

01 OCT 2003
Sports-powerboat
F1 POWERBOAT RACE BACK IN TOWN

KUALA LUMPUR, Oct 1 (Bernama) -- The Formula 1 Powerboat race is back in town with the Malaysian circuit of the world championships set to take place at the Mines Resort lake here on Sunday.

This time, the event will be held on a grander scale as the local organisers, H2O Sports Sdn Bhd, have lined-up various side attractions in their bid to take the event to greater heights.

For the past two years, the local organisers have brought pride to the country with their successful staging of the championships, earning world-wide recognition for the event.

The World F1 Powerboat championships have now been listed as one of the main events in the world sporting calendar.

And that is not all. H2O Sports Sdn Bhd have been recognised as the best organisers of the championships by Union Internationale Motonautique (UIM), an award they won in 2001 and 2002.

This year, H2O Sports Sdn Bhd will be looking forward to pulling off a hat-trick and there appears to be no doubt that Sunday's event would surpass those of the previous years.

With three more days to go, preparations are in full swing. Everything has been put in order and the operations office, located at The Mines Waterfront, has been in business for the past one week.

The race venue -- The Mines Lake -- is all set and has been given the thumbs up by the UIM.

The UIM has, in fact, described Malaysia as an excellent platform for the development of the sports in the entire region.

The Malaysian circuit, to be held from Oct 4-5, is the fifth out of the nine-leg championships before moving on to the next leg in Singapore on Oct 25. The first leg roared off in Portimao, Portugal, on May 4.

A total of 11 teams, comprising 25 drivers from various countries, have so far registered to participate in the Malaysian leg.

Leading the list of participants is current leader Francesco Cantando, from the Singha Racing Team, as well as world defending champion Guido Cappellini, of Zepter Team.

Both Italians are looking forward to a perfect finish in the Malaysian leg to maintain their lead in the overall standing.

After going through four legs, both have accumulated 55 points each, followed by Fabio Comparato, of Comparato Racing Team, who is in third place with 37 points.

Zepter leads in the team overall standings with a total of 60 points.

Best bet to win the Malaysian leg should be Cappellini, who has been in steady form, grabbing the pole positions in Portugal, Finland, Italy and the latest in Germany.

While the race itself will provide all the thrills, the side events planned by the organisers are also likely to attract the spectators.

These include a water ski performance by Stars of Florida as well as an F1 concert by popular local artistes.

The event will be declared open by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

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