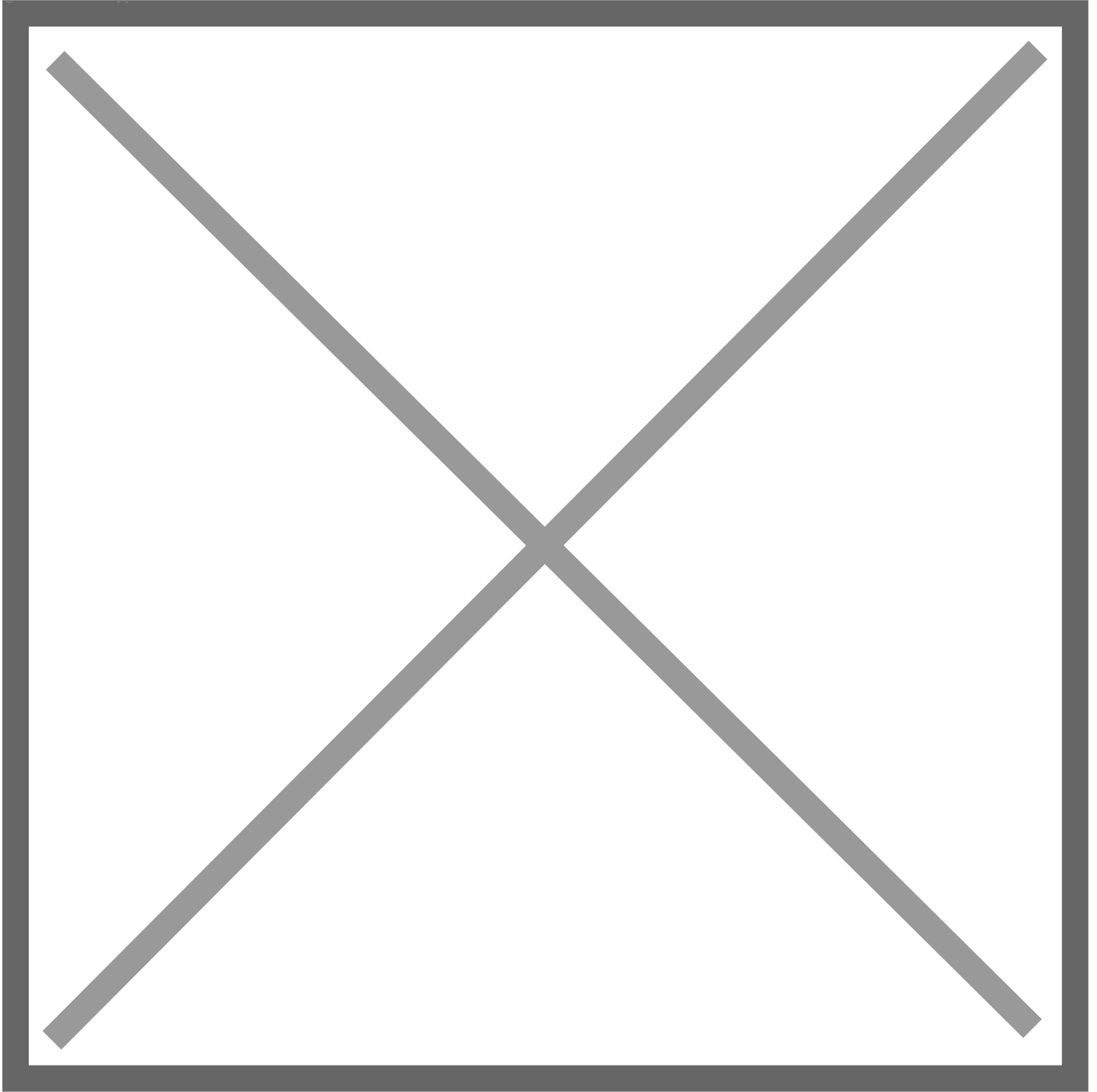


Baja 1000 Winner Joe Bacal to Start 2013 Off-Road Racing Season at Mint 400

March 21, 2013

Image not found or type unknown



PHOENIX (March 21, 2013) – Coming off a solo-driven victory in the 2012 Baja 1000, Joe Bacal and his JTGrey Racing team are ready to race the Lexus LX 570 with full Lexus backing again in 2013, kicking off the season with the Mint 400 this Saturday, March 23 in Las Vegas.

The Mint 400 is one of the oldest and best known desert races—a marquee event for the Best In The Desert racing series and made famous by the likes of Parnelli Jones, James Garner, Ivan Stewart, Steve McQueen and Mickey Thompson.

"The Mint 400 is always exciting and a great test for any bona fide off-road racer," said Bacal. "With Lexus supporting us again this year and the LX working so well, we'd like to show what we can do together at the Mint."

With a fully sorted and quick truck under him, plus Lexus' full support and a seasoned crew behind him, Bacal will also tackle the toughest races on the off-road calendar this year: The Baja 500 and 1000, both of which he and Lexus have won. The beefy LX, despite its generous dimensions, has proven a smart choice on the rough Mexican terrain. It's fast and tough, which comes as no surprise to Lexus.

"Joe and his team have proven the capabilities of the LX 570," said Lexus Vice President of Marketing Brian Smith. "Joe has great skill and true grit as a driver, and the LX is fast and seems unbreakable, so it's a hard-to-beat combination."

Bacal and Lexus began their racing partnership in remarkable fashion with a class victory in the 2009 Baja 500—both as Baja rookies. Perhaps equally remarkable, Bacal, a Hodgkins Lymphoma survivor, drove the entire race distance, a feat Bacal repeated twice at the grueling Baja 1000. The team continued its amazing start by capturing the SCORE Stock Full class championship in 2010, its first full season of racing. The squad has since notched wins at the Baja 1000 (twice), the Laughlin Desert Challenge, the Primm 300 and the San Felipe 250.