



## A Strong Season Finale for Jonathan Klein Awarded “Most Improved Driver of the Year”

Long Grove (October 18, 2004) – In his first visit to Laguna Seca, Jonathan Klein drove an outstanding race in the final round of the 2004 Star Mazda North American Championship at this challenging road course in Monterey, California. The weekend had its ups and downs as the Andersen Walko crew worked to find the best set-up for the #97 Kalfact Plastics, Fettes, Love & Sieben, Nexus Distribution Corp., Midwest Steel & Services, Ironclad and ProStar machine. Jonathan reached a high of 3<sup>rd</sup>-place in a practice session on Friday. Saturday morning’s qualifying garnered a frustrating 15<sup>th</sup>-place on the 40-car grid on a tough track with few passing zones. Jonathan had his work cut out for him.

Klein survived the first lap, Turn 2 melee, which took a few overly anxious drivers out of contention and reshuffled the order. The scoring showed Jonathan with a three-position gain by Lap 2, and he methodically worked his way up, picking off drivers and lapped cars by executing passes and keeping the car on the track as the surface got progressively “greasy” as the race advanced. A 6<sup>th</sup>-place result gave Jonathan his 4<sup>th</sup> top-ten finish of the year, though mechanical problems, a technical DQ in Phoenix, and missing the year’s first Star Mazda race due to involvement in a different series hurt his overall standings with a series’ end result of 15<sup>th</sup> place. The awards ceremony brought a high note, however, as Klein was presented with the Motec Most Improved Driver of the Year Award, a testimony to his hard work and developing race craft.

### Jonathan Klein:

“Man what a year! My summer flew by at probably close to 200 mph. We had non-stop racing and traveling all summer, which was tough but all worth it in the end. Thanks to John Walko and Dan Andersen for giving me such good cars and people to work with all year long; their two minds put together make for a lethal team in motorsports. Also a special thanks to Scott Gates and Eric Langbein; these guys stay all night long working their tails off to make sure we will be prepared as best as possible to go out on the track the next day. I didn’t know how to thank them and put what they do into words, but just know that they’re the best two guys in junior open wheel racing. Also, thank you to Ray Rigglin. He cleaned all my very dirty white wheels and made sure I had new Goodyear rubber on the car to go quick. He also was solely responsible for doing an excellent job getting the cars to the track every weekend, usually beating us jet airline travelers.”

“This year wouldn’t have been possible without the support from Mr. Ken Trupke of Kalfact Plastics, Mr. Albert Gehrke and Mr. John Wolf of Fettes, Love & Sieben Plumbing and Heating Contractors, Brian King and Will and Dean Hansen of Nexus Distribution Corp., Bob Rossdeutcher of Midwest Steel & Services, Rollie Stephenson of Faith Technologies for the help at Road America, Adam Steinberg of ProStar for the excellent Jonathan Klein Racing clothing and hats, and Ed Jaeger of Ironclad Performance Wear for providing my team and I with top-notch mechanic’s and driver’s gloves. And most of all- my Mom and Dad, my biggest supporters and my friend, 2 ½ -year-old Matthew, “President” of my fan club. Thank you also to the Rodrigues family for providing a series that in my mind will best help my career as a race car driver. Thank you to all and watch for me in 2005.”

This weekend’s season finale at Laguna Seca is scheduled to be broadcast on Speed Channel on October 31 at 2pm Eastern time. At Saturday night’s Championship awards banquet it was announced that for the 2005 season, the Speed Channel broadcasts will expand to one hour. Star Mazda will also bring a new look to its website and newsletter. Perhaps the biggest news is that during next year’s twelve race season, the Star Mazda North American Championship will serve as a support series for the IRL at the St. Petersburg, Florida street circuit, while continuing its role as a support series for the American LeMans Series.

