

# Bahrain to host 2024 WEC season-finale

BIC to showcase Bapco Energies 8 Hours of Bahrain as the ultimate event of 2024 WEC season

● Kingdom's endurance racing spectacle to take place 1-2 November, 2024, in Sakhir

● Next year's expanded WEC campaign set to feature eight rounds from March to November

TDI | Manama

The FIA World Endurance Championship's (WEC) 2024 calendar was unveiled yesterday, with the Bapco Energies 8 Hours of Bahrain scheduled to take place on 1st and 2nd November, 2024, at Bahrain International Circuit (BIC), "The Home of Motorsport in the Middle East".

The new championship calendar features eight rounds in all—an expanded schedule from this year's seven events—taking place from March to November next year, and Bahrain has once again been given the honour of hosting the season-finale for the eighth time in WEC history.

The Kingdom has been a part of the WEC campaign ever since



Action from a previous WEC event at BIC

its inaugural season in 2012, and BIC's relationship with the WEC has been growing from strength to strength each year.

In 2022, BIC proudly the extension of this partnership until at least 2027, further cementing Bahrain's standing at the highest levels of international motor racing and continuing the rapid growth of the Kingdom's motorsport culture.

Tickets to this year's Bapco Energies 8 Hours of Bahrain, taking place 3 and 4 November, 2023, at BIC, are already on sale.

The meeting will be the first

major international event of the Kingdom's 2023/2024 racing calendar, which will be highlighted by celebrations marking BIC's landmark 20th anniversary.

Tickets cost just BD5 for adults and BD2.5 for kids for the two-day WEC weekend, which will feature plenty of support race action with the Porsche Carrera Cup Middle East as well as off-track family entertainment for all to enjoy. Tickets can be purchased online at bahraingp.com or by calling the BIC Hotline on +973-17450000.

For next year, leading up to the



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2024 Bapco Energies 8 Hours of Bahrain, the WEC will be making stops in Qatar, Italy, Belgium, France, Brazil, the US and Japan.

The Doha round will be one of four new venues next WEC season, as Qatar joins Bahrain as the WEC's only destinations in the Middle East.

The all-new event, entitled the Qatar 1812km, is scheduled to take place as the championship-opener on 2 March, 2024. The official prologue will also be held at Doha's Lusail International Circuit on 24 and 25 February.

The WEC will then make its first European stop for the inaugural 6 Hours of Imola on 21 April, replacing the 6 Hours of

## 2024 FIA World Endurance Championship Calendar

24-25 February: Official Prologue at Lusail International Circuit  
2 March: Qatar 1812km at Lusail International Circuit  
21 April: 6 Hours of Imola at Autodromo Internazionale Enzo e Dino Ferrari  
11 May: 6 Hours of Spa-Francorchamps at Circuit de Spa-Francorchamps  
15-16 June: 24 Hours of Le Mans at Circuit de la Sarthe  
14 July: 6 Hours of Sao Paulo at Autodromo Jose Carlos Pace  
1 September: Lone Star Le Mans at Circuit of the Americas  
15 September: 6 Hours of Fuji at Fuji Speedway  
1-2 November: Bapco Energies 8 Hours of Bahrain at BIC

Monza which is to be held this year in July as part of the 2023 campaign.

That will be followed by the 2024 season's third round in Belgium for the TotalEnergies 6 Hours of Spa-Francorchamps on 11 May, which will pave the way for the WEC's annual crown jewel, the 24 Hours of Le Mans, scheduled for 15 and 16 June in France.

The WEC will then be making a return to Brazil for the first time since 2014 for the 6 Hours of Sao Paulo on 14 July, 2024, and then travel to the US for the Lone Star Le Mans on 1 September, the first time the series will be racing again at the Circuit of the Americas since 2020.

The season's seventh and penultimate round will then take the WEC far east for the 6 Hours of Fuji on 15 September, 2024,

and that will set the stage for the Bapco Energies 8 Hours of Bahrain to wrap up another thrilling year.

Global motorsport's leading endurance racing series will once again be bringing the Spirit of Le Mans to Sakhir and its packed grid of highly competitive Hypercars, Le Mans Prototype 2 (LMP2) challengers and Le Mans Grand Touring Endurance Am (LMGTE Am) contenders.

The 2024 Bapco Energies 8 Hours of Bahrain will be the 13th WEC race at BIC and sixth in the eight-hour format, following the six-hour races which took place since the WEC's inaugural season in 2012.

For any information on the WEC or other BIC events and activities, visit bahraingp.com or call the BIC Hotline on +973-17450000.

## Djokovic into seventh French Open final as Alcaraz hit by injury

AFP | Paris

Novak Djokovic reached his seventh French Open final in dramatic and controversial circumstances yesterday when world number one Carlos Alcaraz suffered serious cramping which torpedoed his challenge.

Djokovic, 36, triumphed 6-3, 5-7, 6-1, 6-1 to become the oldest man in 93 years to reach the championship match where he will be bidding for a third Roland Garros title and record-setting 23rd men's Grand Slam crown.

The drama yesterday unfolded just as Djokovic had levelled the third set at 1-1 with the first two sets split but with Alcaraz seemingly in the ascendancy in the sweltering 33-degree Paris heat.

Alcaraz, 16 years Djokovic's junior, pulled up clutching his right calf.

He conceded his next service game because he sought treatment courtside before a scheduled change of ends and could not receive a medical timeout for cramping.

As boos and jeers rained down, Djokovic, playing in his



Novak Djokovic (R) shakes hands with Carlos Alcaraz Garfia after his victory

45th Grand Slam semi-final, swept the next five games to open a two sets to one lead.

Alcaraz left the court for a five-minute bathroom break but his physical limitations easily opened the door for Djokovic to coast into his 34th Grand Slam final, having wrapped up 10 of the last 11 games of the semi-final.

"Tough luck for Carlos, the last thing you want is cramping. I feel for him and hope he recovers and comes back very soon," said Djokovic.

"Respect for him in fighting until the end. I told him at the

net that he is very young and he will win this many times."

He added: "He was the better player in the second set. I knew I had to be more aggressive and then match and better his intensity."

Djokovic will face either 2022 runner-up Casper Ruud or Alexander Zverev for a place in Sunday's championship match where he will have the opportunity to become the first man to win all four Slam titles at least three times.

In just their second career meeting, and first at a Grand Slam, Djokovic made light of

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the age gap by breaking for a 3-1 lead, drawing Alcaraz out of position before topping off a rally with a cool backhand.

Alcaraz let slip three break points in the seventh game as his flamboyant all-court game collided head-on with Djokovic's storied defensive wall.

In a see-saw conclusion to the first set, Alcaraz saved a set point in the eighth game, Djokovic thwarted another break point in the ninth before he pocketed the opener when the Spaniard pushed a service return wide.

## German Zimmermann wins Criterium sixth stage

AFP | Crest-Voland, France

Germany's Georg Zimmermann powered to victory in the sixth stage of the Criterium du Dauphine yesterday, as Jonas Vingegaard maintained his overall lead.

Intermarche rider Zimmermann pulled away from

fellow escapees Mathieu Burgaudeau and Spaniard Jonathan Castroviejo on the summit finish of a mountainous 170.5km ride to Crest-Voland.

Reigning Tour de France champion Vingegaard crossed in the main group of race favourites.

The Dane holds a 70-sec-

ond lead over Ben O'Connor, with Frenchman Julian Alaphilippe 13 seconds further back in third overall.

There are two more mountain stages to close out the race this weekend.

Vingegaard finished second in the 2022 Criterium behind Primož Roglič before going on to win the Tour.



Georg Zimmermann crosses the finish line

## BRAVE CF partners with Indian streaming platform MX Player



TDI | Manama

Brave Combat Federation, the fastest-growing MMA organization in the world and Bahrain's own sports jewel, and MX Player, a major OTT platform in India, have announced a landmark, multi-year agreement that will see content from the martial arts organization distributed across the continental nation as interest in MMA continues to rise.

The organization, founded under the vision of His Highness Shaikh Khalid bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the fifth son of the King of Bahrain, has become the most global MMA organization, having travelled to 28 countries in six years of operations.

Brave Combat Federation is the only global mixed martial arts company to have hosted events in India, more specifically in Mumbai and Hyderabad. Brave CF is also home to some of the best Indian fighters in MMA today, including the number one Indian Bantamweight Mohammed Farhad.

He will be among the hundreds of fighters featured in the content to be distributed by MX Player in India, as one of the biggest OTT platforms in Asia and the fastest-growing mixed martial arts organization in the world partner,

through Brave CF's official distribution partner KHK Media Group, to educate Indian fans on the sport as well as continue to expand the brand and the sport in the country.

Brave Combat Federation president Mohammed Shahid celebrated the deal as a momentous occasion for Indian MMA and shared his hopes of continuing Brave Combat Federation's mission in India: to find the next superstars of the sport and to build a new sports economy for mixed martial arts in the country. Shahid believes the partnership with MX Player is key in the pursuit of these goals.

"As the most global and fastest-growing mixed martial arts organization in the world, Brave Combat Federation has the vision to bring the world of MMA to India and take India to the world of MMA as well. We want to build a sports economy for martial arts that can have a similar impact that cricket has in Indian sports. Our partnership with MX Player is key in achieving our goals. MX Player is the number one content distribution company in the country. Their reach and storytelling strengths will help us tell some of the best stories in sports today and bring them to the biggest audience in India and together we will change the landscape of mixed martial arts in the country."