#racingdriverswanted - 56 Gamers Arrive In Abu Dhabi For 2015 Nismo Playstation Gt Academy European Race Camp

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- **Adrian Newey OBE, Red Bull Racing Chief Technical Officer, joins Race Camp as head judge**

The NISMO PlayStation® GT Academy European Race Camp gets underway today at the Yas Marina Formula One circuit in Abu Dhabi. The intensive, week-long racing driver boot camp sees 56 Gran Turismo® gamers from 11 European countries gather in the United Arab Emirates' capital city. They will compete for the chance to embark on Nissan's all-encompassing Driver Development Programme and the chance to become a real racing driver, with Formula One technical genius Adrian Newey OBE on hand as head judge.

The Red Bull Racing Chief Technical Officer stands alone in Formula One, with his designs having won 10 Constructors' titles for three different teams. The British engineer has worked with some of F1's greatest drivers, including Nigel Mansell, Mika Häkkinen and Sebastian Vettel. He now turns his attention to spot a rising star from the gaming world.

“I have enjoyed a long association with Gran Turismo having designed the Red Bull X2010 prototype for the game, and we have also done some work at Red Bull with Jann Mardenborough,” explained Newey. “As everyone knows, simulators play an increasing role in real-world racing and it is no surprise that Jann and the other GT Academy winners are enjoying successful racing careers with Nissan. I am looking forward to getting involved in unearthing the next new talent.”

Newey will have close support from GT Academy's experienced chief instructor, sports car racer Rob Barff, as the racing driver hopefuls are put through their paces on and off the track in a series of challenges to test driving skills as well as physical and mental aptitude. Barff leads a team of top-level GT Academy instructors and high-profile country mentors including: ex-F1 driver Max Chilton (UK); Dani Clos (Iberia); Olivier Pla (France); JP Kraemer (Germany); Tim Coronel (Benelux); Michela Cerutti (Italy); and Josef Král (CEE).

GT Academy is getting bigger and better each year. In 2015, 24 countries across the world have participated in three virtual-to-reality competitions. Champions of Asia and an International competition have already been crowned at Silverstone, the traditional home of Race Camp, but the European competition is ringing the changes with the move to the warmer climes of Abu Dhabi. The sun, sea, sand and impressive skyscrapers of Abu Dhabi will create a spectacular backdrop for the GT Academy TV show which was watched by 27 million people in 2014.

“We're very excited about our move to Abu Dhabi's fantastic facilities,” explains Olivier Pierini, Nissan Europe Manager of Sponsorship and Partnership. “As always, Race Camp will be a very tough test of the competitors' natural talents and determination to succeed. At the end of the process we shall have one winner who has a chance to make his dreams come true and join the ranks of our Nismo athletes competing around the world. Our past successes, with the likes of Lucas [Ordoñez], Jann [Mardenborough] and Wolfie [Wolfgang Reip], who has just won the Blancpain Endurance Championship, demonstrate how much is at stake.”

The winner of GT Academy Europe will embark on the Driver Development Programme with the aim to progress to a career as a racing driver. The results of the programme have been spectacular: Lucas Ordoñez, an MBA student from Spain, spearheaded the programme in 2008, now races for Nissan in Super GT500 class in Japan and has two Le Mans 24 Hour podium finishes to his name; Jann Mardenborough, the 2011 winner from the UK, competes in the GP3 Formula 1 feeder series; and in just three years, Wolfgang Reip from Belgium has been transformed from gamer to Blancpain Endurance Series champion racing a Nissan GT-R NISMO GT3.

"Race camp is something that is exciting for everyone involved in PlayStation and Gran Turismo. The manner by which the fastest gamer impresses the judges, and transforms from a virtual to a real racer, brings me great joy every time.” comments Gran Turismo series creator and President of Polyphony Digital Inc., Kazunori Yamauchi. “There's no need to stress the fact that it's possible to give birth to a driver who has the potential to succeed in international circuits through this program anymore, but I think

it is important to note that this experience at race camp is a moment in the limelight in the lives and memories of all its participants. I wish this year's European challengers good luck."

All the action at the GT Academy Race Camp will be filmed and a GT Academy TV show aired across Europe in the latter part of 2015 and early 2016. More details about GT Academy 2015 can be found on various platforms including: www.facebook.com/GTAcademy, www.gran-turismo.com and Twitter@GTAcademy. #RacingDriverWanted

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David Jackson	Communications Director	01923 899933
Email	david.jackson@nissan.co.uk	
Dominic Vizor	Product Communications Manager	01923 899938
Email:	dominic.vizor@nissan.co.uk	
Linda Robinson	Media Relations Manager	01923 899932
Email	linda.robinson@nissan.co.uk	
Kayleigh Edwards	EV and Corporate Communications Manager	01923 899937
Email	kayleigh.edwards@nissan.co.uk	
Nayab Khan	Press Officer	01923 899934
Email	nayab.khan@nissan.co.uk	

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Notes to Editors

About Nissan in the UK

- Nissan Sunderland Plant produces the Nissan Qashqai, Note and Juke and the 100% electric Nissan LEAF
- Production of lithium-ion batteries for electric vehicles began in 2012
- Total plant volume since 1986 stands at more than eight million units with 80 per cent of production exported to 100 markets worldwide
- Total investment made and announced since then is over £3.5 billion
- 500,238 units were produced at Sunderland plant in 2014
- In 2014, one in three cars built in the UK was a Nissan.
- Sunderland Plant currently employs more than 6,700 people
- Nissan's European Design Centre is located in Paddington, London and employs around 65 people
- Nissan's European Technical Centre is based in Cranfield, Bedfordshire and employs around 1,000 people
- Nissan's sales and marketing headquarters in Rickmansworth, Hertfordshire employs around 190 people

About GT Academy 2015

GT Academy is a collaboration between PlayStation® and Nissan that uses the virtual world of the Gran Turismo®6 game to unearth real-world racing talent. Now in its seventh year, GT Academy includes separate competitions for Europe (France, Italy, Germany, UK, Spain, Portugal, Belgium, Netherlands, Luxembourg, Poland , Hungary, Czech Republic), Asia (Japan, India, Thailand, Philippines, Indonesia) and 'International' (USA, Australia, Mexico, Egypt, Algeria, Morocco, Turkey).

The GT Academy qualification round will be part of a free Gran Turismo®6 update on PlayStation®3 (terms and conditions apply). The fastest gamers in each participating territory will qualify for their place at their territory's Race Camp. A number of competitors will also gain access via a series of Live Gran Turismo® events organised locally.

At Race Camp competitors are put through their paces on track and in a series of challenges in Nissan sports cars under the watchful eyes of high profile judges and mentors. One winner from each competition will be invited to take part in the intensive Driver Development Programme. They could qualify for an international race license and race for Nissan in 2016, before potentially joining Nissan's elite NISMO Athlete group of racers.

Previous winners of GT Academy are now regular racing drivers. In 2015, Jann Mardenborough (UK, winner in 2011) and Lucas Ordoñez (Spain, winner in 2008) represented Nissan in its LMP1 factory assault on the Le Mans 24 Hours. Jann also races single-seaters in GP3, a feeder series to Formula One, while Lucas is racing in the Super GT500 Championship in Japan. GT Academy winners are also

present in the World Endurance Championship and Blancpain Endurance Series.

Since its inception, GT Academy has attracted well over 5 million entrants worldwide. GT Academy winners have recorded two Le Mans 24 Hour podiums as well as 90 further podiums in international racing and over 22 race wins.

News and views on GT Academy 2015 and the progress of all the GT Academy drivers can be followed on various platforms including: www.facebook.com/GTAcademy | www.twitter.com/GTAcademy | www.nismo.tv | www.flickr.com/photos/gtacademyeurope.

About the Gran Turismo® Franchise

Gran Turismo® celebrated its 15th anniversary in 2013, having first appeared internationally in 1998. The multi-award-winning franchise has been the most successful ever for PlayStation®, and in 2013 it also surpassed worldwide sales of 70 million units. Various iterations of Gran Turismo® have been created for PlayStation® , PlayStation®2 computer entertainment system, PlayStation®3 and PSP (PlayStation® Portable), and have always been regarded as the best and most authentic driving simulators ever created due to true-to-life graphics, authentic physics technology and design. Since the inception of Gran Turismo®, famed creator Kazunori Yamauchi and Polyphony Digital Inc. in Japan have revolutionized the racing category as we know it today. His offerings provide the most realistic driving simulation in the industry and a unique medium for automotive manufacturers to showcase their products. Gran Turismo®6, the latest iteration of the game, was released on 6 December, 2013.

About Sony Computer Entertainment Europe Ltd
Sony Computer Entertainment Europe (SCEE), based in London, is responsible for the distribution, marketing and sales of PlayStation®4 (PS4®) computer entertainment system, PlayStation®Vita (PS Vita) portable entertainment system, PlayStation®3 (PS3®) computer entertainment system, PSP™ (PlayStation®Portable) handheld entertainment system and PSN software and hardware in 109 territories across Europe, the Middle East, Africa and Oceania. SCEE has revolutionised home entertainment since they launched PlayStation® in 1994. PlayStation®4 redefines rich and immersive gameplay with powerful graphics and speed, intelligent personalisation and deeply integrated social capabilities. PS Vita is an ultimate portable entertainment system that offers a revolutionary combination of rich gaming and social connectivity within a real world context. PS3® is an advanced computer system, incorporating the powerful Cell Broadband Engine and RSX processors. PSP® is a handheld entertainment system that allows users to enjoy 3D games with high-quality full-motion video and high-fidelity stereo audio. SCEE also delivers the PlayStation® experience to open operating systems through PlayStation®Mobile, a cross device platform. SCEE also develops, publishes, markets and distributes entertainment software for these formats, and manages the third party licensing programs for the formats in these territories.

More information about PlayStation® products can be found at www.playstation.com.

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About Nissan in Europe

Nissan has one of the most comprehensive European presences of any overseas manufacturer, employing more than 17,600 staff across locally-based design, research & development, manufacturing, logistics and sales & marketing operations. Last financial year Nissan plants in the UK, Spain and Russia produced more than 675,000 vehicles including award-winning crossovers, small cars, SUVs, commercial vehicles and electric vehicles, including the Nissan LEAF, the world's most popular electric vehicle with 96% of customers willing to recommend the car to friends. Nissan now offers a strong line-up of 23 diverse and innovative models in Europe under the Nissan and Datsun brands.

About NISMO

For the full NISMO story please click here
For NISMO's GT Academy story click here

For further details please contact.
Lindsay Morle
Tel +44 (0) 7971 481078
lindsay@nismosupport.com

http://www.newsroom.nissan-europe.com/

Company Contact:

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