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Star Mazda Racers to Battle for VISIT FLORIDA Cup

December 10, 2009 (Orlando, Fla.). MAZDASPEED racers compete in a host of series from coast-to-coast, but certain states have a disproportionate number of great race tracks. Florida, the No. 1 travel destination in the world, is home to dozens of iconic race tracks including Daytona, Sebring, Homestead, Gainesville and the St. Petersburg street course.

Mazda has formed a partnership with VISIT FLORIDA[®], the state's official tourism marketing corporation, to promote awareness of the many attributes of the Sunshine State to race fans. Mazda race teams will be promoting Florida vacations in target markets throughout the year.

Racers competing in the Star Mazda Championship Presented by Goodyear will be competing for a new award, the VISIT FLORIDA Cup. The racer scoring the most points in five specific races will win the Cup, as well as a personalized Florida dream vacation. The five races are:

- Sebring International Raceway (Sebring)
- New Jersey Motorsports Park (New York City)
- Autobahn Country Club (Chicago)
- Mosport International Raceway (Toronto)
- Road Atlanta (Atlanta)

Quotes:

Will Seccombe, Chief Marketing Officer, VISIT FLORIDA -- "We've seen what the Mazda racers have done as brand ambassadors for Mazda and are anxious to have them share the wonders of Florida with their friends and fans. The fact that the Star Mazda series draws racers from around the world makes it a great fit to promote Florida on a global level."

Robert Davis, Senior Vice President, Mazda North American Operations -- "Growing up in the South, I've taken many wonderful trips to Florida for Speed Week and Bike Week over the years. My Dad lives in Florida and I visit often for both work and pleasure, so it's easy for me to talk about the merits of this beautiful place. Florida is also a key market for Mazda and we have a strong presence in the state, as exemplified by our decision to have a regional office based in Jacksonville."

Sylvain Tremblay, Owner, SpeedSource Inc. -- "In the business that we are in, there are only a few places in North America that have the weather, race tracks and talent pool to run a professional road racing program and Florida is at the top of the list and the obvious perfect place for us to be based."

Fun Facts:

- Florida is the No. 1 travel destination in the world, welcoming 84 million visitors and employing more than 1 million Floridians.
- Mazda has scored 22 wins at the 24 Hours of Daytona and a dozen wins in the 12 Hours of Sebring since 1973.
- Sebring International Raceway has been a key sports car destination and tradition in central Florida for over half a century, drawing in excess of 150,000 spectators to its many races.
- Florida was the second state to have a Mazda office when they entered the U.S. market in 1970. There are currently over 70 Mazda dealers in the state of Florida.
- Mazda was the first title sponsor of the Gator Bowl from 1986-1991.
- Mazda racers who currently call Florida home include Sylvain Tremblay and Charles Espenlaub.
- Florida is home to multiple car museums including the Don Garlits Museum, Daytona USA, Rick Treworgy's Muscle Car City, the Sarasota Classic Car Museum and the Tallahassee Automobile Museum.
- Now in its 22nd year, the Performance Racing Industries (PRI) show - the world's largest motorsports racing trade show - is held annually in Orlando.

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.

ABOUT VISIT FLORIDA

VISIT FLORIDA (VF) is the official tourism marketing corporation for the State of Florida. VF is not a government agency, but rather a not-for-profit corporation that carries out the work of the Florida Commission on Tourism. It was created by the Florida legislature in 1996 as a public/private partnership. VF markets to consumers, both in the U.S. and abroad, works with the world's major travel journalists, represents the state at domestic and international travel trade shows and promotes the state to travel agents, tour operators and consumers all over the world. VF has hundreds of sales and promotional programs to help the state's many tourism businesses and destinations market themselves more effectively and affordably.

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