

# THUNDERBOWL RACEWAY PREVIEW

Contributed by Bill Klingbeil

## Tony Stewart Racing Outlaw Teams Seek Gold in California

INDIANAPOLIS (March 3, 2010) – Competitors love the challenge of beating the best. In the last few weeks, dozens of triumphant athletes left Vancouver with a gold medal draping around their neck. Those Olympians who left without the ultimate prize know it will take more work to achieve the goal of Olympic glory, and they'll have to wait four years to try again. Fortunately for competitors in the rugged World of Outlaws (WoO) Sprint Series, their schedule offers more than 80 nights of competition each year to showcase their talents in search of glory.

A quick turnaround is exactly what Tony Stewart Racing's (TSR) Steve Kinser and Donny Schatz need after each left a chance at victory get away last Friday night in the WoO's Second Annual Las Vegas Super Sprint Classic. Both are ready to move on and chase their second victory of the season this Friday night, when the Outlaws resume their 2010 campaign at Thunderbowl Raceway in Tulare, Calif.

Four-time and reigning WoO champion Donny Schatz began the year in winning fashion by dominating the season-opening event. At Las Vegas, it looked like he was going to make it two wins in three races by driving the TSR No. 15 Armor All/STP/ParkerStore J&J in front of the pack during most of the 30-lap A-Feature. While Schatz was setting the pace, Kinser, the 20-time WoO champion, worked his way to second from his fifth starting position aboard the TSR No. 11 Bass Pro Shops/JD Byrider Maxim. The TSR duo held the top two spots with only five laps to go in the race, but an unexpected participant joined the fray late and threatened to steal the gold.

With four laps to go, Jason Meyers first passed Kinser to take over second position, and with only three laps remaining, he grabbed the lead from Schatz. Kinser worked his way past Schatz heading toward the white flag, hoping for a shot at Meyers. Kinser briefly took the lead on the final lap, and while Kinser and Meyers duelled for the preferred low line in the final corner, Schatz saw the battle in front of him as a chance to capture the win. Unfortunately for the TSR team, Kinser couldn't hold the bottom line in turns three and four, and Schatz couldn't get around the cushion fast enough to stop Meyers from scoring a thrilling win.

Both Kinser and Schatz have come up on good side of such a story more times than not, and each champion has been able to bounce back from narrow defeat quickly. Thanks to two nights of racing at Thunderbowl on Friday and Saturday, they won't have to wait long for their next chance at victory. This weekend's race also will be the series' first stop at a short-track venue this season. After racing three times on half-miles, the Outlaws will tackle the high-banked 1/3-mile dirt oval in central California.

For Schatz, this weekend's return to California also represents a chance to break a victory drought. The last time Schatz won in the Golden State was at Thunderbowl in October 2007. That win came the day after Tony Stewart Racing announced Armor All would sponsor the Fargo, N.D., racer at TSR the following season. After unveiling the new Armor All colors in Charlotte, Schatz flew across the country and never slowed down en route to earning his 70th career WoO A-Feature. The win was his second career Outlaw victory at the track and it came two years after his initial triumph in October 2005, a night when Schatz was the fastest qualifier and feature winner.

For both events this weekend at Thunderbowl Raceway, the pit gates will be open throughout the day while the grandstands open at 5 p.m. PST. Hot laps are scheduled to begin at 6 p.m. For tickets and more information on the event, visit [www.thunderbowlraceway.com](http://www.thunderbowlraceway.com).

Race fans unable to attend this weekend's races can catch all of the action on DIRTVision.com. Fans can listen live as Johnny Gibson, "Voice of the Outlaws," calls the action as he does at all WoO Sprint Series events on the DIRTVision.com cybercast, as well as on the DIRT Radio Network. Go to [www.DIRTVision.com](http://www.DIRTVision.com) for more information on all the site features, including updated results from each night of racing, as well as a chat room to interact with other race fans.

Donny Schatz, Driver of the No. 15 TSR/Armor All/Chevy/ParkerStore J&J:

This weekend is your first visit to Thunderbowl Raceway this season. Traditionally, it's one of the most competitive stops on the tour. What makes racing in California so tough?

"One of the great things about racing with the World of Outlaws is that we travel the country and get to take on the best guys from each region. Each area takes a lot of pride in trying to beat us when we come to town. California is no different. When I first started racing with the series, we would spend a month each year racing out there. Whether it was the bullrings like Chico and Hanford or the half-mile tracks like Calistoga, the California guys were always up for us. That hasn't changed today.

"Tulare is a fun track. When they get it to where you have a couple of racing grooves, we can put on a great show. Getting side-by-side racing on a smaller track, where traffic comes into play, is a lot of fun. Hopefully, we'll get that type of racing this weekend.

"I've been able to win a couple of races at Tulare. It's been a couple years since we won, so that's priority one for us this weekend. A big key is getting qualified well so that you can be in the mix. This is our first opportunity to be on a short track this year with the Outlaws, and we're hoping to come out with the same kind of success we've had on the big tracks."

In the Outlaws first three races, you've finished first, fourth and third. Are you happy with the way you've started the year?

"We've led two races and only ended up winning one, so that doesn't sit well with us. Our goal every night is to win races and, in Las Vegas, we felt like we should have won the race. The expectations we have as a team are pretty lofty, so it takes a lot for us to be happy.

"We're still in a learning mode. The Armor All guys (crew chief Rick Warner, crewman Shane Bowers and Steve Swenson) keep working hard to give me a good car. It seems like, in the first few races, we've been really fast pounding the cushion but not as good on other parts of the track. We need to be good all over and that's the formula we're working to perfect.

"This team has been through a lot over the years and I know we're going to continue to improve. It's still about winning races for us. We've been right there the first few races. It's simply a matter of continuing to work hard so that we have the best car at the end of the race."