



Hacquard To Learn From Watkins Experience

Vancouver, British Columbia (June 09, 2008) – Taylor Hacquard will chalk Round 3 of the 2008 Star Mazda Championship Presented by Goodyear, held on Saturday 7th June, down to experience as the Vancouver rookie left New York's Watkins Glen International Circuit with an 18th place finish. While he missed out on a third-straight top-ten score, Taylor dropped just one place in the Driver Standings sitting seventh overall now with a seven-week break in the schedule before the next event, a double-header round, in Portland, Oregon.

Having posted ninth and sixth place finishes in his opening two starts behind the wheel of the #15 Wolfe Auto Group/World Speed Motorsports entry, Hacquard looked like maintaining his impressive form when the Star Mazda field hit the 3.4-mile track last Wednesday for practice. Seventh fastest in the morning, the 18-year-old then improved to round out the day sixth quickest on the timesheets.

The following day's test session ultimately set the tone for the rest of the weekend as a large crash in the morning, courtesy of an encounter with a wayward ground hog, put paid to the Canadian teenager's hopes of building up further momentum. He was forced to miss the afternoon's test session losing valuable track time in the process. A supreme effort from the World Speed Motorsports team put Taylor back on-track for Friday's qualifying outing but a 16th place grid-slot proved both car and driver were still attempting to overcome the side-effects from Thursday's impact and loss of running.

A quick getaway at the start of Saturday's 20-lap race allowed Hacquard the chance to fight for a spot in the top-ten but he would see his chance disappear when attempting to remove his visor strip which had been caked in oil thanks to the spray from one of his competitors ahead. With his vision all but gone, as he ripped off his tear-off strip it inadvertently flipped open his visor. A subsequent spin, although skillfully controlled to avoid contact with the guard-rail, in dealing with the visor situation dumped Taylor down the order ending his hopes of a top-ten finish. While he mounted a recovery drive, and in doing so earned himself valuable championship points with an 18th place finish, Watkins Glen proved to be a learning experience for the soon-to-be high school graduate. England's Charles Hall claimed the win followed home at the flag by Joel Miller and pole-sitter Alex Ardoin.

"Well the weekend wasn't the best which was a shame as we were initially quite quick in Wednesday's test sessions," reflected Hacquard. "It took me a bit of time just to get back into the swing of things after Thursday's crash, we had lost an afternoon's running so it was a bit of a combination of me and the car not quite being there in qualifying on Friday. The team did a great job to get me back on track though, the guys worked some long hours but it's a shame we didn't get more out of the session.

"I actually made a pretty decent start on Saturday and was challenging for the top-ten until I had my tear-off and visor problems. After that I was probably a bit guilty of over-driving and I was pretty frustrated at myself. Overall I have to look at taking some positives from the weekend. I only dropped a spot in the standings and I've learned how important it is to get focused again after a big crash. I can't wait to get back out again in the car now!"

SPEED will broadcast Round 3 from Watkins Glen International as a tape-delay on Saturday 21st June at 11am ET – www.speedtv.com / Portland International Raceway in Oregon hosts Rounds 4 and 5 of the 2008 Star Mazda Championship Presented by Goodyear next month, Friday 25th – Sunday 27th July 2008 – www.starmazda.com

2008 Top-8 Star Mazda Drivers – R3/12: 1st Charles Hall (124pts), 2nd Joel Miller (122pts), 3rd Peter Dempsey (105pts), 4th Alex Ardoin (98pts), 5th Billy Goshen (86pts), 6th Mike Hill (79pts), 7th TAYLOR HACQUARD (77pts), 8th John Edwards (75pts)

ENDS – www.taylorhacquard.com

Photo Credit: 'Vancouver's Taylor Hacquard – driver of the #15 Wolfe Auto Group Star Mazda' – Taylor Hacquard Motorsports

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