

FROM THE BOTTOM OF MY HEART

Seven years ago while attending the funeral to put my good friend Mark Hahn to rest I made a promise to him while he lay at rest that I would work diligently to see that his dreams of PWC endurance racing dominance were realized and to also insure that his name and memory were synonymous with the type of endurance racing he and I had spent years supporting, both knowing that it could be done better. Thus began my personal odyssey into the world of race co promoting with DSM's Jim Russell that has taken every ounce of courage to successfully put on a 300 mile endurance race to honor my friend Mark Hahn.

Hurdling all the road blocks that were thrown in our way the first year back in 2005, the race was successful due to the support of the great people in this sport that were willing to take a nominal risk with me personally and give us money to make the event happen. After last years event, no one was ready for all the press, awards and good will that was generated, and every single sponsor, competitor and fan immediately signed up for this years event with greater enthusiasm and money.

After the inaugural event I realized that if this event was going to succeed it would require a professional, experienced promoter to deal with all the regulatory agencies and grunt work involved with putting on a quality event. Jim Russell of DSM Events stepped in to take over that responsibility which allowed me to focus on sponsorship relationships and the public relations side of things. The entire world of PWC racing owes Jim Russell more praise and gratitude than anyone realizes. Without Jim and his staff unwavering devotion, this event would not have been the best run event I have ever been in. I will never forget the image of Jim approaching the starting line doing his impression of Dick Cheney with a 12 gauge shotgun cocked over his arm to use as the starters gun, and ready to fill anyone who jumped the start with more buckshot than a Texas attorney.

I would also like to thank my friend Ross Wallach, who was also a friend to Mark, for taking time away from his family and race promoting business to come all the way out to Lake Havasu and work tirelessly to help make this event a huge success. Both Jim and Ross are consummate professionals worthy of our respect and support; however, racers need to step up and show them how much we need and appreciate what they do by showing our support by entering events early and often, becoming involved in the promoting of events and taking responsibility for and getting involved in the growth of the sport.

With the support of the APBA and Patrick Mell, all the manufacturers and other fine sponsors, forty eight (48) teams/boats participated in the incident/controversy free 2011 Hot Products APBA Mark Hahn Memorial Havasu 300 that got more Int television, magazine, newspaper and media coverage than the other Havasu race. With over 300 in attendance at the awards banquet, it truly did have the feel of the "good old days" when everyone was energized, positive, involved and having a great time while doing it.

I owe too many people thanks for their help and support to mention them all here, but I do thank you all for everything. The totally positive feedback I have received since the event has energized me and challenged me to make the 2012 Hot Products Mark Hahn Memorial even bigger and better. I know the Big Guy was looking down on us Saturday and was feeling very proud that he was being remembered in such a grand fashion, but I also know he would have been the first to say, "That was truly a great, event !

On behalf of myself and the entire Hahn family a big Thank You for keeping Mark's dream alive.

I will for ever miss my friend Mark Hahn a true giant of a man.

Mike Follmer