

# Haas hopeful of speedy Grosjean recovery

Brazilian Pietro Fittipaldi to make F1 race debut in place of recuperating Frenchman at this weekend's Rolex Sakhir Grand Prix

● Fittipaldi has attended the majority of F1 races this season in his test and reserve driver role with the team

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Haas F1 team members have been united in their support of Romain Grosjean following his horrifying crash at Sunday's Formula 1 Gulf Air Bahrain Grand Prix 2020, and until his full recovery, announced yesterday that Brazilian Pietro Fittipaldi will race in the Frenchman's place.

Fittipaldi will therefore make his F1 debut with Haas at this coming weekend's F1 Rolex Sakhir Grand Prix at Bahrain International Circuit (BIC), the penultimate round of the 2020 FIA F1 World Championship.

Fittipaldi has attended the majority of F1 races this season in his test and reserve driver role with the team. The 24-year-old Miami-born driver holds a career resume which includes a Formula V8 3.5 Championship title and several starts in IndyCar.

He is the grandson of two-time F1 World Champion and double Indy 500 winner Emerson Fittipaldi.

He has tested previously with the team in 2019, and in Friday's opening practice sessions at the Sakhir Grand Prix will be making his first time behind the wheel of Haas' VF-20 car this season.

"After it was decided that the



Pietro Fittipaldi

best thing for Romain was to skip at least one race, the choice to put Pietro in the car was pretty easy," stated Haas team principal Guenther Steiner.

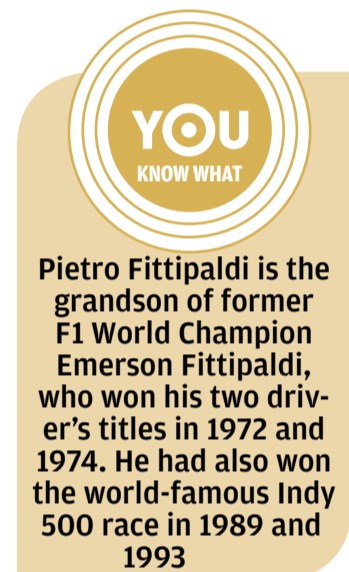
"Pietro will drive the VF20 and he's familiar with us, having been around the team for the past two seasons as a test and reserve driver.

"It's the right thing to do and it's obviously a good opportunity for him. He's been patient and was always prepared for this opportunity - and now it has come. That's why we want him in the car and I'm sure he'll do a good job.

"It's very demanding being called in at the last minute, but as I said, I think it's the right thing to do for Haas F1 Team."

Fittipaldi commented: "Most importantly I'm happy Romain is safe and healthy. We're all very happy his injuries are relatively minor after such a huge incident.

"Obviously, it's not an ideal set of circumstances to get my



first opportunity to compete in F1, but I'm extremely grateful to Gene Haas and Guenther Steiner for their faith in putting me behind the wheel this weekend.

"I've been with the team a lot this season, both trackside and



Grosjean lays on a stretcher as he is attended to by medical team personnel

working on simulator sessions, so I'm familiar with the team's operating procedures on a grand prix weekend.

"It's going to be exciting to make my first career start in F1 - I'll be giving it my all and I look forward to starting in free practice on Friday in Bahrain."

Racing in the F1 Rolex Sakhir Grand Prix will be held along BIC's 3.543-kilometre Outer Track. It will be the first time that circuit layout will be used for competition.

#### Fortunate

Meanwhile, Steiner and Grosjean's teammate Kevin Magnussen have wished Grosjean a speedy recovery.

"We got fortunate today," Steiner said. "The good news is that Romain is doing well considering what happened. We

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PIETRO FITTIPALDI

are thankful for all the safety advancements in modern F1 in order to protect the drivers. We send a thank you to the FIA safety team and the marshals who were on-site immediately to help Romain get away from the scene.

"As I said, I think we got lucky - there's not a lot more to say. We hope Romain will recover quickly from the injuries he sustained."

Magnussen added: "Firstly, I'm just very, very happy to see Romain walk away from that crash - it was unbelievable. To see him survive that is frankly a miracle.

"I'm so happy that the halo was introduced, and it was on his car. Without it I'm sure it would have been very different. I'm just happy that we've still got Romain."

# Bahrain secures place in qualification for FIBA World Cup 2023

● World Cup qualifiers will be played over a period of 15 months, beginning in November of next year

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Bahrain's senior men's national basketball have doubled their reasons to celebrate following their victories the past few days against Iraq and India.

Not only have they booked their tickets to the FIBA Asia Cup 2021, which will be their first appearance in the continental tournament since 2013 and ninth overall, but they have also secured their place in the qualification competition for the FIBA World Cup 2023.

This was confirmed yesterday by the Bahrain Basketball Association, who said that the World Cup qualifiers will be played over a period of 15 months, beginning in November of next year.

Bahrain will be one of 80 countries from around the world competing for 32 spots in basketball's showcase tournament, which will be jointly hosted by Indonesia, Japan and the Phil-



Bahrain national team members celebrate after their win over India on Sunday, securing their qualification for the FIBA Asia Cup 2021

ippines.

The World Cup field will include eight teams from Asia and Oceania, 12 from Europe, seven from the Americas, and five from Africa.

Japan and the Philippines

have already secured their seats as hosts, while co-host Indonesia must finish amongst the top eight teams in next year's FIBA Asia Cup to gain qualification.

#### Philippines rout Thailand

Meanwhile, the FIBA Asia Cup 2021 qualifiers held in Bahrain over the past few days wrapped up last night with the Philippines routing Thailand 93-69 in the day's lone fixture.

The Filipinos led the entire

way and went ahead by as many as 28 points.

Javier Gomez De Liano top scored for the victors with 19, while Juan Gomez De Liano added 14 and Dwight Ramos 13. Chantip Jakrawan had 34 to

pace the Thais in the loss.

With the result, the Philippines conclude their campaign in Bahrain with two wins from as many games, while the Thais lost all three of their contests.



#### Standings after qualifiers in Bahrain

(\*already qualified for FIBA Asia Cup 2021)

#### Group A

	P	W	L	Pts
Philippines	3	3	0	6
Korea	2	2	0	4
Indonesia	3	1	2	4
Thailand	4	0	4	4

#### Group D

	P	W	L	Pts
Lebanon*	4	4	0	8
Bahrain*	4	3	1	7
India	4	1	3	5
Iraq	4	0	4	4