**Press Release**

For Immediate Release

**Luke McLean Captures Reality on the Run with Sound Devices Astral® Wireless Series and MixPre II**

*Location sound mixer of The Amazing Race Canada and Canada’s Ultimate Challenge on the evolution of live audio in reality TV*

**TORONTO, CANADA, OCTOBER 28, 2024 — Since reality television first took hold of the public imagination in the early 2000s, the genre has evolved to incorporate a variety of formats and production styles to suit the wide range of programming that has been developed. Luke McLean has been on the forefront of competition-based reality shows, serving as Audio Supervisor on Top Chef, and Location Sound Mixer on Survivor as well as Insight Productions' The Amazing Race Canada and Canada’s Ultimate Challenge — high-intensity programs that test the endurance and stamina of their production staff as much as the competitors participating. To ensure that he doesn’t miss any critical storytelling moments in a shoot that can often change at the drop of a hat, McLean has developed a streamlined production workflow that incorporates the** [**Sound Devices MixPre II**](https://www.sounddevices.com/mixpre/) **portable mixer/recorder and** [**A10 Wireless Receivers**](https://www.sounddevices.com/astral/)**.**

**Along for the journey**

The globe-trotting pedigree of the shows that McLean works on requires a unique mentality from production staff that echoes the sense of adventure and drive of the competitors. Camera operators and sound mixers are companions on the journey and have developed operating procedures and equipment load outs that reflect this mentality. “It’s a really exhilarating experience and an adrenaline rush to work on these shows because you face the same challenges as the competitors while also having to capture their stories as they happen,” McLean explains. “There’s a lot of camaraderie between the production teams and the competitors that is truly unique in reality show production as a result — you really are along for the journey with them and it’s such a privilege to be able to do so.”

“We have to keep pace with them, though. So how we work has to be sensitive to what’s going on minute to minute while also capturing everything without any interruptions.”

The advent of portable digital gear and reliable, wireless audio recording has proven to be a gamechanger for productions like this. McLean has worked closely alongside his mentor, technical producer and sound mixer Mark Krupka to develop lightweight, reliable systems that take advantage of these technologies to suit the unique production requirements of these programs. “The advances in wireless audio created a fundamental shift in how we make these shows,” he says. “They enable us to do things we’ve never been able to do and the impact on our workflow and the quality of work we can do has been incalculable.”

“Sound Devices gear has played a major role in this, and allowed us to create custom-designed sound kits that do everything we need to do in the smallest possible package.”

**One size fits all**

Each contestant or set of competitors on these types of programs has their own camera and sound mixer — a far cry from the days when multiple teams of each were required in order to capture all the action. The lynchpin of McLean’s mobile setup for recording and mixing audio in this workflow is the Sound Devices MixPre-6 II paired with Sound Devices A10-RX receivers and A10-TX digital wireless transmitters. “The MixPre-6 II is perfect for what we need — they are incredibly small, not power hungry, and completely reliable,” McLean says. “We had used the 633 prior to this and being able to shrink the kit size by half while still having the same features and workflow had a huge impact on how we work. We’re always looking for ways to make things as light as possible, and MixPre-6 II was perfect for that.”

“In terms of wireless, we often have at least 20 A10-RX or A20-RX stereo receivers running at once and a corresponding number of transmitters with the competitors,” he continued. “The reliability and fidelity of the A10s work incredibly well for us in the field. We’ve started to integrate A20 units now as well, and we’re seeing yet another leap forward in terms of quality and features that we’re excited to design new rigs around.”

In terms of RF, McLean and Krupka have been following Sound Devices’ wireless evolution for several years, and trusted that investing in the brand would pay off in the long run. The result has allowed them to continue to hone their design concepts and continue to develop a workflow that can keep up with the speed of these productions. “We’ve been doing this for 20 years and we love how the brand has constantly evolved what they offer,” says McLean. “You can tell that Sound Devices has invested serious R&D in wireless and they haven’t let us down yet.”

“There’s a unique amount of creativity and storytelling involved in what is normally a ‘technical’ profession on shows like these,” he concluded. “Therefore, it’s extra satisfying when you know you’ve designed the perfect mobile kit to carry alongside these competitors in these competitions. I’m really proud of the work we do and we’re glad to have Sound Devices along for the ride with us.”

**About Sound Devices:**

For more than 25 years, Sound Devices has created premier audio equipment that helps sound professionals capture superior audio. The company's products have been used for an array of applications, from award-winning feature films and television shows, to live events, houses of worship, and educational applications. Sound Devices designs, assembles, and supports its products at their Reedsburg, Wisconsin, headquarters and their Madison, Wisconsin, and Rickmansworth, UK, offices.

For more information, visit [www.sounddevices.com](http://www.sounddevices.com/).

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