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SHAABAN AIMS FOR BIG FINISH TO F3 EURO SERIES



Arab driver looks forward to Macau GP debut and chance to impress top teams in winter testing

Dubai, UAE, 24th October, 2008: Basil Shaaban aims to underline his position as a leading Arab racing driver on the ladder to Formula One when the F3 Euro Series reaches its climax in Germany this weekend.

Feeling strong and confident at the end of a tough but progressive second season in the world's most competitive F3 championship, Shaaban is determined to produce his best display so far behind the wheel of his Shell Dallara Mercedes at Hockenheim.

While the double race weekend becomes a virtual lap of honour on home territory for new F3 Euro Series champion, Nico Hülkenberg, Shaaban is determined to follow the German driver into the F3 elite.

Next month he makes his first appearance in the Macau Formula 3 Grand Prix among an exclusive line-up of top F3 drivers before heading into an intensive winter series of testing ahead of a new Euro Series campaign next year.

“I want to do my very best at Hockenheim this weekend, and then go with a strong, open mind to Macau which will be a fantastic challenge,” said the Lebanese driver, who grew up in Abu Dhabi.

“I’m getting some great opportunities this winter to test with a few teams for a seat next season, including a chance to test with the best formula team outside F1, ART Grand Prix.



Basil Shaaban – inspired by Le Mans after good signs in Barcelona.

“It’s crucially important to find the best possible team to give me the best equipment and best in-team driver competition for 2009. I know I’m ready for it, and I just want the chance to get the best out of myself.”

Shaaban says a tough second season in the F3 Euro Series has ultimately given him an extra competitive edge as he prepares to take his Shell Dallara Mercedes into action in this weekend’s first of two races at Hockenheim tomorrow (Saturday).

“It has been another key learning year for me,” he said. “Last year, I was learning the basics of racing an F3 car, and this year I’ve learned a great deal about becoming more competitive as a driver.”

“A racing driver’s development is all about eliminating mistakes, improving technique and of course improving race speed and lap times, and the last second is the hardest. But everything is coming together much better now. I have been consistently competitive in testing this year, improving a lot throughout the season. More often than not, things haven’t gone my way during race weekends, and I’ve been through some hard times.

“It’s been a very challenging season, but I’ve come out of the difficult spell now and feel strong and confident and ready for Hockenheim, Macau, and the chance this winter to impress one of the top teams.”

Euro Series leading positions after 9 of 10 events:

1. Nico Hülkenberg (D) 72pts
2. Edoardo Mortara (I) 49pts
3. Jules Bianchi (F) 42pts
4. Mika Mäki (FIN) 40pts
5. Renger van der Zande (NL) 37pts
6. Christian Vietoris (D) 36pts
7. Yann Clairay (F) 33pts
8. Koudai Tsukakoshi (J) 30.5pts
9. Jean Karl Vernay (F) 29.5pts
10. Franck Mailleux (F) 27pts

Ends