

RENAULT BRIDGESTONE

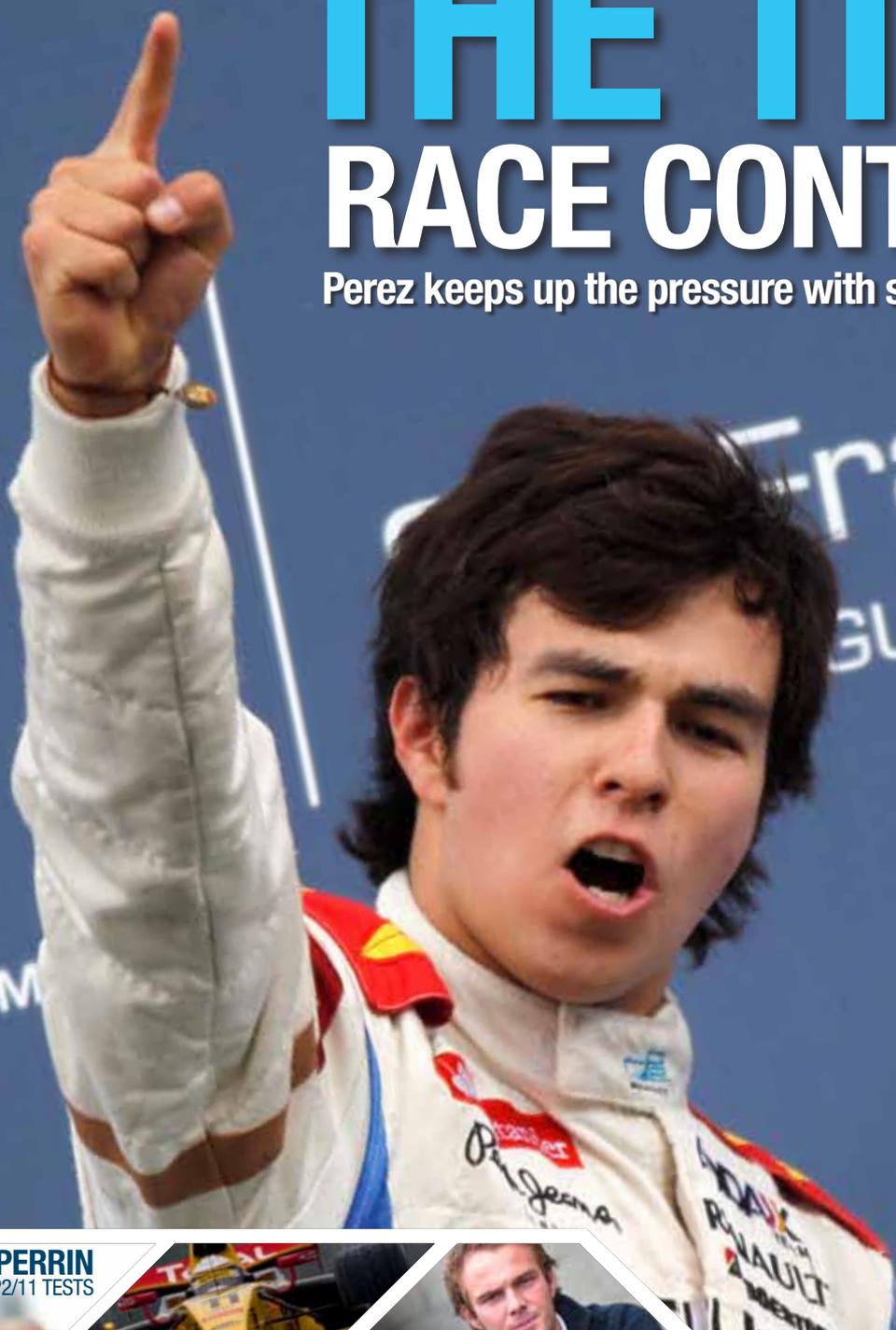


THE INSIDER

ISSUE 33 BELGIUM

THE TITLE RACE CONTINUES

Perez keeps up the pressure with sprint race win at Spa



PERRIN
GP2/11 TESTS



DAMS
ROLLERCOASTER



VAN DER GARDE
MONZA PREVIEW

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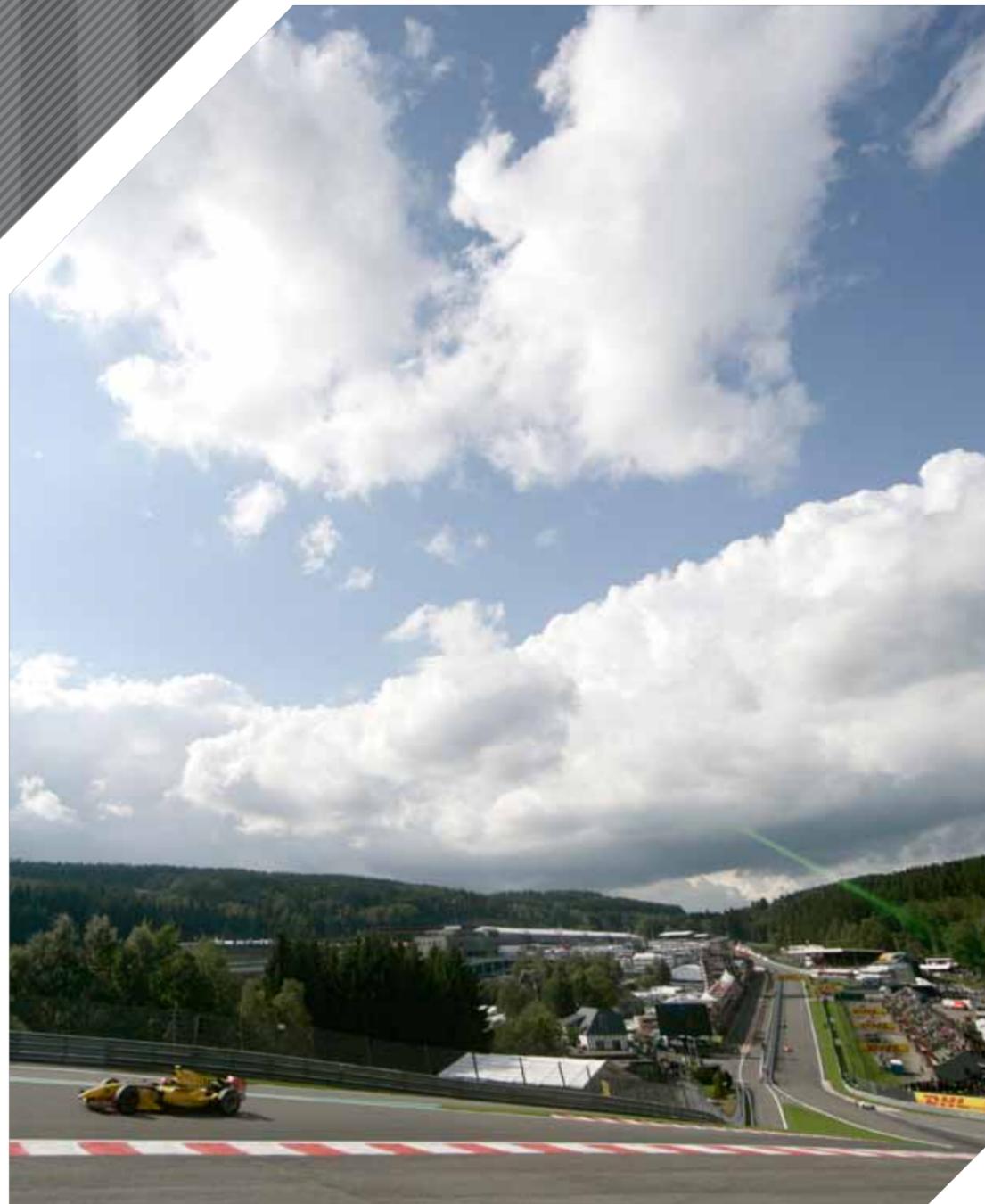
DAMS RIDE THE ROLLERCOASTER

Just like the layout of the Spa-Francorchamps circuit, the DAMS team's race weekend was up and down. With Ho-Pin Tung sitting out the race, Romain Grosjean returned and Jerome d'Ambrosio was hoping for a strong weekend at his home circuit.

The Belgian secured pole position for the feature race, with his team-mate in fifth place. D'Ambrosio fought to get past Maldonado only to break down, with Romain fighting up to third.

"I'm very sorry for Jerome because he did a very good race and yesterday made a very good qualifying," said Romain. "He deserved to win today, but at the end we were on the podium, and this is good for the team."

Jerome was reflective after the race; happy with pole, the lead and fastest lap, but hoping for his luck to turn. In the sprint race, he retired again, while Romain fought back for another point for sixth. Rollercoaster indeed.



BIANCHI RETURNS

After their accident in Budapest, it was unclear whether Ho-Pin Tung and Jules Bianchi would make it to Spa. Ho-Pin's return will wait, but Jules was back on the grid in Belgium, where *The GP2 Insider* caught up with him.

"I'm feeling good and really happy. We did a good job between Hungary and here, and

I have had no problems with my back this weekend," he said.

"I relaxed for ten days and then started working – it was not easy to get back to it! I have to thank my trainer Andre at Ferrari. He came to my house for eight days, then I went to Italy to train with him. Without him there is no way I'd be here."



SPA REPORT

Spa-Francorchamps saw the championship battle hold station, with one victory each for title rivals Pastor Maldonado and Sergio Pérez. In the feature race, the Venezuelan took advantage of Jerome d'Ambrosio's mechanical problems to record his sixth win of the season, but series returnee Alvaro Parente pushed him all the way, ahead of fellow returnee Romain Grosjean.

In the sprint race, Pérez made the most of his front row start, easily dispatching polesitter Rodolfo González to take a lead that would not be relinquished throughout the race, despite three safety car periods in the tricky weather conditions.

Team-mate Giedo van der Garde pushed up from ninth to second at the flag, with Parente rounding out his return with another fine podium finish.

Maldonado has promised to win the championship in Monza; Pérez has said he will dominate at his favourite circuit. Only time will tell...



FROM THE BLOG

"The weather was causing its usual havoc. The rain started just as the cars got into the pitlane for practice after a typically sunny session for F1. It then fell a little heavier as the cars went out on track, then dropped like an anvil shortly afterwards. When Fabio Leimer slihtered into the wall at Blanchimont, the red flags came out and we watched the clock tick away to zero.

"Naturally, the sun came out again for the F1, but obviously the rain started up again just as our cars came into the pitlane. 'Bernie pays for the sun for F1, why can't we?' I sighed to Bruno Michel as we watched the teams' umbrellas get blown across the cars. 'You don't understand,' the series organiser smirked. 'We pay for the rain... it's much more fun that way.'"

GOOD MONTH



PASTOR MALDONADO

A sixth consecutive win in the feature race at Spa makes Pastor GP2's most successful driver ever. A seventh win in Monza will give him the title



BARWA ADDAX

A double podium, Sergio Perez's fourth win in the sprint race, and only eight points behind Rapax in the championship, Barwa can be pleased with their weekend



DAMS

A rollercoaster weekend, which saw DAMS take a pole position, a podium finish and a point, but which also contained two DNFs



ART

Jules Bianchi returned after an injury sustained in Hungary, but that proved to be the highlight of their weekend. That's just two points scored in the last four races for ART; well below their usual standard



OCEAN

It never rains, but it pours was an apt phrase to sum up Ocean Racing's weekend. Another zero points at a soaking wet Spa means they haven't scored a point since the first round in Barcelona

BAD MONTH



THE GALLERY

Q&A

SERGIO PÉREZ BARWA ADDAX

Q: Another win in the sprint race at Spa... so how would you rate your season so far?

Sergio Pérez: Really up and down! We should be fighting closer with Pastor [Maldonado], but there is no time to look back: I'm doing the best I can, and I'll keep going to try and catch him.

Q: What have been your highlights and low points?

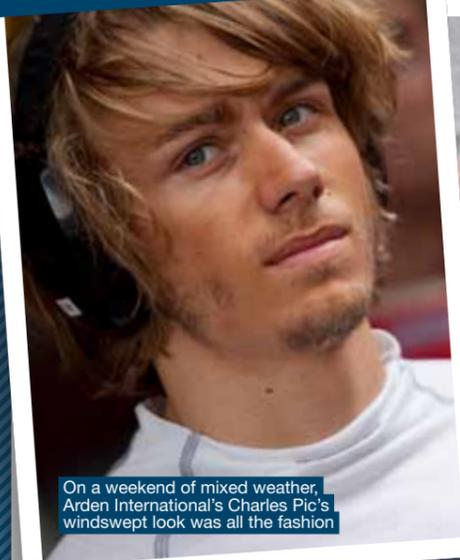
SP: The highlights have been my wins in Monaco and Hockenheim, which was a particularly special win. Silverstone was also a good race, but the low points were



definitely Turkey, where I got disqualified, and Valencia where Pastor hit me in the first corner when I was on pole!

Q: Pastor keeps on winning, how do you think he does it?

SP: Pastor has done a great job this season. He has six wins already and has not made many mistakes so far, but I believe we should be a lot closer to him, or even leading the championship! This is racing, and I hope that the good luck can come back to us.



On a weekend of mixed weather, Arden International's Charles Pic's windswept look was all the fashion



Alvaro Parente looks relaxed after a successful return to the GP2 Series with Scuderia Coloni



A feature race win at Spa, his sixth in a row, means Pastor Maldonado is GP2's most successful driver ever... no wonder the bubbly was out!

AWAY FROM THE TRACK

OLIVER TURVEY iSPORT



"I spend a lot of time training, obviously. Most days I'm in the gym, out running or on the bike, but I actually enjoy all of that. I've always liked doing sport and keeping fit and healthy.

I also normally go down to the iSport factory after each race and spend a day there debriefing with my engineer, going over things we did right and whether we might be able to do things better.

Then we do some preparation for the upcoming round, go through past data

and look at what they've done in past years and what we can learn from that.

I use the iSport simulator, too – they just started developing it last year, and it's pretty good. I particularly use it for the tracks I don't know. It is a good tool to give you a feeling for the way the track flows; it gives you a rhythm before you get there.

It probably saves you a couple of laps in terms of learning the track, which is particularly valuable when track time is so limited."



When he asked for the full Spa treatment, this probably wasn't quite what Adrian Zaugg had in mind



Jerome d'Ambrosio checks his glovebox for an umbrella after Friday's wet qualifying session



Handshakes all round for Barwa Addax team-mates Sergio Pérez and Giedo van der Garde after Sunday's race

SPA STATS

14 LAPS LED BY PARENTE

215.481: AVERAGE SPEED OF SERGIO PEREZ'S FASTEST LAP (SPRINT RACE)

0.243s

WINNING MARGIN IN FEATURE RACE BETWEEN PASTOR MALDONADO AND ALVARO PARENTE



Q&A

DIDIER PERRIN TECHNICAL DIRECTOR

Q: The test programme for the new car is still underway, how's it going so far?

Didier Perrin: We have done a lot of tests to validate the car itself, and have started an intensive programme involving Pirelli, GP2 and F1.

In the last test, we ran the same tyres, and the behaviour of the tyres is very similar. This is very

good news, as it means that potentially we can run the same tyres as F1.

I'm happy because we've obtained the results predicted in the wind tunnel at Dallara, and also that reliability is there. In Mugello we achieved more than 1,000km, almost three race distances per day twice in a row.

Q: What are the next steps in the GP2 Series programme?

DP: We will concentrate on the tyre programme: the car is not frozen yet but we are already ahead of schedule, and this helps us to concentrate our efforts on tyre development.

CLICK HERE FOR OLIVER'S PROFILE

CLICK HERE FOR LATEST NEWS



NICO HÜLKENBERG SECURED THE 2009 GP2 TITLE AT MONZA, DESPITE NOT WINNING EITHER OF THE TWO RACES

RACE PREVIEW

ITALY

MONZA (11-12 SEPTEMBER)

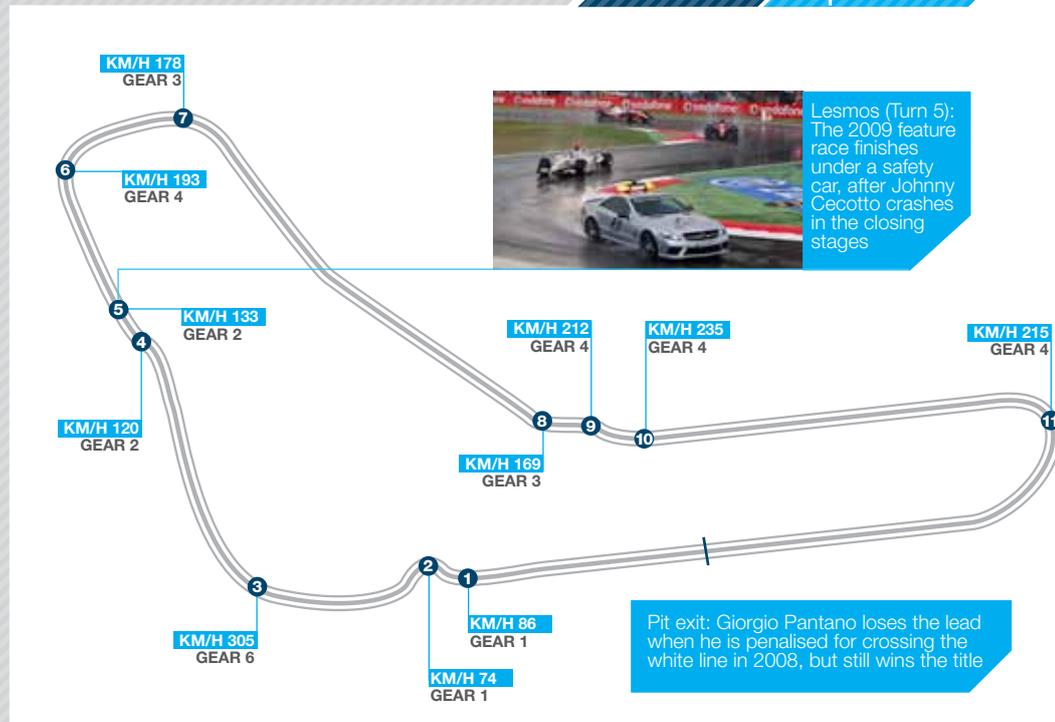
TRACK LENGTH
5.793KM

2009 FEATURE RACE WINNER
GIEDO VAN DER GARDE (iSPORT)

2009 SPRINT RACE WINNER
LUIZ RAZIA (SCUDERIA COLONI)

2009 track temp
36°

2009 race weather
27°



Lesmos (Turn 5): The 2009 feature race finishes under a safety car, after Johnny Cecotto crashes in the closing stages

Pit exit: Giorgio Pantano loses the lead when he is penalised for crossing the white line in 2008, but still wins the title

TYRE CHOICE: MONZA



Hirohide Hamashima, director of Bridgestone Motorsport Tyre Development

“With speeds of up to 315km/h along the start/finish straight, Monza is the quickest venue the GP2 Series visits. Combined with the chicanes, this means it’s a real challenge. In terms of tyres, Bridgestone’s hard specification GP2 Potenza racing slick is the most suitable compound, mainly because of its greater heat durability capabilities. High-speed changes of direction at turns three, eight and eleven put a high load on the tyres, making Monza a test of driver tyre management.”

DRIVER'S EYE VIEW

GIEDO VAN DER GARDE
BARWA ADDAX



Monza is one of the best circuits we go to, along with Spa. It’s a really, really nice track. It’s very high-speed and you spend a lot of time at full throttle. At Monza, it is important to be really strong under braking and you need a good line through the chicanes. Then of course

you have Parabolica, the final corner, which is special. It’s a ‘flow’ circuit. If you brake late and are good with your timing, and are good over the kerbs and get a good exit, that’s what counts, because all of the corners lead onto long, fast straights.

It’s a tricky track where you can find quite a lot of time in some corners. There are a few places where you can overtake, particularly in Turn 1 and the second chicane. If you’re good there then you can do two very good races – so let’s hope we do!

STATS

1m30.007s
VITALY PETROV'S
POLE TIME
IN 2009

201.918km/h
AVERAGE SPEED OF
EDOARDO MORTARA'S
FASTEST LAP



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

