



-- THE ROAD TO INDY GETS WIDER AND FASTER --

The Mazda Road to Indy unites the open-wheel driver development ladder and provides scholarships for champions at each level to move up; USF2000 > Star Mazda > Firestone Indy Lights > IZOD IndyCar

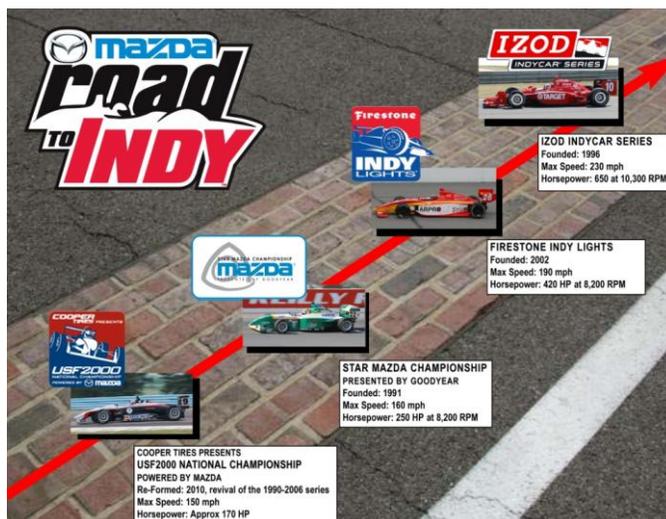
PRI Show / Orlando, FL / Dec. 9, 2010 – With today's announcement of Mazda as the multi-year title partner of INDYCAR's [Road to Indy](#) driver development program, top young open-wheel racers from around the world find themselves at the beginning of a new age of open-wheel racing; the Mazda Road to Indy will provide scholarships to the 2011, 2012 and 2013 champions of the three affiliated series – the [Cooper Tires Presents USF2000 National Championship Powered by Mazda](#), the [Star Mazda Championship presented by Goodyear](#) and [Firestone Indy Lights](#), to graduate to the next level of the sport.

The MAZDA Road to Indy, with its career-making scholarship program, is designed to dramatically increase both the numbers and skill level of drivers on the road leading to the IZOD IndyCar series and the [Indy 500](#).

And the Star Mazda Championship presented by Goodyear has responded with the most diverse and high-profile schedule in the series' 21-year history. Star Mazda teams and drivers will share race weekends with INDYCAR six times during 2011, including two road circuits (TBA, Infineon), two street courses (St. Petersburg, Baltimore) and two ovals (Milwaukee, Iowa).

Additionally, Star Mazda and Firestone Indy Lights will share top billing at the GP3R street circuit in Trois-Rivieres; this marks Indy Lights' first stand-alone event since it raced at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway's road course in support of the U.S. Grand Prix in 2007. Rounding out the 2011 Star Mazda Championship schedule are two road course weekends (Mosport and Mazda Raceway) with the American Le Mans series, and the high-profile [Night Before the 500](#) USAC event on the O'Reilly Raceway Park oval in Indianapolis.

As a further demonstration of the growing relationship between the Star Mazda Championship and INDYCAR, Star Mazda's official pre-season test will take place during the IZOD IndyCar Series and Firestone Indy Lights 'spring training' event. The teams and drivers of the Star Mazda Championship will share the track, as well as press and TV coverage, with Firestone Indy Lights and IZOD IndyCar Series. This will be the first of many opportunities during the season for drivers and teams to build relationships around INDYCAR's Road to Indy program.





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"These announcements mark a major step toward the creation of a fully-integrated, fully-functioning development program for open-wheel racing in North America," says Star Mazda founder and CEO [Gary Rodrigues](#). "I want to thank everyone who worked so hard to make this a reality and to encourage young drivers around the world to pay close attention to the unique and exciting opportunities that Star Mazda and the MAZDA Road to Indy will offer in 2011 and beyond. It should be abundantly clear that any driver serious about racing in the IZOD IndyCar series and the Indy 500 needs to be a part of this program."

Notable graduates of the Star Mazda Championship already competing in the IZOD IndyCar Series include [Marco Andretti](#), [Graham Rahal](#) and [Raphael Matos](#) (the 2005 Star Mazda champion and 2008 Indy Lights champion). Additionally, competitors in the Indy Lights series who honed their skills in the Star Mazda Championship include James Davison, James Hinchcliffe, Pablo Donoso, Michael Potekhen, Daniel Herrington, Jay Howard and Jonathan Bomarito. [Five drivers](#) from the 2010 Star Mazda Championship – including 2010 champion [Conor Daly](#) - have already tested Indy Lights cars and one, Canadian racer [David Ostella](#), has announced he will run a full 2011 Indy Lights season with [Jensen MotorSport](#).

"Our series has had a long relationship with the Star Mazda Championship over the years and a number of the drivers competing with us currently are Star Mazda graduates." says [Roger Bailey](#), Executive Director of Firestone Indy Lights. "The Star Mazda race car is just the right vehicle, with the right horsepower and driving characteristics, to produce drivers ready to hit the ground running in Firestone Indy Lights. Star Mazda has been the unofficial stepping-stone to Indy Lights for many years and to be able to officially recognize that now, along with all the other good things happening for INDYCAR and the IZOD IndyCar series, is perfect timing and a big step forward for open-wheel racing."

| Date | Event | Track Type | With |
|-------------|---------------------------------------|----------------|-------------|
| TBA | Spring Training | Road Course | INDYCAR |
| March 26-27 | GP of St. Petersburg | Street Circuit | INDYCAR |
| TBA | TBA | Road Course | INDYCAR |
| May 27-28 | O'Reilly Raceway Park | Oval | USAC |
| June 18-19 | The Milwaukee Mile | Oval | INDYCAR |
| June 24-25 | Iowa Speedway | Oval | INDYCAR |
| July 22-23 | Mosport | Road Course | ALMS |
| Aug. 6 | Trois-Rivieres | Street Circuit | Indy Lights |
| Aug. 7 | Trois-Rivieres | Street Circuit | Indy Lights |
| Aug. 26-27 | Infineon Raceway | Road Course | INDYCAR |
| Sept. 3-4 | Baltimore Grand Prix | Street Circuit | INDYCAR |
| Sept. 16-17 | Mazda Raceway | Road Course | ALMS |



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The first Star Mazda Championship race of 2011 will be at one of IndyCar's most high-profile events, the [Grand Prix of St. Petersburg](#) on March 26-27. Also on the schedule, as they will be at many races this season, are the other series that are part of the Road to Indy: the Cooper Tires Presents the USF2000 National Championship Powered by Mazda; the Star Mazda Championship presented by Goodyear; and the Firestone Indy Lights series.

The Star Mazda Championship made its first appearance in the streets of St. Petersburg in 2010, a hotly-contested race won by [Conor Daly](#). This was the first victory of Daly's 2010 season and the first of a 4-race winning streak. Daly went on to win the Star Mazda championship with a total of seven wins and a series-record nine poles.

From there, the Star Mazda Championship moves to another IndyCar race weekend on a road course, with the date and venue to be announced.

Three oval races in a row distinguish the next stretch of the 2011 schedule; the [Night Before the 500](#) at [O'Reilly Raceway Park](#) with USAC on May 27-28, the [Milwaukee Mile](#) with IndyCar on June 18-19 and [Iowa Speedway](#), also with IndyCar on June 24-25.

The Night Before the 500 is a high-profile event on the schedule, with Star Mazda Championship drivers taking part in a comprehensive '[Road to Indy Summit](#)' that includes an autograph session at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway and meetings with top officials, teams and drivers of the Firestone Indy Lights and IZOD IndyCar series. 2010 was the first pairing of Star Mazda and the Night Before the 500, with Indianapolis native Conor Daly winning the inaugural event.

Star Mazda last raced at the Milwaukee Mile in 2009 with the NASCAR Nationwide Series; Norwegian driver [Anders 'The Viking' Krohn](#) won that event and returned for a second season of Star Mazda competition in 2010 and went on to finish 2nd in the championship.

2011 will be Star Mazda's third consecutive visit to the 7/8ths-mile Iowa Speedway oval in Newton, Iowa; the series ran with the ARCA/RE MAX cars in 2009, a race won by Irish driver [Peter Dempsey](#), and in 2010 with IndyCar, where Conor Daly won from the pole.

After three races in a row on ovals, the drivers and teams of the Star Mazda Championship head to one of Canada's premier road racing circuits for the [Mobil 1 Presents the Grand Prix of Mosport](#). This round of the American Le Mans series has historically been held at the end of August, but for 2011 moves to July 22-23. Conor Daly scored his final victory of the 2010 season, from the pole, at this event.

After the wide open spaces of Mosport, the shotgun-barrel confines of the legendary street circuit at Trois-Rivières in Quebec, Canada on August 6-7 will provide the drivers with a challenge, but the incredible energy and enthusiasm of the fans always makes this one of the most popular stops on the circuit. It will be a double-header / double-points weekend at the [42nd annual GP3R](#) in which Star Mazda will be the co-



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feature with another high-profile open-wheel series. In 2010, this race provided one of the season's most memorable moments as the 2009 winner, Louisiana racer [Alex Ardoin](#), on hand as a driver coach for [Team GDT](#), found himself in the team's spare car and, starting from the outside of the second row, went on to win the race for the second year in a row.

The next three races on the calendar will see the Star Mazda Championship team transporters criss-crossing the country... several times. From Trois-Rivières, the circus moves out to the West Coast for the [IndyCar Grand Prix of Sonoma](#) at [Infineon Raceway](#) August 26-27; and then it's back to East Coast street circuits with an appearance at the inaugural [Baltimore Grand Prix](#) September 3-4.

While Baltimore will be new to all involved, the Star Mazda Championship has a long history at Infineon Raceway, though the last visit there was for a double-header with IMSA in 2005. The winners will be familiar to fans of the Indy Lights series; Chilean driver [Pablo Donoso](#) and Canadian [James Hinchcliffe](#) (he finished 2nd in the 2010 Indy Lights championship). And the 2005 Star Mazda Champion, was Brazilian racer [Raphael Matos](#), now racing for the [deFerran Dragon](#) team in IndyCar.

The 2011 Star Mazda Championship season will wind up at the series' traditional year-end venue, Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca with the [American Le Mans Series Presented by Patrón](#). The series has a long and dramatic history at the legendary road course in Monterey, California, including the dramatic [2009 victory](#) by English racer [Adam Christodoulou](#) (his third of the season) to win the championship.

Andretti Motorsports to field Star Mazda effort for Sage Karam

Even with another major Road to Indy announcement still to come early in December, additional news coming from the Star Mazda Championship confirms the forward momentum the series is building for 2011, including the revelation that [Andretti Autosport](#) will field a Star Mazda Championship effort for 2010 USF2000 champion [Sage Karam](#) with scholarship funding from the Mazda Road to Indy.

The announcement marks Andretti Autosport's debut in the Star Mazda series and gives the team entries in each level of the Mazda Road to Indy, which includes the USF2000 National Championship, Star Mazda and Firestone Indy Lights. Karam, a 15-year old native of Nazareth, Pa., won the 2010 USF2000 driver championship with Andretti Autosport, scoring nine victories in 12 starts during the season.

Canadian Star Mazda Racer David Ostella graduates to Indy Lights

Demonstrating that the Star Mazda Championship is the ideal training ground for drivers to take the step up to the next level of open-wheel racing, five of the drivers competing in the 2010 Star Mazda Championship, including series champion [Conor Daly](#), Norwegian racer [Anders 'The Viking' Krohn](#), French driver [Tristan Vautier](#), Florida racer [Nick Andries](#) and Canadian driver [David Ostella](#), have tested Firestone Indy Lights cars – with Ostella announcing he will move up to a full season of Indy Lights racing with [Jensen MotorSport](#) in 2011. Ostella competed in the 2009 and 2010 Star Mazda championships; last season,



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driving the #16 AIM Autosport / GP Global Precast Mazda, Ostella scored two top-5 and seven top-10 finishes. Canada-based Jensen MotorSport has a long history in North American open-wheel racing. During the past 15 years, the team has competed in championships including Firestone Indy Lights, the Atlantic Championship and Formula BMW Americas.

Star Mazda drivers top-ranked by eFormulaCarNews.com

With the pro junior formula car seasons now complete in North America, top open-wheel racing web site eFormulaCarNews.com has issued its final Driver Rankings of 2010... and four Star Mazda Championship drivers are in the top-10 among a list of 206 drivers competing in various open-wheel driver development series. Conor Daly, winner of the 2010 Star Mazda Championship presented by Goodyear, is ranked #1 on the list, followed by Anders 'The Viking' Krohn in 4th, Mazda-backed development driver Connor De Phillippi in 7th and Jorge Goncalvez in 9th. Additionally, expanding the list to the top-15 includes four more Star Mazda drivers; Tristan Vautier in 11th, Caio Lara in 12th, Mikael Grenier in 13th and Joao Victor Horto in 14th.

The EFCN Driver Rankings are calculated using a driver's best finishes in the pro junior formula car series raced in North America (Indy Lights, Star Mazda Championship, F2000 Championship Series, Pacific F2000 Championship, USF2000 National Championship, Formula Enterprises Pro Series and Skip Barber National). Assembled using events from the last 12 months, EFCN uses a driver's best 10 finishes in order to determine their overall current point total. Following a race, drivers receive points based on their finishing positions with 100 points earned for a win. To see the full story on the EFCN web site, click [here](#) or go to www.eFormulaCarNews.com.

For more information on the Star Mazda Championship and its drivers, please visit www.starmazda.com and www.mazdausa.com. For information, interviews and photos, please contact Star Mazda Communications Director Peter Frey at (818) 398-5733 or StarMazdaPR@aol.com.

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