



Andersen RacePark
10101 U.S. Highway 41 North
Palmetto, Fla. 34221
Tel.: (941) 723-3900
Fax: (941) 723-3992
E-mail: info@usf2000.com
Web site: usf2000.com

Media inquiries:
Linda Mansfield, Restart Communications
Cell: (317) 201-0729
E-mail: LindaKMansfield@cs.com

USF2000 and Cooper Tires Officials Pleased With First Oval-Track Tire Test of 2010

PALMETTO, Fla., March 6 — Three different compounds of Cooper oval-track tires recorded excellent results Wednesday as officials of the USF2000 National Championship presented by Cooper Tires and powered by Mazda conducted an oval-track tire test at Walt Disney World Speedway in Lake Buena Vista, Fla. in conjunction with Cooper Tires, the series' official tire partner and supplier.

Anders Krohn, a former F2000 champion and current Star Mazda driver, handled the driving duties. A team of Cooper engineers was on hand together with officials and staffers from Andersen Promotions, the organizers of the series.

"All three compounds turned in excellent results after more than 150 laps around the 1-mile tri-oval," said Dan Andersen, the series co-owner and an observer at the test. "Lap times were better than the pole time from the last time the USF2000 National Championship competed at Walt Disney World Speedway, and the Van Diemen USF2000 racecar, outfitted with the new aero package and Performance Friction brake package, performed flawlessly.

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"Though slightly larger than what we will be experiencing in 2010, the Disney track proved to be an excellent choice for this test," Andersen added. "It was no surprise to me that the test went off without a hitch.

"The Cooper radials were terrific," said John Andersen, series co-owner and director of competition. "I am convinced the teams and drivers will enjoy the tire Cooper has developed for us, and we are pleased with how much advance preparation was done by their engineers to make this test go so smoothly."

The USF2000 will hold a doubleheader March 27-28 on the street course in St. Petersburg, Fla. before its two oval-track events of 2010. They occur May 29 at O'Reilly Raceway Park in Indianapolis, Ind. and June 19 at Iowa Speedway in Newton, Iowa.

"The excitement and support of the 2010 season-opener for the USF2000 National Championship is building at a rapid pace among our fans and tire dealers," said Chris Pantani, Cooper Tires' director of motorsports. "The IZOD IndyCar Series may be starting on March 14th in Sao Paolo, but the Road to Indy starts with the USF2000 race on March 27th in St Pete!"

Sanctioned by the Indy Racing League (IRL), the USF2000 National Championship is one of only two series that are part of both the IRL's Road to Indy ladder system and the MAZ-DASPEED Motorsports driver development program.

The complete schedule and other information is available on the series' Web site at usf2000.com, or by calling (941) 723-3900.

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 Monterey, 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.

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.