

# **Dancing With The Stars' Maksim Chmerkovskiy to Serve as Grand Marshal for 2013 Toyota Pro/Celebrity Race**

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LONG BEACH, Calif., April 8, 2013 –“Dancing with the Stars” professional dancer and popular cast member Maksim Chmerkovskiy will bring his ballroom flair to the 37th Toyota Pro/Celebrity Race as grand marshal of the long-running, prestigious charitable event. Chmerkovskiy will be joined by singer and former “American Idol” contestant Paul McDonald, who will open the race by performing the national anthem.

Chmerkovskiy, a Latin ballroom dance champion, choreographer and instructor, thrilled audiences as an outspoken and fiery competitor on “Dancing with the Stars.” McDonald was a popular finalist on Season 10 of “American Idol,” performing original music from his band, The Grand Magnolias.

The participation of both celebrities adds to the impressive list of Toyota Pro/Celebrity Race drivers from film, television, music, sports and the military who will speed through the historic 1.97-mile street circuit on the streets of downtown Long Beach, Calif. They include one of Mexico’s most acclaimed actresses Kate del Castillo; Jenna Elfman, star of “1600 Penn”; Olympic gold medalist Jessica Hardy; “Dallas” star Jesse Metcalfe; actor Jackson Rathbone, best known for his role as Jasper Halein the hit “Twilight” movie series; comedian Wanda Sykes, Medal of Honor recipient Dakota Meyer and Jeremy Sisto, star of “Suburgatory.”

The celebrity participants also include Brett Davern, star of MTV's hit series “Awkward”; Mark Steines host of Hallmark Channel’s “Home & Family”; Michael Truccoof SyFy's acclaimed series "Battlestar Galactica" and most recently “Revenge”; Fox Sports/SPEED auto racing analyst and co-host of “Top Gear USA” Rutledge Wood and 2012 Toyota Pro/Celebrity Race winner and comedian Adam Carolla. Each will get behind the wheel of an identically prepared, race-ready Scion FR-S sports car to compete in the 10-lap event.

“We are thrilled to have Maksim Chmerkovskiy serve as grand marshal and Paul McDonald sing the anthem before this year’s race, bringing more star power to this high-profile charitable event,” said Les Unger, Toyota national motorsports manager. “Together their presence will help bring more attention to the children who benefit from The Toyota Pro/Celebrity Race.”

The Toyota Pro/Celebrity race is one of the longest-running, corporate-sponsored events of its kind. Toyota annually donates \$5,000 to Racing for Kids on behalf of each participant and another \$5,000 to the winning racer’s charity of choice. Racing for Kids – a national nonprofit program benefiting children’s hospitals throughout the country – was created as a way to connect these children with their favorite celebrities and race car drivers.

Since 1991, Toyota has donated more than \$2 million to the Racing for Kids organization, on behalf of this race and its participants. In addition to Toyota’s contributions, a \$15,000 donation will be made in conjunction with the 16th annual “People Pole Award.” Sponsored by People magazine, the award honors the pole-position winner of the Toyota Pro/Celebrity Race qualifying session on April 19.

To learn more about the Toyota Pro/Celebrity Race, visit [www.toyotaracing.com/series/toyota-pro-celebrity.html](http://www.toyotaracing.com/series/toyota-pro-celebrity.html).

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