



March 22, 2005

To All Star Mazda Racers:

There were a number of changes in equipment and some new faces in the Star Mazda Championship at Sebring. The impression was of renewal and retooling as everyone seemed intent on raising their game. Brian Anderson joined the Series tech staff, Mark Rodrigues assumed duties as driver advocate and shared some of Eric McCombs' responsibilities as media representative, and the Series now has Jim Martyn for its dedicated track announcer. New teams included Red Beard Racing, Guthrie Racing, Northwest Autosports, MJ Motorsports, and AIM Autosports. Many of the returning teams were sporting new equipment. The Series rig has foregone the "factory team" component in favor of expanded parts and service, a tech enclosure, and more elaborate hospitality and catering facilities. So far, 42 drivers are competing for Series points. 15 drivers are rookies this year.

We are just back from Sebring and the feeling is very upbeat. There were 42 entries for the opening round of the 2005 Star Mazda Championship presented by Goodyear and all 42 cars took the green flag. Raphael Matos, driving for Ocean Tomo, had a near perfect week, winning pole position and leading every lap of the race. The intensity of the competition going on behind him may have made it look easier than it was. Matt Jaskol set fastest lap of the race in his Hearn Motorsports prepared car, and earned the silver medal. The remaining podium position was taken by another rookie with a familiar name, 16 year old, Graham Rahal. Eric McCombs' story is attached, plus you can watch the race on Speed Channel, Sunday, April 24th at 11:00am Eastern time.

You will note if you look at the full listing of all the Speed broadcast Star Mazda races, included here, that we plan to make up for the loss of the race originally scheduled for St Pete by running two races at Infineon in July. We will therefore be qualifying and racing on both Saturday and Sunday. The preliminary schedules for most of our race weekends are here along with the full 2005 TV schedule. Please remember these are subject to change, so watch the website and always "consult your local listings."

There was a lot of media coverage for Star Mazda at Sebring, beside the new one hour show on Speed Channel; "Speed Freaks" was shooting four shows to air in April. For those not familiar with the Saturday night show on Speed Channel, it is an irreverent, motorsports alternative to "Saturday Night Live," soon to include interviews of several of the personalities involved with Star Mazda. There was also a TV crew shooting footage for use in Mazda's TV advertising and some well known photographers, like Peter Brock, shooting for magazines. There are also programs, now, in other countries doing TV coverage of all the Star Mazda races. Some of these are the UK, Venezuela, and Chile. Talks are continuing at this time to add two more very large TV markets to the list.

We need to hear from all the teams that wish to participate in the press day at Road Atlanta on April 18th. We will have the track to ourselves and several motorsports publications will be on hand. Some of the celebrity drivers who have said they would like to take part are Johnny O'Connell, Brian Till, Calvin

Fish, Dorsey Shrader, Bobby Rahal, and Eliseo Salazar. This will take place on the Monday following the Atlanta race. Call me, if you would like to be included. (818) 686-3359.

Part of the expanded TV coverage of our Series for 2005, includes four in car cameras, all with front and rear views, doubling the opportunity to get your sponsors logo in frame. One of the perks is that you get a copy of your race footage. We are compiling a list of drivers wishing to take advantage of the exposure. Call or email us well in advance, if you want to be on the list.

There are a few additions and clarifications in the updated Supp Regs attached here. They relate to start/restart procedures, and renumbering the 2005 Championship rounds to reflect the schedule changes.

Some have inquired about racing a "one off" with the Series at the Montreal F-1 race. This may be possible, but we are limited by contract to 50 starters maximum at Montreal. We will give precedence to those who have earned points in the Series and we will grid for the start of the race based on the latest Series points standings. The usual point for pole will not go to the Series points leader, who will be grided number one at Montreal, but that point will go instead to the driver turning the fastest race lap. If there are 50 drivers or more at Montreal, who have earned Series points before the F-1 weekend, the grid will be set with the 50 drivers that have the highest point totals. If there are less than 50 drivers with Series points after the Mid Ohio event, the Series will select from the remaining drivers who have tendered entries for Montreal and notify them that their entries have been accepted. Those drivers will then be grided at Montreal, behind the Series drivers, in the order their Montreal entries were received at the Series office. If you have any questions about how this will work, feel free to call or email our offices.

We have noted some Pro cars using number panels which vary slightly from those issued by the Series. Expect this to be an issue starting at Atlanta. Use of the Series issued number panels is mandatory.

TV has requested that the Series provide them with a "map" of the team locations on pit lane, to make it easier for the pit lane reporter during the race. Since we usually "buddy up" with, or just work around the teams running other Series, the order and spacing of our teams seems a bit haphazard. We will make up the map for TV; all we ask is that each team tries to always use the same pit location, once you have made your choice for the event. Your cooperation is appreciated.

We are restating the schedule for the West Series below. This has become necessary due to some schedule changes within the SCCA. The best 9 results of 13 possible races will be counted.

Feb 5	California Speedway Double Regional
Apr 30	Phoenix Double/Regional
Jun 18	Buttonwillow Enduro
Jul 8-10	Thunderhill Double Regional
Aug 5-7	Laguna Seca Regional/National
Oct 8	Willow Springs Double Regional
Oct 30	Buttonwillow Double Regional

We are pleased to announce the new source for Star Race Cars parts and service in the San Francisco region is the ESPN Russell Racing School located at Infineon Raceway.

See you at the races!

Gary E Rodrigues