

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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AREA DRIVERS LOOK FOR SUCCESS AT MID-OHIO

LEXINGTON, OHIO (July 30, 2010) – Two drivers in the Patrón GT3 Challenge by Yokohama will have more than a few eyes on them this weekend, with family and friends in town to watch Indiana native, veteran Kendall Smith, and Cincinnati resident, newcomer Kasey Kuhlman, at the Mid-Ohio Sports Car Challenge.

Smith, driver of the surging #4 Maxwell Paper Racing Porsche 911 GT3 Cup car, currently in third place in the Gold Cup class standings and winner of both races at the recent Utah event, was born nearby in Marion, Indiana. He drove a Porsche in the KONI Challenge at the track last year, and looks forward to family and friends coming to the track this weekend.

“I was born in the area and as a result, I do have a lot of family and friends that attend the event,” says Smith. “I am really looking forward to seeing them and getting on to Mid-Ohio! It is my favorite track on the schedule, such a technical track - always busy, lots of good passing points, which translates to a great race for the fans. The track has such a good flow to it, you stay busy in the cockpit but you get a chance to take a breath on two of the straights.

“My father had a painting of an American Le Mans start at a Mid-Ohio event and I remember thinking how incredible it would be to race on that track! Now, I will have another chance to race on this beautiful track and coming off two wins, I couldn't think of a better venue to try and keep the momentum going! My grandparents and Dad will be in the crowd and I really want to make them proud.”

Kuhlman, behind the wheel of the #15 KuhlSport/Wright Motorsports Porsche 911 GT3 Cup car, also in the Gold Cup class, will be making his debut in the Patrón GT3 Challenge by Yokohama at Mid-Ohio - a track he first visited at the tender age of eight. As Kuhlman moves up the auto racing ladder, it seems every new series experience begins at the famed Ohio track.

“I attended my first race at Mid-Ohio - first race anywhere for that matter - with my Dad when I was eight years old,” says Kuhlman. “It is a special place for me in that it is the venue I have associated with auto racing since I was a little kid. My first track experience of any type was at Mid-Ohio in their one day performance driving school in 2004. I did that in my 996 Porsche Turbo and was hooked. I went on to race for three years with Skip Barber in their regional race series. Each year's event at Mid-Ohio was always a special opportunity because it was the one track that all my friends and family could come and see me race, since it is only a couple hours from home. I co-drove a Porsche 996 in the KONI Challenge race in 2007 with Spencer Pumpelly – it was my first pro race, first race in a Porsche and again, Mid-Ohio was the venue.

“I started racing Porsche Club of America events in a 996 cup car with Wright Motorsports in 2008. My first event in that car and with PCA was at...Mid-Ohio. In addition to several private test days, I have raced PCA events at Mid-Ohio in 2009 and 2010.

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"So I have more laps at Mid-Ohio than any other track I have raced. There is a huge reward for smooth driving which is always challenging, given Mid-Ohio's elevation changes, complex corners and high speed breaking zones. It is definitely my "home track."

"This will be my first Patron GT3 race. I am anticipating a heightened level of competition and very close quarters racing. If the experience is positive, I will consider running the entire series in 2011. I am excited that this opportunity will be at Mid-Ohio, since many of my family and friends will be in attendance. It creates some pressure for me because I know that there will be eye witnesses to the truth of what happens and how I perform! When I am off at some other far away track, they only know what I tell them (good and bad.) There is no hiding when they are actually at the venue. Their support and presence at the track will make the weekend a lot of fun."

A promoter test day for American Le Mans presented by Tequila Patrón teams is scheduled for Tuesday, August 3rd, in addition to the regular Thursday test sessions. Practice for the Patrón GT3 Challenge by Yokohama will take place Friday at 8:00 am, with qualifying at 11:21 am. Round 9 is scheduled for Friday at 5:15 pm, with Round 10 Saturday at 6:00 pm.

A comprehensive motorsports facility, Mid-Ohio Sports Car Course features a permanent road-racing circuit with two primary configurations: a 2.4-mile, 15-turn, and a 2.25-mile, 13-turn circuit. Located 60 miles north of Columbus and 75 miles south of Cleveland near Mansfield, the track has been called "the Most Competitive in the U.S." and annually hosts a diversity of locally, regionally and nationally sanctioned racing events for amateur, club and professional drivers and riders.

The Patrón GT3 Challenge by Yokohama features semi-professional drivers racing head to head in one of the world's most successful race cars, the Porsche 911 GT3 Cup car. As a developmental series designed to prepare drivers and teams for professional careers in sports car racing, the multi-class structure of the series teaches drivers essential skills for an eventual career in the American Le Mans Series presented by Tequila Patrón.

The series is broken into two classes, with the Platinum Cup Class featuring the more powerful 2010 Porsche 911 GT3 Cup Car. The Gold Cup Class includes 2005 ½ - 2009 Porsche 911 GT3 Cup cars.

The Speed TV production of Rounds 9 and 10 of the Patrón GT3 Challenge by Yokohama is scheduled to air on September 5 at 1:00 am EDT (rounds 7 and 8 are due to air on August 8 at 1:00 am EDT). The 2010 season of the Patrón GT3 Challenge continues August 20-22, with Rounds 11 and 12 held in conjunction with the 2010 Road America Showcase in Elkhart Lake, Wisconsin. Follow along on the race weekend at www.gt3timing.com and visit www.imsachallenge.com for the latest track schedule, television information and updates.

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