



01/02/2017

King Bou looks to retain his crown

Defending champion Toni Bou - Repsol Honda starts the 2017 FIM X-Trial World Championship this coming Sunday in Barcelona, Spain as an overwhelming favourite to win his eleventh successive title.

Bou has won in Barcelona on ten occasions and has been unbeaten in the Palau Sant Jordi for the last eight years. However, having lost the opening round of the 2016 Championship in Sheffield, England to his fierce rival Adam Raga - TRS he knows he cannot afford to be complacent.



© FIM/Good-Shoot

“We will try, as always, to win the series,” said Bou. “It’s always my goal. It is clear that a four-event championship does not allow for mistakes and riders always must give their best.”

“It’s the ‘home’ X-Trial for me, but also for most of my rivals so I do not have a special advantage. Everyone wants to win this event - and everyone wants to beat me!”

His strongest challenge will almost certainly come from fellow Spaniards Raga and Albert Cabestany - Sherco. Both riders have beaten Bou indoors at least once in the last two seasons and over the last ten years have been Bou’s most consistent rivals.

Raga, the last man to win the FIM Indoor / X-Trial World Championship before Bou began his incredible run, finished runner-up in 2015 and 2016. This may suggest he starts as second favourite but Cabestany - FIM Indoor Trial World Champion in 2002 - beat him into third place in the final two rounds of the 2016 series.

Realistically, the remaining four permanent riders contesting the full season will have a tough job to displace the established top three.

Spain's Jeroni Fajardo - Vertigo finished fourth last year ahead of Japan's ever-popular Takahisa Fujinami - Repsol Honda and both riders will be hoping to stage a major upset. They will be joined by Britain's James Dabill - Gas Gas and Germany's young Franz Kadlec - Gas Gas.

Dabill, third in January's non-championship Sheffield Indoor Trial, will be looking to make a big impact on his full-time return to the FIM X-Trial World Championship. Kadlec, a wildcard on two previous occasions, makes his debut as a permanent rider.

The eight-man field for Barcelona is completed by Spanish wildcard Jaime Busto - Repsol Honda, who just could spring a surprise himself on what promises to be a strong opening encounter to the 2017 series.

FIM X-Trial - Key Facts

- Finland's Tommi Ahvala was the first FIM Indoor Trial World Champion in 1993
- Round one of the 2017 FIM X-Trial World Championship marks the 40th anniversary of the first Barcelona Indoor Trial
- Since Toni Bou began his incredible run of titles in 2007 - he has won 46 out of the 56 World Championship rounds held
- Bou went four years without defeat, achieving perfect seasons in 2011 / 2012 / 2013 / 2014
- Spanish riders have won the FIM X-Trial World Championship every year since 2001 when Britain's Dougie Lampkin claimed the last of his five titles
- If Adam Raga can win in 2017 he will equal Lampkin's total of five indoor titles

ABOUT THE FIM (www.fim-live.com)

The FIM (Federation Internationale de Motocyclisme) founded in 1904, is the governing body for motorcycle sport and the global advocate for motorcycling. The FIM is an independent association formed by 113 National Federations throughout the world. It is recognised as the sole competent authority in motorcycle sport by the International Olympic Committee (IOC).

Among its 50 FIM World Championships the main events are MotoGP, Superbike, Endurance, Motocross, Supercross, Trial, Enduro, Cross-Country Rallies and Speedway. Furthermore, the FIM is also active and involved in the following areas: public affairs, road safety, touring and protection of the environment. The FIM was the first international sports federation to impose an Environmental Code in 1994.

