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## JULY 2018 Issue

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June has been a good month for HRC. The Pukekohe round of the ENEOS Endurance Series was another very interesting race with fluctuating fortunes for the drivers and changes in the leading cars. These GT's are certainly the fastest Tin Tops in the country with their race pace exceeding Australian Supercars. Once again the final result is yet to be declared because of protests. But we do now have a result for Hampton Downs round with Simon Gilbertson and Johnny Mac declared the winners and the Evans team second. The hearing held on Friday before the Pukekohe race showed that the rule book needed some clarifications in dealing with a race ending under the red flag when running under Schedule Z.

The Pukekohe Round saw two teams excluded for one of the drivers not wearing a balaclava which seems a very harsh punishment. Even the Clerk of the Course had no way of not excluding the car.

Quite rightly the decision has been taken to MSNZ and we would hope the rule can be modified so as not to be so harsh.

The Manfeild final is going to be New Zealand's Great Race (our new term) with a number of teams that could take the title. The Gilbertson / McIntyre Porsche is on 177 points and the ITM Mike Racing Mercedes SLS of Christina Orr-West and Brendon Leitch is on 172. The ITM Mike racing car is being sponsored by Dayle ITM and Debbie Day has abandoned her race control roles and is hands on helping the team. Debbie sees it as going over "the Dark Side of Motor Racing"

Following a suggestion that now we are streaming these races (on "thefastfiles.com") and getting good audiences now, viewing figures are about 25,000 we should be providing more information on driver sponsors and cars HRC has gone back to providing drivers with sheets to fill out with information for live streaming commentary. If you have already provided information on your team John Tomlin will keep it on file for future meetings. If you haven't provided any info yet please email the information to [johntomlin@xtra.co.nz](mailto:johntomlin@xtra.co.nz) or hand it in at documentation at the Manfeild round. Expose your sponsors and use the viewing figures to raise more money. Thanks to PJ Johnson for supplying Two Mahindra SUV's. They were certainly helpful when Gary Devon got his tow Truck stuck !

Entries are also up for the Manfeild round on 21<sup>st</sup> July. Entry is on [www.motorsportentry.com](http://www.motorsportentry.com) and discounted spectator tickets on [www.hrcevents.co.nz](http://www.hrcevents.co.nz). Don't miss this exciting series.

# ENEOS North Island Endurance Series 2018

## Round 3 – MANFEILD

**Friday 20<sup>th</sup> JULY 2018**

*Registration from 8.30am. Drivers briefing at 9.45am. Track live from 10am – 4pm Open Pit Lane.*

*4.00pm – 4.30pm Meeting Rides (Hot Laps).*

12 noon to 4.00pm - Scrutineering and Documentation available at the circuit

**SATURDAY 21<sup>st</sup> JULY 2018**

Race Day Programme

- 7.30am Documentation and Scrutineering resumes
- 8.30am - 8.45am: ROC Drivers briefing
- 9.00am: Circuit Clearance
- Qualifying – ALL Drivers must qualify:
  - 9.15 – 9.35am: Qualifying Session 1 for 3 Hour Race
  - 9.40 – 10.10am: Qualifying for 1 Hour Race
  - 10.15 – 10.35am: Qualifying Session 2 for 3 Hour Race
- 11.00am: One Hour Race Starts  
12.00pm: One Hour Race Finishes
- 12.01pm - Park Ferme in pit lane for 15 minutes, Grid up 3 wide in pit lane, 1 hour trophies will be handed out to class winners
- 12.15pm: Lunch Break Starts
- 12.45pm: Lunch break ends  
12.45pm: Pit Exit Opens  
12.55pm: Pit Exit Closes
- 1.00pm: 3 Hour Race Starts  
4.00pm: 3 Hour Race Finishes
- 4.01 pm: Park Ferme in pit lane for 15 minutes, Grid up 3 wide in pit lane, 3 hour trophies will be handed out to class winners

[theFASTfiles.com](http://theFASTfiles.com) will again be streaming the racing live so if you can't make for the live action - tune in and watch this exciting racing on the net. Streaming on the internet is now attracting audiences similar to free to air TV channels.

A quality entry but still room for more entries [www.motorsportentry.com](http://www.motorsportentry.com).

**FREE Entry for spectators**

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## 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Meeting

Planning is underway for the Motorcup Meeting on January 25<sup>th</sup> - 27<sup>th</sup> 2019. The Motorcup is the oldest Motor Racing Trophy in New Zealand and goes back to the beach races at Muriwai from 1921. Many famous names are on this Cup Moss, McLaren, Brabham, Hill, Surtees, Amon and Smith.

This meeting will feature classes that are celebrating their 50th Anniversaries. The classes are Formula First, Formula Ford and F5000 though F5000 are yet to confirm. The International TRS class will be an invited class (thanks to Speedworks) and the meeting will be an HRC promotion. We have a number of classes that want to be part of the exciting event and there are already two containers of Formula Fords coming from Europe and the UK We will also be inviting as many of the older retired single seater drivers to be part of this celebration event

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### Volunteer to Europe 2018

I wonder how many of you will remember how Bruce McLaren got his big break into motor racing? From what we can determine, his performance in the New Zealand Grand Prix in 1958 was noticed by Australian driver Jack Brabham (who would later invite McLaren to drive for him). Because of his obvious potential the New Zealand International Grand Prix organisation selected him for its 'Driver to Europe' scheme designed to give a promising Kiwi driver year-round experience with the best in the world. McLaren was the first recipient, to be followed by others later including Denny Hulme.

Whilst we see several Kiwi Drivers now making their way on the global stage, The MotorSport Club, NZIGP and HRC Events decided last year to make a similar award to a promising young Motorsport Volunteer – and so the Volunteer to Europe scheme was born.

The prize awarded is return flights and 5 nights campground accommodation to Marshal at the prestigious Goodwood Festival of Speed in the UK. The lucky recipient this year is Sam Thomson. Sam has been involved with volunteering in motorsport since he was 9 - his current role is either timing or running the start line for Motorsport Club staffed events. As well as the Goodwood Festival of Speed, Sam decided that he would like to attend the 2018 Le Mans Classic so here are a few pictures and notes from France. Part 2 – Goodwood Festival of Speed will be next month.

We flew from Auckland to Paris via Shanghai and Zurich arriving early evening at our hotel in Paris. After dinner and a nights sleep, we made a quick tour of Paris before our transport arrived to take us out to Orly Airport to collect the hire car. Heading South West towards Le Mans we started seeing more and more sports cars on the roads – all with the same destination.... Le Mans Classic.

We reached our hotel in good time and were able to meet with others in our group before dinner. We were staying at the Hotel Arbor – right on the Mulsanne Straight, 100m after the second chicane.... What a perfect spot.



The next 3 days were spent at the circuit amongst the pits and watching the races. Some incredible cars on display. Being Kiwi's, we know that there's only two degrees of separation.... Well we managed to meet up with Jo Johnson (BMW Driver) and John Hudson along with a few Trofeo Series racers past and present !



We departed Le Mans and headed to the UK. More of that next issue.....

# **BMW** RACE DRIVER SERIES



**Do you want to go racing? Do you have what it takes? NOW is the time to enter the E30 Scholarship for the 2018-2019 season.**

On Sunday, August the 5th, 20 successful candidates will go head to head at Pukekohe Park Raceway with a series of tests, interviews, some hot laps to show you the ropes and then finally some driving observations to see what you have absorbed..... no pressure!!

If you think you can show the judges something that sets you above the rest, something that convinces them that you are the one that should be strapped into the Scholarship drivers seat for the whole of the next season, then APPLY NOW!

The E30 Scholarship Application Form & FAQs are available at the link below - what are you waiting for?!

[http://www.bmwraceseries.co.nz/?page\\_id=1582](http://www.bmwraceseries.co.nz/?page_id=1582)

## 2K Cup News



Entry for season 6 is up at <https://goo.gl/forms/RHKCOHHmfvBKWxAf1>

If new then please make sure to see what car numbers were taken last year (link on the form), existing numbers won't be up for grabs until August 1st.

Please note the Constructors Championship is now teams of 3. The best team for each manufacturer will go on to the works points table. So just like F1 the top 2 teams are a given (Honda and Toyota in our case) but there is still a fight to be the best of the rest, in fact we will have a trophy for both.

### **2K Cup TV Production**

We have recently seen a draft of the 2K Cup program that will show on CRC Motorsport shortly. It looks very professional and is produced by the 2K Cup team. Certainly helps having a large field and drivers willing to go 4 wide into a corner !

## Introduction To Motorsport Day



Another event that HRC ran this month was the Introduction to Motorsport day which was subsidised by HRC events. Thanks to our tutors John McIntyre, Wendy Metcalfe and Peach Ardagh.

These sessions are proving extremely popular and has all the benefits of a Track Day but with the advantages of limited numbers out on track, the option of coaching and the availability of likeminded folk all willing to encourage you to get the best from the sessions.

It was great to see the improvement over the day by the drivers and the smiles on their faces at the end of the day. Below is an email we received from Bernie who had the winning bid at the Race4-D Cup Pink Ribbon Breakfast the weekend before.

*Hi Tim and Co,*

*Just want to extend a huge thank you for a great day... loved every second, learnt a lot and really appreciate the volunteer time that goes in to making the day work. I am sure I will be back... probably with some extra ladies too.*

*Regards*

*Bernie*

## **Advertising Opportunities**

HRC will be looking to live streaming a number of our upcoming events next season and there is the opportunity to purchase a limited number of advertising slots for a very reasonable price. In live streaming the endurance races we have had audiences of 15,000 to 25,000 viewers. Another advantage of advertising on this medium that the video remains on the net and can be viewed on a future occasion giving further value for your advertising dollar. The price is very much less than you would pay for TV advertising. For further details contact Chris Watson on 0274827542 [chris@hrcevents.co.nz](mailto:chris@hrcevents.co.nz)

## **The HRC Team**

**Chris Watson 0274 827542** [chris@hrcevents.co.nz](mailto:chris@hrcevents.co.nz)

**Tim Hill 021 614600** [tim@hrcevents.co.nz](mailto:tim@hrcevents.co.nz)

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**HRC Office 44 Stoddard Rd Mt Roskill (rear of building) 09 629 4438 PO Box 28140 Remuera**

## **Competition Licences and Authority Cards**

The HRC office is always open to do Licence examinations and authority cards during office hours and evenings by prior appointment. You don't even have to be a member of HRC

## **Holidays**

Even the hard working HRC team need holidays Chris will be away 20/6/18 to 14/7/18 and Tim 3/7/18 to 3/9/18. Chris will be available on email though 12 hours behind. Tim will actually be working some of time as he has the tough job of taking the Motorsport Club volunteer of the year to Goodwood and the Le Mans Historic Meeting. (Tim gets all the tough jobs).

## Next Season Events

We had hoped to be able to confirm to all classes our events for next season but unfortunately we have 2 events that are proving problematical. Great Lake Taupo we are looking into a revised date as BMCC have scheduled Motorcycles on our traditional date. Pukekohe on Auckland Anniversary Monday, we are working with the circuit to be able to run on the Monday. Chris will keep all the classes updated and as soon as we have confirmation we will advise all the Series Co-ordinators.

Meeting Name	Venue	Date	Date
Waikato Challenge	Hampton Downs	8-Sep-18	9-Sep-18
Icebreaker	Hampton Downs	22-Sep-18	23-Sep-18
2K Cup Challenge	Hampton Downs	24-Nov-18	25-Nov-18
Tasman Revival	BMMP Taupo	5-Jan-19	6-Jan-19
Motor Cup Meeting	Hampton Downs	26-Jan-19	27-Jan-19
TBA - Auckland Anniversary Monday	Pukekohe	28-Jan-19	
Tasman Revival	Pukekohe	23-Feb-19	24-Feb-19
Legends of Speed	Hampton Downs	23-Mar-19	24-Mar-19
Great Lake Meeting	BMMP Taupo	6-Apr-19	7-Apr-19
Season Finale	Hampton Downs	4-May-19	5-May-19

# ESCORT RACE NEWS



The iconic Ford Escort hits 50 this year and we at HRC want to celebrate this milestone with an ESCORT only race at our ICEBREAKER meeting on 22/23<sup>rd</sup> September at Hampton Downs. The races will be for any car as long as it's an Escort.

Since last month's announcement of entries being open, we have filled over half the grid – so if you want to be part of the party, please get your entries in NOW... [www.motorsportentry.com](http://www.motorsportentry.com)



**ENGINE SPECIALISTS**

EST 1988

## We are very pleased to announce that GER Engine Specialists are Sponsoring the Escort Races on 23<sup>rd</sup> / 24<sup>th</sup> September

A message from Scott Sampson at GER Engine Specialists

My team & I are really excited to be sponsoring the upcoming Ford Escort Races at the Icebreaker meeting in September. We see it as a great opportunity to give back to the sport we have had a long standing involvement with over the last 20+ years as competitors, supporters and engine builders for a multitude of race cars.



Dad, (John) has been racing his Capri for over 20 years now, and my very first race project was a Ford Escort RS2000 Replica (now owned & raced by Ken Northin), and although I ventured into the BMW racing field for a few years, I've started a new Capri project and hope to be back out on the track myself in the near future.

GER Engine Specialists is a family owned and operated business established in 1988, with over 130 years combined experience in the automotive industry. (Many of you may be more familiar with Glendene Engine Reconditioners, before we rebranded in 2015.)

In 2016, my wife Shannon & I took over the family business, and in the last few years it has grown to include a precision CNC Machining Centre, we've moved to a larger workshop to increase work capacity, and through close built relationships with other specialists in the industry, we can now provide a complete one stop shop for all of your vehicle needs.



We know from our own experience building classic race cars how time consuming it can be organising work to be carried out throughout all of the different stages of the build. Although our primary focus has always been engine building and machining, we are now able to offer full project management in this area... So as well as looking after your engine needs, we can take care of vehicle pick up & delivery, dyno tuning, engine bay detailing, fabrication, panel & paint work and more.

So whether it's a new build project, a between season freshen up or repairs, we've got the expertise and equipment to get the job done.

Our recently relaunched website provides a great deal of information on our services and what we can offer: [www.ger.co.nz](http://www.ger.co.nz) or our facebook page: [www.facebook.com/GERengines](http://www.facebook.com/GERengines)

We are always happy to discuss racing projects (or any vehicle needs in general), so if you have any questions, or would like to get your car looked over before you hit the track, feel free to give us a call at the workshop on 09 8185352, otherwise, we look forward to seeing you at the track in September!

Cheers,

Scott Sampson

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HRC membership has continued to increase with membership doubling from March 2016 to March 2017. To join or renew membership just go to <http://www.hrcevents.co.nz/shop.php>

At the office here at 44 Stoddard Rd, we can do licence tests and authority cards Monday to Friday 10am to 7pm. Just email [chris@hrcevents.co.nz](mailto:chris@hrcevents.co.nz) with a time and date and he will confirm by email. My Laps transponders always available on [www.hrcevents.co.nz](http://www.hrcevents.co.nz) and the courier is part of the price or they can be picked at the office.

### **HRC Membership Benefits**

We have included the following benefits as part of your HRC Membership

- Free Entry for current HRC Members to spectate at any of our race meetings (On production of valid Club Membership Card)
- HRC Members can take advantage of the HRC Suite at any of our Hampton Downs race meetings. There will be a small charge of \$20 to cover Tea / Coffee.

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Report

# Great Race Round Two

## ENEOS Endurance Race Pukekohe

### Young guns Harker and Milligan lead MIKE Racing 1–2 win

June 17th, 2018 - Simon Chapman Reporting for Velocity News

Two of the youngest drivers in the ENEOS North Island Endurance Series have bounced back to convert pole position into victory at Pukekohe Park.

Toyota 86 Championship graduates Jack Milligan, 21, and Reid Harker, 22, took their first victory together in the Three Hour Series for Palmerston North outfit MIKE Racing.

It was a memorable win for the pair who led home a 1–2 finish for the team with the second Mercedes-Benz SLS AMG GT3 of Brendon Leitch and Christina Orr-West close behind.

Winning was especially satisfying for the pairing having suffered during round one at Hampton Downs Motorsport Park. Electrical gremlins saw them in and out of the pits and ended hopes of finishing up the front despite a strong qualifying effort.

With their woes behind them the duo kept their car out of trouble to take the win.

“This is redemption after round one, for sure,” Harker said.

“I think we had the potential at round one, but things didn’t go our way. To secure the win at round two, I don’t think it could’ve gone any better with pole and the win.”

The second round of the series was dominated by attrition. Even before the race started title contenders Wet & Forget Racing had to withdraw from the event. An engine issue discovered on Friday evening prevented the early favourites from taking the start.

Christchurch-born Milligan started in the no.96 car, but a mistake at the beginning of the race dropped him down the order. However, they recovered, and both of the MIKE Racing Mercedes’ spent much of the race hovering inside the top five positions.

Nick Chester and Cameron Jones looked to be early race favourites in their ex-Supercar Holden Commodore VZ having led for much of the first stanza. However, their race came to a halt soon after the halfway mark when Jones suffered a suspension failure and crashed at the final corner.

The retirement meant it was a GT3 duel to the finish with John de Veth and Glenn Smith in the lead.

Albany-based Harker spent several laps under the rear wing of the leader. With traffic playing its part, Harker managed to round up de Veth at the turn five–six complex to take the lead.

A late dive to the pits during the final safety car period by de Veth for fuel handed second place to Leitch and Orr-West, which put MIKE Racing first and second.

On the final restart Leitch surged past the lapped traffic and got alongside Harker. However, he couldn't make it past. Unaware that the race had gone green, Harker was caught out.

"I was waiting for the call for green from Mike (Chua) but I didn't get it as early as Brendon did," Harker said.

"I thought initially he'd jumped the restart. Obviously you can't see the green coming over the hill so you're relying on the person in your ear telling you it's green. When I got the call, Brendon had already passed all those slower lapped cars."

The margin between the pair stabilized at two and a half seconds after a brief battle. Marginal on fuel to the finish, Leitch backed off and allowed Harker to get away. Eventually Harker and Milligan came across the line just under 10 seconds ahead to take their first win.

Off the back of victory; spirits are high for Harker, Milligan and the team following the 1-2 finish. Milligan said he's at the point where he feels confident he can be a regular contender despite their relative inexperience.

"I'm definitely more comfortably in the car now than what I was before," Milligan said.

"I've had a pretty limited amount of laps. It's a big learning curve for both of us, especially with the amount of aero this car has got.

"Endurance racing is all new to us as well, so we're learning how it all works. It's really good now though, we're getting more comfortable with the team and with the car. Bring on Manfeild!"

A fourth and second place finish means Leitch and Orr-West provisionally sit atop the overall and GT-A class points standings with one round to go. Glenn Smith and John de Veth brought home third in class behind the leading MIKE Racing cars.

Provisionally, victory in GT-B went to John McIntyre and Simon Gilbertson who also finished fourth overall. Andre Mortimer and Glen Chappel took out Class One victory, meanwhile Bryan Symes and Lochlainn Fitzgerald-Symes won Class Two, with Stefan Calcott and Shane Drake winning Class Three.

The final round of the ENEOS North Island Endurance Series takes place at Manfeild Circuit Chris Amon in Feilding over July 20-21.

# MY LAPS TRANSPONDERS



My Laps Transponders can be purchased from the Historic Racing Club. Order online at [www.motorsportentry.com](http://www.motorsportentry.com) or send a cheque to HRC Inc, PO Box 28140 Remuera.

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MYLAPS provides personal transponders to fulfil the needs of organizations as well as the needs of participants. With the introduction of the Car/Bike X2 personal transponder, MYLAPS offers a low cost entry solution for racers.

## 2018 Canadian Grand Prix

From our F1 Correspondent Owen Evans

### GP CANADA

Mercedes left Montreal with a baggage of worries. "We came to this circuit believing that we could be strong here. But we left with the fact that Ferrari had under all conditions a faster car", Toto Wolff said. The difference was just a tenth per lap, but it was enough. Niki Lauda summarized: "Ferrari had the better car, the better engine, the better fuel consumption. We are in an alarming situation. Something has to happen". Vettel was the whole race in control. He kept the gap to Bottas between 2.5 and 7.5 seconds. Räikkönen lost a better place with a mistake in qualifying. He finished Sixth and could not take points away from Vettel's opponents. In his defence, he still had to run the first engine spec, because since the race in Barcelona he had already used his second power unit. Ferrari kept him out on track till lap 32 hoping that he could build up an 18 second lead on Ricciardo and Hamilton. When he reached that point, Ferrari called him in. But it did not work out. Kimi had a poor IN-lap.

It was no big surprise that Ferrari were stronger than Mercedes. They brought new barge boards to the car and an engine upgrade, worth 10 hp or 0,15 seconds. Mercedes had nothing new in Canada. That makes the difference, when you are so closely matched. The intended engine upgrade travelled to Montreal but stayed in the cargo boxes. Tuesday before the race, one of the spec 2-engines broke on the dyno after 3700 kilometres. For validation at least 7000 kilometres are required. Mercedes found the problem quickly. It was a part in the crankcase that missed the required dimensions by 0.02 millimetres. This part had been built in all the 6 engines sent to Canada. So they had to stop the plan to run them before the FIA would seal the power units. They will be ready next time in France. It would have been worth as well a tenth in laptime. It was one of the reasons why Bottas missed pole position by just 0.093 seconds. The other was the tyre allocation. Mercedes had ordered only 5 sets of hypersoft tyres for each of their drivers. The other teams had chosen 7 or 8 sets. That meant, that Hamilton and Bottas got the first feel for Pirelli's softest compound only on one run in P3. "With our new engine and more runs on the hypersoft tyres pole position probably would have been possible. And then it would have been a different story in the race", Wolff said. His conclusion: "The gaps between Ferrari, Red Bull and us are so small, that we cannot allow ourselves any more to do such mistakes."

The problems of Mercedes continued in the race. A stuck valve in the water system of Hamilton's car caused the overheating of the engine. Hamilton had to switch to the "normal" power mode. The problem dictated him an early pit stop in lap 16. The mechanics took away a cover over the cooling exits next to the driver's helmet. That helped to bring the temperatures down. Afterwards Hamilton could apply full power again, but still felt a few dips in power later on. The early stop cost him a position to Ricciardo due to a slow IN-lap. Bottas had to save massively fuel in the second part of the race. "Before the pit stop we wanted to stay as close to Vettel as possible. We reserved our fuel savings to the second part of the race. In the end it got so bad, that Verstappen could close up. I crossed the line with the last drop of fuel and had almost lost my place", Bottas said. It would not have affected the result, as the Canadian model Winnie Harlow showed the flag one lap too early, so only 68 laps counted. Not her fault, as Charlie Whiting explained: "She got the information from the starter. And he had been in contact with the clerk of the course in the race control before. It was a misunderstanding between the two." The fuel drama of Bottas was concerning Lauda more than anything else: "Fuel consumption always had been our strong point. It looked as if Ferrari and Renault could do faster laps than us when they were fuel saving."

The Canadian Grand Prix was decided in qualifying and at the start. Whoever arrived first in the first corner stayed there. Overtaking was as difficult as in Monte Carlo. For different reasons. Despite 3 DRS zones and a straight that is 1050 meters long, there were only 11 overtakings throughout the whole race. Mostly in the back of the field. The tyres were just too hard for Canada and showed no degradation. Most of the teams did not use the critical hypersoft in the race. With a set of ultrasoft you easily could do 40 laps without any major degradation, with the supersoft the whole race. The ones, who had to start the race on hypersoft were helped by an early safety car. The field quickly spread out, so that they could get rid of the hypersoft without losing positions. In the end the faster cars were in front of the slower ones. And in the case between Hamilton and Ricciardo, Hamilton was not quick enough to get close. He needed a delta of 2 seconds to overtake.

Renault also brought an engine upgrade to Canada. In combination with the new fuel that had been introduced in Spain already it was worth 20 hp. Abiteboul said: "We have improved our lap times since the first race only with our engine development by 0.3 seconds." However he admitted: "We still don't have a classic qualifying mode. That will be only introduced with our face 3 engine later in the year." That applied only to the factory team. The customers use different fuel, which had not been adapted yet to the spec 2 engine. In the case of Red Bull the new Renault engine meant only a progress of 12 hp. "We will get our fuel development only in Hungary". Marko told us. Still the engine helped. Red Bull was closer to the competition in qualifying than usually on a power circuit. Verstappen lost only 0.173 seconds to the

pole position. Normally it is around half a second in qualifying. After so much criticism about his driving Verstappen had a strong and faultless weekend. Red Bull tried to outwit the competition with a different strategy by starting the race on hypersoft tyres. They were hoping, that their tyre saving car would give them an advantage in the race, but it turned out to be an unfulfilled theory. „The tyres were just too hard for that track. Nobody got in trouble“, Marko said. Still he believed, that the start on hypersofts was the right choice: „Daniel gained one position at the start to Räikkönen, Verstappen almost one to Bottas.“ Later Red Bull brought Ricciardo past Hamilton by an overcut of 2 laps.

Red Bull wants to announce before their home race in Austria whether they will race with Renault- or Honda power in 2019. „We will analyse from the Canadian and French Grand Prix how good their upgrades work and compare them“, Christian Horner said. Renault wants to have a decision before the next race in France. „They have all the information, they needed already now. Why to wait any longer“, Abiteboul stated. Marko does not see a reason why to change the timing: „Cyril talks about the difference of a few days. Why is it so important for him?“ This conversation gives you the feeling that the decision is already done in favour of Honda. Which would be bad news for Renault, who prefer to stay with Red Bull despite all the troubles they had with each other. Red Bull is the only team which can give Renault a win and they pay 21 million euros to Paris. Losing Red Bull would reduce the development budget. Also the comparison of the upgrades speaks in favor of Honda, who found 20 hp with their newest spec. „Toro Rosso went three tenths faster with the new engine. In our case it was just 0,15 seconds“, Marko reveals. He did not mention the fuel factor, but that problem would not apply any more if they line up with Honda. With Red Bull and Toro Rosso the Japanese can concentrate to develop their engine for fuel and oil from Mobil. In the case of Renault, Red Bull would always have a delay in fuel development. On top of it a partnership with Honda comes much cheaper.

Whatever Red Bull decides, it probably would be only for two years. According to many sources, Porsche is going to come 2021 into F1 if the FIA confirms the engine rules as published by the end of June. That will be a V6 Turbo without the MGU-H and with a stronger MGU-K. Officially Porsche will concentrate on Formula E from 2019 onwards for two years, while developing quietly a F1 engine. Then they will hand over the project to another brand in the Volkswagen community in order to focus fully to F1. Just what Renault does now. Their Formula E project will be taken over Nissan next year.

Still no contract with Hamilton. According to Lauda it could be done before the French Grand Prix. He explains the delays: „We have agreed to marry again. Therefore the date of the wedding was not so important.“ As soon as Hamilton is

signed, Mercedes wants to renew with Bottas. „He does the best possible job right now. No reason not to carry on with him“, says Lauda.

The situation at Mercedes and Ferrari leaves Ricciardo with not much choice than to stay at Red Bull. McLaren made him an offer, but why do go to a team, that is far away from winning? The offer to him tells you a lot. That can only mean, that Alonso is not driving F1 for McLaren in 2019. Otherwise there would be no need to look for others drivers. With Alonso, Vandoorne and Norris McLaren has more than enough. Another indication in losing Alonso is, that McLaren was not prepared to give Lando Norris to ToroRosso. Red Bull wanted the kid at least for a couple of years, but McLaren was not prepared to release a driver, they built up. And they might need him next year. Alonso could well have a year off in F1 and compete in IndyCar and WEC in 2019. But he will stay in the McLaren family. McLaren is currently checking IndyCar teams for a partnership. So Zak Brown was confident to state: „Alonso is driving a McLaren next year.“ What he did not mention: In which Championship?

Alonso is more and more frustrated. His hope to drive for podiums this year did not come true. In fact McLaren rather seems to go backwards despite their B-version of the MCL33. The car is not competitive in slow corners and is unstable under braking. „We have an aerodynamic problem in corners below 140 kph. In order to compensate that, we add more wing. That hurts us on the straights. And sometimes it shifts the balance“, Boullier explained. He is quite unhappy with his engineers: „We did not get the car we wanted.“ Reliability also has become an issue. For the second time in a row Alonso lost points. This time because of a broken exhaust.

Renault emerges more and more as the fourth force in the field. Further modifications to the barge boards increased the downforce in the back. The car does not stress its rear tyres as bad as in the first few races. That helps in the race performance. „Still we are lacking a second to the front. Even on a bad day they will be faster than us. They are gaining time on us in every corner. The Red Bull accelerate as if they were running with a four-wheel-drive“, says Hülkenberg. Force India is the team to watch out for Renault right now. Ocon got ahead of Hülkenberg in the first lap, but lost then two positions to the Renault drivers a a poor pit stop. The rear jack did not engage properly in the first attempt, so the car fell back to the ground. That cost two seconds. Perez lost points by a collision with Sainz. He was running in 10th place before. „I left Carlos enough room, but he decided to push me off the track“, Perez complaint. He thought, that the stewards should heve punished the Spaniard.

Force India is still in severe financial troubles. For the moment they live from money, Liberty has loaned to them. In exchange Vijay Mallya had to step down from his director's role and he had to promise to take no further money from the team. Now

everybody waits, until the team goes into insolvency. That it can be sold. There are five potential buyers interested, some of them not very serious. One is the American Jeff Moorad, who owns a football team. The other a private equity fund from New York, called Castle Harland. Then an IndyCar team. The Rich energy bid is a fake. They do not have the money to run a F1 team. The fifth in line is the most serious. It is Mercedes or better said: Daimler, Toto Wolff and Niki Lauda. They keep quiet as much as they can. Before Force India goes to them, all other teams have to agree. They only would do, if there is no other way to save the team.

It is agreed, that F1 will run on 18 inch wheels latest by 2021. At the moment the FIA is collecting offers for the tender. It will be closed by the end of the month. A decision is expected by September. Apart from Pirelli also the Korean tyre manufacturer Hankook is interested, we hear.