



## **Pro Mazda Championship Announces Partnership with Cooper Tires *Leading Manufacturer Becomes Official Tire and Presenting Sponsor***

PALMETTO, Fla. (December 13) – Andersen Promotions, owner and administrator of the Pro Mazda Championship, today confirmed a key component of the series' infrastructure by welcoming Cooper Tires as the Official Tire and presenting sponsor. The Mazda Road to Indy series will now be known as the Pro Mazda Championship Presented by Cooper Tires with a three-year agreement in place.

The newly formed series was officially announced on December 7 to fill the opening vacated by the Star Mazda Championship. The Pro Mazda Championship Presented by Cooper Tires represents the second step on the driver development ladder system established in 2010 and sanctioned by INDYCAR with drivers transitioning from the Cooper Tires USF2000 Championship Powered by Mazda to Pro Mazda, Firestone Indy Lights and, ultimately, the IZOD IndyCar Series.

“The Pro Mazda Championship is off to a great start with Cooper Tires joining this new effort as our tire partner and presenting sponsor,” said Dan Andersen, Owner and CEO of Andersen Promotions. “Cooper has provided excellent tires and service to our USF2000 Championship and they are a fantastic partner. I know our teams will benefit from this change, and we thank Cooper for now supporting the first two steps on the Mazda Road to Indy ladder.”

Andersen Promotions recently announced a partnership extension between Cooper Tires and USF2000 through 2015. The Findlay, Ohio-based manufacturer alongside Mazda will now form the foundation for two key steps on the ladder system.

“As Cooper Tires begins our new venture with Andersen Promotions, we have enthusiastically stepped up the Mazda ladder system to become ‘The Official Tire of the Pro Mazda Championship,’” said Chris Pantani, Director of Motorsports for Cooper Tires. “Drivers and teams graduating from the USF2000 Championship will once again be joined with Mazda and Cooper Tires in their next step towards the IZOD IndyCar Series.”

A schedule for the 2013 Pro Mazda Championship Presented by Cooper Tires will be announced in the near future with a new website debuting in the coming weeks.

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**About Cooper Tire & Rubber Company:** Cooper Tire & Rubber Company (NYSE: CTB) is a global company with affiliates, subsidiaries and joint ventures that specialize in the design, manufacture, marketing and sales of passenger car and light truck tires. The company also has subsidiaries that specialize in medium truck, motorcycle and racing tires. With headquarters in Findlay, Ohio, Cooper Tire has manufacturing, sales, distribution, technical and design facilities within its family of companies located in 11 countries around the world.

**About Pro Mazda:** The Pro Mazda Championship Presented by Cooper Tires will debut in 2013 as a new series, replacing the Star Mazda Championship which ceased operation in 2012 after 22 years. The series is sanctioned by INDYCAR and owned and operated by Andersen Promotions. It is the second official step on the Mazda Road to Indy ladder system with the series' champion awarded a scholarship package from Mazda to advance to Firestone Indy Lights competition the following year.

**About Mazda:** Mazda is the number-one brand for road-racers across North America. Thousands of Mazda powered grassroots racers compete in various classes with the SCCA and NASA highlighted by Spec Miata, the world's largest spec class with over 2,500 cars built. In 2006 Mazda established the MAZDASPEED Motorsports Development Ladder to assist racers in moving up through the ranks. In 2010 this was expanded to include the Mazda Road to Indy. Key to Mazda's success is strategic partnerships with the Skip Barber Racing School and Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca.

*MAZDASPEED* Motorsports is managed by Mazda North American Operations (MNAO). MNAO 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. Consumer information can be found at [www.mazdausa.com](http://www.mazdausa.com) with press information at [www.mazdausamedia.com](http://www.mazdausamedia.com). Racers and fans can follow the action on Facebook (*Mazdaspeed Motorsports*).

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