



'Horror crash' in Monaco grand prix

This picture was taken at the 2022 Monaco grand prix on May 29. It shows the American Haas team car, driven by the German driver, Mick Schumacher, after it spun out of control, smashed into a wall and broke into two pieces. The driver was able to get of the wreck and walk away. The incident, described as a 'horror crash', was the only aspect of the race worth reporting, otherwise it was the usual procession as overtaking is rarely possible on the Monaco circuit.

For Formula 1, the Monaco event is purely a marketing matter, not a sporting event. The event is charged a hosting fee of only about US\$15m (about \$21m Australian dollars) because Formula 1 needs Monaco's glamorous status to boost its prestige. Formula 1 will probably lose money on the Monaco event, but can recover this by higher rates for other events. Other race hosts, including Victoria, are now being charged up to US\$60m, ie \$84m Australian dollars. This means that the Victorian public could be helping to fund the Monaco grand prix! (Ref. *euroweeklynews/horror crash in Monaco, May 29, 2022*)

The most important election in Australia's history?

An article in *'The Conversation'*, issued May19, was headed 'I'm a climate scientist and writer: this election is the most important in Australia's history'. The author, Joelle Gergis, based in the Australian National University, Canberra, stated:

'The latest climate change assessment report released by the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPPC) is clear: humanity has less than a decade to avert a planetary disaster. The world must cut greenhouse gas emissions in half by 2030 and reach net zero by no later than 2050 to limit warming to 1.5 degrees Centigrade above pre-industrial levels. The IPPC shows that this is possible, but the next few years are critical.'

The Coalition's climate policy before the election was to reduce emissions by 26-28% by 2030, and reach net zero emissions by 2050, with commitment to continuation of Australia's coal and gas export industries through to 2050 and beyond.

Labor's policy on which it was elected is to reduce emissions by 43% by 2030 and reach net zero by 2050, but with approval for new coal mines that meet environmental standards.

The Greens policy is to reduce emissions by 75% by 2030 and net zero by 2030, with an immediate ban on the construction of new coal, oil and gas infrastructure.

Clearly, the Coalitions policy will not help the world to halve emissions by 2030. Labor's policy is considerably better, and the Greens' policy is the one to follow, if it is proved achievable. We can expect the Greens, with their increased representation in the Federal Government will try to improve Labor's target.

Save Albert Park can suggest one practical measure (which we keep repeating !) to reduce Victoria's emissions : relocate the grand prix out of Albert Park Reserve and into a permanent circuit and eliminate the 66,000 kilometres of heavy truck travel needed to transport the temporary circuit infrastructure into and out of the park.

Albert Park sports clubs condemn the April grand prix

In the October-November 2021 issue of this newsletter we published a media release from the Albert Park Sports Clubs Association which set out a comprehensive list of reasons why the proposed April 10 date for the 2022 grand prix would be **'a body blow for community sport in Albert Park Reserve'**.

Included was the following statement:

'GP occupation of Albert Park means clubs are forced off their grounds and pavilion for up to three months to allow for set-up before the GP and pack-up and ground rehabilitation afterwards. An April GP means some clubs could lose half their entire season. A few fear it may even threaten their existence.'

the 2022 grand prix was held as planned on April 10, and many of the sports clubs worst fears have become reality. On behalf of the clubs, the president of the Albert Park Community Sporting Tenants Association, Hugo Armstrong, has written to the major events minister, Martin Pakula setting out the damaging impacts of the event. In summary:

- It is nearly two months since the event and at least six sports field still have significant problems and are not playable,
- slower grass growth has delayed repair of fields,
- some fields allegedly fully repaired have been ruled unsafe by sporting authorities,
- delay in the repair of fields are causing serious problems with match fixtures,
- some fields returned for use are deteriorating at a faster rate than usual and may become grassless quagmires before the end of the season,
- sporting associations are expected to closely monitor the safety of some fields, and this could lead to fixture changes and undermine Albert Park clubs.

The Association points out that the process of compensating the clubs for the disruption caused by the event is running very slowly, and is not helped by the need to submit revised claims because of the delay in repairing sports fields. This delay, and the mid-season April date of the grand prix has led to hundreds of extra hours of work by the volunteers who manage the clubs and organize the season fixtures. Many are exhausted and are advising that they will leave their posts at the end of the current season. They are *'both infuriated and despairing about their experiences on 2022'*.

The Association insists that the grand prix should not be held in April *'in any circumstances'* and calls for it to be held in March or September, ie between summer and winter sporting seasons. Failing that it suggests October or November. Also it wants to see more money spent on improving the durability of the sports fields and installing adequate irrigation. There must be a restriction on the amount of infrastructure placed on sports fields; for example *'it is completely unacceptable to allow heavy machinery such as army tanks onto sports fields'*.

The final paragraph reads: ***'We look forward to your urgent advice about when the 2023 GP will be held and how the Victorian Government will step up to more effectively support the needs of the community, rather than rich foreign interests.'***



This photo shows seven sports fields covered by grand prix infrastructure: fields 12,13 16E, 16W, 17 20, 21.



Incompatible: the grand prix and sports fields.

Top: an army tank on Oval 11. **Lower:** Oval 20, 8 weeks after the grand prix.

(Photos by the Albert Park Community Sporting Tenants Association.)

How to improve Melbourne's environment

On ABC Melbourne radio, 7th June, Dr Kate Shaw, Honorary Research Fellow in Urban Geography and Planning offered a succinct example of urban and environmental improvement for Melbourne: **get rid of the grand prix**. We agree that this would be a definite improvement and given we are into the second billion dollars of taxpayer subsidies, it would also benefit Victoria financially.

<https://findanexpert.unimelb.edu.au/profile/1533-kate-shaw>

How to waste a billion dollars

The latest response from the grand prix corporation regarding a freedom-of-information request by SAP has revealed that the grand prix event is not generating much tourism excitement across Australia. More than 70% of the GP television audience comprised Melbourne viewers, so this shows we are sponsoring an event that mostly 'advertises' Melbourne to Melburnians. This means that the event fails on its own *raison d'être*, ie to 'create value' for the state of Victoria in terms of generating tourism and new business opportunities. Any mainstream economist will tell you that over a billion dollars sunk into this event for the amusement of mainly Melburnian TV viewers does not create value for Victoria.

The Kennett Government and its secret deals

Thanks to an SAP member, SAP has been provided with some further insight regarding the operation of the Kennett government of the 1990's and the signing of the original grand prix contract. We have extracts from the memoirs of a former academic based at Monash and Victoria universities, Bill Russell, who has been an advisor to various Victorian governments on public administration.

Regarding the Kennett era of 1992-1999, he commented as follows:

'There were various reasons for the fall of the Kennett government and I believe their attack on the Auditor-General and the community's response to that attack was a leading reason. Of course, he underlying causes were the community's rejection of the onslaught Kennett's group had made on all aspects of the community, the public domain and social capital, from schools to hospitals, from local councils to non-profit organizations, from public transport to public health. The community had had enough.'

Bill Russell was engaged by the new Bracks government to undertake a 'commission of audit' on the general condition of the state's finances, in particular, the scope and process of government contracting. He found that there was no overall contract clearing body and ministers, departments and agencies had been allowed to proceed without central oversight. Details of contracts were dispersed



all over the government's operations. The contract for the grand prix had been given specific attention and was regarded so 'hot' that there was no copy held by the Treasurer. Bill Russell had to go to law offices elsewhere in the city and view the contract under the guidance and in the presence of Ron Walker. Copying was not tolerated! The government file on the grand prix showed no evidence that a business case or cost benefit analysis had been conducted. All there was on the file was a memo saying that such a study should be carried out.

Because of general secrecy regarding many private contracts, Bill Russell compiled a list of 70 'Contracts of Concern', which justified examination by a body with 'forensic powers'. Consideration was given to the question: was the secrecy intended to protect the intellectual property of private corporations or to provide political concealment for government of deals that they didn't wish to see the light of day? It was concluded that 'the level of secrecy was largely driven by government, rather than private firms'..

The faded photo shown here shows Jeff Kennett, full of confidence, at the Save Albert Parks rally in the park on May 15, 1994 (Caulfield and St Kilda Leader, March 23, 1994)

Formula 1 aims to boost 'fan engagement'

Early in 2022, Formula 1 signed a 5-year deal with the US company 'Salesforce', which claims is the world leader in 'customer relationship management'. The two companies aim to *'collaborate to expand the global fan base and deepen the engagement of existing F1 fans'* and to achieve a *'richer understanding of fan data, combined with new broadcast graphics, trackside signage, digital content Grand prix activations and more.'*

It appears that this collaboration could have been in full flight in the staging of the recent Melbourne grand prix. Certainly, a large crowd attended and appeared to be 'engaged' by the spectacle of cars following one another around in circles. We wonder what 'fan data' was being collected!

Formula 1 and Salesforce claim to be working towards 'a sustainable' operation of the 'fast-paced, world' of car racing but it's hard to believe that this is high priority. If they were serious about climate change they would be urging the Victorian Government to move the grand prix to a permanent circuit.

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