



Hacquard Set for Canadian Race Debut

Vancouver, Canada (August 12, 2008) – This weekend's Grand Prix of Trois-Rivieres will see Vancouver's Taylor Hacquard make his first open-wheel racing start in Canada and the 18-year-old couldn't be happier to head to the famed Quebec street circuit to experience the excitement of competing on home soil, Friday 15th – Sunday 17th August.

A stellar race package is on the cards with Taylor participating in Round 7 of the 2008 Star Mazda Championship Presented by Goodyear, where he currently sits ninth overall and top Canadian entrant, while the weekend also boasts race starts for the NASCAR Canadian Tire Series, the Atlantic Championship, the Mazda MX-5 Cup Series and the Canadian Touring Car Championship.

Hacquard heads to Trois-Rivieres off the back of a mainly positive sixth round outing last weekend, 8th-9th August, at Wisconsin's Road America circuit. The Canadian stand-out, competing for World Speed Motorsports in the #15 Wolfe Auto Group entry, belied his rookie status to run competitively throughout practice, comfortably posting top-six lap times in the final two sessions before qualifying.

Eager to improve upon his best start position to-date, a seventh place grid slot in Round 2 at Miller Motorsports Park, Taylor's hopes were dashed when qualifying wrapped up early due to a red-flag incident. While he only enjoyed a couple of tours of the 4.08-mile circuit on fresh tires before the session ended prematurely, the teenage rookie's pace was still good enough to merit a top-ten start, Taylor lapping in 2m07.281s (114.493mph) to set the ninth fastest time. Pole position went to two-time race winner John Edwards courtesy of a 2m05.313s (116.291mph) hot lap.

Despite a good start, Round 6 effectively ended for Hacquard by the first turn. Battling for position with Rusty Mitchell, the two cars touched through the corner with both ending up beached in the gravel trap, Taylor's car losing its front-wing in the process. The incident, and trip back to the pits for a new nose, dropped Taylor a couple of laps down on the leaders - the rest of his race effectively serving as a test outing before being classified with a 22nd place finish. Ireland's Peter Dempsey took the win ahead of John Edwards and new championship leader, England's Charles Hall.

"Road America proved we have the speed to run at the front," stated Hacquard. "We just have to be able to put it all together and keep up some consistency. It was a good weekend in terms of our pace and performance. It was just a bit disappointing that we didn't get to show our true potential in qualifying or the race.

"Moving on, I'm pretty excited to be heading to Trois-Rivieres this weekend. I've heard it's a great street circuit with an amazing atmosphere so I'm looking forward to getting there and racing. It's my first time racing an open-wheel car in Canada and my first ever street race so there's a lot to look forward to. I used to do well on the parking-lot, street-style tracks we ran in karting so I'm hoping that I can transfer those performances into my Canadian Star Mazda debut!"

Qualifying for Round 7 of the 2008 Star Mazda Championship Presented by Goodyear gets underway on Saturday 16th August at 10am EST with the 45-minute race held the following day, Sunday 17th August starting at 11:15am EST – www.starmazda.com / www.gp3r.com

SPEED will broadcast Round 7 from Trois-Rivieres as a tape-delay on Saturday 30th August starting at Noon ET – www.speedtv.com

2008 Top-10 Star Mazda Drivers – R6/12: 1st Charles Hall (211pts), 2nd Alex Ardoin (202pts), 3rd Joel Miller (200pts), 4th Peter Dempsey (184pts), 5th Tom Gladdis (182pts), 6th Billy Goshen (179pts), 7th John Edwards (177pts), 8th Kristy Kester (160pts), 9th **TAYLOR HACQUARD (153pts)**, 10th Ernesto Otero (148pts)

ENDS – www.taylorhacquard.com

Photo Credit: 'Hacquard races the #15 Wolfe Auto Group/World Speed Motorsports entry' – Star Mazda Championship

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