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Andersen Racing's Donoso Makes the Podium With Bonilla Right Behind in Fourth In Saturday's Star Mazda Race at Road America

ELKHART LAKE, Wis., Aug. 19 — Andersen Racing's Pablo Donoso was one of five drivers to break the track record for cars competing in the Star Mazda Championship presented by Goodyear Saturday morning when he qualified second at Road America. Later on Saturday afternoon he finished a close third in the series' 18-lap, 45-minute race that supported the Generac 500 American Le Mans Series (ALMS) headliner, setting the fastest lap of the race to boot.

The driver from Santiago, Chile was making a guest appearance with the team at this race after running a full Star Mazda season with Andersen Walko Racing last year.

One of the Fairfield, N.J.-based team's full-season drivers, Gerardo Bonilla of Orlando, Fla., finished right behind Donoso's Cristal Beer car in fourth place and further extended his lead in the Expert Series point standings with his Skip Barber Racing School-sponsored car.

Another one of the team's full-season drivers, Ramiro Scuncio of Conception, Chile, started 11th and had worked his way up to seventh with his Sky Airline No. 22 before he was hit in the rear just past the half-way point and ended up in a gravel trap alongside the 4.048-mile road course. His official finishing position was 35th.

Phil Saville of Oak Brook, Ill. had to start next-to-last in the 39-car field in a fourth Andersen Racing entry sponsored by New York Jewelers of Chicago; NVG Residential and Mac

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Andersen Racing Road America results

Page 2 of 6

Marketing & Advertising Corp. due to an electrical problem right before qualifying. He had been 12th overall during practice on Friday. Despite being hit more than once during the race, Saville brought the car home in one piece in 21st place.

Donoso drove Brad Jaeger's car. Jaeger, of Cincinnati, was on hand at Road America but his return to the cockpit is pending the results of an MRI scan expected next week. He suffered head injuries at the Star Mazda race in Montreal June 24.

Ron White and Ryan Justice wiggled by Donoso on lap one but he stayed in fourth place until those two made contact with five laps down, vaulting Donoso back to second. Logan Gomez got by Donoso on lap seven to push him to third, and he stayed in that position until White got back around him on lap 16 to push him back to fourth. Gomez went off course with 17 laps down while running second, which allowed Donoso to regain third. Then White passed polesitter Adrian Carrio, who had led the whole way, on the last lap to earn the victory and make the top three White, Carrio and Donoso.

Bonilla started seventh in his No. 9, which carried a decal in memory of his grandmother, Maria Altigracia Bonilla, who died a week and a half ago. He ran in ninth or tenth at the start and then moved into eighth on lap five after a yellow when Matt Varsha crashed. He moved up to sixth on the next lap when White and Justice tangled, and then he passed Lacroix on lap eight to enter the top five.

He stayed in fifth place for the next three laps until lap 11, which had all sorts of fireworks. That's when Scuncio got hit in the rear and Michael Potekhen and Micky Gilbert tangled behind him, resulting in a heated exchange between the latter pair. Lacroix got by Bonilla at that point to push him to sixth, but he got fifth back on the white-flag lap when Lacroix and Justice tangled and fourth a minute later when Gomez went off on an exit road.

Scuncio had a much better drive than his finishing order suggested. He started 11th and was in tenth with five laps down and eighth on the next circuit. He passed White for seventh place on lap eight, but then he got hit in the rear on lap 11 and his day was done. Earlier he escaped a very close call when a wrecker almost hit his car in its haste to retrieve an errant competitor.

Saville had worked his way up to 28th by lap five and he was in 25th by lap nine. At that

Andersen Racing Road America results

Page 3 of 6

point he had a nice battle with Ken Losch and Thomas Wieringa, and by lap 13 he had advanced 18 positions and was in 20th place. He got by Jay Poscente for 19th on the next lap and then he had a nice battle with Jon Brownson, who went on to finish 18th. Saville's run was hindered when he was hit at least twice in the late stages of the race, eventually taking the checkered flag in 21st place.

The Road America race is scheduled to be broadcast on SPEED at 3 p.m. Eastern time on Aug. 26. The next race is Sept. 3 at Mosport International Raceway in Bowmanville, Ontario. After that it's off to Road Atlanta Sept. 30. The season finale will be held Oct. 21 at Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca in Monterey, Calif.

For more information see andersenracingteam.com and starmazda.com.

Driver quotes follow:

Pablo Donoso: "The car was good. I had a couple of mistakes during the race, but I'm happy to be back with Andersen Racing. They are the best team in Star Mazda for sure; they are all very professional.

"I've been driving USAC Silver Crown cars this year, and it was nice to be back in Star Mazda for this race. It isn't that big of an adjustment going from one series to the other. As a driver you have to do the same things no matter what you drive; you push the throttle and try to pass the other drivers and go fast. You need time in the car and I just had this weekend, but I think qualifying second and getting on the podium is a good result.

"Kevin Lacroix touched me in the right rear about two laps from the end. That's why my tire had that mark on it.

"We needed a little more downforce today, but I'm happy."

Gerardo Bonilla: "My car was pretty stable, but it just wasn't the rocketship we had yesterday when we were second and broke the track record.

"Maybe I could have measured the grip level better today. I'm still learning about these cars.

"I had lots of close calls. The start wasn't too bad; I think I lost one position, but then I settled in to a nice position and had a good rhythm going. Then Varsha spun, and I was fourth or fifth at that point. Then on the restart I was ahead of Kevin Lacroix and he bogged down com-

Andersen Racing Road America results

Page 4 of 6

ing out of Turn Three. He blocks a lot and he made sure I couldn't pass him, and I had to go over the rumble strips. I think I was sixth then.

"Then there was another caution and it got really crazy. Towards the end I was going into Turn Eight. Lacroix turned in on Ryan Justice in the Carousel and spun him out. I got two tires on the grass but I missed them, and I was fourth at that point. Today everyone else did the messing up for me. I just had to drive clean and I got fourth."

Phil Saville: "It was difficult to pass back there. The car was wonderful though; the team did an amazing job. The last thing I wanted to do was bring back a crashed race car, and I didn't.

"I got hit in the side with about eight minutes to go and drove into the gravel at the top of Turn Six. That cost me about five spots.

"Then I got hit on the last lap from behind. I kept going, but that cost me two spots.

"My radio became unplugged at the helmet so I lost radio communication. That cost me time on the restarts because I didn't know when we were going to go green.

"All in all it was fun but nerve-wracking. If I hadn't had the problem before qualifying and I'd been able to start further up, I would have been fine. But I had trouble getting around some of the drivers in the back of the field today."

Ramiro Scuncio: "My car was good and we were doing well; I think we were in sixth or seventh place, but then I was hit in the left rear by Micky Gilbert in Turn One. I spun and went into the gravel trap and touched the tire wall.

"Gilbert and Michael Potekhen made contact behind me. I saw them shouting at each other but nobody shouted at me. I just went and sat on the tire wall and waited for the wrecker."

The stats from Road America:

Test session one (Thursday, 8:40 a.m. to 9:10 a.m., dry):

1. Mike Potekhen, 2:05.544 (116.077 mph)
5. Gerardo Bonilla, 2:06.483 (115.215 mph)
6. Pablo Donoso, 2:06.514 (115.187 mph)
18. Ramiro Scuncio, 2:08.879 (113.074 mph)
30. Phil Saville, 2:11.640 (110.702 mph)

Test session two (Thursday, 12:35 p.m. to 1 p.m., light rain):

1. Ryan Justice, 2:08.498 (113.409 mph)

Andersen Racing Road America results

Page 5 of 6

- 3. Pablo Donoso, 2:09.091 (112.888 mph)
- 13. Phil Saville, 2:12.197 (110.235 mph)
- 17. Gerardo Bonilla, 2:13.223 (109.387 mph)
- 28. Ramiro Scuncio, 2:18.140 (105.493 mph)

Test session three (Thursday, 3:30 p.m. to 3:55 p.m., light rain):

- 1. Rob Bunker, 2:13.768 (108.941 mph)
- 2. Gerardo Bonilla, 2:17.533 (105.959 mph)
- 13. Pablo Donoso, 2:25.851 (99.916 mph)
- 19. Phil Saville, 2:31.562 (96.151 mph)
- 23. Ramiro Scuncio, 2:39.258 (91.504 mph)

Thursday Combined Times

- 1. Mike Potekhen, 2:05.544 (116.077 mph)
- 5. Gerardo Bonilla, 2:06.483 (115.215 mph)
- 6. Pablo Donoso, 2:06.514 (115.187 mph)
- 18. Ramiro Scuncio, 2:08.879 (113.074 mph)
- 30. Phil Saville, 2:11.640 (110.702 mph)

Official Practice Session One (Friday, 8 a.m. to 8:45 a.m, dry.)

- 1. Adrian Carrio, 2:04.967 (116.613 mph)
- 2. Pablo Donoso, 2:05.160 (116.433 mph)
- 7. Gerardo Bonilla, 2:05.368 (116.240 mph)
- 11. Phil Saville, 2:05.717 (115.917 mph)
- 13. Ramiro Scuncio, 2:06.009 (115.649 mph)

Official Practice Session Two (Friday, 2:50 p.m. to 3:35 p.m., dry)

- 1. Ron White, 2:04.388 (117.156 mph, new record)
- 2. Gerardo Bonilla, 2:04.567 (116.988 mph; also under the previous mark of 2:04.621 held by Daniel DiLeo.)
- 10. Ramiro Scuncio, 2:05.811 (115.831 mph)
- 11. Pablo Donoso, 2:05.898 (115.751 mph)
- 17. Phil Saville, 2:06.605 (115.104 mph)

Friday Combined Times

- 1. Ron White, 2:04.388 (117.156 mph)
- 2. Gerardo Bonilla, 2:04.567 (116.988 mph)
- 5. Pablo Donoso, 2:05.160 (116.433 mph)
- 12. Phil Saville, 2:05.717, (115.917 mph)
- 13. Ramiro Scuncio, 2:05.811 (115.831 mph)

Andersen Racing Road America results

Page 6 of 6

Qualifying (Saturday, 8 a.m. to 8:45 a.m; dry, overcast)

1. Adrian Carrio, 2:03.849 (117.666 mph, new track record)
2. Pablo Donoso, 2:04.127 (117.402 mph)
7. Gerardo Bonilla, 2:04.790 (116.779 mph)
11. Ramiro Scuncio, 2:05.482 (116.135 mph)
38. Phil Saville, no time.

Race (Saturday, 1:05 p.m. to 1:50 p.m., dry but windy)

1. Ron White
3. Pablo Donoso, fastest lap of race with a 2:05.302 (116.301 mph)
4. Gerardo Bonilla
21. Phil Saville
35. Ramiro Scuncio

Overall Points After Road America

1. Adrian Carrio, 330
6. Gerardo Bonilla, 238
11. Ken Losch and Ramiro Scuncio, 187
27. Brad Jaeger and Jon Branam, 89

Expert Points After Road America

1. Gerardo Bonilla, 156.