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## Karam Dominates Saturday's USF2000 Race At New Jersey Motorsports Park

MILLVILLE, N.J., June 26 — Polesitter Sage Karam of Nazareth, Pa. dominated the USF2000 National Championship race, which was presented by Cooper Tires and Powered by Mazda, Saturday afternoon on the Thunderbolt Raceway course at New Jersey Motorsports Park. The 20-lap/30-minute race was the first half of a USF2000 doubleheader that is part of the Mazda Motorsports Festival presented by VisitFlorida.com.

Saturday's action was covered live on HDNet, which will also carry the second half of the doubleheader tomorrow live in coverage that starts at 12:30 p.m. and concludes at 4 p.m.

Karam, who drives for Michael Andretti's Andretti Autosport, had a 10.936 second lead over Patrick McKenna of Dublin, Ireland at the checkered. The latter drives for Cape Motorsports with Wayne Taylor Racing.

Karam had nearly a 4-second lead by lap four and he continued to stretch his advantage as the race progressed. With about 25 family and friends in attendance to cheer him on, he was simply unbeatable. His performance certainly pleased his car owner, Michael Fux of the Michael Fux Foundation, who lives in New Jersey and was on hand to cheer on his rising star.

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“Sage’s future is very bright,” Fux said while waiting for the victory lane ceremonies to begin. “He has all the qualities it takes to succeed. He’s not only a good driver; he’s smart and handles himself well. I’ve been working with him for a couple years. I can’t wait for him to go to IndyCar or Formula 1; IndyCar is more likely.”

Fux is a good judge of talent. He sponsored Raphael Matos in Firestone Indy Lights, and he also helps sponsor Michael Andretti’s Indy cars driven by Tony Kanaan and Marco Andretti.

In addition to the Michael Fux Foundation, other decals on the winning car advertised Comfort Revolution, Bell Helmets, Alpine Stars, Walters Web and Artrotundo.com.

JDC Motorsports’ Mikhail Goikhberg of St. Petersburg, Russia finished third. Andretti Autosport’s Zach Veach of Stockdale, Ohio was fourth, while Fuerza Chile Motorsports’ Martin Scuncio of Concepcion, Chile rounded out the top five.

Two JDC Motorsports drivers, Martin Sala of Bogota, Columbia and Raphael Abbate of Sao Paulo, Brazil, were sixth and seventh. Abbate originally qualified third but he had to start last when his car was found to be underweight in the post-qualifying inspection. He got the \$200 Tilton Hard Charger award for gaining more positions than anyone else in the race.

Fuerza Chili Motorsports’ Javier Barrales of Concepcion, Chile finished eighth and received the \$200 Staubli award, which is presented randomly. AcceleRace Motorsports’ Ardie Greenamyler of Louisville, Ky. survived a spin on the first lap to finish ninth and earn the National class honors.

Karam won his fourth \$500 “Cooper Tires, Don’t Give Up a Thing” award, set an automatic new track record and obtained an extra point when he earned the pole position Saturday morning. His new qualifying record is a 1:17.462 for an average speed of 100.849 miles per hour, which he turned on his fifth of eight trips around the 2.17-mile, 14-turn road course during the 30-minute qualifying session.

He ran even faster in practice on Friday, when he turned a 1:17.288 in the morning.

Karam will start on the pole for Sunday’s race too, as that event’s grid was determined by each driver’s fastest lap during Saturday’s race. Karam’s fastest race lap, which brought him another bonus point, was a 1:18.809 recorded on lap two. He got a third bonus point for leading the most laps Saturday.

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Goikhberg will start second in tomorrow's race and McKenna will start third.

PFC's awards of gift certificates, which go to the teams that win the Championship class and the National class, went to Andretti Autosport (\$100) and AcceleRace Motorsports (\$50).

For more information see USF2000.com. That Web site will have live timing and scoring of the second half of the doubleheader tomorrow, which starts at 2:05 p.m.

In addition to this weekend's doubleheader in the Garden State, HDNet is also booked to provide live coverage of the next doubleheader, which is slated for July 31-Aug. 1 at the Autobahn Country Club in Joliet, Ill.

The USF2000 National Championship is part of both the MAZDASPEED Motorsports driver development program and the Indy Racing League's Road to Indy ladder system. The top driver in the series' Championship class earns a scholarship package from Mazda valued at \$350,000 to help him or her advance to the Star Mazda Championship presented by Goodyear the following season.

The podium finishers' post-race quotes follow:

**Sage Karam:** "My car was a masterpiece. The Mazda engine is very strong, and the Cooper Tires were very consistent. Everything was good. We were in cruise-control mode."

**Patrick McKenna:** "I knew it was going to be tough to catch Sage today. I had no issues. My car was good. I just didn't have the pace at the end of the race."

**Mikhail Goikhberg:** "It's always good to finish on the podium. My car was fine; just not fast enough. We get another chance tomorrow."

**Ardie Greenamyre** (National class winner): "It was kind of calm after the first lap. On the first lap I ran out of room with Raphael Abbate in Turn 1. He was running hard. There was no contact, but I spun. I got going again, and I just held on from there until the end of the race."

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### ***About Mazda:***

On any given weekend there are more Mazdas on the road courses of America than any other brand of vehicle. MX-5 Miata, RX-8, MAZDA3, MAZDA6, RX-7 and other vintage Mazda models are all popular race cars because every Mazda has the soul of a sports car. In fact, the largest road-racing class in the world is Spec Miata. With more than 2,500 first- and second-generation Miatas tearing up America's racetracks, it the most-raced production car in the world. Mazda's involvement in motorsports extends to its relationship with one of the world's premier road courses, Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca in Salinas, Calif., and the Skip Barber Schools for driving and racing.

Celebrating its 40th anniversary in the United States in 2010, Mazda North American Operations is headquartered in Irvine, Calif. It oversees the sales, marketing, parts business and customer service of Mazda vehicles in the United States, Canada and Mexico through nearly 900 dealers. Operations in Canada are managed by Mazda Canada, Inc., located in Ontario. Operations in Mexico are managed by Mazda Motor de Mexico in Mexico City.

For more information see [MazdaUSA.com](http://MazdaUSA.com).

### ***About Cooper Tire & Rubber Company:***

Cooper Tire & Rubber Company is a global company that specializes in the design, manufacture, marketing and sales of passenger car and light truck tires and subsidiaries that specialize in medium truck, motorcycle and racing tires. With headquarters in Findlay, Ohio, Cooper Tire has manufacturing, sales, distribution, technical and design facilities within its family of companies located in 10 countries around the world.

For more information visit Cooper Tire's Web site at [coopertire.com](http://coopertire.com).

### ***About the Cooper Tires Presents the USF2000 National Championship Powered by Mazda:***

Many top drivers in the IZOD IndyCar Series and endurance sports car racing honed their skills in F2000, and the Cooper Tires Presents the USF2000 National Championship Powered by Mazda is an important training ground for rising stars.

Debuting in 2010, it is the revival of the very popular USF2000 series of 1990 through 2006. Sanctioned by the Indy Racing League, it is the first step on its Road to Indy ladder system, preceding Star Mazda and Firestone Indy Lights.

It is also part of the prestigious MAZDASPEED Motorsports driver development program. The top driver in the series' Championship class earns a scholarship package from Mazda valued at \$350,000 to help him or her advance to Star Mazda the following season.

USF2000 races are contested on road courses, street courses and ovals in order to give the series' drivers experience on all the different types of tracks they will face as they proceed up the ladder.

For more information visit [USF2000.com](http://USF2000.com).