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PART 1 OF THE 'INDY SUMMIT' EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE FOR 2011 MAZDA ROAD TO INDY DRIVERS BEGINS WITH A DAY IN THE RACING CLASSROOM AT ST. PETE

Grand Prix of St. Petersburg (March 23, 2010) – The 'Indy Summit' is one of the most eagerly-awaited events on the Mazda Road to Indy, an unparalleled educational experience in which drivers get to listen



and interact with the top figures in motorsports. The subject – the hard and fast truth about what it takes to be a racing driver at the top level in today's media, marketing and financial environment.

This year, the Indy Summit has so many aspects it has been divided into two parts, the first taking place here at the season-opener at the Grand Prix of St. Petersburg and including

media training, a presentation by the top managers of Mazda's motorsports department on the business realities of motorsports sponsorship, and finally a sit-down with one of the most powerful and knowledgeable men in U.S. Motorsports today, Mike Hull, Managing Director of Target Chip Ganassi Racing.

The second half of the Indy Summit will take place at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway in May, during the lead-up to the 100th anniversary of the Indy 500. This portion of the program will focus on the on-track and operational aspects of racing in IndyCar and the Mazda Road to Indy, including driver coaching from Indy racing legend Al Unser, Jr. This portion of the Indy Summit will be part of the activities surrounding Round 3 of the 2011 Star Mazda Championship season, Lucas Oil Raceway, the first of three ovals on the schedule.

The morning session of Indy Summit Part 1 was conducted at the Mahaffey Theatre on the grounds of the Grand Prix of St. Petersburg. Drivers were coached by a team of professionals on how to deal with the all forms of media, including print interviews, radio and television. Part 2 was the Business of Motorsports Seminar presented by Mazda. Speakers included Jim Jordan (Merchandizing Manager for Mazda North American Operations), John Doonan (Manager, Motorsports Team Development at Mazda North American Operations) and Dean Case (Communications Officer, MAZDASPEED Motorsports). Topics covered included everything from personal appearance to how to configure a sponsorship proposal that will get the attention of top decision-making executives.



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"I came to St. Petersburg with a new sponsor, Jimmy Johns Gourmet Sandwiches, so I know something about pitching sponsors," observed Nick Mancuso, driver of the #27 JDC Motorsports / Jimmy Johns /



Indeck / Lake Forest Sportscars / F.A.S.T. Race Products Mazda. "But what I heard at the seminar made so much sense that I'm going to revise my sponsor proposal substantially before I go after the next one. This was time well spent with people who know what they're talking about."

The final segment of the G.P. of St. Petersburg Indy Summit was a group meeting with Mike Hull, who has run the Target Chip Ganassi team

for twenty years. Delving into a massive accumulation of knowledge gained in two decades at the top of North American motorsports, he gave the drivers his perspective of how they can 'brand' themselves, what top teams look for in a driver, and what steps drivers currently in the Mazda Road to Indy program can do to get noticed by top teams. At the end, he provided all of the 30+ drivers at the meeting with his e-mail address and an offer to advise them individually.

"This is an absolutely fantastic opportunity for a driver in my position," says Irish Racer Patrick McKenna, driver of the #48 Team GDT / Motorsport Ireland / Irish Sports Council / General Data Tech Mazda.

"Having grown up in European racing, there is such a confusing number of series and no clear way to progress your career unless you have access to major sponsorship. I came to America to make a racing career because the Mazda Road to Indy provides a clear path, it offers scholarship funding to series champions to help them move up, and it provides access to people at the very top of the sport; no young driver would ever get to sit down and speak personally with the head of a Formula One team. It was a big decision to come to another country and try to make a career in motorsports, but I'm confident that I made the right decision."

After a day well-spent in the classroom, drivers in the Star Mazda Championship and the other series that are part of the Mazda Road to Indy take to the track for practice on Friday morning. Star Mazda qualifying is scheduled for 8:05 – 8:50 am Saturday morning, and the race will get the green light for the first standing start of the 2011 season at 4:10 pm Saturday afternoon. The next race on the schedule is with IndyCar at Barber Motorsports Park, April 9-10.

Fans can follow the drivers through the course of the weekend via the series' web site at www.StarMazda.com, or on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/starmazdaseries> and Twitter at <http://www.twitter.com/starmazdaseries>. Follow the actual race on your computer or smartphone at <http://livetiming.net/starmazda/>.



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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, Mazda2, 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, the Skip Barber Schools for driving and racing, and the Mazda Road to Indy.

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.

For information, contact Dean Case / Communications Officer /MAZDASPEED Motorsports (310) 318-4582 / mazdaspeed@mazdausa.com

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.

For more information on the Star Mazda Championship and its drivers, as well as the Mazda Motorsports ladder system, 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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