

Di Resta makes return to DTM with Mercedes

Scottish driver Paul di Resta has secured his immediate future in racing by making a return to DTM, the German Touring Car series where he made his name in 2010.

Despite recording an impressive 12th place finish in the 2013 F1 Drivers' Championship, di Resta was not kept on at Force India, the team preferring to go for a completely new line-up in Nico Hülkenberg and Sergio Perez. The 27-year-old found himself without a place in Formula 1 and rumours began to circulate about a return to DTM.

Today, Mercedes and di Resta confirmed a partnership which will allow the Bathgate-born driver the opportunity to compete in the 2014 season alongside 2005 champion Gary Paffett.

Speaking to AUTOSPORT, di Resta said that he was pleased to make his return to the series:- "I'm happy to be coming back to the DTM – things have moved on here since 2010.

"I loved my time here before and I have great respect for it, and hopefully I will only grow fonder of it.

"Racing is my job, but I've got to enjoy my racing, and coming back here is where I am going to enjoy it most."

Di Resta is determined to push for wins and mount a championship challenge, hoping to find the kind of form which saw him win the title in 2010 and which earned him a place in Formula 1.

"I'm coming in with the goal of winning the first race. I don't really want to give myself time to settle in," he said. "Maybe it will take time, but certainly when I signed the contract I signed it to go out and win the championship.

“I was the last person to win a championship here for Mercedes and bringing the title back is one of the key reasons Mercedes has brought me here.”

The partnership with Mercedes could also mean that di Resta stays involved with Formula 1, with suggestions that he could combine his DTM role with that of reserve driver for Mercedes AMG Petronas F1 team. Although di Resta refused to confirm any such agreement was in place, he did concede that he could do both with a view to one day returning to Formula 1;- “Racing in the DTM makes sense, and it lets me combine something with F1 and keep my foot in the door should something come up.”

The DTM season begins at Hockenheim on 4 May.