



Rookie Hacquard Seals Top-Ten Title Finish

Vancouver, Canada (October 20, 2008) – A fuel pump failure robbed Vancouver’s Taylor Hacquard of a fourth consecutive top-ten finish as Round 12 of the 2008 Star Mazda Championship Presented by Goodyear, the season finale, played out at the Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca on Saturday, 18th October.

Hacquard’s retirement, just two laps shy of the checkered flag, marred what had otherwise been a stellar weekend for the 18-year-old rookie, capped by his second straight top-ten qualifying performance and second highest of the year. Despite this, and after dropped scores were taken into consideration, Taylor’s maiden open-wheel racing season exceeded expectations as the Canadian standout finished tenth overall in the Driver Standings from a field of 34 point scoring racers.

Taylor arrived at the 2.238-mile Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca for Thursday’s promoter test sessions buoyed by his eighth top-ten finish two weeks earlier at Road Atlanta. His pace was again evident throughout both Thursday and Friday’s track time as Hacquard remained a fixture at the sharp end of the timesheets heading into Saturday morning’s final qualifying session.

Piloting the #15 Wolfe Auto Group/World Speed Motorsports entry for the last time this season, Taylor maintained his momentum to secure his second consecutive top-ten grid slot, claiming eighth overall with a lap time of 1m21.594s while the pole went to England’s Richard Kent.

A fuel pick-up problem presented itself early in Round 12 on Saturday afternoon. Taylor held his own when the 26-lap race started, quickly gaining a spot and looking good to close in on the top-six when events beyond his control started to hinder his progress at the undulating track. Forced to retire for just the second time this season, Hacquard’s race ended prematurely with the fuel pump failure but his solid form throughout the year guaranteed he’d finish in the top-ten in the points – a significant accomplishment for the rookie who graduated to the Star Mazda Championship directly from karting.

The race was won by Richard Kent, the English rookie followed home at the flag by America’s John Edwards and Ireland’s Peter Dempsey. Edwards’ second place was enough to secure the former Atlantic Championship racer the 2008 Star Mazda Championship.

“I’d have liked to have finished the season deeper in the top-ten but it’s been a great rookie year for me,” stated Hacquard post-race. “I have to be happy with my performance at Mazda Raceway as I proved to be consistent throughout practice and qualifying. I was running well in the race but it wasn’t to be. That’s the way racing goes sometimes!

“I’ve had some ups and downs this year but I’ve learned so much and both met and exceeded some of the goals I had at the start of the season so overall it’s been a pretty successful campaign. I have to thank the whole World Speed team for their efforts and everyone else who’s helped me along the way this year. I’m already looking ahead to the 2009 season and building on all I’ve learned.”

2008 Top-10 Star Mazda Drivers – R12/12: 1st John Edwards (422pts) - CHAMPION, 2nd Joel Miller (406pts), 3rd Peter Dempsey (398pts), 4th Alex Ardoin (365pts), 5th Charles Hall (342pts), 6th Tom Gladdis (334pts), 7th Billy Goshen (324pts), 8th Ciao Lara (286pts), 9th Kristy Kester (284pts), **10th TAYLOR HACQUARD (281pts) – www.starmazda.com**

ENDS – www.taylorhacquard.com

Photo Credit: ‘Hacquard races the #15 Wolfe Auto Group/World Speed Motorsports entry’ – Eric McCombs

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