

AL KHAN AND SHAIKH HAMAD LOOKING FORWARD TO FINAL BATTLE

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Mustafa Al Khan and Shaikh Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa are all set to get back on the race track for the grand finale of the 2009/2010 Batelco 2,000cc Challenge.

The eighth and last round is set to take place this Friday (May 14, 2010) at Bahrain International Circuit in Sakhir.

Al Khan is the defending champion, and heading into the meeting is the current championship leader with 116 points. Al Khan, who drives a Honda Civic, commented: "I will be focusing until the very end of this round as this meeting is the most important of the season. I will do everything I can to keep the title for the second year in a row."

Al Khan expects the heat to play an important role in deciding the round's two race winners. "All the drivers will surely be affected by the weather. That will add to the challenge for everybody, especially the top four who are all in the championship battle."

The round is being organized by the Circuit Racing Club (CRC) in cooperation with the Bahrain Motor Federation (BMF) and Bahrain International Circuit, "The Home of Motorsport in the Middle East". It will be held along the circuit's 2.55km inner track.

"I'd like to thank Bahrain International Circuit and our official sponsors Batelco for another wonderful season," Al Khan added. "Plenty of thanks must also go to the BMF and CRC. Hopefully this series continues for many years to come."

Al Khan is currently ahead of chief title rival Shaikh Hamad bin Isa by four points and Shaikh Salman bin Isa Al Khalifa by six points.

The top three must also not forget the high-flying capabilities of Shaikh Jaber bin Ali Al Khalifa, who also still has a shot at the title in fourth place, only 10 points behind Al Khan.

Shaikh Hamad commented: "This final round will see very serious competition amongst us top four. I shall strive for the best performance I can give as this will be the last opportunity to secure the title.

"I would be very happy to win this season, especially after all the trouble I had faced with my car on several occasions. But for this round, I am making sure it is fully ready. It will need to be at its best, especially since the last round saw Mustafa and Shaikh Salman put on great performances.

"I am really looking forward to this weekend, and I would like to thank everybody involved in making this season a success, especially my team Z-Speed, and of course Bahrain International Circuit, Batelco, the BMF, CRC, and my backers Robeco Investment Bank, who supported me in the Chevrolet Supercars Middle East Championship."

During the previous round, a brilliant performance by Al Khan saw him secure a fantastic double. His twin victories helped him regain number one position on the championship standings.

Apart from all the exciting action in the series, there will also be plenty going on off the track. Family fun and entertainment will include carnival booths, games, face painting, music, and many other activities, with food and beverages also readily available at the venue.

Those wishing to attend the Batelco 2,000cc Challenge's grand finale, tickets can be purchased on the circuit's official website, www.bahraingp.com, or at the ticket booths at the circuit entrance. They can also be bought by calling the circuit hotline on +973-17-450000.

Tickets will be half the price for children age 10 years old and under, while children aged three and younger can get in for free.

The drivers championship standings in Batelco 2,000cc Challenge

- 1 Mustafa Al Khan (Honda Civic) 116
- 2 Shaikh Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa (Honda Civic) 112
- 3 Shaikh Salman bin Isa Al Khalifa (Honda Civic) 110

- 4 Shaikh Jaber bin Ali Al Khalifa (Honda CRX) 106
- 5 Abdulrahman Ghuloom (Honda Civic) 52
- 6 Raed Himmo (Honda CRX) 46
- 7 Tim Birkin (Honda Integra) 36
- 8 Mohammed Saleh (Honda Civic) 35
- 9 Chris Rabie (Renault Clio Sport) 32
- 10 Essa Al Kooheji (Honda Integra) 31
- 11 Hamed Kuzbar (Ford Focus) 27
- 12 Hisham Al Othman (Honda CRX) 23
- 13 Peter Turney (BMW) 16
- 14 Stephen Kellogg (Honda Civic) 15
- 15 Ahmed Kuzbar (Ford Focus) 7
- 16 Osama Al Buflasa (BMW) 3