

F1's stars are here!

Formula 1 drivers, team and race officials begin arriving in Bahrain ahead of F1 Aramco Pre-Season Testing this week at Bahrain International Circuit

● **AlphaTauri star Pierre Gasly among first drivers to arrive in Bahrain**

● **F1 teams begin setting up garages along F1 Pit Lane at BIC**

TDT | Manama

Formula 1's superstar drivers and team members have begun arriving in the Kingdom of Bahrain ahead of the F1 Aramco Pre-Season Testing 2022, taking place tomorrow to Saturday at Bahrain International Circuit (BIC) in Sakhir.

The stage is set for F1's final on-track running in preparation for the start of the 2022 FIA F1 World Championship. The season kicks off with the F1 Gulf Air Bahrain Grand Prix from 18 to 20 March at "The Home of Motorsport in the Middle East". First to arrive from motorsport's biggest names was Pierre Gasly of AlphaTauri. Large groups of F1 team personnel along with officials from F1 and the Federation International de l'Automobile (FIA) have also started to reach the Kingdom.

They were received upon touching down at Bahrain International Airport by BIC's Meet



AlphaTauri star Pierre Gasly, second from left, arriving at Bahrain International Airport

and Greet Team, who assisted the Kingdom's guests on their arrival formalities and their transportation to their respective hotels.

Meanwhile, preparations at BIC have ramped up ahead of the start of on-track action tomorrow.

Huge crates of the F1 teams' cars and equipment have been off-loaded at the Sakhir race track and the garages are already being set up along the F1 Pit Lane.

This week's tests are scheduled to begin at 10am each day and continue until 2pm before heading for an hour-long break. Running will resume at 3pm and conclude at 7pm over the three days of testing.

BIC will be opening its doors to the public on the last two days of the tests on 11 and 12 March. All those who had purchased their tickets to the Bahrain Grand Prix



The F1 pre-season tests will be the first opportunity for F1 fans around the world to witness in person the new generation of F1 cars on track

2022 before 1 March have free access to the tests.

For those without F1 tickets bought before 1 March, tickets to pre-season testing are available to purchase online at bahraingp.com. They are priced at BD5 per day for adults and BD2.5 for children.

The tests will be the first opportunity for F1 fans around the world to witness in person the new generation of F1 cars on track. All 10 F1 teams and their star drivers of 2022 will be taking part in the sessions.

F1's famous Paddock Club hospitality, with its exceptional cuisine and the best view in the house, is also available for the last two days of testing. Those interested should e-mail corporate@bic.com.bh or visit the BIC website for more details. Paddock Club pass holders will also



The F1 Pit Lane with the crates of F1 teams' equipment

have the chance to take part in a Pit Lane Walk and Truck Tour on the two open days.

This week's F1 tests follow

F2 and F3 joint-testing held last week. F2 and F3 will also be opening their respective seasons in the Kingdom in support of F1 at the Bahrain Grand Prix weekend.

This year's sporting and entertainment extravaganza is set to be a once-in-a-lifetime occasion for motorsport, as it ushers in "A New Era" in F1 following the biggest shake-up in rules and regulations in the top flight.

As the host of pre-season testing and the opening round of the season, Bahrain's fans are in the enviable position of being the first in the world to experience racing's top championship like never before seen.

For more information on pre-season testing and the F1 Gulf Air Bahrain Grand Prix



The F1 Safety and Medical cars at BIC

Players set for youth national basketball team selection



The group of young players at the selection gathering

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Young basketball players from six Bahraini clubs came together at the Zain Basketball Arena in Um Al Hassam for the first selection gathering for the

Kingdom's youth national team.

The players, born in 2007 and 2008, will go through a process that will narrow down a final roster that will fly the Bahrain flag in the Gulf championship next year, as well as

the qualifiers for the Asian championship.

A team of coaches from the Bahrain Basketball Association along with officials from the federation's national teams committee facilitated the gathering.

Zverev handed suspended eight-week ban by ATP for Acapulco outburst

Reuters | London

Men's tennis governing body has handed world number three Alexander Zverev a suspended eight-week ban for smashing his racket against the umpire's chair at last month's ATP 500 event in Acapulco, for which he was expelled from the tournament.

Zverev was fined \$20,000 for verbal abuse, \$20,000 for unsportsmanlike conduct and forfeited more than \$31,000 in prize money and all rankings points earned

The biggest penalty in men's tennis to date was handed down to Australian Nick Kyrgios in 2019 for verbally abusing a chair umpire and smashing two rackets. After an initial fine of \$113,000, he was given a suspended ban of 16 weeks and an additional fine of \$25,000 following an ATP investigation

from singles and doubles action at the Abierto Mexicano tournament.

Following a review, the ATP found the 24-year-old German had committed "aggravated behaviour" and issued an additional fine of \$25,000 and an eight-week ban from any ATP-sanctioned event.

The ATP said, however, the ban and the additional fine were suspended, providing that over a probation period ending one year after the incident, Zverev does not incur any more fines for unsportsmanlike conduct.

Loeb keeps world rally-raid title in his sights

● **Sebastien Loeb climbs leaderboard as Prodrive Hunter has trouble-free stage**

TDT | Manama

Stage three of the Abu Dhabi Desert Challenge saw another second place for Sebastien Loeb and Fabian Lurquin, and four more points for Bahrain Raid Xtreme towards their World Rally-Raid Championship (WRRRC) campaign.

Once again, the sustainably fuelled Prodrive Hunter ran trouble-free in the searing heat of the Al Dhafra desert, while there were issues for several cars currently lying ahead of the pair in overall WRRRC standings, enabling Loeb to climb the leaderboard.

Championship leader Nasser Al Attiyah won the stage but remains 18 hours behind and much further down the leaderboard following his retirement on stage one.

Loeb said: "Today was pretty good for us and we had a clean run. The car was good and the pace ok despite the heat and the sand being very soft. We are not really pushing as we are trying to protect our position for the championship as that is our goal."

Gus Beteli, BRX team principal, said: "It was another good



Sebastien Loeb in his Prodrive Hunter

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SEBASTIEN LOEB

day for us. with the Hunter continuing to perform well in the hot conditions. Seb's pace means he is continuing to climb the overall WRRRC leaderboard, and that is the most important thing for us as our target is to come away from here with the championship lead with three rounds to go."

In the final standings at the end of the event, T1 cars will score points based on their overall position, not their position within the T1 class. Having lost time on the first stage, this means that Loeb is looking to overtake WRRRC competitors in all the classes, not just T1, in order to maximise his championship points.