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Contact: Diane Swintal
dswintal@imsaracing.net
949.439.7871
www.prototypelites.com



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GOLDBURG AND STRAUS EARN FIRST PROTOTYPE LITES VICTORIES

SEBRING, FL (March 17, 2011) -- Daniel Goldberg earned his first Cooper Tires Prototype Lites Championship victory in wire-to-wire fashion in the Lites 1 class, while rookie Ari Straus took advantage of problems for the Lites 2 class veterans to take the win in Round 1.

When the 13-lap event was done, Goldberg had managed to hold off charging rookie (and teammate) 15-year-old Tristan Nunez, earning the win by .037 – in real time, about 1/3 of a car length.



"It was a tough race," said Goldberg, driving the #6 Performance Tech Élan DP02. "I had Tristan on my back the whole time, but the team gave me a really great car. I just kept my head down and kept going. I was able to get a cushion on the first restart, but that was it. He was right on my tail the whole time. It's looking like a great season; I'm excited for the rest of the year.

For Nunez, behind the wheel of the #8 Performance Tech Élan DP02, it was almost his first victory in his first race. But given the youngster's poise and confidence, that first win is only a matter of time.

"This is my first race in the series and it's been an adventure," said Nunez. "The team did a great job, the car was just to my liking. Daniel ran a great race, it was really hard to get around him – some places he was faster, other places I was faster. That last corner, I thought I had him but he got the edge. I'm looking forward to tomorrow!"



Ari Straus, behind the wheel of the #75 Berg Racing/Monticello Motor Club West WR1000, saw plenty of cars in front of him – most of them in trouble, as both yellow flag incidents and problems for pole sitter Robert Sabato and Lee Alexander happened right in front of him.



"This is my first time racing with IMSA," said Straus. "I couldn't ask for a better series or a better team. John Weisberg just handed me an amazing car. The competition was fierce - there were a lot of incidents out there, I was lucky to avoid most of them. Each one I missed by inches, so someone was on my side today."

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The Prototype Lites mission is two-fold: present an opportunity for semi-professional race car drivers to compete in a world-class environment while also providing an avenue for drivers to move up the ladder into the LMPC or LMP classes in the American Le Mans Series Presented by Tequila Patrón. The series is divided into two classes: Lites 1, featuring the Élan DP02 chassis, powered by a 2.3-liter, four-cylinder Mazda MP2 engine; and Lites 2, utilizing the West WX10 and WR1000 chassis, with either a Kawasaki ZX10R or a Suzuki GSXR motor.

Round 2 is set for Friday at 2:05pm EDT, ahead of the 59th Mobil 1 Twelve Hours of Sebring. Live timing, news and driver/team information is at <http://www.prototypebiles.com/>.

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