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## USF2000 Driver Title to Be Determined Between Karam and McKenna at Road Atlanta

PALMETTO, Fla., Sept. 23 — After 10 races contested on street circuits, oval speedways and road courses, two young drivers still have a chance to win the inaugural driver's title in the Championship class of the "Cooper Tires Presents the USF2000 National Championship Powered by Mazda" heading into the final event, a doubleheader at Road Atlanta in Braselton, Ga. at 5 p.m. Thursday, Sept. 30 and 8:45 a.m. Friday, Oct. 1.

The 30-minute races are support events for the Petit Le Mans Powered by Mazda2, the season finale of the American Le Mans Series presented by Tequila Patron.

The USF2000 championship — and a scholarship package from Mazda valued at \$350,000 — will go to either 15-year-old Sage Karam of Nazareth, Pa. or 23-year-old Patrick McKenna of Dublin, Ireland. The money will help fund the champion's racing next year on the next step in both the MAZDASPEED Motorsports Driver Development program and the Road to Indy — The Star Mazda Championship presented by Goodyear.

Either Karam or McKenna will also win the VP Fuels Rookie of the Year award.

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Karam drives the red No. 8 Van Diemen Mazda that is sponsored by the Michael Fux Foundation, Comfort Revolution, Bell Helmets, Alpine Stars, Walters Web and Artrotondo.com.

McKenna drives the white No. 2 Van Diemen Mazda fielded by Cape Motorsports with Wayne Taylor Racing. He is sponsored by Willsborough Transport, Motorsport Ireland and the Irish Sports Council.

Karam currently has a 55-point advantage over McKenna in the driver point standings, 285 to 230. He has won seven events to McKenna's two. He's never been out of the point lead, and the championship is his to lose.

There are 33 points up for grabs in each race at Road Atlanta. Even if McKenna has a perfect weekend and wins every point available, Karam can sew up the title with a finish of tenth or better in Thursday afternoon's race.

Karam has won all but one of the Cooper Tires "Don't Give Up a Thing" pole awards presented so far this year. Each pole is worth one point, as is leading the most laps of a race, setting the fastest race lap or finishing 20th or worse.

Karam's team, Andretti Autosport, has already clinched the team title in the Championship class.

It would take a huge dose of Irish luck for McKenna to become the champion, and he needs strong finishes to hold on to the runner-up position for the year. Should he have problems at Road Atlanta Mikhail Goikhberg could wrestle that position away from him. The latter, from St. Petersburg, Russia, drives the blue No. 10 fielded by JDC MotorSports.

Karam, McKenna and Goikhberg have been joined by a host of other top guns in the series' inaugural season. Additional rising stars such as Raphael Abbate, Zach Veach, Martin Scuncio, Javier Barrales, Martin Sala, Matthew Powers, Terrick Mansur, Josh Fielding, Anthony Furfari and Benjamin Searcy have given notice that they're serious about a career as a professional race car driver. Even veteran Tonis Kasemets joined in the fun and ended up winning one of the races at Autobahn Chicago.

Two other drivers who can be added to that list are Luke Ellery of Melbourne, Australia, who will make his international debut in the USF2000 doubleheader at Road Atlanta, and top Skip Barber National driver Felix Serralles of Ponce, Puerto Rico, who is also entered in the USF2000 races.

Although the USF2000 series' top class is open only to Van Diemens, any car that meets the current SCCA Formula Continental rules is eligible to compete in the series' National

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class. AcceleRace Motorsports' Ardie Greenamyer of Louisville, Ky. currently leads the National class point standings over Pabst Racing Services' J.R. Smart of Madison, Wis.

Greenamyer, who will be in the No. 28 sponsored by Bidazzled.com, Hi-Rise Equipment and Sabelt, has six class victories going into Road Atlanta so he's ahead in the fight for the top prize, a \$20,000 package consisting of a new, race-ready, Mazda MZR 2.0 engine and additional pieces needed to convert a Zetec Van Diemen to Mazda power. Smart, who drives the Smart Motors No. 9, has four victories to date.

The Road Atlanta action includes practice at 8 a.m. and 12:50 p.m. on Wednesday, Sept. 29 and qualifying at 9:20 a.m. on Thursday, Sept. 30. (There's also an optional test day on Tuesday, Sept. 28.)

The pole for Friday's race will go to whoever sets the fastest race lap on Thursday.

For more information as well as live timing and scoring during the official practice sessions, qualifying and the races, see [USF2000.com](http://USF2000.com).

Mazda is also giving another scholarship valued at \$150,000 to the champion of the BF Goodrich/Skip Barber National Series Presented by Mazda to help that driver advance to the USF2000 series next year. The Skip Barber championship is also being determined at Road Atlanta. Spencer Pigot of Windermere, Fla., who will turn 17 on Wednesday, Sept. 29, has a big lead in those standings. Three other drivers — Isaac Lyons, Felix Serralles and Dennis Trebing — are also eligible for that title.

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### ***About Mazda:***

On any given weekend there are more Mazdas on the road courses of America than any other brand of vehicle. MX-5 Miata, RX-8, MAZDA3, MAZDA6, RX-7 and other vintage Mazda models are all popular race cars 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, it the most-raced production car in the world. Mazda's involvement in motorsports extends to its relationship with one of the world's premier road courses, Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca in Salinas, Calif., and the Skip Barber Schools for driving and racing.

Celebrating its 40th anniversary in the United States in 2010, 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.

For more information see [MazdaUSA.com](http://MazdaUSA.com).

### ***About Cooper Tire & Rubber Company:***

Cooper Tire & Rubber Company is a global company that specializes in the design, manufacture, marketing and sales of passenger car and light truck tires and 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.

For more information visit Cooper Tire's Web site at [coopertire.com](http://coopertire.com).

### ***About the Cooper Tires Presents the USF2000 National Championship Powered by Mazda:***

Many top drivers in the IZOD IndyCar Series and endurance sports car racing honed their skills in F2000, and the Cooper Tires Presents the USF2000 National Championship Powered by Mazda is an important training ground for rising stars.

Debuting in 2010, it is the revival of the very popular USF2000 series of 1990 through 2006. Sanctioned by the Indy Racing League, it is the first step on its Road to Indy ladder system, preceding Star Mazda and Firestone Indy Lights.

It is also part of the prestigious MAZDASPEED Motorsports driver development program. The top driver in the series' Championship class earns a scholarship package from Mazda valued at \$350,000 to help him or her advance to Star Mazda the following season.

USF2000 races are contested on road courses, street courses and ovals in order to give the series' drivers experience on all the different types of tracks they will face as they proceed up the ladder.

For more information visit [USF2000.com](http://USF2000.com).