



For Immediate Release:

## Alberico Begins Toyota Racing Series Challenge at Teretonga



Invercargill, New Zealand (January 10, 2014) – After a shakedown and two rain-interrupted days of testing, Team USA Scholarship winner Neil Alberico will begin his Toyota Racing Series season in earnest on Saturday at the world's most southerly permanent race track, Teretonga Park in Invercargill, New Zealand.

The series, which celebrates its 10th anniversary this year, has attracted an extremely strong field of 23 drivers – literally from around the world. Twelve different nations will be represented, including Australia, Brazil, Malaysia, Russia, Switzerland, United Kingdom and the United States. Contenders will include Pedro Piquet, the 15-year-old youngest son of former three-time F1 world champion Nelson Piquet, European Formula Renault 2.0 campaigners

Egor Orudzhev (Russia) and Ryan Tveter (USA), as well as series veterans Englishman Jann Mardenborough, a product of the Nissan GT Academy, Dutchman Steijn Schothorst and favored local driver Damon Leitch.

Alberico, 21, from Los Gatos, Calif., has endured some challenges in becoming accustomed to the TRS car, especially since his team, Victory Motor Racing, is working with new engineers this season. The weather so far has been uncooperative, too, with cool conditions during the Southern Hemisphere summer and persistent showers leading to a multitude of red-flag interruptions.

Alberico, who finished second in the 2013 Cooper Tires USF2000 Championship Powered by Mazda, recording a series-high six race wins, has been running on old tires thus far. The team struggled initially to find a good balance for the car, which features a mono-shock suspension system, but Alberico has made good progress, especially in collaboration with veteran Kiwis Dave McMillan and Chris Schofield, who have worked extensively in North America.

“The team has worked very hard over the past few days to get the car where it’s at,” said Alberico, who posted the seventh fastest time in yesterday’s final practice session. “We still have some work to do, however I believe we are in good shape going into qualifying for tomorrow. The weather looks to be mostly dry in the morning, so it looks like we will get our first proper run on new tires. I think we have good pace in the wet as well. All the pieces of the puzzle are there, now we just have to put them all together.”

Qualifying will take place on Saturday morning at 11:00 local time (plus 18 hours from the U.S. East Coast), followed by the first of three 15-lap races at 3:00 pm. Races Two and Three will follow on Sunday. Live timing and scoring will be available at <http://www.toyotaracing.co.nz/calendar-results/live-timing/>.

### About Team USA Scholarship:

The program has been providing opportunities for talented young American race car drivers since 1990. It is supported by a range of companies and individuals, including Doug Mockett & Company, the Road Racing Drivers Club and [www.SAFEisFAST.com](http://www.SAFEisFAST.com), Cooper Tire & Rubber Company, Mazda, David Heinemeier Hansson, Basecamp.com, Chip Ganassi Racing, Honda Performance Development, The Amazing Flameless Candle, NameSilo, Dyson Racing, Robertson Racing, JAY Motorsports, Pelfrey Performance, Andersen Promotions, CXC Simulations, RaceCraft1, PitFit Training, Sparco USA, *RACER* Magazine, eFormulaCarNews.com, Speedstar Management, Styled Aesthetic, Manifest Group and numerous past Scholarship winners.

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