Schmidt Wins International Motorsports Industry Show Achievement Award

INDIANAPOLIS (Dec. 7, 2011) – Officials from the International Motorsports Industry Show (IMIS) announced Wednesday that Sam Schmidt, owner of Sam Schmidt Motorsports (SSM), is the recipient of the 2011 IMIS Achievement Award.

Schmidt was presented the award during the IMIS Welcome Reception at Lucas Oil Stadium in Indianapolis. Chip Ganassi, who won the first IMIS Achievement Award last year, presented Schmidt with the honor along with Randy Bernard, president of INDYCAR, and Chris Paulsen, one of the founders of IMIS.

"The International Motorsports Industry Show is for hardcore racers," Paulsen said. "Sam is the definition of a hardcore racer. After his driving career ended unexpectedly, he became one of the most successful and respected team owners in INDYCAR. He's given a lot of young drivers their first break into INDYCAR racing and his record in Firestone Indy Lights competition is unmatched. It's an honor to present him with the second International Motorsports Industry Show Achievement Award."

Schmidt, 47, who resides just outside of Las Vegas in Henderson, Nev., was a top-notch driving talent in IZOD IndyCar Series competition before being involved in a testing accident at Walt Disney World Speedway in Orlando, Fla., prior to the 2000 season that rendered him a quadriplegic.

He formed SSM in 2001 and, since then, has captured five Indy Lights championships (Thiago Medeiros, 2004; Jay Howard, 2006; Alex Lloyd, 2007; J.K. Vernay, 2010 and Josef Newgarden, 2011) and 46 race wins. For the past nine years, Schmidt has also fielded cars in the IndyCar Series' premier race, the Indianapolis 500. This past May, SSM driver Alex Tagliani won the pole position for the Indy 500 while his teammate, Townsend Bell, qualified fourth.

Several drivers who have competed for SSM in Indy Lights competition have moved up to race in the IndyCar Series, including Lloyd, Ana Beatriz and James Hinchcliffe.

"This is a tremendous honor for me to win the International Motorsports Industry Show Achievement Award," Schmidt said. "It's very humbling and is really an award for all of our employees who work so hard to build championship-winning racecars. It meant a lot to me to have Chip and Randy there to present the award, as well. I just can't thank everyone enough for this honor."

The third annual IMIS, set to run Thursday through Saturday, is the United States' premier hardcore racing trade show. Owned by Paulsen, owner of C&R Racing, Jeff Stoops, president of Stoops Freightliner, and three-time NASCAR Sprint Cup Series champion Tony Stewart, IMIS has a lifetime contract with the City of Indianapolis and has reserved show dates through 2015. From car builders to tire manufacturers to parts suppliers, every form of motorsports is represented at IMIS. Attendees come from all levels of the sport. From NASCAR team owners to weekend road racers, IMIS attracts motorsports enthusiasts from around the globe.

For information about IMIS, go to www.imis-indy.com.

-IMIS-

Contact Joe Crowley with True Speed Communication
(704) 875-3388, ext. 805 or Joe.Crowley@TrueSpeedCommunication.com
www.TrueSpeedCommunication.com ● Online Media Kit Available at: www.TrueSpeedMedia.com
Twitter: @IMIS_Indy