

**FOR RELEASE:** 9 p.m. PST, Saturday, January 10, 2009

## **AARWBA Titus Trophy to Schumacher**

***NHRA Top Fuel Champ Tops All-America Team;  
Wins by 1 Over Johnson in Media Group Voting;  
Ceremony Presented by A1GP World Cup of Motorsport***

ONTARIO, Calif. – Tony Schumacher, whose record-setting NHRA drag racing season was capped with a fifth consecutive Top Fuel championship, was announced as winner of the Jerry Titus Memorial Trophy at Saturday night's 39<sup>th</sup> annual American Auto Racing Writers and Broadcasters Association All-America Team ceremony, presented by A1GP World Cup of Motorsport.

In the closest margin in over a quarter-century, Schumacher edged NASCAR Sprint Cup titlist Jimmie Johnson by one vote. Shirley Muldowney received one vote more than Bobby Allison in 1982.

The Titus Trophy is awarded to the driver who receives the most All-America Team votes. It is named in memory of the late journalist and racer, who was an AARWBA member. It is the highest honor offered by AARWBA, the country's oldest and largest organization of motorsports media professionals.

AARWBA members annually elect drivers to the Team from seven categories: Stock car, open-wheel, drag racing, road racing, short track, touring series and at-large.

Schumacher dominated the Top Fuel class. He finished with 15 wins out of 18 final-round appearances in 24 events, had seven consecutive victories, made 11 straight final rounds and had 31 consecutive round wins. All are records. His 76 round wins tied Greg Anderson's single-season mark. Along the way, Schumacher surpassed Joe Amato's all-time Top Fuel wins record and ended the 2008 season with a career total of 56 victories.

"It's a thrill to be named the Jerry Titus Trophy winner," said Schumacher, who also won the award in 2006. "Given the history-making season the U.S. Army team had in 2008, I wish this trophy could be split up in a lot of different

ways so every crew guy can have a piece for themselves. When I look back on this past season, I can safely say I was part of the greatest Top Fuel team that's ever been assembled in NHRA history.

"I'm also happy that I could bring home another Titus award to the NHRA world. With so many talented drivers from so many different series eligible, to be singled out as the top vote-getter is really special. It clearly means drag racing is getting its fair share of attention."

Other Team drivers to earn Horsepower Trophies were: Cruz Pedregon (drag racing); Johnson and Carl Edwards (stock car); Scott Dixon and Helio Castroneves (open wheel); Scott Pruett/Memo Rojas and David Brabham/Scott Sharp (road racing); Johnny Benson and Justin Allgaier (touring series); Jerry Coons Jr. and Donny Schatz (short track); Jorg Bergmeister/Wolf Henzler and Raphael Matos (at-large).

A1GP Chief Commercial Officer Scott Hollingsworth greeted guests on behalf of the ceremony's presenting sponsor. The international, 10-race, A1GP open-wheel series' unique format matches country vs. country. A1GP brings together more than 20 nations to compete on an equal basis. Andretti Green Racing represents Team USA with Marco Andretti leading the driver roster.

Several special awards were presented:

**Pioneer In Racing Award:** Dave McClelland, the legendary NHRA announcer and broadcaster, was honored for longtime dedication and achievement that has made a difference in the sport. The Pioneer is one of AARWBA's oldest and most prestigious awards and this was the first time it was presented to someone in the media. McClelland was the evening's Master of Ceremonies. Co-Chairperson Susan Wade made the introduction and presentation.

**Jim Chapman Award:** Judy Stropus received the honor for excellence in motorsports public relations. It is named in memory of Chapman, the late legendary PR executive, who was Babe Ruth's PR rep and director of racing for CART series sponsor PPG Industries. Stropus, representing Don Schumacher Racing, was chosen by a blue-ribbon committee of journalists, all of whom knew Chapman. The plaque was presented by ceremony Co-Chairman Michael Knight and AARWBA Southern Vice President Mike Harris, both close friends of Chapman.

**Appreciation Awards:** Ford, Honda, Toyota, Mazda and Porsche were recognized by President Dusty Brandel for their longtime support of the organization. All were represented at the ceremony.

**Gorsline Scholarship:** The 16th annual scholarship, given by John Gorsline of The Gorsline Co., went to Star Mazda series runner-up Joel Miller. The prize is awarded to an up-and-coming driver who displays the attributes of a future champion.

The ceremony was staged in the Hilton Hotel ballroom. Audio-visual tributes were offered in memory of Paul Newman, Phil Hill, Scott Kalitta, Porsche publicist and Chapman Award winner Bob Carlson and longtime AARWBA vice president and online racing journalism pioneer Michael F. Hollander. Several speakers participated in the Shav Glick Newsmakers Forum. The pre-dinner reception was co-hosted by ESPN, *MAZDASPEED* and Valvoline. Guests enjoyed complimentary Budweiser products.

Earlier in the day, AARWBA members toured the shop of 14-time Funny Car champion John Force and participated in media drag racing on the legendary Pomona quarter-mile.

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**NOTE TO NEWS MEDIA:** Visit AARWBA.org for more information. Contact President Dusty Brandel, 818/842-7005, [aarwba@compuserve.com](mailto:aarwba@compuserve.com) or dinner chairman Michael Knight, 602/315-3900 (cell phone) or [SpinDoctor500@aol.com](mailto:SpinDoctor500@aol.com) . Thank you.