

Birmingham entry heading for Hockenheim

ACCOUNTANTS

By Steve Pain
Acting Business Editor

Chartered accountants Clement Keys is helping a group of engineering students from the University of Birmingham build careers in motorsport by supporting their entry in this year's Formula Student.

Clement Keys partner Michael Meakin, who specialises in accountancy services for motorsport, has helped put the team on track for success by arranging race-craft training with professional Renault driver Dean Smith prior to the Formula Student competitions.

Formula Student is an initiative that aims to nurture engineering talent by involving students in the design and production of a single-seater racing car.

The aim is to develop not just design and manufacturing competence, but also the management, marketing and people skills key to success in the industry.

"The team has built its car to very high standards and is confident it will be fast and reliable, but you only have to look at today's exponents of Formula 1 to see what a difference a good driver can make," said Mr Meakin. "We work with automotive engineering clients, including racing teams and drivers like Dean, contesting this year's Eurocup Formula Renault 2.0 Championship, and used our contacts to make sure the University of Birmingham team's drivers are equipped to get the best out of the car."

This year's entry has been built over nine months by 25 students working towards degrees in mechanical and electrical engineering. They designed and built a car with a fully adjustable independent double wishbone suspension, front anti-roll bar, lightweight magnesium wheels, a tubular steel chassis and full data logging, including g-forces and GPS positioning.

The tyres have been custom designed and

developed in collaboration with Dunlop Motorsport.

The first of the Formula Student competitions took place at Silverstone from July 10-13 and will be followed by further tests at Germany's Hockenheim circuit in August.

The University of Birmingham is competing against 76 university teams from across the world and is one of only seven representing the UK.

Clement Keys has a dedicated sport, media and entertainment unit and is unique in providing specialist accountancy services, which are not normally available outside of London, to clients working in these areas.



Michael Meakin from Clement Keys, Alex Coignac-Smith of Birmingham University and Dean Smith – racing driver