

Beat: Sports

FORMULA 1-PALMER TO MAKE DEBUT IN LOTUS AT BARCELONA TEST

PRESEASON TESTS IN SPAIN

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USPA NEWS - Jolyon Palmer will make his first appearance for Lotus during this week's pre-season test in Spain.

The reigning GP2 champion joined the team as their third driver earlier this year, with the deal including a 'significant number' of Friday practice sessions over the course of the season.

Palmer's first taste of the Mercedes-powered E23 will come this week however, with the Briton set to drive on the second day in Barcelona.

Lotus's 2015 regulars Pastor Maldonado and Romain Grosjean will be behind the wheel on the other three days, with Maldonado on duty on the first and third days and Grosjean completing the work on Sunday, the fourth and final day.

Alongside Palmer, Susie Wolff will drive on the first day of the test for Williams as part of her expanded official test driver role.

Mercedes' reserve driver Pascal Wehrlein will drive for Force India on two days of the forthcoming four-day pre-season test at Barcelona.

The deal is part of an increased association between Wehrlein and Force India, with the 20-year-old also slated to drive for the team in both of this year's in-season tests.

"I am very happy that Sahara Force India has offered me the opportunity to drive their car for two days at the official test in Barcelona and that Mercedes-Benz has supported me to make this happen," Wehrlein said.

"As a young driver, any time you can spend in the car is extremely important and you can learn a lot. I know the simulator already, but I don't have much experience on the track.

"My first goal in Spain will be to do a great job together with the team, to learn as much as possible and to give good feedback to the engineers."

Force India will be using their 2014 car at the four-day Spanish session after experiencing delays with their new machine, the VJM08. Wehrlein, who made his Formula One test debut with Mercedes at the end of 2014, will drive the VJM07 on Thursday and Saturday, while the team's regular drivers, Sergio Perez and Nico Hulkenberg, will be behind the wheel on Friday and Sunday respectively.

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