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## Karam Leads All 50 Laps in USF2000 Race Saturday Afternoon at Iowa Speedway

NEWTON, Iowa, June 19 — Polesitter Sage Karam of Nazareth, Pa. led all 50 laps and posted a 7.364-second victory over Raphael Abbate of Sao Paulo, Brazil Saturday afternoon in Round 4 of the “Cooper Tires Presents the USF2000 National Championship Powered by Mazda” on Iowa Speedway’s 0.875-mile tri-oval.

With his third victory of the year the Andretti Autosport driver extended his lead in the Championship-class’ point standings. He also gave his father an early Father’s Day present and pleased his sponsors, which include the Michael Fux Foundation, Comfort Revolution, Bell Helmets, Alpine Stars, Walters Web and Artrotundo.com.

While Karam had no problems at all, the other two class podium finishers had more exciting stories to tell when they got back to the transporter of their team, JDC MotorSports. Abbate, who drives a car sponsored by Avery Dennison and Alphacolor, started fourth but dropped back to seventh when he had to take evasive action after front-row starter Patrick McKenna and the driver who started third, Zach Veach, made contact between Turns 1 and 2 at the start. The nose and front wings of Veach’s Van Diemen flew off and landed on the track after

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the melee, causing the event's only full-course caution from laps one through three for debris.

Veach, of Stockdale, Ohio, pitted for repairs and battled back to fifth for Andretti Autosports and his sponsors, ADS, Retail Pro and Secure IT.

McKenna, of Dublin, Ireland, drove with a slowly deflating left-rear tire due to the contact for the rest of the race. McKenna, who drives for Cape Motorsports with Wayne Taylor Racing with sponsorship from Motorsport Ireland and Willsborough Transport, remained in second place until Abbate passed him at the halfway point. McKenna then held third until two laps to go when the tire finally let go, and he ended up finishing right behind Veach in sixth place.

The third-place finisher, JDC's Mikhail Goikhberg of St. Petersburg, Russia, also had an eventful race. He started sixth but on lap five he had contact with the driver who eventually finished fourth, Fuerza Chile Motorsports' Martin Scuncio of Concepcion, Chile, and spun. Goikhberg quickly restarted and didn't cause a yellow, although now he was ninth instead of the fifth place he held at the time of the spin. He methodically worked his way back up through the field, and broke back into the top five around the halfway point. He passed Scuncio for fourth on lap 36, shortly after Javier Barrales spun in Turn 2 and then restarted, and then he got third with two laps to go when McKenna's tire finally let go.

Louisville, Ky.'s Ardie Greenamyer of AcceleRace Motorsports was the National class winner over J.R. Smart and Brian Belardi. His car is sponsored by Bidazzled.com, Sabelt, ChaseCam, MemeTech, NEXAIRA and a brand-new supporter, Home Owners Security Door Co., which is the largest manufacturer of security doors and ironwork in the Louisville, Ky. area.

Karam set the fastest lap of the race on lap 49 with a time of 23.881 seconds, and the only driver he didn't lap was Abbate. The Tilton Hard Charger award went to Goikhberg, while McKenna won a special award from Staubli. PFC gave gift certificates to the car owners of the class winners, Andretti Autosport and AcceleRace Motorsports.

Karam won the pole Saturday morning with an automatic two-lap track record of 48.080 seconds for an average speed of 131.032 miles per hour.

This race was the series' first one at this track. The series travels to another new venue, New Jersey Motorsports Park in Millville, N.J., next weekend for a doubleheader that will be broadcast live on HDNet. Live timing and scoring is also planned for the series' Web site at USF2000.com.

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The podium finishers' post-race comments follow:

Sage Karam: "My car was just hooked up today. There was no understeer or oversteer; it was like driving on rails. Hopefully we can keep this momentum up going into New Jersey next weekend.

"I want to thank everyone at Andretti Autosport, my sponsors and Mazda and Cooper Tires.

"I didn't have any trouble with lapped traffic either; they were good sports out there."

Raphael Abbate: "In the last race I had a lot of trouble, so I'm very pleased with second here. I had a big moment at the start because Zach Veach and Patrick McKenna came together in front of me, and I lost a lot of positions to avoid them."

Mikhail Goikhberg: "We tried a calculated risk in qualifying that didn't work out, so I had to start sixth. My strategy was not to worry, and just let the race come to me. Then on the third or fourth lap I had contact with the No. 99 car and spun. I thought my race was done because I damaged one of my tires, but it held up. If you want to have a car that can come from the back, you should be sure it's a Mazda with Cooper tires."

Ardie Greenamyre (National class winner): "I'm glad I had some patience and maturity or whatever you want to call it out there, because the track changed five or six times during the course of the race for me. This is a great training ground for young drivers and more experienced ones, and I can't say enough about the series' Cooper tires. They're always consistent."

### ***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).

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### ***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).