



STAR MAZDA TEAM AND ALUMNI STAR IN RECORD-SETTING ROLEX SERIES RACE AT CIRCUIT GILLES VILLENEUVE IN MONTREAL

Both current participants and recent graduates of the Star Mazda Championship presented by Goodyear played a starring role in the record-setting Rolex Series event held this past weekend at the Circuit Gilles Villeneuve in Montreal.

AIM Autosport, the Woodbridge, Ontario-based team that became the first repeat winner in the 2008 Star Mazda Championship series with John Edwards' victory in Race 2 at the Mazda Grand Prix of Portland, also won the Montreal Daytona Prototype race- by a margin of 64/1000ths of a second – in the #61 Exchange Traded Gold Riley Daytona Prototype... a car driven by a pair of Star Mazda graduates, Mark Wilkins and Brian Frisselle.



“This feels fantastic and is exactly the result this team deserved!” Frisselle said. “We’ve been really strong and led the last few races, but just didn’t have the luck that we needed to break through. You hate it for the 58 guys running out of fuel like they did, but today was just our day and this feels great.”

Wilkins, who came up through the ranks at AIM, ran two seasons in the Star Mazda Championship, 2005 and 2006. Brian Frisselle moved up from the Skip Barber national Championship in 2004 to run the Star Mazda Championship in 2004, moving up to the Rolex DP series in 2005.



In addition, Joey Hand (a former Formula Mazda champion) ran out of fuel with one lap to go in the #23 Ruby Tuesday car... but not before he made what the announcers called "the move of the season" in making a daring and brilliantly judged pass to move up from 3rd to 2nd.

Hand was the 1999 Formula Mazda champion and the 2000 Team USA

scholarship winner. He finished third in the 2001 Atlantic championship and claimed his first Rolex Series GT victory co-driving with Boris Said in 2004. He moved up to the Prototype category in 2007,

Other recent Star Mazda Championship graduates making news on the national motorsports scene include IRL race winners Graham Rahal and Marco Andretti and NASCAR Sprint Cup rookie Michael McDowell the 2004 Star Mazda champion. Raphael Matos, the 2005 champion, currently drives for Andretti/Green Racing in both Indy Lights and the American Le Mans series. Among ALMS drivers, Gerardo Bonilla and Ben Devlin, co-drivers of the #8 B-K Motorsport/Mazda/BP LMP2 prototype, are both graduates of the Star Mazda Championship.

2007 Star Mazda champion Dane Cameron, only the second rookie in the 18-year history of the series to win the championship in his first year, has scored three top-5 finishes driving his Mazda-sponsored #19 Genua Racing / Finlay Motorsports/Lynx Racing Swift 016.a. His back-to-back top-5s in the double-header with the IRL at Edmonton vaulted Cameron from 12th to 7th in the Atlantic championship battle.



Over the past eighteen years, the Star Mazda Championship presented by Goodyear has grown into one of the most prolific and successful driver development series in all of auto racing. This year's series' prizes total \$1.5 million and includes a full-season sponsorship from the MAZDASPEED Motorsports Development Ladder for the 2008 Star Mazda series champion to move up and race in the 2009 Atlantic Championship Powered by Mazda.

"Its weekends like this that are the real payoff for eighteen years of hard work helping young racing drivers, and teams, climb the ladder," says Star Mazda Championship founder and President Gary Rodrigues. "The success that our teams, drivers and graduates are enjoying in such a wide variety of racing is the best possible testimonial to the well-rounded education – and the career opportunities - that the Star Mazda Championship provides.

We took some major steps forward in 2008 with the implementation of standing starts, radial tires and E10 gasohol racing fuel. And there will be still more changes for 2009, changes that will ensure that the Star Mazda Championship, while remaining affordable, is also a relevant training ground for the full range of racing venues utilized by the top tier of North American open-wheel racing."

For more information on the Star Mazda Championship and its drivers, as well as the Mazda Motorsports ladder system, please visit www.starmazda.com and www.mazdausa.com.

Peter Frey / Communications Director / Star Mazda Championship

Office – (818) 906-6997 / Cell – (818) 398-5733 / E-mail: StarMazdaPR@aol.com

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For more information on the various Mazda spec series, visit:

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Dean Case / Communications Officer / MAZDASPEED Motorsports

Office - (310) 755-7403 / Cell - (310) 318-4582 / E-mail: dean@RWB-LLC.com

