

## USF2000: McKenna Confirms Plans with Cape Motorsports

Reigning Motorsport Ireland Young Racing Driver of the Year Patrick McKenna has ended weeks of speculation by signing to race in the Cooper Tires presents the USF2000 National Championship powered by Mazda with Cape Motorsports.

In common with an increasing number of European racers, McKenna has decided to forego the usual treadmill of UK and European single-seater racing for the burgeoning US junior single-seater scene. The Former Irish Formula Ford Champion McKenna has decided to begin his quest for glory in the revamped US F2000 championship, which benefits this year from an impressive prize fund and promotion by the Indy Racing League as the first step on the 'Road to Indy'. For



*Patrick McKenna will make his North American racing debut piloting a Cape Motorsports entry in the USF2000 National Championship  
(Photo: Jakob Ebrey Motorsports Photography)*

McKenna, a podium finisher in British Formula Ford last season, the move to the US is a logical one. "In Europe every step on the ladder to F1 requires much higher financial input and there is less of a culture of supporting drivers," said McKenna. "In the USF2000 the prize fund includes a paid drive for the winner of the championship in the 2011 Star Mazda Championship worth \$350,000. There's nothing in Europe to match that. Being part of the IRL family also means that there is a clearly defined path all the way to the Indianapolis 500 and racing in a series on street tracks, road courses and ovals will provide the necessary training for aspiring Indy racers."

The series is set to be ultra competitive with the best up-and-coming US drivers pitting their talents against a number of star imports from Europe and South America. and McKenna is expecting to be in the thick of the action from the start.

McKenna's status as Young Racing Driver of the Year helped open doors with the leading squads in the series and he had a number of options to weigh up before opting to sign with the much decorated Cape Motorsports squad.

The St Petersburg, Fla.-based team won the vast majority of USF2000 races and the championship when it last competed at that level in 2006. Now, with a new Mazda engine specified for the cars and a different compound from tire supplier in Cooper, there are new engineering challenges that McKenna is confident the squad can answer.

"Everything I've seen and heard about the team suggests that they are the strongest team and I believe that their combination of engineering know-how and total commitment to the USF2000 program will give me the best chance of victory."

As well as his €50,000 scholarship funding from Dunlop, Motorsport Ireland and the Irish Sports Council, McKenna also enjoys support from Paul Kenny of Willsborough Transport, a long time patron, and DIT.

McKenna's pre-season test program begins in two weeks time at Roebing Road Raceway, Savannah, Ga. The first weekend of racing in the seven-event, 12-round Cooper Tires USF2000 series Powered by Mazda is on the streets of St Petersburg, Fla, on March 27-28, in support of the IndyCar Series.