

The Argus

Palmer follows the family tyre marks

MOTORSPORT by
HOWARD GRIGGS

WILLIAM PALMER is to follow in the successful footsteps of his father and brother by embarking on his own motorsport career.

Jonathan Palmer competed in 87 Grands Prix from 1983 to 1989 with a best finish of fourth behind winner Gerhard Berger while racing for Tyrrell-Ford at the Australian Grand Prix in 1987.

Jolyon Palmer, 21, was runner-up in the 2010 FIA Formula Two Championship and is currently preparing for his second season in GP2 Series, a feeder for Formula One which was won by Lewis Hamilton in 2006.

Now Jolyon's 15-year-old brother, William, is hoping to continue his family's motorsport pedigree.

William, who lives at the family home at Southwater near Horsham, is preparing to contest his first full season of racing in the highly competitive Ginetta Junior Championship, having recently signed with front running team HHC Motorsport.



FAMILY TIES:
William Palmer with his father, Jonathan

The Ginetta Junior Championship is the country's top junior series for drivers aged between 14 and 17 and uses identical 100bhp sports cars that can reach speeds of up to 120mph.

Taking place over 20 rounds, it races alongside the popular British Touring Car Championship at top UK circuits across the country, attracting large crowds and live television coverage.

The West Sussex youngster only started racing last year having made his debut in the junior series at Snetterton last August. He went on to compete in further meetings at Sil-

verstone and Brands Hatch, where he secured a best finish of eighth.

Earlier this year, Palmer got his pre-season preparations under way with three successful tests and is now looking forward to the start of the season, which begins on April 1 at Brands Hatch.

He said: "I'm really excited to be doing my first full season of Ginetta Juniors with HHC Motorsport."

"I competed in a few races last year and learnt a lot and now I'm looking to build on that experience this season."

Palmer knows he is going to have to work hard to achieve

his goal of a top six finish but is pleased to have the experience of his father and brother to call upon.

He said: "They have both been brilliant and really supportive and of course we always chat motorsport when together at home."

Alongside his racing this year, Palmer will also have to maintain his studies at Cranleigh School where he's working towards his GCSEs, something he admits must not be compromised.

Before opting for a career in racing, Jonathan Palmer qualified and worked as a doctor in London.

Motorsport has gone on to become the focal point of his career and Palmer has spent time developing a number of young drivers, some through Formula Palmer Audi which is a series he created.

Now dad is looking forward to seeing and helping his son progress.

He said: "Ginetta Juniors is an excellent series. The cars look good, are safe, fast enough and reliable. It's also very competitive so Will was inevitably towards the back of the field last year."