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## A TIGHT FIGHT DONE RIGHT – GABBY CHAVES DRIVES A FLAWLESS RACE TO CLAIM HIS SECOND WIN FROM THE POLE IN THE STAR MAZDA SEASON FINALE DURING THE PETIT LE MANS AT ROAD ATLANTA

Road Atlanta / October 19, 2012 – Colombian racer Gabriel 'Gabby' Chaves, finished his rookie season in the Star Mazda Championship presented by Goodyear in the best possible way, with a win from the pole



that cemented his second-place finish in the championship battle. It was his second consecutive win from the pole; Chaves did it the first time in Race 2 at the previous event at Mazda Raceway and then, like today, he drove a flawless race with a top competitor filling the mirrors of the #19 JDC Motorsports / CLARO / Marca Colombia / Tecpro Mazda every foot of the way between green and checkered.

In this case, it was the bright red #88 Andretti Autosport / Comfort Revolution Mazda car of Sage Karam. He, too, had a nearly-flawless race until – just for 'style points,' as he put it – he spun and continued in turn 7 on the last lap of the 37-lap race. Coming home third, and the potential beneficiary of Karam's mistake were it not for the 18-second gap between 2nd and 3rd, was Connor De Phillippi in the #2 Juncos Racing / ModSpace Racing / One24 Mazda. Trying to make the best of a bad situation that nearly destroyed his car in qualifying yesterday and dropped him to 9th on the starting grid, De Phillippi drove a smart, disciplined race to finish on the podium.

"I knew that as soon as the race started I had clinched second in the championship, but that actually freed me to take an all-or-nothing attitude toward the race; I was going to win it or spin it," says Chaves, who was born into a racing family and is a member of the prestigious 2012 FIA Institute Young Driver Excellence Academy. "Even though I led all the way, it was a very tight race with Sage's car always there in my mirrors. I was fortunate that he was never able to get a run on me and try to pass, which might have worked out well for Connor, but probably not for Sage or I. I'm so happy to be able to repay the JDC Motorsports team for all their hard work during the season, and my family and sponsors for all their help and faith. We'll go to the awards banquet tomorrow, take it easy for a few days and then get to work on what I'm going to race next year."

De Phillippi had a similarly forward-looking attitude about his season. "The season started off just like we wanted, then we hit a really bad patch that tested the Juncos Racing team to the limits. Like the



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champions they are, they pull themselves – and me – through it and we're happy to finish the season on the podium. Like Gabby, I'm going to be working harder than ever during the off season to make sure my open-wheel career continues on an upward path. And I'd like to thank Mazda for the tremendous driver development program they put together; without it, I wouldn't be where I am today."

Though there was a considerable gap between the first two cars and De Phillippi, the rest of the field was a tight little scrum of cars battling wheel to wheel in every corner. The on-track struggle for supremacy between Juncos Racing Team Viso Venezuela teammates Diego Ferreria and Bruno Palli had fans on their feet, as did the similarly no-quarter-given race between Team Pelfrey teammates Petri Suvanto and Gustavo Menezes. Zach Veach was higher up in the mix until an unforced spin dropped him out of the top-3 and down to finish 8th, and the multi-car battle between Ashley Freiberg and newcomer Scott Anderson saw them change places several times per lap.

**Star Mazda Championship presented by Goodyear / Race Results / Season Finale at Petit Le Mans**

Pos No.	Name	Laps	Total Tm	Diff	Gap	Sponsor
1	19 Gabby Chaves	38	50:59.411			Claro/ Marca Colombia / Tecpro
2	88 Sage Karam	38	51:04.794	5.383	5.383	Comfort Revolution
3	2 Connor De Phillippi	38	51:19.767	20.356	14.973	ModSpace Racing / One24
4	57 Diego Ferreira	38	51:28.716	29.305	8.949	Team Viso Venezuela
5	15 Bruno Palli	38	51:31.001	31.590	2.285	Team Viso Venezuela
6	81 Petri Suvanto	38	51:31.397	31.986	0.396	Mazda Road to Indy
7	83 Gustavo Menezes	38	51:33.064	33.653	1.667	Team Pelfrey / Safety Park / Oakley
8	77 Zach Veach	38	51:35.541	36.130	2.477	K12.com / Zakosi Data Backup
9	9 Juan Piedrahita	38	51:40.247	40.836	4.706	Petrosur / Colombia es pasion / GFK Motors / Lamd Link
10	66 Zack Meyer	38	51:47.481	48.070	7.234	Partners III
11	91 Ashley Freiberg	38	51:59.163	59.752	11.682	TRUECar.com
12	16 Scott Anderson	38	51:59.779	1:00.368	0.616	Laser Nail Centers / Neuropathy Testing Centers
13	97 Juan Camillo Acosta	38	52:01.725	1:02.314	1.946	STF Group / Studio F
14	82 Ryan Tveter	37	51:09.695	1 Lap	1 Lap	CIMIER Swiss Watches / Motorola Mobility LLC
15	53 Andres Mendez	37	51:17.269	1 Lap	7.574	GrupoKriterion.com / DataFile.com.co
16	21 Camilo Schmidt	35	48:38.936	3 Laps	2 Laps	
17	23 Walt Bowlin	34	51:09.055	4 Laps	1 Lap	Tampa Bay Jaw Surgery

**Star Mazda Championship**

In the final analysis, it was English rookie Jack Hawksworth, who (though not competing this weekend) triumphed with 397 points, followed by Gabby Chaves in second with 360. Sage Karam and Connor De Phillippi tied with 325 points, but third place in the championship goes to Karam by virtue of his three wins to De Phillippi's two. Finnish racer Petri Suvanto, the 2011 USF2000 champion who moved up to race in Star Mazda this season with scholarship funding from the Mazda Road to Indy, finished 5th with 271 points. In addition to points for where a driver finishes in a race, one point is also awarded for winning the





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pole, and one for turning the fastest race lap. For a full list of points, and how each driver did in each race during the season, click [here](#).

"I think the race was an ideal end to a historic season of growth for the Star Mazda Championship and the Mazda Road to Indy," said series founder and President Gary Rodrigues. "It showcased extremely close and smart racing between drivers who are fierce competitors but also respect each other. We have an extremely worthy champion in Jack Hawksworth, and a deserving race winner in Gabby Chaves. We know they both, along with the other rising stars in this year's field, will make us proud in coming years."

The next item on the agenda for the Star Mazda drivers and teams is an awards ceremony tomorrow at Chateau Elan where prizes valued at \$1.2 million will be given out. Included is the scholarship funding provided by the Mazda Road to Indy that will pay for a full-season drive for champion Jack Hawksworth in the 2013 Indy Lights Championship.

This is the final race of the 2012 season, which saw for the first time a schedule with 17 races on 10 weekends, and included road courses, street circuits and ovals. More than 25 drivers from eight different countries participated, and the races were broadcast in the U.S. on the Velocity channel and globally on ESPN International.

### **Star Mazda Championship presented by Goodyear**

The Star Mazda Championship presented by Goodyear is a part of the [Mazda Road to Indy](#), the official driver development program for IndyCar. The 2012 schedule included 17 races on 10 weekends, most with IndyCar. Rising stars from around the world competed on road courses, street circuits and ovals in front of more than a million fans as they raced for prizes valued at \$1.2 million, including a scholarship to move up and race in the 2013 Firestone Indy Lights series. Drivers 16 and older are welcome to compete and the Star Mazda Championship also features standing starts, wheel-to-wheel racing at 160 mph and budgets a fraction of other top open-wheel ladder series. For more information on the Star Mazda Championship please visit [www.starmazda.com](http://www.starmazda.com).

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



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