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STEVE KINSER & DONNY SCHATZ

Tony Stewart Racing Tandem Looks To Make History at Knoxville

INDIANAPOLIS (Aug. 8, 2012) – The preparation is all but over for Sprint car racing's biggest event. The 52nd running of the Goodyear Knoxville Nationals commences Wednesday, when the first of four of the most exciting nights of the season takes place at Knoxville (Iowa) Raceway. Tony Stewart Racing (TSR) teammates Steve Kinser and Donny Schatz have experienced incredible success in the prestigious event and individually are two of the most decorated drivers in the Central Iowa event's rich history.

It all begins with Wednesday's opening-night festivities on a stage that doesn't get any brighter. The legendary half-mile dirt oval will welcome half of this year's entries for a program that includes qualifying, heat races and a preliminary feature. The remainder of the field will compete Thursday. Drivers will accumulate points during each segment, and all aim for a perfect score of 500. The top-16 in points will be locked into Saturday's 50-lap A-Main.

Kinser, who enters his third Nationals driving the TSR No. 11 TSR No. 11 Bass Pro Shops/J.D. Byrider/Chevrolet Maxim and the 36th of his career, last put a 500 night together during the 1992 Nationals. He'll be part of Wednesday's field as he begins his quest for a record 13th Knoxville Nationals crown. If numbers mean anything, this could be Kinser's year as three of his previous wins were in 1982, 1992 and 2002.

Reigning Knoxville Nationals champion Donny Schatz will also be part of Wednesday's field. Last August, Schatz started the TSR No. 15 STP/Armor All/Chevrolet J&J 13th and charged his way to first during the opening 15 laps before ultimately leading 34 of the final 35 laps en route to victory. It was the ninth time in the last 10 years where Schatz has finished either first or second.

The statistics Kinser has amassed during his illustrious career are by far the best of any driver who has competed in the tradition-filled event. Wednesday, "The King of the Outlaws" will begin his quest to qualify for his 35th career Nationals A-Main. The Bloomington, Ind., racer has 14 podium finishes. Ten times he has started on the front row and came out as the victor. He has won his qualifying-night feature on 14 occasions and has led more laps than any other driver (302).

Kinser won his first Knoxville Nationals in 1980 and followed that with wins in the next two Nationals. He put together another three-race winning streak from 1986 to 1988, and won a record five in a row from 1991 to 1995. He scored his 12th and most recent Knoxville Nationals triumph in August 2002. Last year, Kinser's Nationals started solidly as he qualified ninth, finished third in his heat and fifth in Wednesday's preliminary feature. In the 50-lap finale, he was running inside the top-10 during the first half of the race, but faded to finish 16th.

Schatz will be competing in his 19th Nationals. After failing to make the Nationals A-Main in his first four tries, he has made the last 14. The Fargo, N.D., racer opened some eyes at the Nationals in 1998 when he raced to a fourth-place finish. He followed that effort with a top-10 finish in 1999 before jumping into the spotlight in the 2000 Nationals when he led the first 25 laps before ultimately finishing second. The following season, he earned his first career win at Knoxville Raceway during his preliminary night. In 2002 and 2003, he won his qualifying feature and finished second in the finals. In 2006, he broke through and earned the biggest victory of career by winning the Nationals. In 2007, he came back and led all 30 laps of the race to make it two straight. In 2008, he used a lap-23 restart to pass Jason Meyers to win his third in a row and, in 2009, he drove past Joey Saldana with seven laps remaining to score his fourth consecutive Knoxville crown. Last year, Schatz overcame a blown engine in his preliminary feature and raced from deep in the field to win his fifth Nationals in six years.

Race fans unable to attend this week'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 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.

Steve Kinser, Driver of the No. 11 TSR/Bass Pro Shops/J.D. Byrider/Chevrolet Maxim:

In Sprint car racing, the Knoxville Nationals is clearly the biggest race of the year. How important is it to be coming into the Nationals with momentum?

"So much of the Nationals is about getting yourself in a good position for Saturday night. Momentum can do a lot of things and it certainly helps to have your program fine-tuned and ready to go. With everything that is on the line at the Nationals, you'll take any help you can get."

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Steve Kinser, Driver of the No. 11 TSR/Bass Pro Shops/J.D. Byrider/Chevrolet Maxim (continued):

Why is the Knoxville Nationals so hard to win?

"You have to be almost perfect every time you hit the racetrack. With the way the competition is out here now, that's really tough to do. The Nationals challenge every aspect of your team. The driver has to be ready. The crew has to put a car underneath you that is capable of winning, and you have to have some luck. Sometimes, even all of that isn't enough. Guys get on rolls there and it's just tough to stop them. When I first started going to Knoxville, Doug Wolfgang was really tough to beat there. We were really strong during the 1980s and 1990s and here, recently, Donny (Schatz) has been nearly unbeatable. It takes so many things to go right. That's what makes it such a tough race to win."

Tuesday, the Tony Stewart Racing Knoxville Smoke No. 11 was unveiled. What are your thoughts on running uniquely schemed cars?

"I think it's great when sponsors want to work on different ideas and come up with new looks. Knoxville is our biggest race of the year. It gets the most attention, so this is the best place to bring out something new. Everyone at Tony Stewart Racing is proud to represent the sponsors we have and, to spend time Tuesday at the Bass Pro store with people from Bass Pro Shops, Arctic Cat, and Chevy Performance was a lot of fun. I have yet to win the Nationals with a special car, but I am trying to win my 13th, so maybe things will work out this year. The car looks great and I can only hope we can park in victory lane for everyone involved."

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

Did you ever dream that you would be a five-time Knoxville Nationals champion?

"I never thought I'd win a race at Knoxville, let alone the Nationals. It's still hard for me to believe that we've won five Nationals. Every year you strive to be at your best for that week in August and, fortunately for me, we've had a pretty good package for Knoxville and the results have followed. The place has so much tradition and just being a winner there is an honor."

It seems like you haven't let adversity during your qualifying nights slow you down. Is that a result of experience?

"I'd say experience definitely helps. Yes, you'd like everything to go right but, when it doesn't, you can't just panic and throw in the towel. The Knoxville Nationals comes once a year, so you have to focus on only one thing at a time. It starts with qualifying and on through the preliminary feature. At the end of the night, you see where you stack up and go from there. The last few years in my preliminary night, I've had tires go flat, water lines break and, last year, we blew a motor. You win as a team and you lose as team. The STP team has been through the wars before, and they'll be ready for anything that comes our way this year."

Tony Stewart Racing's Donny Schatz: Career Results at The Knoxville Nationals

	Qualifying Night				Nationals Final Night
Year	**Car No.**	**Qualifying**	**Heat Finish**	**"A" Finish**	**"A" Finish**
2011	**15**	**2**	**1**	**24**	**1**
2010	15	7	2	5	2
2009	15	**3**	**7**	**7**	**1**
2008	15	**1**	**6**	**8**	**1**
2007	**15**	**4**	**3**	**2**	**1**
2006	15	**5**	**3**	**2**	**1**
2005	15	2	7	6	2
2004	15	15	4	2	12
2003	15	3	2	1	2
2002	15	9	4	1	2
2001	15	5	1	1	23
2000	15	6	1	2	2
1999	15	6	1	2	9
1998	15	9	1	2	4
1997	15	2	9	---	---
1996	15	18	5	---	---
1995	15	38	4	11	---
1993	15	63	---	---	---

Tony Stewart Racing's Steve Kinser: Career Results at The Knoxville Nationals

	Qualifying Night				Nationals Final Night
Year	**Car No.**	**Qualifying**	**Heat Finish**	**"A" Finish**	**"A" Finish**
2011	11	9	3	5	16
2010	11	1	3	11	22
2009	11	7	8	15	12
2008	11	12	2	3	5
2007	11	10	4	6	6
2006	11	22	2	7	6
2005	11	3	4	19	7
2004	11	30	5	24	8
2003	11	8	3	1	6
2002	**11**	**11**	**1**	**1**	**1**
2001	11	8	3	3	11
2000	11	18	1	1	20
1999	11	11	3	5	7
1998	11	6	1	1	5
1997	11	11	1	3	10
1996	11	1	2	5	4
1995	**11**	**2**	**1**	**21**	**1**
1994	**11**	**3**	**2**	**2**	**1**
1993	**11**	**1**	**2**	**2**	**1**
1992	**11**	**1**	**1**	**1**	**1**
1991	**11**	**1**	**2**	**1**	**1**
1990	11	1	1	1	24
1989	11	1	1	1	6
1988	**11**	**1**	**4**	**2**	**1**
1987	**11**	**2**	**1**	**1**	**1**
1986	**11**	**2**	**2**	**4**	**1**
1985	11	10	1	1	7
1984	11	2	1	2	2
1983	11	5	1	1	19
1982	**11**	**2**	**1**	**2**	**1**
1981	**11**	**1**	**1**	**1**	**1**
1980	**20x**	**2**	**1**	**2**	**1**
1979	11x	5	2	1	19
1978	11x	5	2	1	2
1977	86	32	5	5	DNQ

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