



CONOR DALY ON POLE FOR INAUGURAL STAR MAZDA RACE AT ST. PETE – RED FLAGS DURING SPLIT QUALIFYING SESSION SCRAMBLES GRID, SETS STAGE FOR EXCITING RACE

Grand Prix of St. Petersburg/Saturday, March 27 – American racer Conor Daly reprised his top-of-the-time-sheets performance from final practice on Friday and took the pole position in Saturday morning qualifying for Sunday's inaugural Star Mazda Championship presented by



Goodyear race at the Grand Prix of St. Petersburg. His lap of 1:10.352 (92.108) around the 1.8-mile, 14-turn St. Pete street circuit in the #22 Juncos Racing / INDECK / College Network / Merchant Services Ltd. / Tom Lange Co. Mazda now stands as the official Star Mazda track record and he will start from the inside of the front row.

"The car felt really good this morning and the Juncos Racing team and I are ready for a good race on Sunday," said Daly, who won from the pole at New Jersey in 2009 and finished third in the championship. "The second session for the faster cars being so short it has really scrambled the grid and left a number of quick cars starting back in the field. I'm sure they're going to want to move up as soon as possible, so the start and early laps will be exciting for them. Personally, I'm hoping for a long, uneventful run at the front to victory... but we're also prepared for a lot of full-course yellows."

Starting alongside Daly will be Brazilian rookie Joao Victor Horto, who turned a lap of 1:10.794 ((1.533 mph) in his #18 Team Apex / Wabash Capital Investments Mazda. Horto is a karting champion and veteran of the Formula BMW series. Starting third, after a heroic effort by his JDC Motorsports crew to repair a severely damaged #19 JDC Motorsports / MLD / ATW Mazda will be Brazilian racer Caio Lara. It was his incident – if indeed incident can describe top-speed contact with walls on both sides of the track -- in Turn 9 early in the second half of the split qualifying session that brought an end to the session with only nine laps completed. Due to the nature of the Star Mazda rules, if his crew had been forced to change two or more tires as a result of the crash, he would have been moved to the back of the field. As it is, only one tire needed to be replaced and he will retain his starting spot on the inside of the second row.

"I feel bad for the team about what happened, but I know it was my mistake and not the car that caused the crash," says Lara, a third-year Star Mazda competitor who scored four top-5 finishes in 2009 and finished 8th in the championship. "The car is very good and I know that the JDC team will give it back to me just like new and we will start from third. It was a bad crash, but I have been racing a long time and these things happen; it will not affect my attitude or approach to the race."

Starting fourth will be Scandinavian racer Anders Krohn, the pole-sitter at Sebring. He turned a lap of 1:11.307 (90.875 mph) in the #47 Andersen Racing / Norse Cutting & Abandonment / Trallfa / Colosseum Mazda. And rounding out the top-5 is American Rusty Mitchell, who started from the pole and finished 2nd on the street circuit in Trois-Rivières, Quebec last season. His lap of 1:11.317 (90.862 mph) in the #66 Mitchell Motorsports / Motorola / Petro Comm Mazda earned him the inside of the third row on the grid.

MAZDASPEED Motorsports Driver Development Ladder scholarship winner Connor De Phillippi in the #11 JDC Motorsports / MAZDASPEED Motorsports / Skip Barber Mazda and the quickest of the trio of local drivers was again St. Petersburg College student Nick Andries. He has consistently-been 11th-fast in pre-race practice session – which is where he will start on Sunday in the #81 Andersen Racing / Team Pelfrey / Andersen RacePark Mazda.

Luminaries who were relegated toward the back of the field, either through sheer circumstance or strategy gone wrong, include Sebring winner Tristan Vautier. The French pilot of the #38 Andersen Racing / Moulin TP / Cecibon / Circuit du Laquais Mazda will start from 13th on the grid and right next to him will be Englishman Richard Kent, driver of the #33 Team GDT / Traka Mazda. In 2008, Kent drove his first-ever Star Mazda Championship race in the season-finale at Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca – and won from the pole with a new lap record. In 2009, he ran the full season, scored four poles and two victories and finished 7th in the championship.

The 45-minute Round 2 of the 2010 Star Mazda Championship is scheduled to take the green light at 11:50 am Sunday, March 28.

Pos No.	Name	Best Tm	Best Speed	In Lap	Diff	Gap	Sponsor
1	22 Conor Daly	1:10.352	92.108	7			INDECK, The College Network, Merchant Services Ltd., Tom Lang Co.
2	18 Joao Horta	1:10.794	91.533	7	0.442	0.442	Wabash Capital Investments
3	19 Caio Lara	1:11.049	91.205	7	0.697	0.255	MLD, ATW
4	47 Anders Krohn	1:11.307	90.875	3	0.955	0.258	Norse Cutting and Abandonment, Trallfa Industries, Colosseum
5	66 Rusty Mitchell	1:11.317	90.862	7	0.965	0.010	Motorola, Petro Comm.
6	11 Connor De Phillippi	1:11.403	90.752	6	1.051	0.086	Mazdaspeed Motorsports, Skip Barber
7	16 David Ostella	1:11.565	90.547	7	1.213	0.162	GP Global Precast
8	85 Chris Miller	1:11.578	90.531	7	1.226	0.013	Miller Milling, Red Line Oil

9	27	Court Vernon	1:11.610	90.490	6	1.258	0.032	Mangroove Boats,Capt. Harry's
10	13	Michael Furfari	1:11.762	90.298	6	1.410	0.152	Furfari Paving
11	81	Nick Andries	1:11.763	90.297	6	1.411	0.001	Team Pelfrey/Anderson Racepark/ Allied
12	9	Jorge Goncalvez	1:11.903	90.121	7	1.551	0.140	Wabash Capital Investments
13	38	Tristan Vautier	1:11.999	90.001	2	1.647	0.096	Moulin TP, Cecibon, Circuit du Laquais, Fontanel
14	33	Richard Kent	1:12.399	89.504	8	2.047	0.400	Traka
15	25	Tatiana Calderon	1:12.842	88.960	9	2.490	0.443	Kia Motors
16	94	Hayden Duerson	1:13.156	88.578	6	2.804	0.314	Tampa Bay Endodontics
17	20	Carlos Linares	1:14.018	87.546	4	3.666	0.862	IND
18	64	Patrick O'Neill	1:14.783	86.651	3	4.431	0.765	O'Neill Construction
19	31	Carlos Conde	1:15.202	86.168	6	4.850	0.419	Pronto-GMT, Olympus Securities
20	28	Juan Piedrahita	1:15.390	85.953	4	5.038	0.188	Petro Sur, GFK Motors
21	17	Mikael Grenier	1:16.588	84.609	2	6.236	1.198	NAPA Auto Parts, CAA-Quebec, HS Telecom
22	23	Walt Bowlin		-	0			Tampa Bay Jaw Surgery
23	65	JW Roberts		-	0			General Data Tech

