

# SpeedSource Takes Championship

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Photos By JUHA LIEVONEN

**T**HE SPEEDSOURCE TEAM GAVE rotary engine and Mazda fans a reason to stand up and cheer at this past weekend's Lexus 250 in Fontana, California. The SpeedSource team and Mazda effort took their sixth podium finish for the season giving them the driver and team championship for the Sport Touring class in an incredible year. This marks the

SpeedSource crew were confident in their effort but winning the championship came as a surprise to them.

"We knew we had a really good chance to beat them on track. Turner had a stellar season but we wanted to win no matter what," stated Tremblay.

"We didn't know we had [the team and driver championship] until we were being interviewed by Calvin [Fish]. We just continued on doing what we had to do. It was a big thing for Mazda and we hope to be back in the



SpeedSource's team third championship season.

The California Speedway race enabled the SpeedSource team to once again prove their ability to lead the series in race car development. This is the first year for the Mazda RX-8's to enter into Grand Am Cup competition and SpeedSource is leading the development of these cars.

Since their Phoenix race win, the SpeedSource team has been a permanent fixture on the podium. Their consistency grew through the season and in the last five races alone, they claimed three wins and two second place finishes.

Team owner and driver Sylvain Tremblay spoke briefly about the evolving competitiveness the team developed during the course of the season, "After the Phoenix win it changed the entire face of the program. We became contenders. From Phoenix on we worked non-stop and had great resources behind us and made a push for the championship."

The SpeedSource team was trailing the No. 95 Turner Motorsport BMW and drivers for the team and driver championships. Tremblay and his

same place next year, too," stated team engineer and Tremblay's co-driver, David Haskell.

Tremblay and Haskell share the driver championship for the first time as co-drivers.

The most effective and important strategy for SpeedSource at the California race was their success in pit stops. They were able to limit themselves to two stops during the race and make the appropriate changes to the car.

"We had great pit stop strategy with the early pit stop and a latter splash of fuel. It worked for us," stated Tremblay.

The SpeedSource team was not only able to apply good pit stop strategy but was able to make a name for the RX-8s. They brought back the rotary engine in a brand new car and took it directly to champion status.

"It was a big team effort and we started with a brand new car. We did a lot of work throughout the whole season and just didn't have any pressure this race," Haskell concluded.



“As you bring out a new car you have a lot of developmental issues that you need to work out. The RX-8 is a great platform and we just had to convert it to a race car. We had to make it faster and better. We worked on making it handle on older tires on longer stints. I am very pleased with Mazda and I am happy to be driving with David all season long. He led just about every race that he drove in and was consistent behind the wheel. His driving really matured this season and this championship is a small pay-back for his hard work and dedication,” Tremblay said.

Tremblay went on to credit all those involved with the championship. “This entire effort was made possible by Mazda and MazdaSpeed who were tremendous in the preparation for the season. Without their faith in us this would have never been possible. To come out with a new car and make it a championship car in its first year is great for everyone involved. HAWK, Dynamic Suspension, and MoTeC also made it possible for us. Racing Hart

made a special wheel just for our car. Sparco USA and Goodridge’s support was incredibly important to us. Hoosier has wonderful tires and the wear has just seen amazing improvement.”

“Our entire effort for the team is a mix of full time and weekends guys. Their dedication, hardwork, and commitment has been outstanding. We are very fortunate to have a good depth of engineering in-house. The rotary community and its response to our success has been phenomenal and people worldwide are emailing us with encouragement,” stated Tremblay

The SpeedSource Race Engineering team heads home to their shop in Sunrise, Florida to bask in the glory of their win and begin shifting their focus to the 2005 season. Great things will be expected from this team in the 2005 season but for now they can savor their victories and the success of the Mazda RX-8.

RX Tuner would also like to extend our congratulations to the entire SpeedSource team. Having seen the operation first hand at their shop, and on the track, I can say without question that they embody professionalism in motorsports. I’m just glad we have them on our side! I would also like to say thank you to Juha Lievonen for providing RX Tuner with top quality race photos all year long.

2004 was the first good year in motorsports for rotary fans in some time, and we’re looking forward to keeping the ball rolling in 2005! — Ryan Scott. **RX**