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USF2000 Announces Incentive For F2000 Champs to Compete at St. Pete

PALMETTO, Fla., March 1 — Officials of the USF2000 National Championship, which is presented by Cooper Tires and powered by Mazda, are pleased to announce a special package of benefits to former F2000 champions that was designed to help them sample the newly revived series at its season-opening doubleheader on the street course in St. Petersburg, Fla. March 27-28.

The promotion includes free race entry fees for the St. Petersburg Grand Prix USF2000 doubleheader, two free sets of Cooper tires to use that weekend, and a special “meet and greet” with representatives of the Road to Indy ladder program.

“We wish to recognize and honor the accomplishments of these select few drivers who have earned championship titles in F2000 cars, either in SCCA Runoffs competition [in the Formula Continental class] or in one of the two other F2000 series operating in the United States,” said Dan Andersen, series promoter.

“We realize that some of these drivers are still attempting to climb the ladder, and if we can assist that climb by allowing them to showcase their talents in our in-

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augural event, we are delighted to do so,” added John Andersen, director of competition.

For more information and eligibility confirmation, contact Michelle Kish at the series office by telephoning (941) 723-3900 or e-mailing her at info@usf2000.com.

The 14 eligible drivers include:

East Coast (2006-2009)

Matt McDonough

Cole Morgan

Anders Krohn

Chris Miller

West Coast (2004-2009)

Brad Jaeger

Mike Forest

Robert Podlesni

Patrick Barrett

Jeff Westphal

SCCA Runoffs (2001 to 2009)

Nicki Coello

Chas Shaffer

Brian Tomasi

Mike Andersen

Andrew Prendeville

Sanctioned by the Indy Racing League (IRL), the USF2000 National Championship is one of only two series that are part of both the IRL's Road to Indy ladder system and the MAZ-DASPEED Motorsports driver development program.

About Mazda:

On any given weekend there are more Mazdas on the road courses of America than any other brand of vehicle. MX-5 Miata, RX-8, MAZDA3, MAZDA6, RX-7 and other vintage Mazda models are all popular race cars because every Mazda has the soul of a sports car. In fact, the largest road-racing class in the world is Spec Miata. With more than 2,500 first- and second-generation Miatas tearing up America's racetracks, it the most-raced production car in the world. Mazda's involvement in motorsports extends to its relationship with one of the world's premier road courses, Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca in Monterey, Calif., and the Skip Barber Schools for driving and racing.

Celebrating its 40th anniversary in the United States in 2010, Mazda North American Operations is headquartered in Irvine, Calif. It oversees the sales, marketing, parts business and customer service of Mazda vehicles in the United States, Canada and Mexico through nearly 900 dealers. Operations in Canada are managed by Mazda Canada, Inc., located in Ontario. Operations in Mexico are managed by Mazda Motor de Mexico in Mexico City.

For more information see MazdaUSA.com.

About Cooper Tire & Rubber Company:

Cooper Tire & Rubber Company is a global company that specializes in the design, manufacture, marketing and sales of passenger car and light truck tires and subsidiaries that specialize in medium truck, motorcycle and racing tires. With headquarters in Findlay, Ohio, Cooper Tire has manufacturing, sales, distribution, technical and design facilities within its family of companies located in 10 countries around the world.

For more information visit Cooper Tire's Web site at coopertire.com.