted over the backstretch wall to his death. He was leading at the time.

The American Automobile Association had had it with a sport that brought you the death of Ascari and now Vukovich – with the Le Mans disaster still to come in June; its Contest Board was disbanded. It was debatable whether Hulman needed a sanctioning body, so big had Indy become, but he decided that he did and formed the United States Auto Club on January 1 1956. This was evolution not revolution: the officials' names hadn't changed, their armbands had. Of greater note was Shaw's death in a plane crash in October 1954. Fiercely competitive on the track, charming and persuasive off it, no one had done more to popularise the 500. His was a huge loss, but the talented team he had created took up the slack and coped with the strain, while an increasingly public Hulman filled the gap at the top.

There were other changes for 1956: all bar the bricked section of the main straight was repaved, and a Kurtis didn't

“Chapman could hardly believe his eyes: laughably big and outdated cars winning serious money. He persuaded Ford to build him a V8”

win. Back in '48, Wallard had invented a new 'groove', running from wall to apex to wall in Turns 1 and 3 rather than hug the track's inside-middle. This was taken a step further by Pat Flaherty, who used the new surface's extra grip to three-wheel his way to pole and victory. He was driving a roadster built by LA's AJ Watson, whose simple, elegant design – or direct copies of it – would soon come to monopolise the grid and win on six more occasions. But not before there was a twist.

For years George Salih, winning mechanic to Wallard, had mulled over and proposed his big idea without finding any takers. So he financed and built it himself: a 'laydown' roadster with its Offy tilted at 72 degrees. The benefit? Lower CoG. The problem? Potentially compromised oil circulation. Sam Hanks delayed his retirement to drive the smallest car of the 1957 race, and with it became the first man to win more than \$100,000 at a single 500. The same layout won in '58 too, driven by Jimmy Bryan, a cigar-chewing hard man from Phoenix.

Kansas-born Rodger Ward, hellraiser-turned-churchgoer, and Jim Rathmann,

real name Richard – Dick, his elder racing brother, was christened James! – then provided the roadsters with their zenith. Both in Watsons, Ward won their duel of 1959, while Rathmann turned the tables in '60 in a ding-dong dice that included 15 swaps of lead.

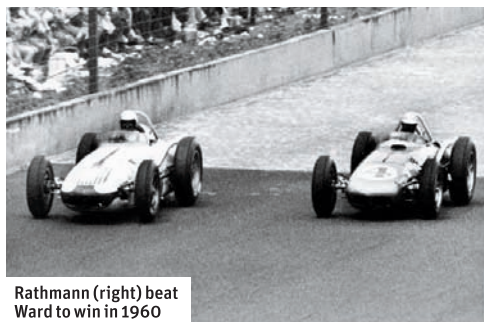
Ironically it was Ward, a second-time winner in 1962, who would drop the drawbridge. He arrived at Sebring for the inaugural American GP of '59, confident that his Kurtis-Offy midget was capable of victory. He qualified 44 seconds off Stirling Moss's pole in a Cooper. Ward soaked up his embarrassment, befriended world champion-elect Jack Brabham and persuaded him that his fast-cornering rear-engined Cooper had an Indy future.

Money for the project was sourced from tissue magnate Jim Kimberly, and a Cooper fitted with a stretched 2.7-litre Coventry Climax was built for 1961. Despite giving away 1500cc



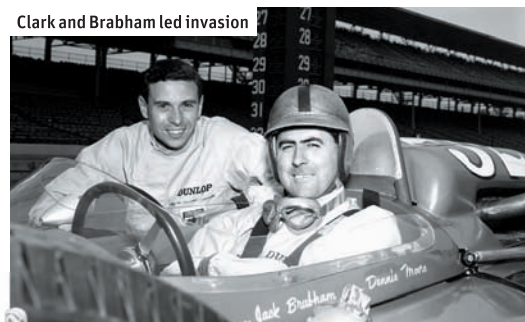


Clark in '63, before oily chase of Jones



Rathmann (right) beat Ward to win in 1960

Clark and Brabham led invasion



Mauri Rose with Lou Moore and trophy in '48

— even Indy's supercharged cars ran to a 2.8-litre maximum — the foreign 'funny car' shocked the locals. It might have finished sixth had its driver run hard on a three-stopper from the off rather than try — and fail — to massage two stops from his too-soft Dunlops. Even so, Brabham finished a creditable ninth. Never again would an Indy 500 be totally front-engined.

Brabham had cut his teeth on the dirt ovals of Australia and so fitted right in at Indy. The crowd warmed to his and genial team leader John Cooper's gutsy effort. In contrast, Lotus boss Colin Chapman was too choppy for their liking. With a personality to match Agajanian's or that of STP suit-wearing Andy Granatelli, a man as loud, large and colourful as his Novi cars, this imperious interloper wanted one thing: victory. If that meant putting a buzz saw through the buzzcuts' world, so be it.

Chapman had been invited to Indy in 1962 by GP racer Dan Gurney, who was driving the only rear-engined car in the race for dragster legend Mickey Thompson. Chapman could hardly believe his eyes: laughably big and outdated cars winning serious money. Before the year was out — and before a contract was signed — he persuaded Ford, returning to Indy for the first time since its '35 debacle, to build him a V8 for a reworking of his F1 car by designer Len Terry.

Chapman, however, underestimated the task. America's new driving icons, bullnecked Texan AJ Foyt

and snake-eyed Parnelli Jones, born in Arkansas but raised in California, formed a formidable roadster bulwark, while the quirky customs of Indy's 'Month of May' drove the fidgety Londoner to distraction. His number one, the peerless Jim Clark, took it all in his stride, but even he misjudged the pace of the yellow-flag periods. Tardy pitstops didn't help Lotus's cause either, and Clark had to settle for second behind Jones's mobile oil slick.

Lotus had a lot to learn. The future, however, was clear and a heap of American racers — even cool, calm Watson — scrambled to join the rear-engined revolution. Their offerings varied wildly in quality, and none was a match for the new Lotus, which now boasted a fuel-injected twin-cam V8 rather than a pushrod on carbs. Foyt and Jones wisely stuck with what they knew.

A one-stopping Thompson carrying 100 gallons of gasoline, which gave better consumption than the usual methanol, spun exiting Turn 4 on

the second lap. It slapped the inside wall, exploded and rebounded onto the track. 'The Clown Prince' Eddie Sachs T-boned it and was killed; Dave MacDonald succumbed to his burns two hours later. It was a smoking scene of atomic devastation and a 500 was red-flagged for the first time.

Upon its resumption, Lotus, in the form of impressive Pennsylvanian Bobby Marshman and Clark, led for 47 laps. Marshman was pulling away when he was forced low in a turn by a backmarker, bottomed and ripped out the engine's oil plug. Seven laps later a chunking Dunlop — Chapman's choice over the harder Firestones — caused Clark's left-rear suspension to collapse. So Foyt worked his roadster hocus-pocus for a second time, and Lotus, despite its science, had yet to disprove the superstition that green cars at Indy were anything other than unlucky. ☒



Part 3: horses & CART,
in our March 24 issue



LAT.SUTTON MOTORSPORT IMAGES, STALEY/GP2

Sport of Kings\$

Climbing the single-seater ladder to Formula 1 is proving almost impossible for all but the very wealthiest. *By MARCUS SIMMONS*

Motorsport has never been more accessible to the population at large – in the UK alone, scores of low-cost categories and championships have been launched in the past decade, most with the aim of offering maximum track time for minimal cost to amateurs.

But for the career-minded driver, the sport has rarely been more inaccessible. Mark Hughes, in his MPH column in our January 20 issue, discussed how the reduction of manufacturers in Formula 1 – and the consequent elimination of many junior-driver schemes – means that over the coming years we are unlikely to see the best drivers at the pinnacle, with many falling by the wayside as they climb the ladder.

The reality is considerably worse. Drivers aren't just falling off the ladder at GP2 level, they're toppling away from the sport at such an early stage that you could argue the ladder no longer exists.

Marcus Pye also touched on the same subject in his column last week, asserting that only those from backgrounds of immense wealth can afford to chase the single-seater path, similar to pre-war and up to the 1960s.

The sport has chased itself into a corner. To compete in Formula Renault

UK, you won't get much change from £200,000 for a season with a top squad, and that's with teams operating at a bare minimum profit margin in order to pay owners and staff a living wage. "I feel quite embarrassed when I tell people the budget," says Tony Shaw, co-owner of FRUK reigning teams' champion Manor Competition. "I fully expect them to turn around and tell me to get stuffed. But they seem to accept it and try to find it."

From the 1970s to the 2000s, sons and daughters of the professional middle classes could scabble around, do deals, find small backers and just about scrape together enough to race. Yet in the current recession this is almost impossible for all but the very wealthiest. There is nothing wrong with the rich going racing of course: these parents have normally worked incredibly hard and made considerable sacrifices to earn their standard of living. And a good proportion of these drivers have the talent to beat allcomers (Ayrton Senna, for instance, was born into great privilege). But what is wrong is that only these people can afford to compete, other than those who earn patronage from the fantastic Racing Steps Foundation, or the very lucky who pick up low-profile backers, such ▶





If you don't fall off in F1 Renault...



Bland is president of new Commission

...you then have to raise an F3 budget



"If you live in a high-tax economy, it's more and more difficult to find sponsorship. I feel like telling dads to tell their sons to take up tennis"
GP2 team boss David Sears

◀ as GP2 ace Sam Bird and British F3 contender Rupert Svendsen-Cook.

That's just as well for Bird, given that the going rate for a GP2 campaign is an eye-watering €2.25 million – a far cry from the series' stated aim, when it started in 2005, of being 10 per cent cheaper than its predecessor, F3000. "The extra costs come from doing two races a weekend instead of just one in F3000," explains iSport International boss Paul Jackson. "These cars are so much quicker than F3000 that they consume parts at a much quicker rate."

No doubt the F1-support status helps GP2 teams on the corporate side. "We hope that GP2 will reach a stage where it's attractive to commercial sponsors so we don't have to ask the drivers," continues Jackson. "There seems to be a pick-up in that market. Okay, most of it is smaller than £30k, but that does allow us to subsidise the drives a little."

Fellow GP2 team boss David Sears was a Formula Ford 1600 champion in 1979. The Super Nova Racing principal came from a Norfolk landowning family, but even he found it a struggle to raise the budget of £30,000 for British F3 in 1980 (which equates to £90,000 today). In 2011, for the same series, you need to find at least half a million – make that £750,000 if you want to join a top team.

"It's fast becoming the case that if you live in a high-tax economy like we do in Britain, it's more and more difficult to find sponsorship," says Sears. "I get these dads coming up to me who have spent hundreds of thousands on karting, and can't believe how much the next step costs. I feel like telling them to tell their sons to take up tennis. I don't

see how the hell any driver is going to make it on talent alone anymore."

GP2 and its baby brother GP3 should both be fully subscribed in 2011, but part of the reason for this is the immense financial penalties meted out by organisers to teams should they not be present at all rounds with a full squad. GP3 was launched last year with three-car teams charging budgets not far short of F3, but with track time way short of F3 and, as a one-make class, nowhere near the learning potential for the drivers. This year, due to the threat of penalties, some of the teams are offering ridiculously cheap deals to fill their third seats: AUTOSPORT has heard €200,000 in one case!

The story is different elsewhere. F3 is struggling; so is Formula Renault UK. The Renault Eurocup potentially looks strong, and doesn't cost too much more than FRUK. But some of the top drivers and teams will combine Eurocup with a regional series such as North European Cup, giving themselves a huge advantage – on a combined budget not far short of half a million.

The introduction of the new Formula Renault in 2010 also left a bitter taste for many teams. They claim that the new cars are much more expensive to run than the trusty old Tatuus warhorse that served from 2000-09, and far more complicated. "You need a bloody university degree to bleed the clutch," says Manor boss Shaw.

This deters the little teams – the small family efforts, for example, run by dad with a couple of his lad's old karting mechanics. But they can compete in Formula Renault BARC, where the user-friendly old Tatuus is still racing and which looks likely to be flush with entries this year. The professional teams here are still charging five-figure budgets, but you get only six race weekends and very small crowds.

While Tatuus lost its Renault deal, it almost simultaneously picked up the new Formula Abarth, launched in Italy for 2010. A Eurocup is running in 2011, with budgets expected to be around the

OLIVER TURVEY: GOING IT ALONE



RSF backing has ended for Turvey

GP2 RACER OLIVER Turvey faces a tough future since being dropped by the Racing Steps Foundation after three years of support, without which he says "I wouldn't have got to GP2."

The 2006 McLaren AUTOSPORT BRDC Award winner adds: "The main way to raise money now is more from investment in your career. A lot of the drivers have contracts to pay back a certain percentage of their future earnings."

The problem is, the number of paid drives is diminishing. "Now there's a lot of pay-drivers in F1 it's not so good for the sport," adds Turvey. "Now it's only the top drivers who get

paid, so that makes it much more difficult to persuade people to invest."

Contrast this with, a decade ago, the progress of Jenson Button and Anthony Davidson. Button needed the investment of David and Steve Robertson, plus Harald Huysman, in Formula Ford, but enjoyed some subsidising of his F3 season. Then he got to F1. Davidson made it to F1 test-driver status thanks to London-based French banker Didier Stoessel, but even he needed Davidson to finish in the top echelons of the 2001 British F3 table to recoup his investment in a type of insurance-indemnity scheme.

€160,000 mark – cheaper than Renault and with cars that are much easier to work on, with bombproof Fiat engines. Engineer Andy Welch, who plans to become the first British team owner to enter Abarth, says: “It’s an updated version of the old Renault – even the gearbox internals are the same.”

What’s the solution? Jonathan Palmer courageously tried centrally-run championships with Formula Palmer Audi, then at a higher level with Formula 2. At £225k plus VAT, F2 enables many drivers to compete on an international stage. But even here you can buy an advantage: some F2 drivers pay top-ranking ‘ghost’ engineers to come along as their guests and provide additional input besides that given by the series’ staff engineers. People like ex-F1 men Andy Miller and Graham Taylor, or A1GP wizard Chris Gorne, probably don’t come cheap.

FIA president Jean Todt appears to be a purist, and word is that he supports the idea of multi-chassis categories against the proliferation of ‘promotional’ classes. He has already introduced an FIA F3 International Trophy, mopping up the existing high-level races and awarding F1 super-licences to the top drivers. He has also launched an FIA Single-Seater Commission, with international F3 coordinator Barry Bland as president, which meets

in Paris for the first time this week. The Commission links with the Single-Seater Technical Working Group led by Jo Bauer, the F1 technical delegate. One of its first priorities, says Bland, is “to aim for the grass roots, and to bridge the gap from karting” below FRenault/Abarth level.

This could mean a new category, representing the first involvement by the FIA at this level of the sport. It could be for spaceframe chassis and – great news for purists – it could be multi-chassis and free of manufacturer whim. “Should it be spaceframe with added safety measures, or a carbon monocoque, which has the problem of difficulty of repairs globally without sending it back to the original maker?” says Bland. “They will possibly find that spaceframe with added safety is a better way to go because it can be repaired more cheaply. Whether it’s single-make or open remains to be seen.”

Some would argue an open-chassis class could paradoxically make costs lower for the most-talented drivers, and that the idea of a ‘level playing field’ is ridiculous and can never work in motorsport: however hard one-make series organisers try to equalise opportunity or restrict testing, you’ll always get richer drivers sneaking off for mileage in old Formula Master cars and the like. Opening it up returns the

sport to its initial essence as a contest between cars as well as drivers.

Look back to the 1970s and ’80s, when Formula Ford 1600 was the global junior category, and F3 was unrivalled as an interim step (Atlantic and Super Vee also existed, but in most cases the F3 chassis could be adapted to use different engines). In FF1600 you could start out with a third-hand car run by your mates or a small local team.

Transfer that philosophy to today: you’re never going to compete with the top teams in a dry race at Rockingham, but you can show your talent if it’s slippery on the Brands GP track. Then the constructors – who, remember, need to sell cars and, to do that, need them winning races – spot that top talent and take it on with subsidised drives. Did FF1600 legend Dave Coyne pay for his racing when he won the Festival? No he didn’t – he got given drives because he could win races.

For this to work, the categories need to be truly global so constructors can sell enough cars to be able to subsidise top young drivers. Likewise we need a variety of tuners, even if a single engine is proscribed (as in FF1600).

But all this means an elimination of the majority of existing categories. And does the FIA really have the power to do this? **X**

GP2 interviews by Andrew van de Burgt



Todt appears to be an F3 supporter



ONE STRIKE AND YOU'RE OUT



Foster-Jones had just one season

Three decades ago, Gary Foster-Jones competed at the top level of British karting before running out of money and calling it quits.

In late 2009, Gary’s son Robert, the golden boy of the British karting scene and a man regarded as a surefire star, made his car-racing debut in the Formula Renault UK Winter Cup.

Gary, a successful businessman, loves everything about the sport, the atmosphere, hanging around the team awning and shooting the breeze. Robert had some setbacks, but took his first win in September 2010 at Knockhill and looked a title contender for 2011. Then, last month, he

decided to retire from racing – at the age of 20.

He could have raised the budget for a second term in FRUK, but then what? “I couldn’t afford a £750k budget, so where was I going to go?” he asks. “I think I impressed enough in my first year, but I’m quite a realistic person and I woke up and faced the facts.

“I come from a relatively well-off family, but the investment you have to put in is astronomical, regardless of how good you are.” He doesn’t rule out returning as an amateur in GT racing one day, but for now Robert Foster-Jones is a ridiculously early casualty of the sport’s system.



Formula Master cars: now GP3 test mules



EXCELLENCE IS EXPECTED

Twelve young drivers have been chosen by the FIA to front a new initiative to help them progress all the way. By DAVID EVANS

Can you bring a BMW M3 under control after it's been kicked into a slide at 60mph on a surface as slippery as sheet ice? Really? Okay. Can you hit level 14 on a beep test? Dazzle a panel with a six-minute presentation? Make a paper aeroplane fly 10 metres? Write a limerick? And, tell me, what function does a priest perform in fishing?

If you can do all that, then sorry, you've missed the boat. You should have been in Austria earlier this month; you should be part of the FIA Institute Young Driver Excellence Academy. But you're not. Unless you're one of the super-talented, cream of the crop listed below, that is.

With Professor Sid Watkins as its president, the primary function of the FIA Institute is to enhance safety in motorsport. There are already a myriad of working groups putting together life-saving developments for our world, but the hardware is just one part of the equation. The men and women who drive that hardware are also worth looking into. And that's

where the FIA Institute Academy comes in.

The Academy is aimed at drivers from across the globe in, at least, their second season in the sport and aged between 17 and 23. The FIA Institute is funded by an annual donation from the FIA Foundation. The FIA Foundation is a UK-based charity, established in 2001, with a \$300m donation from the FIA. The Foundation's focus is promoting road safety, environmental protection, sustainability and motorsport research – hence the Institute and hence the Academy.

National governing bodies of motorsport from across the world were invited to put two drivers forward for the Academy and an impressive 45 countries did just that, meaning the CVs of more than 70 drivers had to be whittled down to a final 18. And those 18 went to Melk. To do some skids, feel some pain and, hopefully, bag a place on the Institute's ground-breaking new scheme to deliver future talent to the race tracks and rally stages.

Former F1 racer and double Le Mans 24 Hours winner Alex Wurz and 2001 World Rally Champion co-driver Robert Reid had devised tasks such as maintaining a constant drift on a low-grip surface in a BMW M3 – how hard can that be? Hard, believe me... Then they had to maintain the highest average speed possible while only using the highest gear in the same car – no problem in the quick stuff; ever tried a hairpin in top? It's all about the lines. Then there was a pursuit-style race, a beast in the gym and a grilling in the classroom. After three days of massive physical and mental effort, 12 drivers emerged (ready for more of the same in the six Academy workshops planned this year).

The 12 should have been 10, but this is the scheme's pilot year and this lot were so good that two more spaces were created. Rightly so, given that Wurz and Reid are convinced there's a world champion among them...

Who's it going to be? Here's our form guide to the top 12.

Oh, and the priest? It's a small mallet used to kill freshly-caught fish ►

BAYNE IN THE LIMELIGHT WITH DAYTONA 500 WIN

Twenty-year-old rookie becomes youngest winner of NASCAR Sprint Cup race



A week ago, Trevor Bayne (left) was almost unknown outside NASCAR circles, but a win in the Daytona 500 not only catapulted him to stardom but it also lifted him up 125 places to 326th in the Castrol Rankings.

The 20-year-old rookie beat Carl Edwards by just 0.118 seconds to become the youngest winner in

Daytona 500 history. It was his first attempt, and only his second start in the Sprint Cup championship.

Edwards' runner-up spot kept him 13th in the Castrol Rankings, giving the Roush Fenway Ford driver a chance to reach the top 10 in the next few weeks.

Castrol EDGE Expert performances

Sprint Cup David Gilliland

David Gilliland (right) has had just three top-20 finishes in the past three years, but the Front Row Ford driver finished third at the Daytona 500 and shot up 69 spots to 253rd position.



NASCAR Trucks Michael Waltrip

Michael Waltrip out-sprinted Elliott Sadler for a maiden victory in the Truck Series at Daytona, gaining 38 places from 1,090th to 1,052nd in the Castrol Rankings.

Nationwide Danica Patrick

IndyCar star Danica Patrick (right) led a Nationwide Series race for the first time at Daytona after qualifying fourth, and secured a career-best 14th place finish. She moved up two places to 65th.



Sprint Cup Dale Earnhardt Jr

Dale Earnhardt Jr was on pole for the Daytona 500, but crashed out with just a few laps left. He dropped six spots to 60th in the Castrol Rankings.

Castrol EDGE Performer of the Month

Nasser Al-Attiyah was the Castrol EDGE Performer of the Month for January, but who will be February's top-ranked driver? Visit the website to find out.

www.castroldriverrankings.com

Castrol Rankings		CURRENT STANDINGS	
1	Sebastian Vettel	F1	24,200
2	Mark Webber	F1	22,079
3	Sébastien Loeb	WRC	21,215
4	Fernando Alonso	F1	20,467
5	Lewis Hamilton	F1	19,217
6	Will Power	IndyCar, V8 Supercar	17,858
7	Jenson Button	F1	17,006
8	Jimmie Johnson	Sprint Cup, Grand Am	16,330
9	Dario Franchitti	IndyCar, V8 Supercar, Grand Am	15,946
10	Kevin Harvick	Sprint Cup, Nationwide, Trucks	15,237

DATA CORRECT AS OF 21 FEBRUARY 2011

The Castrol Rankings analyze 2,000+ drivers in 500+ races and rallies across five continents. Go online today to find out more

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KEVIN ABBRING, 21 HOLLAND (RALLY)

Brilliant on the track, especially in the drifting, Abbring finished third at Ken Block's Gymkhana Grid event in December and it showed in his aggressive, super-sideways approach in the M3. Great in the interview and presentation, but let himself down a bit in the fitness. Now with FIA Institute backing, he needs the cash to get back out in the Production Car WRC or Intercontinental Rally Challenge.



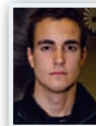
PAUL-LOUP CHATIN, 19 FRANCE (RACE)

A former top-class skier who struggled with his English on the day. Did well in the fitness tests, scoring highly, but the early track work tricky. Asked to set lap times within half a second of each other, he found this a real challenge – but was then exceptional at maintaining the car's high average speed through high- and low-speed corners. Will need to match pace with consistency in FRenault Eurocup in 2011.



ALBERT COSTA, 20 SPAIN (RACE)

Engaging, interested and interesting in the interview and Mr Confident in the car. Among the highest achievers on the track, but could have done better with fitness side. Immediately ingratiated himself with the rest of the group and, for one so determined and single-minded, played well in the team. A great bloke who's looking to contest a second Formula Renault 3.5 season in 2011.



ALON DAY, 19 ISRAEL (RACE)

Moving into his second season of German Formula 3, the Israeli is the kind of driver who will really benefit from the Institute Academy. He needs to come out of his shell to realise his potential. He seemed quite restrained during the shoot-out and didn't show his best on the track or in the gym. He has the speed, however, having won the Asian Formula Renault Challenge in the past.



PHILIPP ENG, 20 AUSTRIA (RACE)

Did well to overcome being slightly starstruck by boyhood hero and countryman Alex Wurz (he still has a photo Wurz signed for him 13 years ago). Well above average in pretty much all the tests, this guy is another 'one to watch'. He's aiming for the Renault World Series this year, but has already tasted Formula 1 power, having tested a BMW Sauber after winning the BMW World Final in 2007.



ROBIN FRIJNS, 19 HOLLAND (RACE)

A hugely confident and combative character. Like Day, he was middle of the road on the track and blown away in the fitness work. Clearly he's no nobby in a race car, having won Formula BMW Europe last season with six victories. Not as polished all-round as his countryman Abbring, but that's what the FIA Institute is looking to fine-tune via the Academy.



That'll do! Youngsters were let loose in M3 V8s



Wet-track work in M3 showed car control



Fitness assessment crucial for drivers



Some of the finalists struggled in the gym



Ex-F1 ace Wurz oversaw on-track performances



Half-second-margin lap times were required



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Would any future world champions step forward...

Low-grip drifting is not easy, apparently



It took all day to select the right 12

TIMMY HANSEN, 18
SWEDEN (RACE)

Hugely likeable lad, with a famous father in European Rallycross legend Kenneth Hansen. A former Swedish karting champion, he demonstrated solid skills in the car and is now venturing into the world of FRenault Eurocup after finishing third in Formula BMW Europe last season. Scored extra points for going straight from the shoot-out to stand in -30C to watch the Swedish Rally. The boy has fever.



EGON KAUR, 23
ESTONIA (RALLY)

Ice racer Kaur has a big talent behind the wheel – recognised by Wurz and Reid in the early driving tests. Has already won the Estonian title, but struggled with the M3, given that the only other rear-drive car he'd competed in was a Lada! Good team player with work to do on his fitness. Much more outgoing than any previous Estonian WRC drivers, he will do the WRC Academy in a Ford Fiesta.



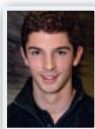
ANDREAS MIKKELSEN, 21
NORWAY (RALLY)

Seemed a little bit hesitant in the early driving tasks but once he'd opened his shoulders a bit, he was well into it and among the best at everything he tried. Hugely refreshing attitude from a lad who has had it all, lost it all and is now fighting back. Great attitude and effort to take maximum points in the gym and absolutely on message in the interview, doing Skoda UK proud.



ALEX ROSSI, 19
USA (RACE)

Californians aren't known for being bashful. And Rossi is Californian through and through. Supremely confident in everything he did – despite making a hash of drifting the M3 in the wet and giving Red Bull's F1 US Driver Search a bit of a nonsensical slating (he didn't win) in the interview. Clearly a big talent in the car, he needs to relax out of it. He plans Formula Renault 3.5 attack in 2011.



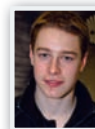
RICHIE STANAWAY, 19
NEW ZEALAND (RACE)

Dropped the M3 in fourth gear and was clearly shaken after the spin and hugely grateful for being allowed to stay in the process after biffing the back bumper. Extremely capable and hard-working in terms of fitness. He's contesting this year's German F3 series and living 12,000 miles away from home for the second year – a big ask and a demonstration of the 19-year-old's maturity.



STOFFEL VANDOORNE, 18
BELGIUM (RACE)

Won the end-of-shoot-out race, which was a fair reflection of the early ability he'd shown on the track – hardly surprising given that he's been at the competitive edge of karting since he was six. Average-level out of the car, but there's plenty of potential to work with in the areas of gym and media skills. He won last year's F4 Eurocup with six wins from 14 races and it's FRenault Eurocup this season.



DAYTONA 500

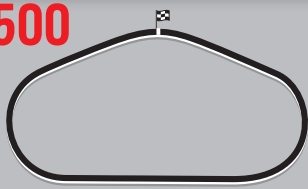


USA

February 20

NASCAR SPRINT CUP

Round 1/36



AT A GLANCE

- Winner Trevor Bayne
- Pole Dale Earnhardt Jr
- Most laps led Ryan Newman
- Fastest lap Bayne



Trevor Bayne celebrates win



No Bayne, no gain

An unknown 20-year-old wins the biggest race in NASCAR as two-car drafts produce a new type of racing

THE FIRST RACE ON DAYTONA'S newly paved track produced a record number of lead changes and caution flags, as well as a surprise winner.

One of the Sprint Cup's oldest teams came to the Daytona 500 looking for enough sponsorship to run the entire 2011 season with the sport's youngest driver. The Wood Brothers, now in a second generation of leadership, and driver Trevor Bayne left with the Daytona

500 trophy after surviving the new crash-happy era of two-car tandem racing on the high banks in Florida.

In just his second Sprint Cup Series start, Bayne, who turned 20 the day before, spent most of the 208 laps as the 'pusher', or the trailing car. Yet an improbable series of events, including two tries at a green-white-chequered finish, left Bayne in the lead on the final restart, with many top contenders

waylaid by damage. Bayne thwarted a charge by Roush's Carl Edwards coming off the last corner, jumping in front of a two-car tandem that included David Gilliland to lead a one-two-three for Ford.

"If I tried to put it into words, I wouldn't be doing it any justice," said Bayne, whose short career has been a patchwork of promising deals gone bad due to a lack of sponsorship. But the Knoxville, Tennessee

driver's brief tenure in stock car racing has never been short of promise. After deals with Dale Earnhardt Inc and Michael Waltrip Racing fell through despite good results on the track, he was signed as a development driver by Roush Fenway Racing last year to run in the Nationwide Series, and in September became the first driver since Jeff Gordon in 1992 to win three straight poles on the understudy circuit.

With Earnhardt Jr sent to rear, Kurt Busch started from 'pole'



RACE RATING

★★★★☆

An unexpected winner made for a great story, but there were too many yellows for the race to flow

KEY MOMENT

Lap 202

David Ragan (6) blows his race by illegally switching lanes before the startline at restart



Three Hendrick Chevys involved in early 'Big One'

REPORT DAYTONA 500

JONATHAN INGRAM
reports



ALL PICS: WAHSHAW/GETTY, MICHAEL LEVITT/LAT SOUTH



When Eddie and Len Wood, the sons of the founders of the eponymous team, cut a deal to partner with Jack Roush's team as a satellite operation in the Sprint Cup for 17 races, Bayne, who had never won a race on any of NASCAR's three major touring series, came along as part of the package. "It hasn't sunk in yet," said Eddie Wood, whose team failed to qualify at Daytona in 2008. "We've struggled so much in the past couple of years just to make the Daytona 500, much less win it."

In Thursday's qualifying race, Bayne succeeded impressively in this new style of racing in two-car packs, which are 10mph faster than a single car. And it was veteran Gordon who made a mistake in the first qualifier, his Chevy coming loose off Turn 4 with Bayne pushing him on the final lap. "I was talking to Richard Petty about how well he had run in the qualifying race," said Eddie Wood. "We decided he didn't know how to race any other way."

Bayne, who enjoyed success in karting before

moving to stock cars, added: "I don't want to say I did anything different to any other rookie. We were just fast. I can't thank Jeff [Gordon] and those guys enough for putting trust in me. None of us has any experience doing this, so I really had a little bit of an advantage not having to re-learn it all. I got behind [the veterans] and I was comfortable pushing."

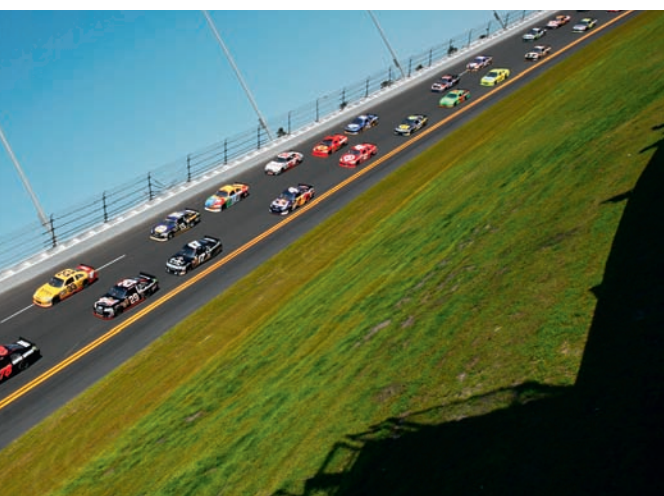
Although this victory is anticipated to be the first of many, the traditional NASCAR ladder system rarely produces such a young driver capable of competing with veterans. Bayne, by turns voluble and humble in a manner typical of his age, is talented beyond his years, according to Wood. While growing up on the team of his father Glen Wood and uncle Leonard Wood, Eddie was in the family's pits during Daytona 500 wins by AJ Foyt, Cale Yarborough and David Pearson.

"Trevor caught on quickly to what everybody else was doing," said Eddie, referring to the tandems now possible on the ultra-smooth Daytona surface. "He's got

a tremendous awareness in the car. All the greats are like that. I've listened to a lot of drivers over the radio and he reminds me of the greats."

David Pearson, one of these greats, was similarly impressed after watching Bayne's qualifying race. "I spoke to him before the 500," he said. "I told him to keep his head straight and not to do anything crazy. I told him to stay relaxed. I knew he would because he was relaxed in the qualifier."

Two-car packs demand great car control at 200mph to remain bumper-to-bumper without crashing, which often requires the lead driver to drag the brake and the trailing driver to be deft on the accelerator. The trailing driver also drives virtually blind and both drivers in 'the pod' rely heavily on the spotters who use radio communications while watching from the roof of the Speedway. The trailing driver also has to be sure to breathe his front end occasionally to get air to the front radiator, preventing fatal overheating. Drivers must also switch positions regularly to keep engines ▶



22

NUMBER OF LEADERS

Ryan Newman (right) led nine times for 37 laps, ahead of Clint Bowyer (11 for 31 laps) and Kurt Busch (10 for 19 laps). Winner Bayne led one time for six laps



74

LEAD CHANGES – A RECORD

The previous mark – 60 – lasted more than three decades. It was set in the 1974 Daytona 500, won by Richard Petty

◀ cool without losing too much time to other tandems.

Yet it was the veterans who were guilty of not staying relaxed. Michael Waltrip hit two of his partners, and Roush Fenway team-mates Greg Biffle and Matt Kenseth also collided while running in tandem.

It's up to NASCAR to maintain a rules package if teams are to continue to run tandems on restrictor-plate tracks like Daytona and Talladega, which was re-paved in 2006 and became the birthplace of tandem racing. Gordon, who was caught in the crash that damaged 14 cars on lap 29, believes the excitement will continue. "This is what we're going to see here," he said of the early shoving and spinning. "It is new for all of us and the first time with 43 cars in this type of situation. It's a learning situation for all the drivers."

After the Budweiser Shootout the week before resulted in average lap speeds of 206mph in the first race, with teams using the two-car packs, NASCAR reduced the size of the front grille openings, among other changes, to force cars in 'the pods' to swap places more often, reducing the build-up of speed, which tends to work like a head of steam.

On Sunday, the Ford FR9 motor, consistently presented as an outstanding design to keep engines cool, prevailed, while the Chevy engines of



Veteran Michael Waltrip (15) made crucial errors

Earnhardt-Childress Racing failed to handle the demands of the tandems as effectively. Kevin Harvick and Jeff Burton of Richard Childress Racing fell out before the halfway mark with blown engines. After a valiant effort by Juan Pablo Montoya and Jamie McMurray to remain pod partners throughout the race, the Ganassi duo – which also uses ECR engines – fell back with 20 laps to go when McMurray dropped a cylinder. The duo had led for 16 laps between them.

Between engine failures and crashes, many of the usual contenders were

eliminated. The big crash on lap 29 also heavily damaged Gordon's Hendrick Motorsports team-mates Jimmie Johnson and Mark Martin, leaving Dale Earnhardt Jr with no two-car pack partner from his team. Earnhardt Jr eventually led nine laps, but was taken out on the final caution which brought out the second green-white-chequered attempt. "I tried to miss the wreck," he said, "but I may have caused a couple of wrecks myself."

The previous multi-car incident, which brought out the first green-white-chequered, eliminated contenders Clint Bowyer and Ryan Newman, leaving Roush Fenway's David Ragan as the leader after Bayne had pushed him in front. In his haste to get back in front of Bayne on the restart, Ragan changed lanes before the start-finish line, and was black-flagged by NASCAR as the final crash occurred. That put Bayne at the front for the final restart.

"He came over the radio and asked, 'What shall I do now?'" said Wood Brothers crew chief Donnie Wingo. "I told him the best thing to do was line up with whoever

HE AIN'T HEAVY, HE'S MY BROTHER



Brad Keselowski (2) pushes brother Brian

Brotherly love was the key to the Gatorade Duel qualifying races last Thursday, as Brad Keselowski pushed elder sibling Brian's five-year-old car into the 500 starting field.

It was Keselowski's Penske Dodge team-mate Kurt Busch who won the opening Duel, but with his brother Kyle in the second encounter, Kurt found a drafting 'bro' in Regan Smith, who pushed him all the way to the finish for his second Daytona victory in six days.

"You have to have a partner, and Regan Smith was a great team-mate today," said Busch, despite the fact Smith drives for a different team and manufacturer! They led home the other unholy team-mate/manufacturer alliances of Kevin Harvick (Chevrolet) and Matt Kenseth (Ford), then Kasey Kahne (Toyota) and Juan Pablo Montoya (Chevy).

The second Duel was a more ragged affair, with Joey Logano, Todd Bodine and Steven Wallace all suffering sizeable shunts. Jeff Burton headed home Richard Childress Racing team-mate Clint Bowyer, with Kyle Busch pushing Michael Waltrip home in third, ahead of a Jamie McMurray-filled Keselowski sandwich. During the wild finish, earlier strong pairing Jeff Gordon and Trevor Bayne clashed at the final corner, also taking out David Ragan.



Montoya (42) spun twice but still finished sixth



YOUNGEST-EVER WINNER

Trevor Bayne was 20 years and one day old when he won on Sunday. Jeff Gordon was 25 when he won the 500 in 1997

60

REPORT DAYTONA 500

NUMBER OF CAUTION LAPS
Another record, and 16 yellows was a new track landmark too

Bayne heads Edwards, Gilliland and Labonte in sprint to finish



is behind him and hopefully we'd get enough push and they'll lock up and be in front. We were lucky to have Bobby Labonte there."

The tandem of Bayne and Labonte broke free. Behind them, the partnerships of Edwards/Gilliland and Kurt Busch/Montoya were in hot pursuit and caught up in Turn 3, with the chequers ready to wave. "I went to the middle and should have gone to the low side," said Busch, whose Penske Racing Dodge lost enough momentum to let Edwards and Gilliland steam past on the lower groove.

Out of Turn 4, the Edwards/Gilliland locomotive had the momentum — until Bayne dropped down a lane to cut them off. "I realised, once I lost my momentum behind Trevor, that I wasn't

going to win," said Edwards. It was Edwards who made a phone call to Bayne last autumn and encouraged him to sign with the Roush team. Over the winter, Bayne again consulted Edwards about running a partial Cup schedule with the Wood Brothers for 17 races under Motorcraft sponsorship.

"He was a little nervous about it," said Edwards, "And I said, 'Look, just go out and run great, and you won't be a partial Cup driver.'"

Although more sponsorship has yet to formally materialise, those words look prophetic after Bayne blocked Edwards' bid to win and brought the Wood Brothers back to victory lane at Daytona for the first time since Pearson beat Petty in a final lap showdown in 1976. 🏆

RESULTS

NASCAR Sprint Cup, Daytona 500 (USA), February 17-20, round 1 of 36

GRID

1 EARNHARDT JR 186.08MPH*	2 J GORDON 185.96MPH
3 KU BUSCH 184.89MPH	4 BURTON 185.07MPH
5 SMITH 183.68MPH	6 BOWYER 185.22MPH
7 HARVICK 184.74MPH	8 WALTRIP 183.96MPH
9 KENSETH 184.10MPH	10 KY BUSCH 183.59MPH
11 KAHNE 183.60MPH	12 BRI KES*SKI 177.58MPH
13 MONTYA 183.76MPH	14 McMURRAY 183.65MPH
15 ALL DINGER 184.29MPH	16 BRA KES*SKI 184.00H
17 MARTIN 184.99MPH	18 HAMLIN 181.31MPH
19 MENARD 185.42MPH	20 TRUEX JR 184.45MPH
21 NEWMAN 185.00MPH	22 EDWARDS 184.47MPH
23 JOHNSON 184.67MPH	24 REUTIMANN 184.019MPH*
25 STEWART 184.91MPH	26 BIFFLE 184.91MPH
27 VICKERS 183.57MPH	28 RICHARD*W 181.46MPH
29 ELLIOTT 184.53MPH	30 R GORDON 182.12MPH
31 B LABONTE 183.57MPH	32 BAYNE 185.445MPH
33 YELEY 180.977MPH	34 RAGAN 184.612MPH*
35 AMBROSE 184.748MPH	36 WALLACE 182.574MPH
37 LALLY 180.828MPH	38 LOGANO 183.206MPH*
39 GILLILAND 182.697MPH	40 KVAPIL 184.271MPH
41 NEMECHK 184.22MPH	42 BLANEY 183.793MPH
43 T LABONTE 181.492MPH	

208 LAPS, 520 MILES

POS	NAME	TEAM	CAR	TIME	EARNINGS	GRID
1	Trevor Bayne (USA)	Wood Brothers Racing	Ford Fusion	3h59m24s	\$1,462,563	32
2	Carl Edwards (USA)	Roush Fenway Racing	Ford Fusion	+0.118s	\$1,081,413	22
3	David Gilliland (USA)	Front Row Motorsports/Yates	Ford Fusion	+0.172s	\$831,061	39
4	Bobby Labonte (USA)	JTG Daugherty Racing	Toyota Camry	+0.343s	\$667,769	31
5	Kurt Busch (USA)	Penske Racing	Dodge Charger	+0.762s	\$582,077	3
6	Juan Pablo Montoya (CO)	Earnhardt Ganassi Racing	Chevrolet Impala	+0.929s	\$454,064	13
7	Regan Smith (USA)	Furniture Row Racing	Chevrolet Impala	+2.170s	\$414,328	5
8	Kyle Busch (USA)	Joe Gibbs Racing	Toyota Camry	+2.228s	\$394,314	10
9	Paul Menard (USA)	Richard Childress Racing	Chevrolet Impala	+2.711s	\$327,413	19
10	Mark Martin (USA)	Hendrick Motorsports	Chevrolet Impala	+2.737s	\$318,038	17
11	AJ Allmendinger (USA)	Richard Petty Motorsports	Ford Fusion	+2.769s	\$309,463	15
12	Bill Elliott (USA)	Phoenix Racing	Chevrolet Impala	+2.832s	\$324,978	29
13	Tony Stewart (USA)	Stewart Haas Racing	Chevrolet Impala	+3.825s	\$305,863	25
14	David Ragan (USA)	Roush Fenway Racing	Ford Fusion	+5.094s	\$350,188	34*
15	Terry Labonte (USA)	FAS Lane Racing	Ford Fusion	+5.335s	\$334,263	43
16	Robby Gordon (USA)	Robby Gordon Motorsports	Dodge Charger	+5.679s	\$313,211	30
17	Clint Bowyer (USA)	Richard Childress Racing	Chevrolet Impala	+12.263s	\$315,813	6
18	Jamie McMurray (USA)	Earnhardt Ganassi Racing	Chevrolet Impala	+16.208s	\$335,003	14
19	Martin Truex Jr (USA)	Michael Waltrip Racing	Toyota Camry	+33.421s	\$341,963	20
20	Steve Wallace (USA)	Rusty Wallace Racing	Toyota Camry	+34.097s	\$291,638	36
21	Denny Hamlin (USA)	Joe Gibbs Racing	Toyota Camry	-1 lap	\$300,538	18
22	Ryan Newman (USA)	Stewart Haas Racing	Chevrolet Impala	-2 laps	\$297,013	21
23	Joe Logano (USA)	Joe Gibbs Racing	Toyota Camry	-2 laps	\$290,363	38*
24	Dale Earnhardt Jr (USA)	Hendrick Motorsports	Chevrolet Impala	202 laps-accident	\$350,813	1*
25	Kasey Kahne (USA)	Red Bull Racing	Toyota Camry	-9 laps	\$311,719	11
26	Dave Blaney (USA)	Tommy Baldwin Racing	Chevrolet Impala	198 laps-accident	\$304,736	42
27	Jimmie Johnson (USA)	Hendrick Motorsports	Chevrolet Impala	-19 laps	\$300,713	23
28	Jeff Gordon (USA)	Hendrick Motorsports	Chevrolet Impala	-35 laps	\$287,588	2
29	Brad Keselowski (USA)	Penske Racing	Dodge Charger	166 laps-accident	\$310,742	16
30	David Reutimann (USA)	Michael Waltrip Racing	Toyota Camry	164 laps-accident	\$318,219	24*
31	Brian Vickers (USA)	Red Bull Racing	Toyota Camry	-48 laps	\$313,861	27
32	Travis Kvapil (USA)	Front Row Motorsports/Yates	Ford Fusion	153 laps-accident	\$304,242	40
33	Andy Lally (USA)	TRG Motorsports	Chevrolet Impala	-59 laps	\$282,863	37
34	Matt Kenseth (USA)	Roush Fenway Racing	Ford Fusion	133 laps-accident	\$320,668	9
35	Greg Biffle (USA)	Roush Fenway Racing	Ford Fusion	126 laps-accident	\$289,713	26
36	Jeff Burton (USA)	Richard Childress Racing	Chevrolet Impala	92 laps-engine	\$311,451	4
37	Marcos Ambrose (AUS)	Richard Petty Motorsports	Ford Fusion	82 laps-accident	\$312,414	35
38	Robert Richardson Jr (USA)	Front Row Motorsports/Yates	Ford Fusion	45 laps-accident	\$270,313	28
39	Joe Nemechek (USA)	NEMCO Motorsports	Toyota Camry	29 laps-accident	\$292,998	41
40	Michael Waltrip (USA)	Michael Waltrip Racing	Toyota Camry	28 laps-accident	\$281,113	8
41	Brian Keselowski (USA)	K-Automotive Racing	Dodge Charger	28 laps-accident	\$273,663	12
42	Kevin Harvick (USA)	Richard Childress Racing	Chevrolet Impala	22 laps-engine	\$300,013	7
43	JJ Yeley (USA)	Whitney Motorsports	Chevrolet Impala	10 laps-engine	\$268,550	33

POINTS

POS	DRIVER	PTS
1	Edwards	42
2	Gilliland	41
3	Labonte	41
4	Ku Busch	40
5	Montoya	39
6	Smith	38
7	Ky Busch	37
8	Menard	36
9	Martin	34
10	Allmendinger	34

KEY R=Retired; * started at back.
Winner's average speed:
130.326mph.
Fastest lap: Bayne, 44.67s,
201.487mph.

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INTERNATIONAL RACES & RESULTS

NASCAR NATIONWIDE
Daytona (USA), Rd 1/34

QUICK RESULTS

→ Winner **Tony Stewart**
→ Pole position **Clint Bowyer**
→ Lead changes **35**

RACE RATING

★★★★☆

Great recovery from Stewart, and he'd felt ill all week too

REPORTS WORLD OF SPORT



Stewart (4) is pushed by Cassill (1) past Bowyer (33)

NASCAR NATIONWIDE DAYTONA (USA), FEBRUARY 19, RD 1/34

Stewart smokes 'em to make it four in a row

TONY STEWART kept up his streak of Nationwide Series victories on the day before the Daytona 500, grabbing the lead inches from the chequered flag to defeat team-mate Clint Bowyer by 0.007s in their Kevin Harvick-run Chevrolets.

Stewart, whose win was his fourth straight in this 300-mile second-tier event, looked down and out when he picked up a right-rear puncture with just 14 laps to go — a legacy of debris from a huge shunt in the tri-oval between Brad Keselowski and Josh Wise.

Although he restarted 11th with six laps to go, luck was on Stewart's side as youngster Landon Cassill

— who had sparked the big crash when he moved down on Keselowski — also had to pit to fuel his car to the finish. The Stewart/Cassill duo paired up to draft their way back in the reckoning, quickly advancing to fifth.

Kyle Busch was leading, drafting with Joe Gibbs Toyota team-mate Joey Logano, but when Busch 'switched' with Logano with three laps to go, Bowyer and Dale Earnhardt Jr swept past.

Stewart, who was pushing Cassill, switched at Turn 1 on the penultimate lap, and in the next four-or-so miles built perfect momentum for the sprint to the finish.

Bowyer/Earnhardt led at the white flag, with Logano/

Busch side-by-side with them as they entered Turn 1. Halfway around, Busch moved down to block the onrushing Stewart/Cassill, but in his haste to switch lanes Kyle turned Logano sideways, who then slammed the wall twice. With the Toyotas out of the picture, it was a four-car Chevy duel for victory.

After sweeping through the final corner in line astern, Junior looked inside on the run to the finish, Bowyer moved to block, and this crucial lack of drafting momentum was all it took for Stewart — being pushed all the way by Cassill — to sweep around the outside of the pair of them to win.

"We had the benefit of having the pocket of air to get the momentum," said Stewart. "Landon pushed, and did a really good job. We just ran 'em down."

Bowyer finished second,

ahead of Cassill and Earnhardt. Danica Patrick led her first-ever lap in NASCAR in the early stages, and made a formidable drafting partner for Bowyer early on, but she later lost a lap to finish 14th.

Cassill leads the points, as the Cup superstars are ineligible this year, but as yet has no drive for the next round at Phoenix.

● Chuck Bradbury Sr

RESULTS

1 Tony Stewart (Chevrolet Impala), 120 laps in 2h08m52s; 2 Clint Bowyer (Chevy), +0.007s; 3 Landon Cassill (Chevy); 4 Dale Earnhardt Jr (Chevy); 5 Reed Sorenson (Chevy); 6 Jason Leffler (Chevy); 7 Kyle Busch (Toyota Camry); 8 Ricky Stenhouse Jr (Ford Mustang); 9 Michael Waltrip (Toyota); 10 Trevor Bayne (Ford).

POINTS 1 Cassill, 41; 2 Sorenson, 39; 3 Leffler, 38; 4 Stenhouse, 36; 5 Bayne, 35; 6= Mike Bliss & Danica Patrick, 31.

SPOILER ALERT! WALTRIP WINS TRUCK RACE ON ANNIVERSARY
Michael Waltrip won Friday's NASCAR Truck race at Daytona, 10 years to the day from his ultimately-tragic 500 success. He was aided when his spoiler fell off in the closing laps



ALL PICS: LAT SOUTH

Castrol
Rankings

CURRENT
STANDINGS

- | | | | |
|---|------------------|---|--------|
| 1 | Sebastian Vettel | ↔ | 24,200 |
| 2 | Mark Webber | ↔ | 22,079 |
| 3 | Sebastien Loeb | ↔ | 21,215 |
| 4 | Fernando Alonso | ↔ | 20,467 |
| 5 | Lewis Hamilton | ↔ | 19,217 |

Ranking the world's best drivers

WHAT HAPPENED THIS WEEK

Trevor Bayne's shock Daytona 500 win lifted him 125 places to 326th while third for David Gilliland (253) gained him 69 spots. Jeff Gordon (23) gained a place, making him the highest-ranked mover, while poleman Dale Earnhardt Jr (60) dropped six after crashing.

To see the full list, visit castrol driverrankings.com

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Malvern set to join Jamun

Race winner ready to return to British Formula Ford with his 2010 rival

BRITISH FORMULA Ford runner-up Scott Malvern is set to return to the category this season with leading squad Jamun Racing.

Malvern, who was a mechanic for Jamun in 2008, finished second to Jamun's Scott Pye last year, driving a Cliff Dempsey Racing Ray. He had been hoping to graduate to Formula Renault UK in 2011, but instead is on the verge of signing a deal to drive one of Jamun's Mygales.

"Formula Renault is beyond what I can put together and there's no point going into a car that's cheaper but has little chance of winning," said the former McLaren AUTOSPORT BRDC Award

finalist, who tested with Jamun at Snetterton earlier this month.

"Jamun have offered me quite a good deal. It's not set in stone, but things are looking good."

Malvern concedes that expectations for this season are now very high. "It definitely puts pressure on me, but I've always had pressure to perform," he said. "In a way it takes pressure off because I know I've got the equipment to do the job."

"I want to win the championship, win a lot of races, and win the Eurocup – and I've put myself in the best place."

Team boss James Mundy, who has already signed Australian Richard

Goddard and is expecting to run 2010 Jamun driver Jeroen Slaghekke this year, said: "An opportunity came up so we did a deal. Scott's got the experience and he's quick, so it was a bit of a no-brainer. Testing at Snetterton went very well."

Cliff Dempsey had been hoping to use Malvern as a test driver for the new Ray chassis this season. "I'm a little bit disappointed, but we've just got to go out and beat him," he said.

"It'll be difficult because he's good, but there's always someone out there who's better. The new Ray will hopefully help us and [first 2011 signing] Neil Alberico has been going really well in testing."

Dempsey also believes Malvern's move to Jamun, which has run the drivers' champion for the past six years, will increase the pressure on the 22-year-old.

"He's got to go out there and win a lot of races," he said. "He'll be in a car that's well developed and he's got to get the job done. If he doesn't, he's in big trouble."

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FLUID	7
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AUTOSPORT SAYS...

KEVIN TURNER
NATIONAL
EDITOR

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SO JAMUN has pulled off another coup. I wrote last month about how promising it was that other teams had signed some quick drivers who could hopefully take the fight to the champion squad straight away.

Now the team has not only snared a driver who doesn't need as much testing because he's done the championship before, but one who was a star of the category in 2010.

After efforts to sign promising Irish racer Raymond Lusty and series returnee Antti Buri fell through, Jamun saw an opportunity to grab Malvern, who is almost certain to lead its 2011 attack. The team must now feel confident it has a good chance of extending its winning streak.

For Malvern, the picture is more mixed. On the one hand, it's good that he is on the verge of getting a deal: racing is obviously better than not. But it's a sad indictment of the current state of funding in the sport that a British Formula Ford frontrunner and McLaren AUTOSPORT BRDC Award finalist can't even find the backing to get into Formula Renault.

The pressure will also be on the 22-year-old. As a top performer last year, he would be expected to be a contender anyway. Joining the Jamun steamroller means many will regard anything other than domination as a failure. That won't be easy in a category where slipstreaming and wheel-to-wheel racing are commonplace.

And there won't be a shortage of people wanting to beat the Jamun-Malvern combo either. Not least among them will be Scott's old boss Cliff Dempsey, who has high hopes for Neil Alberico and the latest Ray, which will carry many of the updates Malvern suggested last year...

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p80 PROFILE
SIMON HADFIELD



Malvern won races in a CDR Ray in 2010



Boucles de Spa

Stouf defeats world rally legends

Ford Escort ace wins the Boucles de Spa against a field of rally and race stars past and present



STEFAN STOUF and Joris Erad added to their success in the Roger Albert Clark Rally last November by winning the Boucles de Spa last weekend.

The Ford Escort Mk1 pair beat Bjorn Waldegard (Ford Escort Mk2), Patrick Snijers (Porsche 911) and Marc Duez (Mazda RX7) to claim victory from 180

cars in the Legends section of the rally.

Having won the RAC in deep snow, Stouf opted to enter his Mk1 Escort in the expectation of more snow and ice in the Ardennes. But the rally ran in cold and dry conditions and the pace of the event claimed many retirements. "If I had known there would be no snow, I would have entered the Mk2 Escort," said Stouf.

"It was amazing to be fighting for victory with so many big names."

Former World Rally champion Waldegard repeated his 2010 result with second. "That means I have a reason to come back next year," said the 67-year-old.

Snijers completed the podium, driving a 911 to celebrate the 30th anniversary of his Porsche victory on the event in 1981.

Other famous names on the rally included Patrick Tambay (911), Stig Blomqvist (Escort Mk2) and British ace Simon Everett (Escort Mk2), on his first rally for 25 years. Retirements included Eric van de Poel (911), Bruno Thiry (Citroen Visa), Henning Solberg (Mazda RX7), Francois Duval (Porsche 911) and Freddy Loix (Skoda 120RS).

British Endurance

Champion team steps up to GTs

BRITCAR PRODUCTION champions Richard Adams and David Green will step up to GT racing in the British Endurance Championship this season.

The Team Bullrun duo took the Class 2 and overall Production titles in a SEAT Cupra last year, after sharing a Honda Civic to the Class 3 crown in 2009. They will now race a Ferrari 360 in the GT class.

Former Renault Clio Cup champion Martin Byford will act as team manager and be the third driver when required. Cavallino Motorsport, which prepared the Ferrari that took Witt Gamski and Keith Robinson to last year's Britcar GT crown, will also help run the Team Bullrun Ferrari.

Adams said: "We had always thought about a move up to GT but were waiting for the right time - having managed to pick up two titles in two seasons we were looking for a new challenge."

"When Britcar announced that they had secured MSA accreditation, the decision for us was relatively easy."

"We are also very excited about Martin Byford joining forces with Neil Cooke at Cavallino."



Byford has already tested Bullrun Ferrari 360

British GT

Denis ready for British GT4 attack

FORMER CATERHAM Superlight champion Dan Denis will contest the GT4 class of the British GT Championship this season.

Denis will race a Ginetta G50 prepared by new team Scuderia Vittoria, run by ex-BTCC racer Tom Ferrier, former Renault Clio Cup champion Danny Buxton and veteran team boss Piers Masarati.

The 19-year-old, who won the final R400 Superlight title in 2009, took 14th in the G50 Cup last year after a serious crash hampered his challenge.

Denis said: "I know the car from last year and hopefully we can go for the championship before going into GT3 next season."



Denis raced in G50 Cup in 2010

Masarati, who confirmed he is close to signing a driver to partner Denis, said: "He won the Superlight championship and anyone who wins a national championship is good."

"By the end of last season he was finding his feet in the G50 Cup. There are a few differences with the GT4, but it's essentially the same car. We're hoping for some good results."

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British Formula Ford

Moores and Tockwith eye switch to single-seaters for 2011 season

FORMER GINETTA Junior champion Sarah Moore and her brother David will make their single-seater debuts this season in the British Formula Ford Championship, if plans to contest the revamped InterSteps category do not come to fruition.

Sarah took the Ginetta title in 2009 with the family-run Tockwith Motorsport team, before finishing seventh, one place behind her brother, last year with Eurotech Racing.

Sarah, 17, will now rejoin her father Simon's Tockwith team for the move to single-seaters. She had her first run in a 2008 Ray at Mallory Park last week.

Moore Sr, who ran Van Diemens in Formula Ford in the 1980s, said: "With [older brother] Nigel doing Formula Palmer Audi last year, Sarah wanted to go to FPA as well, but that has stopped.

"We're hoping to do InterSteps and there's still a chance, but Formula Ford is our back-up plan. We had Fords right up until '91 - it's what I grew up with - so going back will be like turning the clock back."

As well as joining the Formula Ford ranks, Tockwith plans to run three cars in the BRSCC's Ford Fiesta Junior Championship, which kicks off this season.



Sarah tested Ray at Mallory last week

Super Mighty Mini

Lewis set for Mini racing return

FORMER TEAM

boss and Mini Seven champion Jonathan Lewis will return to the tracks this season in the Super Mighty Mini Championship.

The ex-Jonathan Lewis Racing/Team JLR/Martin Donnelly Racing/Lewis Motorsport/Van Diemen/Comtec chief has been racing recently in BriSCA F1 stock cars, but has now bought the ex-Mark Jones Mini.

"I bought Frankie Wainman's world championship-winning car for BriSCA F1 and

raced as a white top, but it might as well have been 'surrender top' - they just all tried to kill me!" said Lewis, who won his Mini title in 1980.

"I'm 50 years old in a couple of weeks and just wanted to do something competitive. Mini Miglias

and Sevens have priced themselves into oblivion, but Super Mighty is as quick as the Sevens."

Lewis's last circuit racing came in Monoposto a few seasons ago. His friend, Mini specialist Nick Swift, will prepare the car.

Lewis hopes to be 'Mighty' in Minis



Renault Clio Cup

Clio Cup assault for karting star

KARTING ACE Tom Grice will graduate to car racing in this season's Renault Clio Cup.

The 18-year-old former German junior karting champion and European KF3 runner-up finished ninth in the British Super KF karting championship last year. He will join Clio sophomore James Dixon and Nicolas Hamilton (brother of 2008 F1 world champion Lewis) at frontrunning squad TCR for his first season in cars.

Grice said: "I've done four test days

with the team and so far so good, everything has been getting better and better. I've been working with Jonny Adam [2005 champion] and he's really helped me improve.

"Saloons have always been my aim - I really like the style of racing and it's much more achievable to make a career in them than in single-seaters, which is all about who has the most money. We've been making great progress in testing so my aim is to be at the front from the first round."

MARCUS PYE

HUMBLE PYE

The voice of club motor racing



Motorsport has moved on since the 1950s

"Things aren't what they used to be." How many times do you hear that in motorsport? Whether it's fiddling with Formula 1's scoring system or British Hillclimb Championship double-headers torpedoing history, or simply the change in club racing's landscape, the fact is that it's not what it was.

While we are resistant to change, sometimes it is for better. But more often among the grass roots, it is for worse.

I don't believe it's a fageyish age thing, or rose-tinted spectacles syndrome, but the British club racing arena I love has altered more than most. But identifying the precise fulcrum point, where good old amateur fun overbalanced into professional domination, is difficult.

The mid-to-late 1980s have plenty to answer for, in league with the rise of the dreaded one-make formulae - is there a single example, other than a gloriously simple Formula Vauxhall Lotus, that true weekend warriors can now run and enjoy? Then the BTCC-supporting TOCA package brought a sea change - and sowed the seeds of the spending culture that has spread like the plague.

Don't get me wrong, the TOCA fare is fine in boom times. But, as can be seen from slimmer grids all over the world right now, financial meltdown has taken its toll on aspiring pros. That's not going to go away in a hurry, but fortunately

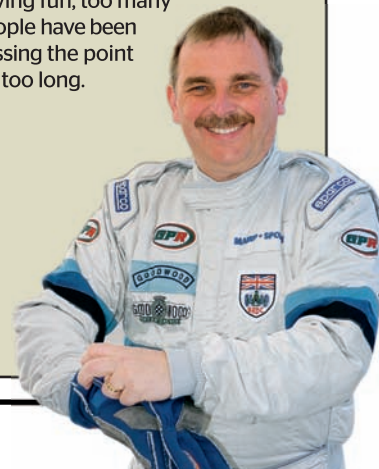
accessible racing still exists for competitors who seek enjoyment rather than overt glory.

The 750 Motor Club (which first ran its eponymous Austin 7-based formula in 1950), Vintage Sports-Car Club and Historic Sports Car Club have provided it for longer than most, and in recent seasons the Classic Sports Car Club has gained a following. Giving members what they want, at a price they can afford, is the common thread.

New kid on the block this season is the Historic Racing Drivers Club, which will also succeed. Founder Julius Thurgood - prime mover in Top Hat Racing, some of whose ideas continue under Masters' broad umbrella - has long known how to look after his customers. Thus the HRDC 'Touring Greats' (for pre-1960 saloons, including Jaguar XKs) and 'Grand Touring Greats' (for pre-'65 GTs up to 1500cc) are off to a flying start. Brands Hatch's openers on April 9 are almost full.

Both series are well-regulated and imbued with considerable pizzazz, good humour and a witty eye to the past. With "great camaraderie, close but fair racing and conservation of historic cars through active motorsport" as its *raison d'être*, is it any wonder competitors are clamouring to wear the badge? When it comes to having fun, too many people have been missing the point for too long.

“Accessible racing still exists for competitors who seek enjoyment rather than overt glory”



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IN BRIEF

EX-FORMULA 1 driver Martin Brundle teamed up with son Alex to take a clean sweep of the Radical Nevada Cup races at the Ascari Race Resort last weekend. The pair (left) shared a works SR8 and scored a pole each, two wins and two fastest laps.



MINI CHALLENGE and AAA Saloons racer Steve Liquorish will graduate to GT racing this season in a Porsche. Liquorish will campaign his ex-Glynn Geddie Carrera Cup 997 in Class 1 of the Porsche GT3 Cup Challenge.

CLASSIC FORMULA 3 driver Jamie Brashaw is planning to double up in Historic FF1600 this season, having bought a Merlyn MK11A. He tried his new mount for the first time at Mallory Park last week (right).



THE BARC will run two six-hour races for two-seater production-type sportscars on the new Snetterton 200 on June 4-5. Cars of any make and age will be eligible for the 'Double-Six' (running to their own series regulations where relevant) and each race will include four mandatory two-minute pitstops.

THE MID-SEASON Formula Renault UK points leader will win test drives in the new Lotus 125 track-day single-seater and a Lotus Evora GT4. After the Oulton Park round in June, the championship leader will get to drive the cars at Lotus's revamped Hethel test track. They will also be invited to the European Grand Prix in Valencia as a VIP guest of Lotus Motorsport.

FORCED INTO early retirement after suffering a broken neck in an accident at Silverstone in the late 1990s, Roger Waite is making a comeback this year. He will drive a Lola T200. "It's unfinished business really," said the 59-year-old, who shook the car down at Mallory Park last week (above). "I want to do Formula Ford and the Classic Racing Car Championship."



RADICAL CLUBSPORT racer Roger Green has had his white 1100 Clubsport (chassis 49) and Brian James RS2 trailer stolen. Anyone with information should contact Northamptonshire Police.

FIVE HOURS of racing from the Aston Martin Owners Club's St John Horsfall event, to be held at Donington Park this season, will be shown live on Motors TV.



Esterer's McRae GM1 leads Smith's Lola

Tasman Revival

Esterer wins twice at Teretonga

Canadian prairieman borrows Chevy V8 and scores Formula 5000 double

CANADIAN JAY Esterer took his McRae GM1 to two wins from three races as the MSC New Zealand Formula 5000 Tasman Cup Revival series hit Invercargill's Teretonga circuit last weekend, but he is not part of a titanic title contest.

The battle between defending double champ Ken Smith – who won the middle leg at the world's most southerly track, when a fuel system drama forced Esterer out – and fellow

Kiwi Steve Ross (McRae GM1) will go to the finale at next month's Australian GP in Melbourne.

Having blown an engine last time out at Ruapuna Park, Esterer was lent another Chevrolet V8 by fellow racers Peter and Aaron Burson. Esterer, a prairieman from Edmonton, made it count, securing pole with a 54.0 second lap, 0.6s shy of Graeme Lawrence's period record.

Smith, who grabbed second and

third in the other races, narrowly beat rival Ross (who took two seconds and a third) during the weekend, but had no answer to Esterer's pace. "We're giving away a good 130kgs to that car of Jay's," Smith said.

Smith's protege Andrew Higgins (Lola T400) qualified and finished third in race two. Of the Brits, Peter Dunn (March 73A) managed a best of fifth and Mike Whatley (Surtees TS8) took one seventh place before shunting.

Historic FF2000

Piper to race Sark in Historic FF2000

RACING VETERAN

Richard Piper will compete in Historic FF2000 this year, at the wheel of a Sark.

Piper, who bought the Patrick Head-designed Starfire Formula Ford 2000 project and relaunched it under the Sark name in 1976, is having one of the half-dozen original chassis

prepared for the growing HSCC class.

Piper, who has raced historic Can-Am, F1 and F5000 cars for many years, acquired the Sark from Wil Arif, its owner for the past 20 years, and has entrusted its preparation to Simon Hadfield, who once worked for him at Sark in Greenwich.

The car's early history is being researched, but it was bought in the late 1970s by the late David Coombs, who raced it in FF2000 events with Canadian Rich Bacon.

It then passed to 1982 Formula Vee champion Chris Taylor, who converted it to 1300cc F4 spec. It is thought that the car was last used in 1984.

Sark (29) will return to FF2000 racing



Group C/GTP

Tandy lines up Nissan R90CK for Group C events



PCA will rebuild FromA Nissan for Group C/GTP

HISTORIC RACER Steve Tandy has added a Nissan R90CK to his Group C stable and is also branching into single-seaters with a Formula 2 Chevron-Hart B40.

Tandy has acquired the ex-Charlie Agg/Andy Purdie FromA Nissan, which is being rebuilt at Peter Chambers Automotive. He has also purchased the ex-Fred Opert Racing/Wink Bancroft

B40-77-05 in which Richard Evans scored an HSCC Derek Bell Trophy double at Oulton Park last year.

While PCA will continue to run the Group C cars, the Chevron will be prepared by Martin Stretton Racing.

Tandy also races a Porsche 962, Jaguar E-types and a Lola T70 Mk3B continuation car, in which he won at last year's Silverstone Classic.

The ace who never planned to race

Simon Hadfield's career in motorsport is a long and varied one. KEVIN TURNER looks back with him



Simon Hadfield has been an integral part of the historic racing scene for more than a quarter of a century. Not only is his eponymous company a top preparation firm, Hadfield is one of the best historic racers in the world.

On the day AUTOSPORT visits his home and workshops in Leicestershire there is a Maserati 250F, a Lola T70 Mk3B and a Formula 5000 Lola in the room underneath his office. And that's before we take a look around the rest of the site, where various exotica are being prepared.

It's a similar story with the cars the man himself has driven. Over the years Hadfield has won races in Lotus Formula Fords, a Brabham F1 car, myriad Chevron and Lola sportscars, and thundering F5000s. He's also experienced success at Macau, Spa, Brno, Le Mans and Daytona.

"There was never a conscious effort to go racing," says the 53-year-old, who now employs a team of 10. "I never thought I'd go to Le Mans, that I'd go to Macau, and yet historic racing has taken me to all these places."

Hadfield's interest was fired early. His father – George Hadfield – worked for John Player and raced a Lotus 11. That meant Mallory Park, Silverstone, and the now-lost tracks of Ingliston, Rufforth, and Ouston became familiar to



Lotus 72 is a Hadfield (above, left) favourite

PICS: LAT

a young Hadfield. While still at school he started tinkering with road cars and helped rebuild a friend's Mallock. At the 1975 British Grand Prix he went round the teams handing out business cards and ended up meeting Richard Piper.

He then joined Sark, Piper's and Chris Parsons' single-seater firm, and things took off. "I built six Sarks," says Hadfield. "Then I left and went to work for Adrian Reynard and Jeremy Rossiter."

He picks out Reynard as a key figure in his own development: "Adrian knew what he was doing and why he was doing it. He taught me about engineering and how to apply it to the car. I left them and went to work at a fabricators, learning to fabricate, weld and make things."

Sark had done work for F1 teams, and it was those links that got him into ATS in F1 in 1978, then to Merzario the following year. There he is recorded as the creator of the A4, though the man himself isn't quite so sure. "I'm credited with designing it, but I was more a put-togetherer," he says. "The A4 was a Kauhnen front end and a Dallara back end, and I made it all fit."

He returned to ATS for 1980 (see sidebar) and also began helping Eddie Jordan in British F3. He continued with the future F1 team owner into 1981, when Jordan ran James Weaver and David Leslie.

A frustrating season with a lack of funds unfolded, and Hadfield showed his judgement wasn't always spot on. "In the middle of 1981 it was clear Eddie was going nowhere in motorsport, so I left..."

His apprenticeship completed, Hadfield struck out on his own. He had already tried his hand with a Barlotti kart and, having previously decided not to race at the same time as working in the sport, Hadfield elected to go into competition with a Lotus Elan that he had restored himself.

At that time historics were confined to the odd race at other meetings. Hadfield made his debut at Donington Park on April 4, 1981. He qualified second, but was beaten in the race by another debutant who would go on to become a big part of his life: Michael Schryver.

"We've done stuff together ever since," says Hadfield of one of the most successful partnerships in historic racing. "We always share cars and we push each other on."

A Lotus 47, Taydec sportscar and a Brabham BT28 – in which Hadfield took his first outright win at Mallory – followed, before John Upton asked him to prepare and run a Chevron B8 for 1984. It was Hadfield's company's big break. Wins followed and Hadfield's success and enthusiasm for the car led

to Schryver acquiring the B6 he still owns to this day, and in which the duo has scored many wins, including in the Spa 6 Hours and the AUTOSPORT Three Hours.

Before that, though, a brief return to modern racing was to come. Upton provided a Sparton with a Toyota engine for Hadfield to contest British F3, but things didn't go well. "I had no money," he says. "It was woeful and I was out of my depth. I didn't understand what I was trying to do or why I was trying to do it."

After just two races, Hadfield stepped back to historics, sharing the B6 with Schryver in Thundersports. "Then stuff happened," he says. A "monster year" against future BTCC champion and fellow Chevron ace Frank Sytner followed in 1986, and Hadfield's experience grew as the sport did. Sean Mooney's £5000 McLaren M10 was his "first big car" before Schryver bought a Lotus 72, giving marque-fan Hadfield his first taste of F1 as a driver.

"The car was fantastic," he recalls. "I've driven almost every car on my bedroom wall, and that was one of the big ones. To drive a Lotus 72, that my father had been involved with when he was at John Player, meant so much to me. And to win outright on the Brands Hatch GP circuit was stunning." ▶

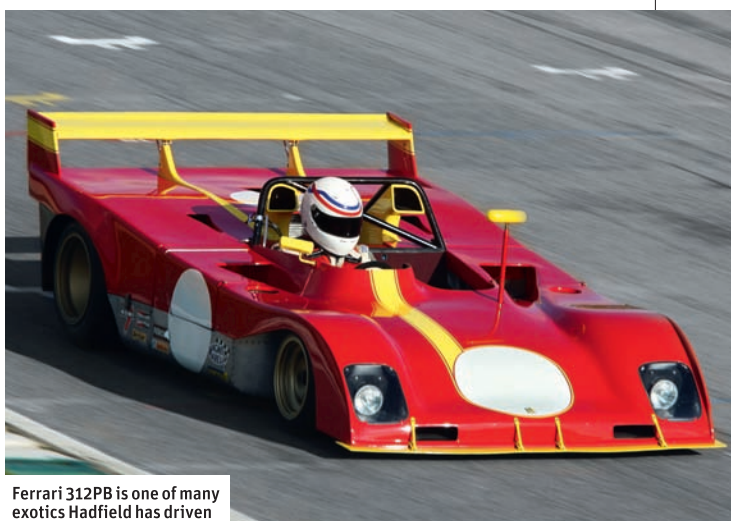


Hadfield (centre) as part of John Upton's Valour Racing equipe in 1984

Chasing Sytner's Lola in Lotus at Macau



Racing career started in Lotus Elan in early 1980s



Ferrari 312PB is one of many exotics Hadfield has driven

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Hadfield, here in a Trojan, has scored many F5000 victories



Recent battles have featured a Ford Lotus Cortina



Michael Schryver's B6 has been a rapid workhorse

A-TEAM AT ATS



Lammers starred in Long Beach qualifying

Simon Hadfield was part of a remarkable team when he returned to ATS in 1980.

Gustav Brunner, who would have a long design career in F1, and future McLaren coordinator Jo Ramirez, were two of the key figures.

"It was an amazing team in hindsight," he says. "Gustav was the designer, Jo Ramirez was the team manager, Roy Topp was chief mechanic. We had some phenomenal people and that's when we qualified fourth on the grid at Long Beach with Jan Lammers."

Alas, the race didn't last long - a CV joint broke - and things

went backwards from there: "Within four races of intense development we got it back to the back of the grid!"

"We didn't realise how good everything was, but it was a good time with good guys."

Earlier at ATS, Hadfield had come across Keke Rosberg, who left a big impression. "After Jochen Mass broke his ankle in 1978 - I helped cut him out the car at Silverstone - we put Rosberg in the ATS. He never gave up. It was a shitbox and he never moaned, never criticised."

"I've never seen a guy want it more."

◀ Hadfield's reputation was growing: "Every time you went to a place and ran a car, people would walk across the paddock and ask you to look after stuff," is how he modestly describes how his business grew.

Perhaps one of the more remarkable customers was Ermanno Ronchi, a friend of Bernie Ecclestone's, who approached Simon in the mid-1990s. "He said, 'I'm a big mate with Bernie and he's going to lend me an F1 car.' I thought, 'Yes, I'm sure he will,' but all he said happened."

After some chasing - "Mr Ecclestone always returns your call" - Hadfield found himself heading to Ecclestone's Formula 1 Operations concern to pick a Brabham BT49C for Ronchi to go Thoroughbred GP racing. "We got into the foyer and it was perfect," he says. "They had lined up six BT49s and said, 'take whichever one you want.' The attention to detail in Bernie's life is astonishing."

Ronchi would eventually win a TGP race, at Monza in 1998, but Hadfield - typically - had already won with the BT49C. When Ronchi injured himself at Brno in 1996 he asked Hadfield to drive the car, and he duly took the flag first.

As a member of the FIA's Historic Motor Sport Commission, Hadfield also has an input into the core of the sport, including the never-ending debate about just how developed historics should be.

"You can't unlearn what you know, but you buy historic cars because you want to see what it was like when Emerson Fittipaldi drove this, or what it was like when Ronnie Peterson sat here," he says.

"It shouldn't be a menu car [where you pick the best bits from the car's history]. Our view is you take a snapshot from the car's life and you restore it to that day."

"I know if I make the car stiffer and lower I will go faster, but I don't any longer have this type of car. I can take a Chevron B8 and make it like a Radical, so why not buy a Radical? Let a B8 be a B8."

"I'm still desperately curious. 'How does that work?' I love that exploration. I test and set-up cars for other people. Ultimately, I hope we have a reputation for making cars work."

Hadfield is not one to ignore modern racing either. He proved rapid in a Radical race last year, but opportunities are rare. "I would love to do a GT4 car, but we go where the customers drive us," he says.

So, having driven more than 500 cars including some of the most famous racers ever built, is there anything left on his to-do list? "The Porsche 917 is the only car on my bedroom wall I've never driven," he says.

With the way Hadfield's career has gone, don't be surprised to see him racing, or beating, one of Stuttgart's finest sometime soon. ☒

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OR EMAIL office@hsc.org.uk



YOUR SAY

What you think of the motorsport news of the past week



Bernie not decisive enough

The decision to call off the Bahrain Grand Prix was correct, but it should have happened sooner.

Prior to the decision, Bernie Ecclestone said he wouldn't advise people to go unless it was safe. Sorry Bernie, but I'll take my advice from the Foreign Office, not from someone with a vested interest.

Putting the future of the race on the Crown Prince's shoulders was wrong too – an attempt to pass the buck should the wrong decision be taken. Bernie has the responsibility of ensuring that F1 is not just profitable, but safe as well.

Sarah Terry Great Notley, Essex

EDITORIAL CONTACT mail@autosport.com

Wow! Did you ever want the underdog to win so much as young Trevor Bayne during Sunday's Daytona 500?

The last 10 laps of the race were spellbinding, with Bayne in with a shout and ending as the event's youngest winner. A great start to what could be a classic season of racing in the Sprint Cup. I can't wait for the next one.

Barry Ambrose
By email

Should Robert Kubica have been driving that rally car? The answer is no. If you are paid millions of pounds annually, you have a responsibility and an obligation to ensure that you can honour your end of the bargain.

To indulge in a hobby that can easily keep you from carrying out your day job is neither considerate nor proper.
Jamie Orton
By email

Well, it looks like Bernie's greed has finally come back to bite him in the arse over Bahrain. Perhaps F1 will start going back to tracks and countries with a bit of history for a change.

Kevin McKenna
USA

Seeing Nick Hamilton come through the ranks is encouraging, but the weight of expectation on his shoulders must be unbearable. Nepotism is rife in racing, but it is surely foolhardy to think that all family members are cut from the same mould as their successful siblings or parents.

I hope Nick is given the right advice, and the space to fulfil his potential. Putting him on a pedestal could hamper his prospects, rather than improving them.

Nicola Green
Saffron Walden

AUTOSPORT.COM

TOP FIVE ON OUR WEBSITE

1. **BAHRAIN WILL NOT HOST OPENING RACE OF 2011**
2. **BARCELONA TO HOST FINAL PRE-SEASON TEST**
3. **HEIDFELD CONFIRMED AT RENAULT**
4. **PIRELLI ANNOUNCES TYRE ALLOCATIONS**
5. **ALONSO: DRIVERS CAN'T CUT OUT RISK**

AUTOSPORT.COM PLUS

TOP STORY ONLINE

GARY ANDERSON'S PRE-SEASON F1 BLOG

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

● Mobil first appeared as a sponsor in grand prix racing at the 1959 US GP, not in 1978, as we stated on p15 last week. Thanks to David Cole for the spot. Also, Nigel Mansell was 33 when he missed out on the '86 F1 crown, not 31, as reported in 'Webber's Woes' on p31.

It is the policy of AUTOSPORT to correct significant errors as soon as possible. Please note the issue date and page number when contacting us on autosport.editorial@haynet.com

THE LATEST GEAR

The most desirable new releases for motor racing fans: books, DVDs, models, art and gifts

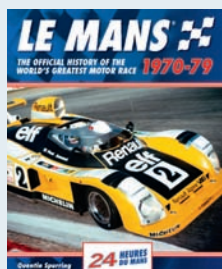


CMC 1:18 1939 AUTO UNION D-TYPE MODEL

£179.99

autosport.com/shop

CMC's 1:18-scale Auto Union Type D from the 1939 French Grand Prix is a miniature masterpiece. The #12 car pictured here is a replica of the German machine driven to victory at Reims by Hermann Muller, ahead of team-mate Georg Meier in the #14 car (also available). The model is hand-built from more than 800 individual parts, and has several intricate features such as individually spoked wire wheels and movable windscreen. Both the engine cover and front bodywork are removable.



LE MANS 1970-79 BOOK

£45 (978 1 84425 539 9)

QSpurring.chaynes.co.uk

The second of former AUTOSPORT editor Quentin Spurring's decade-by-decade story of the Le Mans 24 Hours covers the 1970s.

With expert analysis of each year, relevant featurettes, full entry lists, results and mega pics, this ACO-authorised treat is a must for Le Mans fans.



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Unlike a lot of fancy-branded kit aimed at keeping your road or race car looking mint, this stuff really works.



SPARK AUDI LE MANS MODEL

£51.95

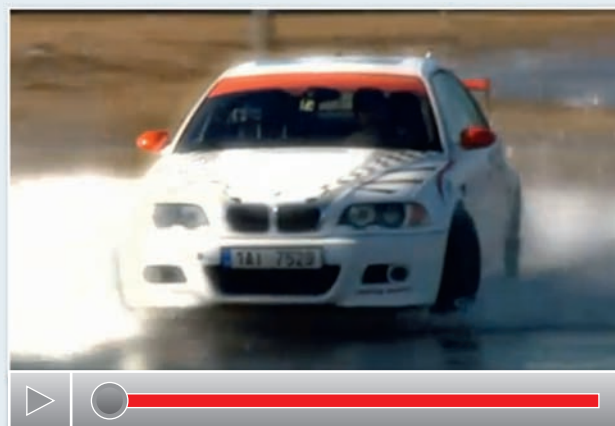
grandprixmodels.com

Fantastically detailed, 1:43-scale resincast replica of the Audi Sport North America-run R15-plus TDi driven to victory at Le Mans last year by Timo Bernhard, Romain Dumas and Mike Rockenfeller.

Photo-etched parts accentuate the detail of Spark's latest miniature Le Mans winner.

HOT ON THE WEB THIS WEEK

YOUTUBE: FIA INSTITUTE ACADEMY WANNABES



SEARCH FOR: FIA Institute Young Driver Excellence Academy (3:46)

If you've read David Evans's feature on the candidates and selection process for the Academy in this issue, why not watch the accompanying video. You'll be surprised what's expected of the modern racing driver...

WHAT'S ON...

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

NASCAR SPRINT CUP

Rd 2/36
February 27
Phoenix, Arizona, USA
nascar.com

After the vagaries of restrictor-plate superspeedway racing around Daytona, the regular stock car season begins at Phoenix. This will be the last race at the track in its current guise, with variable bankings and a repavement programme set to begin after Sunday's race.



NASCAR moves on to Phoenix after Daytona 500 crashfest



NASCAR NATIONWIDE

Rd 2/34
February 26
Phoenix, Arizona, USA
nationwide.nascar.com

NASCAR TRUCK SERIES

Rd 2/25
February 25
Phoenix, Arizona, USA
www.nascar.com/series/truck

ACCESS ALL AREAS

Our guide on how to keep the motorsport flame burning through the cold winter months

TRAVEL COMPANIES

IT'S THAT TIME of year again – if it's not raining it's probably about to, and that's only if the snow or freezing temperatures don't make an unwelcome return.

It's definitely time to consider your holiday options for 2011, so why not combine an excursion to sunnier climes with an action-packed motorsport weekend? There's nothing to stop you putting together a trip for yourself, of course, what with low-cost airlines, hotel booking and car hire all available online, but if you want to take the undoubted hassle out of the

equation, then check out a specialist motorsport travel company.

The good news is that there is a wide choice of outfits offering a great range of events for various prices, and their core business is to ensure you have a great time. Even a little knowledge can go a long way when it comes to European or worldwide travel, and these guys are the experts in getting you to the tracks and the stages.

So, in no particular order, if you're planning an overseas grand prix or world rally visit, or even a trip

Wish you were here? Indy 500 in May is a mega holiday choice



Stateside to see how the Americans do it, check these companies out:

- Select Motor Racing
- Motor Racing International
- Simplytheticket.com
- Grandstand Motor Sports Tours
- Just Tickets & Just Motoring

- Page & Moy
- Travel Destinations
- Co-operative Travel, Sports & Events
- Racetickets.com (for all American events)

All these companies have websites, so get online and start pondering your holiday choices. Then get it booked!

Television

THURSDAY FEBRUARY 24

0900-1210, 1650-2000 **Motors TV**
Asian Festival of Speed
1005-1110, 1830-1935 **ESPN Classic**
World Rally Classics
2000-2205 **Motors TV**
Andros Trophy
2300-0000 **Sky Sports 3**
Racemax

FRIDAY FEBRUARY 25

0315-0600 **Motors TV**
Asian Festival of Speed
1005-1110, 1830-1935 **ESPN Classic**
World Rally Classics
1200-1300 **Sky Sports 3**
Racemax
1300-1400 **ESPN**
WRC: Access All Areas
A look back at Ford's domination of the season-opening Rally Sweden.
1415-1620 **Motors TV**
Andros Trophy
2100-2205 **Motors TV**
Dubai 24 Hours
Re-live victory for the Schubert BMW team in the Middle East.
2205-2305 **Motors TV**
WRC: Rally Sweden highlights

SATURDAY FEBRUARY 26

0000-0030, 0430-0500 **Sky Sports 3**
0200-0230 **Sky Sports 4**
British Rally Championship:
2011 Preview
0115-0315, 1825-2030 **Motors TV**
Andros Trophy
0355-0420 **Five**

Motorsport Mundial
0505-0600, 1035-1135, 2340-0040
Motors TV
Dubai 24 Hours
0800-0830 **Dave**
Race Car Driver
More from the 2005 Paul Tracy/Forsythe Champ Car documentary.
0900-1000 **Bloomberg**
Race of Champions 2010
1415-1720 **Motors TV**
Asian Festival of Speed
2215-2315 **ESPN**
WRC: Rally World
Preview of Rally Mexico and round-up of support categories from Rally Sweden.

SUNDAY FEBRUARY 27

0110-0410, 0900-1210, 2305-0215
Motors TV
Asian Festival of Speed
0600-0700 **Sky Sports 3**
Racemax
0900-1000 **Bloomberg**
Race of Champions 2010
1030-1100 **Sky Sports 3**
British Rally Championship:
2011 Preview
1210-1415 **Motors TV**
Andros Trophy
1530-1630 **ESPN**
WRC: Rally World
1855-2000 **Motors TV**
Dubai 24 Hours
1930-0030 **Premier Sports LIVE**
NASCAR: Phoenix
Round two of the Sprint Cup – the Subway Fresh Fit 500.

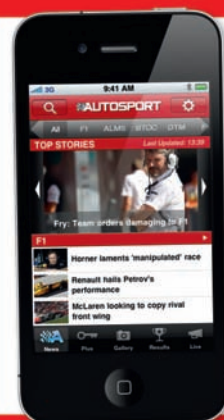
Online

AUTOSPORT.COM

Coming up on the web this week

MOTO GP TEST & NASCAR

Wherever the next Formula 1 test is held, the teams were always scheduled to have this week off. But there is plenty of activity elsewhere for autosport.com to keep you up to date with, not least of which the second pre-season MotoGP test at Sepang (right) and the second round of the Sprint Cup in Arizona, USA this weekend.



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REVVED UP OVER WHAT'S ON THE BOX

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



Premier Sports' Daytona viewers saw a lot of this

FOR SQUARE-EYED fans like *Revved Up*, NASCAR is human catnip. The races are too long and most of the tracks look exactly the same, but there's just something about it that makes you want to tune-in every week. If you can find it, that is.

Having enjoyed a two-year stint on Sky Sports, where quite frankly it was done properly, in 2010 America's biggest motor racing series found itself filling the scheduling vacuum on Open Access, one of the strangest channels available to Sky subscribers.

Watching Open Access was to experience what

life would be like in Atlantis, viewing through a slightly-distorted watery lens. But now NASCAR has a new home on Premier Sports, or 'Setanta lite' as I prefer to think of it.

As Lenny Henry might say, everything about it is premier except the price, although £7 is quite steep given that other sports on the schedule include touch rugby (honestly).

But is it any good? Well, that's not really a question that can be asked of Premier, who did nothing other than tap into Fox's US coverage, including almost two hours of the pre-race show.

There's no doubting that it's very American,

but this does mean there's an awful lot of assumed knowledge, while other aspects seem to make no sense whatsoever.

For example, why is the trackside studio called the Hollywood Hotel? It's definitely not in Hollywood and, apart from a strange bell that's occasionally used to stop DW from over-revving (that's Darryl Waltrip to the uninitiated), it doesn't really resemble a hotel.

And then there are the race graphics, which seem designed to relay as little

information as possible. No interval gaps, no laps completed and don't even try to work out who was getting the lucky-dog pass (if you didn't know who DW was, this will baffle you even more).

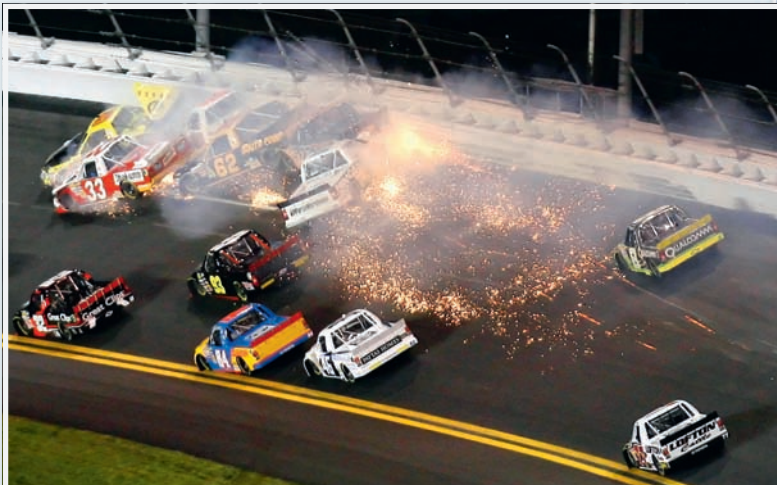
This is irritating, but nothing like as annoying as the view back to Dale Earnhardt Jr's cockpit we were treated to every time Fox went to an ad break (which is a lot). A Sky-style UK studio is sorely needed, but for now I'm just happy NASCAR is back.

Revved Up

"Premier Sports did nothing other than tap into Fox's US coverage, which included two hours of pre-race show"

THE WEEK IN PICTURES

Shooting gallery, from Daytona to the East Midlands



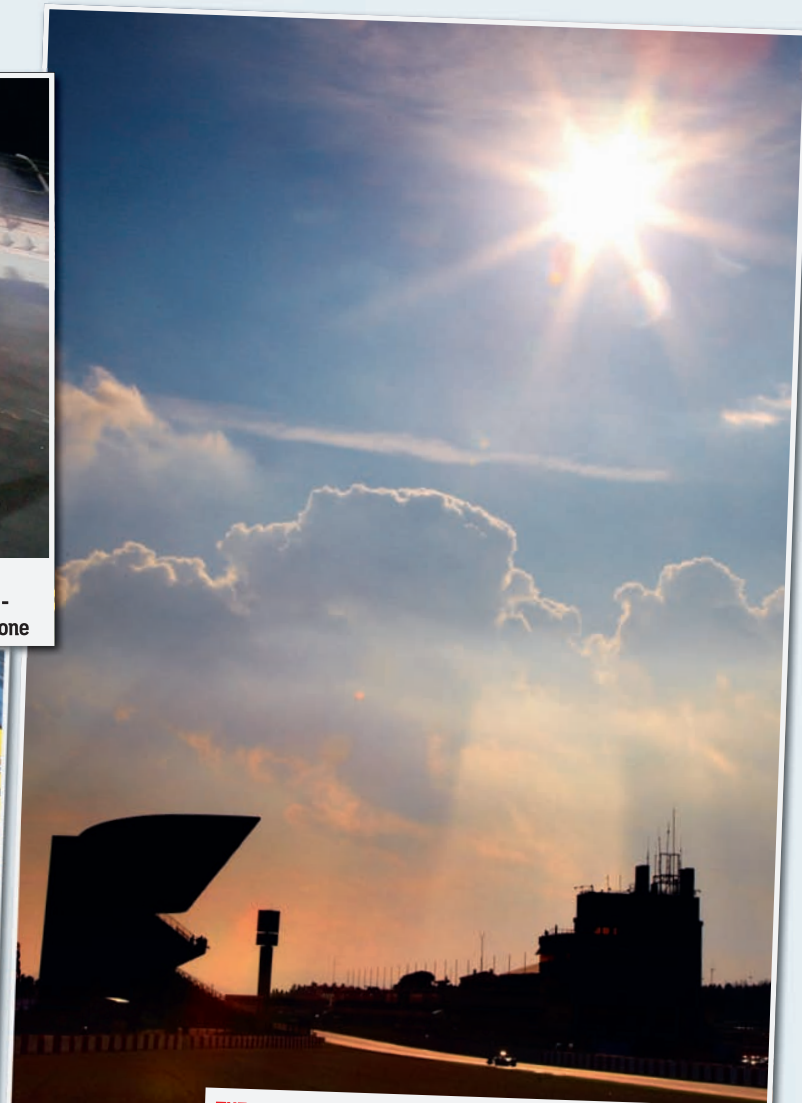
TRUCKING HELL ON THE DAYTONA BANKING

As usual, Friday night's NASCAR Truck Series show turned into a fender-bending festival of shunts. Nelson Piquet Jr (8) managed to miss this one



BURNING BUSCH - A FLASH-FIRE OF BIBLICAL PROPORTIONS

The tyre changer and jackman on Kurt Busch's car got a fright when unburnt fuel ignited as he restarted his Dodge in the Daytona pits



THE SUN ALWAYS SHINES ON FORMULA 1

As the uncertainty over the season-opener raged last week, F1 pressed on with winter testing in Barcelona

EVIDENCE THAT PUBS ACROSS BRITAIN ARE DISAPPEARING FAST

Formula Fordster Sandy Brody once tried to knock down Donington's Redgate Lodge pub with his Reynard, but landed on an ambulance instead. Two decades later, the job is complete due to track updates



BRAD HIT IN NASCAR NATIONWIDE BLOCKBUSTER

Brad Keselowski's strong run in Saturday's Nationwide race at Daytona came to a shuddering halt when his Dodge Charger was hit hard by Josh Wise

FROM THE ARCHIVE

Robert Kubica, Norisring F3 Euro Series, 2003



"Robert performed both days with an arm support. Nobody expected his recovery to be so fast after surgery"

Kubica on his way to a victorious comeback

ROBERT KUBICA faces a long, hard battle back to fitness after his horrific recent rally crash, but comebacks from injury are nothing new for this Polish ace.

The Renault F1 star missed the first three rounds of the inaugural F3 Euro Series season in 2003 after shattering his right arm in a road accident. That meant he couldn't take up his drive with Angelo Rosin's Prema Powerteam until round four at the Norisring.

"Robert did one test before the race weekend and it was an official Euro Series test at the A1 Ring on the 16th and 17th of June," remembers Rosin. "The objective was to verify his physical condition and form, so the focus was never on pure performance."

"Robert performed both days with an arm support that was elaborated by Doctor Riccardo Ceccarelli from Formula Medicine.

"Overall the test went very well, considering that he finished 15th out of 30 cars and considering the circumstances. Everyone was very pleased."

Kubica went on to defy all expectations by qualifying third and second for the two races at the Norisring later that month, but he found the going tough with his arm not fully healed and still using Ceccarelli's specially developed support.

"My left arm is doing 75 per cent of the work," he told AUTOSPORT. "I'm just supporting the steering wheel and changing gear with my right. It made life difficult on a bumpy circuit."

His driving made life even harder for the leading ASM cars of Alexandre Premat and Olivier Pla. He overhauled them both with a combative drive to score a sensational debut win in the first race, before guiding his Dallara-Opel to second place (behind Premat) in race two.

"No one expected me to come here and win first time out – not even me!" he said. "I came here thinking of getting into the top 10. After free practice I thought about maybe being in the top six. When I qualified third and second for the two races, I reckoned a podium might be a realistic possibility..."

Kubica's strength of character and desire to succeed left a lasting impression on his team. "Robert has a great determination and will that we have rarely seen in any other driver," adds Rosin. "This was definitely an important factor for his exceptional comeback."

"Norisring being a street circuit, where the driver's skills make a huge difference, was another factor that allowed him to achieve such a great result, but nobody expected his recovery to be so fast after his surgery."

THIS WEEK IN...



FEBRUARY 24, 2005

McLAREN EXPECTED Colombian Juan Pablo Montoya to challenge for the 2005 F1 world title after spending his first winter with the team following a switch from rival squad Williams.

Team boss Ron Dennis said Montoya had lost a stone in weight since the end of the 2004 season and had been transformed into a world-beater by the team's culture of discipline.

"It's not rocket science," said Dennis. "I asked him to create a mental picture of what he wants to achieve and where he wants to be. As a result he is fitter, better and far more focused."

Swiss touring car ace Alain Menu was interviewed about his return to two-litre tin-top racing after being snapped up to spearhead Chevrolet's works entry into the WTCC (below). He spoke of his and RML's chances heading into the season, and about moving on from his unhappy time in the DTM with Opel, declaring it "a disappointment."



NEXT
ISSUE



What will the neighbours say?

SCANDAL!

The most shocking events to rock F1

On sale Mar 3

PLUS

Jaime Alguersuari - Toro Rosso's young gun is aiming for the big time this year

FRANCOIS DUVAL

■ Tour de Corse ■ October 13-16, 2004 ■ Ford Focus RS WRC ■ Favourite asphalt rally that he could've won



Duval led on the island before engine failure

IT WOULD be easy to say that my favourite rally ever was the 2005 Rally Australia, when I won on my last event with Citroen. Sure, that was good, but my favourite event was always the Tour de Corse. The roads on the island are fantastic to drive, so twisty, always changing – a very good place for a rally.

Corsica is the best asphalt event, better than Germany. Catalunya is just too fast, like the motorway. To pick out one Corsica event for me is quite difficult – I took some podium finishes there and always had a nice result.

In 2004, the event was good and we had the lead in the rally early on. The weather was difficult on that event, the rain was terrible – but that was part of this event. Because of the mountains, the weather could change very quickly, making tyre choice critical.

When the weather is like that, the nice thing about Corsica is that the asphalt is quite aggressive and quite abrasive, which gives you good grip. But there are always places where it can catch you out.

“The nice thing about Corsica is that the asphalt is quite aggressive and quite abrasive, which gives you good grip. There are always places where it can catch you out, but I love to drive the roads on the island”

In 2004, the event ran in October. I was driving for Ford, with Markko Martin as my team-mate. In 2003, I had set a fastest time and led the rally so, of

course, I wanted the same in 2004.

Like I said, the rally was tough again with the weather changing all of the time, but this time it was a good event for Ford. I was fastest

on the first stage of the event and took the lead. Markko overtook me in the second stage, but I was back in the lead after that. For two days, Markko and I were at the front of the field in our Focus RS WRCs, but then I had an engine problem on the first stage of the final day.

I love to drive in Corsica, it's a fantastic place and that was a great event for Ford. If it hadn't been for my blown engine, it could have been an even better event for me. The 2003-spec Focus [that was carried over into 2004] was really nice to drive on asphalt, it was a very good car from [Ford tech chief] Christian Loriaux.  Francois Duval was talking to David Evans

IN PROFILE



FRANCOIS DUVAL was born in Belgium in 1980. He began his career in 1999, winning his local Citroen Saxo Challenge. He graduated to the Junior WRC in '01, losing the title to Sebastien Loeb. His first J-WRC win came in Monte Carlo the following year, with Ford then taking him on for a part-time WRC programme. He stayed with the Blue Oval until the end of '04, taking seven podiums but no wins. A move to Citroen for '05, against Loeb, was not successful, although he won in Australia in his final outing in the Xsara. Bit-part roles at Skoda, Ford and Citroen followed, but he's yet to win again.

NEXT
WEEK

Lyn
ST JAMES





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