

ACCELERATED LEARNING

Coaching is a key factor in a driver's development if they are to succeed and enjoy their chosen motorsport path

Starting out in motorsport can be daunting, even for those with natural ability and confidence. Going racing for the first time, whilst very exciting, can be a scary business. It doesn't matter how fast you might be able to drive during a track day – swapping paint with other drivers in a race is a very different experience.

The best way to mitigate this is to get some tuition. A grounding in basic race craft will not only help to keep you safe, it also makes the start to your motorsport career – at whatever level – more enjoyable than struggling along without any direction.

A good example of how both novice and experienced drivers can benefit from driver coaching is given by DPR Motorsport, an official Caterham race team who run a number of entrants in all the series.

Going racing in a Caterham is a very good way of getting started. The Academy represents the entry point to a motorsport ladder that provides a complete beginner with an easy to achieve entry and, with the same car, develop their expertise over a number of years of increasingly competitive levels of motorsport.

Over the years, DPR race setups have gained a number of championship wins, including James Maclachlan's 2010 victory in the inaugural Supersport championship where he won 11 out of the 12 races in which he

took part. In 2011 their customers won the Academy and Roadsport championships.

Last season a DPR customer was either winner, runner-up, or both, in Academy Group One, Tracksport, Supersport, and R300, along with nine other top six finishers.

It's a very impressive record. How do they do it?

Part of their success comes from working with specialist driver coaches like Ben Clucas, a very experienced instructor who has won five championships, several Caterham races and who has an impressive CV spanning 20 years in all forms of motorsport, including F1. Having coached for 12 years, he knows how to get the best out of his students and onto the front of the grid in a short space of time: as well having coached race winners in Ginettas, Porsches, GTs and single seaters he worked intensively with Jamie Orton, coaching him to win both the Caterham Roadsport A and R300 Championships.

Ben says: "No one is the perfect driver and everyone has something to learn. In every sport in the world people use coaches to try and improve their techniques and performance, and motor racing is no different. In a class of racing as competitive as Caterhams, a few tenths of a second can make the difference between pole and mid-pack."

To augment the effectiveness of Ben's coaching, DPR also take a high-technology approach to their

campaigns by using Video VBOX, the latest in video-enhanced GPS data logging. Manufactured in the UK by Buckingham based Racelogic, it is a proven system that has been put to use by a number of drivers in claiming championship victories over the last couple of years, across a large range of race series from GTs to, of course, Caterhams.

Derrick Rowe of DPR: "We use Video VBOX because it absolutely sets the standard as a driver aid and greatly enhances our instructor's tuition. The system provides an on-track record for the driver that is then analysed with the coach to understand the constraints in reducing lap times. It makes a huge difference to how rapidly we can bring the competitor up to speed."

Anyone taking advantage of DPR's services will be tutored off-track using Circuit Tools, the analysis software that forms a part of the Video VBOX package. Ben has an excellent understanding of this software and has been putting it to use with Chris Hutchinson, a rookie in this year's Academy, who has had some early season training:

"I have used Ben's coaching with Racelogic's Video VBOX system, and had my car setup by DPR, and they have all been excellent. Ben has worked with me on several days, making me much faster and pointing things out that I would never have noticed myself. The Circuit Tools software is great for quickly and simply understanding where you are

losing those vital tenths of a second."

Analysis of performance and driving technique has been a major component in the higher echelons of motor racing for some years, but it is only recently that such technology has been widely available to the novice attempting his or her first season. In the Caterham world, the impact of using brain power as well as horsepower is becoming apparent in the rapidity with which lap records are being bettered.

Ben explains: "In tough one make racing like Caterhams every car is very even, so by far the biggest difference is the 'nut' behind the wheel." Derrick agrees: "Unlike series with more open regulations, Caterham Motorsport provides wheel-to-wheel racing with well-engineered cars, so driver ability is all important. The cars have hardly changed in several years – it's the drivers making the difference."

If you are about to embark on your inaugural racing season it's worth giving these points consideration. Good coaching and effective data analysis are hugely advantageous when it comes to getting the most from your racing, and can make a big difference to your progression.



Video VBOX Waterproof with Predictive lap timing display



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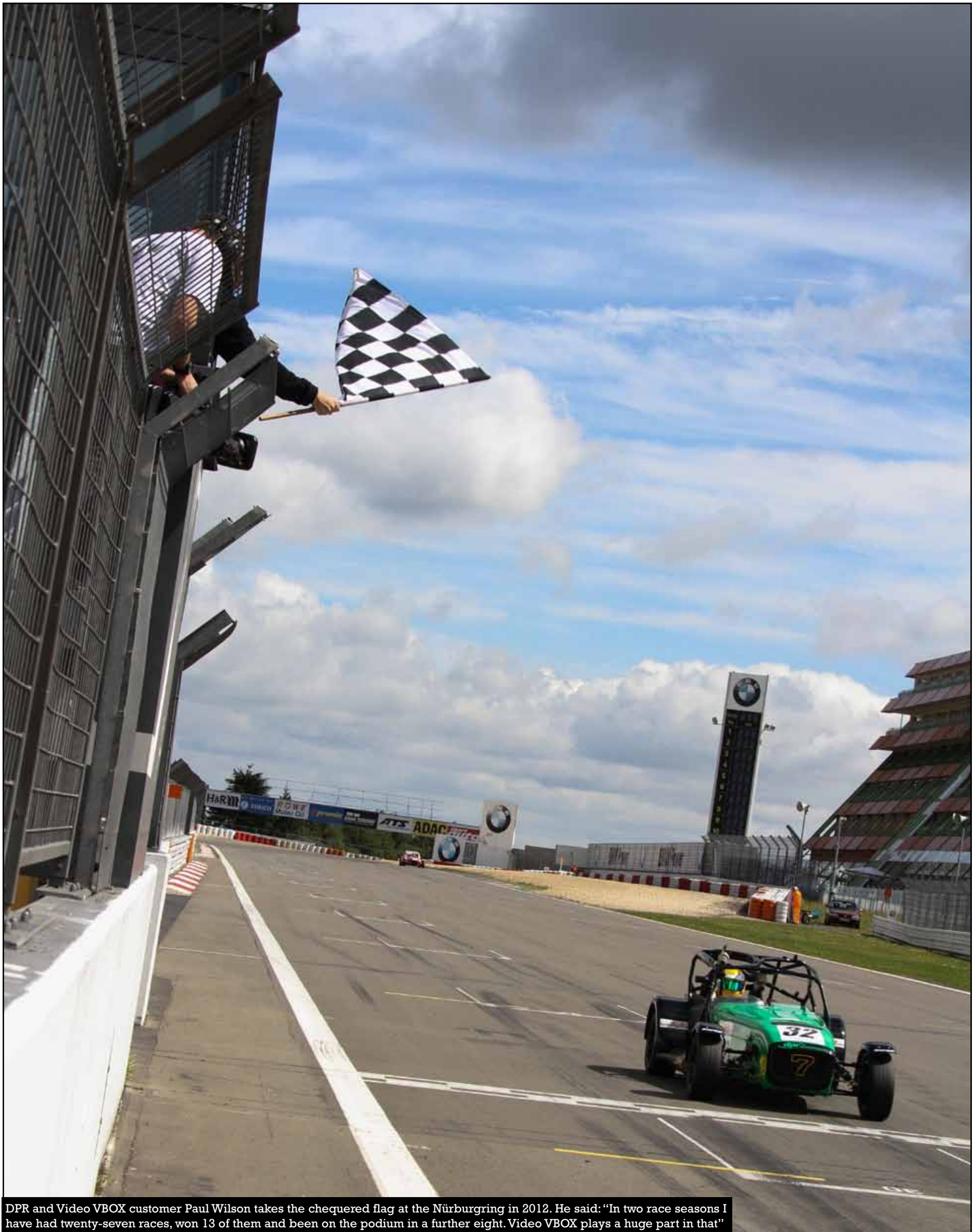
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Analysis using the Circuit Tools software is a fundamental part of the coaching offered by Ben Clucas and DPR



The Caterham Academy is a great way of starting on the motorsport ladder



DPR and Video VBOX customer Paul Wilson takes the chequered flag at the Nürburgring in 2012. He said: "In two race seasons I have had twenty-seven races, won 13 of them and been on the podium in a further eight. Video VBOX plays a huge part in that"