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GAINING GROUND

Ardoin scores the first podium finish for Mundill in Watkins Glen

(Watkins Glen, New York) June 14, 2008 – Arriving at the Glen for Round Three of the Star Mazda Championship Mundill quickly showed that they were able to come to grips with a new track and the changing weather conditions. Alex Ardoin had no problems adjusting to the unfamiliar “big momentum” track. Caio Lara, the youngest driver on the Mundill team enjoyed the “very fast, historical American track.”

During Wednesday's IMSA test session a bearing in the rear case of Ardoin's transmission let go. Lara also experienced a mechanical issue during that first test session as the center hub of his clutch failed. Although disappointed, Lara remained optimistic as he knew that this was something he “could not control.”

Friday's official practice consisted of several red flag's, which threw off many teams and drivers, especially Mundill's Rick Rosin. Due to budget restrictions Rosin needed to utilize all of his track time to develop what other drivers had been able to learn in the previous practice days. However Rosin's shortage of track time only proved that he is quick to learn, quick on the track, and even quicker on restarts.

Ardoin progressed all week long and in qualifying, Alex burned up the track. “Nailing every corner” he earned Mundill pole position with a fast time of 1:46.223.

Mundill started the Watkins Glen Race with three cars in the top ten. Team co-owner Dave Mundy, was “really excited, and proud of the team.” Lara earned himself seventh position with a time of 1:47.555, though he felt as though he “could have done better”. Scott Rettich, a seasoned racer, with numerous karting championships, and Spec Racer Ford win's under his belt gained momentum leading into qualifying. Rettich qualified tenth with a 1:48.040, but felt that if he was given more laps would have certainly been able to improve his time. Not far off the pace, Rosin posted a 1:48.729 to start in 12th position.

Launching off from pole, Ardoin got an “amazing start.” Able to hold his ground through turn one, and the esses, he lost his lead to Charles Hall on the back straight. Lara lost one position off the start but by the fifth lap had gained it back. During the first restart Ardoin lost another position, dropping back to third. Rosin with his lightening speed reactions gained positions on every restart, making his way up to seventh, then dropping back down to tenth. It became apparent that Rettich was suffering from engine issues dropping to 15th.

On lap 12, Lara was up to fifth position when a stone became lodged between his brake rotor and rim. Going into turn six he was unable to brake, causing him to “lose control” and hit the barriers. Lara managed to have the fifth fastest time of a 1:47.145 during the race. The hit was “hard on me, I am just sad because this is so unlikely to happen” said Lara.

Ardoin’s podium finish was more than deserved. Mundill’s drivers are developing more rapidly than expected. This season expect the unexpected for Mundill.

Catch Mundill in full action at Watkins Glen on SPEED Channel, airing June 21st at 11:00 AM Eastern.