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SHAABAN GETS CHANCE TO EARN TOP F3 DRIVE

**Leading French, British teams to evaluate Arab driver after he impresses
in F3 Euro Series and Macau**



Basil Shaaban – testing in the UK and France next week with two of the top four teams in the F3 Euro Series

Dubai, UAE, 19th November, 2008: Two of the leading teams in Formula 3 racing have offered Basil Shaaban the chance to earn a place in their driver line-ups for 2009 and beyond.

Shaaban caught the eye on his debut in last weekend's Macau Grand Prix and as a result has been invited to take part in a day-long test session with Britain's Manor Motorsport next Tuesday (25th November) at Snetterton, England.

The Lebanese driver, who grew up in Abu Dhabi, then flies to France to undergo testing at the Le Mans Bugatti circuit on Thursday with ART Grand Prix, who clinched the F3 Euro Series title for a fifth year in a row recently with German driver Nico Hülkenberg.

The French team developed new Formula One world champion Lewis Hamilton on his way to the top, taking him to the F3 Euro Series crown in 2005 and the GP2 Series championship the following year.

“I’m excited that two of the top teams in the F3 Euro Series have decided to evaluate me,” said Shaaban, who has contested the last two Euro Series championships with Austrian-based HBR Motorsport in a Shell Dallara Mercedes.

“ART want to give me a chance to show what I can do based on my performances this year. They will be evaluating my capabilities for the future beyond the 2009 F3 Euro Series, with an eye on the GP2 Series or GP2 Asia where they also compete.”

“I was approached by Manor Motorsport after Macau and they want to evaluate me for a race seat with them in next year’s F3 Euro Series. These are two great opportunities and the fact that I’m getting them underlines the progress I’ve made in the last two years.”

Shaaban’s debut in the Macau Formula 3 Grand Prix on Sunday ended in bitter disappointment when his Shell Dallara Mercedes clipped a tire barrier and crashed out of the race on lap 11 while fighting for position with 2007 Macau GP podium-finisher Kazuya Oshima.

Nevertheless he came away from Macau in high spirits having given a good account of himself as the first Arab driver to appear in the spectacular four-day racing festival.



Shaaban – took a lot from his experience as the first Arab driver to tackle the legendary Macau circuit last weekend.

“It was the best race weekend of my career so far, as well as the most difficult,” said Shaaban. “Overall I did a great job and received a lot of commendations. What an amazing circuit, and an unforgettable experience.

”Every driver I spoke to agreed that Macau is one of the most demanding circuits in the world. The sheer number and magnitude of crashes over the weekend is a testament to that. I can’t wait to go back there in 2009, especially after another full F3 Euro Series campaign.”

Shaaban was full of sympathy for his team-mate, Spanish driver Daniel Campos-Hull, who at one point had brilliantly fought his way up to second placed in the Macau F3 Grand Prix before being hit from behind by Japan’s Kei Cozzolino, finishing 16th. The race was won by another Japanese driver, Keisuke Kunimoto.

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