



PETER DEMPSEY TOPS RECORD STAR MAZDA QUALIFYING FOR ROUND 11 AT ROAD ATLANTA

Road Atlanta / Oct. 2 – The drivers of the Star Mazda Championship presented by Goodyear put on a record-setting performance in this morning's qualifying session for Friday's Round 11 at



Road Atlanta and the Petit Le Mans. The top three cars all qualified under the existing lap record, the top eight cars are separated by just one second and the top sixteen cars all fall within a two-second range.

Unsurprisingly, Irishman Peter Dempsey, who set the pace in practice yesterday, took the pole position with a lap of 1:18.328 (116.740 mph) under near-perfect conditions, cool and dry with not a breath of wind. Dempsey, who drives the #21 Andersen Racing/ LotusWorks/Allied Building Products Mazda has won four of the last five races

and currently leads the championship battle, but this is only his second time starting from the pole (he was on the pole at Trois-Rivières also).

"This is Irish racing weather, minus the rain, so I'm feeling right at home here," said Dempsey. "I'm really happy to score another pole because even with four wins so far, to only have one pole seems kind of desperate somehow. Andersen Racing and my engineer gave me a great car with the pace to win the pole and the race, and I really want to thank them and my sponsors for giving me this chance. I never thought I'd be able to finish the season due to finances, so to be here at this great track on such a famous race weekend sitting on the pole and leading the championship, well, it's a dream. A lot of my family is over from Ireland, so I'm hoping to have a good race and put on a good show for them and the fans."

Starting next to Dempsey on the outside of the front row will be American Joel Miller who turned a lap of 1:18.328 (116.416 mph) in the #20 JDC Motorsports / Mazda / K&N Air Filters Mazda. Miller, currently second in the championship battle, is the 2007 Skip Barber Pro Series Champion and won his ride in the 2008 Star Mazda Championship courtesy of the MAZDASPEED Motorsport Driver Development Ladder. Miller won the season-opener at Sebring, has started from the pole twice and scored four podium finishes.

The third driver under the existing Star Mazda lap record at Road Atlanta (a 1:18.640, set in 2005 by Scott Jenkins on much softer-compound tires) is American John Edwards, third in the championship with four poles and three wins so far this season. He turned a lap of 1:18.583 (116.361 mph) in the #7 AIM Autosport/Mobil1 Mazda.

The top-qualifying Expert Series (ages 30 to 44) driver was Vancouver native Chris Cumming, who has already clinched the Expert Championship with seven class wins. He set a lap of 1:20.326 (113.836 mph) in the #16 World Speed Motorsports / Inviro Medical Mazda, good for 14th on the starting grid. Starting right behind Cumming in the 8th row will be top-qualifying Master Series (drivers 45 and older) Gerry Kraut, who turned a lap of 1:20.408 (113.720 mph) in the #55 JDC Motorsports / Dougherty & Co. / Dougherty Funding LLC Mazda. Kraut is a co-owner of the 2007 championship-winning JDC Motorsports and teammate to Chuck Hulse, who won the Master Series Championship with seven victories in the #12 JDC Motorsports/Silicon Salvage Mazda.

Round 11 of the 2008 Star Mazda Championship will take place at the ALMS Petit LeMans at Road Atlanta on October 3, with the green flag scheduled to wave at 4:30 Friday afternoon. The Road Atlanta race will be broadcast on SPEED TV Saturday, October 18 at 12:30 pm ET. The 2008 Star Mazda Championship season finale takes place at Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca on October 18.

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

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

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