

RAM Racing

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RAM Racing was a Formula One racing team which competed during the racing seasons of 1976 to 1985. The team entered other manufacturers' chassis from 1976 to 1980, then ran March's team from 1981 to 1983, only entering a car entirely their own in 1984 and 1985.

The team was formed in 1975 by Mike Ralph and John Macdonald, with RAM derived from their names. After running Macdonald in a GRD in British Formula Three, they entered Alan Jones in a Formula 5000 March for 1976. They also bought a pair of Brabham BT44B Formula One cars, and entered the 1976 World Championship, running Loris Kessel and Emilio de Villota for the Spanish Grand Prix, where neither qualified. However, both Kessel and another pay-driver, Patrick Nève, qualified for the Belgian Grand Prix, with Jac Nelleman, Damien Magee, Lella Lombardi and Bob Evans all making appearances in the cars. There were few finishes, and the pay-drivers meant the team were frequent non-qualifiers.

For 1977, Boy Hayje drove a RAM-entered March with little success, and a second "rent-a-car" did no better later in the year when driven by Andy Sutcliffe, Mikko Kozarowitzy or Michael Bleekemolen. However, they had some success running Guy Edwards in the Shellsport Group 8 Championship in Britain, finishing 2nd overall. For 1978 the team switched to the British Aurora Formula One series, with Edwards placing 4th overall that year in a March, and 5th overall the following season in a Fittipaldi F5A. For 1980, RAM made an investment in a pair of 1979-spec Williams FW07, with Emilio de Villota winning the title. They then entered one of these cars for Rupert Keegan in the British Grand Prix. Kevin Cogan and Geoff Lees would guest in another car in the last two rounds, but their best finish was Keegan's 9th place at the United States Grand Prix.

1981 saw RAM manage and run the returning March Grand Prix team, with Derek Daly and Eliseo Salazar driving. However, non-qualifications were frequent, and the team failed to score any points, Daly's 7th place at the British Grand Prix being their best result.

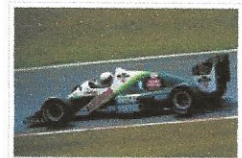
The combination stayed together for 1982, landing backing from Rothmans, and the new March 821 saw design work from a young Adrian Reynard. With veteran Jochen Mass to lead the team, backed up by Raul Boesel, hopes were high, but it was another disappointing year. Mass took 7th place at the United States Grand Prix, but as the car proved to be slow lost motivation, being more interested in his sports car racing with Porsche. From the German Grand Prix, Keegan took over the car, but RAM March once again failed to score points.

1983 saw the RAM name make itself onto the chassis for the first time, with Dave Kelly's RAM March 01 design. Salazar returned to drive the main entry, while a second car for Jean-Louis Schlesser was fielded at the French Grand Prix as a one-off. Salazar scored a 15th place in the season opener, but the bulky car struggled to qualify. Financial reasons saw the team skip the United States Grand Prix, while they only made the Canadian Grand Prix due to fielding local driver Jacques Villeneuve Senior and attracting some Canadian sponsorship. Kenny Acheson then took over for the rest of the season, only qualifying once, at the season-closing South African Grand Prix, where he took the team's best result of the year, 12th and last.

Astonishingly, the team pressed on into 1984. The partnership with March was dissolved, and RAM attracted sponsorship from Skoal Bandit. Two RAM 02 cars, with Hart turbo engines, were entered for Formula Two champion Jonathan Palmer and Philippe Alliot. Kelly's new design was disappointing, and the cars were frequent back-markers, and Palmer's 8th place in the opening Brazilian Grand Prix was their best result of the year. Indeed, the team drew more notices for the crashes their drivers were involved in.












Alliot remained for 1985, with Manfred Winkelhock entered in the second car, and a new RAM 03 designed by Gustav Brunner. Winkelhock put in some improved qualifying performances, but actual results were still thin. Winkelhock's death in a sports car event in Canada in the summer was a blow to the team, and Acheson was recalled briefly, before the team slimmed down to a single entry. They missed the final two rounds altogether. Skoal withdrew their backing at the end of the year, the team's best result having been Alliot's 9th place, again at the opening Brazilian Grand Prix.

The team planned to enter a single updated RAM 03 for Mike Thackwell (who had stood in for Palmer at the 1984 Canadian Grand Prix) for the next season, but the funds couldn't be found, and the team folded over the winter of 1985. The team would have raced as car #9 for the 1985 season otherwise, per the FIA entry list.^[1]



Manfred Winkelhock driving for RAM at the 1985 German Grand Prix.

Complete Formula One results

Year	Chassis	Engine(s)	Drivers	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	Points	WCC	
1976	Brabham BT44B	Ford Cosworth DFV	 Emilio de Villota	BRA	RSA	USW	ESP	BEL	MON	SWE	FRA	GBR	GER	AUT	NED	ITA	CAN	USA	JPN		-	_ [2]	
			 Loris Kessel				DNQ	12		Ret	DNQ			NC									
			 Patrick Nève					Ret															
			 Jac Nelleman							DNQ													
			 Damien Magee									DNQ											
			 Bob Evans										Ret										
			 Lella Lombardi											DNQ	DNQ	12							
1977	March 761	Ford Cosworth DFV	 Boy Hayje	ARG	BRA	RSA	USW	ESP	MON	BEL	SWE	FRA	GBR	GER	AUT	NED	ITA	USA	CAN	JPN	-	_ [2]	
			 Mikko Kozarowitzky			Ret		DNQ	DNQ	NC	DNQ					DNQ							
			 Andy Sutcliffe											DNQ									
			 Michael Bleekemolen														DNQ						
				ARG	BRA	RSA	USW	BEL	MON	FRA	GBR	GER	AUT	NED	ITA	CAN	USA						

1980	Williams FW07 Williams FW07B	Ford Cosworth DFV	Rupert Keegan								11	DNQ	15	DNQ	11	DNQ	9									-	[2]
			Kevin Cogan													DNQ											
			Geoff Lees														DNQ										
1983	RAM 01	Ford Cosworth DFV		BRA	USW	FRA	SMR	MON	BEL	USE	CAN	GBR	GER	AUT	NED	ITA	EUR	RSA								-	NC
			Eliseo Salazar	15	Ret	DNQ	DNQ	DNQ	DNQ																		
			Jean-Louis Schlesser			DNQ																					
			Jacques Villeneuve (elder)								DNQ																
			Kenny Acheson											DNQ	DNQ	DNQ	DNQ	DNQ	DNQ	12							
1984	RAM 02 RAM 01	Hart Straight-4 (t/c)		BRA	RSA	BEL	SMR	FRA	MON	CAN	USE	USA	GBR	GER	AUT	NED	ITA	EUR	POR							-	NC
			Philippe Alliot	Ret	Ret	DNQ	Ret	Ret	DNQ	10	Ret	DNS	Ret	Ret	11	10	Ret	Ret	Ret								
			Jonathan Palmer	8	Ret	10	9	13	DNQ		Ret	Ret	Ret	Ret	9	9	Ret	Ret	Ret								
			Mike Thackwell							Ret																	
1985	RAM 03	Hart Straight-4 (t/c)		BRA	POR	SMR	MON	CAN	USE	FRA	GBR	GER	AUT	NED	ITA	BEL	EUR	RSA	AUS							-	NC
			Manfred Winkelhock	13	NC	Ret	DNQ	Ret	Ret	12	Ret	Ret															
			Philippe Alliot	9	Ret	Ret	DNQ	Ret	Ret	Ret	Ret	Ret	Ret	Ret	Ret	Ret	Ret										
			Kenny Acheson										Ret	DNQ	Ret												

References

- ↑ 1985 Formula One Season Wikipedia article admittedly
- ↑ ***a b c*** Not entered as a constructor.

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Categories: Formula One constructors | Formula One entrants | British auto racing teams | British racecar constructors

Hidden category: Articles needing additional references from September 2007

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RAM 01

Listed below are each of the cars built to this type. Note that the list does not include cars modified to this type but originally built to a different type.

Click on a car to see the race history. The present location is shown where recorded; full details of ownership are held on file but not all of this information can presently be disclosed.

Car	Total Race Starts	Grand Prix Starts	First Race	Present Location
RAM 01/01	2	2	Brazilian GP (13 Mar 1983)	(on file - awaiting transcription)
RAM 01/02	1		Race of Champions (10 Apr 1983)	(on file - awaiting transcription)
RAM 01/03	1	1	South African GP (15 Oct 1983)	(on file - awaiting transcription)

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Encyclopedia

CONSTRUCTORS: RAM AUTOMOTIVE

Name: RAM Automotive

John Macdonald and Mick Ralph were partners in a car business in Willesden, north London in the late 1960s and Macdonald raced in both saloon cars and in occasional Formula 3 events with [March](#) machinery. These became more regular in 1972 and 1973 (when he used a GRD) but he was never a front-runner. When Macdonald decided to stop racing Ralph Macdonald Racing went on to run a March Formula 5000 car for [Alan Jones](#) in 1975 with considerable success and the following year RAM entered Formula 1 with a pair of [Ford](#)-engined [Brabham](#) BT44Bs, while the Brabham works team switched to [Alfa Romeo](#) engines. The team hired a string of different pay-drivers for the European races beginning with [Loris Kessel](#) and [Emilio de Villota](#). [Patrick Neve](#), Jac Nelleman, [Damien Magee](#), [Bob Evans](#) and [Lella Lombardi](#) all followed. There was legal trouble between the team and Kessel at the [German GP](#) and the season ended in farce.

In the British F1 series RAM was more successful with [Guy Edwards](#) winning the Oulton Park Gold Cup in one of the cars. After several abortive projects RAM returned in 1980 in the Aurora British F1 series, running ex-works [Williams](#) FW07s for [Rupert Keegan](#) and [Emilio de Villota](#). The Spaniard won the title but his only international race - the Spanish GP (a non-championship event that year) - ended with him causing an accident as the leaders tried to pass him.

For 1981 RAM went into a joint venture with [March Engineering](#) and moved premises to the March Engines factory. [Robin Herd](#), [Macdonald](#) and Ralph were joined as directors by [Guy Edwards](#) who was detailed to find sponsorship. The car was a [Williams](#) copy and was raced at the start of the year by pay-driver [Eliseo Salazar](#). The car was not a success and Salazar moved to [Ensign](#) and money was found from Guinness and Rizla to run [Derek Daly](#). Herd and Macdonald soon fell out and [Gordon Coppuck](#) was briefly chief engineer before handing over to the young [Adrian Reynard](#).

For 1982 [Edwards](#) managed to convince Rothmans, Rizla and Newsweek to sponsor the team and [Jochen Mass](#) was hired alongside pay-driver [Raul Boesel](#). The 811 was heavily revised by [Reynard](#) but there were disputes with Pirelli which led [Macdonald](#) to switch to Avon tires. When Avon withdrew Macdonald bought all the stock but there was no development and the team was uncompetitive as a result. Rothmans withdrew very quickly and a customer car - run by [Onyx Race Engineering](#) for [de Villota](#) was a similar disaster.

For 1983 the team decided to build its own cars. The RAM-[March](#) 01 was designed by Dave Kelly and was a conventional [Cosworth](#) car. The team started

the year with [Salazar](#) and expanded to two cars for the [French GP](#) where [Jean-Louis Schlesser](#) joined the team. Both drivers failed to qualify. Salazar never qualified again and left the team after [Belgium](#). Jacques Villeneuve ([Gilles](#)'s brother) failed to qualify in [Canada](#) and [Kenny Acheson](#) had a string of similar failures until the last race of the year in [South Africa](#) where he made the grid and raced to 12th place.

For 1984 [Edwards](#) came up with backing from US tobacco company Skoal Bandit and the team took on Formula 2 Champion [Jonathan Palmer](#) and Frenchman [Philippe Alliot](#). Kelly produced the RAM 02 which was fitted with a [Hart](#) 415T turbocharged engine. This proved to be troublesome while Palmer started the year in the reliable old car and finished eighth in [Brazil](#). He soon had a new car but neither he nor Alliot was able to produce any decent results that year. [Mike Thackwell](#) stood in for Palmer in [Canada](#) but he also failed to qualify.

The team hired [Gustav Brunner](#) to design the 1985 car and Skoal Bandit remained the chief sponsor. [Alliot](#) struggled and the team's second driver [Manfred Winkelhock](#) was killed in a mid-season sportscar accident. [Acheson](#) took over but the season ended early with Skoal Bandit pulling out and the team missing the last two races.

[Macdonald](#) kept the team alive through the winter but attempts to save it failed and it closed down early in 1986. The RAM 03 became a Formula 3000 car with [Salazar](#) driving but failed to score any decent results. Macdonald and Ralph ran a series of Formula 3000 teams under the Middlebridge and Superpower names and eventually built a successful fabrication business, supplying parts to F1 teams.

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March Engineering

March Engineering

Basic Information

Base: Great Britain
 Seasons: 1970-1992
 Team principal: Akira Akagi / Robin Herd

Formula1 information

Grand Prix's entered: 207
 World Championships: 0
 Wins: 3
 Poles: 4
 Fastest laps: 7
 Podiums: 21
 Points: 184
 First Race: 1970 South African Grand Prix
 Last Race: 1992 Australian Grand Prix

Year	Chassis	Engine	Tyres	Drivers	Championship Points
1992	March CG911	Ilmor 3.5 V10	Goodyear	E.Naspetti J.Lammers	3
1989	March 811	Judd 3.5 V8	Goodyear	I.Capelli M.Gugelmin	4
1988	March 811	Judd 3.5 V8	Goodyear	I.Capelli M.Gugelmin	22
1987	March 871	Ford Cos. DFZ 3.5 V8	Goodyear	I.Capelli	1
1982	March 821	Ford Cos. DFV 3.0 V8	Michelin Avon / Pirelli	E.deVillota J.Mass	0
1981	March 811	Ford Cos. DFV 3.0 V8	Michelin Avon	D.Daly E.Salazar	0
1978	March 761	DFV 3.0 V8		P. Neve	0
1977	March 761	Ford Cos. DFV 3.0 V8	Goodyear	A.Ribeiro A.Sutcliffe	0
1976	March 761	Ford Cos. DFV 3.0 V8	Goodyear	A.Merzario H.J.Stuck	19
1975	March 741	Ford Cos. DFV 3.0 V8	Goodyear	H.J.Stuck L.Lombardi	9
1974	March 741	Ford Cos. DFV 3.0 V8	Goodyear Firestone	H.J.Stuck H.Ganley	6
1973	March 731	Ford Cos. DFV 3.0 V8	Goodyear Firestone	D.Purley H.Pescarolo	14
1972	March 721G	Ford Cos. DFV 3.0 V8	Goodyear Firestone	C.Pace H.Pescarolo	15
1971	March 711	Ford Cos. DFV 3.0 V8	Goodyear Firestone	A.Soler-Roig A.DeAdamich	36
1970	March 701	Ford Cos. DFV 3.0 V8	Goodyear Firestone Dunlop	C.Amon F.Cevert	55

History and facts

March Engineering was a Formula One constructor and manufacturer of customer racing cars from Britain. Although only moderately successful in Grand Prix competition, March racing cars enjoyed much better achievement in other categories of competition including Formula 2, Formula 3, Indy car and sportscar racing.

1970s

March Engineering began operations in 1969. Its four founders were Max Mosley, Alan Rees, Graham Coaker and Robin Herd. They each had a specific area of expertise: Mosley looked after the commercial side, Herd was the designer, Rees managed the racing team and Coaker oversaw production at the factory. The history of March is dominated by the conflict between the need for constant development and testing to remain at the peak of competitiveness in F1 and the need to build simple, reliable cars for customers in order to make a profit.

The company first built a Formula 3 car in 1969, then went into F1 in 1970, supplying its 701 chassis to Tyrrell for Jackie Stewart. In addition, the factory ran two team cars for Jo Siffert and Chris Amon sponsored by STP. A third car, entered by Andy Granatelli for Mario Andretti, appeared on several occasions. Ronnie Peterson appeared in a semi-works car for Colin Crabbe when his Formula Two commitments allowed; various other 701s went to privateers. The team constructed ten chassis that year, in addition to F2, F3, Formula Ford and Can-Am chassis. Stewart gave the March chassis its first F1 victory in the 1970 Spanish Grand Prix and Amon took a non-championship race, but the works team did not win a Grand Prix.

For the 1971 Formula One season March Engineering came up with the remarkable 711 chassis, which had aerodynamics by Frank Costin and an ovoid front wing [1] described as the Spitfire (for its shape) or 'Tea-tray' (for its elevation from the car) wing. The car took no wins, but Ronnie Peterson finished second on four occasions, ending as runner-up in the World Championship. Alfa-Romeo V8 powered cars were occasionally entered, to little avail (following on from an equally unsuccessful Alfa program with McLaren).

The 1972 Formula One season was not a great success. Three distinct models of car were used, beginning with the 721, which was a development of the 711. Peterson and Niki Lauda then drove the disappointing experimental 721X factory cars (using an Alfa Romeo transverse gearbox and intended to have a low polar-moment, anticipating in some ways the much more successful Tyrrell 005/006). Frank Williams ran regular 711 and 721 customer cars for Henri Pescarolo and Carlos Pace. The 721X was deemed to be a disaster and abandoned, but the team saw a way out; customer Mike Beuttler and his backers ordered an F1 car, and the team produced the 721G in nine days (the 'G' standing for 'Guinness Book Of Records' as the car was built so quickly) by fitting a Cosworth DFV and larger fuel tanks to the 722 F2 chassis (not as desperate an experiment as it may have sounded - John Cannon commissioned a Formula 5000 car which was built to a very similar scheme). The 721G was light and quick, and the team soon built their own chassis. Had they started the year

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with these, wins may well have been possible. The 721G set the trend for future March F1 cars, which for the rest of the 1970s were essentially scaled-up F2 chassis. Meanwhile, March was going from strength to strength in Formula Two (which became its spiritual home) and Formula Three.

Also, the German team Eifelland entered under its own name a 721 much-modified with distinctive and eccentric bodywork by designer Luigi Colani for its driver Rolf Stommelen. This car was extremely unsuccessful, and later reverted mostly to conventional 721 form and was used by John Watson to make his F1 debut for John Goldie's Hexagon of Highgate team.

March's only notable result was Peterson's third place in Germany.

1973 was the low-point for March in Formula 1. The four extant 721Gs were re-bodied and fitted with nose-mounted radiators; although no new chassis were built, they were re-designated 731s. Without significant STP money, the March factory team was struggling, running an unsponsored car for Jean-Pierre Jarier (who mainly concentrated on F2, winning the championship in a works March-BMW), while Hesketh bought a car for James Hunt to race. Jarier was replaced by Tom Wheatcroft's driver Roger Williamson, who suffered a fatal accident in Zandvoort (at which race March privateer David Purley attempted to rescue Williamson from his burning car). The Hesketh team, after considering using a Surtees, bought a March which was developed by Harvey Postlethwaite and became a regular points-scorer, again hinting that there was little wrong with the basic concept of the 721G/731. Had March been able to focus on F1, success would have been possible. 1973 marked the first year where F2 became more important to March than F1, with the new two-litre rules marking the beginning of a long relationship with Paul Rosche at BMW. March undertook to buy a quantity of BMW engines each year in exchange for 'works' units for their own team; the BMW unit was standard-issue for the 732 F2 car and to use up the rest of the units March also manufactured a 2 litre prototype until 1975. Some of these had an astonishingly long life and were still competing in Japan in the early 1980s.

In 1974, the factory team ran Howden Ganley until his money ran out, then Hans-Joachim Stuck in a Jägermeister-sponsored car and Vittorio Brambilla in a Beta Tools-sponsored car. Both drivers were exuberant and occasionally quick, but proved expensive in terms of accident damage. BMW was starting to exert pressure on March to quit F1 and concentrate on F2. Patrick Depailler took the F2 championship in an Elf-sponsored March-BMW, the marque's last title for several years as the Elf sponsorship programme and (in 1976) the arrival of Renault engines turned the formula into a French benefit. Some discontent arose in the March customer ranks in F2 since the works appeared after the first couple of F2 races with cars significantly different to the customer vehicles.

In the following year Brambilla continued, amazing everyone with his victory in the rain-shortened 1975 Austrian Grand Prix. The second car was run by Lella Lombardi, the only woman to score a Championship point in F1 (only a half point actually as the ill-fated 1975 Spanish Grand Prix was shortened). Sadly, Mark Donohue died after a practice accident in a Penske-owned March at the 1975 Austrian Grand Prix. The team had abandoned their own car and bought a March to allow them to continue to compete; subsequent Penske F1 cars were very much 'son of March'. Through the mid-Seventies March provided privateers with simple, fast, and economical cars, although it does not pay to examine the history of individual chassis too closely; at one point Frank Williams bought an allegedly brand new 761B only to discover that it still had orange paint on it from its time as a 751 with Brambilla driving! The relationship between chassis plates, chassis and 'entities' is distinctly fuzzy in the 741/751/761 series, with at least one chassis plate having appeared on three distinct monocoques and one monocoque having appeared under multiple plates.

In 1976, Peterson, unhappy with the uncompetitive Lotus, jumped ship early and returned to March for whom he scored the team's second and last win at Monza. The 761 was fast but fragile, the F2 components starting to show the strain; by this point the F1 effort was being run on a shoestring with a two-car 'works' effort featuring Peterson and Stuck, the cars tending to turn up in different liveries as race-by-race sponsorship deals were signed, and a 'B-team' entered under the March Engines banner for paying drivers Lombardi and Arturo Merzario. By now the F1 effort as a whole was under fairly severe pressure from BMW, which wanted Robin Herd to concentrate entirely on the works' Formula Two effort, which was starting to come under pressure from French constructors (Martini and Elf) and the new Ralt marque.

That year Peterson scored only one other point in 1976 before being brokered back into a deal with Tyrrell for 1977. Although he felt most at home at March, it was clear that the team didn't have the resources to do Formula 1 "properly".

In the off-season of 1976/77, March engineer Wayne Eckersley constructed a rear end for the 761 chassis that had four driven wheels (designated the March 2-4-0) to Robin Herd's design. Unlike the six-wheeled Tyrrell P34, the 2-4-0 had four 16" driven wheels at the rear (the same size as the front wheels). The theory behind the design was that of improved traction and reduced aerodynamic drag (compared to the Tyrrell, which used ultra-small front wheels and normally sized rears). The chassis was tested at Silverstone circuit in early 1977 by both Howden Ganley (although the first time Ganley tested the 2-4-0 only the front pair of rear wheels were powered!) and Ian Scheckter but the project was curtailed in favour of further development of the conventional chassis. Ironically the car made March more profit than many of its successful racing cars as it was licensed by Scalextric and became one of their most popular models. The 2-4-0 rear end was later used in hillclimbing by various drivers including Roy Lane.

A Token F1 effort with Rothmans' sponsorship was run in 1977 for Alex Ribeiro and Ian Scheckter, but nothing worthwhile was achieved. Yet, as the works were fading from F1 the 761, by virtue of being cheap, simple and readily available, became the tool of choice for privateers, notably Frank Williams who after his acrimonious split with Walter Wolf needed a car to get back into racing before his own vehicle was ready.

Merzario later built his own unsuccessful F1 car based on his old 761, which he and Simon Hadfield attempted to develop into a ground effect car. This programme was completely unsuccessful.

At the end of the 1977 season, the F1 team's assets and FOCA membership were sold to ATS (who had bought the Penske cars); Herd was retained by them as a consultant and was hence in the curious position of developing a development of his own 1975 car! Mosley left the company to concentrate on FOCA matters. The F2 car was becoming seriously uncompetitive and the works team abandoned the evolutionary 772 in favour of a smaller, neater car built around an old Formula Atlantic monocoque, the 772P. This was more than a match for the Martini opposition and formed the basis of the next year's dominant 782.

From 1978, March concentrated on Formula 2 running the works BMW team. A 781 chassis was occasionally campaigned in the minor Aurora F1 series. March also assisted in the production of the racing versions of the BMW M1 sports car, which ran in the Procar series as supporting events in many F1 races. The F2 cars of this ERA, particularly the 782, were superb, and March regained its dominance of the formula - Bruno Giacomelli took the F2 title.

Ground effect came to F2 in 1979 but was widely misunderstood; for a while it looked like Rad Dougall in the Toleman team's conventional 782 would beat not only Brian Henton in Toleman's own car but also March's new 792 to the title. In the end, however, Marc Surer prevailed for the works.

1980s

In 1981 March made a half-hearted and ill-financed effort to return to F1, building cars that were little more than heavy and insufficiently stiff copies of the Williams FW07 for Mick Ralph and John McDonald's RAM Racing. The car was driven initially by Eliseo Salazar, but he soon quit for Derek Daly to take over. The team acquired a major sponsorship deal from Rothmans in 1982, but the money came too late for Herd or Adrian Reynard (who was working as chief engineer) to improve the performance of the cars. In 1983, McDonald started building his own cars and March was left outside F1 once more. The RAM-March effort was at arm's length from March proper, with the cars being built at a separate factory and the only real link with March being Robin Herd. During this phase, March Engines (a separate company within the group) undertook a number of bespoke customer projects - a highly-modified BMW M1 (which was highly unsuccessful but provided some input into the later GTP/Group C cars) and an equally unsuccessful Indycar (the Orbitor) based around the 792 chassis.

March's attention in the early 1980s was mainly split between F2 and breaking into the Indycar market. It is a curious irony that although March's FW07 copy bombed in Formula One; when developed into the 81C Indycar, it was instantly successful (largely down to George Bignotti's direct involvement in developing the car). Cosworth-powered Marches won the Indianapolis 500 five straight times between 1983 and 1987. The March 86C actually