

Renault Sport Academy drivers to test F1 car in Bahrain

Renault DP World F1 Team is pleased to announce three of its current Renault Sport Academy squad will further their understanding of F1 with a run in the Renault R.S.18 at the Bahrain International Circuit later this month.

The four-day R.S.18 testing programme in Bahrain will feature newly-crowned FIA Formula 3 Champion Oscar Piastri and 2020 FIA Formula 2 race winners, Christian Lundgaard and Guanyu Zhou.

The upcoming test in Bahrain showcases Renault DP World F1 Team's continued commitment to the Academy as it readies its junior drivers for a Formula 1 race seat in the future.

Nineteen-year-old Dane Christian, currently fourth in the FIA Formula 2 Drivers' Championship with only two rounds remaining, will pilot day one of the test (29 October) marking his third time in a Formula 1 car. Christian has so far won two races in his maiden F2 season.

Taking over from Christian for day two (30 October) for his first-ever experience in a Formula 1 car will be Oscar Piastri. The Australian joined the Academy earlier this year following his triumph in the 2019 Formula Renault Eurocup and sealed back to back titles with the F3 crown this season.

Rounding off the final two days of the test for the Academy (1-2 November) will be FIA Formula 2 driver, Guanyu Zhou. The Chinese driver is Renault DP World F1 Team's Test Driver and currently sits eighth in the 2020 Drivers' standings with one win and five podiums this year.

Mia Sharizman, Renault Sport Academy Director:

"The tests in Bahrain are part of a planned programme that the Academy has delivered every year for the past three years. It's a good opportunity for us to show the progression and level of achievement of the drivers in the Academy. Christian and Zhou will be in the R.S.18 for a second time, whilst Oscar will be experiencing his first time in a Formula 1 car as a reward for winning the FIA Formula 3 title plus it is part of his continued progression in the Academy. The plan for the testing days often varies depending on experience, so Oscar's day will be about getting him up to speed and familiar with the car. For Zhou and Christian, their days will be shaped like an actual race weekend, with practice, qualifying and race simulations. Bahrain is a very good test location for us, and beneficial for both Zhou and Christian who will race here later in November for the final two rounds of the FIA Formula 2 Championship."

Christian Lundgaard:

"I am very excited to be testing the R.S.18 next weekend. I've done two test days before in a Formula 1 car, so we'll be looking to build on where I left off. I've never actually raced in Bahrain, so doing the test will be valuable for me especially since I'm driving there for the final two rounds of championship. We'll be looking to use the test to prepare for the race and also for me to learn more about the car. There is nothing better than learning a track in an F1 car, so that's going to be pretty exciting."



Oscar Piastri:

“It’s safe to say I am very excited to be driving the R.S.18 next week in Bahrain. Obviously, it will be my first test in a Formula 1 car, so it will definitely be a moment to cherish and remember for a very long time. It’s not every day that you get the opportunity to drive an F1 car, so I am very grateful to the team for the opportunity. There will be lots to learn on the day, such as getting used to the power, downforce and braking of the car and it will all be a challenge, but I love tackling new ones. I drove the Bahrain circuit earlier this year when we did the FIA Formula 3 pre-season test, but I’ve obviously never lapped the circuit in an F1 car, so I can’t wait to get out on track.”

Guanyu Zhou:

“It will be my second time driving the R.S.18, so I’m looking forward to getting back behind the wheel. My past experience with the R.S.17 and 18 was all about getting familiar with the car, whilst this year it’s been geared towards some of the smaller aspects, such as finding the right balance in the car and identifying what set-up suits me best. This time out the test will also be focused on getting into a full rhythm of an actual F1 race weekend. It’s extremely useful to do these days, as I learn a lot from them and they will help make sure I am ready for a seat in Formula 1. It’ll also be good to drive around the Sakhir circuit in Bahrain a few weeks ahead of our final two rounds there in the championship.”



Guanyu Zhou
FIA Formula 2 Championship, UNI-Virtuosi Racing
Age: 21
Nationality: Chinese

2020 stats:
Wins: 1
Podiums: 5
Pole Positions: 2
Points: 119.5

Previous Championships:
2019: 7th, FIA Formula 2 Championship
2018: 8th, FIA Formula 3 European Championship
2017: 8th, FIA Formula 3 European Championship
2016: 13th, FIA Formula 3 European Championship, 6th Toyota Racing Series
2015: 2nd, Italian F4 Championship

Guanyu Zhou is in his second season with the Renault Sport Academy after a successful debut campaign in the FIA Formula 2 Championship. He is currently eighth in the 2020 FIA Formula 2 Drivers' standings with two rounds remaining. This season, Zhou has increased his role with Renault DP World F1 Team, progressing from Development Driver in 2019 to Test Driver in 2020.

Christian Lundgaard
FIA Formula 2 Championship, ART Grand Prix
Age: 19
Nationality: Danish

2020 stats:
Wins: 2
Podiums: 6
Pole Positions: 1
Points: 145

Previous Championships:
2019: 6th, FIA Formula 3
2018: 2nd (1st Rookie), Formula Renault Eurocup
2017: 1st SMP F4 NEZ, 1st Spanish F4

Christian Lundgaard is in his fourth season with the Academy and currently races in the FIA Formula 2 Championship with ART Grand Prix where he is fourth in the Drivers' Championship. It's the Dane's rookie year in the series and he has two victories to his name and a handful of podium finishes.

Oscar Piastri:

FIA Formula 3, Prema Racing
Age: 19
Nationality: Australian

2020 stats:





Wins: 2
Podiums: 6
Best Grid Position: 3 (2)
Points: 164

Previous Championships:

2020: 1st, FIA Formula 3
2019: 1st, Formula Renault Eurocup
2018: 8th, Formula Renault Eurocup
2017: 2nd, British Formula 4

Oscar signed for the Renault Sport Academy on the back of securing the 2019 Formula Renault Eurocup Drivers' Championship. Oscar joined the Prema Racing team for the 2020 FIA Formula 3 season, where he secured the Drivers' Championship following six podiums and two race victories.

