



## THE QUIET KID – MICHAEL FURFARI, AGAIN, STUNS THE STAR MAZDA FIELD WITH THE FASTEST TIME IN THURSDAY'S PROMOTER TEST SESSITION AT JERSEY MOTORSPORTS PARK



New Jersey Motorsports Park (June 11, 2009) -- The last time we heard from Michael Furfari, the 16-year old driver of the #13 Juncos Racing / Furfari Paving Mazda, he had amazed one and all by turning the fastest lap during two days of Star Mazda Championship presented by Goodyear testing at the Milwaukee Mile oval... his first time ever on an oval. A 'true rookie' in a field full of 'technical rookies,' Furfari is the shortest (5-ft. 5-in.), lightest (120 lbs.) and youngest (turned 16 just before the season opener at Sebring) in the Star Mazda Championship.

And now he's done it again, setting the fastest lap of the day, a 1:15.903 sec., in the first practice session of the day. Unfortunately, his times in the remaining two sessions of the day were abysmal, right at the tail end of the field. Mix that in with the fact that Furfari's best finish in three races so far this year was 9th at Miller Motorsports Park, preceded by a 25th at VIR and a 12th in the season-opener at Sebring. It would be tempting to write these two fast laps off as a fluke, save that he backed up his Milwaukee time with another lap just 1/100ths of a second slower; and he did set his fastest lap at New Jersey Motorsports Park on the coldest, dirtiest, most un-fast track conditions of the entire day.

So what emerges, tentatively, is a portrait of a driver too young and experienced to have developed any real racecraft – but with blinding speed and nerves of steel for a lap – or two. Not an unfamiliar story with genuinely hot young drivers, and something that bears watching. Can he stretch that speed out over more and more laps, and on to full race length? If so, the last half of the 2009 season could be interesting indeed.



The second-fast lap (1:15.939, in the final session) was by Englishman Richard Kent, last year's 'mystery driver' who ran only one race – the season-ender at Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca – destroying the established order in the process with a lap record pole effort and a flag-to-flag parade to take his first win. He took the pole at this year's season-opener at Sebring and finished second, missed Round 2 due to a non-racing injury and came back to finish 4th at Miller Motorsports Park. He's currently 8th in the championship, but that won't last long.

Third-fast on the day (1:15.968 sec.) was the man you'd expect to annihilated everyone else, current points leader and winner of two of the three races so far this season, Englishman Adam

Christodoulou, driver of the #11 JDC Motorsports / Molecule Mazda. He's made a practice of being fastest in virtually every practice session leading up to a race, and turned the fastest lap on the Star Mazda series test on the Iowa Speedway oval... no small feat for a hard-core road racer raised on corkscrew tracks turned into weekly tests of nerve and car control by the omnipresent European rain.

There were no great surprises in the remainder of the top-5; Canadian Mikael Grenier 4th-fast in his #17 Andersen Racing / NAPA Auto Parts / CAA-Quebec / HS Telecom Mazda, followed by another driver who has yet to show his full potential, 2008 FF2000 Champions Anders "the Viking" Krohn, who turned a lap of 1:16.052 sec.) in his #27 Mundill / Trallfa / Colosseum Mazda. Pleasant surprises on the day included a 6th-fast 1:16.072 from Brazilian racer Caio Lara in #19 JDC Motorsports / MLD / ATW/ Molecule Mazda and a 7th-fast 1:16.173 from another driver coming into his own this season, American Rusty Mitchell in the #66 Mitchell Motorsports / Motorola Mazda.

### **Results of Star Mazda Practice – three Thursday sessions merged**

<b>Pos No.</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Overall Best Time</b>	<b>In Session</b>
1	13 Michael Furfari	1:15.903	Thursday First Practice
2	33 Richard Kent	1:15.939	Thursday Final Practice
3	11 Adam Christodoulou	1:15.968	Thursday First Practice
4	17 Mikael Grenier	1:16.047	Thursday Final Practice
5	27 Anders Krohn	1:16.052	Thursday 2nd Practice
6	19 Caio Lara	1:16.072	Thursday First Practice
7	66 Rusty Mitchell	1:16.173	Thursday Final Practice
8	51 Alex Ardoin	1:16.220	Thursday Final Practice
9	22 Conor Daly	1:16.241	Thursday First Practice
10	82 Billy Goshen	1:16.263	Thursday First Practice
11	2 Joel Miller	1:16.269	Thursday Final Practice
12	72 Jorge Goncalvez	1:16.328	Thursday 2nd Practice
13	21 Dennis Navarro	1:16.445	Thursday 2nd Practice
14	30 Rick Rosin	1:16.451	Thursday Final Practice
15	77 Kevin Toledo	1:17.063	Thursday Final Practice
16	15 Taylor Hacquard	1:17.085	Thursday First Practice
17	71 David Ostella	1:17.096	Thursday Final Practice
18	91 Michael Guasch	1:17.178	Thursday 2nd Practice
19	48 Kristy Kester	1:17.380	Thursday Final Practice
20	16 Chris Cumming	1:17.500	Thursday Final Practice
21	65 J.W. Roberts	1:17.952	Thursday Final Practice
22	61 Sean Burstyn	1:18.217	Thursday First Practice
23	31 Carlos Conde	1:18.377	Thursday Final Practice
24	55 Gerry Kraut	1:18.592	Thursday Final Practice
25	24 J.C. Kester	1:18.674	Thursday 2nd Practice
26	80 Toshi Deki	1:19.039	Thursday First Practice
27	23 Walt Bowlin	1:20.716	Thursday Final Practice
28	20 Gustavo Linares	1:58.145	Thursday Final Practice

The Star Mazda Championship presented by Goodyear is a main race at the multi-event Mazda Formula X returns to New Jersey Motorsports Park this weekend – including Atlantic, Skip Barber, MX-5 and IMSA Lites; also featured, Time Attack and Drifting exhibitions, tuner car and audio show. All the weekend's Mazda-powered races will be broadcast live on HDnet. There will be a live three hour broadcast each day from 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm EDT. The broadcast team will be led by veteran commentator Rick Benjamin and legendary race-driver Elliott Forbes Robinson. Despite the fact that it's listed on the HDnet schedule at an Atlantic Championship broadcast, with no mention of any of the other races during the weekend, all the wheel-to-wheel Star Mazda Championship action will be covered live on both days. To receive HDNet information via email simply go to [www.hd.net/listpage](http://www.hd.net/listpage).

It's a double-header weekend for the Star Mazda Championship with races on both Saturday and Sunday. Star Mazda Championship on-track action begins with a 'promoter test day' on Thursday, June 11; there will be three sessions – 9:40 -10:20 am, 1:35 – 2:20 pm and 5:00 – 5:40 pm. Official practice begins on Friday, June 12 with a session at 8:00 – 8:45 am and another at 1:00 – 1:45 am. Qualifying for Saturday's Race 1 takes place 5:30 pm – 6:15 pm. The standing start for Race 1 on Saturday, June 13 will get the green light at 2:00 pm. Qualifying for Race 2 takes place Sunday morning 9:20 – 10:00 am, followed by the race at 2:00 pm.

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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 information, interviews and photos, contact Star Mazda Communications Director Peter Frey at (818) 398-5733 or [StarMazdaPR@aol.com](mailto:StarMazdaPR@aol.com).

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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](http://www.atlanticchampionship.com)

[www.starmazda.com](http://www.starmazda.com)

[www.skipbarber.com](http://www.skipbarber.com)

[www.mx-5cup.com](http://www.mx-5cup.com)

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