

INSIDE ESSENTIAL 12-PAGE BTCC GUIDE

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MALAYSIAN GP PREVIEW

WHY LEWIS MUST HIT BACK NOW

AUTOSPORT ANALYSIS

Stats show race-two points lead is crucial to title success

CAN ANYONE STOP MERCEDES?

Williams and Red Bull lead charge to beat Silver Arrows

PLUS

AUDI'S SURPRISE LE MANS RACER

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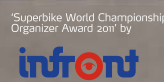


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POLE POSITION

Attention on Hamilton – and the BTCC opener

IT WOULD BE CRAZY TO SUGGEST THAT LEWIS

Hamilton has to win in Malaysia this weekend to retain his hopes of taking the 2014 F1 crown. There will still be 17 rounds to go, after all.

But he does need to get a decent score on the board sooner rather than later. As Edd Straw shows on page 20, the title normally goes to the driver who makes the early running.

If Nico Rosberg is able to build a cushion, it could be difficult for Hamilton to claw the deficit back from a driver with the same equipment. Especially if Mercedes loses its advantage over the rest of the field and needs to pick someone to focus its title push upon. As our analysis shows, there are several teams who could soon close the gap.

A very different kind of contest kicks off at Brands Hatch this weekend. The British Touring Car Championship has always provided some good wheel-to-wheel action, but this year's offering could be the best for some time.

Seven champions, 13 race winners and an entry of 31 mean just breaking into the top 10 will be an achievement this season. Starting on p40, we speak to the main contenders in our preview, as well as hearing from the man behind it all, series boss Alan Gow.

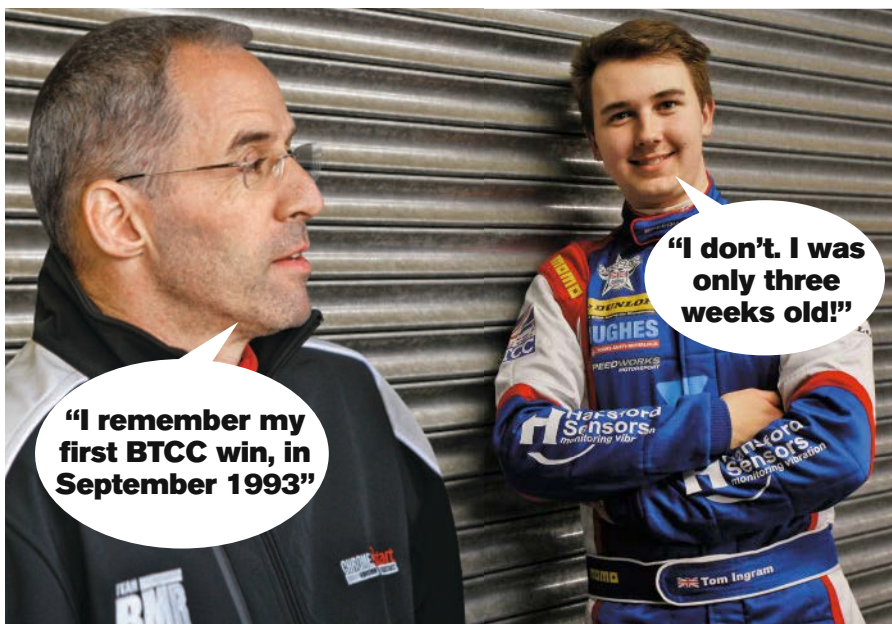


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PRIVATE EAR



"I remember my first BTCC win, in September 1993"

"I don't. I was only three weeks old!"

FIND US ON



Cover Images: Dunbar/LAT

PIT & Paddock

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Series boss acclaims NGTC as field bursts at seams

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OK, it's not a Stuttgart effort, but it could be a winner

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The full 31-car entry that will fight it out at Brands

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THE BIG PICTURE

Sportscar legend Tom Kristensen drove Audi's new R18 from Le Mans city centre to the circuit this week as the German firm officially unveiled its 2014 LMP1 livery

➔ P36 AUDI ON THE R18







THE BIG PICTURE

The racing will probably be this tight too! The BMW of Colin Turkington gets close to Andrew Jordan's Honda at the British Touring Car media day at Donington Park

 P40 BTCC PREVIEW



THE BIG PICTURE

Toyota started testing its Yaris World Rally Car in Italy last week, but maintains it will not be entering the World Rally Championship until 2017 at the earliest

➔ P34 FUTURE OF THE WRC





This week in F1

ROBERTSON/GETTY



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RED BULL HEARING AFTER BAHRAIN

Red Bull's appeal against Daniel Ricciardo's disqualification from the Australian Grand Prix will be heard on April 14 – after the third round in Bahrain.

Ricciardo was excluded from second place for consistently exceeding the maximum fuel-flow rate of 100kg/h in Melbourne. Red Bull lodged its notification of

intent to appeal shortly after the decision, and confirmed that it would be doing so last Thursday.

Red Bull is expected to build its case around its belief that it did not at any point exceed the fuel-flow limit. The FIA stewards confirmed in the statement issued when Ricciardo was excluded that there were inaccuracies in the fuel-flow meters. But the FIA had

put a mechanism in place whereby teams had to use an offset to compensate. Red Bull opted to use its own fuel-flow data instead.

As the Malaysian and Bahrain GPs will be held before the hearing, Red Bull must decide whether to continue to use its own readings, running the risk of further exclusions, or to comply with the FIA's offset.

REMEMBER WHEN



The last time a post-race penalty was overturned after the Australian Grand Prix was in 2009. Jarno Trulli finished third, but was penalised for overtaking Lewis Hamilton under the safety car. When it emerged Hamilton and McLaren had misled the stewards about letting Trulli past, Hamilton was disqualified and the Italian reinstated four days later.

ETHERINGTON/LAT



Sensor firm claims FIA backing

Gill Sensors, which supplies the FIA-homologated fuel-flow meters to Formula 1 teams, insists it has the full backing of the FIA after the exclusion of Red Bull in Australia. A statement said: "Following the Australian GP last weekend, the FIA

have provided Gill Sensors with positive feedback on the performance of the fuel-flow meter, confirming their confidence in the development and stating the meters meet the FIA's accuracy specification."

COATES/LAT



Renault: Mercedes is catchable

Renault head of track operations Remi Taffin believes the French engine builder can soon close the gap to Mercedes. "We

know how far away we are and we know what we can achieve for the next race to fill the gap," he said.

F1 teams open to noise debate

Formula 1 team bosses insist that the sport should be open to improving the noise of the 2014 cars if fans want to see a change. Mercedes motorsport chief Toto Wolff said: "If we agree that there should be something done on sound, then one should look into it."

FERRAROLI/LAT



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TEE/LAT

McLaren eyes half a second

McLaren Group CEO Ron Dennis believes his team will be half a second per lap faster thanks to upgrades for this weekend's Malaysian Grand Prix.

The Woking squad leads the constructors' championship thanks to Kevin Magnussen and Jenson Button finishing second and third in Australia. But the car's performance is still some way off pacesetter Mercedes.

"What we intend to be, as fast as possible, is a winning grand prix team," said Dennis. "We are confident that we will be half a second quicker at the next grand prix, for a variety of reasons. That will not be enough to achieve our goal but it will keep the pressure on those teams that are chasing us [in the points]."

Racing director Eric Boullier believes that Mercedes has a speed advantage of "between half and three quarters of a second over the rest of the field". But as McLaren was not at the front of the chasing pack in Melbourne on pace, its deficit appears to be closer to a second.



HONE/LAT

EXPECT MORE FROM TYRES

F1 tyre supplier Pirelli believes teams have yet to get the maximum performance out of the 2014-spec control rubber. Racing chief Paul Hembery said: "They have been focused on a lot of other factors and we will see more and more work going into getting the tyre/chassis working together to improve front-to-rear balance."



FERRARO/LAT

Raikkonen unhappy with his brake-by-wire

Kimi Raikkonen has blamed Ferrari's brake-by-wire system for his struggles so far this season.

"We identified some general problems which we have to tackle in Maranello and there are other

aspects linked to the set-up on my car to do with the brake-by-wire system," he said.

Bottas: Williams 'different team'

Valtteri Bottas believes the Williams team has been transformed over the winter following a dire 2013 season. "It's a

different team now," he said. "We already have more points than last year and the car is so much quicker compared to the others."



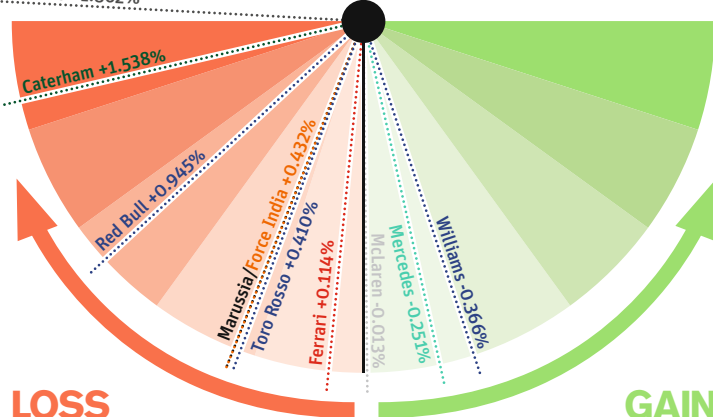
WORK TO DO WITH VJM07

Force India deputy team principal Bob Fernley has admitted that the team was disappointed with its showing in the Australian GP, in which Nico Hulkenberg finished sixth after the disqualification of Daniel Ricciardo. "We didn't quite have the race pace we would have liked, so we've got a bit of work to do," said Fernley.

PACE COMPARISON: 2013 v 2014

Based on the Australian GP, Williams is the team that has taken the biggest step forward in relation to last year. It is one of only three squads to have improved relative to the outright pace compared to its 2013 average.

Sauber +1.862%



LOTUS IN TROUBLE

'Team Enstone' has started 2014 so badly that its +4.126 per cent swing busts our scale above.



- Williams
- Mercedes
- McLaren
- Ferrari
- Toro Rosso
- Marussia
- Force India
- Red Bull
- Caterham
- Sauber
- Lotus

MILESTONE

Hulkenberg's sixth place in Australia was Force India's best result in a season opener. The last time the team finished in as strong or better a position was in its Jordan guise in 2001, when Heinz-Harald Frentzen finished fifth in Melbourne (below).



ETHERINGTON/LAT



Le Mans 24hrs Since 1984



Having Competed 12 times in the Le Mans 24hrs, **Almo Coppelli** has been involved in Motorsport for over 35 years. From the beginning of his long illustrious career to racing at Le Mans, where he achieved 2 lap records in the GT2 Class and finished 2nd in LMP1, Almo's journey has been one of determination and passion. He has learned both his race craft and many life lessons along the way. This has culminated to a full international professional career at the very top of the sport as a driver and VIP Racing Driver Coach, as well as an experienced Motorsport Consultant.

Almo now looks to the future with a programme which has taken over 20 years to develop and bring to fruition.

Discussing his journey from Silverstone to Le Mans, he says:

“ I have been thinking and working on this very special and super exclusive programme since taking part in the Le Mans 24. Now after all my experiences, ‘Silverstone To Le Mans’ Ltd by Almo Coppelli has become a reality. Coaching in the car from day 1 is my full responsibility. Silverstone to Le Mans is NOT just a concept but a way to live for 4 years...



**NO PAIN
NO GAIN**





Jonathan Noble

F1's newshound

The clamour over F1 2014's muted engines should not be allowed to become a distraction – the sport had to change to stay relevant

The sale of rose-tinted spectacles must have gone through the roof in Formula 1 circles in recent days. Such has been the outpouring of derision from fans, the sport's promoters and some circuit owners about the current cars' lack of sound, you'd have been forgiven for thinking the sport had left an era of brilliance to return to the dark ages.

It's clear some think that having a new competitive order in F1, cars that are faster in a straight line and more sideways in the corners, machinery that allows rookies to match their more experienced rivals, and technology that's got car makers and sponsors excited again, are unimportant.

Instead, those shouting the loudest think F1 is ruined solely because we no longer need to wear earplugs to drown out the noise of the engines. It seems they would have much preferred to stick with the V8s.

But if we pause for a moment and consider what would have happened to F1 if the new regulations had been ditched, the answer is simple: we would be in a whole heap of trouble right now.

For a start, carrying on with the V8s would have prompted an engine crisis. As car makers push on with selling products that are more environmentally friendly, the ever-increasing expenditure on an F1 using frozen-spec V8 engines with no relevance to road cars was becoming ever harder to justify.



of rules would have changed anything in competitive terms from last year either. Judging by the aerodynamic brilliance of the current RB10, whichever of the V8s Red Bull had got hold of would have been enough to keep the Sebastian Vettel steamroller going.

So Melbourne may well have delivered the German's 10th consecutive victory. Worse than that, it would probably have been a boring procession too, because let's not forget that Pirelli is being ultra-conservative this year to ensure that its tyres are no

“If the new regulations had been ditched, we would be in a whole heap of trouble right now”

It's no secret that Renault would have pulled out of the sport if the new rules had not come in to play, which would have meant a scramble for Red Bull, Lotus, Toro Rosso and Caterham to find replacement engines.

Mercedes and Ferrari may have been able to expand their supply deals a little, but they would certainly have been under no obligation to do so. And it would not have been so easy to persuade Cosworth to bring its F1 engine operation back into life.

Even if F1 had been able to muddle through, alarm bells would have been ringing about its longer term sustainability, for the levels of interest from other manufacturers to step in were pretty much zero since the last car-maker exodus.

So we can rest assured that the future McLaren-Honda partnership would definitely not be happening if we had V8s rather than the new hybrid turbos.

Beyond the shaky engine situation, there's little reason to think that carrying on with the old generation

longer a talking point.

A boring race and another Vettel win would have given many followers of the sport reason enough to switch off, irrespective of the noise and certainly not withstanding desperate measures like double points.

No one is pretending that some F1 fans don't need winning over about the pleasures that the new engine sounds bring trackside, but the sport's boss has a duty to help the situation and not join in the criticism.

How about moving the trackside microphones closer to the action, and making any necessary tweaks, so the fans at home get a real audible treat?

I will miss the sound of the V8s, just as I miss the V10s and the V12s, but that's no reason to moan about what we have now.

F1 has to move with the times, and I would much rather be looking through sunglasses to a brighter future than peering through rose-tinted spectacles at a skewed perspective of the past. ❧

This week in motorsport

PEUGEOT TO RETURN TO DAKAR WITH SAINZ AND PETERHANSEL

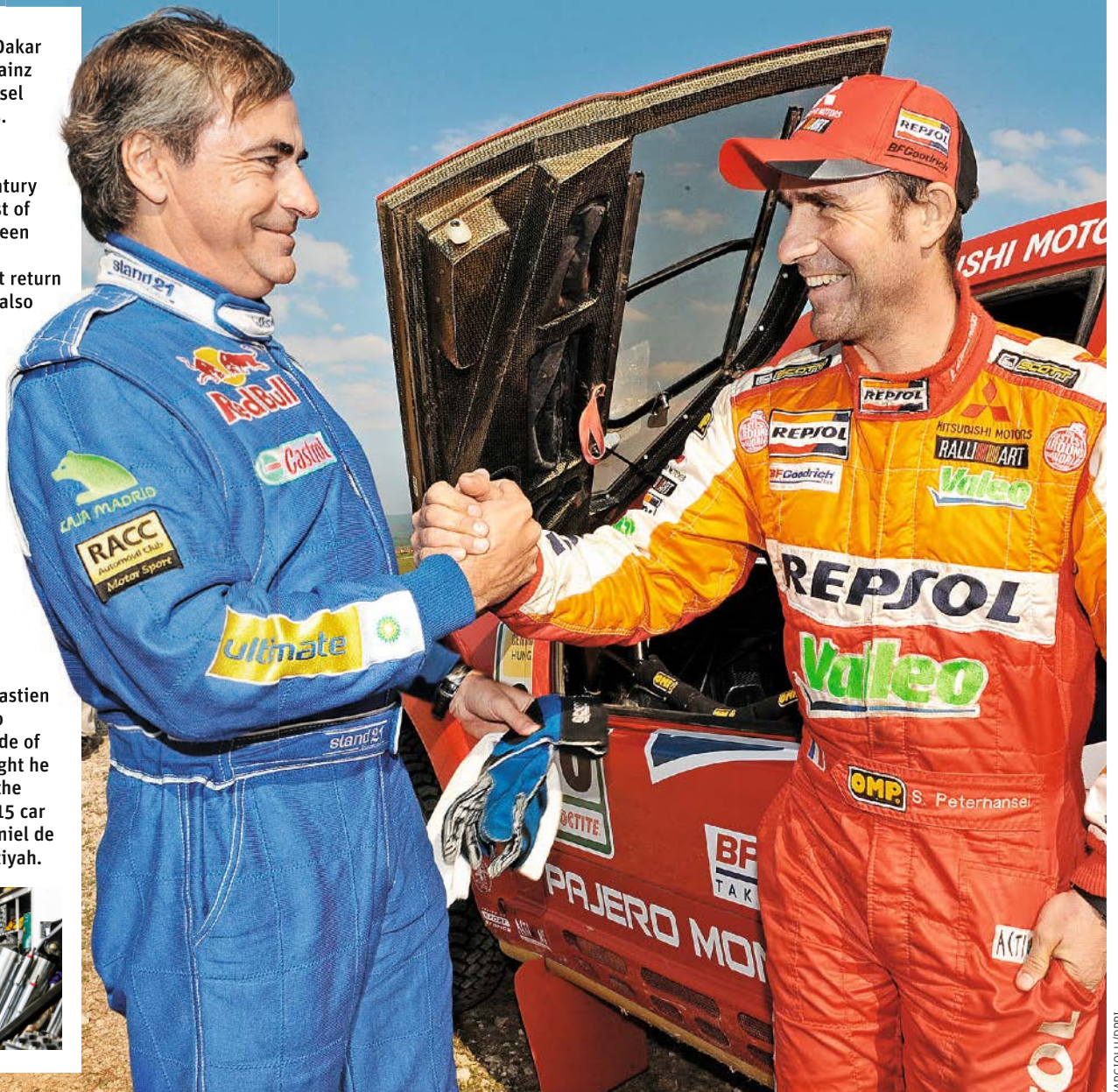
Peugeot will return to Dakar next year with Carlos Sainz and Stephane Peterhansel driving its new buggies.

The French firm will return to the marathon event a quarter of a century after it captured the last of four straight wins between 1987 and 1990.

Peugeot's triumphant return to Pikes Peak last year also came 25 years after Ari Vatanen's famous victory in the 405 T16.

Sainz and Peterhansel, who have collectively won the Dakar Rally 12 times, were both due to be announced as Peugeot drivers this week. The outfit's 208-based buggy will begin testing in Europe soon, before moving into Africa in June for desert running.

Speculation that Sebastien Loeb (below) could also compete looks to be wide of the mark, but it is thought he could join Peugeot for the 2016 event. A third 2015 car could be entered for Giniel de Villiers or Nasser Al-Attiyah.

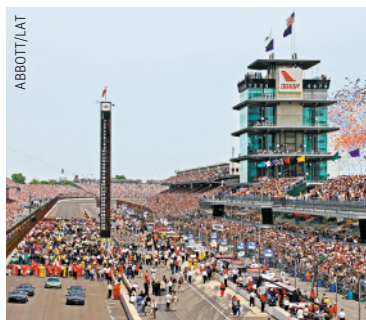


VARGIOLU/DPP/

16

IndyCar doubles 500-miler points

IndyCar has doubled the points awarded for its Indianapolis, Pocono and Fontana 500-mile races. The series has also dropped the practice of applying grid penalties for engine changes as part of a broad rules overhaul for 2014, and is talking to event organisers in Brasilia about a possible return to Brazil in 2015.



ABBOTT/LAT

Trulli joins Formula E shortlist

Jarno Trulli has hinted at a motorsport comeback after signing up for the Formula E drivers' club initiative, along with fellow ex-F1 racers Nick Heidfeld and Jerome d'Ambrosio, and GP2 racewinner Sam Bird. Trulli has not raced since parting with Caterham on the eve of the 2012 F1 season.



COATES/LAT

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I'm over the moon. To get the news that I will be out there is thrilling



A delighted Mat Jackson sealed a late deal to race in the BTCC with Motorbase

Merhi, Stanaway test with Status

DTM refugee Roberto Merhi and sportscar racer Richie Stanaway will both test for GP3 team Status this week at Estoril as they eye single-seater returns. Mercedes-contracted Merhi, who has also been testing in FR3.5, will take over from Stanaway after the first day. Nick Yelloly is the team's only confirmed driver for 2014.



Carlin could take FR3.5 sabbatical

Carlin is prepared to take a sabbatical from Formula Renault 3.5 if it cannot put together a suitable financial package with drivers for the 2014 season. The team, which took Mikhail

Aleshin and Robert Wickens to the 2010 and '11 titles, has missed both official pre-season tests this winter. "We want to do it, but not at any cost," team boss Trevor Carlin told AUTOSPORT.

In brief



NEW INDY LIGHTS CAR

Dallara recently began testing a windtunnel model of the 2015 Indy Lights car (above) at its base in Italy. The current Lights car has been in service since 2002.

LEIMER TO REBELLION

Reigning GP2 champion Fabio Leimer is on the verge of a deal to switch to sportscar racing with a drive for Rebellion Racing in this year's WEC.

ONYX WITHDRAWS

Onyx Racing has been forced to abandon its plans to enter the WTCC this year. Mike Earle had reformed the ex-F1 squad in January with the aim of embarking upon a five-year project in the series.

TAPPY'S BENTLEY DEAL

British sportscar driver Duncan Tappy is closing on a drive with Bentley in this year's Blancpain Endurance Series. Eleven drivers tested for the three vacant seats in the second Continental GT3, but Tappy was the only man invited back.

CHAMPIONS TO BSS

Former FIA GT1 world champions Marc Basseng and Markus Winkelhock will return to the championship, in its latest guise as the Blancpain Sprint Series, with the Phoenix Audi team.

HURST INTO EURO F3

Ex-F2 racer Hector Hurst will step up into this year's Formula 3 European Championship with Team West-Tec.



New Strakka Dome P2 coupe tests

The Nissan-engined Strakka Dome S103 recently completed its first miles at Turweston aerodrome in the hands of team regulars Jonny Kane and Danny Watts, ahead of official WEC testing at Paul Ricard.

McNISH'S NEW AUDI ROLE

Newly retired World Endurance champion Allan McNish will have a dual role with Audi Sport from now on. McNish will act as a conduit of information between Audi's WEC driving squad and the manufacturer's engineers. At the same time, he will liaise with motorsporting authorities around the world on behalf of Audi.

➔ P36 2014 AUDI R18 TECH



Gene to Le Mans with Jota in P2

Audi reserve driver Marc Gene will race for the Jota Zytek LMP2 team in the Le Mans 24 Hours. The Spaniard will fill in for fellow Audi driver Filipe Albuquerque at both Le Mans and Spa,

when the Portuguese steps up from the ELMS to race Audi's third WEC R18 e-tron quattro. Gene will share the Jota Zytek-Nissan Z11SN with Harry Tincknell and Simon Dolan.

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KX Question Time is back

Coming soon to a circuit near you, KXQT will return in 2014. The fun kicks off at Brands Hatch on Saturday March 29



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The Secret Driver

Hidden truths from the paddock



Motorsport is a dog-eat-dog environment in which a driver's emotional mindset is crucial to career progression, regardless of wallet size

One of the hardest personal challenges of being successful in any industry is managing expectations, and sports men and women are no different. The modern world we live in demands results; it's all about the now. As a racing driver you have one goal and that is to be fast. Managing this appetite for success and the potential scrutiny is tough. It requires a realistic and honest approach.

Motorsport is different to most other sporting environments. In fact, it's more like Motor Business than motorsport. It's an individual sport but the environment demands a team of people to be present if you are to achieve success. This team normally consists of a parent, a manager, a trainer and a race team of professionals.

Motorsport makes no secret of the fact young drivers have to pay their way to becoming a professional, should you be part of the select few who get that far. This point alone is pivotal to a young driver's emotional mindset. A driver who carries little or no funding could be generically classed as hungry and driven, but underneath that

shaped by the environment we spend the most time in and by the individuals within. We are then dependent on others and thus who we choose to have around us is crucial towards how we develop.

We can't always choose who we have around us of course. Parents play a huge role in a young athlete's life. A parent being over-involved or under-involved can have a big effect on a youngster's emotional state. A young driver should be managing his own expectations, not the expectations of others. This is a very important aspect missed by most, especially when a driver is still developing as a human being and an athlete.

Pre-season is a particularly challenging time for drivers. For some, new relationships are quickly having to be formed with team members and engineers. A young driver must be supported in order to be themselves. Being yourself is crucial to building a stable and honest relationship with those around you. It enables you to build respect and trust.

I have watched Kevin Magnussen and McLaren throughout pre-season, and during the Australian Grand Prix weekend. What has impressed me is how quickly the relationship has blossomed, and how courageous Magnussen has been in having the strength to be himself. His goals have been realistic and he treated the biggest

“Young drivers need a strong sense of self and to be supported by a team that gives them space”

so-called drive, he or she could be racked with fear of failure. The pressure of not knowing if every time you step in the car it could be for the last time can be all-consuming. Imagine how painfully intense that pressure is for a young kid, knowing that his (or indeed, her) dream could end tomorrow.

This pressure can be a serious distraction from performance. Some drivers come with the other problem: having too much money. These individuals are in the minority but it does happen. For some drivers this can create a diluted intensity towards their focal points. Being alongside a driver fighting for survival with little funds can highlight a lack of intensity within these drivers.

The points I'm making are well documented but nevertheless universal. The most important aspect for all young drivers is whatever their personal situation, they must have a strong sense of self. This can be difficult at a young age because of your limited life experience.

At a young age we are impressionable and tend to be

weekend of his life as if it was any other. Magnussen did not arrive and try to be a grand prix driver; he has simply tried to be the best he can be. His relaxed, open and honest approach has enabled McLaren to trust him immediately and give him the space he needs to further develop as an individual.

Young drivers need to take control of their expectations by setting manageable goals. You need to have a strong sense of self and also be supported by a team that gives you the space to be yourself. Communicating your goals and expectations is very important as this enables others to be able to support your needs and gives your 'Team You' an opportunity to trust your direction.

Having a trusting environment built on respect and honesty will give you the space to embrace your vulnerability when your expectations are not met. Being vulnerable is part of the human make-up and if you can be supported through it you will be much better off than keeping it to yourself and suffering in silence. ❧



Hamilton needs top result in Malaysia

TEE/LAT

Why Hamilton needs to hit back

A non-score in the opening round isn't a disaster, but history shows any more early failures can derail a title bid. **EDD STRAW** investigates why Lewis Hamilton needs to score big in Malaysia

The world championship is decided over 19 races, not two. So to claim that Lewis Hamilton cannot win his long-awaited second title if he again fails to score in Malaysia this weekend is ludicrous. But let's say he does again suffer the misfortune of a sick engine this Sunday and team-mate Nico Rosberg wins, which is far from impossible. In just two races the whole dynamic of his season will have changed.

Why? Because there's a big difference between playing catch-up, even with almost 90 per cent of the races remaining, and being up front and in control of your own destiny. No matter how good a driver you are – and Hamilton is undoubtedly one of the very best – and how good your machinery is, being on the back foot can cause seasons to spiral out of control.

History tells us that, during the past 25 years, the driver leading the world championship after two races has gone on to win the title an astonishing 76 per cent of the time (see panel,

page 23). Statistics can be used to support the idea of patterns that aren't really there, and human beings are very good at co-opting such numbers to support their position, but this figure is significant.

You can legitimately argue that, of course, the driver leading after two races will more often than not win, as they didn't enjoy that early success without reason. That's true to a point. But F1 history is littered with examples of how those who take control early on stay in the box seat while others trip up trying to make up ground, even those who have a pace advantage. That's often not a consequence of any particular failings, but thanks to circumstances.

Hamilton is driving extremely well. He took pole position for the opening Australian Grand Prix, but was doomed in the race from the moment one of the cylinders of his 1.6-litre turbocharged V6 Mercedes engine went sick while on reconnaissance laps before joining the grid. There was nothing Hamilton could have done to prevent that and it was only luck of the draw that meant it was him, rather than Rosberg,



Rosberg (right) has the early initiative

COATES/LAT

who suffered. Had he survived, there's every chance that he, not his team-mate, would have won the race. But that doesn't mean he's insulated from the consequences.

When you're the hunter rather than the hunted, the game changes. One of the best examples of this is the 2005 European Grand Prix at the Nurburgring. That year, the McLaren was a seriously fast car and Kimi Raikkonen had the pace to beat Fernando Alonso and Renault to the world championship. But a patchy start to the season, scoring only seven points in the opening four races, meant he was playing catch-up. Raikkonen went into the race 22 points behind (with 10 for a victory).

He led the race, but in 2005 one set of tyres had to last for the entire race, with a change only allowed in the event of damage. Raikkonen suffered a huge lock-up while lapping traffic, and picked up a significant flatspot. The resulting vibration increased the load through the front suspension. As he was 22 points behind, and Alonso was second, the team had to gamble to close the gap to 20. Had he pitted, Raikkonen would have finished fourth, third at a stretch, increasing the deficit to 26 or 27 points to the race-winning Alonso.

"Life is full of risks," said team principal Ron Dennis after the race. "I believe in my mind we made the right decision. There was not sufficient evidence it [the suspension] was unsteady. We ▶



Hamilton (centre) lost ground from the start in Australian GP opener

ETHERINGTON/LAT

► did what was necessary to win, almost. Obviously, that phenomenal vibration overloaded some suspension component. I discussed it after the race with Kimi and he is comfortable that we took the right decision. We are here to win.

“Coming third with Alonso winning would, of course, have been better than what we had. But we are fighting for the championship and winning is what we want to do. We took a calculated risk and paid the price.”

Everything Dennis said is correct. Raikkonen’s suspension failed at Turn 1 on the final lap, so the gamble was only three miles away from paying off. But say Alonso had been in that same situation. Sitting on a 22-point lead, the equation would have changed. Had Renault weighed up the probabilities, it would have pitted Alonso to limit the potential damage. So in two identical racing situations, the right thing to do can be skewed by championship situation.

When you have a cushion, it’s a huge advantage. Let’s say Hamilton heads to the third race of the season in Bahrain 50 points down, knowing he needs to catch up. Who knows what situation might arise where Rosberg can afford to take the conservative path while his team-mate pushes on? It could manifest itself in taking a risk with a backmarker, in a strategic roll of the dice, a set-up gamble... the possibilities are endless.

A driver at Hamilton’s level will be constantly working through risk assessments in his head. Championship position skews the risk-versus-reward equation and can lead to a driver putting themselves in a more dangerous situation. It’s not about the conservative mindset being right and the aggressive one being wrong, for when you’re playing catch-up you simply don’t have the luxury of taking it easy, even with plenty of points still to play for.

There’s also the spectre of team orders. Mercedes won’t be keen to use them too soon, but if rivals start closing the gap the team may need to throw its support behind one driver. And recall Rosberg’s “remember this one” radio comment in Malaysia last year, when he obeyed instructions to stay behind Hamilton...

Hamilton was at pains to downplay his ‘favourite’ status before the race in Australia, very accurately pointing out that the real challenge was simply to finish. “You guys were hyping us up constantly and for us as a team it’s always important just to keep our expectations low,” said Hamilton. “It’s the sensible approach. We’re really just trying to keep our feet on the ground and take it one step at a time. Of course, as we come here it’s just incredible to see the car come together and be able to drive it and have the performance we have so far. It’s a showing of how strong this team really is.”

But how will Hamilton react if his best chance at a second world championship is compromised by factors outside his control? Looking at his career since that remarkable, last-gasp title win at Interlagos in 2008, he has had to deal with repeated setbacks. In ’09, McLaren produced a car that was dreadfully off the pace at the start of the season. The following year, Hamilton looked odds-on to take the title after winning the Belgian GP only for McLaren to fall behind in the development race, meaning he went to the season finale as the longest of long shots to win.

In 2011, the McLaren wasn’t quite a match for Red Bull, while the following year it was, on average, the quickest car. Hamilton ended the season 91 points behind Sebastian Vettel, but with potential wins lost in Spain (McLaren failed to put enough fuel in his car in qualifying), Singapore and Abu Dhabi (car failures) and Brazil



Rosberg's Oz win gave him 25-point head start

DUNBAR/LAT

(he was hit by Nico Hulkenberg), it’s clear that he should have been in the fight to the end.

Hamilton, with some justification, feels he should have more world titles to his name and, if this golden opportunity starts to slip away from him through external factors, it will be fascinating to see how he reacts. While old team-mate Jenson Button seems satisfied with his single crown and is able to take it as it comes as far as fighting for another goes, Hamilton is driven not just to win one more, but to close the

“The 2008 title is all I have to prove what I’m capable of. It was special but it loses value”



Hamilton needs better luck than he had in Melbourne

MOV/XBP



Merc chiefs Lowe and Lauda: can they manage team-mate duel?

COATES/LAT



WHEN THE LEAD CHANGED HANDS

Only six times in the past quarter-century has a driver not in the lead (or equal first) in the world championship after two races not won the championship. That could be

a very good omen for Nico Rosberg, who has a very strong chance of still being on top if he picks up decent points on Sunday. But what of the occasions

when this hasn't been the case? The fact that three have happened in the past seven seasons gives some hope to anyone not on top by the end of Sunday.



1993

Leader after two races
Ayrton Senna (McLaren-Ford)
Eventual champion
Alain Prost (Williams-Renault)

Prost won the season opener at Kyalami but lost control of his Williams during a deluge at Interlagos and collected Christian Fittipaldi's spun Minardi at Turn 1. Senna won, giving the McLaren driver the points lead, but Prost took the title at a canter.



2007

Leader after two races
Fernando Alonso (McLaren-Mercedes)
Eventual champion
Kimi Raikkonen (Ferrari)

Although Raikkonen won the opener in Australia, McLaren newcomer Alonso finished second and followed it with victory in Malaysia to lead the Finn by two points. Raikkonen went on to prevail in a three-way championship shoot-out in Brazil, beating both Lewis Hamilton and Alonso by a single point.

deficit to four-time champion Vettel. Whether that's a good or a bad thing is a moot point.

"It's all I have currently to prove what I'm capable of," he explained last year when asked about the value of his 2008 crown. "When I had it, it was special, but as you get into F1 and more and more people start to win world championships it becomes less valuable. The only way to make it valuable is to have more."

Nobody doubts that Hamilton has what it takes to win the world championship. But with the title being — for now — a two-horse race he can't afford to watch Rosberg stretch his legs at the head of the points table. Doubly so, given that it's likely the advantage Mercedes holds at the front of the field will be reduced. The same team, in its Brawn guise, experienced this in 2009. And while it's inconceivable that Mercedes will fall back as far as Brawn did that year, Button's path to the '09 championship is another reminder of what a strong start does for you.

He won six of the first seven races, finishing third in the other. But he faded thereafter. After winning the Turkish GP (round seven of 17) he had 61 points, but finished the campaign with just 95. He scored almost two thirds of his points in the first seven races, but that was enough to lay the foundations to seal the crown with a race to spare. In the final 10 races of the year he was the sixth-highest scorer, yet his great start had given him enough to stay clear.

Hamilton unquestionably has the skill and the machinery to put himself in a strong position in the coming races. It's conceivable he could win the next four on the bounce to put himself in an impregnable position on top of the standings. But as history proves, if things go wrong in Malaysia it will mean the 29-year-old could face an uphill struggle to take his second crown, potentially through no fault of his own.

The great champions always accept they need luck on their side, or at least not against them. For the good of the 2014 season, let's hope that the fascinating battle between Hamilton and Rosberg is allowed to play out without being skewed one way or the other by Lady Luck. ❧



1999

Leader after two races
Eddie Irvine (Ferrari)
Eventual champion
Mika Hakkinen (McLaren-Mercedes)

Hakkinen led the season-opening Australian GP for 17 laps before a throttle problem cost him the lead and then forced him to retire. Victory for the Finn in the second race in Brazil, with Melbourne winner Irvine fifth, meant he was just two points down. He went on to win the title by two points.



2010

Leader after two races
Fernando Alonso (Ferrari)
Eventual champion
Sebastian Vettel (Red Bull-Renault)

Vettel and Red Bull were the dominant force on pace, but a spark plug problem in Bahrain meant he dropped to fourth, and he then suffered a brake failure while leading in Australia. This gave Bahrain winner Alonso a 25-point advantage. Vettel overturned this to win the crown by just four points.



2003

Leader after two races
Kimi Raikkonen (McLaren-Mercedes)
Eventual champion
Michael Schumacher (Ferrari)

A coming-together with Raikkonen during the first round in Australia led to Schumacher finishing fourth. Raikkonen won the following race in Malaysia, with Schumacher sixth after a clash with Jarno Trulli's Renault. Schumacher overcame the eight-point deficit to win the title by two points.



2012

Leader after two races
Fernando Alonso (Ferrari)
Eventual champion
Sebastian Vettel (Red Bull-Renault)

The attempt to curb exhaust-generated downforce forced Red Bull into a rethink of its rear end. Vettel was second in Australia, then 12th in Malaysia after picking up a puncture when he was hit by Narain Karthikeyan's HRT. This left him 17 points behind Alonso, who he beat to the title by three points.

WHO CAN STOP MERCEDES?

With the Silver Arrows being the fastest cars in Melbourne, by an estimated second per lap, **EDD STRAW** examines which team is best-placed to mount a challenge to their supremacy

As far as performance is concerned, Mercedes is the only show in town in Formula 1. You can say with absolute certainty that if its cars run reliably, the weather holds, the drivers do their job and there are no strategic catastrophes, then either Lewis Hamilton or Nico

Rosberg will win this weekend's Malaysian Grand Prix.

But behind them is a pack of teams with the means, motive and opposition to emerge as credible challengers as the season progresses. In the early days of any regulation set, development rates are rapid and, with most

teams yet to make significant inroads into exploiting their car and engine packages, things will change. Estimates place the anticipated development rate from first to last race at between two to four seconds per lap. With the well-sorted Mercedes team having long since picked all its

low-hanging performance fruit, the gap at the front should close.

But if someone is to rise from what currently looks like a very close scrap for best of the rest in the long term, who will it be? Which team and drivers, if any, looks best-placed to give Mercedes a run for its money?



McLAREN

ON TOP, BUT WORK TO BE DONE

The Woking squad leads the constructors' championship thanks to second and third places for Kevin Magnussen and Jenson Button respectively in Australia. But whether it can sustain such a challenge will depend on upgrades, starting with a significant package due to be introduced in Malaysia this weekend.

"Mercedes has some pace [advantage], maybe between half and three quarters of a second over the rest of the field," says McLaren race director Eric Boullier. "But we focused a lot of our winter on building a solid and reliable car because we believed that reliability was key to taking big points at the beginning of the season. Now we are pushing very aggressively on performance."

Because of the rain in qualifying in Australia, we did not get a steer on the ultimate pace of all cars. Magnussen was 27 seconds behind Rosberg in the race, in a 41-lap run after the safety car. That suggests a deficit of two thirds of a second but, given the speed with which Rosberg dropped the field after the safety car left the track, it seems McLaren is probably around one second down.

FERRARI

THEREABOUTS BUT STRUGGLING TO BE THERE

Fernando Alonso was classified fourth in the Australian GP, 35 seconds down, but qualifying simulations during Saturday practice put him 1.5 seconds off Rosberg's pace.

Ferrari appears to be the worst-placed of the chasing pack to close up on Mercedes. But Kimi Raikkonen, who struggled more than Alonso and was unhappy with his front-end feel, believes the car's real potential was shrouded by problems in Melbourne. There were some engine issues, notably MGU-K problems in the race, although the fact that all six Ferrari-powered cars finished shows that the marque has produced an engine that is fundamentally reliable.

"If we can run a weekend without any issues and the race without problems, I am sure we can be much stronger," said Raikkonen.

Engine performance must improve. Alonso spent much of the race stuck behind Nico Hulkenberg's Force India, but then disappeared up the road as soon as he jumped ahead in the pitstops. Making strides in this area will decide whether or not Ferrari can get into the title mix.





FERRARO/LAT

WILLIAMS

SECOND BEST BUT CAN IT STAY THERE?

The timesheets tell us that the best Williams was ninth on the grid, that its qualifying simulation pace was 2.3s off in free practice and that its only finisher was over 47 seconds down in Melbourne. But it escaped nobody's notice that the Williams was really the second-best machine. Without the intervention of Kamui Kobayashi's Caterham and the Turn 10 wall, Felipe Massa and Valtteri Bottas had every chance of finishing second and third.

Bottas's fastest lap was less than a tenth of a second slower than Rosberg's. There is absolutely no question that Rosberg could have gone significantly faster than that had he needed to, but the feeling in the paddock among other teams is that Williams does have the second-best car.

The question is, can it maintain the development rate? This has been a weakness at the Grove team in recent years, with too many parts being thrown at the car that don't offer the expected improvement. Chief technical officer Pat Symonds has moved to improve this situation, and this will be the main test of the team's mettle during 2014.



TEE/LAT

RED BULL

MERCEDES' BIGGEST THREAT

Red Bull has scored no points so far, despite Daniel Ricciardo finishing second on the road in Australia, but it has to be considered best-placed to mount a challenge to Mercedes in the long term. Setting aside the fuel-flow-limit violation that led to Ricciardo being disqualified, the Renault engine has made big strides since testing and, aerodynamically, the RB10 looks superb.

"The gap is significant," said team boss Christian Horner after the race. "The Mercedes is extremely quick and I should think they were driving to a pace rather than being stretched. They've got more up their sleeve so we've got quite a lot of work to do. But what's encouraging is that, compared to the rest, we well exceeded our expectations."

The question is, how much of Red Bull's deficit is in the straights? Possibly the vast majority of it. Ricciardo was in the bottom half of all four speed-trap figures during the Australian GP and it seems that Red Bull's hopes hinge on Renault continuing to make progress. Given how good the car is, the smart money has to be on Red Bull being Mercedes' strongest long-term threat. ☼



FERRARO/LAT



MALAYSIAN GP PREVIEW

Cooling F1 cars in the tropics

This Sunday's Malaysian Grand Prix will be one of the hottest races of the year.

CRAIG SCARBOROUGH reveals some of the secrets of how teams keep their cars cool

Every racing car must cool its powertrain. As Formula 1 cars become more complex, this job has become increasingly difficult, particularly when you are racing in the extreme heat of Malaysia. Cooling affects power outputs and reliability, but also chassis and aerodynamic performance.

A large part of the work for the teams in the lead up to the season was designing an adequate cooling system. Packaging this much cooling into an F1 car has brought many different approaches and innovations. Luckily for the teams, the downsized petrol engines now push out less heat than

the old V8s. Yet still the 1.6-litre V6 needs both water radiators and an oil cooler for efficiency. These are about half of the size of the 2013 coolers.

The turbocharger needs to be cooled internally by oil, as well as by airflow around its red-hot exterior. The air compressed by the turbo also needs cooling before going into the combustion chamber. The intercooler that cools the charge air is big enough to fill a sidepod on its own.

The upscaled Energy Recovery Systems (ERS) need even more cooling. From a modest water radiator about the size of a packet of biscuits for KERS in 2013, the 2014 ERS needs nearly as

much water cooling as the petrol engine. In order to keep the temperatures low enough for the electronics, the ERS cooling runs a separate water circuit to the engine.

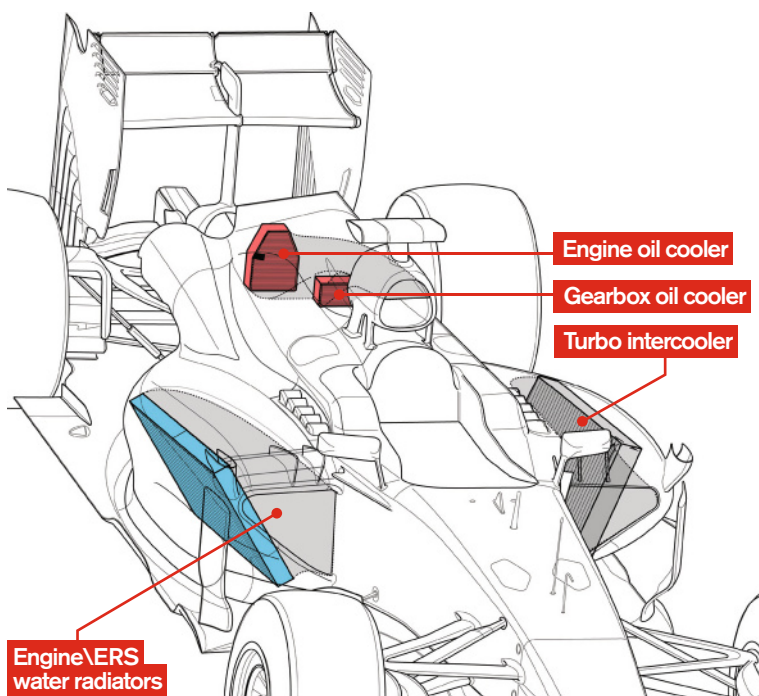
Lastly, the gearbox oil still requires cooling. The gearbox is more heavily-stressed this year, with more torque from the engine and service life extended to five races.

Such demands require, on average, five or six different coolers, each mounted inside the bodywork forming the sidepods and engine cover. Each cooler will need a stream of cool air, but inlet aero costs drag so teams will want to minimise any openings.

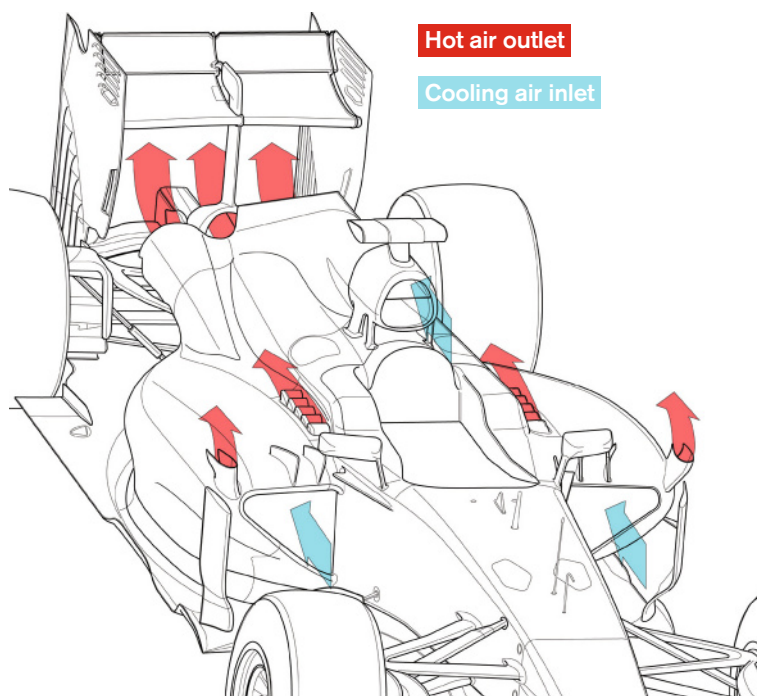
Then the heated air needs to find an exit into a low-pressure area and in a place where aerodynamic performance isn't compromised. Complicating this are regulations that restrict where openings can be made in the sidepods. Teams have to find small areas exempt from this, such as beside the cockpit and chimneys at the front of the sidepod. Heated air will have to move forwards inside the 'pods to reach these outlets, aided by the pressure difference between the two areas.

This cooling package needs to be tailored for each track to cope with different ambient temperatures and aerodynamic considerations.

COOLERS



AIR FLOW



WHAT TO WATCH OUT FOR

Increased retirement rate

Fifteen cars were still running at the end of the race in Melbourne, which was a huge surprise. But with very high ambient temperatures expected this weekend, even by Malaysian standards, each car's and engine's cooling abilities will be stretched to the limit. As a result, it's possible the retirement rate will be higher.



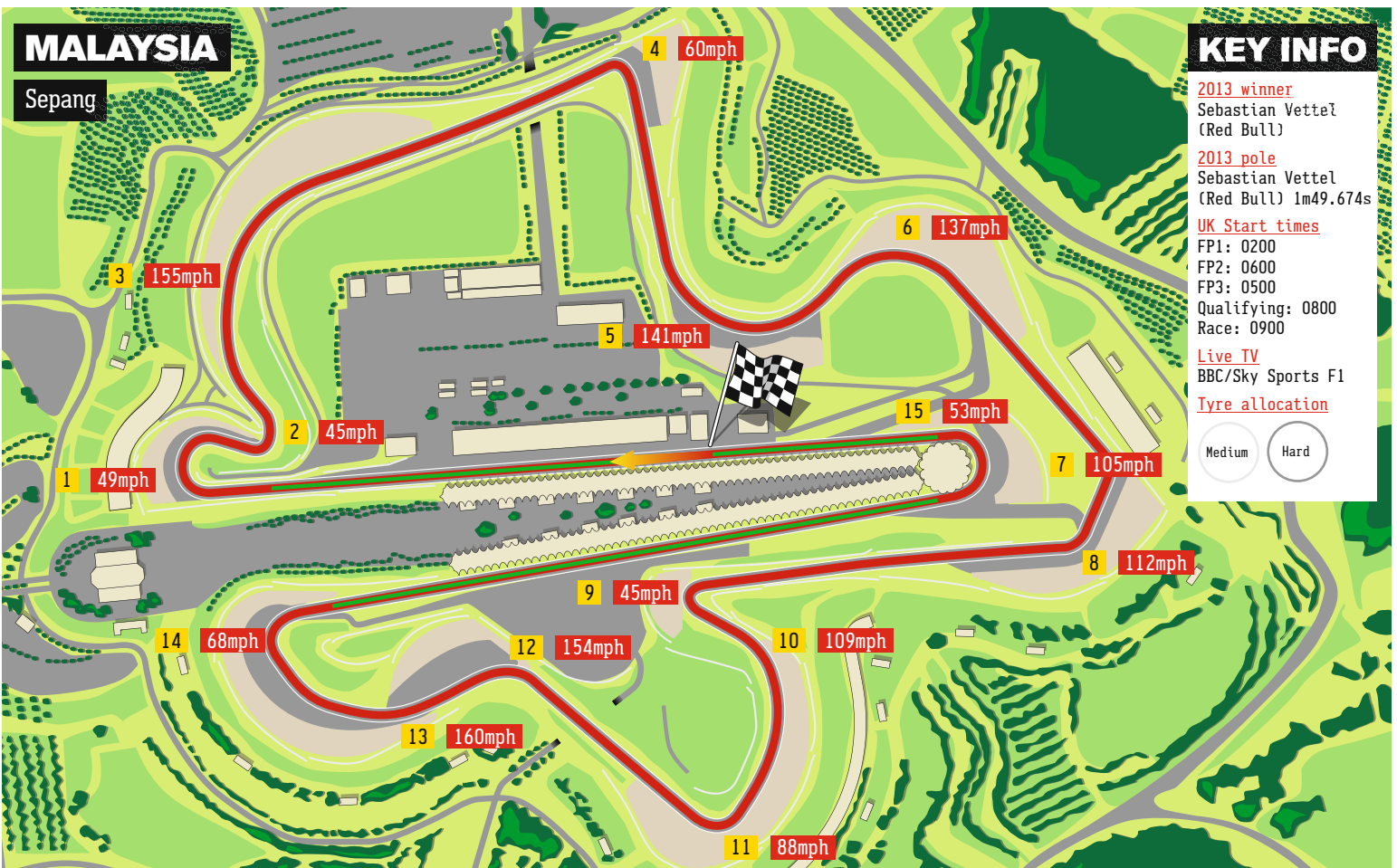
Williams showing its pace

The Williams FW36 was impressively quick in Australia. Fifth-row qualifying performances and Valtteri Bottas's fifth-place finish after a brush with the wall early on shrouded that fact. It's essential that the team starts to bag some big points while in such a strong position as there is no guarantee it will last.



Ferrari's troubled start

Fernando Alonso finished fourth in Australia, but the Ferrari didn't look like a serious contender. The team believes it can do better and its performance level at a more conventional track like Sepang will show whether that's the case. If it again isn't a serious podium threat, it could mean bad news for the Scuderia.



CLASSIC RACE

The second race of the 2003 season was a seminal moment in the rise of a new generation of drivers, with Fernando Alonso claiming his first pole position and Kimi Raikkonen (right) his maiden victory. Alonso, in only his second race for Renault after spending the 2002 season on the sidelines as test driver, claimed pole position having decided to run light during qualifying. At the start, Alonso held the lead, with Schumacher

hitting Jarno Trulli's Renault, forcing a stop for a nose change and a subsequent penalty. Alonso led the first 14 laps before pitting, but Raikkonen ran for five more laps and jumped the Spaniard in the pits. Alonso ran second during the middle stages of the race, but Rubens Barrichello ran three laps longer at his second stop, leaping into second. Schumacher recovered to sixth, just a few seconds behind Trulli.





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Lotus on the back foot

It finished last season as Red Bull's nearest challenger, but propped up the grid at the first race of 2014. **BEN ANDERSON** investigates where 'Team Enstone' goes from here

Last year Kimi Raikkonen used smart strategy and the subtle dynamics of the Lotus E21 to win the season-opening Australian Grand Prix and head to round two in Malaysia leading the world championship. Twelve months on, the contrast in fortunes at Enstone could not be more marked.

Following a turbulent winter, characterised by financial uncertainty and loss of key personnel (including Raikkonen) to rival teams, there were still high hopes that Lotus would calm the stormy waters when its innovative new twin-tusk E22 design finally hit the track.

But after missing the first test at Jerez and then completing the fewest miles of any team over eight days in Bahrain, its woes continued into the first race of the season. Romain Grosjean and Pastor Maldonado missed most of practice after encountering a glut of new gremlins with their Renault engines, forcing Lotus to break F1's paddock curfew on Friday night to fix the cars for Saturday's final free practice and qualifying sessions. The drivers were unceremoniously dumped out in Q1, with Maldonado failing to complete a timed lap.

Renault opted to run the power

units in a safer mode for the race, to give Lotus a better chance of running reliably. Both drivers made it beyond half distance before suffering identical failures on their MGU-K (kinetic energy recovery) units.

This is hardly the start expected of a team that was in contention to finish second in the constructors' championship until the final race of 2013.

Lotus technical director Nick Chester accepts much of the team's troubles are a consequence of that

late start to the season, but he also contends Lotus that has been unluckier than other Renault teams.

"I think the lack of running means we've found some of the problems later than we would have liked," he told AUTOSPORT. "We've possibly been a little bit unlucky in that we seem to have found more than the other Renault teams.

"Some are fundamental in the software and you need to come back to the pits to wake it up again. We've been a bit unfortunate there, but we

also need more mileage to shake out any more problems we have.

"We felt we'd made some good progress on the last day of the first Bahrain test, then we found some chassis issues we hadn't seen, to do with the exhaust, and some pump issues. We just didn't get any sensible mileage and that put us massively on the back foot.

"It's really frustrating. The guys here have worked harder for a first race than we ever have over the last 13 or 14 years at Enstone. Everyone's





WHAT THE DRIVERS THINK

“The engine is not at 100 per cent. It’s still very delicate and fragile, but Renault is working and there is a clear improvement. Performance is very close to Mercedes.”

Pastor Maldonado



STALEY/LAT



STALEY/LAT

“We know our windtunnel numbers, so we can keep positive. We’ve still got lots of work to do, but we’re definitely heading in the right direction.”

Romain Grosjean

disappointed we’re not quicker, but everyone understands it’s difficult getting everything to work on the car, and all we can do is a sensible job checking off the problems one by one.”

Renault works team Red Bull’s encouraging pace in Australia, allied to its sister squad Toro Rosso getting both its cars home in the points, puts added emphasis on Lotus failing to get up to speed so far. Renault head of track operations Remi Taffin suggested this was a legacy of the team’s late start rather than any fundamental issues with the engine, which was estimated to be giving away 80bhp – or a second per lap on the straights – to frontrunner Mercedes at Albert Park.

“We lack running with Lotus, so we’re lacking experience and knowledge of the car, as simple as that,” said Taffin. “Even on our side we lack experience on how to deal with the power unit, and to be completely fair we had so many issues: we had lateness building the car; we had problems with our power unit and mapping; we had problems with driveability; and the clock just keeps on turning.

“The solution is very simple: we just want to run. If we take the

mileage, the laptime will come. It’s just a matter of putting things in the right order.”

Both Lotus drivers have spoken of strong potential in the E22 chassis, if the team can get it running properly. Chester said it was difficult to predict when Lotus could be in a position to run at the front again, but the team takes encouragement from the E22’s form in the windtunnel.

“I’m certainly hoping we’ll be a little bit better for Malaysia and a bit better again for Bahrain,” Chester added. “It may well be Barcelona [round five] before we’re back in a sensible position and competing where we want to be. We’ll have to see how it goes and what progression we make each race.

“What we’ve seen on the chassis in terms of our measurements for the aero side still looks very strong. There’s nothing fundamental on the car that’s going to stop it being competitive, but we need to get to a level of mapping and operating the car where the drivers can drive it properly and set it up.

“Once we start getting mileage and getting the car balanced so the drivers are comfortable, we’ll make massive steps.”

LOTUS AUSTRALIAN GP IN NUMBERS

36%
LAPS COMPLETED
COMPARED TO
LAP-COUNT LEADER
TORO ROSSO

4.462
AVERAGE GAP
TO THE PACE IN SECONDS

5 NUMBER OF
POWER-UNIT
COMPONENTS
CHANGED
(ALL ON MALDONADO’S CAR)

21ST
BEST GRID
POSITION IN
AUSTRALIA

5 NUMBER OF PERMITTED PADDOCK
CURFEW BREACHES REMAINING

Watch out for Williams

Its latest car looks to be a genuine frontrunner, and the unique demands of the forthcoming Malaysian Grand Prix could really play to its strengths. By **BEN ANDERSON**



32



Bottas starred in 2014 opener

DUNBAR/LAT

So many times in recent seasons Williams has been tipped to rise again to the top of the Formula 1 tree, and so many times it has snapped a branch on the way up and come crashing back down.

Last season was a disaster for the Grove-based squad. The recalcitrant FW35 scored just five points across the season, consigning the team to ninth position in the constructors' championship. After the encouraging signs of 2012, which had included the team's first race victory since Juan Pablo Montoya won the 2004 Brazilian Grand Prix, last season was a step back to the dark days.

But a fresh campaign brings fresh optimism, and the outlook after the first race is far rosier. It is no surprise that Mercedes' F1 W05 is way out in front at the moment, but the Williams FW36 looked to be the second-best car in the field during pre-season testing, and its form in the opening Australian GP underlined that impression.

But for his brush with the wall

coming out of Turn 10 at Albert Park, Valtteri Bottas would likely have finished on the podium in Australia, from 15th on the grid.

The drivers are finding the FW36 a difficult beast to tame in the wet, thanks to some rear instability on turn-in, but the car's pace in dry conditions is not in question. Bottas recovered to a top-six finish after that mistake in Melbourne, setting the second-fastest race lap in the process. The Finn could seemingly pass cars for fun, all while running in fuel-save mode...

A COOL CUSTOMER

The general consensus is that the factory Mercedes team has done the best job of meeting the demands of this season's radical new regulations, but there was one customer team that Mercedes executive director (commercial) Toto Wolff singled out for particular praise during pre-season: Williams.

This weekend's Malaysian GP is traditionally one of the hottest on the calendar. Teams can expect air temperatures in the upper

30C range. Keeping cool will be key, which could really play to the FW36's strengths.

Williams chief test and support engineer Rod Nelson, who is looking after the race team until Rob Smedley arrives from Ferrari, said: "We certainly seem to have had fewer problems than some of the teams over the winter. We've actually got another intermediate cooling level because at the moment we're good where we don't need much and quite good where we need a lot, but we had a little bit of a hole in the middle, so we're sorting that out for Malaysia."

"The car's pretty efficient at cooling. Ed [Wood, chief designer] and the guys have done a great job. He's got a PhD in thermal dynamics from Oxford, so he's quite good at that sort of thing! Cooling was definitely high up on our priority list with these new regulations."

DON'T FORGET DOWNFORCE

The latest regulations have robbed Formula 1 cars of much of the downforce they built up over



CIANFLORNE/GETTY



Struggles in the wet masked its potential in Oz

IS WILLIAMS REALLY THAT FAST?

The qualifying and race results from the Australian Grand Prix suggest otherwise, but the Williams-Mercedes was the closest challenger to Mercedes in Melbourne.

Perhaps the biggest weakness of the Williams FW36 is traction, which was exposed by the wet qualifying that left Felipe Massa and Valtteri Bottas ninth and 10th.

Bottas started 15th following a five-place grid penalty for a gearbox change. He finished the first lap 10th, then passed Daniil Kvyat, Kimi Raikkonen, Jean-Eric Vergne and the hobbled Lewis Hamilton to climb to sixth by lap eight. Fernando Alonso was his next target, and it was while chasing the Ferrari that Bottas glanced the wall exiting Turn 10.

Traffic skewed his pace, but Bottas showed glimpses in those early laps that he was able to lap faster than Daniel Ricciardo's Red

Bull and Kevin Magnussen's McLaren, which finished second and third on the road. On lap six, for example, he was half a second faster than Ricciardo and a second quicker than Magnussen. When Bottas made his error, he was 11 seconds behind the Red Bull and just five behind the McLaren.

His drive from 16th after the safety car to sixth on the road at the chequered flag again demonstrated his pace, setting second-fastest lap of the race, just nine hundredths slower than Nico Rosberg's best of the afternoon.

Had Massa's car survived past the first corner, he would likely have been a place or two ahead of Bottas, who was just behind the crash. If the Brazilian's pace was as good as practice suggested it is conceivable that, without the mishaps, Williams could have finished second and third in Australia.

the last five seasons, which has perhaps helped teams such as Williams that seemed to be lagging behind in this area.

Malaysia's Sepang circuit places high demands on the cars in this regard, and ex-Ferrari man Felipe Massa is concerned that it may expose any downforce deficit in the Williams.

"Malaysia is a track where downforce counts, so I don't know how we will be there in terms of our pace, but I'm pretty much sure we can be competitive," said Massa. "We have a competitive car, maybe more in the race than qualifying, so I hope maybe we can try to anticipate some new pieces that will make the car better.

"I'm pretty happy with the car to be honest. Looking where we are, I think it's a pretty good start."

For his new team-mate Bottas, who had to battle with the FW35's foibles throughout his rookie season in F1, the opportunity to drive a car in which he can express his talents so well must be a relief. But the laconic Finn is under no illusions



Massa is happy with the FW36

DUNBAR/LAT

about the fact that Williams will have to evolve its FW36 rapidly if it is to remain as competitive as it showed in Australia.

"I would expect everyone to improve massively all the time so we need to keep up with everyone in development," he said. "It will be very important. From our side nothing big is going to happen in

the next couple of races, but hopefully after that we're going to see some updates.

"Malaysia will be a very different track; a bit more like a proper race track [than Melbourne]. But we do expect that we can really fight in the top six positions. We still have 18 races to prove what we can do. There's definitely more to come."

"We do expect that we can really fight in the top six. There's more to come"

Valtteri Bottas



TEE/LAT

Toyota in no hurry for WRC return

A Yaris World Rally Car was in action last week, but Toyota is sticking to its plan to join the WRC no sooner than 2017. By **DAVID EVANS**



WRC-spec Yaris tested in Italy last week

34

Toyota's return to World Rally Car testing can only be a good thing. But good things come to those who wait.

And we will have to wait until at least 2017 before Toyota returns to the World Rally Championship.

A Yaris World Rally Car tearing up Tuscany last week undoubtedly raised expectations of a rapid return from the Japanese, but a spokesman

from TMG – Toyota's motorsport arm in Cologne – was quick to quell such speculation.

"This car won't be homologated," said the spokesman. "Obviously, we understand the interest and excitement which has greeted the news that we are testing a car, but people have to remember that this was always in the plan. We at TMG have watched this car grow and we

always knew we would be testing at this time – it doesn't mean we are further ahead. Testing the car last week changes nothing – we won't do it [enter the WRC] before 2017."

At the moment, there is still no formal commitment from Toyota to enter the World Rally Championship. President Akio Toyoda has talked in raptures of his desire to see his brand back at the

top of world rallying, but the 14th-largest company on planet Earth would not be one for making quick decisions.

TOYOTA'S TEST

There has been a significant level of security around Toyota's test of the Yaris WRC, but AUTOSPORT believes that four different roads were rotated around a single service area in northern Italy last week. The roads were varied in their nature with a narrow and technical stage being used first before the car moved to wider, faster roads, while the fourth test was rougher, more abrasive and more akin to a stage in Portugal.

As expected, former factory Subaru driver and now Toyota endurance racer Stephane Sarrazin drove the test Yaris and shared it with Sebastian Lindholm. Lindholm has vast experience of testing new World Rally Cars, working with Peugeot and Suzuki in the past.

Motorsport Italia is running the test on behalf of TMG in the same way ORECA helped run the



Toyota ran on a variety of stages



KALLISZ/LAT

**Toyota sportscar ace
Stéphane Sarrazin
was on test duty...**



**...but this car will not
be homologated
for competition**

on-track development of Toyota's TSO30 endurance car.

The Toyota spokesman said: "The reasons for using Motorsport Italia are a lot about staffing levels; we simply don't have the mechanics on hand to jump in with this project. Motorsport Italia come as a fully trained team and are ready to go. It's very similar to ORECA – and, don't forget, ORECA still provides 50 per cent of the engineers in our [sportscar] race team."

Toyota's second test will be in the middle of May and officials from the company are expected to attend Rally Finland in the summer.

WHY 2017?

The 2017 season marks the start of the new era of World Rally Cars. And the good news is that the FIA's technical working group is already well and truly on the case – with a decision on the direction of the rules expected before the end of this season.

WRC Commission president Carlos Barbosa said: "Toyota is waiting, they knock on the door and they want to know what the [2017] car is. All of the manufacturers want to know what is happening and we must and we will decide very quickly. We have the first

AUTOSPORT SAYS



**David Evans
Rallies Editor**

Can you contain yourself? I'm struggling. Toyota has started testing its World Rally Car.

All that's missing is the deeply furrowed brow of Carlos Sainz, the detailed focus of 'Pepper' (legendary engineer Gerd Pfeiffer) and a look of immense pride and warmth from the man mostly responsible for Toyota's WRC success, Ove Andersson.

Toyota's participation is, however, not yet confirmed. And it's quite possible it won't be confirmed until the deal is done on the 2017 technical regulations – why would anybody sign up without reading any of the print in

question, let alone the small stuff?

Toyota's return is another step on the WRC's return to former glories; almost certainly it will return the land of the rising sun to the WRC calendar and put the sport and the series back in front of the Asian masses.

Which is why those new tech regs are so important. Carlos Barbosa's right: we need them now, but more importantly we need them right. And yes, the cost is crucial, but so is spectacle. Let's have them noisy, sideways and cheap. Those attributes are absolutely necessary and absolutely not mutually exclusive.



**WRC's future
looks bright**

meeting about the 2017 car in Portugal [next month] and then we talk with the manufacturers and ask what they think, but it's certain that we cannot wait until next season to decide this. [Otherwise] it's impossible for the manufacturers to test the cars in time."

VOLKSWAGEN ON TARGET

Planning for Volkswagen's 2017 car is also underway. Team principal Jost Capito told AUTOSPORT that he had already started working on the budget for his 2017 Polo R WRC.

"If you want to have a good car in 2017, you can't start in '16," said

Capito. "You have to start in 2015 – latest – so you need the money in place for the development of that car very soon and this is why we are working on that budget now."

Barbosa was emphatic on the need to cut costs, adding: "We are killing the rallies if we don't cut the costs and this cannot continue. We must put the rules down and then nobody can touch them and the car must stay like this. If we give the opportunity in the technical regulations then the manufacturers will spend money and the privateers cannot spend the same money – we don't want this." ❧

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ONE STEP BACK?

Audi has given up on some of its hybrid technology, but still believes it can win Le Mans. **GARY WATKINS** finds out why



Audi doesn't do shocks. Not normally at least. But the announcement this week that it will run one energy-retrieval system rather than the allowed two in its new R18 e-tron quattro World Endurance Championship challenger should rightly be regarded as one.

The news that it has abandoned the turbocharger-driven system, announced as part of its technical package on the first preview of the car in December, and that it will run at the lowest level of hybrid-energy return allowed for factory entries is a bombshell from a manufacturer that has hung its hat on introducing new technologies to sportscar racing and the Le Mans 24 Hours.

That started with the first direct-injection racing engine in the second year of the R8 programme in 2001 and continued through the introduction of turbodiesel technology in 2006 and then its first hybrid

LMP1 racer in 2012. And

don't forget that the new 2014 P1 rulebook offers

The 2014-spec R18 retains Audi LMP look but is heavily revised



an incentive to run the most powerful hybrid system allowed.

The new R18, as per its 2014 homologation, will be allowed to release two megajoules of energy recuperated by a new version of its front-axle energy-retrieval system over each lap of Le Mans. Porsche, meanwhile, has made much of the fact that its 919 Hybrid will be running in the highest of the four sub-classes for hybrids, which means it potentially has 8MJ of electric energy to pump through its front axle every lap. Toyota has yet to announce its plans ahead of the official launch of its TS040 HYBRID today (Thursday), but it was known to be looking at either the 6 or 8MJ categories.

Audi's decision means that, in theory at least, it will be returning less retrieved energy to the racetrack around the long 8.47-mile lap of the Circuit de la Sarthe than last year. The previous rulebook allowed for half a megajoule of energy to be used after each of the now-abolished zones in which recuperation was allowed. There were seven such zones at Le Mans, which potentially meant a total of 3.5MJ. At Silverstone, where the 2014 WEC will kick off next month, the Audis will be allowed to discharge just 1.3MJ according to the formula used to work out the energy that can be reused at the other circuits on the WEC calendar. The new Porsches will potentially have access to 5.36MJ per lap. ▶



Valuable data has been gathered during testing...



► But the new 2014 rulebook is all about efficiency and making the best use of the fuel allocation, and Audi reckons that, for the moment, running in the 2MJ sub-class is the most efficient route available to it.

AUDI'S REASONING

The German manufacturer's traditional conservatism has something to do with the path chosen. Audi Sport boss Wolfgang Ullrich has revealed that the 'Energy Retrieval System – Heat' (called a 'Motor Generator Unit – Heat' in Formula 1 parlance), using spent exhaust gases to create energy, didn't bring the desired results or prove as reliable as hoped in testing over the winter.

"There have been issues, but this was not the only reason," says Ullrich. "The other reason is that we did not get out of the system what was expected, and a lot of risk with not a lot of benefit is not a good decision for Le Mans. We had the car running with it and we tested it, but in the end we said that the ratio between the benefits and the risk was not a good one."

Ullrich has hinted at the problems of getting a diesel-powered LMP1 complete with heavy hybrid systems to the new weight limit of 870kg (down from last year's 915kg) – or rather getting it under that figure so the correct weight distribution can be achieved with ballast – played a part in its decision-making process.

"From the calculations we have done, we think the combination of the diesel engine and the 2MJ system is a better combination than going into a bigger class and having the problem of not getting the weight where you want it," he continues.

A secondary benefit of a so-called e-turbo is the ability to overcome turbo lag by using stored electric power to spin up the turbo. Ullrich said that this proved problematical on the Audi.

"What we could bring out in terms of more torque from the engine was in a period of time

"We are convinced the diesel and the 2MJ system is a good one, which is why we go for that"

WOLFGANG ULLRICH



...at a wide variety of venues, including Austin

where we couldn't use it because of the slip of the tyres [wheelspin], so we said no it makes no sense," he says.

Ullrich is sticking to his guns and claiming that Audi has made the right choices.

"We are convinced that the combination is a good one and that's why we go for that," he asserts. "In our opinion, it provides the optimum balance between efficient energy use, size, weight, energy-conversion efficiency, responsiveness, driveability and a favourable operating strategy – combined with durability, which is the basic prerequisite for success at Le Mans."

Ullrich stressed that its decision to run in the 2MJ class was not driven by any power limitations with its flywheel energy-storage unit – a

mechanical battery, if you like – developed by Williams Hybrid Power. He said there were versions of the system available that would allow it to run in the highest class, but stressed that "with all hybrid systems the more energy you store, the heavier they get".

The decision to abandon the second hybrid system was made only seven weeks ago. Ullrich revealed that the new R18 tested with both one and two hybrid systems at Sebring in December, but that it had opted to run only with its front-axle energy-retrieval by the time it went back to the US circuit in early March for the first of its endurance tests with its 2014 contender.

BIGGER ENGINE FOR EFFICIENCY

Audi has stuck with the single-turbo V6 diesel powerplant that came on stream in the original R18 TDI in 2011. The V6, which replaced the V10 of the two-season R15, followed the introduction of new rules that put a cap on the capacity of turbodiesels at 3.7 litres. With that limit abolished under the new energy-based regulations, Audi Sport has increased the capacity to four litres.

"The change is for more efficiency at different revs," he says. "It is a good compromise between size, weight and rigidity."

R18: FAMILY RESEMBLANCE

The 2014 R18 retains a family resemblance to the namesake that preceded it, despite new chassis regulations that have narrowed the overall width of the car by 20mm and raised the height of the cockpit by 100mm. That look is essentially a result of the retention of the duck-bill nose that goes back to the original R15 TDI.

This contains two cones that form an essential part of the front crash structure of every Audi



Audi's engineers and drivers reckon they'll have the last laugh

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

The new Audi LMP1 confusingly retains the R18 nomenclature of its predecessor and, should there be another Audi LMP1 in the future, it will also be called an R18. The German marque has had to abandon its system of 'R' numbers that goes all the way back to the start of Audi Sport in the early 1980s courtesy of another manufacturer from across the border in France.

"The reason is a non-VW Group car manufacturer has the rights on the numbers with R – and it is Renault. They didn't allow us to use the R19," explains Wolfgang Ullrich. "They insist that they have the naming rights to all R numbers from 19 on. We could [re]start with number 100 and... [Ullrich blows a raspberry at this point], so we have decided that from now on the R18 will be our LMP car."

There is a new system of internal numbering for its projects, which Audi has yet to fully explain. It has so far only revealed that this year's DTM challenger, a further evolution of the new-rules car that first raced in 2012,



First Quattro WRC car of 1980 was Audi's R1 project



R7 code was given to A4 Super Tourer

has been given the code RC3.

The R numbers, which have only been used publicly on Audi's LMP machinery, have been given out chronologically to each of the marque's racing projects. The R1 was the first competition machine to be developed at Audi Sport in Ingolstadt, the Audi Quattro Group 4 car of 1980, the R7 was given to the A4 Super Tourer in all its iterations, the R16 is the R8 LMS GT3 racer and the R17 was the DTM car built to the latest rulebook for 2012.

But there have been anomalies along the way that require some explaining.

The R11 was the internal number for the first factory-developed car for the revived DTM, the A4 that came on stream in 2004. That was two seasons before the R10 TDI first raced, but the programme that begat the three-time Le Mans-winning turbodiesel started before development of the DTM cars. The R10 was earmarked for the successor of the R8 before Audi took a break from the prototype ranks – and left the R8 with importer-backed privateers – at the end of 2002.

There's a confusing break with the system –



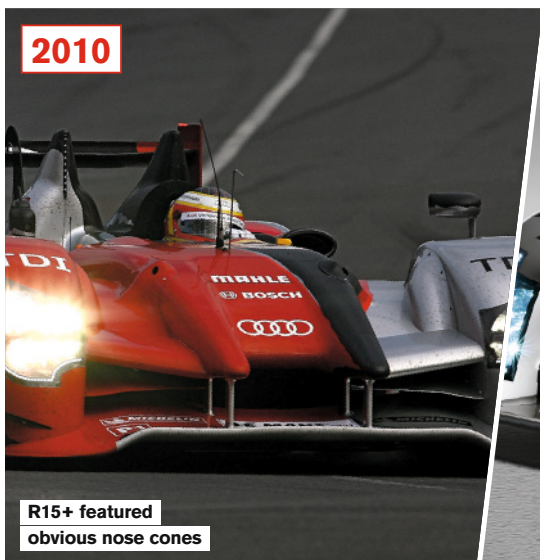
Dominant R8 LMP car should really have been called R9

at least when it comes to the nomenclature used in public – that could be a good omen for the latest car to be called the R18. The hugely successful R8 LMP900/LMP1, the winner at Le Mans on no fewer than five occasions, wasn't the R8 at all, at least according to Audi's internal numbering.

The true R8 was what we know as the R8R of 1999. Its all-new successor for 2000, which we call the plain old R8, was actually project number nine at Ingolstadt and should by rights have been called the R9. Audi opted against that, because it felt it had adopted the R8 moniker for its LMP cars after running both the R8R and R8C – that's R for roadster and C for coupe – in its first year at Le Mans.

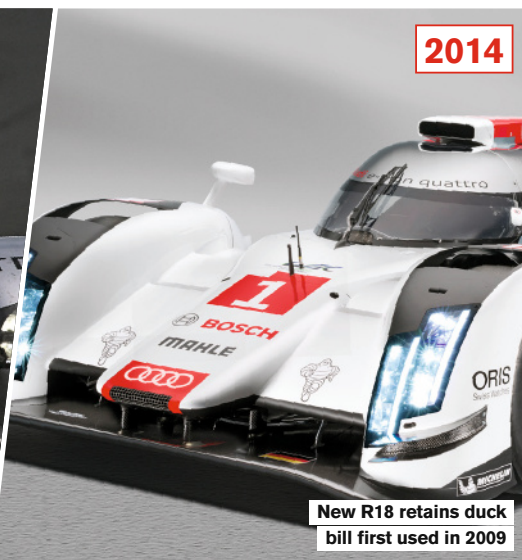
"We had the R8R and R8C and were struggling on which way to go," explains Ullrich. "Therefore we said that our LMP should be the R8."

And just in case you were wondering, the R8C doesn't have an internal 'R' number. Designed and built in the UK by Racing Technology Norfolk, it wasn't a true Audi Sport project.



2010

R15+ featured obvious nose cones



2014

New R18 retains duck bill first used in 2009

LMP1 after the R10. These are plain to see on the ugly-duckling R15+ of 2010 when it carried little or no cover or fairing.

"This broad front nose is part of our concept," explains Wolfgang Appel, director of vehicle engineering at Audi Sport. "We have two crash cones with a fairing on it. We have improved it over time, so we have continued with that philosophy."

The car still looks every inch an Audi to the eye, but the aerodynamic ethos underneath has had to change courtesy of another new regulation. This allows a front wing under the nose for the first time, something Audi Sport's engineers went some way to achieving on the original R15 by means that were subsequently outlawed.

Audi Sport head of LMP Christopher Reinke explains that the front wing, combined with a ban on the blown-diffuser system the car ran last year, has resulted in a radically different aero concept to what has gone before.

"If you start with a brand new component on the front of the car like you have now, you have to follow it through the complete car and rearrange everything," he says. "The philosophy is quite different."

There has also been a revision of the cooling package as a result of the demands of the new regulations. At the same time, the team has swapped from a heat-exchanger in the vee of the engine to cool the gearbox to a traditional sidepod oil cooler.

DATA-GATHERING MOMENTUM

Audi is probably best placed of the three P1 manufacturers ahead of the official – and mandatory – WEC test at Paul Ricard that starts tomorrow (Friday) in that it has been racking up the miles since the autumn with the new R18. Porsche couldn't be accused of doing that until its revised engine arrived to replace the vibrating original in December, while Toyota didn't get its 2014 challenger, the TSO40, up and running until the end of January.

Audi has embarked on a rigorous test programme, which this year has taken it to Abu Dhabi, Sebring, Austin and, this week, Road Atlanta. It believes that the intricacies of the new regulations mean that accruing information on a variety of circuits is essential.

"You need to run in completely different scenarios to have confidence that there are no bugs hidden somewhere that then strike you in a race," explains Ullrich. "This is why we are now on different racetracks with completely different layouts, so we can assemble as much data as possible."

Audi has certainly done its homework as far as testing is concerned – it has completed more than a Le Mans distance on its car. It hit its target of going beyond the 6000km mark (3725 miles) during this month's run at Sebring, and by some margin. It is reckoned that Audi exceeded 7000km (4350 miles) over the course of the five-day test.

Audi is ahead of the game when it comes to mileage racked up with its interpretation of one of the most complicated breeds of racing car ever built. Porsche and Toyota might well argue, however, that they are ahead when it comes to exploiting the new LMP1 rulebook. ❧

INGHAM/GETTY

BTCC 2014

40

It's one of the most eagerly anticipated seasons ever, so here's our guide to the UK's premier tin-top championship





Battle of the super seven

The big news in the BTCC this year is that seven champions will be fighting it out at the front. **KEVIN TURNER** and **TOM WOOD** take a look at their chances



Not even during the fabled multi-manufacturer spendfest of the Super Touring era did a British Touring Car Championship season begin with seven title winners on the grid.

Along with a confirmed entry of 31, including new cars and drivers, the prospect of Fabrizio Giovanardi and Alain Menu taking on reigning champion Andrew Jordan, works Honda duo Matt Neal and Gordon Shedden, Jason Plato and Colin Turkington has created a real buzz ahead of this season.

This weekend's Brands Hatch opener will also begin the new NGTC-only era, returning the BTCC to a single-class format for the first time since 1999.

So, with the seven champions helping to attract so much attention, how do they see the way things are shaping up?



“At the start I was finding it difficult as it’s a completely different set of rules to Super 2000” **FABRIZIO GIOVANARDI**

Fabrizio Giovanardi

Car Motorbase Ford Focus
Donington test position 12th
24 BTCC wins; 2007 and 2008 champion

The Italian proved a class act the last time he arrived in the BTCC with Vauxhall, and scored two victories on his last weekend in the series at Thruxton's 2010 season opener.

He and the Motorbase Performance squad mean business – David Bartrum's team is out to prove a point after a winless 2013 – but testing hasn't been ideal.

Giovanardi has admitted he has yet to get on top of the car and was only 12th fastest in the official test at Donington Park last week.

“At the start I was finding it difficult as it’s a completely different set of rules compared to Super 2000 when I left,” says Giovanardi. “I have to learn how to understand the car

and tell the team what I need so we just started off with difficulty. We're just growing up and growing up and growing up, and I believe we're ready for Brands Hatch.

“I have to be confident obviously, because you need to be ready in your mind and be confident to win. We were unlucky at the last test at media day because we were planning to make some changes in the car and then there was rain, so we couldn't test what we think is the best way.”

But Giovanardi believes progress was made when recently confirmed team-mate Mat Jackson drove the car at Brands after the official test. “Mat tried what we planned and he found something interesting,” adds the 47-year-old.

“Mat knows the car better than me and he found something positive from the last time he drove the [2013] car, so I hope for the first round to be in a place to fight for the top-five positions.”



Andrew Jordan

Car Eurotech Honda Civic
Donington test position 1st
10 BTCC wins; **2013** champion

He's the least-experienced and newest addition to the list of BTCC champions, but Jordan looks pretty well set to mount a stern title defence.

Unlike some of his rivals, he won't have to get used to new kit or a different team, and tweaks to the successful Civic hatchback are only going to make it stronger. Throw in the increased confidence a championship crown brings and it's not difficult to see why the 24-year-old is looking forward to 2014.

"We've got better since the end of last year," says Jordan, who has now become a Red Bull



"We've still got some unanswered questions going to Brands, but we've just got to get on with it" **ANDREW JORDAN**

Athlete. "I'm really happy with where we are."

Jordan topped the Donington test despite rain preventing a planned 'qualifying' run. "We were about to put a new set of tyres on when it started to rain – it's always nice to end up quickest, but it wasn't really a proper day because of the weather and we had quite a lot to try out that we haven't been able to do," he says. "It means we've still got some unanswered questions going to Brands Hatch, but we've just got to get on with it."

"I think my chances are very good to retain the title – we've put the work in, so now it's just time to get out there and win it again."

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Alain Menu

Car BMR Volkswagen Passat CC
Donington test position 3rd
36 BTCC wins; **1997** and **2000** champion

"I don't think I will be completely ready for Brands Hatch and I don't think the team will be ready," said Menu at the official Donington test, but the lap times suggest he'll be further up the grid than many expect.

Given the fact that the team – now under Warren Scott and running as BMR rather than Team Hard – has gone through major change and the VW Passat has yet to achieve much, expectations for the early part of the year were relatively low. But Menu was third fastest at Donington and was reportedly able to lap on the 2013 pole pace at Brands Indy last week.

The 50-year-old does concede the Passat has potential, even if he needs more time in it: "We haven't done enough and I don't think we have

enough grip, but I think the base is good and the car handles OK. The times don't mean too much – it was mixed conditions [at Donington] and we don't know what the other guys were doing.

"It's hard for me to tell because I don't have much experience of NGTC. I haven't practised the starts and I haven't done a long run, but with four cars we've been able to learn from each other.

"My chances? I'd think winning a race or two will be possible."

Menu realises he could be part of the BTCC's best season for some years – arguably the best since he last took the title. "Everyone I've spoken to has been very excited about this year, and the number of fans at the test was really impressive," he says. "It's going to be a good season!"



"I haven't practised the starts or done a long run. My chances? I'd think winning a race or two is possible" **ALAIN MENU**



GARY HAWKINS

Matt Neal

Car Dynamics Honda Civic Tourer
Donington test position 6th
52 BTCC wins; **2005, 2006** and **2011** champion

Neal is now a canny racer, perhaps unsurprising given his two decades of tin-top experience.

On raw pace he won't often match team-mate Gordon Shedden or Andrew Jordan, but he showed last year that he can make up for that by being in the right place at the right time. He led the standings for much of 2013. Ending his run of hand injuries in the closing stages of each season would definitely help...

The switch to the Civic Tourer estate, which was a PR masterstroke, has proved more technically challenging than first thought, but Honda works team Dynamics appears to have made big strides in recent weeks.

"As with any new car, testing with the Tourer was challenging to begin with, and I was initially surprised by how different it felt to the Civic hatchback," says Neal, who is still nursing his martial-arts injury from September. "That said, we've learned a huge amount every time we've gone out and have made a lot of progress, which is really positive.

"I'm confident we've turned a corner now and have rounded off a few of the rough edges.

"There are a huge number of drivers who are likely to be sparring up at the sharp end of the grid. It's shaping up to be the most competitive season in BTCC history, and everybody in the field is going to have to fight like crazy just to make it into the points – which can only be good for the championship."

Both Neal (sixth) and Shedden (second) were quick in the Donington test and the squad's record over the past four years – four teams' titles and two drivers' crowns – means it will almost certainly be in the mix come the Brands GP finale in October.

"Everybody will have to fight like crazy just to make it into the points, which is good for the championship" **MATT NEAL**



Jason Plato

Car Triple Eight MG6
Donington test position 22nd
82 BTCC wins; **2001** and **2010** champion

Plato and the Triple Eight-run MG overachieved in their first season together in 2012 and won more races than anyone else last year. This season really should be the year when the programme delivers the crown.

Plato's performance at the 2013 Brands finale suggests the MG6, often quick in the dry, is now also a competitive proposition in the wet. If Triple Eight can banish the small problems that cost a lot of points in 2013, Plato is capable of delivering a third BTCC title.

"We've done two years of this project now, we're starting the third and we're better prepared than we ever have been," says Plato, who suffered a steering issue during the driest of the Donington test running.

"We've got genuine manufactured developments coming through now, which we've never had before, and in the past we've spent time in the off season trying to understand the car, but we have that information now and we also have a good wet set-up.

"We were a bit unlucky last year, but the mindset this year is very different. All of that gives us real confidence ahead of this season, and as a team we're more organised and in the best position we've been to challenge for the BTCC title."



Gordon Shedden

Car Dynamics Honda Civic Tourer
Donington test position 2nd
33 BTCC wins; **2012** champion

Shedden is unquestionably one of the fastest drivers in the BTCC and in 2012 he showed he could mix that with the right level of aggression. That went a little awry at times last year, although it's fair to say the Scot lost more points through bad luck than his own errors.

If Shedden can rediscover his 2012 racecraft, he will have an easier time scoring points and not have to rely on the sort of late charge that took him to second last year.

The real question mark is over the Civic Tourer, but Donington's test suggested it's closer to the pace than initial running indicated. "So much work has gone on over the winter to try to replicate the heartbeat of the Civic hatchback, which has obviously been such a potent weapon



and the BTCC benchmark for the past couple of years," reckons Shedden.

"We ran the first Tourer back-to-back with the Civic hatchback, which was tremendously beneficial and provided us with some really interesting information.

"The Tourer is clearly a new engineering challenge, but as a manufacturer Honda has always been prepared to try something different and really push the boat out. We've made huge progress from where we started with this car and now we're starting to unlock its secrets, which is tremendously exciting for the year ahead."

Shedden is also hoping for a smoother run in 2014: "You need things to go your way, and with 31 cars on the grid you never know what's going to happen this year. All I hope is that come race 30 at Brands GP I'm in with a cracking chance of winning the title back."

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Colin Turkington

Car WSR BMW 125i M Sport
Donington test position 8th
24 BTCC wins; **2009** BTCC champion

It was difficult to fault Turkington's 2013 campaign as he maximised the new NGTC BMW to remain an outside bet for the title until the final meeting.

WSR's main problem last year was a lack of knowledge of the car, with the 125i M Sport being a real handful through high-speed corners. Turkington believes the rear-wheel-drive machine has potential and, if the BMW can be endowed with a bit more consistency, the 32-year-old has the class to take it to anyone in the field. Remember, he beat Plato, Giovanardi and Neal to his 2009 crown.

"Testing has been going OK – we've had the car out five times, which is five times more than



"Testing has been going OK – we've had the car out five times, which is five times more than this time last year!"

COLIN TURKINGTON

this time last year!" he says. "I'm confident we've moved the 1-series on. You always want more time behind the wheel but I don't think we'll be too far away from the word go."

Team boss Dick Bennetts grew concerned last year that rivals could deliberately try to spin his RWD machines, but Turkington showed in 2009 that he can look after himself.

Turkington believes that the reigning champion and Plato are looking strong at this stage. "I think Andy Jordan and the MGs are going to be quick from the word go," he adds. "But I'll be looking to score well everywhere and the target is obviously to win."



BTCC RACE GUIDE

The winter seems to have taken a long time to pass, but finally we are on the cusp of an exciting new season, and our KX Akademy members will be more excited about the challenge than most.



“The selection process was tough because there was huge demand for places and we had to shift through hundreds of very worthy applicants, but we are delighted with the candidates we have got. Sam Tordoff remains on the scheme alongside me in the KX MG Clubcard Fuel Save British Touring Car Championship team, while David Pittard will tackle the Ginetta GT4 Supercup. Ant Whorton-Eales remains on the scheme and will be joined in the Renault Clio

Cup by Josh Cook, Alex Morgan and Ash Hand. They will all be in position to emulate our Ginetta GT champion from last season, Tom Ingram, who will graduate to the British Touring Car Championship and go his own way, proving the value of the mentoring that KX is able to offer young aspirants.

Our fresh intake has already been through a fitness day and simulation training in preparation for the new season, which included pointers from myself and a leading race

engineer. These are just the first steps that they will take on the road to success over the course of the season.

You will get the chance to meet the drivers, myself and a few special star guests at our popular KX Question Time events, which will take place at seven of the rounds this season. The first one at Brands Hatch takes place at the Kentagon on Saturday night at 1830hrs. I look forward to seeing you there. ”

JASON PLATO

“Meet the drivers, myself and a few special star guests at our popular **KX Question Time**”

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SAM TORDOFF

BTCC WITH THE MG KX CLUBCARD FUEL SAVE MG6

Sam Tordoff says he will come of age as a touring car driver this season at the wheel of the MG KX Clubcard Fuel Save MG6.

The 24-year-old was a race winner in his debut season in the British Touring Car Championship last year and he is aiming to build on that during the forthcoming campaign. Consistency is his aim, and he is revved up for the lights to go out at Brands Hatch on Sunday.

"I am really excited about the season ahead," says Tordoff. "I have experience of the championship now, so there shouldn't be anything to surprise me. Just having that knowledge of how it all

works means I am more relaxed, and the updates we have made to the car over the winter are really strong."

An influx of star names into the BTCC this year means there are seven champions on the grid, but Leeds racer Tordoff says he isn't daunted. "I am driving better than ever - as you would expect after one season in the BTCC," he added. "The fact there are so many title winners on the track doesn't really bother me. I race alongside Jason Plato, and the guys who have joined aren't any better than him. The benchmark will be at the same level it has always been so it won't get any tougher. They are still rivals to be beaten." ●



DAVID PITTARD

GINETTA GT4 CHAMPIONSHIP WITH SVR

Stepping up to the Ginetta GT4 Championship is a big deal for David Pittard, but he has set himself some high targets.

The 22-year-old graduates from the GT5 Championship, where he was a three-time race winner last season, to the headline Ginetta championship with the SVR team. Delivery delays mean that Pittard will only have a couple of days of testing before the start of the season, but he is confident of putting on a strong show.

"It has been a bit of a frustrating time waiting for the car and waiting to begin my testing programme, but we have it

now and I am really enjoying getting to grips with it," he explains.

"I will have two days running before we go to Brands Hatch, so I will have a lot to learn over the course of the race weekend when I get there.

"My target is high though - I want to qualify well and get three finishes to gain experience of the car, but I want to be able to nick a cheeky podium in the final race of the weekend.

"Over the course of the season, I want to run at the front and my plan is to be in the title fight going in to the last round. I have never been in a championship at this level before, but I am ready for the challenge. Bring on Brands." ●



ALEX MORGAN

RENAULT CLIO CUP WITH SVR

Alex Morgan says vital experience gained in single-seater racing will help him capture the Renault Clio Cup this season.

The 26-year-old, who will race for the SVR team this year with backing from KX, says that the revamped Clio will play to his strengths. The former Formula Renault racer thinks that the more racy car is a winner.

"There are things on the Clio now which are more like a single-seater, and I have strong experience of that. The brakes are proper racing brakes and there is a paddleshift gearbox, which I love. We have had lots of data from

testing so far, which has been in both the wet and the dry, so I am fully prepared for the contest. I took five podiums last year, and I know I need to double that to battle for the crown, so that is my aim."

Morgan thinks that regularly being in the top three finishers will help him to mount a campaign for the coveted Clio Cup title.

"I was second in the points last year, so there is only one other thing for me to do now," says Morgan. "My main aim for this campaign is consistency over the entire season. I want to score big points at every race and then the title should take care of itself. I really can't wait for the season to begin." ●



JOSH COOK

RENAULT CLIO CUP WITH SVR

The latest recruit to the KX Akademy is Josh Cook. A late change of plans means he will now tackle the Renault Clio Cup with SVR, and he is revelling in his new environment already.

"I am delighted to be part of the KX Akademy, and I really like the way the SVR team works. I think I am going to slot in straight away," said Bath racer Cook, 22. "I have had a couple of days testing so I am getting used to the new car, but this is the year for me to go for the crown. It is my third year in Clios, so I am desperate to win."

Cook, who was fifth in the points last term with one win, is another Clio man who knows that solid race finishes will be the key to mounting a campaign for the crown in 2014. He knows that regular trophies are the way to

make a step forward in terms of his championship position.

"It is going to be about seeing the chequered flag and maximising your opportunities when they come along," he says. "The cars are very different animals to last year but they are awesome, with lots of torque and it is a motor I really think I am going to get on with." ●



ANT WHORTON-EALES

RENAULT CLIO CUP WITH SVR

This is the season for Ant Whorton-Eales to make a breakthrough, and the 19-year-old says experience gained last season will help him take a step towards the overall championship as he remains with the SVR squad.

The Stafford racer outscored every driver but the champion over the second half of the contest last season, and he says that he is desperate to carry that momentum into the fresh challenge this season.

"We finished last season on a real high and were regularly scoring big points," says Whorton-Eales, who claimed a victory at Rockingham in 2013. "I certainly want to carry that form into the new campaign. Although there are new cars for this season, I have really enjoyed them from

the testing I have completed so far. "They have lots of torque and having a turbo is awesome - I love the sound of them. They aren't massively different to last season but they are on a knife-edge to drive on the limit. It means you have to have quick reactions and I think they are going to look spectacular from the trackside and on TV," he laughs. ●



ASH HAND

RENAULT CLIO CUP WITH SVR

The KX Akademy's influence has got Ash Hand full of confidence ahead of the start of the new season at Brands Hatch this weekend.

The 19-year-old has joined SVR for the new term and says that Jason Plato's input has already helped push him forward.

"It is incredible how much I have picked up so far," says Hand, from Nuneaton. "The KX Akademy

is already helping me and I am enjoying being part of it."

Impressive testing showings so far means Hand is relishing the approaching season, and he says he has gelled well with the SVR team during his early running.

"I wondered what it would be like to switch team, but the SVR crew are brilliant and I have really clicked with the new turbocharged car as well. I am buzzing for the year ahead and

I want to leave Brands Hatch in charge of the points," he says.

"If I can do that, then I am in control and I can drive accordingly in the following races. It is all about going out there, doing the right things and making an impression. If I can leave Brands at the top of the standings, then that would be the ideal scenario for me. It will be tough, given the opposition - but I am only here to win it this year." ●



The hugely popular **KX Question Time** events, where you get a chance to quiz the stars, will return for this season. It will be coming soon to a circuit near you. Check the **KX facebook** page for details.



Jason Plato and the KX Akademy candidates will be racing at ten venues across the course of the season and they will be coming to a circuit near you. Here's our guide to the season's tracks that you can keep safe so you know where you can check out the action.

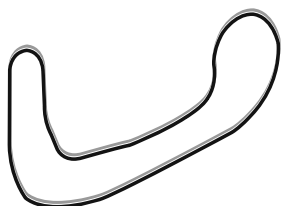
BRANDS HATCH INDY 29-30 MARCH

Swooping but compact circuit that tests the handling.

Should keep the field tight and be all action

BEST VIEWING POINT ▶ **Paddock Hill Bend** is a real rollercoaster

POTENTIAL FLASHPOINT ▶ **Druids** hairpin for late-braking lunges

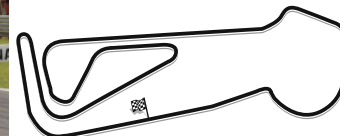


SNETTERTON 2-3 AUGUST

The challenging 300 layout is narrow but a test for the handling of the cars with some long, fast corners

BEST VIEWING POINT ▶ **Agostini's** big spectator bank offers great vantage

POTENTIAL FLASHPOINT ▶ **Montreal** hairpin on lap one is a crunch-fest



DONINGTON PARK 19-20 APRIL

Historic parkland venue with a flowing layout and very few slow corners to break up the drama

BEST VIEWING POINT ▶ **Craner Curves** are ones for the brave

POTENTIAL FLASHPOINT ▶ **Esses** for heavy braking before the switchback

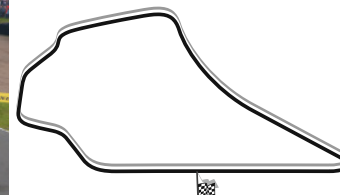


KNOCKHILL 23-24 AUGUST

Scotland's only round is held on this breathtaking rollercoaster of a track with blind crests and huge dips

BEST VIEWING POINT ▶ Go to the **John R Wier** chicane to see the cars fly

POTENTIAL FLASHPOINT ▶ **The hairpin** is where the door-bashing happens

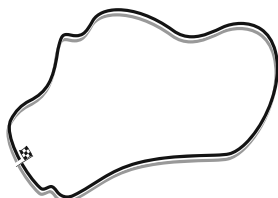


THRUXTON 3-4 MAY

Britain's fastest track benefits good aerodynamics and a lot of power. Strong handling is vital

BEST VIEWING POINT ▶ **The Complex** three-corner sequence is demanding

POTENTIAL FLASHPOINT ▶ **Club Chicane** is where the overtaking happens

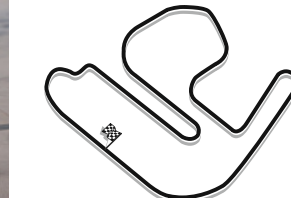


ROCKINGHAM 6-7 SEPTEMBER

The oval plus infield combination always delivers great action and the entire track is visible from the grandstand

BEST VIEWING POINT ▶ **Main grandstand** is where you can see the entire track

POTENTIAL FLASHPOINT ▶ **Deene Hairpin**, where the cars slow from the oval

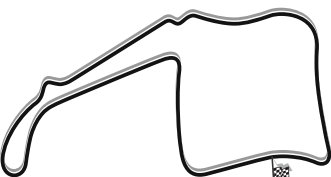


OULTON PARK 7-8 JUNE

The undulating venue is always a favourite with drivers and is a circuit that rewards the bravest of all

BEST VIEWING POINT ▶ **Cascades** offers a fantastic view

POTENTIAL FLASHPOINT ▶ **Knickerbrook** - the tight chicane is a passing spot



SILVERSTONE 27-28 SEPTEMBER

The National configuration of Britain's GP track is short and it keeps the cars tightly grouped

BEST VIEWING POINT ▶ **Luffield** for a close-up view of the overtaking

POTENTIAL FLASHPOINT ▶ **Luffield** again - it is a real hot spot

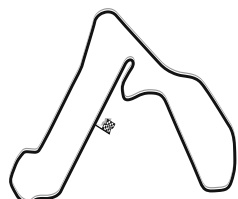


CROFT 28-29 JUNE

Fast and flat, the track offers a bit of everything with flowing turns at the back and a twisty section at the end of the lap

BEST VIEWING POINT ▶ **Ciervaux** is the scene for opening-lap skirmishes

POTENTIAL FLASHPOINT ▶ **The Hairpin** is the place for late-braking bravado

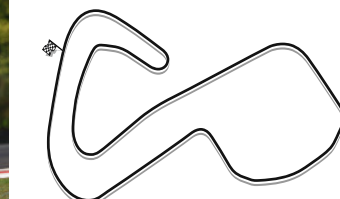


BRANDS HATCH GP 11-12 OCTOBER

The final round of the championship takes place on one of the country's most majestic backdrops, the GP track

BEST VIEWING POINT ▶ **Venture** around the GP loop for real speed

POTENTIAL FLASHPOINT ▶ **Surtees** nearly decided last year's title





Hynes (right) and Collard are among the chasers

The challengers

Can anyone stop the champions? **KEVIN TURNER**

looks at the likely contenders to the established stars

The seven champions might have stolen the limelight, but the strength of this season's British Touring Car Championship field goes beyond the big names.

Several rising stars and a number of established tin-top racers should have the pace to get into the fight at the front, and it's not out of the question that one or two of them could get into the title chase.

Perhaps Jason Plato's MG team-mates **Sam Tordoff** and **Marc Hynes** are best placed to do so. Tordoff impressed in his rookie season in 2013, running his mentor close on a number of occasions and taking his first win, while ex-British F3 champion Hynes has a fine pedigree, even if he lacks front-wheel-drive touring car experience.

Beating Plato over a season in the same car will be a tall order, but Tordoff has high hopes. "I feel a lot better than I did last year," he says. "I want to be fighting at the front, challenging for podiums and ultimately wins."

"I've realised consistency is key and I'll be going all out to finish every race in the points. That should allow the challenge for the title to build itself. I've got no excuses; I have a fantastic team, car and team-mate, and we've improved."

It's no secret that **Mat Jackson** had a troubled 2013 and he almost didn't have a drive for this season. But with Tom Onslow-Cole deciding to switch from touring cars to GTs, Jackson was able

to clinch a late deal to stay at Motorbase.

He has missed most of pre-season testing in the revised Ford Focus and Jackson knows he will have to be on top of his game with Fabrizio Giovanardi as a benchmark in the team. "I know there is a lot of competition this season, but when I was runner-up in 2008 there was only Fabrizio in front of me," he said at the BTCC launch last week. "I hope we can both be in the title mix."

Team-mate **Jack Clarke** has a reasonable single-seater record, but that is no guarantee of success in the BTCC. It may take time before he can show his best.

Jack Goff and **Aron Smith** have been two of the more promising newcomers over the last couple of years. Goff lacked a topline team-mate for some of 2013 and Smith was part of the Motorbase wobble, but neither will have

anywhere to hide with Alain Menu as the BMR team leader. If they can learn from the double champ, they should be able to take advantage of cars (Goff in a Vauxhall Insignia; Smith in a VW Passat) that are bound to get better.

Rounding out the team-mates of the champions is **Rob Collard** at WSR. After a fine 2012, he struggled with the new 125i M Sport and a run of bad luck left him well behind Colin Turkington. He got much closer to the 2009 champ in the second half of the season, however, and should be a more consistent challenger in '14.

Rob Austin was the only man to break the stranglehold of the big teams in 2013 with his win at Rockingham and has managed to attract sponsors to replace the loss of WIX. He has also been pleased with the Audi A4's pace in testing: "We've never been anywhere near as well prepared as this before. All the data suggests we've moved the performance forward over both a single lap and a race distance."

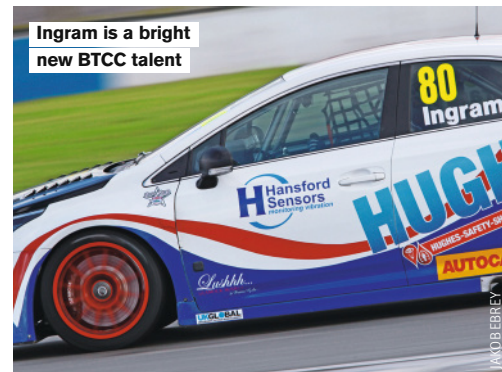
Adam Morgan has shown impressive speed in testing with his Mercedes (see p54), while **Dave Newsham's** switch to AmD's newly acquired Focus could help him to improve on a disappointing 2013.

Of the newcomers, KX Academy graduate **Tom Ingram** could be a standout. The likeable 20-year-old knows the TOCA package and the circuits from his stellar Ginetta career and could spring a surprise if Speedworks can overcome some of the minor glitches that hampered its Toyota Avensis challenge last year. ❧

"We've never been anywhere near as well prepared. All the data suggests we've moved forward" **ROB AUSTIN**



Late deal means Jackson is back



Ingram is a bright new BTCC talent

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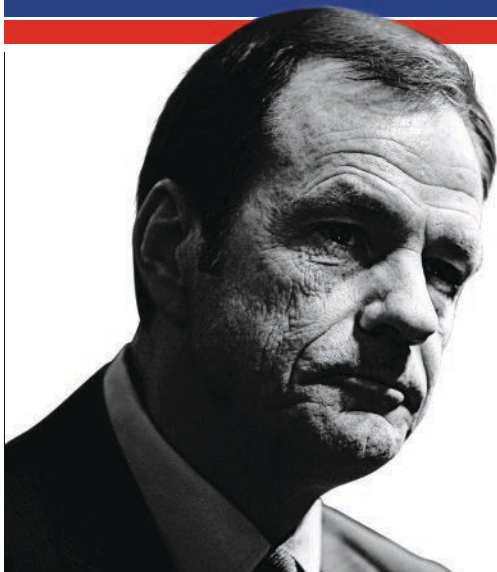
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Alan Gow

The inside line

The series director reckons this year's 31-car grid means a new golden era. Now he's keen on trimming the full-time number to 30...

We were delighted to confirm a 31-car grid at the British Touring Car Championship media launch at Donington Park last week, and it only goes to underline that the BTCC continues to go from strength to strength – and there's no sign of it slowing down either.

It also pays testament to the introduction of our clever 'Next Generation Touring Car' rules that we launched in 2010 to bring the costs down and make the championship more accessible for manufacturers and teams. It was a three-year plan of a phased introduction of the rules, and now we have got to the end of that every car on the grid will run to full NGTC spec from this season.

NGTC has ticked every box on the way through that process, although I really think we've got to the stage where we need to stop calling them NGTC cars, because NGTC was a working title and it meant 'Next Generation'. But we can't keep calling something 'Next Generation' when it has already happened. I obviously didn't think it through very well when we named them NGTC – now we'll have to think of a more suitable name for them.

With 31 cars out there and more new models in the planning stage to be built, I think our 'Now Generation' Touring Cars are going to be around for quite a while. We can update and revise the regs as we want or

championship was a multiple-class series.

The entry is a record since the BTCC became single-class in 1991 and a major difference this year is that all of those cars are obliged to take part in every race. That's a huge shift for us. Previously, we have allowed some flexibility with drivers and teams missing some rounds, but that isn't the case any more and is a result of our new three-year licensing system, the TOCA BTCC Licence (TBL). We introduced it this year to provide an asset to the teams and a reward for their commitment to the series. Subject to approval of TOCA, teams can sell, loan or lease out their TBL. It means the teams have something tangible and gives them security in their entry. By obtaining a TBL, the teams hold the only route into the BTCC.

From a maximum entry number of 32, we undertook to issue 30 TBLs to the teams, with TOCA keeping two up our sleeves for if or when we need to use them... although such was the demand that I've issued 31 licences. So at the first opportunity we will take back one TBL to then keep the ratio of 30 licences issued and two kept in reserve. I'm a great believer in keeping supply just below demand...

The TBL is one of the initiatives we have introduced for this season, but the strength of the series is that we have real consistency and stability, and that's helped create the buzz that we have surrounding

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“All those returning champions wouldn't be here if British Touring Cars wasn't at the right level”

need to, and we future-proofed the regulations when we devised them in the first place. The regulations are not dependent on the previous expensive homologation process, so our approval of each vehicle is a much simpler process.

The BTCC has proud and important long-term partnerships with ITV, Dunlop and our other associated sponsors, so clearly we must be doing something right. When setting new regulations it's important not to get distracted. When we planned NGTC there was some scepticism initially. But it was important that we held firm on the direction we were going and not be sent down cul-de-sacs by other 'expert' parties. You have to know what you want, what you are doing and just get on with it.

One thing that is impressive is the diversity; that we have 11 makes on the grid and, between them, there are 14 different models of car. We've never had anything like those numbers apart from the old days, when the

series at the moment.

That buzz has been helped by the seven champions we have on the grid, which is a modern-day record. That's further testament to the strength and value of the BTCC and that goes for the past and the present.

But in that respect there's something that needs to be kept in mind – all those returning champions wouldn't be here if the BTCC wasn't at the right level. And with the exception of Fabrizio Giovanardi, it was the BTCC that made the name and reputations of all the champions on our 2014 grid. It's the championship that makes champions and it will be fascinating to watch the 'next generation' (there's that damn phrase again!) of BTCC champions develop before us.

No doubt in a few years' time we will be looking back on this era and remembering it as 'the good old days'.

But in the meantime, get your backside trackside (or onto the sofa in front of ITV4) and enjoy what will undoubtedly be an epic season. ❧



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MORGAN'S MERCEDES MARAUDER

Adam Morgan was one of the stars of 2013, but a first win remained elusive. He's hoping that will change with the three-pointed star in the BTCC. By **KEVIN TURNER**

Despite its illustrious history in motorsport, Mercedes doesn't have much to shout about in British Touring Car terms. The German marque has never made a major assault on the UK's leading tin-top series and has no wins to its name.

Adam Morgan and Ciceley Motorsport are hoping to change that this season. The combination was perhaps unlucky not to win a race last year with its Toyota Avensis and Morgan finished a fine seventh in the drivers' table.

The squad decided early on to switch to the smaller A-class – bringing the brand back to the series for the first time in over two decades – and the 25-year-old hopes he can attract Mercedes' attention.

"It made sense because Ciceley Commercial is our family business and it's a Mercedes truck and van dealer," says Morgan. "We had a couple of contacts and decided it would be a good idea.

"We've got quite a few [Mercedes] people coming down to the races, we want to get them interested. We'd welcome any type of support – Mercedes is a brilliant brand."

The fact that Ciceley, led by experienced chief engineer Paul Ridgeway, was able to build up the

Morgan took a podium finish in Toyota in 2013



MORGAN IN THE BTCC

Starts	58
Wins	0
Podiums	1
Poles	0
Fastest laps	2
Points	283

Mercedes on its own is testament to the NGTC regulations, which specify many spec parts across all the cars. Nevertheless, getting the Merc ready was still a challenge.

"The majority of the components are from the Toyota," adds Morgan, who started thinking about the switch at Knockhill in August and took the plunge shortly afterwards. "The NGTC package works really well and made it easier, but it was still a long, hard build.

"If we'd started at the end of the season I don't think we'd have made it in time. We did everything apart from put the cage in, but it does mean we could get everything how we wanted."

Given the challenges of the build and a move to new premises near Accrington – "we've got ambitions to stay in touring cars and if we're going to do it let's do it properly" – Ciceley decided to stick with the TOCA engine it used in the Toyota.

"We did look at developing our own engine, but we've had so much on that it would have

been too much," reckons Morgan.

Despite the similarities between the cars, small changes can have a big impact with the NGTC machines – as the works Honda team has found with its new estate – so there was no guarantee the package would work when it hit the track. But after tests at Silverstone, Brands Hatch and Donington, Morgan is confident the Merc is better than the Avensis.

"It's a lot shorter with a shorter wheelbase and we've got the weight distribution much better," he says. "The handling is massively improved.

"Paul and the boys have produced the best car that I've driven and it keeps surprising me with how good it is. There have been no real problems, and the speed we have shown so far is up there with the big boys.

"It feels really good. Every time I get out of the car I've got a smile on my face."

Ridgeway has also been pleased with progress.

"The team has done a fantastic job in putting the car together and Adam has done a great job behind the wheel," he says.

"It's fair to say that the performance of the Mercedes so far has exceeded my expectations. Of course we don't know where we really stand until we get to Brands Hatch and everyone shows their hand, but we're in a good position."

With extra backing from WIX Filters, the team is well set away from the track too, and has a plan to expand. "We have aspirations to run a two-car team next year," confirms Morgan. "We've already had interest in the Mercedes and this year is about getting the car sorted and up to speed."

So can Morgan and Mercedes win in 2014? After a troubled rookie season in 2012, the man in the cockpit was one of the BTCC's most consistent performers last year. But he did throw away arguably his best chance of victory with an off at Thruxton and Morgan knows he needs to keep improving.

"I've watched the season review two or three times and I'm always trying to better myself," he says. "I've been working on my fitness, anything that could give me an edge over the others.

"It would be amazing to get a win in the first year of the new car. This year will be incredibly tough with a capacity grid and seven champions – I do think it's got the makings of one of the best touring car seasons for many years – but the car is definitely capable of running at the front. That's where I want to be."

New look and new hope for 2014



Q&A

ROB HOLLAND

ROTEK'S NEW AUDI

The Mercedes isn't the only new German car on the 2014 grid. Rotek Racing is joining the BTCC with an Audi S3 for American Robb Holland.

How are things shaping up?

Obviously, you would rather have another week or two, but we are one of the few teams to build up a new car this year and we had to wait until we got the TOCA BTCC Licence (TBL). We had the chassis come in from Audi a couple of weeks before we got the TBL licence on December 1, but the build didn't start until we were officially confirmed, which was a really short lead-in time.

Why an Audi?

We have had a great relationship with Audi. We have done a lot of stuff with them at the Nurburgring in VLN, and we have their factory Audi TT RS. We looked at the A3-S3 platform and thought it was going to be one of the best in the series and it has turned out that way. The chassis builder says it is one of the lightest chassis he has ever built and from an aerodynamics standpoint it is one of the best out there.

Is there any working relationship with Audi above and beyond them just saying, 'Yes, you can do this'?

There has been some technical support. We had some questions in terms of wiring and things like that. There is nothing to the factory level, but they are returning our phonecalls. There is a lot of potential here and I think Audi likes being involved where there is potential.

You haven't run the car yet, have you?

Our big thing was that our guys were not going to cut corners. We do things in the right way no matter what time it takes to get it done. Going to Brands, our goal is reliability. We don't want to say that our goal is to go out there and win the first race because we are up against 30 other cars. Our goal is a three-year programme and beyond. It is not dependent on storming things from the word go. We're here for the long term.

Robb Holland was talking to Matt James

Holland with all-new Rotek-built Audi S3



BTCC 2014

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Who's driving what? When are the races? Who are the most successful winners in history?

KEVIN TURNER brings you the essential guide to the 57th British Touring Car season

ENTRY LIST

EUROTECH RACING



Honda Civic



88 **ANDREW JORDAN**
30 **MARTIN DEPPER**

A known car, improved engine and confidence from a title win mean Jordan will be up there. Depper has more of a chance than the last time he was in the BTCC, but this is a tough field.

HONDA (Team Dynamics)



Honda Civic Tourer



4 **MATT NEAL**
52 **GORDON SHEDDEN**

Switch to the Tourer looked like setting the team back when testing began, but Honda has made good progress in recent weeks. Both Neal and Shedden are bound to be up at the front.

MG (Triple Eight)



MG6



88 **SAM TORDOFF**
99 **JASON PLATO**
888 **MARC HYNES**

Is it Plato's year? It's hard not to see him in the thick of the championship fight once again. Despite their inexperience, Tordoff and Hynes have enough class to be in the mix.

WSR



BMW 125i M Sport



5 **COLIN TURKINGTON**
10 **ROB COLLARD**
18 **NICK FOSTER**

Turkington put a title challenge together with an undeveloped BMW in 2013, so he should be one of the main threats this year. Collard should be stronger after unlucky start to last season.

CICELEY MOTORSPORT



Mercedes A-class



33 **ADAM MORGAN**

A title challenge would be asking too much, but it wouldn't be a shock to see Morgan and Mercedes fighting for podiums. The man himself reckons the new Merc is better than his 2013 Toyota.

MOTORBASE



Ford Focus



6 **MAT JACKSON**
7 **FABRIZIO GIOVANNARDI**
44 **JACK CLARKE**

Impressive line-up shows Motorbase means business this year. Jackson needs to bounce back after a difficult 2013 campaign, while Clarke has two good benchmarks for his BTCC rookie season.

AmD



Ford Focus



17 **DAVE NEWSHAM**

Newsham's season with Speedworks last year didn't yield the results expected, but the Motorbase-built Ford Focus could be a good package once AmD gets used to it.

ROBAUSTIN RACING



Audi A4

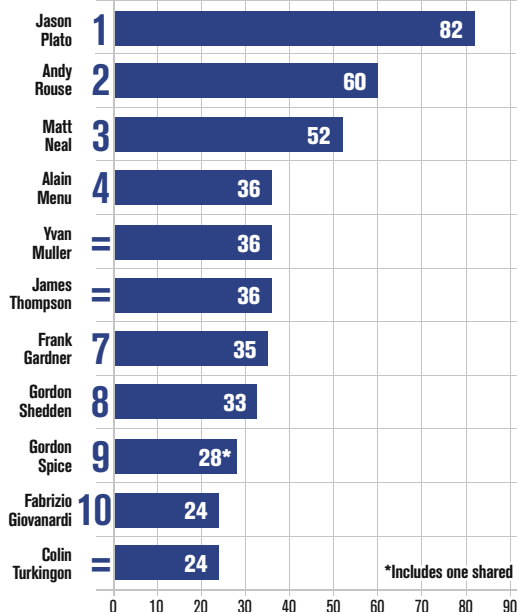


54 **HUNTER ABBOTT**
101 **ROB AUSTIN**

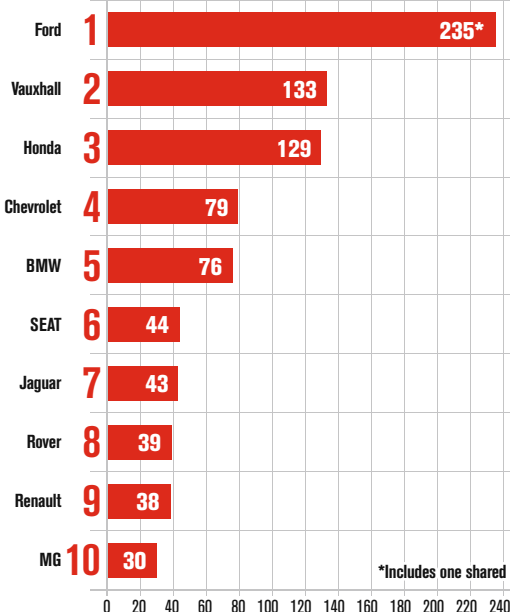
Popular squad has recruited former GT racer Abbott, but has traditionally struggled to run two cars cleanly. Nevertheless, expect Austin to be up there on the A4's better days.

ALL-TIME WINNERS

DRIVERS



MANUFACTURERS



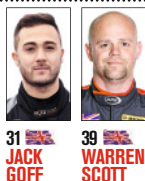
NEW RUBBER



Dunlop will introduce an all-new compound across its Sport Maxx tyre range, which is based on a new construction to offer improved driver feedback and confidence. As in 2013, every driver will have to nominate one of the three races on each weekend (except Thruxton) in which to run the soft compound instead of the medium. Dunlop will now reveal each driver's tyre choice via its social media feeds at 10am on racedays, where previously fans would not find out until cars reached the grid.

TEAM BMR

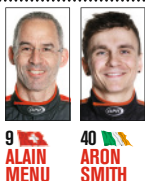
Vauxhall Insignia



31 JACK GOFF
39 WARREN SCOTT



VW Passat CC



9 ALAIN MENU
40 ARON SMITH

Revamped and ambitious squad will make for interesting viewing in 2014. Menu will get the best out of – and push forward – the machinery, and provide a good gauge for the promising Goff and Smith.

AIDEN MOFFAT RACING



Chevrolet Cruze



16 AIDEN MOFFAT

Season likely to provide a steep learning curve for Moffat, particularly after a fragmented 2013 campaign. The NGTC version of the Chevrolet Cruze is also an unproven package.

WELCH MOTORSPORT



Proton Gen-2



12 DAN WELCH
48 OLLIE JACKSON

Welch has had more than its share of bad luck in the BTCC. It remains to be seen whether running two cars will spread its resources too thin or help development with twice the data.

ROTEK RACING



Audi S3 Saloon



67 ROBB HOLLAND

Another team with big long-term targets, this will probably be a learning year for Rotek. Holland has yet to impress at this level, but this will be his first proper BTCC campaign.

UNITED AUTOSPORTS



Toyota Avensis



20 JAMES COLE
21 GLYNN GEDDIE

Successful GT squad steps into the BTCC. Both Cole and Geddie have won national titles (Formula Ford and British GT respectively), but are unproven in touring cars.

SPEEDWORKS MOTORSPORT (+ Handy Motorsport)



Toyota Avensis



80 TOM INGRAM
11 SIMON BELCHER

Multiple Ginetta champion Ingram has talent and is an engaging character outside the car. He should be one to watch for the future. Belcher may find things a tad tougher.

HOUSEMAN RACING



Toyota Avensis



43 LEA WOOD

The S2000 king and Jack Sears Trophy winner gets a much-deserved step up into NGTC. Unlikely to challenge at the front, but one to keep an eye on, especially when it rains.

BTC RACING



Chevrolet Cruze



28 CHRIS STOCKTON

Stockton has a decent amount of experience but developing the hatchback version of the NGTC-spec Cruze as a one-car team could prove tricky.

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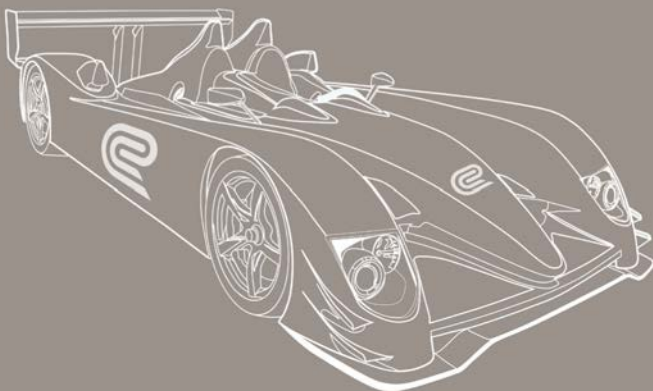
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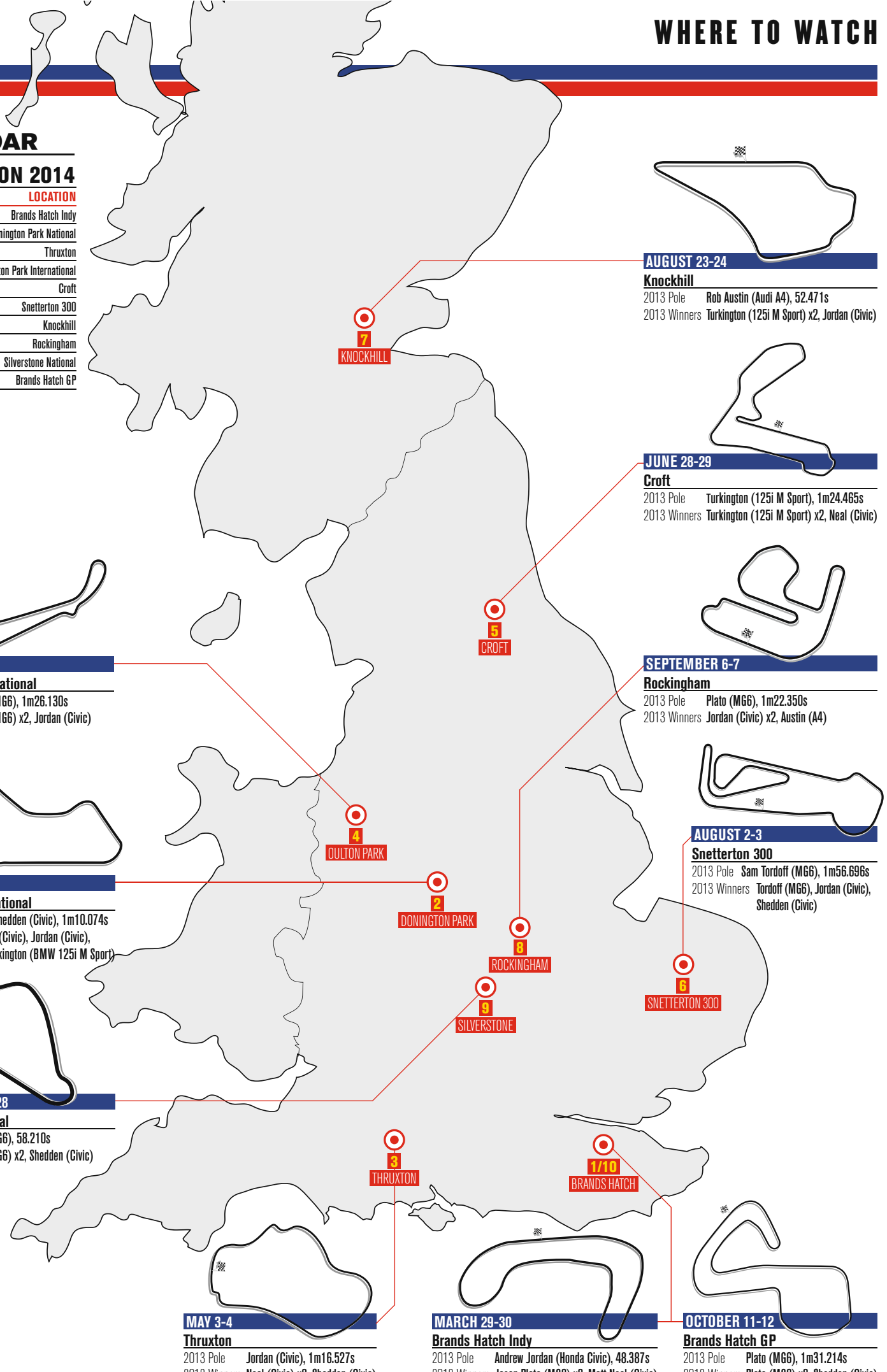
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CALENDAR

BTCC SEASON 2014

DATE	LOCATION
March 29-30	Brands Hatch Indy
April 19-20	Donington Park National
May 3-4	Thruxton
June 7-8	Oulton Park International
June 28-29	Croft
August 2-3	Snetterton 300
August 23-24	Knockhill
September 6-7	Rockingham
September 27-28	Silverstone National
October 11-12	Brands Hatch GP



AUGUST 23-24

Knockhill

2013 Pole Rob Austin (Audi A4), 52.471s
2013 Winners Turkington (125i M Sport) x2, Jordan (Civic)

JUNE 28-29

Croft

2013 Pole Turkington (125i M Sport), 1m24.465s
2013 Winners Turkington (125i M Sport) x2, Neal (Civic)

SEPTEMBER 6-7

Rockingham

2013 Pole Plato (MGG), 1m22.350s
2013 Winners Jordan (Civic) x2, Austin (A4)

AUGUST 2-3

Snetterton 300

2013 Pole Sam Tordoff (MGG), 1m56.696s
2013 Winners Tordoff (MGG), Jordan (Civic), Shedden (Civic)

JUNE 7-8

Oulton Park International

2013 Pole* Plato (MGG), 1m26.130s
2013 Winners* Plato (MGG) x2, Jordan (Civic)
*Island circuit

APRIL 19-20

Donington Park National

2013 Pole Gordon Shedden (Civic), 1m10.074s
2013 Winners Shedden (Civic), Jordan (Civic), Colin Turkington (BMW 125i M Sport)

SEPTEMBER 27-28

Silverstone National

2013 Pole Plato (MGG), 58.210s
2013 Winners Plato (MGG) x2, Shedden (Civic)

MAY 3-4

Thruxton

2013 Pole Jordan (Civic), 1m16.527s
2013 Winners Neal (Civic) x2, Shedden (Civic)

MARCH 29-30

Brands Hatch Indy

2013 Pole Andrew Jordan (Honda Civic), 48.387s
2013 Winners Jason Plato (MGG) x2, Matt Neal (Civic)

OCTOBER 11-12

Brands Hatch GP

2013 Pole Plato (MGG), 1m31.214s
2013 Winners Plato (MGG) x2, Shedden (Civic)



Members' medley to marvel at

This weekend's 72nd Members' Meeting at Goodwood recreates the lifeblood of the circuit from its heyday, with plenty of extra treats. **MARCUS PYE** looks forward to on- and off-track fun and games

Almost 48 years after the British Automobile Racing Club's 71st Members' Meeting closed Goodwood's contemporary era on July 2, 1966, the 72nd brings a different flavour to the GRRC epoch fabled for the now world-renowned Festival of Speed hillclimb and Revival Meetings at the motor circuit, introduced in 1993 and '08 respectively.

The Private Members' Meetings – early ones themed for sportscars – kicked-off on August 13, 1949 (when HRG racer Eric Thompson, who would finish fifth in the British GP three years later, was a winner) and accounted for almost three-fifths of the period action. While they were aimed at clubmen who turned up, painted numbers on their cars in plimsoll white and hared out for a dice, household names emerged from their alumni.

Indeed, the 39th Members' Meeting on March 19, 1960, is enshrined in motorsport history for the Formula Junior dice between astonishing four-wheeled-debutant John Surtees – the motorcycle champion who stole pole position in Ken Tyrrell's Cooper-BMC T52 – and Jim Clark, who went on to win for Team Lotus in his Cosworth Ford-powered Type 18. Both would be



House captains, l to r: Reid, Pirro, Mass and Minassian

F1 world champions within five years.

The battle lines for this weekend's newcomer to Lord March's stable are not so clearly drawn, for while many of the runners and riders will be familiar from previous Revivals, a change of focus brings iconic Group 1 saloon cars of the 1970s and early '80s under starter's orders for the first time at the former RAF Westhampnett airfield, offering opportunities for Goodwood rookies to sample the challenging high-speed track.

Not only has the RACMSA sanctioned the two-part Gerry Marshall Trophy showpiece for

the colourful period-liveried tin-tops, running on Dunlop treaded tyres, but the governing body has also approved high-speed demonstration sessions for flame-belching 1500cc Formula 1 turbocars of the 1980s and wonderful Le Mans aerodynes of yore, plus a spectacular sprint for muscular Group B world rally machinery.

While winners will be feted on track with Goodwood's customary panache, our genial host has added his own brand of spin to the event by splitting the 400 racers and all the racegoers into 'houses' to recreate the atmosphere of an old school



MATT SILLIS



MATT SILLIS

The Mass/Diffey BMW is ready for anything



BARC ran first Members' Meeting in August, '49...



...and its 71st and last just under 17 years later

“The 72nd Members’ meeting will be more than the traditional racing that the venue has always done well”

sports day. Everybody will be encouraged to accrue points in 40-plus diverse, sometimes bizarre, activities over the two days. From trailer towing to welly-wanging, darts and egg-and-spoon contests to Martini mixing, all will count alongside race results towards the overall result.

Yes, this is rather more than the traditional motor racing that the West Sussex venue has always done so well. Try to imagine a blend of medieval jousting and *Jeux Sans Frontieres*, sharpened by a squeeze of Hogwarts, and you might be forming a picture. Points will be tallied

on a giant blackboard within the Great Hall, as the paddock’s Earls Court building will be re-dressed and quartered for the teams’ HQs.

House names Aubigny, Darnley, Methuen and Torbolton all reflect Lord March’s family genealogy and detail king Charles has appointed Goodwood favourites Nicolas Minassian, Jochen Mass, Anthony Reid and Emanuele Pirro, passionate sportsmen all, as their respective captains – honorary positions for life. The Frenchman’s newly inked WEC deal with SMP will preclude his appearance on Saturday, when vice-captain Andy

Prialx will hoist the blue coat of arms into battle.

The four standard-bearers enjoyed pounding round the circuit in saloons at last month’s sunny photocall. Mass drove the rorty Warsteiner-liveried BMW 2002 he is nominated to share with Simon Diffey at the event, while Pirro had a quick taster in John Young’s Autocar Ford Capri 3.0S once an oil line was fixed. Reid, who will race Tim Morley’s Triumph Dolomite Sprint, shook down Nigel Garrett’s Faberge Chevrolet Camaro for Stuart Graham, and Minassian sampled Kevin and Patrick Doyle’s raucous Motul Mazda RX-7. ▶



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THE OTHER RACES

It's not only the tin-tops that should entertain this weekend. Here's our guide to the other contests

GROVER-WILLIAMS TROPHY

Aside from the touring car feature, this all-Bugatti field is talk of the 12-race card. Ettore Bugatti's marquee's Goodwood



history dates back to September 1948's inaugural event, when Michael Chorlton appeared in a Type 51A 51126. Sixty-five years on, the entry spans T13 'Brescia' to T59/50B models, with Marshall Bailey set to debut the T35C he rescued from a long French hibernation.

THRELFALL CUP

Remembering period works Elva driver Chris Threlfall, the front-engined Formula Junior encounter should be a thriller with Ray



Mallock and Will Mitcham (U2s), reigning UK and FIA Lurani Trophy Mark Woodhouse and Andrew Tart (in Elva 100 and Bond respectively) and American Michael Gans (Stanguellini) in the mix. McLaren's Chris Goodwin could upset the status quo, guesting in the Lola Mk2 his father Dr Tony raced in F3 trim in '64.

COLLINS TROPHY

The early sports-racing showcases are named for Peter Collins (1948-'55 cars) and Roy



Salvadori ('55-'60). Patrick Watts (Allard J2 'Blunderbuss'), Rob Newall (Cooper-Jaguar T33), circuit neighbour 'Spike' Milligan (HWM-Jaguar) and Nick Finburgh (Jaguar C-type) face Ben Shuckburgh's fearsome Cunningham C4R replica in the former.

SALVADORI CUP

Bobby Verdon-Roe (Ferrari 246S Dino) will be tough to conquer in the Salvadori contest, in which Gary Pearson (Lister-Jaguar), Andrew Smith (Lister-Chevrolet) and Marino Franchitti (Maserati 'Birdcage') have other ideas.



TONY GAZE TROPHY

The 1950s production sports and GT event to be run in memory of Tony Gaze – the Australian airman whose idea to run races at the demobbed RAF Westhampnett found favour with the current Earl of March's grandfather – is wide open. Andy Shepherd's AC Ace-Bristol won at Goodwood in 1960 in Paul Fletcher's hands, but factory Aston Martin ace Darren Turner (Turner Mk1) is a dark horse. Watch for the bizarre Bentley 'Gooda' Special coupe with Wil Arif behind the wheel.



Mass last raced a BMW 2002 for crack Schnitzer squad in '70

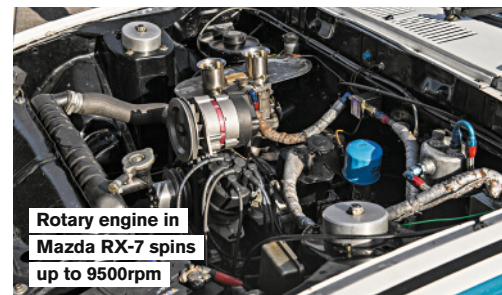
► Mass has fond memories of Goodwood going back more than 40 years: "It must have been 1972 when I drove John Surtees' F2 car here, but I also tested the Capri here. The circuit hasn't changed, just the surroundings. The pits were [made of] scaffolding and corrugated tin then, which looked pretty dismal, but the place is beautiful now. They've done a great job.

"The circuit was always quite a challenge. Fordwater and the next right were pretty much flat, but getting the right line through the dip after that [St Mary's] was tricky. The BMW [2002] was not overly powerful, but for sure it was fun. The last time I drove one was in 1970 for Schnitzer."

As captain of Darnley house, F1, Le Mans and Spa 24 Hour winner Mass is taking this weekend's responsibility seriously. "The driving is the easy bit – I am racing a Mercedes-Benz 300SL [in the Peter Collins Trophy race] – but I'm curious to see what other games we will be playing. I know it will be fun!"

Aubigny captain Minassian enjoyed the Mazda. "I never drove a rotary-engined car before, but it's very different," he says. "The sound of the engine is amazing. At 4000-5000rpm there is nothing, but it screams up to 9500 and when the power comes it's really smooth. The driving technique is interesting, because you cannot really play with the throttle, but it's not difficult to learn.

"It's a nice little car – the [Tom Walkinshaw



Rotary engine in Mazda RX-7 spins up to 9500rpm

and Pierre Dieudonne) 1981 Spa 24 Hour winner – from a wonderful time in saloon car racing. Back then there were V8, V6 and four-cylinder engines too. There is not as much variety any more, and that's a pity I think.

"I have been coming to Goodwood since 2005, when I first did the Revival, and love it. I know England quite well now, and live here, and I will do anything they throw at me for Aubigny. But can you believe Andy Priaulx, vice-captain? I'm almost ashamed to say it, but Andy will be as much a leader as me."

Pirro, a three-time winner at the Goodwood Revival meeting (he drove Jaguar E-type lightweight 4 WPD to TT Celebration honours in 2001 with Gregor Fiske and in '05 with Dario Franchitti), found the Capri V6 very much to his liking, even in a short stint. "I had a good feeling," enthused the lanky Roman. "It's an historic car, but it's not too far from the era when I started racing.

"The Capri is basically straightforward. It doesn't have so much power, but it's nice to drive and shift, has good grip and brakes and you can use the chassis. When I race in historic events I keep a little bit in reserve. Normally I set two margins, the first to minimise the risk of mistakes, the other to respect the car. The idea is to have a lot of fun, not to use the last drop of juice.

"But when Lord March invited me to be a team captain I committed myself to every competition. Whether it's tug-of-war, cooking omelettes or climbing trees I want to do it [if points are at stake]! I'm naturally competitive and of course want Torbolton to win." ►



Minassian hustles '81 Spa 24Hr-winning Mazda on test day

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MOSS TROPHY

Sir Stirling Moss, whose record of Goodwood victories between '48-'61 was unparalleled, figureheads the '59-'62 closed GT



set. The yellow Ferrari 250 GT SWB of Jackie Oliver/Gary Pearson takes on the Jaguar E-types of the Cottingham brothers and British GT racers Gregor Fisker/Jon Minshaw. Last year's Revival TT Celebration victors Wolfgang Friedrichs/Simon Hadfield are in the German's Aston Martin DB4GT here, and Rob Hall will fly in Martin Halusa's Ferrari 'Breadvan,' but the Drogo-bodied Ferrari 250 of Dutchmen David Hart/John Hugenholz may be a tad too quick for them all.

BRABHAM TROPHY

F1 cars are split, the '54-'60 pack chasing Brabham Trophy honours. Cooper men Roger Wills (T51) and 1992 FVee



champion Jonathon Hughes (T53) are hot 2.5-litre favourites, but a stellar front-engined brigade including six factory Maserati 250Fs, Tony Smith's Ferrari Dino and John Clark in Julian Bronson's Scarab will command huge interest.

CLARK-STEWART TROPHY

The shrieking 1500cc V8 cars of '61-'65 compete for the Clark-Stewart Cup, Scots Jimmy and Jackie having held the outright lap record when Goodwood closed on July 2, '66. Andrew Beaumont (ex-Innes Ireland Lotus 24), Mark Piercy (ex-John Surtees Lola Mk4) and Sid Hoole (ex-Jo Bonnier Cooper T66) look set for a stonking battle, and Sam Wilson – a past Goodwood winner in 500cc F3 and FJ fields – should head the four-potters in Alan Baillie's Cooper T71/73. The field is bolstered by one-litre F2 and F3 machinery.



SEARS TROPHY

Everybody loves a good tin-top thrash and the '59-'63 saloonatics are focused on the Jack Sears Trophy. Lotus Cortinas, Jaguar Mk2s and Mini Cooper Ss guarantee fireworks. Americana is represented by Andy Ruhan's Studebaker Lark Daytona 500 and Bruce Chapman's Chevrolet Corvair.



SURTEES TROPHY

The big-banger sports prototypes race for the Surtees Trophy, fittingly since the 1964 F1 World Champion also won the inaugural Can-Am crown with Lola in '66. Sextets of T70s and McLaren M1s square up to seven Ford GT40s, trios of Cooper T61s and Lotus 30s, plus Attila, Crossle and Marina Rolls-Royce in the thunderous V8 slugfest.



Le Mans winner and Revival favourite
Pirro enjoyed Capri

▶ Reid's Goodwood experience dates back to 1979, when he was works driver for Alan Langridge's Image Race Cars concern, based in the Super Shell building at Woodcote. "I lived in [team manager] Robert Synges' mother's caravan beside the factory, built the cars during the week then nipped out through the gap in the bank and went testing," he recalls. "There were no marshals then."

While seven years older, the brutish Chevrolet Camaro Z28 he drove on the photoshoot is diametrically opposed to the Formula Ford single-seaters of 35 years ago. "It had plenty of power and capacity for tail-sliding, which was fun, but its brakes were an issue and the gearing was a bit short," adds the former BTCC star. "With those addressed, it will be a contender [for Stuart Graham, who raced the original Faberge car]."

"The mix of horsepower versus handling in a fantastic field makes it difficult to predict the outcome. I'm in a Triumph Dolomite Sprint, which I hope handles better than the HL model I owned when I was at Image. I hit a telegraph pole [on the A24] sideways at night, which cut the car in half. I was thrown out of the windscreen, miraculously unhurt. The following day the recovery people found the engine in a field on the opposite side of the road!"

Reid heads Methuen, "appropriately a Scottish house. I've been trying to find out – without success – who is on my team. I've had plenty of requests, but if things don't go too well for us on track I could always head to the skidpan. And my wife is quite good at making cup cakes, if that would make a difference to the judges..."

The field for the twin-legged pro-am saloon car thrash – named in honour of the inimitable Gerry Marshall, who raced at Goodwood but once in period, in a Lotus Elan in 1966 – is studded with name drivers from various racing disciplines. It will definitely be a memorable weekend for Gregor Marshall, who races the Shaw & Kilburn Vauxhall Viva GT his much-missed dad raced in 1971.

Guernseyman Priaulx (who shares BMW marque specialist Alex Elliott's ShellSport 3.0Si) tops the roster of touring car legends in Saturday's field. Other masters of the discipline include 1990 BTCC champion Robb Gravett (breaking a long lay-off to co-drive Anthony Robinson's ex-works Dolomite Sprint), Patrick Watts who returns to the Mazda fold to share Ian Cowley's Pentax RX-7, Barrie Williams (VW Golf GTI), Tiff Needell (Rover SDI) and 'Les' Blackburn (Ford Capri, what else?).

GT ace Oliver Gavin (in Lotus F1 team member Tim Scott Andrews' Triplex Rover), Darren Turner and Alex Buncombe (Ford Capris) adore Goodwood, as does multiple Festival of Speed winner Justin Law (Capri). Also in the international field are ex-F1 racers Mike Wilds (Dolly Sprint) and Rupert Keegan (Alfa Romeo GTV6), and sports-prototype racers Stuart Hall (Opel Commodore GS/E) and Jamie Campbell-Walter (Capri).

Discount Historic racers Yvan Mahe (Chevrolet Camaro), Andrew Smith, Chris Ward, David Clark and Roger Wills (Capris) at your peril, and expect giant-slaying from Nick Swift's ex-Richard Longman Mini 1275GT if the track should be wet or greasy.

Let the games commence... 🏁

DYNAMIC DEMOS

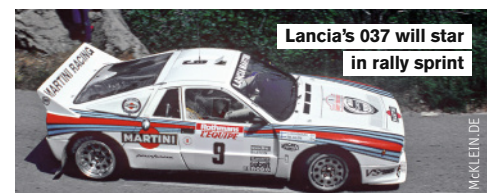
Of the three special showcases for cars built after Goodwood's first heyday, only the Group B Rally show has a competitive element – an invitation sprint for the steroidal monsters against the clock.

Six Lancias, three 037s and three Delta S4s, are joined by a quartet of MG Metro 6R4s, Ford RS200s, Peugeot 205 T16s and Enda Garvey's ex-Ari Vatanen 405 T16 GR Pike's Peak car – Audi Sport Quattro, Renault 5 Maxi Turbo and Citroen BX4TC.

Kiwi Rob Whitehouse's 037 Evo2 and the distinctive-voiced Audi of Dave Kedward may take some beating.

Almost 20 1500cc F1 turbocars, spanning 1981-'86 and 10 marques, are scheduled to sizzle round the 2.4-mile circuit each day in a high-speed demonstration.

McLaren tester Chris Goodwin is in a TAG-powered MP4/2, Richard Meins has entrusted his Beatrice



Lancia's 037 will star in rally sprint

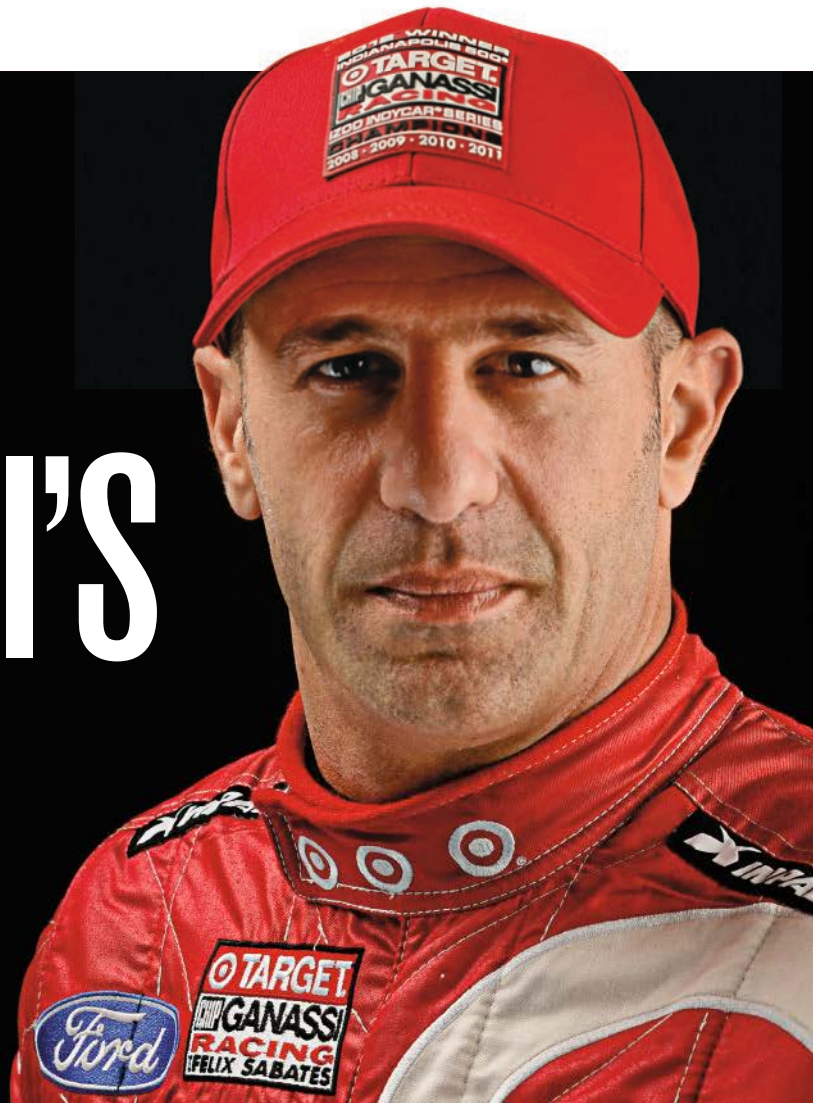
Lola-Hart THL2 and Renault RE30B to Sam Bird and Oliver Gavin respectively, while Kenny Brack, Gary Ward and Joaquin Folch saddle Lotuses. Alfa Romeo, Ferrari, Toleman and Zakspeed chassis are also down to run.

Low-drag Le Mans prototypes offer even greater variety. From long-tailed Ferrari 512S and Matra MS670B of the 1970s through Alpine-Renault A441 – Flavien Marcais' unique ex-works C-spec car, which ran for the first time in almost 35 years at Montlhéry this month – Mirage GR8, de Cadenet Lolas, Lancia LC2 and Jaguar XJR-9LM to '89 Mazda 767B and Porsche 962, this is a rolling history book of the French class.

DOLE/LAT

STEPPING INTO FRANCHITTI'S SHOES

A burning question for the 2014 IndyCar season will be how Tony Kanaan takes to his new seat at Ganassi. By **MARK GLENDENNING**



66



Kanaan with his great pal Franchitti

LAPERGE/GETTY

How do you replace a guy who won four IndyCar titles, three Indy 500s, and developed a near-perfect relationship with the sharpshooter who drives the sister car? The answer is that you can't. So even though Tony Kanaan will inevitably spend the first part of 2014 being compared to Dario Franchitti, the man whose place he has taken in Chip Ganassi Racing's #10 entry, the reality is that a like-for-like replacement for the Scot simply doesn't exist.

If you look at the bare numbers from the past couple of seasons, you may not think that's such a big deal. After all, Kanaan and Franchitti have the same number of wins to their credit with the current DW12 chassis — one — although Franchitti has a clear advantage if you take qualifying into account. But even though Franchitti endured a frustrating final two years before his injury-enforced retirement, he remained immensely valuable to Ganassi for the less tangible benefits that he brought to the table. Indeed, it's for this reason that the team was so keen to retain him in a consultancy role once it became clear that his driving days were over.

Kanaan, history shows, was not initially hired as Franchitti's replacement at all. The Brazilian's move to Ganassi was confirmed in Houston — on the same weekend, as fate would have it, as the crash that ended Franchitti's career — although he was initially earmarked to drive the #8 car in the squad's 'second team' alongside Charlie Kimball. It was only later, when Franchitti's prognosis forced the team to re-evaluate its options, that he was promoted to the frontline alongside Scott Dixon, creating a new vacancy in the #8 that was

eventually filled by Ryan Briscoe.

According to CGR managing director Mike Hull, finding someone who closely mirrored Franchitti's track record was less important than finding someone who was compatible with the Ganassi culture.

"I don't think we've ever compared drivers to drivers, when one has stepped into the role of the previous driver," he says. "But at the same time, we've looked at what they had in common, and how we think they will work within the resources we have here. The number-one requisite is that if natural ability, talent and experience are the base, then they have to have that unselfish element about them that really defines a team-mate."

Having the will and confidence to work openly with a new team-mate — especially one as quick as Dixon — is a rare quality, which is why Ganassi was in no rush to confirm Kanaan as the new occupant of the #10 car. (The team spent two months assessing its options before announcing Kanaan's promotion). But even that is meaningless unless all those concerned know how to communicate with one another, and this part is a bit more of a process. During the IndyCar off-season, Ganassi used its United SportsCar programme to help integrate Kanaan within the team, just as it did when Dan Wheldon joined in 2006. On that occasion, the Brit went on to win the IndyCar season opener at Homestead.

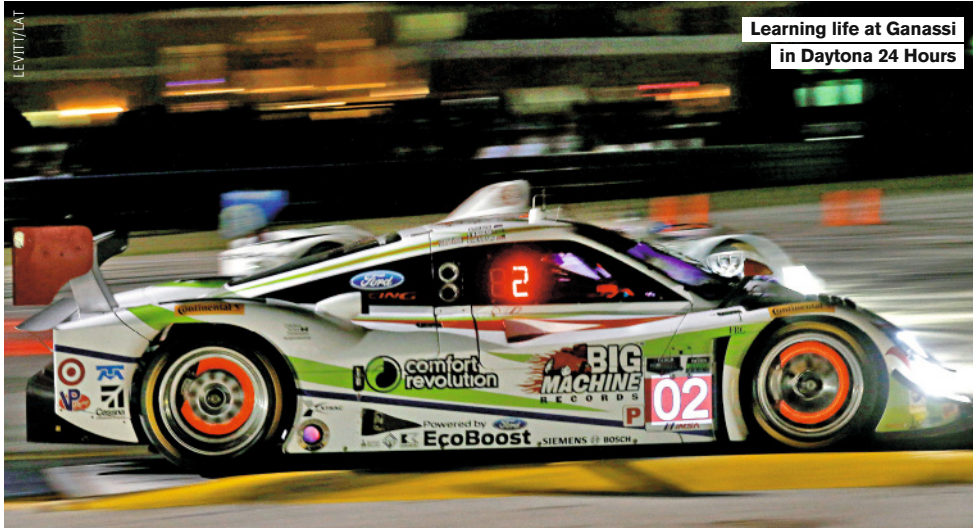
"That [sports car] side, during the IndyCar off-season, is run by our IndyCar team," Hull explains. "So Tony has been working with Scott, comparing set-ups in the same car, compromising on what's important. Chris Simmons [Kanaan's engineer] looks after that car, a lot of his mechanics are on that car — some of Dixon's are on it also — and I'm involved with that



Familiar car, unfamiliar lid:
Kanaan in Ganassi's #10



TK won last year's
Indy 500 with KV



Learning life at Ganassi
in Daytona 24 Hours



Kanaan (front) was part
of big team with Franchitti
(behind) at Andretti Green

“We expect that a driver like Tony doesn't have a lifevest. He drops in at the deep end and swims” MIKE HULL

programme. So it's an integration of the IndyCar people. I think that really does help.”

So the assimilation plan is in action. How quickly does the team expect results? Kanaan himself is under the impression that there is no room for a honeymoon period. “The expectations are the highest possible,” he admits. “Not just from me, but from my boss and everybody else.”

This is confirmed by Hull. “We expect that a driver like Tony doesn't have a lifevest,” he says. “He drops right in at the deep end and swims immediately.”

To that end, Kanaan has been a regular feature at the team's headquarters from the moment his commitments to previous team KV Racing Technology ended with the conclusion of the 2013 season. The 39-year-old is aware this could be the last big opportunity of his career and, as a long-time pal of Franchitti's, he is also mindful of wanting to do justice to his friend's legacy.

“The thing that I really had to [adjust to] is that things [at Ganassi] happen a lot quicker, especially with four team-mates,” says the 2004

champion. “I've been in an organisation like that before [at Andretti], but it's three years since I've experienced that. And you have to pick up your pace, that's for sure.

“I'm in a very good place, and I'm extremely confident in my capabilities. I've just got to work and try to find out what's good for me – what worked for Dario sometimes is not going to work for me in the car – and go forward. I kind of like this type of pressure.”

Indeed, Hull identifies the ferocity of Kanaan's application since his arrival in the Ganassi camp as the biggest surprise from the early stages of their relationship. “The depth of his passion to improve himself has been the surprise,” he says. “Sometimes, what happens with race drivers as they gain experience is that they want to sit on that experience. And I don't see that in Tony. I have a great appreciation for that, because I think that drive matches the rest of us here.”

So far, so rosy. Most of the remaining questions can only be answered by the stopwatch and the points tally, with one exception. What exactly should Kanaan's results table look like? Is he there to win another Indy 500? To serve as wingman for Dixon's championship defence? Or, taking the #10 car's history into account, should Kanaan be a title contender himself?

“If Tony does his job and we do our job, he should be at the front,” Hull says. “The Indy 500 is on the table for him, and the championship is on the table for him.

“But the second part of that is what we do every day as a team. Our culture is about winning today, day after day, in everything we do. We have to give Tony the opportunity to be on the pedestal at the end of the year. And that is the expectation that we have for each other.”

2014 INDYCAR CALENDAR

March 30	St Petersburg	street
April 13	Long Beach	street
April 27	Barber Motorsports Park	road
May 10	Indianapolis Motor Speedway	road
May 25	Indianapolis 500	oval
May 31	Detroit	street
June 1	Detroit	street
June 7	Texas Motor Speedway	oval
June 28	Houston	street
June 29	Houston	street
July 6	Pocono	oval
July 12	Iowa Speedway	oval
July 19	Toronto	street
July 20	Toronto	street
August 3	Mid-Ohio	road
August 17	Milwaukee	oval
August 24	Sonoma	road
August 30	Fontana	oval



Indy 500 is the one
they all want to win



Who to watch in INDYCAR 2014

ABBOTT/LAT

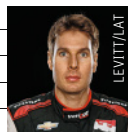
In recent years it's been hard to pick who is best placed to take the IndyCar crown, and it's no different this year. **MARK GLENDENNING** does his best to highlight the likely stars of 2014

68

TEAM PENSKE

WILL POWER

Starts 89
Wins 19*
Poles 26
2013 position 4th



LEVITT/LAT

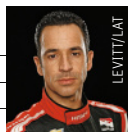
*inc 2008 Long Beach GP

After a few seasons as a title contender, he went uncharacteristically quiet for a good part of 2013, and by the time he'd got his mojo back his focus had become the title hopes of Helio Castroneves rather than his own. The lesson, Power says, was that he's better off racing every lap hard than with an eye on the points. If that's the approach he's taking, the rest of us have just one more reason to tune in.

He says "I had spent three years being very conservative. Last year taught me you just need to race hard no matter what."

HELIO CASTRONEVES

Starts 199
Wins 22
Poles 34
2013 position 2nd



LEVITT/LAT

The Brazilian did exactly what Power was trying to wean himself away from last year in playing things conservatively, and it so nearly worked out for him. But part of the reason that approach was successful was the inconsistency of the other strong teams, and it would be brave to rely on that again. Some may think that his best shot at a title has escaped him – but last year, no-one predicted he'd get that close in the first place.

He says "Give us the opportunity, and the door will open one day. That's the attitude I'm going into 2014 with. You can't just wait for something to happen."

Power is planning to be more aggressive in 2014

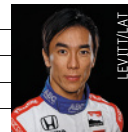


LEPAGE/LAT

AJ FOYT RACING

TAKUMA SATO

Starts 68
Wins 1
Poles 3
2013 position 17th



LEVITT/LAT

For all his experience, his name is not generally the first that springs to mind when considering potential title contenders. But he was leading the points four races deep into last season, and the Sato/Foyt combination can be formidable when things are going right. He insists his dramatic late-season fade was not related to the niggling injuries he was carrying, but that only raises more question marks this time around.

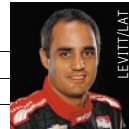
He says "I know what the team is capable of, and what I'm capable of, in the coming season."



LEVITT/LAT

JUAN PABLO MONTOYA

Starts 1
Wins 1
Poles 0
2013 position N/A



LEVITT/LAT

Not even the team expects Montoya to fight for the championship this year. And with the field so close and the Colombian having seven single-seaterless seasons to make up for, he'll be doing well just to be there or thereabouts during the first few races. One of the most naturally gifted drivers of his generation, his enthusiasm for his new career seems genuine, and it's going to be fascinating to see how brightly the sparks still flicker.

He says "It's a tough challenge ahead, but it's so nice to be doing what I'm doing now. I feel really happy."



LEVITT/LAT

CHIP GANASSI RACING

SCOTT DIXON

Starts 182
Wins 32
Poles 22
2013 position 1st



Came from nowhere to wrestle the 2013 title from Castroneves, but he'd prefer not to have to depend upon the same Lazarus trick in repeating it. The team should have no trouble adapting to Chevy power, but will he miss Dario Franchitti's input?

He says "With the off-season and tests spread out, it hasn't been a whole lot of change dumped on you at once. Everything has gone pretty smoothly."

TONY KANAAN

Starts 185
Wins 15
Poles 11
2013 position 11th



At the age of 39, he finds himself being handed the keys to one of the most storied entries in the paddock. Talk about second chances. The Brazilian has some big shoes to fill, but he has already impressed the team with the depth of his commitment. It's going to be fascinating to see what he can do with the opportunity he's earned.

He says "The team's results speak for themselves. It's like you can't avoid it."

RYAN BRISCOE

Starts 111
Wins 7
Poles 13
2013 position 26th



Along with Kanaan, he's Ganassi's other 'second-chance' story after a fragmented 2013 campaign. He proved at Penske that he can beat anybody on his day; Ganassi's main task is to make those days happen a little more often.

He says "Ganassi were the guys to beat last year, and it's been great to get a feel for those set-ups. We're not sitting still, but it's a good baseline."

CHARLIE KIMBALL

Starts 50
Wins 1
Poles 0
2013 position 9th



The UK-born American came of age as a driver in 2013. His win at Mid-Ohio was the standout, but he reinforced that with a string of other excellent performances: he was a strong '2' in the Ganassi 1-2-3 at Pocono.

He says "All the way along, Chip's advice has been to build foundations for a long-term career, so when I take that next step, I stay there."



Ever-improving Kimball has one win to build on

DALE COYNE RACING

JUSTIN WILSON

Starts 98
Wins 3
Poles 2*
2013 position 6th



*inc 2008 Long Beach GP

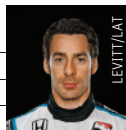
Sixth in last year's points was a phenomenal result for the Brit, considering the resources of the Dale Coyne team relative to those around it. One of the key conspirators in that success, engineer Bill Pappas, has been poached by RLL, but Coyne has secured a well-credentialed replacement in Michael Cannon.

He says "I'm hoping we can pick up where we left off last year, but we have to make sure we don't make any mistakes."

SCHMIDT PETERSON

SIMON PAGENAUD

Starts 37
Wins 2
Poles 0
2013 position 3rd



The fact that the Frenchman was third in the points last year puts him on the radar, and the Schmidt team has demonstrated that it's a threat pretty much anywhere. For his part, Pagenaud says that he has spent the winter identifying areas where he can still improve as he prepares for his third IndyCar campaign.

He says "I can always be more focused. I think I can still react better in some situations. That's what I'm working on."

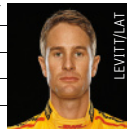
ANDRETTI AUTOSPORT



RH-R and team-mates now have Honda power

RYAN HUNTER-REAY

Starts 109
Wins 9
Poles 4
2013 position 7th



In Jekyll-and-Hyde terms, Hunter-Reay's 2013 as reigning champion was up there with the best – quirks of misfortune prevented him gaining momentum. A repeat of last year with a little less weirdness should add up to a decent 2014.

He says "We're starting anew with Honda and we've got a chance to really take our game to a new level."

JAMES HINCHCLIFFE

Starts 51
Wins 3
Poles 0
2013 position 8th

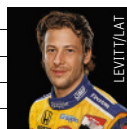


Thought he'd proven that he was more than just a chirpy personality when he won two of the first four races in 2013. But the second half of his season was a portrait of inconsistency. Still needs to answer some questions, but there's no doubting his desire or application.

He says "We're working closer than ever. Add another year onto that, and hopefully we can be even stronger."

MARCO ANDRETTI

Starts 136
Wins 2
Poles 4
2013 position 5th



Pledges to spend the off-season soul-searching after a tough year rarely amount to more than a hollow cliché. But Andretti actually did it after a poor 2012, and the benefits were there to see last year. He was unfortunate not to win a race, but aside from that he was the most consistent member of the Andretti Autosport line-up.

He says "I feel like I have a lot of unfinished business."

CARLOS MUNOZ

Starts 3
Wins 0
Poles 0
2013 position 28th



It's a stretch to be thinking of the young Colombian in terms of the title, but he proved through the Month of May in 2013 that he's not intimidated by the big stage. That he squandered a handy points lead in Lights last year is a reminder that he's not yet the finished product, but he is promising.

He says "Have my team-mates played any jokes on me yet? After Indy, no."

ED CARPENTER RACING

ED CARPENTER/MIKE CONWAY

Starts 148/61
Wins 2/2
Poles 2/1
2013 position 16th/23rd



On paper, a one-car team with two drivers splitting the seat time might not inspire much confidence, but the Ed/Mike

combination could be a potent one. Conway proved his street-and-road-course prowess with a stunning win/podium in Detroit last year; Carpenter has long been a threat anywhere that doesn't involve turning right.

Carpenter says "I think that Mike and I are both capable of winning in our respective disciplines. I feel like we should be in the mix everywhere we go."



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V8 STOCK CARS INTERLAGOS (BR), MARCH 23 RD 1/12

New boy beats the F1 heroes

NOT EVEN IN HIS WILDEST DREAMS could 18-year-old Felipe Fraga think of winning his maiden race in Stock Cars. But, sharing a Vogel Motorsport Chevrolet Sonic with the experienced Rodrigo Sperafico, the reigning Stock Car Lights champion beat a full field in a special two-driver race containing a host of internationals – and 10 ex-grand prix drivers.

Fraga was part of a four-way fight early in the race, then lapped very quickly after leader Caca Bueno pitted. When Bueno's handover to Juan Manuel Silva (who was fastest 'guest' driver in qualifying) was delayed by eight seconds, Fraga's co-driver Sperafico emerged in front.

Valdeno Brito had also been part of the early lead scrap before passing his Chevy over to Jeroen Bleekemolen. The Dutchman gained on Sperafico for two laps, but overheated his rain tyres in the damp conditions.

Daniel Serra was the other battler up front early on, but a slow stop to pass his Chevy to Alessandro Pier Guidi allowed the Peugeot of Marcos Gomes and Mauro Giallombardo into third. Pier Guidi and Silva fought for fourth, but a collision between the pair meant Australian V8 star Mark Winterbottom slipped past.

Pier Guidi survived an accidental hit from Silva to take fifth, with Nelson Piquet Jr moving up to claim sixth from Silva, Englishman Craig Dolby and DTM star Augusto Farfus.

Among the others with Formula 1 experience were Chico Serra, Ricardo Rosset, Antonio Pizzonia, Bruno Senna, Lucas di Grassi, Luciano Burti, Ricardo Zonta, Enrique Bernoldi and Rubens Barrichello – the ex-Ferrari star caused an early safety car by spinning out Denis Navarro, who was collected by three other

competitors. Barrichello continued before handing his car over to Farfus. ● Lito Cavalcanti

RESULTS 1 Felipe Fraga/Rodrigo Sperafico (Chevrolet Sonic), 25 laps in 52m56.982s; 2 Valdeno Brito/Jeroen Bleekemolen (Chevy), +5.903s; 3 Marcos Gomes/Mauro Giallombardo (Peugeot 407); 4 Sergio Jimenez/Mark Winterbottom (Peugeot); 5 Daniel Serra/Alessandro Pier Guidi (Chevy); 6 Atila Abreu/Nelson Piquet Jr (Chevy). **Points 1 Fraga, 24;** 2 Brito, 20; 3 Gomes, 18; 4 Jimenez, 17; 5 Serra, 16; 6 Abreu, 15.



Fraga took a shock debut win

CARSTEN HORST

NASCAR SPRINT CUP FONTANA (USA), MARCH 23 RD 5/36

Busch grabs it in last-lap surge

KYLE BUSCH HELD OFF ROOKIE KYLE Larson to clinch his first victory of the 2014 NASCAR Sprint Cup as a spate of tyre failures produced a wild finish at Fontana.

Busch, the winner of last year's event, dived his Joe Gibbs Racing Toyota down the inside of Tony Stewart and brother Kurt to snatch the lead heading into the final lap, and then held off Larson around the final two turns to clinch victory by less than a quarter of a second.

That scenario had seemed a remote possibility just six laps earlier. Jimmie Johnson and his Hendrick Chevrolet stablemate Jeff Gordon had looked comfortable in first and second

respectively, but with seven to go Johnson's left-front tyre suddenly gave way, leaving the six-time champion's victory hopes in tatters.

It was the first of four dramatic blowouts in the closing stages, with Brad Keselowski, Marcos Ambrose and Clint Bowyer – two laps from the end – suffering failures.

Bowyer's incident changed the complexion of the race. Ambrose was flicked into a spin, prompting a caution that wiped out Gordon's lead and led to a bevy of differing strategies as drivers dived into the pits. Kurt Busch and Stewart both took two tyres and hit the front ahead of Landon Cassill, who had not pitted, and Kyle

Busch, who took four new tyres.

The younger Busch's gamble paid off, and he was able to surge ahead on the green-white-chequer finish. "Holy cow – I had to do some wheeling and dealing," Busch said, "but put me in the right spot and give me the steering wheel, coach."

Kurt Busch held off Matt Kenseth and Stewart for third. Dale Earnhardt Jr, who suffered a blown tyre on lap 44, beat the fading Gordon to 12th.

A disgruntled Johnson, 24th at the flag, suggested NASCAR needs to address the number of blowouts. "I'm really shocked," he said. "These cars are much faster [than 2013]. Maybe there is a bigger picture that needs to be investigated."

● Connell Sanders Jr

RESULTS

1 Kyle Busch (Toyota Camry), 206 laps in 3h05m53s; 2 Kyle Larson (Chevrolet SS), +0.214s; 3 Kurt Busch (Chevy); 4 Matt Kenseth (Toyota); 5 Tony Stewart (Chevy); 6 Jamie McMurray (Chevy); 7 Brian Vickers (Toyota); 8 AJ Allmendinger (Chevy); 9 Paul Menard (Chevy); 10 Carl Edwards (Ford Fusion). **Points 1 Edwards, 186;** 2 Dale Earnhardt Jr, 185; 3 Jeff Gordon, 184; 4 Brad Keselowski, 182; 5 Kenseth, 179; 6 Jimmie Johnson, 165; 7 Kyle Busch, 158; 8 Ryan Newman, 150; 9 Austin Dillon, 150; 10 Joey Logano, 146.



Busch broke his Sprint Cup duck for 2014

MILLER/LAT

SUPER TC2000 RAFAELA (RA), MARCH 23 RD 1/12

Fontana is back in style

TWO-TIME TC2000 CHAMPION

Norberto Fontana took a popular win on his debut in Super TC2000.

Fontana didn't compete in the series' first two years, but has now landed a Chevrolet drive. He was third in the early stages at the legendary Rafaela oval (with two chicanes), before dropping to fourth.

Fiat ace Mariano Werner then dropped back in a clash while fighting for the lead with Nestor Girolami. Next, tyre problems – caused by the long, banked left-handers – dropped Agustin Canapino down the order from second. Finally, with victory virtually in the bag, the Peugeot of Girolami locked up under braking and, fearing tyre trouble, he allowed Fontana to slip past to win.

● Tony Watson

RESULTS

1 Norberto Fontana (Chevrolet Cruze), 22 laps in 38m16.257s; 2 Nestor Girolami (Peugeot 408), +0.844s; 3 Julian Santero (Peugeot); 4 Facundo Chapur (Peugeot); 5 Mariano Werner (Fiat Linea); 6 Christian Ledesma (Fiat). **Points 1 Fontana, 30;** 2 Girolami, 26; 3 Santero, 18; 4 Werner, 18; 5 Chapur, 17; 6 Facundo Arduso, 13.

NASCAR NATIONWIDE

Californian youngster Kyle Larson took his first Nationwide Series win on home ground at the Fontana superspeedway in his Turner Scott Chevrolet – but he had to fend off a host of challenges to do it. Kyle Busch got in front with a few laps to go but brushed the wall, so it was Kevin Harvick who chased Larson home, with Busch third and Joey Logano fourth.

MIDDLE EAST RALLY

Qatar's Nasser Al-Attiyah fended off a persistent challenge from Khalid Al-Qassimi for a 27.5s win in the Kuwait International Rally, round two of the Middle East Rally Championship. The success gave the Ford Fiesta RRC driver his 52nd career MERC win, his fourth in Kuwait and a 17-point lead in the regional series. Al-Qassimi won five stages in his Citroen DS3 RRC and finished 1m44.8s in front of Saudi Arabia's Yazeed Al-Rajhi.

NZ V8 SUPERTOURERS

Veteran Greg Murphy soaked up the pressure to win the feature-race finale at Pukekohe, despite a suspected broken shock absorber. Murphy's Holden got edged off when being passed by Ant Pedersen, but Pedersen was one of a few drivers to make the wrong call in pitting for slicks on a drying track. Thereafter, Murphy held off Morgan Haber and Richard Moore. 'Murph' won the first race, with Angus Fogg taking the second encounter despite a penalty for a start infringement.

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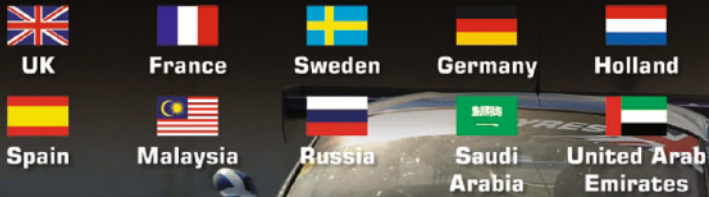
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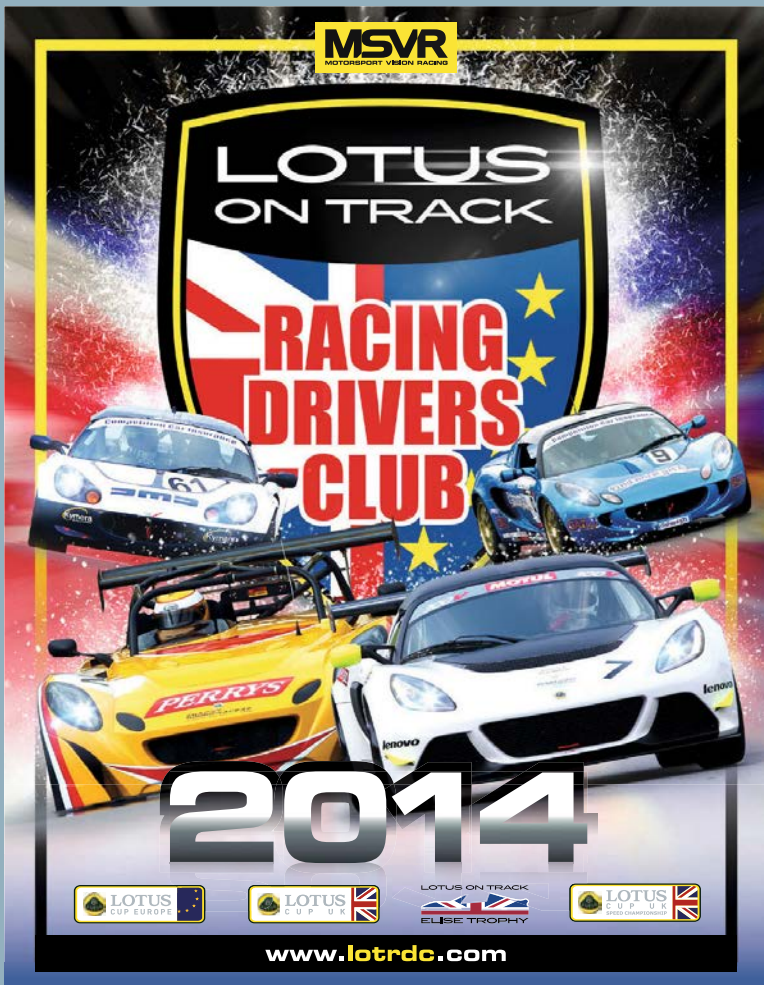


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The successful candidate will assist in pre-event race preparation, such as driver lines and GPS data. They will assist with data analysis during races, as required and report on the post race data results. They will be required to generate, publish and maintain databases, statistics and metrics records of race events.

As a pre-requisite candidates will have proven experience of working within a similar role and have a thorough understanding of a Race Telemetry System. They will be highly proficient with analysis and reports and be fluent with Matlab programming, Excel and Microsoft Office. Experience in Control System Engineering, Vehicle Dynamics and Race Car Aerodynamics would be advantageous.

Applicants interested in applying for this will be able to demonstrate that they can communicate effectively with key performers, such as the Simulation Engineers and across departments including Vehicle Dynamics, Race Engineering, Race Strategy, Aerodynamics and Vehicle Design. In addition, candidates must be self motivated, a team player and have strong organisational skills, in order to meet the requirements of the role and the demands of the business.

The ideal candidate will already have proven experience of working in a technical role within Formula One and would have attained a First Class Honours Degree in a suitable engineering discipline, or equivalent.

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Paddock Hill Bend will be under intense scrutiny this weekend

SCOTT MITCHELL
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IT WASN'T DIFFICULT TO FIND critics of the new UK track-limits rules when the Motor Sports Association announced the regulation change at the end of last year. After years of maximising the circuit run-off, drivers will have to rein themselves in when it comes to dropping wheels onto the grass at the circuit's edge from 2014.

Depending on which side of the fence you're camped, the reason for the change is either to rid racing of a troublesome grey area or just a money-saving exercise. As the rule change's main proponent, Jonathan Palmer is the voice of the former, but detractors say that the UK operating under a totally different rule to the rest of the world will be to its detriment. The question there, of course, is whether Britain will be the trendsetter or the black sheep. Will the FIA (or on a lower level, individual ASNs) adopt a similar approach or will the UK stand alone?

Regardless of which side of the argument you're on, it's difficult to find fault with the high-tech solution Palmer and MSV are pioneering. Whether other circuits follow suit is another matter, as it will be at their expense unless the MSA or someone else offers to help foot the bill.

Those relying on human observation will also be encouraged by BARC clerk of the course Ian Watson's words, whereby last weekend's Donington Park meeting failed to throw up any difficulties in policing the new rule by simply using a pair of eyes. This weekend's BTCC opener at Brands is sure to throw up more challenges though, and it will be fascinating to see how the new system copes with the inevitable incidents.



Palmer backs new rule

CCTV to police track limits

MSV installs new system at Brands Hatch to monitor new UK rule

A NEW CCTV SYSTEM HAS BEEN installed at Brands Hatch as the circuit prepares for its first test of the new UK track-limits rules.

Circuit owner Jonathan Palmer, whose MotorSport Vision company also runs Snetterton, Oulton Park and Cadwell Park, has invested in the technology to help enforce the revised regulation, which has attracted criticism over how it will be policed.

The new rule, lobbied for by Palmer and approved by the Motor Sports Association last year, permits drivers to use the asphalt up to and including the white line, and the full extent of any kerbs. Drivers are not permitted to put a wheel beyond the white lines or kerbs, so running on the grass is no longer allowed.

The new system, which will monitor Paddock Hill Bend, Druids

and Graham Hill Bend, will use pressure sensors to detect when a car goes off beyond exit kerbs and trigger video footage from a high-resolution camera. This will take two pictures – a zoomed-in image to show the wheel's proximity to the kerb and a wide image to show if there were other factors in the car running wide – that will then be displayed on dedicated screens in race control for cases to be judged.

The new technology will be used in racing conditions for the first time at this weekend's British Touring Car Championship opener, with the other MSV tracks likely to adopt the system in the coming months.

"We've been determined to do everything we can to make sure it's going to be backed up by sensible policing," Palmer told AUTOSPORT. "At MSV we wanted to do all we could

to assist with fair and consistent policing, hence our major investment with new camera technology.

"We know track limits has been controversial, but that's largely due to a lack of understanding. We are determined to make the transition as easy and swift as possible."

In addition to the pressure sensors and cameras, the circuit's kerbs have been extended and repainted, while run-off areas have been refurbished.

Other tracks around the country are not mandated to introduce MSV-style technology and are likely to rely on human observation to monitor breaches.

Last weekend's Donington Park opener involved just one track-limits penalty across 24 races and clerk of the course Ian Watson, who did not have the same systems as are now available at Brands, downplayed fears that the rule would be difficult to police without them.

"I don't believe it's any finer a margin to observe," he said. "Yes there were people running wide from time to time, but you have to accept there are certain circumstances when people go off for genuine reasons.

"I'm sure it won't be the same everywhere we go but, if it's anything like last weekend, as far as I'm concerned we haven't got a problem."



Brands kerbs have been restored

HAWKINS

Onslow-Cole evaluated
GT move with Britcar
outing last season



HAWKINS

BRITISH GT

Onslow-Cole confirms British GT move

BRITISH TOURING CAR RACE winner Tom Onslow-Cole has confirmed that he will switch to the British GT Championship this year.

Onslow-Cole had sporadic test and race outings alongside Paul White in an Aston Martin Vantage GT3 in 2013 as he evaluated a potential switch to GT racing, and recently announced that he would leave the BTCC.

Onslow-Cole and White have

committed to a full GT campaign, although are yet to confirm which car they will drive or the team that will run it. They may have to miss the season opener at Oulton Park as that entry is already full.

"It's a bit of a tease but the difficult bit is done," Onslow-Cole said. "We will be doing it, the budget is there. I'm really excited and relieved.

"It was a bit of a risk to move

away from a deal in touring cars but I've thought long and hard about it.

"Last year was about dipping my toe in to see if I liked it [GT racing] and could cut it, and I realised that was what I wanted to do."

Meanwhile, Porsche Carrera Cup GB race winner Rory Butcher will drive a Motorbase-run Vantage.

The Scotsman, who raced a KTM X-Bow in British GT in 2010 in the defunct G4 class, had initially

explored a potential pairing with Jody Fannin, and tested with the former GT4 champion at the Algarve circuit last month. But they never lodged a formal entry and Butcher will instead team up with ex-European Le Mans Series and TVR Tuscan racer John Hartshorne.

"I'm absolutely delighted," said Butcher. "I'm not quite there pace-wise yet but it's a fantastic car. I expect to be competitive."

GT CUP

United Autosports into GT Cup with European champion Geddie

EXPANDING GT SQUAD UNITED Autosports will run European Supercar Challenge champion Jim Geddie in the GT Cup season.

The 2011 British GT title winner will race the McLaren MP4-12C GT3 he shared with son Glynn last season.

It means that Richard Dean's team will have a presence in four major UK series in 2014, including a maiden two-car British Touring Car Championship entry and a debut in the Ginetta GT4 Supercup.

"To have Jim back with us for another year is great news," said Dean. "The GT Cup is a fantastic championship to be entering, so we're really looking forward to the year ahead."



Breeze will join
UA in Ginettas

EBREY

● Former Supercup champion Carl Breeze will spearhead UA's Ginetta campaign. The ex-BTCC driver was confirmed as a late returnee to the championship last week and will join the previously announced Luke Davenport in a brand new G55.

CLIO CUP UK

Cook in Clio team switch as he joins KX Akademy

JOSH COOK WILL SWITCH TO SV Racing for this season's Renault Clio Cup UK and has become a late addition to the KX Akademy.

The category race winner had agreed a deal to drive a 20Ten Racing-prepared Clio, but will now replace Devon Modell at SVR, with the team's outgoing driver moving to Westbourne Motorsport.

Cook, who won the final race with the older model last season and has been testing throughout the winter, joins



Cook had planned
to run with 20Ten

Alex Morgan, Ant Whorton-Eales and Ash Hand in the KX-affiliated team.

SVR team boss Danny Buxton said: "It's all come around quite quickly. What can you say about Josh? He's literally been a thorn in my side since we started in Clios. It's a huge coup for us."

Buxton is confident that having a quartet of drivers capable of fighting for wins will not create any problems.

"Bring it on, I can't wait," he said. "I'm sure that will be a nice problem to have."

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BRITISH FORMULA FORD

F4 ace Barlow joins Jamun Racing for British Formula Ford switch

BRDC FORMULA 4 RACE WINNER

Jack Barlow will compete in British Formula Ford this season after completing a late deal with Jamun Racing.

Barlow finished sixth in BRDC F4 last season with two victories and joins James Mundy's multiple title-winning squad as its lead driver.

"It's all a bit last minute because we've been keeping our options open," said Barlow. "I like the car a lot – it seems to suit my driving style."

This will be my second year in cars



Barlow tested at Brands

and I'm looking to go out and win the championship. But I know it will be tough – there are several drivers out there in their second year of Formula Ford."

Jamun had initially agreed a deal to run Argentinian Juan Rosso, who took a clean sweep at the Brands Hatch finale last season, for a second year but he later defected to the Radical set-up.

"Since that deal [with Rosso] fell through we've worked hard to secure someone like Jack," said Mundy.

"From the first lap we were happy [with Jack]. His pedigree in F4 showed. He hasn't got as much experience as the other guys who are mostly second-year drivers, but his pace showed we should be at the front."

The team intends to run a second Mygale this season and has tested karter Sam Oram-Jones. Mundy confirmed that the youngster is in talks with the team to make his car-racing debut at the Brands opener this weekend.

HUMBLE PYE

The voice of club racing



Huge Compact Cup grid will kick off new season

Bustling entry for 750MC opener marks iconic date

Precisely three quarters of a century after the committee meeting in Willesden, North London, at which the 750 Motor Club was founded, its 75th-anniversary racing season kicks off at period race circuit Donington Park – now its competition department's home – on Saturday. War may have restricted members' initial aspirations for a decade, but March 29 will always be an iconic date in the club's calendar.

A lot has happened since October's Birkett Six Hours team relay race closed the action-crammed 2013 term. Competition manager Giles Groombridge and his small team have split the sparkling Renault Clio 172s, which debuted within the long-established Stock Hatch championship, into a standalone series and added the Tegiwa [Honda] Civic Cup and 5Club Racing [Mazda] MX-5 initiatives.

The booming BMW Compact Cup has been taken to the next level by driving force Paul McErlean. The tireless marketer even had a car at the unveiling of 2013 racer Neil Trotter's £108m National Lottery win last week. The bounty may have altered the Surrey man's aspirations to a BTCC drive (I can't help feeling that he'd enjoy an iconic Super Tourer with the HSCC en route) but 47 of the good-looking E36 coupes form the weekend's biggest set, justifying three races. Former Locost champion Declan McDonnell returns to his tin-top roots here after a less-successful Formula Vee adventure.

More than 30 entries is a splendid start for the RGB competition, even before stalwarts Austen Greenway and Tim Hoverd have finished their exciting new MNR and Sabre

machines. Sometime FF1600 racer Doug Lague and his father Peter, a Mini ace in the late 1960s, are among many welcome newcomers.

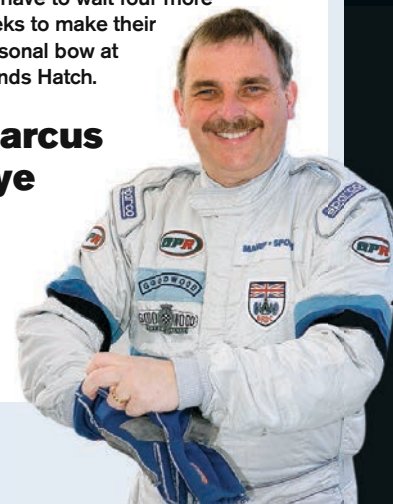
Defending Bikesports champion Tim Gray – 750MC's most prolific modern-era winner in Locost and RGB arenas prior to the switch last season – is set to give Paul Nightingale's first central-seat Spire

"Paul McErlean has taken the booming Compact Cup to the next level"

its debut on home soil. Roadsports also looks promising with Rob Horsfield (Toyota MR2 Turbo), Tina Cooper and husband David Sharp (Lotus Elise), JM Littman (Porsche Boxster) and Carl Owen (Audi TT).

The Fiat-powered 750 Formula maintains the link to Britain's first club championship in 1950 on the Grand Prix circuit. Formula Vee, Stock Hatch, Locost, Sports Specials and Clio competitors will have to wait four more weeks to make their seasonal bow at Brands Hatch.

Marcus Pye



Gavin tries out ex-Arnoux Renault

Sportscar star Oliver Gavin tried the ex-Rene Arnoux Renault RE30B for size at Donington Park week. The Briton, who will demonstrate the car at Goodwood this weekend, marvelled at driving a machine "designed for two drivers [Arnoux and Alain Prost] half my size".

DONINGTON PARK

Kart stars contest Donington club opener to gain licence signatures

HIGHLY RATED SINGLE-SEATER

rookies Ben Barnicoat, George Russell and Toby Sowery raced at Donington Park's BARC season opener last weekend to gain the required signatures for their respective race licences.

Barnicoat requires an International B licence to race in Formula Renault NEC. The McLaren protege finished the Kumho BMW races 17th and 10th and will also take part in the Citroen 2CV races at Oulton Park this weekend.

BRDC Formula 4 and FR ALPS hopeful Russell requires an International C licence and won his Pre-'05 Production



Sowery starred in Crossle 32F

Touring Car class in a Peugeot 206.

Sowery, in a Crossle 32F, finished fourth in the Classic Formula Ford 1600 opener before winning his class and claiming third overall in the second. He needs a National A licence for a prospective F3 Cup campaign.

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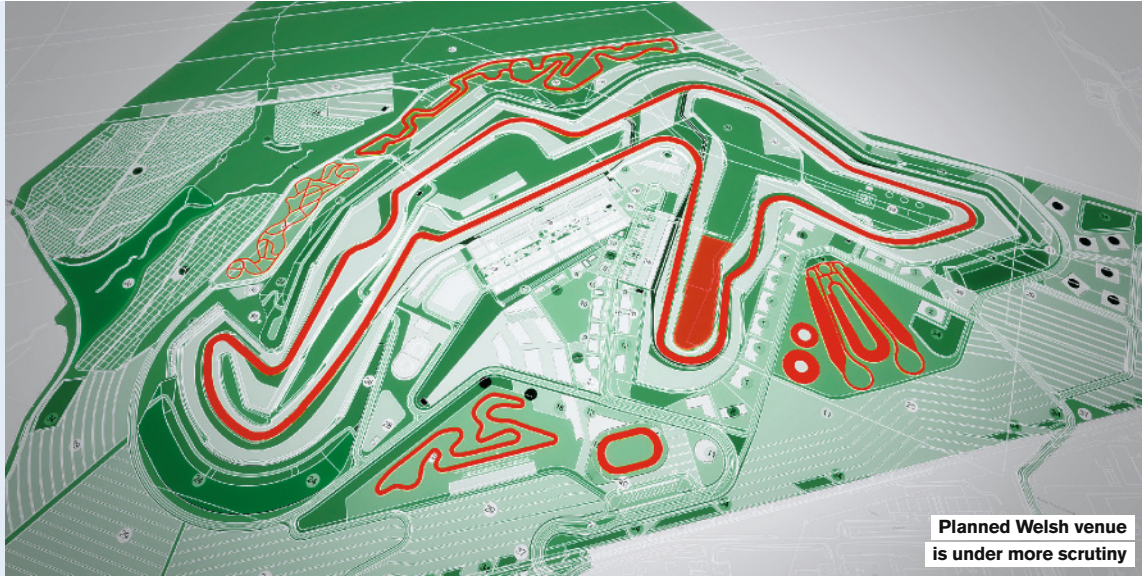
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Planned Welsh venue is under more scrutiny

CIRCUIT OF WALES

Silverstone queries Circuit of Wales

SILVERSTONE HAS WRITTEN TO British Prime Minister David Cameron to get confirmation that the UK government is not considering financial support for the proposed Circuit of Wales.

CoW project boss Michael Carrick told AUTOSPORT last week (March 20) it had made a "modest" request believed to be around £20m from HM Treasury, plus £30m from the Welsh Assembly.

"When Silverstone circuit was recently looking for support to secure the future

of the Formula 1 British Grand Prix the application was denied on the basis that this would be classed as illegal state aid," the statement read.

"Silverstone has been advised that an injection of funds by the Welsh and/or UK governments to the CoW project could also amount to illegal state aid, as [it] would give CoW an economic and selective advantage.

"Based on its unrivalled knowledge and experience of running an international

motor racing venue for over 60 years, it is Silverstone's view that the CoW project is unviable. Many UK circuits struggle for revenue. It is unrealistic to suggest the CoW will be the exception."

In response to the letter, Carrick commented: "We are disappointed to have heard of the content of this letter.

"The suggestion of 'illegal state aid' made by Silverstone highlights they do not understand the basic process of applying for state funding of this nature."



GRIFFITHS

In brief

Jimenez back in Porsche

Spanish racer Victor Jimenez (above) will return to the Porsche Carrera Cup GB this season alongside Redline Racing team-mates Michael Meadows and Josh Webster. Meanwhile, Peter Kyle-Henney will step up to the series from the defunct GT3 Cup Challenge.

Robinson returns

Andy Robinson returned to the Classic Thunder field at Donington Park last week, 18 months after heavily crashing his Ford Falcon V8. Robinson set the fastest lap of the first race but was forced to retire after a gearbox problem, which also sidelined him for the second event.

BMW men hospitalised

Kumho BMW racer Rob Alman sustained a broken arm and was operated on for suspected damage to his pelvis after a hefty crash in the second race at Donington Park last weekend. Alman collided with Robert Williams on the exit of Coppice three laps into the race. Williams was kept under observation briefly but both should make full recoveries.

Herbert sticks with Clios

Renault Clio Cup Series frontrunner Luke Herbert will return to the category for its first full year as a championship. Herbert won five of the club series' six races last season and was fourth quickest at the official pre-season test last week at Rockingham. Mike Robinson was fastest.

Fittipaldi tops test

Second-year Formula Renault BARC racer Pietro Fittipaldi (below) topped the championship's official pre-season test at Rockingham last week, edging Piers Hickin and Matteo Ferrer. The Brazilian's best time of 1m17.254s shaded Hickin by 0.03s. Mike Bushell topped the Clio Cup UK running for title-winning outfit Team Pyro.



EBREY



Rees drove Mundy's car at the media day

GRIFFITHS

PORSCHE CARRERA CUP GB

Rees joins In2 for Porsche switch

FORMER SINGLE-SEATER racer Paul Rees will contest this year's Porsche Carrera Cup GB with the In2 Racing squad.

The 27-year-old has not competed regularly for the past two seasons, but does have prior sportscar experience after contesting the 2011 International GT Open and making a one-off

appearance in the FIA GT3 European Championship the same year.

Prior to that, the Formula Palmer Audi podium finisher contested various single-seater championships.

"I had a great opportunity to come back to racing, and sports and GT racing is now my career focus," said Rees. "I want to make my mark."

MASTERS

Dutch series to make UK debut

THE DUTCH-BASED NK

Historische Toerwagen and GT series will make its UK debut as part of the Brands Hatch Masters Festival.

The series for touring and GT cars built from 1947 to 1965 usually races at Zandvoort, Assen, Spa and the Nurburgring but will race on British soil for the first time when it comes to the May 24-26 event.

Chevrolet Corvettes, Ford GT40s, Jaguar E-types, Lotus Cortinas and Austin Coopers are among the cars that will race on both circuit layouts.

"It is very exciting for us to come to Brands Hatch," said series manager Egbert Kolvoort. "It is a fabulous circuit and we look forward to racing in England and with Masters.

"We will have some interesting cars and will put on a good show for the fans."

RALLYCROSS

Huge entry for British RX opener

MORE THAN 120 DRIVERS HAVE entered the first round of the British Rallycross Championship this weekend.

The 123-strong entry list for the Lydden Hill curtain-raiser is headed by three-time champion Julian Godfrey and contains an influx of drivers from the Belgian series.

Kevin Procter returns, as does Steve Hill in his Mitsubishi Evo 10, while Koen Pauwels and Jochen Coox lead the challenge from the overseas drivers.

Multiple X Games skateboarding gold medalist Danny Way will make his rallycross debut in the Suzuki Swift category.



Champion Godfrey is returning

HAISE



Hewitt edged second
Mega encounter

CATERHAM GRADUATES DONINGTON PARK, MARCH 22-23, BARC

Caterham thrillers go down to wire

EDWARD BENSON AND JUSTIN COX both claimed narrow Caterham Super Graduates victories after Charles Elliott was pipped at the post in both races, having led out of the chicane for the final time.

Only 0.175 seconds covered the top four in race two, with Toby Briant completing the podium.

The Classic class featured race-long duels between the Smiths, Graham edging Graeme each time.

Ian Anderson headed the Mega Graduates from the first lap, leaving

Brett Ray to hold off Michael Rowland for second. David Hewitt took the race two spoils, with Ray and Tom Overton only fractionally behind. Scott Lawrence and Alexander Gurr shared the Sigma class wins in two close finishes.

Both Sigmax races were won by Jeremy Webb. He beat Rick Potter and Mick Whitehead by 4.9s in the first and made the most of a huge race-two scrap to finish 14s clear of Neil Shinner and Whitehead.

● Peter Scherer

RESULTS

CLASSIC/SUPER (16 LAPS) 1 Edward Benson 22m16.206s (85.32mph); 2 Toby Briant +0.068s; 3 Charles Elliott; 4 Justin Cox; 5 Andy Molsom; 6 Jonathan Miller. **Class winner** Graham Smith. **Fastest lap** Molsom 1m21.835s (87.06mph).

RACE 2 (14 LAPS) 1 Cox 19m30.182s (85.23mph); 2 Elliott +0.004s; 3 Briant; 4 Benson; 5 Molsom; 6 Chris Rome. **CW** Graham Smith. **FL** Elliott 1m21.274s (87.66mph).

SIGMA/MEGA (13 LAPS) 1 Ian Anderson 22m23.913s (68.91mph); 2 Brett Ray +3.049s; 3 Michael Rowland; 4 Glenn Burtenshaw; 5 Tom Overton; 6 Adrian Russell. **CW** Scott Lawrence.

FL Alexander Gurr 1m39.403s (71.67mph).

RACE 2 (14 LAPS) 1 David Hewitt 19m22.365s (85.81mph); 2 Ray +0.021s; 3 Overton; 4 Luke Cooper; 5 Rowland; 6 Simon Longman. **CW** Gurr. **FL** Ray 1m20.475s (88.53mph).

SIGMAX (12 LAPS) 1 Jeremy Webb 21m34.659s (66.03mph); 2 Rick Potter +4.929s; 3 Mick Whitehead; 4 Ray Gilliland; 5 Gary Burke; 6 Martin Amison. **FL** Gilliland 1m22.640s (86.21mph). **RACE 2 (15 LAPS)**

1 Webb 20m08.495s (88.43mph); 2 Neil Shinner +14.297s; 3 Whitehead; 4 Amison; 5 Gilliland; 6 Richard Pursglove. **FL** Whitehead 1m19.655s (89.44mph).

PRE-'93 TOURING/PRE-'05 PRODUCTION/CLASSIC THUNDER DONINGTON PARK

McLoughlin takes on the Bimmers in tin-top duels

DAVE HICKTON'S FAST-STARTING BMW M3 made the early running in the first Pre-'93 Touring & Pre-'05 Production Touring Car race. But Jim McLoughlin took charge from Coppice on lap six, heading home a trio of BMWs in his Ford Sierra Cosworth. Hickton took a lights-to-flag win in race two though, with McLoughlin clinching second after passing Paul Bellamy at the Esses.

After chasing the Escort Cosworth of Dave Cockell for three laps, Vaughan Fletcher and his Subaru Impreza took charge of the first Classic Thunder race. Cockell was never headed in race two, as Fletcher chased in vain. Keith Butcher completed the podium after a battle with Bradley Gelman.

● Peter Scherer

(Mini Cooper); Allan Weyman (Chevrolet Camaro). **FL** McLoughlin 1m26.824s (82.05mph).

RACE 2 (12 LAPS) 1 Hickton 16m15.485s (87.64mph); 2 McLoughlin +1.211s; 3 Bellamy; 4 West; 5 Cattliff; 6 Stanford. **CW** Stanford; Hampshire; Stuart Tranter (Rover Tomcat); Stephens; Weyman; Russell; Fisher; Rowles. **FL** Hickton 1m19.843s (89.23mph).

CLASSIC THUNDER (11 LAPS) 1 Vaughan Fletcher (Subaru Impreza) 15m11.545s (85.97mph); 2 Dave Cockell (Ford Escort Cosworth) +1.055s; 3 Ian Froggatt (Impreza); 4 Keith Butcher (Nissan Primera); 5 Bradley Gelman (Sierra); 6 Stacy Vickers (Mazda RX7). **CW** Butcher; Gelman; Vickers. **FL** Andy Robinson (Ford Falcon) 1m17.937s (91.41mph).

RACE 2 (13 LAPS) 1 Cockell 16m06.329s (95.84mph); 2 Fletcher +0.810s; 3 Butcher; 4 Gelman; 5 Froggatt; 6 Kevin Wendt (BMW E46 M3). **CW** Butcher; Gelman; Wendt. **FL** Fletcher 1m12.985s (97.61mph).

PRE-'93 TOURING/PRE-'05 PRODUCTION

TOURING CARS (10 LAPS) 1 Jim McLoughlin (Ford Sierra Cosworth) 15m14.058s (77.94mph); 2 David Hickton (BMW M3) +2.889s; 3 Paul Bellamy (M3); 4 Ray West (M3); 5 Karl Cattliff (E36 M3); 6 Roger Stanford (E30 M3). **CW** Stanford; Jerry Hampshire (Renault 5GT Turbo); George Russell (Peugeot 206); Graham Stephens (Honda Civic); Colin Gibbons (Alfa Romeo 156); Steve Rowles (Proton Satria); Stephen Kirton (Vauxhall Astra); James Fisher



McLoughlin took a win in his Sierra



Palmer eased clear of chasing MG pack

MGOC DONINGTON PARK

Palmer class of MG field

IT ONLY TOOK A COUPLE OF LAPS FOR Ben Palmer to make a decisive break in the first MG Owners' Club race of the weekend.

Gary Smith had been an early threat, but had to give best to Lee Sullivan through the Craner Curves on lap seven, with Vince Pain a clear fourth after Andrew Rogerson had a slight excursion.

Palmer was clear on the opening lap of race two, going on to win by nearly 12 seconds as the field battled behind.

It was Sullivan who came through to claim second place, although Pain briefly demoted him before the pair swapped their order again in the closing stages.

Pain had moved up from fifth position when Rogerson, who had nosed ahead of him into the chicane, challenged Smith but went off into the gravel in an incident that delayed Smith too.

● Peter Scherer

RESULTS (BOTH 11 LAPS) 1 Ben Palmer (ZR)

15m45.980s (82.84mph); 2 Lee Sullivan (ZR) +4.723s; 3 Gary Smith (ZR); 4 Vince Pain (ZR); 5 John O'Brien (ZR); 6 Andrew Rogerson (ZR). **CW** Simon Kendrick (F VVC); Jim Baynam (B Roadster). **FL** Palmer 1m24.387s (84.42mph). **RACE 2 1 Palmer 15m42.278s (83.17mph);** 2 Sullivan +11.984s; 3 Pain; 4 Rogerson; 5 Smith; 6 David Mellor (ZR). **CW** Kendrick; Baynam. **FL** Palmer 1m24.728s (84.08mph).

BLUE OVAL SALOONS/HONDA V-TEC CHALLENGE/CLASSIC SALOONS/HISTORIC & PRE-'83 TOURING CARS DONINGTON

Rainer takes total control

NOBODY ELSE GOT A LOOK IN AS CRAIG Rainer won both Blue Oval races at a canter. Ashley Bird chased hard, but only just held off Stephen Matthias for second place in race two. Matthias fought off the leading Honda V-Tec of Robert Burkinshaw after losing out to him in race one. It was plain sailing for David Howard's Jaguar XJ12 in the first Classic Saloon/Historic & Pre-'83 Touring Car race, leaving Mark

Freemantle to beat Mark Osborne and Stephen Primett to second. A Howard spin at Coppice in race two left Freemantle in the clear to win from Primett and Osborne.

● Peter Scherer

BLUE OVAL SALOONS & HONDA V-TEC CHALLENGE (BOTH 12 LAPS) 1 Craig Rainer (Ford Escort Mk2) 16m21.398s (87.11mph); 2 Ashley Bird (Sierra XR4i); 3 Robert Burkinshaw (Honda Integra Type R); 4 Stephen Matthias (Escort RS Cosworth); 5 Paul Nevill (Escort RS Cosworth); 6 Olly Allen (Fiesta). **CW** Nevill; Allen; Alan Eason (Fiesta XR2); Gary Wait (Escort Cosworth); Brian Long (Fiesta); Burkinshaw; Phil Wright (Honda Accord Type-R); Dawn Boyd (Civic

Type-R). **FL** Nevill 1m19.174s (89.98mph). **RACE 2** 1 Rainer 15m53.351s (89.67mph); 2 Bird +21.543s; 3 Matthias; 4 Burkinshaw; 5 Mike Webb (Focus); 6 Allen. **CW** Nevill; Webb; Gary Parkes (Ford Ka); Wait; Long; Burkinshaw; Wright; Boyd. **FL** Robert Drummond (Escort Cosworth) 1m17.318s (92.14mph).

CLASSIC SALOONS/HISTORIC & PRE-'83 TOURING CARS (BOTH 11 LAPS) 1 David Howard (Jaguar XJ12) 15m49.996s (82.49mph); 2 Mark Freemantle (Escort Mk1) +1.795s; 3 Mark Osborne (Triumph Dolomite Sprint); 4 Stephen Primett (Escort Mk1); 5 Riorden Welby (Rover SD1); 6 Steve Cripps (Escort RS2000). **CW** Osborne; Welby; Mark Fowler (Ford Capri); John Avill (Lotus Cortina); Phil Manser (Mini Cooper); Stephen Yates (Escort



Rainer won in Escort

RS1600i); Luc Wilson (Austin A40); Tim Dodwell (Mini Cooper); Stuart Radford (Triumph 2000). **FL** Howard 1m23.606s (85.21mph). **RACE 2** 1 Freemantle 15m31.810s (84.10mph); 2 Primett +1.541s; 3 Osborne; 4 Howard; 5 Welby; 6 Cripps. **CW** Primett; Welby; Fowler; Avill; Tony Preston (Morris Minor); Pietro Caccano (Lancia Fulvia); Steve Barber (Ford Anglia). **FL** Howard 1m22.184s (86.69mph).



Cryer beat Roddison in the opener

MAX5 DONINGTON PARK

Cryer's joy as pair of wins ends Max5 victory drought

AFTER FOUR YEARS OF WAITING Jonathan Cryer finally claimed not one, but two Max5 wins.

Cryer led early on in race one from Paul Roddison and Jonathan Halliwell, before being passed by Roddison into the chicane just after mid-distance. They briefly swapped places a lap later, and Roddison led onto the final lap, but Cryer had the inside at the chicane and held the advantage in the drag to the finish, with Halliwell a solitary third.

Halliwell split the duelling Cryer and Roddison at the start of race two but overshot the chicane and dropped to fifth. Roddison led

briefly before Cryer moved clear, while Halliwell snatched second at Redgate on the last lap from Roddison, who was nearly passed by Ian Loversidge and Simon Fleet.

● Peter Scherer

RESULTS (14 LAPS) 1 Jonathan Cryer 20m23.304s (81.53mph); 2 Paul Roddison +0.133s; 3 Jonathan Halliwell; 4 Ian Loversidge; 5 Thomas Collins; 6 Simon Fleet. **CW** Robert Chilcott; Rob Williams. **FL** Fleet 1m25.976s (82.86mph). **RACE 2 (11 LAPS)** 1 Cryer 18m05.991s (72.16mph); 2 Halliwell +0.806s; 3 Roddison; 4 Loversidge; 5 Fleet; 6 Jeremy Shipley. **CW** Amy Barker; Williams. **FL** Cryer 1m26.132s (82.71mph).



Whittaker won both Class A races

KUMHO BMW DONINGTON PARK

BMW champ leads the way

A WET TRACK MEANT AN ADDED challenge, but reigning champion Garrie Whittaker still won both of the Class A Kumho BMW races.

He trailed Darren Fielding early in race one until making the race-winning pass into McLeans on lap four. Tom Wrigley was a clear third.

Whittaker led from start to finish in race two, with Wrigley second after Colin Wells went off at the Old Hairpin, and Fielding

completing the podium.

There was another double winner in the Class B, C and D races. Matthew Fielding — brother of Class A ace Darren — had a substantial lead in race one that was wiped out by a safety car, but he was still able to win from Roger Lavender and the scrapping Robert Salisbury and Dave Griffin.

Race two was red-flagged after only three laps when Rob Alman and Robert Williams collided heavily on the exit of Coppice. Fielding was ahead at the time of the crash and duly claimed the win, classified ahead of Dave Heasman and Salisbury.

● Peter Scherer

CLASS A (11 LAPS) 1 Garrie Whittaker (E36 M3) 20m44.219s (62.98mph); 2 Darren Fielding (M3 Evo) +7.453s; 3 Tom Wrigley (M3); 4 Piers Ross (M3 Evo); 5 Colin Wells (M3 CSL); 6 Ian Hill (M3). **FL** Whittaker 1m46.618s (66.82mph). **RACE 2 (14 LAPS)** 1 Whittaker 20m46.844s (79.99mph); 2 Wrigley +1.592s; 3 Fielding; 4 Hill; 5 Richard Bacon (E46 M3); 6 Kal Ezzat (M3). **FL** Wells 1m16.392s (93.26mph). **CLASSES B-D (14 LAPS)** 1 Matthew Fielding (M3) 20m27.659s (81.24mph); 2 Roger Lavender (M3) +0.477s; 3 Robert Salisbury (M3); 4 Dave Griffin (M3); 5 Rodger Card (E30 M3); 6 Dominic Surdi (M3). **CW** Dave Heasman (328i); Greg Marking (318is). **FL** Lavender 1m18.291s (91.00mph). **RACE 2 (3 LAPS)** 1 M Fielding 6m23.421s (55.74mph); 2 Heasman +1.286s; 3 Salisbury; 4 Griffin; 5 James Ford (318 Ti); 6 Adrian Gilbert (E36 M3). **CW** Heasman; Ford. **FL** Heasman 1m49.289s (65.19mph).

CLASSIC FF1600 DONINGTON PARK

Mitchell conjurs up some Merlyn magic with double

THERE WAS A WINNING DOUBLE FOR Ben Mitchell and his Merlyn Mk20 in Classic FF1600.

Benn Simms spun out of second place at McLeans in race one, leaving Callum Grant and Stuart Kestenbaum to settle into second and third. Toby Sowery claimed a late fourth after Nigel Lingwood ran wide at Coppice.

Grant pushed Mitchell hard in race two and briefly led at the chicane on lap three. But after regaining the advantage exiting Redgate, Mitchell was never headed. Meanwhile, Sowery headed a four-car battle for third

after taking Simms on the last lap. Lingwood completed the top four when Simms outbraked himself at the chicane.

● Peter Scherer

RESULTS (BOTH 12 LAPS) 1 Ben Mitchell (Merlyn Mk20) 15m44.575s (90.51mph); 2 Callum Grant (Merlyn Mk20A) +2.239s; 3 Stuart Kestenbaum (Van Diemen RF79); 4 Toby Sowery (Crossle 32F); 5 Nigel Lingwood (Van Diemen RF80); 6 Benn Simms (Jomo JMR7). **CW** Kestenbaum. **FL** Mitchell 1m17.295s (92.17mph). **RACE 2** 1 Mitchell 15m36.332s (91.30mph); 2 Grant +1.750s; 3 Sowery; 4 Lingwood; 5 Simms; 6 Kestenbaum. **CW** Sowery. **FL** Mitchell 1m16.770s (92.80mph).



Mitchell eased to a pair of wins

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THIS WEEK

LETTERS • BEST PICS • LATEST GEAR • ON TRACK & SCREEN • ONLINE

What you think of the motorsport news of the past week



2014's noses might not be appealing, but at least there's variety

Don't put noses out of joint

I read in the last AUTOSPORT that the FIA says the noses on this year's cars are not as they had envisioned, and that they will be addressed for 2015.

I know the noses are not to everyone's liking, verging on ugly, but for the first time in many years we have a field of

distinctly different looking cars.

My fear is that the FIA will write the rules to say how the noses should look, and we will be back to having a field of lookalikes.

Leave the rules as they are, and let the designers decide what solution works best.

Simon Roffey, Witney, Oxfordshire

Dietrich Mateschitz has been quoted as saying that he could withdraw Red Bull from Formula 1 if he's not happy with the way the sport is run.

This reminds me of the bad old days when Enzo Ferrari would threaten to take the ball away if his team didn't get its way.

It's time Mr Mateschitz realised that no man, or team, is bigger than the sport and they have to play within the rules.

If they don't like it, go play somewhere else. F1 was fine before Red Bull and it will be fine without them.

**Richard Hargrave
Hitchin**

To be read in the style of an old

Points of View letter: why oh why has the BBC dropped Gary Anderson from its presenting team?

Complete madness.

**Toby Bailey
By email**

Thankfully Gary's insights are available in AUTOSPORT – ed

If a Formula 1 car's fuel tank holds 100kg and if Daniel Ricciardo's engine 'consistently' consumed fuel at a rate of more than 100kg/hour and if the race lasted for one-and-a-half-hours, how come he finished the race?

**Dr Paul Sheldon
By email**

The FIA is making a big thing

about racing numbers in F1, with drivers picking their own numbers that they can keep for the duration of their career.

But if this is to work, surely we need to be able to see the numbers on the cars! In particular, the Williams cars have nice clean white sidepods apart from a tiny black mark... wait a minute, pass me a magnifying glass – that's the number!

I can see no reason why there can't be a rule insisting on numbers at least 8in (200mm) high on the sidepods, which could easily be incorporated without reducing the size of sponsor logos.

**John Napper
Rio de Janeiro**

Sam Tremayne's comments on two-wheel and four-wheel motorsport (March 20, p84) chime very much with my own thoughts on the subject.

I'm an AUTOSPORT subscriber, but my first motorsport love is MotoGP. I do find sportscar racing very absorbing and make a point of watching coverage of Le Mans. Then there's Aussie V8 Supercars – one of the most entertaining series on the planet.

Motorsport is motorsport irrespective of how many wheels are providing traction. Not all of it will appeal to everyone, but we shouldn't deprive ourselves of something without at least having a look.

Lawnmower racing anyone?

**Tony Walsh
Letchworth Garden City**

CORRECTION

Apologies to Kevin Magnussen – in last week's Australian Grand Prix report we pictured the Danish driver next to a Norwegian flag. Thanks to reader Matthew Magness for pointing out the error.

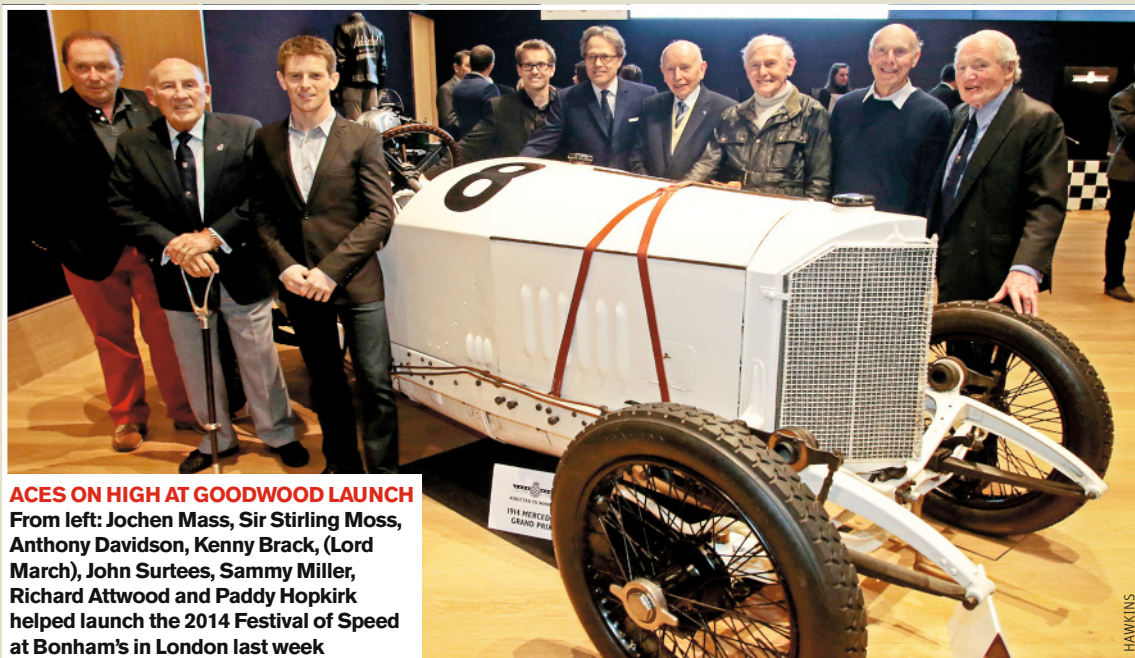
In pictures

Images around the globe, from London to Alabama, via Spain and Germany



HONDA'S NEW CIVIC READY TO GO
Former World Touring Car champion Gabriele Tarquini gives the factory Honda Civic its first airing with the 2014-spec livery at Valencia last week

LE MEUR/DPP/PI



ACES ON HIGH AT GOODWOOD LAUNCH
From left: Jochen Mass, Sir Stirling Moss, Anthony Davidson, Kenny Brack, (Lord March), John Surtees, Sammy Miller, Richard Attwood and Paddy Hopkirk helped launch the 2014 Festival of Speed at Bonham's in London last week

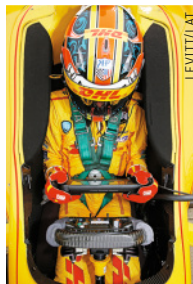
HAWKINS

RACERS' ROW
DTM stars Timo Scheider, Antonio Felix da Costa and Christian Vietoris row with the gold medal-winning German scull in Dortmund last week. Creeks and paddles anyone?



MP-SPORT/PAKUSCH

HUNTER-REAY TAKES A BREAK
IndyCar racer Ryan Hunter-Reay takes time out from testing at Barber recently, although swiping his tablet's screen can't have been easy with those gloves on...



LEVITTI/LAT

In the shops

Desirable new releases

RED BULL 2014 F1 APPAREL

From £25 – autosport.com/shop

The full range of world champion team Red Bull Racing's official gear is now available, with everything from caps to T-shirts and shorts to rain jackets. The Team T-shirt (pictured below) features the correct branding, is made from 100 per cent cotton, comes in sizes S-XXL and costs £45. Check the website for the complete product line-up.



TAMIYA 1:12 McLaren M23

RRP £79.99 – hobbyco.net

Tamiya's latest, re-released large-scale plastic kit is a fantastically detailed replica of the 1974 McLaren M23. If you build it properly, the suspension and steering will work, and the front cowling, cockpit shroud and engine cover are removable. The kit includes photo-etched parts for extra realism. Due to tobacco-advertising laws, you'll need to source your Marlboro decals elsewhere to finish the job off.



ORECA 40-YEAR CELEBRATION

€29 – motors-mania.com

Seasoned French team owner Hugues de Chaunac has carefully collated his finest moments from 40 years as le patron of ORECA (Organisation Exploitation Competition Automobiles). Packed with stories and pics from his time in Formula 3, sportscars and as a prototype constructor, this 208-page, French-language book is probably one for real aficionados only.



WHAT'S ON

ON TRACK IN THE UK

BRANDS HATCH

BARC/BTCC

March 29-30

www.brandshatch.co.uk

The British Touring Car Championship kicks off this weekend at Brands with seven champions among what is likely to be a 31-car field. Last year's title winner Andrew Jordan goes up against returning tin-top ace Alain Menu and Fabrizio Giovanardi, with experienced hands Jason Plato, Matt Neal, Colin Turkington and Gordon Shedden in the hunt too. If you're not heading to the Kent track you can catch the action live on ITV4 throughout Sunday. Support comes from the Porsche Carrera Cup GB, British Formula Ford, Ginetta GT4 Supercup, Renault Clio Cup UK and Ginetta Junior Championship.

GOODWOOD

BARC Members' Meeting

March 29-30

www.goodwood.co.uk

The 72nd Members' Meeting features a host of famous names from the world of motorsport set to do battle in some of history's greatest and coolest cars. The Gerry

There's bound to be plenty of this at Brands this weekend



EBREY/LAT

Marshall tribute races for Group 1 Touring Cars and retro turbo Formula 1 demonstration should prove highlights.

DONINGTON PARK

750MC

March 29-30

donington-park.co.uk

The bustling 750 Motor Club grids return with a season opener at Donington that will have 12 different classes on display. A massive Compact Cup grid heads the billing, with 750 Formula, Bike Sports, Toyota MR2, RGB, Mazda

MX5s and Classic Thoroughbreds races just part of the remaining cast.

LYDDEN HILL

British Rallycross

March 29-30

www.lyddenhill.co.uk

There's a new World Rallycross Championship on the block in 2014, but that doesn't mean you should forget the British iteration that started it all. More than 120 drivers will descend on Lydden this weekend, three-time British champion Julian Godfrey leading the way.

SILVERSTONE

MGCC

March 29

www.silverstone.co.uk

Saturday's meeting is the circuit's first racing event this year, and the MG Car Club's opening salvo features the Cockshoot Cup, Ecurie GTS, MG Metro Cup and Peter Best Cup.

OULTON PARK

BARC

March 29

www.ouiltonpark.co.uk

A quiet meeting is topped by the BARC North-West Sports

and Saloon Championship. British Superkarts, 2CVs and Sports Racing Car Series provide ample back-up.

KIRKISTOWN

500MRCI

March 29

www.kirkistown.com

Northern Ireland's main championships get lift-off at Kirkistown's season curtain-raiser on Saturday only. The 500MRCI's Formula Ford 1600, Saloon and GT, Road Sports and Ford Fiesta series are on display.

ON TRACK AROUND THE WORLD

MALAYSIAN GRAND PRIX

Formula 1 World Championship

Rd 2/19

Sepang, Malaysia

March 30

formula1.com

INDYCAR SERIES

Rd 1/15

St Petersburg, Florida, USA

March 30

indycar.com

INDY LIGHTS

Rd 1/10

St Petersburg, Florida, USA

March 30

indycar.com

NASCAR SPRINT CUP

Round 6/36

Martinsville, Virginia, USA

March 30

nascar.com

V8 SUPERCARS

Rd 2/14

Symmons Plains, Tasmania, Australia

March 29-30

v8supercar.com.au

EUROPEAN RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP

Rd 3/12

Acropolis Rally, Greece

March 28-30

fiaerc.com



IndyCar ends winter hibernation in St Pete

ABBOTT/LAT

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

ON TELEVISION

THURSDAY MARCH 27

0700-0745 Sky Sports F1 LIVE
 Malaysian GP: Drivers' Press Conference
2100-2345 Sky Sports F1
 F1 Classics: Malaysian GP 1999

FRIDAY MARCH 28

0145-0350 Sky Sports F1 LIVE
 Malaysian GP: Free Practice 1
0155-0355 BBC2 LIVE
 Malaysian GP: Free Practice 1
0545-0700 Sky Sports F1 LIVE
 Malaysian GP: Free Practice 2
0555-0735 BBC2 LIVE
 Malaysian GP: Free Practice 2
0800-0845 Sky Sports F1 LIVE
 Malaysian GP: Team Principals' Press Conference
2100-2300 Sky Sports F1
 F1 Classics: Malaysian GP 2002

SATURDAY MARCH 29

0320-0430 BT Sport2 LIVE
 V8 Supercars: Symmons Plains Race 1
0445-0615 Sky Sports F1 LIVE
 Malaysian GP: Free Practice 3
0455-0605 BBC2 LIVE
 Malaysian GP: Free Practice 3
0520-0630 BT Sport2 LIVE
 V8 Supercars: Symmons Plains Race 2
0700-0945 Sky Sports F1 LIVE
 Malaysian GP: Qualifying
0700-0930 BBC1 LIVE
 Malaysian GP: Qualifying
1315-1530 BBC1
 Malaysian GP: Qualifying Replay
1500-1720, 2100-2340 Motors TV
 V8 Supercars: Symmons Plains Races 1 and 2

2100-2330 Sky Sports F1

F1 Classics: Malaysian GP 2007
2315-2345 Eurosport
 ERC: Acropolis Rally Day 1

SUNDAY MARCH 30

0550-0730 BT Sport2
 V8 Supercars: Symmons Plains Race 3
0800-1215 Sky Sports F1 LIVE
 Malaysian Grand Prix
0800-1115 BBC1 LIVE
 Malaysian Grand Prix
1030-1800 ITV4 LIVE
 BTCC: Brands Hatch
1345-1545 BBC1
 Malaysian Grand Prix Replay
1400-1500 Sky Sports F1
 Malaysian GP: Highlights
1415-1600 Motors TV
 V8 Supercars: Symmons Plains Race 3
1730-2230 Premier Sports LIVE
 NASCAR Sprint Cup: Martinsville
1800-2000 ITV4
 Touring Car Legends
2000-2300 ESPN LIVE
 IndyCar: St Petersburg
2100-2330 Sky Sports F1
 F1 Classics: Malaysian GP 2010
2330-0000 Eurosport
 ERC: Acropolis Rally Review

MONDAY MARCH 31
0600-0630 Eurosport 2
 ERC: Acropolis Rally Review
1100-1200 ESPN
 NASCAR Sprint Cup:
 Martinsville Highlights
2000-2300 Motors TV
 V8 Supercars: Symmons Plains Highlights

ONLINE

HOT ON THE WEB THIS WEEK

YouTube REGAZZONI WINS INAUGURAL LONG BEACH GP IN 1976



SEARCH FOR: 1976 Long Beach GP Race Highlights (20:28)
 The Long Beach circuit in California has recently thrown its hat into the ring to be an F1 host for the first time in over 30 years. Here are some highlights from the first time it put on a GP, 38 years ago tomorrow (Friday), when Clay Regazzoni won for Ferrari.

AUTOSPORT+
 Exclusive content coming up in our premium website this week

Will Lewis Hamilton defeat Nico Rosberg? Can Williams make good on its Melbourne promise? Will Red Bull choose to use its own fuel-flow readings or those of the FIA? Our team will be in the paddock to bring you the latest news and opinions. Plus, we look ahead to the IndyCar and BTCC season openers.

GET AUTOSPORT ON THE MOVE

- IN THE IPAD ISSUE THIS WEEK
- INDYCAR PREVIEW WITH THE STAR CONTENDERS
- ON SALE ALL OVER THE WORLD FOR ONLY £2.99

Download it now from autosport.com

Revved up over what's on the box

This weekend a host of new Ginetta teenagers will get their first taste of live TV potential notoriety thanks to ITV4's now well-established broadcast of not just the British Touring Car Championship, but most of its support package.

One of Revved Up's favourite motorsport commissioning choices, the 'whole-day' shows mean Ginetta, Renault Clio and Porsche Carrera Cup racers no longer have to tease potential sponsors into thinking that a few minutes of small-hours highlights for an audience of insomniacs represents ample TV exposure (no matter how many thousands of people you claim are taping it to watch next day). Instead 'any TV?' became an easily answered question with live races in full on a Freeview channel.

Live TV was unthinkable for the Formula Ford, Formula Vauxhall Junior and Clio packs of the mid-1990s TOCA-support era, but they still got what Revved Up reckons was some of the best-ever primetime exposure for British junior motorsport: regular appearances on the late, lamented *Top Gear Motorsport*.

The antithesis of 21st-century specialised scheduling, where fans expect to hunt down (and generally pay for) coverage of their sport of choice, *Top Gear Motorsport* was a single flick of the remote-control button away from the end of *Coronation Street* on a Friday night.

For a few glorious years, there was a peak-time half-hour slot when a quarter of the then four-channel UK schedule offered



a bite-sized highlights-package whizz through the best of not just TOCA supports, but original DTM, Alister McRae versus Gwyndaf Evans, Rover Turbos, rallycross, or Dougie Lampkin's trials-bike heroics.

Whether they were filling time before *Shooting Stars*, or home for dinner in between happy hour and returning to the pub, it had never been easier for viewers

to stumble across spectacular and slightly obscure motorsport and, with only three other channels to choose from, to stay there. This week, BBC2 offers *Lambing Live* in the *Top Gear Motorsport* slot. Tiff Needell won't be commentating and Martin Schanche will not feature. Friday nights were indisputably better in the 1990s.
Revved Up

Brian Henton

“I ran over to tell Eddie Cheever how disappointed I was – with my fists!”

■ Hockenheim European F2 ■ September 24, 1978 ■ March 782-Hart ■ Bittersweet in a ‘sold’ car



MY WEEKEND AT THE END OF the 1978 season at Hockenheim seemed to perfectly encapsulate the bittersweet nature of motor racing.

I'd come out of a brief and difficult period in F1. I just seemed to be in the wrong place at the wrong time... all the time! Then I set up my own team which didn't work out. I don't think a few grubby blokes working out of a van was what Bernie Ecclestone had in mind when, in the 1970s, he started his vision for F1.

By the start of 1978 I was pretty much written off. But I was still determined to get back to F1 and believed that in the right car I could win. So I mortgaged everything I had, bought a March 782, borrowed an engine from Brian Hart and got Pete Hemmings, a Mini specialist, as my chief mechanic with Barry Foulds drafted in as second 'spannerman'. A mate of Pete's who we just knew as 'Lou' was the truckie and then we had this bloke called 'Nick the Greek', who looked like Jesus and acted as 'gofer'. So with this elite team we decided to do European F2!

We were so hand-to-mouth it was unreal. But we formed an incredibly tight and hungry little team. Mixing it with the best we got several poles, fastest laps and decent finishes. I led a few races but because we were running on 'second-hand fresh air', things broke and denied us wins.

We got to Hockenheim where there were two races. I won the first one, beating Bruno Giacomelli, Marc Surer, Elio de Angelis and Eddie

Cheever. That felt good.

Just before the weekend I had signed with Toleman for 1979 and had agreed to sell the March. The guy who was buying it was in the paddock with the cash. Everything was working out very nicely.

What could possibly go wrong?

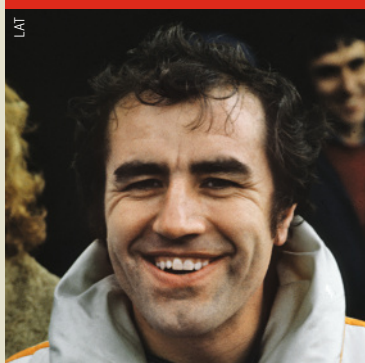
In the second heat I was chasing Cheever for the lead and going down to the first chicane he braked super early. The BMW-engined car was

much lighter than our March-Hart. He launched me in to the air and I started barrel-rolling. It was like an aircraft accident. When all the banging and crashing stopped I was left in just the monocoque – the thing was obliterated. I looked at it and realised I'd lost about £50k. I then ran up the track to tell Cheever how disappointed I was, with my fists! Once the marshals had pulled me off him, I ended up at the hospital for a check-up.

Funny thing was that the g-forces during the accident had been so great that the vessels around my eyes had burst and I had these scary black rings around them. I somehow decided, along with the boys in the team, to get colossally pissed that night to drown our sorrows and also to thank the Lord I was alive. Big mistake! I had forgotten I had a PR event in Paris the next day and had problems getting through immigration because I looked like the walking dead! ☹

Brian Henton was talking to Sam Smith

PROFILE



BRIAN HENTON WAS A LATE starter to racing but won both British Formula 3 titles in 1974. A brief F1 chance with a below-par Lotus came in 1975 before he set up his own F1 and F2 teams in 1977. He took the European F2 title in 1980 with Toleman and moved with the team to F1 a year later. His final F1 race came at the Race of Champions in 1983. Henton, now 67, runs an engineering company.

NEXT WEEK MALAYSIAN GP REPORT
Plus: Toyota's LMP1 challenge; BTCC Brands action

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- + Trackside VIP Hospitality and weekend camping available (limited spaces/pre-book only)
- + Plus a special Jim Clark tribute at BTCC

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SPANISH GRAND PRIX

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June 14/15

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Coach Tours & Paris Stop-Overs



Monte Carlo - 25 May

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Budapest - 27 July

HUNGARIAN GRAND PRIX

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Budapest & Vienna 2-Centre Holiday

Monza - 7 September

ITALIAN GRAND PRIX

Weekends & Longer Tours Based in Como

Montreal - 8 June

CANADIAN GRAND PRIX

4 Nights in Montreal
Scheduled Flights

Motor Racing International



Singapore - 21 September

SINGAPORE GRAND PRIX

Spectacular Night Race
Scheduled Flights
5 Nights in Singapore

Spielberg - 22 June

AUSTRIAN GRAND PRIX

Weekend in Graz
Graz & Vienna 2-Centre Holiday

Suzuka - 5 October

JAPANESE GRAND PRIX

5 Nights in Nagoya
Scheduled Flights

Silverstone - 6 July

BRITISH GRAND PRIX

Tickets, Hospitality & Hotels

Austin - 2 November

UNITED STATES GRAND PRIX

Texas Hosts F1's Instant Classic

Hockenheim - 20 July

GERMAN GRAND PRIX

Weekends in Heidelberg or Heilbronn
Travel by Coach, Air or Self-Drive

Spa - 24 August

BELGIAN GRAND PRIX

Selection of Tours by Coach, Air or Eurostar
Self Drive Packages

Yas Marina - 23 November

ABU DHABI GRAND PRIX

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