

## USF2000 Cooper Tires Winterfest Schedule Confirmed

### Six-Race Mini-Series Offers Head Start on 2012 Season

PALMETTO, Fla. – The Cooper Tires Presents the USF2000 National Championship Powered by Mazda has confirmed the dates and venues for the second annual Cooper Tires Winterfest Championship – a six-race mini-series which provides teams and drivers the opportunity to gain a jumpstart their 2012 season campaigns.

Two premier road courses will host the tripleheader rounds. Dates have been secured at the historic 3.7-mile, 17-turn Sebring International Raceway circuit in Sebring, Fla., on February 6 and 7 alongside the IMSA Development Series Winter Test featuring the Cooper Tires Prototype Lites Championship Powered by Mazda and IMSA GT3 Cup Challenge classes. The event is a prelude to the American Le Mans Series Winter Test on February 8 and 9.

On February 11 and 12, the series will make its first appearance at the 2.034-mile, 11-turn Palm Beach International Raceway in Palm Beach, Fla. The three-race schedule will run in conjunction with Cooper Tire Prototype Lites in addition to test sessions for the Star Mazda Championship Presented by Goodyear and Firestone Indy Lights.

“We are very happy to announce the second annual Cooper Tires Winterfest with a terrific schedule that promises a lot of racing in a short period of time,” said Dan Andersen, Owner and CEO of Andersen Promotions, the series promoter. “The schedule of six races over seven days works well for our teams and drivers and is the perfect way for them to develop their working relationships in the midst of fierce competition. We are excited to get our first look at the drivers who we expect will give us another great season of USF2000 racing in 2012.”

Teams will have the opportunity to go directly from Sebring to the PBIR facilities for pre-race preparations on February 9 and 10.

Andretti Autosport's Zach Veach captured the 2010 Cooper Tires Winterfest Championship title and \$10,000 award. Teammate Spencer Pigot finished second followed by Matthew Di Leo driving for Brian Stewart Racing. Pabst Racing Services' J.R. Smart claimed National Class honors.

The Cooper Tires Presents the USF2000 National Championship Powered by Mazda enjoyed a highly successful 2011 season with nine different drivers emerging as race winners. Championship battles in both the Championship and National classes came down to the wire in a pair of season-ending races at the inaugural Baltimore Grand Prix which featured series high 19-car fields. Petri Suvanto of Cape Motorsports with Wayne Taylor Racing clinched Championship honors and Luca Forgeois of Pabst Racing Services earned the National title.

As the first official step on the Mazda Road to Indy ladder system sanctioned by INDYCAR, the top driver in the USF2000 Championship class will earn a scholarship package from Mazda to advance to Star Mazda competition. The series is also part of the MAZDASPEED Motorsports Development Ladder which assists young drivers in advancing from the Skip Barber Racing School to USF2000.

INDYCAR and Mazda's strong support of the ladder series extends beyond the race track with the highly successful Mazda Road to Indy Summit program offering media, social media and business/sponsorship training amongst other topics as well as networking and promotional opportunities to its drivers.

The doubleheader opening rounds of the 2012 USF2000 season will take place at the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Mobil 1 Twelve Hours of Sebring Fueled by Fresh from Florida on March 14-17. A full series schedule will be announced in the coming weeks.

Teams interested in participating in the Cooper Tires Winterfest Championship can contact Series Manager Michelle Kish at 941-723-3900 or via [info@usf2000.com](mailto:info@usf2000.com). Additional information, including a schedule, will be available at [www.usf2000.com](http://www.usf2000.com).



The Cooper Tires Presents the USF2000 National Championship Powered by Mazda debuted in 2010 and is a revival of the highly-regarded USF2000 series which ran from 1990 through 2006, launching the careers of many of today's top drivers.

Sanctioned by INDYCAR and managed by Andersen Promotions, the series is the first official step on the Mazda Road to Indy ladder system. The top driver in the Championship class will earn a scholarship package from Mazda to advance to the Star Mazda Championship.

The series also is part of the MAZDASPEED Motorsports Development Ladder program with the top driver in the BFGoodrich/Skip Barber National Presented by Mazda receiving a scholarship from Mazda to contest the USF2000 series.

#### Contact:

Tamy Valkosky, Public Relations  
949.459.9172 Office  
949.842.3946 Cellular  
[pr@usf2000.com](mailto:pr@usf2000.com)

Andersen RacePark  
10101 U.S. Highway 41 North  
Palmetto, FL 34221  
941.723.3900  
[info@usf2000.com](mailto:info@usf2000.com)

[www.usf2000.com](http://www.usf2000.com)  
[www.mazdamotorsports.com](http://www.mazdamotorsports.com)  
[www.coopertire.com](http://www.coopertire.com)  
[www.indycar.com](http://www.indycar.com)

**About Mazda:** On any given weekend, there are more Mazdas on the road-race tracks of America than any other brand of vehicle. At the track, you'll see MX-5 Miata, RX-8, MAZDA3, MAZDA6, RX-7 and other vintage Mazda models competing, because every Mazda has the Soul of a Sports Car. In fact, the largest road-racing class in the world is Spec Miata, with more than 2,500 first- and second-generation Miatas tearing up America's racetracks, making it the most-raced production car in the world. Mazda's involvement in motorsports extends to its relationship with INDYCAR, Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca, one of the world's premier road-racing circuits, and the Skip Barber Schools for driving and racing.

With over 40 years of experience in North America, Mazda North American Operations is headquartered in Irvine, Calif. It oversees the sales, marketing, parts business and customer service 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. Operations in Mexico are managed by Mazda Motor de Mexico in Mexico City.

**About Cooper Tire & Rubber Company:** Cooper Tire & Rubber Company is a global company with affiliates, subsidiaries and joint-ventures that specialize in the design, manufacture, marketing and sales of passenger car and light truck tires. The Company also has subsidiaries that specialize in medium truck, motorcycle and racing tires.

With headquarters in Findlay, Ohio, Cooper Tire has manufacturing, sales, distribution, technical and design facilities within its family of companies located in 10 countries around the world.