



For Immediate Release

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## **Mazda to Sponsor Third-Annual Touge California Japanese Vintage Road Rally**

*- Mazda to Celebrate 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Mazda's First Sports Car, the Rotary-Powered  
Cosmo Sport 110S, in 200-Mile Event -*

IRVINE, Calif. (May 16, 2017) – Mazda North American Operations has today announced that it is again partnering with *Japanese Nostalgic Car*, the largest U.S.-based online magazine covering vintage cars and automotive culture from Japan, to sponsor the third-annual Touge California rally. This will be MNAO's second year as the title sponsor.

This year, the event will celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Mazda's first sports car, the Cosmo Sport 110S, powered by a Wankel rotary engine. Much as the case today with Mazda's SKYACTIV Technology that leverages a combination of lightweight, efficient powertrains and platforms to offer outstanding safety, fuel-efficiency and driving dynamics, Mazda used its engineering expertise in the 1960s to develop unique technologies that industry conventions and set Mazda apart.

While Mazda is famous for its rotary engines, in the 1960s, automakers from the U.S. and Germany also held patents to build rotary engines. However, none could make the technology work. Mazda's "Never Stop Challenging" spirit helped the company reach a breakthrough, launching the Cosmo Sport 110S on May 30, 1967. In the following years, Mazda found success with the Wankel rotary, selling more than 1 million units globally in everything from compact cars to sports cars to full-size luxury vehicles and even 26-passenger buses.

In parallel, Mazda has consistently challenged convention, whether by way of its rotary-powered vehicles; motorsports successes; its Miller Cycle engines—technology still used in today's engine



family; or SKYACTIV engines, which run the highest compression ratio of any street-going gasoline engine—even on 87-octane gasoline.

That spirit of innovation will be on full display on July 15 in Southern California, as Touge California will play host to vintage Japanese vehicles from all over the U.S., including several vehicles from Mazda's own Heritage Collection.

"We created Touge California three years ago to provide a Mille Miglia-style road rally for owners of Japanese cars," said Ben Hsu, founder and editor of *Japanese Nostalgic Car*. "Our focus was to embrace and celebrate the cars we might have grown up with or may have been forbidden fruit, growing to legendary status in their Japanese home market."

"Touge" (toe-geh) is a Japanese word that means "Mountain Pass," and is synonymous with the spirited driving styles adopted throughout hilly Japanese expanses. While not featuring the often competitive aspects of touge driving, Touge California participants will traverse a 200-mile route taking place in and around Southern California's mountain roads. Their final checkpoint will take them back to Irvine, where they will be treated to a private tour of Mazda's Heritage Collection.

"As a company that celebrates driving, whether on the road or racetrack with our Mazda Motorsports team, we relish opportunities to cultivate the heritage of Mazda and what the Japanese automakers have done to leave their mark in North America," said Kelvin Hiraishi, director, R&D, MNAO, who is part of the team that maintains MNAO's heritage efforts. "Touge California is a natural fit for the Mazda brand, as it is our mission to bring joy through driving. It provides a venue for us to share our story—driving on the road, where cars are meant to be."

For more information or to submit an application to participate in Touge California, please visit [JapaneseNostalgicCar.com](http://JapaneseNostalgicCar.com).



Mazda North American Operations is headquartered in Irvine, California, and oversees the sales, marketing, parts and customer service support of Mazda vehicles in the United States and Mexico through more than 600 dealers. Operations in Mexico are managed by Mazda Motor de Mexico in Mexico City. For more information on Mazda vehicles, including photography and B-roll, please visit the online Mazda media center at [InsideMazda.MazdaUSA.com/Newsroom](http://InsideMazda.MazdaUSA.com/Newsroom).

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