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Palmetto, Fla.-Based Andersen Racing Will Have Big Presence at St. Pete Grand Prix; Team Focuses on Developing Future Stars

*One of Its Six Drivers Competing at St. Pete is Local;
Two Others Live in Key Biscayne and Miami*

PALMETTO, Fla., March 24 — Andersen Racing, which is based at Andersen RacePark in Palmetto, Fla., will have five Star Mazda cars and one Firestone Indy Lights car competing in support races during the Honda Grand Prix of St. Petersburg this weekend. The team's principals

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Palmetto-Based Andersen Racing/Page 2 of 5

will be overseeing 13 other race cars competing in two other races on the street course in that Florida city this weekend too, as a sister company, Andersen Promotions, administers the USF2000 National Championship presented by Cooper Tires and powered by Mazda.

It's all part of the team's mission to provide the best training possible for young people who want to make careers as professional race car drivers.

Andersen Racing's driver development system starts with karting. Andersen RacePark has its own 1-mile road course test track, where many local karters practice weekly. Others from around the country fly in for the karting camps that are held there periodically. The facility is also used for corporate karting programs to build teamwork and camaraderie, and karting parties just for fun.

Members of the public don't have to have any equipment or prior experience in order to participate in events like the charity kart enduro that will be held at the track, located at 10101 U.S. Highway 41 North, this afternoon from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. For a \$150 donation (plus tax) to the Best Friends Animal Society, members of the public can join three-driver teams and race with some of the drivers who will be competing at St. Pete this weekend. Admission to watch the event is a \$20 donation (plus tax) to the not-for-profit animal welfare organization.

Andersen Racing has regional, national and even international karting teams too. Last weekend six karters (Andrew Palmer, Andy Dunne, R.C. Enerson, Jeremy Kane, Mitchel StCin and Michael McCarthy) represented the team in a Florida Winter Tour event at the Ocala Gran Prix in Ocala. The team's director of competition karting, Wes Phillips, is currently in France competing in the first round of the Euro Challenge as part of the team's new international program.

m-o-r-e

Palmetto-Based Andersen Racing/Page 3 of 5

After karting, the next step on the Andersen Racing ladder is the USF2000 National Championship presented by Cooper Tires and powered by Mazda. The team's owners, brothers Dan and John Andersen, used to administer this series in the 1990s with much success. They were asked by the Indy Racing League to revive it as the first step on the sanctioning body's Road to Indy program. They agreed, and 13 drivers have signed up to compete in the series' season-opening doublerheader on the St. Petersburg street circuit at 12:20 p.m. Saturday and 8 a.m. Sunday. The Andersens don't own any of those cars in order to circumvent any possible conflicts of interest, but they'll be watching them all carefully as they stage that series' races.

The USF2000 National Championship and the Star Mazda Championship presented by Goodyear are also steps in a driver development system supported by Mazda. The car manufacturer's MAZDASPEED Motorsports Development Program offers scholarships to the champions of the top class in both USF2000 and the Star Mazda series to help them advance up the ladder the following season.

The step after USF2000 is Star Mazda. Andersen Racing has five cars entered in the Star Mazda race scheduled to get off to a standing start at 11:50 a.m. Sunday at St. Petersburg. One of them will be driven by the current point leader, Tristan Vautier of Corence, France, who won the season opener last Friday at Sebring, Fla. in car No. 38.

Another Andersen Racing driver, Anders Krohn of Norway, who now lives in Houston, smashed the track record at Sebring to win the pole for that race in his No. 47.

A third Andersen Racing driver, Mikael Grenier of Stoneham, Quebec, started right alongside him in a car that carries the same number as his age, 17.

m-o-r-e

Palmetto-Based Andersen Racing/Page 4 of 5

Court Vernon of Key Biscayne, Fla. had mechanical difficulties at Sebring but he'll be looking for better luck at St. Pete in the Andersen Racing No. 27.

Dom Bastien of West Palm Beach, Fla. drove the Andersen Racing No. 81 Star Mazda car at Sebring, but he's not signed up to do this weekend's race. That car will be driven at St. Pete by another Florida driver, 19-year-old Nick Andries of Pinellas Park. Andries is a freshman and President's List scholar at St. Petersburg College, where he is studying mechanical engineering. He'll be making his first start with the team and his first start in the Star Mazda series.

Another driver who will be making her first start with the team and in a series new to her is Carmen Jorda, who will drive the Andersen Racing No. 4 in the Firestone Indy Lights race at 12:45 p.m. Sunday. She's from Alcoy, Spain, but she lives in Miami when she's in the States, and she's really looking forward to tackling the 1.8-mile, 14-turn street course for the first time.

If that's not all, the Andersen brothers will also be keeping their eyes on graduates of their program who will be competing in the IZOD IndyCar Series headliner Sunday at 3:45 p.m. Graham Rahal (No. 67), who won that race in 2008 and sat on the pole here in 2009, drove Star Mazda cars for Andersen Racing in 2005, and Mario Romancini (No. 34) won two Firestone Indy Lights races for the team last year. Dan Wheldon (No. 4) also competed in the earlier edition of the USF2000 series when the Andersens promoted it in the past.

For more information on Andersen Racing, which is sponsored by Allied Building Products Corp., see andersenracingteam.com, andersenkarting.com, andersenracepark.com and usf2000.com.

m-o-r-e

Palmetto-Based Andersen Racing/Page 5 of 5

About Allied Building Products Corp.:

Allied Building Products Corp., headquartered in East Rutherford, N.J., is one of the largest roofing and siding distributors in the United States. Founded in 1950 with five employees and two trucks, today it is a \$1.8 billion building material distribution company with over 3,500 employees, more than 200 branches in 30 states, well over one million square feet of office and warehouse space, and an inventory of approximately 85,000 products, from residential roofing and siding to doors, windows, waterproofing, manufactured stone, interior products and commercial roofing systems. For more information see alliedbuilding.com.

About Andersen Racing:

Andersen Racing strives to provide the best and most comprehensive training possible for future open-wheel superstars while giving its marketing partners media exposure and hospitality opportunities at some of the most prestigious events in North America. It provides a unique program utilizing multiple entries in three different platforms: karting, Star Mazda and Firestone Indy Lights.

A sister company, Andersen Promotions, administers the USF2000 National Championship presented by Cooper Tires and powered by Mazda. It is part of both the Indy Racing League's Road to Indy program and the MAZDASPEED Motorsports driver development system.

Andersen Racing is sponsored by Allied Building Products Corp. The team is headquartered at Andersen RacePark, an 18-acre facility in Palmetto, Fla. that includes a 1-mile road course test track. For more information see andersenracingteam.com, andersenkarting.com, andersenracepark.com and usf2000.com.