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CONNOR DE PHILLIPPI SCORES BACK-TO-BACK VICTORIES... SIX MONTHS APART – WITH A WIN FROM THE SECOND ROW IN STAR MAZDA ROUND 1 AT THE G.P. OF ST. PETE

Grand Prix of St. Petersburg (March 26, 2011) – Connor De Phillippi, the California racer who



won the Star Mazda Championship presented by Goodyear season finale from the pole at Road Atlanta, scored his second victory in a row – six months later – winning Round 1 of the 2011 season at the Grand Prix of St. Petersburg in the Team Pelfrey / Justice Brothers Products / Trademark Garage Floors Mazda.

Starting from the inside of the second row, De Phillippi kept his cool through a multi-lap full-course yellow on the first lap of the race, and on the second lap of the re-start, passed pole-sitter Martin Scuncio's #60 Juncos Racing / Fuerza Chile Mazda for the lead... a position he held until he crossed the finish line with a two second margin in hand. Finishing 3rd was French racer Tristan Vautier in the #5 JDC Motorsports / Cecibon / Circuit du Laquais Mazda; Vautier dominated pre-season testing and was the quickest driver in the first practice session at St. Pete, but his team missed the setup by just a hair and he was content, relatively, to take home 3rd-place points.

The winner of the Expert Series for drivers 30 and older was 2010 Expert Series champion J.W. Roberts; the Texas computer company CEO and owner/driver of Team GDT started from the 14th spot on the starting grid and moved up to finish 11th overall in the #65 Team GDT / General Data Tech Mazda.

"I was amazed at how good a car Team Pelfrey gave me for the race; it was absolutely consistent throughout and never faded at all," said De Phillippi, who finished third in the championship and was Rookie of the Year last year driving for another team. "We were hoping for a podium finish and wanted to strike a balance between being aggressive and still bringing the car home in the points. I was able to keep out of trouble in the race and it feels great to head into Round 2 at Barber Motorsports Park in two weeks leading the championship."



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Starting and finishing 4th was Irish Rookie Patrick McKenna, runner-up in the 2010 USF2000 championship and now racing the #48 Team GDT / Motorsport Ireland / Irish Sports Council / General Data Tech Mazda. Rounding out the top-5 was second-year Star Mazda racer Chris Miller, who moved up from 8th on the grid to finish 5th in the #85 JDC Motorsports / Miller Milling / Red Line Oil Mazda.

Several other drives of note included second-year driver Carlos Linares, racing the #20 Linares Racing / Mindeporte Mazda for the completely re-vamped Linares Racing team, now being run by experienced team manager Martin Bates. Linares qualified 11th and moved up to finish 6th, the best result of his Star Mazda career so far. Also well worth mentioning is Nick Mancuso, a sports car racer and extreme adventurer making his open-wheel racing debut at St. Pete. He signed a sponsor deal during the weekend with the Jimmy John's Gourmet Sandwich chain and drove an excellent race from 13th on the grid to finish 7th in the #27 JDC Motorsports / Jimmy John's / Indeck / Lake Forest Sportscars Mazda.

Pos	No.	Name	Laps	Diff	Gap	Best Tm	Sponsor
1	11	Connor De Phillippi	29			1:11.967	Justice Brothers Products / Trademark Garage Floors
2	60	Martin Scuncio	29	2.261	2.261	1:12.016	Fuerza Chile
3	5	Tristan Vautier	29	3.032	0.771	1:12.117	Cecibon, Circuit du Laquais, Fontanel
4	48	Patrick McKenna	29	6.441	3.409	1:12.439	Mosport Ireland / Irish Sports Council / General Data Tech
5	85	Chris Miller	29	10.366	3.925	1:12.401	Miller Milling, Red Line Oil
6	20	Carlos Linares	29	13.347	2.981	1:12.688	Mindeporte
7	27	Nick Mancuso	29	15.709	2.362	1:13.045	Jimmy John's Sandwiches / Indeck / Lake Forest Sportscars
8	28	Gustavo Menezes	29	17.368	1.659	1:13.146	TrueCar, Inc. / www.TrueCar.com
9	39	Richard Heistand	29	20.554	3.186	1:13.168	Masney Auto Transportation
10	26	Jérimy Daniel	29	28.881	8.327	1:14.035	FixAuto / Sherwin-Williams
11	65	J.W. Roberts	29	35.338	6.457	1:14.678	General Data Tech
12	66	Zach Meyer	29	36.267	0.929	1:14.528	
13	72	Larry Pegram	28	1 Lap	1 Lap	1:15.867	Foremost Insurance / Tampa Bay Jaw Surgery
14	7	J.V. Horto	27	2 Laps	1 Lap	1:12.847	Programa LeiLoes
15	88	Sage Karam	16	13 Laps	11 Laps	1:12.878	Comfort Revolution
16	23	Walt Bowlin	8	21 Laps	8 Laps	1:17.588	Tampa Bay Jaw Surgery
17	81	Nick Andries		29 Laps	8 Laps		Lithionics Battery / GS610 Brake Fluid / Trademark Garage Floors
18	10	Tatiana Calderon		29 Laps	1.597		JAC Motors





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Round 2 of the 2011 Star Mazda Championship will take place at Barber Motorsports Park on April 10. Fans can follow the drivers through the course of the weekend via the series' web site at www.StarMazda.com, or on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/starmazdaseries> and Twitter at <http://www.twitter.com/starmazdaseries>. Follow the actual race on your computer or smartphone at <http://livetiming.net/starmazda/>.

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.

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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.

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