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## **SHAABAN STEERS CLEAR OF NUMBERS GAME IN GERMANY**

### **Shell-backed Arab driver keeps focus on technique in F3 Euro Series countdown to Norising**

Dubai, UAE, 14th June, 2007: Arab driver Basil Shaaban has been told to forget about numbers and focus on pure driving matters when he attempts to make more progress in the F3 Euro Series in Germany next weekend.

Despite a series of setbacks in round two at Brand Hatch last week, Shaaban produced the kind of speed in his Shell Dallara-Mercedes-Benz which suggests he is well on course to achieving his first season goals in the world's most competitive F3 series.

His fastest laps in free practice, qualifying and the second of the weekend's two races were all just over 0.7 secs off the best times recorded each day, putting into perspective his race finishes of 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> in the 22-car line-up.

But Shaaban's specialist instructor Marc Hynes is insisting the Lebanese-born driver who was raised in Abu Dhabi forgets about lap times and finishing positions as he prepares for his next F3 Euro Series action at the Norisring circuit on Saturday and Sunday.

"Both Marc and my team are very pleased with my progress," he says. "They keep reminding me that I'm competing against drivers who have three years experience in F3 while I've got just a few test sessions and a couple of events behind me.

"Marc says the best way to close the gap even more is to remain focused on the things we're working on to improve my control, be it my technique in keeping the tyres warm and in good condition during the safetycar period, or my mental readiness at restarts.

Shaaban 2

“These are all things that myself, Marc and the team are working hard on together to improve,” said Shaaban, who made visits to Dubai and Beirut this week for meetings with sponsors Shell and TV representatives which should soon bring his race action to a major Middle East audience.

“The aim is to get myself into a position to be challenging for a top ten position later in this my first season in an F3 car. Then the priority will be to get a lot more hours behind me in the car during winter testing to prepare me for a stronger challenge next season.”

Shaaban’s outright goal is to become the first Arab Formula One driver, and he is following basically the same three-year course through the F3 Euro Series and GP2 which took Lewis Hamilton to the top, also under the guidance of Marc Hynes.

In the last week Shaaban’s HBR Motorsport team mechanics have been working to resolve the clutch and handling problems he experienced at Brands Hatch, where Frenchman Romain Grosjean replaced Swiss Sebastien Buemi as championship leader.

**2007 F3 Euro Series leading positions after 2 of 10 events:**

1. Sebastien Buemi (SUI) 22pts;
2. Romain Grosjean (FRA) 20pts
3. Nico Hülkenberg (GER) 14pts
4. Yelmer Buurman (NED) 12pts
5. James Jakes (GBR) 11pts
6. Edoardo Mortara (ITA) 10pts
7. Kamui Kobayashi (JAP) 10pts
8. Franck Mailleux (FRA) 7pts

**Remaining events:**

- 23-24 June, Norisring (GER)
- 30 June-1 July, Magny-Cours (F)
- 13-15 July, Mugello (I)
- 28-29 July, Zandvoort (NL)
- 1-2 September, Nürburgring (GER)
- 22-23 September, Barcelona (E)
- 29-30 September, Nogaro (F)
- 14-15 October, Hockenheim (D)

Ends