



COUNTDOWN 2009



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Full Throttle Series Schedule

COUNTDOWN TO 10 (Regular Season)

KRAGEN O'REILLY NHRA WINTERNATIONALS

Feb. 5-8 at Pomona, Calif.

NHRA ARIZONA NATIONALS

Feb. 20-22 at Phoenix

ACDELCO NHRA GATORNATIONALS

March 12-15 at Gainesville, Fla. (PSM)

O'REILLY NHRA SPRING NATIONALS

March 27-29 at Houston (PSM)

SUMMITRACING.COM NHRA NATIONALS

April 2-5 at Las Vegas

SUMMIT RACING NHRA SOUTHERN NATIONALS

April 16-19 at Atlanta (PSM)

O'REILLY NHRA MIDWEST NATIONALS

May 1-3 at St. Louis (PSM)

NHRA THUNDER VALLEY NATIONALS

May 15-17 at Bristol, Tenn.

O'REILLY NHRA SUMMER NATIONALS

May 29-31 at Topeka, Kan.

NHRA ROUTE 66 NATIONALS

June 4-7 at Chicago (PSM)

NHRA SUPERNATIONALS

June 11-14 at Englishtown, N.J. (PSM)

SUMMIT RACING EQUIPMENT NHRA NATIONALS

June 25-28 at Norwalk, Ohio (PSM)

MOPAR MILE-HIGH NHRA NATIONALS

July 10-12 at Denver (PSM)

NHRA NORTHWEST NATIONALS

July 17-19 at Seattle

FRAM-AUTOLITE NHRA NATIONALS

July 24-26 at Sonoma, Calif. (PSM)

LUCAS OIL NHRA NATIONALS

Aug. 13-16 at Brainerd, Minn. (PSM)

TOYO TIRES NHRA NATIONALS

Aug. 20-23 at Reading, Pa. (PSM)

MAC TOOLS U.S. NATIONALS

Sept. 2-7 at Indianapolis (PSM)

COUNTDOWN TO 1 (Playoffs)

NHRA NATIONALS

Sept. 17-20 at Charlotte, N.C. (PSM)

O'REILLY SUPER-START NHRA FALL NATIONALS

Sept. 24-27 at Dallas (PSM)

O'REILLY NHRA MID-SOUTH NATIONALS

Oct. 2-4 at Memphis, Tenn. (PSM)

NHRA VIRGINIA NATIONALS

Oct. 9-11 at Richmond, Va.

NHRA LAS VEGAS NATIONALS

Oct. 29-Nov. 1 at Las Vegas (PSM)

AUTO CLUB NHRA FINALS

Nov. 12-15 at Pomona (PSM)

2009: The Year of Change

Free Agency, retirement alter the landscape in TF

The so-called "Silly Season" has never been sillier than what we just witnessed in Top Fuel this past off-season.

The first domino to fall was of course the announcement at the Mac Tools U.S. Nationals that Alan Johnson would be leaving Don Schumacher Racing to form his own team, thus effectively ending arguably the greatest dynasty in NHRA Top Fuel history.

This opened a sea of speculation about who was going where, and in the weeks following the conclusion of the 2008 season all of the pieces fell into place.

It didn't happen overnight, but eventually Larry Dixon parted ways with longtime team owner Don "Snake" Prudhomme and was signed on by Johnson to be the driver of his new Top Fuel entry.

Johnson also brought with him most of the crew from the U.S. Army team to turn the wrenches for Dixon.



The Staging Lane

What's next: Kragen O'Reilly NHRA Winternat'l's
When: Feb. 5-8, 2009
Where: Auto Club Raceway at Pomona
ON TV (ET): ESPN2; Qualifying highlights, Saturday at 10 p.m.-midnight; Race, Sunday at 6:30-10 p.m.
Notable: The 2009 season-opener will mark the debut of the re-branded NHRA Full Throttle Drag Racing Series ... It will be the 49th annual Kragen O'Reilly NHRA Winternationals, the second longest-running race in the NHRA Full Throttle Series (U.S. Nationals, 55) ...

Meanwhile, in the Don Schumacher Racing pits, FRAM crew chief Mike Green and his team were moved to the U.S. Army team and to fill the void. On the FRAM team, Schumacher reassigned Todd Okuhara and Phil Shuler to act as co-crew chiefs for Cory McClenathan.

All of which left one big hole to be filled, the seat on Snake's dragster and that coveted seat was filled by promising newcomer Spencer Massey.

So to review, DSR will field two Top Fuel entries: driver Tony Schumacher/crew chief Mike Green and Cory McClenathan/Phil Shuler-Todd Okuhara; Alan Johnson will have one Top Fuel entry: Larry Dixon/Jason McCulloch; and Don Prudhomme will have one TF team: Spencer Massey/Donnie Bender.

The carousel in Top Fuel did not end there.

With the retirement of Tim and Kim Richards, Brandon Bernstein will enter the season with a new crew chief in Rob Flynn.

And with Mike Ashley's purchase of the Matco Tools team, Lee Beard was out as crew chief and Brian Corradi and Mark Oswald were in as co-crew chiefs; Antron Brown will return to the Matco seat.

*** FINAL *** 2008 NHRA FULL THROTTLE SERIES STANDINGS

NOTE: The season consists of an 18-race regular season and a six-race playoff; the Top 10 drivers qualify for the playoffs.

TOP FUEL		FUNNY CAR		PRO STOCK		PS MOTORCYCLE	
Driver (Ws)	Pts	Driver (Ws)	Pts	Driver (Ws)	Pts	Rider (Ws)	Pts
1. Schumacher (15).....	2,703	1. C. Pedregon (3).....	2,561	1. J. Coughlin (3).....	2,523	1. E. Krawiec	2,471
2. L. Dixon (2).....	-258	2. T. Wilkerson (6).....	-93	2. G. Anderson (6).....	-36	2. C. Rivas (4).....	-5
3. McClenathan (1).....	-297	3. J. Beckman (3).....	-104	3. K. Johnson (3).....	-73	3. M. Smith (4).....	-20
4. Hillary Will (1).....	-298	4. R. Hight (3).....	-119	4. M. Edwards (2).....	-135	4. A. Hines (2).....	-137
5. A. Brown (2).....	-333	5. T. Pedregon (4).....	-121	5. J. Line (2).....	-135	5. A. Sampey.....	-161
6. R. Fuller (1).....	-335	6. A. Force (1).....	-176	6. D. Connolly (4).....	-140	6. C. Ellis (1).....	-187
7. B. Bernstein.....	-376	7. J. Force (1).....	-258	7. A. Johnson.....	-160	7. S. Johnson (2).....	-188
8. D. Herbert (1).....	-396	8. R. Capps.....	-259	8. G. Stanfield (1).....	-194	8. C. Treble (1).....	-201
9. D. Kalitta.....	-494	9. M. Neff.....	-277	9. V. Gaines (1).....	-289	9. K. Stoffer.....	-304
10. D. Grubnic.....	-509	10. G. Densham.....	-344	10. R. Krisher (1).....	-365	10. M. Guidera (2).....	-315

Bold-regular season champion.