



Fifth Annual Honda Grand Prix Kicks Off Tomorrow

Superstars Danica Patrick, Tony Kanaan Among Impressive Field; Night Parade, Air Show on Tap

St. Petersburg/Clearwater, FL (April 1, 2009) – On the heels of hosting the Tampa Bay Rays historic World Series run *and* Super Bowl XLIII---the most watched TV program ever---the St. Pete/Clearwater area will again be the center of the sporting world this weekend as it hosts the Acura Sports Car Challenge and the Honda Grand Prix of St. Petersburg.



Superstars like Danica Patrick and Dan Wheldon---as well as last year's Grand Prix winner, Graham Rahal---are expected to draw huge crowds to St. Pete's palm-dappled bayfront, where world-class museums, sidewalk cafes and luxury yachts moored just feet from the action provide a Monaco-like setting for one of the racing world's most exciting contests.

The Acura Sports Car Challenge, an American Le Mans Series race, will be broadcast live on ABC at 1:30 p.m. on Saturday. The following day, the Grand Prix will be broadcast live on VERSUS beginning at 2:00 p.m.

Both races will run on the 1.8-mile-long, 14-turn circuit that starts on runway 7/25 at St. Petersburg's Albert Whitted Airport, heads up First Street South, turns right toward the bay on Central Avenue, then hugs the waterfront on Bay Shore Drive as it winds back to the airport.

Street racing isn't the only attraction you'll find at this four day event, which runs April 2-5. The weekend will also feature a yacht club, airshows, drifting exhibitions, concerts, interactive attractions, a night parade, parties and other family entertainment.

This year's schedule is as follows:

Thursday, April 2:

11:30–3:30	Indy Experience 2-seater rides
3:30–6:15	IndyCar Pace Car Rides
6:15–7:15	Track Walk
7:30–8:30	Festival of States Illuminated Night Parade
8:30–	Street Party at Straub Park

Friday, April 3:

10:45–12:15	IndyCar Practice
12:20–12:45	Drifting Exhibition
12:45–1:05	Airshow
3:25–4:25	IndyCar Practice
4:30–5:30	American Le Mans Series (ALMS) Autograph Session
4:45–5:30	Firestone Indy Lights (FIL) Qualifying
7:00–9:00	Michael Andretti Foundation Gala

Saturday, April 4:

8:05–9:05	IndyCar Practice
9:20–9:40	ALMS Warm-up
9:55–10:35	FIL Qualifying
10:50–12:20	IndyCar Final Qualifying
1:20–3:15	Acura Sports Car Challenge of St. Petersburg
3:45–4:15	Airshow
3:45–4:45	IRL Autograph Session
4:45–5:45	FIL Race #1

Sunday, April 5:

8:00	Gates Open
8:30–9:00	IndyCar Warm-up
10:00–11:00	FIL Race #2
11:30–12:00	Drifting Exhibition
12:00–1:30	Pre-Race Concert
1:15–1:45	Air Show
2:45–5:00	Honda Grand Prix of St. Pete

More information on this one-of-a-kind event is available at <http://www.floridasbeach.com/cms/index.php?id=245>

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Visit St. Pete-Clearwater is the destination marketing organization for Pinellas County, Florida.

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