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Dirt Sports Magazine Names Andy McMillin 2009 "Driver of the Year"

**Carl Renezeder, Brad Lovell and Jeff Ward also honored in
Newly Restructured Annual Award**

February 4, 2009 (Long Beach, Calif.) – On the eve of trying to repeat his overall victory at the Best-in-the Desert (BITD) Parker 425 desert race, defending event champion Andy McMillin capped off his monumental 2009 season by being honored by *Dirt Sports Magazine* and Ryan Communications Group (RCG) as Dirt Sports' "2009 Driver of the Year." The third generation driver took top honors in this year's selection, but was also joined by fellow racers Carl Renezeder as "2009 Short Course Racer of the Year," Brad Lovell as "2009 Rock Racer of the Year," and Jeff Ward, who took the magazine's "2009 Rookie of the Year" title.

Last season, McMillin, co-driver and father Scott McMillin, and his entire San Diego, California-based McMillin Racing team not only captured the BITD Class 1400 championship for unlimited trucks, but also posted overall winning performances at some of the sport's biggest races including the 2009 BITD Parker 425, the SCORE Mint 400, the BITD Las Vegas to Reno, the SCORE Baja 1000 and the season finale BITD Henderson Desert Classic. The team's campaign was supported by McMillin Homes, Ford, BFGoodrich, Fox Shox, Eibach, KMC Wheels, K&N, Vision-X and VP Fuel.

In tonight's award ceremony, McMillin's dramatic cover shoot by artist Tim Mantoani was unveiled on the newly-printed February, 2010 issue. As part of his award, the happy winner was also awarded a custom-made presentation box by Oakley featuring a specially engraved watch and high performance sunglasses; along with a one-of-a-kind Oakley "Driver of the Year" jacket.

"Most years, choosing our 'Driver of the Year' is a difficult one because of the incredible competition across our magazine's core coverage of desert, short course and rock racing" explained Marty Fiolka, group editorial and marketing director, Ryan Communications Group. "But in consideration of Andy McMillin's watershed season in 2009, this year our top honoree was a clear one; especially after Andy, and his father Scott, won the prestigious Tecate SCORE Baja 1000 and then the BITD Class 1400 Championship."

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ANDY McMILLIN NAMED DRIVER OF THE YEAR 2-2-2-

In choosing each of their past winners, the panel of judges made their final determinations based upon drivers posting a championship performance, their ability to represent both the sport and their sponsors in a professional manner, and their ability to rise above the competition in a significant manner.

The 22-year old McMillin adds his name to an illustrious group of past honorees that represent some of the sport's best, including the late Jason Baldwin (2004), Shannon Campbell (2005), Carl Renezeder (2006), and Rob MacCachren (2007). Last year, Heidi Steele made history by becoming the first female to ever win two major championships in the same season and also the first woman ever to earn the prestigious "Driver of the Year" title.

"Ever since I was young I wanted to be recognized as one of the best in this sport and I have worked really hard to achieve it," explained McMillin. "On behalf of my father, my family and the entire McMillin team, I want to thank everyone involved for making a dream really come true."

For the first time in the award's history, the magazine named awards the other forms of off-road motorsports not represented by the overall winner. Known as the "Dirt Sports Honors," those chose in these categories will also receive special Oakley watches and jackets. Last season's list include Renezeder, who claimed two championships in the Lucas Oil Off-Road Racing Series (LOORRS), Colorado's Brad Lovell, a rock racing veteran that also took dual titles in the W.E.Rock and XXRA series and the multi-talented Jeff Ward, who enjoyed a spectacular first season in LOORRS Unlimited 2 competition.

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Ryan Communications Group (RCG) is a multi-media communications business providing full market coverage that connects the consumer as well as the business trade market segments. Current properties include *Dirt Sports* magazine, Dirtsportsnation.com, *Off-Road Industry Magazine* and Offroadindustryonline.com.