

# NEWS from TEAM

**GDT**  
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Andres Méndez (No. 53) waits in the pits at Baltimore last weekend. Team GDT is in Salinas, Calif. this weekend.  
(Star Mazda photo by Eric McCombs)



Both Méndez and Ryan Tveter (No. 33, above) took their first laps at Mazda Raceway on Thursday.  
(Photo by Joe Jennings)

## Team GDT's Méndez and Tveter Tackle Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca

SALINAS, Calif., Sept. 6 — Team GDT's rookies in the Star Mazda Championship presented by Goodyear took their first laps of Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca during a test day Thursday in preparation for a doubleheader there on Saturday and Sunday.

Andres Méndez of Bogotá, Colombia, and Ryan Tveter, of Oyster Bay, N.Y., are representing the Dallas-based team at the 2.238-mile, 11-turn road course

this year. They're depending on the team's engineers, veterans Eric Purcell and Remi Lanteigne, and its driver coach, Chuck West, to help them get acclimated to the track as quickly as possible.

Méndez drives the No. 53 sponsored by DataFile Internacional S.A. and Grupo Kriterion. Tveter drives the No. 33 sponsored by CIMIER Swiss Watches and Motorola Mobility, LLC.

"Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca is very demanding and challenging, but it's an incredible thrill to drive," said Tveter Thursday after his first 30-minute test session. "The steep elevation changes and very fast turns require a lot more rhythm than the street circuits, where the surface changes slow you down.

"It's really great to have the Promoter's Test Day," he added. "That track time is so valuable. My goal this weekend is

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Photos may be downloaded off Star Mazda's Facebook page.



to continue to build my race craft and learn some new skills, since I have not raced on a permanent track in Star Mazda before.

"It's really great to be at Laguna Seca," he added. "My mom is from California. We drove by here every spring break on our way to Carmel. I love this area and it will be nice to have friends and family at my races this weekend."

A year ago Patrick McKenna of Dublin, Ireland finished fourth at this event driving for Team GDT. He missed the podium by just 0.278 of a second but he was 2.217 seconds ahead of last year's series champion, Tristan Vautier, the current Firestone Indy Lights point leader. J.W. Roberts of Dallas, who owns Team GDT, won the Expert class here last year with another Team GDT driver, Dom Bastien of West Palm Beach, Fla., second in that division.

Although Tveter has vacationed in the area, it's all new to Méndez. He enjoyed a whale-watching expedition on Monterey Bay with other Team GDT members on Tuesday before tackling Mazda

Raceway Laguna Seca for the first time on Thursday.

Thursday's test day schedule offered three 30-minute test sessions for the Star Mazda series, which is part of the official Mazda Road to Indy program.

There is one 30-minute practice session on Friday at 8:35 a.m. Qualifying for the Peak Performance pole follows at 1:55 p.m. that afternoon. That session will determine the starting line-up for Saturday's race. Sunday's starting line-up will be determined by each driver's fastest race lap on Saturday.

Saturday's race is at 5:20 p.m. and Sunday's gets the green flag at 3:30 p.m. All times are local.

Saturday's race has a 30-minute window on the schedule and Sunday's has a 45-minute window. Last year's race saw the winner complete 28 lap in 45 minutes.

The Star Mazda action is part of a Grand-Am Rolex Sports Car Series weekend called the Continental Tire

Sports Car Festival Powered by Mazda.

Live timing and scoring of the Star Mazda action is available throughout the weekend via [Starmazda.com](http://Starmazda.com) and the Race Monitor app. The races will also be broadcast on a tape-delayed basis on Discovery's Velocity Network, Canada's Rogers SportsNet and ESPN International. In the United States the race will air at noon Eastern on Saturday, Oct. 13. Broadcast times for other countries are listed on the series' Website.

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

Both Méndez and Tveter also have Facebook and Twitter accounts. Méndez's Website is at [agMéndez.com](http://agMéndez.com) and Tveter's is at [RyanTveter.com](http://RyanTveter.com).

Following this race there is a series test on the road course at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway Oct. 10-11 prior to the season finale at the Petit Le Mans at Road Atlanta Oct. 17-20.