

BASIL SHAABAN RETURNS TO RACING IN BRITISH F3 CHAMPIONSHIP

24 July 2006.../Basil Shaaban will make his British F3 debut this weekend, contesting the Spa Francorchamps round of the championship with Comtec Racing. The A1 Team Lebanon driver has undertaken a limited testing programme with the team over the last two months, in preparation for his first outing and is eager to be returning to competitive racing.

Shaaban's last race event was the A1 Grand Prix Indonesian rounds and without regular race competition for over five months, the young Lebanese driver is prepared for the challenge ahead in Spa. He competed at the circuit last year in the F3000 pro series enjoying his best qualifying position of his season at this famed Belgian track which features the drivers' favourite, the Eau Rouge complex, a challenging collection of sweeping corners which test the driver's skill and commitment.

"It's a fantastic circuit," says Shaaban. "It's a tough track with some of the most challenging sections of track, and the weather is very unpredictable: it can be dry in one part of the circuit and wet in another, so this adds extra spice to the mix.

"Entering the British F3 championship halfway through the season, racing against drivers who have been racing all year will give me a tough test, but it also provides me with tangible goals. My competition will be the National class drivers and I'm going to be judging my performance against these guys."

The British F3 International Series comprises 22 races at 11 different European race tracks and is renowned as a feeder series to Formula One. The championship boasts more F1 world champions and Grand Prix winners than any other series. There are two classes within the Series, with the championship class drivers using the latest specification of F3 chassis and the National class featuring 2001-04 chassis. All the National class cars are powered by Mugen Honda engines.

Shaaban will be classified in the Invitational class, although he will be competing in National class machinery, as in-season testing is banned for the regular F3 championship competitors. The races will take place on Friday 28th July at 14:45 and on Saturday 29th July at 08:55. The weekend also features the FIA GT 24 Hours of Spa, which starts at 16:00 on Saturday 29th July.