



## PRESS RELEASE

### INDIAN RACER AKHIL RABINDRA SELECTED BY McLAREN GT DRIVER ACADEMY

RABINDRA SET FOR BRITISH GT DEBUT WITH BLACK BULL GARAGE 59



The McLaren GT Driver Academy is set to return for its third year in 2017 with more drivers than ever before, as the Woking-based company looks to continue developing and handing opportunities to some of the world's best young drivers. For 2017, the academy has chosen the Indian racer Akhil Rabindra along with 7 other drivers from across the world.

As part of this year's initiative, four of the Academy drivers will compete in the 2017 British GT Championship. Sandy Mitchell, Ciaran Haggerty, Akhil Rabindra and Dean Macdonald, will join forces and compete in the national series with customer team Black Bull Garage 59 across its two-car 570S GT4 programme.

Rabindra and Macdonald will share the #59 570S GT4, making their series debuts against what's shaping up to be another healthy and diverse GT4 class in the national series. 16-year-old Macdonald joins the academy as a Scottish Motor Racing Club Rising Star while 20-year-old Indian young gun Rabindra, moves into the programme after competing in both BRDC F4 and British F3 since 2013.

Andrew Kirkaldy, Managing Director, McLaren GT commented: "We started the Driver Academy in 2015 with two young drivers, Watson is still with us in the programme today, and it was all designed in helping youngsters make the move into sportscars. It is no secret that there are more career opportunities for young upcoming drivers within the sportscar world than the traditional single seater 'dream'.



Now in its third year, the McLaren GT Driver Academy is set to be its biggest yet and we believe this is a reflection of the growing appeal of GT racing to young drivers. The Driver Academy looks to help enhance the talents and provide a more complete understanding of how to manage and progress with a successful GT career.'

#### ABOUT AKHIL RABINDRA

Akhil Rabindra has been signed by the Garage 59 team to race in the 2017 British GT championship and is set to contest the seven-round championship in the stunning McLaren 570S GT4. Born in Bangalore, Akhil was enrolled into the FIA institute Young driver Academy in 2014 and has enjoyed two successful years in the British GT supporting series; racing in the BRDC F4 and British Formula 3 championships and is well acquainted to the circuits he will race on in 2017.

Akhil started racing at the age of 14 and has mainly concentrated on Formula cars, deciding now is the time to make the switch over to sports cars, outlining his plans to become a professional GT driver in the future. The Edinburgh-based 20 year-old, tested with GT machinery before Christmas, showing great potential before his debut season in the country's premier GT championship.

Akhil will team up with fellow McLaren GT Academy Driver Dean Macdonald forming the driver pairing for the #59 570S GT4. Scottish Motor Racing Club rising star Dean Macdonald who is from Fife is the youngest ever Scottish Karting champion and will also make his debut in British GT racing.

Bas Leinders, Team Manager, Black Bull Garage 59 commented: "We are delighted to have Akhil onboard for the 2017 season. Having competed in the top level of single seaters for the last few years in the UK he knows the circuits we will visit with the championship. We are confident that knowledge, coupled with the knowledge of the car he can gain from his teammates, we are in a good position for the season ahead."

For more information about Akhil visit [www.akhilrabindra.com](http://www.akhilrabindra.com)