

# On Camera And On Track: Hollywood Races For Kids

*Actor Chris McDonald Takes The Checkered Flag In 2004*

*Toyota Pro/Celebrity Race At The Toyota Grand Prix of Long Beach*

(NAPSA)—How do today's hottest stars spend their time when they're not in front of the camera? This year, Lil' Kim, Sean Astin, Chris McDonald, Frankie Muniz, Laila Ali and others left their normal spotlights and moved behind the wheel of a race car at the 28th annual Toyota Pro/Celebrity Race in Long Beach, Calif., to benefit children's hospitals.

McDonald came out ahead of Andrew Firestone, from ABC's "The Bachelor," and Access Hollywood reporter, Tony Potts, who got tangled up on the wet track, allowing McDonald to grab the lead and the win.

A fan favorite at the 30th anniversary Toyota Grand Prix of Long Beach, the Toyota Pro/Celebrity Race combines stars from film, television, music, sports and fashion to compete in the world's largest celebrity racing event.

Since the race's inception, the event has attracted many of Hollywood's top-names like Ashley Judd, Gene Hackman, Clint Eastwood, Cameron Diaz, George Lucas, Cuba Gooding Jr., Kelsey Grammer, William Shatner, Jay Leno, Matt LeBlanc, and Queen Latifah. Year after year, celebrities prove that a passion for racing takes a close second to their love for acting.

But it's not just the celebrities that like to put the pedal to the metal as greats from the vast sports world have also joined the action. World-class athletes like Joe Montana (three-time Super Bowl MVP), Carl Lewis (Olympic track gold medalist), John Elway (Super Bowl XXXIII MVP), Mary Lou Retton (Olympic gold medal gymnast) and Dara Torres (Olympic swimming gold medalist, who



**Andrew Firestone, former Bachelor (center), with some of his toughest competitors, preparing for the Toyota Pro/Celebrity Race, which raises money for children's charities. From left to right, Laila Ali, triple crown boxing champion and daughter of Muhammad Ali; Andrea Parker of ABC's "Less Than Perfect;" Melissa Joan Hart, star of "Sabrina, the Teenage Witch;" Lil' Kim, grammy-winning hip-hop recording artist; Dara Torres, Olympic swimmer and gold-medalist; and Liza Snyder, from CBS' "Yes, Dear."**

raced last year as well), have left their competitive arenas to burn rubber on the racetrack. Even top fashion models like Carol Alt and Kim Alexis traded the latest vogue for a race suit.

The high-octane fun begins at race training; an intensive four-day session that teaches stars racing skills and the complexities of road racing. The celebrities then experience a practice session on the seaside street course in Long Beach. On race weekend, as part of the Toyota Grand Prix of Long Beach, the celebrities entertain tens of thousands of screaming fans in a 10-lap race.

"Year after year, celebrities love to compete in the Toyota Pro/Celebrity Race for two main reasons: the challenge and thrill involved with auto racing and the opportunity to benefit chil-

dren's charities," said Les Unger, national motorsports manager at Toyota Motor Sales, U.S.A. "Each celebrity's participation since 1990 has helped us raise close to \$1.5 million for 'Racing for Kids,' a national fundraising program that benefits children's hospitals in Southern California."

As it has for the last seven years, "People" magazine presented the People Pole Award to the celebrity who earned the pole position the day prior to the race. This year Tony Potts won the award and \$15,000 was donated to his charity of choice, Haven Hills shelter for battered women and children.

The 28th annual Toyota Pro/Celebrity Race will be broadcast nationally on the SPEED Channel in coming weeks. Check cable listings for times in your area.