

SGP4 YOUTH CATEGORY LAUNCHES IN SWEDEN THIS SUMMER DURING SGP MALILLA

The future of youth speedway is here as FIM Speedway global promoter Discovery Sports Events and the FIM prepare to launch SGP4 this summer.

As part of their 10-year vision to nurture FIM Speedway's future stars, Discovery Sports Events has enlisted the expertise of six-time world champion Tony Rickardsson to develop a new entry-level bike, aimed at 11 to 13-year-olds, to help the sport's next generation take their first steps into speedway.

After a year of testing and development across Europe, a 190cc, four-stroke bike has been selected and the SGP4 bike will make its international debut in a special SGP4 test event, to be raced on the Skrotfrag Arena training track on the day of the 2023 FIM Speedway GP of Sweden – Malilla on July 15.

Young riders from around the world will be invited to race at one of world speedway's most famous venues, and it is hoped national federations will adopt the SGP4 bike for their own national championships from 2024.

Youth riders around the world currently start racing on different bikes, with Scandinavian nations staging 85cc competitions and other countries running 125cc categories for their youngest stars.

Rickardsson believes having one standard bike for youth riders would offer them the perfect stepping stone on their journey towards FIM Speedway Grand Prix stardom.

He said: "The idea of this bike which we have worked on is it should look like a big bike, sound like a big bike and, most importantly, it should ride like a big bike, but in a small package and for a reasonable sum of money. I think we have reached all of these criteria.

"These bikes are built for approximately 11 to 13-year-olds, size-wise, but it could be a practice bike for anybody.

"All in all, the first objective was to build a class where you can come from all over the world and race under the same regulations on an international level. We are hoping all the national federations will also pick up this bike model for their national championships as well.

"If you want to race internationally, it will be with the SGP4 bike. When I started this project, people said it would be impossible to change. But now everybody I speak to is hopefully

going to implement these bikes into their national championships.

“This is the future. It is also the first time you can go and buy a bike ready to race, and not only at national level. You can go international.”

As well as ensuring the new bikes will be as affordable as possible, Rickardsson was determined to create a machine that opens the sport up to families who have never been involved with racing before.

He said: “It’s just going to make it so much easier for newcomers to the sport. You won’t have to have parents who are extremely technically advanced that can build their own bikes.

“Previously, it was more or less impossible to start riding speedway if you didn’t have a parent who could build a bike. Now anybody can go to a shop or order online and have a bike that’s ready to race delivered right to their doorstep.”

While Rickardsson insists he isn’t trying to stop youngsters honing their skills on other youth bikes if they prefer, he is confident the new SGP4 machine will become the bike of choice.

He said: “These chassis are built from the best you can buy of everything – from handlebars to specially-designed frames, engine plates and wheels. It’s the best you can buy on the market.

“Engine-wise, we have the most suitable engine for this bike. These chassis will also have a great second-hand price. Everybody will see the quality of them. The complete bike will have a higher second-hand value than the existing youth bikes. I think these bikes will live on for a very long time.

“At a time when environmental factors are at the forefront of everyone’s minds, I am also pleased to say the four-stroke engine creates less pollution, while the exhaust system minimises noise pollution.”

For the first time in speedway history, Discovery Sports Events brought all of the sport’s international junior and youth championships under the SGP banner when they began their tenure as FIM Speedway global promoter in 2022.

Developing the SGP4 category was a key priority for François Ribeiro, Head of Discovery Sports Events, as the group works to strengthen the pyramid and ensure that in speedway’s 100th anniversary year, the sport continues to produce young talent as it enters its second century of racing.

He said: “This is another exciting step on our journey to develop the next generation of Speedway GP riders. I want to thank Tony Rickardsson and everyone involved with the project for their time and expertise, which has delivered a bike which we hope will train our

future champions.

“We are all looking forward to our SGP4 test event in Malilla, which has the ideal training track to showcase the new bikes – on the same weekend as we also stage the FIM SGP3 Final; an event which delivered some fantastic 250cc racing at Wroclaw in 2022.

“We hope SGP4 will also prove a great success and the SGP4 bikes will become the go-to bike for any rider with ambitions of making it into Speedway GP one day.”

FIM CCP Track Racing Commission director Armando Castagna commented: “Along with Discovery Sports Events, we identified a class that was missing from our discipline, and it has been a pleasure to work with Tony Rickardsson and everyone involved to create both a new bike and a new category for riders taking their first steps into our sport.

“Making bikes more available and accessible allows riders from many more backgrounds and countries the chance to try speedway and compete against rivals from all over the world on the international stage.

“We are very much looking forward to the SGP4 test event in Malilla and hopefully SGP4 will establish itself as a great event on the FIM track racing calendar in the years to come.”

Further details about the SGP4 bikes, prices and how to order will be available on [FIMSpeedway.com](https://www.fimspeedway.com) soon, with the machines also on display in FIM Speedway fanzones throughout the 2023 season.