

## **Stewart Sets NASCAR Future Beginning in 2009 as Driver/Owner with Stewart-Haas Racing**

JOLIET, Ill. (July 10, 2008) – Two-time NASCAR Sprint Cup Series champion Tony Stewart has set his NASCAR future, and it's as an owner and driver with Stewart-Haas Racing beginning in 2009.

Stewart-Haas Racing is the new partnership between Stewart and Haas CNC Racing, with the revamped entity slated to run two cars full-time in the Sprint Cup Series.

“This is an incredible opportunity that allows me to race competitively in NASCAR's top division while carving out a place in this sport long after my driving career is over,” Stewart said. “I've won races and I've won championships and I know I could've continued to do that at Joe Gibbs Racing, but to attempt to do those things as a car owner is something that really appeals to me. There's a whole new sense of appreciation and satisfaction that comes with success when you're both a driver and an owner.”

Stewart knows that sense well, for the 37-year-old from Columbus, Ind., already owns two teams in the United States Auto Club (USAC) and two Sprint Car teams in the World of Outlaws (WoO).

Since its formation in November 2000, Tony Stewart Racing (TSR) has earned eight owner championships, the most recent of which was the 2007 USAC Sprint car title care of TSR driver Levi Jones, which marked the first USAC title for Chevrolet as a manufacturer.

“The moment the idea of team ownership in NASCAR really clicked for me was at last year's Chili Bowl,” said Stewart, referring to the “Super Bowl of Midget Racing” at the Tulsa (Okla.) Expo Center. “I won that race back in 2002, but in 2007 I won in one of my own cars. Making it even sweeter was that out of a total of 267 entries, Tony Stewart Racing placed two cars in the A-main. One of them won and the other finished 10<sup>th</sup>. The sense of satisfaction I had from that weekend was awesome, and I want to enjoy that same feeling in NASCAR.”

While ownership in the Sprint Cup Series is a big jump from ownership in USAC and WoO, Stewart knows that the right pieces are in place at Stewart-Haas Racing to continue his streak of ownership success, while also maintaining his impressive record as a Sprint Cup driver, which currently stands at two championships, 32 wins, 10 poles, 124 top-fives, 199 top-10s and more than 10,000 laps led.

“Stewart-Haas Racing will have everything it needs to be successful,” Stewart said. “The equipment is there to win races next year and in the years to come. I look forward to being an integral part of growing this team into a contender.”

Joe Custer, Haas CNC Racing's general manager, is obviously pleased with the coming addition of Stewart to the team's fleet of race cars and to its front office.

“Tony Stewart is a proven champion, on the track and off,” Custer said. “He brings a track record of success to an organization owned by the world's largest machine tool manufacturer. And while Haas Automation has enjoyed great success in the marketplace, our racing operation has yet to achieve the same kind of success. Tony Stewart is a racer with a keen business sense, and we're proud and excited to have him as a key partner of our team.”

Haas CNC Racing operates out of a 140,000-square foot shop in Concord, N.C., and is owned by Oxnard, Calif.-based Haas Automation Inc. The company has been involved with motorsports since 1995 through various technical partnerships with teams in the IRL IndyCar Series and NASCAR, including Hendrick Motorsports, which will continue to provide chassis, engines and technical support to Stewart-Haas Racing.

News regarding sponsors of Stewart-Haas Racing, as well as the complete driver lineup and corresponding car numbers for the two-car team, will be announced at a later date.