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Ram Truck and Mopar® Announce TORC Off-Road Racing Sponsorship

April 4, 2011, Auburn Hills, Mich. - Ram Truck and Mopar® today announced joint sponsorship plans for The Off-Road Championship (TORC) Series in 2011.

The sponsorship will see five PRO-class drivers behind the wheel of a Ram truck during the 14-race series that gets underway Memorial Day weekend at RedBud MX in Buchanan, Mich.

Ram Truck and Mopar will share sponsorship of the Traxxas Racing team fielded by Mike and Mark Jenkins along with the Menzies Motorsports team owned by Steve Menzies.

"I couldn't be more proud to have Ram partnering with these great off-road drivers, championship-caliber teams and the TORC Series itself," said Fred Diaz, President and CEO, Ram Truck Brand and Head of U.S. Sales, Chrysler Group LLC. "Off-road racers and fans are extremely passionate about their trucks just like we are. This partnership is a perfect fit for us to connect and share the passion in a fun and exciting way."

The new sponsorship has several other elements, as well:

- Ram will become the official vehicle of the TORC Series
- A Mopar Ram Runner will serve as the official pace truck of the TORC Series; Mopar now offers a Ram Runner conversion kit for the aftermarket
- Ram and Mopar will bring a significant trackside presence to each stop of the TORC Series. That presence will include off-road Ram Truck test-drive opportunities for fans

"From the drag strip to the circle track, the Mopar brand has a proud heritage in racing," said Pietro Gorlier, President and CEO of Mopar, Chrysler Group's service, parts and customer-care brand. "We are excited to extend our presence into off-road racing, where many of our Mopar fanatics reside. In fact, off-road accessories and performance parts make up more than 30 percent of our portfolio, so this is a critical market that we want to reach."

The 2011 driver lineup includes:

Traxxas Racing

- Rob MacCachren, No.21 PRO 2 class (two-wheel drive) Ram, sponsored by Ram Truck
 - MacCachren brings 20 championships and more than 180 off-road event wins from various series throughout his outstanding career that began in the early 1980s. In 2010, MacCachren won the Lucas Oil Pro 2 Unlimited championship and finished second in TORC after capturing the 2009 TORC Series championship
- Samuel Hubinette, No. 77 PRO Light class Ram, sponsored by Mopar and Ram Truck
 - The two-time Formula DRIFT champion is adding off-road racing to his ongoing drifting and stunt-driving duties

Menzies Motorsports

- Ricky Johnson, No. 48 PRO 4 class (four-wheel drive) Ram, sponsored by Red Bull with associate sponsorship from Ram Truck and Mopar
 - The 2010 TORC PRO 2 champion makes the move to PRO 4 in 2011. The seven-time AMA Supercross champion founded the TORC series in 2009
- Bryce Menzies, No. 7 PRO 2 Ram, sponsored by Red Bull with associate sponsorship from Ram Truck

and Mopar

- New TORC Series driver brings three years of racing experience in the CORR (Championship Off Road Racing) Series and the Lucas Oil Off Road Racing Series
- Luke Johnson, PRO Light Ram, sponsored by Red Bull with associate sponsorship from Ram Truck and Mopar
 - The son of Ricky Johnson is one of the youngest drivers in the sport with a bright future ahead

The Mopar Ram Runner is a production truck inspired by high-speed desert off-road racing and is a 4x4 unlike any other Ram. The rigors of off-road racing require large tires, additional ground clearance, and a sophisticated suspension system capable of withstanding tremendous impact. These features are combined with the proven HEMI 5.7-liter V-8 into a package that is stable at speed and rock-solid in the corners. Inspired by trophy trucks, steel front fenders and rear bed-sides are replaced with fiberglass layered in the Liquid Metal Mopar racing scheme. The high clearance wheel wells allow tremendous suspension articulation with zero tire-to-body interference.

Dodge trucks, now recognized as Ram trucks, have raced successfully in various off-road efforts since the mid-1970s, including a string of 37 consecutive SCORE and HDRA victories from 1977 into the next decade by famous off-roader Rod Hall – a record which stands to this day. Dodge vehicles were a large part of Hall's 14 class wins at the grueling Baja 1000 over his 30-year career. Through 1993, Dodge also scored nine off-road championships over the previous 11 years with Hall behind the wheel.

In 1979, a Dodge driven "The Legend" Walker Evans became the first pickup truck to win the Baja 1000.

Mopar and Ram have been active in international desert racing with Ram Runner development partner KORE, owned by Kent Kroeker. In addition to multiple podium victories in the SCORE Baja 1000 and Best in the Desert's Vegas to Reno, Kent has scored Ram-powered wins in the SCORE Baja 500, SCORE Primm 300 and also won the Mint 400 in 2008 and 2009.

On November 19, 2004, Kroeker made history when he raced a 2003 Dodge Ram 2500 4x4 in the SCORE Baja 1000. Kroeker drove solo for 29 hours 23 minutes and 10 seconds, bringing the Dodge Ram across the finish line and directly to the podium. This Dodge was the first Cummins-powered vehicle ever to finish the Baja 1000. The next day, while others loaded their race vehicles on trailers for the journey back to California, Kent drove back in the street-legal Dodge.

About the TORC Series

The Traxxas TORC Series, presented by AMSOIL, is the fastest, most punishing short course racing series on the planet. TORC events are packed with flag-to-flag fender banging as drivers push the limits over whoops and jump-filled natural terrain race tracks. Off-road racing fans come from far and wide to experience the most challenging form of high-octane competition. And once they taste TORC for the first time, they're hooked for life. For more information, see www.torcseries.com

The 2011 TORC Series schedule consists of:

May 28	RedBud, Buchanan, Mich.
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June 18	Crandon Off Road, Crandon, Wis.
June 19	Crandon Off Road, Crandon, Wis.
June 26	Pikes Peak, Colorado Springs, Colo.
July 22	Charlotte Motor Speedway, Charlotte, N.C.
July 23	Charlotte Motor Speedway, Charlotte, N.C.
Aug. 13	Bark River Off-Road, Bark River, Mich.
Aug. 14	Bark River Off-Road, Bark River, Mich.
Sept. 3	Crandon Off Road, Crandon, Wis.
Sept. 4	Crandon Off Road, Crandon, Wis.
Sept. 15	Chicagoland Speedway, Joliet, Ill.
Oct. 15	Cycle Ranch, San Antonio, Texas

About the Ram Truck brand

With a work-hard, play-hard attitude, the Ram Truck brand offers the boldest, most powerful and capable pickup truck lineup on the planet.

Introduced in 2008, the Ram 1500 is a game changer in terms of its ability to "outsmart" and "out-tough" the competition with its bold exterior design, crafted and refined interior, engineering excellence, superb innovation and best-in-class features and amenities.

The Ram Truck brand added to its award-winning truck lineup with the introduction of the 2010 Ram 2500 and 3500 Heavy Duty trucks. Ram heavy-duty trucks provide customers with first-time innovations and features along with new standards of strength, utility and drivability, building on the Ram's leadership in the heavy-duty pickup segment.

The Ram Truck brand is further enhancing its commercial vehicle presence with a "new crew" of commercial-grade work trucks: the new 2011 Ram 3500, 4500 and 5500 Chassis Cabs. Led by an all-new crew cab, the new 2011 Ram Chassis Cabs are built on a proven frame and chassis, and engineered for maximum uptime, optimum performance and enhanced commercial capability.

About the Mopar Brand

Mopar is Chrysler Group LLC's service, parts and customer-care brand.

Mopar distributes approximately 280,000 parts and accessories in more than 90 countries and is the source for all original-equipment parts for Chrysler, Dodge, Jeep and Ram Truck vehicles. Mopar parts are unique in that they are engineered and tested with the same teams that create factory-authorized vehicle specifications for Chrysler, Dodge, Jeep and Ram Truck vehicles – a direct connection that no other aftermarket parts company can provide. A complete list of Mopar accessories and performance parts is available at www.mopar.com.

More than 70 Years of Mopar

When Chrysler bought Dodge in 1928, the need for a dedicated parts manufacturer, supplier and distribution system to support the growing enterprise led to the formation of the Chrysler Motor Parts Corporation (CMPC) in 1929.

Mopar (a simple contraction of the words Motor and PARTs) was trademarked for a line of antifreeze products in 1937. It also was widely used as a moniker for the CMPC. The Mopar brand made its mark in the 1960s—the muscle-car era. The Chrysler Corporation built race-ready Dodge and Plymouth "package cars" equipped with special high-performance parts. Mopar carried a line of "special parts" for super stock drag racers and developed its racing parts division called Mopar Performance Parts to enhance speed and handling for both road and racing use.

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