



For Immediate Release:

## Hawksworth Extends Series Lead with a Win and a Second for Team Pelfrey



LEEDS, ALA. (April 1, 2012) – Team Pelfrey and 21-year-old Englishman Jack Hawksworth (*LEFT*) today continued to place a stamp of authority on this year's Star Mazda Championship Presented by Goodyear by claiming a win and a second-place finish in front of an appreciative IZOD IndyCar Series crowd at Barber Motorsports Park.

Hawksworth laid down his marker on Friday by producing a scintillating lap in wet qualifying to win the PEAK Performance Pole Award. The youngster continued his dominance this morning, in dry, sunny conditions, as he led throughout the 21-lap race to claim his second win in a row. Hawksworth also set the fastest lap to secure pole position for this afternoon's fourth round of the championship.

Hawksworth again led from the start but soon was passed by Martin Scuncio. Hawksworth kept the pressure on his rival and again claimed the bonus point for fastest lap but had to settle for a runner-up placing.

Hawksworth has finished on the podium in all four races this year and, unofficially, now holds a commanding 29-point lead (equivalent to one race win), 115-86, over Round One St. Petersburg winner Connor De Phillippi. Team Pelfrey also leads the Team Championship by 119-108 over Juncos Racing.

Petri Suvanto slipped to sixth in the standings after finishing sixth this morning and seventh this afternoon (when he started third but lost four positions due to a missed gear-shift at the exit of Turn One), while Gustavo Menezes, in the third Team Pelfrey entry, finally overcame a string of misfortune to claim two solid finishes.

Menezes, who qualified 10<sup>th</sup> for Race One, rose steadily to seventh and closed rapidly on the five-car battle for second in the latter stages. The 17-year-old Californian posted another fine charge in Race Two, starting eighth before again working his way toward the front and passing Sage Karam for fourth following a restart with just two laps remaining.

The Star Mazda Championship now takes a brief hiatus before returning to action at the hectic 0.686-mile Lucas Oil Raceway in Indianapolis (Ind.) for the traditional "Night Before the 500" on Saturday, May 26.

### WHAT THEY SAID:

Jack Hawksworth (#82 Team Pelfrey/TORGOEN Swiss Watches/EXA Networks), finished first in Race One and second in Race Two – "It's been a good couple of days. I started from pole in the first race and managed to keep the lead on the first lap. The team gave me a great car. It was good from start to finish and I was just able to pull a gap at the beginning and then manage it throughout the race and pull out the victory, so that was an awesome result. Race Two we didn't quite have the speed at the beginning of the race. Martin managed to pass me but then the car came in and we were quick again. We set the fastest lap. I didn't quite have the beating of him in that race but overall we extended our points lead, so we're going away from here really happy, and we're now focused on the oval races."

Petri Suvanto (#81 Team Pelfrey/Mazda Road to Indy), sixth in Race One, seventh in Race Two – "It was a tough weekend for us. I made a few rookie mistakes in the wrong places and that cost us many places on the track. I've been struggling a bit with standings starts, so I dropped to eighth in the first race. I managed to get back to sixth but that was as far as I could get because it's really difficult to overtake on this track. Then in Race Two I made a good start and held onto third but then I missed a shift on the exit of the first corner and three cars went by, so I was pretty much stuck there for the whole race. Overall it was a big disappointment for me, but the speed is good; the team gave me a great car. I just need to learn from my mistakes and deliver for the team."

Gustavo Menezes (#83 Team Pelfrey/SafetyPark), seventh in Race One, fourth in Race Two – “We did a great job; the team put everything together very well for both races. Unfortunately, in the first race, we just ran out of time. We were really closing down, we had fastest lap the last eight laps on track, and I really got it going. It’s unfortunate that we didn’t have more time to drive up to the front. In Race Two we knew that we had to stay with the pack initially because we knew we would have a good car and that happened exactly as we planned. I got a great start and was able to pass one car under braking for Turn Five on the first lap and then we just stayed behind Petri and waited for the car to come in. As soon as it came in, we knew that it was go-time. I got past Petri into Turn Five again, then caught up to (Gabby) Chaves and I tried to waste as little time as possible. I got around him through Turn 12, around the outside – that was a nice pass – and then we finally caught up to Sage (Karam). We banged wheels a couple of times, which was a bit frustrating, but (driving coach) Rocky (Moran) guided me through it and the Safety Car came out on the next lap. As soon as the green flag came out, we really pushed it, got a good run, and we just threw it down in there at Turn Five. I actually was sideways into the braking area but it worked! I think if we had one more lap we would have been on the podium, but it was a great weekend. We showed that we have the pace and it’s unfortunate that we had to start so far back in Race One, but I think if we can keep it this way we’re going to be running really good all year.”

**About Team Pelfrey:**

Dale Pelfrey’s race team, based in the St. Petersburg, Fla., area, is built upon the same principles he used 35 years ago when establishing his business career – hire the best, acquire the best and demand the best in order to achieve the most. After fielding cars in the IZOD IndyCar Series from 1998 until 2000, Team Pelfrey was reformed in 2011, winning on its Star Mazda debut and going on to earn the Team Championship as well as second and third in the drivers’ title-chase with Connor De Phillippi and Nick Andries. Team Pelfrey is fielding three cars in the 2012 Star Mazda series in addition to expanding its driver development program within the Mazda Road to Indy ladder system by supporting Spencer Pigot in the USF2000 Championship.

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