

## RACING NEWS

Vintage racer is being mourned



Photos: Paul Lawrence, Charlotte Little, Dan Bathie/McLaren Trophy, GTWorld Challenge Europe, Theodore Racing



Grimwade was hugely popular

# VINTAGE RACING MOURNS GRIMWADE LOSS

*Popular and prolific competitor dies in VSCC Donington crash on tragic weekend*

By Graham Keilloh

**The vintage racing fraternity is mourning the loss of Julian Grimwade, one of the true characters of any vintage paddock.**

Grimwade touched many with his outgoing personality, warmth and sense of humour and he was a hugely popular

member of this close-knit group of competitors in pre-war machinery.

After great success in the Frazer Nash single-seater, he moved to the 1913 Romano Special, which had been rebuilt by his friend James Baxter and is a replica of the first Pikes Peak winner.

At Donington Park's Vintage Sports-Car Club meeting last Saturday Grimwade,

from Weybridge in Surrey, was competing in the special Mephistopheles Trophy for pre-1925 racing cars run to honour the memory of Ernest Eldridge's 1908 Fiat Special that went on to claim the world land speed record in July 1924 at 146mph.

Grimwade, who was 72, crashed on the first lap of the first race of the day, and was taken to hospital where he was later

pronounced deceased. The single-day meeting was abandoned.

Governing body Motorsport UK has confirmed that, as with all serious incidents, it will conduct an investigation and cooperate with the relevant external authorities.

Many tributes have been paid on social media to this wonderful character and

prolific competitor from vintage racing and speed events, and MN also sends its sincere condolences to Grimwade's family and friends.

On a dark day for UK motorsport, Grimwade's accident was just a few hours after rally co-driver Dai Roberts was killed in an accident on the Jim Clark Rally (*see p10*).



Sawyer stepped onto podium

## SAWYER GETS FIRST PODIUM

DJ, producer and record label partner Paul Sawyer started his second season of car racing with his first podium finish.

The Radio 1 DJ is back for a second season in Mini Challenge Clubsport with an upgraded car and a new team. And in the 2025 opener on the Silverstone national circuit 10 days ago – Sawyer's first competition at the venue – he

immediately finished second in the R53 class, and seventh overall, in the 15-minute race one.

He retired from race two with engine failure, and in the finale fought from the back to fourth in class and eighth overall.

Sawyer said: "It proved to be a real roller coaster to kick off the season

with my first podium in race one being a massive highlight.

"I can't thank my new team at Sussex Road & Race for getting me back out for race three, and for their efforts across the whole weekend.

"There was some pretty intense racing at times which was a lot of fun, and I'm pleased with how I've performed."



Denning (r) has three wins so far

## HARRISON TO RACE IN McLAREN TROPHY

Historic ace Samuel Harrison will race in advanced modern GT machinery this year in McLaren Trophy Europe having been confirmed as a member of the McLaren Trophy Academy for 2025.

McLaren Trophy was formed in 2023 as the British marque's equivalent of Porsche Carrera Cup or Lamborghini Super Trofeo.

Harrison, 21, won the Historic Formula Ford crown in 2022 – a year in which he was named Motorsport News's Historic Driver of the Year – then won 2023's Historic Formula 3 title. Last year he claimed the Historic Formula Ford 2000 championship.

Harrison made his GT racing debut in modern machinery in last year's 24H Series Abu Dhabi Six Hours with Toyota Gazoo Racing UK in a GR Supra GT4 EVO, and took a class podium.

In McLaren Trophy he this year will race with ALM Motorsport alongside Leonidas Karavasili in the new-for-2025 Pro class. Their first race meeting is this weekend at Monza.

Harrison wrote on Facebook: "It is a great honour to be affiliated with such a prestigious manufacturer for the 2025 season and one I am eager to learn from to progress my career."



Young historic star gets McLaren chance

### Young Brits in McLaren's line-up

Rising British stars Adam Smalley and Joseph Loake have been confirmed as McLaren Junior Pro Drivers in 2025 in McLaren Motorsport's GT racing driver line-up.

Smalley, 24, finished third in the 2024 British GT championship in a Garage 59 McLaren 720S GT3 while Loake, 20, fought for 2023's GB3 title – and won that year's Autosport BRDC Award – and raced in FIA Formula 3 last year before making a full-time switch to GT racing.

Both Smalley and Loake are racing in GT World Challenge Europe in a Garage 59 720S. As McLaren



Loake: factory coaching

Junior Pro Drivers they will receive coaching from factory drivers.

Young Britons Josh Rattican and Aston Millar have been confirmed in McLaren Graduate Driver category while Dean MacDonald continues as a McLaren factory driver.

### DENNING HAS CHARGING START IN LAMBO ASIA

Irish sportscar racer Alex Denning continued his storming start to the Lamborghini Super Trofeo Asia season by taking a win plus a second place from the back in Shanghai recently.

The Dublin racer was Mini Challenge JCW runner-up in 2022, and in the last two years has raced mainly in European GT4 competition in an Elite Motorsport McLaren Artura.

This year the 26-year-old shares a Theodore Racing-entered Lamborghini Huracan with Macau's Charles Leong in the Asian championship, and they claimed both wins in last month's Sydney opener.

At round two at the Chinese Grand Prix-hosting Shanghai track earlier this month Leong was clipped from behind to spin at Turn 1, resuming off the back. He had recovered to sixth when he handed over to Denning, and by the end of the 50-minute race Denning placed second less than four seconds from victory. The duo then won race two by 0.4s, after a 0.3s penalty for a short pitstop.

Denning said: "Race two was a difficult one. We've been pushing hard all weekend to fine tune the balance on the car and we tried something on the car set-up that didn't quite work as we'd hoped. Still, the team had a great strategy."

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