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Promotion strategy may be the cause

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THE number says it all. Only 18,992 came to watch the Malaysian Motorcycle Grand Prix last Sunday, the second to be held at the 130,000-capacity Sepang F1 Circuit.

This was a huge drop from last year's 25,000, which was already a decline from the 30,000 the event used to attract at the Shah Alam circuit.

Given that the much smaller circuit which hosted seven editions since the first in 1991 has also seen a record-breaking crowd of 40,000 in 1997, the crowd attendance in Sepang is alarming indeed.

The only consolation was that the GP looked merrier than the last as the crowd was concentrated at the double-frontage 30,000-seater grandstand instead of being scattered all over the 5.542km circuit.

Some say there were not enough promotions but the advertisements and prominence given by the media in the last two weeks proved otherwise.

SIC, when asked, couldn't give an answer. Press officer Azhar Ghazali could only say that a post-mortem would be conducted.

The fact is the less moneyed Malaysians, including `mat motor' who commute to work by small bikes, should be targetted.

Perhaps SIC could have done better if they had targetted that crowd's hang-outs like Pertama Complex in Kuala Lumpur and the workshops where they service their bikes.

Worth considering is price reduction. Last Sunday's RM50 race day tickets could be too much to fans who used to go to Shah Alam and pay RM10.

Even Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, who officiated at Sunday's race, said ticket prices need to be reduced to get the motorsports fans coming.

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