



Klein Earns First Star Mazda Podium

Long Grove (October 5, 2004) – Jonathan Klein drove a fantastic race at Phoenix International Raceway, his first oval ever, to bring the #97 Andersen Walko Racing entry to a third-place finish. Unfortunately, a technical error, which in no way created an advantage, caused Jonathan to be disqualified by the race stewards. The team ran strong all weekend, with Klein consistently in the top ten during testing and practice sessions. Friday's qualifying yielded a sixth-place start for Saturday's race.

Saturday morning's warm-up session ended with Jonathan in second place. When the green flag dropped for the race, Klein immediately moved into position from sixth to start passing cars, gaining a few spots after the opening laps. Team Co-Owner and Chief Engineer John Walko served as Jonathan's spotter from high above the race track and did an outstanding job giving Jono information about his surroundings on the track. The restart after the first caution period had Klein pulling ahead of Dan DiLeo to grab third place. Although Jonathan's clutch failed early in the race, causing the motor to rev but not provide power to the rear wheels, his ability to pick his way around lapped cars and traffic were key to his clinching a comfortable third-place finish.

During the post-race technical inspection, it was discovered that the road course sway bar from the earlier Road Atlanta weekend did not get replaced with the designated oval sway bar. This actually resulted in a poorer handling, looser car that Klein managed to drive outstandingly through all 75 laps of the race.

"Well, we now know that we are a front-running car in the Star Mazda series," said Klein. "With running second at Atlanta prior to tire failure, and a legitimate third-place finish at Phoenix, we know we'll be strong at Laguna Seca, and even more so for the entire 2005 season to come. A critical mistake was made this weekend, but Eric, John, Scott and Ray all put together a car that ran at the front of the field. Even with the wrong sway bar, and the handling being worse than everyone else's, Eric and John set the car up well enough to finish third. On to Laguna."

The Star Mazda race from Phoenix is scheduled to be televised on October 17 at 2:00 pm Eastern on Speed Channel. The final round of the 2004 Star Mazda North American Championship will run on October 16 at Mazda Raceway, the historic Laguna Seca track in Monterey, California.

