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Looking for the Stars of 2020

MAZDASPEED Ladder Promotes Tomorrow's Champions, Today

August 3, 2010 (IRVINE, Calif.). With thousands of active club racers across North America, Mazda has developed a grassroots racing program and career advancement system like no other. Mazda is the only automaker who promotes drivers from a variety of feeder series to reach the next level in their career. This is known as the MAZDASPEED Motorsports Development Ladder, and no other automaker in the world offers anything like it.

Mazda rewarded six 2009 champions with Mazda-funded rides in 2010, and sights are already being set for 2011. This is support in the form of cold-hard-cash, for a champion or shootout winner, to be used in a Mazda-powered car, in a higher level series the following season.

"When we formalized our program for the 2006/2007 season, we quickly learned that changes would be required each year to match the changes in the industry and the sport. While the Atlantic Championship went on hiatus and rules changes obsoleted our World Challenge program, we have seen the addition of a Formula 2000 class, the adoption of Star Mazda and USF2000 as a part of the Road to Indy, and experienced tremendous growth in our customer programs in both Grand-Am GT and Continental Tire ST creating new opportunities," noted Robert Davis, Senior Vice President, Product Development and Quality, and the man responsible for Mazda's North American motorsports operations under the MAZDASPEED Motorsports Development banner. "Success has also come from having great partners like VISITFLORIDA.com, who have placed our key Star Mazda races on TV such as this past weekend when Harrah's Autobahn Grand Prix was shown live on HDNet," he added.

2010 Mazda racers have their eye on the following prizes:

- A Mazda-powered club racer will be awarded a ride in the 2011 Playboy Mazda MX-5 Cup.
- The 2010 Playboy Mazda MX-5 Cup champion will be awarded a ride in a MAZDASPEED3 in the 2011 Continental Tire Challenge Series.
- Two karting champions will be awarded rides in the 2011 BFGoodrich/Skip Barber National Championship, after a multi-day shootout at Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca in December.
- The 2010 Skip Barber National champion will be awarded a ride in the 2011 Cooper Tires USF2000 Championship Powered by Mazda.
- The 2010 USF2000 champion will be awarded a ride in the 2011 Star Mazda Championship. Introduced in 2010, the Cooper Tires USF2000 Championship Powered by Mazda is the newest series within the MAZDASPEED Motorsports Development Ladder. Both the Star Mazda and USF2000 Championships also are a part of the Road to Indy.
- The 2010 Star Mazda champion will be awarded a full-season ride in a Mazda RX-8 in the 2011 Grand-Am GT Championship.

The 2009 champions have been making their mark in 2010.

- 2009 Star Mazda Champion **Adam Christodoulou** is currently ranked seventh in Grand-Am GT driver points, having scored one win and two second places.
- 2009 Skip Barber Champion, and 2007 Karting shootout winner **Connor De Phillippi** is currently ranked seventh in Star Mazda points, having finished in the top eight in eight of the first nine races of the season.
- 2009 karting shootout winners **Spencer Pigot** and **Felix Serralles** are currently ranked first and fourth respectively in the Skip Barber championship points.
- 2009 MX-5 Cup champion **Todd Lamb** has been racing a Mazda RX-8 in the Grand-Am GT championship and is currently ranked 15th in points with a season-best finish of second.
- 2009 club racing shootout winner **Nick Evans** is ranked fifth in points in this year's MX-5 Cup points chase, having scored three podium finishes and two pole positions in the first eight races.

Equally impressive are our recent ladder alums including:

- 2008 Star Mazda Champion/2009 Atlantic Champion **John Edwards** is the teammate to Adam Christodoulou, currently ranked seventh in Grand-Am GT driver points. They are third among all rookies (combined DP & GT).
- 2008 Skip Barber Champion **Conor Daly** is leading the 2010 Star Mazda Championship, having scored five wins from the first nine races.
- 2008 Karting shootout winner **Sage Karam** is leading the USF2000 Championship, having scored five wins from the first eight races.
- 2008 club racing shootout winner **Justin Piscitell** is leading the 2010 Playboy MX-5 Cup, having scored his first series win this year and having no finishes below fourth.
- 2007 club racing shootout winner **Brad Rampelberg** is third in the 2010 Playboy MX-5 Cup standings, having scored four wins from the first eight races.
- 2006 club racing shootout winner **Andrew Caddell** left the pavement for the off-road world. He is third in the 2010 Traxxas PRO LIGHT 2WD standings.

ABOUT MAZDA

On any given weekend, there are more Mazdas on the road-race tracks of America than any other brand of vehicle. At the track, you'll see MX-5 Miata, RX-8, MAZDA3, MAZDA6, RX-7 and other vintage Mazda models competing, because every Mazda has the Soul of a Sports Car. In fact, the largest road-racing class in the world is Spec Miata, with more than 2,500 first- and second-generation Miatas tearing up America's racetracks, making it the most-raced production car in the world. Mazda's involvement in motorsports extends to its relationship with Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca, one of the world's premier road-racing circuits, and the Skip Barber Schools for driving and racing.

Celebrating its 40th Anniversary in the United States in 2010, Mazda North American Operations is headquartered in Irvine, Calif. and oversees the sales, marketing, parts and customer service support of Mazda vehicles in the United States, Canada and Mexico through nearly 900 dealers. Operations in Canada are managed by Mazda Canada, Inc., located in Ontario; and in Mexico by Mazda Motor de Mexico in Mexico City.