

The logo for Gabby Chaves, featuring the name "Gabby Chaves" in a stylized, italicized font. "Gabby" is in red and "Chaves" is in white, both on a black background.

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Contact: Gabriel Chaves  
Prepared by: ProMedia Motorsports PR  
Additional Photos available upon request

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## **CHAVES ADDS TO STAR MAZDA CHAMPIONSHIP PODIUM TALLY AT BARBER MOTORSPORTS PARK**

### **2012 FIA Young Excellence Academy driver continued strong start to season with third place result in Round Three in Alabama**

MIAMI, FLA. (April 2, 2012) – Gabby Chaves has quickly established himself as one of the top drivers in the highly-competitive Star Mazda Championship presented by Goodyear, with the teenager adding another podium finish to his resume this past weekend (March 31-April 1) at Barber Motorsports Park. The JDC MotorSports star further showcased his ever-growing talent behind the wheel in the Alabama doubleheader, with a third in Round Three to capture a second podium finish in only his third career start, and adding a sixth place result in Round Four.

After an superb Star Mazda debut on the streets of St. Petersburg just over a week ago - earning a top-three result in the season-opener - Chaves was greatly looking forward to getting back into the cockpit of his No. 19 OMP/Red Line Oil/JDC MotorSports racing steed for a pair of races at the Barber Motorsports Park. Chaves, having previously tested at the undulating track via Spring Training, had high expectations entering the second event on the series calendar.

Chaves' chase for top honors in Alabama got off to a solid start, posting the second best time in the final practice run before qualifying.

Aware that starting positions often play a key ingredient in how one finishes at Barber, Chaves was focused on getting multiple mistake-free fast laps come qualifying on Friday. Mother Nature, however, decided to make her presence felt, initially delaying what would be a wet session. The 18 year-old overcame the change in conditions in fine fashion, challenging for the pole position. Among the top three throughout most of qualifying, Chaves in fact was poised to secure his inaugural series pole until encountering lapped traffic on the last sector of his last flying lap. The OMP driver as result dropped to the fifth position when the session concluded.

While frustrated with his end result in qualifying, Chaves was confident he could still work his way forward come race time.

When Chaves and the rest of the competitive Star Mazda field rolled back on-course for Round Three, clear and sunny skies greeted the racers. In what proved to be the decisive moment of the race, Chaves got a superb launch from the traditional F1-style standing start, vaulting into third place by the exit of turn one. The highly rated up-and-comer repeatedly looked for way past into second from that point forward, but in the end was never presented with a high percentage opportunity. The end result was a second visit to the post-race podium in only his third career Star Mazda start.

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Returning to action immediately following the IZOD IndyCar race, Chaves lined up in sixth for the second standing start of the weekend. In a repeat of the opening affair, he timed his launch to near perfection, immediately advancing up to fourth. Closing into the rear wing of the third place racer, his No 19 car appeared poised to pass for position. It was not to be however, as an electrical issue began draining power from Chaves' entry, causing him to fall down the order. Dropping as deep as 10th on the scoring charts, Chaves made the most of a late race restart to regain a few positions, crossing the stripe in an unrepresentative sixth.

"It was great to score another podium finish in race one," stated Chaves. "That being said, I'm actually somewhat disappointed in the final results from the weekend. I believe I had a car to challenge for the win in both races if not for some bad luck in qualifying and race two. JDC MotorSports has been great, and we will continue to work on finding even more speed. I'm now looking forward to making my oval debut at Lucas Oil Raceway in May."

Chaves now travels to Europe to continue his training at the FIA Institute Young Driver Excellence Academy, before resuming his quest for that inaugural Star Mazda Championship presented by Goodyear win on May 26, at Lucas Oil Raceway in Indianapolis. Prior to contesting the first of back-to-back oval races during the prestigious 'Night Before the 500' event, the teenager will take part in official series testing at the short oval on May 5.

Those interested in supporting Chaves' charge towards a career in the upper echelon of motorsports are encouraged to contact Chaves and/or his management team.

Additional information on Gabby Chaves can be obtained from his website @ [www.GabbyChaves.com](http://www.GabbyChaves.com) . For direct contact, please email [gabbyracing@yahoo.com](mailto:gabbyracing@yahoo.com)

Keep up to date via Twitter @ [GabbyChaves](https://twitter.com/GabbyChaves)

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#### **About Gabby Chaves:**

Widely considered one the premier up-and-coming drivers in the junior formula car ranks, Chaves has made a name for himself by winning races and challenging for championship titles. The American first got behind the wheel of a race car at the age of 13, winning a Skip Barber Racing Shoot-out scholarship. In his first full-season of competition, the former Easy Kart, Stars of Karting and Florida Winter Tour champion captured the Colombian Grand Prix Formula Renault 2000 title and finished as the series runner-up in the Skip Barber Eastern Regional Series. Building on this success, Chaves went undefeated in the 2006-07 Skip Barber Regional Southern Series, winning all 10 races. The teenager continued his winning ways one year later, extending his Skip Barber Racing victory streak to 17 consecutive victories, leading the Skip Barber National Series before making the switch to Formula BMW Pacific competition. Chaves returned to the top of the championship charts in 2009, winning the final Formula BMW Americas title with five wins and podium finishes in every race. In 2010, Chaves raced full-time in Europe, winning the Italian Formula 3 Championship Rookie of the Year award. The teenager made his GP3 Series debut in 2011, earning five top-10 finishes. This season, Chaves returns to North America, competing in the Mazda Road to Indy-backed Star Mazda Championship presented by Goodyear with multiple series champion JDC MotorSports as a Institute Young Driver Excellence Academy racer.