

## SPORTS

# Bahrain team joins British GT

2 Seas Motorsport is set to compete in Intelligent Money British GT Championship

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Bahraini racing team 2 Seas Motorsport will be competing in this year's Intelligent Money British GT Championship, it was announced yesterday.

The debutants are making sporting history as they are the first Bahraini outfit to race in the prestigious series.

They will contest this year's campaign with a pair of McLaren 720S GT3s, and Bahrain's very own racing talent HH Shaikh Isa bin Abdulla Al Khalifa is one of their drivers.

The team's Silver Cup driver combinations comprise 2019 GT4 title contender Dean Macdonald and Angus Fender, who claimed two GT3 podiums last season; as well as HH Shaikh Isa, whose British GT co-driver will be confirmed in due course.

HH Shaikh Isa co-owns 2 Seas Motorsport with business partner Nick Cristofaro. The McLaren Customer Racing team was only established in 2019 but boasts many years of experience amongst its staff.



The team's McLaren 720S GT3

Indeed, HH Shaikh Isa expects to hit the ground running when Oulton Park plays host to British GT's season-opener on April 11 and 13.

"I am really proud to be now in a position to launch 2 Seas Motorsport, confirming the first of our exciting plans for this season, running with the McLaren 720S GT3 and with the entry into the Intelligent Money British GT Championship," HH Shaikh Isa said.

"It is going to be a tough year and we are going in at a high level, as the grid is one of the strongest ever with world-class

drivers and teams all the way down. But Dean, Angus and I are all fired up for the challenge.

"While we are a new team, the 720S GT3 has proven itself on the world stage already, and the individuals who make up the team have extensive experience from all forms and series within motorsport, and we are confident going into this new programme."

The sister 720S is shared by two 19-year-old rising stars, who both impressed throughout last season. Macdonald finished third in the GT4 standings with HHC Motorsport following

particularly impressive qualifying performances, while Fender's late-season GT3 switch to Century's BMW M6 resulted in back-to-back podiums at Brands Hatch and Donington.

"2 Seas Motorsport joins McLaren Customer Racing for the 2020 season, and we are proud to be working with such an iconic name in motorsport," said Cristofaro, who was instrumental in bringing the programme together.

"We monitored the performance of the 720S GT3 closely throughout 2019 during its debut season and it has proven itself a race-winner against some of the toughest opposition including the race victory at the British GT season-finale. It has also started the 2020 season strongly with a podium at the Bathurst 12 Hour, so we enter the season full of confidence and looking to secure more silverware."

The team is scheduled to hold a testing programme ahead of the British GT's season-opener.

The 2020 championship features seven races in all, to be run until September.

## BIC opens multi-purpose stand at The Avenues



BIC's multi-purpose stand at The Avenues

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Bahrain International Circuit (BIC), "The Home of Motorsport in the Middle East", announced today the opening of its stand at The Avenues Bahrain, as the days count down to the Formula 1 Gulf Air Bahrain Grand Prix 2020.

The Formula 1 spectacle takes place March 19 to 22 in Sakhir, and BIC is set to light it up with a fantastic programme of racing and entertainment.

The stand is located in front of gate number one (Harbour Gate). It will be open daily between 9.30am and 10pm on weekdays and between 9.30am and 12midnight from Thursdays to Saturdays.

At the stand, fans will be able to purchase their tickets for the Formula 1 Gulf Air Bahrain Grand Prix 2020, as well as all sorts of BIC and Formula 1 merchandise and memorabilia.

There is also a Virtual Reality game and a kids' colouring

area for visitors to enjoy.

Tickets to the Bahrain Grand Prix are selling fast and all those excited to attend are advised to purchase theirs as soon as possible.

Fans who purchase a Main Grandstand ticket for the Bahrain Grand Prix will have a chance to take home a pair of Formula 1 Paddock Club three-day passes worth almost US\$10,000 in an exciting new raffle. This is the first time this prestigious prize has ever been offered for the Bahrain Grand Prix.

Interested race-goers have until March 7 to buy their Main Grandstand ticket in order to be a part of the draw. Those who have already secured their Main Grandstand seats have also already been entered automatically.

The grand prize of two Formula 1 Paddock Club passes will give the winners access to one of the most exclusive locations from where to enjoy this year's Bahrain Grand Prix.

## BIC to host official pre-season tests of F2 and F3

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Bahrain International Circuit (BIC) is all set to host three busy days of official pre-season testing next week for two of Formula 1's biggest feeder series.

Set to take to the tarmac from next Sunday to Tuesday (Editor's note: March 1 to 3) in Sakhir are competitors in this season's FIA Formula 2 Championship and FIA Formula 3 Championship.

Testing will be held from 9am to 7.45pm on all three days. Many of international racing's superstars of the future will be lining up in the pit lane as the look to make their way up the motorsport ladder to the top flight.

Each series will complete their running at BIC as part of their preparations for the start of their respective 2020 campaigns.

The Formula 2 drivers and

teams will also get the first chance to sample the new 18-inch Pirelli tyres—acting as a first step towards Formula 1 making the same change for 2021—during their three-day test.

Formula 3 will complete running in Bahrain over the same three-day period, making use of the state-of-the-art floodlights at BIC to allow for separate sessions to take place each day. These tests will mark the first-ever action in Bahrain for the Formula 3 championship, which is only in its second year.

Both Formula 2 and Formula 3 will be staging their first rounds of their 2020 seasons at BIC a few weeks following the tests, in support of the Formula 1 Gulf Air Bahrain Grand Prix from March 19 to 22.

They are a part of the Grand Prix weekend's stellar support race programme that also includes the Porsche Sprint Chal-



Race cars in action at BIC

lunge Middle East.

Meanwhile, BIC will also be hosting testing next month for Formula 1 tyre suppliers Pirelli. These tests will be held on March 24 and 25, with Formula 1 teams Renault and Mercedes participating.

In the tests, each team will

sample the new 18-inch tyres that are set to debut in the 2021 Formula 1 season.

The Formula 2, Formula 3 and Pirelli tests this March confirm BIC's status as a favourite venue for hosting testing at the highest levels of international motorsport.

## Zelzaal motor show draws huge participation and crowd



Cars on display during the event

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Bahrain International Circuit (BIC), "The Home of Motorsport in the Middle East", hosted the Zelzaal motor show last Friday at the BIC premises in Sakhir.

This hugely popular event took place on the sidelines of BIC's Vehicle Dynamics Area, which is a specially configured venue at the circuit's car park.

More than 2,000 vehicles including sports cars, coupes, convertibles, sedans, hatchbacks, Sports Utility Vehicles, pick-up trucks and motorbikes of various makes and models were on display to the thou-

sands who turned up for the show.

The participating owners represented all kinds of car clubs from across the Gulf, including Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Kuwait, Oman and Bahrain.

As part of the gathering, a drifting show was held along BIC's Vehicle Dynamics Area, which is a specially configured venue at the circuit's car park.

The Zelzaal motor show is one of the largest in the Middle East. It has been held at BIC a few times in the past, and it has always been a huge draw for motoring enthusiasts.

## Corral cruises past Moussa in FCTG Cup Opener

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Filipino Thess Corral overpowered Egyptian teenager Khadija Moussa in the opening match of the ladies Flight 4 division in the Eleventh Chairman's Cup, organized by the Filipino Club Tennis Group (FCTG) and supported by Almoayyed Motors at the Bahrain Tennis Federation courts in Isa Town.

In other ladies Flight 4 division matches, Ana Hernandez started startedly but regained her composure in subduing Lei Del Rosa 8-6 while Elvie Al-ico eased pass Leanne Gayle



Participants at the venue

Sinocruz 8-3.

The opening ceremony and first few matches of the tournament were held on Friday. There

are total of 166 singles entries playing in seven men's divisions, three women's divisions, beginners and kids division. The

Tournament format is double elimination. Matches are played according to schedules at the BTF courts.