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BILLY GOSHEN PUTS IN A STRONG PERFORMANCE TO FINISH THE 2008 SEASON

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The final race for the 2008 Star Mazda Series was held at the very challenging 2.238 mile Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca, which was also the final event for the America Le Mans Series. Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca, one of the most revered circuits in the world, is located on the beautiful Monterey peninsula with the Pacific Ocean visible from the top of the famous "Corkscrew." With the weather report calling for clear skies through the weekend, 2008 may be the first time Star Mazda has run every race in the season under sunny skies.

Thursday, October 16 was a test day with the first practice starting at 11:05 A.M. With this being another new track for the Goshen Motorsports Team, Billy put in the 12th fastest lap with a time of 1:23.990. The afternoon session started at 3:55 P.M. and Billy improved on his morning time by putting in the 9th fastest lap at 1:23.296.

The team arrived at the track Friday morning to sunny blue skies, with the first practice starting at 8:00 A.M. Three laps into the session the CV unit on the #82 car broke ending Goshen's practice before the tires had time to warm up. This would turn out to be very unfortunate as most of the fast times used for determining the qualifying groups were recorded in the morning session. Mechanics, Ed Graca, Kimball Williams and John Calandra, had the car repaired in time for the 1:05 P.M. session. Billy was able to put in a time of 1:23.590 missing the cutoff for the second (fast) qualifying group by only .2 seconds.

Saturday morning, the Star Mazda teams arrived at the track to a definite change in the weather. As the first group sat on the grid waiting for the 9:00 A.M. qualifying to start, the fog continued to settle in with visibility dropping to less than 100 feet. Billy was able to record the second fastest time in the group at 1:23.049. The second group went out at 9:25 and five minutes into the session the fog lifted. With unlimited visibility, the times began dropping dramatically, relegating Goshen to the 15th position for the start of the race.

The final race of the 2008 Star Mazda season was to begin at 12:15 P.M. As the field followed the pace car around the track on the parade lap, one of the cars at the rear of the field went off the track causing several additional laps behind the pace car while the car was removed. The decision was made by the Star Mazda officials to go with a rolling start, a first for the 2008 season. Crew chief, Richie Hearn, would have preferred a standing start giving Billy a chance to move up before the first turn.

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With the single file start, Goshen was only able to hold his position coming out of Turn 1, but within a few laps he had moved into 14th. As the race continued under green, Billy calculated where he could best make his moves and the difficult Turn 2 “Andretti Hairpin” became one of his two favorites. With Billy nose to tail with the three cars in front of him, he made an inside pass to overtake two of the cars in Turn 2. His next outstanding pass was in the famous “corkscrew.” As they came over the top of the hill at the end of the “Rahal Straight”, Goshen dove down the “corkscrew” passing another car putting him in 9th place. Shortly thereafter, the first and only full course yellow came out, which is exactly what the team had been hoping for to close up the field. A few laps after the race went green, Billy again used the “

Andretti Hairpin” to his advantage. Goshen faked an outside move, as the driver moved up to block, Billy then dove underneath to take over 8th place. Nearing the end of the race, Billy made another gutsy pass going down the “corkscrew” to take over 7th place.

For the last race of the year, Billy Goshen put on a good show for team sponsors, Gatorz Precision Eye Wear, Global Tracking Communications, Otto Environmental Systems, their clients and many friends and family that were in attendance. With his 7th place finish, Goshen locked up 7th in the Points Championship, missing 6th by only 10 points. After the race, Billy thanked team engineer Andy Tagg for giving him a car that really handled well. Billy Goshen was quoted as saying “It was a difficult week, but I am very happy with the race. This was a great year and I am very pleased with how the season went and my results. I far exceeded the expectations I had coming into the year. I can’t wait for next year to begin and compete for the Championship. I have to thank the entire team and my sponsors for making this an outstanding year for me.”

The year 2008 was a learning experience for Goshen Motorsports and its young driver. Being one of the youngest and least experienced drivers in the 2008 Star Mazda Series, it was an outstanding year for the rookie. Billy Goshen recorded one podium finish (3rd), 3 top fives and 9 top tens in the 12 race Star Mazda Series. Goshen Motorsports team owner, Bill Goshen, would like to thank all of the team sponsors, Quality 1st Concrete, Global Tracking Communications, Otto Environmental Systems Baker Commodities Inc., Geneva Companies, Merv Griffin Entertainment, Gatorz Precision Eye Wear, Passion 4 Life, Pasternak Baum Co., John Kuhni Sons and our many friends for their support and making 2008 a very successful year.

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