

NHRA legend Johnson will headline Atlanta's 60th-themed activities

With Summit Racing's Jason Line winning back-to-back races to open the year and 2004 NA-SCAR Sprint Cup champion Kurt Busch making a big splash in Gainesville, the Pro Stock class has been the talk of the early part of the 2011 NHRA Full Throttle Drag Racing Series season.

With so much attention on the class, the timing couldn't be better for motorsports fans in the Southeast because the NHRA legend who will be featured as part of NHRA's 60th Anniversary activities at the Summit Racing Equipment NHRA Southern Nationals in Atlanta May 13-15 will be none other than Warren Johnson, the Buford, Ga., resident who is the winningest driver in the history of the Pro Stock class.

He also holds the distinction of retaining the



one major NHRA record – No. 1 qualifiers – not held by John Force. He has paced the Pro Stock field an NHRA-record 138 times; Force has 135.

Here's a snapshot look at Johnson's resume, one of the two or three most impressive in NHRA history:

- 138 No. 1 qualifiers, No. 1 all-time in NHRA history
- 97 wins, No. 2 all-time in NHRA history
- Six championships, tied (with Kenny Bernstein) for No. 4 all-time in NHRA history

He's also the first Pro Stock driver to eclipse the 200-mph mark. He accomplished the milestone with a 200.13-mph pass in Richmond, Va., in 1997, and he'll have that record-setting GM Performance Parts Pontiac Firebird in the pits in Atlanta for fans attending the Summit Racing NHRA Southern Nationals in Atlanta to see.

Johnson will also be the NHRA legend hosting NHRA's popular Track Walk with a Legend series Sunday morning before the pre-race ceremony; NHRA Track Walks with a Legend in Pomona (Don "the Snake" Prudhomme) and Gainesville (Darrell Gwynn) have garnered huge crowds, and all fans with a Sunday ticket to the Summit Racing Equipment NHRA Southern Nationals will be allowed to participate.

The Summit Racing Equipment NHRA Southern Nationals will mark the sixth stop in a yearlong celebration that will pay homage to the



evolution of the hot rod, the impact of the sport's legendary racers, and the lifeblood provided by the many millions of loyal and passionate NHRA fans.

Tickets for the 31st annual Summit Racing NHRA Southern Nationals, May 13-15 at Atlanta Dragway, are on sale now via NHRA.com or by phone at 800-884-NHRA (6472).

NHRA News Nuggets



WORSHAM NABS THIRD WIN OF SEASON; NOBILE EARNS FIRST OF CAREER IN HOUSTON:

Former Funny Car driver-turned Top Fuel pilot Del Worsham raced to his third win of the 2011 season at the recently completed O'Reilly Auto Parts NHRA Spring Nationals in Baytown, Texas. Worsham, who faced teammate and defending world champion Larry Dixon for the second consecutive time in the final round, drove his Al-Anabi Racing Dragster straight to the finish line and his third win in five races—posting one of the most impressive starts to a season in Top Fuel history. Worsham also became the first NHRA Full Throttle Drag Racing Series driver

this year to reach the 500-point mark in the point standings, and currently sits an impressive 95 points ahead of second-place driver Dixon. "This is surreal," said Worsham. "The way the day unfolded, we had some close races, and it was amazing. It was great to race Larry in the final because he's the champion and we're all shooting for him. The final was a heck of a race. I've got to give all the credit to the Al-Anabi team. I am just a small part of it." While the veteran Worsham raced to his 28th career victory, Pro Stock rookie Vincent Nobile was picking up his first. In one of the most exciting and closest finishes in NHRA history, Nobile drove his Mountain View Dodge Avenger past

runner-up Rodger Brogdon, beating him on a holeshot with a reaction time of .007 on the starting line. "It was close, I didn't even know who won at the stripe," said Nobile. "Then everyone was screaming in my ear that we won. It was incredible." In Funny Car, Jeff Arend powered his DHL Funny Car past points leader Mike Neff to collect his first win of the season and move up to the fifth spot in the point standings, while three-time Pro Stock Motorcycle rider Andrew Hines raced to his 24th career win when he held off hot-charging Michael Phillips in the final round. Screamin' Eagle Vance & Hines Harley-Davidson teammates Eddie Krawiec and Hines are now one and two in the Pro Stock Motorcycle standings. For more results from the 24th annual O'Reilly Auto Parts NHRA Springs Nationals, visit NHRA.com.

'SNAKE AND MONGOOSE' FEATURE FILM MOVING FORWARD: Rhino films and newly formed shingle, Storywise Productions, have acquired life-story rights from legendary drag racing rivals, Don "The

Snake" Prudhomme and Tom "The Mongoose" McEwen and partnered with the NHRA to produce a motion picture about their years revolutionizing one of the world's most thrilling sports on and off the track. The movie will tell the story of Snake and Mongoose's legendary rivalry, friendship, and accomplishments. It will show how the two men not only made drag racing history as champion drivers and owners, but also how they modernized the sport in 1970 by shrewdly enticing toy giant, Mattel Inc. to make its then-new Hot Wheels line the sport's first major corporate sponsor. When Mattel put logos on dragsters to make them 200-mph billboards for its toy line and put real-life drivers into its TV commercials, Mattel became the first non-automotive sponsor in a racing sport, and the industry's first commercial tie-in was born. Principal photography is expected to start by Fall 2011, with an anticipated theatrical release target date in 2012 commemorating the 40th anniversary of the Snake and Mongoose's partnership with Mattel. For more information on this story, visit NHRA.com.