



IMSA, PATRÓN PARTNER IN GT3 CHAMPIONSHIP

The International Motorsports Association is breaking new ground in 2009 with a new title sponsor for its Porsche GT3 Cup-based championship. The Patrón Spirits Company has joined with IMSA to form the Patrón GT3 Challenge, with news of additional partners to come shortly.

The championship will contest its fifth season in 2009 with a 14-race schedule planned. As in past years, the series will compete at the finest road courses in North America including Road Atlanta, where the championship debuted in 2005.

“This represents a landmark moment for this continually growing series,” said Tim Mayer, Chief Operating Officer of IMSA. “We have made a commitment to our competitors and other partners to constantly grow and improve the quality of this prestigious championship.”

“We are gratified that the hard work by IMSA and its staff, the Porsche race teams and the drivers in this series has resulted in this valuable Patrón sponsorship,” added Paul Ritchie, president of Porsche Motorsport North America, which sells the GT3 Cup race cars and provides parts and technical help to the series participants. “It will boost the visibility for everyone involved and motivate even greater participation from gentleman entrants and up-and-coming drivers.”

Being involved in multi-class racing is nothing new for Patrón. The world’s premium tequila is a major partner of the American Le Mans Series - with which the Patrón GT3 Challenge will compete - and is the primary sponsor of LMP1 team Patrón Highcroft Racing, a four-time LMP2 winner in the 2008 American Le Mans Series.

“As Patrón further increases its presence in motorsports, expanding our alliance with IMSA made perfect sense,” said Ed Brown, President and CEO of the Patrón Spirits Company. “The Patrón GT3 Challenge is one of the most significant development series in North America, and its relationship with the American Le Mans Series only adds to its level of professionalism. Patrón, Porsche and IMSA are synonymous with excellence in their respective fields, and a joint venture between all three brands is ideal.”

The Patrón GT3 Challenge is one of North America's largest single-make championship. It features the continent's top semi-professional and gentlemen drivers competing in Porsche's 911 GT3 Cup car. There are two classes – the Platinum Cup for 2008 and 2009 Porsche GT3 Cup cars and the Gold Cup for 2005-2007 models.

The 2009 season also will see the establishment of a \$60,000 year-end purse, an attractive incentive for a development series of this kind.

The opening round of the Patrón GT3 Challenge is set for March 19-20 at Sebring International Raceway as part of the 57th Mobil 1 Twelve Hours of Sebring presented by Fresh from Florida.