

## Gianmarco Raimondo signs with Team Autotecnica for 2008 Canadian teen to contest Formula BMW Americas series

February 18, 2008 - St. Catharines, Ontario – Since attending the Formula BMW licensing course last year, seventeen-year-old Gianmarco Raimondo's goal has been to compete in the North America open-wheel series and compete for a championship. Today he is one step closer to his goal having signed to race with Toronto-based Team Autotecnica in 2008. Testing with the team begins immediately in advance of official testing in April.

Gianmarco is a graduate of the Sunoco Ron Fellows Karting Championship where he raced with Cameron Motorsports in the premiere InterContinental C (ICC) shifter karts. This class is generally considered the stepping stone to racing cars and at the end of the season, Gianmarco's performance was rewarded with a scholarship on the Sunoco Team Ultra 94. The St. Catharines, Ontario teen would also return to the Formula BMW school in Valencia, Spain to compete in a shootout for a scholarship to run in the 2008 series which would now be called Formula BMW Americas and include a race at the Formula 1 Grand Prix event in Brazil.

"Our goal at the end of the season was to make the move to open-wheel cars in 2008" Gianmarco stated in a recent interview. "After earning my international license at the school in Valencia, we started to put things in motion to make that happen." Throughout the remainder of 2007, Gianmarco tested with different teams including Team Autotecnica, looking for a good fit. "We had a good rapport right from our first test" noted Gianmarco, "and the team has a winning record which is very important to our goals,"

Team Autotecnica entered the Formula BMW series at its inception in 2004 and has always finished in the top three in team points. Their driver won the series and rookie championship in 2005. In 2007 their lead driver scored a record nine poles and had eight podiums on the year. The team would also take home another rookie championship.

Enrico Diano, Manager of Team Autotecnica commented, "The whole team is looking forward to running this season with Gianmarco. He's already proven to have the skills we are looking for in helping him achieve his goals of winning races and fighting for the Rookie and overall championship titles." He continued, "Gianmarco exhibits a cool poise towards his driving and works closely with our Engineer to relay feedback from the car and track and also quickly applies our advice towards his driving technique. He is naturally fast and with a good amount of pre-season testing, we will help him refine his driving to be a front runner in the 2008 races."

In addition to time at the wheel of the Formula BMW FB02 race car, Gianmarco has had a taste of open-wheel competition competing in the Skip Barber Race Series with Sunoco Team Ultra 94. He would earn a podium finish at the famed Sebring circuit in Florida in only his third race. "Any podium finish is good" offered Gianmarco, "but to get it so soon in the car was pretty special. Plus we did it in the rain."

Gianmarco and Team Autotecnica began testing in Talladega (Alabama) this past weekend and will now head to Hallett Motor Racing Circuit in Oklahoma next week for two more test days. Official testing for the Formula BMW Americas series begins April 5th at Virginia International Raceway. The first race takes place at Laguna Seca Raceway in Monterey, California on May 16-18. The series also makes a stop in Montreal for the Canadian Grand Prix and ends the season at the Formula 1 race in Brazil.

Gianmarco will be providing news and race updates throughout the season on his web site: [www.gianmarcoraimondo.com](http://www.gianmarcoraimondo.com)

Photo: Gianmarco at Formula BMW course in Valencia, Spain  
Credit: A. Raimondo

For interviews, driver bio and photos, please contact:

Media Contact:  
Chris Jameson  
Level Ten Communications  
+1 416.284.4932  
[media@gianmarcoraimondo.com](mailto:media@gianmarcoraimondo.com)

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