



## Koch Reigns Supreme with Victory in Wet Finale at Road Atlanta

**BRASELTON, Ga. (Oct. 2, 2015)** – No driver in the Cooper Tires Prototype Lites Powered by Mazda this season reigned in the rain quite like Kenton Koch.

Koch, from Glendora, California, completed an event sweep and finished his dominant Lites 1 championship season with his 11<sup>th</sup> victory in 14 starts in 2015 on Friday, Oct. 2 at Road Atlanta. That win total ties the record set by Tristan Nunez en route to the championship in 2012.

No driver could touch Koch in the No. 60 JDC Motorsports entry Friday on the 12-turn, 2.54-mile course, dampened by light rain throughout the 45-minute race. He beat JDC Motorsports teammate Matt McMurry to the finish by 17.936 seconds, a margin that likely would have been larger if not for a full-course yellow early in the race.

Koch, 21, also produced dominant victories this season in the rain at NOLA Motorsports Park and Watkins Glen International.

“I’ve just kind of always had a knack in the rain,” Koch said. “I don’t know what it is. Everything just kind of feels slower. I guess it feels a little bit better to me. It’s just a lot of fun.

“I think it was back in the day, when I was 3 or 4 years old, and my parents got me a Big Wheel, and I was sliding down the hill the whole time. Maybe that’s where it came from.”

McMurry, from Phoenix, produced his second runner-up finish of the weekend in the No. 20 JDC Motorsports entry. That allowed him to climb to third in the final season standings of the International Motor Sports Association (IMSA) Official Development Series, behind JDC teammates Koch and Clark Toppe.

Austin Versteeg, from Sandy, Utah, finished third in the No. 16 Performance Tech Motorsports entry. It was his fourth podium finish of the year and allowed him to jump to fourth in the final standings in his rookie season.

John Falb, from Las Vegas, capped his Lites 1 championship season by finishing fourth overall in the No. 77 ONE Motorsports entry. He also was the top Lites 1 Masters finisher. Andrew Hobbs, from Milwaukee, completed his first event with the series by finishing fifth in the No. 23 Extreme Speed Motorsports car.



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Brian Alder, from Dublin, Ohio, clinched his third consecutive Lites 2 Drivers Championship by winning the class Friday in the No. 22 BAR1 Motorsports car.

Koch rocketed from the field at the green flag, leading McMurry by 3.280 seconds after just one lap. He continued to march away from the field, pulling a gap of 19.709 seconds when the only full-course yellow of the race was triggered with 29 minutes left when the No. 00 Performance Tech Motorsports car of Robert Alon stopped adjacent to Turn 1 after a mechanical problem.

Alon was running third when his race ended, promoting teammate Versteeg to third.

The race restarted with 14 minutes left, and Koch once again put his Mazda-powered Élan DP02 chassis into cruise control. He led McMurry by 4.316 seconds one lap after the restart and eased away to his final margin.

Koch's victory capped a season for the ages. Besides tying Nunez's record for victories in a season, he finished on the podium in all 14 events and set a series record with 272 points.

"It feels great to tie for the most wins in a season," Koch said. "If I had it my way, I would have broken the record. But things were all good this season, and it really means a lot."

## **Masters**

Normal service was restored in Lites 1 Masters, as Falb earned his 11<sup>th</sup> victory this season. Falb missed Round 13 on Thursday due to a mechanical problem suffered during qualifying.

Falb pulled away early in the race, beating runner-up Stuart Rettie to the finish by 15.673 seconds. The fourth-place overall finish tied Falb's best result of the season

"I was excited this morning," Falb said. "We had some rain, and we did really well last year in the rain.

"We had some engine problems this weekend, which put us far back in qualifying and on the starting grid, but we made up some good time. I had a great time out there. It was great racing, clean racing, and it was a lot of fun."



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Rettie, from Houston, earned his best result of the year and his second podium finish of the season in the No. 21 Lion Rampant Motorsports car. He passed Joel Janco for second in the last 15 minutes of the race.

“I really love driving in the rain,” Rettie said. “So when it was coming down, I was enjoying it so much.”

Janco, from Key Largo, Florida, ended his best season with a third-place finish in the No. 25 Performance Tech Motorsports entry. He solidified his second-place position in the Drivers Championship with his ninth podium finish of the season.

## Lites 2

Alder only needed to start Round 14 to clinch the title, but he sealed the Drivers and Team Championship in style with his eighth victory of the season in the No. 22 BAR 1 Motorsports car.

“It feels really good, especially to top it off with a win in the last race,” Alder said. “Last year we had won a championship, and I threw the race away on the last lap in the rain. This is kind of sweet redemption for last year.

“I just can’t thank the BAR1 Motorsports crew, Top 1 Oil enough. It was a great season, great competition with Todd (Slusher), and I’m looking forward to next year.”

Round 13 winner Todd Slusher, from Las Vegas, finished second in the race and in the Drivers Championship in the No. 62 ONE Motorsports entry. It was the 12<sup>th</sup> podium result of the season for Slusher.

John Salmon, from Lynchburg, Virginia, placed third in the race and point standings in the No. 46 ODU Engineering Race Team entry.

Alder beat Slusher to the finish by 8.991 seconds. It was a calm contrast to the finish in Round 13, in which Slusher and Alder exchanged the lead at least three times in the closing laps, with Slusher edging Alder at the checkered flag by .170 of a second.

“I was consistent,” Slusher said. “I was kind of working it up there a little bit. I couldn’t get up there and catch Brian. He did a nice job today. Congrats to him and BAR1.



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“Our guys did a great job with the car at ONE Motorsports. I’m really happy with those guys. It was a great day. Good to be out racing. Any day that you’re out racing is a good day.”

## ROUND 14 POST-RACE QUOTES

**KENTON KOCH (No. 60 JDC Motorsports, winner):** “Sometimes I’m doing the rain dance in the morning; sometimes I’m not. I’ve just kind of always had a knack in the rain. I don’t know what it is. Everything just kind of feels slower. I guess it feels a little bit better to me. It’s just a lot of fun. I think it was back in the day, when I was 3 or 4 years old, and my parents got me a Big Wheel, and I was sliding down the hill the whole time. Maybe that’s where it came from.” (About capping championship season with recording 11<sup>th</sup> win): “It feels great to tie for the most wins in a season. If I had it my way, I would have broken the record. But things were all good this season, and it really means a lot.”

**MATT McMURRY (No. 20 JDC Motorsports, second):** “It was smooth sailing for me, mostly. The first couple of laps the tires were cold, and it was a little bit sketchy for me then. But then the rest of the time, it was just figuring out what the track was.” (About season): “I’m pretty happy. I wish the beginning of the season was a little bit better, but otherwise, I made a lot of progress.”

**AUSTIN VERSTEEG (No. 16 Performance Tech Motorsports, third):** “We made improvements in the rain. Every track that you go to is different in the rain, a different learning process, especially in the first year. It was really about experimenting. Those last five to six laps, stuff started to click, adapting to the different situations. I’m really happy with that. We got a bit lucky with Clark (Toppe) going off right in front of us, and I feel bad for my teammate Rob (Robert Alon). He was going really good in the rain. A podium is a podium. We kept it alive and a good way to finish off the season.”

**JOHN FALB (No. 77 ONE Motorsports, first Lites Masters):** “I was excited this morning. We had some rain, and we did really well last year in the rain. We had some engine problems this weekend, which put us far back in qualifying and on the starting grid, but we made up some good time. There was some oil down around the track in the middle of the race, and it really took me off my pace. Right toward the end, we got it going and did some good laps. I had a great time out there. It was great racing, clean racing, and it was a lot of fun.”

**STUART RETTIE (No. 21 Lion Rampant Motorsports, second Lites Masters):** “It was pretty good. We had quite a bit of car trouble all weekend, a lot of trouble with



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wheel bearings. We finally got that sorted out. I really love driving in the rain. So when it was coming down, I was enjoying it so much.”

**JOEL JANCO (No. 25 Performance Tech Motorsports, third Lites Masters):** “It was quite a race. It was very wet and challenging, and it’s awfully nice to be back on the podium. Thanks to (driver coach) Jonatan Jorge and Performance Tech for coaching and giving me a good car. We’ll be back next year.”

**BRIAN ALDER (No. 22 BAR1 Motorsports, winner Lites 2, 2015 Lites 2 champion):** “It feels really good, especially to top it off with a win in the last race. Last year we had won a championship, and I threw the race away on the last lap in the rain. This is kind of sweet redemption for last year. I just can’t thank the BAR1 Motorsports crew, Top 1 Oil enough. It was a great season, great competition with Todd (Slusher), and I’m looking forward to next year.”

**TODD SLUSHER (No. 62 ONE Motorsports, second Lites 2):** “Very wet. A lot of spray. Just trying to feel the grip on the track and bring it up each lap. I was consistent. I was kind of working it up there a little bit. I couldn’t get up there and catch Brian (Alder). He did a nice job today. Congrats to him and BAR1. Our guys did a great job with the car at ONE Motorsports. I’m really happy with those guys. It was a great day. Good to be out racing. Any day that you’re out racing is a good day. I’m happy.” (About season): “The season was fantastic. I had a blast. There’s nothing like it in my book. I’ve tried other things, done other things, and I just keep coming back to this. It’s a great series. The cars are a blast to drive. The guys are great. I think it’s one of the best.”

**JOHN SALMON (No. 46 ODU Engineering Race Team, third Lites 2):** “Not my best effort, but the car is pretty close to in one piece. I got some good seat time in the rain, so I can’t complain. I had sort of a ‘that’s racing’ kind of race. I got clipped. There was a faster car behind me, and I was trying to let him by smoothly, and I just got dive-bombed into (Turn) 10B. The next thing I knew, I was in the back of the back. I got lapped right as the Safety Car came out, so I was a lap down. Then I was just mentally done.”

### **Cooper Tires Prototype Lites Powered by Mazda**

Cooper Tires Prototype Lites Powered by Mazda, an International Motor Sports Association (IMSA) Development Series, completed its 10<sup>th</sup> season in 2015. The series provides thrilling action and grooms drivers for future TUDOR United SportsCar Championship competition in the Prototype and Prototype Challenge classes.



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The two classes of competition in the Cooper Tires Prototype Lites Powered by Mazda series take drivers and teams down unique, exciting roads of prototype sports car racing. Nimble, high-tech, purpose-built Lites 1 machines pack in the power with a 230-horsepower, 2-liter Mazda engine designed to prepare aspiring professionals for prototype competition in the TUDOR United SportsCar Championship and offer a challenging environment for mature semi-professional drivers, including competition in a Masters Championship. Equally capable and cost-effective Lites 2 machines offer new competitors a perfect introduction to the world-class competition offered by IMSA.

For more information about Cooper Tires Prototype Lites Powered by Mazda, visit [www.imsa.com](http://www.imsa.com), follow hashtag #CTPL @IMSA on Twitter or IMSA on Facebook.

### About IMSA

The International Motor Sports Association, LLC (IMSA) was originally founded in 1969 with a long and rich history in sports car racing. Today, IMSA is the sanctioning body of the TUDOR United SportsCar Championship, the premier sports car racing series in North America, which will become the IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship in 2016. IMSA also sanctions the Continental Tire SportsCar Challenge and the Cooper Tires Prototype Lites Powered by Mazda, as well as four single-make series: Porsche GT3 Cup Challenge USA by Yokohama; Ultra 94 Porsche GT3 Cup Challenge Canada by Michelin; Ferrari Challenge North America; and Lamborghini Super Trofeo North America. IMSA – a company within the NASCAR Holdings group – is the exclusive strategic partner in North America with the Automobile Club de l'Ouest (ACO), which operates the 24 Hours of Le Mans as a part of the FIA World Endurance Championship. The partnership enables selected TUDOR Championship competitors to earn automatic entries into the prestigious 24 Hours of Le Mans. For more information, visit [www.imsa.com](http://www.imsa.com), [www.twitter.com/UnitedSportsCar](http://www.twitter.com/UnitedSportsCar) or [www.facebook.com/UnitedSportsCar](http://www.facebook.com/UnitedSportsCar).



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