



Podiums For Goncalvez and Horto

For Immediate release:

Brownsburg, Indiana, March 29, 2010 – Jorge Goncalvez drove a flawless race at the Star Mazda Championship's first event of the season held at the famed Sebring 12 Hour course to score his first ever Star Mazda Championship podium finish.

Qualifying for the fast Venezuelan didn't go as planned and Goncalvez had to start 7th. Working his way through traffic and capitalizing on restarts, Jorge was all over eventual race winner Tristan Vautier, as he crossed the finish line only .175 of a second behind Vautier. Jorge made a run on Vautier with two laps to go but the Frenchman quickly shut the door on Jorge in turn 17. The last lap Goncalvez tried another run but was not close enough to make the pass and had to settle for second place.



Goncalvez on his way to a second place finish at Sebring

Coming home in a strong sixth place in his first ever Star Mazda race was Jorge's teammate Joao Horto. Horto qualified sixth and had some real exciting racing from the start. The third member of the team, Juan Piedrahita, was running a strong 11th, also in his first ever professional race. Juan ended up 19th after spinning to avoid contact with another car that went off the track but showed he had the speed throughout the event.

"This was a really exciting race and I thought I might have a heart attack at the end, exclaimed team owner Jim Exline, what a way to start the season"

St. Petersburg was a new event on the schedule and both Horto and Piedrahita have never raced on a street circuit while Goncalvez had raced last year at Trois Rivières. Having posted 3rd and 5th practice times with Jorge and 10th and 7th with Horto, we felt ready to challenge for the pole. During qualifying we encountered a brake issue with Goncalvez and our bid for the pole was over. Horto however had no issues and secured a front row starting spot with an excellent qualifying effort of 2nd. Piedrahita was in the first group and struggled slightly and qualified in 20th.

The race start was clean and everyone got through turn 1. Horto was having a good battle with Caio Lara letting Conor Daly slip away but once Horto got by Lara he settled down and set his sights on Daly. In the meantime Goncalvez was working his way through traffic and clipped his left front wing and had to pit for a new nose assembly thus putting him down a lap and his bid for another podium vanished. Piedrahita, however, was having a great race and worked his way through traffic and did an outstanding job to bring his car home in 11th, just missing his first top ten. Horto went on to a brilliant second place finish and was only bested in lap time by winner Daly.



Horto Second Place Podium - St. Petersburg Grand Prix

Team Apex Racing, USA was formed in 2004 and has been involved in grass roots racing since 1989. The team emerged as championship contenders in the 2005 Formula BMW USA series with Canadian rookie Robert Wickens and continued its winning heritage in 2007 with American superstar Alexander Rossi. Team sponsors include Wabash Capital Investments and Apex Performance x3 Cryogenics.

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