

# Gulf Weekly

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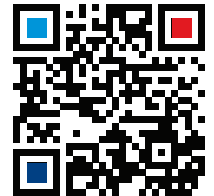
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## Classic crescendo

**F1 REPORT**  
By NAMAN ARORA  
naman@gulfweekly.com

**O**N Sunday night, while the world's eyes were glued on the inferno at the Formula One Gulf Air Bahrain Grand Prix as driver Romain Grosjean was helped from the wreckage of his car, chief scrutineer Abdulrahman Ghuloom and his 32-member team were busy ensuring that the other F1 cars followed the strict rules that a red flag entails.

Abdulrahman, who was crowned the 'Best Scrutineer in the World' in 2019 by the FIA, has been the chief scrutineer at the Bahrain International Circuit (BIC) since it opened in 2004.

For him, Sunday night was the crescendo of a lifetime of technical scrutineering, borne out of a deep love for cars that started when he was just 14 years old.

"We always go through the red flag scenario during our Saturday meeting but this was the first time in BIC's history that we actually had to implement that protocol," the 73-year-old former race driver told *Gulf Weekly*.

"We worked like a well-oiled machine, as each of us took our place beside our designated car to make sure all of FIA's rules and regulations were followed.

"There are certain things that teams are allowed to



Volunteers being recognised, with Jean Todt, president of FIA



Abdulrahman with his FIA trophy

change during this time and many that they are not allowed to adjust. We had to detail exactly what was done and by which team during the 80-minute-long red flag period."

It is this attention to detail, quick response and willingness to serve for which Abdulrahman was recognised on a global stage in May.

Every year, each F1 host country nominates their best officials and FIA picks the best scrutineer, marshal,

secretary, timekeeper and steward, and recognises the efforts of every volunteer during the FIA Volunteers Weekend at the end of November.

Serendipitously, for the first time in F1 history, the FIA Volunteers Weekend was celebrated in Bahrain, just before the volunteers earned their laurels during an incident-packed race about which the world is still talking.

"Receiving this global recognition means the world to me," Abdulrahman said. "I'm incredibly proud of the achievement as well as the opportunity to show the world how much hard work Bahrain's volunteers and scrutineers put in, to make the race weekend happen."

"I would like to thank the Bahrain Motor Federation and its president Shaikh Abdulla bin Isa Al Khalifa for their constant support."

The overture of Abdulrahman's love affair with motorsports started from behind the window of his school in Salmaniya,

from where he would eye the garages across the road with great interest.

Soon, he started volunteering there to learn as much as he could about cars and before long, he was repairing them for friends and family. He was just 16 at the time.

When he went to the UK for his higher studies, he bought his first car, a Mini Cooper, from a scrap yard for £45 (BD22.64) and before long, he was 'bashing cars with friends, as one did, back in the day'.

When he returned to Bahrain during the 1980s, he started competing in rally races and went on to drive in Saudi Arabia, Jordan, the UK and the UAE, amongst others.

"I love 4x4 cars and whenever I travel, I try to find a race to compete in," the motorsport devotee, who regularly manages scrutineering teams of up to 65, added.

"I even got my wife, Esther and daughter, Carina, into racing, and they were co-

drivers during a number of races."

In fact, Carina, whom he lovingly calls Coco, was the inspiration for his auto shop, Coco's Car Care.

Abdulrahman's experience and technical knowledge was the reason he was picked as the Chief Scrutineer when the BIC opened in 2004, and since then, he has been inspiring and educating others in the fine art and science of scrutineering.

"Motorsport volunteers and officials are among the biggest contributors to motor racing events around the world," BIC chief executive Shaikh Salman bin Isa Al Khalifa commented.

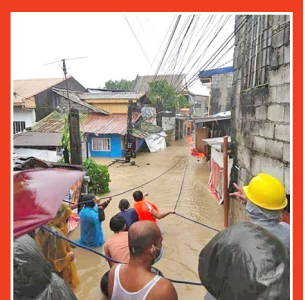
"This is especially true here in Bahrain, and we could not be more grateful for such a capable and dedicated team that we have here."

Last Sunday the marshals and scrutineers really showed their mettle ... and they're up to the challenge again this weekend.

To learn more about the volunteers driving the BIC, see Page 7



**SPREADING SMILES**  
Caring for children  
SEE PAGE 2



**FUNDING FOR FAMILIES**  
Chaos in the Philippines  
SEE PAGE 3



**ITALIAN FLARE**  
Bellissimo  
SEE PAGES 4-5



**A LEGEND'S LEGACY**  
Maradona passes  
SEE PAGE 7





Sukanya with children from the Sevadaan Special School in Mumbai that helps autistic children



Sukanya and Satyajit with some kids in India

# Service with a smile

**A** caring couple have spent the past four years bringing smiles to the faces of children across India with the aim of helping them to build a better tomorrow by supporting their education.

Food blogger Sukanya Saha aka @entreetodessert.bh and her husband Satyajit Mishra started their own, personal initiative called Spreading Smiles in 2016 to support NGOs in India with whatever they needed.



**COMMUNITY REPORT**  
By MAI AL KHATIB-CAMILLE  
mai.alkhatib@gulfweekly.com

"Spreading Smiles started by raising funds through crowd-funding to arrange gift bags filled with stationery, snacks, juices and toys for

underprivileged children," said Sukanya, 26, a senior consultant in transactions and strategy, who lives in Juffair. "As we gained knowledge and expertise from our respective careers and professions, we wanted to

do more."

The dynamic duo decided to offer their consulting services for free to help support children being cared for by different NGOs.

"We believe that education must be an equal opportunity for all and education is the best way out of poverty," explained Satyajit, 27, a research manager.

"We started working with different NGOs in India that focus on education of underprivileged children.

"They have an incredible vision and mission but often fall short of the expertise and necessary skills to run day-to-day operations and achieve scalability.

"Our aim is to help these NGOs reach their full potential by providing them with our consulting services, pro-bono."

The help they extend includes mentorship, assisting in fundraising, developing awareness campaigns and creating long-term strategic plans for their sustainability.

They are currently working with Fulora Foundation, which is one of Mumbai's largest private relief and development organisations, founded in 1984 and registered as a Public Charitable Trust in 1996.

It was established by Arun Sabnis, the chairman and managing director of an advertising agency, along with eminent educationist and former vice-chancellor of Mumbai University, the late professor Ram Joshi.

The foundation has become a leader in sustainable development and emergency aid, reaching tens of millions of people each year in more than 60 places in

Maharashtra. For more than seven years now, it has been a vehicle of Mumbai's generosity towards society.

"We support them because we are incredibly proud of the work that they do and the efforts that they put in," added Sukanya.

"Fulora Foundation educates 5,000 homeless children in Mumbai across 151 traffic junctions. The NGO has vehicles equipped with computers. They stop at each traffic signal and around 30 to 35 children gather around the vehicle to learn English, mathematics and computer skills.

"In addition to this, they hold arts and crafts as well as musical activities for the children to be engaged in.

"We are working with them on a long-term basis to help develop their awareness campaigns, a fundraising strategy and develop sustainable education programmes to educate the homeless children."

The pair also hope that others in Bahrain will be encouraged to follow in the footsteps. "The Covid-19 pandemic has affected NGOs globally," said Satyajit.

"Many are not receiving the same amount of corporate and individual donations as they used to before.

"If you know any NGO in Bahrain or elsewhere that needs support, we request you to support them in whatever way that you can. A lot of times we think that our donation is 'too little' to donate, but honestly, every small contribution goes a very long way for those in need.

"Also, we want Spreading Smiles to evolve with more volunteers extending support to our cause.

"We also want to extend our reach from India to Bahrain. If there is any NGO in Bahrain who would like to get in touch with us for our help or to be added to our mailing list, please feel free to email us.

"We circulate different NGO fundraiser details where you can directly contribute to the NGO. Please note, we do not collect any money on behalf of any NGO."

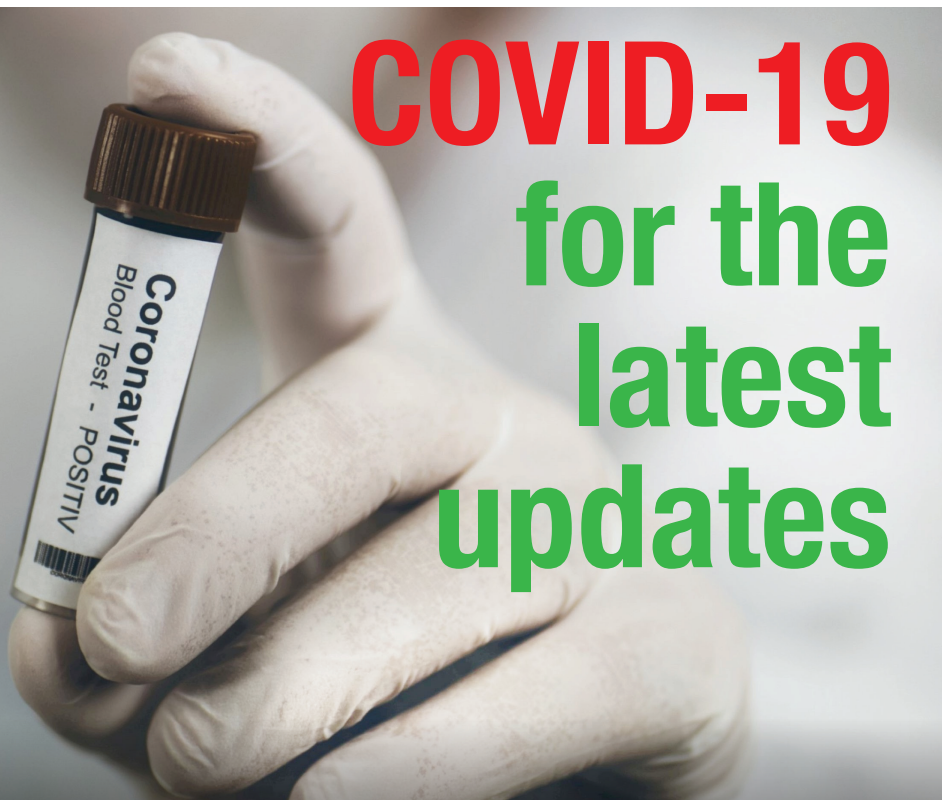
*To be added to the mailing list or request support, email [spreadingsmilestrust@gmail.com](mailto:spreadingsmilestrust@gmail.com).*



Some children being supported by the foundation

**GDN life**  
Bahrain's Social Media Platform

**COVID-19**  
for the  
latest  
updates



As a community initiative during these extraordinary circumstances Covid-19 articles are also being shared from [gdnonline.com](http://gdnonline.com) to our social media platform [www.gdnlife.com](http://www.gdnlife.com)

Our Bahrain....Our Life



[www.gdnlife.com](http://www.gdnlife.com)



Download the app



# We're there for you!

**COMMUNITY REPORT**  
By MAI AL KHATIB-CAMILLE  
mai.alkhatib@gulfweekly.com

**T**HE Philippines recently suffered a series of devastating typhoons with many people losing everything they own... such as Jhean Antonia Faura and Daylin Baja and their families.

Moved by the tragedy, Afkarech Female Network & Think Tank launched a fundraising initiative to support the two women and their loved ones in their time of need.

"When the vice president of Afkarech, Lovy Joseph, the committee members and I heard of the typhoons that had hit the Philippines and the massive destruction left in their wake, we knew we had to help," said Mariam Alammadi, a licensed psychologist and founder of Afkarech, a female network for professionals living in Bahrain.

"We wanted to help two families in particular, with the goal of helping others if more money was raised. We came to know these women from within the Afkarech Female Network and both are caregivers to our members families.

"These ladies have selflessly helped us in our gatherings and have promoted the idea of female empowerment alongside Afkarech members. Now, we feel it is our duty to help them in their hour of need.

"When we saw the photographs of their homes submerged in water and attempted to console them – we felt truly distraught.

"These are two women who already struggle to make incomes for their families and are now facing a huge financial burden to try and rebuild what they have lost.

"Your home is regarded as your safe haven. Watching it being taken away from you without being able to do anything is truly heartbreaking.

"They have lost not only their homes but every single possession they had in the world and as we all know things with sentimental value are more than mere possessions and are irreplaceable.

"Financially it had taken many years of saving and



Jhean and Mariam



Homes submerged

sacrifice not to mention loans to help pay for their houses only to see them washed away in such a devastating manner."

In the past month alone, five storms have hammered the Philippines from Typhoon Molave (locally named Quinta) on October 25 to Vamco (Ulysses) at the beginning of November, which came less than a fortnight after



Daylin

the season's strongest storm, Typhoon Goni (Rolly).

Typhoon Vamco has affected more than three million people in 5,594 barangays (villages/wards). It was recorded that more than 70 people have died; 283,656 people are in 2,205 evacuation centres; and 50 villages remain completely isolated.

In areas affected by Typhoon Goni, at least 25 people died, more than 390 were injured and nearly 83,000 remain displaced.

Agriculture damage from recent typhoons exceeds \$250 million and infrastructure damage stands at \$165 million.

Power supply is disrupted in more than 250 cities; water supply is affected in 50 municipalities and communications networks are down in 51 cities.

Many health facilities have been damaged and Covid-19 patients have had to be transferred out of five quarantine facilities.

Jhean, a single mother living in Saar, is thankful her children are safe but doesn't know how she will cope. She



Families being rescued



Devastation



Scan the QR code with the BenefitPay app to donate

said: "I am devastated that my house and everything I own in the world is gone.

"I thank God that my two children are safe and that is the one true blessing from this.

"I saved for many years for this home and took a loan for the remainder. As a single mother I cannot put into words what I am feeling today and cannot begin to describe the feeling of loss. Both of my sisters have also suffered a similar fate".

Meanwhile, Daylin, from Budaiya, said: "I remember the phone call I received that night. My sister was howling and weeping saying we had lost everything. The floods had taken it all away. All was gone!

"The line was not very clear and went dead immediately after. I tried for many hours to reach her but I was unable to.

**When we saw the photographs of their homes submerged in water and attempted to console them – we felt truly distraught.**



Mariam

"My family are safe and I thank God for his eternal mercy but the devastation left behind by the typhoon created massive difficulties for them and our neighbourhood.

"People were climbing on roof tops with their children, huddling up for safety. Nobody had water or provisions for more than 24 hours until help arrived."

Afkarech is asking for donations of BD5 and BD10, or any amount, to help pay to

rebuild their homes.

"This is a very generous act of kindness provided by Afkarech," added Daylin. "It shows us there is still love and humanity left in the world and we are very thankful for all the help and donations.

"This money will definitely be able to help my family buy the essential items for their survival and, hopefully, play a part in rebuilding our

lives again."

In the meantime, their children are currently being housed with extended family.

Afkarech hopes the donations will help towards the cost of rebuilding their homes, easing their financial burdens and showing them that people really do care and understand hardship.

"Be the rainbow after their clouds," said Mariam from Saar.

"Afkarech has undertaken many charitable initiatives and we have always been astounded by the kindness of people in Bahrain. We truly feel showing kindness to others is just as rewarding as receiving it from someone else."

Donations can be made to IBAN BH48BBKU00100000386530 or by BenefitPay. For details, email info@afkarech.com.





# Culture

## Beauty in the air

**T**HE pandemic had created a craft revolution around the world with more people picking up knitting, painting and other art forms to keep themselves sane and entertained.

One hobby that has flourished is macramé, a form of textile produced using knotting techniques.

It was long crafted by sailors, especially in elaborate or ornamental knotting forms, to cover anything from knife handles, bottles to parts of ships. It's the second top emerging craft trend around the globe and has formed a fan following on the island thanks to Bahraini Khawla Alawadhi.

The mother-of-two boys took on the crafty design when she was having her second son. She said she found it therapeutic and relaxing.

"I was obsessed with pictures of macramé that I saw on *Instagram* created by artists based in the UK," said the 31-year-old legal researcher from Arad.

"I also found a Russian

**ART REPORT**  
By MAI AL KHATIB-CAMILLE  
mai.alkhatib@gulfweekly.com

girl in Bahrain posting her macramé creations and asked her if she could teach me the basics knots. That was almost two years ago. Now, I'm a legal researcher by day and a macramé maker by night!

"When the kids are asleep, I make my decaf coffee, play my fav podcast and start working on it. Sometimes I'm up until midnight. I can't help it. When I

start a piece I love to finish it."

Macramé is so versatile that it can be used in many ways such as decorative wall hangings or hanging chairs, planters, key chains, as belts, jewellery or even as a fringe on other textiles.

The primary knots of macramé are square (or reef knot) and forms of 'hitching'.

Cavandoli macramé is one variety that is used to form geometric and free-form patterns like weaving. It is done mainly in a single knot, the double half-hitch knot.

Leather or fabric belts are another accessory



Khawla



Planters



A pretty wall hanging

often created via macramé. Most friendship bracelets exchanged among schoolchildren and teens are also created using this method.

Khawla creates each knot using cotton cord and a wooden ring or dowel. She doesn't require many tools to do this, other than scissors, a tape measure and a rolling rack for clothes to keep the item in place while she is working.

A small project like a plant hanger can take her around one hour to make.

Khawla is inspired by her travels and learning about different cultures. For example, she was inspired by the lifestyle in Scandinavian countries and by the colourful yarn and fabric art in Marrakesh.

She said: "That inspired me to combine weaving into macramé by adding some colours in my project."

Having always been artsy, Khawla decided to share her passion, as well as spread awareness, by starting a macramé *Instagram* account @hygge.bh in which she displays her designs and stages workshops to teach others the handy skill.

"Hygge, (pronounced hue- guh), is a Danish word used when acknowledging a feeling or moment

whether alone or with friends, at home or out, ordinary or extraordinary," She explained.

"This is what I feel when I'm making macramé, and when I'm making new friends while teaching the trade at my workshops. As they learn a new skill, we are enjoying my freshly-baked goods over coffee and tea, as well as chatting about beautiful things in life."

For details, follow @hygge.bh on *Instagram* or email hygge.bh@gmail.com.

## Italiana



**GOURMET REPORT**  
By NAMAN ARORA  
naman@gulfweekly.com

**T**HERE are few cuisines in the world that can evoke the same warmth and feeling of home and happiness as Italian fare.

Perhaps it's down to a culture which prizes fresh ingredients, taste-texture balance and staple foods made from scratch that you just want to share in the company of loved ones.

While the idea of a large family dinner seems elusive during the Covid-19 pandemic, we were treated to some of Italy's finest culinary concepts at the Oliveto restaurant and lounge in Adliya's hip Block 338 last weekend.

The place takes one by surprise as you enter, with its large olive trees and relaxed poolside atmosphere. General manager Rosella Tafuno welcomed us, and we joined Valerio Accorinti from the Italian embassy by the shimmering pool. The ambiance of the place is lounge-like, with electronic music wafting over from the DJ booth, but the food that appeared before us told a more traditional tale.

Executive chef Enrico Morselli prepared a brilliant blended menu that featured some of the dishes introduced to

celebrate the recent 'Week of Italian Cuisine in the World', as well as elements from the regular menu.

As we waited for our food to arrive, my colleague was treated to a lavender-infused citrusy mock-tail with hints of pineapple, which satiated his thirst, while also setting his palate up for the dishes to come.

First up was a spread of antipasti. The Carpaccio Di Manzo, with its thinly-sliced lightly-seared Angus beef tenderloin served with dressed arugula & cherry tomatoes topped with

béarnaise sauce and a parmesan-thyme infused balsamic dressing, instantly took us for a dip in Italia, enjoying every juicy bite while meditating on truly important things in life, like how to make the perfect mozzarella.

And, almost in answer to our unspoken query, the Pizza ai Funghi took us deeper into the land that perfected the tomato, cheese and dough combination. With its fresh tomatoes, sautéed mushrooms, buffalo mozzarella and rucola, my expectations of coming to an Italian dinner were met and easily surpassed.

While we nibbled on some Fritto di Calamari e Gamberi - Sicilian style fried prawns



Chef Enrico



Tortina di Ricotta, Timo e Arancia



Chair decor



Ladies happy about their designs






# an indulgence

## EATING OUT

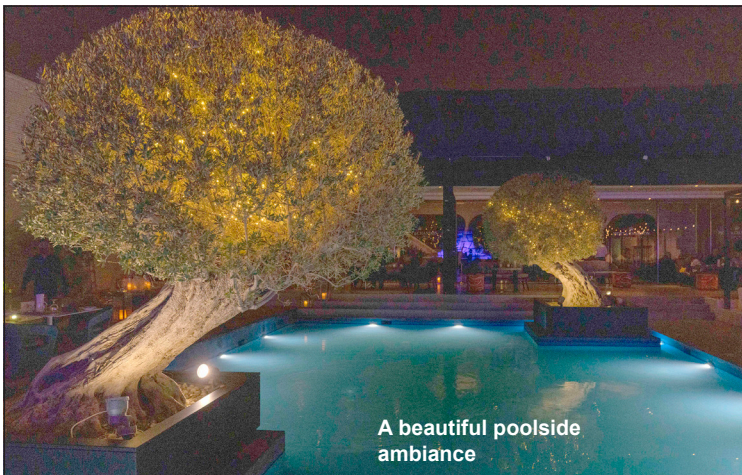
OLIVETO RESTAURANT AND LOUNGE, ADLIYA



Carpaccio Di Manzo



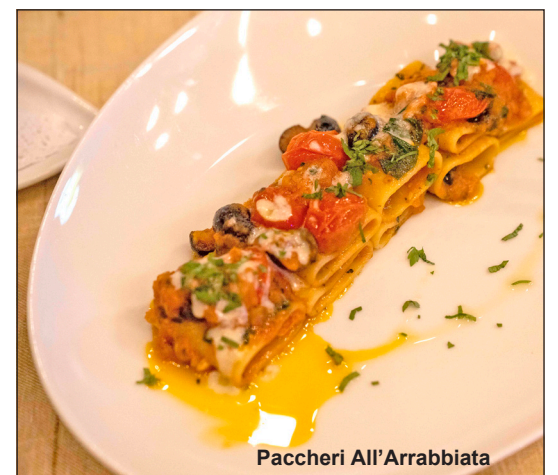
Tortelli all'Anatra



A beautiful poolside  
ambiance



Pizza ai Funghi



Paccheri All'Arrabbiata

and calamari served with a homemade lemon-tartar sauce – Valerio gave me a crash course on Italian cuisine around the world as we bonded over our shared love of the perfect pizza, even if our visions vastly differed.

Just when I thought we were ready for the next course, we noticed the Tortino di Parmigiana, which had been waiting patiently at the side for its turn to please our palates.

The Molten eggplant parmigiana, stuffed with parmesan cheese fondue and served on tomato ragù, was truly mind-blowing. It was rich yet light with velvety soft texture about which one could wax poetic.

It was a short wait before the Tortelli all'Anatra and Paccheri All'Arrabbiata appeared.

Dear readers, while an Italian meal necessitates at least three courses, if you absolutely have room for only one dish, let it be the

Tortelli all'Anatra.

Each bite of the braised duck stuffed ravioli, tossed in butter-sage and topped with parmesan cream duck glaze and truffle roasted pine nuts, was nothing short of a revelation.

Of course, the Paccheri All'Arrabbiata is nothing to be scoffed at either! The Paccheri pasta in a fresh tomato sauce with cured Italian black olives, garlic & fresh chili, drizzled with parmesan sauce, gave us the right amount of kick to send us wafting through a cloud of serendipitous satisfaction.

As we waited for the main course, Valerio educated me a bit about the intricacies of his cuisine and the etiquette at an Italian table.

“When you are served pasta, it is polite to only use your fork when eating it. This means that it is perfectly el dente,” Valerio explained.

“If a knife is necessary, it means that the pasta is not perfect.

“Much of Italian cuisine

and the etiquette we follow at the table can trace itself back to Science in the Kitchen and the Art of Eating Well written in 1891 by Pellegrino Artusi.”

I was just adding the book to my long list of books I have yet to explore, when the Steak Tagliata announced its arrival.

Armed with a fork and a steak knife, we dove into the flash-grilled thinly-sliced ribeye topped with Sicilian red onions and freshly-ground mustard dressing

served on a bed of fresh arugula.

The cut was tender and perfectly cooked, with the arugula providing a balancing herbal respite.

And this would have sent us into the much-desired state of food coma I was secretly craving, not having been able to indulge in any Eating Out reviews over the past eight months. But Rossella and Valerio had a final card up their sleeve to close out the night's magic.

The Tortina di Ricotta, Timo

e Arancia was their piece de resistance. And the ricotta cheesecake with orange zest and thyme served with berry compote was exactly what one would expect when thinking of a European dessert – smooth, velvety-texture combined with a sweet but subtle flavour.

It was just perfect to entice me into an expertly-crafted espresso, which brought me back from the lands of food coma. And, I was surprised at how quickly the place had filled up.

While respecting social distancing, of course, tables had filled up with beautiful folk from across the island, some there to reconnect with friends they hadn't seen for months while others were there for a special night out with their special someone.

As Rossella moved amongst them, catching up with the regulars, I realised that Oliveto's unique flavour goes beyond its exquisitely prepared meals – this is a sanctuary that adds a homely touch to a fancy night out.



Cheese, olives and bread to keep diners company between courses



Steak Tagliata



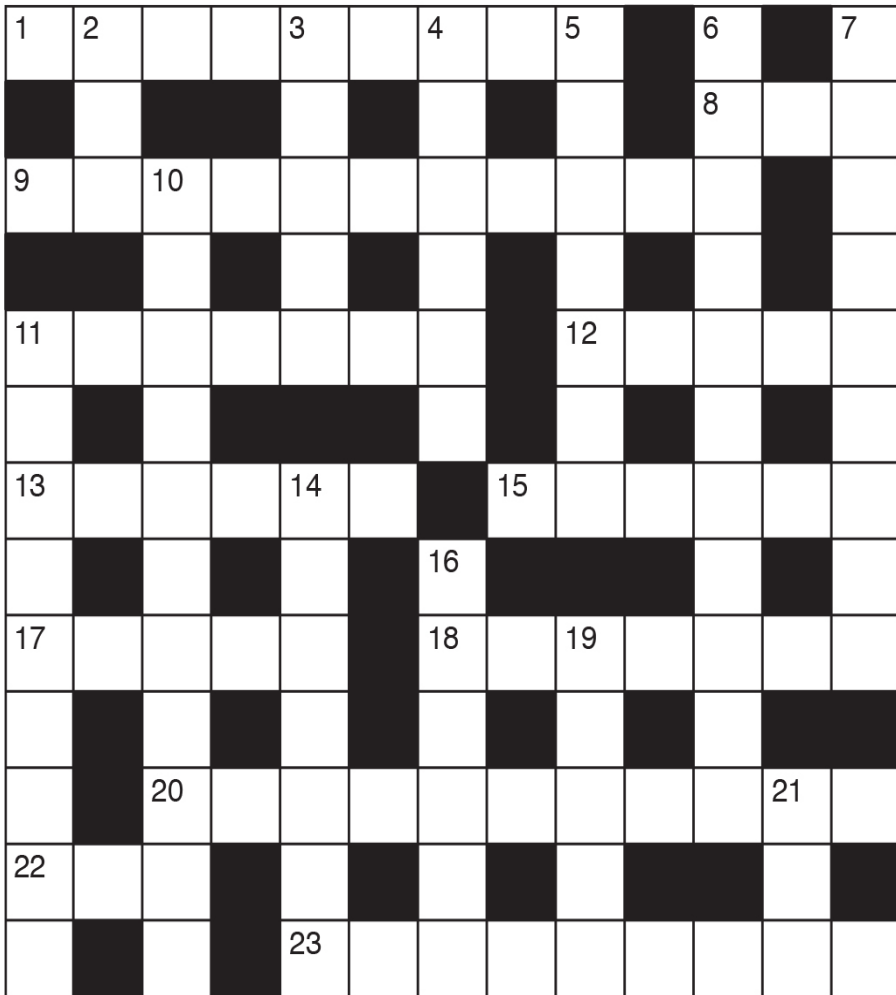
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# cerebrally crust & crema

## crossword break



Solutions in next week's issue.

### ACROSS

1. Joy (9)
8. Regret (3)
9. As an example (3,8)
11. Withhold (7)
12. Upright (5)
13. Jewel case (6)
15. Lower (6)
17. Previous (5)
18. Deadlock (7)
20. Change direction (5,6)
22. Entrap (3)
23. Minister (9)

### DOWN

2. Fuss (3)
3. Internal (5)
4. Regard (6)
5. Genuine (7)
6. Ancestor (11)
7. Remorse (9)
10. Revive (11)
11. One who receives (9)
14. Rambling (7)
16. Savage (6)
19. Tine (5)
21. Ocean (3)

### who, what, where, when

WHO ... is the victim in the US boardgame *Clue*?

WHAT ... is the best known legacy of the graphic designer Harry Beck?

WHERE ... in London was Queen Elizabeth II born?

WHEN ... was Paul Jewell appointed manager of the English league's Wigan Athletic FC?

WHO ... wrote the novel *Gulliver's Travels*?

WHAT ... name did the trio Scott Engel, Gary Leeds and John Maus record under?

WHERE ... in Asia is the city of Pakxe?

WHEN ... was Cherie Blair born?

### just so

CALOTTA

APPLE x

U R N  
O E A

DAWN

## darn tough sudoku

So you think you're good enough at Sudoku to crack this baby? Remember, we were the first in the Gulf to bring you this bit of Japanese mayhem...so we don't kid around

### Last week's sudoku

9	7	5	6	2	1	3	8	4
2	1	8	5	3	4	7	9	6
3	6	4	9	7	8	2	1	5
6	4	9	1	5	3	8	7	2
1	5	2	4	8	7	6	3	9
7	8	3	2	6	9	4	5	1
4	3	6	8	9	5	1	2	7
8	9	1	7	4	2	5	6	3
5	2	7	3	1	6	9	4	8

2	9	6	1	8	7	4	5	3
4	7	1	6	3	5	9	8	2
5	3	8	9	2	4	6	7	1
7	2	4	8	5	1	3	9	6
6	1	3	4	7	9	8	2	5
9	8	5	3	6	2	7	1	4
1	4	7	2	9	3	5	6	8
8	5	2	7	4	6	1	3	9
3	6	9	5	1	8	2	4	7

### darn tough sudoku

7	6	2	3	9	8	1	4	5
8	3	1	5	7	4	9	2	6
9	5	4	1	2	6	3	8	7
4	1	8	2	5	9	6	7	3
3	7	9	4	6	1	2	5	8
6	2	5	8	3	7	4	1	9
2	8	7	9	1	3	5	6	4
1	4	3	6	8	5	7	9	2
5	9	6	7	4	2	8	3	1

Sudoku

			2		1		5	
2	4						9	6
6				8				7
	3	2	5			9		
		5	8					2
		6		9	2	4	7	
5				3				9
9	2						4	1
	1		9		5			

Sudoku

3				7				
			1	5			8	
	9	8					3	
	7			3	4			2
5		4		6			9	7
8			7	1			5	
	2					3	1	
	1	3		4	2	5		
				7	1			9

### Last Week's Leisure Solutions

#### CROSSWORD BREAK:

**Across:** 7 Outset; 8 Mobile; 10 Confuse; 11 Knave; 12 Raid; 13 Group; 17 Climb; 18 Trip; 22 Heave; 23 Notable; 24 Ritual; 25 Divers.

**Down:** 1 Concern; 2 Stand-in; 3 Debut; 4 Lookout; 5 Vital; 6 Repel; 9 Detriment; 14 Illegal; 15 Problem; 16 Appease; 19 Charm; 20 Haste; 21 Staid.

#### JUST SO:

The birds and the bees, House of cards, Through thick and thin, Turn a blind eye

**WHO, WHAT, WHERE, WHEN:** US President Gerald Ford; Newcastle Vipers; Manhattan; 1991; Lynne Reid Banks; Rocinante; Newark, New Jersey, US; 1981.

### Darn Tough Sudoku

		8		6		4		
	3						7	
4			8		1			3
		7	4		9	6		
		2	3		6	5		
9			6		8			4
	2						9	
		4		2		7		



# MotoringWeekly

The top motoring and motorsport news

# Unsung heroes

**F1 REPORT**  
By NAMAN ARORA  
naman@gulfweekly.com

**T**HE contribution of motorsport's all-action volunteers came under the global spotlight in a crash-filled Formula One thriller in Bahrain and preparations are already underway for race number two this weekend.

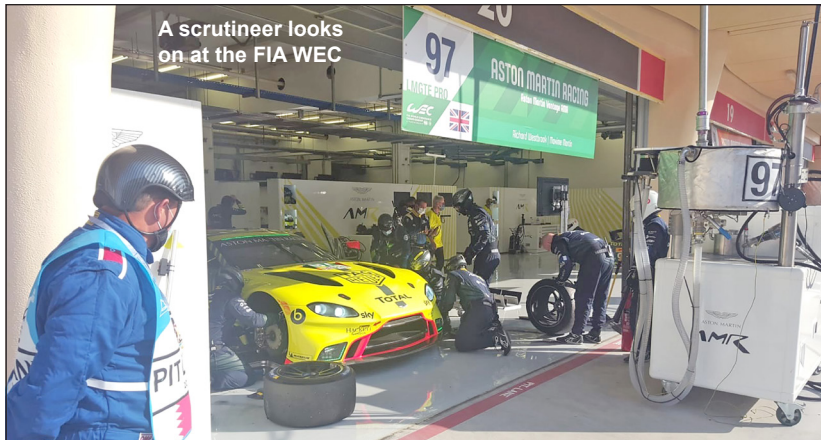
In timely fashion, the Bahrain International Circuit's (BIC) became the destination for the official FIA Volunteers Weekend for the first time in F1 history.

Bahrain's team of more than 1,000 marshals and volunteers are the 'house elves' that bring the F1 magic to life, as stewards, scrutineers and race officials.

"Volunteers are the unsung heroes of motor sport. Without them, quite simply, we would not be able to go racing," said FIA President, Jean Todt.

"It is important for the FIA to recognise their vital contribution, and the occasion of the Volunteers Weekend shine the spotlight on their hard work and dedication to ensuring the safety and success of events the world over.

"This is also an opportunity to promote the positive benefits that volunteers gain from their



A scrutineer looks on at the FIA WEC



Volunteers at the BIC

involvement, and help attract new people to motor sport."

For most of them, it's about more than just F1 – it's about nurturing a passion for motorsport.

Osama Albuflasa, for example, has been volunteering for 16 years and has a deep love for anything with an engine.

"It was love at first speed for me, ever since I got into my first car in Moscow, where I tried karting for the first time!" the 42-year-old told *GulfWeekly*.

"When I came back to Bahrain, I got involved with racing and volunteering on the island, and that's when I met Abdulrahman Ghuloom, who has become a godfather for all of us.

"Not only did he help me as a racer, he also encouraged me to volunteer. As a racer, volunteering

has helped me gain a unique understanding and perspective on rules and regulations, and why they are necessary.

"Motorsports can get very dangerous and understanding the technical aspects keeps everyone on the track safe."

For many, volunteering has taken them around the world. Teams of BIC volunteers have been sent to Azerbaijan, India and Abu Dhabi to help in training the local population of enthusiasts.

For Hashem Almarzooqi who volunteers as a risk control chief communicator, assisting at numerous motorsport events in Bahrain and the Gulf throughout the year, believes it is a patriotic endeavour.

"Our main purpose, in my opinion, is to serve our country and help put Bahrain's best foot forward when it

comes to motorsports," the 33-year-old racer explained.

"When we participate in national or international events, we also get much more exposure to the industry and meet people from around the world. They who have helped me grow."

Not everyone who volunteers comes from a racing background. Hanan Mohamed Omar, who has been volunteering for 16 years, just loves seeing the passion that Bahrain's race fans bring to the sport.

And this year, owing to Covid-19, she and other volunteers have missed seeing their faces at the circuit.

"We were all distraught when we first heard in February that the Bahrain F1 race might be scrapped," she added.

"Every time a race is done, we start

counting down the days to the next one. We have become quite a close-knit community throughout the years and especially during Covid-19, this is one of the few times we all gather together. For me, this is like a second family."

As Bahrain gears up for the second leg of its first-ever double header, the volunteers and marshals are also revving up to once again showcase their professionalism on a global stage.

"Alongside the BMF and all our affiliates, we look forward to further developing our already formidable partnership with the kingdom's motorsport volunteers as we continue to deliver top-class events that showcase everything Bahrain has to offer to the world," said BIC Chief Executive Shaikh Salman bin Isa Al Khalifa.

# Inspiring memories of a legend

**F**ans are mourning the loss of Argentinian footballing legend Diego Armando Maradona and recalling his visits to the kingdom, writes Mai Al-Khatib-Camille.

The Argentinian star, who died from a heart attack last Wednesday, touched down in Bahrain in 2017. At the time he was head coach of UAE outfit Al-Fujairah.

Maradona, alongside retired Brazil ace Ronaldinho and American women's national team star Carli Lloyd, greeted fans in the West Wing of Seef Mall.

In the crowd was Bahrain national team midfielder and Tekkers Academy director, Deena Rahman. "I've always idolised skilful, technical and exciting players to watch and he simply was one of the best," she said. "I was playing in a Futsal tournament with the national team and we went to meet Maradona in Seef Mall.



Rahman and Maradona

"He signed a football and kicked it into the crowd and I caught it. It now has pride of place in my home. It was a huge shock to hear he had passed away but unfortunately I feel his lifestyle in the last few years caught up with him. It's a huge shame."

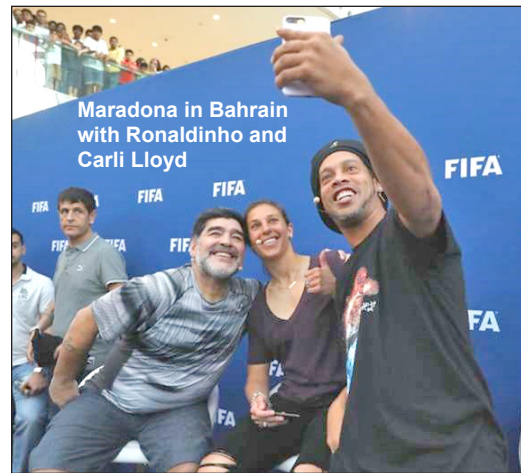
Maradona also participated in a few friendly fixtures at the National Stadium in Riffa behind closed doors, held on

the sidelines of the 67th FIFA Congress.

GDN reporter Reem Al Daaysi, a former Bahrain Women's National Football Team defender, saw him in action.

"It was surreal to see him walk in front of me after spending most of my childhood watching 'the hand of God' on TV creating magic on the field," she said.

"The hand of God" was a



Maradona in Bahrain with Ronaldinho and Carli Lloyd

phrase used by the footballer to describe a controversial goal that he scored during the Argentina vs England quarter final match of the 1986 FIFA World Cup.

"To watch him handle a ball in real life just a feet away from me felt like the greatest moment of 2017 for me as I got to see a master, a magician, a legend and an artist all moulded into one person," Al Daaysi added.

"His passing came as a shock and he has left behind a void in the hearts of football lovers all around the world after giving so much to the game."

This was not the World Cup star's first time in Bahrain. He also visited the kingdom in April 2012 to lead UAE's Al Wasl FC in the GCC Clubs Championship League Group D tie against Riffa at Khalifa Sports City.

The legend was given a warm welcome by senior club officials, headed by soccer team manager Shaikh Khalid bin Ali Al Khalifa, his deputy Shaikh Khalifa bin Ali Al Khalifa, club vice-president Shaikh Ziyad bin Faisal Al Khalifa and other board members.

He also received a certificate of honorary membership from the Bahrain club's representatives.



Al Daaysi in action





# Albon ready to charge!



**F1 REPORT**

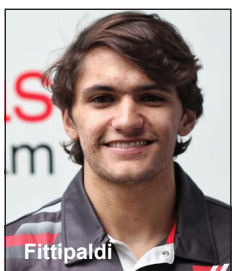
By NAMAN ARORA  
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**T**HE world's eyes are on Bahrain as it heads into the second F1 race weekend of its first ever double header with some wondering if last weekend's drama-filled race can be topped.

At the F1 Rolex Sakhr Grand Prix, fans can expect to see Red Bull's Alex Albon race for his career as the Thai driver's seat at Red Bull has been rumoured to be in jeopardy due to a lacklustre season.

Last Sunday Albon pulled all the stops and put up some of his best laps at the Bahrain International Circuit (BIC), finishing third after Sergio Perez's Racing Point car caught fire.

Coincidentally, if Albon is unable to maintain the pace in the coming two races, the fiery Perez is rumoured to be his replacement at a team which has struggled to find a worthy racing partner for Max Verstappen, who



Fittipaldi



Albon under pressure

finished second last Sunday. Mercedes' Lewis Hamilton, who finished first on Sunday, has bowed out of the coming race after testing positive for Covid-19.

He will have to wait till March 2021 for another shot at stealing Sebastian Vettel's record for most wins at the BIC, the "home of motorsport in the Middle East."

He is currently tied with

Vettel for the record after a near-perfect drive last Sunday, where he was the first to race past the chequered flag being waved by National Taskforce for Combatting the Coronavirus (COVID-19) member and BDF Hospital infectious disease consultant and microbiologist Lt Col Dr Manaf Al Qahtani.

This will be the first F1 race that Hamilton has missed since his F1 debut at the 2007 season-opening race in

Australia.

While Hamilton's replacement is yet to be confirmed at the time of publishing, reserve driver Stoffel Vandoorne, due to return to Bahrain after Formula E testing in Valencia, seems to be the most likely choice.

However this didn't stop Haas reserve driver Louis Delétraz from throwing his hat into the ring for consideration, saying on Twitter: "Hi Mercedes. I'm

in Bahrain, I have my super license, Haas is not using me. Also I was on the podium on that exact same track two days ago. Please?"

In the extremely unlikely event that the F2 driver competes for Mercedes, he will be the first driver to be allowed to drive in F2 and F1 during the same weekend.

After Sunday's F1 inferno, Haas confirmed the next day that their reserve driver Pietro Fittipaldi will take Romain Grosjean's

place during the upcoming weekend and make his Formula One race debut.

There will also be plenty of action in the Formula 2 series, which is a feeder championship for the F1. While Mick Schumacher, son of renowned race driver Michael Schumacher currently leads the championship, his margin is razor thin and he could lose it to Callum Ilott if he can't keep the pace up in this weekend's season closer.



Albon or alb-gone?



Grosjean walks away from crash

Grosjean climbs out of the fire

## THIS WEEKEND'S SCHEDULE

### Friday (December 4)

Porsche Sprint Challenge ME  
FIA Formula 2  
Formula 1  
FIA Formula 2  
Formula 1  
Porsche Sprint Challenge ME

First Practice 1.55pm  
Practice 3.05pm  
First Practice 4.30pm  
Qualifying 6.45pm  
Second Practice 8.30pm  
Second Practice 10.25pm

### Saturday (December 5)

Porsche Sprint Challenge ME  
FIA Formula 2  
Formula 1  
Porsche Sprint Challenge ME  
Formula 1

Qualifying 2pm  
First Race (48 Laps) 3.10pm  
Third Practice 5pm  
First Race (17 Laps) 6.30pm  
Qualifying Session 8pm

### Sunday (December 6)

FIA Formula 2  
Porsche Sprint Challenge ME  
FIA Formula 3  
FIA Formula 2  
Formula 1  
Formula 1  
Formula 1  
Formula 1

Second Race (34 Laps) 3.20pm  
Second Race (17 Laps) 4.30pm  
F3 Prize Ceremony 5.45pm  
F2 Prize Ceremony 6pm  
Drivers' Presentation 6.20pm  
End Racism Recognition 7.53pm  
National Anthem 7.54pm  
Grand Prix (87 Laps) 8.10pm