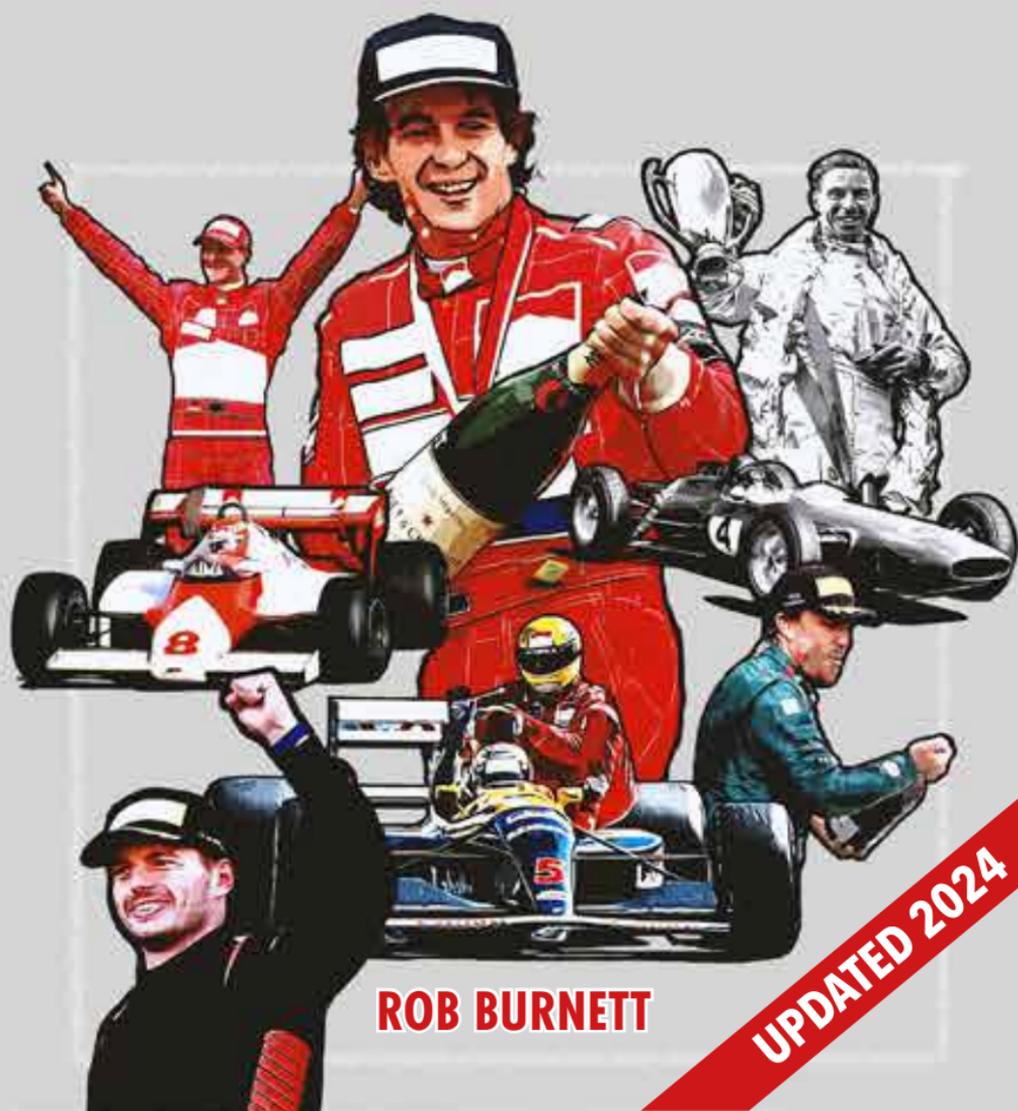


FORMULA ONE

On This Day

*History, Facts & Figures
from Every Day of the Year*



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FORMULA ONE

On This Day



JANUARY

JANUARY 1

While New Year's Day is traditionally for nursing a hangover and trying to remember your ambitious resolutions, for a few years in the 1960s it was also when the F1 season started with the South African Grand Prix. Jim Clark won in 1965 on his way to his second World Championship and he also triumphed in 1968 at Kyalami. It was an historic victory as it took Clark to 25 race wins – the most in the history of the sport at the time and one more than Juan Manuel Fangio, whose record had stood for ten years. Tragically it was not only Clark's last win, but also his last championship race as he was killed in a crash at the Hockenheimring in Germany four months later.

Some of motor racing's finest have been recognised by the Queen on this day in the New Year's Honours list. Jack Brabham and Frank Williams became knights today in 1979 and 1999 respectively.

JANUARY 2

Nigel Mansell reckoned the support from his home crowd was worth a second per lap at Silverstone, which perhaps accounts for the remarkable performance of the delightfully named John Love in the South African GP at Kyalami today in 1967, though he was actually from neighbouring Zimbabwe (then Southern Rhodesia). Not a regular on the F1 circuit, 42-year-old Love qualified fifth and with just seven laps to go was pulling away in the lead in his privately entered ex-Bruce McLaren Cooper. A fuel pump problem forced him to pit, robbing him of the chance to become the first African grand prix winner.

Love eventually finished second to Pedro Rodriguez – it was the Mexican driver's first F1 victory in only his ninth race. While his winning streak had just begun, another was ending – it was the last win for the pioneering Cooper team, which had powered Jack Brabham to the World Championship in 1959 and 1960, the first time a rear-engined car had achieved the feat.

JANUARY 3

The first known use of the word ‘automobile’ was printed in a *New York Times* article on this day in 1899.

In the 1960s and ’70s Jackie Stewart was one of the best racing drivers in the world, but in the ’50s he wasn’t even the best in his family. The man who would go on to become a three-time World Champion was preceded in the sport by his older brother Jimmy, who made his F1 debut in the British Grand Prix at Silverstone in 1953. He retired from driving two years later after a big crash, and thereafter supported his younger brother’s efforts. James Robert Stewart died on this day in 2008 aged 76. In his autobiography Jackie Stewart says of his brother: ‘What do I owe Jim? I owe him almost everything.’

JANUARY 4

Today in 2008 former Ferrari team principal Jean Todt revealed that Michael Schumacher had been offered the chance to take over running the team but had declined. ‘He would have been the best candidate for this job, but he did not want it,’ he said. Later Schumacher added: ‘When I saw how much passion and dedication he put into his job – similar to what I did in my job – but he simply was just sitting in Maranello, day by day, even on weekends, late into the night – I said: “Do I need this? Simply not. Simply not.”’

Alex Albon spent a year and a half racing alongside Max Verstappen at Red Bull but was then dropped in favour of Sergio Perez, with Albon relegated to a reserve driver role. But today in 2021 it was announced the British-Thai driver would combine those duties with racing in DTM, Germany’s prestigious touring car championship. He took his first win in August at the Nürburgring, then returned to F1 with Williams in 2022.

JANUARY 5

Today in 2022 marked the end of the road for team principal Otmar Szafnauer at Aston Martin. A Formula One veteran who had worked in the sport since joining BAR in 1998, Romanian-born Szafnauer had spent over a decade at the Silverstone-based team under its Force India, Racing Point and Aston Martin guises. But today the team announced he had left with immediate effect. He wasn't out of work for long and joined midfield rivals Alpine as team boss the following month.

The prospect of a new American team joining the grid gathered pace on this day in 2023 when Andretti Global announced their plan to enter an 'all-American team' with car giant General Motors' Cadillac brand. Former McLaren F1 driver Michael Andretti said his new venture could 'bring excitement for the fans'.

JANUARY 6

Despite the race never having been part of the Formula One World Championship, plenty of F1 drivers have competed in – and won – the New Zealand Grand Prix. Stirling Moss did both on this day in 1962 when the race was held at the Ardmore Circuit in Auckland. Driving a Lotus, Moss won from fellow F1 stars John Surtees, Bruce McLaren – who was racing on home soil – Roy Salvadori and Lorenzo Bandini, all of whom were driving Coopers.

The New Zealand Grand Prix was also held on this day in 1968, this time at the Pukekohe Park Raceway. Double World Champion Jim Clark took pole position, but it was home-grown racer Chris Amon who triumphed on race day in his Ferrari. Along with Clark and Pedro Rodriguez – who both retired from the race – Piers Courage was the only other non-New Zealander on the grid. The British driver finished third in a McLaren.

JANUARY 7

Austrian drinks company Red Bull purchased the Jaguar F1 team in late 2004, and today in 2005 they made their first crucial appointment when Tony Purnell and David Pitchforth – who had been running the outfit for Ford – were sacked, and former F3000 team owner Christian Horner was installed as the new team boss. At just 31, he was the youngest team principal in F1, but is now the longest-serving team boss in the sport.

On this day in 2019 there was another team boss reshuffle going on, with Ferrari making yet another change to try to return to championship-winning ways. ‘After four years of untiring commitment and dedication, Maurizio Arrivabene is leaving the team,’ a statement read. During his spell in charge, Ferrari won 14 of 81 races, scored 71 podiums and 12 pole positions – but no championship titles. Scuderia stalwart Mattia Binotto was announced as the new team principal.

JANUARY 8

Argentina hosted the country’s first F1 World Championship Grand Prix in 1953, but there had been grand prix racing going on since the 1930s. Today in 1950 the Palermo Street Circuit hosted the non-championship Buenos Aires Grand Prix – also called the *IV Gran Premio Extraordinario Maria Eva Duarte de Perón*. Italian F1 ace Luigi Villorosi won in a Ferrari, with Argentine hero Juan Manuel Fangio fourth.

Another non-championship race was held on this day in 1955 – this time the New Zealand Grand Prix at the Ardmore Circuit in Auckland. It was won by Prince Bira of Siam, a member of the Thai royal family who was also an Olympic sailor and noted pilot, and raced in F1 for Maserati and Connaught. He was the only Thai driver to compete in F1 until Alex Albon joined the grid in 2019.

JANUARY 9

Graham Hill is the only man to have won the so-called ‘Triple Crown’ of motorsport: that is, victory in the Le Mans 24 Hours, the Indianapolis 500 and either the Monaco Grand Prix or the F1 World Championship. Today in 1965 Hill added victory in a lesser-known race to his CV when he won the non-championship New Zealand Grand Prix at the Pukekohe Park Raceway. Hill’s fellow F1 stars Bruce McLaren, Jim Clark and Phil Hill all retired from the race.

The ultimate aim for any new Formula One team is to win races but usually it takes time for any new outfit to get up to speed. Today in 1977 at the Argentine Grand Prix the Walter Wolf Racing team won its very first race with Jody Scheckter behind the wheel. The team was new in name but had grown out of Frank Williams’ first attempt at F1 and been renamed after Canadian millionaire Walter Wolf had purchased it and Williams had left. Scheckter started only tenth on the grid and was fortunate that six runners in front of him retired but it was still a great start for the Wolf team.

JANUARY 10

Two veteran drivers were proving experience is a valued commodity in F1 on this day. First off in 2003 Dutch racer Jos ‘the Boss’ Verstappen – father of Max – was confirmed as Justin Wilson’s partner for the season at Minardi.

Five years later Giancarlo Fisichella was also announced at a new team. By then one of the most experienced drivers in the paddock and a member of the exclusive ‘200 Club’ for drivers who have competed in more than 200 grands prix, the Italian had always been viewed as a quick driver who perhaps lacked the consistency to put together a serious tilt at the title over a whole season. Today in 2008 ‘Fisi’ was announced as lead driver for the newly rebranded Force India team. It was his third stint with the team formerly known as Jordan.

JANUARY 11

A number of teams including McLaren and Minardi have built two-seater F1 cars over the years, designed to give passengers the chance to be scared witless by taking a ride with a Formula One driver. Today in 2001 Arrows went one better when they launched a three-seater version of their F1 racer. Arrows head of marketing Steve Hood said: 'By sitting slightly to the side, passengers will have a totally uncompromised view of the track ahead, which is what a driver sees. So they can see corners coming up and think, "Hang on, didn't we pass what would be a sensible braking point 100 metres ago?"'

There were yet more moves on the F1 managerial merry-go-round on this day in 2021 when long-serving Renault man Cyril Abiteboul was ousted as team principal in a shock move by the firm's new CEO Luca de Meo. After five years in charge, Abiteboul had steered Renault back to podium finishes in 2020, but was out ahead of the team's relaunch as Alpine – and was replaced by a three-man management structure, which itself was ditched after just one season.

JANUARY 12

Double World Champion Emerson Fittipaldi got his season off to a flier today in 1975 when he took victory at the Argentine Grand Prix. The Brazilian ace started from fifth on the grid but battled past a host of other drivers including local hero Carlos Reutemann to take the chequered flag ahead of James Hunt in second and Reutemann in third.

It was an altogether different story for Emerson's elder brother Wilson, who was racing for his own team. On lap 12 his brand new car spun out of control, crashed into a barrier and caught fire. Wilson was able to get out but the car was destroyed in the blaze.

JANUARY 13

Alan Jones became the first man to win the World Championship with the Williams team in 1980. On this day that year he got his season off to the best possible start by taking victory in the Argentine Grand Prix. Also on the grid was Alain Prost who finished sixth on his F1 debut in a McLaren.

When Niki Lauda became Jaguar team boss in 2001 he was critical of modern F1 cars and claimed that even a monkey could drive a car with traction control and electronic aids. Today in 2002 he might have been regretting those words when he got behind the wheel of the Jaguar R3 at a test. After spinning twice in his first three laps he had to be towed back to the pits. The triple World Champion said: 'Yes, I have said that any monkey can drive a car nowadays, but I am simply comparing it to the driving 17 years ago. I will not make this a regular appearance. If I want to make it regular I have to train and I am not prepared to do that. For this test I didn't train, I just smoked less!'

JANUARY 14

Ferrari began a new era on this day in 2007 when the team unveiled the F2007 car at their Maranello base. The car was the first for 11 years that would not be driven by Michael Schumacher after the German had hung up his helmet at the end of the previous season. The team need not have worried about being without the old master, as Finn Kimi Raikkonen drove the car to his first World Championship title in his first season with the Scuderia.

It was also a new start for the Aston Martin team today in 2022 when they announced former BMW motorsport chief Mike Krack had been appointed as new team principal, replacing Otmar Szafnauer, who had departed just a week earlier.

KIMI RÄIKÖNEN WON HIS FIRST RACE FOR FERRARI IN JANUARY 2007



JANUARY 15

With the brilliant and innovative Colin Chapman at the helm the Lotus team was always a force to be reckoned with and today in 1978 Mario Andretti put in a dominant performance in the opening round of the season, the Argentine Grand Prix at Buenos Aires. The American driver put his Lotus 78 on pole and then completed a flag-to-flag victory. Andretti went on to win the drivers' title that season, while Lotus won the constructors'. It was the last time Lotus won either championship.

Eighteen years later to the day and Team Lotus was finished. The team never really recovered from the death of founder Colin Chapman in 1982 and a gradual decline was finally ended today in 1996 when the last remnants of the business, Team Lotus Holdings Ltd, was wound up by the High Court in London.

JANUARY 16

Today in 1955 the grid lined up for the Argentine Grand Prix. Juan Manuel Fangio won the race to delight his home crowd but the meeting is more noteworthy as the hottest Grand Prix ever (since matched by the 1984 United States GP and the 2005 Bahrain GP). Temperatures were over 100°F or around 40°C and only two drivers – one of them Fangio – made it to the finish without having to hand over to a reserve driver.

After taking over the McLaren team in 1980 Ron Dennis was a major figure in the sport. He led the team back to winning ways while Alain Prost, Ayrton Senna, Mika Hakkinen, Niki Lauda and Lewis Hamilton all became World Champions at the wheel of his cars. Today in 2009, at the launch of McLaren's new car, Ron announced he was to stand down as McLaren team principal before the new season began, to work on other areas of the McLaren business. 'This is very definitely not retirement,' he said. He was right. Dennis returned as team boss in 2014, before finally selling up and leaving for good two years later.

JANUARY 17

The 1954 Argentine Grand Prix was held on this day in Buenos Aires and home-grown hero Juan Manuel Fangio took the win – but it was not without controversy. He stopped on lap 61 for a tyre change and was passed by the Ferraris of Giuseppe Farina and Froilan Gonzalez. The Ferrari team manager Nello Ugolini decided to protest that Maserati had used too many mechanics to work on Fangio's car and, confident Fangio would be disqualified, he ordered his drivers to back off and take no risks. Fangio went back out and caught and passed them both to win. Ugolini was left distraught after his protest was thrown out by the stewards and the FIA, and Fangio was allowed to keep the win.

Bruno Senna signed for Williams on this day in 2012, some 18 years after his uncle Ayrton joined the team.

JANUARY 18

The first ever F1 Argentine Grand Prix was held today in 1953. A brainchild of President Juan Perón designed to capitalise on Juan Manuel Fangio's success, the race was free to enter and far too many people turned up to the point where they were lining the race track. At one point Giuseppe Farina had to swerve to avoid hitting a spectator on the circuit but he lost control and crashed into the crowd. Estimates of fatalities vary from between one to 13. Alberto Ascari took the win on his way to his second World Championship title.

Today in 2008 the McLaren team announced that Lewis Hamilton had signed an improved five-year deal to stay with the team, designed to reward his strong performances in his debut season when he came so close to winning the championship. Team boss Ron Dennis said: 'The announcement will take the length of our relationship with Lewis to a total of 15 years, which we believe is among the longest-running associations between a sportsman and a team in the history of sport, particularly motorsport.'

JANUARY 19

The Argentine Grand Prix held today in 1958 was notable because home-grown hero Juan Manuel Fangio *didn't* win after taking four victories from the previous four races held in Buenos Aires. Stirling Moss took the win in the tiny Cooper-Climax 43 entered by Rob Walker. The victory was significant as it was the first in the World Championship for Cooper and the first Formula One win for a rear-engined car. All the other teams would slowly start to catch on to the concept until it became the norm.

Jenson Alexander Lyons Button was born on this day in 1980 in Frome, Somerset. He made his F1 debut for Williams in 2000 and in just his second race became, at the time, the youngest points scorer in the history of the sport when he finished P6 in Brazil. He won the championship in 2009, and drove more than 300 grands prix.

JANUARY 20

For nearly 30 years the first man on the scene of any accident in Formula One was Professor Sid Watkins. Known simply as 'Prof' in the paddock, Watkins was appointed as F1's official doctor in 1978 by Bernie Ecclestone and did more than perhaps any other individual to make the sport safer. He was the man who attended to Ayrton Senna as he lay dying on the track at Imola, and helped Mika Hakkinen after his horrific crash at Adelaide in 1995. Today in 2005 Watkins announced he was retiring as F1's medical delegate to become president of the FIA Institute for Motorsport Safety.

Former Toro Rosso/AlphaTauri boss Franz Tost was one of the longest-serving team principals in Formula One. Ex-Formula Ford and Formula Three driver Tost was born in Austria on this day in 1956.

JANUARY 21

After sweeping the board with the revolutionary ground-effect car in 1978, most of the paddock assumed the Lotus cars would again be on top at the opening round of the 1979 season, the Argentine Grand Prix, held on this day. As it turned out the Ligier team had adapted best to the new ground-effect era and Jacques Laffite and Patrick Depailler took pole and second on the grid respectively. Laffite took the victory while local hero Carlos Reutemann had to settle for second in his Lotus. Elio de Angelis also made his debut at this race.

Today in 2013 Mercedes made what turned out to be an inspired move when they appointed Toto Wolff as their new director of motorsport. Wolff soon took control of the marque's F1 team – which had won just one race since the 2010 rebrand from Brawn GP – and oversaw a period of unprecedented domination as the Silver Arrows won eight constructors' and seven drivers' titles between 2014 and 2021.

JANUARY 22

Juan Manuel Fangio continued his dominance in his home Grand Prix today in 1956 but he needed his team-mate's help to do it. After mechanical problems with his Lancia-Ferrari had forced him to retire on lap 23, the team ordered his team-mate Luigi Musso to pit and give his car to Fangio. Many of the other leaders had their own mechanical problems allowing Fangio, in Musso's car, to take the victory by half a minute.

Mike Hawthorn finished third in that race and in 1958 he became Britain's first ever World Champion, beating his great rival Stirling Moss. He retired immediately after winning the title but just three months later, on this day in 1959, he was killed in a car accident near Guildford. He was driving a Jaguar when it hit the kerb and crashed into a tree. The cause of the accident has never been conclusively explained.

JANUARY 23

The first F1 racer to emerge from Argentina since Juan Manuel Fangio was Carlos Reutemann and he made his debut in stunning style at his home grand prix, today in 1972. He shocked most of the paddock with a brilliant qualifying effort which gave him pole position on his debut – something only ever previously achieved by Mario Andretti, and since by Jacques Villeneuve. Normal service was resumed in the race when reigning World Champion Jackie Stewart took victory and Reutemann had to settle for seventh.

Five years later to the day and Reutemann had another British rival to deal with in the shape of James Hunt, who beat the Argentine to pole for the Brazilian Grand Prix at Interlagos. Reutemann was second on the grid but this time he had the last laugh when Hunt had handling problems late on and Carlos was able to pass him and take the victory.

JANUARY 24

Having let Alex Zanardi go after a disappointing 1999 season Williams were looking for someone to partner Ralf Schumacher for 2000. They settled on either Brazilian Bruno Junqueira or Jenson Button, who had recently picked up the prestigious McLaren Autosport BRDC Young Driver Award. The team arranged a 'shootout' test for them to fight for the drive, with Button coming out on top. Today in 2000 he was announced as F1's newest star and the British press went berserk at the rapid rise of the youngster who, only two years previously, had been racing karts. Williams technical director Patrick Head said: 'He is remarkably mature for a 19-year-old and is definitely a star of the future.'

Today in 2005 one of the most colourful characters of F1 bowed out when Eddie Jordan announced he had sold his eponymous team to the Midland Group from Russia. Although the team retained the Jordan name for one final season it was really the end of an era for the outfit which claimed four grand prix victories on EJ's watch.

JANUARY 25

Niki Lauda was the reigning World Champion when the drivers lined up for the first race of the 1976 season in Brazil on this day. The race was the first to be started by a system of lights rather than the traditional flag but it didn't stop Lauda taking the victory. It was the start of a great run which saw him take four wins from the first six races. He looked odds-on to retain his championship until his horrific crash at the Nürburgring in August where he very nearly died.

Years later Lauda would become team principal of the Jaguar F1 team, which was launched on this day in 2000. It was a rebranding of the Stewart team founded and run by Sir Jackie Stewart, before JYS sold out to Ford. The new British racing green car was unveiled by drivers Eddie Irvine and Johnny Herbert, but Sir Jackie announced he would be stepping down as team boss at the launch ceremony.

JANUARY 26

Carlos Pace was a talented Brazilian driver who was tragically killed in a plane crash in 1977. Today in 1975 he took his only F1 victory – and in his home race, the Brazilian Grand Prix at Interlagos. Pace delighted the home crowd by leading home a Brazilian 1-2 as Emerson Fittipaldi came in second. After Pace's death the Interlagos circuit was renamed the Autodromo Jose Carlos Pace in his honour.

The race was also significant for another driver who was tragically killed in a plane crash. Double World Champion Graham Hill started his own team in 1975 but he was still racing himself at the beginning of the season. The Brazilian GP was the last race he finished before he finally retired after 176 starts. He came home 12th, a lap down on the leaders.

JANUARY 27

The 1974 season had started well for McLaren with victory for Denny Hulme in the Argentine GP. The team's good form continued on this day at the Brazilian Grand Prix when Emerson Fittipaldi won his home race for the second year in succession. He had been made to fight for it though as Ronnie Peterson in his Lotus had battled hard with Fittipaldi until a puncture forced him to concede the race.

In 11 years in Formula One Frenchman Rene Arnoux took seven victories. The first came today in 1980 at the Brazilian Grand Prix at Interlagos, the season curtain-raiser. His team-mate Jean-Pierre Jabouille in the other Renault had taken pole position while Arnoux was forced to fight his way to victory from sixth on the grid.

JANUARY 28

When Brazilian Emerson Fittipaldi won the drivers' title in 1972 aged 25, he was the youngest ever champion (a record since surpassed by Fernando Alonso, Lewis Hamilton and Sebastian Vettel) and at the first race of the 1973 season, held today in Argentina, it looked like he would continue his domination when he took victory for Team Lotus. His rival Jackie Stewart finished third that day but would go on to take the title at the end of the season.

Today in 2002 marked the end of the road for Prost Grand Prix, the racing team run by the great French driver Alain Prost. With the loss of his major sponsors and Peugeot engines, 'The Professor' wasn't able to find any investors willing to save the team and it was put into liquidation. 'I received so many blows for months and years that it's almost a relief for me. I was lynched in the last couple of weeks and I see it as a total failure for France,' Prost said.

JANUARY 29

Despite the fact the Interlagos circuit has produced some exciting races over the years, the facilities aren't great and it is not a favourite of the F1 circus. For the 1978 grand prix, held on this day, the race was moved to the Jacarepaguá circuit in the more glamorous setting of Rio de Janeiro. It made little difference to the outcome – Argentine Carlos Reutemann took victory for Ferrari, just as he had done at Interlagos the year before.

Reutemann's victory was also the first win in Formula One for the French tyre manufacturer Michelin, who had entered the sport the previous year.

JANUARY 30

Every F1 fan's favourite minnow team was saved today in 2001 when Australian businessman Paul Stoddart purchased the Minardi team. With the first race of the season in Australia a little over a month away, the team faced a mammoth task to make it on to the grid in time. 'It is undoubtedly a huge challenge but everyone is up for it,' said Stoddart. And he was right – they did make it, and competed in F1 as Minardi until Stoddart sold the team to Red Bull in 2005 and it became Toro Rosso.

Today in 2009 the McLaren team was mourning the loss of one of the most important figures in its history. Teddy Mayer, who helped Bruce McLaren found the team in 1963, passed away aged 73. Ron Dennis paid tribute to his predecessor. 'Teddy was one of motor racing's few truly great men. Bruce died tragically young in 1970, having won grands prix but no World Championships with his fledgling team,' he said, 'but when I bought into the team in 1980 Teddy had built on the foundations laid by Bruce, Tyler Alexander and himself and had already achieved a lot – two Formula One World Championships, as well as huge success in the States. I would like to pay tribute to Teddy's enormously valuable contribution, and to his immortal legacy.'

JANUARY 31

Today in 1997 the Williams-Renault FW19 was launched at the team factory in Oxfordshire. It was the final car in a series that had been highly successful for the British team – it was the last to use Renault engines as the French manufacturer pulled out of the sport at the end of the season, and was also the last Williams designed by Adrian Newey, who left the team to join McLaren. It was once again the class of the field though and won both the drivers' and constructors' titles, and remains the last championship-winning car Williams has produced.

Another iconic British motorsport name was in the news on this day in 2020 when it was announced the Racing Point F1 team was to be rebranded as the Aston Martin works outfit from the 2021 season. Canadian billionaire Lawrence Stroll had taken control of the former Force India team in 2018, and after also taking the reins at James Bond's favourite car-maker, he decided to bring the marque back to grand prix racing as a full manufacturer for the first time since 1960.