



Hacquard Scores Career Best Fifth in Portland

Portland, Oregon (July 26, 2008) – The 2008 Star Mazda Championship Presented by Goodyear roared back into life Saturday, 26th July, at Portland International Raceway (PIR) with Round 4 the opening leg of a double-header race weekend. After a seven week break between races Vancouver's Taylor Hacquard was glad to be back and he duly delivered a career-best fifth place finish on his return – his third top-ten in four starts this season.

Taylor's result followed a challenging morning qualifying session for the 18-year-old. No stranger to the 1.967-mile PIR circuit, effectively his 'home' track, Hacquard found himself battling a loose #15 Wolfe Auto Group/World Speed Motorsports entry throughout the 30-minute outing. While keen to add a second top-ten qualifying slot to his rookie portfolio, the B.C. teen came up just short posting the 12th fastest time of the session with a flying lap of 1m10.380s (101.125mph) to pole-winner Tom Gladdis' 1m08.936s (103.244mph).

Brilliant sunshine greeted the field for the afternoon's 50-minute race but Round 4 would get off to a sluggish start with the first six laps run under a full-course caution due to a first turn incident on the opening lap. When racing resumed Taylor climbed a spot to close in on the top-ten and it wasn't long before he found himself gaining further ground.

The race wasn't without drama at the front with leader Peter Dempsey dropping out at the half-way stage due to fuel pick-up issues but all the while Hacquard kept his nose clean and steadily climbed through the ranks as others found trouble. He claimed the checkered on lap 34 in fifth while pole-sitter Tom Gladdis scored his maiden win, joined on the podium by Alex Ardoin and Billy Goshen.

"We ended up with a decent result but I know there's more to come from both myself and the car," stated Hacquard candidly. "I wasn't really contending for passes out on-track but managed to pick up places regardless which obviously helped my finishing position. Our set-up wasn't quite where we needed it to be and conditions had changed this afternoon, it was a lot hotter than this morning and the track had a lot less grip.

"That said I'm happy to get my best result yet, not least after the last round at Watkins Glen. I'd have liked to have had a bit more speed to contend in the race and stay with the leaders but I worked with what I had and scored some decent points. We're improving each time we're out so I'm hopeful that tomorrow will bring further progress and an even better race!"

Round 5 of the 2008 Star Mazda Championship Presented by Goodyear gets underway in Portland tomorrow, Sunday 27th July, at 2pm PT – www.starmazda.com / www.mazdagrandprix.com

SPEED will broadcast Rounds 4 and 5 from Portland International Raceway as a tape-delay on Saturday 9th August starting at Noon ET – www.speedtv.com

ENDS – www.taylorhacquard.com

Photo Credit: 'Vancouver's Taylor Hacquard claimed a career best fifth in Round 4 in Portland' – Taylor Hacquard Motorsports

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