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## MDR Night Race Post Race Report

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2009's MDR night race concludes with two TOTAL CHAOS drivers Dan Vance & Mike Koenig rounding out the podium with 3<sup>rd</sup> place finishes in class 1400 and class 1450. With cooler than normal temperatures and a stacked field of drivers this year's event proved once again to challenge both the rookies and the veterans with a counter clockwise direction race course. The track was littered with square edges punishing the drivers and their machines. The 7pm start and setting sun on lap one was a nail biting challenge for drivers and co drivers that could not see through the dust 3 feet in front of them. The racers started double wide which added to the risk factor as they headed uphill to a single lane left at the infamous "rock pile" jump which was lined lap one with hundreds of spectators on both sides of the track. The crowd was not disappointed as the drivers launched their trucks & buggies and headed north into the valley in a chase to the checkered flag.

The 1400 class had 15 entered. TC team driver Dan Vance has had a limited desert schedule for 2009. After clinching his SXS M4SX series championship early he was ready to run 200 miles in the desert again! Some modifications were made to convert the short course set up back to his desert set up for the race with help from PRG. Drawing a rear class start proved to be challenging in the thick dust. During lap one a limit strap clevis sheared which caused the straps to tangle with a front brake line and DNF Racing #1429 lost the brakes. "The truck was a hand full to drive in the dust with no brakes on lap one", stated Vance. "I had 12 minutes of down time at main pit to try and make repairs. It cost me a 2<sup>nd</sup> place finish. The course was rough and the dust was so thick at one point I had to come to almost a complete stop and let it run off my lens! This was my first desert race on my new GoodYear Kevlar Wrangler MTR's and they ran flawless. We had no flats. They helped me clinch the final podium spot. They hooked up great and got the job done!" Attrition took out almost half the field and only 6 entries in class 1400 completed the race.

Class 1450 has grown steadily for the past 5 years. This year 48 trucks started the race side by side and hammered down to the single lane at the rock pile. TC team driver Mike Koenig made the trek from Sacramento to test his skills against the southern California locals. "We love racing against these guys", stated Mike after the race. "My bone stock 3.4 V6 Toyota was no match for Steven Herrera's newly built V8 race truck but it didn't let me down. I drag raced a supercharged 3.4 off the start and my Doug Thorley headers gave me that extra power I need to stay within a truck length of him to the rock pile. Then he blew the motor." The dust never settled on lap one and the racers were challenged with blinding lights, the setting sun and a brutally rough race course. For Koenig Racing it was a fairly uneventful race. "With no mechanical problems and fresh prep the Toyota ran trouble free. We had the front bumper lights go out and then my co driver accidentally turned off the light bar lights. That was kind of scary but that was the only problem we had!" TOTAL CHAOS suspension equipped racers AJ Steeber and Tim Scott were also competing and completed the race in 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> place.

TOTAL CHAOS and Locos Mocos offered a remote pit support program at MM 28 Pit C where the Locos Mocos crew provided the pit trailer, welder, generator and tools to assist damaged and broken racers throughout the night. From lap one to lap 4 for some racers at 3am the pit had trucks limping in and out all night long. Some left on trailers, others left on tow straps. #1494 required 5 gallons of fuel to continue. You still owe Pat at the shop some cash by the way. #1423 required welding to repair the bung on the rear wishbone. #1408 blew a head gasket and drained every cooler in the pit trying to get him going. #1458 lost a lower link bolt which resulted in a couple of bent shocks and a busted rear drive line. They were excavated and towed back to the pit only to get heckled by the seniors. He was sent back to main via a trailer. Rory Ward of Racer's Only fame pulled in every lap in car #197 to re-torque the constantly loosening beam thru-bolts while he tested his car with zero prep after the Mint 400 to prepare for the Baja 1000. The most memorable repair was on truck #1483 that folded a radius arm. It was straightened and gusseted, realigned and sent back on the course on their way to finish their very first desert race ever! "As a manufacturer in the industry it is an amazingly positive feeling to give back to the race community," stated TC marketing director Nicole Pitell. "Our staff enjoys wrenching and our Locos Mocos extended family has a professional pit support trailer that they offered to assist us. It was totally a group effort!"

TOTAL CHAOS would like to thank: Patio, Baja Jones, Bethel, BVZ, Baja Tym, Big & Lil Buckelew's, Tiny, Jer, Broken K & Val, Rock Lobster, Pete, OCB, Buffet, BCG 1 & 7, Grey Squirrel, The Fuzz, Russ and Russel, Minion, Blumer, Bobby Hill, Hot Pocket, Frosted Flake & anyone else who popped in to lend a hand or say HI.

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Koenig Racing would like to thank: ORW, Doug Thorley, BFGoodrich, Baja Bros., King Shocks, TOTAL CHAOS, our families and friends, and Dezert People.



Photo: Dave Brumbly



Photo: Kevin Blumer



Photo: Kevin Blumer



Photo: Dave Brumbly



Photo: Steve Bucklew

OOPS!!!!



NO JOKE Captain!!

Photos: Steve Buckelew



SHOCK DAMAGE!



Photo: Kevin Blumer



We're SMOKING Captain!!



Photos: Steve Buckelew



Jer makes sure he sees the checkered flag!!