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SHAABAN READY FOR THE ITALIAN JOB

Arab driver faces big test as F3 Euro Series takes to big stage at Mugello



Basil Shaaban goes back into action in Italy at the wheel of his Shell Dallara-Mercedes-Benz.

Dubai, UAE, July 13, 2007: The picturesque countryside of Tuscany provides the setting for another demanding test this weekend as Basil Shaaban continues along the learning curve in the Formula 3 Euro Series.

Motor racing has been held at Mugello since the opening of a road circuit there in 1914, and as Shaaban finds out this weekend, the modern day challenge at this famous Italian venue is just about as tough as they come.

“It’s another good test for me,” admitted the Arab driver who gets back behind the wheel of his Shell Dallara-Mercedes-Benz for tomorrow’s (Saturday) first of two races in a busy two days of action at Mugello.

“There’s a huge variety between the circuits in the F3 Euro Series, and learning how to adapt from one race venue to another is all part of my racing education.

“The Norisring circuit last month was only 2.3 km long, and is effectively two straights with hairpins on the end. Mugello is more than twice the distance. It’s a beautiful circuit which has been built into the rolling Tuscan landscape which creates great viewing for spectators and plenty of overtaking opportunities.”

Shaaban’s Shell Dallara-Mercedes-Benz is among 23 cars contesting the season’s ninth and tenth rounds of the F3 Euro Series this weekend, with Switzerland’s Sébastien Buemi still setting the pace.

Mugello 2

Holding a three-point lead over Frenchman Romain Grosjean, the only driver to win more than one race so far this season, Buemi has been the most consistent performer to date, having scored points in seven of the eight rounds and clinched two pole positions.

Also still in the hunt for the title are Japan’s Kamui Kobayashi and Britain’s James Jakes, both of whom scored their maiden F3 Euro Series wins of the season at Magny-Cours two weeks ago.

The F3 series shares the Mugello stage with the DTM German touring car championship, as well as the SEAT Leon Supercopa and the Italian Ferrari Challenge.

“It’s another big weekend of racing and I’m eating up the atmosphere,” said Shaaban. “I have still got a lot of catching up to do on most of the other drivers who have so much more experience in F3, and I’m doing that step by step, and by staying focused on improving my overall technique and control of the car.”

2007 F3 Euro Series leading positions after 4 of 10 events:

1. Sebastien Buemi (SUI) 42pts;
2. Romain Grosjean (FRA) 39pts
3. James Jakes (GBR) 25pts
4. Yelmer Buurman (NED) 23pts
- 5 Kamui Kobayashi (JAP) 22pts
6. Nico Hülkenberg (GER) 20pts

Ends