

HYBRID ENGINES FOR F4 AN OPTION AHEAD OF 2021

British Touring Car Championship is only other UK series known to be investigating hybrid power

Hybrid power is being explored

Hedley and O'Sullivan target single-seaters

GINETTA JUNIOR

Newly-crowned Ginetta Junior champion James Hedley is targeting a graduation to single-seater racing in 2020.

Hedley held a commanding lead in the Ginetta Junior points going into the final round at Brands Hatch last weekend and secured the title by winning Saturday's opening race.

He then helped Elite Motorsport clinch the teams' championship with a pair of fifth places in the

remaining races.

Hedley now plans a programme of testing in both BRDC British Formula 3 and British Formula 4 machinery before confirming his plans for 2020.

"I've got some tests lined up," he said. "If I'm honest, we're more likely to do F4 but we might test in F3 too."

Championship runner-up Zak O'Sullivan also looks set to switch to slicks-and-wings, with F4 – either in Britain or in Europe –

the most likely destination.

"Some sort of F4 series, but I'm not too sure which team yet or which country," said O'Sullivan. "I've seen some people I've raced in karts go to the Italian and German [championships] – they've got very strong grids, European teams and also you get to learn some of the circuits."

"But obviously there's more of a price tag on that so we'll see how it goes financially."

MARK PAULSON

BRITISH FORMULA 4

British Formula 4 could introduce a hybrid engine as soon as 2021 as a major testing and development programme will take place between series organisers and engine supplier Ford next season to assess whether the technology can be included in the championship.

The latest one-litre, three-cylinder EcoBoost engine, along with a 48-volt mild-hybrid system, has been fitted to a current Mygale F4 chassis ahead of a full year of evaluation in 2020.

Formula 1 is the only single-seater championship to use hybrid engines at present, although the new Olympics-style Motorsport Games event will feature hybrid-powered F4 cars.

"It's a step in the right direction," said Gerard Quinn, senior manager at Ford Performance Europe. "We're going from four cylinders to three cylinders and we know the engine is good because it's used in the R2 cars in rallying. But we're under no illusions that next year is going to be a challenging year."

New F4 regulations could be introduced by the FIA in 2021, and Quinn believes the engine is well positioned to adapt to these, for example to overcome the extra weight of a halo protection device.

"The power is much higher on this engine – we can go up to 200bhp if we need to," Quinn said. "We have to keep the championship affordable – we wouldn't like it to become any more expensive than it is. It's important to have support from the FIA and Motorsport UK [with that]."

F4 promoter Sam Roach says 2021 would be a logical time to introduce the system, provided the test programme is successful.

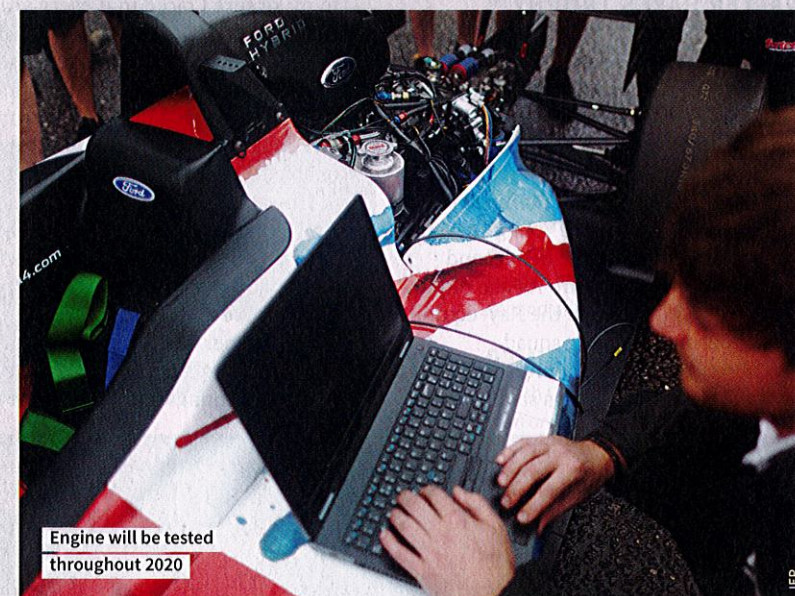
"That's when a new chassis is likely to come in and it gives us a full year of development and to make sure the new FIA regulations are built to allow hybrids [they don't at present]," he said. "We're going to be able to test it in all conditions. In the future, everyone is going to be driving electric cars in some form wherever they end up, so it's great to introduce the technology to them at a young age."

"There's been lots of interested people, and they're fascinated to see how this works."

STEPHEN LICKORISH



The move to hybrid is gaining interest



Engine will be tested throughout 2020



Hedley (left) and O'Sullivan

Webster plans full campaign

PORSCHE CARRERA CUP GB

Former Porsche Carrera Cup GB champion Josh Webster is planning a full attack on the series next year.

The 2014 champion joined the grid for this season's second event at Donington Park and, after taking a win and a third over that weekend, was hopeful of launching a title bid, despite missing the opening races.

But Webster only won two more races during the rest of the season and he finished second behind runaway champion Dan Harper in the standings.

Webster now wants to contest a full campaign in 2020 in an attempt to join Damien Faulkner, Tim Harvey, James Sutton, Michael Meadows and Dan Cammish in the ranks of two-time Carrera Cup GB champions.

"I think I'm going to come back next year," said Webster, who spent the previous two years competing in the Formula 1-supporting Porsche Supercup. "I'm really enjoying it, which is the most important thing, and the sponsors are really enjoying it. Team Parker Racing are doing a great job."

STEPHEN LICKORISH