

# It's F2, F3 testing week!

Bahrain International Circuit all geared up to host three full days of F2 and F3 pre-season tests

● Sessions to be held along BIC's 5.412-kilometre Grand Prix track

● F2, F3 to alternate track time during all three days of test sessions

TDI | Manama

Bahrain International Circuit (BIC) is set to host three full days of pre-season testing this week in the FIA Formula 2 Championship and the FIA Formula 3 Championship.

Formula 1's two chief feeder series, featuring motor racing's stars of the future, will be hitting the tarmac from tomorrow to Thursday for the joint-sessions.

They will be warming up the track at "The Home of Motorsport in the Middle East" in preparation for the start of their respective 2023 seasons, taking place as part of the stellar support programme at this year's F1 Gulf Air Bahrain Grand Prix from 3 to 5 March.

The tests will be held along BIC's 5.412-kilometre Grand Prix circuit.

On each of the three days, F2 and F3



F2 pre-season testing at BIC from last year (File photo)

will be alternating track time. F3 will be the first to go testing in the morning from 9am to 11.30am, and then again in the afternoon from 2.30pm to 5pm. F2's schedule on track will be from 11.45am to 2.15pm and then again from 5.15pm to 7.45pm on all the days.

This week's action is crucial for the F2 and F3 teams and ace pilots, as it will be the only on-track running they have ahead of their upcoming campaigns.

F2 is the last rung on the ladder to F1, with many drivers who have graduated from F2 now starting in the top flight. Among them are Charles Leclerc of Ferrari, George Russell of Mercedes, Lando Norris of McLaren, Alexander Albon of Williams, Yuki Tsunoda of AlphaTauri and Zhou Guanyu of Alfa Romeo, along with the incoming Oscar Piastri of McLaren and Nyck De Vries of AlphaTauri.



F2 and F3 are Formula 1's two chief feeder series, featuring motor racing's stars of the future. They will be hitting the tarmac at BIC from tomorrow to Thursday for the joint-sessions

All 11 F2 teams, each fielding two cars, will be at the tests, including defending champions MP Motorsport, Carlin, ART Grand Prix, Prema Racing, Hitech Grand Prix, Dams, Virtuosi Racing, PHM Racing by Charouz, Trident, Van Amersfoort Racing and Campos Racing.

Meanwhile, F3 is also a one-make category that is the official third rung of the "Road to F1".

The series' 10 teams make for a 30-car grid, and they will all be at BIC this week. The field includes reigning teams' champions Prema Racing, who

will be going up against Trident, ART Grand Prix, MP Motorsport, Hitech Grand Prix, Van Amersfoort Racing, Carlin, Campos Racing, Jenzer Motorsport and PHM Racing by Charouz.

F2 and F3 will each hold two races during the Bahrain Grand Prix weekend, along with practices and qualifying. Both series' Sprint Races will take place on the Saturday with the Feature Races to follow on Sunday, while practice and qualifying are scheduled for Friday.

The 2023 F2 season is set to feature 14 rounds, flagging off in Bahrain and concluding in November in Abu Dhabi, while the 2023 F3 championship consists of 10 rounds, beginning at BIC and ending in September in Monza.

A number of the F2 and F3 talents are currently junior drivers with F1 teams, and they will be able to showcase their skills in front of a global audience that includes the F1 community they will be hoping to impress.

At the Bahrain Grand Prix, F2 and F3 are to be joined on the support programme by the Porsche Sprint Challenge Middle East.

For more information on the sporting and entertainment spectacle, or to buy tickets or hospitality options, visit [bahraingp.com](http://bahraingp.com) or call the BIC Hotline on +973-17450000.

## Rashford strikes again as Man Utd late show sinks Leeds

AFP | London

Marcus Rashford extended his hot streak with the late goal that inspired Manchester United's 2-0 win against old rivals Leeds yesterday.

After Rashford scored to spark United's comeback from two goals down in Wednesday's 2-2 draw with Leeds, Rashford tormented the Yorkshire club once again.

Rashford netted with 10 minutes left at Elland Road to make it four successive Premier League games with a goal for the England forward, who has scored in eight of his last nine appearances in the competition.

Following Alejandro Garnacho's frustrated reaction to being substituted on Wednesday, the Argentine teenager made amends as he came off the bench to seal United's hard-fought victory five minutes after Rashford's goal.

United's win was just their



Marcus Rashford of Manchester United scores the team's first goal

second in their last five league games, although they have now lost just once in their last 17 matches in all competitions.

Erik ten Hag's side moved up to second place, although Manchester City would go back above them if they beat Aston Villa later yesterday.

More importantly, United are seven points clear of fifth placed Tottenham in the race to qualify

for the Champions League via a top four finish.

The clash was marred by offensive taunts from the stands, with Leeds fans singing about the 1958 Munich air crash that killed several United players and their rivals in the away end responding by chanting about the deaths of two Leeds fans in Istanbul in 2000.

Fourth bottom Leeds are

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without a win in their last nine league games and would drop into the relegation zone if Everton beat Liverpool on Monday.

Since sacking Jesse Marsch on Monday, Leeds have seen their move for Rayo Vallecano boss Andoni Iraola blocked by his club, while Feyenoord's Arne Slot and West Brom's Carlos Corberan ruled themselves out of contention.

## Stage set for HM the King's Cup semis



Riffa's Ali Haram, left, and Muharraq's Abdulwahab Al Malood battle during their quarter-final match last week

● Manama take on Al Hala tonight, Riffa play Al Ahli tomorrow

TDI | Manama

The semi-finals of this year's His Majesty the King's Cup football tournament are scheduled to take place today and tomorrow.

This evening, the first final four clash will be between Manama and Al Hala. It is scheduled for a 6.30pm kick-off and it will be played at the Shaikh Ali bin Mohammed Al Khalifa Stadium at Muharraq Club in Arad.

Meanwhile, tomorrow defending league champions Riffa will take on Al Ahli, also

starting at 6.30pm at the Khalifa Sports City Stadium in Isa Town.

All four teams advanced to the semis with penalty shootout victories in their respective quarter-final games. Manama defeated Sitra 5-4 after extra time ended with the two teams tied at 1-1, while Hala beat Hidd 4-2 with their game also ending 1-1 after extra time. Ahli defeated Al Najma with a similar 4-2 score line on penalties after the two teams were deadlocked at 1-1 after extra time, and then Riffa beat Muharraq 3-0 in a shootout after the game was goalless.

Both of last year's finalists, namely holders Al Khalidiya and East Riffa, have already been eliminated from the tournament.

## Marini tops final day Malaysia MotoGP test

AFP | Kuala Lumpur

Luca Marini of Italy was the fastest rider as the MotoGP pre-season test concluded at the Sepang circuit in Malaysia yesterday, clocking in ahead of reigning world champion Francesco Bagnaia.

The 25-year-old Marini recorded the quickest lap over three days of testing in wet conditions with a time of 1min 57.889sec.

Maverick Vinales came in third riding for Aprilia, while Enea Bastianini took fourth and Saturday's fastest rider Jorge Martin came in fifth.

VR46 Racing's Marini, who also topped the winter test timesheets in Valencia last



Luca Marini of Italy and Mooney VR46 Racing Team rides during the Sepang MotoGP Official Test

November, said being the quickest rider was the perfect way to start the season.

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tried everything we needed to try. We improved the bike and it all worked out well. A perfect test in my opinion," he said.