

## **Baltimore Grand Prix organizers announce new sponsors Sunoco, GEICO among sponsors**

By Julie Scharper, *The Baltimore Sun*, April 01, 2011

Organizers of the Baltimore Grand Prix announced new sponsors Thursday for the three-day street racing festival slated to be held around the Inner Harbor over Labor Day weekend.

Sunoco will be the fuel sponsor of the Baltimore race, according to a statement from Baltimore Racing Development. Sunoco is the official fuel of the Indy Racing Series, of which the Baltimore race is a part.

Other sponsors include GEICO insurance, Transamerica/AEGON, Greenspring Energy, Enoch Office Products and HVM Racing, according to the statement.

Race organizers had previously announced that the five hotels in and around the race course — Baltimore's Marriott Hotel, Hilton Hotel, Sheraton Hotel, Harbor Court Hotel and Hyatt Hotel — would be hospitality sponsors.

Race organizers have yet to name a title sponsor. They said they were close to finalizing a deal in August and throughout the fall, but that sponsor never materialized.

Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake and Councilman William H. Cole IV have been strong advocates of the racing festival, which organizers say will draw as many as 100,000 visitors and generate as much as \$70 million in economic impact — nearly twice as much as the economic impact for the Grand Prix of Long Beach, Calif., the country's longest-running street race.

The city committed \$7.75 million in road repair funds to prepare roads for the race and approved a \$4.2 million contract for roadwork. The state economic development agency granted an unprecedented \$500,000 loan to race organizers late last year, just as a \$500,000 payment to the Maryland Stadium Authority came due.