

# Making a splash

The 2025 UIM F1H2O World Championship is set to deliver another spectacular season of elite powerboat racing, from the volcanic waters of Lake Toba in Indonesia to Sharjah, UAE

**W**idely recognised as the premier global powerboat series, F1H2O brings together extreme speed, technical precision and advanced marine engineering, capturing the excitement and intensity of Formula One on water.

Expanding to five Grand Prix events and ten Sprint Races, the updated structure presents more opportunities for drivers to earn points across each weekend. Sessions will reward consistency, endurance and tactical awareness, raising the bar for teams and fans alike.

The opening round takes place from 22-24 August in Balige, on the shores of Lake Toba in North Sumatra. Early morning scheduling has been introduced to avoid peak heat and to take advantage of more stable water conditions. Although the lake's calm surface may appear serene, its compact course, tight corners and shifting currents test the skill and stamina of every competitor.

From Indonesia, the championship moves to China for two back-to-back rounds that are expected to prove pivotal in the title race. The first will be held in

Shanghai from 3-5 October, where drivers will compete on a fast-paced, urban circuit along the city's vibrant waterfront. A week later, racing continues in Zhengzhou on Longhu Lake. These events offer contrasting challenges and could significantly shape the standings ahead of the final stretch.

In the Middle East, the championship resumes in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, from 28-30 November. Known for its dynamic waterfront and enthusiastic spectators, Jeddah introduces unpredictable conditions that often favour experienced drivers.

A sixth race follows from 12-14 December at a Gulf location yet to be announced. The season concludes in Sharjah, UAE, from 19-21 December. Sharjah's Khalid Lagoon, known for its mirror-like waters and floodlit racing atmosphere, has been the stage for many title-deciding races in the past and remains a favourite among teams and fans.

Jonas Andersson enters 2025 as the reigning world champion. Representing Team Sweden, Andersson captured his third title in 2024 with a commanding performance, ending the season with a dominant victory in Sharjah. Known for his smooth handling, efficient cornering and calm under pressure, he continues to be the driver others aim to beat. ➤

**Below: The UIM F1H2O World Championship is the 'flagship' international series of single-seater inshore circuit powerboat racing**







**Above: Chinese Team celebrating victory during the UIM F1H20 World Championship Right and below: F1 Powerboats on display at Singha Thailand Water Sport Festival**

One of the key challengers this year is Rusty Wyatt of Canada, racing with the Sharjah Team. Wyatt's breakthrough 2024 campaign included multiple podium finishes and a standout win in Shanghai, earning him a reputation for bold overtaking moves and intelligent racing. His growth and momentum suggest he could be a strong title contender in 2025.

Also in the mix is Erik Stark of Sweden, now driving for Team Abu Dhabi. With multiple offshore and F2 titles to his name, Stark combines experience with raw pace. He consistently qualifies well and performs strongly in sprint formats, making him a major threat, particularly on high-speed Gulf circuits.

Veteran driver Duarte Benavente, representing F1 Atlantic, continues to bring a strategic mindset and race-day composure, even after more than 25 seasons. Finland's Sami Seljö, a two-time world champion, remains a respected presence in the paddock, both as a competitor and mentor. Norway's Marit



Strømøy, the only woman to win an F1H20 Grand Prix, returns with Strømøy Racing, bringing speed and skill to the grid.

The 2025 season also welcomes emerging talents. Estonia's Stefan Arand, 23, debuted in 2024 and is already being tipped as a future champion. UAE's Ahmad Al Fahim, who debuted in 2023, adds regional pride and growing support during the Gulf rounds.

Announced earlier this year, Brent Dillard of the China CTIC Team will miss the opening rounds as he recovers from back surgery. His temporary

replacement, Australian driver Grant Trask, a third-generation racer with strong credentials, will fill the gap in what remains one of the most competitive line-ups in the field. As always, the F1H20 series delivers breathtaking action, where races are often decided by split seconds at speeds exceeding 240 km/h. With picturesque venues, evolving storylines and a grid packed with talent, the 2025 UIM F1H20 World Championship is set to thrill fans and reaffirm its place as the pinnacle of international powerboat racing.

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