

# NEWS from TEAM

**GDT**  
general datatech, l.p.



*Team GDT's Andrés Méndez turned 254 laps at Lucas Oil Raceway May 5 in preparation for Saturday's "Night Before the 500" show there.*

## Team GDT's Méndez Ready To Tackle an Oval

INDIANAPOLIS, May 24 — Team GDT's Andrés Méndez, 19, a third-generation racer from Bogotá, Colombia, will compete in his first oval-track race ever as the Star Mazda Championship presented by Goodyear joins forces with two other series for the traditional "TourHendricksCounty.com Night Before the 500" show at Lucas Oil Raceway at Indianapolis (LORI) on Saturday night.

Fans in town for the Indianapolis 500 can check out one of Team GDT's Star Mazda cars in the Mazda Road to Indy display at the Brickyard this week, but to see one of them in action they'll have to attend the Night Before the 500 show at LORI Saturday night. Mendez and his fellow competitors in the Star Mazda series, which is part of the official Mazda Road to Indy program to develop talent for the IZOD IndyCar Series, will battle it out on

LORI's 0.686-mile semi-banked oval.

Spectator gates open at 2 p.m. Heat races start at approximately 6 p.m. and features kick off at approximately 7:40 p.m. The Star Mazda race will be 100 laps or 45 minutes long. Last year's race went non-stop.

Méndez is a rookie in Star Mazda this season and finishing the race is

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Photos may be downloaded off Team GDT's Facebook page.



his first priority. He'd like nothing better than to get his first top-10 finish Saturday night with the No. 53, which is sponsored by DataFile Internacional S.A. and Grupo Kriterion.

Although ovals are new to Méndez racing is not, as he's been brought up in the sport. Both his father and his grandfather, who are both named Guillermo Méndez, competed in rally championships in Columbia. His grandfather was also a Columbian motorcycle champion in the 1,200cc class, and he worked as a stunt driver for Harley Davidson.

Méndez has been competing in both karts and open-wheel cars for the past four years in Colombia, Europe and the United States. His karting credentials include major championship events in Colombia, Italy and Mexico, as well as the Florida Winter Tour, Rotax Max Challenge, the Pan-American Rotax, and the Super Kart SKUSA championships in the United States.

He has tested F2000 cars with the Red Bull-sponsored Korainenbros Motorsport Team in Estoril, Portugal; participated in the Jim Russell Future Driver Search and was chosen for the Ferrari Driver Academy as a junior future driver.

In Colombia he competed in the Van Diemen 2.0 National Championship, and he is a three-time winner of the 6 Horas de Bogotá race, one of the most important motorsport events in Latin America, driving a Van Diemen sports racer.



He is with a top team. In 2011 Team GDT won its second Expert Series championship in a row with driver/team owner J.W. Roberts, who won the Expert class at this event last year but is not scheduled to compete at LORI on Saturday. The Expert Series is a race-within-a-race and a championship-within-a-championship for drivers 30 and older.

The Dallas-based team's manager is Paul Mata, who was formerly the lead mechanic for Team ASF and the team manager for Team Extreme's Star Mazda program. Veteran Eric Purcell, who worked with 2008 Star Mazda champion John Edwards, is the engineer for Mendez's car. Chuck West, a former Formula At-

lantic driver who was the 1993 Star Mazda champion, is the team's driver, fitness and nutrition coach.

Mendez recorded 254 laps in testing at LORI on May 5. He'll have three more hours of testing there tomorrow from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. before Saturday's race.

More information, including live timing and scoring, can be found on the series' Web site at [StarMazda.com](http://StarMazda.com). The series is also covered on the Mazda Motorsports Hour on the Velocity network.

Fans can learn more about Team GDT on its Facebook page or through Twitter @TeamGDT.