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JOÃO VICTOR HORTO QUICKEST IN BOTH THURSDAY STAR MAZDA CHAMPIONSHIP TEST SESSIONS LEADING UP TO 2011 SEASON FINALE AT MAZDA RACEWAY LAGUNA SECA

Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca / September 15, 2011 – Juncos Racing driver João Victor Horto, winner of Round 6 at Mosport, was quickest in both Star Mazda Championship presented by Goodyear promoter



test sessions today at Mazda Raceway. His quickest lap – and everyone's quickest lap for that matter -- came in the afternoon session, a 1:21.198, in the #7 Juncos Racing / Programa Leilões Mazda.

Second-quick was Horto's Juncos Racing teammate, Gustavo Menezes, with a 1:21.387 in the #28 Juncos Racing / Truecar / Safety Park Mazda, followed by championship points leader Tristan Vautier with a 1:21.585 in his #5 JDC Motorsports / Cecibon / Circuit du Laquis Mazda. Rounding out the top-5 were Connor De Phillippi, the only driver standing between Vautier and the championship, with a 1:21.634 in the #11 Team Pelfrey / Justice Brothers Products / Trademark Garage Floors Mazda, and Team GDT driver Patrick McKenna, who has endured a most difficult partial season since his promising 4th-place finish in the season-opener at the Grand Prix of St. Petersburg. He turned a 1:21.802 in the #33 Team GDT / Motorsport Ireland / Irish Sports Council / General Data Tech Mazda.

All of the top-7 drivers on the day were within 1-second of each other in lap times. The official lap record for a Star Mazda Championship car at Mazda raceway is held by Englishman Richard Kent, a 1:19.935, set in 2008. Lap records in Star Mazda are counted only in qualifying and the race.

The fastest driver in the Expert Series for competitors 30 and older was another Irish racer, Patrick O'Neill, who was 8th-quick in the #64 O'Neill Racing / O'Neill Construction Mazda with a lap of 1:22.505. This is only his second Star Mazda race of the season, he also competed at the Indy Grand Prix of Sonoma at Infineon, but he won the 2010 West Coast Pro Formula Mazda Championship racing this same car.

This is the season finale for the 11-race 2011 season, and while the championship battle is between JDC Motorsports driver Tristan Vautier and Team Pelfrey driver Connor De Phillippi, the remainder of the field are all battling for the race win and the best placing in the championship – a ranking that has both bragging rights and substantial prize money considerations.



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Wrapping up one of the most competitive seasons in years, the Star Mazda Championship heads to the season finale with three of the four series titles – Series Champion, Expert Series Champion and Team Championship – still up for grabs.

Pos No.	Name	Overall BestTm	In Session	Sponsor
1	7 J.V. Horto	1:21.198	Thursday Final Practice	Programa LeiLoes, Athlete of Christ
2	28 Gustavo Menezes	1:21.387	Thursday Final Practice	www.truecar.com / Truecar, Inc.
3	5 Tristan Vautier	1:21.585	Thursday Final Practice	Cecibon, Circuit du Laquais, Fontanel
4	11 Connor De Phillippi	1:21.634	Thursday Final Practice	
5	33 Patrick Mckenna	1:21.802	Thursday Final Practice	
6	81 Nick Andries	1:22.028	Thursday Final Practice	Lithionics Battery / GS610 Brake Fluid / Trademark Garage Floors
7	10 Tatiana Calderon	1:22.111	Thursday Final Practice	JAC Motors
8	88 Sage Karam	1:22.151	Thursday First Practice	MAZDASPEED / Comfort Revolution
9	64 Patrick O'Neil	1:22.511	Thursday Final Practice	
10	27 Nick Mancuso	1:22.686	Thursday Final Practice	
11	39 Joao Jardim	1:22.736	Thursday Final Practice	
12	77 Zach Veach	1:22.798	Thursday Final Practice	
13	20 Carlos Linares	1:23.207	Thursday Final Practice	Mindeporte
14	65 J.W. Roberts	1:24.040	Thursday Final Practice	
15	26 J�rimy Daniel	1:24.495	Thursday Final Practice	FixAuto / Sherwin-Williams
16	16 Lloyd Reed	1:25.638	Thursday Final Practice	
17	37 Dom Bastien	1:26.313	Thursday Final Practice	

On-track action for the drivers and teams in the Star Mazda Championship continues tomorrow, Friday, Sept. 16 with early morning and just-after-lunch practice sessions. There is no on-track activity Saturday, Sept. 17, but on Sunday, Sept. 18, qualifying will take place from 8:00 am to 8:45 am, with the 45-minute season finale scheduled to get the green light at 10:40 am.



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The 2011 Star Mazda Championship presented by Goodyear awards banquet will take place Sunday evening, Sept. 18 at The Clement Monterey Intercontinental Hotel (750 Cannery Row). The evening begins with a reception at 6:00 pm, dinner at 7:00 pm and the awards ceremony at 8:00 pm.

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>

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

Live timing: <http://livetiming.net/StarMazda/>

On any given weekend, there are more Mazda's 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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