



**STAR MAZDA CHAMPIONSHIP TO AWARD 2010 PRIZES VALUED AT \$1.5 MILLION --  
INCLUDING FULL-SEASON GRAND-AM GT 1 DRIVE IN FACTORY-BACKED RX-8**

Pacoima, CA / Sept. 7, 2010 – The Star Mazda Championship presented by Goodyear today announced that the drivers who competed in the series' 20th anniversary 2010 season will divide a prize package valued in excess of \$1.5 million.

The top prize, valued at \$750,000, is a career-making opportunity that motivates young drivers from around the world to battle for the series championship -- a full-season drive in a factory-backed RX-8 competing in the 2011 Grand-Am GT 1 class courtesy of the **MAZDASPEED** Motorsports Driver Development Ladder. In addition, the champion gets \$100,000 in cash and a test with a top Indy Lights team courtesy of Performance Friction, Andersen Racing and the IndyCar **Road to Indy** program.

Drivers are also competing for the first annual **VISITFLORIDA** Cup, a 7-race championship-within-a-championship sponsored by the series' television partner, **VISITFLORIDA**, the official tourism and marketing organization for the state of Florida. The live HDnet broadcasts and global syndication package made possible by the **VISITFLORIDA** partnership brings Star Mazda Championship racing to more than 150 million households worldwide. The prize, a custom 'dream vacation' provided by VISIT Florida goes to the driver scoring the most points in the seven races that are part of the Cup, including the upcoming season finale at the 13th Annual Petit Le Mans at Road Atlanta, September 29 – October 2.

Cash awards totaling \$500,000 will be presented to the top-15 finishers in the points championship; the winner of the coveted 'Rookie of the Year' award gets \$10,000. The top-3 finishers in the Expert and Master Series championship each receive \$10,000, \$5,000 and \$2,500 respectively, while the top-3 finishers in the Team Championship get \$10,000, \$7,500 and \$5,000.

Special prizes add to the total, including \$5,000 for the Quartermaster Clutch Performer Award, \$5,000 for the VP Fuels Most Improved Driver Award, \$2,500 for the President's (Spirit of Star Mazda) Award and \$1,500 for the Performance Friction Crewmember of the Year Award. The winner of the BBS Wheels Hard Charger Award gets a custom-made coffee table made from a polished BBS wheel and etched glass top, plus a set of four BBS racing or BBS road car wheels, a prize valued at \$5,000. In addition, merchandise valued at more than \$40,000 is awarded via drawings conducted during driver meetings at each race weekend, including 26 sets of new Goodyear radial racing tires (two sets per weekend) and 13 sets of Performance Friction brake pads.

"With the support of our sponsors and corporate partners, we're able to offer a prize package that is noteworthy for both its size and its focus on enhancing the careers of the drivers who compete in our series," says Gary Rodrigues, founder and CEO of the Star Mazda Championship. "Our champions from 2008 and 2009, John Edwards and Adam Christodoulou, teamed up with backing from the MAZDASPEED Ladder to race a SpeedSource RX-8 and help Mazda win the 2010 Grand-Am Manufacturer's Championship. Building relationships with a global automaker and racing a factory-sponsored car in a high-profile international series is a huge step forward for these young drivers. Both of them have now won championships in open-wheel and sports car racing and are on their way to careers as professional drivers. That is function of the Star Mazda Championship and the **MAZDASPEED** Ladder, and I think it's clear that the program is working."

The **MAZDASPEED** Motorsports Driver Development Ladder is the only automaker-backed driver development program that provides financial resources for champions to move up through the ranks from karting to the Skip Barber Pro Series, then to the USF2000 National Championship Powered by Mazda and the Star Mazda Championship presented by Goodyear.

IndyCar's **Road to Indy** program is a separate but complimentary driver development program and is designed to provide a clear path for young drivers whose goal is to race in IndyCar and the Indy 500. The Road to Indy includes the USF2000 National Championship, the Star Mazda Championship and Indy Lights. The Indy Lights test that is part of the Star Mazda champion's prize package is provided through the joint efforts of Star Mazda, Performance Friction, Andersen Racing and the **Road to Indy**. Additional **Road to Indy** elements of the 2011 Star Mazda Championship prize package are under development and will be announced soon.

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For more information on the Star Mazda Championship and its drivers, please visit [www.starmazda.com](http://www.starmazda.com). For additional assistance with interviews, photos, etc., contact Star Mazda Communications Director Peter Frey at (818) 398-5733 or [StarMazdaPR@aol.com](mailto:StarMazdaPR@aol.com).

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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.

For more information on the various Mazda spec series, visit:

[www.atlantic-championship.com](http://www.atlantic-championship.com)

[www.skipbarber.com](http://www.skipbarber.com)

[www.mx-5cup.com](http://www.mx-5cup.com)

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