

## Aston Martin GT4 dates are released

Aston Martin Racing has released the calendar for its factory backed GT4 Challenge series, with four of the six rounds supporting the British GT Championship.

The GT4 Challenge, which operates for the Vantage GT4 and N24 models, will feature a mixture of double-header 60 minute and stand-alone 100-minute endurance races over the year.

The season finale takes place at Zandvoort in Holland.

### CALENDAR

Aston Martin GT4 Challenge		
DATE	TRACK	FORMAT
Apr 19	Oulton Park	100min
May 3/4	Rockingham	2 x 60min
May 31	Silverstone GP	100min
Jun 28	Brands Hatch Indy	100min
Sept 13/14	Donington Park	2 x 60min
Oct 19	Zandvoort	100min

## Pile to line up for a learning year in VWs

A third wheelchair-bound racer will join the Volkswagen Racing Cup this season after the SlideSports squad confirmed James Pile will join it for his first full year of racing.

After passing his ARDS test last year, the 25-year-old raced in the Classic Sports Car Club's Modern Classics series. Pile, who will race in a Mk6 Golf GTi with a new DSG semi-automatic gearbox, will follow Simon Andrews and Philip Morris in becoming the third disabled racer to compete in the championship.

"I'm hoping to be out testing soon so that I can get as much experience of the controls as I can before the start of the season," Pile said. "It will be a learning year. I will have some quick teammates and I want to learn from them and then to progress in the VW Cup for two or three years."

## Long distance races for main Radical class

The Radical SR3 Challenge will incorporate endurance races as part of the main championship for the first time this year after the success of trial events last season.

Radical ran two 90-minute feature endurance races as stand-alone events open to its SR8, SR3 and SR1 models last year. Both events garnered entries into the mid-teens and the response from drivers has prompted the Peterborough firm to modify the format of its premier British series.

This year the SR3 Challenge will take place over eight weekends,

with six rounds running two 40-minute races and then events at Oulton Park and Castle Combe staging a single 90-minute event. The return to Castle Combe on August 2 marks the first time the Wiltshire track has hosted a Radical championship round since 2010. The series will also visit Cadwell Park for the first time for its season finale.

●The Radical Clubmans Cup will also feature an endurance race. Seven of the eight race weekends will run two 20-minute races except Silverstone GP, which will host two 40-minute events.

### CALENDAR

Radical SR3 Challenge	
DATE	TRACK
Apr 26/27	Donington Park National
Jun 7/8	Brands Hatch Indy
Jun 14/15	Oulton Park*
Jul 19/20	Snetterton 300
Aug 2	Castle Combe*
Aug 16/17	Silverstone GP
Sept 20/21	Donington Park GP
Oct 11/12	Cadwell Park

\*denotes 90-minute endurance event



Radicals in for a long haul

## Sharpe family presence on the MG grid is set to continue in 2014

MG stalwart family Sharpe Team Racing will introduce the newest member of its dynasty when third-generation driver Eddie Sharpe takes the wheel of his father's Midget in the MG Owners' Club Championship this year.

Eddie Sharpe, 20, is the fourth member of the family to enter MG racing,



following in the wheel tracks of his father – former MGOC champion – Will, his uncle Hen, who is now a regular winner in the BRSCC Porsche Championship with his 924, and grandfather Andy Sharpe.

Eddie Sharpe passed his ARDS test recently at Silverstone and will

The Sharpes will expand...

now tackle the MGOC series handling the same 1966 MG Midget that Will raced to two MGOC titles. Hen Sharpe said: "To start racing is a massive thing or Eddie, especially after watching the rest of his family compete. It will be emotional for him to race his dad's car in the same series where it all started for us. Eddie's fully ready for this year and I'm sure he'll get some great results."

# PRIZE REVAMP FOR MINI SERIES

## Choice of discounts or a BTCC test for successful one-make drivers



A prize shake up will boost the Mini Challenge in 2014

By Rob Ladbrook

**One promising racer in this year's Mini Challenge will benefit from a new £15,000 prize fund after the series' Best of British Award was expanded for its second year.**

The award is given to the most impressive British talent over the course of the single-make championship, and last year handed R56 JCW Class champion Chris Smiley a fully funded test with the factory XX

Momentum MG British touring car team. The prize is funded by sponsors Corbeau, Forge, Luke, Ryan Motorsport Insurance, Powerflex, Showtrax and Alcon.

For this season, the award will change to offer a range of prizes worth in excess of £15,000. The top six in the R56 JCW Class and the champion of the lower-powered Cooper Class will be invited to take part in a shoot out. The winner will be chosen by a panel of judges.

The successful driver can

choose from a fully funded test with a top BTCC squad, a subsidised season in the forthcoming generation three Mini JCW, which will be introduced into the British championship in 2015, or free entry into the 2015 contest and a discount on the new two-litre turbocharged car.

Mini Challenge promoter Antony Williams said: "The award was a huge success last year and we wanted to take it a step further for this season. The series is all about helping

British talent and the new range of prizes reflects that. The winner can choose to spend a day learning from a top BTCC team or fund a second championship assault."

●Drivers in the Mini Challenge's Cooper Class will no longer be able to score points towards the overall championship and will instead compete for the class title and the spot on the Best of British Award final. Five of the last six champions have come from the lower-powered class.

## ROUND THE BEND WITH...

### HENRY CHART

**Age:** 21 **From:** Beaconsfield, Buckinghamshire  
F3 Cup ace is targeting title glory this season

#### He began in Formula Vee

"I only had some arrive and drive and British University Kart Championship experience but nothing competitive. In 2011 I had been to 750 Motor Club meetings and enjoyed Formula Vee. I bought a car and started so well. I took fourth in my maiden race. I caught the racing bug."

#### He jumped into a Formula Renault car

"In 2012, I dived into the deep end in Formula Renault BARC. Looking back now, I probably wasn't ready for it with only a year of racing experience behind me. It was a very competitive grid that season and, compared to some of my rivals, I didn't have as much backing. I struggled to get to grips with the car and it knocked my confidence."

#### He switched to F3 Cup

"I needed to gain more racing experience in a championship which was cheaper. I didn't want to spend as much money in order to gain that experience, and the F3 Cup was just what I wanted. It's competitive with good grids and talented drivers."

#### He had reliability issues

"I had a huge number of problems with mechanical issues on the car including two engine blow-ups. But I was reasonably happy with how I performed in my first year in the series. Sixth place with six podiums and two wins was a decent return."

#### He's invested

"This year we've bought a newer model, the Dallara F305/7, which should give me a better chance of taking wins and the car should be more predictable around the quick stuff. Tristan Cliffe had a similar new car last year and found a lot of time. Cliffe will be my biggest rival!"

#### He's worked in FStudent

"I'm studying Mechanical Engineering at the University of Birmingham. Last year I took part in Formula Student, helping with sponsorship and, with my racing knowledge, I helped advise the team with feedback from the driver."

#### He plans to go GT racing

"Unless you have millions of pounds, the single-seater route isn't achievable. I want to get on to the GT racing ladder, and once I've won the F3 Cup, my plan is to move into sportscars and GT racing."



Chart has GT racing goal



Findlay had selected outings in the VdeV category last season

## Findlay prepares for a full sportscar switch

Former British Formula Ford ace Garry Findlay has secured a deal to join the CD Sport team to contest this year's VdeV sportscar championship.

The deal marks Findlay's first full-time campaign since he finished third in the 2009 MSA Formula Ford Championship of Great Britain driving for the Fluid Van Diemen team. Findlay raced sporadically in the French-based VdeV class last term, and impressed during a drive with the G-Cat Racing team at Estoril in 2013. That led to a one-off outing with CD in the season finale. Findlay will now race one of

the team's four Norma prototypes. His team-mates have yet to be announced.

"It's nice to know that I have a full season of racing ahead of me – it's been a long time since I've had that," said Findlay. "I went to Portugal last year just hoping to impress somebody and find a seat and things have worked out. CD has won the VdeV title before, so I know what the team is capable of. It's up to me to make the most of this opportunity."

"Sportscar racing is where I see my future and working with a team like CD gives me the chance to make my mark in the sport."