



Star Mazda Champion Adam Christodoulou Completes Successful First Atlantic Test with Team Stargate Worlds at Buttonwillow Raceway in California

BUTTONWILLOW, Calif. (December 18, 2009) – The Star Mazda Championship presented by Goodyear is a major rung on the MAZDASPEED Motorsports Driver Development ladder. Beyond their natural competitiveness, drivers in the Star Mazda Championship are competing for one of the most prestigious and sought-after prizes in motorsports – the MAZDASPEED Ladder scholarship, funding from MAZDA USA to compete in the Atlantic Championship Powered by Mazda.



Recently, 2009 Star Mazda champion **Adam Christodoulou** got his first taste of the Mazda-Cosworth-powered Swift 016.a in a two-day test with Team Stargate Worlds at Buttonwillow Raceway in Southern California.

The 20-year-old British driver logged nearly 400 miles over the two days in cool weather conditions aboard the same No. 78 machine that **Simona De Silvestro** piloted to four victories and third in points in the 2009 Atlantic Championship. The

team, which is based at Buttonwillow, reported that Christodoulou managed to work up to speed quickly and rarely put a wheel wrong over the two days.

After spending the early portion of his career in Europe, and winning the 2008 Formula Renault U.K. Championship, Christodoulou made the move to the U.S. and the Star Mazda championship in 2009. He took the title with three victories and two pole positions from 13 starts, winning the championship over **Peter 'The Irish Steamroller' Dempsey** in dramatic fashion in the final race of the season at Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca. As part of his prize for winning the Star Mazda title, Christodoulou receives a Mazda-funded ride in the 2010 Atlantic Championship – the top rung of the MAZDASPEED Motorsports Driver Development Ladder – courtesy of Mazda.

"It's been really good," Christodoulou said. "We never ran into and trouble and ended up just a fraction off Simona's time around here, so I think for my second day in the car, it's gone extremely well. The team did an awesome job. We didn't have any problems on their part. I had one minor detour off the track, but apart from that, everything else ran smoothly. We've had two days of flat-out testing pretty much. It's been quite cold, but it's been some good testing and it's been an enjoyable first experience in the Atlantic car. I've really enjoyed it."

After a break for the holidays, both Team Stargate Worlds and Christodoulou expect to hit the Atlantic testing trail hard early in the New Year. Both expect to participate in series-sanctioned testing at Sebring International Raceway on the weekend of January 22-24, 2010.

About the Atlantic Championship

The Atlantic Championship heads into its 37th year of competition in 2010 and is noted for its long history of graduating its drivers into the top levels of motorsport throughout the world. Graduates include past and present IndyCar drivers such as Bobby Rahal, Danny Sullivan, Michael Andretti, Jimmy Vasser, Danica Patrick, Dan Wheldon, Graham Rahal, Ryan Hunter-Reay and Raphael Matos, Formula One legends and champions such as Gilles Villeneuve, Jacques Villeneuve and Keke Rosberg, NASCAR Sprint Cup Series drivers Sam Hornish Jr. and AJ Allmendinger and sports car stars like Jon Fogarty, Alex Gurney, Michael Valiante, Luis Diaz, Joey Hand and Simon Pagenaud.

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About Star Mazda Championship presented by Goodyear

For 2010, the Star Mazda Championship presented by Goodyear will feature an 11-weekend, 13-race schedule, most on major race weekends with American Le Mans and the Indy Racing League. Rising stars from around the world will be watched by more than a million fans as they compete for prizes valued at \$1.5 million, including a Mazda-sponsored, full-season drive on the next level of the MAZDASPEED Motorsports Driver Development Ladder. The Star Mazda Championship is also part of the IRL's new Road to Indy driver development program. Drivers 16 and older are welcome to compete and the Star Mazda Championship also features Expert (30 to 44) and Master (45 and older) classes for more mature racers. The Star Mazda Championship features standing starts, wheel-to-wheel racing at 150 mph and budgets a fraction of other top open-wheel ladder series. For more information on the Star Mazda Championship please visit www.starmazda.com

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