

**Justin Piscitell, of Weston, Conn., turned the fourth-best qualifying time with a 1:41.874 (79.086 mph) in the No. 89 Team MER/DAMG Worldwide MX-5 at Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca, CA**

**MONTEREY, Calif.** - Mat Pombo, of Atlanta, continued to show just how fast he is when he put No. 01 PFM Pombo Racing/Range of Motion ATL/Carbotech MX-5 on the pole for Sunday's SCCA Pro Racing Playboy MX-5 Cup Round Three race at Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca, part of the American Le Mans Series Monterey Weekend. Lyonel Kent, of Knoxville, Tenn., will start second.

Pombo set his pole-winning time of 1:41.476 (79.396 mph) on his fifth circuit around the 11-turn, 2.238-mile track. While this was Pombo's second consecutive pole, he looks to get his first MX-5 Cup win this weekend after attempting a pass for the lead on the final lap during Round Two in his home race at Road Atlanta.

"The car performed awesome this morning," Pombo said. "It handled beautifully. I've got to thank Justin Piscitell. I got a little bit of a tow off of him for my lap. I've got to give him some credit towards that.

"It [today's qualifying effort] shows we are quick. This is our first year in the series. This is only our third race. So, we are still learning these cars, but we're getting closer. Obviously, we are fast. It's just a matter of putting it together. I want to get a race win and those are always the hardest to get - the first one. This is a competitive series. The drivers are awesome here.

"I look forward to the race weekend. It's good to be in a Mazda at a Mazda track. Hopefully, we can put on a good show for all the Mazda fans out there. I've got to thank the PFM Pombo Racing/Range of Motion ATL/Carbotech performance brakes crew. They were awesome."

Driving the No. 13 ALARA RACING/Bulldog Productions MX-5, Kent was the fastest through the first 10 minutes of the 30-minute qualifying session, until Pombo bumped him from the top spot. Kent turned in the second fastest qualifying time with a 1:41.592 (79.305 mph). Kent is gunning for his second win this season after besting Pombo in that Round Two race at Road Atlanta earlier this month.

Nick Evans, of Powell, Ohio, will start third in the No. 28 Team MER/Mazda/Sparco MX-5 after turning a 1:41.849 (79.105 mph). This will be Evans' best starting position this season. Evans' teammate, Justin Piscitell, of Weston, Conn., turned the fourth-best qualifying time with a 1:41.874 (79.086 mph) in the No. 89 Team MER/DAMG Worldwide MX-5.

Jesse Combs, of Houston, Texas, will roll off the grid fifth in the No. 77 ALARA RACING/Coolgas.com MX-5, thanks to his 1:41.894 (79.070 mph) qualifying effort.

Ara Malkhassian, of Houston, Texas, and Mark Carpenter, of Charlotte, N.C., will start sixth and seventh, respectively. MX-5 Cup Championship point leader Brad Rampelberg, of San Jose, Calif., will start eighth, while Jeff Mosing, of Austin, Texas, and Michael Cooper, of Syosset, N.Y. complete the top 10, respectively.

Former Indy 500 winner Danny Sullivan will start 14th in the No. 105 SPCA Motorsport/Adopt a Shelter Animal MX-5.

The green flag will drop on the Playboy MX-5 Cup Round Three race at 3:15 p.m. (PT) Sunday, May 23. Live timing will be available at [www.mx-5cup.com](http://www.mx-5cup.com).



*Pombo, two-time MX-5 Cup pole-winner, seeks first win at Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca this weekend.*