



GOODYEAR



MAZDASPEED MOTORSPORTS DEVELOPMENT



VAUTIER VITESSE - FRENCH RACER TRISTAN VAUTIER DOMINATES STAR MAZDA PRE-SEASON TESTING AT INDYCAR SPRING TRAINING AT BARBER MOTORSPORTS PARK

Barber Motorsports Park / Birmingham, AL / March 16, 2011 – Coming out on top in a three-way battle for the quick time on the final day's time sheet, French racer Tristan Vautier put in a flier that was 6/10ths quicker than anything he had done before and made him the first Star Mazda Championship driver to



turn a lap in 'the .19s' at Barber Motorsports Park. Then two, laps later, he found another 2/10ths, finally recording the fastest time of 1:19.399 (104.283 mph) in his #5 JDC Motorsports / Cecibon / Circuit du Laquais Mazda.

"The conditions were just perfect for the Star Mazda car and we got a lot of track time to learn about the car and the members of the team," said Vautier, a second-year Star Mazda driver who won two races in 2010 and finished 5th in the championship. "It's only the first test, but it gives us a good feeling going into the first race, which we know will be much different than here, and difficult with the changing conditions you find at a street circuit. But JDC Motorsports is a championship-winning team and we are working together very well, so we are confident, but not over-confident."

Battling Vautier for the top spot throughout the 3-day test – and achieving it in the second session of Day 1 – was Chilean racer Martin Scuncio in the #60 Juncos Racing / Fuerza Chile Mazda. His lap of 1:19.894 (103.637 mph) was second-quick (.495 sec. back) on the day and also overall during the test. Scuncio ran the final Star Mazda race of the 2010 season at Road Atlanta and made a dramatic impression, very nearly taking the pole and battling for the win throughout the race.

Third-quick on Wednesday and also consistently at the sharp end of the field was Brazilian driver J.V. Horto with a 1:20.200 (103.242 mph) in his #18 Juncos Racing / Programa Leilões Mazda. Horto is also a second-year Star Mazda driver who scored four podium finishes in his rookie season and was 7th in the championship.

Fourth-fast under difficult circumstances was 2010 USF2000 runner-up, Irish driver Patrick McKenna, the leading Star Mazda rookie in the field, with a lap of 1:20.284 (103.134 mph) in the #48 Team GDT / Motorsport Ireland / Irish Sports Council / General Data Tech Mazda.



GOODYEAR



PERFORMANCE[®] FRICTION BRAKES



BBS

QUARTER MASTER



GOODYEAR



MAZDASPEED
MOTORSPORTS DEVELOPMENT



Quick on the first day in the dry, he slid off-course and damaged his car in the wet morning session on Day 2, putting an end to his on-track activities for the day.

"I've had a lot less pre-season testing that most of the drivers out here, so we're still finding our way a little bit, but even with the problems yesterday we were quick overall in the test and learned what we needed to," said McKenna, who is following in the footsteps of fellow Irish Star Mazda racer Peter Dempsey who



will be testing today at Barber Motorsports Park for a drive in the 2011 Firestone Indy Lights Championship. "Team GDT has given me a great opportunity and great support and given that they won two championships last year (the Star Mazda Expert and Master Series), I think we'll be in the fight at St. Pete and throughout the season."

Rounding out the top-5 in the session was St. Petersburg college student Nick Andries, driving for Team Pelfrey, a Clearwater, Florida-based ex-IndyCar team now competing in the Star Mazda Championship. Andries, who competed full-time in both the Star Mazda Championship and Skip Barber Pro series in 2010, turned a lap of 1:20.690 (102.615 mph) in the #81 Team Pelfrey Mazda.

The weather, predicted to be in the high 70s, was ideal for the Star Mazda Championship cars, cold (in the low 60s) to help their Renesis rotary engines make maximum power, and with a solid cloud cover to keep the track temperature down and grip high. The conditions were such that every car participating in the final early-morning session of the three-day Star Mazda Championship series test during IndyCar spring training substantially lowered their best lap time from previous days. The top-4 cars were separated by less than a second around the 17-turn, 2.38-mile Barber Motorsports Park track, and the merge of all the quickest lap (second chart below) shows an extremely competitive field for the most important season in the 21-year history of the Star Mazda Championship and the inaugural season of the Mazda Road to Indy that will have drivers battling for prizes valued at \$1.5 million, including a scholarship to move up and compete in Indy Lights in 2012.

The first race of the 2010 season is scheduled to get the green light for the traditional Star Mazda standing start at 4:10 pm Saturday, March 26 at the Grand Prix of St. Petersburg.



GOODYEAR



PERFORMANCE[®]
FRICTION
BRAKES



BBS





Star Mazda Championship – Wednesday, March 16

Pos	No.	Name	Best Tm	Best Speed	In Lap	Diff	Gap	Sponsor
1	5	Tristan Vautier	1:19.399	104.283	27			Cecibon, Circuit du Laquais
2	60	Martin Scuncio	1:19.894	103.637	25	0.495	0.495	Fuerza Chile
3	7	J.V. Horto	1:20.200	103.242	21	0.801	0.306	Programa LeiLoes
4	48	Patrick McKenna	1:20.284	103.134	27	0.885	0.084	Mosport Ireland / Irish Sports Council / General Data Tech
5	81	Nick Andries	1:20.690	102.615	23	1.291	0.406	
6	10	Tatiana Calderon	1:20.903	102.345	20	1.504	0.213	JAC Motors
7	11	Connor De Phillippi	1:21.022	102.194	23	1.623	0.119	
8	88	Sage Karam	1:21.095	102.102	16	1.696	0.073	Comfort Revolution
9	39	Richard Heistand	1:22.569	100.280	9	3.170	1.474	Masney Auto Transportation
10	26	Jérimy Daniel	1:25.158	97.231	14	5.759	2.589	FixAuto / Sherwin-Williams
11	20	Carlos Linares		-	0			Mindeporte
12	23	Walt Bowlin		-	0			Tampa Bay Jaw Surgery
13	27	Nick Mancuso		-	0			Indeck / Lake Forest Sportscars / F.A.S.T. Race Products
14	66	Zach Meyer		-	0			
15	72	Larry Pegram		-	0			Foremost Insurance / Tampa Bay Jaw Surgery
16	85	Chris Miller		-	0			Miller Milling, Red Line Oil

Best-lap merge

Pos	No.	Name	Overall BestTm	In Session
1	5	Tristan Vautier	1:19.399	Wednesday Test
2	60	Martin Scuncio	1:19.894	Wednesday Test
3	7	Joao Horto	1:20.200	Wednesday Test
4	48	Patrick McKenna	1:20.284	Wednesday Test
5	81	Nick Andries	1:20.690	Wednesday Test
6	10	Tatiana Calderon	1:20.903	Wednesday Test
7	11	Connor De Phillippi	1:21.022	Wednesday Test
8	88	Sage Karam	1:21.095	Wednesday Test
9	85	Chris Miller	1:22.128	Tuesday Final Practice
10	39	Richard Heistand	1:22.569	Wednesday Test
11	27	Nick Mancuso	1:22.851	Monday First Practice
12	66	Zach Meyer	1:23.429	Monday afternoon practice
13	20	Carlos Linares	1:23.660	Tuesday Second Practice
14	72	Larry Pegram	1:23.846	Tuesday Final Practice
15	26	Jérimy Daniel	1:25.158	Wednesday Test
16	23	Walt Bowlin	1:26.385	Tuesday Final Practice





About Star Mazda Championship presented by Goodyear

For 2011, the Star Mazda Championship presented by Goodyear will be a major part of the Mazda Road to Indy and will feature a 10-weekend, 11-race schedule, all on major race weekends and most with IndyCar. Two weekends are with the American Le Mans series, and one is a double-header with Indy Lights. Rising stars from around the world will be watched by more than a million fans as they compete for prizes valued at \$1.5 million, including a scholarship to move up and race in the 2012 Firestone Indy Lights series. Drivers 16 and older are welcome to compete and the Star Mazda Championship also features the Expert Series for drivers 30 and older. The Star Mazda Championship features standing starts, wheel-to-wheel racing at 160 mph and budgets a fraction of other top open-wheel ladder series. For more information on the Star Mazda Championship please visit www.starmazda.com.

For more information on the Star Mazda Championship and its drivers, as well as the Mazda Motorsports ladder system, please visit www.starmazda.com and www.mazdausa.com. For information, interviews and photos, please contact Star Mazda Communications Director Peter Frey at (818) 398-5733 or StarMazdaPR@aol.com.

Twitter: <http://www.twitter.com/starmazdaseries>

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/starmazdaseries>

ABOUT MAZDA

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, Mazda2, Mazda3, Mazda6, RX-7 and other vintage Mazda models competing, because every Mazda has the Soul of a Sports Car. In fact, the largest road-racing class in the world is Spec Miata, with more than 2,500 first- and second-generation Miatas tearing up America's racetracks, making it the most-raced production car in the world. Mazda's involvement in motorsports extends to its relationship with Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca, one of the world's premier road-racing circuits, the Skip Barber Schools for driving and racing, and the Mazda Road to Indy.

Mazda North American Operations is headquartered in Irvine, Calif. and oversees the sales, marketing, parts and customer service support of Mazda vehicles in the United States, Canada and Mexico through nearly 900 dealers. Operations in Canada are managed by Mazda Canada, Inc., located in Ontario; and in Mexico by Mazda Motor de Mexico in Mexico City.

For information, contact Dean Case / Communications Officer /MAZDASPEED Motorsports (310) 318-4582 / mazdaspeed@mazdausa.com

