



## STAR MAZDA CHAMPIONSHIP SEASON-OPENER AT SEBRING ON HDnet THIS WEEKEND – FIRST OF SEVEN TELEVISED RACES IN 2010 VISITFLORIDA CUP

April 22, 2010 – The 2010 Star Mazda Championship presented by Goodyear season-opener at the 12 Hours of Sebring gets a double premier airing this weekend on HDnet. The 1-hour high-



definition broadcast, sponsored by VISITFLORIDA, will air at 5:00 pm (ET) Saturday, April 24 and again at Noon (ET) on Sunday, April 25. HDnet reaches approximately 17 million homes in the U.S. The broadcast team includes veteran Rick Benjamin on play-by-play, Johnny O'Connell as analyst, and Todd Lewis on pit road.

The first race of the Star Mazda Championship's new season features a field of 23 top drivers from around the world, including three open-wheel champions from other series, battling wheel-to-wheel for the honor – and momentum – that comes from winning the opening round. To the winner also goes the early lead in the 2010 VISITFLORIDA Cup, a 5-event, 7-race 'championship-within-a-championship.' The racer scoring the most points in the five VISIT FLORIDA weekends will win the Cup, as well as a personalized Florida dream vacation.

Thanks to the partnership between MAZDASPEED and VISITFLORIDA (the state's official tourism development corporation), select races of the 2010 Star Mazda Championship Presented By Goodyear will be televised, including four LIVE HD broadcasts. The five race weekends and seven races that constitute the VISITFLORIDA Cup include:

- Sebring International Raceway, March 19, 2010 (Season Opener)
- New Jersey Motorsports Park, June 26-27, 2010 (Doubleheader)
- Autobahn Country Club, July 31-August 1, 2010 (Doubleheader)
- Mosport International Raceway, August 28, 2010
- Road Atlanta, October 1, 2010 (Season Finale)

Each 1-hour broadcast will be produced by Carolinas Production Group of Matthews, North Carolina. The New Jersey and Autobahn doubleheaders will be live broadcasts. InCountry is the lead syndication affiliate for telecasts. They will air all shows, nationally, at one air time consistently, beginning approximately 30 days after each race date; with over 60 million additional US households. Each race will have multiple rebroadcasts. InCountry's key is channel 344 on BASIC DirecTV and channel 230 on Dish Network. Star Mazda Championship races will also be broadcast internationally. Schedule information can be found at [www.MazdaRacing.tv](http://www.MazdaRacing.tv).

#### **ABOUT VISITFLORIDA**

VISITFLORIDA (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.

#### **ABOUT THE 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 compete for prizes valued at \$1.5 million and benefit from two driver development programs, including the MAZDASPEED Motorsports Driver Development Ladder and the Indy Racing League's 'Road to Indy' program. Series alumni include Indy Car stars Marco Andretti, Graham Rahal and Raphael Matos, rising NASCAR drivers Michael McDowell, Scott Speed and Colin Braun and prototype racers Dane Cameron and Guy Cosmo. 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](http://www.starmazda.com).

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For more information on the Star Mazda Championship and its drivers, as well as the Mazda Motorsports ladder system, please visit [www.starmazda.com](http://www.starmazda.com) and [www.mazdausa.com](http://www.mazdausa.com). For

information, interviews and photos, 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.usf2000.com](http://www.usf2000.com)

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

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

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