



Another Race another lesson.

I have a tremendous amount of respect for teams that can repeatedly finish races. I have run a couple of companies, and I have orchestrated what, at the time, seemed like huge projects. I can now conclude that was child's play. As I looked across the mountain of iron we brought with us to the Silver State 300, I thought we were prepared. Torchmate Racing was able to win this race last year, and I was determined to repeat that this year. Jessie Haines and Mike Aiello joined our efforts with the 4499 car. We brought the 7231 truck, and after last second adjustments, radio checks, and breakfast we were ready. Logistics and preparation wins races, and I was in charge of logistics. We had a great crew and confidence was high. I was fortunate enough to get to drive our 7231 truck and with the help of my co-pilot Nick Sosha I was confident we had what it would take. Until....

Chad Hall is a great driver and a person you want to BBQ with and have as a friend. He and Jake Povey, our head mechanic, started our effort and their day would dictate ours. We had two vehicles to pit for and an experienced crew. Mark Levrett and Chris Reid were team two on the 4499 car and also pitted until they drove. Jeff and Ross Carr had a huge day as they would support both 4499 and 7231. Nick and I would also pit until we got in at the halfway point. Chad was having a great day and had moved into 2nd place. As Nick and I rolled up on the BF Goodrich pit we were forced to decide if Chad was close enough to the lead to have the driver change effect the win. Pressure, pressure, pressure. After running the numbers we though dropping five minutes was something we could make up. So as Chad's and Jake's feet hit the ground ours were leaving! The next hour was just a blur. I remember how much better the truck felt with the suspension changes we had made, and about then Nick was calling one turn after another and had to squeeze in that we had a temperature problem. My heart sank. It's a hot day and we were in silt, sand and some real technical stuff, but our truck didn't run hot. It didn't look good. We picked up the pace where we could, and the extra airflow seemed to help. As we approached 240 degrees and climbing we decided we couldn't finish without a motor. It was one of the hardest things to do...just sit there. We watched everyone we worked hard to get around go by. We waited fifteen minutes to get back to a temp we could run at. We knew it wasn't all that far to open ground, and I pushed harder than I ever had to cover it. By the time we reached the flats we ran at over 100 mph, and in no time we were back in the dust of the last protruck and 7241 that had gone around us while we were stopped. The rest is history. Thanks to the tremendous effort of everyone the truck held together, and we got an interview in the light of day. 5th place is still a finish, and I try not to be greedy.

I can't wipe the grin off my face when I'm racing. I enjoy everything about this sport. I've even started to get comfortable with the fact nothing gets finished until race day...or so it seems. Torchmate and our crew are definitely the most fun I've ever had. I could go on for days about the race, but hey, I have to get ready for the next one! Thanks to Bill Kunz, Torchmate and all the guys that make it possible for us to do this.

-Greg Jones