



NEWSLETTER – JANUARY 2019

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TEAM ABU DHABI CONFIRM SHAUN TORRENTE & THANI AL QEMZI FOR 2019

Team Abu Dhabi has confirmed 2018 UIM F1H2O World Champion Shaun Torrente and Thani Al Qemzi as its line-up for 2019.

Team Abu Dhabi dominated an extraordinary 2018 season that turned into an inter team title race with each of its three drivers, Torrente, Al Qemzi and Erik Stark leading the standings at one point with the title decided at the final round of the year – the race win going to Stark the title to third placed Torrente by five points, Al Qemzi retiring and rounding out the year in third.

In a statement from the team issued on 16 January last: "Team Abu Dhabi is very proud to announce the two drivers for the 2019 UIM F1H2O Powerboat season, Shaun Torrente

(champion in charge) and Thani Al Qemzi."

"Guido [Cappellini, Team Manager], everyone at ADIMSC and the whole team are very grateful to Erik Stark who last year demonstrated to be an amazing driver and always focused on his job. Erik and his father showed unique qualities on their work during their time with the team."

"We are expecting a very good season, as our work is always driven by passion and performance and we will do everything possible in our hands to reach the top once again."

The announcement means that world number 2 Erik Stark once again finds himself looking for a new team and seat ahead of the new season.





TORRENTE – ON WINNING THE TITLE, SELF-DOUBTS, SUPPORT AND THE GOALS AHEAD

After eight years, 48 Grand Prix, 7 wins and 12 podiums Shaun Torrente achieved his ambition to be UIM F1H2O World Champion - something he knew he could and would achieve.

2018 evolved into a thrilling, highly enthralling and nail-biting title race between Torrente and Abu Dhabi teammates Thani Al Qemzi and Erik Stark. All three at one stage in the season led the title race, but at no stage during the season until the final chequered flag was waved was it a given who would emerge victorious. Torrente said after a far from easy home Grand Prix and finishing in sixth with Al Qemzi winning it, *"I am still in front, it's still in my hands let's go and win the championship"* he held his nerve and did.

Heading into the new season having achieved what you set out to, do you feel the pressure is off and will you approach things differently?

"In some ways yes. Very few people put it out there that they want to be world champion and expect to be world champion and go out and actually do it. Honestly, it took me longer than I thought it was going to take but that's a credit to how amazing our sport is and how difficult it is to win. It takes an entire team not just one guy."

"There was a great feeling of relief that day and over the last month and it feels great to wake up and know that you are the world champion. That you set a huge goal and achieved that goal, it's really rewarding."

"Will I approach racing differently, probably in some ways I will. Now that I've got it and proven something that I always knew I could do I will be

able to relax and not be so anxious because I accomplished the goal. The intensity won't go down, wanting to win, to compete and the level of drive will always be there. But I think it will allow me to make better decisions. I am going to do my best to really enjoy this season, push as hard as ever but enjoy it. I've accomplished my goal I have the cake and now want to put the icing on it with another title."

Having finished runner-up in the title race in 2016 and 2013 and third twice [2015/2014] Torrente's route to the title was not straight forward, one of ups and downs highs and lows – great performances followed by some poor ones and mentally a mine field, from winning the opener in Portimao, messing up in London followed by the immediate announcement of a new teammate, Stark, who promptly went and won on his debut with the team in Evian to lead the title race. A lesser competitor a lesser person than Torrente may have faltered.

At that stage were you having any self-doubts?

"During the season there are always moments of doubt, it doesn't matter who you are. Things might not go your way or you make a bad decision or you've just done a bad job and you think, am I ever going to get this done."

"What helps me is to have such great support from my wife and my daughter and some close friends at home. But above all my wife, she's always there to reinforce what we believe, that I know I can win, how good I can be when I do things correctly. But yes, there will always be some moments of doubt."



"The worst moment of 2018 was London. I did a bad job pretty much all weekend. But although it was the worst moment it was also the most important. I had to get back home and re-evaluate my goals and how I was going to achieve them. It's one thing to say you want to be world champion and you want to do it but it's another thing to fully embrace it, to go 1000% and immerse yourself in the opportunity you have, that I had last year knowing how strong our team was, how good our set up was and to capitalise on that opportunity."

"I had to rebuild myself after London. It took a lot. I went to see some people, put a lot of focus on my mental health, I put a ton of focus on my physical health, made a lot of sacrifices with my time so that I could be prepared for the rest of the season to achieve my goal. And I think it showed, even in Evian where we had some bad luck in qualifying, but the race was good and obviously in China and India which speaks for itself. I pretty much dominated both weekends. So, as bad as the moments after London were, without that I wouldn't be world champion. So I am thankful for those moments."

Now that you have achieved your goal, do you feel that you can go out and defend your title?

"I am confident I can defend the title but not over confident. Everybody sees what we did last year as a team and thinks that we are unbeatable, that we dominated. If you look at the final results it might seem like that but over each race weekend it was not as if we were seconds faster. Yes, we won poles, pretty much all of them but we won them by just tenths of a second, it's not a lot." "It's the racers edge and everything needs to be correct to get the job done. We are confident we can do it but realise it will be just as hard if not harder than last year. We

will have to put in even more time. We are already working, preparing. I travel to Abu Dhabi shortly for another test session, we know where we wanted to be at the end of last year and we are going to fix those areas to make sure we are stronger than ever. Thani and I will continue to push, to share information and do our best to put Abu Dhabi at the front. That's the goal. We are always developing, always evolving. I don't know yet what we will have in Portugal but I guarantee it will be good. It will be tested and we will be prepared."

Torrente is someone who wears his heart on his sleeve and is as transparent as they come, his obvious emotions at times like a cork waiting to explode out of a bottle, the first to put his hand up if he messes up but will share the responsibility with the team when things beyond his control go wrong. He says what he thinks.

"There are very few people in this sport who have the balls to put it out there that they are going to be world champion and have the talent, skill and grit to get it done. And I am really proud to have done it. I was never shy about what I wanted to accomplish and we got it done and I am proud to have done it."

"Before the end of last year, I'd always said that even if I never won the title, I'd had a great career [in Formula 1], winning races, taking poles and getting so close to it and that if it ended that way it didn't matter. But I can say that after winning the title I was wrong. It would never have been complete without the world championship."

"I have always set goals and my next is to successfully defend the world title and get two in a row. Is there pressure on that? sure there is. But it's a good pressure and why we compete."

Are you going to run with number 1 on your boat this year? "What a bloody silly question. Hell yes, of course I will."





**LOCAL PARTNER OF
UIM F1H2O WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP
IN CHINA**

WORLD-LEADING F1 CHINA CTIC TEAM





UIM TO HOST GLITTERING AWARDS AFTER-PARTY FOR POWERBOAT ELITE Stars Set To Party at World-Renowned Jimmy'z Monte Carlo

To celebrate the 10th anniversary of its annual World Champions & Awards Giving Gala, the Union Internationale Motonautique (UIM) will host a glittering Gala After-Party at Jimmy'z Monte Carlo on Saturday, March 23.

The world-famous hot spot – a popular clubbing experience for international celebrities – will welcome all guests who attend the Awards Ceremony being held at the Sporting Monte-Carlo, Monaco earlier in the evening.

The UIM – the world governing body for International Powerboat and Aquabike/Jet-Ski racing – has arranged the event to round off an occasion that annually celebrates and recognises the achievement and successes of the best in the sport.

Before the Awards After-Party, around 400 invited guests from

all disciplines of the sport as well as media representatives, business leaders, industry stakeholders and sponsors will gather to honour the 2018 World Champions, while also recognising those who make a significant contribution to the development, safety and future well-being of both the sport and the environment.

Once the trophies have been handed over, guests will be welcomed at the Jimmy'z where the party will continue from 11.30pm until the early hours.

"The After-Party will be the perfect way to round off an occasion that is the highlight of the UIM season," said UIM President Dr. Raffaele Chiulli.

"It will allow our powerboating friends and family from around the world to gather together in an

informal and fun setting following the Awards Gala itself and carry the atmosphere and celebrations on well into the night. We look forward to what I am sure will be a welcome new addition to the Awards Giving Gala event."

While Jimmy'z has been welcoming the great and the good for more than 40 years, the VIP's favourite night club received an extensive makeover in 2017. With its new look, stunning seafront setting, world-class DJs, lush gardens and spacious design, the club will provide a unique and chic setting for the UIM Gala After-Party.



UIM DRIVER & JUNIOR DRIVER OF THE YEAR NOMINEES ANNOUNCED



The UIM Secretary General Mr. Thomas Kurth and the UIM Athletes Committee Chairperson, Mrs. Marit Strømøy today officially announced the 8 nominees for the 2018 UIM Driver & Junior Driver of the Year. The UIM Driver/ Junior Driver of the Year is the official UIM trophy for the "Best Driver and Junior Driver of the season. Candidates are being selected based on best results achieved and includes those who demonstrate exceptional behavior at UIM events.

Nominees for the 2018 UIM Driver of the Year are:

Shaun Torrente (UAE -USA) 2018 UIM Formula 1 World Champion and 2018 UIM XCAT World Champion

Claudio Fanzini (Italy) 2018 UIM Formula 250 and Formula 350 World & European Champion

Rasmus Haugasmägi (Estonia) 2018 UIM OSY400 World & European Champion

Morgan Jernfast (Sweden) 2018 UIM Formula 4 World & European Champion

Marcus Johnsson (Finland) 2018 UIM Offshore Class 3C World Champion and 2nd European Championship

Nominees for the 2018 UIM Junior Driver of the Year are:

Stefan Arand (Estonia) 2018 UIM Circuit GT30 World Champion and & 2018 UIM Circuit GT15 World & European Champion

Mattias Reinaas (Estonia) 2018 UIM Aquabike Class Pro - Circuit - Ski Juniors GP3.3 World & European Champion

Jakob Simon (Germany) 2018 UIM Formula Future - Class 5 World Champion

Voting process

Your vote matters! For the first time since its creation, UIM fans & followers are invited to help pick the legends that will be enshrined in the UIM top Drivers & Riders list. This is YOUR chance to be a part of the historical selection of the UIM Driver & Junior Driver of the Year.

Voting is open February 1st through February 22nd, 2019 on [Union Internationale Motonautique Facebook Page](#) and on the UIM Website.

The two nominees per category who receive the most votes will count as one of the 27 votes cast by the UIM Council.

The winners will be announced during the UIM Awards Giving Gala Ceremony to be held on Saturday 23rd March 2019 at the prestigious Sporting Monte-Carlo in the Principality of Monaco.

Fans can follow the UIM Awards Giving Gala Live on UIM TV and UIM Facebook page.

UIM Driver & Junior Driver of the Year past winners:

- 2017 UIM Driver of the Year: Rasmus Haugasmägi (Estonia)
- 2017 UIM Junior Driver of the Year: Stefan Arand (Estonia)
- 2016 UIM Driver of the Year: Massimo Rossi (Italy)
- 2016 UIM Junior Driver of the Year: Stefan Arand (Estonia)