

# **NHRA POWERade Countdown to One**

*Six Race Shootout to Determine the 2008 POWERade Champions*

*John Force Racing*

*(Driver performance summary at Countdown host tracks)*

Race Number 1

## ***zMax Dragway at Concord, Charlotte, N.C.***

**Inaugural NHRA Carolina Nationals**

**Sept. 11-14**

**Key elements:** The newest track in the NHRA POWERade series features an all-concrete racing surface and four individual lanes although the NHRA has not yet determined how it will utilize the two extra avenues. zMax Dragway is the fourth Speedway Motorsports-owned and developed facility to host an event in the POWERade series, joining The Strip at Las Vegas Motor Speedway, Bristol Dragway and Infineon Raceway at Sears Point. The track's elevation is 690 feet above sea level.

**Notable:** Although this is the first race on the track, teammates Mike Neff and John Force raced one another in dump trucks during the track's buildup with Neff earning a narrow victory.

**Fun fact:** Although he will be seeking his first victory at zMax Dragway, John Force has won previously in the state of North Carolina. He drove his Castrol GTX Funny Car to victory in the NHRA Winston Invitational All-Star event at Rockingham Dragway in 1990, 1995, 1996 and 1997 and, in 10 appearances in the race, earned \$252,000 in bonus money.

Race Number 2

## ***The Texas Motorplex, Dallas, Texas***

**O'Reilly Super Start Batteries Fall Nationals**

**Sept. 18-21**

**Key elements:** Like zMax Dragway at Concord, site of the first race in the Countdown, the Texas Motorplex features an all-concrete racing surface. It was the first all-concrete track in the series when it was built in 1986 by former Funny Car driver and tour winner Billy Meyer. The track's elevation is 500 feet above sea level.

**Notable:** John Force will be returning to the track for the first time since his Castrol GTX Ford Mustang was in collision with the Dodge driven by veteran Kenny Bernstein in the second round of last year's event. Although he won the round, Force suffered career-threatening injuries that kept him in a Dallas hospital (Baylor University Medical Center) for 27 days.

### **JFR drivers at the Texas Motorplex:**

	<b>Races</b>	<b>Starts</b>	<b>Finals</b>	<b>Wins</b>	<b>Won-Lost</b>
<b>Robert Hight</b>	3	2	1	1 (2006)	4-1

FAST FACT: failed to qualify for last year's event, one of only three career DNQs. He is the track speed record-holder for the quarter mile distance at 330.31 mph and was the No. 1 qualifier in 2006.

<b>Ashley Force</b>	1	1	None	None	2-0*
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FAST FACT: \*Technically, Ashley's Funny Car record at the Motorplex is 2-1. However, she is unbeaten on the track. Her recorded loss last year to Cruz Pedregon was the result of her withdrawal from competition after her father's crash. She won the Top Alcohol Dragster title at the 2004 O'Reilly Fall Nationals.

### **John Force**

Castrol Nationals	4	4	3	1	11-3
Fall Nationals	21	21	10	6	49-15
All events	25	25	13	7	60-18

FAST FACT: Wins at the O'Reilly Fall Nationals in 1993, 1998, 1999, 2000, 2003 and 2005 and in the Castrol Nationals in 2000. Has driven a Castrol GTX Funny Car into the semifinals or beyond 11 of the last 16 years in this race.

### **Mike Neff**

FAST FACT: First appearance as a driver. In four seasons with Don Schumacher Racing as a Funny Car crew chief, never had a driver advance beyond second round.

Race Number 3

## ***Memphis Motorsports Park, Memphis, Tenn.***

**O'Reilly Mid-South Nationals**

**Sept. 26-28**

**Key elements:** Track is the first in the Countdown with a combined concrete/asphalt surface which will create new problems for crew chiefs and drivers. The first 530 feet, more than half of the abbreviated 1,000-foot course, is concrete. Track's elevation is 540 feet

**Notable:** Four different John Force Racing drivers have won the O'Reilly Mid-South Nationals. It represented the first career victory for former JFR driver Gary Densham when he won the 2001 race in the Auto Club Ford Mustang now driven by Robert Hight.

### **JFR drivers at the O'Reilly Mid-South Nationals**

	<b>Races</b>	<b>Starts</b>	<b>Finals</b>	<b>Wins</b>	<b>Won-Lost</b>
<b>Robert Hight</b>	3	3	0	0	6-3

FAST FACT: Set the current track record of 4.762 seconds on Sept. 15, 2007. He has been the No. 1 qualifier in each of his three appearances and has reached the semifinals each time.

<b>Ashley Force</b>	1	1	0	0	0-1
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FAST FACT: Ashley was the first day qualifying leader at year ago before starting No. 2. She was a semifinalist in the Top Alcohol Dragster class in 2004.

<b>John Force</b>	20	20	6	5	40-15
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FAST FACT: Has faced Countdown rival Cruz Pedregon in the first round four of the last six years and has won all four meetings. John won in 1993, 1996, 1997, 2004 and 2006. He's started from No. 1 six times, but the last time was in 2001.

### **Mike Neff**

FAST FACT: First appearance as a driver. Crew chief John Medlen won with Tony Pedregon in 2002 and with his son, the late Eric Medlen, in 2005.

Race Number 4

**Virginia Motorsports Park, Richmond, Va.**

**NHRA Virginia Nationals**

**Oct. 10-12**

**Key Elements:** Track features a concrete launch pad that transitions to asphalt at 680 feet. Track elevation is 186 feet above sea level.

**Notable:** The late Eric Medlen, who lost his life in a 2007 testing accident at Gainesville, Fla., won wire-to-wire at the 2006 race, the last of his six career victories in the Castrol SYNTEC Ford Mustang. He remains the track record holder at 4.728 seconds, a mark he established on Oct. 14, 2006.

**JFR Drivers at Virginia Motorsports Park:**

	<b>Races</b>	<b>Starts</b>	<b>Finals</b>	<b>Wins</b>	<b>Won-Lost</b>
<b>Robert Hight</b>	2	2	0	0	1-2

**FAST FACT:** Was the only JFR representative at last year's event but was upset in the first round by Ron Capps. He was the No. 2 qualifier in both 2006 and 2007.

**Ashley Force**

**FAST FACT:** Missed last year's event following her father's crash the previous week at Dallas, Texas.

<b>John Force</b>	7	7	4	4	22-3
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**FAST FACT:** John never has failed to reach the semifinals at Virginia Motorsports Park and his 88 per cent winning percentage is the best at any race in the POWERade Series. He won in 1995, 1996, 1999 and 2000 also has started No. 1 four times, but not since 2000.

**Mike Neff**

**FAST FACT:** This will be Mike's first appearance at VMP as a driver.

Race Number 5

## ***The Strip at Las Vegas Motor Speedway, Las Vegas, Nev.***

**ACDelco Las Vegas Nationals**

**Oct. 30-Nov. 2**

**Key elements:** The track is a concrete/asphalt combination with a 762-foot concrete launch pad. Track is 2,100 feet above sea level.

**Notable:** It was at LVMS that John Force's record-setting streak of 395 consecutive races ended with his failure to qualify for the 2007 SummitRacing.com Nationals. He has DNQ'ed at the last two Summit events and missed last year's ACDelco Nationals.

### **JFR drivers at The Strip at Las Vegas Motor Speedway:**

	<b>Races</b>	<b>Starts</b>	<b>Finals</b>	<b>Wins</b>	<b>Won-Lost</b>
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<b>Robert Hight</b>	3	3	0	0	0-3
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All LVMS events	7	7	1	1	6-6
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FAST FACT: No. 1 qualifier the last two years but has yet to survive beyond round one. Track record holder for the quarter mile distance at 4.677 seconds.

<b>Ashley Force</b>	2	2	1	0	3-1
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All LVMS events	3	3	2	0	7-3
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FAST FACT: When she reached the finals last fall, she became the first woman to compete in an NHRA Funny Car final round.

<b>John Force</b>	6	6	2	1 (2006)	8-5
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All LVMS events	15	13	2	1	14-12
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FAST FACT: In the first round of the 2001 race, was the victim of an unusual double DQ precipitated by rival Bob Bode, who left the starting line before the system was activated. Under a rule revised following the incident, he would have advanced.

<b>Mike Neff</b>	1	1	0	0	0-1
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All LVMS events	2	2	0	0	0-2
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FAST FACT: made his competitive debut as a driver at the 2007 ACDelco Nationals, qualifying 10<sup>th</sup> before losing to Jeff Arend in round one.

Race Number 6

## ***Auto Club Raceway at Pomona, Pomona, Calif.***

**Auto Club of Southern California Finals**

**Nov. 13-16**

**Key elements:** Track features a 660-foot concrete launch pad that transitions into asphalt. Elevation is 1,100 feet above sea level and the course runs slightly downhill although it is barely perceptible. Track hosts both the first and last races in the series.

**Notable:** John Force has won 104 racing rounds at Auto Club Raceway, the only driver to have won more than 100 rounds at any single track.

### **JFR drivers at Auto Club Raceway at Pomona:**

	<b>Races</b>	<b>Starts</b>	<b>Finals</b>	<b>Wins</b>	<b>Won-Lost</b>
<b>Robert Hight</b>	3	3	1	1 (2007)	7-2
All Pomona races	6	6	4	3	18-4

**FAST FACT:** Robert is seeking his third straight victory at Auto Club Raceway after winning last November's Auto Club Finals at last February's Winternationals. His three wins at Pomona have come from the No. 9, No. 12 and No. 14 qualifying positions.

<b>Ashley Force</b>	1	1	0	0	1-1
All Pomona races	3	3	0	0	3-3

**FAST FACT:** Reached the semifinals at last February's Winternationals.

<b>John Force</b>	26	25	11	7	54-18
All Pomona races	57	54	19	12	104-42

**FAST FACT:** one of only two drivers to have won THREE different races at Auto Club Raceway: the Winternationals, the Auto Club Finals and the NHRA 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary race. Auto Club Finals wins came in 1988, 1994, 1996, 2000, 2002, 2004 and 2006).

<b>Mike Neff</b>	1	1	0	0	0-1
All Pomona races	2	2	0	0	0-2

**FAST FACT:** As crew chief, directed Gary Scelzi to the semifinals of the Auto Club Finals in 2004 where, ironically, he lost to John Force.