

LIAM DWYER ENLISTS WITH MAZDA MOTORSPORTS

IRVINE, Calif., Jan. 21, 2015 /PRNewswire/ — Mazda announced the addition of Liam Dwyer as a full-time racer in the 2015 Continental Tire SportsCar Challenge. Dwyer stunned the racing world in 2014 when he teamed up with Tom Long to co-drive their Freedom Autosport Mazda MX-5 to the win in the Lime Rock Park Continental Tire ST race on Memorial Day weekend. The win was a made-for-Hollywood storyline as Dwyer was competing in only his second professional race, and he was doing it with an artificial leg, having been injured while serving as a U.S. Marine Staff Sergeant in Afghanistan just three years previously.

For 2015, Dwyer will be paired up with Andrew Carbonell for the entire ten-race season beginning January 23rd at Daytona International Speedway. Carbonell scored two wins with Freedom Autosport and Mazda in 2014.

Video: http://youtu.be/6D_5t2-eWdo

Quotes:

John Doonan, Motorsports Director, Mazda North American Operations: “While we are all impressed with Liam on so many levels, we have recruited him for the same reason we recruit any driver. We believe that he can help Mazda win races and the 2015 manufacturers championship. His personal story is just the icing on the cake and helps us connect with a bigger story.”

Liam Dwyer: “I am very excited for the 2015 season. I thought things couldn’t get better after last season, but Mazda has once again shown how immensely awesome they are. To be granted a full ride in the Freedom Autosport Mazda MX-5 is the ultimate dream come true. And on top of that, I have one of the fastest MX-5 drivers, Andrew Carbonell, as my co-driver. I can’t thank Derek Whitis, Rhett O’Doski and everyone at Mazda enough for this opportunity.”

Andrew Carbonell: “I am excited to be confirmed with Mazda and Freedom Autosport for the 2015 IMSA Continental Tire Challenge season. I am also proud to be co-driving with one of the most incredible racing stories recently; Marine Staff Sergeant Liam Dwyer. I have had the honor of getting to know Liam through the select races he drove with Freedom Autosport in 2014. To watch the inspiration and motivation from Liam from afar makes one understand the sacrifices one makes to follow their dreams whatever the circumstance may be. I look forward to continuing success and adding more victories together for Freedom Autosport and Mazda.”

Derek Whitis, Owner, Freedom Autosport: “When we created Freedom Autosport, it was to honor the men and women serving in the armed forces, especially the U.S. Marines. We are honored to have Liam join the team full-time in 2015. Just as important, we look forward to having additional marines serve other key roles on the team.”

The 2015 Continental Tires SportsCar race schedule is as follows:

Jan. 23 – Daytona International Speedway (Florida)
March 20 – Sebring International Raceway (Florida)
May 2 – Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca (Monterey, California)
June 27 – Watkins Glen International (New York)
July 11 – Canadian Tire Motorsport Park (Toronto, Canada)
July 25 – Lime Rock Park (Connecticut)
Aug. 8 – Road America (Elkhart Lake, Wisconsin)
Aug. 22 – Virginia International Raceway
Sept. 18 – Circuit of The Americas (Austin, Texas)
Oct. 2 – Road Atlanta (Georgia)

About Mazda, Mazda Motorsports, and *MAZDASPEED*

Mazda is a leading player in all aspects of sports car racing with an emphasis on endurance road racing. Mazda is the number-one brand for road-racers across North America among both club racers and professionals. Thousands of Mazda-powered grassroots racers compete in various classes with the SCCA and NASA highlighted by Spec Miata, the world’s largest spec class with over 2,500 cars built. Via the Mazda Road to Indy and the Mazda SportsCar Racing Academy, Mazda supports racers at all levels of the sport from club racing up to the TUDOR United SportsCar Championship where it races with production SKYACTIV Technology.

Mazda remains the only Asian car company to score an overall win at the 24 Hours of Le Mans (1991). Mazda has had a naming rights agreement at Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca since 2000.

Mazda Motorsports is managed by Mazda North American Operations (MNAO). MNAO is headquartered in Irvine, Calif., and oversees the sales, marketing, parts and customer service support of Mazda vehicles in the United States and Mexico through nearly 700 dealers. Operations in Mexico are managed by Mazda Motor de Mexico in Mexico City.

Consumer information can be found at www.mazdausa.com, with press information at www.mazdausamedia.com. Racers and fans can follow the action on Facebook (Mazda Motorsports), Twitter (@mazdaracing), Instagram (MazdaMotorsport) and www.mazdamotorsports.com

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SOURCE Mazda North American Operations

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