

their goals for the championship

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for the F1 Motorboat

Shenzhen Grand Prix

Drivers

No

Country

Grand Prix preparation

Team

Terry King

THERE was activity everywhere, Thursday at the new Shenzhen Bay Inner Lake boat racing venue.

Flags were flying: Chinese, French, Italian, and many more. Workers rolled out red carpets, put up hundreds of spotlights, speakers, and adverts for the many sponsors. The world-class racing course for high-speed F1 boats has been built with a speed and perfection never seen before

But it is only when you travel past the grandstand and the spectator areas to the paddock that you understand the real reason behind all this preparation: the passion of men for machines, and the passion for speed. Formula 1 Powerboats are a combination of artistry and engineering.

The boats have incredibly sleek lines and motors with up to 400 horsepower. The crews work with speed but also with great care as they assemble parts of each boat, and check out the steering and safety

The Shenzhen Daily spoke with the engineers and crew of some of the top teams such as Emirates and XPV. The crews have many years of dedication to the sport and to the development of the boats and engines. The original designer of the Mercury motor used is now with the Emirates Team, which has been a consistent winner. But, he said, "When that boat goes in the water, all I can do is watch!" Asked what he looked for, he said, "I watch the boat's action, and especially the 'rooster tail,' which tells me a lot about how the propeller is working." The "rooster tail" is the long, high

spray

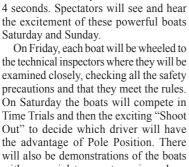


The 400 HP motor in a F1 boat being prepared for the Shenzhen Grand Prix.

of water behind the boats when the driver pushes the accelerator to the floor and all 400 horsepower pushes the boat against the water and air, up to 200 km/h in 3 or

the technical inspectors where they will be examined closely, checking all the safety precautions and that they meet the rules. On Saturday the boats will compete in Time Trials and then the exciting "Shoot Out" to decide which driver will have the advantage of Pole Position. There will also be demonstrations of the boats with a special two-seat version where some officials will get an exciting ride

around the new lake which was built with the speed for which Shenzhen is famous.



Scott Gillman U.S.A. Emirates F1 2 Thani Al Qamzi UAE 27 Ahmed Al Hamli 3 **Bob Trask** XPV Racing Australia 4 **David Trask** 5 Sami Selio Finland F1 Team Energy 6 Stasislav Kourtsenovsky Russia 7 Philippe Dessertenne France China CTIC Team Charente-Maritime 8 Peng Linwu China 9 Philippe Chiappe France Atlantic Team 10 **Duarte Benavente** Portugal 11 Jay Price U.S.A. **Qatar Team** 12 Massimo Roggiero Italy 13 Leo Bonelli 14 Jonas Andersson Sweden F1 Team Sweden 15 Philippe Tourre France 19 Luigi Roberto Italy Comparato Racing Team 20 Sweden Pierre Lundin Guido Cappellini 21 Tamoil F1 Team 22 Marco Gambi 23 Franco Leidi Singha Racing Team Italy 24 Francesco Cantando 31 Fabrizio Bocca Rainbow Team 32 Valerio Lagiannella

Photos by Terry King

