



## Podium Hopes Slip Away for Ostella

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Maple, Ontario, Canada

After two days of testing that ran like clockwork and led to the best road course qualifying position of his career, David Ostella had his hands full shortly after the green flag dropped on the inaugural race of the 2010 Star Mazda Championship on Friday. Thoughts of the podium quickly vanished, and the eighteen-year-old from Maple, Ontario, Canada, was left fighting to salvage what he could from the first race of his sophomore season.

“I had an amazing start and I nosed into third before I had to slow up at turn one,” he said of the opener from Sebring International Raceway. “I slotted into fifth, then got to third after one or two laps. I was good for the opening stage, then the car just went to oversteer really badly and nothing I did helped. I was on the radio and I made all the adjustments I could from the car, but it didn’t help much. I was just left to drive through it.”

The situation proved daunting, as Ostella fell backward one-by-one before settling into eighth. Things then worsened following a full-course caution when a spin dropped him well down the order in a 23-car field, but he wrestled his way forward in the second half, eventually taking the checker running P13.

“The race definitely wasn’t what I was looking for, but overall it was a good week,” Ostella said after taking some time to reflect on Sebring. “The team and I worked well through Tuesday and Wednesday to get into the 58’s, and I had my best qualifying effort in a race car on Thursday morning. We’ve got a lot of positives to take forward to St. Pete and we’re all back at square one on a new track for us.”

Race two this coming weekend will offer a more traditional two practice sessions before qualifying and a race, but at Sebring Ostella and his AIM Autosport team enjoyed two days and four sessions of practice. After breaking in a new engine and getting comfortable during the first session, Ostella approached the Star Mazda track record in the second session and was among a slew of cars to better it during session three Wednesday morning. His 1:59.2 posted as P7, and he went quicker still during final practice when a 1:58.9 had him primed for Thursday qualifying.

He was on pole early, and swapped spots among the top three before pitting for fresh rubber heading to the closing minutes. In the later stages of the session, Ostella sat P2 before once again taking pole with a 1:59-flat.

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With ten minutes remaining, others would better the time, yet Ostella was pleased with qualifying fifth, matching his best-ever result and establishing his best effort from a road course.

“It was a very good session and the team had everything together,” Ostella said Thursday night. “I knew I was fastest after posting my best time, but also realized I definitely needed to be in the 58's to stay there. My goal was to be fast and make sure I set up well for the race. I wanted to make sure I drove my best, and that was pretty close to it.”

The opening event at Sebring International Raceway was the first of thirteen on the 2010 Star Mazda Championship schedule. David was racing thanks to support from Global Precast Intercontinental, Alpinestars and RAW Integrated Ltd. For more information on the championship visit [starmazda.com](http://starmazda.com). For more information on David Ostella and his team, visit [davidostella.com](http://davidostella.com) and [aimautosport.com](http://aimautosport.com).