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Saw rides on waves of faith, hope

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ONCE again, hope and faith ride more than expectations when Simon Saw (pic) carries the Jalur Gemilang on board the Veimero Spirit of Malaysia craft in today's Formula One Powerboat Malaysian Grand Prix at the Mines Resort City in Seri Kembangan.

But this time, the country could do well to expect more.

Having qualified 14th out of 24 contenders yesterday, Saw is hoping his race strategy will to work well and deliver what the country hopes will be an inspirational result in today's race.

After clocking over one minute 0.36s in the first qualifying session, where he was ranked 23rd, Saw shaved off 5.44s to timed 55.80s, the eighth fastest in the second qualifying session and 14th overall.

When asked about how he handles pressure Asked of of expectations as the sport will look to him to boost interest among Malaysians, Saw said: Saw preferred to let the results do the talking, while hoping for the best. "I know that. But all I can say is I will be doing my best in the race. I am happy with my qualifying time, but tomorrow (today) in the race it will be a different story.

"This year we've got a better boat and obviously we should be looking for a better result than last year. That's the main target."

Saw has already shown marked an improvement from the first time he set foot in F1 in 2001. He qualified 23rd out of 24 in Tanjung Puteri in Johor then, but did not start the race after crashing in qualifying.

Last year, Saw qualified 18th out of 20 starters, and scrapped to a 11th place finish after encountering mechanical problems on the final lap. For Malaysia's sake, Saw is feeling pressure of delightful sense. The pressure of hopes that will ride with him as the home crowd cheers from the banks of the Mines Resort City lake today.

For Saw himself, Words of encouragement from the Yang di-Pertuan Agung who visited the pits yesterday, is already an added boost for Saw to perform beyond expectations.

Note: Saw's boat (number 26) will be sporting the words "A Tribute to Dr. Mahathir" on its side in today's race.