



PREVIEW | FIA F3 WORLD CUP

# The Return of the Champions

Renato Marques

**T**HIS year's edition of the Formula 3 Macau Grand Prix has a new attraction with the presentation of an all-new trophy – the FIA F3 World Cup.

When the open-wheeled cars hit the Guia Circuit tarmac they will be chasing not only the glory of winning on such a renowned circuit but also the honor of being the first ever F3 World Cup Champion.

Such an opportunity definitely deserves a quality lineup of drivers and racing machines, in a race which has been dubbed the “return of the champions.” Several former F3 Macau race winners are putting their current duties with other series on hold in order to join the event.

The two-time Macau champion Felix Rosenqvist is absolutely the name to top that list, now making an attempt to break the record and win the Macau F3 Race a third time.

Alongside him are other former champions like the 2012 winner, António Félix da Costa who will retake his seat at the wheel of the Dallara Volkswagen from Carlin, and the 2011 winner Daniel Juncadella, racing with a Dallara Mercedes from Hitech GP.

If the return of these three champions was not enough motivation to pay attention to this race, there is also the opportunity to see some of the younger stars shine. A group of new racers are set to make the

lives of the former champions difficult on their way to the checkered flag.

Despite the notable absence of the 2016 FIA F3 European Champion Lance Stroll, already on his way to the Formula 1 with the Williams F1 team where he will compete in 2017 alongside Valtteri Bottas, there are other leading contenders just waiting for an opportunity to jump to the top of the podium and take the FIA F3 World Cup home.

Maximilian Günther, second in the European championship, is certainly one of them. The German racer may experience difficulties during the first sessions as he makes his Macau debut, but he has had a great season with Prema's Dallara Mercedes and hopes to continue on this “Special Season Finale” in Macau.

Sharing the same hopes is the Briton George Russell, third position overall finisher right behind Günther. Russell has also been enjoying a good series, and racing in Ma-

■ **A mix of experience and ‘fresh blood’ seem to be the main ingredients of the revamped F3 race**

PREVIEW

# FIA F3 World Cup – The Return



## Macau-based GP motorbike team meets with schoolchildren

**B**EFORE the Macau Grand Prix officially kicks off, Macau's team CF Racing Team 32 visited the Escola Primária Luso-Chinesa da Flora to meet with their young fans and inspire them through their team members' stories.

Around 200 students showed up for the meeting at the school's auditorium. Stephanie Fong, vice principal of the school, told the Times that all students, from kindergarten up to the sixth grade, were present in order to ask the riders questions and to get their autographs.

This is not the first time the school has organized an event like this, although it is the first time in the last ten years. “We



encourage all our students to know about Macau's sports events,” said Fong, who also said that in the past several years, the school has been taking its

students outside to witness the race. This year, however, they decided to invite the riders to come to the school.

“Through the car races,

we hope that children can know [more] about sports,” declared Fong, adding that the more important goal is to let students “understand that

they need to spend effort on everything they do.”

The purpose underlying the autograph session is, according to Fong, to raise the awareness in children that for anyone to achieve success like the riders they need to devote themselves for a long time. “Hopefully, the students might get some initiative from this event for their sports, physical activities, and study,” said Fong.

Rider Allan Jon Venter told the Times that this is his second time meeting with children in Macau. Last year, he visited the Portuguese School, the rider had fun with the students, and was questioned by them, hoping as well to inspire kids the same way he had been inspired when he was young.

When asked about his suggestions for students who want to become riders, Allan Jon Venter explained, “The big thing

for kids is to stay focused. Put your heads down, and if you decide something that you want to, you put your mind to it. You work hard for it.”

The rider said that his team is “pretty much prepared” for the Grand Prix. However, he judges this year's Grand Prix competition to be stronger than it was last year.

João Fernandes, team owner, told the Times that it is important for the team to have this type of activity because they can “give a bit back to Macau.” He added “To be with the kids is always important for me. Their eyes are more real, [...] even though sometimes their questions do not make sense, but it is very funny.”

João Fernandes revealed that his team had been preparing for the Grand Prix for five months.

Macau Daily Times is a media partner of the CF Racing Team 32.

# Turn of the Champions



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Macau alongside former champion Juncadella at Hitech GP should bolster his confidence. From the European side there are a lot of other names to consider like the experienced Nick Cassidy racing once more under the colors of Theodore Racing, teaming up with Rosenqvist and Günther to form probably the strongest team on the field.

Also returning are two more names to take good note of this year, last year's podium finisher Alexander Sims on the Double R Racing Dallara Mercedes and the Brazilian Sérgio Sette Câmara. Câmara, although finishing last in his debut

year showed enormous progress over the weekend, ending the race with an impressive lap time and setting a new record at 2:10.186.

On the newcomers field Frenchman Anthoine Hubert, a race winner in the European series, deserves a mention. He is still gaining pace and will debut alongside another Brazilian, Pedro Piquet, the third in a line of racers that started with his father – three-time F1 World Champion Nelson Piquet – and followed by his older brother Nelson Piquet Jr, who also raced twice on the Guia Circuit back in 2003 and 2004.

From Japan's F3 championship come this year's top contestants, including the champion Kenta Yamashita who joins Macau's Andy Chang at the ThreeBond with T-Sport team as well as first runner up Jann Mardenborough, racing a B-Max Racing Team Dallara Volkswagen and Sho Tsuboi, third overall at the Japanese series, racing a TOM's Dallara Toyota.

A mix of experience and "fresh blood" seem to be the main ingredients of the revamped F3 race that hopefully will glue the spectators to the edges of their seats both at home and



Felix Rosenqvist



Felix da Costa

in the Guia Circuit stands.

All pieces now seem to be moving into place to prepare a "green-light" for an edition initially marred by the withdrawal of the lead consultant of over 30 years, Barry Bland, from the organization of the event. This was after his disagreement with the "last minute" changes to the race that created delays because of sporting regulations and others logis-

tic procedures. Another cause of the rift was the sudden and unexpected change from tire supplier in a tender put up by the FIA that was won by Pirelli, which had not been supplying tires for any of the F3 series for a long period of time.

As a novelty for this year's edition, the Grand Prix will for the first time be available to live stream for free on the FIA's webpage.

## Historical Theodore Racing set for 'record breaking' wins

AN historical name of the Macau Grand Prix since its early days, Theodore Racing returns once more to its birthplace to try to break its own record of eight wins at the Macau Grand Prix. The intention was announced by team Principal Teddy Yip Jr during an event to present their new partnership sponsor BBIN.

"This year we return to defend our title with the aim of achieving back-to-back victories and securing a record of nine Macau GP victories," he said.

Commenting on the trust he has in the driver lineup to accomplish such a task, Yip said: "These are the three most prepared guys on the circuit this weekend. I'm sure of that!"

The team's managing director, David Kennedy, highlighted the "fantastic success this season [of] winning the Formula Ford Championship, the F3 [European] championship and the GP2 championship," adding that winning in Macau this year would be "the icing on the cake."

Team head and reigning champion Fe-



Nick Cassidy, Felix Rosenqvist and Maximilian Gunther

lix Rosenqvist questioned the constant change of cars and championships that he had this season and how that could affect his performance.

"This year I have been driving a lot

of different cars in different championships so I think I'm used to going back and forth," he said. "I already did a couple of days of testing with the team before coming here to test the new tyres

so I think I have already got back the speed and with my experience of F3 and the Macau circuit, I'm really confident that I'll be up to the speed."

Rosenqvist finds the circuit an enjoyable but challenging one. He said: "For us drivers, it is a challenge both technically and [because] you need a lot of courage to be quick at the track. There are a lot of risks involved. It's something very special to come here. It is really a favorite for all the drivers."

Debuting in Macau will be the first runner up of this year's European F3 championship Maximilian Gunther. "I think will be a great weekend for all of us. For me it's the first time driving here at this street circuit and I'm looking forward to it," added Gunther to his teammate's sentiments.

Completing the trio of Theodore's racers will be the experienced Nick Cassidy. Racing for the third time on the Guia Circuit, the driver yesterday highlighted how "narrow and fast" the circuit is, making it a "unique" race without an equal in the rest of the season.

"You just need to look at the drivers that have passed to Theodore's alone to see how big this is. In ten years' time people will be talking about the racers that raced here in 2016, so this is pretty special." RM

RACE PREVIEW

# Macau Motorcycle Grand Prix - 50th Edition - 'Gold Rush' for Golden Jubilee

Renato Marques

**C**ELEBRATING its Golden Jubilee, the Macau Motorcycle Grand Prix will feature a strong lineup of 28 riders and their machines.

At the head are the "three musketeers," the 2015 Champion Peter Hickman, the eight-time winner and record holder Michael Rutter and the fastest ever on track and four-time winner Stuart Easton all riding Bathams/SMT Racing BMW's, the bike that proved to be unbeatable in the Guia Circuit last year.

Also riding a BMW is the fourth member of this frontrunner squad, the 2013 winner Ian Hutchinson and he is no less of a candidate for the final checkered-flag than any of the first three. Hutchinson has already proved to be impressively fast and steady in Macau.

If any of these four clear candidates are out for the final victory, there are many more who are willing to make that achievement a difficult one; the competitors



Stuart Easton



Peter Hickman



Michael Rutter

will include first runner-up last year and frequent podium stander Martin Jessop, the "king of the island" John McGuinness, Conor Cummins and Gary Johnson, among others.

With so many great riders racing top-of-the-line bikes, the competition looks to be fierce and they are expected to put on an awesome show for the crowd.

If the battle for the top position will be a heated one, then expect no less for the positions on the first half of the leaderboard. There are some riders that have been

gaining experience over the years trying their best to keep down a good lineup of newcomers.

Included in this group of experienced riders are four-time racer Allan-Jon Venter from local team CF Racing Team 32 racing a Yamaha and the Portuguese rider André Pires on his third attempt in Macau racing a Bimota from Bimota UK team.

Penz13.com always presents strong contenders and this year their team will include rookie Danny Webb riding alongside Gary Johnson.

The question of who is going

to win is a hard one to divine an answer to; we will have to wait until the last minute of the race on Saturday.

As part of the celebration of

**With so many great riders racing top-of-the-line bikes, the competition looks to be fierce**

this grand 50th anniversary, the Macau Grand Prix Organizing Committee (MGPOC) also invited four former champions from the 1970's, 1980's, 1990's and early 2000's of the Grand Prix. Sadeo Asami, Mick Grant, Phillip McCallen and Steve Plater are already confirmed to be joining the celebrations on this special occasion.

A number of activities have been planned to mark the Golden Jubilee, including a display of competing and classic motorcycles and a classic motorcycle parade on the Guia Circuit on Saturday (November 19th).

## NOVEMBER 17 - 20

### 17th of November (Thursday)

06:00 Circuit Closed  
 06:30 - 07:00 Circuit Inspection  
 07:30 - 08:30 Suncity Group Macau Motorcycle Grand Prix - 50th Edition - Practice  
 08:50 - 09:20 Suncity Group Chinese Racing Cup - Practice  
 09:35 - 10:15 Suncity Group Formula 3 Macau Grand Prix - FIA F3 World Cup - Practice  
 10:30 - 11:10 Suncity Group Macau Road Sport Challenge - Practice  
 11:25 - 11:55 Suncity Group Macau Guia Race 2.0T - Practice  
 12:30 - 13:00 SJM Macau GT Cup - FIA GT World Cup - Practice  
 13:20 - 14:00 CTM Macau Touring Car Cup - Practice  
 14:20 - 15:00 Suncity Group Formula 3 Macau Grand Prix - FIA F3 World Cup - Qualifying  
 15:45 - 16:30 Suncity Group Macau Motorcycle Grand Prix - 50th Edition - Qualifying  
 18:00 Circuit Opened

### 18th of November (Friday)

06:00 Circuit Closed  
 06:30 - 07:00 Circuit Inspection  
 07:30 - 08:15 Suncity Group Macau Motorcycle Grand Prix - 50th Edition - Qualifying  
 08:40 - 09:10 Suncity Group Chinese Racing Cup - Qualifying  
 09:35 - 10:15 Suncity Group Formula 3 Macau Grand Prix - FIA F3 World Cup - Practice  
 10:40 - 11:10 SJM Macau GT Cup - FIA GT World Cup - Practice  
 11:35 - 12:05 Suncity Group Macau Road Sport Challenge - Qualifying  
 12:30 - 13:00 Suncity Group Macau Guia Race 2.0T - Practice  
 13:55 - 14:25 CTM Macau Touring Car Cup - Qualifying  
 14:55 - 15:25 SJM Macau GT Cup - FIA GT World Cup - Qualifying  
 15:55 - 16:35 Suncity Group Formula 3 Macau Grand Prix - FIA F3 World Cup - Qualifying  
 18:00 Circuit Opened

### 19th of November (Saturday)

06:00 Circuit Closed  
 06:30 - 07:00 Circuit Inspection  
 07:30 - 08:30 Suncity Group Macau Guia Race 2.0T - Qualifying  
 09:00 - 09:50 Suncity Group Macau Road Sport Challenge - 10 laps  
 10:20 - 11:10 Suncity Group Chinese Racing Cup - 10 laps  
 11:20 - 11:40 Suncity Group Macau Motorcycle Grand Prix - 50th Edition - Warm Up  
 12:10 - 13:10 SJM Macau GT Cup - FIA GT World Cup - Qualification Race 12 laps  
 13:50 - 14:40 Suncity Group Formula 3 Macau Grand Prix - FIA F3 World Cup - Qualification Race - 10 laps  
 14:40 - 15:05 Parade  
 15:30 - 16:30 Suncity Group Macau Motorcycle Grand Prix - 50th Edition - 12 laps  
 18:00 Circuit Opened

### 20th of November (Sunday)

06:00 Circuit Closed  
 06:30 - 07:00 Circuit Inspection  
 07:00 - 07:30 Safety and Rescue Cars - Testing laps  
 08:30 - 09:30 CTM Macau Touring Car Cup - 12 laps  
 10:00 - 12:00 Suncity Group Macau Guia Race 2.0T - 2 Races of 10 laps each with 15 minutes break between Races  
 12:55 - 14:15 SJM Macau GT Cup - FIA GT World Cup - 18 laps  
 14:15 - 14:40 Parade  
 15:10 - 15:25 Lion Dance  
 15:30 - 16:30 Suncity Group Formula 3 Macau Grand Prix - FIA F3 World Cup - 15 laps  
 18:00 Circuit Opened