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**TOP STAR MAZDA CHAMPIONSHIP DRIVER TO RECEIVE TEST IN
AMERICAN LE MANS SERIES**

MANSFIELD, Ohio, May 20, 2005 – In a joint announcement today at Mid-Ohio Raceway, Mazda North American Operations and B-K Motorsports, Inc., in association with the Star Mazda Championship Presented by Goodyear, announced that one Star Mazda driver will be given the opportunity to test a Mazda rotary-powered prototype racecar at the end of the 2005 season. If all goes well during the test, the driver will join B-K Motorsports' regular drivers in the Mazda-Courage racecar for the 2006 running of the 12-Hours of Sebring.

“Since our earliest days in top-level motorsports, Mazda has pinned its hopes – and based its successes – on the rotary engine,” said Steve Sanders, manager, *MAZDASPEED* Motorsports Development. “Our involvement in the Star Mazda Championship – powered by the two-rotor RENESIS engine – and the American Le Mans Series P2 class – powered by a RENESIS-based three-rotor engine – is proof of the engine’s versatility and the company’s commitment to it.”

“Now, Mazda is making a similar commitment to supporting young drivers through the Star Mazda Championship and our relationship with B-K Motorsports’ ALMS program,” Sanders added.

“Current B-K Motorsports drivers Guy Cosmo and Jamie Bach are both graduates of the Star Mazda series, and are examples that this ladder system works,” said John Doonan, Mazda’s manager of motorsport team development, and liaison to B-K Motorsports. “It’s a thrill for us to be bringing Mazda back into top-level endurance racing, and to already have two Star Mazda graduates behind the wheel – with the promise of another joining us soon – shows that Mazda truly does provide the best support in the business.”

Whether young drivers choose to pursue a career in open- or closed-wheel racecars, there’s a Mazda training ladder available. For open-wheel drivers, starting at the Club level in a

Formula Mazda is the perfect combination of speed, competition and affordable cost. Moving up to the professional Star Mazda Championship means television coverage and running at many of the ALMS race weekends, exposing young drivers to potential sponsors and team owners. And now, the possibility of a test in an ALMS P2 car is the perfect springboard for a professional racing career.

“Today’s announcement of this new prize furthers the Series’ mission to develop and encourage the careers of young drivers,” said Gary Rodrigues, Star Mazda Championship president. “We have always tried to align ourselves with top series and venues to give our drivers the exposure they need to showcase their skills and build their careers. Now that Mazda has stepped up to the plate again, we’re able to provide a world-class opportunity to one of our drivers to perform at the historic 12-Hours of Sebring. It doesn’t get much better than that.”

Closed-wheel drivers may start at the Club level in showroom-stock or the one-make Spec Miata series. From there, they may move to the *MAZDASPEED* Cup professional Spec Miata series and ultimately into SPEED World Challenge in a MAZDA6 or Grand Am Cup in an RX-8.

On any given weekend, there are more Mazdas on the road-race tracks of America than any other brand of vehicle. Mazda’s motorsport involvement even extends to the nation’s premier road-racing circuit, Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca.

Mazda North American Operations is responsible for the sales and marketing, customer parts and services support of Mazda vehicles in the United States. Headquartered in Irvine, Calif., MNAO has more than 700 dealerships nationwide.

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