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## **SHAABAN AIMS TO BREAK FRESH BARRIER IN SPAIN**



*Basil Shaaban for action in Barcelona after his best performance so far in his Shell Dallara-Mercedes-Benz at the Nürburgring.*

### **Arab driver heads for Barcelona in high spirits after passing tough F3 Euro Series test at Nürburgring**

Dubai, UAE, 13<sup>th</sup> September, 2007: After breaking through one barrier during his latest outing in this year's F3 Euro Series in Germany, Arab racing driver Basil Shaaban has set himself another target as he looks forward to next week's return to action in Spain.

Shaaban overcame mechanical problems and a hit from behind which sent him spinning off the famous Nürburgring circuit to produce his best performance to date in the world's toughest F3 series.

With three two-race weekends now remaining in his F3 Euro Series debut season, Shaaban is aiming to push his Shell Dallara-Mercedes-Benz to the next level, beginning with rounds 15 and 16 in Barcelona on 22-23 September.

“Seventy per cent of the 2007 season has passed and it's been a fantastic experience so far,” said Shaaban, who is in Dubai this week taking a break between races. “I'm continuing to improve in every area, and I'm continuing to close the gap in lap-times.

“My performance in my last race at the Nurburgring was my best so far because I finally broke the 1% barrier in Race 2 where my fastest race lap was within 0.804 seconds – or 0.95% - of the fastest lap.

“It was also my best overall result as I was placed 17th out of 22 finishers. In reality it was better than my highest finish so far, a 12<sup>th</sup> place at the Norisring earlier in the season, because a lot of other drivers didn't complete that race.”

Shaaban 2

Added Shaaban: “My next goal is to be a consistent runner in the top 15, and to do that I have to start qualifying in the top 15. So improving my performance in qualifying is a priority, starting in Barcelona.”

Gear change problems ruined his qualifying session at the Nürburgring and after starting race one in 22<sup>nd</sup> place he was hit from behind by Frenchman Yann Clairay and thrown off the track, eventually finishing 21<sup>st</sup>. He made amends in race two, chasing down Clairay over several laps and eventually passing him.

“I learnt a lot about how to extract the maximum speed from an F3 car, and got some good wheel-to-wheel competition with a good driver,” said Shaaban, who moved on to Hockenheim for a full-day of testing with the team last week. The HBR Motorsport team mechanics have since been working on a number of modifications to his Shell Dallara-Mercedes-Benz to improve its handling.

“The test at Hockenheim went well,” said Shaaban. “I learned a lot, especially concerning high-speed corner technique. But as a team we have discovered that we are missing out with regards to the 2007-specification tires.

“With its present set up, we’ve seen during testing that the car is quicker using the 2006 tyres. But we have to use the new tyres during race weekends so the engineers have been changing the set up to get the best out of them. Hopefully we have more to come for Barcelona.”

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