



## **Levi Jones Earns Unprecedented Fifth USAC Sprint Car Title** ***Tony Stewart Racing Driver Now a Seven-Time USAC Champion***

HANFORD, Calif. (Nov. 13, 2011) – Levi Jones can still remember the first time he strapped into a Sprint Car – a type of open-wheel racecar with an extremely high power-to-weight ratio.

It was June 1998 and Jones was 16 years old, and on that day at Red Hill (Ill.) Speedway he simply wanted to be competitive enough to come back the next week. The Olney, Ill., native did just that, and now, at age 29, Jones is the first five-time Sprint Car champion in United States Auto Club (USAC) history.

On Saturday night, the Tony Stewart Racing (TSR) driver piloted his No. 20 Chevrolet/GM Performance Parts/Maxim to a flag-to-flag victory in the 30-lap season finale at Giant Chevrolet Kings Speedway in Hanford, Calif., ending the 2011 AMSOIL USAC National Sprint Car season with a 99-point advantage over runner-up Chris Windom. The championship was Jones' seventh USAC National title, tying him with legends Mel Kenyon and the late Rich Vogler. Jones now trails only A.J. Foyt, who has 10 USAC championships.

"I remember putting our first car together and talking about going to our first USAC race when we had no business going," said Jones, who on Oct. 15 clinched his second consecutive USAC Traxxas Silver Crown Series championship. "We were just hoping to make a race, let alone someday win a championship. Tonight, we stand here not only the winner of the race, but as a five-time USAC National Sprint Car champion. This puts us in a class of our own and that's really special. USAC changed up the championship formula this year by only counting the races on dirt toward the title. I don't know if they thought that would give a lot more guys a chance to knock us off, but here we are, champs again."

Jones' title marked the sixth USAC Sprint Car championship for car owner Tony Stewart. Three of Jones' four previous titles (2007, 2008 and 2010) came driving for Stewart. J.J. Yeley (2003) and Josh Wise (2006) piloted Stewart's No. 20 to the other two USAC Sprint Car crowns. Jones' first Sprint Car title came with Benic Enterprises in 2005.

This championship is Stewart's 12<sup>th</sup> as a USAC car owner, as Stewart has six USAC Silver Crown championships, with Jones delivering TSR titles in 2010 and 2011. Stewart captured four consecutive Silver Crown titles from 2002 to 2005 as a co-owner with Bob East.

Stewart now has 15 total owner championships, as TSR is a three-time winner of the World of Outlaws Sprint Car Series championship (2001, 2008 and 2009).

"I've said it before and I'll say it again – Levi Jones is a gifted driver," said Stewart, who won the 1995 USAC Sprint Car title before moving onto the IZOD IndyCar Series and NASCAR. "We're so fortunate to have him drive for us at TSR. He came to us a champion and we're thrilled to win another championship together. He's a five-time champion and that's a huge accomplishment.

"It's a total team effort that starts in our shop at Brownsburg (Ind.) and continues at the track. Those guys never give up. Winning both Silver Crown and Sprint Car titles in consecutive years says so much about everyone involved. I can't put into words how proud I am of this."

Jones' title run began in February at Ocala (Fla.) Speedway. He showed that consistency was key, opening the season with four top-10 finishes. Following a fifth-place finish May 20 at Bloomington (Ind.) Speedway, Jones grabbed the point lead. He remained atop the standings for the remainder of the season thanks to victories June 1 at Lincoln Speedway in Hanover, Pa., during the annual USAC Eastern Storm Tour and Oct. 1 at Lawrenceburg (Ind.) Speedway. Finally, after a 31-race tour, Jones became only the third driver to win three consecutive USAC Sprint Car titles, joining four-time USAC Sprint Car champion Steve Butler (1986-1988) and the late Robbie Stanley (1991-1993).

"Every year so many people start the season with the goal of winning the championship," said Jones, who came into the season-ending race at Hanford with a 33-point lead over Windom. "Just about every year it ends up coming down to where you end up battling two or three guys to win it. This season it came down to us and Chris (Windom). He had a good year and made it interesting. When he crashed out of his heat race and was done for the night, we knew we had it won. At that point, we told ourselves, 'Let's go win this race.'

"It was just another testament to the guys on this TSR team (John Sayne and Brad Mariscotti). My car never had anything fall off it this season. We didn't have any self-inflicted problems all season. We ended the year as both a winner and a champion. It doesn't get any better than that."

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The Sprint Car title was the fourth for Chevrolet, but the first with GM Performance Parts.

“It’s so much fun to bring Chevy another USAC title and to be able to do it for GM Performance Parts, too,” Jones said. “We always strive to be the best at the track each night, and we can’t compete at a championship level without these partnerships. Winning this championship is another milestone I’m really proud of, and the same is true for everyone associated with TSR.”

### **Levi Jones: Driver of the No. 20 Chevrolet/GM Performance Parts/Maxim Sprint Car**

**Date of Birth:** June 10, 1982

**Hometown:** Olney, Ill.

**Residence:** Swansea, Ill.

**Marital Status:** Married (Heidi)

**Children:** Son (Cru)

**Race Director:** Jimmy Carr

**Highlights:** Five-time USAC National Sprint Car Series champion (2005, 2007, 2009, 2010, 2011) ... Two-time USAC Silver Crown Series champion (2010, 2011) ... Earned first career Silver Crown win at USA Raceway in Tucson, Ariz., in February 2010 ... Earned second Silver Crown victory at Terre Haute (Ind.) Action Track in October 2010 ... Won a series-high eight USAC Sprint Car Series races in 2010 ... Won the 2008 and 2009 USAC Indiana Sprint Week Series championships ... Won the 2007 USAC National Sprint Car Series championship ... Earned runner-up honors in the 2006 USAC Sprint Car Series championship ... Won first USAC Sprint Car Series title in 2005 ... Earned a series-high five USAC Sprint Car Series victories in 2005 ... Named the inaugural O’Reilly Sprint Bandits champion in 2005 after sweeping four of five events en route to the title ... Voted 2005 and 2009 Driver of the Year by the North American Non-Winged Sprint Car Panel ... Won the 2004 USAC Indiana Sprint Week Series Championship ... Earned national attention by winning the inaugural USAC Sprint Car Series event at The Dirt Track @ Charlotte (N.C.) Motor Speedway in 2004 ... Finished third in the USAC Sprint Car Series championship in 2003 ... Was named USAC Sprint Car Series Most Improved Driver in 2001 ... Began racing 410 Sprint Cars in 1998 at age 16.

### **About Chevrolet**

Founded in Detroit in 1911, Chevrolet celebrates its centennial as a global automotive brand with annual sales of about 3.5 million vehicles in more than 130 countries. In the U.S., the Chevrolet portfolio includes: iconic performance cars such as Corvette and Camaro; dependable, long-lasting pickups and SUVs, such as Silverado and Suburban; and award-winning passenger cars and crossovers, such as Malibu, Equinox and Traverse. Chevrolet also offers “gas-friendly” solutions, such as Chevrolet Cruze Eco with an EPA-estimated 42 miles per gallon highway, and the Chevrolet Volt offering 35 miles of electric driving and an additional 344 miles of extended gasoline range, according to EPA estimates. Most new Chevrolet models offer OnStar safety, security and convenience technologies including OnStar Hands-Free Calling, Automatic Crash Response and Stolen Vehicle Slowdown. More information regarding Chevrolet models, fuel solutions and OnStar availability can be found at [www.chevrolet.com](http://www.chevrolet.com).

### **About GM Performance Parts**

GM Performance Parts (GMPP) fuels the passions of automotive enthusiasts with factory-engineered and fully assembled crate engines, engine parts and vehicle accessories, including specialized licensed parts and accessories. GM Performance Parts is the only source for brand-new classic small-block and big-block crate engines, which use all-new parts, including the cylinder block, rotating assembly and cylinder heads. GMPP is also the leader in “LS” performance, with a full range of production-based crate engines and the growing family of LSX maximum performance engines and parts. GMPP’s LS-based E-ROD engine systems include emissions equipment that meets California requirements for pre-OBD-II vehicles (E-ROD LS3 systems carry CARB EO D-126-30), delivering high performance with low emissions. No other manufacturer offers a comparable system. Customers can view information and purchase engines and parts at [www.gmperformanceparts.com](http://www.gmperformanceparts.com).

### **About Curb Records**

Curb Records is one of the world’s leading independent record companies. Owned and operated by Mike Curb since 1962, Curb Records has achieved more than 300 Billboard No. 1 records. Today’s roster includes some of the top names in country, Christian and pop/rock music. Curb Records was honored as *Billboard* Magazine’s 2001 Country Music Label of the Year and *Radio & Records* Magazine’s 2005 Overall Gold Label of the Year. For more information, visit [www.curb.com](http://www.curb.com).

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