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**YOKOHAMA-Sponsored Drifting Driver Wins Texas Race and Takes Points Lead on ADVAN Neova AD08R Tyres**

Michael Essa atop Formula Drift standings with one race to go

FULLERTON, CA (Sept. 16, 2013) – YOKOHAMA-sponsored drifting competitor Michael Essa is one race away from winning the series championship after his victory in Formula Drift’s “Round 6 Showdown” event at Texas Motor Speedway in Ft. Worth Saturday night.

Driving on YOKOHAMA’s newest ultra high-performance tyre, the [ADVAN Neova AD08R](http://www.yokohamatire.com/tires/detail/advan_neova_ad08_r), Essa powered his GSR Autosport E46 BMW M3 to victory for his second win of the year. He leads the Pro Championship points chase going into the final competition of the 2013 Formula D season, October 11-12, at Irwindale Speedway in Irwindale, California.  This is also Essa’s second podium result in as many races using the AD08Rs.

“The course was crazy with triple-digit entry speeds,” said Essa, “but we were able to take home the win. The grip of YOKOHAMA’s AD08R tyres is incredible and helped make this an amazing event for us. We are leading the points right now heading into Irwindale and have a shot at the championship. I can’t be happier with the results.”

“Michael’s a tremendous driver and fierce competitor, and it showed in Texas,” said Matt Johnson, performance marketing supervisor at Yokohama Tire Corporation, YOKOHAMA´s North American manufacturing and marketing arm. “He and the GSR Autosport team have built a championship-level car that spotlights the performance of our Neova AD08 Rs. The tyre features a specialized compound that includes our orange oil technology for enhanced traction and road surface adhesion, plus it uses the best of our race tyre compound technology and design.”