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## **SHAABAN FINDS GOOD PACE ON THE LEARNING CURVE**

### **First Arab driver to tackle Formula 3 Euro Series makes his mark at Hockenheim**

Dubai, UAE, 22<sup>nd</sup> April, 2007: Basil Shaaban now knows the size of the challenge he faces as a rookie in the Formula 3 Euro Series, and the first Arab driver to tackle the world's toughest F3 championship aims to show that he is a fast learner.

Shaaban, born in Beirut and raised in Abu Dhabi, has had a testing time so far at the wheel of his Shell-sponsored Dallara-Mercedes-Benz in the opening round of the 2007 series at Hockenheim.

Braking problems hindered his progress in both the free practice and qualifying sessions, undermining his preparations for the first of the weekend's two races on Saturday afternoon.

But despite finishing down the field in 19<sup>th</sup> position, Shaaban's fastest lap was just 1.2 seconds behind that of race winner and pole-sitter Sebastien Buemi of Switzerland, a performance which surprised his Austrian-based team, HBR Motorsport.

"I'm up against guys who have been contesting this series for two or three years, so I wasn't expecting any more in terms of my finishing position in my debut race," said the Shell-sponsored driver. "But given the level of competition here it was really as good as we could have expected. What pleased my team was my race pace, which was a marked improvement over my pace earlier in the weekend."

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Before lining up in this afternoon's second race of the weekend at Hockenheim, Shaaban said: "This bodes well for my learning curve, which I am in all honesty just beginning. There's a lot left to learn, and from here on I must start to increase the aggression in the first laps of the race, get up to speed sooner, and crucially focus on being a bit more consistent and making fewer mistakes."

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