



- [HOME](#)
- [Reason](#)
- [About](#)
- [Rankings](#)
- [Schedule](#)
- [Reports](#)
- [Drivers](#)
- [Archives](#)
- [Colors](#)
- [Links](#)



Deep Throttle American Driver Prospects Ranking

For Open Wheel Road Racing

June 24, 2009

The first [2009 ranking](#) features the [top 15](#) American driver prospects for open wheel road racing. Here is the [press release](#) for this month's ranking.

	Driver	Last Year
1	J.R. Hildebrand (Indy Lights) After a slightly off year by J.R.'s standards, switched teams and currently leads the point standings with a Long Beach win, four podiums, and three poles.	6
2	Jonathan Summerton (Indy Lights, Atlantic) Jack of all trades this year, sits 2nd in the Atlantic series with a win, three podiums, two poles. Also has three top fives and is ninth in Indy Lights.	2
3	John Edwards (Atlantic) After winning the Star Mazda title, returns to Atlantic where he sits in third place with a win and three top fives.	4
4	Josef Newgarden (Europe) After shocking the establishment by becoming the first American to win the Formula Ford Festival, decided to stay in Europe. Competes full time in the MSA Formula Ford Championship of Great Britain where he is fourth with two wins, seven top fives in nine races, and two poles. Also competes part time in Formula Palmer Audi and in just three races has won twice and finished fourth.	8

5	<p>Joel Miller (Star Mazda) After claiming the runner up spot, stayed in Star Mazda for a second season. Consistency (two thirds, a fourth, and two fifths in six races) has him in third place.</p>	5
6	<p>Conor Daly (Star Mazda) Won the Skip Barber National series and then traveled to England and won the Walter Hayes Trophy, first time for an American. Moved up and has a win, a fourth, and a fifth.</p>	7
7	<p>Gabby Chaves (FBMW) After gaining American citizenship, could become the greatest foreign born American driver since Mario Andretti. Youngest driver to ever win the Skip Barber Scholarship Shootout at just 13! Currently at age 15, he has stood on the podium in all seven FBMW races (two wins, four seconds, a third).</p>	NR
8	<p>Connor De Phillippi (Skip Barber National) Taking full advantage of winning the 2008 Karting Scholarship Shootout, he has dominated the Skip Barber National series. In six races, he's won four and finished second once for the points lead.</p>	NR
9	<p>Chris Miller (F2000) After a crashing out of third place on a wet track in the first race (which hurts his standing), he's finished first, second, second, first, second along with two poles.</p>	NR
10	<p>Robert Podlesni (Pacific F2000) Last year's runner up, he returns for another go. Currently leads the series with one win, three seconds, a third, a fourth, and four poles in six races.</p>	14
11	<p>Matthew Inge (F2000) Leads the championship with a win, two seconds, two thirds, and a fifth. He also has the race's fastest lap four times.</p>	NR
12	<p>Alexander Rossi (Europe) After dominating FBMW last year, moved to Europe to compete in the Formula Masters series. Became first American to win a race (Brno) in the series and currently is sixth in the standings.</p>	12
13	<p>Benjamin Searcy (F2000) Won two races (including the season opener at VIR in difficult wet-dry conditions) with one pole</p>	NR

	position, placing him fourth in the standings.	
14	Max Hyatt (Pacific F2000) Two wins and a second along with two poles places him third in the point standings.	NR
15	Brett Smrz (Skip Barber National) Despite some inconsistency, a first, third, and fourth has him fourth in points in a series with large fields.	NR
Dropped out: Jonathan Bomarito, Richard Antinucci, Carl Skerlong, Dane Cameron, Jeff Westphal, Alex Ardoin, Sean Rayhall.		

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