

VETERAN ROSS SMITH JOINS JOHN WALKO RACING FOR 2006 STAR MAZDA CHAMPIONSHIP

TRAFFORD, PA (March 8, 2006) – STAR Mazda Championship Series veteran Ross Smith has signed with John Walko Racing for the 2006 season. This will be the third year of competition in the series for the Plano, Texas driver.

Smith scored 10 podium finishes including 5 victories in the Southwest Formula Mazda Series after scoring dozens of wins and multiple championships in karting. He then moved to the STAR Mazda Championship Series in 2004 for a partial season followed by a full season in 2005, posting four top ten finishes.

Ross is excited about the prospects of getting the season rolling with a team like JWR, "I'm very happy to be part of a well organized team like John Walko Racing. I think I can do well here and I'm really looking forward to Sebring."

After watching the nineteen year old driver's progress over the past few seasons, team owner John Walko is looking forward to having Smith as part of the team.

"We are thrilled to have Ross join our team. Having him on board will put both our team and Ross in a situation to perform well."

Ross has been working with JWR in pre-season testing, including a stint at Roebing Road Raceway in Savannah, Georgia where they have just concluded final preparations for the season opening race at Sebring. According to Walko, the testing has been a success, "He's done really well in the testing. Right now it's all about the car and the setup. He knows what he wants the car to be able to do."

Smith will join series Rookie Charles Anti at JWR as part of a multi-car effort to challenge for the STAR Mazda Championship. Walko believes that adding a veteran will be a benefit to the entire team, "It's good to have an experienced driver like Ross. He'll be a good teammate for Charles."

John Walko Racing, along with drivers Charles Anti and Ross Smith, kick off their STAR Mazda Championship season with the opening race at Sebring International Raceway from March 15th - 17th in conjunction with the 54th Annual Twelve Hours of Sebring and the American Le Mans Series.

The team is seeking interested drivers to join JWR for the STAR Mazda series. Testing programs and full or partial race seats are available for the 2006 season. Contact info@johnwalkoracing.com for more information.

Additional team information can be found at www.johnwalkoracing.com.