

WestWHEELS CIRCUIT RACING

Love steps up a level



Perth teenager Jordan Love has a big future. Picture: Peter Thompson

Talented teen to start in the first public outing for Formula 4s alongside V8 Supercars in Townsville

■ Adrian Chambers

Jordan Love will fly the flag for WA in Queensland this weekend for the long-awaited unveiling of the flagship CAMS Formula 4 championship.

The WA karting champ has earned his stripes in international open wheelers in the just-completed Asia Cup Super 6 series.

The 16-year-old won the first three races at Malaysia's tricky Formula One Sepang circuit but a dud alternator in race four handed him a DNF while a jumped start in race five blew his title hopes, despite another gutsy win in race six.

He has been getting serious tuition from Peter Major in F1000 at Barbagallo and is one of five pilots this weekend for AGI Sport.

The Confederation of Australian Motor Sport took a major leap of faith last year when it decided to stake a truckload of members' funds on total support of Formula 4.

In a tacit confirmation of its all-in approach, the sport's governing body last week officially removed the national status of Formula Ford from 2016.

But in a sop to the long-running FF Australian championship, CAMS has proposed a one-off festival for next year.

This weekend, the culmination of that controversial endeavour is on full public display for the first time, when the Formula 4s support the V8 Supercars circus in Townsville.

The CAMS Jayco Australian Formula 4 Championship runs alongside seven V8 events, debuting with the Townsville 400, running through to December.

No doubt a focus will be on grid numbers, with 12 considered a "pass" for a first appearance.

The FIA, world motorsport's supremo, gave F4 its overriding imprimatur as the future pathway for open-wheel racing, bridging the gap between karting, F3 and F1.

In a coup for the emerging series, local F1 ace Dan Ricciardo has accepted the position of patron.

"It's an honour and I am delighted," Ricciardo said.

"I can honestly say things are going in the right direction for our young drivers looking to do what I have done, given Formula 4 is a category with wings and slicks and is part of a more structured pathway from karting to F1."

Designed as a less expensive, safer and faster first step, the Australian F4 is a significant improvement with its carbon-fibre monocoque chassis and the latest FIA-certified safety equipment, including energy-absorbing cockpit surrounds.

Up for grabs for the 2015 series winner is up to \$250,000 in financial support towards progression to the "next appropriate development pathway", either locally or overseas, as well as a Formula 3 test drive with Carlin, one of Europe's top teams.

Follow the action at formula4.com.au.