



Teams have arrived at Vila Real de Santo Antonio

May 23, 2008

Vila Real de Santo Antonio, Portugal

Competition for the 2008 U.I.M. World Cup title will begin tomorrow in Vila Real de Santo Antonio, Portugal. World Cup events attract only the best of the best and there are 16 pilots from 10 countries present in Vila Real de Santo Antonio.

Reigning champion for two consecutive years Colin Jelf of Great Britain is eager to rewrite F2 powerboat history by winning his third World Cup title. Alongside, his brother Owen may feel that he has been in the shadow of his younger brother for too long and also can be considered as one of the favorites to win this year's title.

During the last year's season we saw great performance of our younger drivers - "Flying Frenchman" Jean Baptiste Thomas and Italian Alex Carella, who without a doubt will be even more competitive this year. However, Alex no longer will be the youngest pilot on the tour as Nick Bisterfeld of Germany will start his F2 World Cup career right here in Vila Real. Unfortunately, another rookie Italian Daniele Martignoni will not be in Portugal and will start his World Cup season with the race in Latvia. Italian veteran Gianni Manici is also here and will try to put up a good competition against the youngsters.

As usual, the Latvians are here to defend the red-white-red colors of their homeland. 2007 European Cup winner Ugis Gross of Kalnciems Racing Team and second best European pilot of 2007 Uvis Slakteris did have great fights between themselves and the others in 2007 and will not stand down in front of anyone.

Scandinavian squad is lead by the experienced Rick Haakonsen of Norway who is a very serious driver to be reckoned with. It is also great to see F1 series' driver Jonas Andersson of Sweden on the line up and, for sure, F2 drivers will not show any mercy for him. The only hope for support for Jonas may be his fellow country man Sven Jansson, an experience powerboat pilot who has decided to race for 2008 World Cup title.

It is unfortunate that there are no local Portuguese pilots, but it is highly possible that two pilots of neighboring Spain, Francisco Sanchez Consuegra and Tiste Orozco, may become the local favorites for the opening round of the Series in Portugal.

As already reported earlier, Arif Al Zafeen of the UAE will not be racing in 2008 and, thus, Yousef Al Rabayan will be the only overseas pilot in Portugal.

Powerboat racing veterans Frode Sundsdal of Norway and Johan Coenradi of the Netherlands are also in Vila Real de Santo Antonio, but it is very unlikely that they will race because their boats have technical problems.

Stay tuned, as tomorrow we will be the first to bring you the results of qualifying sessions, Match Race and Speed Record competitions.