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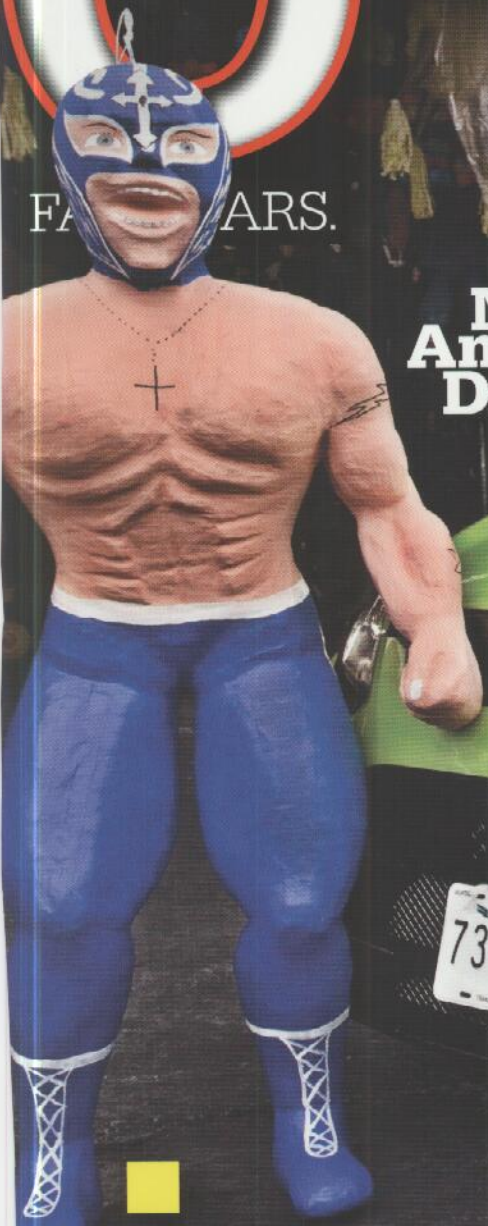
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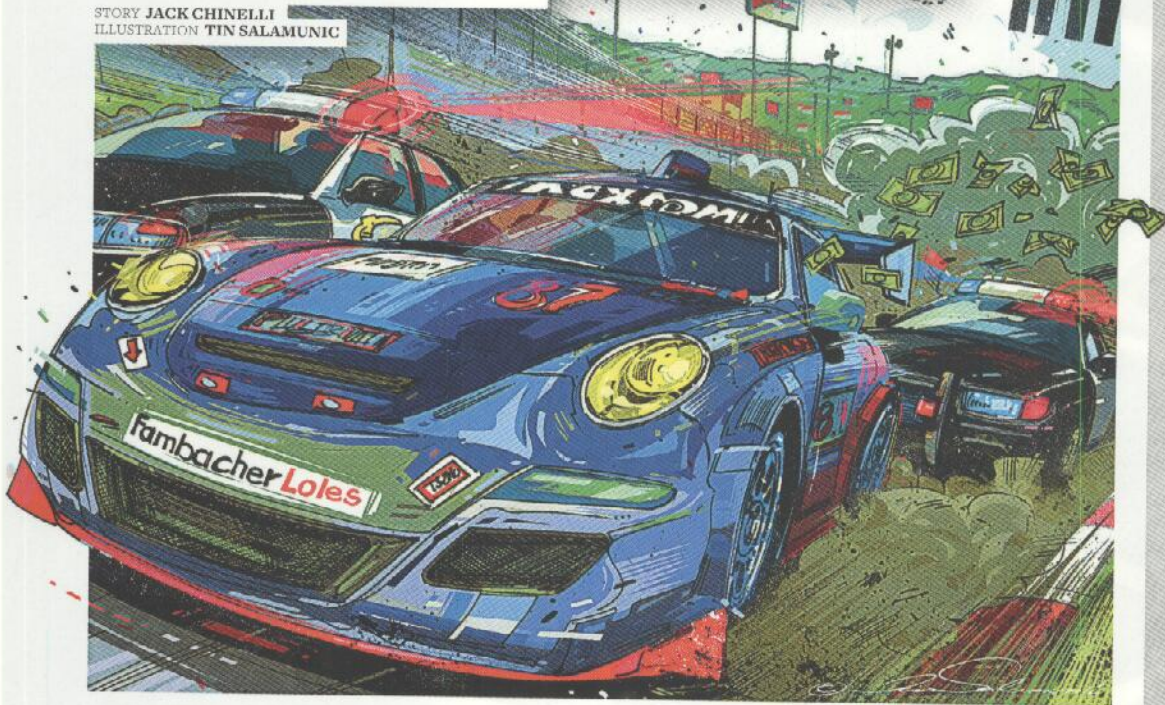
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# Merchants of Speed

In late 2009 Greg Loles, an investment advisor and owner of Farnbacher Loles Racing, allegedly embezzled more than \$1 million from a Connecticut church and its congregation to fund his racing team. But while robbing parishioners is evil, some of his racing peers have surely proven to be dirtier rotten scoundrels.

STORY JACK CHINELLI  
ILLUSTRATION TIN SALAMUNIC



**THE CROOKS** Ted Ball/David Ashworth **THE SERIES** Formula One  
**THE CRIME** Eight counts of corruption **THE TIME** Three years/18 months (respectively)

In 1984 Ted Ball founded Landhurst Leasing to provide leasing services for classic cars. Looking to diversify the company's holdings, he and Financial Director David Ashworth loaned Japanese engineering firm Middlebridge Group Ltd. £8 million (\$10.7 million) to purchase the Brabham F1 team from Bernie Ecclestone in 1989. In return, MGL's directors were strong-armed into making illegal cash payments to Ball and Ashworth totaling hundreds of thousands of pounds. Because Brabham F1 never secured proper sponsorship, they kept taking money from Landhurst and kept paying fees to Ball and Ashworth for the borrowed money. In all, Landhurst loaned Brabham F1 nearly £121 million (\$200 million) off the books, and Ball and Ashworth collected \$678,000 for their personal gain.

**THE CROOK** Vic Lee **THE SERIES** British Touring Car Championship  
**THE CRIME** Drug trafficking **THE TIME** 12 years, twice

Vic Lee's British Touring Car Championship team first aroused suspicion in 1992, with all-too-frequent trips to Zandvoort in Holland. Lee claimed the travel was for testing. He wasn't lying. Turns out, it was the pinky-to-tongue kind. In 1992 he was busted at a Holiday Inn in England with 40 kilos of cocaine, worth \$2 million on the streets. That got him 12 years. In 2005, a year after his release, Lee was again pinched for possessing 18.5 kilos of coke. Back to jail for another 12-year bid.

**THE CROOK** Randy Lanier **THE SERIES** IMSA GT/CART Indycar  
**THE CRIME** Engaging in criminal enterprise, conspiracy to distribute **THE TIME** Life

In 1987 federal prosecutors named Randy Lanier—IMSA Camel GT champion and Indianapolis 500 Rookie of the Year 1986—as a coconspirator in what was then one of the largest marijuana smuggling rings in U.S. history. After fleeing the country and missing a court date, Lanier was picked up by the feds as he was lolling about in the Caribbean. A federal jury convicted Lanier of conspiring to distribute 300 tons of marijuana between 1982 and 1986. The newly enacted RICO laws slapped him hard: life without possibility of parole.

**THE CROOKS** John Paul Sr./John Paul Jr. **THE SERIES** IMSA GT  
**THE CRIME** Importing marijuana, tax evasion, possession of a false passport, shooting a federal witness, racketeering **THE TIME** 25 years/28 months

Although its cars never carried a single sponsor sticker, John Paul Sr.'s IMSA team, JLP Racing, campaigned a baby-blue Porsche 935 successfully throughout the early '80s. Turns out the team's lavish facilities were supported by a smuggling ring that prosecutors said brought 50 tons of marijuana into the U.S. from Colombia during the late 1970s, using the race team's trucks and Paul Sr.'s yacht *Argonaut*. Paul Sr. was also charged with the attempted murder of a witness who testified against the smuggling operation in return for immunity from prosecution. Along with his son John Paul Jr., who served 28 months for racketeering, the two Pauls turned IMSA into the "International Marijuana Smugglers Association."

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STORY MICHAEL CRENSHAW



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