

Q&A



PAUL SAWYER

British DJ is finding success in budding motorsport career

Photos: Sophie Mayes Photography



Sawyer (centre) has turned hand to racing

Paul Sawyer is an international DJ who has his own record label and has performed in Ibiza and on BBC Radio 1.

In 2024, the Briton pursued his passion for motorsport, entering the MINI Challenge Clubsport championship. Sawyer is now a multiple class winner and ready for his next challenge.

He spoke to *Motorsport News*.

Motorsport News: How did you end up combining music and racing?

Paul Sawyer: "Music has been in my life since the early '90s, and I've always been into fast cars. I did motocross from the age of 11 and then downhill mountain bike racing. I broke my collarbone three years ago and, because racing is in my blood, I was thinking about what I was going to do next. My brother was doing track days, so I ended up buying a MINI that was used for hillclimbs, absolutely loved it and started putting posts on Instagram. One of the drivers who was in MINI Challenge Clubsport at the time followed me, we went out together at Thruxton to see what my driving was like, and he said I should race."

MN: What is the favourite car you've driven?

PS: "I've driven other cars doing supercar days and stuff but, funnily enough, I've just bought a Ginetta. I went out to Donington Park a few weeks ago to do a test day and absolutely loved it. I'm looking to race that next year."

MN: Who have been your biggest influences as a driver?

PS: "I've got such a brilliant team behind me who have helped to bring me forward with my driving. The difference between now and when I started in 2024, it's chalk and cheese. Chris Williams, our team manager, really



Sawyer has been getting class wins

brought me along last year. I've had [BTCC driver] Bobby Thompson coaching me this year, who has made a massive difference and made really small changes that have transformed my driving."

MN: If you could race any car, what would you pick?

PS: "I would love to race a 992 Cup car, or a Cayman GT4; I've always fancied a go in the Porsche Sprint Challenge."

MN: Which driver, past or present, would you most like to go head-to-head against?

PS: "I really like Ricky Collard as a driver. I just love his enthusiasm. Also, Daryl De Leon – I've spent some time with him this year and he's such a lovely guy and a brilliant driver."



Sawyer is a celebrated DJ with his own label

MN: What are your ambitions for the next few years in motorsport?

PS: "I'm looking at going into either Britcar or the GT Cup Championship next year with the Ginetta. It feels like the right time to make the step up into a different series and go rear-wheel drive with something a bit quicker. I've loved racing the MINI and have learnt so much."

"I've also not raced at Knockhill or Oulton Park yet, so I'd love to have a go at those, Silverstone GP and Brands Hatch GP too. Doing Britcar or GT Cup should give me the opportunity."

"I have wanted to do longer races for a long time. I did a 40-minute race in a Clio Cup car last year at Thruxton and really enjoyed having more time to think about the race rather than just a 15-minute sprint. I've done a C1 endurance race, and it was great fun, but it just wasn't quick enough for me."

MN: Which excites you more: playing a festival or lining up on the grid?

PS: "It's quite a similar feeling with the nerves, and both I absolutely love. Getting up on the stage in front of thousands of people is a great feeling and sitting on the grid is exactly the same. I probably get a little bit more nervous racing, but that soon disappears once you get off the startline."

MN: Do you listen to music before a race?

PS: "Funnily enough, I haven't got a pre-race playlist, but we do have decks in the awning. One of my friends is a DJ and he has been coming along and playing music between races, and it has been brilliant, it really gets you into the zone."

MN: Which racing driver do you think would make a good DJ?

PS: "I can imagine someone like Lewis Hamilton doing it. Freddy Hewitt, who is in our series, is a drum and bass DJ and he is brilliant. He's at the right age to really make something of being a DJ as well, so I could see him doing really well."

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