



## Media Information

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### **Subaru Driver David Higgins Clinches Second Straight Rally America National Championship At New England Forest Rally**

Newry, Maine, Jul 15, 2012 - Subaru Rally Team USA driver David Higgins has captured his second straight Rally America National Championship after a measured second place finish at an extremely dusty New England Forest Rally. Higgins and his co-driver Craig Drew entered the New England Forest Rally, round five of the six round Rally America series, with enough of a cushion atop the championship standings that just a sixth or better finish would mathematically clinch the Rally America Driver's Championship for he and the Subaru team. Higgins was frustratingly slowed by dust on the event's first day after being placed second on the start order and preventing him from attacking for victory, but was able to comfortably pilot his Vermont SportsCar-prepared and BFGoodrich Tires-shod 2012 Subaru WRX STI to wins on five of day two's seven stages and finish in second place overall, merely 21 seconds from the leader. The podium position netted Higgins more than enough points to clinch the championship with the final round, the Olympus Rally, still to run in September. The 2012 Rally America Championship win is the sixth in the past seven years for Subaru Rally Team USA and the Subaru WRX STI (2006-2009, 2011-2012), the second in a row for Higgins and his fourth championship on U.S. soil after championship wins back in 2002 and 2003.

"I'm extremely proud of what we accomplished this year. To successfully defend our championship and keep Subaru a-top rallying in the USA means a lot to [co-driver] Craig (Drew) and I," explained Higgins at the podium champagne spray. "Our Subaru has been perfect all season, the 2012 STI is reliable and so tough and that has really been the difference in the points race. We have finished every event with either a victory or a second place finish and the car has worked in every condition thrown at it. I'm looking forward to going to the Olympus Rally in two months with no thoughts on championship points, so Craig and I will make sure the fans get a proper show! I thank Subaru for their support and faith in myself and Craig and big thanks the team at Vermont SportsCar who have worked tirelessly on providing me with the best car and the best team possible."

The New England Forest Rally featured nearly one hundred miles of technical gravel forest roads along the Maine-New Hampshire border. Recent dry weather made the roads extremely dusty which forced Higgins, who was running second on the road, to slow at times as visibility became fleeting. On the second day of competition Rally Officials provided an additional minute separation (three minutes total) between Higgins and his archrival, Antoine L'Estage who was running first on the road, free of the choking dust. The extra minute provided some help and Higgins won a majority of the second day's stages, but was content to stay in second place overall, avoiding unnecessary risks and finished just twenty seconds behind rally winner L'Estage.

"There's much to be proud of from our team's performance at this rally and on each previous Rally America round this season," added James Han, motorsports marketing manager for Subaru of America, Inc. "Frustrating as it may have been for both David and Craig to run behind Antoine and Nathalie in such dusty conditions, our drivers took the prudent approach within the context of our goal in retaining the championship title, and what a great job doing so at the penultimate round. The basis of Subaru Rally Team USA's success rests solidly on the Subaru WRX STI, each built

with symmetrical AWD system and our legendary boxer engine.”

Subaru Rally Team USA now has nearly two months to celebrate before the sixth and final round, Washington State’s famed Olympus Rally, September 22-23.

For additional information about Subaru Rally Team USA visit: <http://www.subaru.com/rally>. Become fan on <http://www.facebook.com/subaruofamerica> and follow @subaru\_usa and @srtusa.

For more information on the Rally America Championship visit: <http://www.rally-america.com>

#### **About Subaru PUMA RallyCross Team USA**

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Subaru of America, Inc. is a wholly owned subsidiary of Fuji Heavy Industries Ltd. of Japan. Headquartered in Cherry Hill, N.J., the company markets and distributes Subaru Symmetrical All-Wheel Drive vehicles, parts and accessories through a network of more than 600 dealers across the United States. All Subaru products are manufactured in zero-landfill production plants and Subaru of Indiana Automotive Inc. is the only U.S. automobile production plant to be designated a backyard wildlife habitat by the National Wildlife Federation. For additional information visit [www.subaru.com](http://www.subaru.com).

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