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BLACK BULL GARAGE 59 CONFIRMS BRITISH GT TWO-CAR LINE-UP IN 2017

Garage 59 is delighted to confirm Black Bull Scotch Whisky as the team's title sponsor for the 2017 British GT season. The Huntly-based Scotch Whisky company returns to the grid with Garage 59 and McLaren for a second successive season with a pair of 570S GT4s. Piloting the #100 car – promoting Black Bull's 100 proof Scotch – will be McLaren GT Academy Drivers Sandy Mitchell (Forfar, Scotland) and Ciaran Haggerty (Johnstone, Scotland) after a strong debut season in 2016. They will be joined by fellow Scot Dean Macdonald (Fife, Scotland) and Akhil Rabindra (Bangalore, India) in the #59 car.

Fronted by team manager Bas Leinders, Black Bull Garage 59 is looking to build on the third place in last year's GT4 championship. Returning duo of Mitchell (17) and Haggerty (20) amassed a wealth of awards during the 2016 season including; third place overall in the championship, second place in Silver/Silver Cup, British GT Rookies of the Year, two race victories including the season finale at Donington Park, a new lap record at Spa-Francorchamps, and three pole positions. Both drivers carry the prestigious Scottish Motor Racing Club (SMRC) Rising Star status and extensive experience with both the car and the tracks following the McLaren GT development testing programme they were both instrumental in last season.

Fellow McLaren GT Academy Drivers form the driver pairing for the #59 570S GT4 with SMRC Rising Star Dean Macdonald (16) and British F3 convert Akhil Rabindra (20) at the wheel. Macdonald makes the step to GT racing following a triumphant career in go-karting including becoming the youngest ever winner of the Scottish Championship in Comer Cadets at eight years old. Alongside the young Scot, Rabindra has competed in the top level of national single-seater racing over the last few years, bringing experience of the circuits on the British GT Championship calendar. Rabindra competed in the BRDC Formula 4 championship during 2015, and in 2016 made the step up to the British Formula 3 Championship. With a busy testing plan scheduled ahead of the season commencing, both drivers are hopeful of solid results throughout their debut season.

Starting the 2016 season at just 15 years old, Mitchell was the youngest driver ever to compete in British GT and, at just 16 years and 169 days, he went on to become the championship's youngest race winner – a title which will be challenged this year by new teammate Dean Macdonald.

Production Glassfibre returns for 2017 in support of Haggerty, whilst Advance Construction's sponsorship deal is extended to support Haggerty and now Macdonald, with both companies featuring across the #100 and #59 cars' liveries. Mitchell welcomes new sponsors Christie Digital and Stampede Global onboard alongside continued support from Thornton's, Close Brothers, Stirfresh and SGM. Black Bull Garage 59 is also proud to confirm McLaren Glasgow as a sponsor of all drivers for the 2017 season, supporting the nurture of young, upcoming talent through the sport.

Bas Leinders, Team Manager, Black Bull Garage 59 commented: *"We are delighted to have Sandy and Ciaran back for 2017 and looking to hit the ground running and build upon the successes they had last year. The experience of the car, the circuits and the championship will help them support the development and transition in to GT racing of their new teammates – as we saw with them supported by Factory Driver Rob Bell last season. It's also an exciting chapter for the team with Black Bull coming on board as title sponsor and seeing Advance Construction return to support Ciaran and Dean."* He added: *"With the experience running with the McLaren 570S GT4 last year, we are in a strong position going into the new season, and hope to be challenging for podiums and race wins again in 2017."*

Euan Shand, Chairman of sponsors Black Bull Scotch Whisky commented: *"Last year proved to be an outstanding season for these young drivers and we're thrilled to be partnering with Garage 59 and these young drivers again. Sandy, Ciaran, Dean and Akhil are the future and we have high hopes for what 2017 will bring."*

Running an all new, distinctive livery for the new season, the team is set to complete an extensive testing programme prior to the season commencing in April where all four drivers will work closely together. The opening round of the British GT Championship returns to Oulton Park for 2017, over Easter bank holiday weekend 15 – 17 April.

Further information:

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