

March 13/14th, 2010: The 7th Annual “Duel in the Desert” is On!!!



This year's Desert Storm Rally, "Duel in the Desert," is really heating up with the use of over three counties' of stage roads in a two-day battle of competition. Lauchlin O'Sullivan coming back, with Scott Putnum navigating, in a Vermont Sports Car-prepared 2007 Subaru Impreza WRX STI. Doug Chernis and Craig Macnair come to see about shaking up the competition, after which Doug goes from this event to out to the Sebring 12 hour race the following weekend. Now that is hardcore! Then there is the Keith Jackson/Marra Estep team that can do the shaking as well, but there are others that can or will surprise the front-runners. There are some brand new rally cars making their debut, to be given their test in the desert. George Doganis has his brand new Honda Civic, and there are so many more the list goes on and on. Unfortunately, Bill Holmes will not make it, and he is bumming.

Desert Storm is the opening round of the Rally America Southwest Region, featuring Saturday coefficient 3 and Sunday coefficient 2 rallies on the unpredictable desert of eastern California and western Arizona. The first round for Bilstein Southwest RallyCup and CRS series. There will be over 100 stage miles to test the competitors.

This year Desert Storm has Lucas Oil and Subaru SW Region on board to support the event and its endeavors along with associate sponsors Capital Suites and Palo Verde College.

Also this year the event boasts over \$4000.00 dollars to give out as contingency funds that came from Subaru, Lucas Oil and the Bilstein Southwest RallyCup Series for the event's own "Attack" event. It will be called Storm Attack, but there is a twist to it. It is not just the two-wheel-drive competitors that are included, but also all-wheel-drive competitors. They will be separated into two categories: 2wd and 4wd.

The Bilstein Southwest Rallycup series is proud to introduce to the series a chance to have its very own class. It is called "The Bilstein Cup Class," in which competitors running on Bilstein shock absorbers have a chance to have their own category and run for the season-end minimum \$1200.00 contingency fund prizes and the prestigious "Bilstein Racing for Excellence" award, which is considered as close as you can get the Bilstein Madonna award.

Friday after recce the rally will donate time and money to the City of Blythe Fundraising Spaghetti dinner, and will have a parc expose in front of the fire department. This is a local

favorite each year to see the rally cars and meet the competitors to enjoy a really nice dinner at the facility.

On Saturday the teams will traverse the historic Bradshaw Trail, a stagecoach road originally used in the 1860's. The generally smooth, fast roads lead to a crossing of scenic Graham Pass, a test of suspension and patience. This year the rally has added another spectator area right out on a stage for the public to come and watch. Later on that day, the competitors will return to the headquarters city of Blythe, California where teams will do a Lucas Oil Four Lap Showdown Super-Special on the tarmac at Lucas I-10 Speedway with over 1000 to 1500 race fans. This will be the first to have road racers intertwine with rallyists as part of the schedule. Everyone is excited about this, to have Modified, Legends, Bondeleros and Sprint Midgets with Rally cars; an array of different types of cars on one track. Also, we shall see if once again a rally car can beat the track's record, like last year's performance by Camaro Jim Morris. Jim will be back again to see if he can beat his time again.

Last year, the rally was a pre-racing event scheduled with two laps around the track and the race fans loved it so much that the Desert Storm organization and Lucas Oil wanted to bring road-racing and rallying together as part of the event itself. So everyone is looking forward to this Saturday night at the track.

Sunday will find competitors on the U.S. Army Yuma Proving Grounds in western Arizona, where they will wind their way between Saguaro cactus and Ocotillo plants.

Conditions: Desert Storm stages are generally graded and fast, punctuated by low lying rough washes that can be both sandy and hard at the same time. The transition from fast to "gotcha" will challenge all entries, regardless of experience.

For more information and check out the General Event Schedule go to the event website: www.desertstormrally.com. Let's go rallying!