



Rockstar Hart and Huntington Blazing Trails Towards Multiple Championships

Going into Lucas Oil Off Road Series Rounds 9 & 10, the Premiere Motorsports Group was poised and ready to take to the track with an arsenal of high performance off road machinery. Just to get to the event, a tremendous amount of preparation went into the organization's 7 different race efforts competing in 5 out of 6 divisions.

The Team arrived early to Arizona on Wednesday, for an autograph session with Carey Hart at a local Dillards Department Store. While the crew was at the track constructing a massive PMG Compound, a Trophy kart, the #17 SuperLite, and the #46 Unlimited-2 were all on display in front of the Department Store. The Hart and Huntington Promotion Team setup a free raffle for tickets to the races among other prizes. Hundreds of fans received team posters, and purchased Hart and Huntington gear to be signed by Carey and other PMG Team Drivers.

Community outreach and spreading joy to others is an incredible feeling and anytime Premiere Motorsports Group can arrange that into the schedule, you bet they will. All day Thursday the operation worked hard to setup a complex pit arrangement. After a long hot day and consuming 10 cases of Weekend Warrior Water, PMG Team Mates Josh Merrel, Scot Demmer, Briana Magowan and a handful of others took off the evening to visit Phoenix Children's Hospital and spend some time with the young ones under care. Hitting every floor and distributing Hart and Huntington gift bags to any patient that wanted one was an awesome experience. Later in the weekend, Unlimited Lite racer, Leroy Leorwald, who is working on a new foundation called Lucas Oil Cares, brought a Special Olympic Softball Team over to the PMG Compound to get out of the hot Arizona sun and grab some snacks and cold drinks before going out to watch the racing.

One notable difference for the second to last weekend of the 2009 series, was Josh Merrel turning in an outdated Unlimited-2 Truck for a much more competitive Unlimited-4. Josh, in his rookie season has made leaps and bounds of progression since he got behind the wheel late in the season. Learning the new truck and multiple test sessions shows fair lap times and good improvement, however any veteran will say it takes years and hundreds of laps to install the skill and second nature of sliding a 4 wheel drive 800 horse power truck around a slick track at speed. This scenario would reveal itself during a Friday Practice Shakedown, when a developing hole tripped up the #22 U-4 sending Merrel into a cartwheel. This corner would take a number of others out during the course of the weekend. The crash had Josh feeling shook up and he opted to sit out. Chris Brandt took over driving duties converting the #22 for a #82 number plate for Qualifying and the rest of Saturday's events.

Every practice session showed the Rockstar Hart and Huntington Team warming to the conditions and feeling out the track in preparation for the weekends racing. Experimenting with lines and mixing it up with the other cars, demonstrated each racer flexing and ready for competition. However, during Qualifying the Unlimited-4 was coughing smoke at any right hand corner forcing Brandt to shut it down early. Faced with a hard call and an expensive gamble, PMG determined they wanted each race car in the weekend's stable out on the track. An all night motor swap and standard race prep had the crew thrashing to prepare the Unlimited-4 for Saturday's racing.

Round 9 was particularly a struggle for Premiere Motorsports Group. Carey Hart's U-2 race ended quickly right at the green flag start when Dale Dondale shot his truck into a gnarly lawn dart cartwheel and left the #46 Rockstar Hart and Huntington Truck with nowhere to go but crashing right into the carnage. Several sections on the front of the U-2 had to be reconstructed and repaired in order to get the Ford straight and square. Chris Brandt's Unlimited Lite effort was truly a marvelous 3 way race for the lead between the Mastercraft Truck, Robert Naughton and the #82 Rockstar Toyota. Lap after lap each driver would challenge the other competitors. Near the end, Brandt feel way back with transmission issues losing a podium finish and doing everything he could to push the truck to the checkers. During the Unlimited-4 race with Brandt piloting the #82, Chris showed promise early on however the engine temperature rose to over 350°. With nothing to prove and wanting to conserve the truck PMG called the truck off and headed back to the pits.

Despite Saturday's issues, the Rockstar Trophy Kart Program showed their best effort ever with Anthony Busnardo and Brandon Vermillion two timing, setting up and making passes while displaying a great race. They were both super stoked and are having a great time competing in the Modified Trophy Karts. For Anthony and Brandon it is all about having fun and mixing it up. After any track time you will find the them both working on their Karts and preparing for the next session. John Fitzgerald continued his impressive domination of the Limited Buggy division, sweeping the weekend and winning 10 of his last 12 races, making it 7 straight.

Striving to overcome and a never give up attitude, the Rockstars of Premiere Motorsports Group rise to the surface whenever there is work to be done. From all nighters to power outages the key personnel show up and power through. Showing great resilience, Eric Anderson, Crew Chief for the #46, led the way on the all night prep session repairing the U-2 while Bill Smith from Pro Fab Motorsports and Crew Chief for the #22 U-4, Blake Wilkey, had their hands full preparing the Unlimited-4 for the following day's battles. Bill Smith is highly trained in every aspect of motorsports. His technical knowledge and professional experience has been a welcome addition to the Rockstar Hart and Huntington pit area.





By early Sunday morning, the trucks were buttoned back together & body panels fastened, the pits were very much alive with action. Although Sunday's temperatures were warm, it would not reach the scorcher experienced on Saturday. The Rockstar Hart and Huntington Unlimited-4 once again adorned the #22 number plates which meant Josh Merrel would return to the driver's seat. During a quick group meeting the team gathered to strategize and hear the game plan. Ryan Busnardo summarized it quickly; "OK guys, Saturday is for working, Sundays are for winning races. Let's go out there and get it done."

Sunday's race action fared much better for Premiere Motorsports Group. Fitzgerald kicked it off with another commanding race win in the #314 Lucas Oil Hart and Huntington Limited Buggy followed by a redeeming SuperLite win by Chad Leising. The #17 SuperLite did not perform the standard top 3 finish during the previous round, however during Round 10, the Lucas Oil Hart and Huntington ride captured the lead from the talented Ricky James and never looked back. It is likely a good thing Chad did not, because James was right behind looking to sweep the SuperLite podium. Chad has now narrowed the gap from class leader John Harrah down to 7 points and is in good position to win the division.

Chris Brandt looking for a 2009 series Championship has his hands full with a highly skilled field of racers. He did not disappoint during the Unlimited Lite event. Sunday's show was probably considered the race of the weekend and the #82 Rockstar Hart and Huntington was the star. During the race it was anyone's game, Deegan, Naughton, Stephenson, and Cuffaro were all throwing their hat in and lap after lap the quickest trucks made their way to the top of the field. The restart showed Brandt emerging with the lead and Deegan & Cuffaro falling in behind. The two team mates made every attempt, but they could not find their way around the consistent driving style of Brandt. In the end it was a Rockstar Podium with Chris on top and now leading the division with 2 rounds to go.

Carey Hart went into Round 10 looking for a decent finish. Not only did he place in the top 5 right behind Carl Renezeder, but Hart proved he can charge around door to door with some of the sports elite. Carey started from the last row in a field of 14 very aggressive racers. Lap by lap, the #46 Rockstar Truck ran its race and even fended off Jerry Wechel as he was trying to nose in on him early during lap 2. Despite all the banzai action on the track, Carey just stayed cool and consistent all the way to the checkers taking one of his best finishes of the season.

After Sunday's action and back in the PMG Compound for the after hours celebration, Premiere Motorsports Group Team Manager Scot Demmer, raised up refreshing Flawless Vodka & Rockstar Cocktail to congratulate the team; "That is what I'm talking about. Thanks to everyone pulling the all nighters, going on no sleep, and for all the hustle. It is a team effort, and everyone top to bottom is the reason why we can keep these race cars on the track and win! Special thanks goes out to Bill Schlieper of Pro Power and Bill Smith of Pro Fab Motorsports. Also thanks to everyone at King Shocks, KMC Wheels, K&N Air Filters, Weekend Warrior Water, General Tires and everyone at the Lucas Oil Series."

Television coverage of the Lucas Oil Off Road Series Rounds 9 & 10 will air on SPEED Channel November 7 at 3:00 p.m. and 4:00 p.m., as well as VERSUS on April 3rd, 8th, 10th and 15th all at 5:00 p.m. Check your local listings to confirm dates and times.

With nearly zero down time, Chris Brandt and John Fitzgerald raced back to Premiere Motorsports Group's Corona based headquarters to tear down and once again prepare the two-timing race cars for yet another weekend of competition in the TORC Series this next weekend. Before heading straight to Las Vegas Motor Speedway, these hardcore Rockstar Short Course Racers stopped to test and shakedown at Glen Helen. Both of the programs are putting it all on the line to finish off the 2009 TORC Season. You can bet their competitors felt the same and every race will be one for the record books. Brandt is sitting high, 4th in points with some talented veterans in his way. Fitzgerald may have his division on lockdown but with this being the final round, it is anyone's game.

In addition to the online broadcast efforts of Dirt Newz.com's Live at TORC and USAC Live Race Day Coverage, ABC will bring the Las Vegas Finale event into everyone's house with a television broadcast airing on Sunday, November 8th, at 1:30pm EST.

For more information on the Rockstar Hart and Huntington Offroad Team go to www.premiermotorsportsgroup.com

This professional motorsports organization is the product of numerous individuals and support of strong companies brought together to create an offroad racing powerhouse. The brands like Rockstar Energy, Hart & Huntington, Lucas Oil, Geico Powersports, Liquid Graphics, Fantasyoff-roadracing.com, Simpson Race Products, Gator Wraps, Chronic Tacos, and General Tire will ensure a number of achievements & results throughout the 2009 season. Additional support from King Shocks, K&N Air Filters, VP Racing Fuels, KMC Wheels, JSTAR Motors, National Concrete Cutting, Century Collision Center, NRGX, Screen Works, Corona Millworks Racing, Blurred Motion, and Bully Dog Technologies, constantly through the season compounds the sustainability of racing.

