

Alex Huang

WORDS. Dave Bewley PHOTO. Chris Walker

Karting is a sport that demands considerable sacrifices to be made by competitors and their families. However, there can be few participants or parents who have committed themselves quite so strongly as 15 year old Alex Huang and his family. Having started out in the old KF cadet category four years ago, Alex recently upped sticks from his Singapore home and moved to Britain where he believed that racing would be of a much higher standard. Several others have made similar decisions, it's true, but what makes the case of Alex rather special is that he left his dad thousands of miles away. Dr Martin Huang is a highly successful plastic surgeon and needed to remain with the Singapore practice while his wife and son explored pastures new over here.

"Martin still takes a great interest in Alex's karting activities," says mum, Patricia. "He is always watching on live timing and will telephone me immediately if there's something out of the ordinary occurring. In fact we never seem to be off the phone during a race meeting," she adds with a laugh. "We return to Singapore when possible and Martin has joined us at some European races, so our time apart isn't such a big problem. This is an experimental year for all of us. We've chosen to jump right in and then take stock afterwards. It was really circumstances that dictated our move to the UK. When Alex started High School they wouldn't allow him sufficient time off to pursue his karting interests. We decided that he should take a break and enrolled him in an online school

that operates from America. We chose to live near the PF circuit because it's obviously the most popular karting venue in Britain. Our house is situated in Burton Waters just outside the city of Lincoln. I'm very impressed with Lincoln because it has so much history and really good shops."

Alex is currently a member of the MBR team. "Ben Barnicoat is my driver coach and it was his recommendation to try MBR after I'd experienced some problems with my previous team," he points out. "I'd observed Sean Butcher, another MBR team member, and he looked pretty quick so I trusted Ben's judgement on this one. The move has worked out very well for me and I'm much happier with my progress since joining them. The

atmosphere is more relaxed and I can actually enjoy my racing whereas previously I'd been on the verge of quitting altogether. My favourite circuits are PF and Larkhall. I don't have any great ambitions in karting apart from getting the best out of myself. It would be nice, though, to maybe win a round of S1 or the LGM. I'll also be contesting the European round of OK at PF in May. I've no plans outside of karting, although it might be good to test a GT3 or single seater car at some stage."

Unlike many young kart competitors, Alex isn't a keen fan of F1. "I don't watch it very much," he admits. "I quite like Daniel Ricciardo because he strikes me as a great racer, but otherwise there doesn't seem to