



## Team LMR Endures Roller Coaster Season Opener!

### Auto Diagnostic Services



### The Fiberglass Body



Jim Webb Motorsports



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Larry Mason drove the Auto Diagnostic Services Team LMR Formula Mazda (FM) to a third place podium finish to start the 2018 season on a high note at Auto Club Speedway in Fontana, California on January 13th for the first round of the SCCA U.S. Majors Tour. "It was a tough race as they moved us into Group 8 instead of Group 2. This had us racing late in the afternoon with the sun shining right in our eyes as we entered the final turn on the track. This wasn't an issue until I got balked by a slower car and when I made a move to the outside to avoid contact, I hit a cone which tore off the right front wing. Fortunately we had enough of a gap to keep our 3rd place podium finish," explained Mason.

"In Race #2, we qualified third again and I had a great start and jumped into the lead right away! Unfortunately the



Hard luck for Mason (#12) as he gets T-boned and crashed out of the race by another driver. Caliphoto  
 Fortunately the first and second place cars seemed to have more power as they both drove by me and gapped me by about 10 car-lengths as we exited Turn 2 of the oval!" As the race wore on, the fourth place driver passed Mason for third and Mason passed him back on the next lap. This happened again but when Mason looked to the inside at the end of the last straight, the other driver out-braked himself and slid off into the marbles. Instead of totally blowing the chicane and tucking in behind Mason, he decided to jump the curbing and re-enter the track. Mason

was already there and received a massive hit to the left rear of the car that knocked him into the air and into a wild spin. Mason was transported back to the paddock by ambulance but was able to walk away. "Thank God for Bell Helmets! It was a hard hit and my helmet smacked the roll bar padding quite hard."

The crash caused extensive damage to the left-rear suspension and bodywork. On a positive note, Mason is still leading the championship points battle!

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## Sonia's View

Sonia will be taking a hiatus on her column as she completes her degree at

Harvard Extension School. She will guest write intermittently until her graduation

in 2019. We wish her the utmost success!

## Tech Tidbits—Crash Damage

When you push to the absolute limits of adhesion and grapple with trying to grab every last tenth of a second to go faster, you sometimes must step over the edge to see where the edge actually is. Combine this with multiple other racers trying to do the same thing with everyone having the same goal - to win - and you will most likely have some crash damage every now and then. Knowing this in advance, **Team LMR** strives to have an inventory of spare parts—the

parts most likely to get damaged. Spare nose, front wings, suspension pieces such as uprights, shear plates, heim joints and the hardware to connect them are just some of the things in inventory. However, once a crash has happened and the spare parts are used up, it's time to re-stock again.

In some cases, if an upright checks out fine with no cracks after going through the crack check inspection process, it will be placed into inventory

as a spare. But typically, all pieces on the car will be replaced with new to make sure of maximum performance and safety.

These parts are not cheap and part of being a championship winning team is being prepared to finish the weekend despite the crash damage. Every so often the damage is bad enough to put



FM upright, halfshaft and CV joints are just some of the broken parts to be replaced. Photo by Brad Bernstein

you out of competition until all of the parts can be ordered, delivered and installed on the race car.



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**"Unless you're leading, the scenery never changes." Larry Mason**

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