



MEDIA RELEASE

- *MRF Challenge set for exciting finish*
- *Mawson, Newey, Schumacher in frame for title*
- *Saloon car races to have big grids*

Chennai, Feb 16: There is plenty of high octane action on cards as the second round of the MRF MMSC Fmsci Indian National Racing Championship kicks off at the MMRT track in Sriperumbudur, near here this weekend along with the grand finale of MRF Challenge (Formula 2000) which boasts of a highly competitive grid containing young guns from abroad, some of them boasting rich racing pedigree.

In all, 10 races have been scheduled over Saturday and Sunday after Friday's free practice sessions. Much of the attention will be on the four MRF Challenge races where Australian Joey Mawson (211 points), Harrison Newey of the UK (184) and German Mick Schumacher (171) are locked in a three-way battle for the championship. The MRF Challenge returns to Chennai after previous rounds in Bahrain, Dubai and Greater Noida (Buddh International Circuit).

One of the highpoints of the weekend will be the presence of MRF brand ambassador Bharat Ratna Sachin Tendulkar who is expected to do a few laps of the circuit in a twin-seater racing car on Sunday.

The MRF Challenge is being run concurrently with the National Racing Championship that includes MRF F1600, a revamped Formula LGB 1300 and the Saloon cars which comprise the Indian Junior Touring Cars and the Super Stock while the Esteem Cup will be making its debut, but not counting towards the National championship. The high-end Indian Touring Cars will be joining the championship in the next round to be run in March.

The entry-level Formula LGB 1300 which also has a Rookie class provides an option for youngsters moving up from karting to open-wheel racing. The Rookie class is part of MMSC's continuing efforts to attract fresh and young talent, especially among students and the initiative has met with an encouraging response with 22 entries.

Chairman of the Meet Vicky Chandhok said: "Now that we have the single-seater category in place as a platform for talent to move up the ladder, we decided to focus on saloon cars in our effort to encourage participation of more car manufacturers in the National Championship in keeping with MMSC's vision.

“With this in mind, we have thrown open the Super Stock to all comers and not just restricted to the Maruti Esteem.

“The production of Esteem cars has been stopped, but considering that many have already invested in this make, we decided to have a separate Cup for this make. We hope that this move will see bigger grids and more manufacturers coming aboard.”

The MRF F1600, where the champion at the end of the season will be eligible to participate in the Mazda Road To Indy shootout in the United States, is no doubt the flagship of the National championship with a very competitive grid.

The first round in Noida last month saw Bengaluru’s Ananth Shanmugam and Nayan Chatterjee from Mumbai winning a race apiece. The two share the top spot with 40 points apiece, ahead of 2015 Volkswagen Vento Cup champion Anindith Reddy (36) from Hyderabad. The grid also has 2016 Vento Cup champion Ishaan Dodhiwala (Hyderabad) who is in his first single-seater season and managed just six points in the previous round.

About Madras Motor Sports Club

The Madras Motor Sports Club has been the pioneer in developing and promoting motorsport in India since 1953, and we look to further improve in the years to come. It is the club’s endeavor to provide more opportunities for competitors and to this end, it has chalked out a progressive program for 2016. From the days of Sholavaram , MMSC built its own racetrack which was inaugurated in 1979 and secured its FIA Grade-2 international certification in 2015, making it the only club which owns such a facility. The club has organised the Porsche Super Cup, Formula Campos, Formula Asia, Asian touring car championships, Formula 3, Tata Prima Truck racing championship, the Asian 2-wheeler racing championships besides a host of other motorsport events over the years. The club also has active participation for its events from vehicle manufacturers who also use the Madras Motor Race Track (MMRT) extensively for testing their products.

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