

## **MAZDA MOTORSPORTS AND ANDERSEN PROMOTIONS REACH AGREEMENT FOR INDYCAR TO SANCTION MX-5 CUP SERIES**

### **2017 BATTERY TENDER MAZDA GLOBAL MX-5 CUP PRESENTED BY BFGOODRICH TIRES SCHEDULE TO INCLUDE FOUR INDYCAR WEEKENDS**

IRVINE, Calif. (October 28, 2016) – Mazda Motorsports and Andersen Promotions announced today that the parties have reached an agreement for INDYCAR to sanction the Mazda MX-5 Cup series beginning with the 2017 season. The Battery Tender Global Mazda MX-5 Cup presented by BFGoodrich Tires is the signature spec series for the Mazda Road to 24 (#MRT24), the sports car counterpart to the Mazda Road to Indy presented by Cooper Tires (#MRTI).

In both programs, series champions earn a Mazda Motorsports scholarship to advance their racing careers. The MX-5 Cup season champion earns a \$200,000 scholarship. New for 2017, the MX-5 Cup Rookie-of-the-Year will earn a \$50,000 scholarship. In total, MX-5 Cup pays more than half-a-million dollars in prize money and scholarships.

“This sanctioning agreement with INDYCAR for the Battery Tender Global Mazda MX-5 Cup presented by BFGoodrich Tires is based upon our long and productive relationship with Dan Andersen, Andersen Promotions and INDYCAR,” said John Doonan, director of motorsports at Mazda North American Operations. “We have worked closely with them to grow the Mazda Road to Indy into the finest open-wheel ladder in the world. Now, we are striving to grow this series, which is the first step of our sports car ladder known as the Mazda Road to 24. In only one year, we have sold more than 120 of the newest generation of MX-5 Cup cars and have seen starting fields of up to 40 cars. By teaming with INDYCAR, we believe the series will thrive. Mazda strives to provide value to our customers, and to present our race teams with this race schedule today is a big step forward. They will have the opportunity to race at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway, plus other iconic circuits in the U.S. and Canada.

In 2017 the MX-5 Cup will consist of a 12-race schedule held on a total of six event weekends, plus the second annual Global MX-5 Cup Invitational, a non-points-paying event for Mazda racers from around the world. Four of those event weekends will be held during Verizon IndyCar Series events – Barber Motorsports Park (April 20-23), Road America (June 23-25), Toronto (July 14-16) and Watkins Glen International (September 1-3). The series will also compete on the road course of the Indianapolis Motor Speedway during the SVRA event (June 15-17) and twice at Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca (Sept. 22-24 and the Global Invitational, Oct. 13-15).

“The Mazda MX-5 Cup race car is such a terrific package and the MX-5 Cup championship already has shown what great racing this car and its drivers can provide,” said Dan Andersen, CEO of Andersen Promotions, which will oversee operational aspects of the series. “Andersen Promotions is very excited to expand its Mazda involvement and move into the Mazda Road to 24 sports car ladder to complement what the Mazda Road to Indy open-wheel ladder has already accomplished. We are all about developing drivers for careers in racing, and we expect to bring our experience to MX-5 Cup and enhance the training that drivers receive to better enable them to climb the sports car ladder. INDYCAR is the best sanctioning body and has such exciting events on its calendar, and I can’t wait to add MX-5 Cup to some of these weekends and wave the Mazda flag even more.”

The MX-5 Cup series is considered the best value in sports car racing. The cars are sold as a ready-to-race, turnkey package for \$58,900. Because of the parity of the cars, [the racing is always close, hard-fought and great fun for fans](#). The series is entering its twelfth season of action.

“When Mazda approached us regarding MX-5 Cup, we felt it would be a great opportunity for INDYCAR to expand upon what we’re already doing with our involvement in the Mazda Road to Indy,” said Jay Frye, INDYCAR president of competition and operations. “This agreement also allows us to enhance our overall platform with Mazda Motorsports and Andersen Promotions, who have been great partners of INDYCAR.”

#### **About MX-5 Cup:**

The MX-5 Cup race cars start as complete MX-5 road cars from the Mazda Hiroshima, Japan factory before being transported to engineering development partner Long Road Racing in Statesville, North Carolina where they are produced into a race car. The process includes disassembly of the production car, welding and paint of a full roll cage and interior, and assembly of the race car, adding more than 250 motorsports-specific parts. Other components of the car, including the Mazda SKYACTIV 2.0 liter engine are sealed to ensure even competition and a cost-effective platform.

The Battery Tender Global Mazda MX-5 Cup presented by BFGoodrich Tires is the signature spec series for the Mazda Road to 24 (#MRT24), the sports car counterpart to the Mazda Road to Indy (#MRTI). On both paths, Mazda-powered champions earn a Mazda scholarship to advance their career. The MX-5 Cup champion earns a \$200,000 scholarship.

Information on the car is online at [www.mazdamotorsports.com](http://www.mazdamotorsports.com).

### **About Mazda Motorsports:**

Mazda Motorsports boasts the most comprehensive auto racing development ladder system of any auto manufacturer in the world. The Mazda Road to 24 program offers a number of scholarships to advance drivers up the sports car racing ladder, beginning with the Global MX-5 Cup series and culminating with the Mazda Prototype team. The Mazda Road to Indy is a similar program that includes Mazda-powered categories of USF2000, Pro Mazda and Indy Lights. In grassroots road racing, more Mazdas race on any given weekend in North America than any other manufacturer. Mazda is also the title sponsor of the renowned Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca in Monterey, Calif. Follow all of the latest news at [MazdaMotorsports.com](http://MazdaMotorsports.com), @MazdaRacing on Twitter, and MazdaMotorsports on Instagram and Facebook.

### **About Andersen Promotions:**

Andersen Promotions has a long and successful background in promoting open-wheel championships and has also owned multiple race teams, including an Indy Lights team, in the past. The company relaunched the Cooper Tires USF2000 Championship Powered by Mazda in 2010, which it operated from 1992 through 2001. In December of 2012, Andersen Promotions founded the Pro Mazda Championship Presented by Cooper Tires to replace the void left by the Star Mazda Series which ceased operations after 22 years. On July 12, 2013, it was announced that Andersen Promotions would take over the licensing and operation of the Indy Lights Series from INDYCAR and now operates all three levels of the Mazda Road to Indy. For additional information, please visit [www.indylights.com](http://www.indylights.com), [www.promazdachampionship.com](http://www.promazdachampionship.com) and [www.usf2000.com](http://www.usf2000.com).

### **About INDYCAR:**

INDYCAR is the governing body of the Verizon IndyCar Series, the premier open-wheel racing series in North America, and the Mazda Road to Indy presented by Cooper Tires development ladder, which includes: Indy Lights presented by Cooper Tires, the Pro Mazda Championship presented by Cooper Tires and the Cooper Tires USF2000 Championship powered by Mazda. INDYCAR events are available to a worldwide audience through a variety of multimedia platforms, highlighted by long-term and broad-reaching partnerships with ABC and NBCSN. INDYCAR is continually at the forefront of motorsports innovation with drivers, teams and tracks benefiting from safety and technological improvements such as the SAFER Barrier, SWEMS wheel and chassis component tethers, chassis enhancements, advanced aerodynamic bodywork kits, high-definition in-car cameras and E85 ethanol fuel.

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