



## **SAM BASS UNVEILS ARTWORK FOR HISTORIC LOWE'S MOTOR SPEEDWAY PROGRAM COVERS**

Concord, N.C. (May 4, 2009) -- Fine art ... fast cars ... and one of the most historic speedways in the entire realm of motorsports ...

Renowned motorsports artist Sam Bass, along with officials from Lowe's Motor Speedway, today unveiled two original paintings that will grace the covers of souvenir programs for two of the most significant events in the track's history: the 25th edition of the NASCAR Sprint All-Star Race and the 50th running of the iconic Coca-Cola 600.

A high impact illustration entitled "Silver Knights!" appears on the cover of the NASCAR Sprint All-Star Race souvenir publication, while the Coca-Cola 600 program features an equally poignant artwork called "Gold Rush!" Of course, the titles allude to the silver and golden anniversaries of the two prestigious events.

"Producing the cover artwork for these two spectacular anniversary events certainly presented me with one of the biggest creative challenges I have ever faced in my career," said Sam Bass, the official artist of Lowe's Motor Speedway. "There is so much history in not only the events, but also the speedway itself. I thought there would be no better way to depict the memorable race highlights than to frame them in the Speedway Motorsports, Inc. globe icon. It was certainly most gratifying to learn how excited the speedway and sponsor officials were with the paintings I created!"

The most recent collaboration between Bass and the Concord, N.C. speedway extends one of the longest running streaks in all of motorsports. A record 59 consecutive covers have been designed by Bass – NASCAR's first officially licensed artist – dating back to the inaugural All-Star Race and Coca-Cola's first year as the title sponsor of the 600.

"Sam has a long history of doing fine work for Lowe's Motor Speedway, but this year he's outdone himself on these historic covers," said Marcus Smith, president and general manager of Lowe's Motor Speedway. "I can't imagine how much work went into designing these, but it's amazing to see how well he captured the moments and personalities that have helped make the Sprint All-Star Race and the Coca-Cola 600 NASCAR's biggest events."

### **A CLOSER LOOK**

Employing his trademark mixture of fine art and graphic design, the artist uses vivid colors and subtle imagery to convey the feeling of "being there." For example, "Silver Knights!" seizes the very essence of racing under the lights at Lowe's Motor Speedway, while "Gold Rush!" captures all the anticipation of an event that begins in the afternoon and continues well into the evening.

The program covers for both events offer fans a retrospective view of the men and machines that elevated both races to legendary status.

Led by last year's winner, Kasey Kahne, some key players in the 2009 NASCAR Sprint All-Star Race are showcased in "Silver Knights!" as they streak across the center of the well-known "globe" logo. Above and below, images from days past bring fans back to some of the defining events in the most celebrated showdown in motorsports. Among the heart-stopping moments shared through the strokes of Bass' paintbrush are:

- Darrell Waltrip's dramatic win in the inaugural event.
- The classic confrontation between Dale Earnhardt and Bill Elliott in 1987
- Rusty Wallace and DW going head-to-head in the '89 event
- Dale Earnhardt's 1995 "Silver Select" car - the vanguard of the special paint scheme movement
- The fantastic finish between Davey Allison and Kyle Petty after a last lap shootout under the lights in 1992
- Stirring victories by drivers like Dale Earnhardt, Jr., Jeff Gordon, Jimmie Johnson, Mark Martin, and Kevin Harvick

"Gold Rush!" employs a similar format, as a collage of historic images provides a fitting backdrop as representatives from the Coca-Cola Racing Family sprint past one of the most recognizable trophies in motor racing. Beginning with Joe Lee Johnson's triumph in the very first 600-miler in 1960, this timeless composition provides a visual recap of the groundbreaking performances that have punctuated five decades of the Memorial Day weekend classic, including:

- The down-to-the-wire finishing duel between Benny Parsons and Darrell Waltrip in 1980
  - Bobby Allison's 1971 victory aboard the No. 12 Coca-Cola Mercury
  - Jimmie Johnson steamrolling the competition en route to three straight wins in the "600"
  - David Pearson streaking to one of his record 11 consecutive Lowe's Motor Speedway poles
  - Darrell Waltrip racking up another of his unprecedented five Coca-Cola 600 triumphs
  - Career-building triumphs by racers like Dale Earnhardt, Jeff Gordon, Mark Martin, Dale Jarrett, Bobby Labonte, and Casey Mears
- Destined to be one of the most collectible souvenir program covers of all time, "Gold Rush!" captures the very spirit of the race they all want to win.

"Sam has created and produced the souvenir program cover for each and every Coca-Cola 600 race," said Bill Nystrom, Coca-Cola North America's Senior Manager of Sports Marketing for NASCAR. "We appreciate not only his historical connection, but Sam's unique way of linking his concepts to the fans' passion for their favorites - and our Coca-Cola Racing Family of drivers. He has also worked with us and our customer teams on other projects, such as custom paint designs and special packaging promotions. He has been a good partner, friend and a part of the Coca-Cola family. We look forward to seeing his finished cover for many years to come!"

It has been a great 25 years for Bass, but he isn't about to crack the throttle. In fact, motor racing's most celebrated artist is just now hitting his stride - and looking to the future with unbridled enthusiasm. His artwork has become a bona fide NASCAR tradition.

Sam Bass is the most accomplished artist in NASCAR. Since 1987, he has created race team graphics for corporate America's leading sponsors, NASCAR team owners and drivers. He is also known for his fine-art original paintings and a distinctive style when it comes to his design of track program covers, racing-themed ad campaigns, posters, apparel and custom shop guitars. His personal studio and motor-sports art gallery in Concord, N.C., are adjacent to Lowe's Motor Speedway. He is the first officially licensed artist of NASCAR. For more information please call 704/455-6915, or log on to [www.sambass.com](http://www.sambass.com).