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Andersen Racing's Daly Finishes Third Saturday And His Three Teammates Are in the Top Eight In First Half of Star Mazda Doubleheader At Autobahn Chicago

JOLIET, Ill., July 25 — Andersen Racing's Conor Daly finished third in Saturday's Round 8 of the Star Mazda championship presented by Goodyear, but he got the loudest cheers during the podium celebration at the Autobahn Country Club thanks to about 40 enthusiastic fans on hand to offer their support to the rising star from Noblesville, Ind.

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Wearing special T-shirts for the occasion prepared by Tim Megenbier of Megwear, many of the 17-year-old driver's supporters were friends from his high school, the Heritage Christian Academy, or from an Indianapolis-based car club in which he belongs.

Driving the No. 22 sponsored by Indeck, Cytomax, College Network and Merchant Services, the MAZDASPEED Motorsports driver development pilot started and finished third in the 23-car race that was part of the Harrah's Grand Prix presented by Mazda. It was covered live on HDnet, as will the second half of the doubleheader Sunday during coverage from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. Eastern time.

Another Andersen Racing driver, Richard Kent of Clifton Reynes, England, started sixth but finished right behind Daly in fourth place with his No. 33 sponsored by Traka and Allied Interior Products. He passed Andersen Racing's Joel Miller as well as Anders Krohn on the first lap to nail down fourth place, and followed Daly the rest of the way in the 17-lap race on the 3.56-mile, 21-turn road course.

Andersen Racing's Brazilian Star Mazda driver, Denis Navarro of Sao Paulo, improved the most positions of the quartet. He started 13th and ran in seventh place for most of the race, with just Krohn between he and his three teammates. Despite a next-to-last-lap bobble that dropped him two positions he ended up in seventh at the end anyway with his No. 21, which advertises Navarro Medicines Distribution and Allied Interior Products, because Krohn dropped back on the last lap and Miller received a post-race penalty.

Miller's No. 2, which is sponsored by Fader Higher Productions, eSoles Custom Footbeds, Doug Mockett & Co., Burns Truck & Trailer and Brazos Bend Energy Services, started fourth and was originally scored in fourth place but then dropped to eighth after the Hesperia, Calif.-based driver was penalized 30 seconds for allegedly jumping the initial start.

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Polesitter Peter Dempsey led every lap to win the race over Adam Christodoulou, Daly, Kent and Rick Rosin. Dempsey had a 2.871-second lead over Christodoulou that was wiped out when a full-course yellow waved with 13 laps down after Jorge Goncalvez spun and stopped in Turn 18. No one could catch Dempsey on the restart with 15 laps down, but Daly made several valiant attempts to pass a wiggling Christodoulou on lap 16 before time ran out.

Only the top two finishers ran laps that were faster than those posted by the Andersen Racing drivers. Daly, Miller, Kent and Navarro set the third-, fourth-, fifth- and sixth-fastest laps of the race, respectively.

The second half of the doubleheader will start at 1 p.m. local time Sunday. Kent will start third, Miller fourth, Daly sixth and Navarro 14th in that one.

All four Andersen Racing Star Mazda cars are sporting the logo of Best Friends Animal Society as a salute to that not-for-profit animal welfare group, which celebrates its 25th anniversary this month. The donated signage draws attention to Best Friends' quarter century of service to the welfare of abused, abandoned animals at its 3,700-acre sanctuary in southwestern Utah, and for its on-going campaign work across the United States. Best Friends' No More Homeless Pets program includes national campaigns in key American cities to address the problems of saving pit bull dogs, speaking out against puppy mills, addressing the problem of cat overpopulation and striving that one day there will be no more homeless pets. More information on the organization can be obtained at bestfriends.org.

After this doubleheader the series travels to the Trois-Rivieres street course in Trois-Rivieres, Quebec for a race on Aug. 16. The rest of the schedule can be found at starmazda.com.

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Allied Building Products Corp. and Lafarge North America sponsor Andersen Racing, the development team of Rahal Letterman Racing. The team's Web site is located at andersenracingteam.com. Information on the team's 1-mile road course test track at its headquarters in Palmetto, Fla. can be found online at andersenracepark.com.

Post-race quotes follow:

Conor Daly: "The car was good. It had a bit of understeer at the beginning of the race, but I made an adjustment with my front bar and tried to deal with it. On the restart I got to take a couple runs on Adam, but I couldn't get him. It was a podium finish and the car is in one piece for qualifying tonight and tomorrow's race, so it was good.

Richard Kent: "I got a fabulous start. I got Anders [Krohn] by Turn 1 of the first lap, and I passed Joel [Miller] going into Turns 13 and 14. Once you get into a rhythm here, it's hard to make a pass. Conor made no mistakes, and you can't pass a driver here when he makes no mistakes.

"The track was OK even with the different tire compounds being used by the different series. No complaints on that."

Denis Navarro: "The race was good. In the middle of the race my car was very good; that's when it was the best. I could keep my position. Most of the race I ran in seventh, with just Anders Krohn between me and my teammates. Then on the last lap I made a mistake and lost two positions. I didn't spin or anything; I just got off the line a bit and some guys passed me. But my lap times were really good, so I'm happy."

Joel Miller: "It was very follow-the-leader; you can't pass at this place.

"At the beginning of the race the car felt good mechanically right off the bat, but then the gear cut stopped. I had to lift every time I shifted, which slowed me down and was my main issue. The car had a little understeer too, but that's to be expected. The lift with the shift was the main issue. We'll work on that before qualifying tonight."

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Saturday's stats:

Qualifying for Round 8 (8 a.m. to 8:45 a.m.):

1. Peter Dempsey, 2:12.465, 96.750 mph, lap 8 of 9*
3. Conor Daly, 2:12.837, 96.479 mph, lap 9 of 9
4. Joel Miller, 2:13.020, 96.346 mph, lap 9 of 9
6. Richard Kent, 2:13.389, 96.080 mph, lap 8 of 9
13. Denis Navarro, 2:24.301, 88.814 mph, lap 2 of 5

* : Automatic new track record

Round 8 (1:05 p.m. to 1:45 p.m.):

1. Peter Dempsey
3. Conor Daly
4. Richard Kent
7. Denis Navarro
8. Joel Miller

Qualifying for Round 9 (6:35 p.m. to 7:20 p.m.):

1. Peter Dempsey, 2:10.546, 98.172 mph, lap 8 of 8**
3. Richard Kent, 2:11.932, 97.141 mph, lap 9 of 9
4. Joel Miller, 2:12.003, 97.089 mph, lap 9 of 10
6. Conor Daly, 2:12.324, 96.853 mph, lap 7 of 9
14. Denis Navarro, 2:13.420, 96.058 mph, lap 7 of 10

** : New track record

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.

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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, four-step program utilizing multiple entries in four different platforms: karting, Formula BMW Americas, Star Mazda and Firestone Indy Lights (televised on VERSUS). In 2008 it fielded multiple entries in 42 races in 18 states and provinces at some of the best facilities on the continent, including the famed Indianapolis Motor Speedway.

Andersen Racing won the team championship for 2008 for both the F2000 Championship Series presented by Hoosier Racing Tire and the Star Mazda Championship presented by Goodyear. Two of its drivers finished first and second in the F2000 driver point standings, while another was sixth. Three of its Star Mazda drivers placed third, fifth and sixth in that series' driver standings. RLR/Andersen Racing finished sixth in the 2008 Firestone Indy Lights team standings, while one of its drivers placed fifth in that series' driver point standings.

Andersen Racing's principals, brothers 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. and Lafarge North America. It is the official development team of Rahal Letterman Racing. The team is headquartered at Andersen RacePark, an 18-acre facility in Palmetto, Fla. that includes a 1-mile road course test track. For more information see andersenracingteam.com and andersenracepark.com.