

# A truly global event

Formula 1 Gulf Air Bahrain Grand Prix 2023 weekend to feature drivers flying the flags of 33 nations

● Competitors coming from five continents including Europe, North America, South America, Australia and Asia

● Bahrain flag to be flown this weekend by Shaikh Salman bin Rashid Al Khalifa in Porsche Sprint Challenge ME

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The elite of international motorsport have descended upon the Kingdom of Bahrain for the sold-out Formula 1 Gulf Air Bahrain Grand Prix 2023, with drivers flying the flags of no less than 33 nations from across five continents.

This weekend's F1 spectacle is set to be a truly global event as nearly 90 racers are set to hit the track at "The Home of Motorsport in the Middle East" from Friday to Sunday.

F1 boasts 20 of the world's biggest motor racing superstars, while there will be 22 competing in the FIA Formula 2 Championship, 29 in the FIA Formula 3



The BIC stage is set for this weekend's events

Championship, and another 18 in the Porsche Sprint Challenge Middle East.

The majority of the drivers are coming from Europe, representing countries including Great Britain, Finland, the Netherlands, France, Spain, Monaco, Denmark, Germany, Norway, Belgium, the Czech Republic, Switzerland, Estonia, Sweden, Italy, Bulgaria and Poland.

North America boasts drivers

from the US, Canada, Mexico and Barbados, while South America sees competitors from Brazil, Argentina and Colombia.

There are also drivers from Australia, while Asia is being represented by contenders from Japan, Thailand, China, India, Israel, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Bahrain.

The host nation is being represented on track by its very own Shaikh Salman bin Rashid Al



The elite of international motorsport have descended upon the Kingdom of Bahrain with nearly 90 drivers from across the globe competing in F1, F2, F3 and the Porsche Sprint Challenge Middle East



Shaikh Salman bin Rashid Al Khalifa

British Formula Three Championship earlier in his career and was the 2010/2011 champion of the one-make, BIC-based Porsche series, when it was known as the Porsche GT3 Cup Challenge Middle East.

Khalifa, a talented racer with many years of experience, who will be competing in the Porsche Sprint Challenge Middle East.

Shaikh Salman excelled in the

This season marks Shaikh Salman's return to competitive circuit racing after being away for over eight years.

The F1 Gulf Air Bahrain Grand Prix 2023 opens the new FIA F1 World Championship this weekend and it will be the 19th edition of the world's famous desert F1 race.

Tickets for the race weekend have completely sold out, and fans are in for a treat with three days of top-class motorsport being complemented by plenty of entertaining attractions that include roaming acts, stage shows, carnival rides, kids' activities, and back-to-back concerts featuring A-list artists DJ Snake and Craig David.

For all information, including the weekend timetable and gate opening times, visit bahraingp.com or follow BIC's official social media channels.

## Alpine, Haas looking to continue rise in F1 pecking order

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The 2023 FIA Formula 1 World Championship enters a new campaign this weekend, and teams who exceeded expectations last season have been buoyed by their performances and are ready to go one step further.

Bahrain International Circuit (BIC) hosts the season-opening F1 Gulf Air Bahrain Grand Prix from Friday to Sunday and all eyes will be set on Sakhir for a hugely exciting weekend.

The Alpine pair of Pierre Gasly and Esteban Ocon will hope that their all-French connection can spearhead the team to a top-three finish in the constructors' championship, following an impressive fourth place in 2022. And it all starts with a positive showing at BIC.

"I am very excited to race for the first time with Alpine this weekend in Bahrain," said Gasly, who is in his first year with the French outfit after transferring from AlphaTauri. "Since my first test in December with the team in Abu Dhabi, I've been looking forward to this moment, and now it's almost here.

"All my focus is on preparing well for the race weekend and I'm already eager for my



Pierre Gasly in his Alpine contender during F1 pre-season testing at BIC last week

**"I'm definitely confident that we can have a strong race here in Bahrain and the target is to come away with some points in the bag and begin the season in the best way possible"**

PIERRE GASLY

first qualifying laps in the A523 before we battle on Sunday in the race.

"I know it will take a bit of time to get totally comfortable with the team and the car, but right now, I'm definitely confident that we can have a strong race here in Bahrain and the target is to come away with



Nico Hulkenberg in the Haas garage at the Bahrain tests ahead of the new championship

**"It's the usual suspects at the front but after that there is a big group of teams where it's very difficult to see where you are. We know we're in the mix and it's a long season ahead, it's a development race that's going to happen"**

KEVIN MAGNUSSEN

some points in the bag and begin the season in the best way possible."

Ocon added: "It was a long and busy winter, and we are all keen to get back into racing mode and see what the A523 can achieve on track. We've had the last few days to relax and prepare here in Bahrain following the test, so I feel fresh and ready to begin the 2023 season on a positive note."

Meanwhile, Haas are also looking to continue their steady rise and they too boast a new driver partnership for 2023 with Kevin Magnussen and the returning Nico Hulkenberg.

They will be aiming to build on their eighth-place finish in 2022 and challenge the other squads in the midfield.

"It's the usual suspects at the front but after that there is a big group of teams where it's very difficult to see where you are," said Magnussen. "We know we're in the mix and it's a long season ahead, it's a development race that's going to happen."

Hulkenberg commented: "The midfield has always been tight, and small things make a difference to whether you're at the top end or bottom end and even a good day or bad day can have a huge impact. We just need to make sure we do our homework and here onwards develop our car efficiently and maximize what we have."

## BIC set for F1 Pit Walk tonight, valuable prizes on offer in '10 Every 10' Race Day raffle

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The fan activities at the highly anticipated Formula 1 Gulf Air Bahrain Grand Prix 2023 get underway this evening with the F1 Pit Lane Walk, open to all ticket holders at Bahrain International Circuit (BIC) in Sakhir.

The popular activity gives fans the incredible opportunity to see the top flight's teams and their cars up close while in the F1 pit lane, as they get ready for the biggest weekend of the year from Friday to Sunday at "The Home of Motorsport in the Middle East".

BIC will open its gates for today's pit lane walk at 6pm and close them at 9.30pm. The pit walk will be held from 7pm to 8.30pm. Those interested in attending are advised to get to the circuit early with the large crowd expected.

All those taking part will be able to see the F1 team members hard at work in their garages as they prepare for all the action of the grand prix, which starts Friday morning. Fans will be able to take pictures and, if lucky, spot one of their favourite F1 drivers in their garage, working with their engineers and mechanics.

The pit lane walk is one of the most popular activities of the race weekend each year,



The F1 pit lane at BIC

with thousands turning up to take part.

It is only the first of many exciting fan-engagement activities all weekend long at BIC.

Another is an incredible raffle where race-goers will have a chance to win valuable prizes on Race Day Sunday.

All those seated along the 10,500-capacity Main Grandstand will be included in a draw and may come away as one of many lucky winners in BIC's "10 Every 10" raffle.

All they have to do is be in their allotted seats from 4.45pm until the 57-lap night race starts at 6pm. Ten random winners will be announced every 10 minutes during this period, making for plenty of addition-

al excitement amongst those in attendance.

Prizes include high-end mobile phones, tablets, smart watches, headsets, ear buds, gaming consoles, and so much more.

Fans are advised to be in their seats on time as winners will be identified by their seat numbers. They will be announced and located by BIC staff, so they must be in their seat in order to claim their prize.

Race-goers should not miss out on this wonderful opportunity so they must make sure that they are in their Main Grandstand seat for the duration of the raffle. Only those with Main Grandstand tickets can be part of the draw.