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Like Father, Like Son

*Ricky Taylor, 17-Year-Old Son of Championship Sports Car Driver Wayne Taylor,
Set to Make Formula Mazda Debut Sept. 29 at Road Atlanta*

ALTAMONTE SPRINGS, Fla., (Sept. 26, 2006) - Formula Mazda, a motorsports training ground for young and aspiring American race car drivers, will welcome another prodigy this Friday in the series' second to last race of the season at Road Atlanta in Braselton, Ga.

Ricky Taylor, son of championship sports car driver Wayne Taylor, will make his debut in the No. 15 Star Mazda entry for Velocity Motorsports. Ricky Taylor will drive in place of regular driver John Pew, who is recovering from a shoulder injury.

"I just want to thank John Pew and the Velocity Motorsports team for giving me this opportunity," said the 17-year-old Taylor. "This is a huge step in my career and I want to make the most of it."

"A big thanks goes out to John Pew for making this happen," said Wayne. "We could not have done this without his help."

Ricky will enter the 2.54-mile, 12-turn Road America layout with an extensive karting background that led him to a drive in this year's Skip Barber Southern Regional Series. After beating out 57 other young racers to finish second in the Skip Barber Karting Scholarship Shootout at Sebring (Fla.) International Raceway in January, Ricky won a fully-paid seat in the 12-race series. He made the most of it by winning two races, three poles and finishing on the podium eight times.

Ricky earned his way into the Shootout by way of two karting championships and numerous wins. After he began racing 100cc Yamaha in 2000, Ricky won the 2001 Yamaha Central Florida Championship - a title that included two endurance race wins, one of six hours in length and the other at three hours. Ricky earned another Yamaha Central Florida division championship in 2003, a triumph that was highlighted by his victory in the inaugural 24 Hours of Ocala (Fla.). His karting success bore other opportunities, including participation in the 2004 Red Bull Driver Search and an initial foray into the Skip Barber Racing Series in 2005.

"Ricky has shown his talent in a lot of different series," said Pew. "Formula Mazda is a big step, but he's ready for it. He deserves this opportunity and we're happy to make it happen."

The fact that the young Taylor has shown such early promise should come as no surprise. His father, Wayne, has been a road racing standout for over two decades, with numerous championships to prove it.

Wayne was the 1986 South African F2 champion before coming to the United States to further his racing career. By 1990, he was racing in the International Motorsports Association (IMSA) GTP Series for the factory Chevrolet team. By 1994, Taylor was the IMSA World Sports Car champion, a feat he duplicated in 1996 thanks to wins in the 24 Hours at Daytona (Fla.) and the 12 Hours of Sebring. Wins in the 1998 24 Hours of Le Mans in the LMP class and the Petit Le Mans in a Ferrari 333SP led Taylor to help launch General Motors' Cadillac LMP program in the American Le Mans Series from 2000 to 2002.

The elder Taylor is now a mainstay in the Daytona Prototype division of the Grand American Rolex Sports Car Series, where with his SunTrust Racing Team, he earned the series championship alongside co-driver Max Angelelli in 2005 after finishing second in 2004.

"As a father, I'm obviously very proud of what Ricky has accomplished," said Wayne. "Formula Mazda is a very competitive series, and it'll be a good test for Ricky. Opportunities like this don't come along all the time, and when they do, you need to seize them. He's definitely up for the challenge."

Formula Mazda features open-wheel style race cars with a 240-horsepower Mazda "Renesis" rotary engine. The spec series encourages parity, with a single engine builder supplying all teams. The cars are adaptable to both road courses and ovals with minimal changes thanks to a comprehensive trackside support program. Fields of 30-40 cars are commonplace at many venues, which in addition to Road Atlanta include such renowned tracks as Sebring, Mid-Ohio, the Milwaukee Mile, Road America, Mosport and others.