



10101 U.S. Highway 41
Palmetto, Fla. 34221
Tel.: (941) 723-3900
Fax: (941) 723-3992
info@andersenracingteam.com
andersenracingteam.com
andersenracepark.com

For more information:
Linda Mansfield, Restart Communications
Cell: (317) 201-0729
E-mail: LindaKMansfield@cs.com

All Four Andersen Racing Cars Are Contenders in Rough Trip Friday at Road Atlanta

BRASELTON, Ga., Oct. 3 — Andersen Racing's Peter Dempsey led four laps, set the fastest lap of the race and was in contention for the victory until the very end of Friday's Star Mazda race at Road Atlanta after winning the pole with a new track record on Thursday.

Two other Andersen Racing cars driven by Charles Hall and Valle Makela ran in the top five during Friday's 25-lap race, with Makela recording the second-fastest lap of the race and Hall the fourth-fastest lap. At the checkered, however, it was Tom Gladdis who posted the best results for the Palmetto, Fla.-based team in Round 11 of the series, which is presented by Goodyear. Gladdis, of the Isle of Wight and Gibraltar, was forced to battle back from the rear of the 22-car field after a penalty, but he rebounded to finish eighth with his Marrache & Co. No. 5.

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The results certainly were not fitting for the drive posted by Dempsey, who unofficially slipped from first to third in the point standings going into the season finale Oct. 18 at Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca in Monterey, Calif. Each driver's best 11 of 12 races count for the championship. Series officials said that based on total points, Joel Miller, John Edwards, Dempsey and Alex Ardoin are unofficially still in contention. With a drop, unofficially it's between Edwards, Miller, Dempsey and Gladdis.

Dempsey, of Ashbourne, County Meath, Ireland, didn't have a good start initially, but regrouped to go from fourth to second on the first lap behind Miller. He patiently cut down Miller's 1.326-second advantage on lap two to just 0.352 of a second on lap 11. At that point a full-course yellow came out for Hall, who crashed hard in Turn 1 while running sixth after running over oil dumped by Makela's car, which was experiencing engine problems. Luckily Hall was not hurt.

Dempsey, whose car is sponsored by Quayside.ie, LotusWorks, Center Jewellers.ie, Motorsport Ireland, Allied Interior Products and Trojan Complete IT Solutions, made a beautiful pass by Miller for the lead on lap 19 after the race restarted on lap 18. The pace was almost immediately slowed for another full-course caution on lap 20, however, as Makela's engine expired on lap 19 while he was running fifth.

Dempsey had Miller; the eventual winner, Edwards, and Ardoin breathing down his neck on the restart on lap 22. Edwards and Ardoin got around him to push him from first to third on lap 23, with Miller fourth.

Dempsey repassed Ardoin for second on lap 24 of the 25-lap contest, but then an off-track excursion and contact, including being hit in the rear by Ardoin, dropped Dempsey to 15th.

Edwards took the victory over Miller and Rick Rosin. Dempsey took the checkered flag in 14th place, but was later penalized and placed 19th.

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Gladdis started seventh and ran in that position from lap two through lap nine until he was penalized and dropped to 19th. He kept his head down and started back up through the field, getting as high as eighth before it was over.

Makela and Hall, who had a great battle for fifth in the early going, ended up 21st and 22nd, respectively. Makela, of Laitila, Finland, is sponsored by Amitec and Allied Building Products. Hall, of Sheffield, England, represents Blimpie, AccentBanking.com, Pardoes Solicitors and Allied Interior Products.

The race supported Saturday's Petit Le Mans Powered by the Totally New Mazda 6, one of the premier events in the American Le Mans Series.

This Sunday at 2 p.m. the Sept. 13 race at New Jersey Motorsports Park is slated to air on SPEED, while Dempsey's victory at the same track on Sept. 14 is scheduled to be broadcast at 1 p.m. on Sunday, Oct. 12 on the same network. Today's Road Atlanta race is scheduled to air at 12:30 p.m. on Saturday, Oct. 18 on SPEED. The season finale Oct. 18 at Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca in Monterey, Calif., is scheduled to air on SPEED at 1:30 p.m. on Saturday, Nov. 8. All times are Eastern and subject to change; please see speedtv.com for updates.

Andersen Racing is sponsored by Allied Building Products Corp. In addition to winning the Star Mazda team championship in 2008, it also won the F2000 Championship this year and finished sixth in the Firestone Indy Lights series. It is the official development team of Rahal Letterman Racing. For more information see andersenracingteam.com, andersenracepark.com and starmazda.com.

Post-race quotes follow:

Tom Gladdis: "I got a bad start. The track was very greasy to begin with.

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“The car was OK, but I had a drive-through penalty for blocking. That put me back to 19th, and I came back up through the field for eighth at the end.”

Peter Dempsey: “I had a bad start at the beginning, but I got back up to second. There was a full-course yellow and I passed Joel on the restart in Turn 10. Then another yellow came out. Joel got a run on me in Turn 1. I tried getting around him on the outside, but John Edwards came past both of us. I tried to follow John through Turn 3, and Joel and I touched and we went across the grass.

“That put me back to third. Two laps later I repassed Alex Ardoin to retake second in Turn 10. Then coming over the crest of the hill I got hit on the right side in the rear. From then on I was a passenger. I spun off in the grass but kept it off the wall. I took the checkered flag, although I never saw it.

“We had a car that could win. I passed Joel for the lead. It just didn’t happen today.”

Valle Makela: "The engine blew up at the end, and my radio was out for the whole race.

“Before that happened, I had good speed. I had a good battle with Charles. I passed him in Turn 7. But then the engine blew.”

Charles Hall: "I crashed in Turn 1 on Valle’s oil. Valle had gotten past me going down the frontstretch, and he had a little gap on me. I closed in a little bit, and then all of a sudden there was a lot of oil on my visor. I turned into Turn 1 and it was as if my wings fell off. I backed in hard.

“I had gotten a good start, and had moved up to fifth or sixth. It’s disappointing.”

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Results of Round 11 (Friday, 4:30 p.m. to 5:15 p.m.):

1. John Edwards
8. Tom Gladdis
19. Peter Dempsey*
21. Valle Makela
22. Charles Hall

* Took the checkered flag in 14th place, but was moved to 19th post-race for avoidable contact. Set the fastest lap of the race with a time of 1:19.242.

Unofficial Top 10 in Points:

1. Joel Miller, 389
2. John Edwards, 378
3. Peter Dempsey, 374
4. Alex Ardoin, 347
5. Charles Hall, 342
6. Tom Gladdis, 334
7. Billy Goshen, 313
8. Taylor Hacquard, 278
9. Kristy Kester, 277
10. Ciao Lara, 267.

Unofficial Top 10 in Points with 1 Drop:

1. John Edwards, 378
2. Joel Miller, 369
3. Peter Dempsey, 357
4. Tom Gladdis, 334
5. Alex Ardoin, 331
6. Charles Hall, 326
7. Billy Goshen, 294
8. Taylor Hacquard, 261
9. Kristy Kester, 257
10. Ciao Lara, 254

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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.

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 Firestone Indy Lights (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.

Andersen Racing has already won the team championship for 2008 for both the F2000 Championship Series and the Star Mazda Championship presented by Goodyear. It finished sixth in the 2008 Firestone Indy Lights team standings.

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. 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 and andersenracepark.com.