



Jolyon Palmer celebrates his win at Monaco with dad Jonathan. Inset below, lifting a cup for third place at Silverstone

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# Palmer speeding towards a place in Formula One

**JOLYON PALMER** believes he is a step closer to a Formula One drive after another season of progress.

The 21-year-old is hoping to make the step up to the biggest stage in motorsport this time next year.

This follows a successful second season in GP2 where he claimed his maiden victory and two other podium finishes.

Palmer, from Southwater near Horsham, scored his first ever win in the F1 feeder series at Monaco in May.

He followed the likes of Lewis Hamilton by winning a GP2 race on the iconic street circuit when he put some early season electrical problems behind him as he triumphed in the sprint race with the iSport International team.

Palmer then backed up that result by taking third place in his home GP2 event at Silverstone in July before grabbing another third at Monza last month.

He showed excellent pace throughout the season, starting with the opening round in Malaysia when he topped the timesheets in the first practice session of the year, and would have finished higher than 11th in the final championship standings but

for those early-season electrical problems.

Now he hopes a GP2 championship challenge in 2013 will enable him to follow in the footsteps of his father Jonathan, who drove in 88 Formula One races from 1983-89.

Jolyon told The Argus: "When we moved to GP2 from F2 we knew there was limited track time and it was very competitive but it was also one step down from F1."

"We thought it would be a two-year plan which isn't to be as we have had two years

but hopefully I will be back for a third year and I think I will be one of the favourites and then we can look to move up to F1.

"I think I should have a shot at winning the championship next year. Experience counts for a lot and I'm confident driving for the team. "I have had a win and a couple of podiums. Hopefully this time next year I will be looking for an F1 drive."

Palmer has made good progress in single-seater racing, starting out in Formula Palmer Audi as a 16-year-old in 2007 before moving up to Formula Two in 2009.

He finished runner-up in F2 in 2010 before switching to GP2, finishing 28th overall in a productive rookie year.

This season has seen Palmer's career move to another level as his confidence and experience has grown.

He said: "It has been a good season. From last year when it was a bit disappointing but a tough learning year, I managed to put a lot of things I learnt into practice. I got my first win and a couple of other podiums."

"The most important thing was that I was nearly always on the pace."

Palmer admitted there were two major highlights from the season.

He said: "Monaco was a really good weekend. Just driving around Monaco is really good, because it is such a special place and to get my first win there made it a really special weekend."

"I felt my pace was good all year and I felt confident but until you have something to show for it there is always uncertainty. It was great to get off the mark at Monaco and from that point on I felt really good."

"Then we had Silverstone when to take a podium at home was excellent. I had a lot of family and friends there. There have been a few highlights but those the two best."

