

BROWN HONORED DURING GREAT SPORTS LEGENDS DINNER AT WALDORF-ASTORIA:

Antron Brown joined a group of world-renowned athletes during the Great Sports Legends Dinner to benefit The Buoniconti Fund to Cure Paralysis. Joining Brown, pictured with Marc Buoniconti, at the Waldorf-Astoria were Hall of Famers Terry Bradshaw from the NFL, James Worthy from the NBA, and Dave Winfield from MLB along with Olympic gold medalist Shawn Johnson, golfer Nick Faldo, jockey Gary Stevens, and former WNBA great Teresa Edwards. "I've been truly blessed this year, and being recognized by the Buoniconti family is more than I could have imagined," Brown said. "It was a remarkable event, and I'm just humbled to have been able to attend let alone be honored with such dignitaries from the sports world."

HE SAID, SHE SAID

"The Al-Anabi team left St. Louis with the points lead so with three races to go, we are in control of our own destiny, and that is how we want it. Our lead is three points bigger than it was when we started the Countdown, but losing in the second round at St. Louis was still a little

disheartening because with Massey and Kalitta losing in the first round, we had a great opportunity to extend our points lead and widen the gap, but Sunday played out how it did. The Al-Anabi car is very strong right now, and we are very excited to be going to Reading this weekend. A lot depends on the weather in Reading, but if the weather cooperates, you might see some 3.69s or 3.68s (3.69-second passes or 3.68-second passes). Reading has the capability of being a throw-down race so we are going to be prepared for that possibility when we arrive. We want the Al-Anabi car to be ready because if there's an opportunity to get a national ET (elapsed time) record and pick up those extra 20 bonus points, we want to be the ones to do it." -- Shawn Langdon on retaking the Top Fuel points lead and the conditions at Maple Grove Raceway.

INSIDE THE NUMBERS

7: Number of consecutive seasons Jack Beckman has won a Funny Car event in his eight-year Funny Car career. This streak is in jeopardy as Beckman has yet to win a points paying event this season with only three races remaining on the schedule. "We have yet to win a trophy



Funny Car driver
Jack Beckman

this year and we're getting low on opportunities to do that," Beckman said. "We're not getting desperate. We're approaching it the same way. It is frustrating to be this deep into the season and not have a trophy. And when you get to Reading there are only 12 rounds left. It is put up or shut up time."

DID YOU KNOW...

SMITH FAMILY HAS SUCCESSFUL OUTING AT GATEWAY MOTORSPORTS PARK:

The weekend for Rickie Smith and his son Matt at Gateway Motorsports Park could long be remembered as one of the most successful of their careers. In the NHRA Pro Mod Drag Racing Series Rickie Smith was able to secure his first championship on the strength of two wins and two No. 1 qualifying positions. Smith became the champion when he defeated Jim Laurita in the semifinals. An emotional Smith said in the media center that after winning the championship he would retire at the end of the season. "I've been

doing this for 40 solid years," Smith said. "I drive my own truck and put up my own awning and it's time to back off, be a crew chief and let these young guys do it." In Pro Stock Motorcycle Matt put himself in a position to win his second championship when he won his second event of the year. He also took over the points lead in the two-wheel category by 75 points with only 12-rounds of racing remaining.

COMING ATTRACTIONS

NHRA TOYOTA NATIONALS

The Strip at Las Vegas Motor Speedway, Oct. 24-27: The NHRA Toyota Nationals is the penultimate race of the 2013 NHRA Mello Yello Drag Racing Series and the championship battles will be tight as the season comes to a close. Bob Vandergriff (Top Fuel), Ron Capps (Funny Car), Allen Johnson (Pro Stock), and Eddie Krawiec (Pro Stock Motorcycle) are defending event champions and will again be top contenders during the weekend. One of the largest autograph sessions of the year will take place at the Fremont Street Experience on Oct. 24 with many of the top stars in the NHRA Mello Yello Drag Racing Series.

AUTO CLUB NHRA FINALS

Auto Club Raceway at Pomona, Nov. 7-10: The 2013 Mello Yello Drag Racing Series comes to a thrilling conclusion at the Auto Club NHRA Finals at Auto Club Raceway at Pomona in Southern California, Calif., Nov. 7-10. The champions will be crowned on Sunday night and Shawn Langdon, will attempt to bookend the season with Pomona wins and secure his first championship. Brandon Bernstein (Top Fuel), Cruz Pedregon (Funny Car), Allen Johnson (Pro Stock) and Andrew Hines (Pro Stock Motorcycle), took home wins in 2012 and will attempt to end the season on a high note.

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