

12 DEC 1998

Racing-Rain

HEAVY DOWNPOUR WASHES OUT AFTERNOON QUALIFYING ROUNDS

KUALA LUMPUR, Dec 12 (Bernama) -- Part of the qualifying rounds of the Proton International 300km Merdeka Race has been postponed until tomorrow due to a heavy downpour at the new Sepang International Circuit (SIC) here today.

The organisers decided to hold the qualifying sessions, to decide grid positions, at 9.50am until 10.25am tomorrow before the race proper starts at 1.30pm.

Race Director Jeffri Amin said all the 65 entries, including five foreign, would roll off in two batches with Driver One on for a 15-minute spin.

He said the time taken by Driver Two in today's qualifying rounds held before the downpour would be considered at the end of the qualifying session tomorrow.

Under the rules of the championships, each car must be driven by two drivers in the 107-lap race.

Jeffri said positions on the grid would be decided after Drivers One complete the qualifying rounds.

"We will consider the best times recorded either by the first or second driver of a car," he said.

Only the fastest 50 cars in the qualifying rounds will be allowed at the starting grid.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad flagged-off today's qualifying round.

The race is promoted by Perusahaan Otomobil Nasional Berhad (Proton).

The overall champions will receive a Satria GTi, worth about RM68,000, a RM20,000 transferable discount voucher for a Proton car for second place and a RM12,000 similar voucher for third place.

The Proton race is the first to be held at the RM286 million SIC track.

-- BERNAMA

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