

MAZDASPEED VISITS FLORIDA TO KICK OFF 2012

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[The No. 70 SpeedSource Mazda RX-8 has won the GT class at the Rolex 24 Hours two of the past four years.](#)

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Seeking 24th class win in Rolex 24 at Daytona

January 24, 2012 (IRVINE, Calif.) While the weather may be cold in many parts of the country, Mazda teams are warming up in sunny Florida. Multiple motorsports season-openers will be taking place at Daytona Beach, Sebring, and St. Petersburg, Florida starting this weekend and running through late March.

From GRAND-AM:

- The 2012 GRAND-AM Rolex Sports Car Series will kick off with the 50th Anniversary Rolex 24 at Daytona this weekend. Mazda will be seeking their 24th class win since 1975.
- The #70 SpeedSource Mazda RX-8 is hoping that the odds are 'even' this year, having won the GT class in both 2008 and 2010. Drivers Sylvain Tremblay and Jonathan Bomarito will be joined by Mazda alums James Hinchcliffe and Marino Franchitti.
- Dempsey Racing has a pair of Mazda RX-8s and is hoping to improve on their third-place finish in 2011.
- Team Sahlen's has three of their fan-favorite red, yellow, and black RX-8s entered and are seeking to step up their performance into the winner's circle.
- Joining the rotary brigade for Daytona is one of the most famous families in all of motorsport - Andretti. John Andretti received an invitation to attend the 50th Anniversary Rolex 24 At Daytona by virtue of being a former winner of the event. John will team up with his 19-year-old son, Jarett. They will share the No. 36 Yellow Dragon Motorsports Mazda RX-8 with Star Mazda Championship alums Taylor Hacquard and Anders Krohn.

From the Continental Tire Sports Car Challenge:

- Mazda will be seeking to defend their 2011 Continental Tire Challenge Street Tuner (ST)

Manufacturers Championship as the 2012 season opens on Friday at Daytona.

- Both Freedom AutoSport and i-Moto will be back with three-car teams. It was their combined efforts that delivered the 2011 championship. Freedom will be racing Mazda MX-5s (No. 25, 26, & 27) while i-Moto will have a fleet of *MAZDASPEED3*s (No. 30, 31, & 32).
- CJ Wilson Racing will be joining the series with a two-car effort. No. 03 will be a *MAZDASPEED3* with No. 04 a Mazda MX-5. Both cars will feature new marketing partners, ModSpace, Construct Corps and Forza 4/Xbox.
- Also racing at Daytona with Mazda will be single-car teams from Nixon Motorsport (No. 44 *MAZDASPEED3*), Riley Racing (No. 66 Mazda RX-8), and Pirate Motorsports (No. 69 Mazda RX-8)

From ALMS:

- The Dyson Mazda team will be kicking off their ALMS LMP1 title defense at Sebring on March 17th.

From the SCCA Pro-Racing Playboy Mazda MX-5 Cup:

The 2012 Mazda MX-5 Cup schedule stretches over 11-races spread across eight race weekends of high-profile events supporting the American Le Mans Series, NASCAR Nationwide Series and Grand-Am Rolex Series. MX-5 Cup also will run at the popular Coronado Festival of Speed at Naval Base Coronado during Fleet Week San Diego 2012.

- March 14-16, Sebring International Raceway, with American Le Mans Series Series (doubleheader)
- May 10-12, Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca, with American Le Mans Series Series (doubleheader)
- June 8-10, Mid-Ohio Sports Car Course, with Grand-Am
- June 22-23, Road America, with NASCAR Nationwide Series and Grand-Am
- July 20-22, Mosport International Raceway, with American Le Mans Series
- September 14-15, Virginia International Raceway, with American Le Mans Series
- September 21-23, Naval Base Coronado, with Coronado Festival of Speed Historic Races
- October 17-19 Road Atlanta, with American Le Mans Series (doubleheader)

From the Skip Barber Racing School:

- Registration recently opened for the inaugural Skip Barber Racing School *MAZDASPEED* Pro Challenge class in the 2012 SCCA Pro Racing Playboy Mazda MX-5 Cup Series. This new class provides another step in the *MAZDASPEED* Motorsports Development Ladder for racers aiming to race professionally in sports cars. The winner of the Skip Barber Racing School *MAZDASPEED* Pro Challenge class will receive funding to compete in the full 2013 SCCA Pro Racing Playboy Mazda MX-5 Cup Series.
- Additional information on the Skip Barber Racing School can be found at www.skipbarber.com [4]

From the Star Mazda Championship Presented by Goodyear:

- 2011 USF2000 Champion Petri Suvanto graduates to 2012 Star Mazda competition with a scholarship package from the Mazda Road to Indy. He will join Team Pelfrey, winners of the 2011 Star Mazda Team Championship title.

- The Star Mazda Championship presented by Goodyear announced that the [2012 season finale](#) [5] will be held at Road Atlanta during the 15th Annual Petit Le Mans powered by Mazda, October 17 - 20.
- Juncos Racing and international multi-media company Auto a Fondo Media have formed a [comprehensive partnership](#) [6] going into the 2012 racing season.
- Chicago-based [Team Stange Racing](#) [7], Inc. has announced their 2012 plans. The multi-car team team has signed Brazilian Lazaro Selegar to contest the entire season while Brandon Reed from Elkhart, Indiana will run a partial season.
- Andretti Autosport driver Zach Veach won the [Formula Car Challenge Presented by Goodyear](#) [8] Winter Series Championship. Veach is competing in the FCC as a testing platform during the off-season as he prepares to compete in the 2012 Star Mazda Championship.
- For additional information please visit www.StarMazda.com [9]

From the Cooper Tires USF2000 Championship Powered by Mazda:

- The 2012 USF2000 schedule includes 14 high-profile races in support of INDYCAR and the American Le Mans Series with the recently announced season finale taking place at Virginia International Raceway on September 14-15.
- A strong field is already in place for this year's championship with 20 drivers confirmed and additional announcements expected.
- *MAZDASPEED* Development Driver Spencer Pigot, who finished second in the 2011 title chase, has signed to drive for Cape Motorsports with Wayne Taylor Racing and announced a new partnership with Emerging Technologies Group.
- Shelby Blackstock, son of country music star Reba McEntire and Narvel Blackstock, will make his USF2000 debut with Andretti Autosport.
- Additional driver announcements include Team USA Scholarship winner Neil Alberico at JDC Motorsports, Canadian karting stand-out Dalton Kellett at Pabst Racing Services and Skip Barber graduate Luigi Biangardi at ArmsUp Motorsports.
- With the series expanding to include SCCA Enterprises' Formula Enterprises (FE) entries in its National Class, three new teams have already been added to the 2012 roster - Comprint Motor Sports, PRL Motorsports and Robinson Motor Sports.
- Zach Veach, voted 2011 "Favorite USF2000 Driver of the Year" by INDYCAR Nation fan club members, graduates to the Star Mazda Championship with Andretti Autosport, teaming with 2010 USF2000 champion Sage Karam.
- Seventeen drivers are confirmed at present for the USF2000 pre-season Cooper Tires Winterfest. The six-race mini-series will take place at Sebring International Raceway on February 6-7 and Palm Beach International Raceway on February 11-12.
- Additional information on the series can be found at www.usf2000.com [10].

From Formula D:

- The 2012 Formula D season will kick off in the streets of Long Beach on April 6-7. Team Bergenholtz and Kyle Mohan Racing will once again challenge in their RX-8s.

Fom Pirelli World Challenge:

- The 2012 Pirelli World Challenge will kick-off March 23 in the streets of St. Petersburg, Florida. Several Mazda teams are preparing to compete in the Touring Car class. The new "B-Spec" class, which will feature the Mazda2, will debut later in the season.

From Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca:

- The 2012 season at Mazda Raceway will be diverse and world class with five great events planned.
 - American Le Mans Monterey, presented by Patron (May 11-12)
 - Ferrari Racing Days (May 18-20)
 - Red Bull United States Grand Prix featuring the MotoGP World Championship (July 27-29)
 - Rolex Monterey Motorsports Reunion (August 17-19)
 - Continental Tire Sports Car Festival, Powered by Mazda (September 7-9)
- Additional information can be found at www.mazdaraceway.com [11]

About Mazda & MAZDASPEED

Mazda is the number-one brand for road-racers across North America. 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. In 2006 Mazda established the **MAZDASPEED**

Motorsports Development Ladder to assist racers in moving up through the ranks. In 2010 this was expanded to include the **Mazda Road to Indy**. Key to Mazda's success is strategic partnerships with the Skip Barber Racing School and Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca.

MAZDASPEED 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, 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.

Consumer information can be found at www.mazdausa.com [12] with press information at www.mazdausamedia.com [13] Racers and fans can join the action on facebook (Mazdaspeed Motorsports).

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Links:

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[2] <http://www.mazdausamedia.com/files/images/2012 SpeedSource Grand-Am GT Mazda RX-8 No 70.preview.JPG>

[3] [http://www.mazdausamedia.com/files/images/2012 SpeedSource Grand-Am GT Mazda RX-8 No 70.JPG](http://www.mazdausamedia.com/files/images/2012%20SpeedSource%20Grand-Am%20GT%20Mazda%20RX-8%20No%2070.JPG)

[4] <http://www.skipbarber.com/>

[5] <http://starmazda.com/news/series/2011/SeasonFinaleRelease.pdf>

[6] [http://starmazda.com/news/teams/2012/01/2012_Juncos_Auto A Fondo Partnership.pdf](http://starmazda.com/news/teams/2012/01/2012_Juncos_Auto%20A%20Fondo%20Partnership.pdf)

[7] <http://starmazda.com/news/teams/2011/12/teamstangeracingrelease1.pdf>

[8]

http://campaign.r20.constantcontact.com/render?llr=7v5wgcab&v=001bHw_LhcjpQoafcX7vACkf2cVaADj6z6rIpSha8KUUnl5vZHsztIPCOfsfejlSpMa3MUtFrPep5_k=

[9] <http://www.starmazda.com/>

[10] <http://www.usf2000.com/>

[11] <http://www.mazdaraceway.com/>

[12] <http://www.mazdausa.com/>

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