



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

Three Andersen Racing Drivers Are in Top Seven Saturday In Star Mazda Season Finale

MONTEREY, Calif., Oct. 10 — Three of Andersen Racing's drivers finished in the top seven Saturday at Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca in the season finale of the Star Mazda Championship presented by Goodyear, as Conor Daly was fourth, Richard Kent finished sixth and Denis Navarro placed seventh. The fourth, Joel Miller, was as high as third but ended up 17th at the end of the 45-minute, 33-lap contest.

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Daly's results were impressive, as the MADZASPEED Motorsports driver from Noblesville, Ind., started 15th in the 23-car field after problems in qualifying. He passed four cars on the first lap to move into 11th, and was in the top 10 by lap three. He passed Jorge Goncalvez for ninth on lap 10 to settle behind one of his teammates, Kent. They exchanged places on lap 14 with about 20 minutes gone, three laps after Daly set the second-fastest lap of the race on lap 11 with a time of 1:21.634 for the 2.238-mile road course and an average speed of 98.694 miles per hour.

By lap 25 Daly was seventh, having passed Giancarlo Vilarinho. He passed David Ostella for sixth on lap 26, which put him right behind another teammate, Miller, who was running fifth at the time. Unfortunately Miller and the fourth-place driver, Caio Lara, had contact in Turn 2 while working lap 32, which dropped Miller from fifth to 17th. It also allowed Daly to move from sixth to fourth at the checkered one lap later. Daly's No. 22 is sponsored by Indeck, Cytomax, College Network and Merchant Services.

Kent, of Clifton Reynes, England, and Navarro, of Sao Paulo, Brazil, finished sixth and seventh for the second time in less than a month, as they also finished in those positions at Road Atlanta on Sept. 25. Kent, who won the pole and the race here last year, drives the No. 33 sponsored by Traka and Allied Interior Products. Navarro Medicines Distribution is the primary sponsor of Navarro's No. 21.

If their drives were relatively uneventful, the same couldn't be said for Miller's experience here Saturday. The driver from Hesperia, Calif. led the team in qualifying when he earned the fourth starting spot with his No. 2, which is sponsored by Fader Higher Productions, eSoles Custom Footbeds, Doug Mockett & Co., Burns Truck & Trailer and Brazos Bend Energy Services.

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Unfortunately Miller and Peter Dempsey, who had to finish seventh or better to win the championship, were involved in a racing incident coming out of Turn 6 on the first lap. Miller lost two positions but was able to keep going. Dempsey spun and had to restart last. He raced back up to 12th before he was involved in another incident and retired with 14 laps complete.

Miller moved from sixth to fifth on lap four by passing Ostella, and he took fourth with nine laps complete when he got by Anders Krohn. He ran in fourth from that point until lap 16, when Lara dropped from third to sixth.

Miller remained in third, chasing leader Alex Ardoin and the second-place car of Adam Christodoulou, for much of the race. Christodoulou and Ardoin exchanged places around lap 22 and shortly thereafter Miller and Ardoin tangled in Turn 2, which dropped Miller back to fifth again.

A top-five finish wasn't in the cards for Miller on Saturday, however, as a similar incident with Lara at the very end of the race dropped him from fifth to 17th at the checkered.

Christodoulou won the race over Ardoin and Krohn, and with it he also won the drivers' championship over Dempsey and Daly. Miller finished fifth in the point standings while Kent was seventh and Navarro was 11th for the year, unofficially.

Andersen Racing finished second to JDC Motorsports in the unofficial team standings.

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. Information on its karting program can be found at andersenkarting.com.

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The series' Web site is at starmazda.com.

Post-race quotes follow:

Conor Daly: “In the first half of qualifying I caught a curb in Turn 6 so we came in and changed a pushrod. Then the differential broke when I went back out, so I didn’t get many laps and I had to start 15th.

“The car was really good in the race. We passed a lot of guys. I just tried to keep moving up and not get caught up in anything. I knew where I had to finish to keep ahead of Joel to keep third in the championship, but then Joel and Caio Lara got together near the end. Lots of crazy things went on in the race.

“But my car was good throughout the race, even at the end. We set the second-fastest lap of the race, and I think on the last lap we were faster than the top three guys, so my car was really good.

“I learned so much this year. I learned something every time I was on the track. There were a few things here and there that I wish I could have done better, but I learned a lot and that’s what I was here to do. I think it was a good year.”

Richard Kent: “It was kind of a frustrating weekend. We started out by being fastest for the day on Thursday, but then we went backwards.

“We had a few problems in qualifying; the engine overheated and we had a problem with our tires.

“Then in the race we just didn’t catch traffic at the right points. It was a contact-free race for us, so that was good. But it was just an average race, and it gave us an average end to the year.”

Denis Navarro: “It was a good race; I stayed on the track and didn’t spin, but it could have been better.

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"I liked the track; it was different than all of the others we raced on this year.

"Overall I hoped the year would be better, but I had to learn all the tracks and the car and I didn't have enough money to test, so considering that it was OK. I learned a lot."

Joel Miller: "It was a crazy race for me.

"First, unfortunately I was involved in a racing incident with Peter Dempsey on the first lap that caused him to spin and drop to the rear. It happened coming out of Turn 6 on the run to the Corkscrew. It was an aggressive move on my part for sure, but I think he could have been more defensive since he was running for the championship. I definitely had a fast car, and I had the inside going into the turn. He spun but I kept going. He's not happy with me but it was definitely just a racing incident, for sure. We were both racing as hard as we could.

"That set me back to sixth. I got by Anders Krohn in Turn 2 and David Ostella in Turn 3 and then Caio Lara in the Corkscrew. My car was fast, and I was able to use the whole track. At one point they told me on the radio that I was a second faster than the field. I knew I had a big gap to make up but I was able to catch the leaders in five laps, so that tells you how strong my car was.

"Then, while I was in third, Ardoin turned straight into me in Turn 2. I collected it, but I went back to fifth again.

"Then at the end exactly the same thing happened again in Turn 2 with Caio Lara. That time it broke my right-front toe linkage and ended my race.

"As far as next year goes, I'm hoping to maybe get an opportunity to test a Firestone Indy Lights car with Andersen Racing. My goal for next year is to find the budget to do Firestone Indy Lights. I feel I've proven that I'm ready."

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The stats:

Test Session 1 (Thursday, 11:15 a.m. to 12 p.m.):

1. Adam Christodoulou, 1:21.183, 99.242 mph
2. Joel Miller, 1:21.689, 98.628 mph
3. Conor Daly, 1:22.205, 98.009 mph
6. Richard Kent, 1:22.318, 97.874 mph
14. Denis Navarro, 1:23.419, 96.582 mph

Test Session 2 (Thursday, 3:45 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.):

1. Richard Kent, 1:20.706, 99.829 mph
8. Conor Daly, 1:21.843, 98.442 mph
10. Joel Miller, 1:22.008, 98.244 mph
16. Denis Navarro, 1:22.920, 97.164 mph

Practice 1 (Friday, 8 a.m. to 8:40 a.m.):

1. Peter Dempsey, 1:20.362, 100.256 mph
2. Conor Daly, 1:20.620, 99.935 mph
4. Joel Miller, 1:21.359, 99.028 mph
7. Richard Kent, 1:21.782, 98.516 mph
11. Denis Navarro, 1:22.189, 98.028 mph

Practice 2 (Friday, 1:10 p.m. to 1:50 p.m.):

1. Peter Dempsey, 1:20.851, 99.650 mph
2. Conor Daly, 1:21.124, 99.315 mph
4. Joel Miller, 1:21.500, 98.856 mph
7. Richard Kent, 1:21.638, 98.689 mph
13. Denis Navarro, 1:22.027, 98.221 mph

Qualifying (Saturday, 8 a.m. to 8:45 a.m.):

1. Peter Dempsey, 1:20.109, 100.573 mph, lap 15 of 15.
4. Joel Miller, 1:20.412, 100.194 mph, lap 9 of 15.
9. Richard Kent, 1:21.080, 99.369 mph, lap 10 of 14.
13. Denis Navarro, 1:21.403, 98.974 mph, lap 8 of 8.
15. Conor Daly, 1:21.767, 98.534 mph, lap 8 of 10.

Round 13 (12:50 p.m. to 1:35 p.m.):

1. Adam Christodoulou
4. Conor Daly
6. Richard Kent
7. Denis Navarro
17. Joel Miller

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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 the Lafarge Group:

The Lafarge Group is the world leader in building materials, with top-ranking positions in all of its businesses: cement, aggregates and concrete, and gypsum. With 83,000 employees in 78 countries, the Group posted sales of 19.0 billion Euros in 2008.

Lafarge North America Inc. ("Lafarge North America" or "Lafarge"), a Lafarge Group company, is the largest diversified supplier of construction materials in the United States and Canada.

In 2009 and for the fifth year in a row, the Lafarge Group was listed in the "Global 100 Most Sustainable Corporations in the World." With the world's leading building materials research facility, the Lafarge Group places innovation at the heart of its priorities, working for sustainable construction and architectural creativity.

For more information about Lafarge North America, go to lafarge-na.com or contact Louise Muth, director of external communications, at (703) 480-3707.

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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 program utilizing multiple entries in three different platforms: karting, 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, andersenracepark.com and andersenkarting.com.