



GOODYEAR



## DE PHILLIPPI WINS THE PEAK PERFORMANCE POLE AWARD FOR RACE 1 OF THE 2012 STAR MAZDA SEASON-OPENING DOUBLE-HEADER AT THE GRAND PRIX OF ST. PETE

March 23, 2012 / G.P. of St. Petersburg – Connor De Phillippi, winner of this race last year and quickest



in both pre-season Spring Training and pre-race practice, has commenced his battle for the 2012 Star Mazda Championship presented by Goodyear in the strongest possible way, winning the PEAK Performance Pole Award in his #2 Juncos Racing / ModSpace Racing / One24 Mazda. His lap of 1:10.401 is just shy of the 1:10.352 set – under cooler conditions – in 2010 by series champion Conor Daly. De Phillippi not only scores the first point of the 2012 season, but will also have a \$1,000 bonus, courtesy of Peak Performance Products.

Starting on the outside of the second row, after starting on the pole here last year and finishing 2nd – to Connor De Phillippi – Argentine driver Martin Scuncio, who only ran a partial season last year, showed he had lost none of his pace with a lap of 1:10.410 in the #22 Juncos Racing / Pullman Bus Mazda. Rounding out the top-3 was a top English open-wheel racer making his debut in Star Mazda this season, Jack Hawksworth. His lap of 1:10.580 in his #82 Team Pelfrey / TORGOEN Swiss Watches / EXA Networks Mazda was just 0.179-sec. off the pole.

"Juncos Racing is a tremendously professional team and they've given me a great car every time I hit the track," says the California driver who finished 2nd in the Star Mazda Championship last year. "We were immediately faster in qualifying than we were in practice and we just kept chipping away, a couple of tenths here, a couple there, and given how small the split was between me and my teammate Martin Scuncio, it's a good thing we did. It's going to be a highly competitive race tomorrow, and again on Sunday, and we're just keeping our heads down and focusing on the job at hand... winning."

Rounding out the top-5 were Hawksworth's Team Pelfrey teammate, Petri Suvanto, the 2011 USF2000 National Champion who is competing in Star Mazda with scholarship funding from the Mazda Road to Indy. The Finnish racer, starting on the outside of the second row, turned a lap of 1:10.632 in the #81 Team Pelfrey / Mazda Road to Indy Mazda. Fifth was another newcomer, Gabriel 'Gabby' Chaves, a European racer with experience in both Italian F3 and GP3. Chosen as a member of the 2010 FIA Institute Young Driver Excellence Academy, Chaves ran a lap of 1:10.773 in his #19 JDC Motorsports / OMP Mazda.

The quickest Expert Series (for drivers 30 and older) competitor was Texan J.W. Roberts, a two-time Expert Series champion. He ran a lap, 15th-fast overall, of 1:12.615 in the #65 Team GDT Mazda /



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General Data Tech before contact with the wall damaged his car too badly for him to compete this weekend. Expert Series honors will be fought out between friends and AIM Autosport teammates Walt Bowlin (#23 AIM Autosport / Tampa Bay Jaw Surgery Mazda), the racing dentist from St. Pete and Larry Pegram (#72 AIM Autosport / Foremost Insurance Mazda), one of the top AMA Superbike Racers in the country who has competed in the Star Mazda Championship for the past three years.

Pos	PIC No.	Name	Best Tm	Best Speed	In Lap	Diff	Sponsor
1	1	2 Connor De Philippi	1:10.401	92.044	6		ModSpace Racing / One24
2	2	22 Martin Scuncio	1:10.410	92.032	9	0.009	Pullman Bus
3	3	82 Jack Hawksworth	1:10.580	91.811	16	0.179	TORGOEN Swiss Watches/ EXA Networks
4	4	81 Petri Suvanto	1:10.632	91.743	18	0.231	Mazda Road to Indy / RKM Building
5	5	19 Gabby Chaves	1:10.773	91.560	12	0.372	OMP
6	6	9 Juan Piedrahita	1:10.824	91.494	12	0.423	Petrosur / GFK Motors
7	7	57 Diego Ferreira	1:11.320	90.858	10	0.919	Team Viso Venezuela
8	8	77 Zach Veach	1:11.436	90.711	16	1.035	Zakosi Data Backup / ADS IT Solutions
9	9	15 Bruno Palli	1:11.452	90.690	15	1.051	Team Viso Venezuela
10	10	83 Gustavo Menezes	1:11.538	90.581	17	1.137	TrueCar.com
11	11	93 Stefan Rzdzinski	1:11.547	90.570	13	1.146	PoweredbyAlberta.com
12	12	91 Ashley Freiberg	1:11.955	90.056	10	1.554	TRUECar.com
13	13	20 Carlos Linares	1:12.027	89.966	17	1.626	Mindeporte
14	14	33 Ryan Tveter	1:12.585	89.275	15	2.184	Alpha / Ryan Tveter LLC
15	15	65 J.W. Roberts	1:12.615	89.238	5	2.214	
16	16	10 Jerimy Daniel	1:12.681	89.157	9	2.280	FixAuto / Sherwin-Williams
17	17	66 Zack Meyer	1:12.697	89.137	16	2.296	Partners III
18	18	21 Camilo Schmidt	1:12.963	88.812	9	2.562	
19	19	53 Andre Mendez	1:12.983	88.788	10	2.582	GrupoKriterion.com / DataFile.com.co
20	20	72 Larry Pegram	1:13.005	88.761	16	2.604	Foremost Insurance
21	21	23 Walt Bowlin	1:15.149	86.229	14	4.748	Tampa Bay Jaw Surgery
22	22	88 Sage Karam		-	0		Comfort Revolution

Star Mazda Race 1 (of 2) starting at 4:10 pm, Friday, March 23. Race 1 takes place 1:00-1:40pm, Friday, March 24. With the double-header format that Star Mazda will use at many events this season, the quickest lap time for each car in Race 1 will set the grid for Race 2, which is scheduled to take the green at 10:05 am, Sunday, March 25. The races, as part of the Mazda Motorsports Hour, will air on the Discovery Channel's Velocity TV in the U.S. and globally on ESPN International. For air dates and times, go to [www.StarMazda.com](http://www.StarMazda.com) and click the Star Mazda TV icon.

For more information on the Star Mazda Championship and its drivers, as well as the Mazda Road to Indy, please visit [www.starmazda.com](http://www.starmazda.com) and [www.mazdausa.com](http://www.mazdausa.com). For information, interviews and high-res photos, contact Star Mazda Communications Director Peter Frey at (818) 398-5733 or [StarMazdaPR@aol.com](mailto:StarMazdaPR@aol.com). Twitter: <http://www.twitter.com/starmazdaseries/>

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

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

