

RENAULT BRIDGESTONE



# THE INSIDER

ISSUE 16 TURKEY // BRITAIN



# MUSCLING IN ON THE TITLES

Maldonado and ART race themselves into the mix for the GP2 Series 2009 titles



WE TALK TO  
ALBERTO VALERIO



RACE PREVIEWS  
GERMANY



DI GRASSI  
BACK ON THE TOP STEP

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ALL THE NEWS FROM AROUND THE PADDOCK

# CHANDHOK FIRES UP ORT

Ocean Racing Technology's Karun Chandhok has gelled quickly with his new team this year, but one issue where they may never see eye-to-eye is that of spicy food.

Chandhok decided to treat the Portuguese squad to dinner at his favourite local Indian restaurant during the Silverstone weekend, and the results were dramatic.

"The Kushboo restaurant in Brackley has got a Karun

Special on the menu," the Indian driver explained. "Every year I take my team there for dinner. So this year I took all the Portuguese down there, and they were all sweating about three bites into their starter! It was brilliant."

And what's in the Karun Special? "It's a naan bread with some mince meat and potatoes – it's like an Indian pizza. But apparently it is not to Portuguese tastes."



## SURPRISED WINNER

Alberto Valerio made a name for himself with his Silverstone feature race win...literally.

The Piquet GP driver's first podium in 27 GP2 starts came as a surprise to some of the photographers around the GP2 podium. The custom is to shout the driver's name and get his attention for that perfect shot, but a handful of the photographers were strangely quiet, admitting later they had to ask around to find out what Valerio's name was!

The extra attention took Valerio by surprise too, he was late for the GP2 press conference after landing pole position. "I didn't realise there was one," he exclaimed as nearby Bruno Senna pushed him towards the media tent.

## FROM THE BLOG...

The GP2 Series blog is starting a new series of driver interviews this month. The twist? The drivers are interviewing each other. It was the task of GP2's ever-intrepid blogger to catch up with the drivers so here's a taste of what he got up to:

Edoardo Mortara and Sergio Pérez were happy to sit in the GP2 Series truck for their interview, even though the air conditioning wasn't working at a stifling Istanbul circuit. But still, Edo and Sergio were in great form, bouncing off each other as they got stuck into the interview questions:

Edoardo Mortara: "Who is the shyest? I think that's me."

Sergio Perez: "Actually, I

think it's me: I'm really shy."

EM: "Really? Okay, so maybe it is you."

SP: "No, no, I'm sure it can be you: maybe I'm not really that shy..."

Fat Burner Racing Engineering's Lucas di Grassi and Dani Clos also enjoyed themselves in the truck, while trying not to say anything too bad about each other.

Their interview (in which Lucas reveals exclusively that he would cook Pot Noodles for Dani if he popped around for dinner, while the Spaniard makes a mental note to never put that to the test) will appear on the GP2 Series website later this season, so keep an eye on [www.gp2series.com](http://www.gp2series.com).



## NELSON SURVIVES HOTEL ACCIDENT

Durango's Nelson Panciatici may not have scored any points in Istanbul but the 20-year-old Frenchman did well to even make Saturday's starting grid after coming off second best in a clash with a hotel staircase...

Panciatici took a nasty fall on his way down to dinner on Friday, damaging his ankle. Having been rushed to hospital by his manager, doctors told him to stay off his feet.

Naturally, Panciatici's first question was: "Can I drive?"

"I guess that would be OK," came the response from the doctor, unaware of Panciatici's job. "If no-one else can drive you, that is."

## LATEST NEWS

### UNBEATABLY UNPREDICTABLE



The 2009 GP2 Series is just eight races old, but Alberto Valerio's victory in the Silverstone feature race made him the sixth different race winner already this year. The victory was Valerio's first in GP2 and the 23-year-old was delighted. "For me it's a dream

that's come true," said Valerio. "I hadn't won since 2005, and now I've found a way again."

His Piquet GP outfit had also not won a race since Spa in 2008, but at Silverstone became the fifth team this year to take one of their drivers to victory.

Another man to have topped the GP2 Series podium this season for the first time is Arden's Edoardo Mortara. The 22-year-old Italian became the latest in a long line of drivers who have won during their first season of GP2 racing when he picked up a win in the Barcelona sprint race. "I could not believe it! When I arrived at the end of the race, I could really not believe it," said Mortara after the race. "This weekend was really brilliant, and we just need to keep improving like this."

## MIXED FORTUNES



Pastor Maldonado had a weekend of extremes in Silverstone. The Venezuelan started his 20th GP2 event by putting his ART into the wall during free practice, and forcing a rebuild of the front right suspension.

Maldonado turned around his fortunes in Sunday's sprint race though. Starting from second on the grid he beat pole-sitter Andreas Zuber into turn one and led all 23 laps for his second win of the year.

## GOOD MONTH



ART

Combining the points from Istanbul and Silverstone, Nico Hülkenberg outscored everyone, while team-mate Maldonado took his second win of the year in Britain. The duo lie fourth and fifth overall, propelling ART into second in the teams' standings.



LUCAS DI GRASSI

After a disappointing start to the season, the talented Brazilian is coming back to his best with podium finishes at the last two rounds. He left Silverstone in the top five.



ALBERTO VALERIO

Winner of the Silverstone feature race, Valerio is enjoying the best spell in his GP2 career, backing up his Silverstone victory with points in both Turkish races.



VITALY PETROV

The Barwa Addax driver took 15 points from Istanbul – more than anyone else. But failure to score at Silverstone allowed team-mate Romain Grosjean to overtake him in the overall standings.



JÉRÔME D'AMBROSIO

GP2's only Belgian driver made a blistering start to the season, but has failed to score in the last two rounds and needs to get back on the pace if he is to emulate his GP2 Asia success.

## BAD MONTH

CLICK HERE FOR MORE NEWS

CLICK HERE FOR THE GP2 BLOG



# Q&A

## FIGHTING BACK: LUCAS DI GRASSI

**It wasn't the best of starts, but the sprint race win was a great way to finish in Turkey...**

Yeah. We were last by far in the first race, and it was an incredible comeback to win the second race. I was 21st or 22nd when the safety car was deployed and I overtook maybe 10 guys and finished ninth. One of the guys ahead of me got a penalty, which gave me pole, and I won the second race with the fastest lap. So it was a very positive weekend after a bad start.

### How important was it to get a result there?

In the first race we had mechanical problems with the brakes and other stuff, so it was frustrating to start like that. But it seems that the Addax team found their way between testing and the first race. They improved the car a lot. That was a surprise for me at the beginning of the season. My aim now is to catch them, and to do the best effort I can.

### Are you still thinking about the championship?

Of course. Now is the time to catch up. Every race is a race; you can lose a lot of points in one weekend of GP2...



Lucas di Grassi and Alfonso de Orleans celebrate in Turkey

## THE GALLERY



The Ocean Racing duo had a mixed weekend at Silverstone



Nelson Piquet celebrates Valerio's win, and seems to have grown a few extra arms for the occasion



Huge crowds watched every session at Silverstone



Nico Hülkenberg celebrates his first GP2 pole in Turkey



Andreas Zuber - not looking quite as cool as he thinks

## SILVERSTONE STATS

**10** **55'32.255**  
**POINTS** **VALERIO'S**  
FOR ALBERTO **WINNING TIME**  
**VALERIO** **IN FEATURE RACE**

**205.863KM/H**  
**NICO HÜLKENBERG'S**  
**AVERAGE SPEED**  
**SETTING THE FEATURE**  
**RACE FASTEST LAP**

# Q&A

## FIRST TIME WINNER: ALBERTO VALERIO



**You're now a GP2 feature race winner. Was this something you expected going into the 2009 season?**

Of course. You are always expecting some results like that. This year, we did a very good job in the tests over the winter – we were top five in the Barcelona test and the Paul Ricard test. I was just unlucky in Barcelona this year, and in Monaco, where I had a crash. But we were always quick. In Turkey I had a lot more fun than Silverstone because I started in P11 and overtook five cars. It was a good indication of the potential of the car and the package.

### Can you carry this on?

We'll be working on that! The team has worked really hard this year, the engineers have worked really hard, I am working really hard ... there is a lot of dedication. I'm far away from my family; I have been living in Europe since 2006, I train

every day, and each second I am just thinking about GP2. So I think if we just keep it going like this, we can get more results.

### It is a big sacrifice...

Yeah. It's pretty difficult. I don't know if people know how hard it is. All my family and friends are in Brazil and a flight is 13 hours, so I cannot see my parents any time that I want. It's something that I gave away to follow this dream.

### Do you feel like you're driving better this year?

For sure, for sure. I have an engineer who gives me a lot of good advice, so I just listen to what he says and put everything together, and I have definitely improved my driving skills.

## AWAY FROM THE TRACK

### DAVIDE RIGON SQUASH & CLUBBING



When he's not walking around the paddock in the most distinctive pair of trainers in GP2 (his metallic gold footwear takes some beating), Rigon quietly busies himself spearheading Trident Racing's campaign.

Away from racing, the Italian is equally low-key.

"What do I do when I am not at the track?" he ponders. "Nothing! I prepare for the race! Well okay, sometimes I go to a nightclub with my girlfriend. I don't like to drink too much, but if it is a Saturday night and I have no race, then sometimes we will do that. During the day we might go to the beach, or hang out with my friends.

"But I also like sport and play quite a lot of different kinds, particularly racquet sports like tennis and squash. I have a personal trainer and we incorporate those into my training quite a lot. Squash, especially – I'm good at that! It's really useful preparation for racing, because it makes you faster and forces you to develop quicker reactions – something very important once you get into a race car.

"Both my trainer and I are competitive, so whenever we're on the court it's always a good fight. We're pretty evenly matched though, so I'll keep practicing so I can beat him a bit more often."

[CLICK HERE FOR DAVIDE'S PROFILE](#)

[CLICK HERE FOR RACE IMAGES](#)

[CLICK HERE FOR ALBERTO'S PROFILE](#)



THE GP2 SERIES HAS VISITED THE NÜRBURGRING THREE TIMES IN ITS HISTORY, MOST RECENTLY IN 2007

## RACE PREVIEWS

### GERMANY

NÜRBURGRING (JULY 10-12)

TRACK LENGTH  
5.148KM

2007 FEATURE RACE WINNER  
TIMO GLOCK

2007 SPRINT RACE WINNER  
JAVIER VILLA

2007 track temp  
23°

2007 race weather  
19°



**2007 sprint race:** Kazuki Nakajima puts an excellent move on Pastor Maldonado into turn one and spends the rest of the race hunting down Kohei Hirate. Hirate holds on to second, finishing behind Javier Villa, who leads from start to finish for his second win of the season.

**2007 sprint race:** A move from Giorgio Pantano into the Michelin-Kurve sends Lucas di Grassi over the curbs, causing collisions and spins behind.

KM/H 170  
GEAR 4

KM/H 260  
GEAR 6

KM/H 115  
GEAR 2

KM/H 121  
GEAR 2

KM/H 93  
GEAR 2

KM/H 148  
GEAR 3

KM/H 95  
GEAR 2

KM/H 160  
GEAR 4

KM/H 198  
GEAR 4

KM/H 79  
GEAR 2

KM/H 146  
GEAR 3

KM/H 260  
GEAR 6

KM/H 206  
GEAR 5

KM/H 240  
GEAR 5

KM/H 103  
GEAR 3

KM/H 114  
GEAR 2

**2007 feature race:** Having started from 14th, Trident's Kohei Hirate passes team-mate Pastor Maldonado in the closing laps for fifth.

**2007 feature race:** Series leader Luca Filippi collides with ART's Sébastien Buemi at turn one and is forced to retire from the race.



### STATS

FASTEST  
AVERAGE  
SPEED  
ALEXANDRE PREMAT  
2006  
183.523km/h

#### Drivers' standings

1	Romain Grosjean	40
2	Vitaly Petrov	33
3	Pastor Maldonado	26
4	Nico Hülkenberg	26
5	Lucas di Grassi	24
6	Jérôme D'Ambrosio	18
7	Alberto Valerio	16
8	Andreas Zuber	14

#### Teams' standings

1	Barwa Addax Team	73
2	ART Grand Prix	52
3	Fat Burner Racing Eng.	24
4	DAMS	21
5	Super Nova Racing	20
6	Telmex Arden Int.	16
7	Piquet GP	16
8	FMSI	14

17 POINTS  
HIGHEST  
SCORE FROM THE  
NÜRBURGRING  
FEATURE RACE  
LEWIS HAMILTON  
2006  
1'40.983  
FASTEST LAP  
ALEXANDRE  
PREMAT 2006



## DRIVER'S EYE VIEW

JAVIER VILLA  
ON THE NÜRBURGRING

"I really like the Nürburgring, and won there the last time we went in 2007.

"I enjoy it. It's nice to have some gradient changes – that makes it a bit different to a lot of the new circuits that are just big and flat.

"I understand that the new circuits are a lot safer, but there are a couple of tracks, like Monaco, that you really enjoy because they are a change, and the

Nürburgring is a bit like that.

"Using the new cars will be quite different. There are some quicker corners, and with the new engine, we have more traction in

**"With the new car, the lap times will be a lot faster"**

the slower corners, so there is more acceleration. The times will be a lot faster.

"The best place for overtaking is turn one, and in the chicane at the end of the long straight. It's hard braking there, so you can try, and see what happens!

"But the best thing about going to the Nürburgring is having the opportunity to see the old Nordschleife circuit – that's amazing."

CLICK HERE FOR  
JAVIER'S PROFILE