

Formula BMW Pacific



Date May 14, 2009
Subject **Preview Formula BMW Pacific Rounds 3 – 6**

Challenging weekend in store for region's fledgling talent.

Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia – Four thrilling races are on the cards at the next round of Formula BMW Pacific on May 30 – 31, as the series returns to Malaysia's Sepang International Circuit. After the 2009 season roared to life there last month at the 2009 Formula 1 Petronas Malaysian Grand Prix, the region's most talented young drivers can look forward to a marathon weekend on track.

Leading the charge in both the Drivers Classification and the Rookie Cup is Ireland's Gary Thompson (16/E-Rain Racing), who came away from the opening rounds with a pole position, one win and another podium finish. Thompson's early success will have buoyed his confidence as he heads into the next round at the 5.542km Malaysian track, where he will be looking to increase his points advantage.

Also making impressive start to the season is Formula BMW Junior Chris Wootton (AUS/20/Eurasia Motorsport), runner-up in the 2008 Rookie Cup and currently second in the points. With a full season's experience under his belt, Wootton already has with two second-place finishes to his name.

Having already made a strong impact in his first full season, Indonesian Rio Haryanto's (16/Questnet Team Qi-Meritus) win and podium finish in the first two races put him third on the leaderboard, just half a point behind Wootton.

Fourth overall and second in the Rookie Cup is Malaysian Calvin Wong (17/Team Holzer PFX) who will be racing for the second time on his "home" circuit.

Formula BMW Junior Axcil Jefferies (15/ZIM/Eurasia Motorsport) got his season off to a sensational start, finishing just shy of a podium finish in the first race. Jefferies' fourth-place finish in Round 1 gave a glimpse of greater achievements to come. While he charged ahead in Round 2, briefly leading the field, his race was prematurely cut short after a coming together with another car.

Fellow Junior Steel Guiliana (AUS/17/Motaworld Racing) faced a steep learning curve on his debut, having arrived at the opening round with virtually no time in the car. Despite this, the Australian came away with a point, and much more can be expected from this dedicated youngster as he familiarizes himself with the FBO2.

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Since its debut in 2003, Formula BMW Pacific has quickly become the region's premier entry-level junior racing series, providing young karters with optimal opportunities to transition into single-seater racing. The series races at some of the region's premier events such as September's 2009 Formula 1 Singapore Grand Prix and November's season-closing Macau Grand Prix. In addition to the showcase events, Formula BMW Pacific also provides plenty of track time for the drivers to gain experience, in this case at the Asian Festival of Speed weekend.

Championship Points Tables after Round 2.

Drivers

1. Gary Thompson (IRL/E-Rain Racing) 28 points; 2. Chris Wootton (AUS/Eurasia Motorsport) 22.5 points; 3. Rio Haryanto (INA/Questnet Team Qi-Meritus) 22 points; 4. Calvin Wong (MAS/Team Holzer PFX) 11 points; 5. Axcil Jefferies (ZIM/Eurasia Motorsport) 10 points; 6. Dustin Sofyan (INA/Questnet Team Qi-Meritus) 8 points; 7. Aditya Patel (IND/Atlantic Racing Team) 5 points; 8. Cao Hong Wei (CHN/Ao's Racing) 5 points; 9. Fahmi Ilyas (MAS/E-Rain Racing) 4 points; 10. Akhil Khushlani (IND/E-Rain Racing) 3 points; 11. Dominic Ang (MAS/Team Holzer PFX) 2 points; 12. Fahad Algozaibi (KSA/E-Rain Racing) 1.5 points; 13. Steel Guilliana (AUS/Motaworld Racing) 1 point; 14. Zhu Huan (CHN/Questnet Team Qi-Meritus) ½ point.

Rookie Cup

1. Thompson, 28 points; 2. Wong, 11 points; 3. Jefferies, 10 points; 4. Sofyan, 8 points; 5. Ilyas, 4 points; 6. Algozaibi 1.5 points; 7. Guilliana, 1 point

Teams

1. Eurasia Motorsport, 38.25 points; 2. Questnet Team Qi-Meritus, 26.5 points; 3. E-Rain Racing, 22.875 points; 4. Atlantic Racing Team, 22.5 points; 5. Ao's Racing Team, 21 points; 6. Team Holzer PFX, 17.5 points; 7. Motaworld Racing, 6 points.

Statistics:

Winners 2009: Thompson (1); Haryanto (1)
Pole Positions: Thompson (2)
Podiums: Thompson (2); Wootton (2); Haryanto (2)
Rookie Cup Wins: Thompson (2)

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Background:

Formula BMW is the world's leading entry-level series in formula racing. In 2009 the three Formula BMW series – Formula BMW Europe, Formula BMW Pacific and Formula BMW Americas – will be held in the key motor sport markets of Europe, pan-Asia and North and South America. Formula BMW will be regularly held in the support programme of Formula One. The series gives young racing talents the chance to enter professional motor sport in a safe racing car – the Formula BMW FB02.

The FB02 has been in use since season 2002. It is powered by a 140 hp BMW engine that takes it to a top speed of up to 230 km/h. It ranks among the safest vehicles in its category and exceeds the FIA safety regulations that govern this class of car. Innovations such as the FORS (Formula Rescue Seat) were developed by BMW Motorsport specifically for Formula BMW. Following Formula One, Formula BMW was the first single-seater series outside the US in which the HANS system was made mandatory.

Formula BMW drivers have the opportunity to take part in an Education and Coaching Programme that runs parallel with the racing season. The programme includes driver coaching at the races by professional race drivers, attending a Formula One test, fitness courses, tuition in driving technique and strategy, as well as seminars on sponsoring and sport management.

Among the 20 team drivers in this season's Formula One, there are now five Formula BMW graduates: Nico Rosberg, Adrian Sutil, Sebastian Vettel, Sebastián Buemi and Timo Glock.

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