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## TEAM PELFREY WINS STAR MAZDA DEBUT IN FLORIDA

### De Phillippi led series newcomers to victory lane on the streets of St. Petersburg

CLEARWATER, FLA. (March 28, 2011) – Team Pelfrey enjoyed a perfect start to its 2011 season on Saturday (March 26), winning Round One of the *Star Mazda Championship presented by Goodyear* in its series debut on the streets of St. Petersburg, Fla. Reigning Rookie of the Year Connor De Phillippi avoided multiple incidents and overcame several hotly contested re-starts to win his second career series win in his debut with the Florida-based team. Fellow series standout Nick Andries was not as lucky, ending his race on lap one via a multi-car crash.

While most series newcomers would set conservative goals in its first-ever Star Mazda Championship event, that was not the case for Clearwater, Fla.-based Team Pelfrey. Racing in front of a hometown crowd, the squad and its talented driver duo had one goal in mind...challenge for the race win. That was readily apparent right from the get go, as De Phillippi placed his No. 11 Oakley/Justice Brothers/Hernan Capdevila/Team Pelfrey Mazda entry P2 on the timing monitors in the opening morning practice session. Andries kept the momentum going in the second and final afternoon practice run, posting the fifth best time in the No. 81 Indy 500 American Icon Team Pelfrey car.

When the Team Pelfrey cars rolled back on-course on Saturday morning for the lone qualifying run, the squad took another step towards achieving its goal on the streets of St. Petersburg. Both Andries and De Phillippi were in contention for the season-opening pole position throughout the session, with Andries actually leading the way until the final lap. In the end, Andries and De Phillippi qualified second and third respectively, just missing out on an all Team Pelfrey front-row by another racer's flying lap as the checkered flag waved.

Given their performances leading up to the traditional standing start for Round One, confidence was high under the team awning and in the cockpits when the lights went out to get the racing action underway on Saturday afternoon. While De Phillippi got away cleanly from the second row, Andries was not as fortunate, immediately becoming involved in a multi-car incident, ending his race before it had really begun.

On the ensuing lap five re-start De Phillippi got an excellent launch, passing for the lead in turn one. From that moment forward, the Californian never relinquished the top spot, despite constant pressure from second place and multiple additional restarts due to assorted incidents. De Phillippi in the end crossed the stripe two seconds ahead of his nearest competitor, giving Team Pelfrey a



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hometown win in its series debut. In doing so, the Florida squad made modern Star Mazda history by winning it's first-ever series race.

"I was amazed at how good a car Team Pelfrey gave me for the race," said De Phillippi. "It was absolutely consistent throughout and never faded at all. We were hoping for a podium finish and wanted to strike a balance between being aggressive and still bringing the car home in the points. I was able to keep out of trouble in the race, and it feels great to head into Round Two at Barber Motorsports Park in two weeks leading the championship."

"First off I want to thank all my family, friends and supporters for coming out to the race and the sponsors that stepped up for this weekend, Lindross Remodeling, Q Auto Injury Attorneys, Lauglen Electric, Tampa Bay Grand Prix and RKM builders," stated Andries. "I guess you could say is it was an emotional weekend. The lead-up to the event was exciting, then our pace in practice and especially qualifying was excellent. The race still was awesome for the team, but a huge let down for me. I was really happy to see Connor take the win, but knowing we had nearly identical cars, I felt we had a great chance of a win and a team 1-2."

"I couldn't be happier for the entire team," Team Pelfrey Team Manager Geoff Fickling. "Connor put together a superb drive in what was not an easy race to manage. I can't thank each and every member of the team enough for all of their hard work over the past couple months in building the team up to where we are now. Dale has assembled quite the group here and we are all so grateful to him for his support. It's somewhat of a relief that we can now finally reflect for a moment before our focus quickly shifts to Barber."

With continued support from Trademark Garage Floors, HP Spartacote, Lithionics Battery, GS 610 Brake Fluid, Justice Brothers, and Oakley, Team Pelfrey returns to action on April 10<sup>th</sup>, with Round Two of the *Star Mazda Championship presented by Goodyear* at Barber Motorsports Park in Alabama. De Phillip enters race two of the 11-race title fight leading the championship standings, while Team Pelfrey lies third in the team standings.

Additional information on Team Pelfrey can be obtained via the team website at [www.Team-Pelfrey.com](http://www.Team-Pelfrey.com) For direct contact, please contact Geoff Fickling at [gf@team-pelfrey.com](mailto:gf@team-pelfrey.com) or (727) 329-8860.

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#### **About Team Pelfrey:**

After a multi-year hiatus from motorsports competition, Team Pelfrey rejoins the professional open-wheel ranks in 2011. With the primary goal of helping develop and train new talent, the Florida-based squad will run a multi-car effort in the highly-regarded Star Mazda Championship presented by Goodyear, which is part of the Mazda Road to Indy ladder system. Building on Team Pelfrey's previous success in the IndyCar Series, which featured the likes of Danny Ongais, Memo Gidley, Bryan Tyler, Billy Boat, Robby Unser, Sarah Fisher and 1998 Indianapolis 500 race leader John Paul Jr. getting behind the wheel, Team Principal Dale Pelfrey has assembled a talented crew of personnel with a proven Star Mazda track record.

