

**EXPECTING THE UNEXPECTED – ALEX ARDOIN WIN THE POLE FOR
ROUND THREE OF THE STAR MAZDA CHAMPIONSHIP AT WATKINS GLEN**

Watkins Glen, NY (June 6, 2008) – Louisiana driver Alex Ardoin has re-established himself as a force to be reckoned with by winning the pole for Round Three of the 2008 Star Mazda Championship presented by Goodyear at Watkins Glen this weekend. His lap of 1:46.223 in the #51 Mundill/Oral & Facial Surgery Center/Performance Drink/ Twister Trailer Mazda was 0.152 seconds clear of the 2nd-place car of British driver Charles Hall, who led every practice session in the #77 Andersen Racing/Blimpie/ AccentBanking.com/Pardoes Solicitors/Allied Mazda. Hall finished 2nd in both Round One and Round Two, and is currently 2nd in the championship.

Ardoin's last pole position was at Trois Rivières during the 2007 Star Mazda Championship season, and he won the season-engine race at Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca to finish 6th in the championship. He finished 4th in the 2008 season-opener at Sebring but endured a disastrous weekend at Miller Motorsports Park, persevering to finish 10th in a car that started the weekend with a small fire and ultimately had to be re-built from the ground up – including a new chassis – before the race. He is currently 5th in the championship.

“Actually, this weekend didn't start so great; this is a brand-new car but the transmission failed during the very first session,” said Ardoin. “But Mundill is one of the best teams in the paddock and I kept faith with my team and they ultimately delivered a really good car for qualifying. I'm feeling pretty good about the race because this is a track that, like Road Atlanta, has a lot of high-speed turns that take a lot of commitment on the part of the driver, and that suits my style very well. You look at the track diagram and it seems like a simple course, but all the elevation changes make it very technical and I'm looking forward to the race.”

Qualifying featured both several red flags and an exciting duel between Ardoin and Hall, who traded the top spot several times in the closing minutes. Also figuring in the mix was Sebring winner and current championship points leader Joel Miller who suffered a small off-course excursion in his #20 JDC Motorsports/Mazda/K&N Air Filters Mazda in Thursday morning practice and sat out the afternoon session. His Friday afternoon qualifying lap of 1:46.596 (117.190 mph) was good for third on the grid. Irishman Peter Dempsey, who finished 3rd at Sebring and 4th at Miller Motorsports Park and is currently 3rd in the championship ran at the sharp end of the field in practice and his lap of 1:46 .691 (117.086 mph) was good enough for 4th on the starting grid.

Rounding out the top-5 is John Edwards, the surprise winner from the pole of Round Two at Miller Motorsports Park. Edwards, who competed in the Atlantic Championship Powered by Mazda last season, joined the Star Mazda Championship in a last-second deal with AIM Autosport and justified the team's faith with a runaway win in his first race that produced a margin of victory of almost 15 seconds. Due to a penalty imposed for being late for the pre-qualifying driver's meeting, Edwards sat out most of the first part of the session, finally taking to the track with about nine minutes to go. His first hot lap moved him up to 11th and his next lap – 1:46.830 (116.933 mph) -- took him up to 5th, which is where he will start in the #7 AIM Autosport Mazda.

Starting in the top-10 are Billy Goshen in 6th with a lap of 1:47.239 (116.487 mph) in the #82 Goshen Motorsports/Merv Griffin Entertainment/Global Tracking Comm./Baker Commodities Mazda. In 7th is one of pole-sitter Ardoin's teammate's, Brazilian Caio Lara, turning a lap of 1:47.555 (116.145 mph) in the #19 Mundill Racing/MLD Mazda. Ernesto Otero, another Brazilian, sits 8th on the grid with a lap of 1:47.818 (115.862 mph) in his JDC Motorsports/Brazilian Green Beef Mazda. In 9th is Englishman Jonny Baker, who drove a full season in 2007, turning a lap of 1:47.882 (115.739 mph) in the #11 Andersen Racing/Allied Mazda. Scott Rettich, driving the #17 Mundill/PDI Communications Mazda, turned a lap of 1:48.040 (115.624 mph) to sit 10th on the starting grid.

The fastest of the three female drivers in the field, and making her Star Mazda debut at Watkins Glen, is Natalia Kowalska, a Polish karting champion who has also raced in the European Formula Renault series. Her time of 1:48.589 (115.039 mph) was good for 11th on the starting grid.

The top-qualifying Expert Series driver (for drivers 30 to 44 years old) is Chris Cumming, who is currently leading the Expert Series championship with a class win at Sebring and a 2nd-place finish at Miller Motorsports Park. His lap of 1:48.955 (114.653 mph) places him 15th on the 23-car starting grid for tomorrow's race. The leading Master Series driver (drivers 45 and older) is Chuck Hulse, also leading the Master Series championship with a class win at Sebring and 2nd-place finish at Miller Motorsports Park. He will start from the 20th grid position with a lap of 1:50.034 (113.529 mph) in the #12 JDC Motorsports/Silicon Salvage Mazda.

The Star Mazda Championship presented by Goodyear is making its debut at Watkins Glen International this weekend as a support race for the Sahlen's Six Hours of The Glen Rolex Series event. The 45-minute Round Three of the 2008 Star Mazda Championship presented by Goodyear scheduled to take the green flag at 9:05 am Saturday, June 7. The race will be broadcast on SPEED Saturday, June 21 at 11:00 am Eastern.

For more information on the Star Mazda Championship and its drivers, as well as the Mazda Motorsports ladder system, please visit www.starmazda.com and www.mazdausa.com.

On any given weekend, there are more Mazdas on the road-race tracks of America than any other brand of vehicle. At the track, you'll see MX-5 Miata, RX-8, MAZDA3, MAZDA6, RX-7 and other vintage Mazda models competing, because every Mazda has the Soul of a Sports Car.

For more information on the various Mazda spec series, visit:

www.champcaratlantic.com www.starmazda.com
www.skipbarber.com www.mx-5cup.com

Dean Case / Communications Officer / MAZDASPEED Motorsports
Office - (310) 755-7403 / Cell - (310) 318-4582 / E-mail: dean@RWB-LLC.com