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HAWK ON THE HUNT – RISING ENGLISH OPEN-WHEEL STAR JACK HAWKSWORTH LEAVES ROUND ONE OF THE 2012 STAR MAZDA CHAMPIONSHIP WITH A PODIUM, A POLE, A WIN AND THE POINTS LEAD

March 25, 2012 / G.P. of St. Petersburg – And so a new, and well-deserved nickname is born; 'The Hawk'... for despite Connor De Phillippi's championship-caliber performance in the Star Mazda Championship presented by Goodyear Spring Training at Barber Motorsports Park (fastest time), pre-



race practice for the Grand Prix of St. Pete (fastest in every session), qualifying for Race 1 (on the pole) and Race 1 itself (won the race), it was English racer Jack 'The Hawk' Hawksworth (center), driving the #82 Team Pelfrey / TORGOEN Swiss / EXA Networks Mazda, who left the season-opening Star Mazda Championship presented by Goodyear at the Grand Prix of St. Petersburg with the championship points lead.

Hawksworth, who finished 2nd in Race 1 on Saturday also set the quick time in the race and thus won the pole position for Race 2 on Sunday... which he promptly converted in to a dominant race win... in his first-ever race on a street circuit. De Phillippi won Race 1 in the #2 Juncos Racing / ModSpace Racing / One24 Mazda, but turned only the 7th-fast lap in the race, thus starting from 7th on the grid for Race 2. And with several major yellow flag sessions breaking up the race, he had no opportunity to build a credible charge to the front and, despite feeling he had a car capable of winning the race, was forced to settle for 5th.

"I had a pretty easy time of it since all the carnage was behind me, though having a race broken up with that many major full-course yellows does make it harder to concentrate and you have to be very careful about keeping the tires up to operating temperature for the re-starts," says Hawksworth. "But the Pelfrey team gave me an immaculate car that was consistent throughout the race and we were able to build a bit of a lead and bring it home well clear of the second-place car."

That 2nd-place car was the #9 JDC Motorsports / Petrosur / GFK Motors Mazda driven by Juan Piedrahita, a former Star Mazda driver who moved back to USF2000 to gain more experience and is not back to demonstrated how well he learned his lessons... quite well, apparently. Rounding out the top-3 finishers was another rising star, Finnish racer Petri Suvanto, the 2011 USF2000 Champion who is racing in Star Mazda with scholarship funding from the Mazda Road to Indy. He brought the #81 Team Pelfrey / Mazda Road to Indy Mazda / RKM Building Mazda home in 3rd for the first podium finish of his U.S. career.



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Joining them on the podium was the first finisher in the Expert Series from drivers 30 and older, top AMA SuperBike racer Larry Pegram, making one of his periodic forays from the world of 2-wheel racing to 4-wheels. He won the class in both Race 1 and 2 driving the #72 AIM Autosport / Tampa Bay Jaw Surgery / Foremost Insurance Mazda. "I really want to run with the kids, but while there are some things that are the same about racing a SuperBike and a Star Mazda open-wheel car, there are some instinctive things that you do with a motorcycle that are completely wrong for a car. I just need to get those compartmentalized, and get some more testing, and I think I can give these young hotshoes more of a fight."

As he did in Race 1, Sage Karam, the 2011 Star Mazda Championship Rookie of the Year' put in the drive of the race, though still not producing the results he expected or is capable of. He moved up 5 places to 8th by Lap 2, at which point Canadian racer Jerimy Daniel in the #10 The Racing Company / FixAuto Mazda and Ryan Tveter in the #33 Team GDT / Alpha / Ryan Tveter LLC Mazda tangled wheels in Turn 1, sending Tveter barrel-rolling into the concrete wall, where his car caught fire. While he sprinted smartly toward the fire truck, the small fire was put out and the car removed. Daniel was able to continue until, while still circulating around behind the pace car during the full-course yellow his incident caused, he got caught in an 'accordion effect' with cars ahead and nose his car smartly into the Turn 9 wall... so the full-course yellow got a bit longer. Then on Lap 10, Ashley Freiberg's #91 JDC Motorsports / TrueCar Mazda and Camilo Schmidt's #21 Linares Racing / Mindeporte Mazda wound up side-by-side nose into the tire wall; Schmidt was able to back out and continue, but Freiberg's – after an excellent top-10 finish in Race 1, was done.

Pos No.	Name	Laps	Diff	Gap	Best Tm	Best Speed In Lap	Sponsor
1	82 Jack Hawksworth	20			1:11.445	90.699	18 TORGOEN Swiss Watches/ EXA Networks
2	9 Juan Piedrahita	20	1.954	1.954	1:11.775	90.282	19 Petrosur / GFK Motors
3	81 Petri Suvanto	20	2.246	0.292	1:11.615	90.484	20 Mazda Road to Indy / RKM Building
4	19 Gabby Chaves	20	2.819	0.573	1:11.582	90.526	19 OMP
5	2 Connor De Philippi	20	3.382	0.563	1:11.760	90.301	19 ModSpace Racing / One24
6	22 Martin Scuncio	20	3.692	0.310	1:11.557	90.557	19 Pullman Bus
7	88 Sage Karam	20	3.863	0.171	1:11.577	90.532	19 Comfort Revolution
8	93 Stefan Rzdanski	20	6.574	2.711	1:12.125	89.844	20 PoweredbyAlberta.com
9	57 Diego Ferreira	20	6.788	0.214	1:11.793	90.259	20 Team Viso Venezuela
10	83 Gustavo Menezes	20	9.623	2.835	1:12.339	89.578	19 TrueCar.com
11	77 Zach Veach	20	10.449	0.826	1:12.121	89.849	19 Zakosi Data Backup / ADS IT Solutions
12	20 Carlos Linares	20	10.995	0.546	1:12.139	89.827	18 Mindeporte
13	66 Zack Meyer	20	12.365	1.370	1:12.014	89.983	19 Partners III
14	53 Andre Mendez	20	13.731	1.366	1:12.712	89.119	19 GrupoKriterion.com / DataFile.com.co
15	15 Bruno Palli	20	14.809	1.078	1:12.543	89.326	18 Team Viso Venezuela
16	72 Larry Pegram	20	17.110	2.301	1:13.205	88.519	20 Foremost Insurance
17	23 Walt Bowlin	20	32.776	15.666	1:16.271	84.960	17 Tampa Bay Jaw Surgery
18	21 Camilo Schmidt	19	1 Lap	1 Lap	1:13.664	87.967	10 Mindeportes
19	91 Ashley Freiberg	10	10 Laps	9 Laps	1:13.766	87.845	10 TRUECar.com
20	10 Jerimy Daniel	5	15 Laps	5 Laps	1:14.832	86.594	2 FixAuto / Sherwin-Williams
21	33 Ryan Tveter	2	18 Laps	3 Laps	1:14.794	86.638	2 Alpha / Ryan Tveter LLC





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Hawksworth has 57 championship points vs. 47 for De Phillippi. Piedrahita has 44, Gabby Chaves 41 and rounding out the top-5 is Petri Suvanto with 39. Star Mazda awards 29 points for 1st, 25 for 2nd, 22 for 3rd, etc. One point each is also awarded for winning the PEAK Performance Pole Award and for the Fastest Race Lap.

Round 3 of the 2012 Star Mazda Championship presented by Goodyear takes place next weekend, March 30-April 1 as part of the Indy Grand Prix of Alabama at Barber Motorsports Park. All Star Mazda 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 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 and 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. Twitter: <http://www.twitter.com/starmazdaseries/>

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