

Julia Landauer Joins JWR for Unique Testing Program

TRAFFORD, PA (January 1, 2008) – Off-season testing programs often involve new drivers but John Walko Racing recently concluded a day of testing involving a different element than is typically found in these scenarios. Karting sensation Julia Landauer was behind the wheel with JWR Data Acquisition Specialist Kate Gundlach engineering the effort, marking a debut of sorts for both women.

Both Landauer and Gundlach were under the watchful eye of team owner John Walko. While the novelty of the situation could have been a distraction to some, Walko had no such concerns about this duo.

“I was impressed with how they both did. Obviously with Kate being on board with the team for some time now, we were 100% confident that she would be well prepared and focused on our goals for the day. We’ve known Julia as well through her karting exploits and anticipated that she would quickly adapt to the program.”

After nearly two hundred miles of mistake-free driving in less than ideal conditions, Walko’s faith in both driver and engineer proved to be well-founded.

“Julia was the professional racer we expected. She was very mature both on and off the track, made very smart decisions and provided excellent feedback. It was just a really solid drive. She will do very well as she moves up the ladder.”

“Kate also was impressive. The transition from collecting and analyzing data to making the decisions based on the collected data and feedback from the driver was seamless. The two worked together incredibly well. Given the opportunity to develop as a team; they have a lot of potential.

While this was her first full fledged test in the Star Mazda cars, Landauer brings a long history of racing and winning to the team. The sixteen year-old scored numerous wins and championships in karting on the regional and national level. In 2006 Julia reeled off twelve wins, nine poles and a championship in the Skip Barber Eastern Regional Series in her first full season in cars.

A Formula BMW scholarship advanced Julia to the next level in 2007 where she scored three top ten finishes as the youngest driver in the series and the youngest female ever to compete in Formula BMW. According to Gundlach, the experience paid dividends instantly as the young driver was poised and very professional despite less than ideal conditions that saw track temps peak around forty degrees.

“Julia was very easy to work with, she communicated well and her feedback was plentiful and on the mark. She responded to everything we did. We threw a lot of changes at her to see how she would react and what her feedback would be. She did very well despite the fact that we had little time to sit down and analyze video or discuss data. She was able to key in on one aspect, provide feedback and then jump right back in the car.”

For Gundlach, the move to the role of engineer is something she has been working toward since joining JWR. While the job is different from her familiar data acquisition position, requiring more advance work and pre-planning, it is exactly where she wants to be.

“For me, engineering the car requires a lot of preparation in advance. I love to experiment and try different things, take a scientific approach where you have to be thinking multiple steps ahead. It is really a different experience

compared to the data acquisition role which is maybe a bit more reactionary. But I am really looking forward to the challenge. To be able to work alongside Steve (Dreizler) and Eric (Langbein) in that role is something that I am really looking forward to.”

The duo of Landauer and Gundlach will return to the track to continue their testing program soon after the conclusion of the Star Mazda Winter Series.

Drivers interested in joining two-time Winter Series race winner Mike Hill for the final round at Phoenix International Raceway should contact the team as soon as possible. Also, the testing schedule is shaping up for drivers interested in joining JWR for off-season testing.

For more information about the final Winter Series event and/or winter testing, contact John Walko Racing as soon as possible at info@johnwalkoracing.com . Additional team information can be found at www.johnwalkoracing.com.

Team Quotes:

Julia Landauer:

"My first test with John Walko Racing went phenomenally well. On the first day we made my seat, and I became oriented with the car. Day two in the car was such an amazing learning experience, from learning the results of changing the car, to continually pushing myself on-track. John, Kate and Caleb were a great help for the whole two days, answering any questions, and informing me of how I could improve. The atmosphere was friendly, yet down to business, a perfect combination. It was a very successful test, and I look forward to more in the future!"

Kate Gundlach – Engineer:

“The entire day went incredibly fast – we had to push to get through our complete program and routine. It would have been nice to have another day even but that wasn’t an option with the time constraints and weather. Julia made it all very easy though as she never made a mistake and focused on the task at hand. It was a good test and we both learned a lot on reality. We communicated very well and made significant progress in a short time, I am looking forward to seeing what we can accomplish as a team.”