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## Racing Engineering – GP2 Bahrain preview

Racing Engineering is facing the first round of the 2007 GP2 series at Bahrain this weekend. The Sakhir track, near Manama, the capital of the tiny and prosperous Arabian country will be the first of the eleven rounds scheduled this year, and the only one taking place outside Europe.



Racing Engineering are going to Bahrain looking forward to the start of a new season, and they are feeling very positive after the great work done over the winter in the preseason tests, where the two drivers, Javier Villa and Sergio Jiménez have shown an outstanding level of preparedness.



For Javier Villa, Bahrain means the start of his second season in the GP2 series. After all the learning done during 2006, for Javi, 2007 must be the year for him to consolidate his position amongst the most promising drivers at international level. The Spaniard will again be the youngest driver on the grid, but this year will have a year of experience in GP2 behind him and that should allow him to go for better results.



Sergio Jiménez for his part will face his first race weekend at the wheel of the Dallara GP2 car. The Brazilian driver has already shown his skills last year in the Spanish F3 series, and during the preseason tests has been adapting very well to the new category, so Bahrain should allow him to start showing his potential.



The two Racing Engineering drivers will sample the Sakhir track for the first time in Friday's free practice, so for Javi and Sergio it will be crucial to maximize their track time in order to learn the circuit as quickly as possible so that they can give their all in the ever exciting half hour qualification session that will decide the grid for Saturday's race.



To help them in this task Racing Engineering will use their previous experience of Bahrain's track, scene of the final round of the 2005 GP2 series. Although a lot of things regarding the cars has changed since then (switching to slicks, new aerodynamic package, etc), the data gathered then as well as the experience the team has with the Dallara chassis will allow to work from a base setup that has been tested at Paul Ricard and in the simulators installed at Racing Engineering's headquarters in Sanlucar de Barrameda (Spain).



Sakhir's main feature is the succession of long straights and slow corners that makes the track very tough on brakes. Another important characteristic to bear in mind will be the high temperatures and the resultant potential problems with engine cooling. Last but not least, the sand from the surrounding desert that the wind deposits on the asphalt almost continuously will be an important factor because of its effect on tyre grip which is critical in setting good lap times.