KARAM QUICKEST IN THE AFTERNOON BUT CHAVES TOPS THE TIME SHEETS IN STAR MAZDA WEDNESDAY PRACTICE FOR THE 2012 SEASON FINALE AT PETIT LE MANS

Road Atlanta / October 17, 2012 – With the afternoon turning warm and the track, as a consequence, slowing down, it was Sage Karam in the #88 Andretti Autosport / Comfort Revolution Mazda who turned

the quickest lap of the session, but Gabby Chaves who retained the quickest time of the day as the field of 18 cars completed practice for the season finale of the 2012 Star Mazda Championship presented by Goodyear during this weekend's Petit Le Mans at Road Atlanta.

Karam, the only driver in the 18s during the slipperier afternoon session, turned a 1:18.911, while

Connor De Phillippi was 2nd-fast with a lap of 1:19.053 in his #2 Juncos Racing / ModSpace Racing / One24 Mazda. Chaves was 3rd-quick with a 1:19.277. Rounding out the top-5 were Zach Veach with a 1:19.545 in the #77 Andretti Autosport / K12 / Zakosi Data Backup Mazda and Bruno Palli, whose lap of 1:19.713 put him 5th on the afternoon chart.

The top seven cars were all within one second of each other, setting up an interesting scenario for tomorrow's qualifying for the PEAK Performance Pole Award, scheduled to take place at 12:15 pm, Thursday, Oct. 18, with all the drivers aiming to the Star Mazda track record of 1:18.328 set by Peter Dempsey in 2008. The 2012 season finale of the Star Mazda Championship presented by Goodyear is scheduled for 50 minutes and will take the green light for the series' spectacular F1-style standing start at 3:45 Friday, Oct. 19.

Star Mazda Championship cars all carry two Replay XD1080 cameras to provide exciting driver POV footage for races that are part of the Mazda Motorsports Hour broadcast tape-delayed on Discovery's Velocity Channel in the U.S. and globally on ESPN International. In the U.S., the race will air on Velocity at 12 Noon, Saturday, November 24. For information on international and Canadian air times, click here.

Star Mazda Championship / Practice times from Wednesday afternoon session

Pos	No.	Name	Best Tm	Best Speed	In Lap	Diff	Gap	Sponsor
1	88	Sage Karam	1:18.911	115.877	8			Comfort Revolution
2	2	Connor De Phillippi	1:19.053	115.669	12	0.142	0.142	ModSpace Racing / One24
3	19	Gabby Chaves	1:19.277	115.342	12	0.366	0.224	Claro/ Marca Colombia / Tecpro
4	77	Zach Veach	1:19.545	114.954	10	0.634	0.268	K12.com / Zakosi Data Backup
5	15	Bruno Palli	1:19.713	114.712	7	0.802	0.168	Team Viso Venezuela
6	81	Petri Suvanto	1:19.715	114.709	12	0.804	0.002	Mazda Road to Indy
7	57	Diego Ferreira	1:19.990	114.314	10	1.079	0.275	Team Viso Venezuela
8	66	Zack Meyer	1:20.383	113.755	4	1.472	0.393	Partners III
9	9	Juan Piedrahita	1:20.445	113.668	11	1.534	0.062	Petrosur / Colombia es pasion / GFK Motors / Lamd Link
10	16	Scott Anderson	1:20.567	113.496	7	1.656	0.122	Laser Nail Centers / Neuropathy Testing Centers
11	83	Gustavo Menezes	1:20.609	113.436	15	1.698	0.042	Team Pelfrey / Safety Park / Oakley
12	53	Andres Mendez	1:20.866	113.076	13	1.955	0.257	GrupoKriterion.com / DataFile.com.co
13	82	Ryan Tveter	1:21.123	112.718	6	2.212	0.257	CIMIER Swiss Watches / Motorola Mobility LLC
14	91	Ashley Freiberg	1:21.133	112.704	13	2.222	0.010	TRUECar.com
15	21	Camilo Schmidt	1:21.220	112.583	4	2.309	0.087	
16	97	Juan Camillo Acosta	1:21.618	112.034	18	2.707	0.398	STF Group / Studio F
17	23	Walt Bowlin	1:24.555	108.143	14	5.644	2.937	Tampa Bay Jaw Surgery

Star Mazda Championship / Merged times from Wednesday morning and afternoon practice

Pos	No.	Name	Overall BestTm	In Session	Sponsor
1	19	Gabby Chaves	1:18.830	Wednesday Practice 1	Claro/ Marca Colombia / Tecpro
2	88	Sage Karam	1:18.911	Wednesday Practice 2	Comfort Revolution
3	2	Connor De Phillippi	1:19.053	Wednesday Practice 2	ModSpace Racing / One24
4	81	Petri Suvanto	1:19.378	Wednesday Practice 1	Mazda Road to Indy
5	15	Bruno Palli	1:19.408	Wednesday Practice 1	Team Viso Venezuela
6	77	Zach Veach	1:19.545	Wednesday Practice 2	K12.com / Zakosi Data Backup
7	57	Diego Ferreira	1:19.990	Wednesday Practice 2	Team Viso Venezuela
8	16	Scott Anderson	1:20.073	Wednesday Practice 1	Laser Nail Centers / Neuropathy Testing Centers
9	9	Juan Piedrahita	1:20.093	Wednesday Practice 1	Petrosur / Colombia es pasion / GFK Motors / Lamd Link
10	83	Gustavo Menezes	1:20.244	Wednesday Practice 1	Team Pelfrey / Safety Park / Oakley

11	66 Zack Meyer	1:20.383	Wednesday Practice 2	Partners III
12	82 Ryan Tveter	1:20.762	Wednesday Practice 1	CIMIER Swiss Watches / Motorola Mobility LLC
13	53 Andres Mendez	1:20.803	Wednesday Practice 1	GrupoKriterion.com / DataFile.com.co
14	91 Ashley Freiberg	1:20.826	Wednesday Practice 1	TRUECar.com
15	21 Camilo Schmidt	1:21.220	Wednesday Practice 2	
16	97 Juan Camillo Acosta	1:21.254	Wednesday Practice 1	STF Group / Studio F
17	23 Walt Bowlin	1:24.289	Wednesday Practice 1	Tampa Bay Jaw Surgery

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 includes 17 races on 10 weekends, most with IndyCar. Rising stars from around the world are competing on road courses, street circuits and ovals in front of more than a million fans as they compete 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 the Expert Series for drivers 30 and older. The Star Mazda Championship 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.

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