

RENAULT **BRIDGESTONE**

THE INSIDER

ISSUE 17 GERMANY



THE ART OF WINNING

Maximum points at his home circuit leaves ART's Nico Hulkenberg on top of the drivers' championship

 <p>WE TALK TO ANDREAS ZUBER</p>	 <p>GP3 TESTING FASTER THAN F3?</p>	 <p>VAN DER GARDE ON LIFE OUTSIDE GP2</p>	<p>SUBSCRIBE FOR FREE</p>	<p>DOWNLOAD PDF</p>
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ALL CHANGE ON THE GRID



Two drivers took their place on the 2009 GP2 Series grid for the first time in Germany last weekend, with Franck Perera joining Michael Herck at DPR and Rodolfo Gonzalez lining up alongside Ricardo Teixeira at Trident Racing.

Perera returned to the series for the first time since 2006, when he contested the season with DAMS and finished a memorable second in the feature race at Monaco. It was a tough comeback for the Frenchman, who retired from

the first race and finished 16th in the sprint.

But for Gonzalez, Germany marked his GP2 Series debut. Not having the opportunity to test prior to the weekend worked against the 23-year-old Venezuelan, but an inspired switch to slicks in the wet sprint race gave him the chance to trade fastest lap times with Alberto Valerio.

Perera returned to GP2 after a three-year absence



Romain Grosjean gives the new GP3 car a run-out at the Paul Ricard circuit

GP3 TEST

The new GP3 car broke cover for the first time in a test at Paul Ricard last week. Romain Grosjean took the wheel, declaring the car to be "seriously impressive". GP3 will be launched as the prime feeder series for GP2 next year.

GP2 PADDOCK GETS A REVAMP

Getting the inside line on the excitement of the 2009 GP2 season has just become even easier following the launch of a whole range of new features on the 'GP2 Paddock' section of the Series website.

The Paddock remains the home of the ever-popular GP2 Blog, but the archive is now

completely searchable, meaning you can find all the posts about your favourite driver with just a few key strokes. A new fan poll has also been added, giving you the chance to have your say on the things that matter in GP2 every week.

In keeping with the new, more interactive feel, fans are invited

to submit their own suggestions for poll topics. RSS and Atom functions also ensure you never miss a trick with the latest news.

So, if you want to know what's really happening in the GP2 world, the Paddock is the only place to be.

[CLICK HERE TO VISIT THE SITE](#)



[CLICK HERE FOR LATEST STANDINGS](#) →

LATEST NEWS

SOFT FOCUS

At the Nurburgring, Bridgestone brought its soft compound tyre to the track for the first time in 2009. One stop softer than the tyre used last year, it will next appear at Valencia.



GP2 BACK ON EUROSPORT

British TV coverage of the GP2 Series has returned to its home at British Eurosport, with coverage on the digital channel starting with last weekend's round at the Nurburgring.

The broadcaster has signed a 2.5 year deal with the Series, ensuring that fans can catch every race from now to the end of 2011.

Dave Kerr, director of British Eurosport,



said: "We're delighted to have this prestigious series back on British Eurosport, and to be able to ensure that fans can see the rest of this season's races!"
Tune in on Sky channel 410 and Virgin Media channel 521.

LIVE TIMINGS

Pos	Driver	Gap	S1	S2	S3	Bestlap	Laps
1	P. MALDONADO		1:18.215	1:18.215	1:18.215	1:18.215	1
2	A. VILLA	0:08	1:26.2	1:18.4	1:18.4	1:18.215	1
3	R. RODRIGUEZ	0:16	1:21.1	1:18.1	1:18.1	1:18.215	1
4	L. FELIPPI	0:18	1:20.8	1:18.1	1:18.1	1:18.215	1
5	M. VAN DER MEER	0:20	1:20.8	1:18.1	1:18.1	1:18.215	1
6	R. DE VREEDE	0:22	1:20.8	1:18.1	1:18.1	1:18.215	1
7	M. VAN DER MEER	0:24	1:20.8	1:18.1	1:18.1	1:18.215	1
8	M. VAN DER MEER	0:26	1:20.8	1:18.1	1:18.1	1:18.215	1
9	M. VAN DER MEER	0:28	1:20.8	1:18.1	1:18.1	1:18.215	1
10	M. VAN DER MEER	0:30	1:20.8	1:18.1	1:18.1	1:18.215	1

GP2 is a fast-moving sport, but if you want to keep up, visit www.GP2series.com during practice, qualifying and the race for all the latest live timings

GOOD MONTH

NICO HULKENBERG
Pole and two wins on the ART rookie's home track, and the lead in the championship, could things get any better? A titanic battle over the second half of the season awaits.

PIQUET GP
Alberto Valerio's win at Silverstone was a surprise, but Roldan Rodriguez's pace at the Nurburgring suggested it was no fluke. Victory eluded the Spaniard, but his performance in Germany point to further opportunities as the season progresses.

KAMUI KOBAYASHI
In Germany, he scored his first points since Barcelona. And after his team-mate's great results at the start of the season, Kamui is pushing hard to put his team back to the top of the grid.

BARWA ADDAX
A difficult qualifying run, two penalties, a spin and a mechanical failure ensured that Barwa left Germany with little to show for their efforts.

iSPORT
iSport is a proud team with an enviable history, so it is in uncharted territory with its current points drought. Diego Nunes was on target in Germany before being hit by Pastor Maldonado.

BAD MONTH

[CLICK HERE FOR FULL RACE STATS](#)



Q&A

TESTING TIMES: DIDIER PERRIN

Q: How did the GP3 car perform in its first test?

A: We were very happy with the first test. The programme, as always for a new car, was a shakedown, because there are things that you can't do in the factory. But we were able to see a little bit of the car's potential in terms of performance. We have confirmed all of our expectations, and from the performance simulation that we have made, we can already say it has delivered.

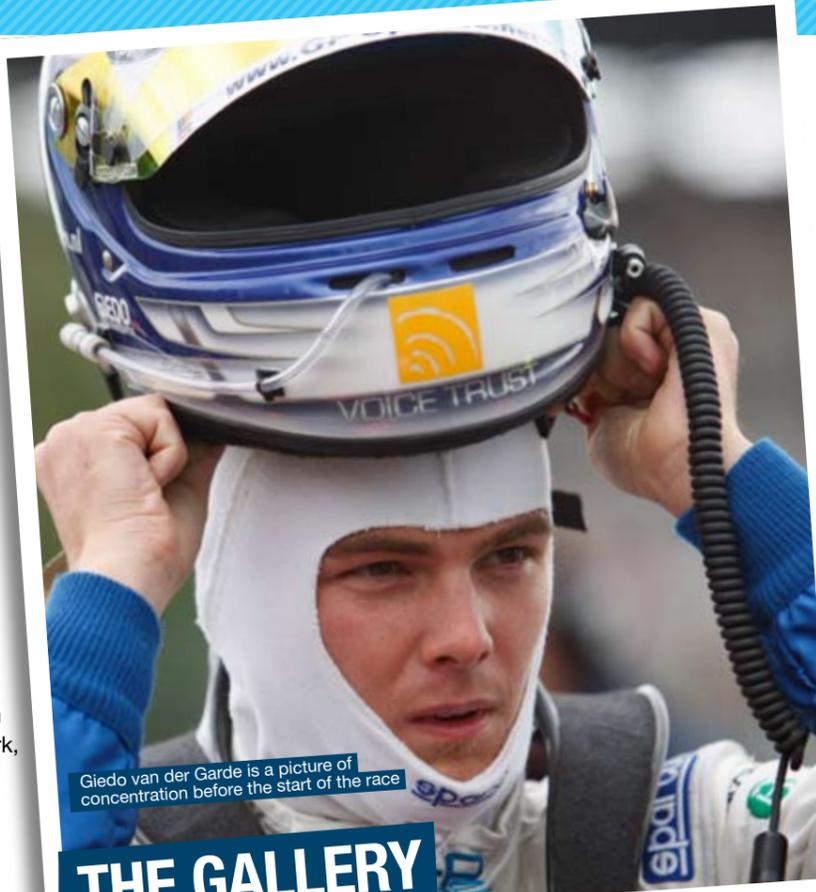
Q: Is aerodynamics the area you need to finalise?

A: Mainly defining the level of downforce and the kind of tyres. We have a big testing programme with Pirelli to understand how the tyres work and also to define the three types of compounds that we will use in 2010.

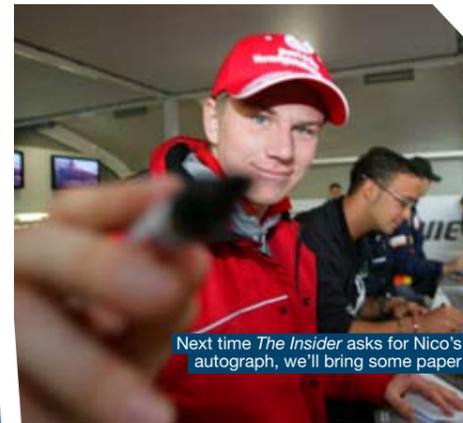
We will aim for a compound as close as possible to the optimum for each circuit. So far it is going very well.

Q: How fast will the car be compared to similar series?

A: It will definitely be faster than Formula 3. That's the benchmark, so we are not comparing it to anything else.



Giedo van der Garde is a picture of concentration before the start of the race



Next time *The Insider* asks for Nico's autograph, we'll bring some paper



Andreas Zuber bubbles over on the podium

THE GALLERY



It must be glove: though why is anyone's guess



Hulkenberg celebrates a double at his home track



Romain Grosjean gets into the groove with a little pre-race music



On a rain-lashed weekend, Kamui Kobayashi wraps up warm

AWAY FROM THE TRACK



GIEDO VAN DER GARDE iSPORT

GP2 drivers would like you to think they spend every waking moment away from the circuit immersed in training. Although most are supremely fit, they still find time to indulge in interests which don't involve breaking sweat. But not iSport's Giedo van der Garde.

"I train!" he shrugs. "No, really, that's what I do. I've just started with [motorsport fitness trainer] Erwin Goellner, and that's actually all I am doing during the week – training and sleeping. Sometimes of course I do something nice with my friends or girlfriend, dinner or whatever, but the rest is just hard work.

"Erwin has specific things for drivers, like a special machine for your neck, for your arms and for your legs. I was there last week, and I will be there next week again. I leave from home on Monday and drive out to Austria – it's about 600km – then stay there the week to do training.

"When I started training I didn't like it, but as you do it more often, you enjoy it. You have to make it fun, because some parts are tough. There are other times when you play squash, tennis... a friend of mine has a boat so we'll go wakeboarding for two hours – that's also good training because your legs blow up! So we do all kinds of things."

GERMANY STATS

20

POINTS FOR NICOLAS HULKENBERG

1m:41.119

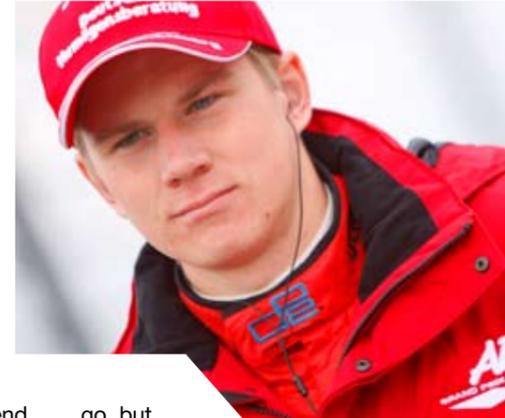
MORTARA'S FASTEST LAP IN FEATURE RACE

0.089 SECS

GAP BETWEEN HULKENBERG AND RODRIGUEZ IN QUALIFYING

Q&A

HOME COMFORTS: NICO HULKENBERG



Q: There can't be a much better feeling than getting pole and two wins at your home track?

A: It has been a perfect weekend – you can't get more points than we did. It is inspiring us even more, and keeps the motivation up to work as hard as we can, and that's what we will do.

Q: The first race seemed to go to plan – you started from pole and led all the way...

A: Yeah, it was mainly down to the good start. Keeping ahead of Roldan [Rodriguez] was important because he had a slightly better start than me. But after the first lap I recognised how good my car was. I had a very good set-up, and I just used the potential of it.

Q: And now you are leading the championship...

A: It's close, isn't it? We still have the second half of the season to

go, but I think the Series is a bit more open now.

We have closed the gap from the beginning of the season when the others were very strong. We had a few issues in Barcelona, but we have improved a lot and it's nice.

Q: What has been the main reason for the improvement?

A: We have a great team spirit and harmony. Pastor [Maldonado] and I work together very well. Also, we did a lot of work with the engineers after the first couple of races where we struggled with the tyre degradation. We went to the workshop and put a lot of effort and work into trying to improve on that side, and I think we really did.

[CLICK HERE FOR VAN DER GARDE PROFILE](#)

[CLICK HERE FOR RACE IMAGES](#)

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



PAST GP2 RACE WINNERS AT THE HUNGARORING INCLUDE CURRENT F1 DRIVERS NELSON PIQUET AND SEBASTIEN BUEMI

RACE PREVIEW

HUNGARY

HUNGARORING (JULY 25-26)

TRACK LENGTH
4.381KM

2008 FEATURE RACE WINNER
LUCAS DI GRASSI

2008 SPRINT RACE WINNER
SEBASTIEN BUEMI

2008 track temp
40°

2008 race weather
30°

2008 race two: Lucas di Grassi earns a drive-through penalty after hitting Mike Conway at Turn 1. The Brazilian finishes tenth.

KM/H 93
GEAR 2

KM/H 209
GEAR 5

KM/H 148
GEAR 3

KM/H 139
GEAR 2

KM/H 105
GEAR 2

KM/H 224
GEAR 5

KM/H 171
GEAR 4

KM/H 108
GEAR 2

KM/H 243
GEAR 5

KM/H 151
GEAR 3

KM/H 100
GEAR 2

KM/H 249
GEAR 6

KM/H 113
GEAR 2

KM/H 132
GEAR 3



2008 race one: Giorgio Pantano (above, front) is hit by Romain Grosjean (back) at Turn 5. Pantano, the series leader, finishes out of the points, opening up the championship.

STATS

LUCAS DI GRASSI
AVERAGE SPEED
AT HUNGARORING
2008
170.905km/h

Driver standings

1 Nico Hulkenberg	46
2 Romain Grosjean	42
3 Vitaly Petrov	41
4 Lucas di Grassi	26
5 Pastor Maldonado	26
6 Andreas Zuber	20
7 Jérôme D'Ambrosio	18
8 Alberto Valerio	16

Team standings

1 Barwa Addax Team	83
2 ART Grand Prix	72
3 Fat Burner Racing Eng.	26
4 Super Nova Racing	25
5 DAMS	25
6 Piquet GP	24
7 FMSI	20
8 Ocean Racing Tech.	17

DRIVER'S EYE VIEW



ANDREAS ZUBER
FMSI

I love the Hungaroring, I've always been very lucky there. I finished third with iSport a couple of years ago and second last year with Piquet. So I'm hoping to be on the podium again this year with FMSI.

It will be tough this year in terms of tyres, because we have the softer compound. The second-last corner, the long left-hander, is very hard on tyres, and the last corner

is similar. Also, it's often hot there, and if that is the case again this year, it will make things even harder for us. I hope it is a bit cooler, but I've a feeling that it's going

"It's often very hot in Hungary. I hope it's a bit cooler this year"

to be very hot again.

There are a few good places for overtaking. One of the best is Turn 1, because the main straight is quite long. You arrive in sixth gear and change down to second, and you just have to be careful with your braking point and your exit.

There's also the chance to overtake at the long left and right handers after the chicane, as well as Turn 14.

20 POINTS HIGHEST SCORE FROM THE HUNGARORING FEATURE RACE NELSON PIQUET 2006
1'27.578 FASTEST LAP SEBASTIEN BUEMI 2008

CLICK HERE FOR ZUBER'S PROFILE