

TURN
HERE →



SERIES™

RENAULT BRIDGESTONE

10 JUNE 2008

GP2 SERIES Monaco

Title tightens

Success in Monaco for the iSport team closes up the 2008 championship race



DOWNLOAD PDF HERE

BRIT BONANZA
LOOKING AHEAD TO SILVERSTONE

KEEPING PACE
DIDIER PERRIN Q & A

PRACTICING RACERS
THE LOWDOWN ON GP2 TESTING

My generation

As GP2 arrived at one of the most historic and evocative venues in world motorsport, the Monaco round of the 2008 Series gave a glimpse of what is to come in the world of open wheeled racing.

So far the 2008 GP2 Series has been anything but predictable. We've had six races and six different winners, three different championship leaders and a rookie scoring a victory in his first ever GP2 outing. After a thrilling start to the season in Spain and Turkey the teams and drivers hardly had a chance to catch their breath before one of the biggest races of the season arrived. The glitz and glamour of Monaco is guaranteed, but its narrow, tight corners mean the racing can occasionally leave something to be desired. But what GP2 delivered was two incident-packed outings and two very popular winners.

From the cockpit Bruno Senna and Mike Conway both picked up their first wins on the claustrophobic street circuit and you can read their accounts of life after a Monaco victory on page three of the e-zine. Meanwhile

Monaco rookie Diego Nunes gives us a candid report of what it is like to drive at the circuit for the very first time. From sharing a house with Alberto Valerio to finishing in the top ten, it's all there.

Technically speaking Also new to racing in the Principality is the GP2/08 car, and while lapping within 3.2 seconds of the F1 racers sounds impressive, GP2's technical director Didier Perrin tells us why there is more to come from the new charge. Sticking with the ever-improving '08 machine we also look ahead to June's mid-season testing with BCN team principal Enrique Scalabroni. While on page seven we let Mike Conway guide us through a lap of Silverstone ahead of next month's British race. That's what you have in store in this issue of the GP2 e-zine - as for what will happen next on-track...your guess is as good as anyone's.

5

points separate the top four as Conway and Senna open up the '08 title race



For all the latest news log on to:
WWW.GP2SERIES.COM

Closing the gap on F1

Piquet Sports driver Pastor Maldonado's pole-grabbing lap of 1m 21.057s in Monaco was just 3.234s short of matching the back of Sunday's F1 grid. GP2's technical director Didier Perrin explains where the GP2/08 finds its pace.

What would it take for a GP2 machine to be as quick as a mid-grid F1 car?

We'd need to give the teams freedom to set up the car at its maximum aerodynamic performance. Monaco is the only track using the full range of downforce available on the car. On all other circuits we limit the maximum angle of the rear wing to make the racing more challenging and exciting. The full aerodynamic potential of this car is much higher than you can see.

Were you expecting the times to be closer, here in Monaco, particularly?

Honestly, yes. We expected to be slightly faster than we were. But, we learnt a lot this weekend from the use of the soft tyres and next time we will make some modifications. I can safely predict next year here in Monaco we will take a step forward.



Are there any other circuits where you expect GP2 cars to be closer to F1?

Not really. What we'll find is the longer the circuit the bigger the difference in lap times. The target from the beginning of the GP2 Series was to be about six seconds from the mid-grid F1 teams. I think this is roughly what we will see throughout the season.

How much faster is this new GP2 car?

The comparison to the old car has been clear since winter testing. In spite of the limitation to the rear wing, the car is 1.4-1.5s quicker than its predecessor. I think that will be consistent this the season, at all tracks.

Q&A MONACO

BRUNO SENNA

How have things been for you since the Monaco win?

To be honest, I haven't really had time to celebrate. It's been flat out, every day: - I wasn't very well after Saturday's race and so I got an early night; I had work commitments all day Sunday with Ferrari GB, and, since then I've been with my sponsor Embratel in Monaco and London.

Was there any particular post race highlight?

What was great was that quite a few GP2 drivers came to congratulate me, Luca [Fillipi] and Andy [Soucek] among others, that meant a lot.

MIKE CONWAY

You've had a week to reflect upon the whole weekend, tell me your thoughts.

The reception since I got back home to the UK has been great and all the local radio stations and newspapers have run features. Unsurprisingly I guess, my most vivid memory from Monaco is Saturday's race and how we won that. As a team our pace was really strong, it was good to show people that we can win races and where better to do that than in Monaco? Last season was the first time I'd gone a year without winning a race and that was tough. But, I am always motivated to do my best, the team are a great bunch of guys and the hard work we've all been putting in is now paying off.

How did you celebrate?

I was meant to go home on Saturday, but after the win the whole team went out to eat and then I got an early night. Then on Sunday my team-mate Ho Pin Tung and I were invited to the Royal Gala Dinner and after that we had a good crack on Vijay Mallya's boat. Ho Pin's a good bloke and eventually saw me onto a flight on Monday. He's a great teammate, very motivated and we are working hard to get the best out of each other across every race weekend.

GOOD MONTH



BRUNO SENNA AND ISPORT

Bounding back from his exploits in Turkey, Senna's Monaco feature race win was possibly the most publicised in GP2 history. Aside from all the hype, it was a solid drive that helped put him joint first overall. Meanwhile his team-mate Karun Chandhok's third place on Friday was the first time an Indian driver had ever been on the Monaco podium.



TRIDENT RACING

The team was five corners from podium glory on Friday, before Mike Conway was punted off the track while running in third. The consolation was P1 and P2 on Saturday's sprint grid, which Conway and team-mate Ho Pin Tung converted into the first one-two finish in GP2 this season.



ADRIAN VALLES

Following a hard-fought battle with Chandhok, Valles finished fourth by less than a second in Moanco's feature race, giving the 22-year-old Spanish driver and his BCN team their first points of the season.



PASTOR MALDONADO

The Monaco maestro was a class ahead in qualifying, but a poor start left him trailing Senna for the entirety of race one. Things got worse in race two when he went into the back of Chandhok.



ROMAIN GROSJEAN / GIORGIO PANTANO

The pair went into the weekend first and second overall. However, neither driver scored points in the Principality, allowing Bruno Senna to match Pantano at the head of the championship (24 points) and Alvaro Parente to tie Grosjean in third (19 points).

BAD MONTH



Races go live on gp2series.com

Fans of GP2 can now stay up to date with all the on-track action after the official GP2 website launched its new live race commentary in Monaco.

Available by clicking the Live Comment button on the GP2 homepage, the service provides real time text updates on all of the qualifying and race incidents as they happen. Alexa Quintin, press officer for the GP2 Series, provides the commentary direct from the pitlane.

"GP2 consistently provides some of the most exciting open-wheeled racing around, so we want to make sure that people have as much opportunity as possible to experience it, even if they can't be at the circuit or in front of a TV," said Alexa.

"I make all of the updates on my laptop from the pitlane so hopefully I can get as much of that buzz across as possible. The only drawback is that everything I write for the commentary goes live on the website immediately, and with all that action going on around me please forgive the odd typo!"

The next live commentary will be available during the French GP2 race from June 20.



FROM THE GP2SERIES.COM BLOG

"There wasn't much joy in either the Racing Engineering or ART garages: Giorgio could see his championship lead evaporating, Javi was called up to the stewards and handed a ten place penalty for race two despite his protests of innocence, while Romain and Luca were inside the truck trying to come to terms with their misfortune."

See blog.gp2series.caradisiac.com for more

GP2 test ticks all the boxes

The GP2 teams travel to France's Paul Ricard circuit on June 10 and 11 for this season's first and only mid-season test and according to GP2 technical director Didier Perrin, the opportunity to experiment ahead of Spa and Monza could be vital.

"Since the teams are restricted to only 30 minutes free practice before qualifying, any development work at the races is limited principally to adjusting ride height. So, all the set up development work happens over these next two test days."

With the low downforce circuits of Monza and Spa to come, the layout for the day two of testing simulates Spa and Monza.

But as BCN team principal Enrique Scalabroni explained, the test is also a chance for the drivers to gain some valuable seat time.

"It's not just important for the

development of the car but the driver too, especially if he's a rookie," said Scalabroni. "We can give him more time to understand the car, work with his engineer, and explore different set ups. All this helps expand his skills for future free practice and qualifying."

"Since this is a new car, with a strong driver taking it to the absolute limit, we can achieve far more in one test day than anything we could achieve on a simulator."



Pit lane gossip

Bruno Senna's iSport car was sporting a new lucky charm in the pits at Monaco. The BCN team presented him with this small plastic dog following his bizarre exit from the sprint race in Turkey. It seemed to work too as Bruno picked up his first win of the season in Friday's Monaco feature race.

No such luck for Alberto Valerio who seems to have lost a bet with a hairdresser. Alberto's new 'do relegated him to the very back row of this group photo taken at Monaco. At first glance though there's a bigger story here - Elvis is alive, and he's wearing Durango race overalls!



DIEGO NUNES REALISING A DREAM

DIEGO NUNES OF DPR TALKS US THROUGH THE WEEKEND OF A MONACO VIRGIN



THURSDAY 22ND MAY

I'm up early and I can't believe I'm here! I've dreamed of racing at Monaco for years.

Bruno Senna, and I are staying with Alberto Valerio at his place we take the ten minute trip down to the circuit by scooter. A word

of warning, never get on the back of Valerio's scooter, the guy touched the wall twice on our way down!

I walk the track with some of the team's engineers and Andy Soucek. It's his 4th time here and his advice on the corners, curbs and breakpoints is really helpful.

Free practice comes around and my God, I'm really nervous, I don't know the track and everyone is very, very fast. This is nothing like practicing it on the Playstation3! It feels like no other circuit, the barriers so close and the speed so fast!

I do a good job on the first set of tyres and land P12, it's fast, but everyone is going faster! I push too hard on the second set and ruin them - the challenge is to find the limit here without making mistakes.

Qualifying comes around quickly and I put in a great lap on the first set of tyres landing me in P10. On the second set though, everyone is out on track. I only get one clear lap and mess up the chicane

after the tunnel. I qualify in P20, but I'm confident I can be quicker when the lights go out tomorrow.

FRIDAY 23RD MAY

That's better! I'm calm, the nerves are gone and this feels like a normal race day.

The start is difficult, there's a lot of confusion but I keep my nose clean and hold my position. At the first round of pit-stops everyone pulls in before me and I can push hard for four or five laps, by the time I emerge from the pitlane on lap 14 I've gained a couple of places.

Buemi then takes out Pantano at turn four and I get 15 seconds of rest as we all pick our way through. It's a real relief. Then I'm straight back on it and overtake two cars on the next couple of laps - yeehaa, passing on the Monaco circuit just feels fantastic! The last few laps are very, very fast and a bit of a blur, I follow (Javier) Villa and (Mike) Conway easily, but can't overtake. Then all of a sudden - Oh boy! I watch Villa take out Mike but lucky I don't get caught up with it and finish in 14th.

SATURDAY 24TH MAY

I sleep late on Saturday and leave Valerio's place for the circuit at 11am.

Race two is a big mess at start, one of those where you just have to do what you can and hope for the best. Bakkerud launches over Zuber right in front of me,

and another two cars crash. I manage to come out in one piece and gain a few places before spending the entire race holding off Romain Grosjean. I finally finish in P9, it's a fantastic result and just what I hoped to get out of this weekend.

Valerio left early after crashing again in race two but I take my time getting home from the circuit and stop at the Red Bull Energy Centre for a drink. It's amazing to see the scale of F1 paddock in action. I want some of this...



AWAY FROM THE TRACK

ADRIAN VALLES, GO-KARTING KING OF SPAIN

Well, it's not really away from the track, but I have a huge passion for karting and have a go-kart track in Teulada-Moraira. It's on the coast about an hour from Valencia.

It all came together last year. With the help of an Italian manufacturer I created my own machine, the AV Kart, and set up a new championship (www.copaadrianvalles.com) that gives local kids the chance to have a go at motorsport. I started by selecting just twenty kids for the first season, but this year I have something close to 84 drivers. They are separated into

four categories: First Step (7-10 year olds), Cadet (10-13 year olds), Star (13-17 year olds), and Hobby (17 years and older).

I try to teach them how to race. We supply the karts, and the kids get a lot of driver coaching. We help them understand how to make the correct set-up, show them how to tune the engine, and get them involved in as many of the aspects of racing as possible. It's fantastic to see how much they enjoy it.

The championship itself has seven rounds and is open for anyone to compete. Unfortunately, I can't go to all the races due to my own racing commitments, but my uncle helps with the organisation and there are a lot of good people working on it. One of the best is my mother, who has already said that if any of the GP2 drivers want to come over for some extra competition, she'll cook a big paella!



DRIVER'S EYE VIEW - MONACO



Monaco rookie Deigo Nunes talks us through his hair-raising first lap on the Principality's peerless street circuit

"You arrive at the first corner, and the braking is very difficult, the wall is right there and it's hard not to be nervous of hitting it.

Up the hill next to Casino Square and another very difficult corner – power up the slope and then you brake just as the car balances itself and levels out – the adrenaline is pumping and I can't help thinking how easy it would be to crash here!

Down, round that famous hairpin and I'm pleased how smooth it feels as I line up on the left for the entrance to the tunnel.

Storming through that tunnel at full-chat is one of the most amazing, unbelievable experiences in motorsport. The noise is incredible, it sounds like gunshots as the drivers in front change gears.

The tunnel corner is flat at 260km, then you head down hill, the car is moving massively under braking and

you have to scrub off all that speed in time for the chicane.

Corner 10 is very fast and it's easy



to mess up the entry point. Then it's hard on the brakes again and into the slow chicane, Rascasse feels good, then there's a final difficult breaking point at the last corner then over the start/finish line. Unbelievable."

GP2 SERIES RACE REPORT MONACO (May 22-23)



iSport's Bruno Senna and Mike Conway of Trident Racing are the latest GP2 drivers to be added to the elite list of men who have won on the inimitable Monaco street circuit.

Pastor Maldonado had dominated practice and qualifying, taking pole in his Piquet Sports machine, but a mistake by the Venezuelan allowed Bruno Senna to snatch the lead going into the first corner. Maldonado harried the iSport driver right to the line but a combination of race craft and the tight slow corners of Monaco saw Senna to his first GP2 Series win of the season.

Conway also made good headway in the feature race and was within five corners of a well-deserved third place when he was taken out by Racing Engineering back-marker Javier Villa. The Briton's consolation was P1 on Saturday's sprint grid and he made the most of the opportunity, leading for all 30 laps of the race and eventually winning by a full 18 seconds over team-mate Ho Pin Tung. Super Nova's Alvaro Parente followed home in third for his best result since winning on the first day of the season in Barcelona.



iSport's Bruno Senna celebrates a race win that puts him at the top of the driver standings

Feature race (45 laps)

1	Bruno Senna	(iSport)
2	Pastor Maldonado	(Piquet)
3	Karun Chandhok	(iSport)
4	Adrian Valles	(BCN)
5	Alvaro Parente	(Super Nova)
6	Roldan Rodriguez	(FMS)
7	Ho Pin Tung	(Trident)
8	Mike Conway	(Trident)

Fastest lap Bruno Senna
Pole position Pastor Maldonado

Sprint race (30 laps)

1	Mike Conway	(Trident)
2	Ho Pin Tung	(Trident)
3	Alvaro Parente	(Super Nova)
4	Roldan Rodriguez	(FMS)
5	Bruno Senna	(iSport)
6	Andy Soucek	(DPR)
7	Jérôme D'Ambrosio	(Dams)
8	Yelmer Buurman	(Arden)

Fastest lap Mike Conway
Pole position Mike Conway

Drivers' points

1	Bruno Senna	24
2	Giorgio Pantano	24
3	Romain Grosjean	19
4	Alvaro Parente	19
5	Sébastien Buemi	16
6	Andreas Zuber	13
7	Vitaly Petrov	12
8	Pastor Maldonado	12

Teams' points

1	iSport International	35
2	Racing Engineering	27
3	Piquet Sports	25
4	ART Grand Prix	19
5	Super Nova Int.	19
6	Arden International	18
7	Trident Racing	17
8	Barwa Int. Campos	13

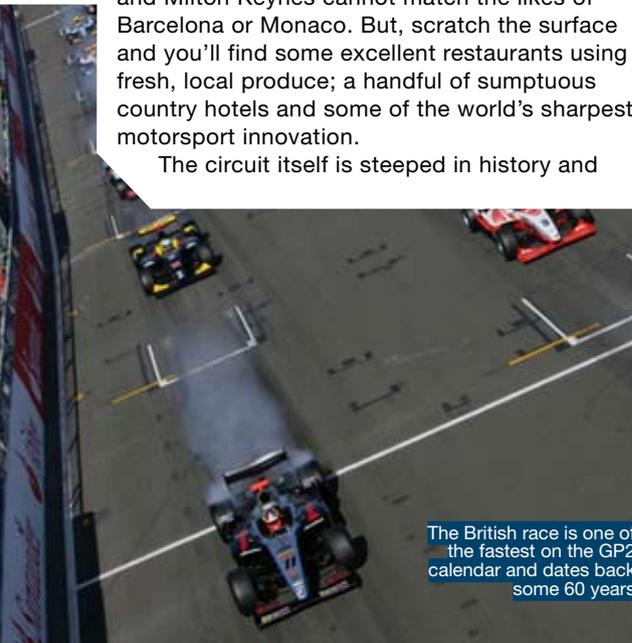
GP2 SERIES RACE PREVIEW SILVERSTONE, UK



Dates	5-6 July
Track length	5.141km (3.194 miles)
Race One	51 laps (5 July 9:00am)
Race Two	42 laps (6 July 9:00am)
Website	www.silverstone.co.uk

The circuit is situated in the sweeping, sleepy English countryside and even the most loyal Brit would admit the nearby towns of Northampton and Milton Keynes cannot match the likes of Barcelona or Monaco. But, scratch the surface and you'll find some excellent restaurants using fresh, local produce; a handful of sumptuous country hotels and some of the world's sharpest motorsport innovation.

The circuit itself is steeped in history and



The British race is one of the fastest on the GP2 calendar and dates back some 60 years

dates back to WWII when the site was home to an aircraft base. Sixty years later and three of Silverstone's straights still use the triangular layout of the old runways.

One of the oldest venues on the GP2 calendar, Silverstone has hosted victories by the likes of Juan-Manuel Fangio, Alberto Ascari, Jim Clark and Alain Prost.

During the 1960's the circuit strayed into popular culture when a car chase for the James Bond film, Thunderball, was filmed there, but it is best known by fans as the home of the British Grand Prix, and best loved by drivers for being a fast, satisfying circuit.

"I really enjoy driving this circuit, it's fast and flowing, like Spa," explains Trident Racing's Mike Conway. "I won every F3 here in 2006 and had a good run last year here in GP2, finishing second in the feature race and fifth in the sprint. So a healthy points haul. In fact, as a team it was our only podium last year.

"Being my home circuit, it's great to have all the family come along. I try and get as many passes as I can because realistically, it's the only race they can all go to, so it's my chance to show them what GP2 is all about."

STAY

Rub shoulders with all the top drivers at Whittlebury Hall, (www.whittleburyhall.co.uk) For something more modern head to Jurys Inn in neighbouring Milton Keynes (miltonkeyneshotels.jurysinns.com)

EAT

Brasserie Blanc (www.brasserieblanc.com) or Woburn's Black Horse pub (www.blackhorsewoburn.co.uk).

SEE

The concrete cows still graze by the road as you drive past Milton Keynes. Or, strap on your skis at the Xscape snowdome (www.xscape.co.uk).

DRIVER'S EYE VIEW - SILVERSTONE

At 25, British-born Mike Conway is already an old-hand around the Silverstone circuit so who better to talk through a lap of the home of British motorsport.

"The first sector is great fun to drive. From that start finish straight you are in 5th gear going into the corner, allow yourself a tiny stab on the brake, then you just attack, attack all the way. But you need to be careful not to step on to the run-off area, which can pull you off – it's really easy to get caught out.

Then you're into the Maggotts-Becketts-Chapel complex which again is really fast – you have to stay smooth through there, keeping as much speed as you can to give you a fast exit as you line up onto

the Hanger straight.

Down Hangar into Stowe, a fast entry then down two gears, and along a short straight before entering the quick left/right of Club.

It's easy to have difficulties with traction here, so the line is critical.

A dash down to Abbey, and there's nothing too technical here, just remember to use a lot of curb and watch out for that tricky bump on the exit, especially in the wet.

Bridge comes up quickly and is very fast, flat when it's dry, which means Priory arrives even faster.

Linking the two can be tricky, particularly because the apex of Priory is blind, so watch the entry.

There are two slow lefthanders which need you to brake as late as possible then it's bang on the power again all the way around Woodcote and onto the straight, time it all properly and you hit 6th gear before passing the start/finish line...then you get to do it all again!"

