

TULARE WEEKEND RECAP

Contributed by Bill Klingbeil

BAD BREAK ENDS WEEKEND IN CALIFORNIA

TULARE, CA - Donny Schatz knew his weekend visit to Thunderbowl Raceway in central California wasn't going to be easy. The defending World of Outlaws champion battled his way to fourth on Friday night, but on Saturday night, he wasn't as fortunate. After being involved in a "racing deal" in Saturday's feature, the end result was his first DNF of the season.

"We were obviously going out there to win a couple of races," admitted Schatz, who fell from first to fourth in the WoO standings. "Coming from 13th to fourth on Friday had us feeling like we were on the right path. The track was really fast and pretty heavy, so seeing all those accidents wasn't a surprise. I knew starting where I did on Saturday that I need to be really aware of what was going on around me. Unfortunately, I didn't see Tim spinning and had no where to go."

Schatz piloted the Tony Stewart Racing (TSR) No. 15 Armor All/STP/Chevy/ParkerStore J&J methodically through the field in Friday night's crashfest. He avoided trouble in the 35-lap feature event ultimately earning his fourth top-four finish in the first four WoO races of 2010.

The luck he had on Friday night turned on him Saturday in the feature event. After qualifying fifth and finishing third in the Dash event, Schatz was running in the top-five following a lap 11 restart. Third place running Tim Kaeding lost control of his car and spun into Schatz, turning the No. 15 upside down. The TSR crew quickly made enough repairs for Schatz to return. He was without a nose wing and raced that way for three laps before another yellow slowed the action. During the caution, Schatz darted into the pits hoping to add a nose wing for the final 20 laps. The changes weren't made before the race restarted and Schatz was credited with a 20th-place finish.

"With the front wing knocked off, I was just going to ride around out there. I figured I'd come in on the next yellow. I came in and we just didn't get everything done in time to get back out there. It is what is and we'll look to bounce back in Texas next week."

Last spring, Schatz finished second at LoneStar Speedway in Kilgore, Texas and second at Houston Raceway Park on consecutive nights. He'll try to finish one spot better at each this weekend with back-to-back races on Friday and Saturday night.