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Big guns gear up for Aug 26 deadline

EVERYBODY is aiming for the spotlight on Aug 26 as most top teams for the Merdeka Millenium Endurance Race (MME) at the Sepang Circuit on Aug 30, are launching their teams on that date.

While the newcomers and novices have done all their introductions and presentations early, the serious business starts today and the probable winners will be unveiled.

Team G1-Meritus have taken advantage of the uncertainty over BSA Motorsports' offer to top local driver Eric Yeo, to line-up a promising team of 2002 Super Sixteen champion Yeo, Formula BMW driver TJ Chin and seasoned racer and Meritus Racing managing director Firhat Mokhzani.

"I was originally offered the drive with BSA, but there wasn't any confirmation. So, maybe there will be a deal with them for next year. Meritus offered a good package which is a drive for charity," said Yeo, 32.

"Well, we can't always be driving for money and I believe we are doing something good here. On top of that, we will be driving a Porsche GT3, which is quite competitive and that's good too."

This will be one of the cars to watch as Firhat will be in search of an overall victory as he has already won Class C for 1,600cc cars in 2001, partnering Ng Kok Chin and Eddie Lew.

Meritus' second car line-up also looks promising with Malaysian Super Series (MSS) Supercar racers JP Chin (TJ's father), Adam Azman and Aminuddin Omar.

Also to be launched on Tuesday is the BSA Motorsports line-up, but just who is set to partner veteran Jimmy Low on board their Porsche GT3 remains a mystery.

The team is also said to be sponsoring a second car, a popular endurance-bred Radical SR3, brought in specifically for the MME from Britain. The driver line-up for that car is yet to be revealed.

Top saloon car driver Faidzil Alang has been snapped up by Honda Racing, who will be parading three Honda Integra DC5s.

Faidzil is rumoured to be partnering former Formula Three driver Nurmad Jusat in one of the three cars, while Ng Kok Chin is set to drive one of the cars with two Hong Kong drivers as his partners.

Among the notable absentees this year are Team Lamborghini Malaysia, previously set to enter a Diablo GT-R, pulled out of the race earlier this week.

Lotus Asia Pacific Racing Team have also opted out, but will be providing technical support for entries from the Lotus Owners Club. The Petronas Eon Racing Team (PERT), previously ever present, have also opted out.

Nevertheless, no fewer than nine Porsche GT3s will be up against the Jaseri Racing Porsche, this year piloted by Datuk Mokhzani Mahathir, ex-Formula One driver Alex Yoong and ex-Formula Asia driver Faizal Hakimi Jaafar.

The combined Naza-Jaseri Racing Team won the overall title last year with Tommy Lee, Tunku Hammam and Nigel Albon at the wheel.

For tickets and further information contact SIC at 03-8526 2000.