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## Three Andersen Racing Drivers Finish in Top Five In 2008 Star Mazda Season Opener at Sebring

SEBRING, Fla., March 14 — Andersen Racing's sponsor, Allied Building Products Corp., had plenty to cheer about in the Star Mazda season opener Friday at Sebring International Raceway. Two of the Palmetto, Fla.-based team's drivers, Charles Hall and Peter Dempsey, finished second and third, respectively, while another Andersen driver, Tom Gladdis, placed fifth and set the fastest lap of the race.

After the series' first standing start ever, Hall beat polesitter Joel Miller into Turn 1 on the first lap with his Pardoes Solicitors No. 77. Miller got the Sheffield, England driver back in Turn 2, however, and they ran that way for the rest of the 45-minute, 20-lap race that amazingly included no full-course yellows.

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Dempsey had an incredible start, vaulting from sixth to third. The 21-year-old from Ashbourne, County Meath, Ireland stayed in that position the rest of the way too with his No. 21, applying plenty of pressure to Hall at the end.

Gladdis, of Gibraltar, started ninth but came on like gangbusters in the second half of the race with his Marrache & Co. No. 5.

He ran in eighth place for the first half of the event, but then started picking off cars from that point forward. He got by Kristy Kester and John Zartarian in two consecutive laps, and then took care of Nick Hays a couple of laps later to nail down fifth.

Gladdis set the fastest lap of the race, a 2:00.935 for an average speed of 110.142 miles per hour, on lap 17 as he tried to catch Alex Ardoin and hold off Hays. Gladdis's fastest lap was only 0.484 of a second slower than the time Miller set to win the pole on Thursday.

Juliana Gonzalez of Mexico City, Mexico was involved in an incident with the fifth Andersen Racing driver in the race, Yannick Hofman, very early in the event, but she persevered to finish 15th in her first Star Mazda race ever. Hofman's Jig-A-Loo No. 00 sustained more damage in the Turn 17 tussle, but the driver from Rosemere, Quebec was still able to run quickly at the end. The two laps he lost couldn't be made up, however, and he finished 25th in the final rundown.

All five of Andersen Racing's drivers in this series, which is presented by Goodyear, are rookies. Hall is regrouping from being a victim of a traffic accident caused by a drunk driver at the beginning of 2005 that forced him to learn to walk again, let alone race again. His great performances this weekend were a signal to all, including himself, that he's back.

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The race supported Saturday's Mobil 1 Twelve Hours of Sebring American Le Mans Series season opener. It is scheduled to be shown on SPEED at 3 p.m. Eastern on Sunday, March 30.

The Star Mazda set will have a slight pause in their schedule now because the second race of the year isn't until May 17 at Miller Motorsports Park in Tooele, Utah. The series will then appear at Watkins Glen International in Watkins Glen, N.Y. on June 7, which replaces the cancelled Houston date. The complete schedule and other information are posted on the series' Web site at [starmazda.com](http://starmazda.com). The team's Web site is at [andersenracingteam.com](http://andersenracingteam.com).

Hofman was unavailable for comment due to his travel schedule, but the rest of the Andersen Racing drivers' post-race quotes follow:

**Charles Hall:** "Andersen Racing gave me a great car. My left leg was shaking on the clutch at the start because I got a little excited, but I was able to lead into Turn 1 on the first lap. That filled me with confidence, and I tried to take Turn 2 flat. I almost went off, and that's how Joel got me back in [Turn] 2. Then I settled down.

"I got pressure from behind by Peter [Dempsey] too. There were a few places where Peter was getting too close, but to start second and finish second is a great result for my first real race back.

"This weekend started off as a one-off deal, but we signed last night for a full season with Andersen Racing. I have to thank everyone on the team."

**Peter Dempsey:** "I was pushing Charles [Hall] at the end. I was banking on him to make a few mistakes at the end, but it didn't happen. It's been a tough week, but I appreciate all the help of the Andersen Racing crew to make my first race in America go so well. I think finishing third got things off to a great start. I also want to thank Motorsport Ireland; Mazda of Ireland; Tommy Byrne, and also Doug Prendeville, who helped me with a set of tires.

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“We changed the set-up drastically before the race, but my car handled brilliantly. It was really good on cold tires.

“I had a perfect standing start. That was really fun.

“I was able to keep up with Charles, but Joel edged away from us.

“Around the halfway point I ran off in the grass in Turn 10 and in Turn 13. I’m just getting race fit. Those were really my only two mistakes and they were minor, so I’m happy.”

**Tom Gladdis:** “My car was excellent, especially in the fast corners. To begin with I found it hard to overtake anybody, but once I started passing people it got easier. I just didn’t have enough time; the laps ran out.

“Nick Haye and I ran close down the backstretch, but it wasn’t that bad. At the end my car was getting loose and I nearly spun twice; my tires were wearing out.

“One guy spun in front of me in Turn 16, but I missed him.

“I was hoping for a top-10 finish in my first Star Mazda race and I got a top-five, so I think that’s excellent for my first race. Now I have to try to keep consistent and get more good finishes. I want to thank everyone on the Andersen Racing team.”

**Juliana Gonzalez:** “I didn’t have a good start and some people passed me, but in the end I had my rhythm again and I was recovering spots.

“At the entry of Turn 17, Yannick [Hofman] hit me three times. He messed up the nose of his car, but my car was OK.

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“It was an exciting race. The track was very hot, and my car was oversteering in the middle of the race.

“Overall we had a pretty good race for the first one. The team is happy, I’m happy, and that’s what counts. From here, I feel we can do well the rest of the year.”

### *About Allied Building Products Corp.:*

Allied Building Products Corp., headquartered in East Rutherford, N.J., is one of the largest roofing and siding distributors in the United States. Founded in 1950 with five employees and two trucks, today it is a \$1.8 billion building material distribution company with over 3,500 employees, more than 200 branches in 30 states, well over one million square feet of office and warehouse space, and an inventory of approximately 85,000 products, from residential roofing and siding to doors, windows, waterproofing, manufactured stone, interior products and commercial roofing systems. For more information see [alliedbuilding.com](http://alliedbuilding.com).

### *About Andersen Racing:*

Andersen Racing strives to provide the best and most comprehensive training possible for future open-wheel superstars while giving its marketing partners media exposure and hospitality opportunities at some of the most prestigious events in North America. It provides a unique, three-step program utilizing multiple entries in three different series: the F2000 Championship (webcast), Star Mazda (televised on SPEED) and the Indy Pro Series (televised on ESPN2). In 2008 it will field multiple entries in 42 races in 19 states and provinces at some of the best facilities on the continent, including the famed Indianapolis Motor Speedway.

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Andersen Racing's principals, brother Dan and John Andersen, have extensive experience in series administration as well as team management. They've worked with many of today's top open-wheel stars, including several Indy 500 winners.

Andersen Racing is sponsored by Allied Building Products Corp. It is the official development team of Rahal Letterman Racing, which competes in the IndyCar Series and the American Le Mans Series. In addition, its F2000 team is also the official factory team of Van Diemen. The team is headquartered at Andersen RacePark, an 18-acre facility in Palmetto, Fla. that includes a 1-mile test track. For more information see [andersenracingteam.com](http://andersenracingteam.com) and [andersenracepark.com](http://andersenracepark.com).