

28/03/2003

Malaysia bags 'Best Organiser' award again

Arnaz M. Khairul

FOR the second year running, Malaysia has won the Best Organiser Award for last year's Formula One Powerboat World Championship.

Having won it in 2001 when the event was held in Johor Baru, organisers H2O Sports secured a permanent site for the Formula One Powerboat Malaysian Grand Prix - at the Mines Resort City in Seri Kembangan - where last year's race was held.

The Aug 17-18 race was won by Zepter Biotron's Massimo Roggiero which capped a fine weekend of almost flawless organisation by the Malaysian organisers who earned praises from the International Motorboats Union (UIM).

Representing the country at the awards ceremony held in Lausanne, Switzerland, H2O Sports managing director Datuk Yahya Abdul Jalil received the award from F1 Powerboat World Championship promoter Nicolo in San Germano and UIM secretary general Regine Vandekerckhove.

Yahya received the award during the Excellence Awards for the 2002 Season hosted by UIM on Wednesday.

"I would like to thank Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad and the government for the support and encouragement which has motivated H2O Sports to achieve greater success in running the event," said Yahya.

"Dr Mahathir Mohamad was instrumental in envisioning the whole thing and responsible for the whole idea of bringing a premier world class watersports event to the country three years ago."

Yahya also thanked Mines Resort City chairman Tan Sri Lee Kim Yew as the host provider and the Sapura Group, who were the main sponsors of the event.

As the permanent venue for powerboat races in the country and being the largest open-cast mine lake in the world, plans are also in the offing to construct a world class powerboat facility along the banks of the lake.

The plans are set to be put into effect by next year.

This year's Formula One Powerboat Malaysian Grand Prix is set for Oct 5 and will precede the Singapore Grand Prix on Oct 26.