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VAUTIER VICTORIOUS WITH POLE-TO-CHECKER RUN IN ROUND 2 OF THE 2011 STAR MAZDA CHAMPIONSHIP SEASON AT THE INDY GRAND PRIX OF ALABAMA

Indy Grand Prix of Alabama / Barber Motorsports Park (April 10, 2011) – French racer Tristan Vautier, who dominated pre-season Star Mazda testing at Barber Motorsports Park during IndyCar spring training, put an exclamation point on that dominance with a pole-to-checkered run – building up a 33-second lead in the process – in Round 2 of the 2011 Star Mazda Championship presented by Goodyear at the Indy Grand Prix of Alabama.



Vautier, who won two Star Mazda races in 2010 and finished 5th in the championship, drove a flawless race in his #5 JDC Motorsports / Cecibon / Circuit du Laquais Mazda, never giving up the lead or participating in any of the drama taking place in his rear view mirrors.

"We knew that the track was going to change a lot between the start of the race and the end, and that tires would be the key to the race," said Vautier. "The JDC team and my engineer Rick Cameron gave me a very good car, and it was my job to not slide it around and keep the tires as good as possible in case we needed them at the end of the race. But I got into a good rhythm and the car was very fast without trying too hard, so I

just drove at a comfortable pace and was surprised to finish so far ahead. The next races are ovals, and I have a lot to learn about racing on them, but the team is working very well together and we all have confidence in each other, which is the most important thing."

Redeeming himself in a substantial way with a run from 9th on the grid to 2nd was Nick Andries in the Team Pelfrey / Lithionics Battery / GS610 Brake Fluid / Trademark Garage Floors Mazda. The St. Petersburg college student endured a problematic beginning to his season when a squeeze play at the start of the opening round at the Grand Prix of St. Pete turned his front-row start into a trip into the tire wall on the opening lap.

And, scoring the first podium of her Star Mazda career so far, Colombian racer Tatiana Calderon – the lone female driver in the field – battled both Andries and her teammate, J.V. Horto, to finish 3rd in the #10 Juncos Racing / JAC Motors Mazda. In the Expert Series for driver 30 and older, Larry Pegram, a top AMA SuperBike racer broadening his resume with periodic appearances in the Star Mazda



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Championship, scored his first in-class win with a drive from 13th on the grid to finish 8th overall in the #72 AIM Autosport / Tampa Bay Jaw Surgery / Foremost Insurance Mazda.

Other drives of note included Venezuelan driver Carlos Linares, driving the #20 Linares Racing / Mindeporte Mazda for his family-owned team; he qualified 14th on the grid and raced his way up to 5th... a good indication that the major between-seasons team overhaul, including bringing in noted manager Martin Bates, have the team headed for a banner season. Nick Mancuso, the experienced sports car racer / extreme adventurer and National Merit Scholar who is making his open-wheel debut this season in Star Mazda, again showed his impressive – and developing -- skills with a 6th-place finish in the #27 JDC Motorsports / Indeck / Jimmy John's / Lake Forest Sportscars Mazda. And young Californian Gustavo Menezes, making the jump directly from the top ranks of international karting to Star Mazda, put in an impressive drive from 10th to 7th in the #28 Juncos Racing / TrueCar / Safety Park Mazda.

The controversy in a race that went green flag-to-flag was provided by two friends, Irish racer Patrick McKenna and Connor De Phillippi, winner of both the final race of the 2010 season and the 2011 season-opener in St. Petersburg. Racing among the leaders at the halfway mark of the race, McKenna in the #48 Team GDT / Motorsport Ireland / Irish Sports Council / General Data Tech Mazda and De Phillippi in the Team Pelfrey / Justice Brothers Products / Trademark Garage Floors Mazda entered a turn wheel-to-wheel and, even trying to leave each other racing room, wound up tangled; De Phillippi, who qualified 5th, finished on the lead lap on 10th and McKenna, who started 4th on the grid, wound up a lap down in 13th.

Pos No.	Name	Laps	Diff	Gap	Sponsor
1	5 Tristan Vautier	33			Cecibon, Circuit du Laquais, Fontanel
2	81 Nick Andries	33	39.586	39.586	Lithionics Battery / GS610 Brake Fluid / Trademark Garage Floors
3	10 Tatiana Calderon	33	41.056	1.470	JAC Motors
4	7 J.V. Horto	33	42.963	1.907	Programa LeiLoes
5	20 Carlos Linares	33	48.562	5.599	Mindeporte
6	27 Nick Mancuso	33	56.834	8.272	Jimmy Johns Sandwiches /Indeck / Lake Forest Sportscars
7	28 Gustavo Menezes	33	1:07.228	10.394	www.truecar.com / TrueCar, Inc.
8	72 Larry Pegram	33	1:15.140	7.912	Foremost Insurance / Tampa Bay Jaw Surgery
9	88 Sage Karam	33	1:20.210	5.070	MAZDASPEED / Comfort Revolution
10	11 Connor De Phillippi	33	1:25.345	5.135	Justice Brothers Products / Trademark Garage Floors
11	60 Martin Scuncio	32	1 Lap	1 Lap	Bia Comunicaciones / Cable Del Pacifico
12	66 Zach Meyer	32	1 Lap	0.350	Damis Partners III
13	48 Patrick McKenna	32	1 Lap	25.036	Mosport Ireland / Irish Sports Council / General Data Tech
14	23 Walt Bowlin	32	1 Lap	38.902	Tampa Bay Jaw Surgery
15	26 Jérimy Daniel	30	3 Laps	2 Laps	FixAuto / Sherwin-Williams
16	19 Richard Heistand	24	9 Laps	6 Laps	General Data Tech





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With his 3rd-place finish at St. Pete and win from the pole at Barber, Vautier moves into the championship lead with 83 points. De Phillippi, who came to Round 2 leading the battle on the strength of his St. Pete victory, drops to 2nd with 71 points. Martin Scuncio, who drove the #60 Juncos Racing / Bia Comunicaciones / Cable Del Pacifico Mazda to the pole position and a 2nd-place finish at St. Pete and finished 11th at Barber after qualifying 3rd, is 3rd in the points with 66. Rounding out the top-5 are Carlos Linares with 62 points and Nick Andries with 60 points. Leading the Expert Series is Walt Bowlin, Larry Pegram's AIM Autosport teammate in the #23 Tampa Bay Jaw Surgery Mazda, and JDC Motorsports, fielding both race winner Vautier and promising rookie Mancuso, leads the team championship.

Round 3 of the 2011 Star Mazda Championship presented by Goodyear will take place at the Lucas Oil Raceway (formerly O'Reilly Raceway Park) oval during the 'Night Before the 500' USAC event in Indianapolis on the night before the 100th anniversary running of the Indy 500. The weekend will include many promotional activities for Star Mazda drivers at the Speedway, including the second half of the 'Indy Summit,' which will feature meetings with IncyCar officials and team owners in addition to oval-track training for drivers from Mazda Road to Indy driver coach Al Unser, Jr.

Fans can follow the drivers through the course of the season via the series' web site at www.StarMazda.com, or on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/starmazdaserie> and Twitter at <http://www.twitter.com/starmazdaserie>. 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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