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PRIME TIME

Daniel Ricciardo is in the form of his life, currently winning in his first season in the Red Bull team, and getting underway in 2018. But he's not in search of a title until the end of the season. (Ricciardo) seems to be able to get the best out of the car, despite the fact that he's never been higher, so he's got to be a strong contender. Or maybe, just maybe, he'll be able to get that first win. Andrew Benson analyses his form.

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Anthony Rowlinson

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Time for the honey badger to bite

That's the trouble with being a Formula 1 driver: there's always someone younger, faster and more 'of-the-moment' fashionable wanting your ride.

Four-and-a-bit years ago that young gun was a 24-year-old Daniel Ricciardo to four-time world champion Sebastian Vettel, then 26, at Red Bull.

Dan's pace and punch had seen off Jean-Eric Vergne and Daniil Kvyat at junior team Toro Rosso, demanding his elevation to Red Bull Racing, where he'd be partnered with Seb, who was king of the F1 world: four straight world titles, if you please.

Tough gig? Maybe Dan didn't get the memo, for 19 races, three wins and 238 points later, he'd completely shaded his starry team leader, finishing as best non-Mercedes driver, with Vettel only fifth in the championship, winless.

Chastened, Vettel jumped ship to Ferrari, reputation largely secure but now 'asterisked' with a marker: 'thumped by the honey badger in 2014'.

Heady days, then, for Ricciardo and he'd go on to be declared 'the best driver in the world' by our sister title *Autosport* that year, and again in 2016.

So given all that forward momentum, his crowd-pleasing 'shoey's and a confident, easy manner that makes him a media favourite, how come it's not Dan who's now The Man – king of the world, as Vettel was before him?

In part he can blame Renault's inability to get fully

to grips with the demands of the F1 hybrid power unit era: they've never been able to match the pace set by Mercedes and Ferrari, leaving Red Bull more often than not playing catch-up or 'smash 'n' grab' these past four seasons, hoping to devour whatever crumb of victory has fallen from the table.

There's also the inconvenient truth of a certain Max Verstappen having 'done a Dan' to Dan himself.

Max's win at the 2016 Spanish GP, on his Red Bull debut, took some swallowing for Ricciardo and Verstappen's subsequent searing pace caused Red Bull to swoon and offer their protégé a contract worth more than \$25m per season through to 2020.

A new darling? Certainly – and a lesser man than Dan might have allowed his head to drop in the face of such favouritism. Ricciardo's made of tougher (and quicker) stuff than that, however, and as our analysis (p36) explains, the perception that he offers a 'steady hand' to counter-balance Verstappen's more mercurial gifts is largely erroneous. He's the real deal – don't doubt it: too quick and canny for Merc to offer him a role as a Hamilton wing-man; too destabilising of Vettel's fragile temperament for a Ferrari role to be viable right now.

And with an ever-improving Honda motor behind his shoulders for 2019, just watch him fly...

Anthony Rowlinson

Contributors



MATT YOUSON

When we're afraid your YATQ posers are going to net us a punch in the mouth, we send Matt instead. He takes one for the team on p46



ADRIAN MYERS

In his spare time, ace portrait artist Adrian plays rugby at Farnham RC. Photographing Dan Ric for our cover feature (p36) was less risky



JAMES ROBERTS

Our associate editor has been industrious, taking a detailed inside look at Williams (p54) and grilling Esteban Ocon in Paris (p66)



GLENN DUNBAR

Glenn has been shooting Williams (p54) for so long, he's almost part of the team – no other snapper enjoys such privileged access

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Circulation queries Seymour Distribution Ltd, 2 East Poultry Avenue, London EC1A 9PE. Tel: +44 (0)20 7429 4000. Fax: +44 (0)20 7429 4001. Email: info@seymour.co.uk. ISSN 13614487. EAN 07713614480012. Printed by William Gibbons & Sons Ltd, 28 Planetary Road, Willenhall, Wolverhampton WV13 3XT. Colour by Haymarket Prepress. © 1996 Autosport Media UK

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Thanks to Tim Bampton, Bertrand Brillois, Steve Cooper, Alex Davies, Russell Day, Sébastien de Chaunac, Mike Edgell, Drew Gibson, Malcolm Griffiths, Sam Hardy, Jacques Heckstall-Smith, Will Hings, Silvia Hoffer, Darren Jones, Bradley Lord, Alastair Moffitt, Billy Morton, Sophie Ogg, Anthony Peacock, Vladimir Rys, Yusuke Suzuki, Alistair Thorpe, Nathaniel Warnes, Ben Wyatt

Subscriptions F1 Racing subscriptions, Autosport Media UK, 3 Queensbridge, Northampton, NN4 7BE, UK. Email: help@asm.secureorder.co.uk. Tel: 0344 848 8826. Overseas Tel: +44 (0)1604 251 454. F1 Racing ISSN number 7459770 is published monthly by Autosport Media UK, 1 Eton Street, Richmond, TW9 1AG, UK. Airfreight and mailing in the USA by agent named Air Business Ltd, c/o Worldnet Shipping Inc., 156-15, 140th Avenue, 2nd Floor, Jamaica, NY 11434, USA. Periodicals postage paid at Jamaica NY 11431. Subscription records are maintained at Autosport Media UK, 1 Eton Street, Richmond, TW9 1AG, UK. Air Business Ltd is acting as our mailing agent. We abide by the Editors' Code of Practice and are committed to upholding the highest standards of journalism. If you think we haven't met those standards and want to make a complaint, contact 0203 405 8100. Autosport Media UK Ltd is a part of Motorsport Network LLC



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First time 'un'lucky

Some F1 fans wait a lifetime to witness a dramatic crash. My son waited about 30 seconds, at his very first grand prix. He couldn't believe it, nor could I, as I snapped away.

Because of the fencing that is at Turn 6 of the Circuit Gilles-Villeneuve, I chose to capture the field instead of following the leaders. If not for that fence, I would have turned in the direction of Turn 7. Lance Stroll and Brendon Hartley came into view, and then this. I had attended the Canadian Grand Prix on and off since the days of Senna and Mansell. There have of course been crashes, but never in front my lens. Add one nine-year-old superfan to the F1 family.



Photographer

Mike Edgell

Where Montreal, Canada

When 2.20pm, Sunday
10 June 2018

Details Canon EOS 5D MK II,
200mm lens, 1/1600th @ F7.1





Fly Emirates

Fly Emirates

Fly Emirates

Fly Emirates

Fly Emirates

Fly Emirates

Fly Emirates

Fly Emirates

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Fly Emirates

Fly Emirates

Fly Emirates

MARTINI

35

18

Red Bull

HONDA

Acronis

23

HUBLOT

SOFINA

BWT

11

Deep in thought

Post-race, the roof of the control tower in Montréal gives you a commanding view of parc fermé and the podium. At this point Sebastian Vettel had already climbed onto his car to celebrate his victory and then jumped into the crowd.

Then I noticed, out of the corner of my eye, Max Verstappen just wandering around by himself, almost aimlessly. He stood and looked at the Ferrari for a little while before walking on. The body language seems almost melancholic, even though he must have been quite pleased because he'd finished a race on the podium without making any mistakes – it makes for a very enigmatic shot.



 LAT IMAGES: Steven Tee

Where Montréal, Canada

When 3.48pm, Sunday
10 June 2018

Details Canon EOS-1DX MkII,
200mm lens, 1/500th @ F4.5





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Red Bull

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MAX

PIRELLI

Shell Power

PIRELLI

Red Bull

Red Bull

Chasing Charles

This location is tricky to reach because you have to trek out to the corner – it's the outside of the first chicane – and you have to make your way through the undergrowth and climb over a big fence. And there's only one viewpoint, so you have to get there early. The bonus is that if the light is good, as it was this year, you get a nicely framed shot with lots of contrast.

Here there's two layers of Armco and you're leaning against one of them. The cars come through incredibly quickly and you feel their power as they roar past. Leclerc was noticeably committed through here – it's clear you have to push the Sauber to make it work. He's a lad with a future.



Photographer

LAT IMAGES Steven Tee

Where Montréal, Canada

When 11.53am, Saturday
9 June 2018

Details Canon EOS-1DX MkII,
200mm lens, 1/2000th @ F6.3





16

PIRELLI

CARRERA

Claro



Between the lines

The last time Paul Ricard held the French GP (in 1990) I was only three, so this was the first time I'd shot a GP there. Since it last held an F1 race, the circuit has been extensively modified and the run-off areas have high-grip blue and red stripes located on the outside of the track which are designed to slow cars down if they go off.

But you can have too much of a good thing, because you can't escape the stripes and this makes it harder to find a variety of pictures.

I decided to venture off to the Turn 11 grandstand during FP3 and photographed Seb Vettel from the very top. I don't know why, but there is something pleasing aesthetically with how the car sits with the lines.



 LAT IMAGES: Andy Hone

Where Paul Ricard, France

When 1.09pm, Saturday
23 June 2018

Details Canon EOS-1DX,
200mm lens, 1/500th @ F4.5





The shadow man

The French GP started late due to the fact England were playing Panama in the World Cup. It meant the podium ceremony didn't take place until nearly 6pm and the sun was low in the sky, despite it being the week of the summer solstice.

Initially, I went for a head-on vantage point for the podium, but discovered too many other photographers had taken up that space, so I moved around to the side for a back-lit shot.

Unfortunately, the drivers didn't come forward when they were spraying the champagne, but right at the end race winner Lewis Hamilton did appear and acknowledged his team by pointing down to them.

Even in silhouette, there's no mistaking who it is.



 LAT IMAGES: Andy Hone

Where Paul Ricard, France

When 6.01pm, Sunday
24 June 2018

Details Canon EOS-1DX,
500mm lens, 1/5000th @ F5



LECLERC SET FOR BIG TIME

01 **Charles Leclerc is set for promotion** to Ferrari as Sebastian Vettel's team-mate in 2019.

Ferrari agreed a deal for the 20-year-old Sauber driver to replace Kimi Räikkönen before the Austrian Grand Prix, sources close to the team say, but it had not yet been signed as *F1 Racing* closed for press.

Ferrari, who supply Sauber with engines badged 'Alfa Romeo', gave Leclerc the Sauber drive this year with the intention of moving him into the factory team sooner rather than later, as long as he proved his potential – although they say any attempt to reveal their line-up before an official announcement is “media speculation”.

Leclerc's first half-season appears to have delivered on Ferrari's expectations, thanks to a series of starring performances that have put his team-mate Marcus Ericsson in the shade. He had a shaky first two or three races as he adjusted to Formula 1 from Formula 2, where he was a dominant champion in 2017. But since his breakthrough sixth place at the Azerbaijan GP, round four, Leclerc has barely looked back. Up to Austria, he had scored points in every race except Monaco (his birthplace), where he retired with brake failure.

His raw pace has impressed: Leclerc is well over half-a-second on average quicker than Ericsson in qualifying and he has been putting the Sauber in grid positions with which the team have been unfamiliar in recent years.

Ferrari's decision has been based both on Leclerc's promise, and Räikkönen's frustrating form. Quite often this year, the Finn has been competitive with Vettel, or even ahead, in practice and through much of qualifying, only to blow it with a mistake in the top 10 shoot-out.

The race that appears to have swung the momentum more decisively Leclerc's way was Canada, where Räikkönen made a series of mistakes during qualifying



Leclerc's performances for Sauber have put him in line to replace a lacklustre Räikkönen at Ferrari for 2019



After 12 years with Renault, Red Bull have opted to change engine suppliers for the 2019 season

and had a lacklustre race. Ferrari's decision means the 38-year old is staring at the possibility of the end of his F1 career this season, as there are no seats available to him at any teams with a competitive car.

Rumours have linked him with McLaren, but the struggling team's main priority at this stage is to try to persuade Fernando Alonso to stay. If they cannot keep the Spaniard, their second choice is Daniel Ricciardo, who looks set to sign a new contract with Red Bull.

Alonso has said he will not make a decision on his future until after the summer break. He says his "priority" remains a competitive car in F1, but none of the top three teams are interested in signing him. Alonso is also keen to pursue his interest in winning the unofficial 'triple crown' of Monaco, Le Mans and the Indianapolis 500. His victory at the endurance classic in June secured a second part of the triple, and his choices look to be staying with McLaren in F1 and being given the Monaco GP off to race at Indy, as in 2017, or switching full-time to Indycars, where McLaren are considering setting up a team.

If McLaren can keep Alonso or sign another A-lister such as Ricciardo, it seems they may choose to promote their reserve driver Lando Norris, who is impressing in F2 this season, in place of Stoffel Vandoorne.

Outside the top three, Renault have been linked with a move for Force India's Esteban Ocon, who would replace Carlos Sainz alongside Nico Hülkenberg, who has a year left on his contract. Renault's interest in Ocon is partly on account of his nationality – it is important for them to have a French driver if possible – but also because he is increasingly impressive. Up to Austria, Ocon had out-qualified team-mate Sergio Perez seven times in nine races, and six times in a row. He is also a graduate of Renault's young driver programme.

If Ocon goes to Renault, Sainz's future would be up in the air. There would be no seat for him at Red Bull if Ricciardo stays, and while motorsport adviser Helmut Marko hasn't been impressed by Toro Rosso's Brendon Hartley, Sainz would be unlikely to want to go back to Red Bull's sister team, where he has already spent three years.

A RISING SON?

02

As time goes by, there will also be pressure on Red Bull to open up a seat at Toro Rosso for a Japanese driver, in recognition of their increasingly close links with Honda.

Red Bull have finally made the call to end their 12-year relationship with Renault, which had grown fractious since the start of the hybrid era in 2014, and switch to Honda engines next year. The decision had been expected for some time as Renault told Red Bull last September that they did not want to carry on supplying them after 2018, when their contract ended. But it remained a

Strategy error and mechanical failures blunt improvements made in France

“HORNER SAID HE SAW THE MOVE AS “LOW RISK” BECAUSE OF THE “PROGRESS HONDA HAVE BEEN MAKING OVER RECENT MONTHS””

possibility because Renault's contract with F1 dictates that they have to supply Red Bull with engines if they ask.

Red Bull wanted to keep their options open but from early this year, once they had evaluated the Honda engine's performance in the Toro Rosso, insiders were saying that the decision to switch was a “no-brainer”.

The decision was confirmed after Canada, when both Renault and Honda introduced their second specification of engine for this season. Honda's upgrade was bigger than Renault's and Red Bull believe the two engines are now on a par on performance, that Honda's reliability is no worse than Renault's and that they have more room to improve. Team boss Christian Horner said he saw the move as “low risk” because of the “progress Honda have been making over recent months”.

The decision raises the uncomfortable prospect for McLaren of Red Bull being contenders next season with the engine McLaren rejected at the end of 2017 – at a net cost of around \$100m. McLaren did so because they believed Honda were the main reason for their poor performance – a belief that has been exploded this season



The deal has been done: Honda will supply Red Bull Racing with engines from next season

– and would never get it right. But Horner says he believes switching to Honda can bring a performance improvement.

Estimates of power of the three manufacturers give Mercedes and Ferrari something like a 30bhp advantage over Renault and Honda in qualifying – hence at least some of the problems Red Bull encounter trying to qualify at the front – but much closer to parity in race conditions.

Red Bull's problems this season have generally been that when you qualify fifth and sixth, in often one-stop races, it's hard to make up sufficient ground quickly enough to challenge for victory. But they have proved that when they are close to the front early on, race wins are within reach – as Max Verstappen demonstrated in Austria, where he bulldozed in on the fight between Mercedes and Ferrari. ▶

BLINDED WITH SCIENCE

03 Austria also highlighted flaws within Mercedes, just as the team were threatening to pull away in the title fight with Ferrari.

Mercedes locked out the front row for the first time this year at the French GP, following the belated introduction of their upgraded engine, which was delayed from Canada because of reliability concerns. Hamilton then romped to victory at Paul Ricard.

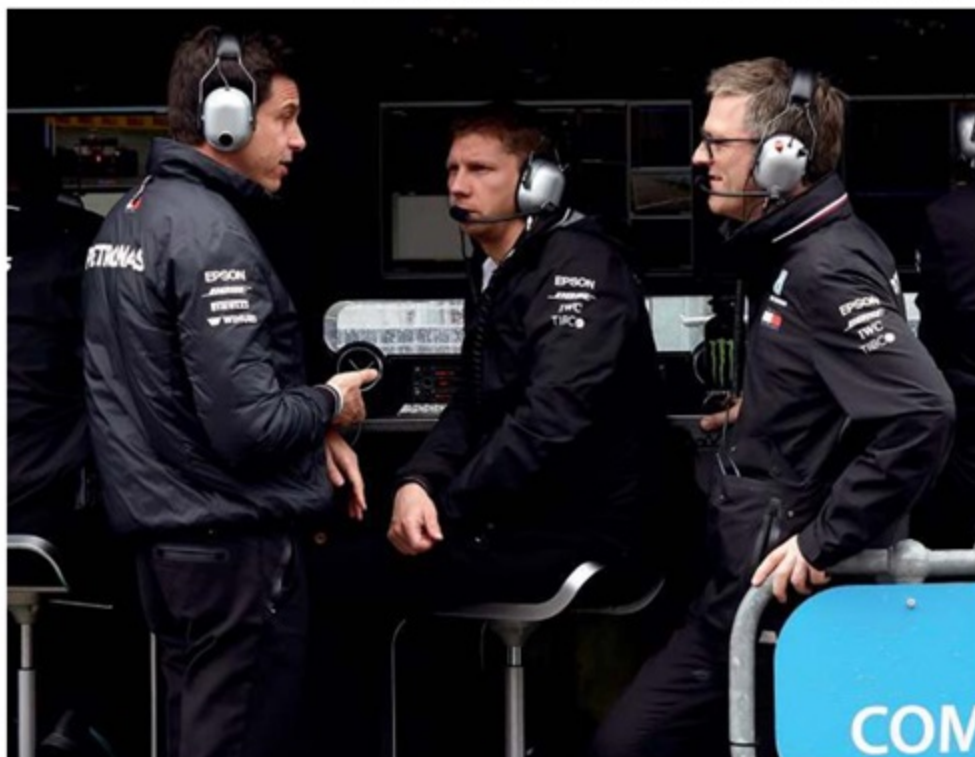
Mercedes introduced a major aerodynamic upgrade a week later in Austria, aimed at giving more front-end grip in the middle of long-radius corners, especially medium- and high-speed. Hamilton and Bottas stuck it on the front row again, by 0.3secs, a huge margin on such a short lap.

And they looked poised for an easy one-two in the race before frailties showed up. Both cars retired with mechanical issues – something that has never happened before in the hybrid era. And the world champions made a bad strategic mistake, failing to stop Hamilton under a Virtual Safety Car.

That gave Verstappen the lead, Hamilton dropping to fourth, from where the need to battle to recover positions sent his tyres over the edge, and forced him into a second stop. Fourth would have been where he finished, had he not then retired with a fuel-pump failure.

It was not the first time Mercedes have been caught out strategically this season. A win was lost in Australia on another VSC miscalculation, they were slow to realise Vettel was going to try only one stop in Bahrain, they failed to stop Hamilton under the safety car in China

James Vowles, flanked by Toto Wolff and James Allison, has admitted the strategy error in Austria was his fault



“ IT WAS NOT THE FIRST TIME MERCEDES HAVE BEEN CAUGHT OUT STRATEGICALLY THIS SEASON. A WIN WAS LOST IN AUSTRALIA ON ANOTHER VSC MISCALCULATION ”

(although they insist this was not an error), and they did not take enough hyper-soft tyres to Canada. Now this.

Chief strategist James Vowles publicly held up his hands for the Austria error, by way of two radio messages to Hamilton declaring ‘mea culpa’. Team boss Toto Wolff backed Vowles afterwards, but added: “We don’t need to ▶

F1 DIGEST THE MONTH'S BIG STORIES AT A GLANCE

14.06.18 Renault signs senior Mercedes engineer Matthew Harman as deputy chief designer

15.06.18 New Michael Schumacher exhibition opens in Germany

15.06.18 Belgian Grand Prix secures three-year contract extension



19.06.18 Red Bull announce Honda engine supply deal from 2019 season



22.06.18 Mercedes reveal enhanced engine upgrade after Canada delay

24.06.18 Action on poor traffic management promised for future French GPs

25.06.18 F1 and FIA to look at removing chicane from Ricard layout



29.06.18 Renault introduce new engine mode for extra power in qualifying

04.07.18 Eric Boullier leaves McLaren as part of another management reshuffle



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make changes. The most important thing is to understand why an error happens and to go back into the situation and analyse. I don't think we would make an error twice. It's just the situation is very difficult, very complex, we are fighting six cars and that is just a tough situation."

Errors have come from both title-contending teams this season. But Austria was the worst example so far.

LONG KNIVES AT WOKING

04 What McLaren would do to have "problems" like those of Mercedes – their former engine partner and shareholder.

The latest fall-out from McLaren's failure to live up to their own 2018 expectations emerged on the eve of the British GP, with a statement saying racing director Eric Boullier had resigned. His role has been made defunct

and McLaren have taken on former Indycar champion Gil de Ferran in a new position of sporting director, and promoted chief engineer Andrea Stella to become performance director.

Stella will be "ultimately responsible for the performance of the car and will be the (team) leader at the race track," chief executive officer Zak Brown said, while de Ferran would work closely with Stella "in a sporting context to maximise the performance of the team and the drivers".

The signature of Alonso is all over those changes: he became friendly with de Ferran when the Brazilian acted as his driver coach at last year's Indy 500. The 50-year-old has been acting as an informal and

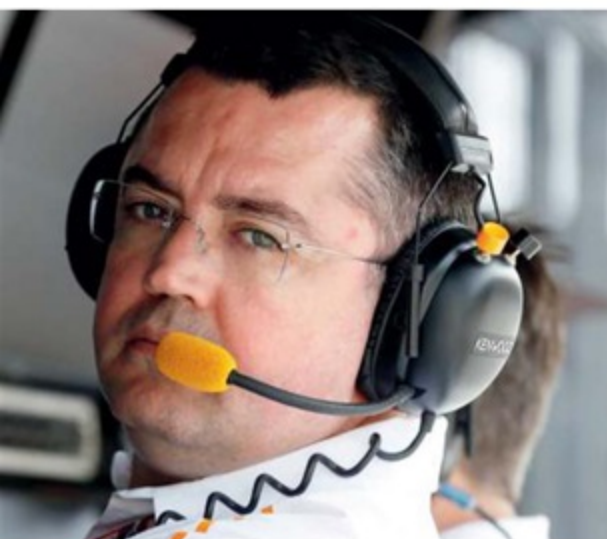
unofficial roving adviser to McLaren since Spain. Brown said he had consulted closely with Alonso on the changes and that he had been "a part of the process". McLaren are also believed to be looking for a technical director.

Brown also said McLaren had found themselves in "a completely unacceptable situation" this season, having entered the year following their switch to Renault engines hopeful of competing with Red Bull and scoring podium finishes but finding they were two seconds off the pace.

"It has been a very difficult time," Brown added. "Lots of pressure in the system and ultimately Eric felt in order for McLaren to go forward in the best possible light, his resignation would allow that to happen.

"We have big performance issues. The situation was not created overnight and it will not be solved overnight but this is a great starting point."

Boullier has called time on his four-year stint as racing director at McLaren



ERIC FELT IN ORDER FOR McLAREN TO GO FORWARD IN THE BEST POSSIBLE LIGHT, HIS RESIGNATION WOULD ALLOW THAT TO HAPPEN

ZAK BROWN

F1 MASTERMIND

Your chosen specialised subject: the world's greatest sport

- Q1** When was the last time half points were awarded for a race because 75 per cent of the race distance hadn't been completed?
- Q2** What do Lorenzo Bandini and the Stewart GP team have in common?
- Q3** Which current driver has the most podiums without a win: Sergio Perez or Romain Grosjean?
- Q4** True or false: Fernando Alonso has never recorded a fastest lap at the Spanish GP?
- Q5** How many British winners of the British GP have there been: 10, 11 or 12?
- Q6** Who made their first appearance in an official GP practice session in Canada this year?
- Q7** How many podiums did Dallara manage in their time as a fully-fledged Formula 1 constructor?
- Q8** Which circuit is further south – Monaco, Paul Ricard or Sochi?
- Q9** Which two drivers are next in this list of drivers to have won Le Mans while competing in F1 that season: Fernando Alonso, Nico Hülkenberg and...?
- Q10** David Coulthard was on pole but who won the last Argentinian Grand Prix back in 1998?

1 Malaysia 2009 2 Their only pole positions were at the French GP 3 Grosjean (10 to 8) 4 True 5 12 6 Nicholas Latifi 7 2 (Canada 1989, San Marino 1991) 8 Paul Ricard 9 Johnny Herbert and Bertrand Gachot (1991) 10 Michael Schumacher

PROMOTION

YOUNG ENGINEER WINS F1 CHANCE

A young engineering student was handed a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to kickstart his F1 career during the Canadian GP weekend.

Carlos Sainz revealed that Chase Pelletier, 22, was the Infiniti Engineering Academy 2018 Canadian winner. His prize is a six-month placement at the Renault F1 Team at Enstone



and another six months at Infiniti's Technical Centre in Cranfield.

Pelletier was one of ten finalists for the region's annual competition to find engineering talent, and impressed judges over two days of challenges.



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THE RACER'S EDGE

PETER WINDSOR

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RICARD: WHEN ALL WAS RIGHT WITH THE WORLD

Back then, though, back in 1973, there was in effect no choice: you drove down to Paul Ricard in your 1969 Ford Escort 1100, worrying a little bit about the water pump gasket but ultimately, disproportionately, amazingly happy that it was all about to happen.

We slept under the car in a lay-by, Peter Collins and I, believing we were safe. I folded up a Firestone jacket into some sort of pillow; feet plodded around us outside on the gravel, apparently in circles, tied to the smoke of *Gitanes*, linked to oaths, muttered in local French.

Eyes scratchy, limbs stiff, we splashed water over our faces in the public toilet. In a motorway café we sipped something hot and ate croissants. Then we were on the road again, the springs in the seat now digging into our backs, the imbalance on the right front wheel much more of a presence than it had been the day before.

Finally, at the top of the long mountain climb, we reached Paul Ricard. It was a golden dusk on a warm-air Saturday night. Inside the circuit the flags and team names of French motor racing



Paul Ricard in 1973: looking down the mile-long Mistral straight to Signes with the heat haze hanging in the air

stretched forever: Elf, BP France, Antar, Motul, Matra, Renault-Alpine, Martini, Michelin, Stand 21, GPA, Ford France, *Scratch* magazine. Their tents and camper vans filled the vastness; it felt as though we were at last at the centre of it all, that summer, that year. Everything else – *everything* else, by comparison – seemed incidental.

We found a two-star in Bandol, complete with bugs and brackish water, and slept despite the street noise and thumps from the room next door.

The sun was rising as we set off for Ricard Sunday – for the French Grand Prix. I pushed hard on the road up the mountain, stretching the Escort in third before braking deep for the first of the banked hairpins. In the mirror: a flash of blue. A hot Renault 5 darted into view, lights blazing.

“Somebody quick’s behind us.”
 “Check-it-out! Jean Ragnotti!”

I moved over and waved the Renault past. PC and I knew Jean already from a couple of F3 races. He waved back, smoke streaming from a *Gitanes*.

A little further on, the back end of the Escort juddered as I hit the brakes over the bumps on a downhill section. This time a Ford Granada breezed past, four-up, tyres squealing.

“Francois Çevert, no question,” said Pete. “Probably with the Tyrrell guys...” The Granada powered quickly away, up towards the next right-hander. I checked the mirror for more.

The Escort was shot by the time we reached the summit so we parked it in the shade and walked towards the ticket booths.

“*Deux billets a la virage Signes*,” I said in my Aussie French. The girl looked at me suspiciously then asked me for my francs.

The PA filled the air with French; the massive crowd pushed its way towards the grass viewing banks. We muscled our way through, finding a location near the front of a makeshift stand. Ahead of us

stretched maybe seven layers of catch-fencing. Beyond that: black Tarmac, baking in the heat. From where we stood, Signes looked innocent enough. Tarmac and painted kerbs. Neat. Tidy. Beautiful. I’d never seen a track look so beautiful.

The F1 cars finally made their appearance, steamroller rear tyres harnessed to much lower fronts. *L’Equipe* told us that Jackie Stewart was on pole for Elf Team Tyrrell, with team-mate, Çevert, fourth. Jody Scheckter was shockingly on the front row for Yardley McLaren – Jody the wild kid, Jody the Next Big Thing. Emerson and Ronnie were third and fifth for JPS Lotus – which meant that Emerson, too, was on the front row alongside Jody and Jackie. Just reading the words brought sweetness. Now we were hearing them in French – and we were about to see the cars *racing* – right in front of us, here at Signes.

The explosion of the start, the incomprehensible words, the noise, the wisps of tyre smoke – and then... nothing... Like Lawrence in the desert, we squinted into the light, up to the start of the Mistral straight, straining for the first sign of movement.

“There! It’s Scheckter!”

A white smudge, shimmering in the heat. The snake of colour grew larger until, finally in focus, it arrived at 190mph, all noise and confusion and speed and frenzy. Scheckter darted the McLaren to the centre of the road, then back to the left. The nose dipped – and then he was into Signes, hands flicking at the wheel, left-rear Goodyear demanding opposite lock. Behind: Ronnie Peterson, gliding the

Scheckter ahead of Fittipaldi,
with Peterson ready to
pounce when the pair tangled



Lotus 72 through momentous slides and Jackie Stewart, all-at-one in the blue Tyrrell.

The race took its form. The two JPS drivers, their black-and-gold Lotus 72s perfectly poised, swapped places. Now it was Emerson applying pressure on Scheckter. Jody took Signes in two, clear parts – a hard, quick entry followed by a flamboyant powerslide, beginning about mid-corner. Emerson drifted the JPS from the moment he first turned into Signes, composing one, long, beautiful drift you could never sub-divide. The PA screamed. The fans threw up their arms. Something had happened over in the tight bits!

More squinting. More heat haze.

“ THE RACE TOOK ITS FORM. THE TWO JPS DRIVERS, THEIR BLACK-AND-GOLD LOTUS 72S PERFECTLY POISED, SWAPPED PLACES. NOW IT WAS EMERSON APPLYING PRESSURE ON SCHECKTER ”

“It’s Ronnie! Ronnie’s leading!”

No Jody. No Emerson. The light blue and yellow helmet in the JPS was angled slightly as Ronnie Peterson headed into Signes. Then, like Emerson,

but with slightly more oversteer, Ronnie began to play. He was heading for the win. His first GP win.

The Escort’s water pump began to fail as we headed home, so we took it easy and laughed about the Dutch, Belgians and Germans who all seemed to be migrating south with their caravans, towards the Med, presumably for some sort of holiday.

Didn’t they know? Didn’t they know that they had missed it? Didn’t they know that the French GP was *yesterday*, Ricard was over for another year, that there was nothing bigger in life?

Forty-five years later, not so much has changed. The traffic jams continue – and the grandstands at Ricard are still temporary. Signes is blunted by a chicane; the fast esses, where we lost Elio De Angelis, are confined to history. On the road out of Bandol you still stop, though, for a quick croissant and a *café au lait* – and still you look, as you reach the summit, over the valley, to the blue, blue Med.

This time, though, you think of Ronnie just as much as you live for today. Ronnie with the power on, fingertips feathering the wheel. Ronnie through Signes, when all was right with the world.



Peterson’s first grand prix win came in the evocative JPS Lotus on a hot day in the south of France



UNDER THE HOOD

PAT SYMONDS

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is detrimental to the following car, is pushed away from your own car. Unfortunately this also leaves a very wide wake of low-energy air for the following car to drive through.

What is required to improve following car performance is to keep the wake narrow and lift it up behind the leading car in a shape resembling a mushroom. Fundamental to keeping it narrow is to limit outwashing, and a strong rear wing is required to lift it up.

Experimental work on the 2021 regulations showed these features to be uncontroversial. So, while a more complete solution was sought for 2021, a few simple fixes were proposed for 2019. In order not to interrupt the work on the future car, the teams were asked to

carry out some basic research on the new proposals and concentrate on the quality of the wake rather than on the absolute performance of the leading car. While there was some variation of results, not a single one was negative, and therefore the revised regulations were put to a vote. To the surprise of many, this vote was carried and the rules adopted. The story didn't quite finish there, though, because once the teams studied the rules in detail they found some ambiguities. At one time this might have been enough to derail the whole process, but in the new-found spirit of cooperation these have been ironed out and a comprehensive, if extremely complex, set of rules agreed on.

So what are the fundamentals of the changes? Starting at the front, the front wing has been simplified by removing many of the appendages that sit on top of it, and the number of elements reduced to five. Abrupt changes of section which could produce vortices to enhance the main Y250 vortex have been outlawed. Under the wing, the vertical strakes have been limited both in number and geometry.

Most importantly at the front, the wing endplate has been redefined as a much more simple device, devoid of the many sections currently seen. The geometry is such that the outwash angle is limited to 15 degrees and the footplate is less complex. Finally the practice of blowing air through the wheel hubs has been outlawed and the front brake duct outer surfaces simplified.

These changes have de-powered the front wing, and to get balance back the wing is ►

2019 CHANGES ARE WELL OVERDUE

Formula 1 has long been resistant to change, a situation that was brought about by a perverse governance system, variable amounts of disunity between enfranchised bodies – and, most importantly, teams that guarded perceived competitive advantage to an extreme degree.

The past twelve months have brought a sea change in this situation. Firstly the governing body and the commercial rights holder are aligned in the desire to bring entertainment back to racing and the teams are also seeing the merit, both from a financial and a sporting viewpoint, of providing closer and less predictable racing.

Much of the work is longer term but the FIA took the initiative earlier this year to see if some of the research into the 2021 aerodynamic regulations could be cherry-picked to improve the short-term situation. Often this is a dangerous thing to do, but already the changes being investigated are better researched than any previous iteration of bodywork rules.

The early work on understanding what it is about the aerodynamic characteristics of the



To overtake a car the chaser must first get close, but that brings with it wake problems

current cars that inhibits close following didn't show up any surprises. In essence there are two features of the wake of a car that are detrimental to the performance of a following car. The first is the turbulence intensity of the wake and the second, and far more important, is the low energy or total pressure of the wake flow.

Aerodynamic forces are directly proportional to the total pressure that they experience. Total pressure is made up of two components: the static pressure or ambient pressure, which is mainly a function of weather conditions and altitude; and then there is dynamic pressure, which is a function of the velocity of the air impinging on the aerodynamic surface.

As I've written before, the route to performance on an F1 car is to sweep the wake of the front wheels out to the side of the car so that this low-energy flow, the very type of low-energy flow that



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larger with the front moved forward 25mm, the width increased by 100mm, and the height also increased by 25mm.

The bargeboards are also changed by reducing their height by 125mm, although this pre-dates the latest changes and was done to expose more of the chassis to exploit advertising potential. To regain some performance the plan area that can be occupied by the bargeboards is increased.

The result everyone is hoping for from these changes is closer racing

which are a consequence of the main changes, although some detail around the halo junction to the chassis has also been altered to make for better aesthetics.

The big question is whether these changes will make a substantive difference, and I believe the answer is yes. They will not achieve all that is required for close racing, and indeed even the 2021 aero regulations won't achieve this in isolation, but I do believe that the changes for 2019 are for the better. There is an immediate cost to the teams in terms of lack of carry-over parts into 2019 but change will always cost money. The important factor is return on investment, and if we can improve racing and attract new fans and sponsors, then the investment into the many changes taking place over the next few years will be repaid many times over.

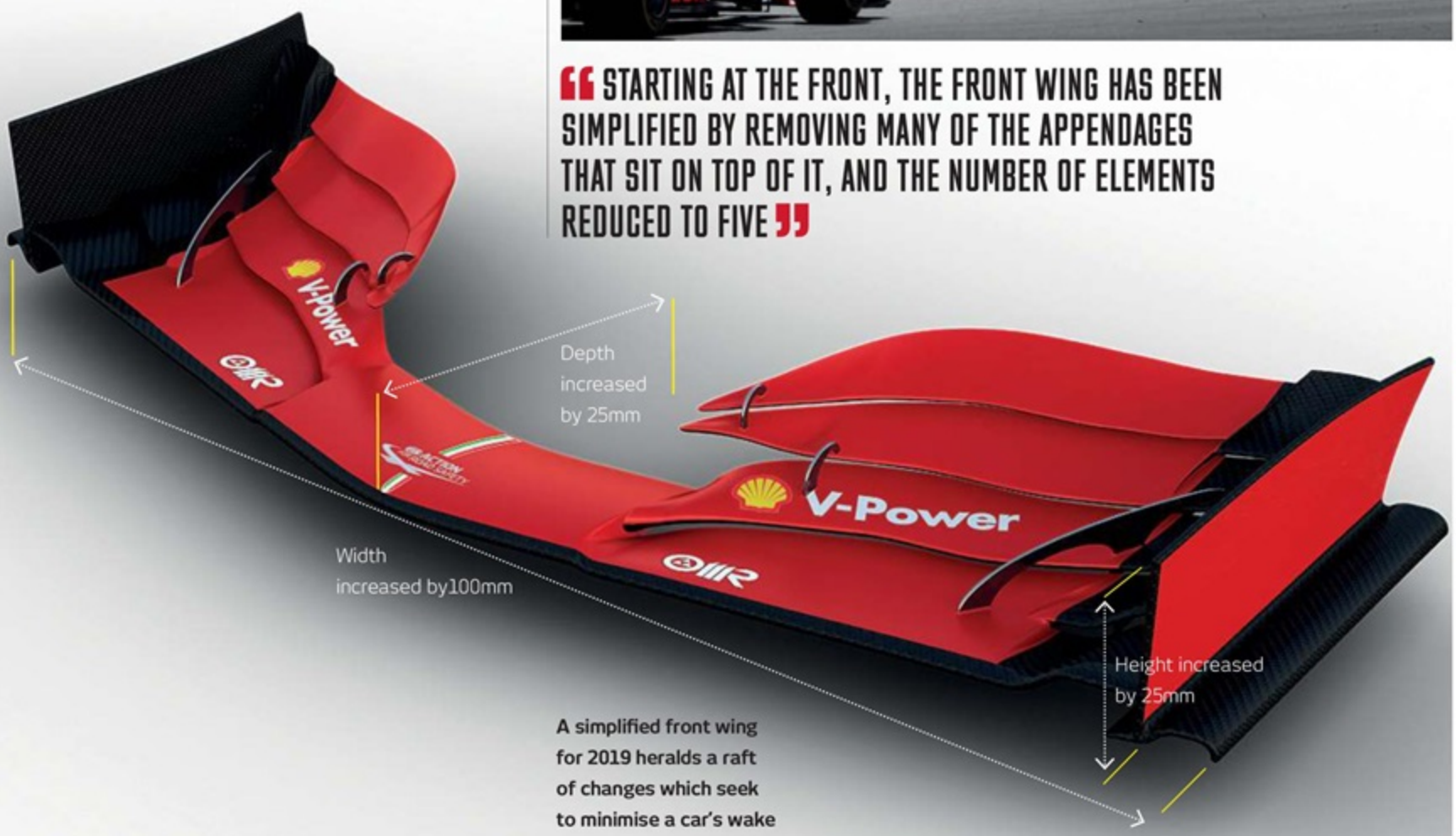
At the rear, the wing has been made larger by extending it 20mm rearwards and making it 50mm wider. The depth of the wing is 20mm greater and the DRS now allows a gap of 85mm between wing elements when deployed, 20mm more than before. The rear wing endplates have also been simplified, again aimed at advertising space rather than wake management.

There are some other detail changes, most of



IMAGE: MARK SUTTON

STARTING AT THE FRONT, THE FRONT WING HAS BEEN SIMPLIFIED BY REMOVING MANY OF THE APPENDAGES THAT SIT ON TOP OF IT, AND THE NUMBER OF ELEMENTS REDUCED TO FIVE



A simplified front wing for 2019 heralds a raft of changes which seek to minimise a car's wake

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James Allen: The new grass roots

Craig Wilson: MD Williams Advanced Engineering

Business news from the F1 world



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STRAIGHT TALK

And in that space a lot is happening. This was one of the dominant themes of Manila, that in some ways esports is the new grassroots of motor racing because the barriers to entry are very low in comparison with, say, the cost of karting. It also appeals to the younger generation that conventional motorsport is struggling to reach.

Motor racing is a sport uniquely well adapted to the world of esports because the controls that the gamer uses are exactly the same as the real thing: steering wheel, gearshift levers and pedals. Hence why an esports champion like World's Fastest Gamer Rudi van Buren can jump into a World Rallycross car and go quickly straight away.

Rupert Svendsen Cook, an ex-Formula 3 driver who now runs the Veloce esports team, told the conference that esports represents "the biggest increase in the global driver talent pool in the history of motor sport. If we can find a way to bring the two together, then all of a sudden, the sport increases in size dramatically. We're engaging a millennial audience and a fan base which is crucial to the future of

our sport. It's very realistic to say that the next generation of drivers will graduate through racing esports – the opportunities are huge."

The elite drivers, such as those who compete in the F1 esports series and who will fight for supremacy in the new Le Mans esports series, are becoming increasingly professional, as are the teams they compete for.

Another thing motorsport is uniquely well adapted to is providing accessibility for all genders, races and religions to compete against each other. And for the disabled to compete on equal terms with the able bodied. There is the example of Robert Kubica's recovery from his accident to become the Williams reserve driver. And in no other sport could someone like Billy Monger suffer an accident where he loses both his legs, yet comes back the following year to compete in a higher category and succeed. With their helmet on and strapped into a car, there is no way from the outside to tell whether a competitor is male or female, disabled or not.

This was another powerful theme of the conference and it was embodied by Nathalie McGloin, who was paralysed from the chest down in a road accident as a teenager, but who races a Cayman S with hand controls in the British Porsche Club championship.

She has recently accepted Jean Todt's invitation to become president of the FIA Disability and Accessibility commission and she will be a powerful voice for this sector of the sport in the coming years.

Like esports, it's an area where the sport really has something to shout about and it shouldn't be shy about doing so.

OLYMPIC GOLD FOR HAMILTON?

Are we about to see motor racing in the Olympic Games?

This was one of the talking points of the 2018 FIA Sport Conference in Manila, which featured high-level thought leadership panels looking at the future of the sport. Another was the steady rise of esports as a funnel for new fans and competitors to the world of motor racing.

The Olympic Charter has long contained a rule that bans sports with mechanical propulsion. But the word in Manila was that this rule is now quietly being dropped. And at the 2018 Youth Olympics, taking place in October in Buenos Aires, an event where new sports are tried out such as sport climbing, karate and roller sports, there will be a demonstration event of electric karting.

This might seem a small step, but it is a significant one. By itself this doesn't mean that Lewis Hamilton will be eligible to challenge for an Olympic gold medal any time soon. But it does show that the recognition in 2012 by the International Olympic Committee of motorsport's governing body the FIA is starting to open some interesting avenues.

The continued success of the Olympic Games

has relied on their ability to iterate and stay relevant to the modern world. In the Tokyo 2020 Games, for example, free-running will be on the timetable. And just look at some of the crazy X-Games-derived disciplines that have become a huge hit on the Winter Games programme.

Motor sport has to evolve, too, and recognise the changing landscape in which it operates. Hence the steady rise of Formula E, the growth of electric karting and the embrace by the Le Mans 24 Hours of an exciting new top category for 2020 based around hypercars.

There are a lot of exciting things happening in the sport and these put pressure on Formula 1, as its pinnacle, to get its house in order and present a format and formula that fans will want to watch for another ten years.

F1 may be top dog at the moment, but there's nothing to say that it has to be the pinnacle of motor racing esports.

Will the day come when F1 stars compete for gold silver and bronze for the glory of their nations?



THIS MONTH

Craig Wilson

Managing Director,
Williams Advanced
Engineering

Adapting Formula 1 engineering know-how to improve productivity and performance in adjacent industries has the potential to become big business – provided customers understand it's not just about adding a sprinkling of motorsport 'fairy dust'. Craig Wilson, managing director of Williams Advanced Engineering, explains how F1 innovations can service industries as disparate as defence and human high performance

CV

2014-present

Appointed managing director of Williams Advanced Engineering

2014-present

Non-executive director of Transport Research Laboratories

2013-2014

Head of Commercial Operations, Williams Advanced Engineering

2012-present

Co-founder of Oxatec,

2007-2011

Director, Holden Special Vehicles

2005-2011

Managing Director, Walkinshaw Performance/Holden Racing Team

2000-2005

Managing Director, TWR Group

1992-2000

Project Manager/
Business Director,
TWR Engineering

1988-1992

Production/
Engineering Manager,
JaguarSport

F1 Racing: Williams Advanced Engineering was incorporated in 2012 but the team had been involved in other partner projects before. What was the new company's mandate?

Craig Wilson: Williams have always undertaken bespoke projects from time to time – the Metro 6R4, a British Touring Car Championship entry with Renault, a BMW Le Mans prototype – but they were mostly opportunistic projects that benefitted the Formula 1 project directly. 2010 was really the starting point for the Advanced Engineering side of the business, primarily born out of the Jaguar C-X75 hypercar programme – Jaguar approached Williams with a view to us assisting with development.

At that time we were a one-project organisation but today we have anything between 40 and 50 projects being undertaken at any one time, and across a multitude of disciplines, customers and sectors.

Williams are proud to be independent, so the opportunity to undertake other business, using the access, capabilities and know-how of the group was really how Advanced Engineering was born. Although the Jaguar project ceased, there was enough evidence to show how a business like this could support the overall group interest – another leg to the stool.

F1R: How important is the perception of Williams as an independent brand?

CW: Independence and engineering excellence are very important, and I think integrity is important as well. I've been in the engineering business a long time and it's continually rewarding to see how much integrity is attached to Williams by people outside the motorsport industry as well as within it.

F1R: Formula 1 is very much an innovation business. Do you ever find that the outside applications of Formula 1 technology are less obvious for potential customers? Is one of your main challenges convincing people that you don't just run windtunnel research and make elaborate pieces of carbon fibre?

INTERVIEW STUART COOLING

CW: Throughout our history Williams have achieved a lot of success on track through out-innovating their rivals. We are a very highly skilled engineering company who just happen to demonstrate that through Formula 1 – and now, through Advanced

Engineering, into other sectors. It is challenging to convince some customers that we will be able to provide solutions that are fit for their purpose – a lot of people look at Formula 1 as a very exotic form of technology application. But we wouldn't have enjoyed the success we've had if we weren't able to take what was relevant and adapt it. For instance, during the KERS era we were one of the few organisations building our own system and we built up a huge amount of knowledge in electric machines, batteries, controls, and so on.

We've been able to take some of those elements and apply it to a very efficient, lightweight and cost-effective power unit for the Brompton electric bicycle. As we deliver more projects and they come into the public domain, it becomes less challenging for us to communicate the possibilities. Fundamentally it's about good engineering.

F1R: You've focused around what you describe as seven core markets (sports science, defence, automotive, motorsport, marine, civil aerospace and energy). Is that a factor of what you see as your competencies, or is it to avoid dilution of effort or confusion?

CW: In any good business you need to focus on what you're good at. I've seen too many businesses fail when they've tried to do things that are too new to them or too risky. So, absolutely, we have core competencies in certain areas and it just so happens that many of those are in demand around the world right now from an engineering perspective. I'm not going to shy away from the fact that we had a tough couple of years after the C-X75 programme was stopped, and it was a case of 'needs must', because until then we'd been a one-project business. We had to ensure our survival. Right now there's a such huge demand for the type of capabilities we're able to offer that our growth is being driven by those seven areas – we're a very good fit with the market need.





All being well, Miami will be the first of Liberty's 'new' races

THIS MONTH

Green light for Miami street race

On 11 May, the City of Miami Commissioners and the Economic Development and Tourism Committee gave preliminary approval to the staging of a Formula 1 race in the Florida city. This bureaucratic necessity means that – barring a remarkable turn of events – there will be a Miami Grand Prix in October 2019.

The wheels have been turning behind the scenes for some time to make this happen, and it stands for a lot more than just the latest chapter in the sport's chequered history of American street races. The last was held in 1991 in Phoenix, and that event is regularly held up as an example of the struggles the sport has had establishing itself in the US sporting marketplace. It is recalled – perhaps apocryphally – that a local ostrich-racing event attracted a bigger crowd.

Before Phoenix came Detroit, Dallas and Long Beach. Only the latter achieved success, in terms of a large crowd and significant popularity. But even that fell prey to F1's perennial problem in the US – race organisers could not make the events turn a profit at the same time as paying the

substantial race fees demanded by Bernie Ecclestone.

Following the end of the deal with Long Beach, F1's former boss tried many times to secure a race in a landmark city on the eastern or western seaboard of the US – where the majority of the country's substantial F1 audience resides. But he always failed for the same reason.



LIBERTY ARE DOING SOMETHING F1 REFUSED TO DO UNDER ECCLESTONE



The race marks a new beginning for F1. For a start, if it actually happens – and at this stage it's hard to

see how it will not – it would be the first new race deal secured by the sport's new commercial rights holders, Liberty Media. Other races confirmed since Liberty took over have simply been extensions of existing events.

Miami is the brainchild of Liberty commercial boss Sean Bratches. Bratches is so keen to make the race happen that he has removed the main obstacle to previous

races – money. It is said by insiders that if Liberty receive any fee for the race, it will be minimal – and it may well be free, in that there will not be a fee at all.

By comparison, France is paying \$35m a year, Russia \$50m and Azerbaijan a reputed \$75m for their races. F1 are being helped in securing the money to hold the event by local property magnate Stephen Ross.

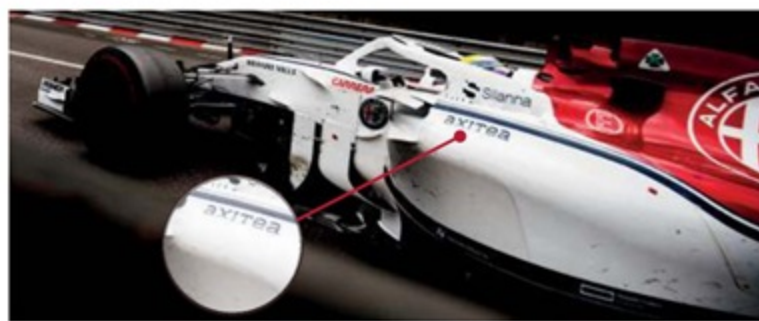
Liberty, then, are doing something F1 refused to do under Ecclestone but which many always felt was necessary – investing in securing a successful future for the sport in the world's biggest market. It is not going to be a model pursued everywhere else – or perhaps anywhere else. Other races, in markets perceived to be less important, will still have to pay fees of one kind or another.

But this race is considered so crucial to Liberty's plans that short-term profit is being sacrificed for perceived far greater medium-to-long-term benefits. It's an approach that would be anathema to Ecclestone, but if you're looking for an example of just how much the sport is changing under Liberty then this is it.

WHO THE HELL ARE... AXITEA?

Who are they?

Axitea Security Evolution are a company who specialise in advanced cyber security. They state their goal as being to protect the digital assets that increasingly represent a critical element for both corporate strategy and all competition-related activities and initiatives.



Where are they? Axitea's corporate brand will appear on the sidepod floorline of the Sauber C37 and, during the Monaco and Italian GPs, on the upper side of the car's sidepods.

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PRIME TIME

Daniel Ricciardo is in the form of his life: winning against the odds, frequently sticking it to his fêted team-mate and proving, weekend-in, weekend-out, that he's an ace in search of a true world title shot. But he doesn't *quite* seem to be able to get his bum in the right seat at the right time, despite flirtations with Ferrari, Mercedes and Renault. Yet his F1 stock has never been higher, so he's ripe for a move from the Red Bull team that made him... Or maybe, just maybe, he'd be best off staying put as Honda finally start to get their act together. Here, **Andrew Benson** analyses the options

PICTURES
VLADIMIR RYS

So,

Daniel Ricciardo, what do you do now? Your contract with Red Bull comes to an end this year and your team are not only widely understood to be more in love with your team-mate Max Verstappen than they are with you, but they have also just signed an engine deal with Honda.

In the light of Honda's never-ending troubles since they made their Formula 1 return in 2015, that – at first glance – perhaps doesn't seem an appealing prospect, compared with potential openings at both Mercedes and Ferrari. But hold on: this is not 2017 when Honda seemed entirely incapable of getting to grips with the challenge of making a hybrid-era F1 power unit.

It's easy to criticise McLaren's decision to split with Honda last year in the context of the engine company's recent improvement to apparently Renault-equalling performance this year. But this time in 2017, Honda were just beginning their recovery from a nightmare start to the season. And how they've kicked on. Following upgrades by both manufacturers for their second permitted engine of the year at the Canadian Grand Prix, Honda are now believed to be on a par with Renault. Even before that, Pierre Gasly had managed to finish fourth with a Honda engine in Bahrain. In a Toro Rosso.

This is a large part of the reason why Red Bull committed to switch to Honda, in a deal that was announced on the eve of the French Grand Prix, rather than stay with Renault. Team principal Christian Horner explains: "We obviously don't want to go backwards. We want to go forwards, and that's the whole purpose of the change that we have made. We believe it's the best route for us to make the steps required to consistently challenge Mercedes and Ferrari – so this is a very different situation than McLaren found themselves in. Honda have matured. They have got a good structure in place, they're on a good development path. We're confident with the decision we've made, which wasn't taken lightly, that this is absolutely the right route for the team, for the 2019 and 2020 seasons."

In short, Red Bull now believe Honda are a better bet for the short- and medium-term future than Renault, and on a path that could bring them close enough to Mercedes and Ferrari to make the four-time world champions title contenders again. Add in the historical fractiousness of the Renault relationship, and a belief within Red Bull that Honda are at least

no worse than the French company in terms of reliability, while showing greater signs of improvement, and it's perhaps no wonder Horner described the decision as "clear-cut".

And if Red Bull believe that, Ricciardo's best option might actually be to stay where he is, despite having been at the centre of speculation about possible moves in the driver market. With his contract up, Ricciardo has made no secret of the fact that he is looking around, the target being to secure a car that offers the best chance of helping him win the championship. And so he should: seven years into this career, seven largely brilliant wins under his belt, and just turned 29, he has every reason to believe he is in his prime and more than good enough to win a title.

With happy synchronicity, the contracts of both Mercedes drivers, Kimi Räikkönen at Ferrari, Carlos Sainz at Renault and Fernando Alonso and Stoffel Vandoorne at McLaren, are all up for renewal this year. So, in theory, the world is Ricciardo's oyster. The reality, however, is somewhat different. McLaren have expressed an interest, and will need a world-class driver to replace Alonso if he moves full-time to IndyCar next year to pursue victory in the Indy 500 as part of his serious bid to achieve motorsport's 'triple crown'. But McLaren are a team in turmoil, and they accept that their chances of securing Ricciardo are unlikely. But 'no harm in trying' is their view.

Renault are interested and talks have been held, but the two parties are millions apart on what they consider to be an acceptable salary; in any case, the Renault is one second a lap slower than the Red Bull this year. Renault have targeted competing for the title by 2020, but ►

He's paid less than team-mate Verstappen, who is seen as Red Bull's 'chosen one'. But staying put could give Dan his best shot at a title

"HONDA HAVE MATURED. THEY'VE GOT A GOOD STRUCTURE IN PLACE, THEY'RE ON A GOOD DEVELOPMENT PATH. WE'RE CONFIDENT WITH THE DECISION WE'VE MADE, WHICH WASN'T TAKEN LIGHTLY, THAT THIS IS ABSOLUTELY THE RIGHT ROUTE FOR THE TEAM, FOR THE 2019 AND 2020 SEASONS" CHRISTIAN HORNER





it's one thing saying it; another doing it. One second per lap is a big margin to close, so a switch to Renault would mean a long-term commitment on Ricciardo's part and a lot of faith in the team's ability to turn things around.

He has not, however, ruled out the idea of such a move. "I'm not going to say: 'No, it doesn't interest me at all,'" he admits. "Probably more because of what Lewis was able to do with Mercedes. And I know that, if you're saying those two teams, they're not quite in that position yet – but could they be? Maybe. The thought of that has some appeal. There are a lot of things for me to weigh up right now."

Among those 'things to weigh up' would be any prospect of a move to Ferrari or Mercedes, and both these top teams have considered Ricciardo, although neither seem overly keen on hiring him. Mercedes are invested in Hamilton as their lead driver, even if agreeing a contract to keep him on for at least another two years has taken a lot longer than either party initially said it would. The argument that they should go for an A-list

like Ricciardo, in case Hamilton gets itchy feet, does not particularly seem to have swayed them, and team boss Toto Wolff has spoken openly about his preference for the intra-team harmony of the Hamilton-Bottas line-up, compared with the friction when Nico Rosberg was there.

He recently told *F1 Racing*: "My belief had always been that two drivers pushing each other was beneficial for the team. They would go faster and eventually score more points. But because of the lack of harmony between Nico and Lewis, it showed me the deficits that can be brought to an organisation. Obviously we're not going racing in order to create a second family, but the working environment still needs to be positive. And I've seen this with Valtteri and Lewis. I'm not sure we would have won the 2017 championships with Nico and Lewis in the team."

And, after a strong first-half season, the temptation to retain that dynamic and re-sign Bottas is going to be even stronger.

Then there is Ferrari. Before the Canadian GP, the signals emanating from Maranello suggested

Räikkönen was going to get another year. Their protégé Charles Leclerc, despite his impressive performances, would be given one more year to develop out of the limelight – either staying on at Sauber or moving over to Haas, where he would probably replace Romain Grosjean.

But Canada gave Ferrari pause for thought. They were obviously aware that Räikkönen's qualifying average was around 0.3s slower than Vettel's, and that he keeps making mistakes under pressure in the top-ten shoot-out – as he had in four from eight races up to the French GP. It was Kimi's race pace in Montréal, though, that really got Ferrari thinking.

Räikkönen emerged from his pitstop on lap 32 right behind Lewis Hamilton's Mercedes, on 16-lap fresher tyres, on a weekend when Hamilton was struggling and Vettel was winning, and when Ferrari really could have done with Räikkönen beating Hamilton to maximise Vettel's points swing. Yet by the end of the race, Kimi was nearly six seconds adrift of the Mercedes, having made not a single attempt to pass. After that,



Ferrari's vision of their 2019 driver line-up was said to be split 65-35 between promoting Leclerc or sticking with Räikkönen. Leclerc's stellar weekend at Paul Ricard provided further ammunition. So Ricciardo remains on Ferrari's list, but not at the top of it. And the team are reluctant to pair him with Vettel because of their time together as team-mates at Red Bull in 2014, when Ricciardo comprehensively outperformed the four-time world champion.

In qualifying that year, Dan beat Seb 12-7, and was an average of 0.2s faster. Ricciardo also won three races – two of them thanks to his now-trademark late-on-the-brakes overtaking moves – and Vettel none. Their respective points tally read: Ricciardo 238, for third in the championship; Vettel 167 for fifth.

But it may well be that 2014 paints a somewhat vulgar picture of Vettel. He was competing off the back of four consecutive titles, and perhaps struggled for motivation once it became apparent that his ▶



“WE SHARED ONE YEAR TOGETHER, WHICH WASN'T GREAT FOR ME... IT WAS GREAT FOR HIM”

Sebastian Vettel

car was not a championship challenger. He didn't like its handling and from early on in the season he knew he was leaving for Ferrari. So perhaps in a different environment, in a car more to his liking, Vettel would match Ricciardo – but would he countenance him as his team-mate again?

"We shared one year together," Vettel says, "which wasn't great for me... it was great for him. But anyway, I think we get along so I wouldn't mind if we get together again in the future but I don't know what his plan is. He has a couple of options and I don't think he needs to rush."

Behind the scenes, Vettel is said to be pushing hard for Räikkönen, and Ferrari are not keen to potentially destabilise Vettel by signing Ricciardo. That could change in the future, but for now at least it appears to be right place, wrong time for Ricciardo at Maranello.

Which leaves him... stationary?

Time is not on Ricciardo's side. The minute Ferrari and Mercedes confirm their line-ups for 2019, his negotiating position with Red Bull will be much weaker. Red Bull insist they want to

keep Ricciardo, but does he want to stay when the perception within F1, rightly or wrongly, is that Verstappen is the team's 'chosen one'?

It was Verstappen's contract that Red Bull rushed to extend when they thought he was being pursued by Mercedes – even though Verstappen's deal at the time ran to the end of 2019, a year longer than Ricciardo's. Insiders say the new contract made Verstappen the third best-paid driver in F1 behind Hamilton and Vettel. Which means he is earning more than Alonso's \$25m salary this year. Ricciardo is on far less. Some drivers would be affected by this. 'Why am I not getting the big money?' Ricciardo might think. 'Why are they going all in for Max?'

There is another perception about the Red Bull drivers, too. It was vocalised not long ago by Hamilton, who said: "They are both great drivers. One is more consistent than the other, one is faster. I'm not going to say who is who, but you can probably guess."

But F1 perceptions are not always backed up by reality. The true comparison is far less ▶

In the driver's seat Ricciardo is universally rated. But would his talent and consistency be better appreciated elsewhere?



OH MAX...

"I get really tired of all the questions. If I get a few more I might headbutt someone."

Max Verstappen's response to yet another enquiry as to why he was having so many incidents suggested immaturity and a lack of capacity to learn. Both of which are a significant part of the answer to the question.

All F1 drivers make mistakes, but Max has made so many this year and is reluctant to take responsibility for most of them. After his practice crash in Monaco, which consigned him to the back of the grid, he admitted he would "need to look into it". But that aside, the only other incident he has spoken of as being his fault is hitting Sebastian Vettel in China.

In fact, every single one of his incidents this year has been entirely or partly his fault. Christian Horner has avoided criticising him too much, but after Monaco even he spoke of the need for "a modified approach" and for Max "to hit the reset button".

"Max arrived in F1 very quickly," Horner says, "and he is doing his learning in a very public arena. Most guys will have gone through this in the lower categories and he is having to deal with it in a very public arena and I am sure he will emerge on the other side."

Verstappen, though, is now in his fourth full season, so hardly a rookie. Fernando Alonso won his first title in his fourth full season; Vettel in his third; Hamilton in his second. Even with the right car, Verstappen would not be close to emulating that achievement this year while making so many mistakes.

Red Bull motorsport adviser Helmut Marko believes Verstappen "has to learn not always to drive flat-out... he's not patient enough. He wants always to show he is the fastest, but the result is only when you cross the finish line. He needs to judge situations better."

Canada, though, was a turning point. Max drove flawlessly there, did so again in France, and then won brilliantly in Austria. So can he turn the corner and emerge as a consistent great driver, rather than a great talent? He has the ability. The question is whether he has the mentality.

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Over the course of a season, Ricciardo has tended to overcome the more hot-headed and error-prone Verstappen

clear-cut. It's certainly true that Ricciardo is more consistent than Verstappen; he has outscored Max – by a considerable margin – every year since they became team-mates at the Spanish Grand Prix in 2015, and is doing so again this year. But a dig into the statistics makes it hard to sustain an argument that he is significantly slower.

The perception of last year is that Verstappen soundly beat Ricciardo, having outqualified him 13-7, and won two races to Ricciardo's one. However, one of Verstappen's wins came from a race where Ricciardo had no chance to compete due to engine penalties, while in qualifying the performance margin between them over the season was very close – it averaged 0.03s. In the races, Ricciardo took eight further podiums beyond his win; Verstappen two.

This year, the tussle between them continues to be close: after the British GP, Verstappen was ahead 7-3 in qualifying, but again the performance margin over the ten races is tiny: just 0.044s. And that's not including Monaco, where Verstappen did not set a qualifying time following his crash in final practice and Ricciardo was quicker in every practice session. Until Verstappen can iron out errors like his Monaco shunt, Ricciardo can probably be confident of beating him over a season – and who is to say he could not do so anyway, even if Verstappen becomes more consistent?

Then there is the car. The Honda engine might not be a match for the Mercedes, but insiders say it is now only 30bhp off, and presumably with more room for improvement, being at an earlier stage of development. If Honda can close the gap to 20bhp next year, the power deficit would equate to a lap-time loss of around 0.3s each tour. Can Red Bull make that up with their chassis? Not easy, but they do have a magic ingredient: chief technical officer Adrian Newey.

It's a brave man who turns down the chance to drive a Newey car. Fernando Alonso did when he left McLaren at the end of 2007 and some at Red Bull believe that, had he joined them then, Alonso would be a seven-time champion. He would have won the titles Vettel did from 2010-13, as well as the 2009 championship, when Vettel lost out to Jenson Button, but made mistakes Alonso would not have.

The quality of Red Bull's 2018 car is clear. Ricciardo has two wins: one from pole at Monaco, despite an MGU-K failure, and an inspirational one in China. Verstappen qualified third in power-hungry Canada and won in Austria. Ricciardo, at the time of writing, is fourth in the standings; Verstappen sixth. With more power, and another Newey chassis, it's not a big stretch to think Ricciardo could win the title in a Red Bull-Honda in the next two years. 🏆

Andrew Benson is BBC Sport's chief F1 writer



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VITABIOTICS

{ YOU ASK THE QUESTIONS }

DANIEL RICCIARDO

Laid-back off the track, ferocious on it, the inimitable and defiantly *not* mature Aussie Red Bull racer talks beer, balls and badgers, and tackles the curious matter of how F1 cars just don't smell as good as karts...

WORDS MATT YOUSON

PHOTOS  LAT IMAGES: ANDY HONE

There's a bone of contention between Daniel Ricciardo and *F1 Racing*: in conversation at a recent grand prix, *F1R* made the tactical error of describing him using a word for which he did not care. In proper Aussie sporting tradition, he called us out on it – but we stuck to our guns. We have the statistics on our side *and* the courage of our convictions.

Next time out, it's still hanging in the air: not so much the elephant in the corner, as the 800-pound gorilla. Daniel looks at the stack of questions *F1 Racing* is holding, then raises his gaze to give us the stink eye. Clearly he's not forgotten we called him 'mature'.

Despite his protests (and he doth protest quite a bit) Ricciardo is not the whippersnapper his own self-image demands. Thirteen of his 2018 classmates are his juniors – but for a racing driver, age is a contributory rather than a deciding factor. The mature driver is the one who maximises opportunity: missing out on nothing; grasping every chance – but not allowing his reach to exceed that grasp. Maturity is the art of understanding the possible. Ricciardo has it. And deep down he knows this to be true. While he bristles at the suggestion that he's entering a Prost-like prime, he happily accedes to a level of wily Alonso-like cunning.

But that's Daniel in the car. Sitting in the Red Bull Racing pavilion it's Daniel the affable man-child. The *Anchorman*-quoting, armpit-

farting, dirt-bike riding thrash-metal devotee. While other drivers view the YATQ stack with a degree of suspicion, to Ricciardo it's just another thing to make him laugh – and not just because we've promised Haribo if he gets it done in our ten allocated minutes...

How are you able to outrake people the way you do? It's insane!
Noel Rivera, USA

I've got a big nutsack. I have very courageous testicles.

Okay honey badger, what animal do you think represents Max?
Jennifer Morehouse, Canada

A sloth. ▶





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DANIEL RICCIARDO



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YOU ASK THE QUESTIONS

When will you try your strength in the UFC?

Michael Nieckarz, Poland

Probably this year at the rate we're going... after Bahrain I would have happily stepped into the cage. [That early-race DNF is still pretty fresh in his mind.]

What's the best concert you've ever been to?

Pauline Clark, UK

Erm... not sure. [Said with a laugh that, to *F1 Racing's* ears, sounds ever-so-slightly guilty.]

Who is the better driver: Seb or Max?

Jo Roberts, UK

Max. [*F1 Racing* twitches an eyebrow at the speed and certainty with which that assessment is offered.] They're both very good, but I will say Max.

What does the tattoo on your leg mean?

Jason Sultana, Malta

I have many. Some mean something, some mean nothing. But I like them.

Would you ever consider trying a MotoGP bike like Lewis Hamilton did recently?

Anna Francis, UK

I don't know if he did. I think that was an April Fools' thing – but if he did, then yeah, I'd love to. I'd love to try a bike anyway. I don't really have any road bike experience, but I'd definitely try it. [Lewis announced his switch to MotoGP on 1 April – but he's been known to get his knee down on sports bikes while hanging out with Cal Crutchlow.]

If you played for an Aussie Rules team, which team would it be and what position would you play?

Andrew Wright, Saudi Arabia

I would play for the mighty [Perth-based] West Coast Eagles and I would play... probably rover. I'd just run and run and run and kick goals.



“ AFTER BAHRAIN I WOULD HAVE HAPPILY STEPPED INTO THE UFC CAGE ”



LAT IMAGES: ANDY HONE; OTHER PHOTOS: JERRY ANDRE/SUTTON IMAGES; MARK SUTTON/SUTTON IMAGES



What experience helped you get to where you are now?

Matthew Bolzon, Australia

Moving away from home, living in another country and being independent. [Daniel moved to Italy to compete in Formula Renault 2.0 Italy and Eurocup Formula Renault at the age of 17.]

Hamilton picked out Vettel, Verstappen and Alonso as his main rivals for this season. Are you disappointed that you didn't make the list?

Dipun Patel, UK



[Firmly...] Absolutely not. [And then more quietly...] I know what I'm worth.

Sheer joy and relief (and the obligatory shoeie) as Ricciardo wins the 2018 Monaco GP, having just missed out the past two years

What's the wildest night out you've ever had with someone from the paddock?

Alison Walpole, UK

Hmmmm... I've had some good nights with Marcus Ericsson. He's good fun. We get on well, so we've caught up a few times. It's been good. There are a few ex-drivers now. Jensen. Felipe...

I have heard that your mother found the world's oldest known message in a bottle. Is it true? Did you see the letter?

Zuzanna Oskiera, Poland

She was out with a group of people and it was actually her friend who found the bottle. She forgot to tell me about it. Until it hit the news, then it was 'Oh yeah.' I didn't see the letter. I believe it's in a museum. ▶

{ YOU ASK THE QUESTIONS }

Do you think Sebastian Vettel would be scared to be partnered with you again after what happened at Red Bull?
Mark McConnell, Ireland

Possibly.



It is obviously very challenging to be paired with Max Verstappen. But I wonder if you feel that there are some benefits to having him as a team-mate?
Mike Adams, USA

Absolutely there are benefits. I think when you have a strong team-mate you push yourself harder, you learn more and you become better yourself. I think it's a very good thing to have a strong team-mate.
F1R: Do you use Max as a benchmark?
DR: I do. He's a very good benchmark.

“ WHEN YOU HAVE A STRONG TEAM-MATE YOU PUSH YOURSELF HARDER, YOU LEARN MORE AND YOU BECOME BETTER YOURSELF ”

Which country that isn't currently on the calendar would you most like to host a GP?
James Finan, UK



Ooh, good one. South Africa.

What is the hardest training set that you've ever done?
Cynthia Latif, Indonesia

Oooooo... oooooo... that's a very good question! It was probably when I first moved to Italy back in 2007. We did a training camp and one day we ran 15 miles along the beach. That was really tough. I remember it because I wasn't

prepared for it. Running on sand is *hard*...
F1R: We hear stories today of junior single-seater drivers overpreparing and being too muscular and too heavy...
DR: Yeah, they're full of muscles. I think it's being young. When you're 18, you want to look good for the ladies. And it's the first time your body develops, you get muscles and your mindset is: I *like* these muscles. I was probably bigger back then. Also, you have more time to train. Now, with all the travel, it's hard to do as much.

Do you really think you can beat Lewis in a Mercedes car? Be honest, because he is really good...
Prasanth Kambhatla, USA

Hi Prasanth! Yes. I would beat him. Shut your damn mouth!



Is there an instrument you want to master?
Robert Johnson, UK

Yeah – all of them! I love music but I can't play anything. I'd start with a guitar. ▶



Daniel rates Max more highly as a team-mate than Seb, and enjoys the challenge he sets



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YOU ASK THE QUESTIONS

Was Monaco 2016 your most angry moment in F1?

Peter Selecky, Slovakia

Yes.



What's your favourite Western Australian craft beer?

Jay Menon, Australia

Great question. I like Perth Local lager. Perth Local's good. It's by the Feral Brewery Company.

Would you like to try Supercars in Australia when you finish with Formula 1?

Tim Moore, New Zealand

I'd love to do Bathurst. That would be fun. Yeah, that would be really cool.

F1R: That requires a car-share.

Who would be your team-mate?

DR: Someone fast. Someone loose.

The Gis [Shane van Gisbergen]

likes to drift. It's a good question. I know Will Davison pretty well. Maybe with Will.

What is the best advice you've ever received?

Cynthia Latif, Indonesia

Be you. Have fun. Trust your instincts. Y'know, stuff like that.



I haven't yet driven it.

What's your favourite F1 car of all time?

Adam Pender, UK

I guess Orlebar Brown [the men's beach and swim-short costumier with whom Daniel has a partnership] are English. The English like to travel – so I think they're doing okay!

Have you sold many pairs of your swim-shorts in not-so-warm England yet?

Chris Tofton, UK

P2 at Monaco 2016 – the disappointment plain to see

“
EVEN THOUGH I LOVE IT AND I'M PASSIONATE ABOUT IT, ON MY FREE WEEKENDS I DON'T WANT TO BE AT A RACETRACK
”

Monaco 2018: the winner's cup and compensation for the misery of Bahrain

I hear you're a keen car collector. Of those you own, which is your favourite? And what car would you most like to add to your collection?

John Slater, New Zealand

I'm starting to build up a bit of a collection, yeah. I just got my first old car. It's probably my favourite because it's unique. It's a 275 GTS Ferrari.

F1R: Your dad has some impressive metal in the garage as well, doesn't he?

DR: He does. We like our cars. I've driven a few of his. He's pretty cool about letting me borrow them – mostly because he doesn't drive them enough and he wants them to get a bit of a run out.

My son races karts in Texas and we love the smell of C112 and premix in the morning. What do the different categories of karts/cars/F1 rockets smell like – and what is your favourite?

Roy Phelps, USA

Every time I smell the two-stroke karts, it brings back a lot of good memories, it really does. Nothing beats that smell, so enjoy it. Enjoy it all. Formula 1 cars don't smell good.

F1R: You're on track quite often promoting Ricciardo Kart – but when did you last properly compete in karts?

DR: Hmm... properly

competing... 2005. But if I smell it. I'm there! Instantly. **F1R:** So you're not one of those guys with a plain helmet who turns up incognito at a kart track on a Saturday morning then?

DR: No. But Max probably does. He likes karting. Since having Ricciardo Kart I'm certainly more invested in it. I've been trying to get out in a kart more, but it's about having the time. Even though I love it and I'm passionate about it, on my free weekends I don't want to be at a racetrack. It's about finding that balance.

F1R: Some of your peers would disagree...

DR: You mean Fernando, don't you? I love competing, but testing doesn't excite me. I'd prefer to do other things – learn to ride a motorbike, for example.

With Ricciardo Kart's work at the grassroots, have you found any Australian talent that we should be looking out for in the future?

Guy Meade, Australia

Yes. Absolutely. We did a day before the Australian GP and took a few karters to a local circuit. Talent was present. The numbers are good in Australia at the moment. These kids are 11-12 years old, but talented. There has always been talent in Australia,

but making the move to Europe and finding someone to support you is important. Mick Doohan's son, Jack, is good. He's been racing in Europe and he's strong.

F1R: Did the youngsters beat you?

DR: Oh yeah, of course. I'm not as good in a kart as I used to be, so they beat me pretty easily. 🙄



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HOW TO RUN A FORMULA 1 TEAM

Williams open up their garage, hospitality unit, motorhome and engineering offices to *F1 Racing*, to demonstrate the harmony required to compete in Formula 1 and build up to that next elusive win

Winning is a virtuous cycle. First place nets you more prize money, greater visibility to advertise top sponsors and the ability to attract the best drivers. There is more resource to make cars even faster: success breeds success. But aligning everything to win is a monumental task.

Williams' last win was Pastor Maldonado's victory at the 2012 Spanish GP (before that it was Brazil 2004), while McLaren haven't won since 2012 either. Force India have started almost 200 races but have never won one, while both Sauber and Toro Rosso have just a solitary GP win each.

A grid is separated by seconds, so why is it so difficult to make it to the top step of the podium? "An F1 team is like an orchestra with everyone playing a different instrument and you need all 700 people to play in harmony," says Williams' deputy team principal Claire Williams.

Here we take an exclusive look behind the scenes at Williams, witnessing the sheer scale and complexity of an F1 team, which emphasises just how hard it is to succeed. ▶

WORDS JAMES ROBERTS

PICTURES  LAT IMAGES: GLENN DUNBAR



WILLIAMS
MARTINI
RACING

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THE LOGISTICS OF GETTING TO A RACE ON TIME

The F1 teams descend on Melbourne in March for the season-opener, but for Bryan Hart, logistics coordinator at Williams, his work starts eight weeks earlier. Leaving the Port of Southampton in mid-January is a ship containing much of what the team needs (apart from the cars and 30 tonnes of parts and other equipment) in two 40-foot containers, weighing 30-40 tonnes. And over the coming weeks, three other ships will take similar paraphernalia out to Bahrain, Shanghai and Baku.

"When the Melbourne freight returns to the UK, we send it on to Montréal, while later in the year we're planning to ship the Singapore freight straight on to Brazil," says Hart. "Throughout the year we have five sets of equipment that are constantly criss-crossing the globe."

Inside the freight containers are generators, grid trolleys, ancillary items and panelling for the garage interior, plus hospitality equipment, ten tables, 54 chairs, four TVs, two counter units and coffee machines for the engineering room, garage and hospitality – as well as two spares.

But what of the cars? A week before a flyaway race, three trucks leave Williams HQ in Grove, Oxfordshire, and travel to East Midlands Airport. Two chassis, gearboxes and bodywork and 30 tonnes of spares and equipment will be loaded on to a cargo plane on 12 pallets and are then flown to the destination city of the grand prix.

Logistics partner DHL deliver the sea freight to the team's designated pit, and ahead of the race weekend a crew arrives to unpack it and build the garage and hospitality unit. Hart is also given a checklist of requirements from the circuit: "Once our garage is allocated, we will organise payment to have the floor painted to our specification, and hire equipment such as forklift trucks, dry ice and gases for the wheel guns and jacks – any service we don't bring ourselves."

When the crew of mechanics arrive on the Tuesday before the race (air tickets, hotel accommodation and transportation to and from the hotel in up to nine minibuses is all organised in advance), they begin the job of unpacking

the cars from the air freight and assembling them for the weekend. Mercedes transport the engines separately, while Pirelli handle the transportation of all the tyres.

For the European races, ships and planes are replaced by eight trucks. Ahead of May's Spanish Grand Prix, the engineering lorries trundle out of Grove on a Thursday evening to make the 1,000-mile journey to Barcelona, arriving the Saturday before the race weekend. Again, the cars leave later, crossing the Channel late Monday to arrive at the track on Wednesday morning. And all this is a separate operation to the team's motorhome, which requires an extra 14 trucks and a two-day build, so that it's ready to house guests and feed the team from Wednesday evening onwards.

Late on Sunday night, the reverse happens. Everything is packed up ready to go to the next event. "Once the champagne's been sprayed and the drivers are long gone," says Hart, "we're here six to eight hours later packing up in the dark." ▶



Freight arrives by sea and air, and unpacking everything and building the team motorhome (far left) takes days



Q&A



DAVE REDDING
Team manager

F1 Racing: Once everything is unpacked for a race, what do you do next?

Dave Redding: The event starts at 10am on Thursday morning and that's when the FIA remove the seals from the power unit so we can fire up the car for the first time and make sure everything works. Then we take the cars to the FIA weighbridge to ensure we are technically compliant. The first curfew comes into force at 11pm on Thursday and lasts until 7am Friday.

F1R: Are you responsible for ensuring that you are compliant with the rulebook at all times?

DR: That's one of the many responsibilities, but yes, during sessions I sit on the pitwall and have an intercom that connects with Race Control, so I can talk to FIA race director Charlie Whiting about anything the stewards spot. We have a team managers' meeting on Thursday evening and a drivers' meeting on Friday

where we discuss issues from the previous race.

F1R: What is the most challenging bit of your job?

DR: In isolation, nothing is particularly difficult – it's when three or four things happen at the same time. It could be a logistics drama where something hasn't arrived, or a medical problem combined with being called to see the stewards. When it all happens at once, that's the big challenge.

CREATING AND DEVELOPING A RACING CAR

Eighty per cent of the Williams team never actually attend a grand prix weekend. They remain back at base in Grove, designing and creating the two machines for Lance Stroll and Sergey Sirotkin to race. In January their focus is on the current year's car, but by June there will be a 50/50 split, with one half continuing to develop the current car while the other half concentrates on next year's machine. Depending on budgets and resource, more staff may migrate to next year's car as the current season unfolds.

"When we go to the track, our objective is to get the best from the car and win that race," says chief technical officer Paddy Lowe. "But there is another thing we do and that's to generate feedback to further develop the car to go quicker.

"Take the front wing, which is a very important part of the car. How do you make a better front wing? We might test a new one on Friday and that data goes back to the design office to help create an upgrade.

"First it is evaluated using CFD (computational fluid dynamics) and if the simulation looks good, a version of it will be built on a 60 per cent scale to be tested in the windtunnel. Finally, if those results seem promising, we'll build it full scale and bring it to the track – and then start the process all over again.

"The quicker you can complete that cycle, the quicker you can develop performance and that is happening on every part of the car – I just gave the front wing as an example."

Lowe goes on to explain that if the factory has better tools, then the team's capability improves so that 20 per cent of the workforce are focused in this area. He's not talking about spanners – he means research and development (R&D) tools such as the simulator, dynamometers, the windtunnel, finite-element analysis and simulation software.

"Every single thing we do costs money and the finance people always wish that we could carry

Every part of the car goes through a cycle of development. The quicker the cycle, the quicker performance gains are made

Q&A



CLAIRE WILLIAMS

Deputy team principal

F1 Racing: What do you need to create a successful team?

Claire Williams: Most obviously money, state-of-the-art resources and brilliant people. People are your critical asset. You need the best people working in harmony with their objectives very clearly laid out. Ultimately, talent wins. Culture is also hugely important. When you have a team that is as large as ours, trying to establish the culture is hard but crucial.

If your talent is imbued with a culture that doesn't promote winning, then you're not going to win.

F1R: How do you change that culture?

CW: In Frank [Williams] and Patrick's [co-founder, Head] day they worked with 200 people and knew their names and their wives' and kids' names – and so they found it relatively easy to inspire the team to go that extra mile. Now the team is much larger, so that's

much harder, but it's no less important and you can't just think 'it's too difficult'.

Good comms galvanises people. Visible leadership, engagement and fostering a culture of listening and learning is important. Driving the passion and belief that you can do it through an F1 team, particularly in times of poor performance, is paramount. If I didn't think Williams had the chance of winning again I wouldn't be here. One day that will come.





over at least half of the car into next year – but it's actually less than a tenth of the car. The rest of the car is completely redesigned for the new season," says Lowe.

"Those teams who have more resources can speed up the time of their cycle of parts and can develop their car quicker. Formula 1 is a little like a war, and if you study military conflict you'll know it's not so much about the battle but the underlying processes going on. The winners usually have the better economics."

After all the work back at base, the focus shifts to the car's performance on track during a grand prix weekend and, according to Lowe, the critical aspect is driving efficiency and avoiding errors. "And that can be at any level, from the mechanic who accidentally fits a part that causes the car to break down, to a pitstop going wrong, or making a mistake in the engineering setup – or even the driver going off the track," he explains.

"It's sometimes said that all the front line can do is screw it up, but there's still the opportunity for ingenuity, flair and brilliance." ▶





RUNNING THE CARS DURING A GRAND PRIX



Constant testing feedback and analysis through the early on-track sessions allow the engineers to determine race setup

Two months before a race, engineers and vehicle dynamicists at the Williams factory begin to form their strategy for that event, firstly informing Pirelli how many sets of compounds for each particular tyre they would like to use.

A month before the GP, test driver Robert Kubica starts lapping the circuit in the simulator, and from his work, as well as historical data, a car setup is decided. Before it hits the track for the first practice session, wing levels, ride heights and suspension will all be predetermined.

The first practice session lets the drivers hone setup to extract the maximum from the car. Running in parallel is a programme where data is collected from new parts that are tested. With in-season testing so limited, this is the main chance for teams to research and trial new components.

“When I first started in F1, you turned up with a car you thought was somewhere near right, sent the driver out, looked at what he came back with – and reacted accordingly,”

says Rob Smedley, Williams’ head of vehicle performance. “Now there is a huge tranche of experimental work to develop the car throughout the year. If we do things right, we will have more experiments than time and one of my jobs is to balance future development with extracting the best performance from the car for the weekend.”

FP1 will see cars laden with pressure sensors and flo-vis paint, and the data generated is fed back to the factory for R&D engineers to decipher. Then, in FP2, the first low-fuel qualifying sims take place, followed by high-fuel long runs as teams plan their race strategies.

“We have 200 sensors on the car looking at aero, balance and tyre data, so after FP2 the different factions analyse their specific areas and we debrief to learn what we must do for Saturday practice and qualifying,” says Smedley. “The key is not to get led astray if things don’t work because of outside influences. Then as we head into Saturday, it’s critical we are error-free.” ▶

Q&A



SERGEY SIROTKIN

Williams F1 driver

F1 Racing: How do you prepare before a GP?

Sergey Sirotkin: As well as the physical training, we run in the simulator the week before. There is also a lot of homework: I had a 120-page report from the last GP and an 80-page brief to read for the next race.

F1R: Talk us through the first part of a weekend...

SS: I arrive on Thursday morning and walk the circuit with my engineer, discussing setup, strategy

or issues from the last race. In the afternoon I have media and autograph sessions and sometimes an evening sponsor event.

F1R: Are you relieved to get in the car on Friday?

SS: Yes! I warm up in my room, before I go out on track for a familiarisation run or to test parts. It’s simple runs in the morning to build up data. In the afternoon we focus on performance and tyre wear with heavy fuel loads.

F1R: Then the pressure starts to build...

SS: In FP3 we optimise everything for qualifying, as the only thing you can change after that is the front wing. Then we decide race strategy. There is more tension on Sunday morning.

F1R: Is it difficult to unwind after the weekend?

SS: You feel so tired on Sunday night when all the adrenaline has flowed away. Then you rush home to prepare for the next one!

GETTING THE MESSAGE ACROSS

In the late 1960s, when Lotus famously changed their colours from British Racing Green and yellow to red and gold, in deference to their tobacco-company sponsor, racing cars became high-speed billboards. Today the livery of every single car on the grid distinguishes that team's brand and incorporates the identity of whichever sponsor is paying top dollar for the privilege of a global shop window. But as Chris Murray, Williams' marketing director, explains, partnerships with companies now extend far beyond decals on a car.

"As an independent team, all of our partners are important to us, but the old-fashioned model of brand promotion is just one aspect of the relationship," he says. "Take Unilever, who own a number of brands – one of which is Rexona. Yes we deliver visibility for them, but we also help them drive sales in local markets. For example, in China, Lance Stroll went out to a Carrefour supermarket to meet the local media and guests to boost a promotional activity that we had been running in store. But beyond that, there is a third aspect to our partnership – and that's a synergy programme.

"We're now able to share some of our technical know-how, so some of Unilever's engineers have been helping us and, in return, through Williams Advanced Engineering, we've been working with Unilever to help them create better, whiter washing powder and crunchier ice cream – primarily through computational fluid dynamics modelling around flow."

Murray also cites the JCB digger firm as another brand that wanted to tie up with Williams thanks to a similar philosophy – and one of their values in the relationship is to invite key customers to races. "Like Williams, they are a classic British firm, family owned with second-generation family management, and the value they get from the relationship with us is through the further relationships they can establish in meeting CEOs of other companies at races. Both the Paddock Club and our own motorhome can be great places to do business." ▶



All the drivers' many media commitments are carefully scheduled in by the comms team

Q&A



SOPHIE OGG

Head of F1 communications

F1 Racing: How hard is it to manage drivers at a GP?

Sophie Ogg: We give them a schedule so they know what to do and where to be. Whether it's an engineering debrief, a fan session or the FIA press conference, they don't need to worry about timekeeping; it's all mapped out for them.

F1R: What happens when a driver causes a media storm with his comments?

SO: We had that in Austin in 2013 when Pastor

Maldonado blamed his poor qualifying performance on the belief that we had 'sabotaged' his car. When that happened we sat him down to try to understand what he meant, because we all work flat-out for our drivers and clearly *no one* had sabotaged his car. After realising something had been lost in translation and he hadn't actually meant to say 'sabotage', he was more than happy for us to get him on TV as soon as possible to apologise.

F1R: How do you react to rumours being published?

SO: It's difficult because, for example, someone Tweeted over the winter that Robert Kubica was going to be our racing driver. But I try to work closely with credible media and give them off-the-record briefings as to why something like this story wasn't accurate. People might think they have a story, but until all the legal paperwork has been signed it's not a done deal.

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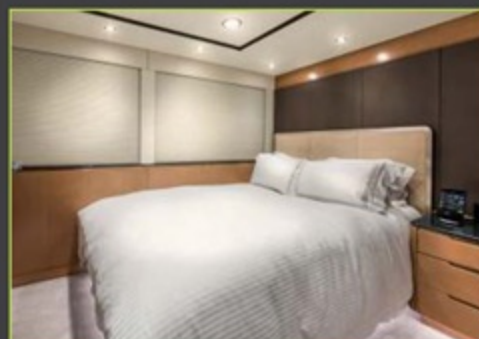


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AN F1 ARMY MARCHES ON ITS STOMACH



All are welcome to eat at the team hospitality unit: Williams aim to make it feel like a home from home

When you spend six months of the year on the road, it's the home comforts you crave the most: a full English breakfast or a decent cup of tea. One of the philosophies of the Williams catering and hospitality staff is to make anyone dining with them – be that mechanics or VIP guests – feel relaxed and welcome.

"We are a friendly, warm and open team and as soon as anyone walks into our motorhome we really want them to feel like they are at home," says Michaela Kamphuis, Williams' hospitality service delivery manager. "With so many people away for such a long time, it's really important they are looked after."

Food, and nutrition in particular, are both vital aspects of keeping a team functioning to the best of their abilities, and the team have to cater for 70 members of staff needing three meals a day. If you add guests to that tally, it's around 1,000 meals that have to be provided during a four-day grand prix event.

"We serve a lunchtime buffet between the various sessions for all the team members, but if for any reason the mechanics and engineers are really busy, we always ensure we take hot wraps, salads, sandwiches, healthy protein pots and fresh fruit to the garage so they never go without food," says Kamphuis.

There is also a record of every team member and a special allergy sheet for soy, gluten and dairy to ensure that if someone has an allergy, then the team's chefs can prepare an alternative. But the level of service also extends to the VIP guests who attend the grand prix.

One of Williams' ambassadors is the Michelin-starred chef Michael Caines, and he regularly attends races to prepare bistro tasting menus and special wine lists so that guests of Williams can dine in style over a grand prix weekend.

"We are briefed before every race in terms of who is going to be there and what events are being held. We have a database of visitors that we will cross-reference, so if we know we have a returning guest who likes green tea and honey, we go that extra mile to serve that to them, before they've even asked, to make them feel special," says Kamphuis. "We want to create the ultimate guest experience and make people feel relaxed, allowing them to enjoy themselves when they visit Williams for a race weekend."

Sundries such as salt, pepper, tea and coffee are bought in bulk back in the UK and are then packed and sent over with the sea freight to grand prix venues, while the chefs will source as much fresh produce as possible from local supermarkets in the days leading up to a race. A thousand meals requires a lot of storage space, and you will often see chefs criss-crossing the paddock if they find themselves momentarily short of an ingredient. Pirelli can always be relied on for olive oil and balsamico...

"Ensuring everyone has three meals a day can mean that we work long hours," says Kamphuis. "Serving breakfast means being at the track for 6am and we often don't finish until 11pm. Working for a grand prix team means that we work very long days." 📌

Q&A



TOM FITZPATRICK
Operations manager

F1 Racing: Where do you source food for the team?

Tom Fitzpatrick:

Condiments and tea and coffee we buy in bulk at home and ship it over to the races. Then everything fresh is bought at supermarkets close to the track. The exception to this is Australia, which has strict customs restrictions, so we can't take any food in and have to buy it all there. I was once stopped at customs there for having too many M&Ms in my bag!

F1R: What is the most important commodity?

TF: I'd say it has to be coffee. We will usually serve up to 2,000 cups a week from coffee machines in the hospitality unit, the garage and the engineering room. We even have back-up machines in case anything goes wrong. Once at the Abu Dhabi Grand Prix, I got the supplies wrong and was forced to make a mad dash to Dubai to get the correct coffee for the machines. We were telling the mechanics

to try to ration their intake so we didn't run out!

F1R: Are there any other logistical headaches you have to deal with?

TF: One of the biggest hurdles we have to get around is that for Bahrain, France and Abu Dhabi we have to have a different set of equipment because of restrictions on alcohol advertising. So all of our branded hospitality equipment is different for those three races.

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JE SUIS OCON

Force India's Esteban Ocon meets *F1 Racing* in Paris for lunch and opens up about his never-say-die attitude

WORDS
JAMES ROBERTS
PORTRAITS
LAT IMAGES
GLENN DUNBAR

W

earing a pressed white apron and black waistcoat, a portly Parisian waiter raises an eyebrow at the sleek, silver machine parked in front of his café. Holding the keys to the Mercedes roadster is Force India racer Esteban Ocon. Today he's off duty, in grey jeans and blue Farah jacket, enjoying the warm sunshine on this Spring public holiday.

In the far corner of the Place des Vosges, Ocon slides into the convertible's low-slung driver's seat, disturbing the espresso-sipping locals by firing up the V8. As it barks into life, the crackle causes our waiter to throw down his cigarette and retreat into his café.

Roof down, Ocon motors through the tree-lined streets of the French capital, along the Seine to the Place du Trocadéro, where he's recently discovered a new favourite eatery. Behind him, a sun-kissed Eiffel Tower completes the scene. "Not bad, eh?" he says, grinning.

Paris has never been a regular haunt for the Mercedes junior driver. He was born and grew up on the Normandy north coast where his father, Laurent, owned a car repair garage.



Living directly above the workshop, every day Esteban would walk past battered and bruised wrecks and a garage floor scattered with greasy tools, all surrounded by that unmistakably sweet concoction of four-star and Castrol 4X.



Descended from Spanish parents, Laurent Ocon was born in France and developed a passion for cars. A self-taught mechanic with a meticulous eye for detail, he established his garage business and one day decided to give

his son a trial at an indoor kart centre. Young Esteban was just four and a half years old.

"I refused to get out of the kart," recalls Ocon Jr, chuckling at the memory. "People, including my father, were trying to get me to stop but every

time they came near me I drove around them like a chicane. I was enjoying myself so much that it was the only thing I wanted to do."

Not only was he keen, he was quick, too, and his father nurtured that emerging talent, working ▶

tirelessly to fettle his son's karts to the best of his ability, being short of the finance required to buy Esteban the top-level equipment. It didn't hinder the youngster's pace in any way. In his first two years of mini-karts, the seven-year old won an impressive 20 out of 21 races. The one that got away is ingrained in his memory.

"I finished in second place, but I was crying inside my helmet on the slow-down lap," Ocon recalls. "I was convinced that the winner had done some trick with his engine because I just





Esteban opens up to *F1R* about learning to lose with grace

couldn't keep up with him on the straights. I was such a poor loser that I came into parc fermé and 'bump!' I hit his kart at full speed and the poor kid went flying. I think about it now and it could have been very dangerous.

"The following year the same thing happened. The same guy was ahead and do you know what? I stopped. I refused to race him. My father asked me what I was doing, but I said: 'He is going to win, so I prefer to stop.' My father had sacrificed a lot of things to help me, so he was furious that I didn't finish the race."



became regional,

and then national French karting champion but, just like the boy who was so distraught at being beaten, today's 21-year old still finds losing hard to handle. "The last time I cried after a race? That was Baku," he says, referring to his first-lap crash with Kimi Räikkönen in April. "It was hard to swallow. After such a good qualifying [P7] and a great start, I knew I was going to have a strong race. But then not being able to achieve something and watching [team-mate] Sergio [Pérez] finish on the podium... the following week was probably the darkest one for a while."

As he sips on his sparkling mineral water and orders a steak béarnaise, *F1 Racing* relates the story of when we first encountered a young Ocon – at the Abu Dhabi young driver test in November, 2014. In conversation, McLaren boss Eric Boullier had told *F1R* a story about how Laurent Ocon would find barely used kart tyres, discarded by drivers with wealthier parents, and fit them to Esteban's kart. His son would then outqualify the field using the old rubber.

"It's true," Esteban concurs. "Some karters would buy brand new tyres and throw them away after just two runs, so my dad would take them from the bin. When I became French champion, we did it on a very low budget. Other drivers would have big hospitality vehicles, while we just had a caravan and used second-hand parts that my father would cobble together."

Boullier was aware of Esteban's plight and knew this talent would be lost without a step-up in investment. At the time, Boullier was at Lotus and helping to run Gravity Sport Management.

He arranged a meeting with his colleague Gwen Lagrue (who today heads up Mercedes' young driver programme) to meet the Ocons.

"Eric told me a few years ago that he took me on instead of some of the other kids because of my response to a question he asked me. He asked: 'What do you want to do next season?' and my immediate answer was: 'I want to win.' My dad tried to speak for me, but I stopped him and said: 'No, I want to talk,' and reiterated that no matter which category I entered, I wanted to win. Eric took note of that."

Gravity signed Ocon up and paid for the next phase of his career, a Formula Renault 2.0 drive alongside then Red Bull junior Daniil Kvyat, and ultimately FIA European Formula 3, where he became champion in 2014 (Max Verstappen finished third). Ocon won F3 with Mercedes-Benz power and was invited to the German GP that year for a crucial meeting with Mercedes F1 boss Toto Wolff. It was to save his career.

**"WHAT DO YOU WANT TO DO NEXT SEASON?"
MY IMMEDIATE ANSWER WAS:**

"I WANT TO WIN"

Gravity were closely linked to Genii Capital, the group behind the management of the Lotus F1 team who were reducing their investment in both the Enstone outfit and the drivers they had on their roster. For Ocon, the financial tap had run dry and he thought his racing days were over. He started working at his father's workshop, believing that was his future. It was February 2015 and a new racing season was about to begin without the talented Frenchman. He made a brave telephone call to Wolff to see if there was anything he could do to help.

"I was so nervous," Ocon recalls. "It was my very last chance, but I had nothing to lose. I had no drive and I asked Toto if he had anything for ▶



Scene stealers: Ocon, his Merc... and some very Parisian architecture



me. He responded by saying that if Lotus didn't have any plans for me, then he would take me on. And he was true to his word, something for which I have a lot of respect."



the eleventh hour,

Mercedes paid for a seat at Frédéric Vasseur's ART team in GP3 and Ocon officially became a Mercedes junior driver: he knew that he had grasp the opportunity. He won the season opener in Spain and despite missing out on other victories due to time penalties, he ultimately took the series crown with extraordinary consistency – finishing almost every race (there was one disqualification) and claiming ten second places. This tactic was something he had learned from his F3 engineer Jean-François 'Jeff' Leveve.

"He told me that you will always lose some points in a championship campaign, either through reliability or bad luck," says Ocon. "But the key to winning a title is to have enough points in hand to be comfortable when these things happen. So, if you cannot win, just ensure you finish second and don't try anything stupid. No one will remember you for risking everything to win one race in Spain, but everyone will remember if you won the championship. I was not the quickest that year, but I won the title."

After a bit-part season with Mercedes in German touring cars (DTM) at the start of 2016, Ocon was offered the chance to compete in F1 from the Belgian GP onwards when the Mercedes-powered Manor team split with Rio Haryanto. His strong performance there led to a step up to Force India last season. The consistency he displayed in GP3 continued in F1.

Despite three prominent on-track clashes with his Force India team-mate Pérez last year (Baku, Canada and Spa), Ocon didn't actually retire from an F1 race until the Brazilian GP, when he tangled with Romain Grosjean on the opening lap. Statistically, Ocon has managed to finish the first 27 races of his career – the most of any driver in the history of the sport (see page 72).

Force India's team bosses were forced to act over their drivers' on-track misdemeanours and Ocon reveals that both have learned from their experience. "What happened before was



Best foot forward as Ocon looks to a future beyond Force India

unacceptable and if we come close again there will be more than enough room for both of us," he says. "Given our performance this year, it's much more critical that we score points.

"We had a moment in China this year where Checo pushed me onto the grass at the start. But we discussed it straight away and he apologised because he didn't know it was me. We could have lost both cars and we're not in a position where we can afford to do that this year."

Ocon is tall at six foot one (186cm) and with weight – or the lack of it – still an important factor for a modern grand prix driver, he is very conscious of his dietary intake. "I have 4.8 per cent fat," he mentions. But he delights today in being able to order dessert. He refuses to eat everything on his plate though, sharing his

chouquettes (a delicious chocolate and cream puff pastry) around the table.

Reiterating how thankful he was to Wolff at Mercedes, he discusses

the future and whether, ultimately, a seat with the championship-winning top team could be an option. But to be considered for that honour, Ocon will need to display again those extraordinary feats of consistency and to regularly outqualify and outscore his Force India team-mate. Last year, despite pushing him close, Ocon finished 13 points and one place behind Pérez in the drivers' championship.

"I have to perform with Force India," he says. "Like last year, Mercedes have set targets, but they are higher to reach and at a higher level than last year. That's normal, I'm more experienced and I'm in my second year with ▶

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the team. At the moment I am respecting them, so they are happy and I just have to keep doing the job I'm doing.

"I get good advice from Mercedes; I can go there whenever I want to look at data from the cars and they will ultimately decide my future career. As a junior the most logical thing would be to step up to the Silver Arrows in the future – it's just a matter of if they are happy with me."

You can understand why missing out on a potential podium in Azerbaijan was so crucial for Ocon, particularly as he strives to cement his future with Mercedes in Formula 1. As



he's proved, setbacks have characterised his career but he's bounced back from them every time. Just like that four-year old driving a kart for the very first time, the prospect of not having a drive is something he just won't countenance. 🚗



Which rookies have the best finishing record?

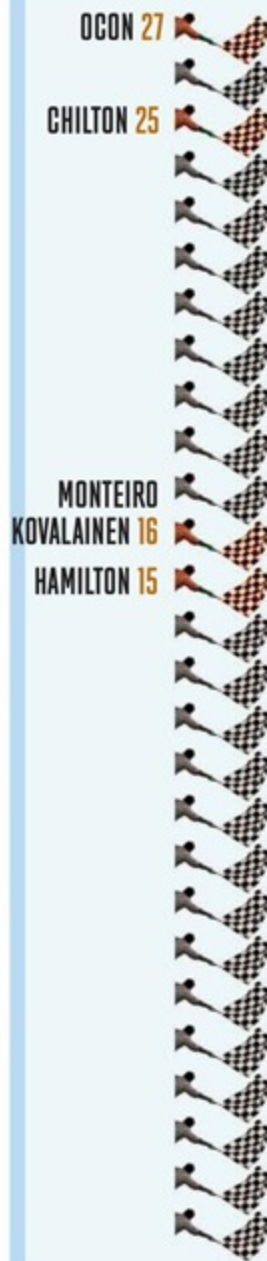
Esteban Ocon

The current holder of the record, having finished in the first 27 grands prix of his Formula 1 career.



Max Chilton

The British driver made his debut at the 2013 Australian GP for Marussia and finished the next 25 races – just two shy of Ocon's record. He scored a best result of P13 twice (in Australia and Bahrain 2014) and ended his streak in Canada 2014, after tangling with Marussia team-mate Jules Bianchi.



Tiago Monteiro

Starting his F1 career at the 2005 Australian GP for Jordan, the Portuguese racer was let down by engine failure in Brazil, halting his record at 16 races. Meanwhile **Heikki Kovalainen** was classified in his first 16 races for Renault in 2007. He failed to finish his fourth race at Monaco due to an engine failure, but was still credited with P13.



Lewis Hamilton

Hamilton's dream debut in F1 in 2007 oh-so-nearly culminated in the world championship, but his streak of 15 consecutive race finishes for McLaren came to a dramatic end as he slithered into retirement on worn tyres in the entry to the Shanghai pitlane.



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(TOO MUCH OF A GOOD THING?)

More races, more entertainment, more money. That might well be a glimpse into Formula 1's near future. But is that really what fans want? And more importantly, is it really for the best?

WORDS DAMIEN SMITH



PHOTOS: GETTY IMAGES/RED BULL CONTENT POOL

When will enough be enough?

That's the question that keeps popping up in Formula 1 whenever its already bulging 21-race calendar is discussed – as it is pretty much every week. Venues for all-new grands prix, as additions rather than substitutions to season schedules, are a perennial hot topic of paddock gossip and recently, in the case of Miami, a little more than that. A race in the Floridian city looks highly likely for inclusion in 2019.

But can we – fans and insiders alike – really take any more races? And *should* we? “Good question,” says Zak Brown, before pausing for several seconds. “I’m in favour of not many more,” he says, with obvious care.

The McLaren CEO’s response reflects how torn F1 folk can be when they grapple with the calendar question. More races means more money, certainly in terms of revenue, but also in terms of spend. More races means more action, and further succour for fans ever-hungry for extra helpings;

although, we wonder, how many more would it take for even the most devoted to be struck down by indigestion? For teams, more races means more opportunity, whether financially, commercially or in sporting terms, but also more strain on resources and their dedicated staff who already work around the clock at both factory and track. So what is the limit?

We’re not there yet, it seems. “As a racing driver you will always be happy to race more, but that’s only one point of view,” says David Coulthard, veteran of 15 F1 seasons and a man who still thrives on travelling the world to work on the other side in TV land. “What makes this a very interesting debate is that it will be settled by the commercial rights holders’ decision and desire to grow the sport and grow the revenues, which ultimately will benefit the business of the teams as well,” he says.

In other words, it’s always about the money. He’s quite right, of course. If more races is good for business, then more races it will be.





In May this year, Red Bull headed to Vietnam, where David Coulthard performed a series of demo runs along a 650m course in Ho Chi Minh City, to a crowd of thousands. And where the Red Bull programme goes, F1 often follows...

"The business, the profile, the potential is definitely there," says DC, who in his role as a Red Bull ambassador has a history of scouting out new venues by participating in promotional events long before the real circus comes to town. "The question is, are we strong enough to go to all those events? I'm thinking about mechanics, engineers, hospitality staff, media and so on. Those who are on site for longer. Senior managers and drivers are in the privileged position of turning up last and leaving first, usually in an executive manner."

"Wear and tear on employees" is certainly a consideration for Brown, as it will be for every F1 team principal. "If you want to cut costs, more than 21 races is not going to do that," he adds, in reference to the ongoing review being conducted by rights holder Liberty as they attempt to shape a brave new F1 world. Any potential budget cap, a concept that is back on the table, would have to account for more races, while teams' scales of revenue must also be in the mix in any expansion.

Since Liberty took over from Bernie Ecclestone as the F1 rights holder at the start of last year, there has been a clear drip-feed of change. But what we haven't yet seen is a defined overarching strategy that covers everything from new regulations for the cars; the business model that will make F1 more sustainable for teams; how fans new and old will be catered for; and our question about where F1 chooses to race and how often. That's understandable – for now. After all, Liberty surely need and deserve time to unpick the intricate web that has been spun around this vastly complicated sport and business over many decades. The trouble is, in the world we live in, patience quickly wears thin. The pressure on them to reveal a cohesive vision of F1's future is intensifying.

What we have seen are individual developments from Liberty that at least give some clue to the future strategy: discussions on less complicated hybrid engines; the digital media expansion; the embrace of e-sports and the launch of F1 Live events are just some of the ▶



welcome developments that are enticing the sport into the 21st century.

On the subject of races, it's clear that Liberty commercial boss Sean Bratches is moving heaven and earth to confirm a Miami GP, driven by the perceived high value of a second grand prix in the US. The deal is said to be so important it's even being suggested that F1's famously



radar. Neither are likely for next year – and neither seem obvious F1 destinations.

Brown politely says Copenhagen and Vietnam represent “important markets”, but given his caution about further calendar expansion, he's more specific about the races he would welcome: “If you said to me we'd have a 23-race calendar and the extra races were in Miami and New York, I'd say let's go to 23.”

“Copenhagen would work,” muses Coulthard. “I've been there for a Red Bull event, the royal family are behind it and engaged in the motorsport event that already takes place in town [he's referring to the Copenhagen Historic Grand Prix, which takes place in August].

“Miami has had races in other categories, and has strong links to central and south America. But how has the fanbase grown in the US since the Austin GP? If it hasn't really moved the dial in America, is Miami going to do more?”

Red Bull also visited Copenhagen in 2012. It's on Liberty's radar, but there's a sense that they don't consider it a key market...

DC is particularly interested in the Vietnam suggestion, following his recent trip for a Red Bull promotion in Ho Chi Minh City. “I was quite surprised,” he says. “I didn't know much about Vietnam, beyond watching documentaries about the war. When you actually go there you start to understand more about the French influence, how that affected the people, the battles that were fought as a result, and where it is today: Ho Chi Minh City is a modern business city with an Asian twist and a bit of European influence. It is more than capable of hosting a grand prix, and as we've seen elsewhere, it will create some local interest and pull in tourists.”

He adds: “I can see the business play for Vietnam; there also has to be a business play for F1, to justify signing the contract.”

And that's the key. For years F1 has taken bold new steps into new territories: a government somewhere has simply been willing to pay. Some, like Singapore, have worked brilliantly and established themselves as valuable additions; others – India and South Korea spring to mind – were flashes in the pan. If new races ▶

exorbitant promoter fees will be waived, in the interests of long-term gains.




On the one hand, that's encouraging and suggests strategic thinking is at work. But on the other, where would such a deal leave the other circuits already on the calendar and those who want to vie for a place? What do they pay and why? One rule for one, another for the rest? That's straight out of the Ecclestone school.

So where else might we go? Along with Miami, talks have been held with representatives from Denmark's sophisticated capital city, Copenhagen, while the intriguing prospect of a Vietnamese GP has also appeared on the



AN IDEAL CALENDAR?

The following is not based on fantasy. This is a calendar based on reality, so no Nürburgring Nordschleife or circuits that don't exist any more, such as the old Österreichring. It's also worth noting that the current 21-race schedule really isn't at all bad, so what follows is only a minor shake-up – and certainly no more than 20 races. Damien Smith suggests a schedule.

1. **Melbourne, Australia**  This is the classic season opener. No need to change.
2. **Sakhir, Bahrain**  The Middle East is a must and this is better than Abu Dhabi.
3. **Baku, Azerbaijan**  A new street race that oozes character. Well worth keeping.
4. **Imola, San Marino**  The challenging layout makes this a real drivers' circuit. Bring it back.
5. **Barcelona, Spain**  Traditional, and doesn't get the credit it deserves.
6. **Monte Carlo, Monaco**  The race everyone thinks of when they think of F1.
7. **Montréal, Canada**  Classic track, popular venue, bags of character.
8. **Miami, USA**  A cool new location that makes perfect sense for F1.
9. **Paul Ricard, France**  Not a great track, but the French GP is the oldest of all.
10. **Silverstone, Britain**  The venue of the first ever F1 GP is loved by everyone.
11. **Nürburgring, Germany**  A much better track than the modern, bland Hockenheim.
12. **Hungaroring, Hungary**  Aging better than anyone would have guessed in 1986.
13. **Spa, Belgium**  Yes, yes, yes... obviously. Without a doubt. Every time.
14. **Monza, Italy**  Refer to our entry above for Spa.
15. **Singapore**  A superb venue, especially at night. It would be missed.
16. **Suzuka, Japan**  One of the greatest tracks ever. So much history, too.
17. **Ho Chi Minh City**  A completely new location for F1 is an intriguing prospect.
18. **Macau, China**  Why not? It's a fantastic street circuit, and so much better than Shanghai.
19. **Austin, USA**  Two US races makes sense. This one is too good to lose.
20. **Interlagos, Brazil**  The perfect atmosphere for a gripping season finale.

On the scrapheap: Shanghai, Sochi, Abu Dhabi – who'd miss any of those? Red Bull Ring? A bit of a shame, and Mr Mateschitz wouldn't be happy, but something's got to give. And Mexico City... fantastic atmosphere, but now an unremarkable circuit.



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are to be added just because a city or government wants in, is that justification for inclusion? Again, without a cast-iron strategy we can all follow, such additions could be mistaken for the short-term thinking that marked Ecclestone's reign.

Besides economics and logistics, there's a sporting factor to consider if the calendar expands – because above and beyond everything else, Formula 1 is still a sport. When Liberty first took over, there was much talk about 'every race being a Superbowl', presumably to that particular host nation and its local audience. Races are all supposed to be special, then. But can they remain special to the global audience if they come so thick and fast? Will fan fatigue set in?

"There's a balance," says Brown. "We have to consider the exclusivity of the sport. There needs to be a race every other week, but maybe not every week."

He's speaking just before the French GP, the beginning of an unprecedented and exhausting run of three races in three weeks. Is that really what's best for F1? It might have to be if the calendar stretches to 24 or 25 races a season.

"It's one of the challenges NASCAR is up against," says Brown, warming to the theme and referring to the US stock car racing calendar that each year runs to an incessant 36 rounds. "The races come with such frequency that they don't have much impact. Look at the NFL: it's a pretty small calendar. Every [American] football weekend is a big weekend. We have to be in that territory."

Coulthard takes a different view and uses an alternative sporting analogy. "I don't get that sense when you look at football [he's talking about the proper kind!]. It seems to me that there are a lot of Premier League matches [each of the 20 clubs in England's top flight play 38 league games a season], and then you have cup competitions – European cups, World Cups and so on.

"I think a grand prix is more of a World Cup final or 100m final type of an event, by the nature of being individual events in individual countries. The promoter wants 100,000 people there on race day, but for F1 itself it is through the TV fee and

promoter fee that they earn their money, plus revenue streams such as the Paddock Club. I guess what Liberty are doing is trying to build a fanbase from a younger generation using social media, apps and digital platforms with gamers and so on, as a way to generate more income. Even if they are not at the races they all feel connected and part of a community."

His point is an interesting one. If you want to appeal to a younger generation – something that F1 has struggled with in the modern era – it almost needs to be 'on demand', like everything else in their lives. A constant flow of races would

F1 Live London was organised by Liberty for 2017, in an attempt to drum up enthusiasm for a GP in the UK capital

surely appeal to this generation and their incessant craving for 'content'.

Calendar sizes and the choice of venues will come down to exactly what F1 wants to achieve and who

it is aimed at. We're back to that point on strategy. F1 chose not to contribute to this feature when we approached them. But with the publication of a 2019 calendar supposedly imminent, a few more clues might soon become apparent.

From what we know, some form of expansion looks certain: perhaps one extra grand prix next year, perhaps even more beyond that. But all things considered, are more races really in everyone's best interests? Last word to Brown on when enough is enough: "We could go to another couple of races, maximum. But they have to be in the right markets. Certainly 25 would be too much." 📌



"THERE'S A BALANCE. WE HAVE TO CONSIDER THE EXCLUSIVITY OF THE SPORT. THERE NEEDS TO BE A RACE EVERY OTHER WEEK, BUT MAYBE NOT EVERY WEEK"
ZAK BROWN

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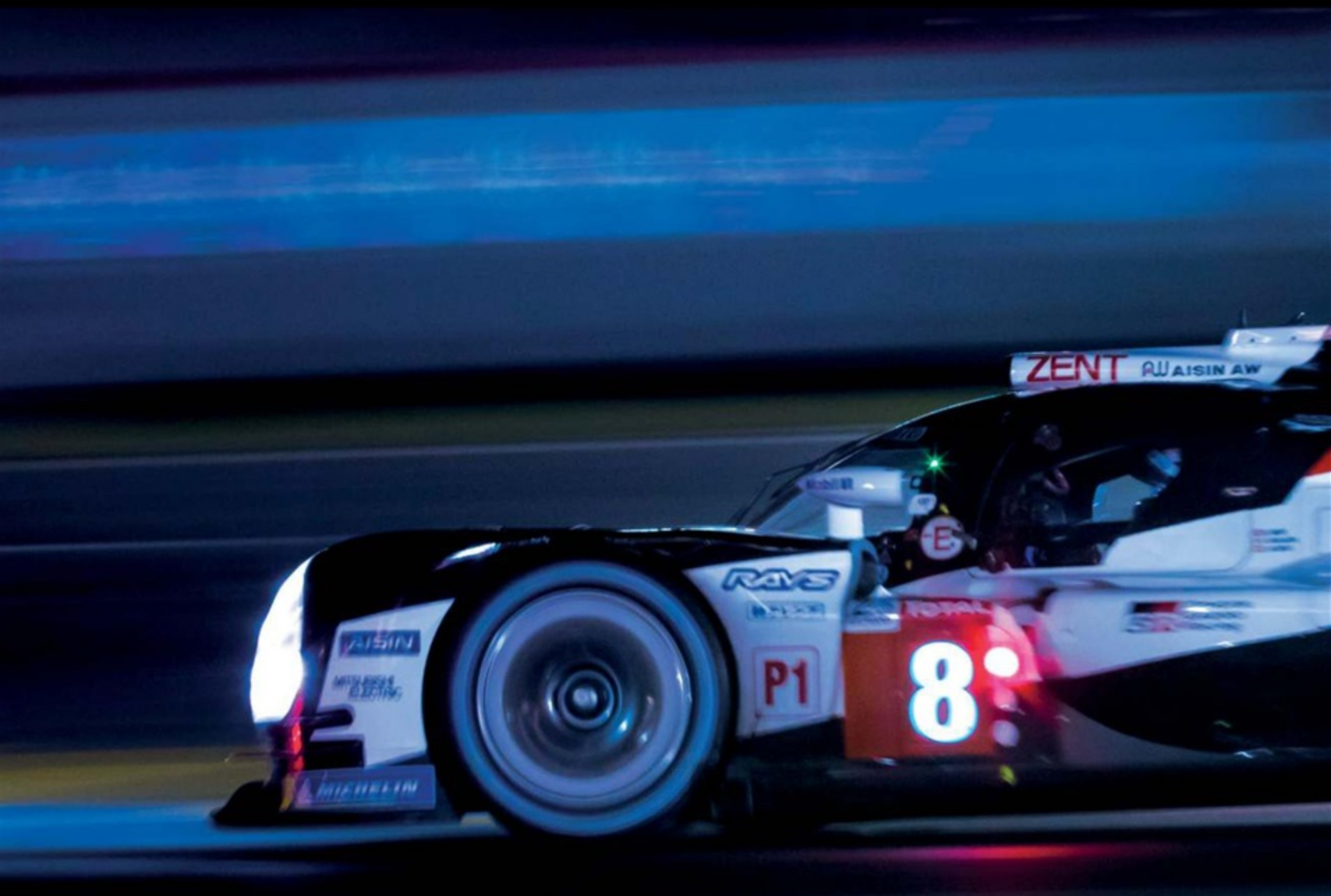
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THE RHYTHM OF THE NIGHT



Fernando Alonso's victory at the Le Mans 24 Hours laid demons to rest for both driver and his Toyota team. And while his win may have seemed a foregone conclusion, the manner in which he went about it was truly exceptional

WORDS ANTHONY PEACOCK

PICTURES DREW GIBSON

JAMES MOY/TOYOTA





ERNANDO ALONSO

isn't well-known for his love of 1990s dance music. But in the early hours of the morning at Le Mans, at the end of a mesmerising quadruple stint in his Toyota, he practically begged to be allowed a fifth, declaring that he now had "the rhythm of the night".

And he certainly did, in a much more convincing way than anyone from Corona – the Italian eurodance act responsible for the 1993 anthem – ever managed. Le Mans is, of course, legendary, but it's only when night falls that it becomes truly emblematic.

The backbone of the famous race is located between midnight and sunrise, traditionally the time when the competition is won or

lost on pace, with lower track temperatures and the engines able to gulp dense, energising cold air that boosts power. The fastest times in qualifying always come in the night at Le Mans, during the so-called 'Happy Hour'. Although for Fernando Alonso, who was taking part in the event as part of his bid to capture the 'Triple Crown' – victory at the Monaco Grand Prix, Le Mans, and Indy 500 – it seemed as though every hour was happy.

"Honestly, I loved every minute of it," he said afterwards, looking remarkably fresh in the

way that only racing drivers can after hours of exertion. "It's a shame that Le Mans is just once a year – it should be every two or three weeks."

Most people there (especially the mechanics) would find this a genuinely appalling prospect, but that's how quickly and deeply the Spaniard fell in love – both with Le Mans and everyone who shared the adventure with him.

"I am very, very proud of my team-mates and very proud of Toyota," he said at the post-event press conference, still reeking of champagne and wearing an oversize laurel wreath around his neck, retro Kimoa cap at a jaunty angle, just like a latter-day Steve McQueen. "Winning



Le Mans still feels like a dream.”

Hollywood helped to create the legend of Le Mans of course, thanks to the famous 1971 film, just as it did the Monaco Grand Prix and even the Indy 500. And Fernando, walking around the paddock, easily had the swagger of a McQueen or a James Garner (star of the 1966 *Grand Prix* movie). He owned the story. Racing is life. Anything before or after is just waiting.

At this stage in his life and career, Fernando is interested only in the epic. The

banal – dragging home a mediocre car to somewhere in the lower half of the points-scoring places – no longer interests him.

There’s a romance and a sense of occasion to Le Mans that you find in few other places. It’s one of the oldest races in the world after all (first run in 1923) and one that’s known for stretching drivers to the very limit. In the past, crews used to complete it using two, rather than three, drivers. One or two even tackled it single-handed. Fernando would have signed up for those days, just to extend the rhythm of the night even further still.

At one point during those long, dark hours he was reeling in his main – okay, *only* – rival (his

team-mate, in the other Toyota) by three seconds a lap or more. It had been a long time since he’d enjoyed that feeling of utter invincibility. When he got in to start his ‘graveyard shift’, taking over from former Toro Rosso racer Sébastien Buemi, the gap between the two Toyotas was close to three minutes, mainly because Buemi had got the worst of the traffic and Safety Cars, picking up a minute’s stop/go penalty for speeding in a slow zone.

By the time Fernando climbed out, three hours later, that deficit had been halved – and there was a very real sniff of victory. ▶

The three musketeers: Alonso, Nakajima and Buemi make Le Mans history by taking Toyota’s first win



so close – with nearly 12 hours left on the clock – that it would have been patently wrong to impose team orders.

Only those on the inside fully understood how absolutely critical it was to close down that gap. Team advisor Alex Wurz described it as “one of the most intense battles I have ever seen within a team in all of motorsport”.

If you take an average of the top 50 fastest laps for each of the Toyota drivers, Fernando emerges more than half a second quicker than his closest colleague, Buemi. That’s just how stellar his race pace was. So it’s perhaps surprising that he didn’t qualify the car or take the prestigious final stint across the line: both those honours went to Kazuki Nakajima – consolation at last, since he was driving the car two

years ago when it stopped with three minutes to go.

But, Fernando was the architect of their victory. That’s the feeling the two-time champion had been waiting so long to sample again. A feeling that only Le Mans could deliver.

“Right now I’m just trying to enjoy every second,” he said at the finish. “Maybe I’m a little bit in shock because we were so focused on the race and so stressed at the end, watching Kazuki on the television during the final stint. I’m not used to watching my

car – I’m normally in it! So that bit wasn’t easy. It was actually quite a tense 24 hours, with two cars within one minute of each other for more or less the whole race. But the preparation was perfect and the execution.”

The adage about Le Mans not being about how quickly you go but about how little you stop was as true as ever.

The main reason why Alonso’s Toyota won (by two laps) was that it remained stationary for just 47 minutes of the 24 hours during 35 pitstops. You can add two minutes to that for two stop/go penalties (neither earned by Alonso) but had it not been for a few lengthy Safety Car periods, the winning car would probably also have been on course to break the record for laps and distance covered at Le Mans.

That’s why Toyota being the only factory

LMP1 entrant this year was irrelevant – in Fernando’s eyes at least. “It was a great challenge,” he said. “I put this victory in a higher level than any other victory at Le Mans. Last year there were only four cars; this year there were ten.”

The majority of those ten were LMP1 privateers (in the absence of Porsche as Toyota’s sparring





partner) but Fernando makes a decent point. Just look at the pitstop numbers and there's a strong argument that Toyota would have won anyway, even had Porsche, Audi or whoever been there too.

Neither of the cars had a single mechanical problem throughout the 24 hours and the only minor drama came in the

final hour for the Toyota that finished second – and only then because one of its drivers forgot to pit for fuel.

Fernando himself did not put a foot wrong, and took no prisoners when overtaking. A couple of the moves looked close to the limit, but would you expect anything else?

“As a debut, it was exceptional,” said Shigeki Tomoyama, the head of Toyota Gazoo Racing. “If we have the opportunity to carry on with Fernando, we’d like to. He’s so fast and his technical and strategic skills are very important for our team, but he’s also important to the image of Toyota. At first I wasn’t sure how he would settle in to our team, but it worked very well for everyone I think.”

After all, it was thanks to Toyota that Fernando – incredibly – ended a victory drought that dates all the way back to the 2013 Spanish Grand Prix. He tasted champagne not only at Le Mans, but also a month earlier, when he won the Spa 6 Hours.

Spa is proof that Fernando isn’t in it just for Le Mans and one glorious Steve McQueen-themed weekend in France. He wants to win the World Endurance Championship, too.

“We’re leading that championship now,” he pointed out. “It’s no secret that becoming World Endurance

champion was one of the targets I had when I joined. I didn’t come just for the Le Mans experience; I want to fight for the world championship. Let’s see if we can achieve that as we’ve had a good start to the season so far.”

Top of the list for the future, though, is still likely to be Indy, the missing link in his Triple Crown bid. And you don’t need much persuading to Fernando’s point of view, that this is somehow worth more than multiple F1 world titles.

It stands to reason that if you win any world championship once, you can do it again. But to cast the net across three different disciplines? That’s something else, which few have attempted and only Graham Hill achieved. It’s exciting and motivating; the chance to reserve a place in history. All commodities that have been lacking for Alonso of late.

“Of course the Triple Crown is a very attractive target to see if I can be a better driver, a more complete driver,” pointed out Fernando. “Being in Formula 1 you just follow your team performance, and if your team is first you will be first or second, and if your team ▶



“WE WERE SO FOCUSED ON THE RACE AND SO STRESSED AT THE END, WATCHING KAZUKI ON TELEVISION DURING THE FINAL STINT. I’M NOT USED TO WATCHING MY CAR – I’M NORMALLY IN IT!”

FERNANDO ALONSO



Toyota team triumph: the winning trio soak up the atmosphere at Le Mans, having repeated their success at the 6 Hours of Spa the month before



Two down, one to go... with the Monaco GP and now Le Mans ticked off the list, Alonso just needs the Indy 500 to bag the Triple Crown

is third you will be fifth or sixth. To be a better driver, a more complete driver, you need to win in every series against the specialists from those series. To beat the specialists in oval racing or here in endurance racing – the guys who know every little trick – is great. It makes it a very attractive target.”

The fact that each of these events is a one-off makes the achievement even greater, but the stress levels higher. You never win or lose a championship in one weekend, but by definition that’s what happens at Indy or Le Mans. Everything is intensified. You live every

emotion. There’s no such thing as going through the motions.

“True,” agreed Fernando, with feeling. “At Indy we were leading the race and close to winning, but we missed the opportunity. Here we were leading the race and I was worried about missing the opportunity again...”

It wouldn’t be the first time a chance was missed for Alonso, after all. Or for Toyota. Not this time though. As the famous Rolex ticked round to 3pm on Sunday, the 256,000-strong crowd at La Sarthe rose to their feet as one, saluting Toyota’s achievement in finally conquering a race they had been entering since 1985. And acknowledging the presence of a lion-hearted legend who had wanted to compete there for many

years, but first came to Le Mans in 2014 just to wave the field away. Four years later, he won. 🏆

(NOT) ON THE BUTTON

Alonso wasn’t the only F1 star making his debut at the Le Mans 24 Hours. Also starting for the first time were fellow triple-crown challenger Juan Pablo Montoya (in LMP2), and Jenson Button, in a privateer LMP1 car run by SMP Racing.

In theory, Jenson’s car was among the best of the rest, but any hopes of a decent result were gone within 20 laps when it returned to the pits with a sensor issue, staying there for three hours. By the time Jenson got behind the wheel the car was 60th and last, but over the next 18 hours he did help to haul it nearly 20 places up the order before the engine expired with an hour to go.

“It was a lovely experience; at least I got to drive at sunset and sunrise,” he reflected afterwards. And he did better than Montoya, who crashed in an incident at Indianapolis that he put down to “running out of talent”. Montoya’s car, which lived to fight another day, was nonetheless classified ninth overall at the finish.



Montoya and Button also made Le Mans debuts



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| 11/12 August | DTM (German Touring Car Masters) | Brands Hatch GP |
| 17-19 August | Bennetts British Superbike Championship | Cadwell Park |
| 19 August | Festival Italia | Brands Hatch |
| 25/26 August | Mini Festival | Brands Hatch |
| 25-27 August | Historic Gold Cup | Oulton Park |
| 2 September | Festival of Porsche | Brands Hatch |
| 8/9 September | British Truck Racing Championship | Snetterton |
| 14-16 September | Bennetts British Superbike Championship | Oulton Park |

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Force India's young Russian test driver on lessons learned and working his way up to F1

Where did your interest in racing come from, because motorsport isn't particularly big in Russia, is it?

No, it's an exclusive sport to get into and we don't have that many kart tracks, but I did visit one at the age of six and slowly started to develop an interest. One of the first people I met was Pavel Guskov, a former racer who used to coach [fellow Russian F1 driver] Daniil Kvyat. He helped me in karting and from there I progressed through the Moscow, and then the Russian karting championships.

You clearly showed some natural aptitude...

When you start off at a reasonably low level, you either stand out or you don't. In karting I was always one of the quickest and that gave me extra motivation to try hard and spend more time doing it. By the age of 12 I was getting reasonably serious about the sport, but unlike my peers I was never allowed to drop out of school. And now I'm in my first year of university, studying economics and languages, while racing in GP3.

So when did you start to get serious about moving into F1?

I did karting in Italy and moved to Formula Renault when I was 15, but I was unprepared. I did just eight days of testing before joining the championship. When I was 16, my mentor [racer turned team owner] Oliver Oaks did a deal for me with Force India and I've done six test days for them since 2016.

You did an F1 test session at Barcelona in May – how was it?

In the morning session I started by adjusting from driving the GP3 car [Mazepin had just won the season-opener at

Barcelona] as that car is 12 seconds slower than an F1 car. But it's a combination of getting used to the levels of downforce and speed of an F1 car, while at the same time giving the team feedback on the test items they are running.

Every time I jump in an F1 car it's such a great feeling and I'm very lucky to be able to do it, because I'm still only 19. When I first joined Force India I was shocked at how much work goes into Formula 1; it's been a great insight into understanding the sport at this level.

When you first drove the Force India, did you appreciate what a step up F1 is compared with the junior formulae?

When I did my first test at Silverstone, I was doing reasonably good lap times. I was consistent and didn't crash and thought that I had done a good job. Then when I was having a debrief with the engineers, I realised there was so much I could have done better and so many areas where I could improve. That was a very good lesson in appreciating the high level at which Formula 1 drivers operate.

Another lesson you must have learnt was about the importance of controlling your emotions, after you received a one-race ban in F3 for assaulting your rival, Callum Hogg – who is now your GP3 team-mate – after a session...

Yes, I've realised that it doesn't matter if you've been offended or have been wronged, you are here to do a job and you need to keep your emotions under control. There have been a number of situations since where I have been upset, but I've learnt to take it on board and keep it to myself. I was young and it happened a long time ago, and thankfully Callum and I are friends now. But when I look back at it, it was a huge step towards maturity.

What is your strategy for the next few years? How long do you think it will take before you are ready to compete in F1?

The opportunity to compete in F1 doesn't come along very often, so when it does it's something that you have to grasp. At the moment I'm a bit too young to be thinking about it for this year, so I'm just going to take one step at a time, continue to work hard and see what the future brings.

The Russian Grand Prix has become an established event on the F1 calendar, so would you say this is a good time to be a Russian driver trying to break into the sport?

I'd say it was the best time there has ever been. Ten years ago, the amount of people in Russia who knew about Formula 1 was half what it is today. Russia is a big country with a huge population, so it's only right that it should host a grand prix. The next step is to have a Russian driver winning the championship – and that's my goal for my country. 🇷🇺

CV Nikita Mazepin

Nationality Russian

Age 19

Role Force India test driver

2018 Completes two days of F1 testing with Force India at Barcelona (in February and May); wins a race in GP3 with ART

2017 FIA European F3 with Hitech (3 podiums); F1 test driver at the Hungaroring and Abu Dhabi with Force India

2016 Competes in FIA European F3 and British F3; completes two F1 test days with Force India at Silverstone

2015 Formula Renault 2.0; scores one podium

2012-14 European and world karting championships

NIGEL ROEBUCK'S GRAND PRIX GREATS

WHILE THERE HAD BEEN GRAND PRIX RACING for nearly half a century, it was not until 1950 that Formula 1 was born, and with it the world championship. Silverstone in May started it all, and the man on pole position also won the race and set the fastest lap. Giuseppe Farina went on to become the first world champion.

Born into a wealthy Turin family in 1906, Farina won several major races in the 1930s, driving Maseratis and Alfa Romeos, but it may be said that, as with Hermann Lang, his greatest years were surely lost to the Second World War. In 1936 'Nino' joined Scuderia Ferrari, then racing Alfas, and when two years later Tazio Nuvolari left for Auto Union, he became Enzo's number-one driver.

Even at this early point in his career, though, already *Dottore* Farina – his degree was in political science – had the reputation of one to be approached with care. A patrician figure out of the car, he was chillingly ruthless within it. Leading the Deauville Grand Prix in 1936, Farina impatiently shoved Marcel Lehoux off the road, and back then it was not the trifle it has become today, when cars are strong, run-off areas copious. Lehoux was killed, and in identical circumstances the same fate befell Lazlo Hartmann at Tripoli two years later.

Farina never changed his ways, as Stirling Moss, encountering him in the 1950s, can attest. "Undoubtedly he was a great driver, and I loved his relaxed, arms outstretched, style – in fact I copied it!

"On the track, though, Farina was a bastard. If he was lapping you, you had to be damn sure not to hold him up because he'd just push you off

the road – and he'd do the same with an inexperienced guy. In those days you didn't often come across what used to be called 'dirty driving', but he was something else..."

After the war, Farina joined the Alfa Romeo factory squad, alongside Achille Varzi, Jean-Pierre Wimille and Felice Trossi. In 1946 he won the Grand Prix des Nations at Geneva, but left Alfa at season's end, and didn't race at all the following year. In 1948, driving his own Maserati, he won the Monaco Grand Prix.

By the end of that decade, Alfa's world had changed: Varzi had been killed in 1948, and Wimille in early '49; a few months later Trossi died of cancer. For 1950 it was to be the three Fs: Fagioli, Farina – and Fangio.

Although the peerless Juan Manuel was unquestionably the best driver in the team,

initially there little to choose between him and Farina. While Fangio won at Spa, Reims and Monaco, his rival triumphed at Silverstone, Berne and Monza – and took the championship by three points.

The following year, though, he won only at Spa, and by now Fangio's main opposition was coming from Ferrari's Alberto Ascari. No longer was Farina Italy's top driver, and it did not sit well with him.

For 1952, following Alfa's withdrawal, he joined Ascari at Ferrari, and now Alberto was in his pomp. From June '52 to June '53 he did not lose a single grand prix, and Farina's sole victory, at the Nürburgring in August '53, came only after Ascari retired.

That said, there were several non-championship victories, and overall it was a fine season: at 47 Farina had no thought of retirement, but perhaps this might have been the moment to stop. After Ascari's departure for Lancia, he assumed the number-one role at Ferrari in 1954, but a bad accident in the Mille Miglia was followed by another in practice for the Supercortemaggiore sports car race at Monza, when his fuel tank was punctured by a broken driveshaft. Farina, severely burned, was by no means fully recovered when he went to Argentina for the first GP of 1955.

Although he finished second, this was the era of the Mercedes W196, and he was dispirited by his ill-handling 'Squalo'. At Monaco he was a distant fourth, but Spa – a circuit he adored – offered the opportunity to display all his warrior qualities, good and bad. While Fangio and Moss disappeared, he had a merciless fight with Eugenio Castellotti.

Half his rival's age, Castellotti was the coming star of Italian motor racing, and Farina pulled every trick in his repertoire, more than once edging the Lancia perilously close to the pits on the run down to Eau Rouge. No pit wall in those days, of course: the mechanics had to scatter.

The duel ended when Castellotti's gearbox broke, but although Farina finished third, he was infuriated at being a minute and a half behind the Mercedes, and told Enzo Ferrari he had no wish to continue.

That summer, following the death of

GIUSEPPE FARINA

The first world champion





Ascari, Lancia left the sport, handing over their D50s to Ferrari, and Farina returned to drive one at Monza, but although he was fifth fastest in practice, tyre problems led to the cars being withdrawn. He had driven a Formula 1 car for the last time, and his career ended with unsuccessful qualifying attempts at the Indianapolis 500 in 1956 and '57.

When I asked Fangio what he had thought of Farina, he rolled his eyes. "He was a strange man. When a driver was hurt, he never went to visit him in hospital, and once, when I did that for him, he asked me why. 'Because I feel sorry for you,' I said, 'and wanted to

Farina's style is on show as he manhandles Maurice Trintignant's Ferrari 625 in Monaco GP practice in 1955

wish you well.' 'You should feel happy,' he said. 'One less to beat next weekend...'

"Farina was not in the category of Ascari or Moss, but certainly he was a great driver. Very fast on the track, although I didn't like to go too close. But on the road – a madman! Completely loco! I hated to drive with him in traffic..."

Ten years on Farina was involved in the making of *Grand Prix*, and in June 1966 set off to drive to Reims for the French Grand Prix. In the mountains near Chambéry, he died instantly when his Lotus Cortina crashed on an icy road.

THIS MONTH

MURRAY AND NIGEL REUNITE AT THRUXTON

AGELESS F1

Old friends Nigel Mansell and Murray Walker were reunited at Thruxton's 50th anniversary race meeting in early June when they jointly opened the new £2 million Thruxton Centre at the challenging Hampshire track.

Murray commentated on Nigel's exploits throughout his front-line racing career and they shared many memorable and amusing off-track moments, including the time when Murray accidentally poked a large bruise on Nigel's head while interviewing him after the 1987 Austrian GP.

"It's been a great privilege to be at Thruxton with Murray," said the 1992 world champion. "He's the voice of motor sport and a great friend. It's been a fantastic day for the fans, with a wonderful atmosphere. I remember Thruxton very fondly. It's one of my favourite circuits, because it is very technical and a really demanding, ballsy place with the bumps and the long corners, and the braver you are, the faster you can go."

"I enjoyed the day immensely," said Walker. "It's been lovely getting out and meeting so many people and seeing a lot of old friends. I first came to Thruxton in 1951 for motor bike racing on the old runways, so I've got about 17 years' advance on most people!"

The highlights of the weekend's on-track demonstration sessions included

former F1 racer Karun Chandhok turning some fairly rapid laps in an ex-Keke Rosberg Williams FWo8.

'Formula 1 through the ages' will be the central theme of this year's Classic Nostalgia event at the Shelsley Walsh hillclimb course (July 28/29).

The famous 1000-yard dash up the side of the Teme Valley in rural Worcestershire will host a range of former grand prix cars, some on static display and some running in anger on the historic hill.

Among notable cars pledged for the event are two BRMs: the P25 raced by Ron Flockhart in 1957 and the ex-Dan Gurney P48 from 1960. More recent Formula 1 cars will include an ex-Elio De Angelis 1979 Shadow DN9 and Satoru Nakajima's Lotus 101 from 1989.

Williams Heritage will bring a pair of cars spanning 25 years of the team's history, both on static display: Nigel Mansell's 1992 title-winning FW14B and an FW40 from the 2017 season.

Honouring the early years of Shelsley will be the 1926 Bugatti Type 37, which was used by Malcolm Campbell at the venue in 1937. Shelsley Walsh is the world's oldest motor sport venue still using its original course;

it first hosted competitive motor sport in 1905. Throughout the 1950s and 1960s, many former grand prix cars were used in hillclimbing before purpose-built single-seaters took over at the top of the sport.

Mansell and Walker open Thruxton's new £2m hospitality centre

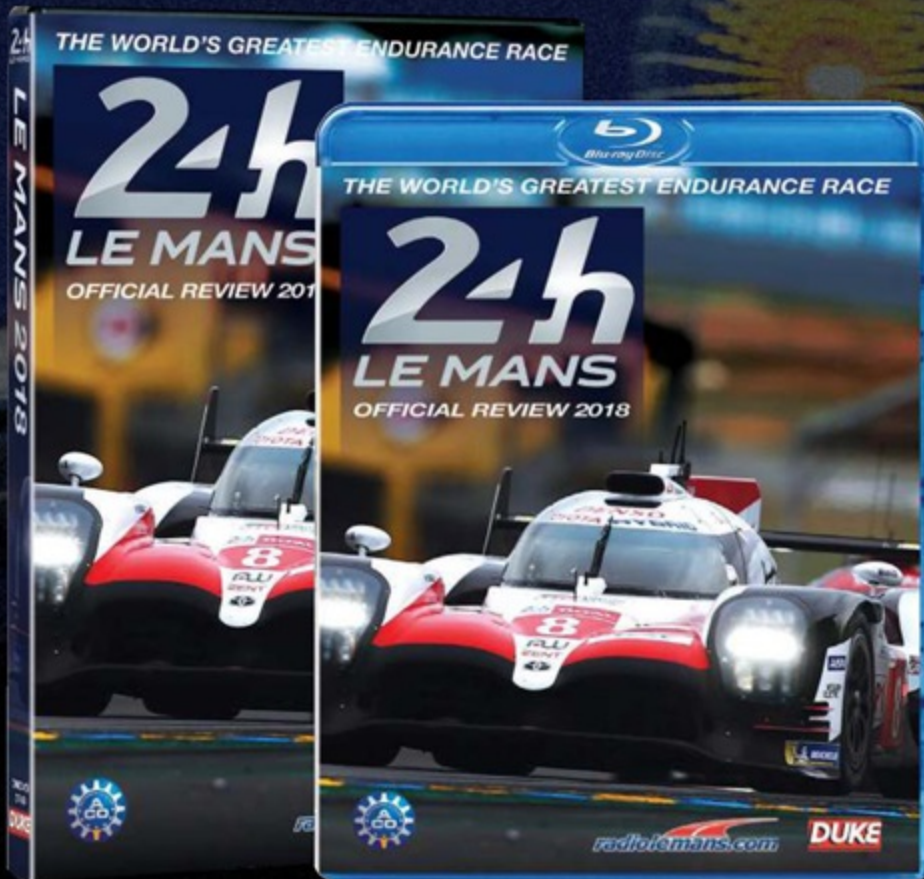
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NIGEL MANSELL



PICTURE: PAUL LAWRENCE



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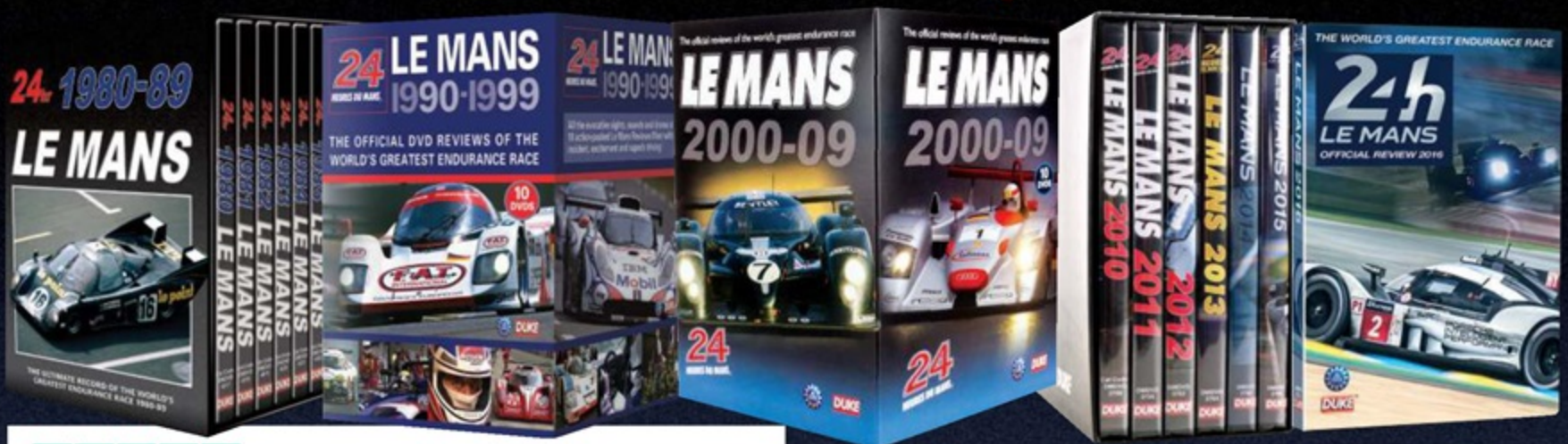
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THE MAIN EVENT

Bumper entry for the Silverstone Classic honours the circuit's 70th anniversary

It is the **biggest annual festival** of classic and historic racing and fills both the 'Wing' pit complex and the heritage pits at Silverstone with around 1000 period race cars. The Silverstone Classic is simply huge, and the 2018 edition runs from 20 to 22 July.

Right from the beginning of the historic festival at Silverstone, the circuit's F1 heritage has been a central feature – and this year's will be very special since it marks the 70th anniversary of the 1948 RAC Grand Prix. Silverstone's debut event pre-dated the start of the world championship by 18 months and featured a number of pre-war GP cars. A young Stirling Moss was among the entrants in the 500cc F3 support race.

Representing the early years of Silverstone history will be two races for cars from the Historic Grand Prix Cars Association, ranging from the mid-1930s to the end of the 1500cc engine formula at the close of 1965.

A fabulous 50-car grid ranges from the 1937 Talbot of Richard Pilkington to the 2.7-litre Tasman-engined Brabhams of Barry Cannell and Jon Fairley. In between will be a raft of front- and rear-engined GP cars, including the Lotus 21 that Jim Clark raced in the fateful 1961 Italian GP. The leading front-engined car is the rare Scarab of Julian Bronson.

A couple of FIA Masters Historic Formula One Championship races will recreate the sport's Cosworth DFV era, and as many as 30 cars from the 1970s are expected. Former champion Martin Stretton (Tyrrell 012), Katsu Kubota (Lotus 91), Simon Fish (Ensign N180) and Steve Hartley (Arrows A4) are among the leading contenders.



Stirling Moss raced in the inaugural British GP F3 support race in 1948. 70 years on Silverstone is celebrating...

HISTORIC RACING AND AUCTION CALENDAR

July 21-22:

Silverstone Classic Sale (Silverstone Auctions)

July 20-22:

Masters FIA Historic F1 Championship, Silverstone Classic

July 20-22:

Historic Grand Prix Cars Association races, Silverstone Classic

July 28-29:

Shelsley Walsh Classic Nostalgia: F1 through the ages

August 3-5:

Copenhagen Historic Grand Prix

August 10-12:

Masters FIA Historic F1, Nurburgring Oldtimer Grand Prix

August 23-26:

Masters USA Historic F1, Rolex Monterey Motorsports Reunion

August 25-26:

RM Sotheby's auction at Monterey, California

September 1-2:

Masters FIA Historic F1 Championship, Zandvoort Historic Grand Prix

September 5:

RM Sotheby's Auction, London

September 6-8:

Goodwood Revival

September 8:

Bonhams Goodwood Revival Auction

September 14-16:

Masters FIA Historic F1 Championship, Spa-Francorchamps

October 12-14:

Masters FIA Historic F1 Championship, Dijon-Prenois



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WORDS DAMIEN SMITH
PICTURES JAMES MANN

THE BENETTON B192

The B192 wasn't 1992's fastest car – but the brains behind it would change the shape of F1

Michael Schumacher, Rory Byrne and Ross Brawn. Three men who formed an axis of power so potent it would define a Formula 1 generation. Seven drivers' world championships, including five on the bounce for Ferrari; seven constructors' titles, six consecutively in Maranello red. But the roots of sheer domination were established here, in vivid yellow, with a conventional and relatively simple racing car under the garish banner of a trendy Italian clothing company.

Benetton's first toe in the F1 water was as a sponsor for Tyrrell and Alfa Romeo, before ambition led to the purchase of the Toleman team at the end of 1985. Powered by BMW's explosive turbo, Byrne's B186 made Benetton a grand prix victor in their first season when Gerhard Berger won in Mexico City, but during the rest of the decade the team became established as nothing more than a regular best-of-the-rest contender: wins were sporadic, titles just out of reach.

Flamboyant boss Flavio Briatore knew little about motor racing, but that didn't prevent him making big decisions. Short on patience and long on ambition, Briatore recruited proven design kingpin John Barnard from Ferrari to raise the stakes, as Byrne, chief engineer Pat Symonds and others defected to Adrian Reynard's new F1 project. Under Barnard, Nelson Piquet won three races over two seasons – but the marriage of obstinate English visionary and instinctive Italian entrepreneur was a brief and unhappy union. As Barnard returned to Ferrari, Briatore showed the astute common sense that would ultimately make him a successful F1 team principal: he hired back Byrne, Symonds and the other defectors, once Reynard's project proved to be a non-starter.

Significantly, the team structure was also rebooted as Tom Walkinshaw and his crack TWR sports car team entered the F1 fray. It was Walkinshaw who brought in Brawn, fresh from

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No. 69

his fabulous all-purple Jaguar XJR-14 Group C car, complete with the same Ford Cosworth HB V8 F1 engine that powered Benetton. That same year, 1991, Michael Schumacher burst on to the scene with a stunning qualifying performance on his debut for Jordan at Spa, before Briatore and Walkinshaw swooped in to snatch the German for Monza. Three consecutive points finishes underlined Schumacher's next-big-thing potential. The pieces were now in place for Benetton to take the next step.

Working together for the first time, Byrne and Brawn adopted the pragmatic theory of evolution over revolution that would underpin their future success. In Barnard's high-nose B191 they recognized sound potential. Barnard had been frustrated that his groundbreaking semi-automatic gearbox, pioneered at Ferrari, could not be mated to Benetton's software and, without traction control and ABS, the team lacked the sophistication that would mark the rival Williams FW14B as one of the greatest F1 cars in history. But Byrne and Brawn knuckled down nevertheless, and made the very best from what they had.

The team started the year with the B191 for the first three races, before the new car took its bow at the first European round, in Spain. Impressively, Schumacher finished second only to Nigel Mansell and the FW14B.

The B192 was tidy, conventional and, with the dependable Cosworth HB V8, capable of giving Schumacher and new team-mate Martin Brundle – another Walkinshaw recruit – the means to contend with McLaren, if not the dominant Williams. Passive suspension and a standard H-pattern gearbox would only take them so far, but this was a car Schumacher and engineer Symonds could work with. The team would score points at every one of the season's 16 races.

Exactly one year on from his explosive debut in the Jordan, Schumacher would score his breakthrough win, in a wet-



**THE BENETTON
B192**




dry Belgian race at Spa. At the time, this was considered a lucky victory. Senna's early gamble of staying on slick tyres on a wet track backfired, taking him out of contention. Later, Schumacher was running third on wets behind the Mansell-Riccardo Patrese Williams train on a drying track. Under pressure from Brundle he skated off at Stavelot, but as the sister Benetton slipped past, Schumacher noticed the blisters on its tyres. On dirty Goodyears anyway following his moment, Michael chose to dive straight in for slicks. The decision would jump him ahead not only of Brundle, but also the Williams duo after their stops. Lucky? Sure, he'd had some – but the first of his 91 career wins was typically instinctive and intelligent.

Brundle's chances of a first F1 win had been slim at Spa, but the one that really got away was Canada in June. From seventh on the grid he rose through the order, even passing Schumacher for third place. With poor reliability taking care of Williams, Brundle was closing on Berger's leading McLaren... only for the bolts in his differential to come undone. At Silverstone too, he'd beat Schumacher fair and square and enjoy a spirited duel with old Formula 3 rival Senna to finish second to Mansell, and conquered his talented young team-mate again at Monza for another podium. But it didn't save him. Briatore sacked Martin in favour of Patrese for 1993 – a decision in later years he would admit was a mistake.

The Spa victory and seven other podiums (five in the B192) lifted Schumacher to third in the drivers' standings, three points behind runner-up Patrese and ahead of Senna, despite the Brazilian's three wins. Brundle was sixth, as Benetton claimed third in the constructors' standings.

Pretty good – but the team had achieved as much in '88 and under Barnard in '90. But after more of the same in '93, the power axis of Byrne, Brawn and Schumacher – ably supported by Briatore and Walkinshaw's canny leadership, and Symonds' engineering nous – would flourish to finally deliver on Benetton's true aspirations.

Schumacher's controversial first title in '94 justified Briatore's decision to welcome back Byrne and Symonds. Unquestionable dominance and Benetton's single constructors' crown would follow with Renault V10 power in '95, before Schumacher switched to Ferrari. Luring Byrne and Brawn to follow in his wake would change everything for Benetton, but more significantly for the whole of F1.

This group of remarkable men were only just getting started. 

“THE SPA VICTORY AND SEVEN OTHER PODIUMS (FIVE IN THE B192) LIFTED SCHUMACHER TO THIRD IN THE DRIVERS' STANDINGS”

RACE RECORD

Starts 26
Wins 1
Poles 0
Fastest laps 2
Other podiums 10
Retirements 6
Points 80

SPECIFICATION

Chassis Carbon fibre composite and honeycomb monocoque
Front and rear suspension Double wishbone, pushrod-actuated springs and dampers
Engine Ford HB V8
Engine capacity 3494cc
Power 700bhp
Gearbox Transverse six-speed manual
Tyres Goodyear
Weight 505kg
Notable drivers Michael Schumacher, Martin Brundle



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FINISHING STRAIGHT



Those that eventually made it through the traffic to Paul Ricard embraced the return of the French GP

Welcome back France...

As I sat in my car for five hours waiting to leave the Paul Ricard circuit on Sunday evening, Bernie Ecclestone's description of the British Grand Prix in 2000 as "a country fair masquerading as a world class event" had a certain resonance.

But give me a great day out, good food, lovely people and beautiful countryside, and then a country fair has a certain charm. There is room for improvement on the traffic front but the return to Le Castellet was fantastic with a unique track and a truly French experience. I would not have missed it for the world.

Welcome back France, we missed you. It's great to see you back.

Dave Thompson

By email

...but improvements needed

I've just been to the French GP and, having read your interview with the French drivers, decided to investigate the port of Cassis on the Monday, as recommended by Romain Grosjean. Please pass on my thanks to him, it's a lovely place – didn't see any sign of him though!

As for the GP, it's great to see F1 back in France but the organisation left a lot to be desired. I met loads of people who were so fed up after the Friday that they didn't bother using their tickets for the rest of the weekend! And those that did persevere said they won't return.

The organisers need to visit Hungary and Austria to see how a good GP can be run, with relatively quick and easy access, a great selection and variety of local

cuisines with enough outlets to avoid Ricard's queues. Most people gave up after the first day and brought their own food.

Also, with the downpour in FP3, there was absolutely nowhere to shelter. The only plus point was there were plenty of toilets!

Alex Chester,

Worthing, UK

Worrying accident

Marcus Ericsson's French GP practice accident suggests to me that this year's F1 cars are not as safe as we are led to believe.

Had Ericsson been unconscious, as initially thought, and the fire spread more rapidly, it's entirely possible the accident could have been much worse.

It seemed the marshals were slow

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to douse the fire and it's unclear how an unconscious driver could have been released from the cockpit and pulled free with the halo in place, especially if the fire had spread further forward.

Marcel Escudier

By email

Fewer viewers

Whether F1 needs Ferrari or the reverse is a moot point. Fewer people are watching and THAT is the problem

F1's business plan was designed and implemented in the 1970s for the 1980s and 1990s. Time has bypassed the sport. Young people are interested (passionate) about social media (full disclosure: I am nearly 80, and *my* generation gets F1...but is dying off) and many don't want to own a car, or even have a driver's license. I've spectated at, flagged at and driven in support races for F1, but can see the tapering off of interest and financial expansion, which is the lifeblood of F1. Failure to define and understand the problem will mean failure to address and implement a fix.

Garrett Waddell

By email

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NEXT MONTH*



LECLERC

Is F1's newest star destined for the top?



SEAPLANE SAINZ

Carlos takes a Canadian detour



MIKA HÄKKINEN

Answers questions from the paddock

ON SALE

AUG 16

- > Half-term report: who's on top as F1 breaks for summer
- > Picture special: we go onto the grid at Silverstone
- > Now That Was A Car: the Williams FW08C
- > In the Austrian mountains with McLaren's Lando Norris



SEB INVOKES SPIRIT OF GILLES

Four decades on from home hero Gilles Villeneuve's breakthrough victory in Montréal, Sebastian Vettel painted the town red once more



The 'Chant of the Italians' rang out over the Circuit Gilles Villeneuve on Sunday afternoon as Sebastian Vettel gave Ferrari their first victory in Canada for 14 years. Appropriately, this coincided with the 40th anniversary of Gilles Villeneuve's first grand prix victory, scored at the track that now bears his name.

As Vettel jumped out of his winning machine, he grabbed a giant Ferrari flag and leapt about with childlike joy, not only celebrating his 50th grand prix win but, perhaps more significantly, relishing his return to the top of the drivers' world championship – just a solitary point ahead of Lewis Hamilton.

"Forty years after Gilles won his first GP here,

it's great to show that Ferrari is still alive winning races," said a delighted Vettel. "This is something for all the Canadian tifosi to enjoy and I'm just extremely proud to become part of that story."

Vettel took a lights-to-flag victory at a warm Île Notre-Dame circuit in a largely processionary one-stop affair. He finished 7.3 seconds ahead of Mercedes' Valtteri Bottas and a further 0.9s in front of Max Verstappen, who drew a line under the misdemeanours he committed in each of the first six races of the year by racing cleanly and error-free to the podium.

QUALIFYING

When Sebastian Vettel crossed the line to set the

fastest time in qualifying, the roar from the crowd drowned out his 1.6-litre turbocharged engine. It was the first time that a Ferrari has annexed the top of the grid in Canada since Michael Schumacher's pole in 2001, and Seb himself hadn't been quickest here since 2013.

In recent years Hamilton has dominated at this track, but scrappy laps in Q3 – including a lock-up at the hairpin on his final run – meant he could only qualify fourth, behind team-mate Bottas and the Red Bull of Verstappen.

Once again, Kimi Räikkönen slipped up in Q3, running wide at Turn 2, putting himself out of contention for the top spot. He aborted his final lap, consigning himself to fifth, one place ahead of Daniel Ricciardo's Red Bull. Rounding out the top ten were the two Renaults and both Force Indias.

The only real drama of the hour-long session – held in glorious summer sunshine – came right at the start when the Ferrari engine in Romain Grosjean's Haas blew as he headed down the pitlane. He was immediately eliminated in a cloud of white smoke, followed in short order by Sauber's Marcus Ericsson, who tapped the wall at the second chicane (Turn 9).

The most significant element in qualifying was the fact both the Mercedes and Ferrari runners set their best Q2 time on the purple ultrasoft tyre, meaning they started the race on that rubber. But both of the Red Bulls opted for the pink hypersoft, offering up a mix of strategies for race day.

"I'm surprised both Red Bulls chose the

“AFTER THE EARLY DRAMAS, THE RACE QUICKLY SETTLED DOWN. VETTEL RAN AT THE FRONT WITH A COMFORTABLE LEAD OVER BOTTAS, WHO REMAINED AHEAD OF RÄIKKÖNEN AND THE CARS WHO HAD TO PIT EARLY.”

hypersoft," said Vettel. "It's not a good race tyre, but we'll see what happens tomorrow..."

RACE

As the cars formed up on the grid, all eyes were on Verstappen to see whether he could avoid contact on the opening lap. Starting on the hypersofts, he was expected to get the best launch of the frontrunners and be right in the thick of things at the first corner. Red Bull team boss Christian Horner said to Max beforehand he should "go for it", not wanting to suppress his natural racing instinct, despite recent misadventures.

Once the five red lights went out, Verstappen was no threat to Vettel, who converted pole into

CIRCUIT GILLES VILLENEUVE / 10.06.18 / 68 LAPS



Vettel (above) cruised to a comfortable win (below) as Hamilton scrapped his way to fifth behind Ricciardo (right)



an instant lead, but Max did get alongside Bottas in the first sequence of bends. Bottas was robust in repelling the threat, and although the pair had the slightest of kisses, they stayed wheel-to-wheel through Turns 1 and 2 and Bottas nosed ahead.

Less than half a lap into the race, the Safety Car was deployed – for the one and only time in this GP – after a sizeable crash in the crowded midfield.

As local boy Lance Stroll rounded the swift right-hander at Turn 5, Toro Rosso's Brendon Hartley attempted to pass the Williams around the outside. When Stroll's car got loose, he corrected the slide, but flicked across the track and forced Hartley into the barriers on the outside of the corner. Hartley's Toro Rosso became airborne, finally coming to a halt in a wrecked heap alongside the battered Williams of Stroll.

After the early dramas, the race quickly settled down. Vettel ran at the front with a comfortable lead over Bottas, who remained ahead of Räikkönen and the cars who had to pit early: Verstappen, Ricciardo and Hamilton (who was forced to follow the Red Bull pit strategy), and then the two Renaults.

On lap 40 the race had its third retirement when Fernando Alonso lost power in his McLaren with an exhaust failure. He was celebrating his 300th GP this weekend, but this retirement once again typified his dismal run of bad luck in F1.

While Alonso was unstrapping himself from his broken McLaren, there was still a race going on and interest lay in whether Räikkönen was far enough up the road (in third) to pit and emerge ahead of Hamilton (sixth). When the Ferrari man did pit on lap 32, he couldn't make it stick and emerged just behind the Mercedes. Hamilton, who had been suffering from drop-outs in power during the race, was relieved just to finish.

Up front Vettel made his one-and-only stop on lap 37, one lap after second-placed Bottas had made his switch to fresh rubber.

Vettel was joyous as he celebrated on the top step of the podium for the first time since Bahrain, as were the Canadian Ferrari fans who had good reason to cheer long into the night. As they headed into the Montreal bars on Sunday evening, we suspect one of two of them raised their glasses and said: "This one's for Gilles."



| | | | |
|------|-------------------|-------------|----------------|
| 1st | Sebastian Vettel | Ferrari | 1h 28m 31.377s |
| 2nd | Valtteri Bottas | Mercedes | +7.376s |
| 3rd | Max Verstappen | Red Bull | +8.360s |
| 4th | Daniel Ricciardo | Red Bull | +20.892s |
| 5th | Lewis Hamilton | Mercedes | +21.559s |
| 6th | Kimi Räikkönen | Ferrari | +27.184s |
| 7th | Nico Hülkenberg | Renault | +1 lap |
| 8th | Carlos Sainz | Renault | +1 lap |
| 9th | Esteban Ocon | Force India | +1 lap |
| 10th | Charles Leclerc | Sauber | +1 lap |
| 11th | Pierre Gasly | Toro Rosso | +1 lap |
| 12th | Romain Grosjean | Haas | +1 lap |
| 13th | Kevin Magnussen | Haas | +1 lap |
| 14th | Sergio Pérez | Force India | +1 lap |
| 15th | Marcus Ericsson | Sauber | +2 laps |
| 16th | Stoffel Vandoorne | McLaren | +2 laps |
| 17th | Sergey Sirotkin | Williams | +2 laps |

Retirements

| | | |
|-----------------|------------|-------------------|
| Fernando Alonso | McLaren | 40 laps - exhaust |
| Brendon Hartley | Toro Rosso | 0 laps - accident |
| Lance Stroll | Williams | 0 laps - accident |

FASTEST LAP



Max Verstappen,
1min 13.864s on lap 65

FASTEST PITSTOP



Fernando Alonso,
23.099s (entry to exit)

TYRE COMPOUNDS USED



Hypersoft Ultrasoft Supersoft Inter Wet

CLIMATE

Sunny

AIR TEMP

21°C

TRACK TEMP

41°C

DRIVERS' STANDINGS

| | | | | | |
|----|------------|--------|----|-----------|-------|
| 1 | Vettel | 121pts | 11 | Gasly | 18pts |
| 2 | Hamilton | 120pts | 12 | Pérez | 17pts |
| 3 | Bottas | 86pts | 13 | Ocon | 11pts |
| 4 | Ricciardo | 84pts | 14 | Leclerc | 10pts |
| 5 | Räikkönen | 68pts | 15 | Vandoorne | 8pts |
| 6 | Verstappen | 50pts | 16 | Stroll | 4pts |
| 7 | Alonso | 32pts | 17 | Ericsson | 2pts |
| 8 | Hülkenberg | 32pts | 18 | Hartley | 1pt |
| 9 | Sainz | 24pts | 19 | Grosjean | 0pts |
| 10 | Magnussen | 19pts | 20 | Sirotkin | 0pts |





RACE DEBRIEF FRENCH GP

FINISHING STRAIGHT

HAMILTON'S FRENCH FANCY

The return of a classic GP to the F1 calendar was hugely welcome, but some of the scenes on track were as chaotic as the roads around Paul Ricard...



The last time Formula 1 raced at Paul Ricard, in 1990, a feisty Brit – Nigel Mansell – was on pole, Ferrari were in the thick of it, and a passionate home crowd had high hopes for strong results from a clutch of their country's *pilotes*. And there were some well-documented issues getting to and from the circuit...

QUALIFYING

At a glance, not much seemed to have altered in the intervening 28 years, as Lewis Hamilton blasted to his 75th pole position; Sebastian Vettel and Ferrari challenged for the front row (before winding up P3); Romain Grosjean, Esteban Ocon, Pierre Gasly and Monegasque Charles Leclerc all

entertained *pour la France*. Meantime, social media lit up with rants from fans and F1 personnel cooling their heels for hours in traffic.

Hamilton, indeed, was in commanding form at Ricard, though team-mate Valtteri Bottas came close, revelling, like Lewis, in performance upgrades delivered by Mercedes engine HQ in Brixworth to clock a 1m 30.147s that was briefly fastest time in the fading moments of qualifying. But Hamilton's 1m30.029s lap settled the matter.

Turn 6, the right-hander looping towards the back straight, had proved challenging, he said, owing to a strong tail wind. Ditto Bottas and Vettel, whose final effort was unusually scrappy.

Ferrari, though, would gamble on a racy

outlook, by relying on ultrasofts from the start. A one-stopper remained viable, though the likely need to switch to marginally slower supersofts from around lap 25 seemed counter-intuitive. Whatever the merits, Kimi Räikkönen was already compromised by an underwhelming P6 start slot.

By contrast his touted Ferrari replacement Charles Leclerc was the Saturday stand-out, nailing his first Q3 with a stirring lap. It was a massive effort and Leclerc benefitted from Q3 troubles for the two Haas cars, both of which had made it comfortably into the top ten with sixth- and seventh-fastest Q2 times.

Kevin Magnussen complained that Kimi had overtaken him at the beginning of his fastest lap, ruining his Q3 and leaving him ninth, while Grosjean blew it at T3 during his first run, sliding into the barriers at Turn 4 and bringing out the red flag.

RACE

This one was over almost before it started. A Vettel flyer from P3 put him briefly ahead of Bottas, who'd started in P2, and for a moment the Ferrari was gaining on Hamilton, directly ahead but covering, defensively, into Turn 1.

Had Bottas not been to Vettel's right, Seb would surely have jinked out and tried to run side-by-side with Lewis into Turn 2. But Valtteri was there, standing his own ground, and when Bottas braked into the first corner, then turned left to take his line, Vettel found himself boxed in with nowhere to go.

The Ferrari's right front-wing endplate tagged

“ WHILE THE IDENTITY OF THE PODIUM FINISHERS SEEMED SET, THE RACE FOR THE OTHER POSITIONS WAS ENLIVENED BY A CHANGE OF WIND DIRECTION ON THE MISTRAL STRAIGHT ”

Bottas's left-rear, spinning the Mercedes out and condemning Valtteri to a long, slow, three-wheeled drag back to the pits, during which his W09 sustained floor damage from a flailing Pirelli that would hamper his pace thereafter. Vettel, too, was pit-bound for a change of nose and tyres.

That left Hamilton in the clear and free to control the race from the front, which he proceeded to do, immaculately, through to lap 53 and win number 65.

Max Verstappen, who'd started fourth, was up to second after the fracas and he, too, would go on to execute a perfect, fast, untroubled race – never in the hunt for a win, but equally untroubled for P2.

Carlos Sainz was elevated to third – a position above his Renault's performance station, but a



Early excitement: Vettel and Bottas (above) tangle, Gasly (right) retires and Sainz (below) is up to a popular third



temporary placing that brought joy to the locals, who cheered the yellow car to the echo as it crossed the line in P3 at the start of the second lap. Their partisan elation was tempered, however, by further lap-one woe lower down the order. Remarkably the contretemps involved all three French drivers and resulted in the elimination of two. It began as Ocon, from P11, drew alongside Haas man Grosjean on the pit straight immediately after the start, before the two made contact. Then, approaching Turn 3, Ocon lunged at the apex from the far left, leaving Gasly committed to a disappearing gap. Ocon and Gasly were eliminated from the race, and with car parts littering the track, the appearance of the Safety Car was inevitable.

A wild first lap, then, but alas the French GP had spurted much of its excitement in one go. While the identity of the podium finishers seemed set, the race for the other positions was enlivened by a change of wind direction on the Mistral Straight which boosted the DRS effect, adding a spice to the fightback by Bottas and Vettel.

Vettel's was the most convincing, as he set off on a long soft-tyred charge that took him to fifth

(also his finishing position), before his lap 40 stop for a set of ultras. While stationary he also served the five-second time penalty given to him as a wrist-slap for initiating the first-lap mayhem. Bottas trailed home in seventh (with fastest lap), having seemed a dead-cert podium finisher.

Verstappen's P2 was a better result than Red Bull might have hoped for, since the RB13 had appeared to be third fastest around Ricard. Daniel Ricciardo could manage no better than fourth in his, though. Wing damage hampered his pace and left him incapable of holding off Räikkönen for the last podium spot.

Kimi's determined drive from seventh at the end of lap one showed a spark too often absent, but a younger generation is anyway taking hold: Magnussen's charge to sixth was notable while Sainz deserved more for his verve than eighth place, ahead of team-mate Nico Hülkenberg. Carlos was fortunate, however, even to hold that position after a late MGU-K failure robbed him of power. But a VSC, triggered by a Lance Stroll puncture and shunt at Signes, saved Sainz from an invidious slide out of the points.



| | | |
|------|----------------------------|--------------------|
| 1st | Lewis Hamilton Mercedes | 1h 30m 11.385s |
| 2nd | Max Verstappen Red Bull | +7.090s |
| 3rd | Kimi Räikkönen Ferrari | +25.888s |
| 4th | Daniel Ricciardo Red Bull | +34.736s |
| 5th | Sebastian Vettel Ferrari | +61.935s |
| 6th | Kevin Magnussen Haas | +79.364s |
| 7th | Valtteri Bottas Mercedes | +80.632s |
| 8th | Carlos Sainz Renault | +87.184s |
| 9th | Nico Hülkenberg Renault | +91.989s |
| 10th | Charles Leclerc Sauber | +93.873s |
| 11th | Romain Grosjean Haas | +1 lap |
| 12th | Stoffel Vandoorne McLaren | +1 lap |
| 13th | Marcus Ericsson Sauber | +1 lap |
| 14th | Brendon Hartley Toro Rosso | +1 lap |
| 15th | Sergey Sirotkin Williams | +1 lap* |
| 16th | Fernando Alonso McLaren | +3 laps/suspension |
| 17th | Lance Stroll Williams | +5 laps/tyre |

Retirements

| | | |
|--------------|-------------|--------------------------|
| Sergio Pérez | Force India | 27 laps - water pressure |
| Esteban Ocon | Force India | 0 laps - accident |
| Pierre Gasly | Toro Rosso | 0 laps - accident |

*Includes 5-sec penalty for driving too slowly behind the Safety Car

FASTEST LAP



Valtteri Bottas, 1min 34.225s on lap 41

FASTEST PITSTOP

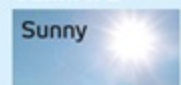


Kimi Räikkönen, 24.289s (entry to exit)

TYRE COMPOUNDS USED



CLIMATE



AIR TEMP



TRACK TEMP



DRIVERS' STANDINGS

| | | | |
|--------------|--------|--------------|-------|
| 1 Hamilton | 145pts | 11 Gasly | 18pts |
| 2 Vettel | 131pts | 12 Pérez | 17pts |
| 3 Ricciardo | 96pts | 13 Ocon | 11pts |
| 4 Bottas | 92pts | 14 Leclerc | 11pts |
| 5 Räikkönen | 83pts | 15 Vandoorne | 8pts |
| 6 Verstappen | 68pts | 16 Stroll | 4pts |
| 7 Hülkenberg | 34pts | 17 Ericsson | 2pts |
| 8 Alonso | 32pts | 18 Hartley | 1pt |
| 9 Sainz | 28pts | 19 Grosjean | 0pts |
| 10 Magnussen | 27pts | 20 Sirotkin | 0pts |





RACE DEBRIEF AUSTRIAN GP

FINISHING STRAIGHT

MERCEDES GO INTO MELTDOWN

Red Bull nailed their first 'home' win as both Merc drivers retired from a commanding position



The 20,000 orange-clad Dutch fans who descended on the Styrian region of Austria had good reason to celebrate. Max Verstappen drove with what his team boss Christian Horner described as "great maturity" during the 71 laps of the Austrian Grand Prix. The Red Bull man took his first victory of the season ahead of the two Ferraris of Kimi Räikkönen and Sebastian Vettel.

In the past four years, Red Bull have only led five laps since their 'home' circuit returned to the Formula 1 calendar. Finally, they had their first victory thanks to Verstappen's measured drive.

In contrast, it was a disaster for Mercedes, who

were hit by their first double retirement in over two years. Firstly, pole position holder Valtteri Bottas suffered hydraulic failure on lap 14, while Lewis Hamilton was forced to stop with a fuel pressure problem on lap 63. It was Hamilton's first retirement since the 2016 Malaysian GP, ending 33 consecutive points finishes.

QUALIFYING

Bottas took the fifth pole position of his career and his first of 2018, pipping Hamilton by just 0.019 seconds on his final run. As if this development wasn't dramatic enough, third-place qualifier Vettel

would soon find his position under threat: two hours after qualifying had finished, the stewards handed Vettel a three-place grid penalty for "unnecessarily" impeding Carlos Sainz in the final segment of Q2.

Replays showed the Renault driver approach Turn 1 on his hot lap, and when he found the Ferrari running slowly ahead of him on the racing line, Sainz took to the kerbs in avoidance. Vettel told the stewards he was unable to see the car in his mirrors, and that he had not been warned by his team via the radio of its approach.

There were harsh words, too, between the Red Bull drivers with regards to who should run on track first. The first driver to leave the garage – and therefore provide the other one with a 'tow' on the straights – alternates each weekend. In Austria it was Daniel Ricciardo's turn, but he slowed in Q3, causing Verstappen to query what was going on. When told to "just overtake him", Max replied: "No. Last weekend I was in front and now he is in front. Come on, man. It's discipline."

Ricciardo was annoyed at going first for all three of his runs and said afterwards that he wanted at least one run in which he wasn't first on track. The issue came to light here because of the nature of the Red Bull Ring: since the track is so short, drivers get a third run in Q3 to get a time, rather than the usual two.

RACE

From the second row, Räikkönen made a lightning start to sandwich himself between the two Mercedes as they ran three abreast on the run towards Turn 1. Bottas caught too much wheelspin off the line and was forced to concede the corner to both his team-mate and the Ferrari.

As the field headed towards the Turn 3 hairpin, Räikkönen saw an opportunity to take the lead from Hamilton and braked late on the outside of the bend. But he locked up and ran wide, giving Verstappen the chance to steal the position. While they squabbled over on the right-hand side of the track, Bottas made up for his tardy start by out-braking them both into Turn 4, slotting back into second place behind his team-mate.

Max, though, was not about to give up on challenging Räikkönen for third and dived for the inside as they rounded Turn 7. With his inside left-front wheel on the grass, his outside front-right just tapped the left-rear of Kimi, which unsettled him – and Max was through. Given the final result, that first-lap chance was arguably the move that won Verstappen the race. "The margins are so fine in sport," said Horner afterwards. "A few races ago, Max was making moves like that and it could so easily have been a puncture."

RED BULL RING / 01.07.18 / 71 LAPS



A bad day for Merc: after locking out the front row and running one-two they were undone by strategic and technical errors



“WITH BOTH CARS ON THE FRONT ROW, EVERYONE WAS TELLING ME WE COULD DO NO WRONG, BUT MOTOR RACING CAN BE VERY CRUEL... AND TODAY IT WAS BRUTAL” TOTO WOLFF

The race came undone for Mercedes on lap 14. Bottas was suddenly slowing with a hydraulic issue and parked his car, forcing a Virtual Safety Car to neutralise the race. Mercedes did not pit Hamilton under the VSC, while Red Bull brought both their cars in on the same lap, as did Ferrari, knowing they would lose less time pitting now than in normal race conditions.

Once the VSC was lifted, Hamilton had a 13-second lead over Verstappen and was asked by his team to extend the gap by a further eight seconds to enable him to pit comfortably and retain the lead. An exasperated Hamilton responded: “I haven’t got that time. Why didn’t you pit me under the VSC?”

It became academic when on lap 63 Hamilton retired with a fuel pressure problem, and after the race team boss Toto Wolff admitted it was his worst day since the last time his two silver cars failed to finish, in Spain 2016. “With both cars on

the front row, everyone was telling me we could do no wrong, but motor racing can be very cruel,” he said. “And today it was brutal.”

Up front, Verstappen was managing his soft compound tyres to perfection and could withstand the threat from the two Ferraris close behind him. Afterwards Horner said that Verstappen drove “very maturely” by conserving his tyres, particularly in the fast double-right handers at the end of the lap. He held off Räikkönen and Vettel to win by less than two seconds at the flag.

Of immediate concern for Mercedes was the fact that the DNF for Hamilton brought about a change at the top of the drivers’ standings. Although Ferrari – sensibly – didn’t switch their cars at the end (the fallout from the 2002 race here still haunts F1), Vettel was still able to reclaim the lead of the world championship from Hamilton – by just the solitary point.



| | | |
|------|---------------------------|-----------------|
| 1st | Max Verstappen Red Bull | 1h 21m 56.024s |
| 2nd | Kimi Räikkönen Ferrari | +1.504s |
| 3rd | Sebastian Vettel Ferrari | +3.181s |
| 4th | Romain Grosjean Haas | +1 lap |
| 5th | Kevin Magnussen Haas | +1 lap |
| 6th | Esteban Ocon Force India | +1 lap |
| 7th | Sergio Pérez Force India | +1 lap |
| 8th | Fernando Alonso McLaren | +1 lap |
| 9th | Charles Leclerc Sauber | +1 lap |
| 10th | Marcus Ericsson Sauber | +1 lap |
| 11th | Pierre Gasly Toro Rosso | +1 lap |
| 12th | Carlos Sainz Renault | +1 lap |
| 13th | Sergey Sirotkin Williams | +2 laps |
| 14th | Lance Stroll Williams | +2 laps* |
| 15th | Stoffel Vandoorne McLaren | +6 laps/gearbox |

Retirements

| | |
|----------------------------|-------------------------|
| Lewis Hamilton Mercedes | 62 laps - fuel pressure |
| Brendon Hartley Toro Rosso | 54 laps - gearbox |
| Daniel Ricciardo Red Bull | 53 laps - exhaust |
| Valtteri Bottas Mercedes | 13 laps - hydraulics |
| Nico Hülkenberg Renault | 11 laps - turbo |

*Includes 10-sec penalty for ignoring blue flags

FASTEST LAP



Kimi Räikkönen,
1min 06.957s on lap 71

FASTEST PITSTOP



Lewis Hamilton,
20.980s (entry to exit)

TYRE COMPOUNDS USED



CLIMATE

Sunny

AIR TEMP

24°C

TRACK TEMP

49°C

DRIVERS' STANDINGS

| | | | |
|--------------|--------|--------------|-------|
| 1 Vettel | 146pts | 11 Pérez | 23pts |
| 2 Hamilton | 145pts | 12 Ocon | 19pts |
| 3 Räikkönen | 101pts | 13 Gasly | 18pts |
| 4 Ricciardo | 96pts | 14 Leclerc | 13pts |
| 5 Verstappen | 93pts | 15 Grosjean | 12pts |
| 6 Bottas | 92pts | 16 Vandoorne | 8pts |
| 7 Magnussen | 37pts | 17 Stroll | 4pts |
| 8 Alonso | 36pts | 18 Ericsson | 3pts |
| 9 Hülkenberg | 34pts | 19 Hartley | 1pt |
| 10 Sainz | 28pts | 20 Sirotkin | 0pts |





RACE DEBRIEF BRITISH GP

FINISHING STRAIGHT

VETTEL REIGNS ON LEWIS'S PARADE

Lewis Hamilton couldn't deliver the home win fans craved, but, *gosh*, what a race this was



Lewis Hamilton might not have been able to claim a record-breaking sixth British Grand Prix victory, but one day he will surely rank his charge from the back of the field to second place at Silverstone among his most accomplished drives.

Hamilton had dug deep to secure pole position at Sebastian Vettel's expense on Saturday, but a combination of wheelspin away from the grid and a tap from Vettel's Ferrari team-mate on the opening lap meant that effort was squandered. Lewis would later describe that manoeuvre as "interesting tactics" but the damage was done.

Over the course of an incident-packed and

dramatic 53 laps, Vettel had to fight for the lead with Hamilton's team-mate Valtteri Bottas before the second Mercedes' tyres let go, finally enabling Hamilton to get close – but not close enough – to the victory he craved.

QUALIFYING

The dying moments of Q3 proved utterly compelling as the leading drivers embarked on their final runs with Vettel on provisional pole by 0.057s from Hamilton – this in spite of having sat out the end of Saturday's FP3 with what Ferrari described as a "neck nuisance". Qualifying was

running late, owing to Lance Stroll's Williams spearing off at Brooklands and causing Q1 to be red-flagged, and with kick-off in the England World Cup game imminent the fans were getting restless.

Hamilton repaid their faith. He set a new personal best in the first sector and went fastest of all in the second over the course of a mighty final flying lap, neatly quelling a rear-end slide at Vale to cross the line in 1m 25.892s, a new record. Crucially – and perhaps appropriately, given his race number – it was 0.044s faster than Vettel's, and Seb was unable to better his previous time on his second run. Kimi Räikkönen threatened to unseat Hamilton but locked up at Vale, crossing the line a tenth off, and Bottas made a mistake at Club that left him a distant fourth.

"It was so close," said a visibly shaking Hamilton after he climbed out of the cockpit to acknowledge the crowd. "I gave it everything for you guys [the home crowd]. The Ferraris pulled something out for Q3 and without you guys we couldn't have done it. It felt like one of the best laps I've ever been able to produce, the most pressurised lap that I've had."

"It was a very difficult session for us actually," said Mercedes boss Toto Wolff, "We thought we might have a little bit more of a margin, and having two Ferraris behind us is not good for the start."

RACE

Wolff would be proved right. As the lights went out, Hamilton dropped the clutch and spun up his rear wheels, enabling Vettel to blast through on the inside line into Abbey. Hamilton then ran slightly wide, enabling Bottas to follow Vettel through.

🔥 DAMAGED MAYBE, BROKEN MOST DEFINITELY NOT. BY LAP 11 HAMILTON HAD CUT PAST STROLL, SIROTKIN, VANDOORNE, ERICSSON, GROSJEAN, GASLY, ALONSO, MAGNUSSEN, SAINZ, OCON, LECLERC AND HÜLKENBERG 🏆

and as Hamilton gathered himself under braking for Village, Räikkönen tried to send his Ferrari up the inside line, locking a wheel and tapping the Mercedes into a spin.

Thus Hamilton rotated to the tail of the field while Räikkönen dropped just two places, losing out to the Red Bulls of Max Verstappen and Daniel Ricciardo. And although Kimi made short work of Ricciardo, the stewards hit him with a 10-second penalty for causing a collision. "Damn," said Hamilton on the radio. "I think my car's broken, man."

Damaged maybe, broken most definitely not. By lap 11 Hamilton had cut past Stroll, Sergey Sirotkin,

RESULTS ROUND **10**

SILVERSTONE / 08.07.18 / 53 LAPS



A tardy start from Lewis (above) and the subsequent contact meant the polesitter had to battle through the field from the back (left). In the end, the Merc man just came up short



Stoffel Vandoorne, Marcus Ericsson, Romain Grosjean, Pierre Gasly, Fernando Alonso, Kevin Magnussen, Carlos Sainz, Esteban Ocon, Charles Leclerc and Nico Hülkenberg to run sixth, but with a seemingly cavernous 27-second gap to the leader.

The majority of the frontrunners started on soft tyres and went on to mediums at what was anticipated to be the only round of pitstops, and although Mercedes ran a different strategy with Hamilton – keeping him out until five laps after Vettel and Bottas had stopped – it would be a Safety Car appearance that decided this race and brought Hamilton fully back into the picture.

On lap 32 Ericsson's Sauber swapped ends on him viciously at Abbey with the DRS flap open, smiting the barrier hard enough for the Medical Car to be deployed as well as the Safety Car. Ferrari took the opportunity to stop both cars for soft tyres, but Mercedes opted to stay out, promoting Bottas to the lead ahead of Vettel and Hamilton to third ahead of Verstappen, Räikkönen and Ricciardo.

A second Safety Car almost immediately after

the first – Grosjean and Sainz collided at Copse just after the restart – meant the race would not be green-flagged until there were just 10 laps left. It quickly became apparent that Bottas's tyres were fading, and Vettel made a millimetre-perfect lunge up the inside at Brooklands to reclaim the lead, followed in short order by Hamilton and Räikkönen. Bottas would spend the remainder of the race fighting Ricciardo for fourth place, slithering around on his expiring rubber. He was spared the task of taking on two Red Bulls by Verstappen's late retirement.

Vettel crossed the line 2.2s ahead of Hamilton, followed by Räikkönen, who mumbled a post-race *mea culpa* when questioned about the incident on the first lap. Mercedes boss Wolff was more forthright, suggesting it was "deliberate or incompetence".

So the sun set on the British GP with Vettel eight points ahead of Hamilton in the drivers' championship. "We take it on the chin," said Lewis. "We keep pushing hard and never give up."



| | | | |
|------|-------------------|-------------|-----------------|
| 1st | Sebastian Vettel | Ferrari | 1h 27m 29.784s |
| 2nd | Lewis Hamilton | Mercedes | +2.264s |
| 3rd | Kimi Räikkönen | Ferrari | +3.652s |
| 4th | Valtteri Bottas | Mercedes | +8.883s |
| 5th | Daniel Ricciardo | Red Bull | +9.500s |
| 6th | Nico Hülkenberg | Renault | +28.220s |
| 7th | Esteban Ocon | Force India | +29.930s |
| 8th | Fernando Alonso | McLaren | +31.115s |
| 9th | Kevin Magnussen | Haas | +33.188s |
| 10th | Sergio Pérez | Force India | +34.708s |
| 11th | Stoffel Vandoorne | McLaren | +35.774s |
| 12th | Lance Stroll | Williams | +38.106s |
| 13th | Pierre Gasly | Toro Rosso | +39.129s* |
| 14th | Sergey Sirotkin | Williams | +48.113s |
| 15th | Max Verstappen | Red Bull | +6 laps/gearbox |

Retirements

| | | |
|-----------------|------------|-----------------------|
| Romain Grosjean | Haas | 37 laps - collision |
| Carlos Sainz | Renault | 37 laps - collision |
| Marcus Ericsson | Sauber | 31 laps - accident |
| Charles Leclerc | Sauber | 18 laps - loose wheel |
| Brendon Hartley | Toro Rosso | 1 lap - mechanical |

*Includes 5-sec penalty for causing a collision

FASTEST LAP



Sebastian Vettel,
1min 30.696s on lap 47

FASTEST PITSTOP



Lance Stroll,
27.774s (entry to exit)

TYRE COMPOUNDS USED



CLIMATE

Sunny

AIR TEMP

29°C

TRACK TEMP

54°C

DRIVERS' STANDINGS

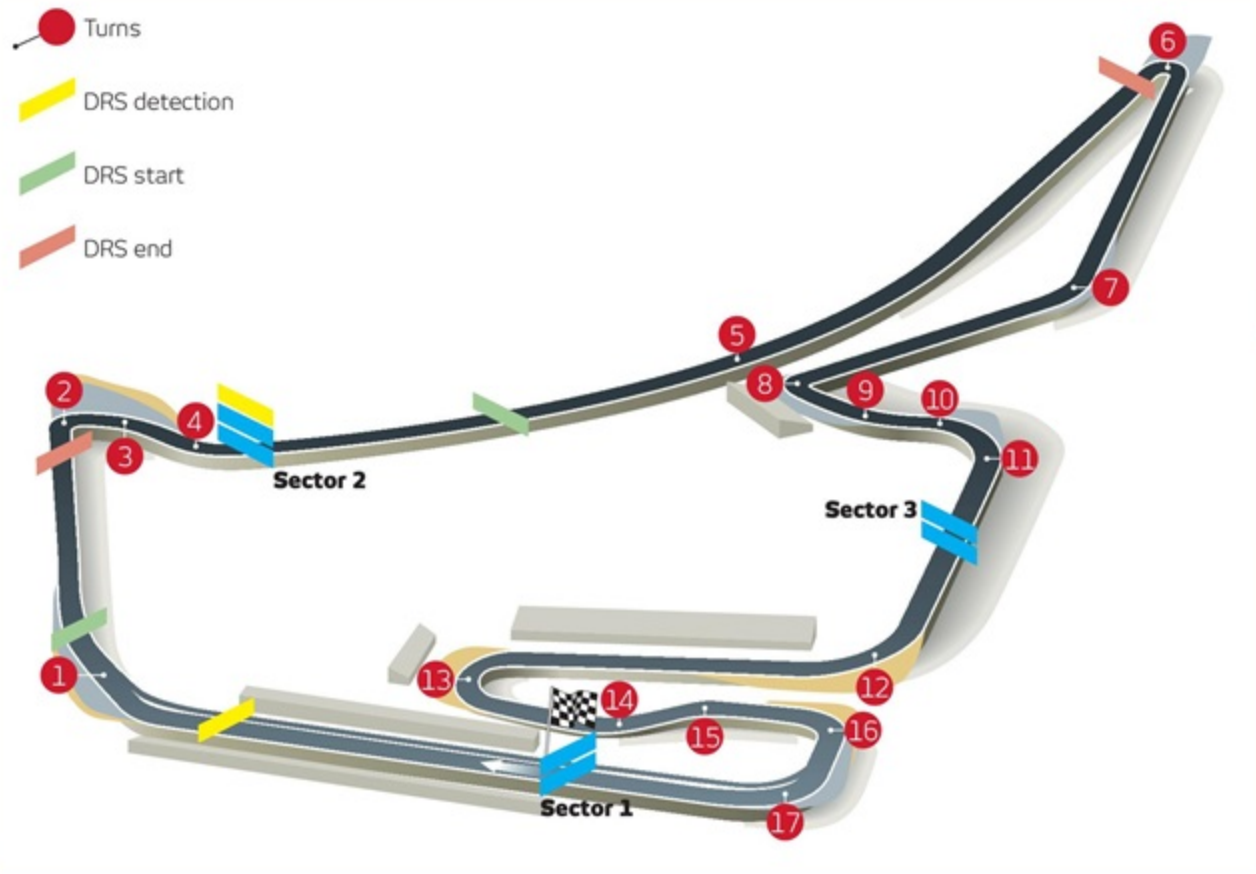
| | | | |
|--------------|--------|--------------|-------|
| 1 Vettel | 171pts | 11 Ocon | 25pts |
| 2 Hamilton | 163pts | 12 Pérez | 24pts |
| 3 Räikkönen | 116pts | 13 Gasly | 18pts |
| 4 Ricciardo | 106pts | 14 Leclerc | 13pts |
| 5 Bottas | 104pts | 15 Grosjean | 12pts |
| 6 Verstappen | 93pts | 16 Vandoorne | 8pts |
| 7 Hülkenberg | 42pts | 17 Stroll | 4pts |
| 8 Alonso | 40pts | 18 Ericsson | 3pts |
| 9 Magnussen | 39pts | 19 Hartley | 1pt |
| 10 Sainz | 28pts | 20 Sirotkin | 0pts |





FINISHING STRAIGHT

THE GERMAN GP



RACE DATA

Circuit name Hockenheimring
First grand prix 1970
Number of laps 67
Circuit length 2.84 miles
Race distance 190.42 miles
Lap record 1m 13.780s
 Kimi Räikkönen (2004)
F1 races held 35
Winners from pole 18
Tyres Ultrasoft, soft, medium

TIMETABLE (UK TIME)

Friday 20 July
Practice 1 10.00-11.30
Practice 2 14.00-15.30
Saturday 21 July
Practice 3 11.00-12.00
Qualifying 14.00-15.00
Sunday 22 July
Race 14.10
Live coverage Sky Sports F1
Highlights Channel 4

THE MAIN EVENT



The Hockenheimring can trace its origins to 1932, when this corner of southern Germany first hosted races on a sprawling triangular road course linking Hockenheim with its neighbouring towns. The present 2.8-mile layout dates from 2002, when F1 circuit architect Hermann Tilke was brought in to cut out the long straights and concentrate the action in the stadium section where spectators could see it.

In Michael Schumacher's Ferrari pomp the stands were a sea of red. Numbers have dropped in the interim, but Max Verstappen lures a substantial and ever-growing orange contingent. There's also plenty of Mercedes employees, too, since the company's HQ is in nearby Stuttgart.

The circuit is predominantly a rapid-fire combination of slow and medium-speed corners, with one long, curving straight that terminates in a hairpin. Tyre strategy will be a bigger factor than usual since Hockenheim only hosts the race biennially, so Pirelli has less data available, and this will be the first F1 event here with the new generation of cars.

CLASSIC RACE: 2000

This was the year that kickstarted Michael Schumacher's five-year domination of F1, but this particular race was all about Ferrari team-mate Rubens Barrichello. The Brazilian only qualified 18th, after his car developed a problem, but made up eight places alone on the first lap. He was aided by a Safety Car when a disgruntled Mercedes-Benz employee encroached onto the track, but it was the decision to stay out on slicks after leader Mika Häkkinen pitted for wets with 10 laps to go that proved crucial.



It propelled him into the lead and although the final laps were tense, Barrichello held on for his first F1 victory. And there were tears. Lots of them...

THE WINNERS HERE...

| | | | | |
|----------------|--------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------------|
| | | | | |
| 2016 | 2014 | 2012 | 2010 | 2008 |
| Lewis Hamilton | Nico Rosberg | Fernando Alonso | Fernando Alonso | Lewis Hamilton |
| Mercedes | Mercedes | Ferrari | Ferrari | McLaren |

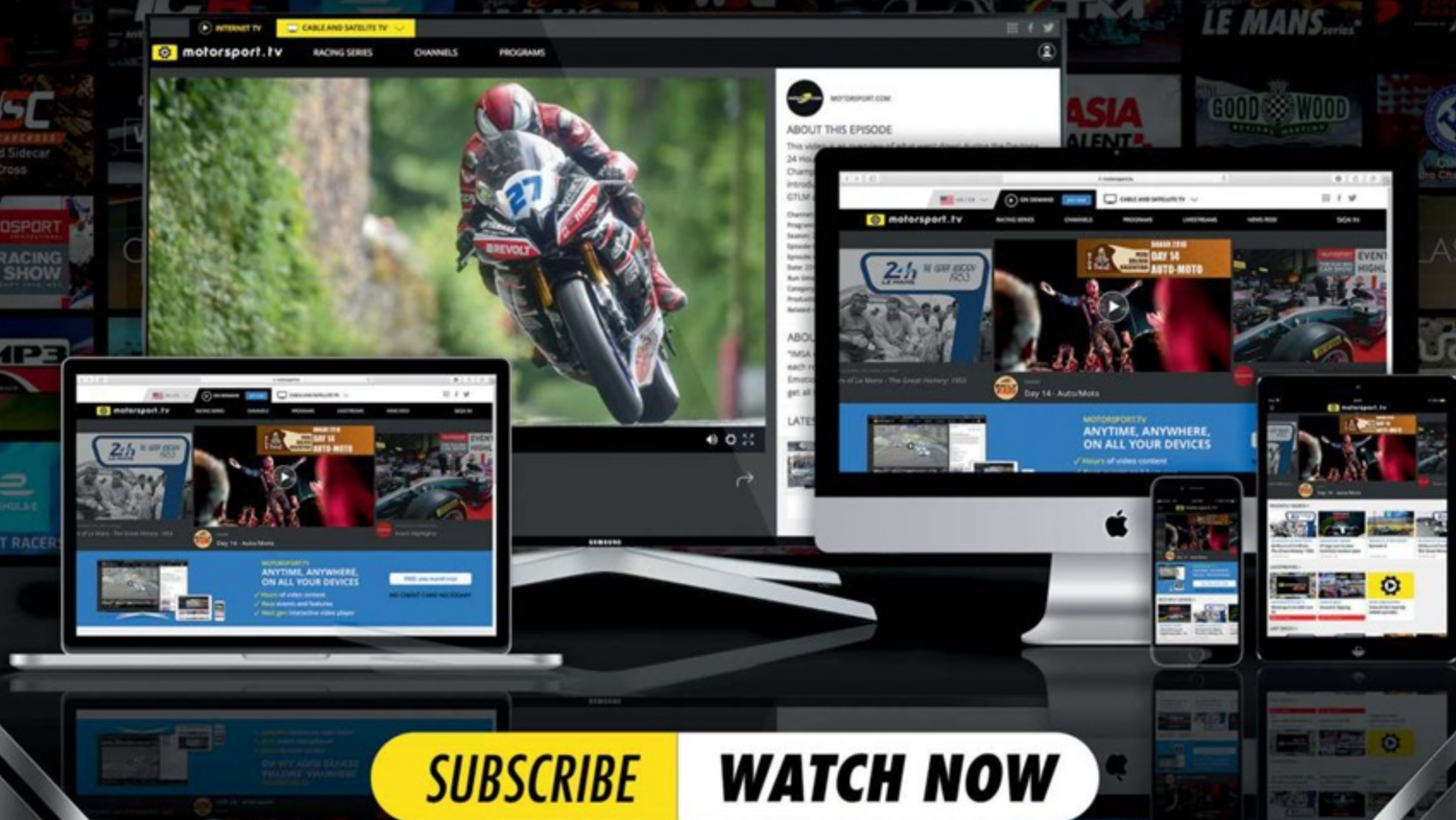


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FINISHING STRAIGHT

THE HUNGARIAN GP



RACE DATA

Circuit name Hungaroring
First grand prix 1986
Number of laps 70
Circuit length 2.72 miles
Race distance 190.53 miles
Lap record 1m 19.071s
 Michael Schumacher (2004)
F1 races held 32
Winners from pole 14
Tyres Ultrasoft, soft, medium

TIMETABLE (UK TIME)

Friday 27 July
Practice 1 10.00-11.30
Practice 2 14.00-15.30
Saturday 28 July
Practice 3 11.00-12.00
Qualifying 14.00-15.00
Sunday 29 July
Race 14.10
Live coverage Sky Sports F1
Highlights Channel 4

THE MAIN EVENT



Widely derided for many years on account of it being a tough track on which to overtake, the Hungaroring has undergone a renaissance in recent seasons. Nearby Budapest is a vibrant tourist destination, easily accessible by air, and the track's compact layout within a natural amphitheatre makes it fan-friendly. The racing has been good, too, thanks to occasionally unpredictable weather and the performance characteristics of the Pirelli tyres.

Strategy could be a factor again this year since Pirelli are skipping a step in compound, as they did in China and will do in Germany, bringing the medium, soft and ultrasoft. This introduces the possibility of teams trying alternative strategies, which worked very well for Red Bull in China.

There's every chance of a similar scenario here, too. There's still just one big braking area, which tempts drivers to chance it – last year Max Verstappen took out teammate Daniel Ricciardo early on, while Kevin Magnussen biffed Nico Hülkenberg off the track in the later stages.

CLASSIC RACE: 1989

It takes a lot to win over Ferrari's legion of fans but this race enshrined Nigel Mansell's place in Scuderia history. On a track still in its infancy and difficult to overtake on, Mansell qualified 12th and, through some good fortune and a lot of guts, was on the tail of race leader Ayrton Senna by lap 53. The extra power in Senna's McLaren-Honda should have resulted in victory from there but when the pair caught backmarker Stefan Johansson exiting turn 3 on lap 58, Senna hesitated and Mansell's greater momentum allowed him past. Mansell then pulled away with ease and had nearly a half a minute advantage over the Brazilian at the flag.



THE WINNERS HERE...



2017
Sebastian Vettel
Ferrari



2016
Lewis Hamilton
Mercedes



2015
Sebastian Vettel
Ferrari



2014
Daniel Ricciardo
Red Bull



2013
Lewis Hamilton
Mercedes

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The Hungaroring hosts the last race before Formula 1's summer break



LAT IMAGES: ZAK MAUGER; ANDY HONE; OTHER PHOTOS: SHUTTERSTOCK

VISIT THE HUNGARIAN GRAND PRIX

BUDAPEST, HUNGARY, 27-29 JULY 2018

YOUR GUIDE TO BUDAPEST

The Hungaroring circuit, located approximately 30 kilometres from Budapest, has hosted the Hungarian Grand Prix every year since the race's inception in 1986. While the racing takes place in Pest county, the teams and visitors to the grand prix base themselves on the banks of the Danube in one of Europe's most beautiful cities.

Budapest is an amalgamation of three of Europe's oldest conurbations and was established in 1873 when Buda and Óbuda, in the hills to the west of the river, officially unified with Pest on the plateau to the east.

Budapest is a city you can easily enjoy on foot and as you walk around you'll be struck by the mix of Austro-Hungarian and Soviet architecture. As you move through the densely urban Pest, you'll see grey buildings tower over bustling streets, while hidden away in side streets are the famed 'ruin bars', an example of the new, young population of the city taking ownership over their country's turbulent past.

Inside former tower blocks, factories and offices are now the trendiest bars in town. Take a seat in a former living room, CEO's office or foreman's store, all of which have been decked

out as a modern hipster haunt.

If you head towards the River Danube and emerge from the towering structures of modern Pest, you'll be greeted with a panorama of the scenic and historical Buda on the hills on the opposite side of the river.

On the water's edge are the Hungarian Houses of Parliament – which are well worth a visit. Open to visitors from 8am to 6pm, the country's seat of power is a magnificent sight comprising four towers and a central dome. The clean cream outer walls sit underneath a deep red tiled roof making for a spectacular sight – head down on



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Sport**

Budapest and the River Danube look spectacular at night



The Fisherman's Bastion is a must-see for visitors



The Széchenyi Baths are the biggest bath complex in Europe



Fernando Alonso enjoys the Hungaroring sun in 2017



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- ★ Ticket upgrades
- ★ Saturday (qualifying) circuit transfers



**ASK THE EXPERT
THE THOMAS COOK
SPORT REP'S VIEW**

Where's the best place on the circuit to spectate from?

The Silver grandstands, as well as the Red Bull stand, are all clustered around the final few turns 12-14, and they sit on a hill overlooking the end of the lap.

What do you suggest doing away from the track?

Take time to soak in Budapest, go on a tour, wander the streets, sit and watch the world go by. It's gorgeous and is certainly up there among the most stunning cities in Europe. One evening take a river cruise along the Danube or dine in one of the many good-value restaurants: you'll get an amazing meal for a fantastic price.

What local specialities do you recommend?

It has to be a pint of local beer, Sporoní, and a bowl of goulash. The beer is crisp, strong and a favourite of the Budapesti, while goulash is an amazing traditional broth-style dish that will have you coming back for more.

How long is the transfer from the city?

No long transfers here as it's less than an hour to the small town of Mogyoród which hosts the race. Just remember to bring plenty of sun cream as it was 35°C for the GP in 2017.

an evening for a remarkable view of the facade lit up against the night's sky.

Once up in the hills, you'll find the city's world-famous spas and bathhouses. Highly coveted throughout the ages by the Romans and Turks, the bathhouses are now a mainstay for the everyday citizen and tourist in the city.

Bathing became a fashionable pastime in the early 1900s and was particularly popular with the Budapest bourgeois. The Gellért Baths and Hotel, Lukács Bath and Széchenyi Baths all established themselves in the opening throes of the century, home to pools varying in

temperature from freezing up to 40°C.

And where better to end your tour than on the walls of the Fisherman's Bastion high on the Buda hills with incredible views over Pest and the fourth-largest parliament building in the world? Constructed between 1895 and 1902, the neo-gothic white-walled castle consists of seven towers and a series of high-walled battlements built into the Buda hills.

Catch a musical performance or theatrical piece in the structure's grand courtyard and then walk the walls for a perfect parting shot of the city.

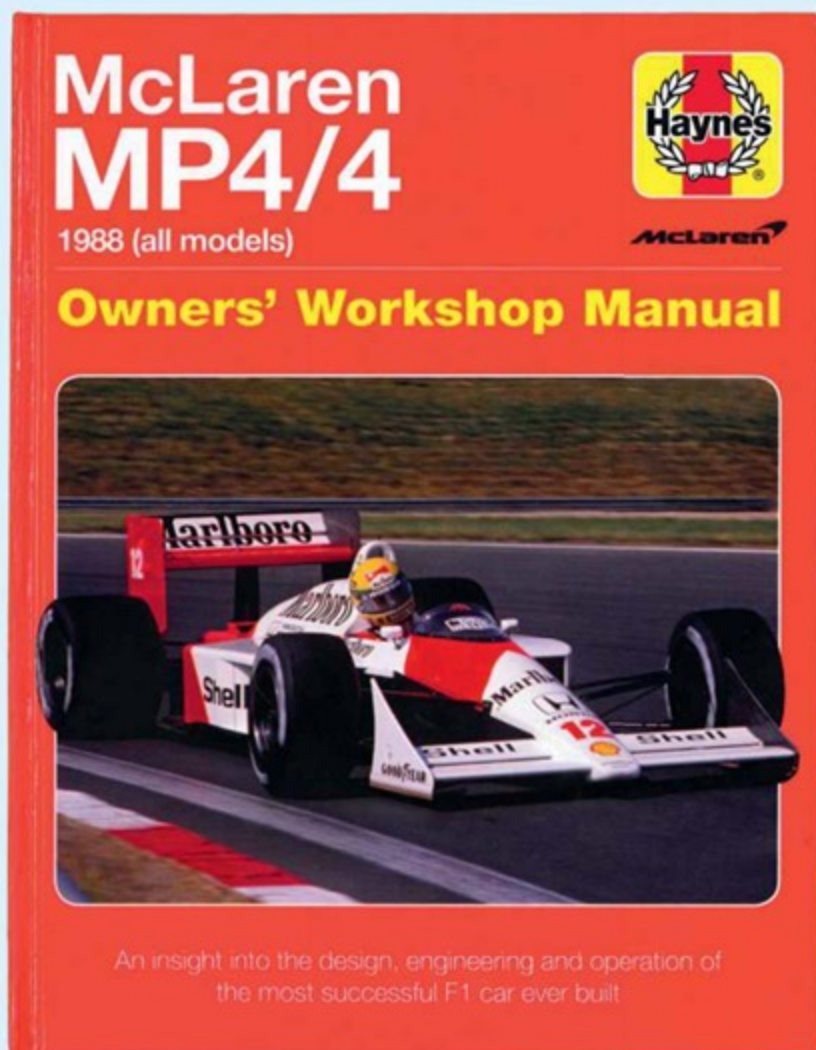


ESSENTIALS

FINISHING STRAIGHT

F1 UPGRADES

Enhance the F1 experience with the latest must-have products



McLAREN MP4/4 OWNERS' WORKSHOP MANUAL

Author Steve Rendle

Price £25

haynes.com

Haynes manuals used to be the preserve of the amateur mechanic, but since modern road cars are less user-serviceable than they used to be, the company have established a sideline in giving subjects as diverse as Hadrian's Wall and nuclear submarines the workshop manual treatment. Historic F1 cars fit the format too, and this tome focusing on the McLaren MP4/4 sits alongside

others devoted to such as the Williams FW14 and Lotus 49.

The cover – colour-matched to the Marlboro red of the car itself – sets the tone for the meticulous detail within. Author Rendle had the full co-operation of McLaren, and the result is definitive. Should you ever need to strip and rebuild an MP4/4, the torque settings for the suspension bolts are listed, plus a pictorial guide to changing the brake pads. Or you can sit back and relive the car's first test with the engineers' 'pink sheets'.

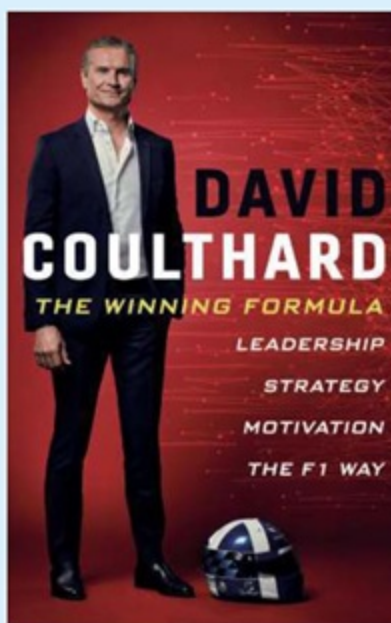
Alternatively, just read the inside story of this great F1 car as that remarkable 1988 season unfolded.

THE WINNING FORMULA

Author David Coulthard

Price £20

blinkpublishing.com



Multiple grand prix winner David Coulthard has written a new hardback book about his experiences in the sport. But this isn't a regular autobiography – he's already done one of them. Here DC imparts his wisdom about what he's learned in Formula 1 and how that can translate into successful business strategies.

In *The Winning Formula: Leadership, Strategy, Motivation - The F1 Way* he explains how he's channelled his racing experience (with Williams, McLaren and Red Bull) into entrepreneurial decisions in the context of his own business empire, which includes consultancy work and an award-winning media production company. Coulthard explains how the characters he has met along the way, including Sir Frank Williams and Ron Dennis, have helped him be successful in his own right, developing his work ethic and a knowledge of how to maximise the potential of his own abilities. The secrets of DC's success are all here...

CASIO EDIFICE EFR-559TR-2A

Price £199.00

casio-intl.com



As part of their partnership with Toro Rosso, last month Casio unveiled four new Edifice watch models in a limited edition Formula 1 range. All of them sport blue, silver and red as a nod to the collaboration with the Red Bull junior team.

The model with the code EFR-559TR features a sporty design with a retrograde dial between 9 and 10 o'clock. Weighing in at 181g, the chronograph is also water resistant to a depth of 100 metres.

The EFS-S520TR version, meanwhile, is a solar-powered chronograph with a dial made from carbon fibre. Other models in the range, such as the EQB-900TR-2A, include Bluetooth technology which allows the watch to keep accurate time anywhere in the world by automatically connecting four times a day to a time server through a paired smartphone.



SERENGETI SUNGLASSES

Price £159-179

serengeti-eyewear.com



To coincide with the 86th running of the Le Mans 24 Hours, Serengeti have launched five new models of '24H' limited-edition sunglasses.

The models are available in various colours built around Serengeti's Polar PhD Trivex lens technology. The lenses claim to be 75 per cent lighter than glass and 10 per cent lighter than polycarbonate and are designed to withstand extreme impact and temperature changes, and also feature a special coating to help repel water and fingerprints.

WHO WORKS IN FORMULA 1 2018

Author François-Michel Grégoire

Price £69

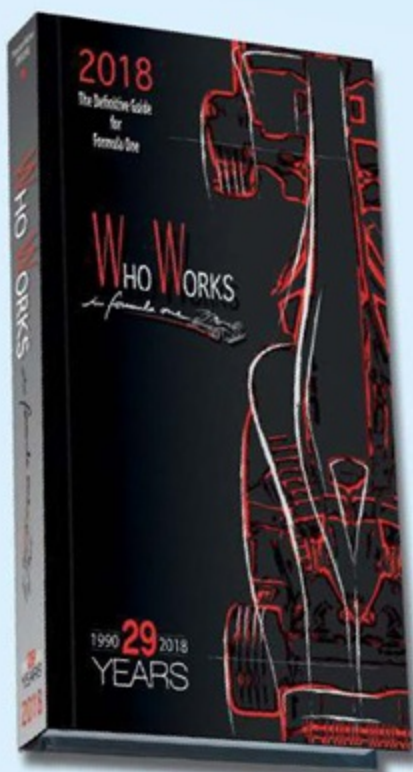
whoworksin.com

'Who Works in Formula 1', now into its 29th year of publication, is an indispensable guide to the companies and individuals who work within the Formula 1 business. Covering everyone from sponsors and suppliers to officials, engineers and marketing, PRs, and even journalists and photographers, this is the updated version for the 2018 Formula 1 season.

Think of it as the 'Yellow Pages' of F1 where you can look up everyone from the logistics manager of Renault to the address of the Alpinestars race clothing company in Italy.

Not only are contact details provided, but there are also handy CVs of key people, offering a great insight into the experience required to get to the top of the sport. But please note – you won't find contact details for any drivers in this or any edition of the book.

This invaluable reference book runs to 740 pages and has around 3,500 colour portrait pictures. In addition, a digital app and e-Book are also available.



THE RINGMASTER

Author Toby Vintcent

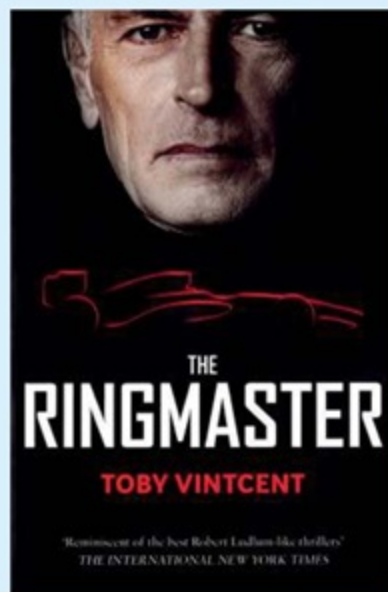
Price £8.99

arcadiabooks.co.uk

Formula 1 fans seeking a made-up yarn within the world of grand prix racing need look no further than Toby Vintcent's third fictional novel. Following on from his previous titles *Driven* (2014) and *Crash* (2016), *The Ringmaster* tells the story of how a brilliant entrepreneur realised the commercial potential of Formula 1 and managed the challenges of the cut-throat politics of the business.

Vintcent's background is not in motor racing as he served as an officer in the British Army 16th/5th The Queen's Royal Lancers, but he seems to be carving out a niche for himself with his F1 novels.

While *The Ringmaster* has certain parallels with the real-life story of how the control of Formula 1 came to be in the hands of one man, and Vintcent does include some authentic elements in the book, such as the FIA, the author's work is purely fictional and inspired by the sport's off-track politics. In paperback the book stretches to over 500 pages and if you enjoyed Vintcent's previous two titles, then this is for you.



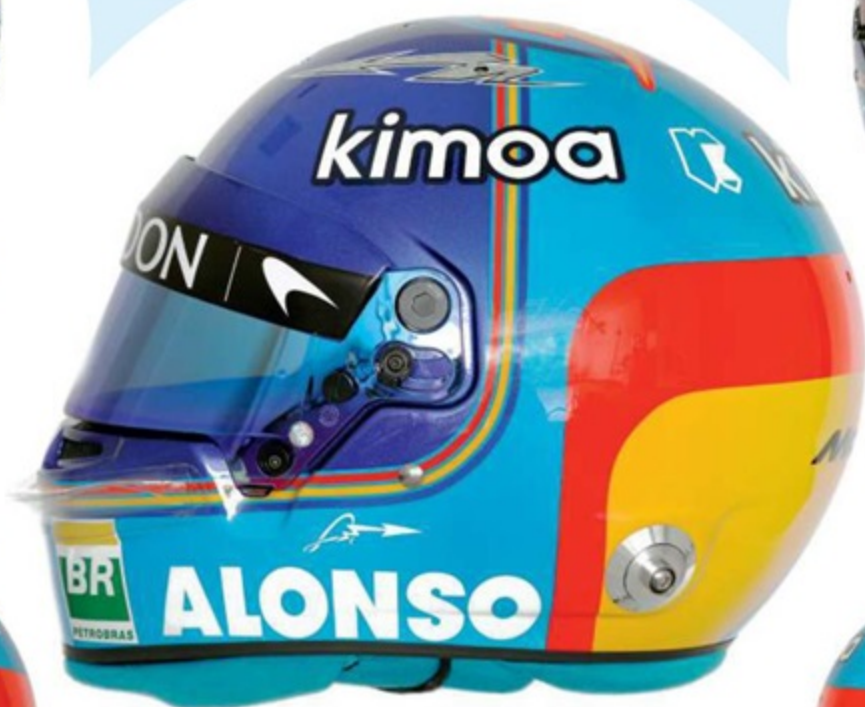


FERNANDO ALONSO ME AND MY LID

Combining his favourite colours with team requirements can be tricky but that hasn't stopped Alonso coming up with a new design for 2018



LAT IMAGES; STEVEN TEE; OTHER PICTURES: McLAREN



Your helmet design is part of your identity, so although I've altered the details of the design all through my career, I always use the same basic four colours: the dark blue, light blue, the red and the yellow. Those colours represent my region – Asturias – and also the Spanish flag.

How you combine these four colours is always difficult because you need to put the sponsors on it as well, so there are always requirements from the team, but it's good fun every season to design your own helmet, and make different little touches to it.

I've also worked very closely with Bell, my helmet supplier, to make one-off designs for some specific races – reflective ones for night races, one with added black for the Indianapolis 500 we did last year, one for Daytona and yet another for Le Mans.

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