



JOHN EDWARDS WINS A WILD ONE IN ROUND 11 OF THE STAR MAZDA CHAMPIONSHIP AT ROAD ATLANTA



Road Atlanta / Oct. 3 – After a relatively well-mannered season, so far, the Star Mazda Championship presented by Goodyear was due for a wild one – and Round 11 at Road Atlanta was it. After qualifying third, American John Edwards recorded his fourth win in the #7 AIM Autosport / Mobil1 Mazda amid a whirlwind of spinning cars on the final lap.

Pole-sitter Joel Miller, after leading almost half the race laps – notwithstanding that eleven of them were run behind the pace car – survived a potentially devastating collision with another car to bring the #20 JDC Motorsports / Mazda / K&N Air Filters Mazda home in second... and put himself squarely back in the championship battle that will go down to the final race of the season at Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca in two weeks. Finishing third in his first podium of the season was Brazilian racer Rick Rosin, who qualified 12th in the #30 Mundill Racing / State of Catarina Mazda. Also of note was the 4th-place finish by Canadian first-time Star Mazda driver Kyle Marcelli, who also qualified 4th in the #71 AIM Autosport / La Farge Mazda.

The top-finishing Master Series (driver 45 and older) was Gerry Kraut who qualified 14th, ran as high as 8th and finished 11th in the #55 JDC Motorsports / Dougherty & Co. / Dougherty Funding LLC Mazda, his third class win of the season. Leading home the Expert Series (drivers ages 30 to 44) was J.W. Roberts in the #65 Team GDT / General Datatech, L.P. Mazda. This is also his third class win of the season.

"We finally got some luck after having to drive off the road in New Jersey to avoid a spinning car and the oil spill in Mosport that cost us a win," said Edwards. "I didn't really have the car to win, but Dempsey bobbed the start and that let Joel and I get a good run going. I was the youngest driver ever in the Atlantic series last year, and was probably too young to be in the series because I didn't get the kind of results I expected and needed. I've learned a lot in the Star Mazda Championship this year and if I'm able to win the MAZDASPEED scholarship to move back up to Atlantic in 2009 I'll be ready to keep winning."

The start of the race was without incident, though Miller slipped past pole-sitter Dempsey and led until the first full-course yellow on lap 11. Taking away a damaged car and cleaning up an oil spill took seven laps and at the green flag on lap 18 Dempsey took the lead. Racing lasted

only one lap before another full-course yellow slowed the field for five laps. The green came out with four minutes to go and the action was fast and furious, with various cars spinning and the two of the front-runners sailing off course at top speed.

The big loser in all the action was pole-sitter Dempsey, who had won four of the last five races and was leading the championship. He was eventually credited with a 14th-place finish in the #21 Andersen Racing/ LotusWorks/Allied Building Products Mazda, but was further penalized by series officials for 'avoidable contact' and demoted to 19th.

When all the dust had cleared, both literally and figuratively, six drivers remain in contention for the championship. With one race to go, and drivers allowed to drop their worst finish of the season and count the best 11 of 12 races, Peter Dempsey leads with 337 points, followed by John Edwards with 334, Joel Miller with 329 and Louisiana racer Alex Ardoin, driver of the #51 Mundill Racing / Oral & Facial Surgery Center / Twister Trailer Mazda, with 311. Ardoin qualified 6th for the race but contact with Peter Dempsey dropped him to an 18th-place finish.

Englishman Charles Hall, who speared backward into the Turn One tire wall at high speed to bring out the first full-course yellow drives the #77 Andersen Racing / Blimpie / AccentBanking.com/ Pardoes Solicitors / Allied Building Products Mazda and is still in with a chance at 309 points. The final contender is young Tom Gladdis, driver of the #5 Andersen Racing / Law firm of Marrache & Co. / Allied Building Products Mazda. He qualified 7th, finished 8th and has 305 points.

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

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Dean Case / Communications Officer / MAZDASPEED Motorsports

Office - (310) 755-7403 / Cell - (310) 318-4582 / E-mail: dean@RWB-LLC.com

