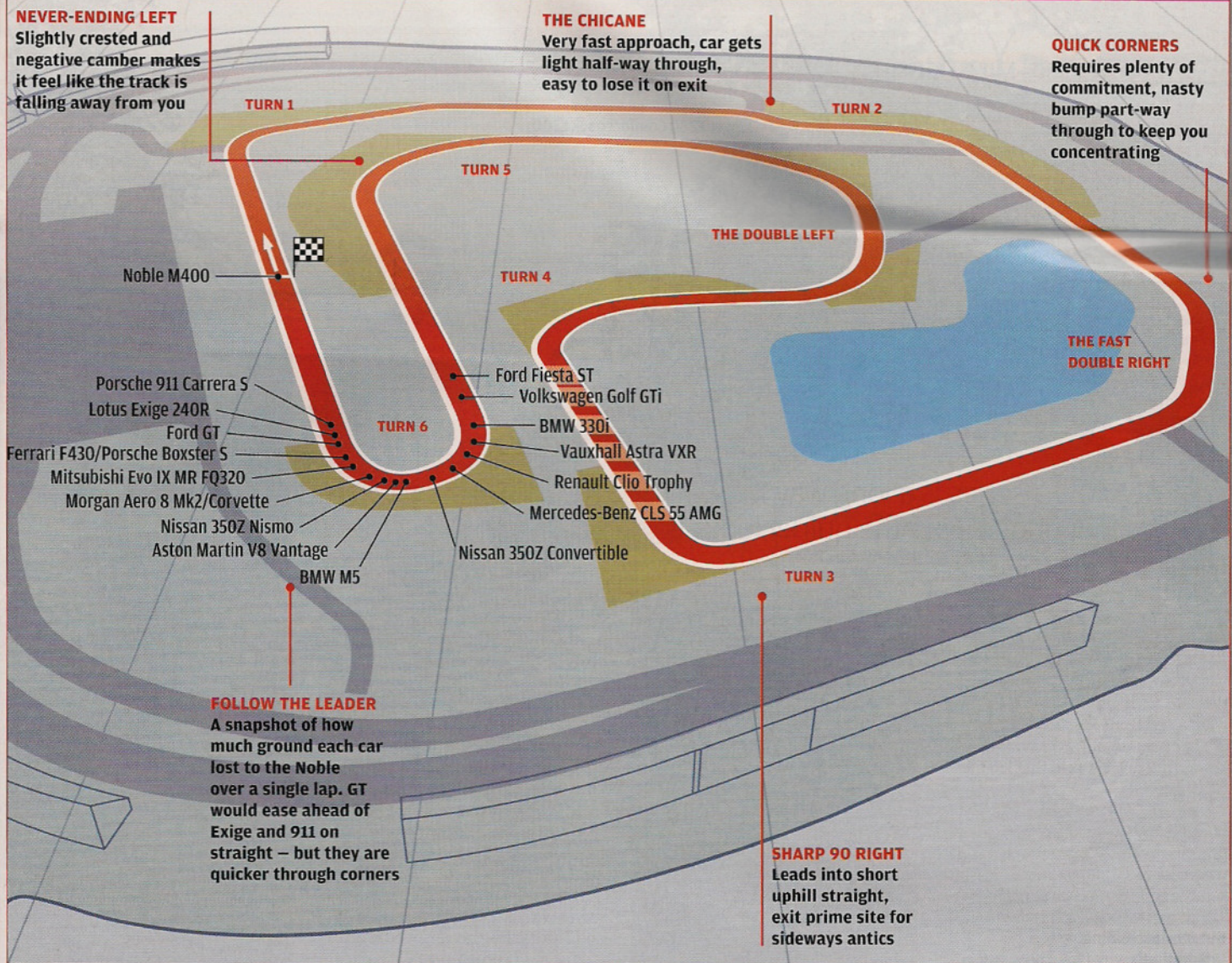


SECRETS OF THE ROCKINGHAM TRACK

Where reputations were made and shattered



although it still continues to amaze. In the dry, as the times prove, it makes most things look faintly pedestrian, and it's intensely rewarding yet not overly intimidating. If you enjoy track days, and you want a car to deliver a massive hit of adrenaline yet with decent road manners, there's nothing quite like it on sale.

There is, however, a clear winner. It was like a scene from a spaghetti western when every judge and contributor held up their note pads in turn to reveal the 911 as their choice. Maybe we've become slightly complacent about its charms recently; certainly it has been winning group tests all over Europe with monotonous regularity. Yet when we surrounded it with the best it shone the brightest.

This is a car for every situation: ballistic on the circuit, yet practical and eminently useable; truly involving, characterful, stylish, and all with a deep sense of mechanical integrity. With the 911's evolution to this latest 997-series, Porsche has raised the bar significantly higher. In 2005, regardless of purchase price, the driver's choice is the Porsche 911 Carrera S. **A**

THE SCORES Yes, points do mean prizes

TOTAL POINTS (out of 100)		LAP TIMES						
Place	Car	Total	Road	Track	Wet time (sec)	Dry time (sec)	Peak lateral g	Peak mph
1ST	Porsche 911 Carrera S	89	44	45	94.7	81.4	1.05	107.8
2ND	Noble M400	84	40	44	98.0	76.6	1.22	111.6
3RD	Ford GT	80	39	41	93.6	80.7	1.04	115.3
4TH	Ferrari F430	79	40	39	101.5	81.1	na	na
5TH	Aston Martin V8 Vantage	78	40	38	100.0	84.4	1.00	102.2
6TH =	Nissan Nismo 350Z	76	37	39	102.5	84.7	1.02	101.7
6TH =	BMW M5	76	39	37	98.3	84.4	0.98	108.0
8TH	Porsche Boxster S	75	40	35	99.1	82.7	1.09	101.2
9TH	Lotus Exige 240R	72	33	39	94.7	81.8	1.07	102.1
10TH	Mitsubishi Evo IX	71	36	35	98.4	82.5	1.01	106.5
11TH	Renault Clio Trophy	70	36	34	101.2	87.0	0.95	95.8
12TH	Volkswagen Golf GTi	69	38	31	103.8	88.8	0.93	96.0
13TH	BMW 330i	66	36	30	106.5	88.1	0.95	97.4
14TH	Nissan 350Z convertible	65	33	32	103.9	85.9	1.00	98.5
15TH	Ford Fiesta ST	64	29	35	105.0	89.1	0.97	90.8
16TH	Mercedes CLS 55 AMG	60	31	29	98.9	86.4	0.93	103.7
17TH	Corvette C6	56	29	27	94.7	84.0	1.02	105.8
18TH	Vauxhall Astra VXR	48	26	22	103.8	88.0	0.96	94.7
19TH	Morgan Aero 8 Mk2	35	10	25	103.9	84.0	1.04	103.0