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Andersen Racing's Jaeger and Bonilla Are Regrouping After Huge Crash at Canadian GP

FAIRFIELD, N.J., July 1 — Andersen Racing's Brad Jaeger and Gerardo Bonilla are both out of the hospital and looking ahead rather than behind after one of the biggest crashes in the history of the Star Mazda Championship presented by Goodyear last weekend at the Circuit Gilles Villeneuve in Montreal, Quebec.

Jaeger spent one night in a Canadian hospital after being knocked unconscious in the crash on lap one of last Saturday's race, a support event for the Canadian Grand Prix. He is currently resting at his home in Cincinnati. He may miss the next race on July 16 at Miller Motorsports Park in Salt Lake City, Utah, but he feels certain he'll be able to compete in the following event July 23 at Portland International Raceway in Portland, Ore.

Bonilla, of Orlando, Fla., only spent a few hours in the hospital before he was released.

The Fairfield, N.J.-based team's third driver in the event, Ramiro Scuncio of Concepcion, Chile, was one of only 27 of the original 42 drivers able to restart the race, which was shortened from 26 laps to 11 after the red flag. He lost a front corner of his car in the crash and drove it into the pits with a mangled suspension and wheel. The team replaced the entire corner and of course

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the wheel and tire and sent him back out. He ended up four laps down in 24th place in his car, which is sponsored by Sky Arline Chile, but he did finish the event.

Bonilla's car, which carries the colors of the Skip Barber Racing School, was destroyed in the accident, but efforts are underway to get him a new car. Andersen Racing's mechanics are repairing Jaeger's No. 2.

Bonilla's official finishing position was 29th after starting sixth while Jaeger's was 32nd after starting 14th. The starting line-up was determined by points, and Scuncio started 11th.

Adrian Carrio ended up winning the race over Matt Varsha and Mike Potekhen.

The Montreal action will be broadcast on SPEED at 1 p.m. Eastern time July 9. A video of the accident can be viewed on the Internet at youtube.com.

"I was proud of the team's effort, and very happy that our drivers were all O.K., considering what they went through," noted team owner Dan Andersen.

Andersen Racing's Web site is at andersenracingteam.com and the series' Web site is at starmazda.com.

Quotes follow:

Ramiro Scuncio: "I'm glad that no one was hurt badly in the accident. My car was hit by debris but luckily we were able to restart. We received a 12-minute penalty for working on the car during the red flag, or we would have finished higher."

Gerardo Bonilla: "I am OK, and not hurt any worse than a bruise on my left foot. The car is a total loss, so we're in a very dangerous situation season-wise, but we're working on it. My focus is stronger than ever before, so I think we'll be OK."

"What a horrible way to start a race! This is a major disaster for so many teams. I would have done anything to miss Daniel Herrington after he hit the wall, and tried to. When I saw the impact coming our way anyway, I just closed my eyes. I couldn't believe how many times I felt an impact as the others crashed into us. We had been so fast in practice, and our expectations for

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a great race and giving our new friends from King Canada a great show were sky-high.

“What really burns me is four of us getting injured for no reason, not to mention all the wrecked cars. We, the drivers, must do a better, more professional job from here out to make sure this doesn't happen again. As for the No. 9 Skip Barber car, we'll make a new one and pick up where we left off. We will not be deterred.”

Brad Jaeger: “The Circuit Gilles Villeneuve was amazing. It was a lot of fun to drive and race on. I wish that we could have had a qualifying session. I loved the track and the city of Montreal. Unfortunately things didn't end up going our way in the race.

“The start of the race was pretty good for us. We got around a few cars but I was held up in turn two by Doug Peterson, which allowed John Pew to get around me. This didn't matter much to me at the time; my plan was to just survive the start and then start working at moving up positions.

“Unfortunately Turn Five was hazardous for many of us. The only thing I remember about the incident is coming around the blind corner and seeing cars everywhere. Some were stranded in the middle of the track, debris was mid-air, and there was soon to be a car mid-air. That's all I can remember, and the rest that I can tell you is from seeing the in-car video after the race.

“Peterson was trying to avoid hitting Daniel Herrington and got into Pew. Pew then hit the tire wall and got airborne, spinning while in the air. Unfortunately for me I was right behind Pew, and when he came down it was on top of my head. The tire on his car hit my helmet and knocked me unconscious.

“I remember asking the nurses their names when either traveling in the ambulance or during the helicopter ride to the hospital. I have only a brief memory of that. The Hospital du Sacre Coeur decided to keep me overnight. I felt fine when I left. I was suffering from headaches and dizziness. The first couple of days after they let me go I slept about 20 hours a day. I was told it's all part of the recovery process.

“I am still continuing to recover and rest at my home in Cincinnati. I don't believe I will

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be back for Salt Lake City, but as of now I'm planning on competing in Portland. I plan on continuing to rest and revitalize myself, and only time can help prepare me to get back in the car. I will be visiting the doctor every week for a check-up until he believes I'm OK to get back behind the wheel. Hopefully that will be in time for Portland."

The stats from Montreal:

First Practice (Fri., 8:45 a.m. to 9:25 a.m.):

1. Ryan Justice, 1:37.541
4. Gerardo Bonilla, 1:38.720
6. Brad Jaeger, 1:38.967
23. Ramiro Scuncio, 1:40.655

Second Practice (Fri., 5 p.m. to 5:40 p.m.):

1. Ryan Justice, 1:37.017
8. Gerardo Bonilla, 1:37.506
15. Brad Jaeger, 1:38.271
20. Ramiro Scuncio, 1:38.887

Starting Grid Was Set by Points:

6. Gerardo Bonilla
11. Ramiro Scuncio
14. Brad Jaeger

Race (Sat., 2:30 p.m. to 3:15 p.m.):

1. Adrian Carrio
24. Ramiro Scuncio
29. Gerardo Bonilla
32. Brad Jaeger