

2009 NORC Report #1

Written by Administrator

Monday, 18 May 2009 13:52 - Last Updated Monday, 18 May 2009 13:56

From Dan Courtney comes this first in-depth eye-witness report:

We got the final adjustments made to The Winged Warrior and took it around the block, then loaded up and departed around 10 PM for a 500 mile maiden voyage to catch the Nevada Open Road Race Challenge / SS.

I knew this would be about a 7 hour drive and that the road gets closed at 5:00 AM, so it was going to be tight. Not to mention this was the first time off the block in 1 1/2 years, with a new motor and allot of other new parts.

The Winged Warrior ran great, until we got to Ash Springs, close to the finish line, then started running like crap.

We got to the 316 just as they were putting up the Road Closed signs (had to swerve around one sawhorse) and looked for the spot on the course where The Beast ended it's run at last September's Silver State Challenge, around mile 85. The plan was to bring water, beer and snacks for the gate workers who sheltered me after The Beast blew up.

This is a great site, atop a hill at the end of a five mile straight heading into the final turn in the middle of a silent desert with no human for miles and miles.

We arrived around 5:15 AM and no gate workers, so we were alone. I checked the engine and found the problem immediately, it had lost the donut gasket from the header collector and had a 1/2" gap. Despite having no sleep I thought it was best to stay on it and do the repair before the sun (and heat) came up. Luckily, I had brought one spare donut.

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After the fix we set up on the hill and I proceeded to pass out on a bolder.

I was in a deep dream when I heard music, a cross between symphony and AC/DC. I thought maybe this was a car? I jumped up just in time to see one purple Pantera flying down the straight at about 180 MPH. It was Mad Dog! They let him run first start again.

I scrambled up, displaying my "bed" (DeTomaso fender cover with logo) and snapped off my first photo. About 10 seconds later came Steve Waldman in his red Viper. The race was on!

We saw another 100 or so cars come flying by during the course of the next several scorching hours (100 degrees or so). The fastest was a NASCAR type Monte Carlo accompanied by a plane. Seems like he was doing about 220 MPH. After the turn we noticed a plume of smoke and found out later that he went off road and crashed 4 miles from the finish due to debris on the road. I'll send photos later. I hear he was OK, thankfully. We noticed the Camero before him (doing about 195) was trailing a rear valance, possibly this came off.

It was a long, hot day, but allot of fun. Unfortunately I passed out at a hotel in Vegas and missed the awards banquet, and was unable to personally rag on the Dawg. Really, I had nothing negative to say, his car was the best sounding machine I heard all day and he was really flying, plus he must have finished. I didn't even have to use my fire extinguisher this time.

I was disappointed to see not one other Pantera all day, something needs to be done about that.

The Winged Warrior is still running like crap, so I'm going to see if I fouled the plugs. Hopefully I didn't warp any brand new valves.

Your Team Pantera stealth reporter / supporter in the bush, DanTomaso

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