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24/04/2008
AUSSIE YOUNGSTER SET FOR AMERICAN DEBUT THIS WEEKEND



Gold Coast karter Mitchell Griffin will debut in the Snap-on Stars of Karting Series in Salt Lake City this weekend

Young Australian karter Mitchell Griffin will make his debut in America's highest profile karting series, the Snap-on Stars of Karting series, in Salt Lake City, Utah this weekend.

Griffin, who flew from Queensland last week to meet with the Tony Kart USA team for a couple of days testing prior to the event, will compete in the Cadets category for drivers aged between 10 and 12 years.

Karting is considered the first step in any serious racer's career. It can prepare the driver for high-speed wheel-to-wheel racing by developing quick reflexes, precision, car control, set-up, mechanical and decision-making skills. The sport teaches the children in the Cadet class, both boys and girls, basic driving skills well before they are able to obtain their road licence as they reach speeds of up to 80 km/h.

With Griffin competing in five rounds of the series he will be making history by becoming the first Australian to regularly compete in the American series. The 11-year-old already has his sights set on a career in American motorsport and is aiming to follow in the footsteps of Australian NASCAR star Marcos Ambrose.



Griffin will compete in the Cadets class for drivers aged between 10 and 12 years

"I really want to be like Marcos, he is my idol," said Griffin.

"There are so many opportunities over here in America, it is the place to be where you will be seen by teams as many of them have 'scouts' coming to watch kart racing."

The Miller Motorsport Park, where this weekend's event will be held, is one of the most spectacular road course karting venues in America. At 1400 metres (0.89 miles), with a main straight approaching 275 metres (900 feet) in length and nine metres (30 feet) in width, the track is one of the fastest in the nation, yet still has a wide range of different-speed corners.

"The track is just awesome, it is better than anything I have ever been to before," said Griffin.

"Everything is bitumen, including the entire pit area, and we pit out of a garage like the V8 Supercars do in Australia - it's awesome.

"I was one of the fastest drivers in my category during testing last week so I'm hoping that I can have a good run over the weekend, learn a lot and finish somewhere near the front."

Griffin will take to the circuit for official practice tomorrow followed by racing across Saturday and Sunday before returning home to Australia on Monday.

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POLL

What was the best category to watch (or read about) at the Nationals?

- Junior National Light
- Junior National Heavy
- Junior Clubman
- Senior National Light
- Senior National Heavy
- Clubman Light
- Clubman Heavy
- Clubman Super Heavy
- Leopard Light
- Leopard Heavy

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