



Kelvin van der Linde to make senior circuit racing debut

Kelvin van der Linde, the 2010 South African Engen Karting champion in the Junior Rok class, will become the youngest driver in senior circuit racing in 2011 when he moves up to the Engen Volkswagen Cup national championship with Team Ferodo.

The 14-year-old Dainfern College grade 9 pupil joins established Team Ferodo driver Gennaro Bonafede, 20, who will contest class T of the Bridgestone South African Production Car Championship in a Ferodo Volkswagen Gold GTi after finishing runner-up this year in his debut season, and another newcomer to the team in Lee Thompson, 31, who will compete in the Masters' category of the Engen Volkswagen Cup.

Van der Linde, who turns 15 on June 20 next year and just makes the Motorsport South Africa deadline of July 1 for a 15-year-old to compete in senior racing, is the third generation of the famous Van der Linde racing family, who has been winning national titles since the 1980s.

Grandfather Hennie won three consecutive national saloon car championships from 1984 to 1986, his father Shaun won five titles in Formula GTi, touring cars and production cars from 1992 to 2004, and his uncle Etienne won national championships in karting, Formula Vee and Formula GTi in South Africa and in Formula Opel in Europe and Germany in 1998.

Kelvin van der Linde has acquired an impressive list of achievements since his first kart race as an eight-year-old in 2004. In 2008 he and his younger brother Sheldon made South African motor racing history when they both won national karting championships in the same year. Kelvin was both national and Northern Regions Mini Max champion in the Rotax Max Challenge. This year he again won two karting championships, taking the honours in the Engen National Karting Junior Rok class and also in the Northern Regions Rotax Max Challenge Junior Max category. He missed out on a second national title by a mere three tenths of a point in the Junior Max class.

"We're grateful to Federal-Mogul, manufacturers of Ferodo brake pads, for supporting Kelvin's entry into senior circuit racing," said Shaun van der Linde. "We believe we can repay the faith Team Ferodo has placed in him. Despite his young age, he has proved himself in the tough world of junior karting and has already shown in testing in a Volkswagen Challenge Citi Golf that he is more than capable of handling a racing saloon car.

"We'd also like to pay tribute to Bruce Coquelle of Autoquip, who has supported the Van der Linde family since my father started racing. When Kelvin was born we received a letter from Bruce congratulating us and predicting that another Van der Linde champion had arrived."

The opening round of the 2011 WesBank Super Series, which hosts the Engen Volkswagen Cup, will take place at Kyalami on March 5.

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