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AWR Names Scuncio as Its Third Driver for 2006

FAIRFIELD, N.J., Jan. 18 - Andersen Walko Racing's Dan Andersen is pleased to announce that he has signed Ramiro Scuncio of Argentina as the team's third full-time driver for the 2006 Star Mazda Championship presented by Goodyear.

Scuncio, 16, joins Brad Jaeger of Cincinnati and Gerardo Bonilla of Orlando, Fla. on the driving squad for the Fairfield, N.J.-based team for all 12 races in 2006. Other drivers are expected to race for the team, widely regarded as one of the best in North American formula car racing, in selected events.

Scuncio comes to American racing from the Chilean Formula 3 series, where he won a race last year in his rookie season.

He is managed by former IndyCar and Formula One driver Eliseo Salazar, who also arranged to have Pablo Donoso drive for Andersen Walko Racing last year. Donoso, of Santiago, Chile, was victorious at one of the Star Mazda races at Infineon Raceway in Sonoma, Calif. in 2005 while driving for AWR, posting two other podium finishes and three poles last year too. He is competing in the USAC Silver Crown series in 2006 in the hopes of catching the eye of a NASCAR team owner.

"It will be a big step for Ramiro to follow in Pablo's footsteps this year because the Star Mazda series is quite different than what Ramiro has done in the past, but both he and his family are very committed to the effort," said Salazar, who was at Phoenix International Raceway with Donoso for this weekend's USAC Silver Crown season opener at the Copper World Classic. "We expect for Ramiro to run in the top 10 this year, and learn enough so that he can contend for the Star Mazda championship in 2007. He's looking forward to our next test at Road Atlanta very much."

"Relationships are very important in racing, as they are in all other businesses, and it's nice that Eliseo is again endorsing the work we do by bringing another driver to our team," noted Michelle Kish, team manager.

Scuncio's signing followed a successful test at Sebring International Raceway in Sebring, Fla. recently. That track will hold the 2006 Star Mazda season opener March 17 as a support event to the Mobil 1 Twelve Hours of Sebring American Le Mans Series (ALMS) race.

"We were all very impressed with Ramiro at the test, and we're looking forward to an exciting season," Kish added.

Rossella Manfrinato will be Scuncio's engineer. She was Jonathan Klein's engineer last year for his second season with AWR. Klein will drive for Andretti Green Racing in the Indy Racing League's Indy Pro Series this year.

More information on the team may be obtained from its Web site at andersenwalko.com or by calling team owner Dan Andersen or Kish at (973) 287-5600.

Jaeger's Web site is at bradjaeger.com and Bonilla's is at gerardobonilla.com. Other interesting sites for Web surfers include starmazda.com, americanlemans.com, speedtv.com, sebringraceway.com and restartcommunications.com.