

The Chequered F1ag



A Formula One blog by Stephen English
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Malaysia shows how exciting 2011 could be

WHILE the season opening Australian Grand Prix left many fans wondering what differences the new for 2011 Drag Reduction System (DRS) and Pirelli tyres had actually made to the racing last weekend's Malaysian Grand Prix showed that the coming season of action could be one to savour.

Last season will rightly be long remembered for its enthralling title battle but the actual racing left a lot to be desired between the leading drivers with overtaking between the top drivers still confined to only a handful of moves over the course of the season.

There was numerous reasons why overtaking was such a rare occurrence last year with aerodynamics and tyre performance two of the primary reasons. Malaysia though gave us a clear indication that the coming year could produce some incredibly exciting races. The DRS looks likely to afford drivers of the opportunity of making a successful move under braking following a long straight while the Pirelli tyres are clearly much less durable than last year's Bridgestone rubber.

While the circuit in Melbourne did not play to the strengths of DRS, a fast corner leading on to a short straight into another fast corner, the Sepang Circuit is almost tailor made to guarantee overtaking moves using the device. Throughout the race there were numerous successful manoeuvres into turn one and by the end of the race internet sites were bombarded with fans saying that "overtaking is now too easy and frequent with DRS." Formula 1 fans are a very challenging group to keep pleased!

It was clear that the DRS greatly assisted in allowing drivers to make overtaking moves but the FIA can change the way that the drivers are allowed to use the device. The governing body can change the size of the wing opening, thus decreasing the speed differential, or they can change the length of the zone in which DRS can be used.

While it is clear that the system is far from perfect it is also perfectly clear that it can be exceptionally successful in creating overtaking opportunities without taking all the skill out of overtaking a rival. The majority of successful moves still required drivers to be right on the ragged edge, as they should be. The DRS is a facilitator of overtaking, not a guarantee of a successful move.

Pirelli have met their targets

Malaysia also showed just how successful Pirelli has been in developing a tyre that is degradable and will ensure that races are not dominated by the entire field making just a single visit to the pitlane for fresh tyres; as per the requests of fans, teams and the FIA.

There was some variety throughout the field with the majority of runners making it through the 56 laps with three stops. There were also numerous exceptions to this rule with Mark Webber recovering well from a terrible start to finish fourth having made four stops and Kamui Kobayashi having a trademark action packed, two stop race to an eventful seventh place finish.

Webber's performance was probably the drive of the day. The Australian made a poor start when the lights went out but a KERS problem on his Red Bull meant that he was effectively defenceless on the run down to the first corner and Webber fell to tenth at the end of the opening lap. The Australian mounted a spirited recovery drive to take fourth at the flag but this race pointed to some short comings that Red Bull need to address.

Reliability still a concern for Red Bull

This was the second races in a row that Red Bull had an issue with KERS. In Australia the team decided against using the system following a failure to prove its reliability. They knew that it was crucial to use KERS in Malaysia, precisely because of the problems that Webber had on the run down to turn one.

While Webber had to persevere without the system throughout the race his teammate, Sebastian Vettel, could only use KERS for the first half of the race before also suffering reliability woes with it. Luckily for the team Vettel was able to use it off the line and convert his pole position into an early lead. The reigning champion opened enough of a lead while his system was functional to take the win ahead of Jenson Button and the impressive Nick Heidfeld.

Even though Red Bull and Vettel have won both races the question marks hanging over their reliability is of concern to the team as is the fact that Webber suffered worse tyre wear than the majority of leading runners. His four stops were not a strategic decision to move through the field, they were a necessity because of his inability to preserve the tyres.

In Melbourne Red Bull qualified on pole position by almost one second but in the race the McLaren of Lewis Hamilton was able to maintain his pace for the majority of the race because he could use his tyres better for the duration of stints. While the team has done enough to win both races it is clear that they are having issues with the new Pirelli tyres and if their rivals can get their act together for a full race we could see some fireworks at the front of the field.

China set to provide more excitement

Could this weekend's Chinese Grand Prix offer that opportunity? The Shanghai circuit has been kind to the leading contenders in the past with Alonso, Hamilton, Vettel and Button each having tasted the victory champagne at the circuit. Shanghai has generally encouraged close racing with the margin of victory generally about six seconds. With this close racing at the front and with DRS set to be effective once more this weekend there is the potential for another exciting race.

Since Formula 1's first visit in 2004 China has provided some very exciting races. In 2006 it produced the most recent of Michael Schumacher's 91 victories. In 2007 in wet conditions Lewis Hamilton came into the pits leading the title but spun into the gravel trap and retirement. The lost points were crucial in his attempts to win the title as a rookie. Last year's race saw Jenson Button storm through the field to take the victory in one of the most exciting races of 2010. The big question now is can this weekend produce a similar excitement?

HOCKEY Dundalk Grammar School

Grammar girls bring home the silverware

DUNDALK Grammar School's girls' hockey teams have had a very successful season.

Four out of the six girls teams within the school made it to the Meath and District league finals with the other two teams missing out on narrow margins.

The first year girls came up against Mercy Navan School in their final. The game was tight from start to finish. Neither could break the deadlock in normal or extra time which meant the game went to penalty strokes.

Dundalk keeper Katie Saurin was the hero saving four of Mercy's five penalty strokes. Georgia Wilson and Clara Vallely scored the winning penalty strokes for Dundalk Grammar.

The junior B team played Skerries Community College in their final. The girls started the game very strongly and scored three goals in the first half which killed the game off. Libby Flood scored two goals with Ruth Burlingham adding to the scoring. The final score was 3-0 to the Grammar allowing captain Kirsty Lawson to lift Dundalk's second trophy.

The junior A team came up against a strong Wilsons Hospital team in their final. Dundalk Grammar were the stronger team and had all the possession but could not score that crucial goal.

Wilson's managed to take the lead just before half time. In the second half Dundalk had chance after chance but just could not score. Coach Ruth Eveson started to panic on the sideline believing it was going to be one of those days but with four minutes to go Sarah Rowntree finished off



The Dundalk Grammar School First Year Girls hockey team

a great penalty corner for the Dundalk side evening up the scores.

Most people then presumed the game would go to extra time but they were proved wrong when 30 seconds before the end of the game Libby Flood popped up in the circle to score giving Dundalk their third trophy.

The senior girls were last up to play after waiting patiently all day and watching and supporting all the other Dundalk teams.

The girls started slowly which allowed their opponents Skerries Community College to score twice in the first half.

After a motivational talk from coach Nicola Clements at half time the girls came out much stronger in the second half and began to play some good hockey. Unfortunately the girls ran out of time and lost the game by two goals to nil.

This has been a very successful year for girls hockey within

Dundalk Grammar not only winning three league titles, but the number of girls participating in hockey has grown dramatically allowing Dundalk to field six teams.

This success is down to the three hockey coaches, Ms Curling, Ms Eveson and Ms Clements and all the hard work and commitment of all the hockey girls. Let's see the same commitment and effort next year to fill that trophy cabinet some more!

CRICKET Dundalk Cricket Club

Cricket Club swing back into action with two games at the weekend

WITH the glorious sunshine baking a newly mown wicket out in Dromiskin, Dundalk Cricket Club was able to move its training from indoors to outdoors last week. And it whetted the appetite of all to be striking the ball off the willow towards the boundary once again.

With the first match of the new season beckoning next Saturday against Rush and a 20/20 lined up against Balbriggan for the following day, the home ground has been a hive of activity over the last few weeks.

Brendan Watters and his grounds committee have been putting the finishing touches to the pitch.

And last weekend an informal challenge match against the newly formed DkIT Cricket Club was staged in advance of DkIT's first game in the inter-varsities cup against Royal College of Surgeons, also next Saturday.

The Sunday morning indoor sessions during February in Oriel Park helped the batsmen and bowlers re-hone their skills, and the club later moved their indoor pre-season work to the magnificent arena in North County Cricket Club in Balrothery.

30 members arrived for the recent session including Derek Turner, Jiwan Jodhani, Peter Kieran, Waleed Hussein, Phil Osborn, Mithun Mathews, Brian Morris, Kalkaran Kieran, Sunil Kumar, Eddie Bosano-Andrews, Sajan Jeyaseelan, Bala Murugan Baskaran, Ann Treanor, Marina Hughes, Rodd Bond, Graham Hodgins, Murt OSheaghdh, Fergal Smyth, Philip McGuinness, Andrew, Bhoomi, Scott MacDonald, Ian Walker, Iqbal Mohamed, Abi Hassan, Father and son David and Stephen and Justin John.



DkIT staff members who partook in the recent indoor cricket coaching session at the magnificent arena in North County Cricket Club in Balrothery. (Left to right): Brian Morris, Marina Hughes, Rodd Bond, Graham Hodgins, Murt O Seaghda, Gerry Coleman, Philip McGuinness, Fergal Smyth and coach Brian Kirby.

With so many matches coming up, there will be plenty of cricket for everyone this year. So, if you are in the mood for banging

a few sixes contact club secretary on 087-2627893 and derek@spiritstore.ie.

CYCLING Cuchulainn Cycling Club



Cuchulainn Cycling Club's Owen Martin.

Cuchulainn play host to yet another successful event

FOR the third week running Cuchulainn Cycling Club successfully hosted another race. The Irish Veterans Cycling Association runs a handicap league over the summer for males and females over 40.

Sé Weston of Cuchulainn undertook to organise the third round of the league here in Dundalk. Over 90 riders signed on to partake, however only one Dundalk rider Martin Grey was racing. Martin has won national medals with the IVCA before and as such was placed in the last group on the road.

Despite constantly trying to break away from his fellow scratch riders Martin was unable to bridge the gap to the handicapped groups and settled for a place in the lower rankings. Sé and his team of marshalls did an excellent job running the race on a new course out around Ardee and back into Dundalk.

On Sunday a large number of the club's cyclists descended on Drogheda for the annual Coombes Conor Memorial. Unfortunately despite having riders in every race the club came home empty handed.

In the main race, held over 110km Conor Quinn and Liam Dolan were active throughout the day but didn't figure in the final sprint. Upwards of 10 club men signed on for the 70km A4/A3 race. Sean Loughran was hoping to continue with his strong start to the

season but was forced to retire with a puncture.

Strong riding from James Flynn, Owen Martin and company was not enough to prevent a small group staying away for the win, where Newry Wheelers cyclist Cormac Clarke was first home. Finally in the women's race the Dave twins Annette and Breda completed the 56km race but riding strongly and finishing in the main bunch in the same time as the winner.

This Wednesday, April 13, sees the launch of the Beginners Cycling Group. This eight week introduction to cycling course is for people new to cycling and for those who cycle and want to participate in club spins.

The one to two hours sessions take the form of group spins starting from Felda and cover areas such as bike position, basic bicycle maintenance and group riding skills. Anyone interested should contact Sé Weston via www.dundalkcycling.com The first spin will be 16km/10miles in length.

Also launching this week is the FPM Accountants Summer Cycling League. The first round on Thursday April 14th will be a 10mile time trial starting and finishing at Felda on the old Dublin Road. This year participants must register in advance which can be done on the club website, www.dundalkcycling.com

EQUESTRIAN Results

Kernan's Equestrian Centre results

Horse League April 3

80CM - 1, J. Maguire's Cavaliers Little Lady (Colleen Maguire); 1, J. Griffin's Kilwinney Duchess (Colleen Maguire); A. Kelly's Penann's Lady Mourne (Orlagh Kelly); 90CM - 1, T. McBride's Van Clover (Edward Mulligan) 1, L. McSorley's Terro Lane (Connor McEneaney);

1M - 1, E. Hanratty's Wonella (Siobhan Hanratty); 1, J. Murphy's Javas Sophie (Barry Griffin); 1, J. Duffy's My Captain (Johnny Duffy); 1, L. Priestly's Pennys Lagan (Luke Campbell);

1.10M - 1, J. Kearney's Diamond Roller (Johnny Duffy) 1; 1, S. Kernan's Bikila Van't Brokend (Rebecca Kieran); 1, P. McCourt's Trebor Tell Me More (Emmett McCourt); 1, T. McBride's Vechtas Rose (Edward Mulligan); 1, S. Kernan's Euro General (Thomas Dooley); 1, E. Hanratty's Right Touch (Siobhan Hanratty); 1, P. McEneaney's Moonlite Cavalier (Connor McEneaney); 1, J. Rooney's Carmenflag (April McCrea);

1.20M - 1, P. McEneaney's Imperial Clover (Connor McEneaney); 1, J. Kernan's Wopper (Aoife Dooley); P. McParland's Benlough (Declan McParland); 1, J. Rooney's Carmenflag (April McCrea); 1, B. Smyth's Carneyhaugh Tequila Sunrise (Luke Campbell); 1, P. McCourt's Trebor Tell Me More (Emmett McCourt); 1, D. Rice's Premier Sport (Hannah Joyce).

Pony League April 3

128CM 70CM - 1, A. Torren's Ballisbrook Boy (Jennifer Torrens); 1, A. Torren's Bonny Be Good (Jennifer Torrens); 128CM 80CM - 1, A. Torren's Penny 1V (Jennifer Torrens); 1, A. Torren's Ballisbrook Boy (Jennifer Torrens); 128CM 90CM - 1, H. Patterson's Euro Magic (Ronan Patterson); 128CM 1M - 1, H. Patterson's Euro Magic (Ronan Patterson); 138 80CM - 1, J. D. McCaughey's Blackwater Melody (Aron McCaughey); 138 90CM - 1, B. Dooley's Pennwood Rocco (Cathal Dooley); 138 1M - 1, S. Hughe's Sundance Prince (Ellen Hughes); 148 90CM - 1, D. McCaughey's Lackamore Comet (Sean McCaughey); 148 1m - 1, D. McCaughey's Glen Miller (Aron McCaughey); 1, L. Conn's Unlimited Pride (Jackie Conn); 148 1.10m - 1, D. McCaughey's Glen Millar (Aron McCaughey); 148cm 1.20m - 1, E. Whiteside's Ballydoolagh Dreamer (Yvonne Whiteside); 2, B. Dooley's Vivantos (Aoife Dooley).

Forthcoming events

Horse and Pony Training Shows every Wednesday at 6pm; Horse and Pony Training Shows every Saturday at 10.30am. Horse and Pony Registered Spring League final on April 17. Mini Grand Prix Horse Show Bank Holiday Monday May 2. Horse and Pony Summer League starts on May 19, final on July 21. Ulster Grand Prix Sunday June 19. Contact James Kernan on 00353(0)868370376 for more information.

Ravensdale Lodge Equestrian Centre results

Week four dressage league

Class 1: Intro B, # 1 Caroline Buchanan's Finn (C. Buchanan) 68.50%, # 2 Amy O' Hanlon's Misty (A. O' Hanlon) 60%, # 3 Mary Cosgrove's Rio (M. Cosgrove) 59.56%, # 4 Breige Farrelly's Chestnut Ridge (B. Farrelly) 59.13%, # 5 Chelsea Dollard's Mikkado 57.39%.

Class 2: Prelim 10, # 1 Michelle Murphy's Red Ruby Man (M. Murphy) 69.54%, # 2 Marnie Crerar's Daddy Long Legs (M. Crerar) 66.81%, # 3 Marina Hope's Trinity Life (M. Hope) 64.54%, # 4 Mary Cosgrove's Rio (M. Cosgrove) 63.18%, # 5 John Melvin's Glenkerrin Sally (J. Melvin) 62.27%, # 6 Michelle Murphy's Drumbilla Star (L. Cumesky) 60.90%

Class 3: Prelim 12, # 1 Karen Mc Kee's Kool Sryle (K. Mc Kee) 68.40%, # 2 Marnie Crerar's Daddy Long Legs (M. Crerar) 67.20%, # 3 Stephen Campbell's Marcus (S. Campbell) 64.80%, # 4 Alison Mc Grath's Ashford Bridge (A. Mc Grath) 63.60%, # 5 Garvey & Toal's Copper (E. Garvey) 63.20%.

Class 4: Novice 28, # 1 Karen Mc Kee's Kool Style (K. Mc Kee) 69.58%, # 2 Grace O' Shaughnessy's The Biscuit (G. O' Shaughnessy) 67.50%, # 3 Alison Mc Grath's Ashford Bridge (A. Mc Grath) 66.25%, # 4 Garvey & Toal's Copper (C. Toal) 65.88%.

Week three indoor horse spring league

90cm Class: Divided between, Lynn Patterson's Stainsby Free Spirit (L. Patterson), Lynn Patterson's Cujo (L. Patterson).

1m Class: Divided between, Sarah Kinnear's Lyleview Heartbeat (S. Kinnear), Lynn Patterson's Cujo (L. Patterson), Johnny Duffy's My Captain (J. Duffy).

1.10m Class: Divided between, Jamelle Mc Caughey's Lady Porschell (J. Mc Caughey), Jamelle Mc Caughey's Touch of Porsch (R. O' Neill), Sarah Kinnear's Lyleview Heartbeat (S. Kinnear), Catherine Robinson's Porsch Springs (C. Robinson), Tom Tranor's Cruising Miss Jones (M. Mc Shane).

Week eleven horse and pony training league

70cm Class: Shirley Mc Kinney's Miss Twilight (S. Mc Kinney).

80cm Class: Divided between, Jackie O' Brien's Gigman Messenger (N. O' Brien), Tommy Moriarity's Frankie (R. Moriarity), Lauren Mc Cabe's Paddy (L. Mc Cabe).

90cm Class: Divided between, Denise Finnegan's Tommie Girl (J. Finnegan), Shauna Mc Elroy's Supreme Sam (S. Mc Elroy), Jackie O' Brien's Sillogue Sparkie (N. O' Brien), Ciara Cullerton's Miller (C. Cullerton).

1m Class: Divided between, Jackie O' Brien's Sillogue Sparkie (N. O' Brien), Tommy Moriarity's Thunder (O. Moriarity), Tommy Moriarity's Dollar (M. Moriarity).

Working hunter weekend horses show incorporating Northern Ireland Festival qualifiers

Class 1: Clear round jumping, divided between, Sarah Kileen's Asha Diamond Flight (S. Kileen), Marnie Crerar's Prospect Drimmy (M. Crerar), Bronagh Stevenson's Tico (B. Stevenson), Maria Melvin's Glenkerrin Sally (J. Melvin), Sarah O' Rourke's Bertie (S. O' Rourke).

Class 2: # 1 Catherine Slevin's Millie (C. Slevin), # 2 Sarah Kileen's Ashs Diamond Flight (S. Kileen), # 3 Sarah O' Rourke's Bertie (S. O' Rourke), # 4 Marina Hope's Trinity Life (M. Hope).

Class 3: # 1 Nicky Corr's Topper (N. Corr).

Class 4: # 1 Marina Hope's Trinity Life (M. Hope), # 2 Simon Wylie's Rangehill Llwynog (S. Wylie), # 3 Sarah Richardson's Red Square 8 (S. Richardson), # 4 Nicky Corr's Roger (N. Corr), # 5 Sarah Kileen's Asha Diamond Flight (S. Kileen), # 6 June Ellenberg's True Love (J. Ellenberg).

Class 5: # 1 Nicky Corr's Storm (N. Corr).

Class 6: # 1 Dayna Curtis' Ambassador Jones (D. Curtis), # 2 Sarah Cassidy's Woodland Bridge (S. Cassidy), # 3 Simon Wylie's Rangehill Llwynog (S. Wylie), # 4 Maria Melvin's Glenkerrin Sally (J. Melvin), # 5 Marnie Crerar's Prospect Drimmy (M. Crerar).

Class 7: # 1 Nicola Martin's Alfie (N. Martin), # 2 Dayna Curtis' Ambassador Jones (D. Curtis), # 3 Jane Richardson's Zanadoo (J. Richardson), # 4 Ciara Flynn's Atlantic Firefly (C. Flynn), # 5 Lauren Smyth's Oscar (L. Smyth), # 6 Sarah Richardson's Red Square 8 (S. Richardson).

Class 8: # 1 Jane Richardson's Zanadoo (J. Richardson), # 2 Janine Curtis' Rockabilly Boy (J. Curtis), # 3 Nicola Martin's Duke (N. Martin), # 4 Zara Brown's Touch of Class (Z. Brown), # 5 Sarah Cassidy's Woodland Bridge (S. Cassidy), # 6 Sinead Taffe's Mount Ferdia (S. Taffe).

Class 9: # 1 Michelle Murphy's Red Ruby Man (M. Murphy), # 2 Zara Brown's Touch of Class (Z. Brown), # 3 Zara Brown's Made by Design (Z. Brown), # 4 Clare Murtagh's Mc Ardles Travellers (C. Murtagh).

Class 10: # 1 Clare Murtagh's Mc Ardles Travellers (C. Murtagh).

Working hunter weekend ponies show incorporating Northern Ireland Festival qualifiers

Class 1: Clear round jumping, Georgia Kingwood's Bright Spark (G. Kingwood).

Class 3: # 1 Sophie Elliot's Dreamacers Splashdown (S. Elliot), # 2 Georgia Kingwood's Bright Spark (G. Kingwood).

Class 5: # 1 Sophie Price's Sweet William (S. Price).

Class 8: # 1 Emma Douglas' Inismore Ranger (E. Douglas), # 2 India Dawson's Bob Marley (I. Dawson).

Class 9: # 1 Rachel Conn's Garnfach Lynn (R. Conn), # 2 Hannah Patterson's Panache (H. Patterson).

Class 10: # 1 India Dawson's Bob Marley (I. Dawson), # 2 Hannah Patterson's Panache (H. Patterson), # 3 Rachel Rendle's Colourcode Chinook (R. Rendle), # 4 Maria Black's Charly Girl (M. Black), # 5 Rachel Davies' Prince of Dromelily (R. Davies).

BASKETBALL Kilsaran Dynamites Basketball Club

Kilsaran Dynamites enjoy a successful year at all age groups

KILSARAN Dynamites completed this year's North Eastern Basketball League by having three teams compete in the top four play offs.

Kilsaran Dynamites U14 and U16 ladies teams reached the finals on Saturday and Sunday last while the senior Ladies will continue their hard training schedule to contest these finals in May.

Dynamites under 16s, who finished joint top of the league with Castleblayney - only to be denied the title by their loss to Blayney in the final game of the season - found themselves up against a very strong and disciplined Virginia College outfit under the guidance of coach Gerry Smith.

After overcoming Virginia in the semi finals they went on to once again challenge Castleblayney in the final for the honour of top four champions.

However once again the outcome did not go Dynamites' way and Castleblayney once again had the height advantage which Dynamites found hard to contain.

The young Dynamites side had a wonderful season within the league and have next year to look forward to as most of this team is eligible to play at this level once again.

This under-16 team looks set to progress to greater heights with the confidence, skill and morale they displayed on Saturday and throughout the season serving them well for the future.

Under-14

The under-14 Kilsaran Dynamites team were the stars of the league though sadly they just missed out on the summit. However their determination and never say die attitude has gained them fans

wherever they have played.

Under the guidance of coaches Orla Brennan, Kathy O'Neill, Kate O'Byrne and Sabrina McGuire this team has gone from strength to strength with great displays of running basketball, far beyond their age group levels.

Without doubt this team will challenge for honours outside of the North Eastern League with future international players already learning their trade through the coaching systems put in place within this newly formed club.

The standards of play within these team must be admired and congratulations must go to the committed parents who have followed and cheered these teams throughout this 2010/11 season.

New members are welcome to apply for the new season and can contact any committee member for more details. More information is available on www.dynamites.ie.

RIGHT: The Kilsaran Dynamites senior ladies basketball team.

