



For Immediate Release:

Team Pelfrey's Hawkworth Wins on the Streets of Trois-Rivieres



TROIS-RIVIERES, QUE., CANADA (August 5, 2012) – English rising star Jack Hawkworth took another step toward his goal of winning this year's Star Mazda Championship Presented by Goodyear by virtue of an utterly dominant display in the opening leg of the 43rd Annual Grand Prix du Trois-Rivieres on Saturday afternoon. Team Pelfrey stablemates Gustavo Menezes and Petri Suvanto also enjoyed strong performances on the unforgiving streets as Menezes claimed a pair of top-six finishes during the weekend and Suvanto bounced back from an incident on Saturday to record a fourth-place result in Race 2.

Hawkworth once again belied his rookie status by setting the pace from the outset. The 21-year-old Briton circulated faster than the existing track record of 1:01.341 during the first practice session on Friday, then increased his pace even further in qualifying to claim his seventh PEAK Performance Pole Award of the season with a record-breaking lap of 1:00.850.

Hawkworth was never remotely challenged in the opening race, stretching his advantage throughout the 43-lap contest before taking the checkered flag an astonishing 24.394 seconds clear of his nearest challenger, Sage Karam.

Menezes qualified an impressive fourth for the opening race, but his bad luck returned when a minor technical infraction resulted in his car being banished to the rear of the field. The young Californian bounced back with another mature drive, rising steadily through the field to finish seventh.

Suvanto ran sixth for much of the race, and displayed his potential by posting the second fastest lap of the race – behind only Hawkworth – before making contact with rival Gabby Chaves while attempting to make a pass for fifth. The incident damaged his car's front wing and resulted in a black flag. After a pit stop for repairs, the Finn eventually crossed the line an unrepresentative 14th.

Hawkworth seemed set to extend his championship points lead still further in Race 2 on Sunday when his #82 Team Pelfrey/TORGOEN Swiss Watches/EXA Networks Star Mazda romped clear in the opening stages, only for his progress to be halted by a torrential downpour soon after the halfway mark. Officials wisely decided to red-flag the race to enable everyone to change to grooved, wet weather Goodyear tires.

Soon after the resumption, which came with seven minutes remaining, Hawkworth was passed by Karam and then was caught out by the treacherous conditions, sliding nose-first into the tire wall in Turn Six. Hawkworth limped his battered car to the finish in 12th place.

Suvanto was unable to take advantage of his front row starting position for Race 2, slipping from second to fifth in the opening stages, but fought back to finish fourth, with Menezes a couple of positions farther back in sixth.

After an eventful six-race swing in Canada, the Star Mazda Championship will return to American soil for the Grand Prix of Baltimore on September 1-2, where two more races will be held in support of both the IZOD IndyCar Series and the American Le Mans Series.

- Team Pelfrey Development Driver Spencer Pigot secured his fifth victory of the season when the Cooper Tires USF2000 Championship Powered by Mazda visited the Mid-Ohio Sports Car Course on Saturday, and even though he was involved in an incident in Race Two today, Pigot still increased his championship lead to 18 points with seven races remaining.



WHAT THE DRIVERS SAID:

Jack Hawksworth (#82 Team Pelfrey/TORGOEN Swiss Watches/EXA Networks) – Race One, qualified first, finished first; Race Two, started first, finished 12th: “It was another superb weekend pace-wise, and right from the outset after some adjustments in first practice, Team Pelfrey was able to give me a supremely balanced car which enabled me to grab pole in qualifying. The first race was just perfect. The car was great from start to finish and I was able to knock off consistent lap times while looking after the tires to secure my sixth win of the season. Race 2 was much of the same for the first 25 minutes as I was able to pull out a decent lead before the heavens opened up and the whole field was forced to pit for wets. After the restart I didn't quite have the pace I needed to win in the wet but despite this I was in a solid second. Unfortunately, I made a big error into Turn Six and locked up and hit the wall. I was able to recover and limp home in 12th but was obviously extremely disappointed for myself and the whole team who deserved so much better. I'll work hard to come back stronger and faster at Baltimore and won't make the same mistake twice! Despite this we won another race and showed great pace all weekend. This can only bode well for the upcoming races. Thanks again to the team for another flawless performance from them. Roll on Baltimore!”

Gustavo Menezes (#83 Team Pelfrey/SafetyPark/Oakley), – Race One, qualified fourth but started 18th, finished seventh; Race Two, started sixth, finished sixth: “Trois-Rivieres has been a very exciting weekend. We were sixth in first practice on Friday and worked really hard on improving the car for qualifying. We were able to dial the car down and held third for nearly the whole session. I dropped to fourth on the last lap but was still happy to be able to fight for the win from the first two rows. A few minutes later I was told I would have to start from last because of a minor technical infraction. On Saturday, I began the race 18th and drove my way back to seventh. I started sixth for the second race and, unfortunately, had to avoid an incident which put me back to eighth. I managed to drive back to sixth when the rain came down and brought us to the finish. The guys worked really hard this weekend and I am quite happy with the result considering my starting position. I can't wait until Baltimore to fight for a podium!”

Petri Suvanto (#81 Team Pelfrey/Mazda Road to Indy) – Race One, qualified seventh, finished 14th; Race Two, started second, finished fourth: “We didn't get the results we wanted this weekend. After the progress we made in Edmonton in terms of performance, I felt confident coming into GP3R. Qualifying is extremely important on a track like this where it's hard to pass, and we didn't do such a good job which set the tone for the rest of the weekend. I was able to make a couple of passes in the first race to get up to sixth place and I felt I had more pace than the cars in front of me, but I was stuck there in the back of a group of four cars. Towards the end of the race I made a decision to try a pass into Turn Six and it failed and I bent my front wing, which forced me to pit in order to replace it. I dropped all the way back to 14th. Thanks to our speed in the first race I secured all-Team Pelfrey front row for Race 2. Once again my start wasn't the best and I dropped to fifth during the first lap. I ran a consistent race under the tricky, changing track conditions and brought the #81 Team Pelfrey machine over the finish line in fourth position. We will now go on a month's break and I'm looking forward to visiting Finland for the first time since the season started. It's a good chance to recharge my batteries and get well prepared for our next race, which is in Baltimore.”

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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