

MAZDA AMPLIFIES ALL-NEW MAZDA3 AND MAZDASPEED3 FOR 2009 SEMA SHOW

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LAS VEGAS - With the launch of the all-new 2010 MAZDA3 and MAZDASPEED3, a small team of designers and engineers at Mazda R&D in Irvine, Calif., decided to celebrate with a pair of special projects, debuting for the first time at the 2009 Specialty Equipment Market Association (SEMA) Show.

Figuring out how to commemorate the completion of the MAZDA3 was easy. Mazda's line of exciting, fun-to-drive cars are born from the passion of the people who design them, so starting with a MAZDASPEED3 and a 2.5-liter MAZDA3s the team took its knowledge of the Mazda parts bin and its close relationships with MAZDASPEED Motorsports suppliers, looked in the mirror, and decided to build a pair of tuner cars that show its own vision of the MAZDA3.

Both cars are painted to mimic the new MAZDA3 World Challenge race car, but in a more subdued Crystal White Pearl base coat with soft gray tone graphics. The scheme is a modern twist on the famous Renown graphics used on the Mazda 787B that won Le Mans in 1991.

Exterior details, including grille inserts, side mirrors, fog lamp bezels, the roof panel, and the formerly chrome interior of the front lamps are all given a bright black paint treatment. Combined with tinted windows, and dark red taillight lenses, the dark details tighten the car visually, emphasizing the MAZDA3's taught, muscular shape much like a tailored black suit on an athlete.

Both cars roll on 19x8-inch wheels with 225/40-19 Bridgestone Potenza RE050A tires straight off the RX-8 R3. The wheels are forged aluminum, giving them strength with exceptional light weight.

The sedan was sent to Tri-Point Engineering for a boost in power. Between World Challenge races, Tri-Point installed their turbo kit, utilizing a rugged cast iron turbo manifold feeding a high-efficiency Garrett GT2871R ball bearing turbo. At a mild 10 psi of boost, the 2.5-liter MZR engine is making well over 250 horsepower at the wheels (final tuning is still being finished).

To handle this extra power, the front brakes were replaced with rotors and calipers from a *MAZDASPEED3*, while the rear rotors and calipers were sourced from a MAZDA5. Double-adjustable coil-overs from KW Suspension, paired with a Tri-Point adjustable rear stabilizer bar bring the handling back into harmony with the engine's higher output.

The *MAZDASPEED3*, already capable of 155 mph, was already nearly fast enough. An AEM cold-air intake bumps output about 20 horsepower, but otherwise, the powertrain remains untouched. Suspension is again KW coil-overs, but this time with modified top mounts on the front struts to increase camber and provide additional cornering grip. Four-piston Stoptech calipers and floating two-piece rotors nearly identical to those on the World Challenge car are used, since the car's original brakes were transplanted to the 4-Door.

Celebrating its 40th Anniversary in the United States in 2010, Mazda North American Operations is headquartered in Irvine, Calif. and oversees the sales, marketing, parts and customer service support 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; and in Mexico by Mazda Motor de Mexico in Mexico City.

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