



For Immediate Release

Contact: Dean Case, Mazda Motorsports (310) 318-4582, mazdaspeed@MazdaUSA.com

Matt Cleary, Sunday Group Management (317) 908-2975 matt@sundaymanagement.com

Battery Tender Global Mazda MX-5 Cup Presented by BFGoodrich Tires: 2017 Awards Recap

- Patrick Gallagher earns \$200,000 Mazda Road to 24 Scholarship -

IRVINE, Calif. (September 28, 2017) – The 2017 Battery Tender Global Mazda MX-5 Cup presented by BFGoodrich Tires featured passing. Lots of passing. In 12 races, there were over 2,000 passes for position. It also featured awards. Big awards. \$200,000 for the champion and \$50,000 for the rookie-of-the-year being the most lucrative.

Emerging as the 2017 Global Mazda MX-5 champion was Patrick Gallagher. The 24-year old Gallagher, from Thornville, Ohio, drove his No. 29 McCumbee McAleer MX-5 to eight race wins. This tied the series record set by Todd Lamb in 2009. Gallagher finished on the podium on 11 of 12 races, scored six pole positions, set four fast laps, and led 38% of all laps. Gallagher thanked his parents for being at every one of his races since he was in quarter midgets at age six. He also thanked his longtime partner Howard Concrete Pumping. He also thanked Mazda for giving racers with limited budgets the opportunity to earn large scholarships.

By winning the championship Gallagher earned a \$200,000 MRT24 Scholarship to use in the 2018 race season. When accepting the check from Mazda Motorsports director John Doonan, Gallagher teased that he might announce his 2018 plans in two weeks. Gallagher plans to return to Mazda Raceway in three weeks seeking to add another \$75,000 to his bank account at the Global Mazda MX-5 Cup Challenge.

John Doonan observed that, “2017 opened up a new chapter for the MX-5 Cup, working with INDYCAR and Andersen Promotions. We continued our cost effective opportunity for entry level professional sports car racing, while advancing it to a new level. We are proud of the on-track



action, the parity between competitors, and having great partners and teams. We congratulate Patrick Gallagher, Robert Stout, McCumbee-McAleer Racing, and the entire MX-5 Cup grid. We'll be making some exciting announcements, including our 2018 schedule, in the weeks and months ahead.

Gallagher was not the only racer completing a great season. 2016 MX-5 Cup champion Nathaniel Sparks (No. 8 Sick Sideways Racing), seeking to become the first ever two-time MX-5 Cup champion, ended up as the runner-up this season, and earned the highly coveted "Spirit of Mazda Award". The award recognizes the racer that best embodies the qualities of Mazda including the challenger spirit and the pursuit of constant improvement. Known as "Sparky" within the paddock, Sparks humorous comments about what the series means to him were among the highlights of the evening.

Robert Stout (No. 28 McCumbee-McAleer Racing) earned third place in the championship and the Rookie-of-the-Year (RoY) honors. New for 2017, Mazda added a \$50,000 award to the RoY prize making it an intense battle between Stout, Bryan Ortiz (No. 4 Copeland Motorsports), and Matt Cresci (No 51 Slipstream Performance). Stout earned two wins on the way to scoring the \$50,000.

Not surprisingly, the McCumbee-McAleer Racing (MMR) team was recognized as the Team of the Year. The team won ten of the 12 races, including four 1-2 finishes. Team manager Jonathan Gibbons thanked team partners Modspace, Charles Paquin, and the Monticello Motor Club. MMR team member Jim Vann was honored as the Mechanic of the Year.

New for 2017 was a fan voted for award for the "Mazda Move of the Year". Racers submitted on-board videos with the three finalists being voted on via an online ballot. Winning the award was Patrick Wilmot (No. 06 GB Racing) for his outside pass of three cars, in the rain, at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway.

About MX-5 Cup:

The MX-5 Cup racecars start as complete MX-5 Miata 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 converted 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 racecar, adding more than 250 motorsports-specific parts. Other components of the car, including the Mazda SKYACTIV-G 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.

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, California. Follow all of the latest news at MazdaMotorsports.com, @MazdaRacing on Twitter, and MazdaMotorsports on Instagram and Facebook.

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 nearly 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.



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