



Singaporean Rishab Jain testing a Formula Four car during a practice session in Monza, Italy. He made the step up to F4 this year, with the hope of eventually making it to Formula One. PHOTOS: PAOLO PELLEGRINI, CHRISTIAN HO

FORMULA 4 TO FLAG OFF TRIO'S RACING DREAMS

Singaporeans Rishab, Ho and American Nikhil chase success in bid for coveted F1 spot

Kimberly Kwek

Just three years ago, Rishab Jain was still karting and focusing on simulated racing.

But a karting session in Spain in 2019 changed that after the Singaporean was told by the track owner that he had the potential to race professionally.

Rishab made the move to single-seater cars soon after and although karting and car racing are different as the latter involves the use of a gear box, he adapted quickly and finished on the podium in his de-

but at the 2021 Radical Cup Korea.

The National University of Singapore undergraduate, 20, has also made the step up to Formula Four racing this year, competing in the 2022 Italian Formula Four Championship with German team BWR Motorsports.

He said: "I'm looking forward to a good championship. What defines good is that every race is an improvement – that's how they determine what's a good driver and what's a driver who's going to be stagnant. I'm aiming to be better in every race."

Rishab's start in F4 racing comes slightly later than others, with

many of his counterparts starting in their mid-teens. But Rishab, whose ultimate goal is to race in F1, does not let this bother him.

The stakes are high for the 2022 Italian Formula Four Championship as they will determine whether he progresses to F3, but Rishab is not worrying too much about the future yet.

He said: "It depends on where I stand and what are the chances of me going to F3. I'm not going to be stagnant in F4, not at this age."

"If there are no chances, I'm not going to regret what happens and this becomes a hobby for me. I've tried and tested and if it doesn't work, the next generation of people can try again."

Another Singapore driver who is also racing in F4 is Christian Ho, who has enjoyed success in kart-

ing, coming in second in the FIA Karting Academy Trophy and the German Junior championship in OK-Junior karts in 2019.

After turning 15 at the end of last year, Christian was eager to start his F4 journey, which he sees as a stepping stone towards his dream of competing in F1.

He started F4 racing with a few rounds of races in the United Arab Emirates in February.

Christian joined Nicolas Todd's All Road Management stable last year and is racing with MP Motorsport, one of the biggest and most successful teams in the Spanish F4 Championship.

One main thing that he has had to adapt to is standing starts for F4 races instead of a rolling start for karting. Standing starts can be challenging as it tests a driver's reaction time.

"I have had to adjust several things when doing these starts or even restarts when there are race incidents."

"One key thing that I have had to adjust is keeping an eye on my tyres during the F4 race so that I do not lose my speed performance at the end of the race," said Christian.

"I also started new exercises for my physical training as F4 racing is much harder and strenuous on my neck."

"This is because of the strong G force, so I have been training really hard in order to not get too tired or injured during a race."

Despite the steep learning curve, Christian is enjoying the challenge

GEARING UP FOR RACING

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CHRISTIAN HO, Singapore F4 driver (right)



and hopes to win the F4 Spanish Championship.

Also racing under a Singaporean licence in the F4 is Nikhil Bohra, a United States citizen who has been based in Singapore for the past five years.

Nikhil, who has been competing in karting since 2013, is racing with US Racing in the ADAC Formula 4 as well as the Italian F4 championships this year.

After a bumpy return to karting following the pandemic, the 17-year-old is looking forward to racing in the F4 this year.

His goals for the championships are to make the rookie podium, which means he will have to finish in the top three among the first-year drivers.

While like many other race drivers, he hopes to eventually make it to F1, Nikhil's goal is to make a career out of racing, whether it is as a competitor or in other aspects of the sport.

He said: "I want to be able to make racing a predominant part of my life. I want to do something with my life that involves racing."

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