

Joe Bacal Brings First Pro Off-Road Race Victory to Lexus and JTGrey Racing Team at Baja 500

June 09, 2009

Image not found or type unknown



JTGrey11

Cancer Survivor Drives Race Distance Solo to Win in First Attempt

ENSENADA, Mexico, June 8, 2009 – In a remarkable first for driver, team, vehicle and manufacturer, Joe Bacal and navigator Paul Williamsen took their freshly-built Cancer Treatment Centers of America JTGrey Racing Lexus LX 570 to a landmark maiden victory in the 41st annual Tecate SCORE Baja 500 early Sunday.

Their win in the Stock Full class* marks a world's first for Lexus and the culmination of a dream for Bacal and his new team.

“This is truly a dream come true,” said Bacal. “The LX 570 was bulletproof and we went the entire distance without a tire change. I was tired at the end but not exhausted, which is something that two years ago was hard to imagine after my cancer ordeal.”

Assisted by first-time navigator Williamsen and a new but well-organized team, Baja 500 rookie Bacal drove all 16 hours of his race without leaving the vehicle and with only brief stops for fuel and nourishment along the way. They moved the big LX into the class lead a little before the halfway point and were never headed again.

“Joe has a great ability to read the course and managed to steer clear of most of the bigger obstacles that this kind of trail constantly throws at you,” said Williamsen. “But you can't dodge them all, so Joe's stamina and the durability of the Lexus and the BFGoodrich tires were big factors.”

Remarkably, the LX 570 had been completed just days before the race and was tested only briefly in Arizona before shipping to Ensenada for the race. But the big SUV responded well and the team's considerable efforts rewarded.

The dusty, rocky and alternately fast-slow Baja 500 course took its toll on many competitors. It crossed mountains, dry lake beds and even ran alongside the Pacific Ocean for several miles. It did manage to take a small bite out of the LX when an anti-roll bar link failed, but Bacal simply adjusted his driving to accommodate the degradation in handling and soldiered on. It proved to be a smart strategy.

Bacal and the JTGrey team look forward to their next race in late summer when they challenge the Vegas to Reno 1000 in the Best of the Desert series on August 19-23.

*Please Note: SCORE International has indicated that all results are provisional until final posting on Thursday of this week.

About JTGrey

JTGrey Performance Driving, LLC was created in 2007 by Joe and Teresa Bacal to provide expert highperformance driving services (on and off-road) to the auto industry and related companies such as parts suppliers, print advertising and marketing agencies and the commercial and feature film industries, among others. The company is based in Phoenix, Arizona.

JTGrey Racing was created by Joe and Teresa Bacal in 2008 to support Joe Bacal's off-road racing efforts. It is also based in Phoenix.

Note to Editors

Additional high-resolution images are available. Please contact Brad Nelson or Teresa Bacal with your needs.

Contacts

Teresa Bacal
JTGrey Racing
602-738-8678
teresa@jtgrey.com

Brad Nelson
BN Communications
310-245-0139
brad@bncommunications.net

Tiffany Jenkins
Cancer Treatment Centers of America
Western Regional Center (Goodyear, AZ)
623-207-3032
tiffany.jenkins@ctca-hope.com

Christie Enochs
Cancer Treatment Centers of America
Southwestern Regional Center (Tulsa, OK)
918-286-5569
christie.enochs@ctca-hope.com