



GOODYEAR



MAZDASPEED
MOTORSPORTS DEVELOPMENT



AFTER SETTING THE QUICK TIME IN SPRING TRAINING, CONNOR DE PHILLIPPI IS AGAIN QUICKEST – BY ALMOST HALF A SECOND -- IN DAY 1 OF STAR MAZDA PRACTICE FOR THE GRAND PRIX OF ST. PETE

March 22, 2012 / G.P. of St. Petersburg – After turning a time 6/10ths clear of the next quickest driver in Star Mazda Championship presented by Goodyear Spring Training at Barber Motorsports Park earlier this



week, California racer Connor De Phillippi was again quickest – this time by a mere 0.485-seconds – in the first practice session leading up the 2012 season-opener at this weekend's Grand Prix of St. Petersburg. De Phillippi, driving the #2 Juncos Racing / ModSpace Racing / One24 Mazda, turned his fast time – a 1:12.084 – on Lap 12 of the 30-minute early evening session. The official Star Mazda lap

record at the St. Petersburg street circuit is 1:10.352, set by series champion Conor Daly in 2010.

Second-quickest in the session was his Juncos Racing teammate, Argentine racer Martin Scuncio, who set a time of 1:12.586 in his #22 Juncos Racing / Pullman Bus Mazda. Third quick was Colombian racer Gabby Chaves with a lap of 1:12.674 in the #19 JDC Motorsports / OMP Mazda. Rounding out the top-5 were Petri Suvanto, who was the quickest rookie and set the second-fast time in Spring Training, with a 1:12.907 in the #81 Team Pelfrey / Mazda Road to Indy Mazda and American Sage Karam, who drove the #88 Andretti Autosport / Comfort Revolution Mazda to a 5-quickest time of 1:13.085.

The quickest driver in the Expert Series for drivers 30 and older is 2-time Expert Series champion J.W. Roberts who is both owner of, and driver for, Team GDT. He turned a lap of 1:17.187 in his #65 Team GDT Mazda / General Data Tech.

De Phillippi, now in his third season, is by far the most experienced driver in the series, won this race last year and finished second in the championship in 2011. Scuncio was on pole for this event last year, finished 2nd in the race and 13th in the championship after missing the last half of the season. Chaves is a Star Mazda rookie, but with plenty of open-wheel ladder experience, including Italian F3 and GP3. He was also chosen for the prestigious 2012 FIA Institute Young Driver Excellence Academy.

Suvanto is the 2011 USF2000 National Championship Powered by Mazda and has moved up to compete in the Star Mazda Championship with scholarship funding from the Mazda Road to Indy. And Karam was the 2010 USF2000 champion, moved up to Star Mazda with scholarship funding from the Mazda Road to Indy. He won two races in 2011, was the series' rookie of the year and finished 5th in the championship.



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Star Mazda practice continues with another 30-minute session tomorrow morning, followed by qualifying for 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.

Pos	PIC No.	Name	Best Tm	Best Speed	In Lap	Diff	Gap
1	1	2 Connor De Philippi	1:12.084	89.895	12		
2	2	22 Martin Scuncio	1:12.568	89.296	7	0.484	0.484
3	3	19 Gabby Chaves	1:12.674	89.165	12	0.590	0.106
4	4	81 Petri Suvanto	1:12.907	88.880	12	0.823	0.233
5	5	88 Sage Karam	1:13.085	88.664	10	1.001	0.178
6	6	77 Zach Veach	1:13.195	88.531	10	1.111	0.110
7	7	82 Jack Hawksworth	1:13.217	88.504	12	1.133	0.022
8	8	9 Juan Piedrahita	1:13.249	88.465	11	1.165	0.032
9	9	15 Bruno Palli	1:14.075	87.479	11	1.991	0.826
10	10	91 Ashley Freiberg	1:14.204	87.327	11	2.120	0.129
11	11	83 Gustavo Menezes	1:14.762	86.675	10	2.678	0.558
12	12	21 Camilo Schmidt	1:15.038	86.356	10	2.954	0.276
13	13	10 Jerimy Daniel	1:15.184	86.189	11	3.100	0.146
14	14	99 Stefan Rzadzinski	1:15.375	85.970	11	3.291	0.191
15	15	66 Zach Meyer	1:15.701	85.600	11	3.617	0.326
16	16	33 Ryan Tveter	1:16.291	84.938	10	4.207	0.590
17	17	65 J.W. Roberts	1:17.187	83.952	10	5.103	0.896
18	18	57 Diego Ferreira	1:17.798	83.293	6	5.714	0.611
19	19	23 Walt Bowlin	1:19.475	81.535	8	7.391	1.677
20	20	72 Larry Pegram	1:25.565	75.732	1	13.481	6.090
21	21	53 Andre Mendez	-	-	0		

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.

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