



LINARES RACING BECOMES FIRST-EVER VENEZUELAN TEAM TO ENTER STAR MAZDA CHAMPIONSHIP AS THE SERIES CONTINUES TO GROW IN ITS 20TH YEAR OF COMPETITION



Brownsburg, IN (Feb. 9, 2010) – Linares Racing today announced that it will become the first-ever Venezuelan team to enter the Star Mazda Championship presented by Goodyear. The team, owned by Gustavo Linares (brother of famed Venezuelan karting champion Carlos Linares), takes delivery of its first brand-new Star Mazda single-seater today and will begin the 2010 season fielding a car for the 2009

Venezuelan national FF1600 champion Carlos Linares with backing from IND, Venezuela's National Institute of Sport.

Linares, born on June 20, 1992, has been karting since age 7 and competed two seasons in the Venezuelan FF1600 series before winning the championship last season with a record of two victories and seven podium finishes. He has also tested with the Campos Racing F3 team in Spain.

"The United States offers a lot of opportunities for a young driver like me and I'm really happy to be running in a high-profile series like the Star Mazda Championship," says Linares. "With the MAZDASPEED Ladder and the Indy Racing League's 'Road to Indy' program both working to help Star Mazda drivers, I feel that I am heading toward my goal of competing in the Indy 500."

Bringing an additional dimension of top-level expertise to the team will be Rob Ridgely, who engineered Venezuelan driver E.J. Viso's car on the HVM Indy Car team during the 2009 season. The widely-experienced Crew Chief will be Claudio Novoa, a veteran of the Barber Dodge Pro Series, Indy Lights with Andersen Racing and several Indy Car teams, including Team Minardi, Roth Racing and Team Rahal. The new Linares Racing team, headquartered near the heart of the Indy Car racing community at a facility in Brownsburg, Indiana, will have its first test of car, driver and personnel at Sebring on March 3.

"The Star Mazda Championship is a professional, intensely competitive series that attracts rising stars from around the world like Carlos Linares," says Ridgely. "This is a new team, but they are going about it in a very professional way and I believe that the two-year program we have planned to develop Carlos into a top driver is very realistic. And the plans they have for the future are very exciting. I'm delighted to be part of Linares Racing."

Linares Racing will expand to a two-car effort later in the season when Carlos' Linares brother, Gustavo, joins the team. Currently in his first year of college in Indiana, Gustavo Linares drove several Star Mazda Championship races during the 2009 season.

"We looked at entering many different series for our team, but the Star Mazda Championship made the most sense now and for the future of our team, our drivers and our sponsors," says Linares Racing team owner Gustavo Linares. "We have a two-year plan to compete in the Star Mazda Championship before expanding our team to include the Firestone Indy Lights series. We hope to be able to help other young Venezuelan and South American drivers advance their careers in this country, and we've also had interest from American and European drivers, so we are confident that Linares Racing is on the right track."

The first race of the 2010 Star Mazda Championship presented by Goodyear takes place on March 19, during the 12 Hours of Sebring weekend. Round 2 is the following weekend, March 26-28, in the streets of St. Petersburg, Florida with the Indy Racing League.

Media inquiries, as well as requests for further information about driving and commercial opportunities at Linares Racing, should be directed to Gustavo Linares at 317.418.5054 or Claudio Novoa at 954.326.1404.

About the Star Mazda Championship presented by Goodyear

For 2010, the Star Mazda Championship presented by Goodyear will feature an 11-weekend, 13-race schedule in the U.S. and Canada, most on major race weekends with American Le Mans, the Indy Racing League and USAC. Rising stars from around the world will compete for prizes valued at \$1.5 million and benefit from two prestigious driver development programs, including the MAZDASPEED Motorsports Driver Development Ladder and the Indy Racing League's 'Road to Indy' program. The Star Mazda Championship features standing starts, wheel-to-wheel racing at 150 mph and budgets a fraction of other top open-wheel ladder series. For more information, please visit www.starmazda.com or contact Peter Frey / Communications Director / 818-398-5733 / StarMazdaPR@aol.com.

