



GT NEWS

NEWSLETTER NR 21 - DUBAI PREVIEW NOV 10th 2006

SEASON FINALE IN DUBAI

And so the 2006 season draws to a close ... but before this most exciting and close season finishes, there is one more race to go. Even if the Championships have mostly been decided, the season finale, at the Dubai Autodrome, promises to host a thrilling race, with plenty of competition for second and third places

Vitaphone Racing Team, already Team Champions in 2005, went one better in 2006, with Andrea Bertolini and Michael Bartels also securing the 2006 Drivers' Championship at Adria. However, there is a close battle for second place. Zakspeed's Sascha Bert is in the lead at the moment, one point ahead of his team-mate Jarek Janis. Piccini and Deletraz are two points behind. However, Vitaphone's Davies and Biagi, and Aston Martin Racing BMS driver Fabio Babini could all move up to second place with the right results...

In GT2, AF Corse's Matteo Bobbi and Jaime Melo took an unbeatable lead in Adria. However, Bobbi will be replaced by Vilander in Dubai, leaving a question mark over the eventual Champion or Champions. Their AF Corse team-mates Mika Salo and Rui Aguas are currently lying second, but this place is also under threat from their season-long rivals, Scuderia Ecosse. Tim Mullen is still in contention for second place; Kinch and Kirkaldy could move up to third, but second is out of their reach.

Dubai should see a full and varied grid of up to 28 cars. Larbre Competition, whose driver Gabriele Gardel is the outgoing Champion, will return for the first time this season, with a Ferrari 550 Maranello with the new Care Racing Development engine. In GT2, Spyker Squadron will enter two Spyker C8 Spyder cars, with a high-powered line-up including Jeroen Bleekemolen, Jonny Kane, Peter Dumbreck and Peter Kox. Three cars will run in the G3 category : two Aston Martin DBRS9 entered by BMS Scuderia Italia, and a JMB Racing Ferrari 430 GT3 Challenge, as well as the sole G2 Gillet Vertigo.

The event takes place over two days, with support races including the UAE National Superstock Bike Trophy and the GTi Cup Trophy, as well as plenty of on-track entertainment. A thrilling way to end the season...



Dubai Autodrome (United Arab Emirates)

Web site : www.dubaiautodrome.com
email : info@dubaiautodrome.com
Circuit length : 5394 m
Media Contact : *Richard Breiss*
email : richardb@dubaiautodrome.com

FIA GT statistics - 2005

Pole position 1:55.215 - Christophe Bouchut, Aston Martin DBR9
Winners : Lamy/Gardel - Ferrari 550 Maranello - 89 laps in 3:01

GT2 pole 2:01.802 - Marc Lieb, Porsche 996 GT3 RSR
Winners: Collard/Sugden - Porsche 996 GT3 RSR

WHAT THE DRIVERS THINK

"Dubai is the most beautiful of the new Middle East tracks. Very long, with lots of corners to remember"

Andrea Piccini, Phoenix Racing Aston Martin

"I like the Dubai track very much : there is a mix of very fast and slow corners and there are also changes of levels. You have a corner with banking, and some very hard braking zones. I hope the team lets me start the race again - I like it very much.."

Bert Longin, GLPK Carsport Corvette C6



For more information on the teams,
drivers and everything about the
FIA GT Championship,
please visit :
www.fiagt.com





GT1 DRIVERS CLASSIFICATION

1. Bertolini/Bartels - 69
2. Bert - 55
3. Janis - 54
4. Piccini/Deletraz - 52
5. Davies / Biagi - 48
6. Babini - 46
7. Hezemans/Kumpen/Longin - 40
8. Gollin - 30.5
9. Pescatori - 29
10. Wendlinger/Peter - 28.5

GT1 TEAMS CLASSIFICATION

1. Vitaphone Racing Team - 117
2. Aston Martin Racing BMS - 65.5
3. Zakspeed - 55
4. Phoenix Racing - 52
5. GLPK Carsport - 40
6. Race Alliance - 28.5

GT2 DRIVERS CLASSIFICATION

1. Bobbi / Melo 71
- 2: Salo / Aguas - 55
3. Mullen - 50.5
4. Kinch/Kirkaldy - 43
5. Sugden / Alexander - 38
5. Riccitelli - 33
7. Collard - 31
8. Ried / Felbermayr Jr - 24.5
9. Niarchos - 21.5

GT2 TEAMS CLASSIFICATION

1. AF Corse - 126
2. Scuderia Ecosse- 93.5
3. Ebimotors - 54
4. JMB Gruppe M - 39
5. Team Felbermayr Proton - 26.5

GT1 MANUFACTURERS

1. Aston Martin - 152
2. Maserati - 227
3. Saleen - 57
- =. Corvette - 57
5. Lamborghini - 5

GT2 MANUFACTURERS

1. Ferrari - 260
2. Porsche - 92.5
3. Spyker - 10

A WONDERFUL CIRCUIT...

Dubai's beautiful circuit is much appreciated by the drivers. Thomas Biagi takes us round the track :

"There is a very long straight. You arrive with quite high top speed, about 280 km/h, then you brake hard from 6th to 2nd gear, turning right, into a very tricky part of the circuit. Then you start a trick uphill section in fourth gear, followed by a very tricky corner in fourth gear.

This is followed by a quick direction change from right to left and then right, very nice but very technical. While you are turning, you have to brake deeply from 4th to 2nd gear, for a double long right 2nd-gear corner, like two corners. You have to find the good line. Then it's full power, up to fourth gear, and then downshift to 3rd for a very nice parabolical corner. You have to find just the right line, as you are turning and you have to brake. It's an important corner, as it's followed by quite a long straight. At the end of the straight there's a place where you can overtake, as you have topspeed followed by braking. You now enter the slowest part of the circuit, with a right-turn in second gear, then a left turn between 2nd and 3rd gear. Then another small acceleration, up to third and then down to 2nd for a right turn.

Here, you need good traction and acceleration. You are then back in a faster part, and you go up to 5th gear. A left turn, flat out, and then you have to downshift to 2nd for another nice corner, another parabola. Out of the corner, there is a right turn, but

if you find the perfect line, you should be able to stay flat out. In 4th, you brake slightly for the last corner, which is very important for the long straight afterwards. It is difficult as you go slightly downhill, and there is a reverse camber, so you have to use all the circuit and try to get out as fast as possible. The circuit is quite difficult, as there is so much sand, the circuit can be very slippery, especially at the start



of the event. The grip increases over the event. For the race, if you go outside the perfect line, you can be in trouble as it can be very slippery. But it can be good for you, as if some drivers in front of you make even small mistakes, you can overtake almost anywhere ! You need quite a lot of downforce at this track."

Thomas finished third at Dubai in 2004, when he shared the Care Racing Ferrari 550 Maranello with Enzo Calderari and Lilian Bryner. Last year he finished 5th with Fabio Babini in the Vitaphone Maserati. This year, he will be fighting for second place in the Championship with his team-mate Jamie Davies in the nr 2 Maserati MC 12

Dubai has hosted the penultimate round of the FIA GT Championship for the last two years; this will be its first time hosting the finale. In 2004, Bobbi took pole in the BMS Scuderia Italia Ferrari 550 Maranello. He and his team-mate Gabriele Gardel won the race, ahead of Johnny Herbert and Fabrizio De Simone in the AF Corse Maserati MC 12, and the Care Racing Ferrari of Biagi, Calderari and Bryner. The GT2 category was won by Maassen and Luhr in the Freisinger Motorsport Porsche 996 GT3 RS.

In 2005, the Russian Age Racing Aston Martin DBR9, running in the colours of Aston Martin Middle East, took pole position, with Christophe Bouchut at the wheel. But victory went to future Champion Gardel and his team-mate Pedro Lamy, in the Larbre Competition Ferrari 550 Maranello, ahead of the Vitaphone Maserati of Bartels and Scheider and the GLPK Corvette C5 of Kumpen, Longin and Hezemans. GT2 saw victory go to GruppeM's duo of Collard and Sugden, ahead of the Spyker Squadron Spyder of Bleekemolen and Crevels, with the JMB Ferrari 360 Modena of Thurn und Taxis, Buncombe and Casadei third.



TV COVERAGE FOR DUBAI LIVE

FIA GT CHAMPIONSHIP

18th November 2006

- BRAVO 2 (UK) - 10.15
- SKY ITALIA (ITALY) - 11:15
- AB MOTEURS (FRANCE) - LIVE
- SPORT 1 (NETHERLANDS) - 11:15
- DUBAI TV - 14.15
- AL JAZEERA SPORT - TBC

FIA GT 52' HIGHLIGHTS

BRAVO 2 - UK

November 27th at 11:00

November 26th at 11:00

NUOVOLARI - ITALY

November 29th 17:00 - 23:30

SLOVAK TV 2 - SLOVAKIA

November 25th between 14:00 and 16:00

MOTORS TV - EUROPE

Wednesday 20th November 20:00 + 8 repeats

AL JAZEERA - MIDDLE EAST

Schedule TBC

SPORT TV - BRAZIL

Saturday November 26th

FOX - AUSTRALIA

Schedule TBC

SPEED - USA - Weekdays 12:00 - 18:00 - full schedule TBC

FIA GT 26' HIGHLIGHTS

CHANNEL 4 - UK

Saturday 25th November 07.30

ITALIAN SWISS TV

November 25th

CT4 - CZECH REPUBLIC

November 24th at 20:00

DSF - GERMANY

November 22nd 21:45

ESPN STAR - ASIA

Schedule TBC

SPORT + FRANCE

22nd November - times to be confirmed

FIA GT MAGAZINE

SKY ITALIA - ITALY

November 21st at 20:00

HIGHLIGHTS

ORT - 5' news - Sunday 18th Oct 18:00

MOTORSPORT ASIA MAGAZINE (various channels) - 5' highlights - schedule varies, 4 repeats on average.

RTL (Moteurs Mag) - Saturday 25th, evening, Sunday 26th mornings

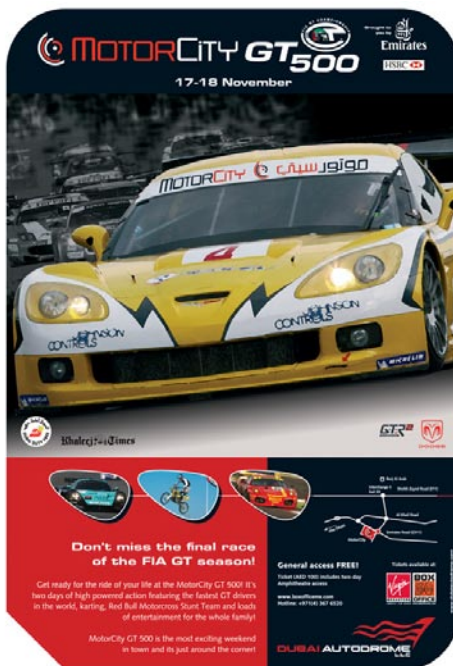
KANAAL 2 - 10' Highlights - Sat. 26th Nov 15:00 and Sunday 27th Midnight

AB3 & AB4 - 5' highlights - TBC

TV GLOBO - 5' highlights - November 25th

Sky Italia pay per view - on demand

Speed Broadband - USA - on demande



PROVISIONAL HANDICAP WEIGHTS FOR ROUND 10

Vitaphone Maserati nr 2 + 80 kg

Vitaphone Maserati nr 1 + 70 kg

GLPK Corvette nr 4 +50 kg

BMS DBR9 nr 23 +20 kg

GT2

AF Corse nr 58 + 35 kg

Scuderia Ecosse nr 63 + 45 kg

AF Corse nr 59 +20 kg

JMB GruppeM nr 55 + 10 kg

New or returning entrants : + 40 kg in GT1, or + 20 kg in GT2 + previous kg

Furthermore, the GT Bureau has imposed the following weights to balance performance

Maserati nr 1 and nr 2 : +25 kg

Zakspeed Saleen nr 9 : +45 kg

GT2 teams with two 'well-known' drivers : + 28 kg (nr 62 - nr 58 - nr 59 - nr 75 - nr 79 - nr 80)

Please note that these are provisional and may be altered up to the race.

IMPORTANT !!

JOURNALIST VISAS FOR ZHUHAI !

The first round of the 2007 season will be in Zhuhai, on March 25th.

Journalists, Photographers and Cameramen must apply for a Journalist's visa. Due to the New Year holidays in the People's Republic of China, it will be necessary for the visa forms to reach the authorities by the end of January 2007.

The forms and instructions can be downloaded on the FIA GT website, and will also be available in the Media Centre in Dubai.

Any journalists, photographers and cameramen who may plan to attend the event are kindly requested to fill in the form to request their visa.

It is easier to apply and not to use the visa, than to decide later that you need to go, when it might be too late.

The form should be returned with a photocopy of the main page of your passport, and for photographers and cameramen, a complete list of equipment with makes and serial numbers.



ERRATA

We have been informed of a mistake in the press release issued after the FIA World Motor Sport Council of October 18th.

The fuel supplier for the 2007 FIA GT Championship will be TOTAL.

Our apologies for this mistake.

LOOKING FORWARD TO 2007 ZHUHAI 2007 LAUNCHED WITH SUCCESSFUL CONFERENCE

The 2007 season of the FIA GT Championship got underway in Zhuhai on October 20th, with a press conference and display to launch the race, which will start the new season in March next year.

To officially announce this prestigious 2007 event, the Zhuhai International Circuit had invited guests from China and abroad to gather at the Holiday Inn Zhuhai on Saturday, October 20th 2006. Guests included Xian Tong Chun, Director of Automobile Sport Dept of FASC.; Zhuhai Municipal Government leader; Mr. Stephane Ratel, Chairman of SRO (FIA GT Championship Promoter) and Mr. Wang Jian Hua, Senior Deputy General Manager of Frestech Electrical Appliances.



In a celebration revolving around Chinese symbolism, Chinese knots, Chinese traditional music, the links between the FIA GT Championship and China were commemorated. From the start, GT established strong ties with China. Upon ZIC's creation, in 1996, the BPR GT Global endurance series came to race in China. In 1999, the FIA GT established a China Round race and became the first FIA Championship to race at a Chinese racing circuit. In 2004 and 2005, FIA GT returned to China, fully sensing the vibrant country's energy.

The 2007 FIA GT Championship race in Zhuhai will be presented by Frestech Electrical Appliances. Frestech designs, produces and markets high quality appliances. While linking its products to the FIA GT Championship, Frestech is making a strong statement about their reliability, quality and unique image.



During the press conference, Stephane Ratel spoke of his delight at returning to the People's Republic of China for the fourth time. "After the success of the last two events, acclaimed by the organisers, the teams, the press and all concerned, it is with great pleasure that we are heading back to the Zhuhai International Circuit, where we will start the 2007 season. Moreover, for the first time, we are visiting in the early part of the season, instead of at the same time as the Formula One Grand Prix and thereby hopefully creating more interest among the media and public.



Ever since being involved in organising the first-ever international motorsports event in the People's Republic of China, back in 1994, I have had great affection for the country and the people, and I was delighted to be able to return with the FIA GT Championship in 2004, after an interval of five years. I am very impressed by the way that China has evolved since I first visited the country. There is great enthusiasm for motorsport in this country, and we hope that the beautiful cars and exceptional drivers taking part in the FIA GT will add to this enthusiasm.



Year after year, the FIA GT Championship grows better and better. The performance balancing system introduced by the FIA has proved that the magnificent sportscars built by Aston Martin, Corvette, Ferrari, Maserati, Lamborghini, Porsche and Saleen can fight for victory on an equal basis, producing extremely close races, where the final result is often still undecided until the very last lap. Moreover, a new two-hour format set in place for 2006 will make the races even more exciting, better for spectators and TV viewers alike.

I cannot think of a better or more exciting place to start the season, and I look forward to March 2007 with great anticipation. "



ERRATA

We would like to make it clear that Frestech is the Presenting Sponsor of the 2007 Zhuhai round of the FIA GT Championship, and not the title sponsor as we indicated in issue 20 of GT News. Our apologies for any confusion this may have caused.

LOOKING FORWARD TO 2007 EXCITING GT RUNS IN CENTRE OF BUCHAREST



An extremely successful press conference was held in Bucharest on November 5th, to launch the 2007 round of the FIA GT Championship, which will be held on a street circuit around the Romanian parliamentary buildings. The circuit has been designed by Hermann Tilke, leading architect of Formula One circuits such as Bahrain and Shanghai.

With 80 journalists and eight camera crews on site, and six TV channels showing the event live on television, over 15,000 spectators packed around part of the track which will be used next May, to watch a variety of FIA GT and GT3 cars put on demonstration runs and taxi rides. Cars included a Vitaphone-liveried Maserati GranSport Light, Lamborghini Murciélago and Gallardo GT3 cars run by Reiter Engineering and two Renauer Motorsport

Porsches, while drivers such as former FIA GT Champions Thomas Biagi and Karl Wendlinger were present, as well as Romanian drivers Mihai Marinescu, Doru Sechelariu (both Formula Renault 2000) and Claudiu David (Dacia Logan Cup).

Mr. Harmut Beyer, CEO of the Bucharest Ring, said: "After working for two years on this Project, I am very happy to introduce the new race circuit in the centre of the capital of Romania, Bucharest. The circuit will be held on a place with a unique, fantastic view around the Parliament building. At the time when Romania is entering the European Union it will bring a lot of attention, public relations and interest in the country. The event itself will offer a whole program over the week-end and lots of entertainment for the whole family. I would like to express my special thanks to the Major Mayor Mr. Videanu and the President of the Romanian Automobile Club, Mr. Niculescu, for their exceptional support in the implementation of this Project"

Mr. Adriean Videanu, General Mayor of Bucharest said. "I am very happy that this project is becoming reality and that Bucharest will host such an extraordinary and exciting event," he said. "The city and the people will profit from this because it will present Romania in a different light and will show how friendly and hospitable Romanians are. This will give an opportunity to international companies for investments in different areas in Bucharest and Romania. Bucharest will take the place on the side of other big capitals in the world which host big sport events."

Stephane Ratel, Chairman of SRO, Promoter of the FIA GT Championship, was present at the event. "There was great disappointment among the competitors and press alike when the 2006 edition had to be postponed, and we are all delighted that this event will now finally come to pass," he said. "We hope that the public in Bucharest will turn out in great numbers to see our magnificent cars, representing some of the greatest makes of sportcars: Aston Martin, Corvette, Ferrari, Lamborghini, Maserati, Porsche and Saleen. The 2007 season will see a new two-hour format, better for spectators and TV viewers, and a guarantee of even closer and more exciting races. Moreover, we will be bringing two other series with us to add to the excitement. The innovative FIA GT3 European Championship is a Cup of Cups series for non-professional drivers, which has thrilled spectators in its inaugural year, thanks to its packed grids and exciting races. And the Lloyds TSB Insurance British F3 International Series is one of the leading single-seater series for Formula One drivers of the future. With the combination of the three series, SRO will be bringing no fewer than 100 cars to Bucharest."

Race Alliance driver Karl Wendlinger made countless taxi drives on the provisional street course around the palace, nowadays the location of the Romanian parliament. The 3.1 km circuit was designed by leading F1 architect Hermann Tilke, who has already designed and built the Grand Prix tracks in Bahrain, Istanbul and China among others. "We just built up a fraction of the entire circuit for today, of course. Many more adjustments will be necessary for the FIA GT race next year", the man from Aachen explained, "For example we will lay new asphalt in the braking zones and in the corners." Karl Wendlinger was enthusiastic: "It's not a typical street course, because there's just a few corners with four long straights – but the backdrop is overwhelming. This race will further increase the value of our championship for sure." Lukas Lichtner-Hoyer, team owner of RaceAlliance, thought likewise: "Looking at the amount of spectators that were already present today, we can expect a real spectacle."



CONGRATULATIONS TO THE (other) CHAMPIONS !

While competing successfully in the FIA GT Championship this year, four FIA GT regulars have triumphed in national GT Championships this year.

LONGIN AND KUMPEN VICTORIOUS IN BELCAR

GLPK Carsport regulars Bert Longin and Anthony Kumpen added another Belcar title to their already impressive career records.



"We had a very busy race programme over the last six weeks," Longin commented. "But then we were on the podium for the last two FIA GT races, and we won the Belgium GT title for drivers and teams/cars. The GLPK team has been very successful over the last ten years. So everything is going very well with us.

For the last race in Dubai we will be very motivated; we know the track and the car has been very consistent over the last races. We really have to try to win this last race of the season; it would be a real 'thank you' for all the people and companies who are involved in our projects."

MULLEN AND NIARCHOS CLAIM BRITISH GT TITLE

Scuderia Ecosse drivers Tim Mullen and Chris Niarchos claimed the British GT Championship title during the final round at Magny-Cours. The pair took pole position for both races but chose to play the sensible game and fight for the Championship, rather than the individual race wins. The strategy paid off, confirming Scuderia Ecosse as the 2006 Championship-winning team.

"The guys did a great job today. It's not easy to be told to slow down!" team principal Stewart Roden commented. "Chris has been amazing this year, especially when you consider this is only his fourth year of racing. He was up against two professionals in the LNT car and beat them fair and square so I'm very proud of him. Tim has done a fantastic job too, always professional and very calm, which is what wins Championships. This title was won before we came to Magny Cours really but we had to come and finish the job off and I'm glad we came out on top!"



The team now heads for Dubai, where Mullen is currently third in the GT2 Drivers Classification, with Kinch and Kirkaldy 7.5 points behind in fourth. Chris Niarchos explained: "I'm looking forward to Dubai as, now Tim and I have won the British GT Championship, the pressure is off. We have nothing to lose and everything to gain. Tim has a shot at moving up a place in the Driver's Championship, past Salo and Aguas, so we'll be out there to do all we can to help him do that. I think it's going to be a great event and I hope we can end the season on a high before we start our preparations for 2007." Tim agreed: "I've never been to Dubai and I really enjoy going to new places so this should be a fun one. We need to stay focused and bag as many points as we can to try and get past the no. 59 Ferrari in the standings. Then it's time for a holiday!"

APEX MOTORSPORT REVEAL INITIAL VISUALS OF THE JAGUAR XKR GT3

Apex Motorsport, led by Richard Lloyd, are pleased to reveal the first images of the recently announced Jaguar XKR GT3 race car.

Richard has already assembled an experienced squad to develop the XKR headed up by Team Manager Dave Ward who has recently returned from two years in Australia where he had been managing one of the top V8 teams.

Dave is joined by another ex Apex team member Howden Haynes who is responsible for all design and development work.

Work continues apace at the Buckingham race shop with the build of the first XKR chassis nearing roll cage completion and as Dave said: "The basic all aluminium chassis is already immensely rigid so we're confident that with the addition of the roll cage it will be amongst the best in class."

Stuart Dyble, Jaguar Board Director and Vice President, Communications and Public Affairs, Premier Automotive Group and Ford of Europe: "There is a great buzz surrounding the launch of the XKR and this GT3 programme is going to reinforce the sporting credentials of the XK range even further. The XKR is undoubtedly a great looking car and we're very pleased that Apex shares our view that its lightweight body structure is an ideal platform for the series. We're really looking forward to seeing the car run for the first time."

The development car is expected to complete its shakedown test in December before moving on to the official FIA tests early next year.



VITAPHONE THANKS THEIR SPA DRIVERS



Having sealed the GT1 Teams title in Budapest, and the Drivers title in Adria, Andrea Bertolini and Michael Bartels can go to Dubai without any pressure. However, they have no plans on taking things easy! "This is my third time in Dubai," Michael Bartels explained. "We were fourth in 2004 with the Saleen, but third in GT1 due to the Maserati, then second last year with the Maserati. So this year I

would like to win, to make it three-two-one!" However, their task will be made slightly more complicated by having three drivers in each car. "We took the opportunity to give something back to our Spa drivers," Michael carried on. Eric van de Poele will therefore be back in the nr 1 Maserati MC 12, with Vincent Vosse in the nr 2 with Thomas Biagi and Jamie Davies. "They will take time to get used to the cars again, so we'll have to see what is possible."

The battle is not over for the nr 2 car, which is still in contention for second place. "They have a good possibility to improve in the rankings, and we will help them to reach the best position possible," Bartels continued. "We will have a lot of guests from Germany and Belgium, and I am really looking forward to the race. We'll do our best to finish in style."

MALUCELLI REJOINS ASTON MARTIN RACING

Matteo Malucelli put in an excellent performance in Budapest, when he shared the nr 23 Aston Martin DBR9 with Fabio Babini, finishing in third place overall. This was the team's best result since Brno, early in the season. For the final race of the season, Malucelli will rejoin the nr 23 car, to hopefully give the team another podium in order to finish the season with a good result. The second car will be in the hands of Fabrizio Gollin and Miguel Ramos. The team will also enter two DBRS9 cars, making for a busy weekend for Aston Martin Racing BMS.



GARBAGNATI TO RACE WITH JMB

Andrea Garbagnati, a regular with JMB Racing in previous seasons, will be back for the Dubai race, sharing the nr 56 JMB GruppeM Ferrari 430 GT2 with Peter Kutemann.

The team's second car will be in the hands of Tim Sugden and Iradj Alexander, as usual. The duo inherited third place in Adria, and therefore have 10 kg penalty weight for this final race.



VARIED GT2 GRID FOR DUBAI



With six Ferrari 430 GT2, six Porsche 996 GT3 RSR and two Spyker C8 Spyder cars taking part, GT2 will see an extremely varied grid for the last race of the season. Adding the Gillet Vertigo in G2, and the two Aston Martin DBRS9 and Ferrari 430 Challenge GT3 cars, a total of 18 cars will race in the GT2/G2/G3 classes for Saturday's race.

LARBRE RETURNS WITH NEW CARE RACING ENGINE

Larbre Competition, who won the 2005 title with Gabriele Gardel and a Ferrari 550 Maranello, will be returning to the Championship for the Dubai race.

The nr 3 Ferrari 550 Maranello will be fitted with the new Care Racing Development engine, and the entry has been accepted, with certain conditions, so that the FIA Technical department can assess the performance characteristics of the engine for possible future use by entrants in the series.

The engine offers the same power and track performance as a standard GT1 engine but is able to run with no restrictors fitted as power is controlled electronically. Championship organisers will be able to set and regulate the power output themselves, in co-operation with the engine manufacturers.

The engine, developed by Care Racing's long-time technical partner, Prodrive, will be available to Care Racing's customers in 2007 and have an extended 'life', the time between re-builds being considerably longer than the current 4,500 kilometres. Care Racing's Frederic Dor was pleased with the first demonstration of the evolution engine in the FFSA GT Championship at Le Mans. "The costs of competing in GT racing, as in all areas of motor sport, continue to rise and, as a company providing a customer based service, we have been working hard to find ways to reduce technical and operating costs for our customers. I believe this is a significant step towards lowering budgets, and I very much hope the FFSA, FIA and ACO will be able to support the initiative for 2007 and beyond."

The driver line-up for Dubai will include Steve Zacchia and Frédéric Makowiecki, both seen in the FIA GT3 European Championship this season, and 2005 FIA GT Champion Gabriele Gardel. Gardel has won the last two FIA GT races to be held at Dubai, so he has plenty of experience at the track. "It's nice to be back and to be involved with a project like this," he said. "I'm proud to be coming back. This year, however, the aim is to show you can have a quick car without spending lots of money. The car is really good, and can still be competitive."

ANOTHER NEW CIRCUIT FOR SASCHA BERT

Sascha Bert, currently in second position in the GT1 Drivers Classification, has faced quite a learning curve this year. "Everything about the FIA GT Championship was new to me, and quite a few circuits have been total unknowns, including Budapest, Adria and Dubai." But Sascha has proved he can come to grips with a new circuit rapidly. "I walk around the track once or twice, looking at every corner, racing it with my eyes. Then the next day, it takes a few laps to get to grips with it. The season has been hard, there has been so much to learn. I would really like to finish the season with a win. To finish second overall in my first season would be a very good result!"



SPYKER SQUADRON TO ENTER TWO SPYDERS



Dutch team Spyker Squadron will be entering two of its Spyker C8 Spyder GT2 R cars in the final round of the 2006 FIA GT Championship. The nr 80 car finished in fourth position in the GT2 class of the Proximus 24 Hours of Spa, while the car took a fine podium finish in Dubai last year. Spyker Squadron will promote one of their sponsors during the race weekend, meaning a change of livery for the two cars.

The team has undergone two test sessions since their last race, and will run with new floor and rear wings in the Dubai race. A new exhaust system has been developed by the team and new intake pipes have been fitted, giving the engine a bit more power in high revs. The cars will run with Michelin tyres.

Jeroen Bleekemolen will share the nr 79 car with former British F3 Champion Jonny Kane. The second car will be driven by FIA GT regular Peter Kox, usually seen behind the wheel of the All-Inkl.com Lamborghini Murciélago, and Peter Dumbreck, a former Mercedes and Opel driver in the DTM.

PHOENIX RACING AIMS FOR SECOND PLACE

Contrary to some announcements in the press, Phoenix Racing will attend the final race of the 2006 season, with Andrea Piccini and Jean-Denis Deletraz aiming to regain second place in the GT1 Drivers Classification. The nr 5 Aston Martin DBR9 will have no penalty weight, compared to their main rivals in the GT1 category.



DRIVER CHANGE AT AF CORSE



2006 GT2 Teams Champions AF Corse have announced that driver Matteo Bobbi will be replaced by Toni Vilander for the final race of the season.

This comes as a consequence of an incident towards the end of the race in Adria, when the nr 58 Ferrari 430 GT2 collided with the team's second car.

The two drivers of the nr 58, Bobbi and

Jaime Melo, had secured the title jointly, but this decision means that as long as Melo finishes in the points in Dubai, the Brazilian would win the Championship alone.

"The first rule of racing is that you don't collide with your team-mate," Mika Salo commented.

Finnish driver Vilander first drove in the FIA GT Championship at Mugello. Qualifying third in the Scuderia Playteam Maserati MC 12, he put in a stunning performance to lead the race in the rain throughout his stint, although unfortunately the car did not go on to finish.

RETURN OF THE (GT2) CHAMPION

A driver change at Ebimotors sees 2005 GT2 Champion Mike Rockenfeller return for the last race of the season. German driver Rockenfeller was part of the all-victorious GruppeM team last season, winning five races including the GT2 category at the Proximus 24 Hours of Spa. Rockenfeller will share the nr 75 Porsche 996 GT3 RSR with Emmanuel Collard, one of his GruppeM team-mates last year. In 2005, Rockenfeller and Lieb failed to finish the Dubai race - their only non-finish all year. As for Luca Riccitelli, the Italian is sad to miss the race - but his second child should be born any time now, and that is an event he does not intend to miss.



G3 FOR BMS SCUDERIA ITALIA AND JMB RACING

Three cars will race in the G3 category in Dubai. BMS Scuderia Italia will enter two Aston Martin DBRS9 cars, with Sergey Zlobin, Luca Pirri and Roberto Benucci in the nr 115 car and FIA GT3 regulars and Budapest race winners Franco Groppi and Toni Seiler in the nr 133. JMB Racing will enter the nr 122 Ferrari 430 Challenge GT3 car for Nicolas Comar, Philippe Rambeaud and Michel Mhitarian. The JMB car last raced in the Paul Ricard event, in August, when it failed to finish.



PRACTICAL INFORMATION Nov 17th - 18th 2006

DUBAI AUTODROME

LOCATION : Dubai, Emirates Road

CIRCUIT LENGTH : 5394 m

EMAIL : info@dubaiautodrome.com

WEBSITE : www.dubaiautodrome.com

PRESS OFFICER : Richard Breiss
EMAIL : richardb@dubaiautodrome.com
NEAREST AIRPORT : Dubai (20 mins)
PREVIOUS VISITS : 2004 & 2005

MEDIA ACCREDITATION CENTRE
This will be located in the Management Building, close to the main entrance

REACHING THE AUTODROME

Coming from Bur Dubai on the Sheikh Zayed Road: Exit at interchange 4, Exit 39, E311 follow the sign to Barsha, continue straight through 2 roundabouts, 250m after the 2nd roundabout turn right at the main entrance of the Dubai Autodrome.

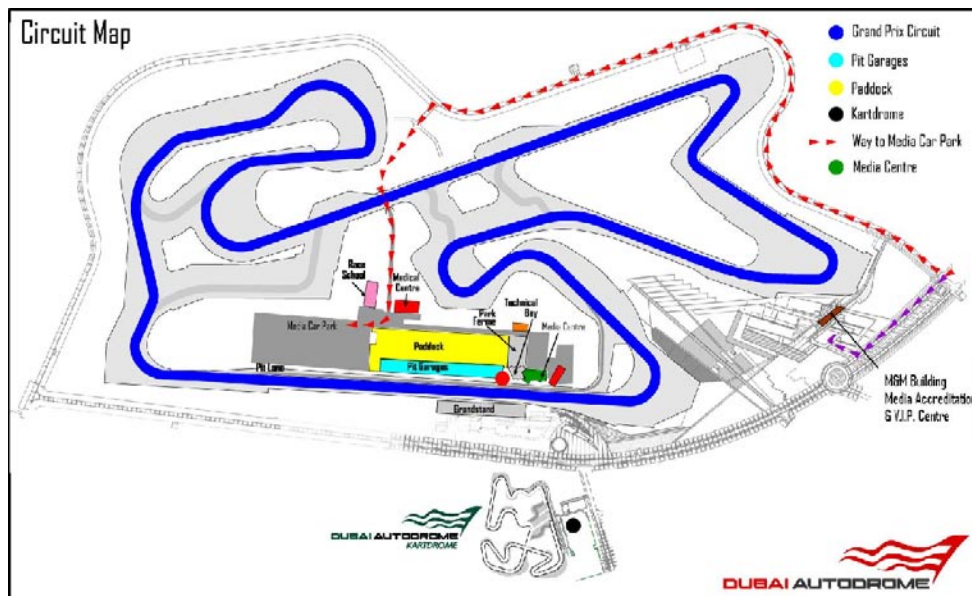
Coming from Sharjah on the Emirates Road: At the 1st roundabout on the Emirates Road, turn left, 250m after the roundabout turn right at the main entrance of the Dubai Autodrome

Coming from Abu Dhabi: Exit at interchange 4 Exit 39, D63, E311, follow the sign to Barsha, continue straight through 2 roundabouts, 250m after the 2nd roundabout turn right at the main entrance of the Dubai Autodrome.

Race Weekend Contacts

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Reports, Results, Live Timing and Photo Gallery available on www.fiagt.com

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PROVISIONAL TIMETABLE - DUBAI MOTORCITY GT

Thursday November 16th

13.45 - 14.15	Superstock Bikes	Test Session
14.30 - 15.00	GTi	Test Session
15.15 - 15.45	Superstock Bikes	Test Session
16.00 - 16.30	GTi	Test Session

Friday November 17th

09.15 - 10.45	FIA GT Championship	Free Practice 1
11.00 - 11.20	GTi Cup Trophy	Qualifying
11.35 - 11.55	UAE National Superstock	Qualifying
13.45 - 15.15	FIA GT Championship	Free Practice 2
15.35 - 15.55	GTi Cup Trophy	Race 1 (8 laps)
16.20 - 16.40	UAE National Superstock	Race 1 (9 laps)
17.15 - 17.35	FIA GT Championship	Qualifying
17.45	FIA GT Championship	Press Conference

Saturday November 18th

10.00 - 10.15	FIA GT	Warm-up
10.45 - 11.05	UAE National Superstock	Race 2 (9 laps)
11.30 - 11.50	GTi Cup Trophy	Race 2 (8 laps)
14.30 - 17.30	FIA GT Championship	Race (93 laps)
17:50	FIA GT	Press Conference