



## **Tough Close to Star Mazda Season at Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca for Rusty Mitchell**

*Strong second half of Star Mazda Championship to close out 2009*

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(Monterey, CA) 12 October, 2009—With some seat time under his belts and previous track experience behind his visor, Rusty Mitchell's 2009 Star Mazda presented by Goodyear season could be described as a break-out year. Driving the No. 66 Motorola Mazda, Mitchell not only scored well in his first-ever oval races with runs to fourth and sixth, he also became a threat for race wins on the road courses as well as he scored a debut race podium with his run to a close second-place at Trois Rivières.

So with a season that kept picking up momentum, Mitchell was naturally looking forward to closing out the year with another strong result as Star Mazda presented by Goodyear finished the 2009 season at Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca. The race, held in conjunction with the American Le Mans season-ending event on the Monterey peninsula, was one that Mitchell was particularly looking forward to as the iconic corkscrew course marks as one of the Texan's favorites.

But the race weekend didn't play out as he had hoped, as an off-course excursion in practice put Mitchell's Motorola Mazda behind the curve for the weekend. The incident, which happened at turn 6 on the 2.3-mile circuit, saw the Mitchell Motorsports crew hard at work to repair the damage to the right front of the Mazda. Quick work with the repairs saw Mitchell back on track, but the loss of time on the circuit meant that the Texan was placed in the slower qualifying group to set the grid for the sprint race.

Further hampering the effort was the limited laps that the qualifying session ran, making it tough for Mitchell to set a quick time as multiple incidents kept his running to a minimum, although he was still able to post a speed that locked him on to the seventh row for the race. Looking to score yet another top ten or better, Mitchell's 2009 season ended prematurely after contact with a championship contender saw his race weekend go from "challenging" to "over" in the blink of an eye.

"This was a tough weekend," said Mitchell. "The guys worked really hard to fix the car, and we were hoping to make up some spots in the race because we didn't get many laps in qualifying so we had to start pretty deep in the pack. The car had some speed and we likely would have been able to move up more, but someone took that opportunity away from us. I got dive-bombed and we had contact. I know he was trying to be aggressive, but it was a shame how it played out. Just not a great weekend for us, which was too bad because the second half of the year we had been really strong so we were hoping to close out on a high point."

Additional information: <http://rustymitchellracing.wordpress.com/>  
[www.starmazda.com](http://www.starmazda.com)  
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