



## AND JORGE MAKES FOUR -- STAR MAZDA'S 'BUMPER CROP' OF INDY LIGHTS DRIVERS

*Venezuelan racer Jorge Goncalvez signs with Belardi for 2011 Indy Lights season, brings to four the number of 2010 Star Mazda Championship graduates accelerating down the Mazda Road to Indy*

When, like the Star Mazda Championship presented by Goodyear, you have a 21-year history of producing top young racing drivers, every year has its triumphs... but occasionally circumstances come together and produce a 'bumper crop' of talent. Such is the case with the Star Mazda class of 2010, whose graduates – with the announcement that Venezuelan racer Jorge Goncalvez will join Anders Krohn at Belardi Auto Racing -- now include four confirmed Firestone Indy Lights drivers for the 2011 season. Others include 2010 Star Mazda Champion Conor Daly, and Canadian racer David Ostella.



Goncalvez, a 19 year-old from Los Teques, Venezuela, finished 4th in the 2010 Star Mazda Championship in 2010, scoring five second-place finishes and 10 Top-10s. Goncalvez will drive Belardi Auto Racing's No. 4 car entry, partnering fellow Star Mazda graduate Anders Krohn, who has previously been announced as the driver of the team's No. 9 entry. Krohn finished 2nd in the championship with a record of one pole, six podium finishes and finishing in the top-5 at every race.

"I am very pleased to have this opportunity to move up to Firestone Indy Lights," Goncalvez said. "I know this will be a big challenge for me, but I am confident that with the support of the talented crew around me that I will do my countrymen proud. I'm really looking forward to the season and to working with all the guys at Belardi and to being a part of the Firestone Indy Lights Series...to compete with so many great drivers at such incredible venues."

Goncalvez enters the 2011 Indy Lights series with Belardi Autosport having raced internationally since 2006. Following multiple karting national championship titles in his native Venezuela, the talented racer made his car racing debut in the Renault French 1600cc in the Pan-Am GP Series. He advanced to the French Formula Renault Series one year later. Goncalvez made his North American racing debut in 2008, finishing seventh in the Formula BMW Americas title chase. Advancing up to the Star Mazda Championship the





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following season, the teenager finished 9th in his rookie campaign, before challenging for the series' title last season.

Goncalvez is known for a fierce little chicken painted on the back of his helmet with the words, "El Pollito" - his nickname, which translates from Spanish to be "Little Chicken." It certainly has nothing to do with his courage on the track, as Goncalvez's father is the "Big Chicken" in Venezuela, the owner of one of the country's largest poultry operations.



Krohn is a true product of the Mazda Road to Indy ladder series. Arriving in this country as an unknown, he won the F2000 Championship series in 2008 with Andersen Racing, was offered an opportunity in Star Mazda for 2009 with Mundill and reunited with Andersen Racing in Star Mazda for 2010 finishing a solid second in the Championship points. Krohn will now take another step up the ladder. "I am now just one step away from the IZOD IndyCar Series. Moving up the Mazda Road to Indy ladder has been such a great experience," said Krohn. "It's a ladder that has

already benefited quite a few, and in the future it will be essential in continuing to feed the very best drivers into what I think is the best racing series in the world. IndyCar and all the sanctioning bodies and sponsors on the ladder, like Mazda and Firestone have done a tremendous job with supporting their up and coming talents, and I am so proud not only to be part of Belardi Auto Racing, but also to be one of the future faces of IndyCar.

2010 Star Mazda champion Conor Daly, who scored seven wins, twelve podiums, nine poles and seven fastest laps, will divide his time between Europe and North America, racing a full season of GP3 with British team Carlin and non-conflicting road-course dates in the Firestone Indy Lights Championship with Sam Schmidt Motorsports.

"I'm extremely pleased to have all the plans worked out for 2011," says Daly. "It's taken a lot of work and I'm extremely thankful to everyone at Mazda who spent a great deal of time making sure my program was in order. It really shows how dedicated Mazda is to their ladder drivers. With the significant changes to the ladder system in 2010, Mazda still stayed devoted to supporting their champions. I'm honored to have the support of Mazda for the 2011 season and beyond."



David Ostella is a 19 year-old Canadian driver moving up to Indy Lights with Canadian race team Jensen Motorsport, a



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team with a long history in North American open-wheel racing. Ostella competed in the Star Mazda Championship during the 2009 and 2010 seasons; in 2010, racing the #16 AIM Autosport / GP Global Precast Mazda, he scored two top-5 and seven top-10 finishes.



“David Ostella is a very fast and marketable race-car driver,” Jensen said. “Our team has recently signed renowned race engineer Remi Lanteigne to quarterback our technical program, so, together with David, we are enthusiastic about our new initiative.”

Both graduates and the 2011 crop of drivers in the Star Mazda Championship presented by Goodyear will return to action on March 16, when official series testing will take place at Barber Motorsports Park in Alabama, as part of the INDYCAR Spring Training program. Both the 2011 Star Mazda Championship

and Firestone Indy Lights seasons get underway on March 27, with Round One on the streets of St. Petersburg, Fla.

### **About Star Mazda Championship presented by Goodyear**

For 2011, the Star Mazda Championship presented by Goodyear will be a major part of the Mazda Road to Indy and will feature a 10-weekend, 11-race schedule, all on major race weekends and most with IndyCar. Two weekends are with the American Le Mans series, and one is a double-header with Indy Lights. Rising stars from around the world will be watched by more than a million fans as they compete for prizes valued at \$1.5 million, including a scholarship to move up and race in the 2012 Firestone Indy Lights series. Drivers 16 and older are welcome to compete and the Star Mazda Championship also features the Expert Series for drivers 30 and older. The Star Mazda Championship features standing starts, wheel-to-wheel racing at 160 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).

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, please contact Star Mazda Communications Director Peter Frey at (818) 398-5733 or [StarMazdaPR@aol.com](mailto:StarMazdaPR@aol.com).



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