



**FURFARI FASTEST -- YOUNGEST DRIVER IN THE SERIES SETS THE FASTEST TIME DURING STAR MAZDA CHAMPIONSHIP TWO-DAY TEST AT THE MILWAUKEE MILE**



Milwaukee Mile (May 22, 2009) – Canadian racer Michael Furfari, at 16 the youngest driver in the 2009 Star Mazda Championship presented by Goodyear, set the fastest time of the just-concluded 21-car, two-day test series session at the Milwaukee Mile; driving the #13 Juncos Racing / Furfari Paving Mazda, the 5-ft.5-in., 120-pound student from Toronto

turned a lap of 27.548 (130.681 mph) on lap 70 of the final session on Thursday afternoon. And just to prove it was no fluke, he backed it up with a 27.550 on lap 71.

The lap record for a Star Mazda Championship car at the Milwaukee Mile is 27.249, set by Adrian Carrio in winning the pole for the series' last and lone visit to the legendary oval in 2006. That race was ultimately won by Mike Potekhen, who is currently competing in Indy Lights.

"At first, it wasn't that great; we had some troubles with the car with a bit of exit push, but the Juncos team did a great job getting the car good for the last few sessions and I got used to the oval and turned a couple of pretty good times and ended up the fastest," Said Furfari, speaking on his cell phone from his mother's car on his way to a lesson required for him to get his Canadian driver's license. "It was certainly a challenge, getting used to how the oval is, the speed and how you go much faster through the corners than a road course. You also have to drive it much differently; on a road course you go as deep into a corner as possible and then brake, but on the oval you never touch the brakes, you need to let the speed carry the car through the turns. The passing is different too, you can't pass going into a corner, you've got to get a run coming out. And traffic is something to be careful of; if you get right up behind somebody there's a fair amount of turbulence and the car gets a little loose, or maybe pushes a bit, so I would stay half a car width inside or outside of them, depending on their line, just enough to keep air flowing over my wings and then the car felt good. The Juncos Racing team did a great job on the setup; at first the car would only be good for a couple of laps, but they

made some changes and made the car really consistent. I was doing a lot of consistent laps out there, so I feel really confident in both myself and the team."

In his first season of professional-level Star Mazda Championship racing, Furfari sits 11th in the championship after the first three races, with a best finish of 9th in Round Three at Miller Motorsports Park on May 16. Furfari, who is a second-year high school student when not racing, began racing karts in Canada at age 12; in 2006, at age 13, he started racing in the U.S. and won the last race of the JICA WKA national championship and finished second overall. At the end of the 2007 season he began attending his first open-wheel racing school, and competed in four Skip Barber events. He began a Star Mazda Championship testing program with Ft. Pierce, FL – based Juncos Racing in June of 2008 and made his series debut in the 2009 season-opener at Sebring on March 20.



Predictably, team owner Ricardo Juncos was extremely pleased with the youngster's performance: "It was a big and pleasant surprise for us to see Michael at the top of the time sheets in the final session. This is the first time as a team that we have ever been on an oval, and it is Michael's first experience also. He just turned 16 and is a rookie in the purest sense, so his achievement is that much more impressive. It was a good test for us; we made steady progress that will help our competitiveness for the rest of the season. We are a new team and need to be noticed for our achievements. What Michael did yesterday did that in the most credible way possible."

#### Star Mazda Championship Milwaukee Mile Test / Day One

English racer Richard Kent was quickest on Day One of the test, turning a 28.093 (128.146 mph) lap in the #33 Andersen Racing / Traka / Allied Interior Products Mazda. Kent, won his only race of the 2008 season, the Star Mazda season-ender at Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca, from the pole and is currently 8th in the 2009 championship having started from the pole and finishing second at the Sebring season-opener and finishing 4th in Round Three at Miller Motorsports Park; he missed Round Two at Virginia International Raceway due to a non-racing ankle injury. Conor Daly was second-fast with a 28.141 (127.927 mph) in the #22 Andersen Racing / College Network / Indeck / Cytomax Mazda, followed by Alex Ardoin and Jorge Convalvez tied for third with a 28.208 (127.623 mph). Ardoin drives the #51 JDC Motorsports / Oral & Facial Surgery Center / Twister Trailer Mazda, while Goncalvez pilots the #72 AIM Autosport / Mazda. Furfari showed little promise of his eventual speed with a 14th-fast time of 28.876 (124.671 mph). The top-15 cars were all within one second on Day One.

## Day One Notes from Star Mazda Director of Race Operations Keith Mellick

- Weather- Upper 80's, winds blowing down the back straight (south to north) up to 20mph up to 35mph gusts.
- At the 8:00am driver/crew chief meeting, the question was asked "how many people have driven on an oval longer than 3/4 of a mile?" Only one hand was raised... that of Ritchie Hearn (*Note: Hearn, the driver coach and Crew Chief for Goshen Motorsports has raced as a driver in both the IRL and Champ Car ranks. He won an IRL race at the Las Vegas Motor Speedway and was co-rookie of the year at the 1997 Indianapolis 500, finishing 3rd.*)
- Most drivers concentrated on proper racing line over setup choices during the first half of the day.
- Going into open practice, after the early morning sessions, it was clear that the track lost grip with racing surface temperatures rising (or tire strategy).
- #27 (Anders Krohn) spun in turn 2 and lightly brushed the wall after showing early quick laps. Minor damage to the left side.\*
- #51 (Alex Ardoin) was quickest out of the pits over all competitors, his out lap and first three laps (qualifying simulation) could not be touched by anyone on the first day.
- Day number one would show the normal names at the top of the time sheet (current series points leader Adam Christodoulou being the exception), this would change on the next morning.
- At the end of Day One, Andersen Racing posted the best times with car 33 (Richard Kent) and 22 (Conor Daly), the cars were within 5/100ths of each other. The interesting part of this is....car 33 had older wings, car 22 had new wings.
- Top 15 drivers are within 1 second. Top ten within .5 seconds.

## Star Mazda Championship Milwaukee Mile Test / Day Two

In the first session of Day Two, Kent was again fastest with a 27.642 (130.237 mph). Furfari began showing his speed at this point with a second-fast lap of 27.701 (129.959 mph) and Brazilian racer Caio Lara was third with a 27.723 (129.856 mph) #19 JDC Motorsports / MLD / ATW/ Molecule Mazda. In the second session, another young Brazilian showed some speed, with Jorge Goncalvez topping the times with a 27.891 (129.074 mph) in the #72 AIM Autosport / Mazda. Conor Daly was again second fast with a 28.022 (128.470 mph), Caio Lara was third 28.156 (128.000 mph) and Rusty Mitchell made his first appearance among the fast-4 with a 28.156 (127.637 mph) in his #66 Mitchell Motorsports / Motorola Mazda.

The final session of the day saw Furfari set his two fast laps, followed just a followed just over 2/10ths back by Goncalvez with a 27.758 (129.692 mph) and Richard Kent with a 27.764

(129.664 mph). Merging the times from Day Two sessions, Kent's 27.642 in the second session was the second-quickest time and Caio Lara was third with a 27.723 (129.856 mph) in session one.

#### Day Two Notes from Star Mazda Director of Race Operations Keith Mellick

- Weather-Lower 80's, Sunny, Wind the same as before until 3pm. Cloud cover (afternoon) and winds periodically blowing from the front straight to the back (west to east)
- The morning sessions proved again that the colder air and track temps allowed many drivers to dip well into the 27's, The favorable conditions fell away quickly, Most teams went out on stickers in the morning and lost more than a second a lap the next session....tires and track.
- Ashley Frieberg (check spelling), the sister of Eric Frieberg, tested with team GDT. Her second time in a FM, posted respectable times until contacting the turn 2 wall mid-day.
- List of drivers that hit the wall...all in turn two and without contact with other drivers.
  1. #27 (Krohn) Day 1 turn 2....slight contact with exit wall
  2. #14 (Frieberg) Day 2 turn 2....oversteer loop, slight contact exit wall
  3. #21 (Navarro) Day 2 turn 2....Hit outside wall fairly hard
  4. #24 (J.C. Kester) Day 2 turn 2....Hit outside
  5. #14 (Frieberg) Day 2 turn 2....Hit outside on out lap 3 with sticker tires
  6. #33 (Kent) Day 2 turn 2....Out on stickers looking for a fast lap, the wind caught him out at the entrance to Turn 1, carried into Turn 2.... impact
- Some drivers complained about wind before crashing in turn two.
- The final afternoon session saw many drivers at the sharp end of the field that have not been there during the first three road races.
- #51's ability to blister the first three laps has now been diminished. Many drivers can now do a 28.5 on the first flying lap. (Remember that qualifying will be only 3 laps).
- Rusty Mitchell worked his way up to the top in the proper fashion. No incidents, working through setups one step at a time.

#### Best story of the day :

- #13 (Furfari) was improving and was used to being near the sharp end of the field. Within the last 30 minutes of day 2. He let loose of the wheel and let his setup and talent clear the rest of the drivers by setting the fastest time over the two days. Car # 13 completed a lap of 27.548. The quickest of any competitor at the very end of the test. The team(Juncos), leaning on years of experience, pulled the #13 car in with 20 minutes to spare, to finish the day...proud, humble, and fast!

## Final Star Mazda Championship Milwaukee Test Session Times / Day Two

<b>Pos No.</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Best Tm</b>	<b>Diff</b>	<b>Gap</b>	<b>Best Spd</b>	<b>In Lap</b>
1	13 Michael Furfari	<b>27.548</b>			130.681	70
2	72 Jorge Goncalvez	<b>27.758</b>	+0.210	+0.210	129.692	67
3	33 Richard Kent	<b>27.764</b>	+0.216	+0.006	129.664	54
4	19 Caio Lara	<b>27.775</b>	+0.227	+0.011	129.613	62
5	27 Anders Krohn	<b>27.858</b>	+0.310	+0.083	129.227	82
6	66 Rusty Mitchell	<b>28.005</b>	+0.457	+0.147	128.548	30
7	22 Conor Daly	<b>28.020</b>	+0.472	+0.015	128.480	40
8	17 Mikael Grenier	<b>28.056</b>	+0.508	+0.036	128.315	21
9	2 Joel Miller	<b>28.074</b>	+0.526	+0.018	128.233	37
10	51 Alex Ardoin	<b>28.103</b>	+0.555	+0.029	128.100	16
11	48 Kristy Kester	<b>28.212</b>	+0.664	+0.109	127.605	21
12	24 J.C. Kester	<b>28.235</b>	+0.687	+0.023	127.501	30
13	82 Billy Goshen	<b>28.345</b>	+0.797	+0.110	127.007	48
14	15 Taylor Hacquard	<b>28.365</b>	+0.817	+0.020	126.917	46
15	71 David Ostella	<b>28.437</b>	+0.889	+0.072	126.596	23
16	77 Kevin Toledo	<b>28.454</b>	+0.906	+0.017	126.520	67
17	11 Adam Christodoullou	<b>28.503</b>	+0.955	+0.049	126.302	39
18	80 Toshi Deki	<b>28.577</b>	+1.029	+0.074	125.975	53
19	14 Ashley Frieberg	<b>29.441</b>	+1.893	+0.864	122.278	4
20	31 Carlos Conde	<b>29.458</b>	+1.910	+0.017	122.208	12

The Star Mazda Championship presented by Goodyear is scheduled to race at the Milwaukee Mile on June 20 with the NASCAR Nationwide and Camping World Truck series. The event will be 100 laps of flat-out, side-by-side racing with no pit stops. Qualifying takes place from Noon to 1:00 pm Saturday, June 20th, with the race scheduled to take the green flag at 2:30 pm. In between now and then, the drivers of the Star Mazda Championship have another oval track test, this one at Iowa Speedway on May 27 – 28, in preparation for the series' first race at that track – the Pizza Ranch 100 -- on July 10. The format again will be 100 laps of flat-out racing; this time, however, it will take place under the lights during an ARCA RE/MAX weekend. And before they hit the ovals, the stars of the Star Mazda Championship still have a double-header, two-race weekend on the road course at New Jersey Motorsports park, June 13 – 14. All of which is part of the 13-race, 11-weekend 2009 Star Mazda Championship race schedule that includes road courses, oval tracks and street circuits in both the U.S. and Canada.

The Star Mazda Championship presented by Goodyear is now in its 19<sup>th</sup> year as one of the most successful open-wheel driver development series in North America. The Star Mazda Championship the college basketball, the triple-A baseball of auto racing, a high-speed training ground for future stars of the sport and a major step on the **MAZDASPEED** Motorsports Development Ladder and automaker-supported scholarship program that provides funding for young champions to move up to the next level of racing. Graduates of the Star Mazda

Championship include three drivers in this weekend's Indy 500 field; Marco Andretti, Graham Rahal and Raphael Matos, as well as seven of 21 drivers in the Indy Lights series.

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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.

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