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**PRAXIS™-EQUIPPED TEAMS DEMONSTRATE VERSATILITY OF SUSPENSION  
SYSTEM IN 2004**

**TIRERACK™ CANNONBALL® ONE LAP OF AMERICA RACE**  
***Teams finish second, third & fourth in mid-priced sedan class***

NASHVILLE, Tenn. - (May 25, 2004) – Three separate entries equipped with the Praxis™ Advanced Suspensions system recently completed the 2004 Tire Rack™ Cannonball® One Lap of America, presented by Car and Driver™. Finishing second, third and fourth in the mid-priced sedan class against serious competition, the Praxis-equipped teams applauded the flexibility and performance of the suspension system.

The One Lap of America features street-legal vehicles that drive 5,800 miles on public roads, stopping at seven racetracks to display their competitive abilities. Eighty-two vehicles entered the race. Seventy-four crossed the finish line.

Blake Fuller, of Braille Auto Development ([www.brailleauto.com](http://www.brailleauto.com)), who co-drove a 2004 Subaru WRX STi with his father, Peter Fuller, pointed to the versatility of the Praxis system as a key to his very respectable finish.

“The Praxis system was awesome,” enthused Fuller. “What I really found great was that we could ride in comfort between the track events – up to 1,400 miles per night – and still easily set the car up in a manner of seconds to drive on the track.”

Fuller’s 2<sup>nd</sup> in class and 6<sup>th</sup> overall finish is truly an accomplishment and credit to the Praxis suspension system when considering the only thing between him and a first-in-class showing was a 500 horsepower Mitsubishi Evo, piloted by a professional driver. The Praxis-equipped Fuller team triumphed over a host of imposing competitors – including teams driving highly modified vehicles such as a Mercedes, Lincoln LS and several BMWs.

Bill Niaura, manager, technology coordination, Bridgestone/Firestone Vehicle Systems, felt the three teams performed extremely well in an event that severely tests the mechanical dependability of a vehicle’s components. He went on to say the Praxis system was more than up to the job, which is evidenced in Fuller’s finish.

According to Niaura, “Fuller’s nearly stock Subaru came within 80 points of a vehicle that had a 33 percent horsepower advantage, which is a true testament to the capabilities of the Praxis suspension system and Fuller’s ability to handle the competition driving at unfamiliar tracks with incredible agility.”

“Our car had only a few modifications -- an aftermarket exhaust, lighter wheels and the Praxis suspension -- and we were leading the class all the way up to the last track event. It was very close. Our great showing was due to the fact that we had no mechanical problems and the Praxis system functioned perfectly,” said Fuller.

In exhibiting the spirit of help that is so much a part of the One Lap experience, the Praxis-equipped “Team Racing for the Children,” ([www.racingforthechildren.com](http://www.racingforthechildren.com)) received the George Schuster Award for Sportsmanship. Drivers Mike Potter, Enrique Ramirez and Shawn Meze made it a habit to assist any One Lap team they saw in need, viewing all participants in the event as “family.” Potter’s team also drove a 2004 Subaru WRX STi and finished 3<sup>rd</sup> in class and 13<sup>th</sup> overall. “We stopped to help other competitors because we just wanted everyone to finish,” said Potter, a four-time One Lap participant.

As for the Praxis system on their vehicle, Potter had nothing but rave reviews. “The system worked great on the roads, where we set it on a comfortable setting for the between track transits. Once we hit a track, it was race ready with the push of a button.”

Potter had used an aggressive race suspension set-up during his three prior One Lap competitions, so he really appreciated the ability to change settings specifically for the road miles and track runs. “On the track, the Praxis suspension gave us the extra stiffness we needed to compete with everyone. When it comes to race vehicle components, it’s often tough to have the best of both worlds, but Praxis truly allowed us to have it both ways,” he said.

One of the best examples of why the team clinched the sportsmanship trophy was found in the assistance they gave to Matt and Gwen Hubbard. The Hubbard team experienced a timing belt failure in a remote area of Colorado and “Team Racing for the Children” drove many miles just to find a cell phone signal to call a tow truck. The team then backtracked to work on the husband and wife team’s Honda Prelude until the tow truck arrived. Blake and Peter Fuller were also on site with the downed Prelude when Potter’s team returned.

Team Firestone suffered one of the most dramatic incidents of the event when driver Andrew Firestone, known for his role on the ABC-TV series *The Bachelor*, lost control of his Subaru WRX STi, slamming head-on into a concrete barrier at Turn 5 on Road America’s four-mile road course. Though the car was significantly damaged, Andrew emerged from the incident unhurt.

Andrew and brother/co-driver Adam Firestone, great-grandsons of Firestone Tire & Rubber Company founder Harvey S. Firestone, had driven consistently until the time of the crash, and managed to finish 4<sup>th</sup> in the mid-priced sedan class and 22<sup>nd</sup> overall. Following the devastating incident at Road America, the brothers managed to piece a drivable vehicle together to finish the race’s last event in South Bend, Ind.

“Even with the accident, and our status as non-professional drivers in the event, the Bridgestone tires and the versatility of the Praxis system were able to provide a competitive edge,” said Andrew Firestone. “We also had a great time making new friends and really enjoyed the camaraderie of all the wonderful competitors.”

Praxis Advanced Suspension ([www.praxisystems.com](http://www.praxisystems.com)) is the first and only aftermarket suspension system that allows the driver to control performance – on the road or at the track – without the need for tools or time in the shop. Multi-Rate Air-Spring technology, coupled with the Intelliride™ control-system and externally-adjustable monotube dampers supplied by H&R Springs allow the driver to rapidly select the ride-height, spring-rate and damping. A simple touch of a cockpit mounted control button and damper adjustment at each corner places the vehicle into one of three fully-tuned operating modes: touring, sport or track.

The Praxis advanced suspension system was first developed for Subaru’s ([www.subaru.com](http://www.subaru.com)) all-wheel drive, high-performance WRX sport wagon and sedan in 2003, and is currently sold through The Tire Rack ([www.tirerack.com](http://www.tirerack.com)). At the 2004 Chicago Auto Show, Bridgestone/Firestone Vehicle Systems announced two new applications for its Praxis line – the Ford Mustang (1994 to present) and 3-Series BMWs (1999 to present – coupes, sedans and wagons).

In the early 1970's, legendary automotive journalist Brock Yates, Sr., created the Cannonball Sea-to-Shining-Sea Memorial Trophy Dash, a race from New York City to Redondo Beach, Calif. In 1992, Yates redesigned the event, creating the Cannonball One Lap of America: a nearly 24-hour-a-day driving experience combined with time trial competitions on racetracks throughout the country. The event is one of the greatest challenges of endurance and vehicle preparation: no support crews are allowed and only one set of tires (and two spares) is permitted per team.

Although scoring is based on performance at the racetracks, the vehicles and their drivers must survive more than 5,800 miles of driving interspersed with “the finest meals found at gas stations and convenience stores.” Competitors include both unknown amateurs and seasoned professional drivers, who battle fatigue, weather, traffic and the demands of strenuous driving competition.

Bridgestone/Firestone Vehicle Systems, an operating unit of BFS Diversified Products, LLC (BFDP), is responsible for the design, tuning, and integration of original-equipment and aftermarket suspension systems.

BFS Diversified Products, LLC, based in Carmel, Ind., is a subsidiary of Bridgestone Americas Holding, Inc. (BSAH). BFDP is responsible for BSAH’s non-tire businesses in the Americas including the building and industrial products, synthetic and natural rubber, and fiber and textile businesses. BFDP’s operations lead their industries in innovation and market share.

Nashville-based Bridgestone Americas Holding, Inc. is the U.S. subsidiary of the Bridgestone Corporation, the world's largest tire and rubber company. BSAH, through its subsidiaries, develops, manufactures and markets a wide range of Bridgestone, Firestone and associate and private brand tires to address the needs of a broad range of customers, including consumers, automotive and commercial vehicle original equipment manufacturers and those in the agricultural, forestry and mining industries. The companies also produce air springs, roofing materials, synthetic rubber and industrial fibers and textiles and operate the world's largest chain of automotive tire and service centers.

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