

David's own FAST SHOW

David Wagner is a young man in a hurry who is aiming to make a name for himself in business and motor racing



Did you know?
The Formula Renault BARC championship is the UK's most popular junior single-seater series

Studying marketing and finance may not seem to tie in with the pursuit of becoming Formula One World Champion, but it's all part of David Wagner's master plan.

Now in his second year at Strathclyde Business School, David also finds the time to take part in the competitive sport of motor racing. His love of racing dates back to when he was a toddler and he was bought a quad bike by his dad, Chris Wagner who, at the time, was a regular competitor in the Scottish Rally Championship.

When he turned five, David started karting for fun at his local circuit, and by the time he was 11 he decided to start racing. In 2005, his first full year of competition, he won both the Scottish and National Championships, which led to his selection for the Scottish kart team to compete in the International Championship against England and Wales – with the result that Scotland won, the first time that England had been beaten in eight years.

"All the current Formula 1 drivers, including Lewis Hamilton and Jenson Button, first started in kart racing. Karting can be very tough but it teaches you a lot about race craft," explains David.

By 2010, after taking a year out to focus on his Higher studies and get the results needed to be accepted by Strathclyde, David moved from karting to racing cars. "I felt I'd learned all that was necessary

from karting and decided to move into racing cars. I entered the Formula Renault BARC Winter Series in 2010 and, despite a lack of testing due to a limited budget, I took four podiums in six races and won the final race of the year, allowing me to finish as vice-champion overall.

"In 2011, I competed in the Formula Renault BARC Championship and finished the year with a best finish of fourth place at the final round at Silverstone."

In 2012, he again competed in the Formula Renault BARC Championship and finished in fourth position. He has had four podiums, including winning the Donington Park race in August.

The 19-year-old has to put in hours of study and classwork for SBS, on top of hours of training for his racing, as well as working hard to secure sponsorship and help from different sources to help him pursue his dream.

"I've had the support of friends, family, local businesses and my sports bursary from Strathclyde, which has allowed me to get to where I am now. However, next year my aim is to compete in Europe, which is a huge cost. I've spent all summer working hard to find businesses, organisations and individuals who are willing to support me."

This is where David's studies come in useful: "It's important to provide an incentive for businesses to join me on my racing career. This includes marketing their company and entertaining them and their guests in VIP Hospitality.

"In the future, having a good understanding of both finance and marketing can only be of benefit to me. All top sports stars are brands. Companies pay for their services in order to help promote their products. With my degree, I will be better equipped to manage my career and entice companies to invest in me."

Last year, David was selected for the University of Strathclyde's Elite Athlete Sports Bursary programme, which provides both financial and non-financial support.

"The bursary allows me to cover the cost of my pre-race simulator sessions held at the iZone Driver Performance Centre at Silverstone," he says.

"The Motor Sports Association – the UK governing body of motorsport – also supports me. In 2010 I was enrolled into their MSA Academy to participate in their Advanced Apprenticeship in Sport and Excellence programme held at Loughborough College and the Porsche Human Performance Centre at Silverstone. On this course, I received my own driver coach, nutritionist and sports psychologist, who I worked with to help improve my preparation for competition."

David has to work with the University's Elite Athletes department to plan exam and coursework deadline dates and once he has this information, he can prepare his training schedules for the year.

"As long as I stay organised I am able to devote enough time to both my racing and university commitments. It can be challenging at times, especially when plans change at the last minute but everyone around me is extremely supportive and helps me sort out any problems."

Staying race-fit is another demand on David's time and he trains five times a week for two hours, focusing mainly on cardio and strength endurance exercise.

"Through competing at a high level in sport, I have gained confidence, determination and the understanding of how tough life can be," says David. "When I have a bad race, I'm always able to bounce back and this ability will stand me in good stead in the future."

David definitely epitomises a positive attitude, and that applies to the future as well: "My target is to become Formula 1 World Champion and I'm absolutely determined to achieve this."

To keep up to date with David and his sporting successes, go to www.davidwagner.co.uk

Formula for success

Motorsport can provide a fast-track learning experience for students like Katrina Pye

Engineering and business school students have for the past two years been working together as part of the University of Strathclyde Motorsport (USM) team to design, build, market and race a single-seat bike-engined racing car. This is part of the global Formula Student initiative, a series of international competitions focused on developing engineering talent in a practical, competitive high-octane environment.

USM technical director Roy Yuile says: "2012 saw the introduction of a new commercial director role to our senior management structure.

"Our USM13 commercial director, Katrina Pye, got involved as a result of this integration project and now forms an important part of the team, handling a wide variety of tasks and projects and bringing fresh perspective to a team drawn solely from the Engineering Faculty."

Katrina, who is studying HR, Hospitality and Tourism Management, says: "I'm very proud to be part of such a successful formula student team. It brings together a variety of students with an even wider variety of skills and personalities.

"I've been involved in the team for the past two years and have had a great deal of support from older and inspiring members to help me settle in. Last year I focused on gaining sponsorship for the team. Without this backing it would be impossible for the team to operate.

"This year I have a bigger role in the team, not only managing sponsorship but also marketing and events management for the team. A big part of the competitions we take part in is based on a successful business plan where business students especially offer a different perspective to solving problems. I'm really looking forward to the challenges this year will bring.

"After I graduate I aspire to work within the Formula 1 circuit, either for a team or a track, so the valuable knowledge and experience I am constantly gaining will have a knock-on effect in my career. I also really enjoy the social aspect of the team, meeting students I wouldn't usually meet on campus and offering opportunities that I wouldn't usually come across in my degree programme: for example helping build parts of the car."

This year the team was successful in the UK and Germany competitions. USM placed 20th overall out of 117 competitors at the Formula Student UK competition at Silverstone in July, the 3rd top British team, with results including 7th in Cost and Sustainability and 12th in Engineering Design. This was a fantastic result, given the challenges faced by the team this year including a six-week delay and enforced relocation due to the James Weir fire, and was bettered only by their performance at Formula Student Germany in August.

