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Fiat 500 B-Spec Leads World Challenge Touring Car-B Standings After Inaugural Race Weekend

- Jonathan Start wins first two of three races at Miller Motorsports Park
- Start leads the Touring Car-B class after opening weekend

April 29, 2012, Tooele, Utah - In the first ever Touring Car-B class races in the Pirelli World Challenge, Jonathan Start, of Caledonia, Mich., drove his specially-prepared Fiat 500 to two consecutive Touring Car-B race wins on Saturday, April 28 at the 2.2-mile Miller Motorsports Park West Course configuration.

Saturday's event uniquely featured two 30-minute races separated by just 10-minutes.

Start completed the inaugural race weekend with a fourth place finish in race No. 3 on Sunday, April 29, just missing the podium after a race-long duel at the front of the pack.

"What a spectacular way to start the inaugural racing season with our brand new Fiat 500 B-spec car," said Tim Kuniskis, Head of FIAT Brand for North America, Chrysler Group LLC. "We're proud of how well the team engineered the car and what a fantastic job Jonathan did behind the wheel."

Start's sweep on Saturday plus his fourth-place finish on Sunday gives him the points advantage early in the nine-round drivers' championship with a 54 point lead over Honda driver Sage Marie (389-335) and 62 point lead over Ford driver Craig Capaldi. Fiat also holds the manufacturers' championship lead with 22 points, followed by a tie between Mazda and Ford with 16. Honda has 15 points, while Kia has scored 3.

Race No. 1 Summary - Saturday, April 28
In an exciting debut race for the new series, Start, in his No. 00 Fiat USA/SRT/Carbotech Fiat 500, battled with the top competitors from Ford and Mazda before taking the lead late in the 17-lap race and going on to finish out in front by 2.171 seconds.

"Race number one was exactly what this new B-Spec should be," Start said. "Close, tight, and very similar cars all competing hard. I had the race of my life in the fun category. We were able to flip and flop, and we raced each other clean. This is what World Challenge is all about."

Race No. 2 Summary - Saturday, April 28
With the race No. 2 grid being based on finishing order from race No. 1, Start took off from pole position at the green flag and led every lap to the finish, taking a 1.392-second victory to sweep the doubleheader.

"I raced smart, and I think that's what it was," Start said. "I wanted to be smooth, I wanted to be consistent, and I wanted to take care of my tires in the first race and I think I did. I watched the other guys and there were some moves where I was like, you guys are nuts. You guys are going to scrub your tires.
"At the end of the day, it's two wins in the first round of World Challenge TCB, and I'm happy."

Capaldi's Ford and Bailey's Mazda battled for the second position for most of the race, joined early on by the No. 45 Honda Fit of Sage Marie. Bailey finished second with Capaldi taking the third spot at the checkered flag.

Race No. 3 Summary - Sunday, April 29
Race 3
Jonathan Start began the finale race of the opening weekend in third spot in class and quickly became part of a four-car scrum made up of Start's Fiat, a Honda Fit and two Ford Fiestas. The battle raged for much of the early part of

the race, with Marie's No. 45 Honda Fit trading the lead with Capaldi's No. 86 Ford Fiesta every other lap for the first four.

Start drove hard in his No. 00 Fiat USA/SRT/Carbotech Fiat 500 as the second through fourth place cars battled for second spot. All the fighting for second place allowed Marie to steadily pull away, driving off to a 3.354-second margin of victory.

Conner Ford finished second in class, with Capaldi third and Start came home in fourth.

About the FIAT Brand

The FIAT brand stands for discovery through passionate self-expression. It encourages people to be in charge of their lives, live confidently and celebrate the smallest of things with infectious excitement. That philosophy is embodied by the North American introduction of the iconic Fiat 500 or Cinquecento - a small car that lives big. Italian at heart and rooted in a rich heritage, the 500 is synonymous with modern simple design blending form, function and a pride of ownership that is genuine.Reminiscent of the original Cinquecento, the 2012 Fiat 500 and Fiat 500c (Cabrio) build on the vehicle’s global popularity. Since its initial launch in 2007, more than 800,000 Fiat 500 vehicles have been sold in more than 80 countries around the world. The model’s unquestionable popularity is the result of the Fiat 500’s great ability to deliver unmatched personalization options with advanced solutions in terms of quality, engine and passenger comfort. In addition to success on the sales front, the Fiat 500 has earned more than 80 awards, including being named the 2008 European Car of the Year, 2009 World Car Design of the Year, Best New Engine of 2010 (FIAT MultiAir® Turbo) and a 2012 “Recommended Pick” by Consumer Guide.

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