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JDC MOTORSPORTS DRIVER TRISTAN VAUTIER WINS HIS FOURTH STAR MAZDA CHAMPIONSHIP RACE OF THE SEASON -- AMID MUCH DRAMA -- AT THE GRAND PRIX OF BALTIMORE

Baltimore Grand Prix / Sept. 4, 2011 – Happy to be well clear of all the drama taking place behind him, JDC Motorsports driver Tristan Vautier won his fourth race of the season – all from the pole – in today's Round



Sage Karam, Tristan Vautier, Joao Victor Horto, Walt Bowlin

10 of the 2011 Star Mazda Championship presented by Goodyear at the inaugural Grand Prix of Baltimore. Following him across the finish line, just half a second back, was Andretti Autosport driver Sage Karam. Crossing the finish line third was Juncos Racing driver João Victor Horto and rounding out the podium was Expert Series driver Walt Bowlin who finished 1st in class and 6th overall racing for AIM Autosport.

With 46 points available in the upcoming season finale in two weeks at Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca and Vautier carrying a 38-point lead (392 vs. 354), the young Frenchman has only one competitor, Connor De Phillippi, standing between him and the series championship. And the battle for the prestigious Rookie of the Year award will also be settled that weekend, between Sage Karam and Gustavo Menezes.

"I felt very much in control of the race right from the start, although I could see Connor De Phillippi in my mirrors and that always gives a little bit of pressure; but then at about the half-way point I didn't see him anymore and they told me over the radio that he crashed, so that meant I could stop worrying about him and focus instead on not making a mistake," said Vautier who splits his time between Grenoble, France and Florida. "This turned out to be a very important race and it looks good for the championship but we must be careful that we do not take anything for granted. I am very thankful to the JDC team and my engineer Rick Cameron for a great car today and all season long. But I know that when we go to the finale at Mazda Raceway we will be prepared for a hard fight, like every weekend."

Due to a lack of practice time resulting from track construction delays, Star Mazda qualifying was turned into a practice session and cars were gridded for the race in the order of their points in the championship. Vautier, leader of the championship since his first victory in Round 2 at Barber Motorsports Park, started



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from the pole in the #5 JDC Motorsports / Cecibon / Circuit du Laquais Mazda. It is worth noting that he was also quickest in yesterday's practice session. In each of the races Vautier has won, including today, he has not only started from the pole but also set the fast lap of the race.

Sage Karam, the 2010 USF2000 national champion and winner of two Star Mazda races so far this season, was lined up 5th on the grid in his #88 Andretti Autosport / MAZDASPEED / Comfort Revolution Mazda, but was quickly battling for a spot in the top-3. Horto, who scored his first win of the season in Round 6 at Mosport, is 4th in the championship and lined his #7 Juncos Racing / Programa Leilões Mazda on the outside of the second row. And Bowlin, the racing dentist from St. Petersburg, FL, who is second in the Expert Series championship for drivers 30 and older with one in-class win, started from 13th on the grid in the #23 AIM Autosport / Tampa Bay Jaw Surgery Mazda.

The drama began in the first turn of the first lap when Team GDT driver J.W. Roberts, the 2010 Expert Series (for driver 30 and older) champion -- and currently leading the 2011 Expert Series -- crashed his #65 Team GDT / General Data Tech Mazda out of the race. On Lap 2, 3rd-place runner Nick Andries had an incident in the #81 Team Pelfrey / Lithionics Battery / GS610 Brake Fluid / Trademark Garage Floors Mazda that forced him into the pits for repairs; when he rejoined the race, it was four laps down and his championship hopes were gone. And on Lap 14, his Team Pelfrey teammate, Connor De Phillippi, who was in the fight among the top-3 in his #11 Team Pelfrey / Justice Brothers Products / Trademark Garage Floors Mazda, did not come around for Lap 15, triggering a long full-course yellow. A tough day for Team Pelfrey; finishing 9th and 10th respectively.

| Pos No. | Name | Laps | Diff | Gap | Best Tm | Best Speed | In Lap | Sponsor |
|---------|------------------------|------|---------|--------|----------|------------|--------|------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | 5 Tristan Vautier | 21 | | | 1:31.192 | 80.533 | 13 | Cecibon, Circuit du Laquais, Fontanel |
| 2 | 88 Sage Karam | 21 | 0.552 | 0.552 | 1:31.507 | 80.256 | 6 | MAZDASPEED / Comfort Revolution |
| 3 | 7 J.V. Horto | 21 | 3.133 | 2.581 | 1:31.995 | 79.830 | 5 | Programa LeiLoes, Athlete of Christ |
| 4 | 28 Gustavo Menezes | 21 | 3.588 | 0.455 | 1:32.236 | 79.622 | 11 | www.truecar.com / Truecar, Inc. |
| 5 | 26 Jérimy Daniel | 21 | 6.522 | 2.934 | 1:33.873 | 78.233 | 11 | FixAuto / Sherwin-Williams |
| 6 | 23 Walt Bowlin | 20 | 1 Lap | 1 Lap | 1:39.825 | 73.569 | 11 | Tampa Bay Jaw Surgery |
| 7 | 39 Joao Jardim | 18 | 3 Laps | 2 Laps | 1:32.266 | 79.596 | 13 | Shopping M |
| 8 | 10 Tatiana Calderon | 18 | 3 Laps | 0.520 | 1:32.812 | 79.128 | 12 | JAC Motors |
| 9 | 81 Nick Andries | 17 | 4 Laps | 1 Lap | 1:31.824 | 79.979 | 9 | Lithionics Battery / GS610 Brake Fluid / Trademark Garage Floors |
| 10 | 11 Connor De Phillippi | 13 | 8 Laps | 4 Laps | 1:31.260 | 80.473 | 9 | Justice Brothers Products / Trademark Garage Floors |
| 11 | 20 Carlos Linares | 5 | 16 Laps | 8 Laps | 1:34.772 | 77.491 | 4 | Mindeporte |
| 12 | 99 Learic Cramer | 4 | 17 Laps | 1 Lap | 1:44.267 | 70.435 | 2 | JWR |
| 13 | 65 J.W. Roberts | | 21 Laps | 4 Laps | | | - 0 | General Data Tech |



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This was Round 10 of an 11-race season for the Star Mazda Championship presented by Goodyear. Round 12, the season finale, will take place during the America Le Mans series weekend at Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca on Sept. 16-18.

On-track action begins with a 35-minute practice session from 8:00-8:35 am Friday, Sept. 16, followed by an afternoon session from 1:30 - 2:05 pm. There is no on-track activity Saturday, with qualifying scheduled for 8:00 - 8:45 am Sunday, Sept. 18 and the race will get the green light for the series' traditional standing start at 10:40 am.

The awards banquet to present \$1.5 million in year-end prizes, including the championship winner's Mazda Road to Indy scholarship for the 2012 Indy Lights season, will take place later that evening.

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

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

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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.mx-5cup.com www.skipbarber.com www.usf2000.com www.starmazda.com

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