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PRESS RELEASE

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Gary Forkner and Thomas Bayer Win NHRA® Pacific Division Championships
On Toyo® Proxes® Drag Slicks

LAS VEGAS, NEVADA – Team Toyo® drag racers, Gary Forkner and Thomas Bayer, both won championships this past weekend in the competitive Division 7 (Pacific Division) of the NHRA Lucas Oil Drag Racing Series while competing on Toyo Proxes Drag Slicks. Forkner, from Temecula, California, won the Pacific Division Top Sportsman Championship while driving his Steve Schmidt 638 cubic inch Toyo Tires®-sponsored Jerry Bickel chassis 2006 Pontiac GTO. His 33.5X17.0-16 Toyo Proxes Drag Slicks ran a remarkable 118 passes throughout the season. Bayer, from Fontana, California, made this his third Super Comp divisional title on 33X16.0-15 Proxes Drag Slicks with his Lucas Oil/Toyo Tires/K&N dragster. He bested a field of 189 other racers in the popular class.

Forkner had two wins out of eight races in 2009. He capped off his championship season by finishing runner-up in the K&N Filters Top Qualifier Shootout on Thursday night at Las Vegas. On Sunday, he won the final (round 6 eliminations) in Pacific Division Top Sportsman posting a 7.459-second elapsed time at 182.26-mph during the *Short Line Express Gambler Showdown presented by Torco*.

“Winning both the championship and the race this weekend was special because racers from nearly all of the divisions were in attendance... it was a like an all-star event,” said Forkner. “My Toyo Proxes Drag Slicks have been a secret weapon. Even on my high-horsepower car, with varying track conditions throughout the year, my 60-foot times were within three to four thousandths. My increment times have been really impressive, only varying a couple of thousandths. Being so repeatable, this allows me to concentrate on cutting a good light.”

Thomas Bayer competed in both Super Comp and Super Gas during the 2009 racing season. In Super Gas, he scored one runner-up in the national races. In Division 7 of Super Comp, he scored one win out of eight races. For the National Super Comp points, Bayer won three out of 14 races, leading the championship points until the very last race. He finished a solid second place out of a field of 1,325 competitors in the class.

“I am proud to lock down another NHRA Division 7 championship. My Toyo Proxes Drag Slicks helped give me an unfair advantage over competitors that don’t run them,” said Bayer. “My equipment has been great all year, my tires delivering consistency, allowing me to put them on and forget about them. With my runner-up finish in the

national championship points, I am even more focused on winning the national championship in 2010.”

“We congratulate both Gary Forkner and Thomas Bayer for winning their NHRA divisional championships on Toyo Proxes Drag Slicks,” said Stan Chen, manager of events and motorsports, Toyo Tire U.S.A. Corp. “Their performances throughout the year tell the tale of winning consistency, an attribute that has become a trademark of Toyo Tires brand competition tires.”

To learn more about Team Toyo race drivers and the tires that have won numerous championships for Toyo Tires in 2009, log on to *toyotires.com*. Toyo Tires manufactures and distributes a complete line of replacement tires for high performance cars, luxury vehicles, light trucks and SUVs as well as tires for commercial trucks, buses and off-road and construction applications.

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