



Dan Vanden Heuvel Makes Successful Comeback at TORC Season Opener

Appleton, WI (June 23, 2010) - If you talked to the Flying Dutchman, Dan Vanden Heuvel, a month ago, there was some serious doubt if he would be able to get behind the wheel of his #77 Maxxis Tire Chevy Silverado for the opening PRO weekend of the Traxxas TORC Series presented by AMSOIL. Back in early March of this year, Dan had a racing incident that caused him serious pain during a race in Las Vegas. The result was a sprained neck, nerve damage, and limited movement in his right arm.

Fortunately, a team of expert physicians put Dan on an extensive rehabilitation program that got him a clean bill of health just three days before the start of the TORC season.

While Dan Vanden Heuvel, or "Driver" as his team calls him, was rehabbing, The Flying Dutchman Off-Road Race Team prepped the 2009 Independent Off-Road designed and built PRO-2 for the start of the season. If Driver wasn't cleared by his doctors to race, Dan Vanden Heuvel Jr. was scheduled to drive the red Wegner powered Chevy at Crandon.

"No matter the scenario, the #77 Maxxis Chevy was going to race the entire season, with either myself or Jr. behind the wheel," remarked Dan Vanden Heuvel. "Jr. is a very capable driver, but this old dog still likes to hunt."

The updated Crandon International Track was really fast. Almost every corner was widened and banked, thanks to the addition of hundreds of truckloads of clay. The banking allowed for multiple race lines in most of the corners. After early morning practice, Dan felt comfortable with the setup in his red Chevrolet.

The land rush start for Round One had Dan running in the top three, and he showed no signs of fatigue for the first half of the race. The competition caution came out, giving other drivers the chance to put pressure on the Maxxis Chevy. Dan knew he was vulnerable with everyone bunched up, so he tried a very high line around the Gravel Pit Turn. As he guided the #77 to the top edge of the banking, the right rear tire hooked and caused the Flying Dutchman's truck to roll over and spin through the air several times. Somehow, the truck landed on its wheels and Dan quickly mashed the throttle and went back to racing. The crowd went wild knowing Dan just came off the injured list and still refused to quit.



The only damage to the truck was the flying body panels that were left hanging off the truck and at the scene of the incident. Dan was able to continue, but unfortunately the crash allowed the pack to get away. The remaining laps saw the Flying Dutchman stay out of trouble to finish on the lead lap in seventh place. After the race, dozens of kids were lucky enough to get some red fiberglass 'souvenirs' as the crew pulled smashed body work off the truck.

After remounting new body panels and replacing a couple of steering components, the team had the #77 ready for Round Two the next day.

Round Two saw Dan take a conservative approach to the race. The speeds the PRO-2 trucks were carrying through the newly banked corners made passing difficult, to say the least. After the Round One incident, a solid finish was mandatory if the team wanted to stay in the hunt for the TORC PRO-2 Championship. With that in mind, the team came across the finish line in a solid fifth place.

"After the wild ride in Round One," noted Dan Vanden Heuvel, "I knew I had to finish today's race with a solid Top-5 performance. We accomplished that today and the truck didn't even lose any fiberglass. The track went from last year's loamy feel to a hard fast layout where horsepower is even more important than ever. With everything that has gone on this year, I'm just happy to be putting on my Safety Solutions neck restraint and getting strapped into the ISP seat to race another season."

After the first two rounds of the 2010 TORC PRO-2 Championship, Dan Vanden Heuvel is currently in fifth place.