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## **RISING FEMALE OPEN-WHEEL STAR ASHLEY FREIBERG TO RUN FULL 2012 STAR MAZDA CHAMPIONSHIP WITH BACKING FROM TRUECAR'S "WOMEN EMPOWERED" INITIATIVE**

*TrueCar Becomes Driving Force in Auto Racing with multi-year commitment to support women in auto racing through primary sponsorship of top professionals and rising stars*



Santa Monica, CA – December 01, 2011 -- TrueCar, Inc., creators of the intelligent automotive marketplace that benefits both buyers and sellers has announced an extensive, multi-year commitment to support top female race car drivers in premier racing series, along with young rising stars across several developmental racing series.

The TrueCar Racing “Women Empowered” initiative is an extension of the company’s efforts to help women enjoy the best possible car buying experience. With over 80% of car buying decisions influenced by women – and 50% of all car purchases made by women – this impactful audience is a significant part of the automotive retail landscape.

“TrueCar is built upon the foundation of empowering individuals with the tools and resources they need to become expert car buyers,” said TrueCar Founder and CEO Scott Painter. “The “Women Empowered” initiative is an exciting extension of that philosophy – empowering women in racing by giving talented female drivers everything they need to dominate their sport.”

The inaugural members to the 2012 TrueCar Racing Team include:

- Ashley Freiberg – Star Mazda Series ([www.ashleyracing.com](http://www.ashleyracing.com))
- Shea Holbrook - Pirelli World Challenge Series ([www.shearacing.com](http://www.shearacing.com))
- Shannon McIntosh – USF2000 Series ([www.shannonmcintosh.com](http://www.shannonmcintosh.com))
- Verena Mei – Rally America ([www.stargirlracing.com](http://www.stargirlracing.com))
- Emilee Tominovich – Pro SCCA Playboy MX-5 Cup Series

The company is also in the process of finalizing its sponsorship of a driver to compete in the prestigious IndyCar Series, as well as a Baja 1000 team for 2012, which will be made up entirely of women drivers vying for a class championship. Additionally, TrueCar will launch a new young driver development program that will introduce thousands of young women to auto racing at the karting level, and then providing support to top championship prospects as they progress through their racing careers from karting all the way up to premier racing series like IndyCar, the American Le Mans Series, Grand Am, and even Global RallyCross and the X-Games.

The strength of the program is enhanced by the involvement of Michael Zimicki – widely regarded as one of the top driving coaches in the industry. Zimicki, who has coached Danica Patrick, Pippa Mann, Ryan Hunter-Reay, and Graham Rahal will be a key consultant on the TrueCar initiative. He will be joined in the program by Marc Miller, a top driver in his own right and renowned driving coach, along with rally expert Tim O’Neil, and other top coaches and advisors throughout the season.



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“Despite their considerable talents, women have yet to achieve the sponsorship opportunities, recognition, and championship successes that we believe is their due in the only sport where men and women compete head-to-head,” said Charles Kim, Director of Motorsports for TrueCar. “This exciting initiative will change that - placing top women drivers on the world’s stage, and providing professional guidance, primary sponsorship support, and exciting new marketing and media opportunities to these talented drivers working their way up to the highest levels of racing. Our mission is simple: to empower these talented drivers and help them become future racing champions.”

Members of the TrueCar Racing Team are equally excited about the initiative. Said Shannon McIntosh, “I’m truly honored to be a part of the TrueCar Racing initiative. Coming from a very modest background with many years of struggle, I’m humbled at this opportunity. Thank you to Scott Painter, Charles Kim, and the entire TrueCar family for believing in me and giving me this platform to empower others to live by NinTai.” Michael Zimicki adds, "The program that TrueCar has announced today is the most comprehensive support of American racing ever done, be it open-wheel, sports car, rally, or off-road. And the real kicker is that it is in support of women. This is a revolution."

### **About Ashley Freiberg**

Ashley Freiberg was introduced to racing in 2002 at age 11 as a timing and scoring official at the local go kart tracks. In 2004 she attended the Jim Hall Karting school in California – and just one week later, she



started her first karting event with the World Karting Association (WKA) in December at the Daytona International Speedway. In 2005, her first season in racing, Ashley placed 4th overall in the regional karting series, the Championship Enduro Series (CES), and finished 7th overall in the WKA national points. In 2006 she scored her first regional and national karting race wins. She also completed an undefeated season in CES, winning 2 championships. Ashley also captured her first WKA national title. From there, she started her path in formula cars and completed both the 3-day and the 2-day Advanced Skip Barber Race Schools in Daytona. 2007 marked her first formula car race with the Skip Barber Racing Series where she qualified 3rd and finished 4th out of 15 cars. She also won her fourth karting championship in CES, and was selected out of all young women drivers in the country to attend the Women in the Winner's Circle Driver Development Academy.

In 2008 Ashley accumulated 7 podium (top 3) finishes and 9 top 5 finishes in the Skip Barber Racing Series. She also entered in her first race in a Formula Mazda with the Sports Car Club of America National Series, where she started 26th and finished 4th. She was also invited by Mazda Motorsports to race in her first BFGoodrich Skip Barber National Series race, placing 6th of 17 starters. At the end of the year, she won her 5th karting championship and graduated from the Women in the Winner's Circle Driver Development Academy. In 2009 Ashley's career really began to take off as she captured five race wins in



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the Skip Barber Racing Series at Sebring, Road America, Road Atlanta and Carolina Motorsports Park, and also competed in the BFGoodrich Skip Barber National Series where she became the first female in history to podium, and finished 6th overall in the championship. Alongside Indy Car and ALMS drivers, Ashley was featured in the online web series, Rev, which accumulated over 8 million hits. She was also invited to West Palm Beach International Raceway by the AMG Mercedes Driving Adademy to teach Olympic Silver Medalists and X-Games Champions how to drive.

During the 2010 season she wound up winning a total of 25 Skip Barber races and two Skip Barber Series Championships, Ashley made history multiple times when she became the first woman to win a Skip Barber Championship and the first woman to win a BFGoodrich Skip Barber National Series race at New Jersey Motorsports Park. Ashley also expanded her driving experiences into sedans, the Skip Barber MX-5 Cup Series, where she became the first woman to win a Skip Barber MX-5 cup race, winning four of the six races she entered. Ashley finished 5th overall in the National Series, and was also awarded the prestigious Coach's Choice Award as the best all-around driver in the series. In a one-off race with Team GDT in the Star Mazda Championship

presented by Goodyear, Ashley recorded an impressive top-five finish at the Autobahn Country Club. She also become only the second female, other than Danica Patrick, to be nominated as a candidate for the prestigious Team USA Scholarship. At the end of the season, Ashley was invited by Andretti Autosport to test their USF2000 car, but she did not have enough funding to progress to the next level.



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2011 proved to be another major turning point in her career; competing in various Skip Barber Series races at the beginning of the year, Ashley captured four more wins and four second places. She spent the rest of the year working on finding funding to keep progressing to the next level. In November, Ashley signed a two year partnership with TrueCar to continue up the Mazda Road to Indy Ladder in the Star Mazda Championship for 2012.

**About TrueCar**

TrueCar, Inc. has changed how cars are sold by providing a significantly better customer experience -- helping qualified dealer partners gain incremental market share and reduce costs. As a transparent, visual publisher of new car transaction data, TrueCar.com price reports help both dealers and consumers agree on the parameters of a fair deal by providing an accurate, comprehensive and simple understanding of what others actually paid for the identically equipped new car over the last 30 days both locally and nationally.



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TrueCar, Inc. is headquartered in Santa Monica, CA and has offices in San Francisco and Austin. The company was founded in 2005 and has been profitable since 2009. With 131% annual growth since 2006, TrueCar has driven over 400,000 sales and is developing a suite of transaction oriented products and services centered on transparency and radical clarity as a result of comprehensively analyzing market data and information. You can follow TrueCar on Twitter and become a fan of TrueCar on Facebook.

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**About Star Mazda Championship presented by Goodyear**

For 2012, the Star Mazda Championship presented by Goodyear will be again be a major part of the [Mazda Road to Indy](#). The [2012 schedule](#) includes 18 races on 10 weekends, most with IndyCar. Rising stars from around the world will compete on road courses, street circuits and ovals in front of more than a million fans as they compete for prizes valued at \$1.5 million, including a scholarship to move up and race in the 2013 Firestone Indy Lights series. Drivers 16 and older are welcome to compete and the Star Mazda Championship also features the Expert Series for drivers 30 and older. The Star Mazda Championship features standing starts, wheel-to-wheel racing at 160 mph and budgets a fraction of other top open-wheel ladder series. For more information on the Star Mazda Championship please visit [www.starmazda.com](http://www.starmazda.com).

For more information on the Star Mazda Championship and its drivers, as well as the Mazda Motorsports ladder system, please visit [www.starmazda.com](http://www.starmazda.com) and [www.mazdausa.com](http://www.mazdausa.com). For information, interviews and photos, please contact Star Mazda Communications Director Peter Frey at (818) 398-5733 or [StarMazdaPR@aol.com](mailto:StarMazdaPR@aol.com).

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