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## JOHN EDWARDS WINS STAR MAZDA RACE 2 AT MAZDA GRAND PRIX OF PORTLAND – BECOMES FIRST REPEAT RACE WINNER OF 2008 SEASON



Portland, Oregon (July 27, 2008) -- John Edwards, winner of Round 2 of the Star Mazda Championship presented by Goodyear at Miller Motorsports Park, repeated the feat with a freight-train run from the front row in Star Mazda Race 2 / Round 5 this Sunday at the

Mazda Grand Prix of Portland. Finishing 2nd was Saturday race winner and Sunday pole-sitter Tom Gladdis, followed by Round 1 winner Joel Miller. The top-finishing Expert Series driver, scoring his fourth class victory of the season and second win of the weekend was Vancouver, B.C. native Chris Cumming. Leading the Master Series drivers across the finish line was 3-time winner, Californian Chuck Hulse.

After a disastrous start to the weekend that saw the clutch on his car fail on the first lap of Race 1 on Saturday, forcing him to limp around to a 24th-place finish, Edwards (#7 AIM Autosport Mazda) turned a terrible weekend into a great one, starting from the outside of the front row – as he did in Race 1 – and leading every lap. Edwards came to PIR 8th in the championship and has now moved up to 7th.

"We finally got it organized and it all came good today," says Edwards. "I got my first good start of the season – even when I won at Miller, I almost lost the lead on the start – and took the lead going into the first corner. I concentrated on running consistent laps, on hitting my marks and not putting a wheel wrong. I ran into traffic at the end and Tom Gladdis started catching me, but I had enough of a time cushion... and a little bet left in the car. This one is for the AIM Autosport guys who have been working night and day to get me back to the front."

Finishing second, after winning from the pole in Race 1 on Saturday, and starting from the pole in Sunday's Race 2, was 17 year old Tom Gladdis (#5 Andersen Racing / Marrache & Co. / Allied Building Products Mazda), a native of the British territory of Gibraltar. Gladdis' age prevented him from competing in Round 3 at Watkins Glen, so this weekend's results were sweet vindication and got his championship aspirations right back on track. He was 13th in the championship battle coming into PIR and leaves in 5th.

"I got an OK start, but Alex Ardoin tried to go around me in a tight space and I had to let off, which killed my momentum on the opening lap," says Gladdis, who took the weekend's "Racing for Kids" award for his victory in Race 1. "But for the rest of the race I just kept chipping away at it, a tenth at a time, a corner at a time. It took me a long while to get around the second-place car, which I did with just a few laps to go and was immediately a second a lap faster. I was catching Edwards at the end, but ran out of

laps just a few short. Still, it's a great result for the Andersen Racing team and my sponsors, Marrache & Co. and Allied. Hopefully we'll keep on at this level the rest of the season."

Joel Miller (#20 JDC Motorsports / Mazda / K&N Air Filters Mazda) had one of those odd race days in which he came into the race second in points, collided on the start with someone so hard it tore off the front suspension. He limped into the pits and his JDC Motorsports crew did a heroic job replacing the broken parts and getting him back out on the track where he finished 22nd and – given what happened to everyone else – wound up back in the championship lead. His day on Sunday was much better, though he qualified 6th and quickly moved up to third on the opening lap and ran there for the rest of the race.

"I got an OK start, but the way the traffic worked out in the beginning of the race there was a big gap between me and the front runners, so I spent most of the race catching up rather than passing," says Miller, the 2007 Skip Barber Pro Series Champion who won his 2008 Star Mazda ride courtesy of the MAZDASPEED Motorsports Driver Development Ladder. "After what happened yesterday, consistency was by focus in Sunday's race and I just kept pounding out 10.4s the whole race and brought it home on the podium. The team and I are ready to go back to winning, but you have to do what you can do on any given weekend, and we'll build from here."

Chris Cumming (#16 World Speed Motorsports / Inviro Medical Mazda), who has won four Expert Series (drivers aged 30 to 44) races this season and leads the Expert championship battle by a wide margin, also drove a relatively uneventful race to his second victory of the weekend.

"This was a much less dramatic race than on Saturday where there were spinning cars every few laps, so I felt really comfortable in the car and had another good result," says Cumming. "The traffic actually helped me this time, and there was a big gap in front of me and another big gap in the back of me and I concentrated on maintaining that bubble of calm around me. Worked out great and I'm delighted for myself and the Worldspeed Motorsports team and my sponsor Inviro Medical."

Sunday's Master Series winner, Chuck Hulse (#12 JDC Motorsport / Silicon Salvage Mazda) is another driver who, like Miller and Edwards, rebounded splendidly from a bad day on Saturday. Hulse, who admits to pushing a bit too hard, backed his car into the tire wall in the closing stages of the race and broke the rear wing. He finished the race 3rd in class, 13th overall, but crossed the finish line dragging his wing on the ground behind him.

"Today was a much better race, and all the parts of my car crossed the finish line at the same time," says the electronics salvage CEO from California. "It was basically an uneventful race for me today, thankfully, and I benefitted from the race going green all the way because I don't much care for how the car feels on cold tires and so I'm not happy about yellow-flag re-starts. But we just ran smooth all the way today and I'm happy to score another win for JDC Motorsports and my sponsor, Silicon Salvage."

Rounding out the top-5 were Charles Hall (#77 Andersen Racing / Blimpie / AccentBanking.com/ Allied Building Products Mazda) who came to PIR leading the championship on the strength of his win in Round at Watkins Glen. After a mechanically-caused DNF in Race1 he rebounded to qualify 3rd and finish 4th on Sunday. He came to PIR leading the championship and leaves in 2nd, but by only a 5-point margin. Billy Goshen, a rookie who is quickly hitting his stride in the super-

competitive Star Mazda Championship, qualified 7th and finished 5th in the #82 Goshen Motorsports / Merv Griffin Entertainment / Global Tracking Communications Mazda. He moves up from 5th to 4th in the championship.

The race began with an impressive testimonial to the strength and health of the Star Mazda Championship – fifteen rows of two cars sitting side-by-side, revving their engines and waiting for the green light to start their drag race into Turn 1. The sole incident of substance in a race that ran green to the checkered took place at the start when Peter Dempsey (#21 Andersen Racing / LotusWorks/ Allied Building Products Mazda) had a coming-together with Alex Ardoin (#51 Mundill Racing / Oral & Facial Surgery Center / Twister Trailer Mazda), spinning him out in the middle of a crowd and causing considerable dodging and darting. Ultimately, rough justice prevailed as Dempsey had to pit for major repairs and finished 27th. A tough weekend for the young Irishman as mechanical problems saw him finish 22nd in Saturday's race. Ardoin, on the other hand, demoted to 16th from his 4th-place qualifying spot, spent the rest of the race making an aggressive and remarkable charge back through the field and was back into 6th by the time the checkered flag dropped. He finished 2nd in Saturday's race.

The race was free of any major drama, unless you were the driver gaining or losing the championship lead, but it was still a demonstration of the depth of talent in this year's Star Mazda Championship presented by Goodyear, and there was hard-fought racing throughout the field for the duration of the race. In qualifying, less than a second separated the top-12 qualifying cars and in the 36-lap race, 16 cars of the 30-car starting field finished on the lead lap. Two of the three female drivers finished in the top-15 (and Kristy Kester (#48 Kester Racing / Texas World Speedway / Unifirst Mazda) scored a career-best 4th-place finish in Saturday's race). The top-10 finishers in Sunday's race included two Americans, two Europeans, two Canadians, a Brazilian, a driver somewhere well north of 30 years old.

When the points are tallied at the end of back-to-back Star Mazda Championship races at the Mazda Grand Prix of Portland, Joel Miller leads with 179 points, followed by Charles Hall (174), Alex Ardoin (168), Billy Goshen (155) and Tom Gladdis (150). Rounding out the top-10 are Peter Dempsey in 6th with 140, John Edwards with 136, Vancouver B.C. racer Taylor Hacquard finished 5th on Saturday and 10th on Sunday in the #15 World Speed Motorsports / Wolfe Auto Group Mazda and is 8th in the points with 135. Ninth is Kristy Kester (131 points), the distaff half of the Kester Racing brother/sister team, who had her best-ever Star Mazda Championship race on Saturday with a 4th place finish. And 10th (125 points) is the remarkable Chris Cumming, the Expert Series ages 30 to 44) points leader with four class wins. He finished 6th overall on Saturday and 8th on Sunday.

The Star Mazda Championship presented by Goodyear is now in its 18<sup>th</sup> year as one of the most prolific, successful and richest open-wheel driver development series in North America. The Star Mazda Championship the college basketball, the triple-A baseball, the Junior A hockey of auto racing, a high-speed training ground for future stars of the sport and a major step on the **MAZDASPEED** Motorsports Development Ladder that reaches all the way from karting to the Atlantic series. All races are broadcast in a 1-hour show on the SPEED Channel. Prize money approaches \$1.5 million, including a Mazda-sponsored drive for the Star Mazda series champion in the next step up the motorsports ladder, the Atlantic Championship Powered by Mazda.

The next event, Round 6 of the 12-race 2008 Star Mazda championship presented by goodyear, takes place in two weeks during the American Le Mans Series GNERAC 500 at Road America, August 7 - 10. On track activity for the Star Mazda championship

series begins with a promoter's test session on thursday, august 7. Qualifying for the race takes place from 4:05 to 4:50 pm, Friday, August 8 with the 45-minute Star Mazda championship event scheduled to take the green flag at 2:25 pm Saturday, August 8. The race will be broadcast on SPEED TV on August 23 at 12:00 pm (ET).

For more information on the Star Mazda Championship and its drivers, as well as the Mazda Motorsports ladder system, please visit [www.starmazda.com](http://www.starmazda.com) and [www.mazdausa.com](http://www.mazdausa.com). For interviews, photos, etc., contact Star Mazda Championship Communications Director Peter Frey at (818) 906-6997 / [StarMazdaPR@aol.com](mailto:StarMazdaPR@aol.com).

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