

Testata: **The Times**  
Diffusione: **Stampa Internazionale**  
Data uscita: **27/05/2013**



**The Times** Monday May 27 | 2013

# 'Bradical' on the fast track

Teen 'could be SA's first champ since 1980'

**JULIA BEFFON**

AT THIS time of year, most 17-year-olds are quietly cursing under their breath as they try to memorise facts and theorems for their mid-year exams.

Brad Binder's tests are of a much more straightforward, but dangerous, nature — trying to get his 250cc motorcycle into the first corner ahead of a bunch of equally determined riders at some of the world's greatest racetracks.

It's applied maths of the highest order and so far in 2013 Binder is passing with flying colours.

After four rounds of the world championship the South African youngster is fifth in the rankings of the Moto3 category of grand prix racing and the highest-placed Honda rider in the two-manufacturer class.

Binder was with the opposition, KTM, last season, but — after several engine blow-ups, most heartbreakingly when he was closing in on his first podium finish at the Sachsenring — moved to the more reliable Honda at the Italian Ambrogio racing team.

It's a move that has improved his consistency but has its drawbacks.

"KTM have really made a step-up in straight-line speed this year," Binder said from his base in Alicante, Spain.

"It means they blast past me on the straight and then I'm stuck behind them in the corners."

Moto3 is the 250cc class that, rather confusingly, replaced the 125cc championship at the beginning of last season. The previous 250cc class, renamed Moto2 and now on 600cc bikes, was launched in 2010.

Despite his tender years,

**'I would not say no to an offer to move up sooner'**

this is Binder's third campaign on the international circuit and, amazingly, his 10th year in competitive motorsport. He started in karts at the age of eight.

Binder was one of seven youngsters from around the world picked for the international Red Bull Rookies series in 2010, a championship in name only that showcases and grooms young riders from around the world.

The highlight of his two seasons in Rookies was a win (by nearly 16 seconds)

at Estoril — in the rain.

Manager Steve Burgess, who also manages stablemate Danny Webb, said Binder has all the talent required to be South Africa's first world champion since 35 years ago.

Though he has yet to get onto a podium, consistently finishing in the high points is putting "Bradical" — a nickname given him by Australian fellow Moto3 rider Arthur Sissis and emblazoned across the seat of Binder's leathers — on the map.

"Eventually I want to race in MotoGP. I'd like to have one more season after this in Moto3 and then move up to Moto2. But if an offer came to move up sooner, I definitely wouldn't say 'no' straight up. I'd have to think about it."

Planning a career in the expensive and expansive requires a great deal of dedication from the rider and sacrifice by his family.

"It costs at least £250,000 to have a rider in this class," said Burgess.

"We have sponsors [from Europe and Australia, but none from South Africa], but I have to raise that money from them every time."

To reduce flying costs, Binder and his mother have set up home in Alicante.

