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Our Feature Interview this month



Pippa Mann - A Star In The Making

What is in store for you this month?



This Issues Cover story



An Exclusive Interview With Female IndyCar Star Pippa Mann

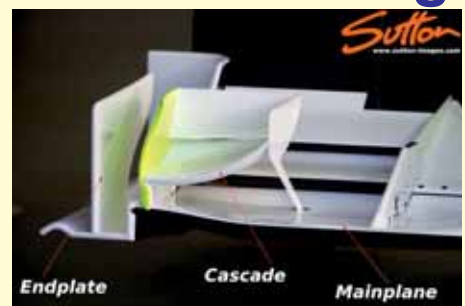
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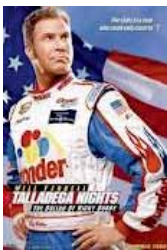
**It Goes Down to the Wire!
Vettel or Alonso?
Who Will Be Champion?**

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Matthew Somerfields popular column**

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Another Exciting and Interesting World Rally Championship



Tomislav Stajduhar looks at the end of the Sebastian Loeb era

NASCAR



Women in the Sport
&
The End of the season
is upon us

Our newest writer Travis Barend
tells us about the thrilling season

Who Is Stormgirl???



Eric Hall Talks About IndyCar 2012



An in depth look at a thrilling season

Giedo Van Der Garde



Caterhams reserve driver & GP2 Winner Speaks Exclusively to
The Podium and we Have a Look at this amazing talent

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From the Editor

Phil Woods

2012 comes to a climax

Well, by the time you read this we will know who the World Champion in Formula One is. As I write this note we are just one day away from Free Practice One and Two in Brazil. It's gone down to the wire, the season where we had different winners every week, the season where Williams at last won a race after all these years, the season when Fernando Alonso got speed out of that Ferrari that didn't seem possible, the season when Sebastian Vettel came good at the right moment. However, despite all that, we have finished on the last day of the season with a straight battle between Vettel and Alonso, who will win is anyone's guess on a Thursday before the race. However this is my page and I am going to be slightly controversial and say that if Alonso doesn't win the championship (despite being 13 points behind), then the best driver hasn't won. Alonso has been so consistent all season, he's found speed out of a car that really shouldn't be that fast, he's made some astonishing starts and had some great races in a car far less superior than the Red Bull. I am not taking anything away from Vettel, he has proven he is a good driver this season, just look at his start from the pit lane to a Podium a week ago. But over the season, I believe that if you'd put Alonso and Vettel in the same car, then Alonso would have run away with it.

Before I say goodbye for this issue I want to kick up a stink. At the rear of the grid there are three teams with no points, however a huge amount of money is given for that 10th place finish, currently that place is held by Marussia. Again I am not criticising the team, they've certainly improved this year, but have they been better than Caterham over the season? Ask yourself that question and be honest with yourself. A 12th place finish for Timo Glock in Monaco is the reason they are 10th and Caterham 11th. Is it right that one result can make the difference of millions of pounds in prize money? I say no, and I would ask that the powers that be have a look at the system again, just in case it happens in the future. I believe that F1 should be like every sport, it should be determined on the whole seasons performance and not a one off result. The championship is like a league, it is not the FA Cup or a knock out competition over a season. What do you think? Let me know on Twitter @F1News2012 (cue a barrage of abuse from Marussia fans lol) Speak next time!!

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An Interview with Pippa Mann. British IndyCar Star



As far as female racing drivers are concerned, Pippa Mann is at the highest level away from Formula One. A British driver born in London in 1983, she now plies her trade in the USA.

Pippa began karting at the age of 13, racing in the Junior TKM, JICA and Formula A. Pippa competed in the British championships and several races across Europe. During the interview with Pippa we will find out how she acquired her first Kart and so much more.

In 2001 Pippa moved to Italy to race karts professionally, in the European and World Championships. She drove for Top Kart, Maranello Kart and CRG, and became the first British female to win an International Kart race. She was a works driver for the above teams over the next three years. Maranello Kart gave Pippa her first International race win in Austria - she was the the first british female to win an International Kart race! Not only that she managed to pick up the lingo as well as her racing craft.

In 2004 she came back home to try her hand at racing in single seaters, competing in the UK Formula Renault 2.0 Championships. She managed to hold her own against some much more experienced drivers, culminating in 2006 where she amassed a very respectable 87 points to finish the championship 19th overall.

In 2007 she was signed by Cram by P1 Europe to race in the World Series by Renault and became the first female to compete in the Formula Renault 3.5 championship. This is when she started to become noticed among her peers as a great driver, regardless of her gender. In 2008 she was signed for a second year by P1 Motorsport and managed seven top 15 finishes, helping her team to third place in the championship. She also managed to achieve a 7th place finish, made even more special as she managed that from the back of the grid following mechanical problems in qualifying. This proved her worth and in 2008 she decided that her career should take her to America.

In September 2008, Pippa joined Panther Racing to partake in the 2009 Firestone Indy Lights Series. She managed to finish her debut season with a large number of top 15 finishes which included three top 10 results for the Indy rookie. Not only that, she managed to qualify in the top 10 for every race at an oval track, culminating in a 3rd place grid spot for the final race of the season. She announced in 2009 that she would contest the Indy Lights Series again, racing for Sam Schmidt Motorsports.

In 2010, Pippa proved her worth in a big way by being the first female to take pole position at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway. Then just over three months later, she took her first victory in Kentucky, leading the race from start to finish. This was her best season to date, making her hot property in the IndyCar scene, having gained three pole positions and four top five finishes. Pippa managed to finish 5th in the drivers' championship. A real sign that the young Brit was a star in the making, and arguably the most successful British female driver in history (Editors opinion).

Pippa then tested in the IZOD IndyCar Series and teamed up with Conquest Racing to become the first British female to contest the Indy 500.

Editor Phil Woods spent nearly two hours on the phone with Pippa, talking IndyCar, F1, her wedding and more. Finding her to be a pleasant person who is easy to talk with. To be able to interview the most successful British female driver in this special 'Pink' Edition of 'The Podium' has been a real treat. Here is that interview, obviously not in full or it would take up the entire magazine;

Phil Woods (PW) - Pippa Mann (PM)

PW – You started karting at 13, tell the readers about how that came about, I tried it but couldn't handle it as I found them very rigid and difficult to drive

PM – It was someone's birthday that first got me into a kart. My Dad and I had discovered they ran a kids club there, so we started going back... The guy running the kids club pulled my Dad to one side and asked why we didn't take me 'proper karting'. We had no idea that anything beyond the local indoor track, and maybe other indoor tracks existed at the time! Then they did their research over the next few months. The Kart was actually a birthday present, on my 13th birthday, there it was.

PW – You started competing in Formula Renault 2.0 in 2004 and moved to Formula Renault 3.5's in 2007.

PM – Yes, I got my chance to test the World Series cars and just loved the extra power and grip from the Formula 3.5 cars.

PW – In your first season you managed a pole I believe, a great achievement.

PM – The record books will show that I did and the PR people will always say I did, but it was a reverse grid and I achieved it due to finishing 10th in the previous race.

PW – It's still a pole Pippa.

PM – The record books show I sat on pole at Monza, but the fact that I scored a point in that race means more to me than the pole to be honest. I finished 10th and had to overtake a lot of people to get there.

PW – I was going to ask how you felt about the pole, but you've pretty much answered that. You say you had to make a lot of overtakes to get to 10th, am I to assume that you lost a lot of places at the beginning and had to fight your way back through the field?

PM – This was only my second race in a Formula Renault 3.5, and to put it into perspective, the 3.5 cars are about 14 seconds faster around Monza than the 2 litre cars. Unfortunately I was having to push hard but there were drivers with a heck of a lot more experience behind me, so I couldn't do much but watch them go past. It's feels a heck of a lot more fun going forward towards 10th place than going backwards to it. It's much more of an achievement when you get there from further back down the field.

PW – I don't know whether you follow Formula One but looking back at Jenson Button's race in Canada last season, he must have had so much fun regardless of the win.

PM – Oh my God, what a race. I'm sure he did when he was at the front but when he was at the back (twice) he probably wasn't having so much fun. I know most racing drivers are the same, there would have been a lot of frustration under the helmet at certain points in that race.

PW – Onto IndyCar, we do have a specialist writer and he did a comparison between the Formula One car and the IndyCar in the last issue. They don't look dissimilar but I know that they are technically different as they all use the same chassis in IndyCar.

PM – The IndyCars have to be bigger and bulkier than the F1 cars as there is much more chance of impact, and going at those speeds they have to be safer and heavier. If you make a mistake or someone else does then it just ends up becoming a huge mass of car parts.

PW – In Formula One, there seems to be too much safety with huge run off areas, something you don't have in IndyCar. What do you think of that? Do you think that takes away the fun of watching Formula One?

PM – For me personally, the cockpit area and the space where I sit in a car, can never be too safe. When I first arrived in America and saw the closeness of the barriers, it was quite a shock. Even in the street circuits the barriers are very close. In Formula One, they rarely even use gravel traps now. A driver can make a mistake and end up in an asphalt area and simply get back into the race. At the tracks I race at, if you make a mistake, that's usually it, your day is over. I actually love the race tracks I race on and the challenges they bring. Just going back to F1 tracks, I've tested at Paul Ricard and the run offs there are so vast that if you make a mistake, there is very little time lost. Now that must be frustrating for a driver to see someone consistently making mistakes and not paying the price for it. I personally love the tracks over here, you need to be on the limit, mentally and physically and if you make a mistake the guys are going to have to rebuild your car. Obviously, if you do make the mistake, it's not so great, but I have to admit I love the challenge of it.

PW – As I am a Formula One journalist, I have to ask whether you've had the chance to compare the two types of car yet?

PM – I haven't actually driven a Formula One car yet but I have done a simulator and I had to ask them to put the steering back to normal. I thought that as I was a woman they had put power steering on. I explained that I have done plenty of training and that I can cope without the power steering. They informed me that this is the way F1 cars are and that seems to be the main difference between the two. IndyCar's don't have power steering, they are standard steering columns. The steering in an F1 car is definitely lighter, however saying that, things happen so much faster in an F1 car compared to an IndyCar. You probably have to have a lot more strength to drive an IndyCar, some of the tracks are really gruelling. That being said your brain has to work a lot faster in an F1 car, similar to an IndyCar on an oval as things happen so much more quickly.

PW – I have driven simulation myself in Formula One and it seems so much easier than I thought, but I have no reference point like you have with the both.

PM – Having said that, I've seen Alonso drive his car this season and the amount of sideways action and effort he puts in is amazing, making it look very difficult indeed.

PW – He's something different, somebody very special who has driven a car beyond its limits in almost every race. He's a special driver.

PM – I completely agree with you on that 100%.

PW – I have to admit I was never a fan, but he did stop the Schumacher era. The season is almost over in Formula One, but in my opinion, I think the drivers' championship will go down to the last race and Alonso will have to finish 5 or 6 places ahead of Vettel to win the championship.

PM – Personal opinion is I'd like Alonso to win, but I think Vettel will end up winning.



PW – Back to your career, and your pole, how special did that feel?

PM – In IndyCar on an oval, you go out one at a time for qualifying, so I didn't know I had pole until the end of the session as there were more drivers to go out after me. I had to sit and wait to see whether someone would take the pole away. It's a little different to the F1 qualifying, more of a time trial. I wasn't sure I was fast enough. You also do two qualifying laps and it's the two added together that give you your time. So as every car that could beat me went out and didn't beat my time, I got a little bit more excited. Winning my first pole at Indy Lights was truly a special experience, especially at a track as major as Indianapolis. I may have been taken out by another driver making a bad decision in that race, and who knows what the result might have been. It could have been the same anyway, we'll just never know what might have been.

PW – Later that season you won a race at Kentucky. How did that feel to you?

PM – Immensely satisfying. I'd had a another opportunity the week before at Chicagoland Speedway and I was leading for about half the race. There was one guy (James Hinchcliffe), who is racing in IndyCar right now. He was the only car that had been faster than me all weekend long, and at the restart you can guess who was right behind me! He and I went at it hammer and tongs for the final five laps and I lost out by, I think, the 2nd smallest margin in Indy Lights history. In fact 1st, 2nd and 3rd were all in a photo finish across the line.

Then the week after at Kentucky, my car felt good in qualifying and during the race I could see my main rival (James again!) in the mirror. I managed to stay far enough ahead that so he never got in my tow. He never got a close enough, I was actually able to open up a pretty large gap. So what turned out a week before as the closest finish in history turned into one of the biggest margins of victory just one week later.

PW – I'm proud of you as a fellow Brit for what you've achieved and I hope that our fellow readers are also proud after reading this article. Especially when they hear that a lot of the above answers regarding the extra special results in Indy Lights came in a season where you didn't take part in a race due to a broken hand. You were telling me that you could have got points for just starting the race but decided against it. Very sensible considering how much worse you could have made things, given the knowledge we now have of the steering in an IndyCar.

PM – Back to your question about the Indy 500, it would have been very difficult to raise enough sponsorship to race full time in the IndyCar Series, so my only chance really was to get a test and go for the Indy 500. Following the test at the oval in Texas, Eric Bachelart of Conquest Racing was persuaded to enter a car for me in the Indy 500. In 2011 we had 42 cars going for 33 grid slots. In the Indy 500 qualifying you have to do 4 laps, which is 10 miles. All your laps are then added together (*Editor - to give one overall time*). The big thing people in Europe don't get about qualifying in IndyCar is that they often say "why can't you just go out and have another go to try and get the a faster time. If you do that in IndyCar then your last lap time, (even if it's good enough to qualify you in 31st out of 33 cars, is scrapped and if your time isn't good enough the next time round, you won't qualify and the car that's 34th gets bumped up to 33rd and then you're out. So unless you're 100% sure you can better your time, it is not worth the risk. I was the only British one-off rookie, attempting their first Indy 500 to qualify that year, something else I am proud of.

PW – So it's the complete opposite to Formula One, where you can keep going on low fuel runs until your time runs out?

PM – Yes, and in 2011, I think it was four full-time drivers didn't make the Indy 500. Even my team mate who was full time didn't make the race that year. There is always a queue of cars waiting to go out on track to as, its one at a time rather than the way it is in F1.

PW - A great job then.

PM – I can't get across how it feels to qualify for the Indy 500, it's a great feeling. Even one of the biggest teams in the paddock didn't make it.

PW – A lot of people in Britain, when you mention IndyCar, they immediately mention the Indy 500. It really is the big one over there and internationally isn't it?

PM – Yes it is. In fact I am more proud of qualifying for the Indy 500 than getting the pole in the Indy Lights.

PW – So 2013 is fast approaching. What is in store for you? Or what do you hope to achieve in racing next year?

PM – Well, I know that there will be a stage where we will be back to 37 or so cars fighting for qualifying in IndyCar, and I am doing everything in my power to be one of those cars. It would just mean so much to me to achieve that.

PW – In 2012 you raced in the Auto GP series?

PM – Just one race, I spent most of 2012 trying to get into the Indy 500 but because of the new engine package etc by the time I had raised the sponsorship it was too late. So I spent most of 2012 trying to help other young women trying to get into racing. The Auto GP deal was a bit of a surprise and was a pretty steep learning curve because the cars are easily the fastest thing I've driven in a straight line and there is virtually no aero grip, so it was a lot of sideways driving. I didn't do too badly though considering that I had only two test sessions and then had to race. It was fun though and definitely something I'd consider doing again if the opportunity arose.

PW – So ideally it seems that IndyCar is what you want to do, am I correct in my assumptions?

PM – Absolutely, I've been doing radio broadcasts and articles etc to keep getting my face seen around the tracks, whilst working hard behind the scenes to get the sponsorship to get back into a car as soon as possible. I've already said that I intend to be one of the cars in the Indy 500, but I hope to be doing a heck of a lot more than that though.

PW – I hope so, you deserve the chance. It's unfortunate that so many talented drivers don't get the chance to race purely down to finances, and that goes for every discipline.

PM – You know, it is, but it's the way of the world and I've been incredibly lucky, as last year was the first year I've had to sit out of racing. However I understand that going to meetings with important people in racing and that is as much a part of my job as sitting behind a wheel of a racing car. Everyone has a sob story, but I am going to continue to work hard to make mine a happy story. You have to look at the positives and I could be sitting here moaning about 2012, but I'm getting on with it and trying to make something happen for 2013. Rather than sitting at home moaning, I grab myself by the scruff of the neck and tell myself to get on with it and make things happen.

PW – (waffles on about mopping around and getting nowhere, we talk briefly about personal things then Pippa makes me aware of something special)

PM – I don't know whether you are aware of Glass Hammer Racing in the states but they are an organisation that help young female drivers get their start in the grass roots levels of racing over here in the USA, they also help young girls get in go-karts for the first time much the same way I did at a local indoor kart track. Glass Hammer have recently started doing winter classes for local outdoor female kart racers too, to try and keep them busy over the winter, and help improve their skill sets for next winter. As this is the pink issue I think it's a good opportunity to make people aware of that and one that I am involved in. It's a great organisation.

PW – I've read about Glass Hammer Racing (since my conversation with Pippa) and it's a great story, take a look at www.beatbyagirl.org

www.beatbyagirl.org

PM – It would have been great to be on track this season, but being a mentor for Glass Hammer Racing's girls, and actually having the time to be there for them this year, and really make a difference has been an amazing experience. When I was a young driver growing up, I would have loved to have had someone else there, whom I could have reached out to, and I am trying to be that person for both the girls whom are just getting started in the professional ranks, and our young karters. Although I am planning on being a lot busier, and hopefully on track a lot more in 2013, being involved with Glass Hammer Racing has been an incredibly rewarding experience, and something I intend to continue dedicating as much time to as I have!

PW – I'm running a major feature on women in racing this month as you know. There just isn't enough in a male dominated sport.

PM – Yes, I believe you're going to speak with Alice Powell too. Thanks for that, I am a fan of her and she is working very hard. She's doing really well and it's such a tough task in Europe to get up the ladder.

PW – It's such a male dominated sport but 50% of the drivers on the road are women so why not on the race track?

PM – It is very difficult and demanding, you have to put your body through so much. It's annoying and sometimes funny when you have men that think that you shouldn't be sharing the same track as them and should move over. But having said that there are more men who want to race than there are women. The thing that frustrates me is when people think it's easier when you're a woman.

PW – Easier?

PM – Only because of the opportunities of raising money. In Europe it is very hard but in America it is easier for both men and women to raise the money, but by no means easy. I just think there is more opportunity here in the USA than the UK and that is why I have never contemplated coming home once I got here.

PW – If I was the owner of a Formula One team and asked you to drive for me next season, regardless of the money, what would your answer to that be?

PM – It's a tough question to answer that one, but if I still had the chance to race in the Indy 500 the answer would be no. Another reason is if you were racing for a small team in F1, the chances of success are very slim, whereas in IndyCar, if you are driving for a small team then the chances of success are much higher.

PW – Well, it's been an absolute pleasure speaking to you. All the best for your efforts in 2013. Keep up the hard work, we are proud of you.

PM – Thank you.



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Eric Hall's IndyCar 2012 Review

Marking the fifth season of a unified series, the 2012 edition of IndyCar racing was touted as a new beginning for the beleaguered top level of American open-wheel racing. After the 2011 season ending events of Las Vegas, everyone invested in the series was ready to kick the 2012 campaign off safely and successfully. A reimagined race control, a reworked rule book, new chassis, new engines and the most competitive field seen in 20 years were all set to make their competitive debut in 2012 and anticipation had not been as high as it was in as many years.

Teams unloaded at Sebring International Raceway for preseason testing with the first freshly designed chassis since the 2003 season. The Dallara Automobili designed DW12, named for the late two-time Indy 500 champion, 2005 series champion and Dallara chassis development driver Dan Wheldon, started its life as something less than spectacular. Through tireless chassis work by Wheldon, test team Bryan Herta Autosport, and the commitment of Dallara to correct deficiencies in the chassis, the new package was transformed into one of the most competitive the series had ever seen.

Birthing the new 2.2 litre, direct injected, turbocharged engine formula was decidedly less difficult. Honda was the first manufacturer to fire their engine up with Chevrolet not too far behind. Lotus, on the other hand, had a difficult time getting funding and the program was plagued by missed deadlines and broken promises. Lotus missed all pre-season testing programs and was reported to be *at least* 50 horsepower short on power at all times throughout the season, but usually much farther behind.

By the time the green flag fell for the season opening round at the St. Petersburg Florida street circuit, the new chassis and engine package had proved itself a formidable competitor on the streets. The action was heavy and the competition heated throughout the grid with the mid-field showing particularly equal parity. St. Pete would finally bring to light how woefully underpowered the Lotus running teams were compared to the Honda and Chevy contingent; at least 7 miles per hour slower down the straights. After a winless 2011, Helio Castroneves took home the checkers and recorded the first win of the 2012 campaign. On his cool down lap, he stopped at the newly renamed "Dan Wheldon Way" and gave Indycar fans an image for the ages. With the finish of the race, it felt as if the paddock was finally finding some normalcy after an emotional offseason.

Barber Motorsports Park in Birmingham, Alabama played host to round two and would redefine the way non-oval racing in the IndyCar Series would be viewed. The action outside of the top five was non-stop, and on a purpose built motorcycle club track that has consistently had less than stellar action in years past. Throughout the afternoon, it became clear that St. Pete was just the dress rehearsal for the new face of road racing in the IndyCar Series. Not only did the new equipment package allow for a fair amount of incidental contact not seen in the series, the new compound tires that Firestone brought with them degraded much faster than in years past, allowing for even more passing and strategy play from the pits. Will Power, the man tipped in March to clinch the eventual series championship, recorded his first win of the season en route to his hopeful maiden championship.

The good will and cheer experienced in the first two rounds of the season quickly wore off as the paddock experience its first big controversy of the year. Honda was granted a larger sized turbocharger cover to offset the perceived deficiencies of the single turbo setup in comparison to the twin setup of Chevy. This was seen as insult to injury as the entirety of Team Chevy had to make an engine change, thus every Chevy powered entry incurred a ten position grid penalty. The DW12 also passed its first big crash test when Marco Andretti took a wild ride over the back tires of Graham Rahal's swerving chassis, after which both found their way into the tire barriers. Once the dust settled, a heated battle between Simon Pagenaud and Will Power punctuated the yellow filled event with Power claiming the top step of the podium for the second race weekend in a row, and possibly putting in the drive of his life by doing it from a P12 starting position.

Round four saw IndyCar embark on its first of three international rounds for the 2012 season. The destination was the Streets of Sao Paulo Brazil, an annual fan favorite and one of the few temporary street circuits that consistently produces exciting races. The series was down one entry this week as BHA and Alex Tagliani stayed home to prepare for the Indy 500 after jettisoning their Lotus engine in exchange for a Honda lump. Another weekend in Brazil meant another weekend of turn one calamity that the street circuit is known for; no less than half the field was involved in contact of one form or another in the turn 1/2 complex. And for the third round in a row, Will Power treated us to yet another road racing clinic with his third win of the season. The preseason predictions of a Power runaway were starting to look more and more accurate.

Powers confidence should have been riding high at this point in the season, but he still had to get through the oval portion of the schedule. The ovals had sealed his fate the past two years as he was relegated to second in very close championship battles. Although the ovals only account for a third of the schedule, Powers previous performances on them had been poor enough that there should have been major doubt in his mind before embarking on round five in Indianapolis.

Entering the “month of May”, two more teams were able to free themselves from the clutches of Lotus who had become the laughing stock of the season. Oriol Servia and Dreyer & Reinbold racing secured a Chevy engine lease and inked a technical partnership with Panther Racing. Sebastian Bourdais and Katherine Legge's Dragon Racing were also able to make the switch to Chevy power for the Indy 500 but with Bourdais taking road course responsibilities and Legge driving the ovals in a split schedule for the remainder of the season as only one engine would be available to the team after Indianapolis. For better or worse, the Indianapolis 500 would mark the competition debut of the new equipment package on an oval track. The speeds were down for the month as the new engines produced about 100 less horsepower in oval configuration than the 2011 engine package, but the chassis looked to be made specifically to scream down the 5/8 mile straights and whip through the four turns of the historic Brickyard. The crown jewel of the IndyCar Series did not disappoint as even in practice drivers were looking extremely racey and very equally matched. During qualifying, the Chevy contingent had a noticeable power advantage taking nine of the top ten positions with Ryan Briscoe stealing the pole by three one thousandths of a second.

The race itself was one for the ages with a record setting 34 lead changes, a highly competitive lead pack that saw fan favorites Tony Kanaan and Ed Carpenter in positions to win late in the race, an early crash by points leader Will Power who had won three of the first four races and a last lap dive bomb pass for the lead by Takuma Sato that ended in the wall for the quick but star crossed driver. Eventual winner and now three time race champion Dario Franchitti made use of the new found Honda power on a day that seemed to be dominated by the Japanese manufacturer by coming from the tail of the lead lap to the front *twice* on his way to victory.

Off-track, paddock unrest was starting to permeate into the media and for the first time, fans caught wind of the witch hunt against IndyCar boss Randy Bernard. The Honda turbocharger cover decision and the perceived price gouging by Dallara on replacement parts seemed to be the fuel for the fire. But all seemed mostly well in the IndyCar world as the paddock basked in the post Indy 500 glow that fuels the series for a month or two after the Memorial Day Classic.





The Indy 500 was the start of a five week back to back stretch of races with the next stop being the street circuit on Belle Isle in Detroit Michigan. The circuit has been on and off the calendar since the early ninety's and is not one of the more loved street circuits on the schedule, but the spending power of Chevrolet and Roger Penske brought the series back. The race started as a normal event but morphed into a wholly different animal on lap 40 when patches that were used to repair the city streets started to be ripped from the ground by the high downforce race machines. A red flag and a Band-Aid fix was attempted and the race was restarted on lap 47 and finally called on lap 60 with Scott Dixon leading every lap on his way to victory.

Dallara, Honda and Chevy all performed extremely well during their maiden oval outing two weeks prior in Indianapolis, but the high banks at Texas Motor Speedway would be the true litmus test regarding the side by side raceability of the new package. Fears were high entering the weekend as TMS is very similar to Las Vegas Motor Speedway where Dan Wheldon was tragically killed in 2011 as a result of "pack racing". The series decreased the amount of downforce available and by doing so, stopped the follow the white line full throttle racing that been the cornerstone of racing at TMS in years past. Early domination from Scott Dixon was undone by a late race battle between Graham Rahal on **tyres** that were many laps older than charging Justin Wilson. Rahal couldn't quite hold on and brushed the wall with three laps to go, allowing Wilson to take the win and giving Dale Coyne Racing its second victory in 28 years of existence; both courtesy of the British pilot.

The oldest continually operated race course in the world would play host to round eight of the championship. The Milwaukee Mile was opened in 1903 and has been intertwined in with open-wheel racing since its creation. History aside, the 2012 edition of the historic race would prove to be the turning point in what had been a one-sided championship battle. The one mile oval proved challenging and the damp afternoon did not help the situation one bit as there was actually a late race yellow for moisture on the track. With the exception of the pit stop rotations, eventual winner Ryan Hunter-Reay never ran lower than the top three while championship leader Will Power ran as high as P8 but came home P10 unable to make any kind of progress through the top ten.

Continuing the series' attempt at drawing more fans to the race track and more eyes to the TV broadcast, qualifying at Iowa Speedway in Newton Iowa would take on a different look. Three heat races were used to determine starting position, however there were no transfer positions to be had so teams and drivers did not take them totally seriously knowing the risk far outweighed the reward in this situation. Dario Franchitti grabbed the first starting position but was unable to parlay that into a strong finishing position. Continuing the three time champion's 2012 woes, his engine expired on the pace laps and Franchitti was never able to take the green. Iowa produces some of the best racing year in and out, and with the new equipment package fans were not disappointed. For the second week in a row, Ryan Hunter-Reay took the checkers. The end of the oval stretch was in sight with four of five completed and Will Power still holding onto his championship lead by a mere three points after dominating the start of the season and crashing out early at Iowa.

Canada would play host to the next two rounds of the season with the street circuit in Toronto, Canada taking the honors first. Toronto has always been a tough track to navigate and in recent history has been one of the more crash filled events on the schedule. Like so many other weekends this year, hopes were high that the new equipment package would alleviate some of the overly optimistic moves seen in the past. The race ran surprisingly clean with only two single car incidents until lap 83 when six cars got into each other and nearly blocked the track. Once again, Ryan Hunter-Reay took control of the race about halfway in and never looked back. He racked up his third consecutive win and took the first decisive lead in the championship since the early season domination by Will Power.



Edmonton Canada Never Again as IndyCar Bids a Final Farewell

Little did fans and teams realize, but the 2012 edition of the Edmonton Indy would be the final race contested at the City Centre Airport in Edmonton Canada. Financial woes and a perceived lack of local support from the community forced organizers to shutter the race, but that didn't stop the drivers of IndyCar from putting on a road racing clinic during their final trip to Edmonton. Alex Tagliani easily controlled the first third of the rare caution free event, but couldn't keep up with changing track conditions and faded from the lead after the final round of pit stops. Helio Castroneves survived a spirited battle with Takuma Sato, who to his credit race Castroneves clean and never put a wheel wrong, to clinch his second win of the season and placing himself squarely between P1 Ryan Hunter-Reay and P3 Will Power in the championship standings.

Two short weeks later and the paddock were back in the US to make the final push to the championship. Mid-Ohio Sports Car Course in Lexington, Ohio played host to round 12 and would mark the second race in a row that an event was completed caution free. The gravity of this accomplishment is often under-appreciated abroad. IndyCar racing is a bit more physical than European single seater racing and full course cautions are the norm instead of the exception. Ryan Hunter-Reay's championship dream took a severe hit when his engine expired before the checkers fell while Will Power put in a strong performance and took the second step of the podium. Scott Dixon jumped Power during the final pit stop rotation to take the lead and win. Dixon's second win of the season transformed what had looked like a Will Power runaway just two months prior into a four horse race to take home the championship hardware.

California wine country would welcome the paddock back to the west coast and Sonoma Raceway. Round 13 would also be the third of three natural terrain road courses to appear on the schedule. Contact and the inescapable crashes finally made a return to the series when Sebastian Bourdais took a wild ride into the tire wall and concrete barriers in the fastest section of the track cracking his Dallara tub and wiping out rookie driver Josef Newgarden in the process. During the resulting yellow, and for the second event in a row, Will Power was snookered out of the lead during the pit stop rotation; this time losing out to teammate and eventual race winner Ryan Briscoe. After being tapped from behind into a spin, championship contender Ryan Hunter-Reay made his bad luck even worse by tapping EJ Viso into a spin and incurring his own drive through penalty. Dixon and Castroneves were hanging onto the championship by a hair and needed stellar showing in the final two races to be a threat.

IndyCar made its way to the streets of Baltimore, Maryland for the penultimate round of the 2012 campaign. Andretti Sports Marketing, the promotional arm of Andretti Autosport and the group that had saved the Milwaukee event a few weeks ago, stepped up to take the promotional risk and save the Baltimore race. Unfortunately, after a year of very clean driving, the race saw more than its fair share of wrecked race machines and 24 of the 75 laps were contested behind the pace car. But that wasn't the only quark to the event. A set of light rails runs right through the start/finish straight necessitating the construction of a chicane to slow the speeds and prevent the cars from launching all four wheels into the air. Even with those negatives, Baltimore saw the move of the year as Simon Pagenaud took advantage of the lap 36 restart and moved from P4 to P1 into turn one. It would be Ryan Hunter-Reay taking the checkers, his fourth time this year, and putting a massive dent in Will Power's championship lead heading into the final round.

It would all come down to the final 250 laps around the relatively flat two mile oval of Auto Club Speedway in Fontana California. Scott Dixon and Helio Castroneves had been eliminated from championship contention and Will Power led Ryan Hunter-Reay by 17 points. Tension was high once again as the paddock embarked on yet another scary fast oval; so out of the realm of sanity in fact that Mike Conway stepped out of the car citing his shaken comfort level on the ovals. EJ Viso even stated he would not race unless more downforce was fitted to the chassis. Had the series gone too far in removing downforce? The consensus in the paddock was “no” and the race went on as planned.

With the point's lead Power had in hand, he did not have to go out and try to win the race. His mission objective was to shadow Hunter-Reay and make sure he doesn't get too far ahead. All was going well and it looked like Power had an easy drive to the championship ahead of him. In a heartbreaking twist, while preparing for his second pit stop during an attempted pass on RHR, Power lost control and spun the wall and nearly collected Hunter-Reay on his way. The Team Penske crew fixed his car and returned Power to the track to click off a few extra laps and gain precious championship points. The pressure was on Hunter-Reay to finish in the top five with a car that was more pig than race machine to clinch the championship. On the final lap, none other than Takuma Sato was racing Hunter-Reay and lost control only to find the wall. Hunter-Reay came home P4; more than enough to clinch the championship and deny Penske and Power the honors for another year. Ed Carpenter repeated his performance from 2011 and won the season ending race for a small team, this time as an owner driver.

As quickly as it had started, the 2012 edition of IndyCar was over and an American was crowned champion for the first time since 2006. Reports from media the world over heralded this season as one of the most competitive ever seen and home of some of the best on track action anywhere in the 2012 motorsports world. The Indy 500 was one for the ages and fans were treated to a now IndyCar patented tight championship battle that came down to the final race of the season. The DW12 performed flawlessly by treating fans to the best racing the series had seen in years. Although engine attrition was slightly higher than expected, the newborn engine formula at least hit expectations save for the embarrassment that was the Lotus engine program. HVM Racing and Simona de Silvestro could not extract themselves from the Lotus contract during the season and had one of the toughest years in motor racing anywhere to be seen. SdS has since moved teams, but HVM is still contracted with Lotus for 2013; no indication they will be able to show up on the grid or what larger implications for the series this may hold.

After the buzz from an amazing season finale and heated championship battle wore off, the politics of IndyCar took front seat again. The politicking reached a head in October when IndyCar boss Randy Bernard finally could not hold back the dam of negativity and was unceremoniously dismissed from his position. Turbocharger covers, repair part prices, Lotus, the cancellation of the China round, financial woes and lost corporate confidence in the fan friendly CEO were attributed to his axing, but the series is still looking ahead to 2013. Muddy political waters are nothing new in open-wheel racing and even expected in IndyCar racing.

Regardless of the behind the scenes drama engulfing the paddock over the offseason, nothing can take away from the amazing season of racing we were witness to. The faces of both oval and road racing in the series changed drastically with the introduction of the new equipment package. The racing at most facilities was different, but in a good way. Drivers had more control over their fate on the ovals and they could actually complete a few clean passes on the road and street courses courtesy of a properly designed road racing chassis. The competition felt much more natural on the ovals, with a noticeable ebb and flow in handling and speed that had been lost in the high downforce days.

The technical regulations remain largely unchanged for the 2013 season so fans all over the world can expect more of the same incendiary action that punctuated the 2012 season. The schedule looks to be expanded for 2013 with the addition of Pocono Raceway, a historic track looking to host its first open wheel race in over 20 years, and the streets of Huston, yet another street race revival. IndyCar is North America's, and possibly the World's, best kept secret in motorsports; if you missed them this year, don't make the same mistake in 2013.

By Eric Hall - Our New USA Editor In Chief

WE BELIEVE IN GIVING OUR BEST. ALWAYS.
THAT'S WHY WE INVEST THE SAME KNOW-HOW AND
THE SAME SPIRIT OF INNOVATION IN EVERY CHALLENGE,
WHETHER IN FORMULA 1™ OR ON THE ROAD.
A SHINING EXAMPLE IS PIRELLI ZERO™, THE TYRE THAT
EPITOMISES CUTTING-EDGE TECHNOLOGY AND
THE PIRELLI EXPERIENCE, GIVING YOU OUTSTANDING GRIP
AT EVERY TURN AND IN ADVERSE ROAD CONDITIONS.
BECAUSE DRIVERS DESERVE TO BE IN CONTROL. ALWAYS.
ON AND OFF THE RACETRACK.

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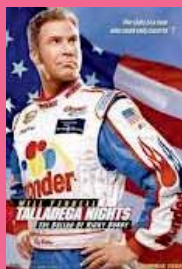
POWER IS NOTHING WITHOUT CONTROL



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Motor Sport at the Movies

by Phil Woods



Over the years there have been many movies about motor sport at the box office, in this issue we look at a handful of the most popular as part one of our feature including a look at a movie due in the very near future.

You will also find as a special treat a two page feature on a new movie that is in pre-production, a movie mixing the super hero genre with motor sport. I personally am excited about this one as it has the potential to be huge but most of all, every racing driver is a hero to me anyway.

First of all we will look at the most recent;

Senna – (2010)

This film take the form of a documentary following the tragic story of a Formula One Icon, that of legendary Brazilian Champion, Ayrton Senna. It starts off following his career during his arrival into Formula One during the 1980's. The film follows Senna's struggles both on and off track. On it against his big rival the French World Champion Alain Prost, but also follows his struggles against the politics that surrounded the sport during that time.

Senna was an inspiration to many, yet at times the film shows his ruthless side. The film shows how Senna conquers Formula One to become a global superstar. It showed how he was deeply patriotic and had plans beyond motor sport, including the money donated to charities in his native country. He was then struck down in his prime during the blackest weekend in the history of the sport. A weekend watched live worldwide on television by 300 million people. Still now, years on, he is revered in motor sport and seen by many drivers as a hero, yet in Brazil he is seen, then and now as a demi-God. A brilliant documentary, well made and a must for every Formula One fan or indeed motor racing fan.

Days of Thunder – (1990)

Following on from the mega successful film Top Gun, the team of producers Dons Simpson and Jerry Bruckheimer, the director Tony Scott and the 1980's/90's hottest movie star Tom Cruise reunited to make 'Days of Thunder'. This film is still rated as on of the all time greats when people talk about motor sport movies. This time the motor sport in question on this occasion was stock-car racing, probably more akin to NASCAR than any other major motor sport.

Tom Cruise plays a fictional racing driver, Cole Trickle, he seemingly has talent but has no real way of channelling that success into a career that would give him the success that the talent deserves. The movie looks at how a racing driver makes a success from what is essentially a raw talent and turning it into race winning material. He is given the chance to drive for a new team based around the training of fictional veteran stock car racer Harry Hogge and the man who makes it happen Tim Daland (played by Randy Quaid). Cole immediately comes into conflict with the star driver in the racing series, Rowdy Burns. I'll give this film credit where it is due, they really did get to grips with the names of southern US people! Because of their on track rivalry it wasn't long before a big crash lands them both in hospital. With both out of the racing game they become friends and Burns supports Cole as he starts to go racing again. There is all the action of an off track romance, but that is boring when it comes to seeing the cars on track (*editors opinion*). The film ends with a grand finale in which Cole must compete with Russ Wheeler, a driver who not only wants to see Cole beaten on track but wants to permanently out of racing for good. I won't spoil the films ending. But I'll end my comments by saying it certainly gives a great feel of the NASCAR /Southern racing scene, that being said, it's classed in the movie as stock cars

Tallegeda Nights – The Ballad of Ricky Bobby – (2006)

We now turn to comedy, starring Will Ferrell. This we can say is based on NASCAR and was promoted in this way. It's an odd one for me to report on really as people seem to love this movie, but as am the one doing the reporting I will say that I believe it to be one of the more....how can I be polite? Lacklustre of the movies I am looking at today. Sure enough we get to see the tin tops of NASCAR, but the film tended to be very slapstick, nothing against that at all but there was far too much in the way of parody and toilet humour for my liking. However it is loved by many people and is a favourite so I watched this one twice to see if I was missing something.

The film revolves around a fictional racing driver called Ricky Bobby (as the title of the movie gives away). But Ricky Bobby is no ordinary driver, he's like a loose cannon, you never know what he will do next. To quote the film, "If you're not number one, you're last", well Ricky Bobby certainly lives up to that, his on ideology means that even his best friend has to stay behind him on the race track in order to keep their friendship alive. Eventually, circumstances bring a very stereotypical gay French (apparent Formula One) driver, played brilliantly by Sacha Baren Cohen one of the movies real plus points. Ricky's pride and competitive spirit leads to tussle between the two drivers both on and off the track. There are funny moments in the movie, and they get some of the essence of NASCAR just right, but for me it was a let-down. Unfortunately the second watching of the movie did little to make me like it any better. But who am I to tell you that it's not all that great. Like I said earlier, people do love it so, there has to be something in it. To finish on a positive note, NASCAR fans should just watch it for the sporting aspect, I'm sure you'll appreciate that, and you may end up being one of the majority rather than be like me a minority.

Rush – (2013 - Yet to be released)

This is a very difficult job right now as all I can tell you about the film and what it is said to portray. Having to write this report, or preview I suppose from quotes by the director, Ron Howard, plus other people involved, makes it a tough job but I'll give it a go. It does have a writer, although it really didn't need that much writing (not taking anything away from Peter Morgan of course, as to get the accuracy may well have been more difficult than writing a new fiction) as this film is based on a true story. It is based on the rivalry between two Formula One legends, Niki Lauda and James Hunt. It looks at their 1976 battle for the title following the crash that almost claimed Niki Lauda's life.

Formula One fans already know the story of this epic battle, but if Ron Howard has managed to get a real feel for this then every Formula One fan worldwide is in for a treat. From what I hear, coming from people inside F1, Ron has really caught the essence of the season and the rivalry. I am confident we won't be disappointed. For those who perhaps don't have any knowledge of this epic season, I'll give you a brief background. At the Nurburgring in 1976, Niki Lauda had a crash that he was lucky to survive, and having had the pleasure of meeting and speaking to him at Silverstone this season, it would have been a sad waste as he is a pleasant man, someone anyone would like to get to know. James Hunt, had a very different aspect to racing, especially comparing him to today's drivers, he was the typical ladies' man, a fag in one hand and a trophy in the other and surrounded by women (naturally, being the handsome driver of his day, so the ladies say).

I think, given the circumstances the best bet is to give you the official synopsis at this point. But if they've captured the magic of the true battle then they are on to a winner with this film. Here is the official synopsis (in Blue Italics) for the forthcoming movie;

"The epic action-drama stars Chris Hemsworth (The Avengers) as the charismatic Englishman James Hunt and Daniel Brühl (Inglourious Basterds) as the disciplined Austrian perfectionist Niki Lauda, whose clashes on the Grand Prix racetrack epitomized the contrast between these two extraordinary characters, a distinction reflected in their private lives. Set against the sexy and glamorous golden age of Formula 1 racing, Rush portrays the exhilarating true story of two of the greatest rivals the world has ever witnessed—handsome English playboy Hunt and his methodical, brilliant opponent, Lauda. Taking us into their personal lives on and off the track, Rush follows the two drivers as they push themselves to the breaking point of physical and psychological endurance, where there is no shortcut to victory and no margin for error. If you make one mistake, you die."



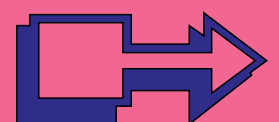
Cars 1 (2006) & 2 (2011)

Cars 1 and 2 are animated movies based around a tin top racer namely Lightning McQueen and his friends and foes. The films both made by Disney/Pixar have become so popular among children and adults alike. They are a treat to watch and if you love motor sport, you'll find these films both funny and entertaining.

The first film is based around oval track racing, akin to that of some NASCAR and IndyCar, but given that they are tin tops, it closely matches NASCAR. Lightning McQueen is a rookie car racing for the 'Piston Cup', however the season climaxes with a photo finish race as the top three cars finish equal 1st. This leads to a showdown race to be held in California, with the ultimate prize of a drive for 'Dinnaco' following the superstar 'The Kings' retirement. His other rival, Chick Hicks is determined to win at all costs and the race begins. Not only are they racing in California, they are racing to California. However, on the journey, in the back of his truck, Lightning McQueen orders to continue to drive despite the tiredness of his transport, this plan backfires as the truck falls to sleep and the back doors open allowing Lightning McQueen to fall out onto the highway. The big problem occurs when he (as a race car that only races in daylight) has no lights and chases the wrong truck. He eventually finds himself in a little village called Radiator Springs and after getting trapped in wiring ends up destroying the main road after attaching himself to and then dragging the town mascot down the centre of the road. In court the following day he is told that he cannot leave town until he has fixed the road. This leads to a massive man(car)hunt, when he doesn't arrive in California. Radiator Springs is a village on the old route 66, before the highway was built, there was little time to fix the road and get away. He did try to escape but was being watched by the town police car and Mater (the funniest tow truck in history). He makes friends with the other cars in Radiator Springs and best friends with Mater. One morning, the town folk wake up to find the road finished and Lightning McQueen gone. That's all I am going to tell you about the first film, because it's one to watch, oh, I will say there is more racing than that at the beginning for racing fans. If you haven't seen this film then download/rent it and enjoy, you will not be disappointed, both adults and children. Beware though adults, there is an amazing amount of merchandise and it could cost you a fair amount of money in the end.

The second film is more of a crime figure and features 'The World Grand Prix' as cars from so many different formats battle in different locations around the world, including Italy, London and Paris for the title of fastest car. The circuits take in a bit of Formula One with an Italian open top racer, endurance cars and tin tops to name but a few. In this film Mater gets mistaken for a spy whilst falling out with his new best friend from the first film, Lightning McQueen. I won't go into great detail about this film, only to say that there is no let-up in the humour and that there is perhaps a bit more racing. Not only that, Mater is as funny as ever and the film is just as good as the first. Expect a third instalment as there is no way Disney/Pixar could stop this franchise. They even have a collection of TV romps specifically around the tall tales of Mater, called 'Carstoon' look out for it. I promise you, you'll not be disappointed.

Next we move to the future





'1' The Past brought back to life

1 – Unmade Film (Expected in 2013 or 2014)

Yet again we come to a film yet to be made. In Austin, Texas just a few days ago, I first heard about this new film documentary simply named '1'. It was talked about during the inaugural USA grand prix in Texas last weekend. It sounds like it's following on from the enormous success of Senna.

The film seems to more about safety in Formula One and how that has changed over the years. What was once a sport where as a driver you left home knowing there was a good chance you may never return, to a sport where you can have accidents akin to the Alonso accident this season and the Famous Webber flip upside down in Valencia a couple of years ago and drivers are lucky enough to walk away.

The film will be made in a documentary style with original footage and interviews with the biggest names the sport has ever seen, such as Bernie Ecclestone, Max Mosley, Sid Watkins (the man who saved so many lives with his innovations and ideas, I am sure that this will be a big part of the film although that hasn't been confirmed), Jackie Stewart, John Surtees, Niki Lauda, Emerson Fittipaldi, Mario Andretti, Nigel Mansell, Jody Scheckter, Damon Hill, Michael Schumacher, Sebastian Vettel, Lewis Hamilton, Jenson Button, Jacky Ickx and Martin Brundle. We are talking a list of household names current, recent and in the past here. There will be contributions from no less than 12 world champions. The films co-producer had this to say about the film "We set out to truly capture the spirit and soul of Formula One, the smell and the sounds, the charisma of the drivers and the pioneering spirit of a different generation," Shevloff added. "It was such a distinct period, so raw and real."

Yet again this looks like an interesting prospect for any fan of Formula One, and I for one am looking forward to its release.

Stormgirl – (Pre-Production/Looking for Investment)

Now for something completely different. We've looked at movies either in the public domain that you may or may not have seen, but this time we look at something that is in pre-production, a project if you like.

This will be a super hero movie involving motor sports, something that even you reading this could become involved in. It's fitting that this edition is the pink edition, because how do you guys fancy watching a beautiful female racing driver and fast car enthusiast by day turn into a super hero at night.

Stormgirl came to my attention recently and it looks like a great idea for a movie, I'm not going to give a lot away because over the next couple of pages you'll be able to read a special feature on this potential movie and make up your own minds.

It is an idea based on a comic strip and a real person. Fior Avona aka Stormgirl can be seen at most motor sporting events in person with her super-powered Nissan V6, 3.7ltr, 370z.

Stormgirl is a superhero who by night fights crime on the streets of London, transforming as soon as she steps into her car. She possesses eyes of infinity and can see crime and injustice before they happen, meaning she can stop crime before it happens. Already in comic book form, just visit www.stormgirl.co.uk to view the comic and read all the latest news. If you've ever wanted to be involved in making a movie, then contact Fior via the website and you just never know, you could be part of making the next big thing.



STORMGIRL®

LIVE LIFE IN THE FAST LANE



Her theme music is the throaty roar of a V6 engine, her curvaceous, leather-wrapped figure is only matched by that of her humble steed, a Storm White Nissan 370Z and according to Joel Newman, the world is about to change and Stormgirl is making the change.

"When you've lost everything, there's nothing left to lose" - Stormgirl

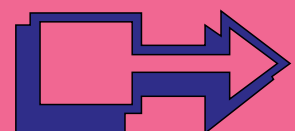
The STORMGIRL® character and Brand name was created in 2009 by Fior Avona aka 'Stormgirl' and inspired by her passion for fast cars and the world of superheroes. The Stormgirl character is a superheroine girlracer and the story behind the Stormgirl comic book and film are based upon real life experience as well as the fun fictional world of superheroes. Fior can be seen dressed in full Stormgirl costume at most sporting events, including Silverstone and London's Earls Court.

In October 2009, Fior took to the tarmac at Silverstone as part of the Nissan Race Academy, where she was the only female amongst 80 male contestants and drove in both the Nissan 370z and it's big brother the GT-R. Whilst keenly and patiently awaiting the delivery of her brand new 'storm white' 370z, she created the Stormgirl character and brand name. Fior had test driven many fast cars including the R8, Camaro, Mustang, M3 and Aston, but no other car made her feel quite like the 370z did - with keyless entry and ignition, it was like a true super hero car! Given a taste for the fast track, she discovered a passion for racing and in the process she developed her idea further by creating Stormgirl. The Stormgirl character also offers brand licensing opportunities. Offering a fresh new and exciting concept, Stormgirl is set to take the world by storm.

Together with the Stormgirl comic book character Artist Keiron Ward, Fior and Keiron have created the Stormgirl character visuals which are in preparation of the forthcoming Stormgirl 'origins' graphic novel.

In early 2010, Fior met Executive Producer Beau Rogers (Imdb) at the Raindance 'Live Ammunition' night, and was introduced to Scriptwriter Richard Perry (Perry Pictures Ltd). Richard has bought Fior's story to life and created an exciting storyline for the proposed Stormgirl feature film. See below for details.

For Movie Details Turn The Page



STORMGIRL - The Movie

Stormgirl is a superheroine with a difference. She is a superheroine girl racer who who was once an ordinary girl but she discovered her inner strength and passion for driving fast cars, after surviving the hurricane of loss and tragedy of losing three things she loved deeply in three short months. Stormgirl was transformed when stepping in to her super fast sports car, the super-powered V6, 3.7ltr, 370z. By day she races, and by night she became a kick-ass Superhero, who drives through the streets fighting crime and injustice.

Stormgirl survived the carnage and came through the storm, and found within her the power to become all that she is meant to be. One of her biggest fears was driving.....but that all changed the day she lost everything.

She regained control of her life behind the wheel of her sportscar, where she becomes transformed in to her alter ego Stormgirl. With eyes that see in to infinity, Stormgirl see's what is going to happen in advance and gets to the crime scene lightening fast. She sees the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. Though she knows not of her own destiny, determined to succeed she moves forward in knoweldge that with each step her path will become illuminated.

Theta DNA healing holds the key to her transformation, as she is plugged in to the universal life force she becomes 'a Brand new person'.

Stormgirl is fearless in the face of adversity, independent, fueled by her passion for her 370z, she drifts and drags to fight her way past her adversaries. Stormgirl carries the secret wounds from her past, the tragedy of the three things she loved and lost - all of which propel her to fight to the end. Her biggest 'nemesis' is the man she once loved.

"A heart can be broken, but you can't break my Soul"

She has been sent by Ancient Japanese Gods to protect the City of London from being taken over by organized crime and from the return of an ancient mystical being.

Stormgirl has two love interests vying for her attention; a rock star and a pro race driver....but who will be first to pip to the post?

Her true allies are here to be discovered.

"When you've lost everything, there's nothing left to lose". (Stormgirl)

See you zoom!

Stormgirl

"Born to Race, Trained to fight Crime and Injustice"



minimalmedia



ENGAGE WITH YOUR AUDIENCE.



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Introducing our latest writer Travis Barend

Three NASCAR Champions to Be Determined at Homestead-Miami Speedway

It has been quite the season of NASCAR racing and it all comes to wraps at Homestead-Miami Speedway in Miami, Florida. It is championship weekend for NASCAR as all three of NASCAR's major touring series champions (the Camping World Truck Series, Nationwide Series and Sprint Cup Series) will be decided.

After a full season of racing action, the Camping World Truck Series championship battle is the tightest in the sport. With James Buescher going into the season finale with an 11 point lead over second place Timothy Peters and a 12 point lead over third place Ty Dillon, Buescher is in control – but he could easily lose it. With a finish of 7th or better with no laps led, 8th or better with one lap led, or 9th or better with the most laps led, Buescher will be crowned champion in NASCAR's third-tier series no matter what his competitors do during the season-concluding race. If Buescher cannot accomplish these requirements, the door is open for Peters and Dillon.

In the Nationwide Series, after 32 races in 2012 which has consisted of a constant battle between Elliott Sadler and defending Nationwide Series champion Ricky Stenhouse Jr., Stenhouse holds a 20 point lead over Elliott Sadler in the point standings. After the two were in a tie going into the penultimate race of the season, Sadler was involved in a wreck, ending any likely championship chances. Still, Sadler still has a chance to gain ground. A finish of 16th or better, 17th or better with at least one lap led, or 18th or better with the most laps led at Homestead will secure the championship for Stenhouse as he gets set to begin his Sprint Cup Series rookie year in 2013.

The main show is with the number one series in NASCAR. The Chase for the Sprint Cup is only one race from completion and will end with either a six-time Sprint Cup champion or a first-time champ. Brad Keselowski, going for his first championship for both himself and team owner Roger Penske in the Sprint Cup Series, holds a 20 point lead as the tour heads Homestead. A finish of 15th or better, 16th and at least one lap led, or 17th and the most laps led will do it for Keselowski, even if Johnson wins and leads the most laps. If Keselowski fails to do this, it is anyone's guess as to how this one will shake out. An exciting weekend is ahead for the season-concluding weekend for the 2012 NASCAR season.

In the next issue of The Podium Magazine, a recap of the outcome of the season for all three of NASCAR's top series will be available.



Jimmie Johnson



Brad Keselowski



The Role of Women in the World of NASCAR

by Travis Barend



As a writer, a task is given and it is my responsibility to fulfill it.

For my first piece with The Podium Magazine, I was asked to discuss women in NASCAR, the most popular motorsport in America. At first thought, this task seemed easy, like any other topic I have written about in my years of writing NASCAR content. I would simply discuss the topic at hand. Then, I got to thinking.

This topic was much more difficult than I imagined. In many sports, women participation would seem easy to cover and discuss. Not in NASCAR. As I sat down to type up my first piece, I began to wonder, where do I begin? That, in fact, is the toughest part of all.

In this sport, women did not just show up. They simply have always been here.

There is no beginning to this and there is no end in sight. Women are just a part of NASCAR.

From NASCAR founder Bill France Sr.'s wife, Anne B France, to Kelley Earnhardt, the sister and longtime supporter and handler of Dale Earnhardt Jr.'s career and business interests, women have shaped the everyday world of stock car racing.

There are so many stories, so many women that have paved the way for the future of NASCAR. How do I even begin? Which stories do I even tell?

That is the question that I face.

Anne B France was the biggest supporter of Bill France Sr. in shaping NASCAR. Stevie Waltrip was a key element to the team where her husband Darrell raced. Teresa Earnhardt stood behind the late great Dale Earnhardt Sr. behind every step of the building process of Dale Earnhardt Inc. Kelley Earnhardt helped shape the successful business interests of her brother Dale Earnhardt Jr., including negotiating multi-million dollar contracts.

Shawna Robinson paved the way for women by scoring a pole position in NASCAR, Janet Guthrie competed in major races such as the World 600. Danica Patrick brings much attention to the sport while other drivers such as Johanna Long and Jennifer Jo Cobb strive for the exposure to make it in the popular league.

Wives and girlfriends, such as Samantha Busch, wife of Kyle Busch, stand behind their husbands through thick and thin. Meeting and greeting fans, being a part of and organizing charities, celebrating wins or handling losses, these women, who don't necessarily compete, are just as much of this sport as anybody.

They all are, past or present, a part of the NASCAR family.

So how does one narrow down these amazing stories and moments? Women don't just exist as race car drivers in this sport, they are everywhere. From Kim Lopez, the flag woman in the Camping World Truck Series, to Krista Voda, Danielle Trotta, Wendi Venturini and Nicole Briscoe, all a part of the NASCAR TV world, to Lesa France Kennedy, CEO of International Speedway Corporation, women are all a part of this big ship.

So, no, I can't narrow it down much more than that. How can one do that?

There are simply too many stories to tell in so little space.



Giedo Van Der Garde - A Real Gem of a Driver

Interviewing Giedo Van De Garde from Caterham Formula One Team and of course this season Caterhams GP2 driver was a complete pleasure. Giedo is a gentleman and someone who always thinks the glass is half full (for those who don't understand that English statement, someone who thinks positive).

Giedo started life in karting as many do, the difference with Giedo is that he doesn't take long to learn, for example in 2001 he competed in the Karting Super A and finished 5th, but then went onto win the championship the following season. This has been the story of his career from day one, however along that road he has had some bad luck, we'll come back to that in a moment, but his answers are always positive. Some people would think, well that could have been me, especially looking at Sebastian Vettel at the moment (again we'll come back to that), but not Giedo, he is fully focused on the job in hand and Caterham Formula One team have a gem on their hands.

Having completed the interview with Giedo, I have decided to present this in a completely different way, not as an interview, but more of a feature about someone with a heck of a lot of talent filled with some quotes from our chat. Before I go any further I have to mention that he was once a team mate of our cover star, Pippa Mann, something I didn't know until just now. Pippa's reaction was the same as mine when I told her, "great guy" she commented.

Back to the man himself, after just 2 years in Karting he went onto race in the 2003 Euro Renault 2.0 series and yet again, in what was essentially his rookie year finished an amazing 5th in the championship, with a win and 3 podiums under his belt. Not many drivers move from karting into the Formula Renault series and manage that. I mistakenly thought he'd class his first big win as in the Formula 3 Euro Series, but I was quickly corrected on that one. Giedo classes the win in 2003 as his first major win. Who can argue with that, he'd just moved from driving a kart and gone into open wheel racing, then secured a win. That's big and I was wrong, his first major success came a lot earlier, three years earlier in fact.

Having spent just one season in the Euro Renault 2.0 series he moved to the Formula 3 Euro Series, yet another step up the ladder. He spent three years from 2004 to 2006, securing ten podiums and a win in that time. In 2006 he was team mates with two current Formula One Drivers, Paul Di Resta and double or perhaps triple (I spoke with Giedo on the Thursday prior to the Brazilian Grand Prix Championship decider) World Champion Sebastian Vettel. He commented that the first half of the season he didn't perform at his peak, but in the second half of the season he outscored the both and had he not had two bits of bad luck may well have finished a lot higher, a car failure at the start of a race being one, not just any failure but the car not starting from pole position (Editor – now that is bad luck in anyone's book). I asked Giedo whether he ever thinks about what might have been, whether it could have been him fighting for a 3rd World Title right now in F1, his answer "What has happened in the past is not important, I am fully focused on driving in a Formula One car next season. The past has gone, the future is what matters." Showing yet again the glass half full attitude. During his time in this series his obvious talents started to become noticed by Formula One teams. Yes, believe it or not, this guy is no rookie to Formula One, having spent 2007 in the Renault World Series, but at the same time was a test driver for the Spyker F1 team. That wasn't all for 2007, in this year he was also enrolled on the McLaren Young Driver programme. Now when you are noticed by one of the biggest teams in Formula One, you know we are talking a talented individual.

Giedo Van Der Garde - A Real Gem of a Driver Continued...

Having learnt his trade in the Renault World Series in 2007, securing a win along the way he then continued that into 2008 and became champion. Showing yet again how fast this guy can learn his trade. Mixing this with a test at Renault F1 team and remaining on the McLaren Young Driver programme. A busy, but highly successful season for Giedo.

At this point in his career, in my own humble opinion he should have been given a chance in Formula One, this didn't come, but Giedo comes across as someone who just looks to the future and how he can fulfil his dreams of a Formula One drive.

In 2009 he moved to the level below Formula One, when he progressed to GP2. He raced for iSport International and made an immediate impact, finishing 7th in the championship (remember that GP2 is often made up of more cars than F1, for instance in 2012 there is a table showing 31 drivers) He managed to move up to this level and straight away found himself on the top step of the podium three times. In motor sport, we as fans often think that there isn't much difference as a driver moves up in class, you have to understand that there is a huge jump from one class to another. To get on the podium at all in your first season is a huge achievement, but on a consistent basis Giedo moves up a class and makes huge strides, showing how adaptable he is and how fast he learns.

Having driven both a Formula One car and a GP2 car, I was interested to know the key differences from a drivers perspective. Giedo commented that they are both easy and hard to drive. A Formula One car has all the grip and power steering etc, but it also has all the buttons on the steering wheel, a lot to be concentrating on whilst driving at tremendously high speeds. In GP2, there aren't so many buttons but it the difference is not that great because you don't have the grip and power steering etc. So it was difficult for him, as it would anyone, to make a comparison. I also asked Giedo whether it is easier now in a Formula One car to when he last drove for what was essentially Force India as a test driver back in 2007. He commented that the cars change so much that it is a complete new learning curve every time he gets in a new F1 car.

He stayed in GP2 again for 2010 and managed to finish 7th again, this time with 4 podiums racing with Addax. Then, in 2011 managed to compete in both the GP2 championship and the GP2 Asia Series. He finished 5th in the GP2 Championship with five podiums and 3rd in the Asian Series.

We then move on to the current season, 2012, He is at last picked up by a Formula One team. Caterham F1 employed him as a reserve driver, giving him some Free Practice One sessions and a chance at the Young Driver test in Abu Dhabi. In October he impressed scores of people up and down the paddock as he has approx. 20 laps in the F1 car, yet manages to post a time just 0.7 seconds behind the hugely experienced Heikki Kovalainen. During 2012 he also raced for Caterham in Gp2.

He has now called it a day on his GP2 career and decided to focus on his Formula One career, but what a way to end your career in GP2 by picking up a win for Caterham, that came with a lovely trophy no doubt and a hug from Tony, I'm sure the trophy was nice (only kidding Tony). This shows a raw talent similar to that of Jenson Button, he may be 27 years old, but it's just luck that has stopped him getting into F1 and in my opinion it's only a matter of time. I asked Giedo about his age and compared him to Jenson. Yes, Jenson has been in F1 for a long time, but he drove shocking cars for so long, then after a long wait, he became world champion. Giedo agreed with the comparison and despite not being in F1 for years, Giedo, like Jenson has had to wait for his opportunity to come along. That came in 2012, and he has proven to be a success, someone who has caught the eye of many. Giedo says "I am focused now on the future, I want to be in a Formula One car next season and there are a couple of opportunities on the cards, it's just a case of settling a deal."

Giedo is a genuine racer, who has been an asset to Caterham this season. It seems that they have found a hidden gem. I am confident that Giedo will be in a Formula One car in 2013. Which one remains to be seen, but this is a talent that can't be wasted any longer, he deserves that drive and I hope he gets it. Good luck Giedo from everyone at The Podium, we look forward to watching you race next season.

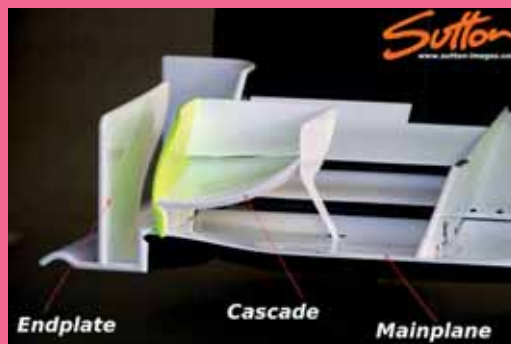
Technology in Plain English

by Matthew Somerfield

This Month Matthew Talks About the Front Wing on an F1 Car

The Front Wing of an F1 car is perhaps the single most important aerodynamic element of the car, this is because it's the first point of contact for airflow approaching the car, entitling the designers to manipulate the airflow over the car as they see fit. The FIA constantly revise the dimensions and loads available to designers for the Front Wing to rob them of both effect and downforce. The current technical ruleset has been in operation since 2009 and ends next year in 2013.

Using the front Wing to divert airflow around, inside and over the front wheels is essential as a huge proportion of the car's overall drag is generated by the wheels. It's also essential to consider the consequences of the airflow when the car is in Yaw and so at the start of this particular ruleset only a handful of teams utilised what we still see being refined today: The multi element Endplate.



In 2009 many teams simply opted to use a singular element and bulky Endplate whereas BrawnGP utilised a design ethos that can be seen across the field in 2012. The BGP-001 pictured above featured a multi element Endplate, utilising the cascades outer portion as the inner element. (Below the Ferrari F2009 Front Wing sporting a solid Endplate)



Since 2009 the processes involved in echoing this style of Wing have increased with previously un-manufacturable profiles being utilised. The teams now not only have multi faceted Endplates that allow airflow to move from the high pressure side to low pressure side but design their Wing planes differently too.

In the next image we can see Red Bull's Wing from Abu Dhabi with the Endplate ripped off, this affords us the opportunity to see that the Wing Planes themselves now form a type of Endplate. These Delta shaped wings produce most of their downforce at their outer edges with the inner portion providing vorticesed flow structures that impact other features of the car aft of the Front Wing. Using more wing planes allows the Wing to have more Angle of Attack without the Wing Stalling. Designing the Wings with this outer arc allows the air pressure to bleed between the surfaces just like the multi element Endplates further outbound allowing more air to pass around the front wheel.

Technology in Plain English

by Matthew Somerfield



Constructed on top of the Wing planes we find the Cascades, these generate some downforce but their principle job remains in the management of airflow beyond the Wing. Their placement atop of the Mainplane helps to convert airflow that couldn't be tackled by the normal wing planes, sending it over the wheel reducing some of the drag in that region.

Some teams also adopt 'R' Cascades as seen on the Red Bull Front Wing below, the 'R' cascade works in combination with the more rearward Top Flap creating a spiralsed Vortex as the two airflow structures collide. If managed correctly a vortex is much more effective than laminar flow as it carries much more energy.



An area that most don't see is behind the Wing, as we can see in the picture below strategically placed strakes are used in order to further enhance the airflow passing under the Wing.



The one area where the Front Wing is weak is when following another car, the wake produced by the car in front displaces the air, making the components less efficient. This was most prevalent when teams used Exhaust Blown Diffusers (EBD) as even stronger vortices would disrupt the air as it exited the rear of the car. In 2009 the rules permitted a 6 degree Front Wing angle change in order to help drivers follow more closely in the wake of another competitor. Unfortunately due to the Double Decker Diffusers of that year the tool was of little use and was replaced by DRS to aid overtaking in 2011. As we have seen throughout 2012 the loss of EBD now allows cars to follow much closer through the corners as the wake is reduced and the following car doesn't understeer so badly. (Understeer would be caused if the Wing becomes less efficient, ie not receiving enough or the right airflow)

With cars now being able to follow another more effectively through the corners a certain element of Slipstreaming has returned to F1 and is the reason we now see drivers not only overtaking in the DRS zones but elsewhere on the circuit. I do however fear with teams recouping some of the effects of EBD through exhaust plume manipulation we may lose this once again.

Formula One Abu Dhabi Race Report

by Phil Woods



A deserved win at last for the Ice Man - Kimi Raikkonen

Raikkonen wins at the Yas Marina, as Vettel plays catch up. Remember that this is supposed to be a boring track with no overtaking or any action, well forget that now as we have just witnessed one of the great races of 2012.

The start was straight forward from the point of view of pole sitter, Lewis Hamilton as he opened up a comfortable lead in his attempt to leave McLaren on a high, what he didn't expect was that his race would be over due to mechanical issues, and yet again the high hopes of McLaren and Hamilton were dealt a bitter blow. His bad luck never ceases to amaze me, if he'd not had a failure, I have no doubt he would have been on the top step of the podium today. Instead we have a new winner in 2012, Kimi Raikkonen who himself had a brilliant start took over the lead and never let it go for a second.

Vettel, the championship leader started from the pit lane and ended up under the safety car having to pit again after damaging his front wing avoiding a Toro Rosso. He though drove through the field showing that he can overtake and he can drive, putting to bed all the doubters that he can only run from the front. This lead to 'The Podium' giving the driver of the day to both Raikkonen for his cool head in the carnage behind him and Vettel for an amazing drive from the back of the field not once but twice.

On Lap 10 we were once again reminded of the legacy left behind by Sid Watkins as Rosberg hit a slowing HRT and flew through the air, fortunately both drivers walked away unscathed but out of the race.

Half way through the race, Kovalainen was running in 12th, a position worth millions to those teams at the lower end of the field, unfortunately he couldn't hang on and ended up in 13th. In the next issue we will be talking about how the system currently works. In my view, if a team consistently outscores and out qualifies another, they should be awarded a bigger slice of the financial pie, rather than relying on one goof finish from another team. That's for another day.

As the race drew to a close it looked like it would be Raikkonen's win, a second for Alonso and a 3rd for Button, but a couple of laps from the end, Button couldn't hold off a rampaging Vettel and despite his best efforts, Vettel passed him to take 3rd position.

As far as the championship goes, there is now a 10 point lead for Vettel over Alonso. Red Bull have virtually won the constructors championship, but will have to wait until Austin to confirm that.

It's going to be one hell of a final two races, don't miss a minute of it.

Formula One United States Race Report

by Phil Woods



Lewis Hamilton wins first ever race in Austin, Texas as Formula One Returns to the US with a bang

Lewis Hamilton completed a tremendous win in the first ever USA Formula One Grand Prix to be held at the newly built Circuit of the Americas, and what a race it was.

It's been a while coming since the Indianapolis farce a few years back but the last winner of a United States of America Formula One Grand Prix, did it again in an amazing fight with championship leader Sebastian Vettel. It seemed to the naked eye, like the Americans fell in love with Formula One all over again, and who could blame them at this amazing facility. Look at the picture above, gone were the podium caps, instead we had Stetsons, after all we were in Texas.

Prior to the race starting we had controversy. With both Alonso and Massa starting on the dirty side of the track, Massa agreed to take a 5 place grid drop as his car was tampered with by the team. The team knew that to start on the dirty (and it really was dirty) side of the track both cars would be at a disadvantage and with Vettel sitting on pole it would mean the loss of the championship, well, almost certainly. So, Massa took one for the team as it were and ended up with a five place grid penalty. Alonso was promoted to 7th and the clean side of the track. It is a team game after all, so despite a lot of the media around the world calling them cheats, I am not going to get sucked in and do the same.

Red Bull went into the race knowing that they needed just 4 points to lift the constructors championship and that we all knew was a formality, that was until Mark Webber's car failed due to the alternator yet again. Christian Horner's leg was bouncing as if on a trampoline from that moment on, after all Vettel was driving the same car, could the unthinkable happen, could Red Bull not only fail to clinch the constructors championship but also leave the penultimate race with Vettel behind Alonso in the drivers championship? The answer was of course no, but whilst Red Bull won an amazing 3rd constructors title in a row, the drivers championship will go right down to the wire at a VERY unpredictable Brazil next week. Vettel has a 13 point lead, but that can soon be eradicated. We all remember when the shoe was on the other foot in 2008, Massa thought he was world champion, but a sliding Glock in his Toyota was no match for Hamilton on the final corner of the final race and all of a sudden, Ferrari and Massa's joy turned to tears. There is no getting away from the fact that Red Bull have the faster car, but Brazil throws many spanners into the works. This week, Red Bull will be praying for sunshine and Ferrari will be doing a rain dance.

Back to the race in the States, the start was as predicted, great for those on the clean side of the grid and poor for those on the dirty side. Webber jumped Hamilton to take 2nd place, Vettel had a good start, Button had a terrible start, ending up in 16th. The one we were all watching had a great start as Alonso moved from 7th to 4th straight away. Schumacher in his penultimate race (ever) was going backwards as both Raikkonen and Hulkenberg take him early on. It was a magnificent sight watching those cars go up that incline into the first corner, which from where a driver was sitting was blind. At some points as they all took that corner for the first time, they were five abreast.

Lewis Hamilton wins first ever race in Austin, Texas as Formula One Returns to the US with a bang

Hamilton in 3rd place was hounding Mark Webber and tried to make a brave move on him but ended up off track, however it was only a matter of time until Hamilton found the right place and time to take 2nd place back. The McLarens having a massive straight line speed advantage over the Red Bulls. Hamilton then set about chasing Vettel who was 1.8 seconds further up the track.

Further back the other McLaren was making ground after a lousy start. He found Schumacher in 10th place and quickly disposed of him on around lap 14. Button was now in the points. The qualifying glory of the Marussia's was cut short as they were both taken by the clearly quicker Caterhams around the same time. The only issue for them was that they were too far behind the cars in front to now go for that 12th place, they so badly need to take a deserved 10th in the constructors championship, however it's Brazil in a few days time, and that means anything can happen.

Hamilton was closing in on Vettel by Lap 17 so much that he was in the DRS zone, it looked as though it wouldn't be long before they were in a tussle for the lead. Meanwhile, Mark Webbers race was over as another failed alternator meant a nervous time for the Red Bull pit wall, obviously concerned about Vettels car. With Webber out, Alonso inherited 3rd place and Massa was going great guns considering he had to start with that penalty.

Lewis started to loose ground on Vettel, so he pitted for a perfect 2.4 second stop, Vettel followed a lap later with a good stop also. Hamilton needed to do all the hard work again and catch up with the Red Bull of Vettel. He eventually caught Vettel and it was only a couple of laps before Hamilton overtook and put a near 2 second gap between him and Vettel. Massa had moved to 4th and Button up to 5th.

This is the way it stayed until the end of the race, with Hamilton winning the first race at this new circuit, Vettel came in 2nd and Alonso (Vettel's main championship rival) in 3rd place. This means that going into Brazil Vettel holds the trump card with a 13 point advantage. But this is Brazil we are talking about and unless it's a perfectly dry day, anything can happen, right until the very last lap of this magnificent season.

The drama isn't over yet.

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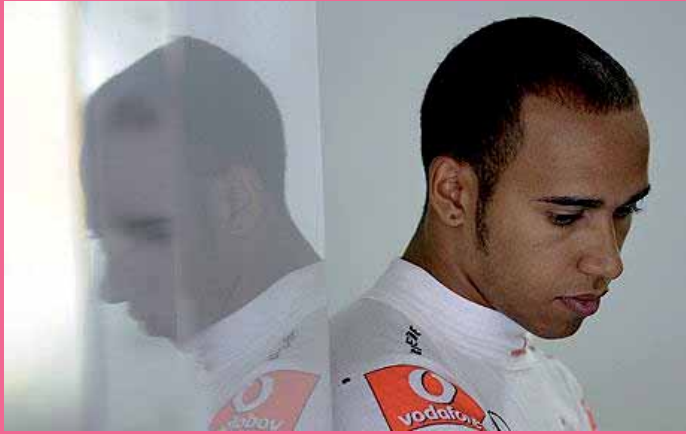


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Why Lewis Hamilton Had to Leave McLaren



LEWIS HAMILTON ON THE PODIUM FOR McLAREN - BUT THAT WASN'T ENOUGH TO KEEP HIM

Lewis Hamilton's move to Mercedes has been the biggest talking point of the season, especially as he has virtually been bought up by McLaren through the years. He even won his first and so far only championship with them, but was unlucky in his first season, just missing out on the title and really should have been battling Vettel and Alonso in 2012, going into the final two races had his luck held out. But why has he left a team capable of delivering a car that will win him a championship and move to a team that probably can't, at least for a while? That has been the question up and down the paddock and between fans around the world.

Believe it or not, the first talks between Mercedes and Lewis' management started way back in the Spring of this year, then during the summer the talks gathered momentum and it was September when a tempting deal was put on the table by the Mercedes team.

So what made him move? That is the question everyone has been asking, and one we can finally answer in this exclusive article from 'The Podium' Magazine.

During the summer of 2012, just as talks were hotting up between Mercedes and Lewis' management, both Ron Dennis and Martin Whitmarsh made it clear that due to the current world financial situation, they would have to significantly reduce the salary that Lewis was on. This was obviously the first reason and who can blame him for looking elsewhere if that was the case. 'The Podium' believe that the initial offer put on the table for Hamilton, by McLaren was £12.5 million, a huge sum of money to people like ourselves, but percentage wise when Mercedes came knocking with a £17.5 million offer, he had to take notice. A choice to be made, have his wages reduced by £2.5 million or increased by the same? It was obvious who was going to win that battle. However he'd been with McLaren since he was a child, he was the young boy who told Ron Dennis that he'd drive for McLaren in Formula One one day, and that dream came true. So is it not like leaving behind a family for the sake of money? According to Lewis, it isn't as things go a little deeper than that.

McLaren signed a young British boy by the name of Lewis Hamilton at the age of 13, not big news at the time but by the time Lewis stepped into a Formula One car, he proved his worth as one of the worlds best drivers. Ron Dennis, is apparently a very domineering person, this caused the two to fall out on numerous occasion, apparently in a big way on occasions. With that in mind Lewis found the atmosphere quite suffocating at times at McLaren.

There were some great moments though, and that meant that the phone call to Martin Whitmarsh (who'd assumed he'd be staying through loyalty) was a tough one to make. I can only assume but despite all of the above that there will be a few tears at the team come the Brazilian Grand Prix when he steps into a McLaren Formula One car for the very last time.

It'll be an interesting pairing up of Lewis and Ross Brawn. If anyone can shape a championship winning car it's those two.



ABOUT

The World Motor Sport Breast Cancer Foundation

This month I am sure you have noticed that this issue has been rather pink. We really wanted to help raise awareness of the difficulties faced everyday by women who can't afford treatment or insurance. The charity is based in America. Unlike the UK, you have to either have health insurance to be treated or a heck of a lot of money. We are so lucky in the UK having the NHS, but in America, if you are poor, it's hard luck, I'm afraid. If you develop breast cancer and have no money or insurance, you are simply ignored by the health system.

This is where this charity comes in, they raise thousands to help those in need. Without charities like this, there would be a greater loss of life. Here are just a few activities they have organised. Before going into that they need to raise around \$1.5 million year.

How They Raise Money - Just a taster of what the charity does, visit the website at the bottom of the page to view so much more;

Every time you shop at any of 700+ online stores in the iGive network, a portion of the money you spend benefits World Motor Sports Breast Cancer Foundation. It's a free service, and you'll never pay more when you reach a store through iGive. In fact, smart shoppers will enjoy iGive's repository of coupons, free shipping deals, and sales. To get started, just create your free iGive account. And when you search the web, do it through iSearchiGive.com where each search means a penny (or more!) for our cause!

Start iGiving at: www.iGive.com/WMSBCF & www.iSearchiGive.com/WMSBCF

If your a Facebook fan then you can donate to the World Motor Sports Breast Cancer Foundation by just signing up on there causes page. It doesn't cost you a thing and all you have to do is watch a video for maybe a few minutes. Every time you do, the Foundation will receive a donation of no less then 5 cents. To sign up for this FREE program just go to: www.causes.com/causes/wmsbcf

With every search you make with the search bar, between \$0.01 and \$0.02 is donated to the World Motor Sports Breast Cancer Foundation (W.M.S.B.C.F.). You can go to www.iSearchiGive.com/WMSBCF and get a free account and download the search bar for your internet browser, so every search you do will benefit the W.M.S.B.C.F.. Also with your free account, you will get www.iGive.com/WMSBCF So if you shop at one of over 500 on line shopping web sites, a portion of your total will be donated by that web site to the W.M.S.B.C.F. Again at no cost to you! You also get special offers that only iGive and iSearch members get such as free shipping, and other discounts.

General Donations: Anyone can become part of the support team by making a contribution of \$1.00, \$5.00, \$10.00, \$25.00 or whatever you can afford to support our efforts to provide the victims of breast cancer the help they need. You can donate on line by clicking the Donate Button. You can also direct where your donation can go, General Operations fund, (no more then \$250,000 will go into this account. Access will be directed into the Family Grant Program) Clinic Grant Program, Family Grant Program or Educational Program.

Those of you that do not want to make your donation over the internet can send your donations to: W.M.S.B.C.C., P.O.Box 124, Park Ridge, IL 60068.

VISIT THE WEBSITE AT - <http://www.worldmotorsportsbcf.org>

Women in Motor Sport

As this is the 'PINK' edition of the magazine, there was no way we could end without mentioning some other women who are at the top level of Motor Sport or on their way to the top. Here is a selection with a brief write up about each ones current career.

Alice Powell - Gp3

Alice is a current Gp3 contender on her way up the ladder. Gp3 is basically the 3rd level behind Formula One. The series follows Formula One around the Europe and is a showcase of the best talent out there. From Gp3, you hopefully move to Gp2 and then Formula One. Alice has proven that she can win races in her career and after becoming champion in Formula Renault back in 2010, she eventually got her well deserved shot at Gp3 in 2012. She has just finished her maiden season in Gp3 and finished a respectable 19th out of 31 drivers. At just 19 years old, she has a potentially great future ahead of her. Gp3 cars are so much different than what she has driven in the past and take some getting used to. Having a look at her results in 2012, she had two 11th and two 12th place finishes, putting her just outside the points. However she did finish the season with a magnificent 8th place in Monza giving her the top 10 place she deserved.



Danica Patrick - NASCAR

In fairness Danica is probably the worlds most famous name when it comes to female racing drivers, she has managed to finish 5th in an IndyCar Championship and 10th on two occasions in the NASCAR championship. She is not only famous for her driving though as a quick google picture search will show you, she is a model also. If we weren't all about sport then the photo may have been completely different. She certainly has talent on the track, having won a race in IndyCar back in 2008 and this season managed a pole position in NASCAR. She has her name in the history books by finishing 3rd in the 2009 Indy 500, the highest ever finish for a woman so far. There have been rumours about Danica moving to Formula One, resurfacing again following the race in Austin. Reports say that Bernie Ecclestone would love to have someone like Danica in F1. For now she is happy in NASCAR having signed a deal with GoDaddy.com for 2013.



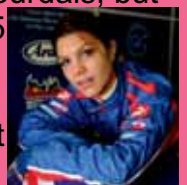
Susie Wolff - DTM and Formula One

Susie has recently hit the headlines with a test for Williams Formula One team, the team and driver both reporting that it was a success, so could Susie be the first woman since Giovanna Amati (who drove 3 times in 1992 for Brabham) to get a Formula One drivers seat. Like most racing drivers she started life in karting, she then went onto Formula Renault and then to Formula 3. Since 2006 she has been racing in DTM, with her best season being in 2010 when she managed two 7th place finishes and finished 13th in the championship ahead of fellow Scot, David Coulthard (He'll hate me for mentioning that, but it was his first ever season in the series). In this season she also battled Katherine Legge who is now plying her trade with Cover Star Pippa Mann in IndyCar.



Katherine Legge - IndyCar

Katherine has been racing this season for Dragon Racing in IndyCar alongside Sebastian Bourdais, but due to circumstances has only raced at the Ovals from part way through the season. In 2005 she raced in the A1 GP for Great Britain, finishing 3rd overall. Since then she has raced in DTM until her move to America. Her best result was actually her last time out at the MAVTV 500 World Championships at Fontana, California, she managed a very impressive 9th in that race. What does the future hold for Katherine? At the moment things won't change in 2013 as if reports are correct she will be racing for Dragon yet again alongside Bourdais in IndyCar.



You Have Your Say

A selection of letters from our readers - Your opinion matters!

Dear Podium

Last weekend I travelled to Austin for the F1 Grand Prix, it cost me a fortune, in fact most of my savings, but I wanted to witness a bit of F1 history. So often you spend money on things and are disappointed, but not this time. What a track! I was standing at the top of the hill by the first corner. It's hard to describe how you feel when you see those cars come up that hill towards you at such speed and its easy to get a sense of the acceleration of the F1 cars. It was brilliant, I will never forget it, it was worth every penny and more. I watched the race again when I got home and what a track overall, and what a race. Hamilton really made a fantastic move on Vettel to keep the championship open and for a grand finale in Brazil, I wish I could have afforded that too, but I'm more than satisfied with my expedience in the USA. I am thrilled and will save for next year. Well done to the designers.

Alan Harppen – Bristol (UK)

Dear Podium

It's going to be a sad day in Brazil when Michael Schumacher finally retires. I know people are sceptical as he has retired before, but I believe him this time. It is the end of an era. I will be sad to see him leave as a big fan of him. I just wish he could stay forever. I for one will have a tear in my eye. His position is being taken by the next best driver in Lewis Hamilton, but nobody can replace the career and success of Michael Schumacher. Michael, I will miss you and have to say that on behalf on millions around the world, they will miss you too. Good Luck Michael, whatever you do.

Alison Cram – Norwich (UK)

Dear Podium

Formula One is s**t (*editor, he means not very good*), If you call that race in Austin 'Brilliant' you really are missing out on some proper racing. NASCAR is the sport you want to watch, you Europeans don't know what you are missing. People have a warped view that it's just a southern American sport, for red necks or something. I am so glad you as a magazine included it in the last issue, a great article and introduction to the sport. I just hope the European people read the article, learn a bit and then you as a magazine continue writing about it. We have just had the most wonderful season ever.

Carlos De La Garcia – Texas (USA)

Editor – I have to say that everyone is entitled to their opinion and point out two things, one you may not like to hear and one you'll be thrilled about I hope. NASCAR can be watched on UK TV and in other European countries, so we do know what its about, and yes I agree it has been a thrilling season, but I can't agree with your Formula One comments. The good news is The Podium have taken on a NASCAR writer and he has two articed in this issue which I hope you enjoyed.

Getting in Touch is Easy

If you want to get something off your chest, have an opinion about motor racing or want to respond to something you've read in this magazine, then there are several ways of getting in touch;

Email - Use the form on our website 'contact us' page

Twitter - Follow and Direct Message us. We are @Podium_Magazine

Facebook - We have a page called 'The Podium e-magazine' for everyone who likes any motor sport

**Finally Congratulations to the Following Champions
Who Have Won the 2012 Drivers Championship in
Their Own Motor Sport.**

**World Rally Champion 2012
Sebastian Loeb**

**British Touring Cars Champion 2012
Gordon Shedden**

**World Touring Car Champion 2012
Rob Huff**

**GP2 Champion 2012
D.Valsecchi**

**GP3 Champion 2012
Mitchell Evans**

**DTM Champion 2012
Bruno Spengler**

**IndyCar Champion
Ryan Hunter-Reay**

**NASCAR
Brad Keselowski**

**Formula One
Sebastian Vettel**

And not forgetting the champions in all other categories of motor sport that may not be as high profile but the champions still deserve high praise and we wish them luck as they progress their careers.