



**TEMPEST IN TROIS-RIVIERÈS – THIS WEEKEND'S STAR MAZDA RACE AT THE 40TH ANNUAL GP3R FEATURES A HEATED CHAMPIONSHIP BATTLE, FIVE WINNERS IN NINE RACES AND A RISING STAR FROM QUEBEC**

**Fast Facts** – Round 10 of the 2009 Star Mazda Championship presented by Goodyear at the 40th Annual Grand Prix de Trois-Rivières, August 14 - 16

- The Star Mazda Championship presented by Goodyear ([www.starmazda.com](http://www.starmazda.com)) is the university-level hockey of Indy 500-style auto racing, a high-speed training ground for future stars of the sport. Series graduates – including Indy Car stars Marco Andretti and Graham Rahal -- have gone on to race in F1, Indy Cars, NASCAR, ALMS and Grand-Am. Star Mazda race cars have a top speed of 160 mph and 0 to 60 mph acceleration takes just 2.8 seconds. Prizes for 2009 are worth \$1.5 million.
- A Canadian rising star from Quebec, 16 year-old Mikael Grenier, a student at Georges-Vanier High School, will be on the Star Mazda starting grid for Sunday's race. A karting champion who started racing at age 5, he scored six podium finishes in Formula BMW Americans in 2008. So far in the 2009 Star Mazda Championship he has two podiums and two top-10 finishes; driving for a top team (Andersen Racing) in front of a home-town crowd, he has to be considered a top contender.
- The hottest driver in the series currently is Peter 'The Irish Steamroller' Dempsey, who won this event last year. In 2008, he won four races – including three in a row – and finished third in the championship. This year, driving for two different teams, he has already won four races – the last three in a row – and the next two races on the schedule (Trois-Rivières and Mosport) are events he won last year.
- The Star Mazda Championship is a major rung on the MAZDASPEED Motorsports Driver Development Ladder, the only automaker-supported motorsports scholarship program reaching from entry-level karting to the top levels of the sport. This year's Star Mazda MAZDASPEED Ladder driver is Conor Daly, the 2009 Skip Barber Pro Series Champion and son of F1/Indy Car/Sports Car racing legend and noted motorsports broadcaster Derek Daly.
- Ten of the top drivers in the series are part of the Star Mazda / Racing for Kids program that arranges visits by racing drivers to children at local hospitals. Racing for Kids ([www.racingforkids.org](http://www.racingforkids.org)) and its professional race drivers have visited more than 20,000 children over the years and raised more than \$5-Million for Children's Hospitals around the world. Star Mazda drivers will visit the Centre Hospitalier Regional De Trois Rivieres (1991 Boul Du Carmel) on Thursday, Aug. 13, 2009 at 1:00 pm.
- The Star Mazda Championship is unique in having categories for more mature racers in whom the competitive fire still burns brightly; the Expert (ages 30 to 44) and Master (45 and older) series. This race-within-a-race features company CEOs risking it all in wheel-to-wheel battles with fearless teenage hotshoes, including Japanese driver Toshihiro Deki (leading the Expert Series) and California Mike Guasch (leading the Master Series).

Trois-Rivières (August 7, 2009) -- With four races remaining on the schedule and fifteen of the series' 25 regular drivers still mathematically in contention for the championship, the battle for supremacy in



this weekend's 40th annual Grand Prix de Trois-Rivières – Round 9 of the 13-race 2009 Star Mazda Championship presented by Goodyear – will be especially fierce.

Carrying the flag for the Quebec racing fans will be Mikael Grenier, a 16-year old 'phenom' who started racing at age 5, won multiple karting championships and scored six podium finishes in last year's intensely competitive Formula BMW Americas series. Born on Oct. 17, 1992 in Quebec City and now a student

living in Stoneham and attending Georges-Vanier High School in Montreal, Grenier has confirmed his talent with a pair of podium finishes and two top-10s so far in the 2009 Star Mazda Championship season.

And while he must be considered a driver to reckon with, driving the #17 Andersen Racing / NAPA Auto Parts / CAA-Quebec / HS Telecom Mazda for one of the top teams in the series – and with a fellow countryman, Remi Lanteigne (a native of Trois-Rivières) engineering his car, Grenier still faces formidable opposition from the deepest and most diverse talent pool in recent Star Mazda history; Sunday's starting grid will feature drivers from ten countries, including three of the top-4 and seven of the top-10 challengers from the 2008 championship.

Leading the pack currently, with a convincing dominance that has only reinforced the appropriateness of his nickname – The Irish Steamroller – is championship leader Peter Dempsey, winner of this event in 2008. Last year, his first season in the Star Mazda Championship, he won four races, three of them in a row, including Road America and both Canadian rounds, Trois-Rivières and Mosport. In 2009, with four races still to go, he has already won four events, including the most recent three in a row... and the next two races are at tracks where he won last year.

Further, he has achieved this with wins on both road circuits and oval tracks while driving for two different teams. He began the season with the Toronto-based AIM Autosport team and won at Virginia International Raceway earlier in the season. Sponsorship considerations forced him to switch to the #3 Juncos Racing / HOOTERS / Motorsport Ireland / Queyside.ie Mazda, fielded by a veteran South American team now based in Florida and in its first season of Star Mazda competition. With financial backing from the fathers of the other drivers on the Juncos team, including Michael Furfari and Sean Burstyn -- as well team driver Walt Bowlin, who is lending Dempsey his HOOTERS-sponsored car for the remainder of the season -- the Juncos Racing team is on its way to one of the most remarkable seasons in the 19-year history of the Star Mazda Championship.

One other driver has won two races and showed dominant form early in the season, Englishman Adam Christodoulou, the 2008 European Formula Renault champion. Driving the #11 JDC Motorsports / Molecule / Alpinestars Mazda, he won the season-opener at Sebring, won from the pole at Salt Lake City and has four podium finishes, including finishing second to Dempsey's two wins in Rounds 8 and 9, the two race weekend at the Harrah's Autobahn Grand Prix presented by Mazda. He is 2nd in the championship, just 19 points behind Dempsey – and with 44 points of offer for a win, the tight confines, unforgiving walls and crowned roads that make up the Trois-Rivières could be where it all changes.

Also having scored wins this season are Christodoulou's fellow Englishman, Richard Kent, Scandinavian racer Anders Krohn and the American son of an Irish racing legend, Conor Daly. Kent burst on the Star Mazda scene in the final race of the 2008 season, winning from the pole at Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca in his first-ever race in the series. Returning in 2009 to drive the #33 Andersen Racing / Traka Allied Interior Products Mazda, he started from the pole and finished second at Sebring, missed Round 2 due to a non-racing ankle injury, and won from the pole in Race 2 of a two-race weekend at New Jersey; he is currently 7th in the championship with 255 points. Anders Krohn, the 2008 FF2000 champion, scored his first-ever Star Mazda victory on the Milwaukee Mile oval driving the #27 Team Mundill / Trallfa / Colosseum Mazda; he is 8th in the championship with 254 points, just one behind Kent.

Conor Daly, son of racing legend and famed motorsports broadcaster Derek Daly, was the 2008 Skip Barber Pro Series champion and won his 2009 Star Mazda Championship drive in the #22 Andersen Racing / College Network / Indeck / Cytomax Mazda courtesy of the MAZDASPEED Motorsports Driver Development Ladder; this unique program is the only automaker-supported ladder program in auto racing today, reaching all the way from karting to the top levels of the sport. Daly, 3rd in the championship with a win from the pole in Race 1 at New Jersey, three podium finishes and 280 points.

Drivers with wins in previous seasons who are always a threat to break through with another victory include Californian Joel Miller, the 2007 Skip Barber Pro Series champion who raced in 2008 with sponsorship from the MAZDASPEED ladder and won from the pole in his series debut at last year's season-opener in Sebring. Now racing the #2 Andersen Racing / Fader Higher Productions / eSoles / Doug Mockett & Co. Mazda, he is 4th in the championship with 275 points, two podiums and four top-5 finishes. Louisiana racer Alex Ardoin, now in his third season of Star Mazda competition, put on a crowd-pleasing, driving-sideways display in the 2007 GP3R and went on to win that year's season finale at Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca. A constantly competitive driver who finished 4th in last year's championship he is looking to break a recent string of bad luck and put his #51 JDC Motorsports / Oral & Facial Surgery Center / Twister Trailer Mazda back in the winner's circle where it belongs.

In addition to the young rising stars of the series, the Star Mazda Championship also includes categories for more mature racers in whom the competitive fire still burns brightly. As a result, in the streets of Trois-Rivières, fans will see corporate CEO's and entrepreneurs battling wheel-to wheel with

fearless teenage rocket pilots. Tied for the lead in the Expert Series (drivers 30 to 44 years old) are Japanese Racer Toshihio Deki (#80 Goshen Motorsports Mazda) with two in-class victories and six in-class top-3 finishes, and Vancouver's Chris Cumming, the 2008 Expert Series champion. Cumming, however, is in training to run the Ironman Canada on August 30 and will miss both the Trois-Rivières and Mosport races. Dominating the Master Series (drivers 45 and older) is Californian Mike Guasch, leading the Master series with five in-class wins so far this season racing the #91 JDC Motorsports / Molecule Mazda.

On-track Star Mazda Championship action in the 40th Annual GP3R begins with two practice sessions of Friday, August 14 (12:30 pm to 1:10 pm and 5:35 pm to 6:15 pm). Qualifying will take place on Saturday, August 15 from 10:30 am to 11:15 am; the field will be split into two groups, with Group 1 qualifying from 10:30 to 10:50 am and Group 2 taking to the track from 10:55 am to 11:15 am. The exciting, F1-style standing start that begins each 45-minute Star Mazda Championship race is scheduled to take place at 11:15am on Sunday, August 16.

Next up on the 2009 schedule for the Star Mazda Championship presented by Goodyear is the second of two Canadian races; the Mobil 1 presents the Grand Prix of Mosport on August 29. The 2009 season wraps up with a final pair of ALMS races; at Road Atlanta on September 25 and at Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca on October 10.

### **About the MAZDASPEED Motorsports Driver Development Ladder**

The *MAZDASPEED* Motorsports Driver Development Ladder is unique in being the only automaker-funded scholarship program that provides funding for champions at each level to move up from karting to the top ranks of the sport. Mazda will provide a next-level, fully-funded ride in a Mazda powered car to the 2009 champions of selected Mazda series.

Open-wheel racers are competing for these awards in 2009:

- One successful kart racer will participate in a full season of the Skip Barber National Presented by Mazda in 2010.
- The 2009 Skip Barber National Champion will be racing in the 2010 Star Mazda Championship Presented by Goodyear.
- The 2009 Star Mazda Champion will be racing in the 2010 Atlantic Series Powered by Mazda.

Mazda is the brand of choice for road-racers across North America. More than 9,000 grassroots racers compete in various classes with the Sports Car Club of America (SCCA) and the National Auto Sport Association (NASA). Racers who are years away from earning a driver's license can now begin their professional motorsports careers in the Mazda family. A driver can begin in karts and progress through the Skip Barber series, Club Racing Formula Mazda, professional Star Mazda and finally to Formula Atlantic, all with Mazda. No other car company has ever connected the dots this way.

**About The Star Mazda Championship presented by Goodyear**

For 2009, the Star Mazda Championship presented by Goodyear ([www.starmazda.com](http://www.starmazda.com)) will feature an 11-weekend, 13-race schedule on major race weekends with American Le Mans, Grand-Am, the Atlantic Championship, NASCAR Nationwide and Craftsman Truck Series. Prize money is \$1.5 million, including a fully-funded drive in the 2010 Atlantic Championship. Drivers 16 and older are welcome to compete and the Star Mazda Championship also features Expert (30 to 44) and Master (45 and older) classes for more mature racers. The Star Mazda Championship features standing starts, wheel-to-wheel racing at 150 mph and budgets a fraction of other top open-wheel ladder series. iRacing.com is the official racing simulation of the Star Mazda Championship, and one-month free 'virtual test drive' of the Star Mazda open-wheel car is available by going to [www.starmazda.com/newdriver](http://www.starmazda.com/newdriver).

---

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).

---

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.atlantic-championship.com](http://www.atlantic-championship.com)

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

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

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

Dean Case / Communications Officer / MAZDASPEED Motorsports  
(310) 318-4582 / E-mail: [MAZDASPEED@MazdaUSA.com](mailto:MAZDASPEED@MazdaUSA.com)

