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Patrick Dempsey to Race in Long Beach Grand Prix

Racer/Actor to Drive MAZDA3 Racecar to Support No Cost Cancer Treatment

IRVINE, Calif., March 29 /PRNewswire/ -- MAZDASPEED Motorsports Development today confirmed that Patrick Dempsey will race a 2010 MAZDA3 prepared by Tri-Point Motorsports in the World Challenge race during the Toyota Grand Prix of Long Beach weekend. Dempsey normally races a Mazda RX-8 in the Rolex Grand-Am GT series.



(Photo: <http://www.newscom.com/cgi-bin/prnh/20100329/LA78186>)

About the weekend and the difference in racecars, Dempsey said, "I'm thrilled to be able to race near my Los Angeles home. With the Grand-Am series, I've been able to race at many of the great tracks in North America, but now I have a chance to race locally. The Tri-Point MAZDA3 really impressed me during testing. I've never driven a front-wheel drive racecar that handled that well before. I shouldn't have been surprised though as my daily driver is a MAZDASPEED3. The weekend will also be personally rewarding to me as we'll be carrying the colors of our Dempsey Challenge."

The Dempsey Challenge presented by Amgen is a non-competitive fundraising event for The Patrick Dempsey Center for Cancer Hope & Healing at Central Maine Medical Center. The 2010 event will take place October 2nd and 3rd in Lewiston, Maine. More information, including registration materials, can be found at www.dempseychallenge.org

The World Challenge series is for production-based racecars and features three classes, GT, GTS, and TC2. Dempsey will be racing against over two dozen other professional drivers in cars ranging from Porsches, Corvettes, Vipers, Acuras, to Scions. The Tri-Point MAZDA3 will compete in the GTS class.

The World Challenge race is a part of the multi-race Toyota Grand Prix of Long Beach weekend, April 16-18. The World Challenge race will take place on Sunday, April 18th. Ticket information can be found at www.gplb.com

Also at Long Beach the same weekend:

- Mazda will compete in the American Le Mans Series presented by Tequila Patron race on Saturday afternoon with the Dyson Lola-Mazda MZR-R LMP car. The ALMS car will be carrying ARCO colors for the two California races (Long Beach, and Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca in May). ARCO is a part of BP, the primary technical partner with Mazda on the powertrain development. The Mazda car will be the only entry fueled by isobutanol, a BP developed bio fuel. Team information can be found at www.dysonracing.com
- Robert Davis, Senior Vice President, Product Development & Quality, Mazda North American Operations will be the keynote speaker at the "The Race Has Gone Green" sustainable motorsports conference to be held Friday, April 16th at the Long Beach Grand Prix. The conference is sponsored by SEMA and the MIA. Conference information can be found at www.sema.org/RaceGoneGreen
- MAZDASPEED will also be a supporter of the Road Racing Drivers Club (RRDC) Salute to Parnelli Jones on the evening of Thursday, April 15th. The annual RRDC gala is a fundraiser for the Team USA Scholarship program. Over the past several years, many of the Team USA scholarship winners have come from the ranks of the MAZDASPEED Motorsports Development series. Information can be found at www.rrdc.org

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 Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca, one of the world's premier road-racing circuits, 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,

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Calif. and oversees the sales, marketing, parts and customer service support 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; and in Mexico by Mazda Motor de Mexico in Mexico City.

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