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Gonzalez and Brooks Test Andersen Racing Star Mazda Cars at VIR

FAIRFIELD, N.J., Nov. 24 — Andersen Racing gave Juliana Gonzalez the chance to test a Star Mazda car last week, and the young lady from Mexico City made the most of it.

Despite very cold temperatures at VIRginia International Raceway (VIR) and the fact that she hasn't been behind the wheel of a race car in several months, Gonzalez posted the fastest lap of any driver the team has tested recently at the road course in Alton, Va.

Gonzalez competed in six of 12 Hankook Tires F2000 Championship Series races with Andersen Racing in 2007. Her best finish was second at Road Atlanta in May.

With the successful test behind her, Gonzalez hopes to advance to the team's next step in its ladder system, the Star Mazda Championship presented by Goodyear, in 2008 if her funding permits.

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"The two-day Star Mazda test at VIR went fantastic," Gonzalez said. "The first day was a little difficult because I had to get used to the brakes and get up to speed. On the second day I felt really confident in the car and I did better. I wasn't expecting to have the best lap time because I had five months without being in a car. I'm very happy with the results, and I'm looking forward to the 2008 season."

"As a team, we were extremely impressed with Juliana's speed and quick adaptation to the car," said team co-owner Dan Andersen. "She should win races for us next season. The considerable promise she demonstrated last year while driving for our F2000 team is still there, and she's improving all the time."

Gonzalez's test occurred on the facility's north course over a two-day period. Joining her on the final day was Joshua Brooks, who has raced with the Bertil Roos program in the past. Michelle Kish, Andersen Racing's Star Mazda team manager, said Brooks made steady progress throughout the day.

"Andersen Racing's cars and crew are incredible," said Brooks, 22, of Raleigh, N.C. "The attention to details by both the engineers and mechanics plays a huge role on performance. Their advanced computer system gives you large amounts of data to review, and improves the drivers' skills and knowledge. This helped me learn areas that I needed to work on, and I made progress every time I went out. I definitely want to be with Andersen Racing this coming season. It was a great learning experience and the most fun I have ever had. They are by far the best team I have ever encountered."

The team's next test is scheduled for its new 1-mile test track, Andersen RacePark in Palmetto, Fla., on Dec. 3-5, right before the Performance Racing Industry trade show in Orlando, Fla. Dec. 6-8, about 100 miles east. The public is invited to Andersen RacePark's open house from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturday, Dec. 8.

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The team also plans to participate in a two-day test at Sebring International Raceway in Sebring, Fla. on Jan. 7-8.

Limited openings are available for both tests. Drivers who wish more information may contact Andersen at (973) 287-5600 or dandersen@andersenracingteam.com.

In addition to the team's Web site at andersenracingteam.com, other info is available at andersenracepark.com.