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**Championship leading MX-5 racers head to European selection with chance**

**to win a drive in the 2016 Mazda MX-5 Global Cup**

* European Friends of MX-5 run-off event takes place in Barcelona over the first weekend of July.
* The 2016 Mazda MX-5 Global Cup race takes place at Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca in September.
* Based on the fourth-generation Mazda MX-5, the Global Cup car makes its debut this season.

With the support of Mazda UK, the current championship leaders of the British Racing and Sports Car Club (BRSCC) MX-5 Championship, the 750 Motor Club 5Club MX-5 Cup and the BRSCC MX-5 Supercup have secured fully funded trips to Barcelona in Spain to test the 2016 Mazda MX-5 Global Cup racecar and compete for the opportunity to race one at Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca in September.

The trio will head to Barcelona in early July to take part in the Friends of MX-5 European Training Event, which takes place at Parcmotor Castelloli circuit. Here they will test the all-new Mazda MX-5 Global Cup Car alongside competitors from across Europe and take part in a series of driving assessments. Also joining them in this two-day selection process will be winning digital racers from the Mazda European MX-5 Cup championship - a virtual race series hosted by online racing platform, iRacing.

From this European event, five lucky drivers will win a seat in the prestigious MX-5 Global Cup race at Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca in September. After winning his place in Spain, 36yr old BRSCC MX-5 Championship leader Oliver Allwood commented, “I’m really excited and a little surprised to be leading the championship at this stage. I’m really looking forward to the challenge of pitting myself against the top drivers from the respective championships around Europe; it should be an amazing experience.”

Lining up against Oliver, 34yr old BRSCC Mazda MX-5 SuperCup championship leader, Alan Henderson said, “I’m really excited, I don’t really know what to expect in terms of competition when I get out there, but with so many MX-5 racers from Europe and iRacing I’m sure it’s going to be tough and no walk in the park. However, the chance to head to Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca doesn’t come around often, so I’m definitely going to make the most of it.”

With more than eight years of MX-5 racing experience between them the BRSCC’s championship leaders will be competing with 25yr old Jack Sycamore who earns his place in the European run off as current points leader in the 750 Motor Club 5Club MX-5 Cup. Having jumped from 4th in the championship to the top of the table with three wins at his last meeting, Mk1 MX-5 racer Jack said, “I can’t believe how the last meeting went, going into the weekend 4th in the championship I didn’t think I’d be in with a chance of getting the Global Cup opportunity, but after claiming a hat-trick of victories and taking the series lead I really can’t wait to go to Barcelona and try to win myself a seat at Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca.”

Based on the award-winning all-new Mazda MX-5, the Global Cup car has been developed in-line with the ethos of grassroots MX-5 racing and remains close to the specification of the road car. Built by Long Road Racing in North Carolina USA, the Global Cup car features a standard 2.0-litre SKYACTIV-G engine but benefits from a sealed racing ECU and a stainless steel exhaust. Plus, with a front cross brace strut bar, two-way adjustable competition dampers, race springs, Brembo brakes and 17-inch RAYS wheels with slick tyres, the all-new MX-5’s famed chassis has been honed for competition.

With a seam-welded safety cage, AIM data system and an upgraded radiator, four MX-5 Global Cup cars competed and finished in the 2015 Thunderhill 25 Hour race in California, while with more than 40 cars on the grid, it has made its one-make debut in the 2016 Battery Tender MX-5 Cup – Mazda’s official MX-5 Cup series in North America. In addition, a standalone Global Cup Race will take place in September at the legendary Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca circuit. Here MX-5 racers from Europe, America, Australia and Japan will come together to find a Global champion.

Commenting on the prize opportunity BRSCC Competitions Manager, Dominic Ostrowski said “the club is proud to run two very competitive MX-5 championships and the opportunity for Oliver and Alan to go to Barcelona, and then hopefully onto the Global Cup race at Mazda Raceway, is fantastic for both our Mk1 and Mk3 series.”

Giles Groombridge, Competitions Manager at the 750 Motor Club added, “we are delighted that our 5Club Racing Championship is part of the MX-5 Global Cup prize drive programme; the prize is a unique opportunity and we really hope Jack wins the chance to on the grid at Mazda Raceway.”

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