

Michael Self Awarded World Speed Motorsports Rising Star Award

16 Year Old Karting Prodigy starts up the Mazda Ladder System

SONOMA, CA
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Only a week after 16 year old karter Michael Self was awarded the 2007 Champ Car ROTAX Career Enhancement Scholarship he was added to the list of winners of the 2007 World Speed Motorsports Rising Star Awards. In addition to his free season of racing with the Skip Barber Racing School, Self will receive a championship level test in a World Speed Motorsports Pro Formula Mazda with coaching provided by Standing Start Driver Development.

The World Speed Motorsports Rising Star Awards have been helping young racers move up the open wheel racing ladder for years. Some past Rising Star Award winners have included Scott Speed, Michael McDowell, Brad Coleman, Joey Hand, Cole Whitt, Alan Scuito, & Ryan Phinny. Many of these drivers have gone on to win in upper level open wheel, stock car, and sports car races all over the world. World Speed Motorsports won the Star Mazda championship in 2006, and has won more Formula Mazda championships than any other team.

"We are blown away by the amount of support Mazda has brought to the North American racing community," stated World Speed Motorsports Operations Manager Mark Milazzo. "Finally there is a solid ladder system that will take a talented racer from karting all the way to Champ Cars. We have been assisting young talented drivers up to the top levels of racing for years, and with Mazda's extra push we expect to be able to help them even further. We are looking forward to seeing what Michael is capable of in one of our Pro Formula Mazdas."

"This is a great opportunity that I am very excited to be a part of, I look forward to testing my skills in this high performance race car," stated Self. Self was chosen for the awards by a panel of judges, including Champ Car driver Justin Wilson who witnessed his amazing display of driving at the 2007 Champ Car ROTAX Grand Nationals.

As the Official Karting Series of the Champ Car World Series, the Champ Car ROTAX Kart Challenge serves as the first step for young drivers who want to climb toward an open-wheel racing career. Self's scholarship at the Skip Barber Regional Series level will put him one step closer to the first echelon in the Mazda Ladder System and will allow him to compete in the largest open-wheel amateur championship in North America. From the Skip Barber Regional Series, drivers have a chance to move on to the BFGoodrich/Skip Barber National Presented by Mazda, then jump up to the Star Mazda Championship Presented by Goodyear and finally follow in the footsteps of Graham Rahal, James Hinchcliffe and Raphael Matos and graduate to the Cooper Tires Presents the Champ Car Atlantic Championship Powered by Mazda. Winner of that series is presented with two million dollars from the Champ Car World Series towards a Champ Car ride which completes the ladder from Karting into Champ Cars.