

## SPORTS

## sports

# BAS end BKEC season in style

BAS Motor Sport Team enjoy spectacular ending to endurance karting season

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Bahrain Airport Services (BAS) Motor Sport Team wrapped up a fine campaign in the 2019/2020 Bahrain Karting Enduro Championship (BKEC), putting in a superb performance in the fourth and final round held as a 24-hour challenge at Bahrain International Karting Circuit in Sakhir.

All four of the BAS squads that took to the track made it onto the podium of their respective categories, making for a brilliant ending to a memorable season.

BAS Chief Operations Officer and BAS Motor Sport Team manager Tony Smith commented: "The whole events of the four rounds have just been amazing; the dedication that all the BAS staff have shown was really impressive, and they have made BAS extremely proud of their achievements."

"Without the support from BAS CEO Mr Salman Al Mahmeed, all of the achievements would not have been possible and our thanks goes out to him."

The BAS A team comprised Gavin Halls, Ahmed Abduljaleel, Khalifa Al Yaqoobi and young BAS Motor Sport Team Ambassador Lewis Smith. They made it onto the race's overall podium in third place with a total of 1,118 laps—just three laps behind the winners.

They had an additional reason to celebrate as their efforts also earned them the runner-up tro-



BAS Motor Sport Team members and officials with their trophies at the end of the 24-hour final round of the season

**“I remember when I started off, my best lap was 1:43 and I never expected to get down to 1:15 in this 24-hour race. I had so much fun and I really enjoyed doing it**

SUJUSHA BHIKU BAKAAL

phy in the Pro class.

Meanwhile, the BAS C and BAS F teams were both amongst the top three in the Corporate category.

The BAS C squad was composed of Don Vinura, Mohammed Al Ansari, Ammar Al Ghawas, Yousif Alaskari, Mohammed Fadhel, Mohammed Rabea, Benjamin John and Husain Habib, and they registered 1,079 laps.

The all-ladies BAS F team had their best performance of the championship, taking third in class with 1,048 laps. Sharing time in their kart were Marwa Mandeel, Jeiel Macaraan, Fatima Mohammed, Sujusha Bakaal, Alya Adel and Christina Anieliesia.

Finally, the BAS B team claimed third place in the Nations category, posting a total of 1,108 laps over the day-long challenge. Their squad featured the talents of Mohammed Faqihi, Ahmed Al Kooheji, Mahmood Al Saati, Mohammed Maki and Ziyad Khalifa.

BAS B team driver Ahmed Al Kooheji was overwhelmingly impressed by how much the entire team had improved from the start of the season to the final chequered flag.

"In our first day of practice for this last round, you could tell that the team has evolved

180 degrees," Al Kooheji explained. "It is something you can be very proud to be a part of. It is something you won't find everywhere, but we were able to deliver. It shows the spirit of BAS and the kind of people we have on our team—if we work together we can achieve these great things."

"This was only our first season competing, and we learned a lot. Thanks to BAS for providing us this opportunity, and we hope to keep growing and developing for next season."

Al Kooheji was especially pleased with how the BKEC finale turned out, in particular with the ladies' squad.

"The energy level and motivation required for this last race—which was almost 36 hours all together—was absolutely high."

"We were battling in every category, and the ladies in particular did a remarkable job.

They were only six on their team, and to complete a 24-hour race alone, while beating other bigger teams, was simply amazing by them. Our ladies really developed well over this season."

For the all-ladies squad, ending the season on the podium was not only an incredible result, but it was also tremendously inspiring.

"I'm very grateful for this opportunity," said Fatima Mohammed, who relished the challenge of being named the team captain for the race. "I can proudly say we did it! 24 hours! It was an amazing experience with many great people to share it with!"

"I dedicate this win to every lady out there!! We are capable of doing anything!"

Alya Adel commented: "This race was a significant event. We practiced hard for it. Our timings were much better than the previous race, and for beginners we did great."

"I'm super sad that it's over but look forward to hopefully competing again next season!"

The ladies were able to overcome huge hurdles in taking part over the full season, which was a completely new experience for the majority of the team as they had previously never driven a go-kart prior to competing in the BKEC.

"What a thrilling experience!" exclaimed Sujusha Bhiku Bakaal. "I could never have imagined getting an opportunity to do something this big."

## Al Anezi goal lifts Manama over Al Ahed in AFC Cup



Manama midfielder Ahmed Moosavies for the ball with Ahed's Ahmad Zreik

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Manama posted their first victory of the 2020 AFC Cup last night following a 1-0 decision over defending champions Al Ahed of Lebanon at the Khalifa Sports City stadium in Isa Town.

Isa Al Anezi fired in the winner in the second half and it was enough to give the Bahrainis the win.

Al Anezi was able to tap the ball in from close range in the 69th minute after Ahed goalkeeper Ali Daher failed to control a low cross from right wing by Manama defender Mohammed Adel.

Al Anezi got enough of a touch on the pass to get it past Daher, and after it rolled through his legs all the Manama striker had to do was to guide it into an open net. The result gave Manama their first victory in two matches in Group A of the AFC Cup's opening stage. They were earlier held to a goalless draw against Al Jaish of Syria in their opening fixture played earlier this month.

## Al Areen hosts first Spartan Trifecta Weekend in Bahrian

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Adventure seekers around the region gathered for the annual Spartan race in Bahrain with this year's edition taking place in the primely located Al Areen Development Project, a growing destination for sports, leisure and tourism. Under the Patronage of His Highness Shaikh Nasser Bin Hamad Foundation, GFH Financial Group (GFH) and Al Areen Investment Company brought to the Kingdom not only the first ever Trifecta Weekend to be hosted in Bahrain, but the first 2020 Spartan Trifecta event in the world.

A race that has grown in popularity amongst Bahrainis, more than 3,250 participants, both new and seasoned, and over 6,000 attendees enjoyed the scenes across the 2,000,000 sq/m desert oasis while taking in the awe-inspiring beauty of the stark desert panorama offered by Al Areen, the destination partner, which also houses the Lost Paradise of Dilmun (LPOD) waterpark, ranked no. 11 World's Best Water Park and destination boasting the largest wave pool in the Middle East, over 25 slides, swimming pools and an interactive kid's play area equipped with 10 pint-sized slides and tipping buckets.

During a panel discussion



Chief guests and officials during the inaguration

hosted to launch the event at the Al Areen Palace and Spa, Ayman AlMoayad, Minister of Youth and Sport Affairs, said, "As a leading regional centre for sport, the Kingdom of Bahrain is pleased to be hosting this landmark global event. In line with the Kingdom's Vision 2030, we continue to sustainably build Bahrain's position and competitive edge on the international sporting stage for the benefit of our youth, community and economy."

"Promoting and fostering an environment that raises awareness of and creates opportunities for youth and athletic development in the Kingdom of Bahrain is a key national objective. We're excited to see this important global race brought to the Kingdom and proud to

lend our support to making it a great success for the organizers, sponsors and the many participants it will attract from within the Kingdom and from abroad," added Mohammed Al Nusuf, Secretary General of the Bahrain Olympic Committee.

Abdulrahman Askar, Assistant Secretary General of Supreme Council for Youth and Sports, further noted, "We are pleased to have welcomed Spartans from around the world and here from the region and the Kingdom to this exciting race. A first of its kind globally, Bahrain continues to help support and pioneer new and innovative platforms for promoting health, sport and opportunities to develop, attract and advance healthy competitions in the Kingdom."

Dr. Essa Faqeeh, CEO of Al

Areen Investment Company, said, "We're delighted to be the main sponsors this year for the Spartan race in Bahrain and to have hosted this exciting event at our Al Areen development project. We continue to focus on promoting the development of sport in the Kingdom and our own unique lifestyle developments throughout Bahrain, which can serve as world-class sports tourism venues, helping to attract visitors and athletes from around the world to Bahrain. We are redoubling our efforts and will step it up through sponsorships and events like the Spartan Race to enhance awareness of and participation in lifestyle and health-focused competitions and as a way of drawing visitors and investment to the Kingdom."

## BIC set to crown new champions in Bahrain drag racing's season finale

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An action-packed season finale is on the cards in the 2019/2020 Bahrain Drag Racing Championship.

The meeting gets underway today at Bahrain International Circuit in Sakhir. The series' fifth and final round will be the culmination of yet another ultra-competitive campaign, and it will help determine the newest group of champions who will each be taking home not only their first place trophies, but also a coveted Wally from the National Hot Rod Association (NHRA).

The first two days of the meeting today and tomorrow will see participants hard at work testing and tuning their respective challengers, both cars and motorbikes.

Around 140 competitors were entered in the 16 competition categories in the previous round, and even more are expected this time. Being the region's biggest and most competitive drag racing championship, it attracts top drag racers from all over the world, including many legends of the sport.



A car in action at BIC

Following the Test and Tune, Qualifying will then be held on Thursday and then the season-ending eliminations will take place on Race Day Friday. Test and Tune will be held from 6pm to 11pm on both nights, while Qualifying will be from 4pm to 11pm. Race Day will begin from 4pm on Friday and continue until the completion of all events.

BIC's quarter-mile drag strip hosts all the action. BIC is a member of the prestigious Worldwide Network of the USA-based NHRA, allowing the Bahrain championship to run under the prestigious NHRA banner.

All race fans are welcome to attend the season's final round. Tickets can be purchased at the gate.